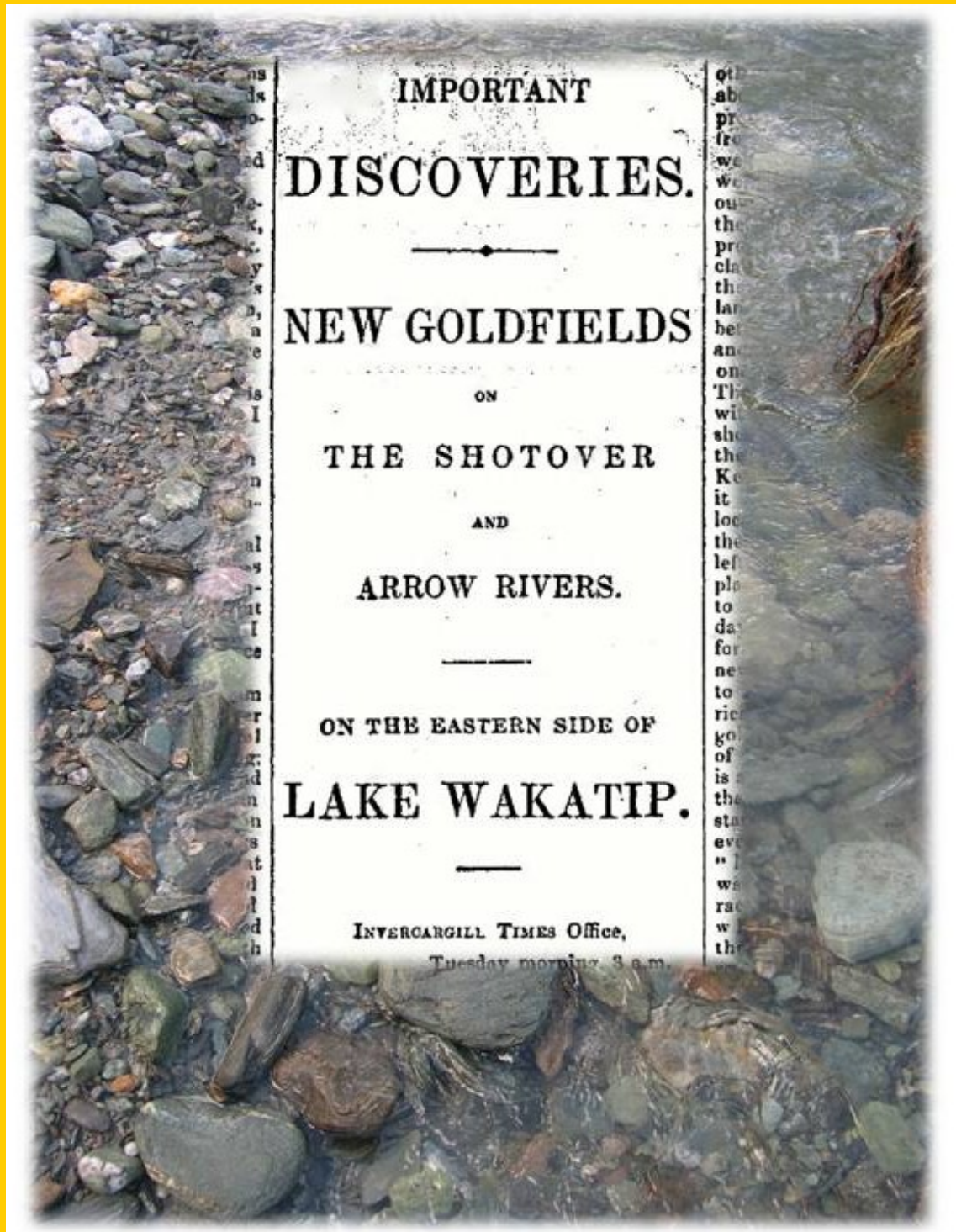


THE QUEENSTOWN COURIER

SPRING 2012

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ARROWTOWN
Born of Gold, Still Thriving At 150

Denis Glover, in his famous poem published in 1945, summed up the town's history thus:

ARROWTOWN

Gold in the hills, gold in the rocks,
Gold in the river gravel,
Gold as yellow as Chinamen,
In the bottom of a shovel.

