

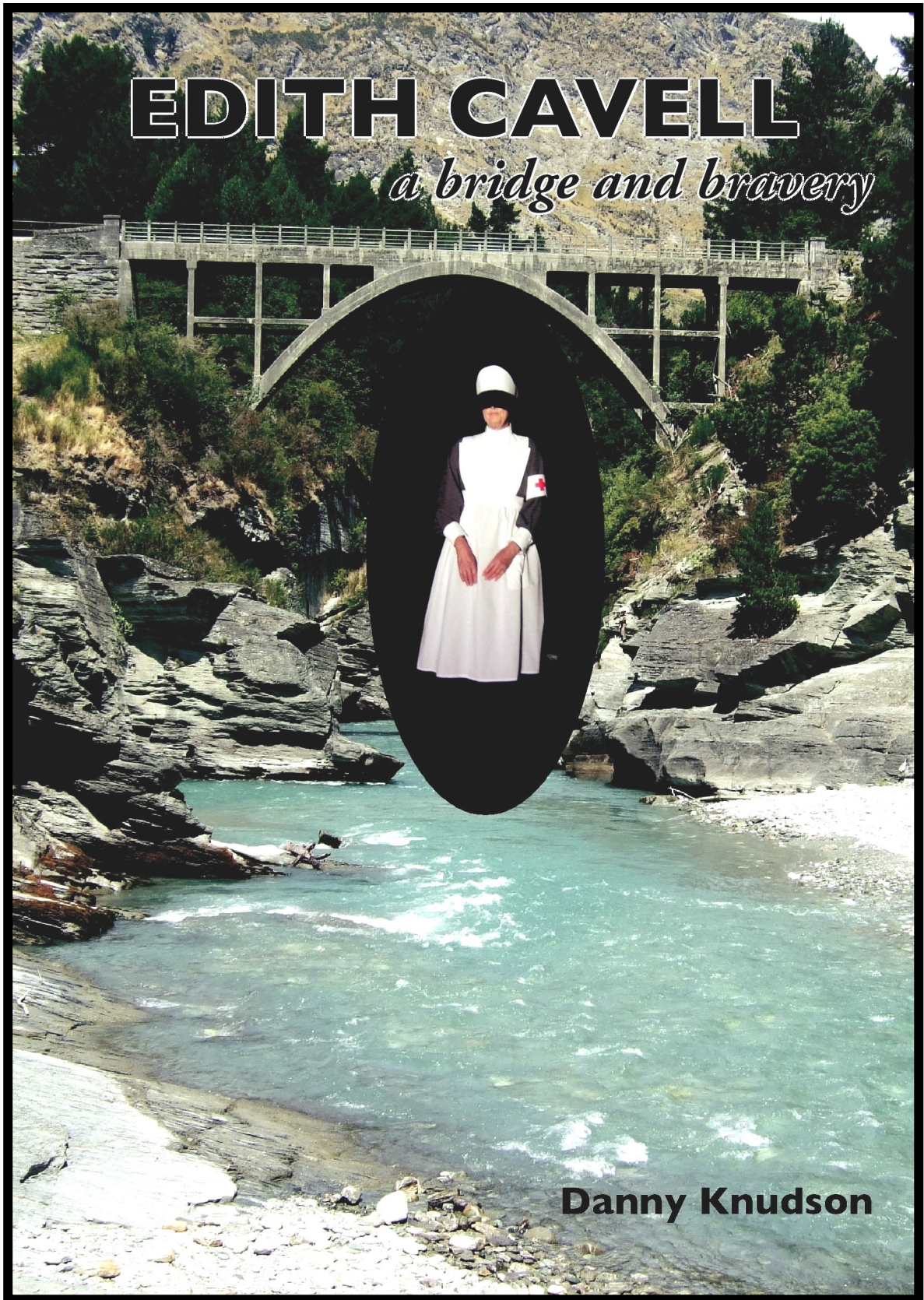
THE QUEENSTOWN COURIER

WINTER 2012

ISSUE No. 87

EDITH CAVELL

a bridge and bravery



Danny Knudson

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This pamphlet accompanies the separately printed book shown on the cover:

Edith Cavell: A Bridge and Bravery by committee member, Danny Knudson.

