

Queenstown & District Historical Society
2008 Incorporated

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ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Individual or Family Membership: \$10 a year

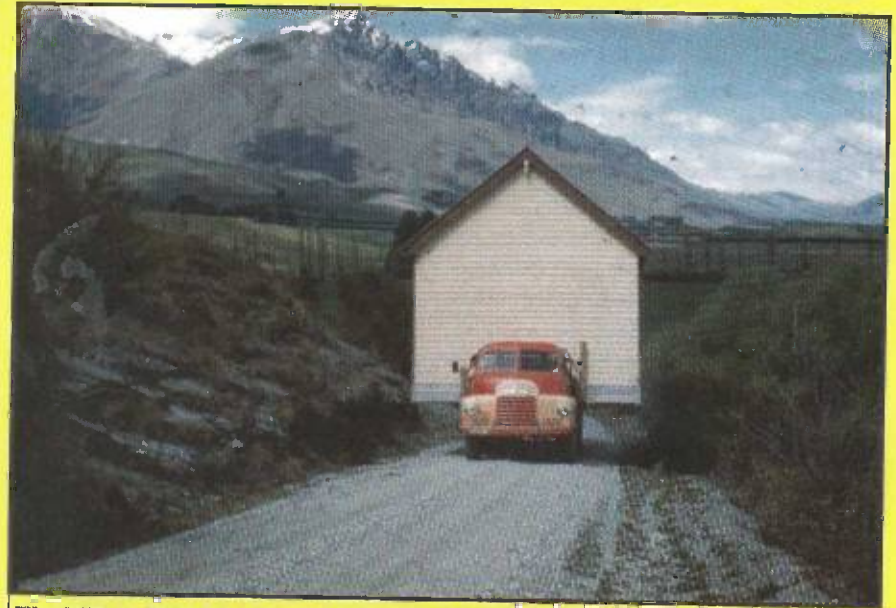
Corporate Membership: \$50 a year

Life Membership: \$100

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

*The Queenstown Courier is produced with the assistance of the Lakes District Museum
Thank you to Karen Swaine: Archive Photos*

THE QUEENSTOWN COURIER
SUMMER 2010 **ISSUE No. 84**



The Millers Flat Church on its way over Hunter Rd hill to Arrowtown, about 50 years ago

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE QUEENSTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC

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St John's Presbyterian Church, Arrowtown, circa 1928, before the Millers Flat Church building was added to it. See story page 10.

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We welcome contributions. Copy should be emailed as plain text, without any formatting, as an attachment. Photos should also be emailed as an attachment. Copy can also be posted.

Queenstown and District Historical Society 2010 Chairman's Report

It's a privilege to report back to you after my first year as Chairman.

The Last Year

It's been a year of consolidation and redirection since the Society was restructured in 2008-09 and the trust deed modified to reflect the changing circumstances in which we operate.

The pace of commercial development has slowed to the point where it has enabled us to pause and do some thinking about the Society, its role and policy priorities. I'll come back to this in a moment.

In other respects, it has been a full and satisfying year:

- We had a wonderful and well-supported summer programme culminating in the Nevis expedition.
- The ever popular calendar was again published, along with two editions of the Queenstown Courier. We also have the means to support other heritage publications and research.
- We saw a number of projects, that were supported by the Society, successfully completed (rescue of the Arrowtown cottages, the restoration of Paradise House, and the construction of the Gibbston walkway, and Bill McDonald's local farm history).
- Two appointments were made to the Lakes District Museum Board (Barbara Hamilton and Jocelyn Robertson).
- We have continued to provide input in the planning process and have made submissions on proposals with heritage significance.
- The Society also assisted the QLDC in the finalisation and adoption of the Lakes District heritage strategy; and
- We are getting behind other projects such as excavation of the Coopers Terrace village site.

These are positive aspects. Other areas where we need to put in more effort include the need to grow our membership numbers if we are to meet members' needs and to generate the financial resources needed to meet our objectives.

Financial Position

Our financial position is good. We have ended up the year in about the same overall position as for 2009.

This gives us enough of a reserve to look at projects such as helping to meet the cost of printing Bill McDonald's farm history, as well as signage on the Gibbston walkway.

While our cash position is satisfactory, we will be looking at prioritising our expenditure items more carefully over the year ahead, together with closer management of our bank balances to ensure that we are getting the best possible return.

Where Are We Heading?

The committee has just completed a review of the Society's activities with a view to developing a two-year strategy.

The review took into account the following factors:

- The drop-off in commercial development activity
- The opportunities offered by the Society's broad and flexible trust deed (education and awareness raising, ability to intervene in the planning and consents process)
- The adoption of the Council's heritage strategy – which is a model of its type – and the critical importance of ensuring that the strategy is appropriately resourced and implemented by the new Council
- The critical importance of our relationships with the QLDC, Historic Places Trust, Lakes District Museum and other trusts and organisations that share our heritage-related interests.

The outcome of this review reaffirmed the committee's belief that the Society should direct its efforts to those areas where its expertise and resources can best be used within the context of the QLDC heritage strategy and the HPT's statutory responsibilities.

The Society will work as closely as possible with the Lakes District Museum, the Department of Conservation and other heritage advisers in prioritising its resources.

Any new initiatives on the Society's part or requests for the Society's support, financial or otherwise, will be assessed in the light of the strategy outlined above.

In addition, the Society will protect and grow its source of funding (subscriptions, calendar sales, and summer programme) and seek to increase its membership base.

Of course, this is easier said than done. The usual constraints apply.

- Managing the workload on committee members
- Attrition of experienced committee and other Society members
- Loss of influence to other heritage organisations (some splintering of effort is already apparent in the Wakatipu – boatshed, First Settlers and Descendants Trust)
- Ensuring that the current restructuring of the Historic Places Trust does not result in a less productive working relationship and
- Being very selective about what resource Management Act-related interventions the Society initiates and managing the financial and legal risks this might entail.

Thanks and Acknowledgements

The Society has an excellent and hard-working committee and I'd like to thank each member for his/her contribution.