Gold built the bank its sham facade;
Behind that studded door
Gold dribbled over the counter
Into the cracks of the floor.

Gold pollinated the whole town;
But the golden bees are gone –
Now round a country butcher's shop
The sullen blowflies drone,

Now paved with common clay
Are the roads of Arrowtown;
And the silt of the river is grey
In the golden sun.

But the story doesn't end there, oh no. Hilary Hunt, a Society member, has written this update:

Gold is back in paper bills,
Gold is spent into ringing tills;
Buses and cars, vans and trucks
Disgorge their folk to spend a few bucks.

The Chinese are back in another guise -
Spenders not diggers, perhaps a surprise.
Time has moved on in this small town,
It's growing and blooming, not winding down.

The Courier is published earlier than usual this time to provide some background reading before the gold-rush commemorations at Labour Weekend. The Society's participation in this event is shown in the programme of Activities for Members in the back of this magazine.

For the full programme of celebrations, see the website: www.arrowtown150.co.nz.

SHIPPING INTELLIGENCE

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THE INVERCARGILL TIMES

STREET VENDORS
KELVINSTOWN, DUNEDIN
Dunedin, 25th Nov. 1892

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When we first commenced work, no diggers were on the spot; when we left they numbered above a hundred, principally from the Dunstan. No stores on the ground; supplies come from Rees'. Though we have had such good success ourselves, we would caution men intending to go to these diggings that they may have great difficulty in finding payable claims. During our stay on the Arrow river, sometimes one and sometimes two of us prospected a considerable portion of the surrounding country, obtaining fair prospects. In the Shotover river, a tributary of the Kawarau, we got about a pennyweight to the dish. In several of the small creeks adjacent we found gold, but not in payable quantity. The opinion we have formed of the gross amount got by the total number of diggers on the ground, up to the date of our leaving, was about 1,600 ozs. Most of the diggers arrived within three or four days of our leaving."

The party who furnished us with the foregoing information, speaks very highly of the kindness they experienced from Mr. Rees, in facilitating their operations by supplying them with stores, etc. The above gentleman is, we understand, making arrangements for the probable influx of diggers, by laying in a considerable quantity of stores, and placing on the lake a boat capable of holding about 20 tons.

After carefully questioning the party who furnished the above report, and also two other diggers from the same locality, we may state generally that the following description will embrace the whole of the country prospected by them—from Rees' station to the Crown, and from the Crown to the Cardrona Creek, and thence to the Molyneux, and following that river down to its junction with the Kawarau, and thence again in a straight line back to Rees'.

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BILL FOX AND THE FIGHT AT THE FOUR ALLS HOTEL

By Spike Broadbent

“Knife!”

James Caulfield was the first to see the glint of metal in Bill Fox’s hand. Caulfield reached out and grabbed Fox’s arm, but the big Irishman was too strong and broke Caulfield’s grip. Fox stabbed McCoy in the ribs. Again Caulfield tried to hold Fox’s arm, but someone in the tight circle gathered round the two combatants moved in front of Caulfield, and once again he lost his grip. Fox stabbed McCoy again. And again. And again. Seven blows were struck before McCoy, feeling the air entering his body where one of the blows had pierced his lungs, collapsed into Fox’s arms.

Fox, covered in McCoy’s blood, gently lowered the critically wounded man to the ground. Half an hour later he was arrested by police Sergeant Fleming. Fox caused no trouble, and quietly followed Fleming to the police cells in Queenstown.

McCoy was close to death. If he had not received prompt and professional medical treatment, Fox would have faced a murder charge.

But was this fight to be Bill Fox’s ruin? Surely only a vicious and violent man would repeatedly stab an unarmed opponent in a ‘fair’ fist fight and such a criminal would be shunned and vilified?

On the contrary, Fox’s reputation was hardly sullied. He was, after all, the pre-eminent explorer/pro prospector in the South Island, and some very important people rallied to his defence and in later years sought him out to lead exploratory expeditions. Few people ever referred to Fox as a convicted felon.

And this raises the question. Was there more to this fight than was ever revealed at the remand hearing in Queenstown and subsequent trial in Dunedin? Was Caulfield a reliable witness? Like so many aspects of Bill Fox’s life, we will never ever really know the truth.

