OTAGO SETTLERS MUSEUM

OTAGO SETTLERS NEWS

OTAGO SETTLERS ASSOCIATION

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HERITAGE HOTEL

BY PETER LAING

Our Anniversary Day Dinner this year is to be held at the Leviathan Hotel, which has long been a part of Dunedin history. This article has been written for us by its present manager who will be our host on 23 March 2002.

The name Leviathan is from the Bible and means a huge creature, usually of the sea. When the Leviathan Railway Temperance Hotel was built in 1884 it was situated close to the harbour, beside the original railway station, on land which had been reclaimed from the harbour with rock dumped during the flattening of Bell Hill. With 150 bedrooms, the Leviathan was then reputed to be the largest hotel in Australasia.

At that time the Exchange area of Dunedin was the bustling hub of the city with many fine buildings situated nearby. The railway station and tram terminus were both just east of the Exchange. Later the bus station was built in the same vicinity. This area has always been a wonderful site for hotels because of its proximity to all forms of transport and its ample parking. (Another hotel nearby was the Terminus Hotel, now the Gresham.)

The first owner of the Leviathan was Mr George Bodley, who sold it after five years to Mrs Antiss Silk. She was born in England in 1839 and emigrated to Australia with her parents and siblings in 1857. In 1859 she married George Silk who emigrated to New Zealand as a steerage passenger in February 1868. In October Antiss followed him with their four young daughters and they lived in Lawrence where George mined for gold and Antiss ran a successful baking and catering business. After George's death in 1887 Mrs Silk moved to Dunedin and took over the Leviathan Hotel in 1889. At the same time she kept mining interests near Nenthorn and in the Lakes district, where she was mainly interested in dredging on the Nevis River. On display in the Leviathan she put a 2.3kg cake of gold recovered from her 'Surprise Co' mine at Nenthorn. She was a true pioneer with a wonderful entreprenurial spirit.

Antiss ruled the Leviathan with an iron hand. All staff had daily uniform inspections and woe betide any one who was caught misbehaving. Apparently it was difficult to keep house staff and waitresses because no sooner were young women trained than they would go off and get married – frequently to hotel guests. Still, under Antiss Silk's direction the hotel 'prospered wonderfully'.

She died on 10 June 1899, and on 9 August 1899 the Leviathan Hotel Company was incorporated to run the hotel. The company's

Leviathan in the 1920's



shares were closely held by Otago people throughout the twentieth century and in 1999 they were sold to a company owned by the Laing family, so that the Leviathan Heritage Hotel is still locally owned and operated.

There were big changes in the 1950s when the Queen came to New Zealand soon after her coronation. In Dunedin she stayed near the Leviathan Hotel which was extensively 'modernised' for her visit. Most of the original ornate exterior was removed, and the dining room was renovated. The 150 rooms were reduced to 75 rooms by making each alternate room into an ensuite.

More big changes came in the 1970s. Until 1974 the hotel was 'dry' although there had been an unsuccessful attempt to get a liquor licence in the 1880s. Subsequent owners were teetotal and one of the directors of the Hotel Company said that it would be over his dead body that they would sell liquor. It is reputed that he died on 9 October 1974 and the hotel started selling liquor the next day!

Also during the 1970s, the adjacent Insurance Office of Australia building was purchased and incorporated into the Hotel. This was a distinctly separate building with a different facade on the exterior and remains noticeable by slightly different floor levels inside.

In the twenty-first century the hotel is progressively undergoing refurbishment and is being restored as faithfully as possible to the original. At the moment we are working on the dining room and restoring it to its former glory. As it had a wonderful reputation in Antiss Silk's time it has been named after her.

The archway at the back of the dining room has been uncovered, although the back wall has still to be done. The fire place has been put back in, and we light the fire during meal times over winter or as required. This gives the room a wonderful ambience. The restoration of the wood panelling around the walls is now complete except for the skirting boards and final paint work. All the woodwork has been specially run according to the original samples. The next phase of the dining room restoration will be to paint the ceiling over winter. We also want to renew the deep red flock wallpaper but we have traced the manufacturer in England and, as you would expect, it is no longer manufactured. So we have to find a suitable replacement.