Ray and his helpers (Geoff Bradley and Marion Borrell) have again made the calendar a financial and awareness-raising success. After many years of service, Ray is stepping down from the committee and he goes with our gratitude and best wishes.

Rob Blair has stepped up and helped us with the accounts and financial reports and Barbara has put together another wonderful summer programme that will be as much fun as it will be educational.

Malcolm has continued in his role as the grand old man of heritage issues in the Wakatipu and I am grateful for his advice and counsel, especially in our dealings with the Historic Places Trust. Similarly, Brian has been a huge source of help, given unstintingly.

I am also grateful to Geoff Bradley who has deputised for me when I have been away. Geoff will relinquish the deputy chairman's position but will remain as a committee member.

No society can function without a secretary, and I would like to acknowledge Jocelyn's role here.

Danny has not been able to attend many meetings but has always contributed what he could. I am particularly appreciative of his help and advice in relation to the publishing of Bill McDonald's farm history.

Bill McDonald has labored mightily over his farm history which is about to go to print. This was a huge undertaking for an individual, even one with Bill's local knowledge.

Ralph, like me, is a relative newcomer to the committee. His role is expanding, probably more than he suspects, and I look forward to working more closely with him. He brings particular skills and experience to the committee that will be put to good use.

Since the last AGM, Marion Borrell has joined the committee with the express role of understudying Ray Clarkson and helping with the calendar and Courier. She is a real contributor.

Finally, I would like to thank you all for your interest and support for my and the committee's efforts. I have enjoyed my first year as your chairman.

This time last year, I said that I hoped to get to know you all better. I've made a start, but I know I've got some way to go yet.

Bill Dolan

Marigold Miller -a tribute

MARYGOLD MILLER - A TRIBUTE

By Malcolm Boote

Granting an Honorary Life Membership to the only surviving founder member of the Society was approved with acclaim at the recent AGM. As Founder in 1965, Secretary 1965/71 and President 1971/2, Marygold Miller is one of a small group who fought and won the battle to save the Old Queenstown Library. This group was so dedicated, they were prepared to put their bodies on the line in their efforts to save the building.

This small token, Honorary Life Membership, recognises 45 years of continuous membership and the Society thanks Marygold for her lifelong support. An article about her achievements will be published in the next Courier.

Summer Programme 2011

23 January
20 February
19 or 20 March

The Churches of Arrowtown
Trip to be finalised
Trip to Lawrence for the 150th Celebrations.

QUEENSTOWN AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY Statement of Receipts and Payments for the Year Ended 30 September 2010					
2009	Receipts	2010	2009	Payments	2010
14591.08	Accumulated Funds net of all costs disbursements and GST ex Old Society				
831.25	Less Legal Costs				
13759.83	Opening Bank	14780.17			
3820.00	Trips & Luncheons	3290.00	3990.38	Trips & Luncheons	3136.22
2570.00	Subscriptions	3023.00	635.09	Subs, Grants, Donations	1040.00
680.00	Donations	233.00	644.96	Printing, Stationery, Typing	100.00
18.55	Other	72.62	45.00	P O Box	45.00
116.68	Interest	597.87	2429.83	Coiniers	3612.91
380.00	Walking Guide Sales		129.42	AGM & Meeting Expenses	171.09
			208.13	Bronze Plaques & Signs	
			67.39	Sundry	74.68
9385.50	2009 Calendars		5840.25	2009 Calendars	
1240.00	2010 Calendars	9643.99	3690.00	2010 Calendars	3481.38
			14780.17	Closing Bank	20036.37
31770.54		31697.65	31770.54		31697.65
	Bank Balance as at 30 September 2010				
		30-Sep-09	Interest	Investment	30-Sep-10
	Current Account	1863.51			2321.84
	Fast Saver	3031.94	160.17	4000.00	7192.11
	Term Deposit Building Society 7-1	5084.72	168.47		5251.19
	Term Deposit Building Society 6-3	5000.00	271.23		5271.23
		14780.17	597.87	4000.00	20036.37
	Auditor's Statement				
	I have examined the financial records of the Society which in my opinion have been properly kept. I have obtained the information and explanations I required in common with other similar organisations, control over income and sundry donations prior to its being recorded is limited, and there are no practicable audit procedures to determine the effects of this limited control. In my opinion the financial statements presented above give a true and fair view of the financial activities of the Queenstown and District Historical Society Incorporated for the year ended 30 September 2010.				
					D Warrington B Com C A

THE 2011 CALENDAR

By Ray Clarkson

At the spring lunch in September, a well attended meeting was entertained by thirteen members who spoke about the photos which illustrate the 2011 Calendar.

A considerable amount of research had been prepared and the short talks added greatly to the appreciation of the illustrations. A comment was made that these talks should be recorded and used in future "Couriers".

We enjoyed:

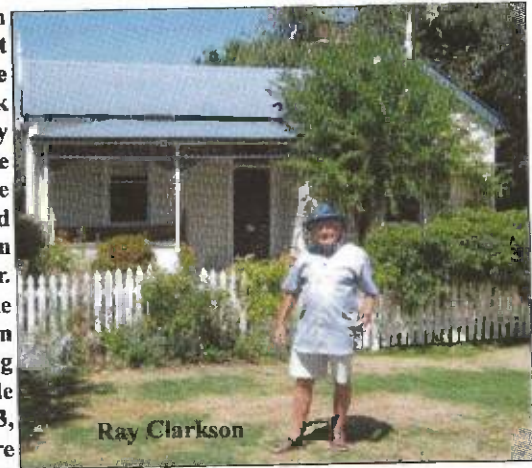
- Frances Lewis and her introduction to the Ballarat Mall
- Jan Morrison on the newly rediscovered Cooper's Terrace
- Joan Cooke on the early Kingston picnic
- Patricia Cook and her Gibbston account
- Bill Dolan and the reverse view of Glenorchy
- Cicely Morrison and the great attendance of Golf Club members
- The unusual postcard provided by Lorraine Elvidge and explained by Revell Buckham
- The wintery scene of Ralph Hanan's, and the Museum's Gibb watercolour explained by Malcolm Boote
- Brian Bayley on Tobin's Track
- Elizabeth Clarkson's amusing comments on tennis styles (below)
- Alma Stevenson explaining the Lower Shotover
- And Barbara Hamilton, the Kawarau Falls homestead.