The history of the Wakatipu has long held Danny Knudson's interests and he has recently investigated the bridge across the Shotover at Arthurs Point. The more information he uncovered, the more he became hooked on the story.

The Edith Cavell Bridge is the fourth crossing at this site and it has an interesting history. It was the first in the South Island designed with a distinctive parabolic arch, it was built on top of an earlier bridge, and it was named in honour of a British nurse who never set foot in New Zealand.

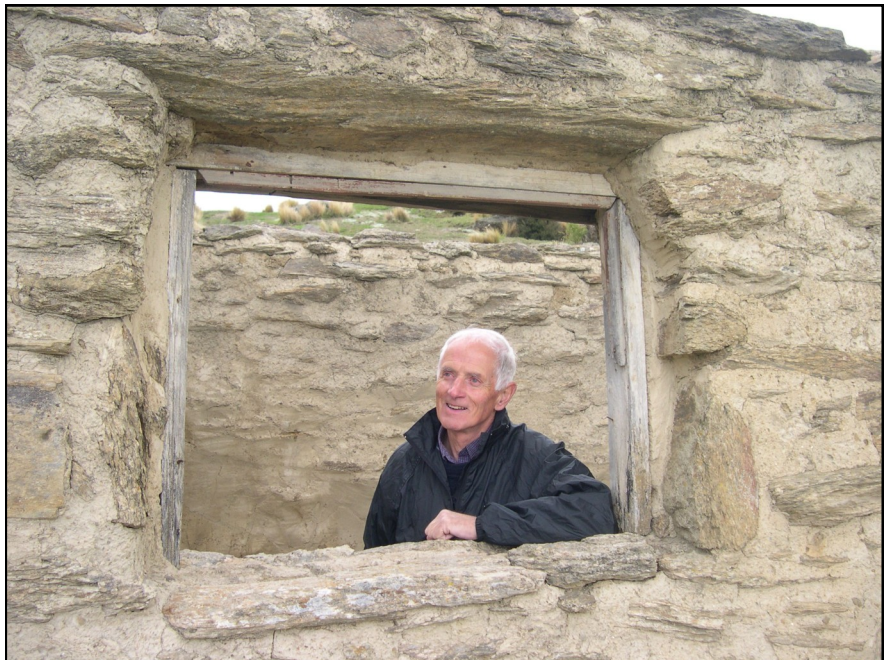
Locals may know that Edith

Cavell was executed by an enemy firing squad for treason in World War I, but the full extent of her bravery deserves to be more widely appreciated. Details of her fortitude in rescuing allied soldiers and helping them escape from occupied Belgium, and her courage when facing certain death, enhanced British resolve at a time when inspiration was most needed.

This is the story of a woman of amazing patriotism and sacrifice.

The book will be on sale at Cavells Café and Bar/Queenstown Rafting, and at the Shotover Jet visitor centre. We are grateful for the financial support of these companies in its publication.

It will also be available at the Lakes District Museum.



Report of Events for Members **Spring 2011 to Autumn 2012**

To see photos of events, go to our website:

www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz

*** September: Luncheon & Launch of the 2012 Calendar**

*** November: Annual General Meeting and Speaker**

Greg Lind from the Department of Conservation spoke and showed photos of his visits to NZ's Sub-Antarctic Islands.

*** December: Picnic at Rum Currie's Hut & Heritage Orchard**

36 members attended on a lovely summer day.

*** January: Boat trip from Alexandra to Doctor's Point**

We appreciated an excellent commentary by Steve Toyer of Clutha River Cruises, and exploration of the goldmining relics at Doctor's Point.

Photos are on the website.

*** February: Trip to Mt Nicholas Station**

36 members enjoyed the boat trip, and the tour of buildings and beyond with our guide Bruce Collins. Photos are on the website.

*** March: Bendigo - Welshtown - Logantown and the Restored 'Come In Time' Battery**

18 people came on this trip to the historic quartz-mining area above Bendigo. Thanks to our guide, Bruce McMillan, a former president of the Goldfields Trust. Photos are on the website.

*** April: A Walk Through Time at the Arrowtown Cemetery**

As part of the Arrowtown Autumn Festival, we recreated eight local people who rest in the cemetery. Over 80 people attended the presentations.