Later the dining room will be enlarged to include the current reception area and foyer. (The wall between dining and reception was put in during the 1950s.) The original ceiling of this area is still above the 1950s wooden T&G ceiling although severely damaged.

Another plan is to re-establish a central courtyard. The hotel was originally built around the parameter of a roughly triangular site with an internal courtyard which held the stables. The old stables are still there although a laundry and boiler were placed in this area in the 1950s. We have installed a new laundry for the hotel and plan to install a new hot water system. When the old laundry and boiler are demolished the courtyard will be cleared and landscaped. Maybe a two-storey high conservatory will be built so it can be used in all weathers.

Finally the external facade of the Hotel will be restored to original.

As well as restoring the past we are moving into the future, so that we have all the modern conveniences such as an internet service for the guests.

On the third floor of the hotel it is reputed that a ghost of an unknown lady lives. Many staff who have worked here acknowledge its existence. Their experiences range from a cool and spooky feeling, to glasses of water appearing and disappearing, doors opening and closing, floors squeaking from footsteps, your name being called but with nobody there. She is a nice ghost, and the general view is that she is Mrs Antiss Silk, forever watchful of her charge. We hope she approves of our treatment of the Leviathan!



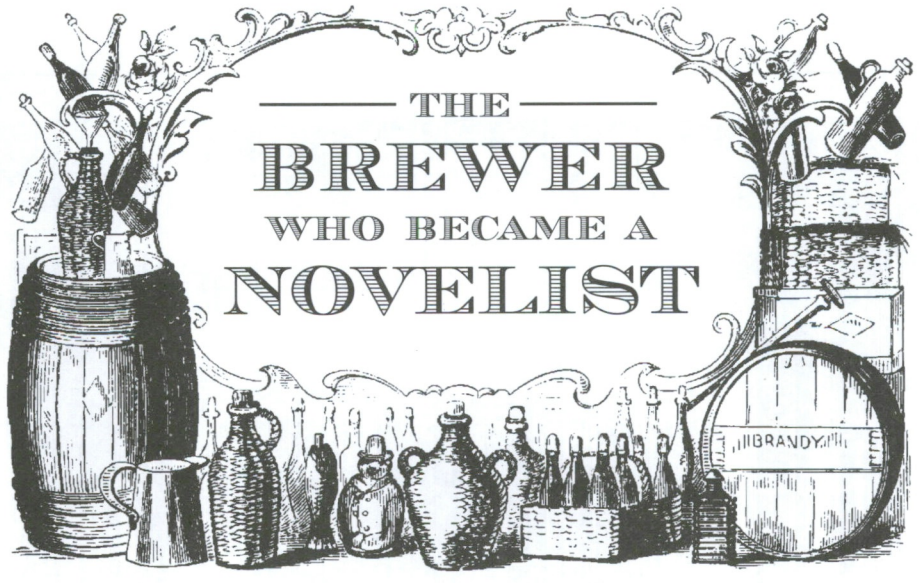
ANNIVERSARY DAY DINNER 2002

Come to the elegant dining room of the Leviathan Hotel at 7 p.m. on Saturday, 23 March! Enjoy the traditional Haggis Ceremony, before choosing from a wide range of delicious meats, vegetables, salads, and desserts at the buffet. The bar will be open.

After dinner, the celebration of our past will be combined with inspiration for the future when Professor Geoff Kearsley, Dean of Social Sciences at the University, speaks on 'OTAGO 2020 – THE PERFECT VISION'.