Thanks also to David Clarke and Karen Swaine for their valuable contributions.



RAY CLARKSON STEPS DOWN

At the Society AGM in November, the longest serving member of the committee did not seek re-election. Ray Clarkson, member since the late 1980's, joined the committee in 1990 and became Vice President in November of that year. Meetings at that time were called 'as and when needed' and, on taking up the President's role for two years in 1993, monthly meetings were soon introduced. Ray has



attended regularly since so has been on call at more than 200 meetings.

A passionate supporter of the Museum, Ray took on the role of school tour guide and lecture organiser. After several years, this role developed into the full time Museum Education Officer, which has been a huge success story for the Museum. Ray also organised the Arrowtown historic walks and led many visitor guided walks in Queenstown. He played a vital role in the History Alive trips organised by the Society to the various local cemeteries, bridges and historic cottages tours in Arrowtown and Queenstown. Ray was, also, a major contributor to the submissions from the Society to the QLDC District Plan Register of Historic Sites and Buildings. He joined the successful campaign to save the Post Master's House in Arrowtown and was a founder member of the Arrowtown Heritage Advisory Group.

Two major landmark efforts by Ray came in his last spell on the committee. Firstly, he took over the Courier in 2008 and with great editorial skill, produced a series of high quality magazines always on time. His final major success, and huge contribution to the Society funds, has been three outstanding heritage calendars depicting the Wakatipu District from the period 1860 to 1920.

The committee and all members thank Ray, and Elizabeth for her support, for years of dedicated service to the Society and Heritage of this District. Ray will be a hard act to follow and his local knowledge will be hard to replace. Best wishes and thank you again.

From the Committee and all Members of the Society.

THE FLYING CHURCH

By Brian Bayley

Not many Historical Society members would consider a Church a likely candidate for flying. Recently, the wooden church building, originally erected at Millers Flat for the Presbyterians in 1871, took to the air for two relatively short but very well controlled flights in Arrowtown. Being vertical lifts and landings, no runway was required.



The first flight required some preliminary work by the Fulton Hogan house removal team, who inched the former Millers' Flat Church (the MFC) away from the wooden vestry (1879/80) behind the 1873 St John's stone church in Arrowtown. On 10th June, 2010, a large crane lifted the MFC up and then swung it over the vestry onto a specially constructed trailer designed to give maximum manoeuvrability shifting buildings.

Watching the lifting process from across the road was a bit like watching a full moon rise. At first, all that was visible was the crane's jib lifting the steel spreader cradle. Slowly, the ridge line of the Church appeared over the vestry and gradually the whole building emerged higher than the vestry which enabled the crane to then swing the building over the vestry roof and onto the rig parked in Durham Street.

A procession of safety and service vehicles accompanied the transporting rig along Berkshire Street into Ramshaw Lane to the rear of the Arrowtown Museum. From there, the trailer gave a wonderful display of many of its party tricks.



The rig inched its way around a very tight right angle bend near the public toilets to enable the MFC and trailer to be parked beside the hedge between the river side car park and Romans Lane. Most nervous spectators concluded the right angle bend was impossibly tight, but the Fulton Hogan team gave a wonderful display of just how capable they are in extracting the maximum from their plant.

The fourth site for the MFC and its former entry porch-used as a garden shed since 1959-is now safely on the miners' cottage precinct behind the Adams' cottage. The crane, working from Romans Lane, lifted the MFC and swung it over hedge, fence, trees and buildings onto the newly prepared piles. This was the second, and probably last, time the MFC will take flight.

By the late 1940s, the MFC was not being used. In 1950, it was shifted on to a section fronting Lower Shotover Road-a quarter acre corner of the late Ron Gordon's Thurlby Domain farm property. Once again, use for the building fell away and the MFC was donated to Arrowtown St John's Presbyterian Church for use as a Church hall on 2nd September 1959. The second shift was carried out by locals and involved some exciting moments. The MFC was lifted using the dangerous hand jacks of the time. Stabilising support was provided by tractor front-end loaders owned by Alan Reid and the late Bert Oldham. Shaw's Motors Ltd donated its Bedford truck, which was driven by a very experienced driver, the late Noel Stevenson.



The move from its Lower Shotover Road site.

The loaded truck, while turning onto Lower Shotover Road, collapsed a large concrete drain pipe under the weight of the left rear wheels, almost causing the MFC to fall off the truck. Alma, Noel's widow, reports it required all Noel's experience and driving skills to climb Hamilton Hill, Hunter Road. Noel thought that he might lose steering due to the front wheels lifting off the road. He kept the driver's door open to enable him to quickly jump clear in case he lost control.

When unloading and lowering the MFC onto the St John's piles, there was a real danger of the MFC collapsing. The late Jim Wilcox had to urgently place props to avert a disaster. The shifting team earned a sound sleep after such a stressful day.

The future. The MFC has been gifted to the Arrowtown Trust-which owns the adjoining Romans, Jones and Adams cottages. All the buildings were constructed between 1870 and 1885. The MFC building is now being restored and will have a toilet and modest kitchen added. It will then be let -probably as a gallery. The MFC will generate a rental income to assist future maintenance of these Trust buildings.

The miners' cottages precinct is an easily accessed and valuable addition to the growing list of historical buildings and relics within walking distance of Arrowtown's town centre.

PARADISE REGAINED The Restoration Of Paradise House

By Bill Dolan



Paradise House, 2010

The restoration of Paradise House took five years (2005-2010), from the first feasibility study to the opening ceremony in April, 2010. The rationale for the restoration of the derelict house and associated outbuildings was to give this historic property new life by providing the type of accommodation facilities and visitor experiences that made the property famous from the late 1890's to the beginning of World War 2.

