OTAGO EARLY SETTLERS' ASSOCIATION INC.
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Otago Early Settlers' Association (Inc.)

June 1979



CORNER OF STAFFORD AND MANSE STREETS.

Moray Place Dunedin
16th December 1865

LETTERHEAD 1865

INTRODUCTION

BY BRUCE MACGIBBON
Publicity and Membership Committee

This newsletter contains news of our successful Annual General Meeting, extracts from the Introduction to the Annual Report by the immediate past President for 1978, Mr John Macpherson, and a greeting from our new President, Rev. Dr. J.S. Somerville. With the vigorous interest in the Association, we received more nominations than there are places for committee members. We thank retiring committee members for their efforts in the past, and we also thank all those who stood for the new committee. The sub committees and new members are listed.

This provides an opportunity too, for a special thank you to John Macpherson for the untiring work he put into his term as President.

Our Director, Seddon Bennington, is now starting to see some return for the work and thought he has put into the museum. He has been supported by the committee and the results are becoming self-evident. This work has drawn heavily on our income, and this is where we particularly value the support of our members. The museum collection is being gradually catalogued and properly stored, but many year's work are still ahead before it is completely ship-shape. Please call in and see the progress.

Our shop is doing brisk business with sales of over $600 during March and April. If you require a gift, write for our list of stock, and remember the 10% discount to members. Our prints are a particularly popular part of our selection. We have increased our post card range to include six different historical photographs which are described in this newsletter.

REPORT FROM MR J.O. MACPHERSON, THE PRESIDENT FOR 1978

Once again my pleasure to introduce to you the Annual Report and Balance Sheet for the Association. While the Balance Sheet is the excellent product of our Treasurer, I think it is fair comment to introduce what I have briefly to say to you by referring to the comparative figures as shown on the accounts forwarded to you. While we take no pride in the expenditure of funds for the sake of spending, we do in fact take pride in the fact that our income was $32,558 plus donations etc, against $21,509 in 1977 and approx $17,000 in 1976. If we had spent this sum unproductively we would be less than adequate guardians of the affairs of the Association, but with some opposition, we can say that we have spent the funds generated, wisely and well. We can also say with some pride that, with an increased tempo and a total expenditure of over $35,000, we have also been able to invest the majority of our bequests to add to our capital stock.

You may well ask why should we have this increased tempo and why should the museum not have stayed as it was. We could have lived comfortably if a little precariously within our income; we could have, in fact, nodded off to sleep and gently passed into oblivion, which I suggest was what was happening. But of course your committee happened to be of the restless type, and this

sort of exercise in improvement has been a challenge which they have successfully met.

Coupled with this fact has been the employment of a Director who has been able to cope with a challenge, and you have had all the ingredients to make the type of show we have been developing.

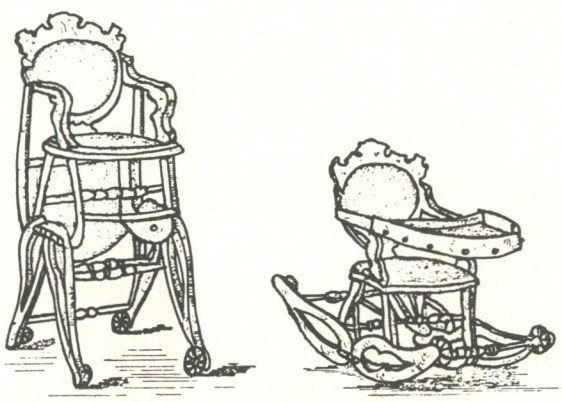
I would ask you then of the future. I have been your President and have presided at the A.G.M's and because I feel that anyone runs out of ideas, I am not standing for re-election, but my successor faces a bigger challenge than I did, because a momentum underway with funds generated within this organisation cannot be so continued. Compared with similar organisations in the country, we are running a show which is under-staffed and what staff we have is underpaid. Our Director has projects in the pipeline which like Bedspreads, will be in demand all over New Zealand and some way must be found of increasing our income to meet our challenge. Even to our educational authorities (schools), tourist organisations and local citizens who were amongst the 60,000 who passed through the doors last year (13,000 in January), we must look for support to see that our venture is adequately endowed.

GREETING FROM REV. DR. J.S. SOMERVILLE, THE PRESIDENT FOR 1979

As the very new President of the Otago Early Settlers' Association, I am pleased to write a word of greeting to all members and friends of the Association with the publication of this edition of the newsletter.

I esteem it a privilege and an honour to follow in the distinguished line of presidents such as my immediate predecessors John Macpherson and Stuart Armitage. Their contribution to the affairs of the Association has been immense. Today we are seeing the fruit of it.