Tickets are $35 per person and available from OSA secretary, Box 74, Dunedin, or at the Otago Settlers Museum, Dunedin Public Art Gallery or Scottish Shop, until 20 March. Cash or cheque only please – cheques should be made out to Anniversary Day Dinner Committee. All members and friends are welcome.

above: Mrs Antiss Silk. below: In the dining room of the Leviathan today



THE BREWER WHO BECAME A NOVELIST

BY DONALD GORDON

While sorting through some old books in Speight's Brewery I came across *A Handbook for Australian Brewers* which, I was surprised to find, had been written in Dunedin. The author was a J.C. MacCartie. As this man didn't figure prominently in the annals of Dunedin brewing, my curiosity was aroused. The Dunedin Public Library had no biographical information but, to my amazement, informed me they held a *novel* written by the same man. As this was published in Melbourne I wrote to the State Library of Victoria which provided a number of helpful leads including a brief obituary which mentioned that MacCartie had ended up in New South Wales. The State Library of New South Wales then provided more details which eventually helped me track down MacCartie descendants. Bit by bit a fascinating story unfolded.

Justin Charles MacCartie was a scion of an aristocratic Irish family, the MacCarties of Carrignavar, whose peer-studded pedigree, according to Burke's Commoners, was among the most exalted in European genealogy, stretching back through centuries of Kings of Munster to Olium who reigned in Roman times. For hundreds of years the family owned vast estates in County Cork but in 1689 had to forfeit them as the price of taking part in a rebellion. In the 18th century Irish Catholics were barred from land ownership but the MacCarties overcame that obstacle by becoming Protestants and from then on were adherents of the Church of Ireland. In 1744 they regained much of their forfeited land.

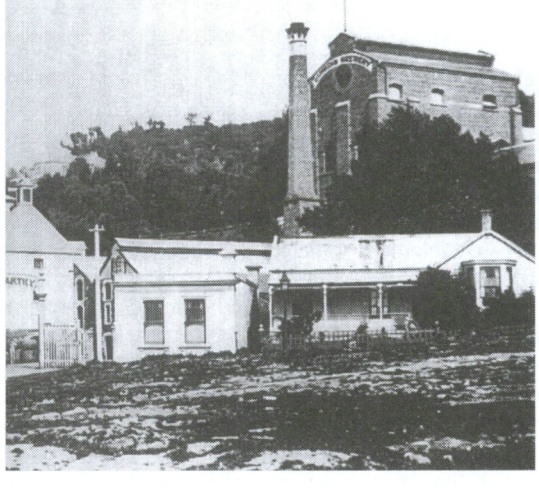
The family seat was Carrignavar, about six miles from the city of Cork, and Carrignavar House was the residence of Justin's father, a 'barrister-at-law' who was head of the family. In this opulent environment Justin would have been brought up. He was born in 1860, the youngest of four sons.



BREWER IN DUNEDIN

After training as a chemical analyst and brewer, Justin set out for the colonies with the intention of 'making his pile'. He arrived in Dunedin in 1882 to take up an appointment as brewer at Keast & McCarthy's Dunedin Brewery which stood in Filleul St. A new building was about to be constructed which would contain the first brewery laboratory in Dunedin. Justin was to set this up, using the best equipment from England. It was announced in July that, when the lab was completed, the company would be able to make analyses for other brewers. Soon Justin began contributing papers on brewing and brewing chemistry to the *Australian Brewers' Journal.*

On 7 August 1883, in St Paul's Church, he married 18-year-old Elizabeth Beale Boyd (known as 'Lillie') eldest of six daughters of John Boyd who was managing director of the brewery and Justin's boss. The Boyds were Irish Protestants who came from near Belfast. The newly-weds lived next-door to the brewery, in a wooden cottage – a far cry from the mansion in which Justin spent his boyhood.



In March 1884, MacCartie completed his *Handbook for Australian Brewers* which was largely compiled from articles he had published. For a textbook, it was surprisingly entertaining – especially the chapter on 'The Brewery and Plant' in which he describes a typical colonial brewery:

left: Carrignavar House, Ireland. right: Justin and Lillie's cottage in Dunedin



On entering the venerable structure our first feeling is one of astonishment that so much dirt could be got into so small a space; our second mild wonder that good beer could ever be produced in such an evil-smelling place; and our third, as we proceed through the upper rooms, admiration for the wonderful ingenuity displayed by the designer in placing beams, pipes, etc., at proper levels for intercepting the human head.