Historical notes

Paradise property comprises some 129 hectares, situated 20 kilometres beyond Glenorchy in the Dart River Valley. The property is on the western edge of Diamond Lake, abuts the eastern face of Mt Alfred and is on the western boundary of Aspiring National Park. In a region noted for its natural beauty and historical interest, Paradise stands out as an exceptionally valuable property, both from a cultural-heritage perspective (farming, saw-milling, tourism and mining), and its value as a community asset.

Paradise House was designed and built in 1883 by William Mason, New Zealand's first government architect, and, later, Dunedin's first mayor and principal of the old Dunedin architectural firm of Mason and Wales. William Mason intended to use the property as a retreat, small farm and accommodation facility but, after several years, mainly because of his poor health, the property was sold to the Aitken family of Glenorchy.

They operated it as a guesthouse for the next 50 years. While the fact that the property was built and developed by William Mason gives it historical significance, it was the tenure of the Aitken family, and the property's role in the development of head of the lake tourism, that made Paradise House famous.

Even back in the 1890s, and through to the 1940s, tourism was big business in and around Glenorchy and the Paradise Valley. Paradise House competed vigorously with Arcadia guesthouse next door and the various Glenorchy hotels. The Aitkens ceased operating Paradise House around 1943. The Veints, its new owners, continued its operations as a guesthouse until 1949, when it was bought by the Miller family, with whom it remained until David Miller's death in 1998.

Timber and Scheelite

Paradise was also a prime source of timber for the growing housing needs of Queenstown. The last traces of the selective logging programme and milling, which took place from the 1880's until about World War 1, are still visible in the beech forest. Many of the original stumps can be seen; several of these have contained old axe heads and sharpening files. The remains of the old bush railway is also visible where it emerges from the forest to the site of the last sawmill on the shore of Diamond Lake.

Paradise also played its part in the compelling history of the scheelite mining industry around the Glenorchy region. A small scheelite mine had been established at the northern tip of the property about the time of the first World War, when the price of the steel-hardening mineral escalated dramatically as a result of armaments manufacturing. The mine fell into disuse, following the end of the war, but was re-opened and expanded by the government during the early days of the second World War. The mine continued on a reduced scale of operations until the early 1950s. During the height of the mine's operations in the 1940s, the mine complex comprised several buildings and a blacksmith's shop. Miners who did not live on-site boarded at Paradise House. The mine buildings were removed at the end of the war but the remains of the blacksmith's shop can still be seen.

The Restoration Project

Paradise House was in very poor condition at the beginning of the restoration project. In fact, it is doubtful that the building would have survived in a salvageable state for more than another year or two.

The restoration project comprised several distinct phases:

- Feasibility, budgeting and planning
- Fundraising and obtaining resource consents
- Restoration and fit-out



The project involved many organisations and individuals, principally the Queenstown District Council (and Lakes Environmental), various engineers (heating, electrical and waste disposal), surveyors and builders and subcontractors. Ensuring the timely contribution of all these people was the critical element in the success of the project and keeping the elapsed project timeline as short as possible.

In addition, the Paradise Trust made every effort to:

- be environmentally friendly with respect to water, sewerage and heating
- preserve the essence of Paradise House by replacing only what was necessary from a structural and weather-tightness point of view
- follow the original paint colours and materials as far as possible
- keep, and restore where possible, the original fittings, such as the kitchen wood-burning stove and light fittings.



The restoration project was closely managed by the Trust, Jackie Gillies (conservation architect), under the general supervision of the Historic Places Trust.

The success of the project, as evidenced by the final result, and the level of interest the property is now creating, was due to the following factors.

- Contracting a professional and experienced conservation architect to oversee the project. Jackie Gillies is pre-eminent in her field.
- Choosing the right builder. A project of this scale and nature requires a builder that has a particular interest in, and feel for restoration work.
- The Historic Places Trust's initiation of the registration process (Paradise is now classified as a Category 1 property under the Historic Places Act 2008). This classification enabled the Paradise Trust to apply (successfully) for funding from the New Zealand Lottery Grants Board and other funding agencies.
- The willingness of the Central Lakes Trust to assume the lead funder role. Most funding agencies will assist only if there is a lead funder.



The ruins before restoration

- The assistance of the Otago Community Trust to advance funds at a level above their usual level of funding for heritage projects.
- The interest and involvement of the Queenstown Lakes District Council.

Timeline

2005: preliminary discussions held with Jackie Gillies (conservation architect) on the feasibility of the project.

June 2007: conservation plan prepared by Jackie Gillies. This was the foundation document for the ensuing project.

August 2005: preliminary project costings prepared by quantity surveyors (Maltby and Partners Ltd, Queenstown). This was updated in May 2007.

June 2007: Paradise Trust formally commits to the project and commences the fundraising programme.

July 2007: application made to Central Lakes Trust for funding assistance (\$400,000 approved October 2007).

October 2007: application made to Otago Community Trust for funding assistance (\$100,000 approved December 2007).

December 2007: Historic Place Trust prepares a report on Paradise (Paradise subsequently registered Category 1 under the Historic Places Trust Act June 2008).

February 2008: application made to the Heritage Committee of Lottery Grants Board for funding assistance (\$250,000 approved June 2008).

July 2008: commenced detailed project planning and preparation of supporting documentation.

August 2008: resource and building consents applied for (granted April 2009).

October 2008: building tenders issued.

December 2008: building contract signed with Mike Kingan Builders Ltd, Wanaka).

December 2008: site preparation and restoration work commences.

January 2009: archaeological consent issued.

April 2010: project completed (pictured below)



BLUFF, SWEAT AND TEARS The Story of the Kingston Road

By Danny Knudson



Date unknown. A work gang on the Kingston road. The man in the jacket, leaning on the horse, is Adam McLeod, father of Joan Cooke, Historical Society member.