The new look of the Museum and the increased attendance and interest in our work over the past two years have been remarkable. Mr Bennington, as Director, with his fresh ideas and enthusiasm and with the help of a dedicated staff, has been largely instrumental in bringing this all about. We do not wish the impetus to slacken and I trust the enthusiasm will continue to grow. More than anything else, this depends on the rank and file of the membership of the Association who can rest assured that their support is for a very lively organisation and not simply for the preservation of the relics of a past age. The things for which the Association stands, such as pride in the achievements of the pioneers, understanding of the problems they faced and the historical lessons we can learn today, are the privilege of all members of the Early Settlers' Association, young and old. I commend the extension of our membership to all.



OUR SUBCOMMITTEE MEMBERS

Works: Mr R.D. Orr (Convener), Messrs N. Wales, J. Salmond.

Museum: Mr W.N.M. Smith (Convener), Messrs G.E. Sherriff, J.W. Ramsay, R. Beardsmore, J.A. Dangerfield, Mesdames H. Young, R. Gow, and Miss J. Fraser.

Publicity and Membership: Mr B. MacGibbon (Convener), Messrs C.L. Croot, L.F. Gerrie, P.N. Dick, Dr W.E. Daniel, Mrs H. Young.

Executive: Dr J.S. Somerville (Convener), Messrs J.O. Macpherson, W.S. Armitage, N.W. Allan, A.E. Russell, N. Wales, P.R. George, Director and Secretary.

Finance: Dr J.S. Somerville (Convener), Messrs P.R. George, W.S. Armitage, J.O. Macpherson, N.W. Allan, Secretary.

INTRODUCTIONS TO THE NEW COMMITTEE MEMBERS

DR WILSON DANIEL

Dr Daniel, recently elected to the Committee, has been a Life Member of the Association since 1959.

He is the great-grandson of the redoubtable 'Speaker' James Wilson (1814-1898), originally from Ayrshire, Scotland, who arrived in Sydney in 1840 to take up land on the Hunter River as a run-holder. After meeting Captain Howell of Riverton in Sydney and corresponding with the Reverend Dr Thomas Burns of Dunedin, Wilson, whose wife had died in childbirth, left Australia with his two young daughters, Charlotte (7) and Ruth (6) on the brig Thomas and Henry owned by John Jones of Waikouaiti, and landed at Dunedin on March 16, 1856.

Leaving his daughters in Dunedin with friends, James Wilson rode on horseback with John Robertson, a Highlander, to Murihiku (Southland) where they purchased land at Waianiwa ('Water of the Rainbow'). In June, Wilson rejoined his daughters and they sailed from Port Chalmers on the Star of Dunedin, first to the New River Estuary and then up the Oreti. Fortunately, the Maoris were very friendly towards the new settlers. After disastrous flooding, some Maoris arrived at Wilson's property laden with replenishments for the larder - wheat, kumaras and smoked eels in flax baskets. The gifts were gratefully accepted, but the Wilson girls were always a little wary - they could remember having been frightened of the aborigines during their early years in New South Wales. Later, when their father discovered the first gold in Southland at Oteramika in 1858, Charlotte and Ruth were to owe their lives to the Maoris who gave them food when their father was delayed on his way home.

Charlotte (Dr Daniel's grandmother) returned to Sydney in 1864 at age 15 for schooling, later becoming a teacher at the Fort Street School which earned the title among Australians of 'Nursery of the Nation's Intellect' In 1868 she married a young Scot, William Ronald, who had landed in Dunedin in 1863 on the Mataura and who was farming at Waianiwa.

Extremely public-spirited, James Wilson served as secretary and chairman of the Waianiwa School Committee for 32 years. As one of the first Justices of the Peace in Southland, he plunged into politics, serving as Speaker of the Southland Provincial Council from 1861 till 1869 when the province was preparing to be reunited with Otago He was Treasurer and member of the Executive in 1869-70 and Deputy Superintendent in 1870. After the union with Otago he sat in the Otago Council

first for Southland in 1870 and then for Makarewa in 1873-76. Despite long involvement in public affairs, Speaker James Wilson found time to write poetry as a true son of Ayr, the home of Robert Burns.

Dr Daniel, at present Administrator of the Cameron Centre, was born in Invercargill and educated at Otago University, graduating in arts, law and theology. He taught law at Victoria University, Wellington, for two years, practised law in Invercargill and Riverton for 8 years, was minister of Roxburgh parish for 5 years, and Associate Pastor of Claremont Presbyterian Church in Southern California for 8 years, becoming an American citizen before returning to N.Z. in 1977.