Presumably the new brewery where he worked avoided such problems!

Change of Career

Soon after this *Handbook* was completed, Justin MacCartie's father-in-law and boss, John Boyd, died suddenly of 'paralysis'. He was only 42. With New Zealand in the grip of a depression the company began to lose money and in May 1887 went into liquidation. MacCartie was out of work and evidently embittered, judging from his later comments about Dunedin. Soon, however, his writing talent enabled him to find employment as a journalist, this being the start of a career he would follow for the rest of his life. He and Lillie moved into a house in Pacific St, Roslyn, but in 1888 shifted to Melbourne where Justin became editor of a monthly journal, possibly the *Australian Brewers' Journal*.

Apparently this wasn't a particularly onerous position because it left him time to write fiction. His magnum opus was *Making his Pile*, a novel set mainly in Dunedin in the early 1880s. This gives glimpses of the city through the wide eyes of a high-born new chum, Reginald Brynton, whose circumstances and attitudes mirror those of MacCartie himself.

Reginald and a companion, Vernon, arrived by train from Port Chalmers and were enchanted by their first sight of the city with its spires and white houses. As they *made their way from the station to the main thoroughfare of Dunedin they were forcibly impressed by the large and solid buildings, the wide streets, and handsome shops, and the inspiriting air of bustle and animation which characterised the whole place.*

"Well, this is very different to what I expected to see," remarked Vernon.

"Just look at that building," he added as they paused opposite Wain's hotel, a fine establishment of four or five stories built throughout of stone, "and see, there are tram cars, and cabs, and actually a hansom; why it's a little London, Brynton, and the whole place is too disgustingly civilised...."

[They soon] arrived at the bottom of a steep hill, on which they were surprised to see rails laid. "Hallo," said Vernon, "here's a refinement of civilisation – 'a railway up Vesuvius' in Dunedin – but preserve us, how does the thing run?" he exclaimed, as he saw a small car making its way steadily uphill without visible mode of propulsion.

"I expect it is a cable tramway," said Reginald. "I have heard of such things, but had no idea they had been brought to such a state of perfection as this."

"Here's another one coming down," said Vernon. The two friends took their seats on the car with several other persons, and in a few minutes were gliding easily and steadily up hill.

"Oh, this is splendid," exclaimed Reginald, as the car ascended the hill, and a magnificent view of the city, bay, peninsula, and ocean opened itself before them, "easy motion, mountain air, beautiful scenery" – "And all for threepence," put in Vernon, as the conductor demanded that amount from each of the passengers.

Exchange area, Dunedin in 1883: 'a little London'

Reginald was welcomed to the business house he had come to join, and soon found lodgings in the home of a 'thrifty, respectable old Scotchwoman named Mrs M'Lellan'. He thought her wooden dwelling was 'flimsy to a degree'. When he banged a door 'the whole house resounded with the noise,' and when his landlady took snuff in the kitchen he 'was instantly made aware of the fact by her sneezes, the sound of which penetrated the flimsy walls'. Still he thought his two rooms reasonably priced considering the high wages and rents in New Zealand.

He joined the 'Provincial Club' where he was surprised at the 'decided horsey and vulgar tone' of some of the members, and the amount of betting on 'Black Pool' in the billiard room.

Other entertainments included picnics and frequent tennis parties. Although Reginald was not good at tennis, he was selected to represent Dunedin against Christchurch, social standing being considered more important than skill.

He also attended balls conducted by the Dunedin Assemblies:

> *When he entered the Garrison Hall, he found that large building brilliantly lighted up by numerous gas jets, and tastefully decorated with flags, and the beautiful ferns and shrubs which are so easily obtained in New Zealand, and at the further end of the hall he heard strange dismal and lacerating noises which were painful evidences of the fact that there a band of musicians were tuning their instruments.*
>
> *"It's home over again," he thought as he observed these things, and turned into a small room where twenty or thirty young fellows were crowded together, changing their boots for pumps, dragging on their gloves, and adjusting their ties, or endeavouring frantically to get a last look at themselves in the one small glass, with which the room was furnished.*
>
> *The same air of dejection, if not of actual sadness, that characterises the opening of all balls was apparent here as in England, and the same desire on the part of the gentlemen to crowd together at the entrance to the hall, and on that of the ladies to remain close under the lee of portly mammas.*

However, once the dancing got underway on the 'well-waxed floor' Reginald thoroughly enjoyed himself. He found his partners 'freer from affectation and infinitely more frank than their English cousins'. But their complexions were paler, this being put down to a constant diet of 'lollies and tea!'

