

Aims of the Queenstown & District Historical Society

1. That we use our power to advise, concerning the saving of historical aspects of the district.
2. Preservation of and education in all aspects of historical research and interest.

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

President: Brian Bayley
Secretary: Jocelyn Robertson
Treasurer: Robert Blair
Immediate Past President: Malcolm Boote

Committee: Ralph Hanan, Danny Knudson, Bill McDonald, Ray Clarkson, Barbara Hamilton, Geoff Bradley, Verona Cournane

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Individual or Family Membership: \$10 a year
Corporate Membership: \$50 a year
Life Membership: \$100

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I would like to start a reader's contribution page. If you have comments on an article, memories to share, an opinion, an interesting photo please forward to the editor.

The Queenstown Courier

Summer 2008

Issue No. 78



Some of the old buildings at Thurlby Domain, Speargrass Flat Road.

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE QUEENSTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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The Mountaineer and, foreground, the Ben Lomond, Lake Wakatipu.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2006/07

Looking back over the last 12 months, I am pleased to report that our society has continued to pursue a considerable number of topics of interest to our members. The objects clause in our constitution has given the committee members and me cause for reflection on how best to face the future. I took the opportunity of writing to all members at the same time the last *Courier* was distributed in July, outlining my concerns.

The society has taken a number of initiatives in the Resource Management field this decade. Due to the limitation of our narrow objects clause, and the total inability to alter these objects because of the restriction imposed by clause 28 of the constitution, I have reluctantly concluded that it is dangerous for the society to pursue any future planning issues. I have tried to explain this to the committee but there is resistance to my proposals.

Because of an absence of unanimity within the committee, I do not wish to push on with the recommended winding up of the present society and the formation of a replacement society with a wide objects clause. I feel that to do so might cause fall-out which could weaken the society's considerable strength. I am not prepared to take such a risk for the future welfare of the society.

For these reasons, I put on record that, in the future, the society should avoid taking any action over planning issues, with the exception of variations to the District Plan. The society will be able to continue in its support of the saving of historical aspects of the district and the preservation and education in all matters of historical research and interest. This will preserve the club feeling and field trips, lectures and recording of historical matters our members enjoy. Because of the danger to our society and to the officers of the society, I will oppose any activity in the planning field.

The society's objects have been considered in depth at least twice - once by the Environment Court where Judge Shepherd stated, "There was no question that those having management of the society's affairs had been entitled to lodge and pursue an appeal in its name." It also recorded that issues raised by the society were outside the scope of the objects of incorporation and that any order for costs awarded against the society were a matter between the society and its members.

Affected person liability - Court Decision

A 2006 High Court decision, *Norhcote Mainstreet Inc and anor v North Shore City Council & Ors* (2006) NZRMA 137, provides clarification of the law defining an adversely affected person. This decision should increase the level of concern the officers of the society should have about taking any planning issues at any hearing. Being the High Court, this decision is binding on lower courts and carries considerable legal clout. I believe the society should play no role on future planning applications and appeals because of its limited objects clause. The Northcote case was the cornerstone of the opinion of the Mountaineer developers legal counsel which helped persuade Civic Corp to exclude the society from the Mountaineer Resource application notification process.

I would like to thank those members who have written, telephoned or spoken their support for the recommended society change. They may wish to attempt to change the views of the committee members who still are unable to see the disadvantages of a restricted future role for the society.

During the year; W. John Heenan and Mrs Liz MacDonald resigned from the committee. I wish to record that the efforts they have both put into promoting the society's affairs have been very considerable. A large number of our members enjoyed the many interesting and informative field trips organised by John. We wish Margaret and him good health and a happy future in Rotorua. Liz has given tirelessly to many planning proceedings, in particular, but also, to a number of other aspects of the society's affairs. Her considerable knowledge of planning matters will be sadly missed. We want to express to her our grateful thanks for all the work she has done on behalf of the society, and wish her and her husband good health.

I would like to record the gratitude of both the society and me to Mesdames Jocelyn Robertson and Barbara Hamilton, the society's appointees to the Lakes District Museum Trust Board. I am pleased to advise that these valued Board members continue to represent our society and play a valuable role on this board.

To our Treasurer, Bob Blair, our Secretary, Karen Boulay, assisted by Jocelyn Robertson, events organiser, Barbara Hamilton, assisted by Ray Clarkson, our planning review teams, our *Courier* team of Mike Lynch and Karen Boulay, and all others who have given so freely of their time, I say thank you. Your efforts keep the society functional and give its members both valued information and pleasure.