We know almost nothing of his childhood and very little of his young adult life. He never married, fathered no children, and there seems to be no surviving photograph or portrait of the man. He was described as a big, powerful, burly man who liked to solve problems with his fists. Patrick William Fox was born in Ireland in 1826 or 1827 and described himself as a ‘seafarer’. Apparently he left his ship in San Francisco Bay in 1847 or 1850 and made his way north to the Californian goldfields.



Fox’s monument in the Arrow Gorge erroneously credits Bill Fox with the discovery of gold there. A sign acknowledging that Jack Tewa (or Maori Jack) was first will be erected in time for the 150th Commemorations in October.

We can assume that it was here that Fox first succumbed to ‘gold lust’ as he was to spend nearly the rest of his life in search of the elusive metal. He followed the gold trail from California to Bendigo and Ballarat, and then across the Tasman to Otago after the announcement of the Tuapeka discoveries in 1861.

By this time Fox had honed his mining skills. Unlike the local miners, who were largely farm labourers and unskilled workers, Fox and other ‘professional’ miners knew how to identify where gold might be found, where to locate it and how to extract it.

From Gabriel’s Gully, Fox made his way up the Clutha to Dunstan, then Cromwell, then the Arrow, and finally the wild West Coast of the South Island which he prospected from nearly top to bottom.

But he first really enters the history books when he made his way to the Arrow River in October 1862. He consistently claimed to be the first to find gold in the river, as he was keen to receive the government reward for the discovery of the fabulously rich gold strike that followed. He was prepared to substantiate his claims even though he knew he was beaten by five days by McGregor and Low and their party which included the Christie brothers, a fact which was recognised at the time. (The government never paid Fox the reward - the Goldfields Secretary, Vincent Pyke, always held that McGregor and Low were the real discoverers, and he never gave Fox a look in.)

Fox was the dominant personality amongst the small group of miners secretly working the Arrow River in the short period before the rush truly started and law and order arrived. He was elected commissioner by McGregor, Low and the others, and he came up with a system whereby each miner was allocated a sixty foot frontage to the river. Fox ruled with an iron hand and justice was simple - anybody who jumped a claim or disputed the law had to fight him!

Fox may have been the biggest and toughest miner in those early, secret days on the Arrow, but he betrayed the other miners’ trust and they never forgave him for this. In 1899 when the Otago Daily Times again raised the issue of Fox’s claim, both Low and D.L. Christie wrote letters explaining that when Fox and his companions came across the McGregor/Low party working the river, they agreed that Fox’s party could join them as long as they all swore to keep the strike a secret as long as possible. But Fox broke this agreement when, after no more than a few days, according to Christie, he “slipped away during the night and rode post-haste to Dunstan where he lodged a claim with the warden for the discovery of a new goldfield.” Christie added that Fox “had no more to do with the discovery of the diggings than the man in the moon!”

Fox defended his actions by stating he needed supplies. William Rees, who visited the diggings on several occasions – the strike was of course on his lands - knew Fox and the other early miners, and he was unimpressed. “Fox like a fool must need go to the Dunstan (for supplies) and as a consequence he was watched and followed,” he wrote. .”

We don’t know how many times Fox returned to Dunstan to sell gold and buy supplies, but it was no secret he was on to a rich supply of ‘colour’, and following him became known as ‘hunting the fox’. Although Fox prided himself on his ability to evade his trackers, he was successfully followed by an American called West, and then others. When provincial geologist Dr James Hector also tracked Fox to the Arrow, he found about 40 men working the river, with Fox very much in charge. It was only a matter of time before the secret strike became a rush and then a stampede, and about two months after McGregor and Low’s discovery, this is exactly what happened.

For all his faults, Fox was gifted with the right criteria to be the consummate prospector: skilful,

tough, observant, energetic, mentally and physically strong, and fearless. He must also have possessed huge amounts of determination and stamina – his search for gold took him, at times alone, into some of the South Island’s most extreme and dangerous wilderness.

There were brief periods when Fox seemed to settle down, but they never lasted long. He was always restless, always looking for Eldorado.

And there were times when he tasted success.

Fox made a lot of money in the Arrow and then the Shotover, but when the ‘easy’ gold became more difficult to extract by early 1863, he decided to invest in hotels and infrastructure. He became partner in the Golden Age hotel in Arrowtown and shortly after the Four Alls at Arthur’s Point. He also owned a large boat on Lake Wakatipu which could transport six or seven tons of supplies from Kingston to Queenstown, a lucrative business in those days.