One of Reginald's happiest experiences was a camping holiday at remote Manapouri, which he reached by hiring a guide from the 'Takitimos Hotel'. As he looked at 'the lofty mountains and wild, wild bush', he felt exalted at being 'for the first time face to face with great mother nature, and the works of her hand absolutely as she had fashioned them, without alteration or blemish imparted by the hand of man'.

The works of nature were not matched by humankind. Reginald found Dunedin to be populated almost entirely by thoroughly unpleasant people – snobs, sycophants, layabouts and swindlers. As despicable as any were the politicians who were simply out to feather their own nests. Two of the most evil characters in the book were Reginald's prospective father-in-law and a sharebroker who swindled him out of every penny he had. Both ended up as Members of Parliament!

Despite the denigration of Dunedin's citizens, *Making a Pile* was a best-seller here and was reprinted more than once.



Justin MacCartie in later life, apparently at a picnic

Subsequent Career

In 1891, the year *Making His Pile* was published, MacCartie set up his own publishing firm in Melbourne, specialising in trade journals, such as the *Australian Cordial-maker and Brewer and Bottling Trades Gazette,* the *Australasian Grocers' Journal and Storekeepers' Gazette* and the *Australasian Coachbuilder and Saddler and Liveryman's Journal.*

After his wife Lillie died in 1892, aged only 27, he married her Dunedin-born sister, Norah, and in 1894 the family moved to London where Justin represented a number of Australian publications and became a member of the Authors' Society. In 1895 his second novel, *The Darleys of Dingo Dingo,* was published in London and Melbourne.

J.C. MacCartie & Co must have been left in the hands of an enterprising manager because the circulation of their periodicals, originally confined to Victoria, became Australia-wide. In 1897 the office was transferred from Melbourne to Sydney and began producing occasional books.

By the end of 1898 the MacCartie family had left London and settled in Sydney where Justin's main occupation was writing articles on technical and commercial subjects for his company's magazines. Norah died in 1900 and by 1902 Justin had married a widow, Mabel O'Curry. By his three marriages he had eight children, and also brought up at least three stepchildren. (His second son was named, intriguingly, Sydney Brynton after his birthplace and the fictional hero of *Making His Pile.)*

By 1914 Justin had contracted Tb and decided to move with his family to the more salubrious climate of New South Wales's North Coast, where he took up dairy farming. This move seems to have given him a new lease of life because he became an enthusiastic member of several local organisations. He also became interested in Theosophy. He was regarded by neighbours as a gentleman 'quite devoid of concern for the practicalities of life'. In 1924, in Lismore, he launched the *Weekly Times* which was acclaimed as a fine newspaper but was not a commercial success.

After a resurgence of his Tb, Justin MacCartie died on 25 January 1928. His first two sons had died earlier but most of the other members of his family survived him, as did J.C. MacCartie & Co which continued to publish the *Australian Cordial-maker* until 1957. The Dunedin Brewery building in which MacCartie had worked stood for many years as the St George jam factory. Smiths City store is now on its site.



SHOW-DOWN ON THE WATERFRONT

BY PETER READ, OSM CURATOR

The 1951 Waterfront Dispute was one of the longest and most bitter industrial disputes in New Zealand's history, involving 20,000 workers at its height.

Sidney Holland's National Party, which had swept into office in 1949, was determined to meet the militant New Zealand Waterside Workers' Union head on and in February 1951 this confrontation erupted into the bitter dispute that would last the next 151 days. Early in February the union had clashed with the watersiders' employers over the application of a general wage order declared by the Arbitration Court. The union subsequently called a ban on overtime by its members until the dispute was settled. The employers responded with a partial lock-out.