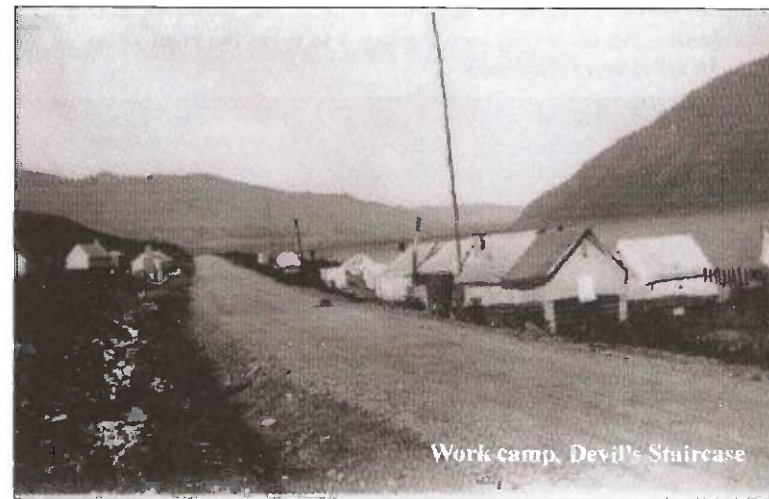
Photo courtesy Joan and Alan Cooke

The Hector Range, including the Remarkables, east of Lake Wakatipu between Queenstown and Kingston, was foreboding for pioneers. The first known explorers to traverse the lower slopes were Donald Cameron and Angus Macdonald while in search of suitable grazing land in 1858. They found one set of bluffs exceedingly steep and described them as the devil's own staircase, originating the name Devil's Staircase. The first known person to journey full length along the foot of the range to Kingston was a man named Green, an employee of William Rees, the first farmer based in Queenstown Bay. In 1862, when Green completed his contract to build two small boats, he swam his horse across the narrows of Frankton Arm to reach Kelvin Heights peninsula, from where he rode his mare to Kingston. Alfred Duncan, another of Rees' men, regarded this as a notable accomplishment.

Cobb and Co coaches commenced a run from Dunedin to Kingston via Tokomairiro and Clutha on 4 April, 1863. The journey cost £10 per passenger and, in favourable conditions, it occupied three days but, in wet or snowy weather, the same distance could take a week. Although a boat

service was available from Kingston to Queenstown, there was sufficient overland travel to warrant the Otago Provincial Government forming a track between Kingston and the Kawarau along the hillside above the route followed by the present road.

The Struggle for a Road



Work camp, Devil's Staircase

A road from Kingston to Queenstown was first suggested in the 1870s, but nothing tangible was started. It was not until September, 1926, that more productive discussion occurred at a meeting of the Queenstown Borough Council, when Cr W.H. Overton suggested that a road be formed via the newly completed Kawarau dam. Cr Jock Cockburn made similar comments at a Lake County Council meeting, suggesting that a road would help tourism in the south. The Southland League took up the matter by writing to the Public Works Department, asking that an engineer survey the route and estimate the cost of a road. Much depended on the extent of public support shown by the Wakatipians, and candidates for the forthcoming Queenstown Borough Council elections lost no time in promoting the road project during their election campaigns. A visit to Queenstown by the Prime Minister and Minister of Public Works also proved timely.

It was only months later, in April 1927, that Government approval was given to commence work on road construction between the Kawarau dam and Wye Creek. It was always intended that the Kingston road would be a

swarm and sweat job; swarm the project with men who would engage in laborious pick and wheelbarrow work. There was plenty of labour available from men laid off at the onset of the economic depression commonly called 'the slump'. Accordingly, progress was slow and the quality of road-making was modest. Without mechanical equipment, some of the soft sections lacked an adequate foundation. However, construction gangs numbering up to 105 men managed to form the road as far as Wye Creek, 10 miles from Frankton.



By mid-1928, the Southern League was frustrated by the limited progress and approached southern members of parliament to begin construction at the Kingston end. The two Councils, Queenstown Borough and Lake County, supported such an initiative. It was argued that this move would provide work for unemployed men in Invercargill. An approach was made to the Government for £10,000 to £12,000 to sustain the idea, but the Government's response was guarded, when the Minister of Works discovered that it would take another £29,000 to complete the road. It was repeated that the project was not urgent and intended principally to provide employment relief.

It came as a surprise when the Government suddenly halted the project and men were paid off in September 1929, by which time construction costs had reached £21,000. The Queenstown Council objected, pointing out that money spent already was wasted unless the project was completed. Furthermore, labour remained plentiful, as New Zealand continued to experience the worst economic depression in its history.

Around this time, significant argument developed regarding the implications of road transport to and from Kingston being in direct competition with services provided by lake steamers. The Railways Department, which operated the *Earnslaw* on behalf of the Government, considered that there would be no prospect of having an additional steamer on Lake Wakatipu if road transport reduced passenger and cargo demands. Lake County members got cold feet at the thought of road maintenance costs becoming a burden on their budget.

Conversely, the Queenstown Council was not phased by the thought of lake and road transport competition. Members believed that the Kingston road would be part of a major tourist route between Otago and Southland. In September 1933, the Main Highway Board issued a reassurance that the road would be declared a main highway for which maintenance costs would be provided rather than left to local Councils. Lake County Council members then gave their support to road works resuming. With general community agreement, the Government approved the re-employment of large teams of men to restart work on the Kingston end from August 1934. The most challenging and expensive section of construction was at the Devil's Staircase,

pictured. Some indication of the steepness of this rugged area comes from the experiences of W.G. Rees. During the gold rush days, beginning in October 1862, Rees sold food supplies to gold miners and



he brought a herd of 35 cattle from Invercargill to Kingston for that purpose. From Kingston, Rees drove the cattle along the lakeside track. At the Devil's Staircase, one of the lead beasts panicked and jumped off the track, tumbled down the cliffs and landed in the lake. The others followed and all were killed. Rees had paid £40 a head for the beasts and sustained a loss of about £1400 which constituted a fortune in the 1860s. Forming a road through the Devil's Staircase was a major achievement for engineers and construction teams, using elementary equipment of the 1930's. This one-mile section of rocky bluffs necessitated the excavation of 30,000 cubic yards of rock at a cost of £12,000, being about one-sixth the total cost of road construction.