A. JOHN SALMOND

Educated at John McGlashan College and School of Architecture, University of Auckland. Is now in private practice as a partner with Salmond & Burt Architects. Outside interests include yachting and Maritime affairs and presently Chairman Otago Maritime Society, Club Captain Otago Yacht Club and a member of the Deacons Court First Church. In the past has served on the Mornington School Committee, John McGlashan Old Collegian Association. Mr Salmond is married with one daughter and two sons.

Great Grandparents the Rev. Dr and Mrs William Salmond arrived in Dunedin from North Shields in January 1876 on the ship Corona. William Salmond had been appointed to position of Professor of Theology at Otago University by the Presbyterian Church of Otago. One of his first duties upon arriving in Dunedin was to preach the first sermon at the opening of First Church.

Other relatives arriving in Dunedin included: David Adams and Family in 1858 on the ship 'Pladda'; Alexander Grant in 1873 on the ship 'James Nicol Fleming'; Benjamin Dawson in 1853.

JIM DANGERFIELD

Another new member of the committee is Jim Dangerfield who was born in Christchurch. He joined the railways in 1936, working at stations in Canterbury and on the West Coast before serving overseas in the Railway Operating Group for which he was Mentioned in Despatches.

On return to this country he was again located in Canterbury, then in the Hutt Valley, before coming to reside in Dunedin in 1960.

His duties involved much travelling around Otago and Southland and as a result he was able to contribute several items of interest to this museum.

In his retirement he researches the history of the lesser known privately owned and operated lines of railway. He has a number of articles already published and has researched for several district histories.

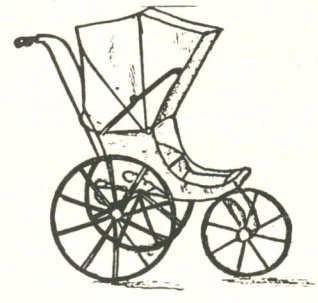
His 'Josephine is 100' was printed in Provincial Pride several years ago.

Mr Dangerfield is an Honorary Life Member of the New Zealand Railway & Locomotive Society and is a member of the JA 1274 Preservation Committee.

He brings to the committee a fair knowledge of Otago and Southland and an interest in things historical.

PETER NORMAN DICK

My great-grandfather, Peter, arrived on the 'Alpine' in 1859 and started work as a gardener. His eldest son, Peter, was a jeweller by trade and commenced business in the Octagon in 1889. My father, Peter George, studied to be an Optometrist in London in 1914, and I studied Optometry with my father and graduated in 1931 and practised my profession in Dunedin. I served overseas in the Pacific area as the Service Optometrist serving Army, Navy and Air personnel from 1943-45. Local interests include music, church work and sport.



MUSEUM NEWS

Seddon Bennington

The museum programme has settled down to our first priority: the proper storage and cataloguing of our collection. This work is under the care of our Acting Curator, Jacqueline Fraser, and Acting Curator of Written Records, Helen Spooner. The following reports describe their progress and present activities. I also wish to introduce our Custodian-Maintenance Man, Ian Pentecost, and Office-Sales-Public Relations Person, Susan Corbett. Together, with Our Education Officer, Arden Porter, this makes up an extremely dedicated team, which despite a paucity of resources and funds, is gradually establishing a sound reputation for the collection.

Our Maori corner with demonstrations of traditional crafts, and items for sale, is also working well, and initiates a programme which I would like to develop to promote crafts such as wood working, metal smithing, and leaded glass work. Crafts people who can demonstrate traditional techniques, and convey their love of the traditions of their craft, can contribute a great deal to a visitor's appreciation of objects made by craftsmen of the past. The balance between working craftspeople and the display of museum objects is an area which is being increasingly explored by museums, and holds some exciting possibilities for our particular institution. In this way, our history and traditions come alive, and become a vital force in our community attitudes and appreciation of the past.

A brochure, advertising the museum has just been produced, and this will be distributed through the hotels and motels to promote our institution to tourists and visitors to Otago. We are very grateful to G.&T. Young, of Dunedin, who are the oldest jewellers in New Zealand, for sponsoring this brochure.

HISTORICAL SLEUTHING

Catering for what must be one of today's favourite hobbies, compiling a Family History, has become a full time job in the Research Department. Requests come from all over the world for help with the tracing of an Otago connection; equally hopeful are authors, students,

reporters and T.V. producers. When logical investigation fails, serendipity comes to the rescue, amazing connections have been made by happy chance. It is hard to find the time to continue with the vital work in the department of the reading and cataloguing archival material; much has been done and the tantalising knowledge that so much valuable material is so far unavailable, is an added spur. Meanwhile one of the many pleasures is to introduce a researcher in the U.S.A. to one in Australia - unknown to each other and both seeking a common ancestor!