'Any individual or group of individuals,' said Prime Minister Holland, 'who stand in the way of, or limit the country's preparation for defence, whether by limiting the handling of goods or the production of goods, is a traitor to the country and should be treated accordingly.'

Thus the National Government issued an ultimatum to return to work with overtime or suffer the consequences, but the watersiders refused to bow to Government pressure. Holland, still determined to play it tough, declared a State of Emergency.

The Waterside Workers' Union was deregistered and Government officials began seizing bank books and ledgers from branch offices of the union. It became an offence to support striking or locked-out workers and their families by giving them financial assistance or donations of food. The Government also clamped down on media coverage.

Troops were sent in to work the wharves and the navy provided sailors for ships stranded in port when regular seamen refused to sail on them. One such vessel, the *Katui*, was stranded in Dunedin for ten weeks before fourteen naval ratings were flown in to end its prolonged stay.

On 2 May violence erupted in Wellington when a deputation of over 1000 watersiders, freezing workers and seamen marched on Parliament only to be ambushed by police at the intersection of Cuba and Dixon Streets. And on 1 June a peaceful march up Auckland's Queen Street was again broken up by baton-wielding police, badly injuring twenty-two of the protestors.

Serious incidences of unrest in Dunedin were few. In April a Port Chalmers watersider, who was said to have returned a Government card inviting him to return to work, woke one morning to find his car painted with the word 'scab'. In May the collision of a train with a toolbox placed across the tracks saw the finger pointed at locked-out workers, although the union refuted the claim that this was an act of sabotage by its members.

Port Chalmers was the first of the four main ports to see former workers return to work on the wharves en masse. Here, in early June, members of the deregistered union voted 185 to 4 in favour of a return to work. 'It was a very hard decision to make between my duty to the men I represent and my allegiance to the national organisation,' said president of the Port Chalmers branch of the deregistered union, Neil Crichton, as he became the first member of the national executive to break ranks. 'I think it is a crime to starve women and children and I will not be a party to it. I want to have my conscience clear.'

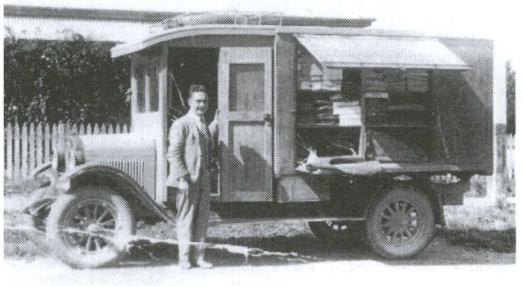
Those who held out until the dispute's bitter end (including twelve Port Chalmers' watersiders) earned the right to a loyalty card carrying the words:

Stood Loyal Right Through
One Hundred and Fifty-One Days –
February 15 to July 15, 1951

***1951: Lockout, Strikes, Confrontation* is an exhibition designed by the Film Archive in conjunction with the Trade Union History Project and runs at the Otago Settlers Museum from 23 February to 5 May 2002.**

LIFE ON THE ROAD

The south's past included people with roots in many cultures. This is a story from our Lebanese community, taken from a time when the hard life of hawking was the main occupation for many newcomers.



Saba and Joe turned their minds to the best way to earn a living without the skills or language of their new country. As the family breadwinners they had not only to make their own way, but to support their mother and younger brother and sister. There was no practical alternative to going on the road...

Joe bought £30 worth of goods, mainly toilet items such as scented soap, bay rum, hair combs, toothbrushes, safety pins and so on, and some towels and pillowcases, men's shirts, pyjamas and pinafores. All this was packed carefully into a tin box with a lift-out compartment to be carried by a leather strap over his shoulders...

Quite soon the weather became very cold. The two brothers conferred together and as winter descended on the South, went into partnership, purchasing their own horse and cart for £100. From this as a base, Joe worked the provincial towns on foot, while Saba handled country sales. They slept in the cart and Joe would tell his family many years later of the times he had to break the ice on the pond or creek before he could have a wash. The length of time he 'lived on biscuits and cheese' may have been exaggerated but it was true that the boys limited themselves to the bare minimum to provide for the family and put something into savings...