By early 1864 he was not only the most famous character in the district, but also at the very least ‘comfortably well off.’ It was Fox the community leader who presented popular retiring mounted police officer Sergeant-Major Bracken with a gold ring, made from gold extracted by Fox’s own hands. And Fox demonstrated his ‘gift of the gab’ in an endearing speech praising Bracken for his success in bringing law and peace to the district.

So why would Fox, who seemed to have so much going, potentially throw all of this away by producing a knife and brutally stabbing a man outside his own hotel?

Let’s look at the few facts we know surrounding the fight which came to light during the remand hearing at Queenstown court before Mr R Beetham.

John McCoy (who spelled his name *M’Kie* and was probably illiterate) was an Irish miner from Arthur’s Point. He had been drinking for several hours at the Four Alls when Fox “came home” – Fox lived in rooms in the hotel. It seems Fox ejected someone from the bar – it may have been one of McCoy’s mates – but for some reason McCoy challenged Fox and Fox readily accepted. “Come on Jack, I’ll fix you,” said Fox and the fight started. It was around 6pm and McCoy and Fox were both inebriated, Fox perhaps less to some degree.

McCoy, who was most probably a regular patron at the Four Alls, had known Fox for four months, so he knew of Fox’s reputation. There were no reports of previous animosity between the two men. In fact, under oath in court, McCoy seemed to have some respect if not affection for Fox.

The fight, which McCoy described as ‘boxing’ started in the bar, where they fought several ‘rounds’ which McCoy believed may have lasted half an hour or so. This would indicate the fight was fair, and to that point at least, relatively even. No man had landed a knockout punch, perhaps because they were both drunk. Then both men agreed to continue the fight outside.

Half an hour is a long time for a fist fight, even if both men were intoxicated and few punches were hitting their target, and both men must have been exhausted as they went outside and squared up. They were immediately followed by a crowd of 40 or 50 men, who formed a tight circle around the protagonists. This circle was so close to the fighters that the spectators on the inner row of the circle were almost touching them. This would have prevented effective punches being thrown, so the fight probably degenerated into a standing wrestle between two very tired men.

McCoy says he stopped the first round outside as he put his hand down his side “and found myself bleeding.”

The only two witnesses to the fight itself called to give evidence were police Sergeant Fleming, and James Caulfield. These days, Caulfield would be known as a ‘person of interest.’

Fleming was passing near the hotel when he heard the disturbance. He hurried up to the hotel, “never losing sight” of the two protagonists who were at this stage fighting outside, but he decided that “McCoy and the prisoner were not in such a state to justify my arresting them.” In other words, the worst of the fight seemed to be over and rather than break it up, Fleming decided it was more urgent for him to go into the bar, as he had heard loud comments directed against Fox coming from this direction.

Fleming warned the men at the bar “not to interfere with Fox.” Fox’s defence lawyer, Mr Campbell, now asked Fleming if a man named Dennis Barry had made the comments against Fox. But Fleming was sure Barry had not made the comments. When he asked who was responsible for the comments, a young man not known to Fleming and who was the worse for drink, said, “It was me who has done it, it is nothing.” However, for Fleming to go straight to the bar rather than break up the fight indicates the comments directed against Fox were serious.

Mr Campbell was fishing as to who was in the bar at the time of the fight. Dennis Barry, it seems, was an enemy of Fox, perhaps someone out to get him. Later, Campbell asked Caulfield if Barry was a spectator in the circle, so Caulfield must have known Barry, and the inference is they were colleagues. Caulfield replied that he did not see Barry in the circle but he did not deny that he was there.

Now Fleming went outside where he was pushing his way towards McCoy and Fox when he heard Caulfield call out “Knife!” Fleming stated that Caulfield was very close, just a few feet, from the fighting men.

McCoy when called to the stand first attempted to have the case dismissed. He produced a letter stating he wanted to withdraw the charges against Fox. He admitted that the letter had been written by the barman at the Four Alls, but that the letter was his own idea and that he had no other contact with Fox other than saying “good morning” to him outside the Court.

Mr Betham informed McCoy that it was not up to him, the victim, to dismiss charges. The matter was out of his hands.