Photos are on the website.

*** May: *The Remarkables: 146 years of Climbing***

At this afternoon function local rock-climber, Guillaume Charton showed his short film which includes a re-enactment of the first Pakeha ascent.

Also *Edith Cavell: A Bridge and Bravery*

Danny Knudson introduced his new book which forms most of this *Courier*.

BRIAN R. BAYLEY, HONORARY LIFE MEMBER
President 2005 - 2009

By Malcolm Boote

The award of Honorary Life Membership to Brian Bayley was unanimously supported at the 2010 AGM in recognition of his selfless work and devotion to re-establish the Society's place in heritage planning.

The old saying "right man, right place, right time" could not have been more appropriate when the Society was deemed by the planning authority not to qualify as an affected party in planning applications, in particular those involving heritage matters.

The Society was formed long before the current complicated planning laws were introduced and the restrictive wording in the Society's constitution was immediately recognised by Brian as a massive stumbling block to the Society's aim to involve itself in all matters of heritage planning.

Brian sprang into action and, after comprehensive research, came to the committee with a proposal to dissolve the present Society and reconstitute it under a new title to include all the legal requirements to meet the new planning laws.

In September 2008, a Special AGM was convened to wind up the Society, following which "The Queenstown and District Historical Society Incorporated, 2008" was formed and in operation. Brian then spent endless hours selling the new Society to council members and planners.

The importance of this change was not truly recognised by some of our members at the time, but these actions by Brian have allowed the Society to continue its great work of direct involvement in all matters of heritage.

In addition to this major change, Brian was a steering committee member for the QLDC Heritage Strategy, and played a leading role in appeals made by the Society to save the Arrowtown Cottages.

The presentation of a Certificate of Honorary Life Membership of the Society was made at the 2011 AGM.

CHAIRMAN BILL DOLAN DEPARTS

By Brian Bayley



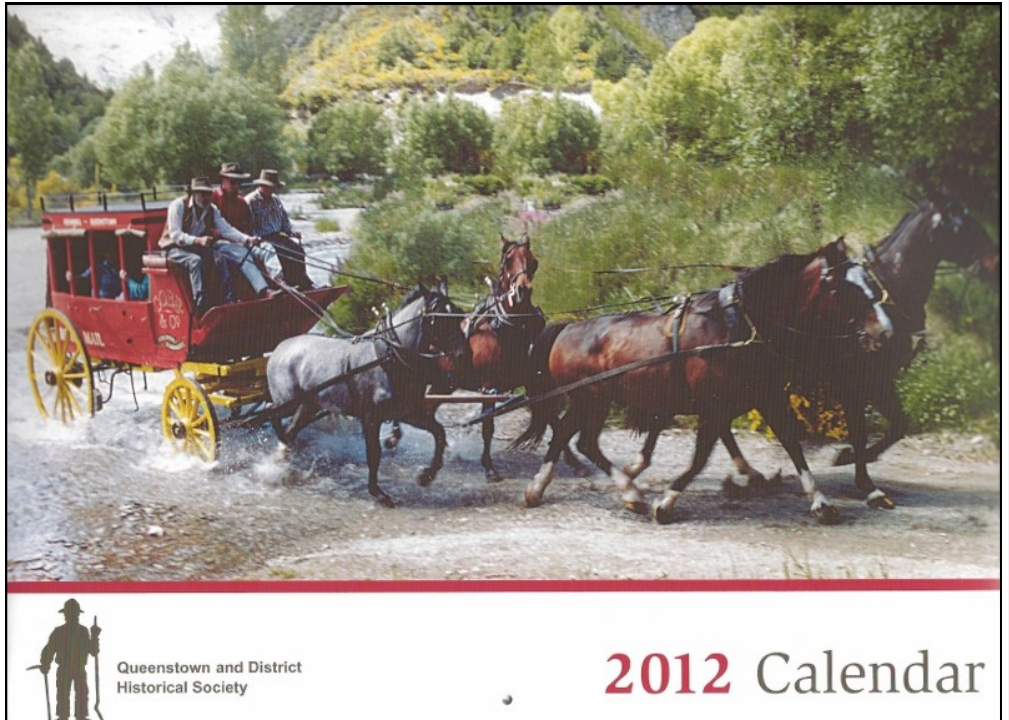
Brian Bayley, left, receives his Honorary Life Membership of the Society from President, Bill Dolan.