Walking Guide plaques

Further historic walking guide plaques have been erected. I am pleased that George Ellingham will be installing a further six of these soon. Others await completion of projects, such as the replacement Horn Creek Gardens' bridge, extensions to the hotel erected on the Buckhams' Brewery site and construction of a new sign board at St Omer's Park, for example. Nothing is achieved simply. I believe that additional signage and further information panels will add further interest to both residents and visitors to the basin. The committee has enthusiastic support for this type of work.

Brian Bayley



Templeton's boat and bicycle hire, near the current Steamer Wharf, probably some time in the 1950's. The old railway buildings are visible in the centre background while the boat shed is the dark building to the right with a sign over it.

See 'Messing About in Boats' page 10 for Margaret Templeton's account of this early, and sadly long abandoned, Queenstown enterprise.

By Ray

SNIPPETS Clarkson

THE MOUNTAINEER BUILDING

Karen Swaine, the Museum archivist, had an excellent article in the Mountain Scene on facadeism. I'm sure that many people did not realise that the Mountaineer building was going to be completely gutted. It is a very sorry sight at present.

THE COURIER

The Courier is late, but, this year, we hope to revert to May and November issues. The new editor, Michael Anderson, lives in Dunedin but spends a considerable amount of time at Speargrass Flat. He welcomes contributions which can be emailed, as attachments, please, to: m.j.anderson@xtra.co.nz or sent to: The Committee, PO Box 132, Queenstown.

Your own photographs of society outings and events would also be greatly appreciated.

THOSE COTTAGES

It is good to see that remedial work is underway on the Buckingham St. cottages in Arrowtown, pictured at right. The recently set-up Trust is getting on with the job.

Let's hope the ranch-slider doors go! (Ed.)



MAXINE ALTERIO

Maxine, left, who spoke at her book launch at Dorothy Brown's Cinema, to which members were invited, also spoke at our AGM.

Her novel, set in Arrowtown, is now into its second print and is reviewed in this publication.



THE CENTRAL OTAGO RAIL TRAIL

Although the Rail Trail started in humble fashion, it has now attracted national and international interest and prompted similar projects in other areas. Cyclists and walkers are its main users but it is also used for major duathlon and mountain bike events. Recent talks on its history and associated side trips have occurred and there is certainly a great amount of literature on it.

ALEXANDRA & RIVERTON MUSEUMS

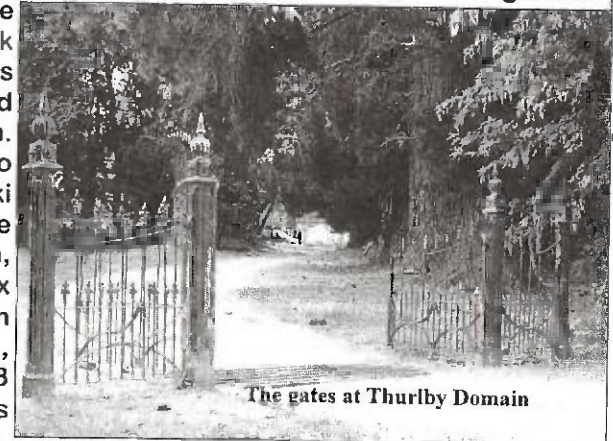
Slightly out of the region, but well worth a visit, are the new museums at Alexandra, *Central Stories*, and Riverton's *Te Hiko*. Both are in interesting new buildings and do a first-rate job of reflecting the history of their areas.

THURLBY DOMAIN

The January picnic at Thurlby was a very pleasant outing on a beautiful day - an impressive group of buildings in a glorious location.

The explanatory talk and reminiscences of members added to the afternoon. Many thanks to Revel and Vicki Buckham. The February function, visiting six cottages in Arrowtown, attracted 73 members and was a great success.

This will be covered in the next edition.



PARADISE HOUSE

New Committee member, Bill Dolan, is Chairman of the Paradise Trust, set up to restore Paradise House, a once very popular guest house at the Head of the Lake. It was designed by William Wales, a notable early architect. The Trust has been granted: \$400,000 by the Central Lakes Trust, \$100,000 by the Community Trust and they also have an application in to the Heritage section of the Lotteries Board.

FIGHTING, FROM THE START

Marygold Miller, along with Margaret Templeton, pioneer Queenstown conservationist of the Sixties, tells the tale of the founding of the Historical Society. Marigold, a feisty Englishwoman, is now living in a retirement home in Blenheim.

The Queenstown and District Historical Society was founded by a small group of us when the old stone Library and Reading Room building on Stanley Street was threatened with demolition in 1965. A glass and chromium building was planned to take its place.