Saba and Joe worked the Southland run with their horse and cart for three years. They learned the art of survival in this hard school of the open road. Putting up with hardship together, working together to support their mother and younger brother and sister, adjusting together to their new country, they developed a wonderfully close bond. Even at the end of his life, when he was in his 80s and Saba was long dead, Joe's dreams would always include his brother.

Although for the most part the people they met were kind, some were suspicious and hostile towards 'gypsies'... A Dunedin woman, who spent her early childhood in Riversdale, remembers the big covered wagon (yellow, with a romantic air, like a gypsy caravan) that Saba brought regularly to her parents' place. It was always exciting to the little girl, seeing the doors slide open to reveal racks of garments hanging inside, flanked by drawers for smaller items of haberdashery and with a space in the middle for the traveller to sleep. She can still describe a smart brown wool gabardine suit, with orange braid trim, bought at this time by her mother. Everyone agreed, she said, that it was a great convenience to have a shop coming to the door, especially in hard times when travelling to town was out of the question...

Not all contacts were so pleasant. There was always the possibility of group bullying in the pubs along the way. A potentially ugly incident happened in the tough little coalmining township of Nightcaps. It was vividly recalled by Joe: three big fellows came into the bar where he and his brother were sitting and demanded to see what they had to sell. Shown the socks, shirts and so on, the men tossed them from one to the other and then flung them behind the sofa. When Joe bent to retrieve his stock, one of the men punched him in the face. He saw stars and was very scared, but seeing that there was no way out came up from the floor and with all his might punched his assailant in the midriff. As the man doubled over, swearing angrily, one of his friends also lunged at Joe who, in a do or die effort, swung his bag in his face. A mêlée was developing when the publican came into the bar. He took in the situation at a glance, escorted Joe into his own sittingroom and then turned on the trouble makers for picking on a young man who had been minding his own business...

This story is taken from the Farry family history, The Hawkers, *by Dorothy Page and John Farry, Shinbone Alley Press, 1990*

Joe standing in front of the motorised van from which he and Saba sold goods around Otago and Southland during the Depression.



CHOIR OF BIRDS

by E. D. Anson

While researching the history of Knox Church recently I was fascinated to read an account of the abundant flora and fauna around the church 125 years ago.

'WHEN Knox Church was built in 1876, the natural surroundings were little modified by the hand of man. The bush came down in places to the very street and road lines. It was full of rare and delicate ferns and mosses, tangled with supplejacks, and vocal with the songs of tuis and korimokos (bellbirds), kakas and pigeons, parrakeets, canaries, native robins and many other birds never seen near settlements today. Moreporks and bats peopled the evening air. There were no sparrows or blackbirds, and no rabbits in the open land, no trout in the streams, only kokopuru, eels, and crayfish. Gorse, broom, elderberry and other plants now classed as noxious weeds were unknown outside hedges and gardens.'

Rod Morris of Natural History NZ comments that 'canaries' or 'bush canaries' were the birds now called yellowheads. They are seriously endangered today. Kaka and robins are no longer found around Dunedin although the little bush robin is still found in quiet pockets such as Three Mile Hill, and kaka stragglers will occasionally turn up, having travelled long distances to get here. Both long tail and short tail bats have disappeared from the Dunedin area. Parakeets are never seen, and recent attempts to establish them in the wild have been unsuccessful because of the high number of introduced predators.

The account I had found describes a period ten years before stoats, weasels and ferrets were introduced, and fifteen years before ship rats became widespread. From then on many native birds, reptiles and insects began to disappear from Dunedin – although we are still lucky to have more than most cities.