Regrettably, our Chairman Bill Dolan and his wife Angela have decided to shift from Arrowtown to the Wairarapa. Bill's years of experience with the Department of Trade and Industry, secondments to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Treasury, his passion for heritage and positive personality have all enabled Bill to make an outstanding contribution to many heritage projects in the area. These have included chairing the Paradise Trust and the restoration of Paradise House, serving as a trustee of the Arrowtown Trust during the restoration of the Buckingham Street miners' cottages, and being instrumental in the establishment of the Wakatipu Heritage Trust. Despite these calls upon his time and wisdom, Bill filled the role of the Historical Society's Chairman with charming efficiency and skill. Bill's leadership and vision will be sadly missed.

STORIES BEHIND THE 2012 CALENDAR PHOTOS

Cover: Cobb and Coach at the Arrow by Marion Borrell

For our cover we have chosen this lively photograph of a re-enactment, in anticipation of the 150th Anniversary Celebrations of the Arrow Gold Rush. This photo was taken during the second Goldfields Cavalcade in 1993 which converged on Arrowtown with 300 participants.



The Coach: The name

Cobb and Co was as well-known in the early days as major airlines' names are today. The company was founded in Australia in 1853 by four Americans.

In 1861, the discovery of gold in Gabriel's Gully enticed a Cobb & Co. coach proprietor Charles Cole, who had been running a service in Ballarat, Victoria. He chartered a steamship and on October 4, 1861 landed in Dunedin with one coach, five wagons, a buggy and fifty-four horses. His 'modern' coach was able to reduce the time of the journey to Lawrence from two days to nine hours. Very impressive.

Despite the reputation for speed and reliability, stagecoach travel was not for the faint-hearted. Passengers had to endure a queasy rocking motion. Male passengers were expected to get out and walk up steep slopes. On rare occasions, passengers drowned in swollen rivers or were killed by being thrown off on steep hillsides. Notice that the passengers in the photo are hanging on firmly as they splash through the ford; and the roll-down curtains would not have kept them cosy in our winters.

When the coaches came to the Wakatipu through the gorge from Cromwell they made their first change of horses at Edwards Ferry – Was that perhaps at Victoria Bridge? - the second change was at the Ballarat Hotel in Arrowtown at the corner where the bakery is now, and then they continued on to Queenstown to the Queen's Arms Hotel which is now Eichardts.

The advent of cars led to a decline in stagecoach travel. The last Cobb & Co coach run in New Zealand was in 1923.

July: The Macetown Road by Ben Saunders



At its peak, Macetown had a population of about 500, all attracted by the business of gold which was heightened by the discovery of a 16 oz nugget the size of a hen's egg. In 1875, quartz exploitation began in earnest. After nearly 40 years of quartz mining, the last mine closed 1914.

The first access was a precarious foot track through the Arrow Gorge. In July 1863, when heavy snow melted to flood, the dam belonging to the Hit and Miss claim collapsed, sending a wall of water through the gorge. Miners were swept from their camps and much of the settlement of Arrowtown, which was located beside the river, was washed away. About one hundred lives were lost.

In 1864, the Big Hill track provided bridle access over the 3000ft pass. A return trip to Arrowtown for supplies occupied up to three days. Freight costs were exorbitant at 50 pounds per ton. Although each year considerable sums were spent on the track, it was still dangerous and fatal accidents occurred. An 1868 report describes the track as being in a disgraceful state. Several horses lost their lives in icy conditions and winter travellers refused to use the route. In 1872, the track was described as almost impassable.

In 1884, after three years of construction, the river track shown in the photo was opened. This was a great improvement, as the first two buggies took only one and a half hours to travel the twelve miles. As there were over twenty river crossings, access was still difficult in the winter, and severe frosts created sights such as shown in this photograph.

March: Buckingham St 1905 by Malcolm Boote



It is 1905, and we are in Buckingham Street, Arrowtown:

No cars, only horses with carts and maybe coaches.