Beth Knowles (wife of photographer Doug and mother of photo-journalist Alan), as Secretary, was a huge help to me, as president, and her dedication, time and energy expended at this time should be recorded. We brought out the first *Queenstown Courier* together. We lived next door to each other, which was very convenient, each of us owning an ancient typewriter. Roma McAndrew designed the magazine's cover, which was kept the same for many years. Perhaps now the early *Courier* seems like an amateurish effort, but served to record much of the history many people of the day were trying to destroy and obliterate.

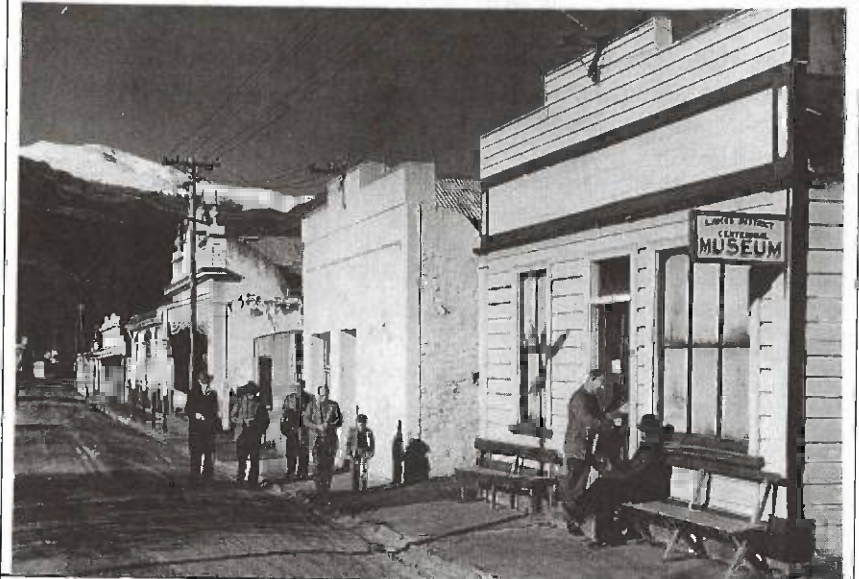
In those days, Maori supported our efforts to save the library and indeed did a haka expressing their feelings in no uncertain terms to those who were steadily knocking down Queenstown's heritage. Their consequent change in attitude has surprised me.

The Queenstown Borough Council, led by George Cochrane, refused to concede and it was determined to get rid of the stone buildings. However, the conservationists won the battle and the Council was thrown out at the next election. At that election I was elected, among others. Warren Cooper, having come out on the side of conservation, was elected Mayor.

The Historical Society had hard work on its hands but, looking back, can claim some successes. Even though it was called the "Hysterical Society" and jeered at by some, it gained respect and the fight for the library was reported in the press all over New Zealand. Only the Southland Times, in its wisdom, refrained from comment.

A great loss and failure soon after, was losing the battle with the Presbyterian Church Elders, who bashed down the superb wooded church on the corner of Camp and Ballarat Streets without concern that it was a New Zealand icon with a beautiful design and steeped in history. They sold the site to a petrol company.

In passing, I also founded the Wakatipu Environmental Society with the backing of the members of Rotary. This was with a view to having a knowledgeable authority make its experience and sagacity in the value of planning regarding valuable assets available to the Council, including those inherited from the past.



Not our current Museum, but an early one at the other end of the main street, an area now occupied by the bakery and cafés.

The Lakes District Museum was one room in the old Bank building in Arrowtown, with a lot of items dumped down in the cellar. Each of the three local Councils had two representatives on a committee appointed to try and improve it. It was a huge task and the end result was a great credit to hard-working people, including the owner of the Golden Nugget. A windfall came in a legacy from an unknown lady who had visited the museum. Unfortunately, the intended recipient of the donation was named incorrectly, and it took quite some effort to prove it was for the Museum in Arrowtown.

Rowing Boats for Hire on the lake

MESSING ABOUT IN BOATS

Rowing Boats For Hire On The Lake

Margaret Templeton, much-loved society stalwart and general thorn in the side of the forces of what she saw as evil, has left a few notes of her early days in Queenstown.

My husband Irvine Stuart Templeton was born at Albert Town. He served with the RNZAF in the Pacific Islands during World War Two and moved to Queenstown in 1947. We were married in 1950, and in 1954 he bought the rowing boat business from Bob and Betsy Ensor. It was run from a shed on the foreshore in the lee of the Steamer Wharf (then just the Earnslaw Wharf) facing the town.



During the following years, he enlarged the fleet of (clinker built) rowing boats to 12, plus two boats with inboard marine engines for fishing trips. Irvine was ahead of his time in the way of tourist amenities. He also had fishing rods for hire and frequently took visitors fishing around the lake.