PIGEON-HOLING TIME

by Ann Barsby

I am a newcomer to the Otago Settlers Association committee, and was glad to join because of my keen interest in the historical and cultural heritage of Dunedin and its province, Otago. Also, I am one of two founding trustees of the Heritage Tourism New Zealand Charitable Trust which has been set up, among other reasons, to encourage a greater awareness of our historical resources. One of our Trust's purposes is to undertake special projects which promote or enhance aspects of our heritage, and this area of the Trust's work is my particular responsibility.

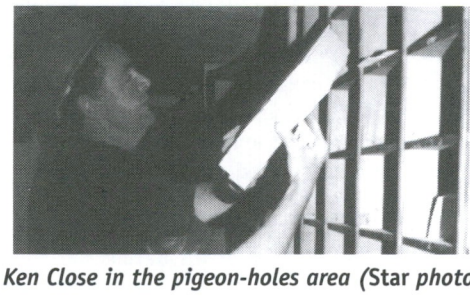
One such project involves the Law Courts building, in Lower Stuart Street. This is one of Dunedin's most interesting public buildings, with its own unique and colourful history. It is now being extended, renovated and refurbished to ensure that it meets present and future Court needs.

It is an achievement for Dunedin that this significant building is to be retained for its original purpose. Also, that conservation is the key to the renovations.

The subterranean records room is lined with kauri and rimu pigeon-holes, which are no longer required for file storage. When I was looking through the building one day with Ken Close, the site foreman of Lunds South who are carrying out the renovations, he had the idea that this area would make a great time capsule. The idea took off with approvals all round, including from the judges.

We wanted to involve children and I approached Richard Newton, principal of St Clair School and president of the Otago Primary Teachers Association, who reported an enthusiastic response from schools. Children will produce material about their schools, themselves and their families that will show what our period is like. Their contributions will be put in the pigeon-holes and that part of the building will be sealed.

I feel this will create more awareness amongst primary school children of our rich heritage. Maybe their parents will become more aware too, and, of course, New Zealanders of the future who may open this time capsule and see its contents.



Ken Close in the pigeon-holes area (Star photo)

A FESTIVE DANCE



The OSA's Christmas function in 2001 was a 'tea dance'. This idea came from the Otago Settlers Museum's *Liquid Jade* exhibition about the history of tea.

To arouse interest, Dr Dorothy Page, committee member and organiser of the dance, wrote an article for the *Star* describing the popularity of late-afternoon tea dances in fashionable London stores and hotels in the early twentieth century. She could find no record of such dances in Dunedin, and OSA member Margery Blackman who has studied the social columns of the *Otago Witness* until 1919 also has found no descriptions of such dances here. However, another OSA member, George Griffiths, remembers attending an afternoon dance at a school in Balclutha after a football match in the 1940s. Can any other members remember dancing in the daytime?

Ballroom dancing in the evening was certainly part of many members' youth and this is probably what attracted so many to the dance at the Otago Settlers Museum on 25 November – the chance to enjoy using their dancing skills again. The occasion was even more successful than we expected. Over 120 people came to dance, watch, talk and enjoy the music of the Melody Makers. The press also took an interest – as well as the introductory article in the *Star,* the event was reported afterwards in that paper and also attracted a full page feature in the *Otago Daily Times* which commented: 'the dance floor was crowded with couples deftly manoevring their way around each other without a hint of tripping, stumbling or forgetting steps....' Observers felt they were glimpsing 'the innocence of an earlier era'.

ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND 2002

Saturday 23 March, 2 p.m. A walk around historic Port Chalmers will be conducted by Michael Findlay (details in enclosed *Pastport).*

Saturday 23 March, 7 p.m. Our Anniversary Day Dinner will be held at the Leviathan Hotel (see p2 of this *Otago Settlers News).*

Sunday 24 March, 10 a.m. Members are warmly invited to the Anniversary Day Service at First Church and to morning tea and shortbread afterwards.

Sunday 24 March. The Otago Settlers Association will have a stall at the 'Go Otago' event to be held at Wingatui. See newspapers for details of the day.

Otago Daily Times *The Otago Daily Times supports Otago Settlers Museum*

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The Otago Settlers Museum was founded by the Otago Settlers Association.
The Otago Settlers Museum is a department of the Dunedin City Council.