No seal, only gravel but footpaths. See the cartwheel tracks.

See the clothes - bowlers, suits. Is it Sunday? Note - no ladies

See the backdrop – no trees, but smoke pollution from a chimney. It has taken the Otago Regional Council a long time to get clean air!

Look at the buildings, some of you may remember, on the left side:

A hut where Golden Fleece is today; the New Orleans Hotel with large street-lamp; the Athenaeum Hall; the Coachmans Hall; the Golden Nugget; the Bank of New Zealand (now the Museum); and on to the Colonial Bank (now the nice clean Tap) and the famous cottages.

On the right:

North's blacksmith (now Tehuia); Jenkins Store, later Cotters; a shop later a hairdresser and BNZ Agency; Lake County Press; the empty site of the Morning Star Hotel now the Village Green; and finally R. Pritchard's General Store.

This building, known as “Taffy’s”, (Robert Pritchard came from North Wales and was the second Mayor of Arrowtown), traded from 1862 in a corrugated iron shed. In 1872, it was replaced by a magnificent two-storey stone building designed by George Burwell of Invercargill, who also designed the Courthouse and Council buildings in Queenstown and other well-known local buildings. It had a handsome stone exterior and hardwood fittings and plate-glass windows. The top storey was destroyed by a major fire in 1896 which started in and destroyed the Morning Star Hotel next door, along with Campbell’s butchers shop. Robert Pritchard re-opened after the fire in the Athenaeum hall. The shop was refurbished as a single storey premises, much as it is today, until it was remodeled as a pharmacy in 1996.

In 1872, the general store had a drapery counter and a private boot room where new footwear could be tried on out of sight of prying eyes. There were rows of kauri shelving and drawers for the grocery section. Hardware was hung from pipes along the ceiling and items were brought down for inspection using poles. What is now the derelict stable on Arrow Lane housed the store’s team of delivery horses.

Remember, everything was in bulk, NO packaging. Sacks of sugar, flour, dried fruit and peas were all scooped into brown paper bags and weighed on beautiful brass scales. There were blocks of rock salt. Cheese was cut by wire, bacon cut on a hand slicer, butter and lard cut by hand with a knife, and all wrapped in greaseproof paper. Tea was stored in tin-lined tea-chests and sold by the scoop into paper bags. Biscuits were in large tins sold loose. The children loved the one penny bags of broken biscuits!

Isn’t it great to think how Arrowtown has remained so close to the 1905 scene?

My thanks to the Arrowtown Museum for research, and to Judith Bradshaw and the late Alan De La Mare for extracts from their writings. Postcards of this scene can be bought at the Museum.

**January 2013 by Marion Borrell
New Orleans Hotel, 1901**



We began our calendar with a celebration, and now close with another: the accession of King Edward VII after the death of Queen Victoria in 1901. The hotel and store are seen in their finery of branches and flags, with placards above portraying the new King and Queen Alexandra. The people have sallied out to pose for the camera in spite of the snow on the ground and roofs, and on the mountainsides beyond. On the left is a man in military uniform, a reminder that the Boer War was in progress.

The New Orleans Hotel was in existence by 1863 (according to Miller) at which time Mr Richmond, the proprietor, complained that Mr Butler of the Prince of Wales Hotel had stolen his precious tomcat. Note that the Prince of Wales at that time later became King Edward VII – he had a long wait for the crown.

From 1888 to 1892 the licensees were Humphrey and Sarah Dyson. After Humphrey's death Sarah continued running the hotel until 1901. In this photo she is aged about 64 and soon to retire from the business. She must have had an eventful thirteen years there. During the Buckingham Street fire of 1896, for example, when Pritchards Store across the street was damaged, people covered the New Orleans with wet blankets to protect it.

Next door is the Cotter Brothers store which was owned by Thomas Cotter. His father Richard came from Melbourne in 1861 in the same ship as William Fox, and was at the Arrow with him as well. He then returned to Australia and, in early 1863, brought his wife and two children back to Arrowtown. In February of that year, Thomas was born, the first white boy to be born in the town. When he grew up Thomas had a general store at Skippers, then returned to Arrowtown where he had the general store and auctioneer's business we see in the photo.