He had the first bicycles for hire in the area and had a firm contract with a petrol company to service the boating fraternity from a pump on the end of our wharf. Unfortunately when we were flooded out for the third time our wharf was badly damaged, so we lost that contract.

Irvine became ill and was no longer able to continue with the business, which was eventually sold to Bill Davies (Wakatipu Transport) in 1959. People, visitors, frequently inquired and regretted the loss of the boats which were a cheap mode of transport and recreation.

Wakatipu High School has benefited from two legacies from the Templeton family:

The Rosemary Templeton Memorial Trophy is awarded annually for personal effort and achievement in spite of difficulties.

Following Margaret's death, the Margaret Templeton Education Trust Undergraduate Scholarship was formed, in part from proceeds from the sale of her Hallenstein Street home. Margaret made arrangements for this annual award herself, planning it carefully and appointing her trustees (Neil Clayton, Elizabeth Clarkson and Walter Rutherford), making sure they were familiar with her wishes. The Trust was set up to provide scholarships for students from the Wakatipu who would not otherwise be in a position to undertake tertiary study. It is open to students who are, or intend, pursuing a course of study at a university or other agreed tertiary establishment in New Zealand.

Scholarships are offered annually, for one year in the first instance. The value of the scholarship is \$5000 in the first year, to be reviewed each year. Each recipient will be able to receive the scholarship for up to three years, depending upon satisfactory results. It can be held concurrently with other scholarships or bursaries.

Applicants are judged on their all-round ability and achievement, sporting and/or cultural involvement, positions of responsibility and leadership roles, and contribution to the community.

The inaugural Trust scholar, in 2007, was Christina Jenkins, whose parents manage Closeburn Station. She intends to study animal nutrition at Massey University. This district is very fortunate that, through Margaret's generosity, a very considerable amount of money is available to help our young people.

Afterword

Irvine succumbed to multiple sclerosis in 1975. Their only child, Rosemary, died 10 years later. Margaret continued her active role in Council, environmental and historical matters right up to her death in June, 2005. In 1999 the Council named the lane behind its offices Templeton Way in her honour. A portrait of her (which she professed to dislike) hangs in the Council Chambers as recognition of the contribution and support (including assiduous invigilation of Council goings-on) she lavished on a community she was so much a part of.

THE GROWTH OF TOURISM

Alan De La Mare

In 1903 the Industries and Commerce Department asked the Queenstown Borough Council for a return of the accommodation available in the town. It reported as follows:

| Hotels | Rooms | Guests | Tariff Daily | Tariff Weekly |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-----------------|---------------|
| Eichardt's | 45 | 60 | 10/- | £3/3/0 |
| McBride's | 23 | 40 | 8/- | £2/2/0 |
| Mountaineer | 40 | 75 | 8/- | £2.2.0 |
| Supreme Court | 25 | 60 | 8/6 | £2.2.0 |
| St Omer Private | 10 | 16 | 1/- per meal | £1.0.0 |

Mountaineer Hotel,
 QUEENSTOWN,
LAKE WAKATIPU,
 NEW ZEALAND.

At this Establishment Families and Tourists visiting the Lake District will meet with every accommodation. The Hotel is most beautifully situated, commanding the finest Views of the Lake, Mountain, and Landscape Scenery, which are unsurpassed by any in the Lake District; and is also within a convenient distance of the Pier.

TERMS STRICTLY MODERATE.

Tariff, with full information, will be forwarded upon application to the Proprietress.

Mrs. R. Bond.

An earlier advertisement from the 1890's, for the Mountaineer Hotel when Rebecca Bond was in charge. In 1903, Patrick McCarthy was running the Mountaineer.

| Boarding Houses | Rooms | Guests | Tariff Daily | Tariff Weekly |
|-----------------|-------|--------|--------------|---------------|
| H N Firth | 10 | 22 | 6/- | £1/15/0 |
| Mrs Gardiner | 9 | 18 | 6/- | £1/5/0 |
| Mr C B Boyes | 11 | 12 | 6/- | £1/5/0 |
| Mrs T Mantle | 5 | 9 | 6/- | £1/5/0 |
| Jas Davies | 12 | 24 | 5/- | £1/7/6 |

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Advertisements.

Pleasant View Boarding - House,

EASTERN TERRACE, QUEENSTOWN.

ESTABLISHED 10 YEARS.

Mrs. T. MANTLE, Proprietress.

First-class Accommodation for Tourists and Families visiting the Lakes District who desire a quiet home during their stay. BATH-ROOM, &c.

TERMS: 4s. 6d. per Day, or £1 5s. per Week.

This COMMODIOUS ESTABLISHMENT is very favourably situated, and commands a fine view of the world-renowned Wakatipu Lake and its magnificent Scenery, and has been patronised by some of the leading families of the Colonies and the United Kingdom.