Another obstacle involved crossing the Kawarau River but, fortunately, the road was able to utilise the dam that had been constructed by the Kawarau Gold Mining Company in 1926. And that is a story in itself. As suggested in the *Lake Wakatip Mail*, had the Government in the 1930's been faced with full construction costs of a bridge across the Kawarau, the Queenstown-Kingston road may have been delayed for many years.

Opening the Road: Saturday 4 April 1936

A full report of the opening of the Kingston road appeared in the *Lake Wakatip Mail* of 7 April, 1936, with the following headlines and lead paragraphs:

**Kingston-Queenstown Road – Great Tourist Route
Official Opening Ceremonies
District Red Letter Day
Fine Weather and Record Crowd**

On Saturday the official opening of the Kingston-Queenstown road took place in fine weather and amid great enthusiasm. A number of people set out for Kingston in the morning, travelling by railway omnibus, motor car and motor cycle, arriving there some time after noon. A picnic lunch was then partaken of on the shores of the lake, hot water and milk being provided by a thoughtful County Council. Meantime, a stream of cars from Invercargill, Dunedin, and indeed, all parts of the province, was pouring into the lakeside township, bearing crowds of people eager to take part in the formal procession that was scheduled to leave the 'port' at 1.30 p.m.

When Mrs Leo Lee, wife of the County chairman, had cut the scarlet ribbon stretched across the road the joyous cavalcade moved off on the historic journey to the Kawarau end of the road, where the official ceremony was to take place. The County chairman's party led the way, followed by cars in which were the various official guests. The Railway Department's fine fleet of Leyland cubs and Cadillacs in their trapping of light blue and gold made a brave show. Members of the Queenstown Borough Council travelled in one of these and the Arrowtown City Fathers in another, while representative railway officials occupied a third.

Wakatipu was in tranquil mood, and the panorama of lake and mountain scenery, ever changing as the cars traversed the road, created a very deep impression upon those who had eyes to see the riches which Nature has heaped up in this highly favoured part of the world.



The official opening, pictured above, was held at Kawarau Falls Station, where Mr Leo Lee welcomed a huge crowd, then outlined the early history of the lakeside route. T.M. Ball, District Engineer of the Public Works Department, spoke about the chronology of construction. He announced that the cost to date of forming the 23.5 miles was £63,000 and that £7000 would be needed to finish the Devil's Staircase bridge and widen parts of the road. A.W. Wellstead, Commercial Manager of New Zealand Railways, addressed the matter of road/steamer co-operation, and Queenstown's Mayor, W.H. Overton, thanked all organisations which had collaborated to make the road a reality. C.J. Talbot, a member of the Mackenzie County Council and Main Highways Board, congratulated the local Councils and announced that the Lake County Council had taken over the new road on a £3 for £1 subsidy for maintenance. Talbot also clarified that lakeside access was now 24 hours a day. Finally, W.A. Bodkin, local Member of Parliament, congratulated those responsible for approving and constructing the road. Tears of joy were justified when Bodkin declared the Kingston-Queenstown road open, nine years after construction had commenced.



APRIL 4, 1936
Opening the Kingston-Queenstown Road



OUTSIDE THE KINGSTON PUB
(date uncertain)



NEGOTIATING THE KINGSTON ROAD

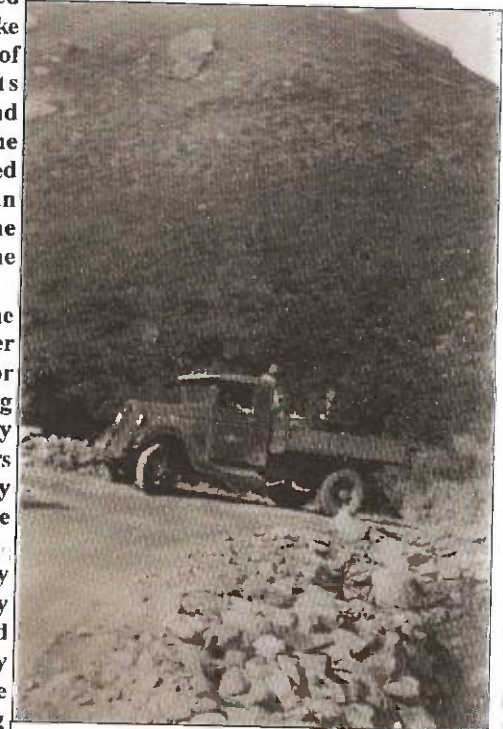
By Brian Bailey

For some years, from about 1954, the late Bill Anderson operated Queenstown Motors out of premises adjoining the old wooden Presbyterian Church in Ballarat Street-now rebranded as the Mall. Bill sold Atlantic and other brands of fuel and oils, undertook mechanical repairs and a vehicle recovery and breakdown service.

Bill's most memorable vehicle recovery took place along the Lake Road to Kingston. A vehicle was being driven to Queenstown loaded with provisions, including a box of live chickens. Dust from preceding vehicles became so overwhelming the driver stopped to allow the dust to settle. Prior to his own dust cloud settling, a following vehicle shunted the stationary car over the bank and down into the lake, where the vehicle

came to rest on a submerged ledge, just before the lake plunged down hundreds of feet. The occupants abandoned their vehicle and provisions and regained the roadway, no doubt battered and bruised. One can imagine the relief of the victims and those in the following vehicle.

To minimise its loss, the insurer sent Bill to recover the vehicle. Bill arranged for divers to attach grappling hooks to the car preliminary to its recovery. The divers encountered many very excited eels around the submerged vehicle, frustrated by their inability to gain access to the tasty pickings. I have been told some of the eels were nearly as big as the divers, not the nicest swimming companions.