McCoy then described what he remembered of the fight itself, which was not much. It was a fist fight. There were no weapons involved. He did not remember who swung the first punch. He did not remember being stabbed, until he felt “the air rushing into my body,” and he remembered falling back into Fox’s arms.

The next witness, Caulfield, said he saw all the fight, although there was a man in front of him. He said he first saw the knife in Fox’s hand, and he yelled out, “Knife!” The knife was small, with a blade about two and a half inches long. Caulfield claimed that Fox held McCoy up with his left hand while stabbing him with his right. Caulfield reached out and tried to disarm Fox, or at least hold his wrist to prevent him landing any telling blows. But Fox was able to wrench his arm from Caulfield’s grip.

Caulfield stated he had known Fox for six or eight months. Mr Campbell now asked Caulfield if he had cried out during the fight that he would give Fox “fourteen years ” because of the injury Fox had “done my cousin”. Caulfield denied this, and also that he had been bragging that he would do Fox “injury during this examination.” Campbell was keen to prove to the court that Caulfield had a grudge against Fox who, it seems, had given Caulfield’s cousin a hiding in an earlier fight. But the canny Caulfield was not going to fall into this trap.

Doctor McMullen was called to describe McCoy’s injuries. There were seven stab wounds in all: “two puncture wounds under the left breast, another between the last two ribs on the left

side, two incised wounds on the same side further back, one puncture wound at the elbow. There were also a few scratches and a black eye.” McMullen stated that McCoy’s life was in danger from one of the wounds beneath the left breast as the knife had penetrated the lung. McCoy had lost a lot of blood, and “death may have ensued had it not been attended by a medical man.” This was a vicious, prolonged attack.

Mr Betham committed Fox for trial in Dunedin charged with Wounding With Intent, but he was allowed bail with sureties provided by two well-known miners, Melody and Mace. However, the charge was reduced to one of Wounding Without Intent and Fox, found guilty on 7 June 1864, was sentenced to six month’s hard labour in Dunedin Gaol. This was a mild sentence for such a severe offence, and demonstrated that the courts had some degree of sympathy for Fox. In his summary, Justice Richmond referred to Fox’s good character. “You are a man to whom the mining community is under deep obligation and at present you command a great deal of sympathy among your fellow miners.”

Throughout the hearing and trial, and for the rest of his life, Fox maintained his innocence. He admitted his fondness for fisticuffs and a “good fair fight” but never to using a knife to cut a man. He was arrested again in 1872 for brawling in a Reefton hotel – no knife was involved - but he never ever admitted to stabbing McCoy, even when his tongue was loosened by alcohol.

Is it possible that Bill Fox was framed by his enemies Barry and Caulfield? Or was Fox himself the intended victim and in the confusion of the melee and the tight circle surrounding it, McCoy was stabbed in error?

Was it Caulfield who stabbed McCoy, and was it Fox who tried to hold Caulfield’s arm?

Why would Fox, who enjoyed fighting and had been in many a pub brawl, suddenly produce a knife and stab an inebriated opponent? Why would Fox, an experienced brawler, stab a man when both fighters were drunk and exhausted and it was only a matter of time before McCoy gave up?

Why would Fox risk so much in front of 40 or 50 witnesses?

And what happened to the knife which was not used as evidence?

Upon his release Fox made his way to Hokitika on the West Coast, where he became an important figure in gold discoveries over the next decade and more.

But Fox never assumed the mantle of convicted criminal. On the contrary, he remained much respected by other miners and by important people as well as government authorities.

And he kept exploring and prospecting for gold!

On 4 April 1865 he announced he had discovered gold in the Fox Creek, a branch of the Arahura River, and in October 1866 he found gold in the Potikohua River, which was soon renamed the Fox River in his honour. When quartz lodes were discovered near Reefton in 1870, Fox was employed by the Government Mines Department to help extract the gold as he was considered one of New Zealand’s leading ‘reefing’ experts. In 1874 with the financial backing of the Westland government, Fox lead a prospecting party into the Big Bay region, where he returned in 1886, and in 1885 he assessed the Terawhiti goldfields for the Minister of Mines.

Back in 1870, a group of Queenstown businessmen funded an expedition to prospect for gold in the rugged region between Glenorchy and Martins Bay, and Fox was offered the job. And in 1871, a number of local identities, including Queenstown mayor Bendix Hallenstein, signed a letter on Fox’s behalf, asking the Otago government to pay Fox the reward for the discovery of gold in the Arrow River.