An earlier advertisement for Mrs Mantle's boarding house on the quaintly named 'Wakatipu Lake'. By 1903 inflation had obviously driven prices up but Mrs Mantle was still the proprietress.

GG GEE-GEES YOUNG TOWN

By Alan De la Mare

Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, G.C.M.G.

If you live in Queenstown and have never heard of this name, do not worry; nobody else has either. But, if you had lived in Queenstown one hundred years ago you would have known him as the Governor of New Zealand paying his first visit to the town and only the second visit of any such plenipotentiary to this area. The Governor was accompanied by the Hon. John Hall and you lose no marks if you did not know he was the Prime Minister at the time and had held important Cabinet posts from time to time since 1856.

The Governor had arrived from England to take up office in November, 1880 and early in the following year embarked on a grand tour of the South Island. The completion of the railway to Kingston in 1879 and the launching of the paddle steamer Mountaineer the following year provided a comfortable and fast means of reaching Queenstown. Until rail service was available, Vice-Regal visits were made by Government steamers and areas away from ports were largely missed.

The visit of the Governor and the Prime Minister to a remote town like Queenstown was a tremendous event and the whole town talked of little else for some time and everybody was spurred into helping decorate the town and ensure proper arrangements were made to receive such important guests.

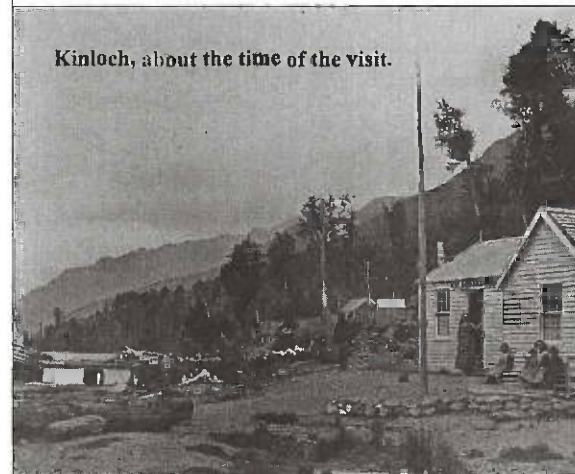
The visitors left Invercargill early on the morning of Saturday March 19, 1881 and arrived at Queenstown late in the afternoon. The chairman of the Lake County Council, Mr F. H. Daniels, sailed to Kingston to meet and accompany the party to Queenstown. Most of the town were present, eager to see such an important person as the Governor and, on his stepping ashore, the welcome which had been the subject of long planning to ensure it would be a memorable occasion commenced.

First the local band played the National Anthem, followed by a 17-gun salute. Certainly the gun and its gunners had been specially borrowed and brought to Queenstown for the occasion. But not so the guard of honour of local enthusiastic volunteers commanded by Adjutant J. Barlow of Arrowtown. In the 1880s belonging to the Volunteers was about equivalent to being a present-day member of Rotary or Lions, and parading for the Governor was indeed an honour.

At the entrance to the wharf the Town Clerk read on behalf of Mayor J. Hotop, councillors and citizens an address of welcome to which the Governor suitably replied. The Governor, who was known to be reserved and whose style had been described as "not very taking", showed his desire to meet and be received by the people by declining the use of a carriage and four and walking to Eichardt's Hotel together with the official party via Beach, Camp and Ballarat Streets. Surely the first Vice-Regal walkabout in these parts. In the evening, the Governor and his suite walked round the town admiring the decorations and illuminations provided in his honour.

In 1881, Sunday was a day surely set aside for rest and church-going, and the Governor set an example by attending divine service at the Anglican church morning and evening. At the morning service the local Volunteers

paraded, with no doubt something like a record attendance.



Monday was business as usual which, for the Governor, consisted of a trip to the head of the lake on the Mountaineer. A stop was made at Pigeon Island where the official party went ashore. They later lunched at Bryant's hotel at Kinloch.