LAKES DISTRICT MUSEUM ARROWTOWN

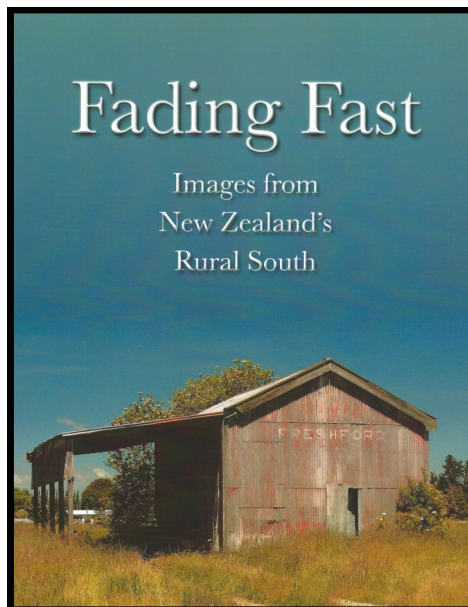
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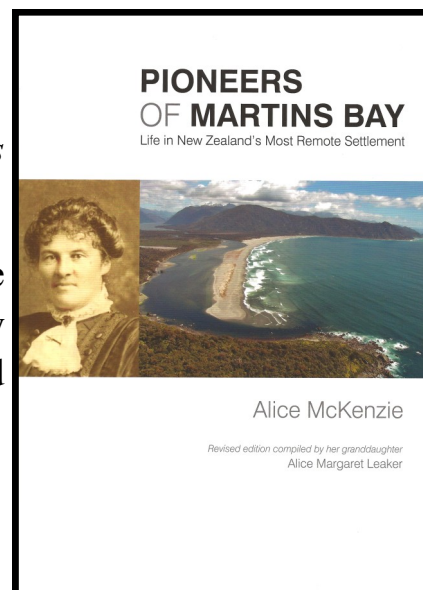
Fading Fast: Images from New Zealand's Rural South

By Historical Society members and Arrowtown residents David Teele, Val McMillan and Rita Teele (self-published)

A quirky collection of unusual signs and buildings from the rural south with numerous photos and researched text. 160 large pages, \$55

Pioneers of Martins Bay: Life in New Zealand's Most Remote Settlement

A handsome, enlarged edition of Alice McKenzie's 1947 book has been compiled by her granddaughter Alice Mary Leaker, and published by the Museum. 186 pages. \$30



Queenstown & District Historical Society
2008 Incorporated

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President: Bill Dolan

62 Adamson Drive, Arrowtown. Ph 409 8022 angelabill@xtra.co.nz

Vice President: Ralph Hanan

PO Box 236, arrowtown Ph 409 8959 rhanan@starpower.net

Secretary: Jocelyn Robertson

45 Cotter Ave, Arrowtown. Ph 442 1468 jsrob@xtra.co.nz

Treasurer: Gavin Jack

68 Devon St, Arrowtown, Ph 4420854 gdmj@xtra.co.nz

Immediate Past President: Brian Bayley

Hunter Rd, RD1, Queenstown Ph4421481 bayleybrpg@xtra.co.nz



COMMITTEE

Malcolm Boote

13 Shaw St, Arrowtown. Ph 442 0004 mandpboote@actrix.co.nz

Marion Borrell

35 Mountain View Rd, R.D.1, Queenstown 9371 Ph 4429319 marionborrell@hotmail.com

Danny Knudson

7 Edinburgh Dr, Queenstown. Ph 442 4228 knudson@ihug.co.nz

Denise Heckler

3 Jenkins Pl, Arrowtown, Ph 4420204 hecklerdenise@hotmail.com

Ben Saunders

50 Cedar Dr, Kelvin Heights Ph 4090026/0276227698 ben@southabout.com

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

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The Queenstown Courier is posted out to members. Correspondence and accounts to: PO Box 132, Queenstown

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Editor: Marion Borrell 35 Mountain View Rd, RD1, Queenstown 9371

Ph 4429319 marionborrell@hotmail.com

Designer: Michael Anderson 196 Speargrass Flat Rd, RD 1, Queenstown

Ph 4098115 m.j.anderson@xtra.co.nz

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