A Taylor's Brothers truck negotiating the Wye Creek section of the road shows how rugged conditions were.

100 YEARS AGO IN THE WAKATIPU MAIL

Compiled by Danny Knudson

Each Tuesday throughout 1910, the Lake Wakatipu Mail was published in Queens-town, bringing local, national and world news to readers throughout the Wakatipu and beyond. A review of editions from 100 years ago reveals a plethora of topics including reports of significant occasions, social events, disputes, and stories written by visitors. A few items have been reproduced on the occasion of their centennial.

Although a long way from 'home', Wakatipians were kept informed of international events, and they continued to take a genuine interest in their English heritage, as demonstrated when King Edward VII died of pneumonia on 7 May. Thirteen days later, one day before his burial at Windsor, a memorial service was held in Arrowtown.

ARROW NOTES

King Edward Memorial Service

Last Friday a memorial service in respect for the dead British Monarch was held in the Athenaeum Hall, a large number being present.

(Lake Wakatipu Mail, May 24, 1910)

Public dances were popular throughout the Wakatipu. Some enthusiasts travelled long distances to participate. For example, people walked from Macetown, over Advance Peak to Skippers to attend dances. Many of the functions continued until daybreak, with pauses for musical items, and a lavish supper provided by women. News of social events such as dances warranted newspaper reports.



DANCE AT THE LOWER SHOTOVER

The second dance promoted, mainly, by the Lower Shotover bridge workmen which took place last Thursday evening in the schoolhouse was another success, notwithstanding that the weather was somewhat disagreeable. Quite a large number of young people went from Queenstown, and the district around about the Shotover was well represented, there being over six sets present...Excellent music was supplied by Messrs J.H. Aldridge and son (cornet and piano), while Mr Alex McBride, Lake Hayes, ably marshalled the dancing. Mr Houston was at his old post, the copper, which is always a guarantee that the beverage is right.

(Lake Wakatipu Mail, 27 Sept. 1910)

Throughout 1910, there were lengthy newspaper reports of court proceedings, many involving disputes between mining parties. Other conflicts were also reported.

THE SHEARERS' DISPUTE

Threatened Industrial Struggle

The principal bone of contention between the owners and men, we are told, is the rate of pay. The men have been receiving 18 shillings a hundred for shearing in Canterbury and Otago, and now the employers demand that the rate shall be reduced to 17s and 6d while the men claim that it should be raised to 20s.

(Lake Wakatipu Mail 24 May 1910)

By 1910, the Wakatipu was widely recognised as a holiday destination and a flourishing trade had developed conveying visitors to various scenic attractions, including Glenorchy and Paradise.

The trip up the lake per S.S. Ben Lomond is really fine. I have often times seen in print reflections on the utility of the Ben Lomond as a passenger steamer since she got into the hands of the Government...Before that as it may, the Government, when taking over the fleet from the Wakatipu S.S. Co., faithfully promised the providing of a new steamer to meet the present and probable greater increase in the passenger traffic.

*Mr Knowles who has recently taken over the Glenorchy Hotel, will, in conjunction with his worthy wife, ere long make Glenorchy a very strong attraction to all visitors. His coach services to Paradise are also of the best. Going further we also have Mr and Mrs Aitken at Paradise...The Arcadia, a fine handsome building, is like placing a palace in a wilderness. The country generally at the head of Wakatipu, although possessing many fine features, is actually best adapted for dairy farming, and would, if properly utilised, make an ideal spot for this industry.
(Lake Wakatipu Mail 15 March 1910)*

The Lake Wakatipu Mail maintained the services of a correspondent to report items of interest regarding the Upper Shotover district. Winter weather conditions in 1910 were mild, but the Blue Slip on the Skippers Road was still troublesome.

Upper Shotover Notes

Winter with us, so far, has been very mild, although a fair amount of snow has fallen on the high country. We have only had a fall of about two inches. Last Monday saw the Shotover in high flood owing to the amount of rain and the warm weather bringing away the snow.

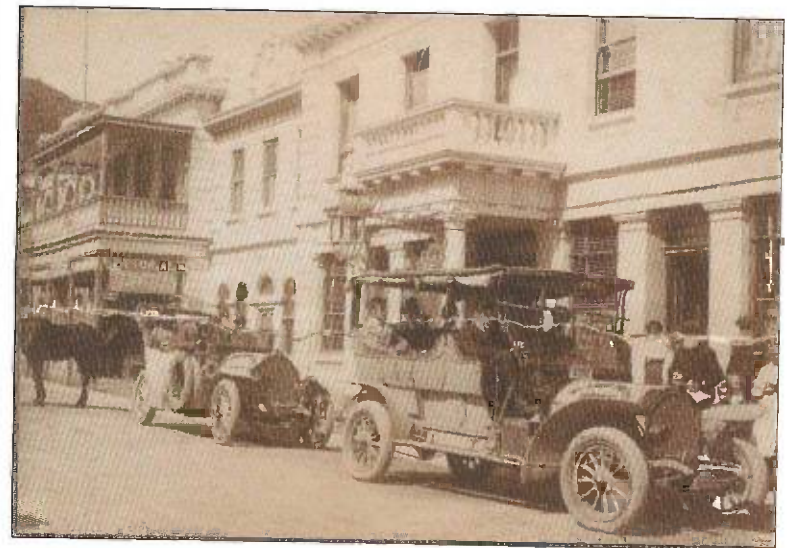
As was to be expected after the soft weather, the noted "Blue Slip" was again steadily moving towards the river; in fact, in two days the whole slip had shifted towards the river about fifteen feet...

At the present time two men are employed keeping the track through the slip open. They are also to try to widen it sufficiently for wheel traffic, but I have grave doubts about the latter. (Lake Wakatipu Mail 5 July 1910)

The Lake County Council was slow to accept the introduction to motorised transport in the Wakatipu. Motor vehicles were forbidden on selected roads long after cars were negotiating other parts of Otago and permitted in Queenstown. A notable highway reserved for horse transport in 1910 was between Frankton and Queens-town. To avoid prosecution, motorists sometimes yoked a horse in front of their cars to satisfy regulations on this section of road. It was not until 1915 that the Council allowed motorcars to have unrestricted access to the Frankton road.