Recently our fees for research have been brought in to line with what is charged by similar institutions. Members of the Association have always enjoyed free research as a service, and it is with regret that we have had to alter this policy. The more realistic charge is a move to meet some of the costs of a research librarian and we offer a $2.00 deduction on research to members, which covers about three quarters of an hour's work

FACELIFTING THE STORAGE AREA

Traditionally, the Otago Early Settlers' collection was accessible by the 'memory' method. This is best described by the saying,'the catalogue has gone to lunch' and has left us in a serious muddle.

As the Curator of the Collection, my job is to organise these mysterious piles of historic objects 'out the back'. We want them to become accessible, in labelled sections with a catalogue describing every item in the museum.

I have already worked on the textile collection. For nine months I unwrapped parcels and laid the fragile garments in flat storage drawers. These have all been listed ready for the main catalogue. This laborious task culminated in the successful 'Bedspread' exhibition which is at present touring the country,(incidentally, I only discovered the bedspreads after sorting through drawers and drawers of lace cuffs, baby's bonnets and countless pantaloons).

The current activity is merely moving section by section of the stored collection. This includes writing desks, bugles, house thatching and sods, and fine crystal glasses. As each pile is moved, that part of the room is painted and new shelving built. The cataloguing process will take place as the items are sorted and placed in appropriate sections on the shelves. Sliding doors will seal out dirt and light - the main enemies of any stored object.

So if we are able to complete this project, the Early Settlers' Museum should be able to present displays and exhibitions of all facets of our Forbears' lives. Meanwhile we plod on with the donkey work.

INTRODUCTION TO JOHN MCLAY'S DIARY

MY YOUNG LIFE IN OTAGO

When Thomas and Margaret McLay came to Otago on the 'Mooltan' in 1849, their son John was eight years old. After a brief stay in Dunedin itselff, they moved to Andersons Bay and later settled in Waikouaiti. John McLay, who followed the occupation of bushman and bullock driver, wrote his reminiscences around the turn of the century. We felt that members would enjoy the vividness and spontaneity of his writing.

We have left the quaint spelling as in the original diary.

No 1. At last we have arrived this afternoon in Dunedin Otago New Zealand Janry the first 1850 - and have got our feet on land at last - the first time since we left Dear Old Scotland, and every thing seames strange and lonely I feel very sad, but my Mothe is such a cheary happy woman - that you cant't be long sad where she is and I am glad to say that I have the same kind of nature - that I can never be sad long - so I must brace up my young nerves - to fight all the hard trials I will have to go through in New Zealand. And now this second day of January we are in our new home and it is a lovely morning - I stand and look in every direction - but I can't see the dear Mooltan - That I had spent so many happy days on this find ship - that I feel so sad and lost like - that the teares roll down my cheeks in streames - Oh but I must try and forget - but I don't think I will ever forget all the nice men that brought the ship safely to Otago - and the dear familer faces of the Passengers - that I may never see again. And now at this time of me writting this a great man- has gone for ever to thir Graves - in the land of their Adoption - May God be with them all - until Christ shall sound the last trump - that all shall hear on the last day - and my own time is fast drawing to a close but while I have strength and nerve I will brace myself up to overcomea all troube that may be before me. The place we ar living in is called Rattery Street - although I don't see any street formed at preasent. The House that we ar living in for a short time is the third house up from the shop on the corner on the left side going up - and down by the end of this shop held by Smith and Allen - you have to cross a small blind creek on a plank and a few yards over the Plank into the left; was the bake house - And when they had flour they baked but when we lived at this place they were out of flour - And we lived on Biskits from the ship - and Maori Potatoes - they were a small round kind of potato streaked all through with black streaks licke marble but they were very nice to eat - and with plenty of fish brought up to Dunedin by the Maori boats we did not so bad - the fish mostlay was barracuta and hapuka called groper by the white people - theas Boats came from along way along the coast Otago Heads Waikouaiti and Moeraka - North, and South from the Taieri Mouth making over 40 miles and when they got up the river as the Estuary is mostlay called to day

TO BE CONTINUED

The child's high chair-rocking chair combination, and three-wheeled pram from a catalogue of the Dunedin Iron and Woodward Company, Princes and Bond Streets, Dunedin.

The following large postcards (6x8 ins), in original sepia tones, are available from the museum bookshop at 20c each.

1) *'Josephine', the first locomotive used on the Dunedin-Port Chalmers railway, and now housed in the Early Settlers' Museum.*
2) *Customhouse Square, about 1890. This was the site of the first landing in 1848, and was for many years the heart of the town.*
3) *Dunedin's first Fire Station in Princes St.*
4) *Mr John Cargill's home at Caversham.*
5) *Jetty St double wharf, about 1880. The waterfront shown here has long since been reclaimed.*
6) *Yeend and Pope's Coach, pulled by six greys, leaving from outside the Empire Hotel, High St, for Balclutha, 1874.*