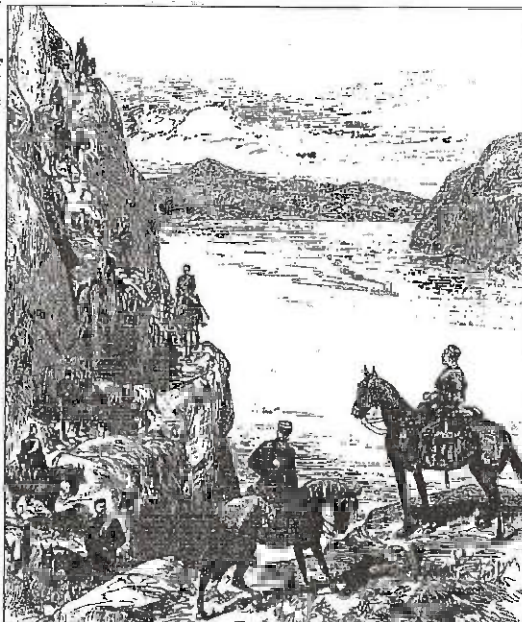
On the return to the wharf at Queenstown the Governor received a deputation of Chinese, who presented an address on behalf of their countrymen. Presumably the address was in English but, if it had been in Chinese, it would probably not have mattered much as the Governor was short-sighted and, during his visit, was continually mistaking the identity of people because of his disability. In the evening, the band serenaded the Governor in his hotel and, to cap the entertainment, there was an excellent fireworks display.

Next morning the Governor departed for Dunedin via Kingston and the town reluctantly returned to its normal routine. The gunners departed with their guns and as the shopkeepers took down their decorations, the Volunteers and the bandsmen put away their uniforms and the Town Clerk began totting up the cost of the exercise, everybody knew it would be a long time before they received a similar visit.

EASTER PARADE 1885

By Alan De La Mare

It is said that history repeats itself, and the relatively recent invasion of Afghanistan by the Russians is a good example. Little over one hundred and twenty years ago, Russia invaded Afghanistan, placing the security of India in jeopardy, and the international reaction was as great or greater than the recent episode. On the earlier occasion Great Britain, rather than the United States, was the Great Power most involved and there were no Moscow Olympic Games to serve as a lever to express opposition to the move.



Invercargill Hussars negotiate the Devils Staircase Bluff, Lake Wakatipu, Easter 1885 from illustrated London News courtesy Canterbury Public Library.

Fear of Russian domination of the world became an everyday feature of the news and, in some areas, an obsession. In Great Britain, fears of the Russian fleet were expressed, and steps to repel any invasion were advanced. These fears were mirrored in New Zealand and the possibility of a Russian invasion here was considered very real. In 1885, the country was put on to something akin to a war footing with Government plans for additional troops and protection of the ports with batteries, mines and torpedoes. Serious consideration was also given to obtaining an armed cruiser to protect the country's shores. In Invercargill, Cowper and Wilson, hardware merchants, for months advertised firearms for sale under the heading 'Prepare for War'.

The Governor of New Zealand, Sir William Jervois, was an authority on military defence and gave the country the benefit of his expert knowledge. The main work of planning local defences was in the hands of an English soldier, Major Cautley.

Over a short period, every port in the country was examined and, where it was considered necessary, plans for defence were quickly finalised and put into effect. The speed with which these plans were carried out would be the envy of today's Army but, on the other hand, the publicity given to the measures taken would have horrified military authorities today. The newspapers daily featured measures taken for the defence of ports and the establishment of artillery batteries and their trial firings were common news.

If the Russians were interested, which is doubtful, there was no need for spies. A subscription to a newspaper revealed all. Within a very short time massive guns in equally massive emplacements were in position to repel any Russian invasion. Some of them remain today without having ever fired a shot in anger.

In all this excitement the role of the Militia was of great importance and the Rifle Companies, Artillery Batteries and Hussars were given a new lease of life as patriotic citizens rushed to join the colours. In all parts of the country existing units were besieged with additional members and proposals for additional volunteer corps were reported daily.

In Invercargill, an Irish and Scottish Rifle Corps was proposed and meetings held to get the necessary numbers to establish a unit. A meeting was held at the Chinese store in Spey Street with a view to establishing a Chinese Corps. There is no record of this proposed unit being successfully established. The Government received offers of hundreds of new volunteer corps and enthusiasm and interest were limited only by lack of training staff and equipment. Goldfields supervisor and author Vincent Pyke, reflecting the patriotic fervour of the times, composed a poem *The Old Flag*, the first verse of which illustrates its sentimentality.

*Only a bit of bunting,
Only a tattered rag,
But we will fight to the death as our fathers fought,
For the brave old British flag.
Who dares to lay a hand on it,
Who dares to touch a fold,
Shall learn that Britain's sons today,
Can fight as they fought of old.
For the brave old British flag my boys,
The dear old British flag,
Though we dwell apart we're one in heart,
And will fight for the Grand Old Flag.*

In this atmosphere the venue for the annual Easter Review came forward and where better to have a long weekend far from work and home responsibilities than the Lakes area. So it was that the volunteers prepared for their annual review in Queenstown.