Skippers Notes

The Royal Mail coach met with an accident last Wednesday when coming down the saddle, by the breaking of an axle. Fortunately the owner of the coach, Mr Bourdeau, who was driving, escaped without injury.



Service cars operated by the Mt Cook Motor Company pioneered motorised transport for passengers in the Wakatipu district in the 1920s. Here one is seen outside Eichardt's.

Motor V. Horse Traction

The Minister of the Tourist and Health Resorts informed a representative of the MAIL that he is endeavouring to arrange a motoring tour from Timaru to Pembroke via Fairlie and Pukaki and would very much like to continue the tour right on to Queenstown over the Crown Range and Saddle and via Arrowtown. He is also desirous that the journey be made from this end also. He says that the journey could be done comfortably in four hours, which is less than half the time occupied by the coach.

Motoring tours are being constantly broken at the Lake County boundaries for although the whole of the roads are not barred against motor men there is not encouragement for them to proceed through the County unless they risk it and stand the chance of a prosecution. It is becoming more apparent every day that the County by-law is a retrograde piece of legislation and the sooner it is blotted out the better. The Council should at least see its way to suspend the by-law as far as those portions referring to the Cromwell-Queenstown and Pembroke-Queenstown roads are concerned.

There is no gainsaying the fact that in time the older order must give way to the new. The motor is fast superseding horse traffic everywhere.

(Lake Wakatip Mail 20 December 1910)

It is not well known that, in 1910, the T.S.S. Earnslaw was designed as a paddle steamer to be a larger version of her predecessor, the Mountaineer. The Lake Wakatip Mail announced this news in January 1910. However, a later decision changed the ship's design and the Earnslaw was eventually launched in 1912 as a twin screw steamer weighing 330 tons, 165 feet long and capable of 15 knots

Proposed New Steamer For Lake Wakatipu A Further Promise

It will be a matter of interest, says 'The Daily Times' to the public who patronise the tourist resorts of the province, and to others as well, that something practical is at last being done in the direction of providing a new steamer for the Lake Wakatipu service. Mr H. McRae, Naval Architect, Dunedin, is at the present time, at the instance of the honourable J. A. Millar, Minister of Marine, preparing plans and specifications, with a view of the calling of tenders in New Zealand, for a new steamer for Lake Wakatipu.

It is anticipated that these plans will be completed in about a month's time and, when they have been forwarded to Wellington, tenders will be called for the construction of a steamer within New Zealand.

The plans which Mr McRae is preparing provide for a paddle steamer of about 250 tons, and capable of carrying from 800 to 1000 passengers and 40 tons of cargo. She will be able to travel at a rate of 15 miles an hour, and will be 160 feet long, with two decks and dining and deck saloons. Her draught will be 5ft 9in, which will permit her going right up to the Head of the Lake and into fairly shallow parts, while the fact of her being a paddle steamer will greatly reduce the tendency to roll. All over, she will be very much larger than the boats at present in commission, and will be from four to five miles an hour faster.

(Lake Wakatip Mail, 25 January 1910)

SAINT MARY OF THE CROSS

By Margaret Hyland

Mary MacKillop was born in Melbourne of Scottish parents in 1842. She was the eldest of eight children. Her father, a well educated man, ensured all the children had a good education, but he was a poor business man and the family had difficulty coping. Mary helped where she could as she grew older, working as a governess, in business and then as a teacher.



It was while she was at Penola that she first met Fr Woods. He, like Mary, was aware of the educational needs of the outback children. Together, they wrote a rule for a congregation of Sisters who would go into the outback, living amongst the locals, providing education and religious training. Mary became Mother Mary of the Cross and opened her first school in a converted stable.

Despite difficulties, the Order spread to New Zealand, beginning in Temuka in 1883. It was during her second visit to New Zealand, in 1897, that Mary and three Sisters came to Arrowtown. They arrived at Bluff and were persuaded to come to Arrowtown by its Parish Priest, rather than Port Chalmers, as Arrowtown's need was desperate. Their arrival in Arrowtown was met by a parade of people including mayor and councillors. Mary stayed about a month before moving on to Port Chalmers.

She wanted her young sisters living closer to the school and church rather than in the cottage provided by the Parish, so she asked Fr Keenan to subdivide the large school and, with a couple of cottages behind, make this the new convent. She returned to Arrowtown for St Joseph's Day, March 19, 1898, and stayed to see the job finished, about another two months, before moving on to other parts of New Zealand.

The little stone cottage in the school grounds is all that remains of this second convent, where Mary stayed and worked; the old school is now part of the Bowling Green Pavilion across the road. The cottage has traditionally been called the refectory and has been restored to as near its 1898 appearance as possible.

Mary did not keep good health. Many of the symptoms she had are now recognised as multiple sclerosis. Medical advisors in 1902 decided she should try the hot springs at Rotorua. While there, she had a severe stroke, returned to Sydney and died there on August 8, 1909.

Beatification, the first step to saint-hood was awarded Blessed Mary in 1995. On October 17, 2010, she was canonised and this was celebrated in Arrowtown on November 7.

Her followers, the Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, continue her work today. They set up schools throughout Australia, New Zealand and South America but also continue to work in other areas of social welfare and Parish administration.

ARROWTOWN CELEBRATIONS

Arrowtown is one of the few places where tangible reminders of Saint Mary of The Cross are found, so it was fitting that her canonisation was celebrated here with a Victorian era classroom session, historic walks, a procession and special mass.



Lakes District Museum Director, David Clark, and organising committee chairwoman, Margaret Hyland, outside Mary's cottage

Miller's Flat church ascends to the heavens



The Millers Flat Church ascends towards the heavens on the first stage of its miraculous journey to, probably, its final resting place, near Provisions Cafe, at Adam's cottage.

Christmas at the Museum

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