As reported in the *Southland Times*, whether considered as a spell of training for the Volunteers or looked upon in the light of a gigantic picnic, the Easter Review was a great success. The number attending could have been larger but bad weather in Invercargill on the Thursday night discouraged the weak-hearted. They were the poorer, for the weather in Queenstown was magnificent, the local arrangements excellent and in the words of the reporter these, combined with the beauty of the scenery and the hospitable kindness of the inhabitants, served to make the visitors lot a happy one.

One hundred and forty militia, including a Riverton party, left on a special train which arrived at Kingston at 4am on the Friday morning. Shortly after, the *Mountaineer* departed for Queenstown and, after a trip by moonlight, arrived at Queenstown at 7am, apparently an hour too early for local Volunteers to accord the visitors the intended reception. The Hussars under Captain F W Burwell, forsaking the comfort of the *Mountaineer*, left Kingston about 8am to journey round the lake to Queenstown, which involved traversing some extremely difficult and dangerous areas. After a long and tiring journey they arrived at Queenstown at 3pm to be greeted by the Garrison Band.

Good Friday was a rest day, but in the evening the massed bands, numbering sixty men, in the memory of General Gordon played the *Dead March* from *Saul* and the *German Dead March* on the Peninsula, where the Invercargill Rifles and G Battery were camped. In conjunction with this musical tribute, M Battery fired a salute of 15 guns. The death of General Gordon, the hero of Khartoum, whom everybody was convinced had been abandoned by the British Government, had recently been confirmed and his lonely and heroic death had captured the imagination of the English-speaking world.

Saturday was set aside for a rifle-shooting contest, won by the Cromwell Rifles, in the morning, followed by a sports meeting in the afternoon. Besides the usual sports events there was a competition for Bayonet Exercises and one for Sword Exercises, thus preserving the military atmosphere.

Sunday was a day of rest and church-going in preparation for the Review proper, to be held at the Frankton Racecourse on the Monday.

All the troops marched out from Queenstown and G Battery took along their two big guns. The Corps were put through battalion movements, executing them most credibly under Major Thomson, and these were followed by a sham fight. The fight terminated rather abruptly owing to the ammunition giving out.

After a strenuous and tiring day, the militiamen were happy to return to Queenstown by the *Mountaineer*, which left from the Frankton wharf.

The units taking part in this exciting day of military exercises were:

| | |
|----------------------------|--------|
| Riverton Rifles | 25 men |
| G Battery | 31 men |
| Bluff Navals | 27 men |
| Hussars | 30 men |
| M Battery | 40 men |
| Cromwell Rifles | 40 men |
| Arrow Rifles | 22 men |
| Invercargill Garrison Band | 27 men |
| Queenstown Band | 21 men |
| Invercargill Rifles | 44 men |

All Queenstown made a picnic of the occasion and the liquor booth, together with the luncheon and refreshment tents, did good business. A most successful weekend, from a social if not a military point of view, wound up with a grand ball and the Hussars attended a banquet in Eichardt's Hotel, given by Captain Burwell.

At 7am on Tuesday, it was time to return home and the *Antrim* left with the Hussars and their horses, followed by the *Mountaineer* with the foot troops. Twelve hours later the tired but happy militiamen arrived in Invercargill back to work, families and responsibilities.

Captain Burwell did a sketch of the Hussars negotiating the dangerous track over the Devil's Staircase bluff. It later appeared in the *Sydney Mail* and the *Illustrated London News* (see page 16). Thus the exploits of the Invercargill Hussars became world news without their having fired a shot in anger.

MOVING TALE OF LOVE & DECEPTION IN THE QUEST FOR GOLD ON THE ARROW

Ribbons Of Grace by Maxine Alterio

Reviewed by Elizabeth Clarkson

In her prologue to this novel, the author writes, "I will speak of shadow times, as well as happy ones, for stories, like people have many sides."

Maxine Alterio has a range of characters from many races and with various customs who provide a lively and colourful assembly of men and women in Arrowtown during gold mining times.

The two principal characters, Chinese Ming Yuet, known as Little Wind, and the fiddle player, Conran, from the Orkney Isles, represent two ancient cultures. The author tells how sorrows, joys, and tribulations merge their lives. Ming yuet left her loving family disguised as a male because girls were not permitted to leave China. Following her brother's death, she sets out to fulfil his plan to join the gold rush to New Zealand because 'they say gold is as plentiful as animal droppings.'



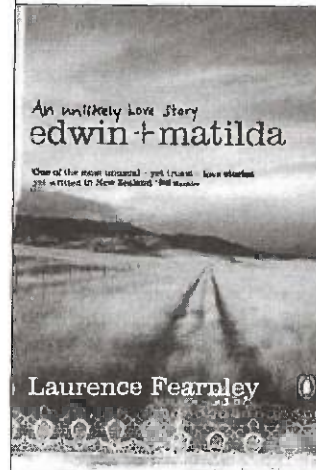
Ming Yuet keeps her disguise a secret in the little settlement of 208 people, including 70 Chinese men.

The Chinese suffer abuse and accusations such as 'the scum of China'.

Alterio describes the many hardships, harsh winters and destructive floods, the many and severe injustices to miners, the drinking, opium smoking and disorderly behaviour against a moving story of love, tragedy and sorrow.

The writing is imaginative and detailed, as a portrayal of life on the gold fields unfolds. For the many readers familiar with Arrowtown as it is now, this book will add a rich understanding of the colourful events of its past in this immensely readable and human story.

EDWIN AND MATILDA - Laurence Fearnley



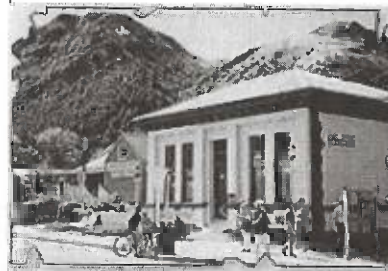
Another recently published novel set in Otago, is Laurence Fearnley's tale of mismatched couple Edwin, a lugubrious, 62 year old photographer, and Matilda, 22, recently separated and with a sad past.

While it is a contemporary tale, readers will enjoy the depictions of life in the TB sanatorium in Waipiata. The familiarity of other local Central Otago settings also makes this a fun read.

Fearnley is a splendid writer with a fine eye for detail who manages to arouse in the reader genuine sympathy for the two very

likeable major characters in this touching story. Recommended. *Editor*

MUSEUM BOOKSHOP



Of special interest to local historians are a few new publications.

Alan De La Mare has produced a valuable little booklet entitled *Bucket Dredging on the Shotover River*. This provides a brief history of dredging operations on the Shotover River and is a follow up to his booklet, *Mining Pipe Dreams of the Wakatipu*. Both available at the book shop for \$7.50.

Landmarks of Fiordland, Southland and Stewart Island/Rakiura - Past and Present by Marios Gavalas (Reed \$32.00). This is a richly illustrated book exploring the stories of pioneering hardship and the courageous characters that populated the stunning yet unforgiving landscapes in our part of the world.

Hammy's Gold - Prospecting Yarns of the Wakatipu & Western Australia by Alan Hamilton, right, (\$40.00). An excellent follow up to his *Woolshed Yarns*, this book tells of Alan's gold fossicking adventures around the Wakatipu and in Western Australia.

Photo courtesy, Southland Times



THE CHANGING FACE OF QUEENSTOWN

By Cliff Broad

We all know that there have been tremendous changes in the Wakatipu Basin in recent years. Sometimes, however, it is hard to realise the changes in our own life times. In the May 2002 issue of *The Courier*, I wrote about 'Accountance in Queenstown'. Recently, I was asked about some of the early work that I did here. There are three feasibility studies which could be of interest.

TAXI, PLEASE!

The first, was whether there was a living to be earned from owning and driving a taxi in Queenstown. This was early in the 1960's when Mr Sorenson of the Skippers Road posed the possibility. Today, with over 50 taxis in Queenstown, it is hard to comprehend that, at that time, the town was so small that it didn't have one taxi. In those days, taxis had to be licensed and obtaining one was quite expensive. We concluded that the first couple of years of operating a taxi would be a bit thin but, after that, it would be OK and then improve to allow the licence to be an asset which at the appropriate time could be sold. And, that's how it worked out.

GONDOLA, 1964

Another task in 1964 was to evaluate whether the building of the first gondola was financially possible. With the benefit of hind-sight, it is hard to imagine that it couldn't be, but it wasn't so easy at the time as there was nothing comparable in New Zealand. In due course, our estimates were entirely wrong - the gondola installation actually cost twice the estimate but, fortunately, the annual passenger numbers were also twice the estimate, so it turned out OK. It wouldn't have been very good if the passenger figures had been half the estimate! It is also interesting to recall that, when possible, investors were approached, slightly more than half turned the chance down. The first fare of £1 shows how much inflation we have had in the past 40 years.



JET BOATING ON THE SHOTOVER, 1970

The final example occurred in 1970. I was approached by Trevor Gamble and asked to give an opinion on whether giving jet boat rides on the Shotover River could be made into a profitable business. We got that one right and Trevor launched what is today, Shotover Jet.

Imagine, now, Queenstown without taxis, without gondolas and without commercial jet boats on any rivers.



Early days on the Shotover. Trevor Gamble driving his Shotover Jet. Note the modest boat, small number of passengers compared to today's trips, and that everyone, even almost 40 years ago, is wearing a life jacket.