These were not the actions of men who believed Fox was a violent criminal, but rather the

actions of people who had some sympathy towards this complex character. Did these people have a feeling that Fox was innocent? Did they believe Fox had made a terrible mistake that was out-of-character and had paid for his crime? At the very least they obviously believed he was reliable and trustworthy.

When Fox died on 9 April 1890 in Reefton, he was bankrupt and broken, yet a huge crowd turned up for his funeral and he was eulogised for his bravery and his prospecting skills.

So did Bill Fox really brutally stab John McCoy at the Four Alls hotel nearly 100 years ago? We will never ever know. What we can be sure of is that William Fox made an important contribution to the early European history of our district. And he was a remarkably colourful character, of that there is no doubt!

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BUT YOU CAN'T EAT GOLD

By Marion Borrell

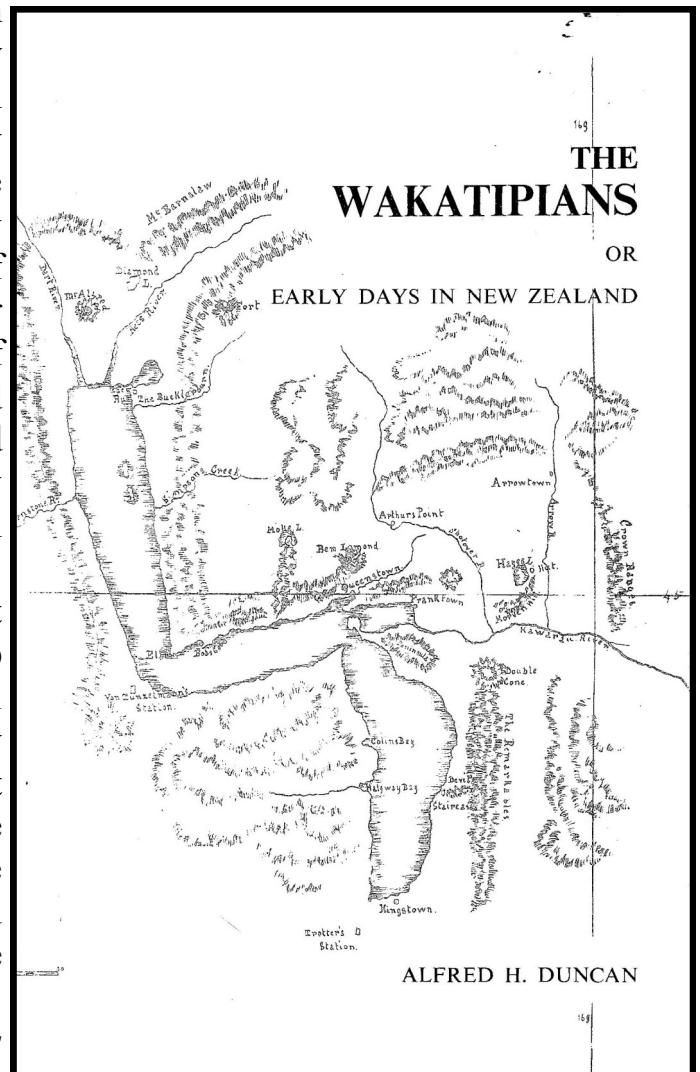
As the advance parties of prospectors moved inland from Dunedin, the supply-lines for food and other necessities of life stretched further from their source. These prospectors were generally experienced miners who had learnt their trade on the Californian and Victorian goldfields, and now explored in pairs or small parties. Knowing little about how to live off this unfamiliar land, they had to make regular treks on foot to the nearest of the scattered sheep stations or stores for their simple provisions – flour, sugar, tea, tobacco. If they out-stripped their supplier, they would perish. It is well-recorded that William Fox would travel secretly to Clyde and back when his party in the Arrow Gorge needed provisions which in turn would have reached there from Dunedin.

What a boon it was, then, for the first diggers that at Queenstown there was William Rees's sheep station, and an owner who was both resourceful and pragmatic. Invasion of his station by hungry miners afforded him a business opportunity, but his response went much further. At first the numbers seeking food were small. It is rather like the spread of mice into the district which Alfred Duncan, Rees's shepherd, records in his fine memoir, *The Wakatipians*:

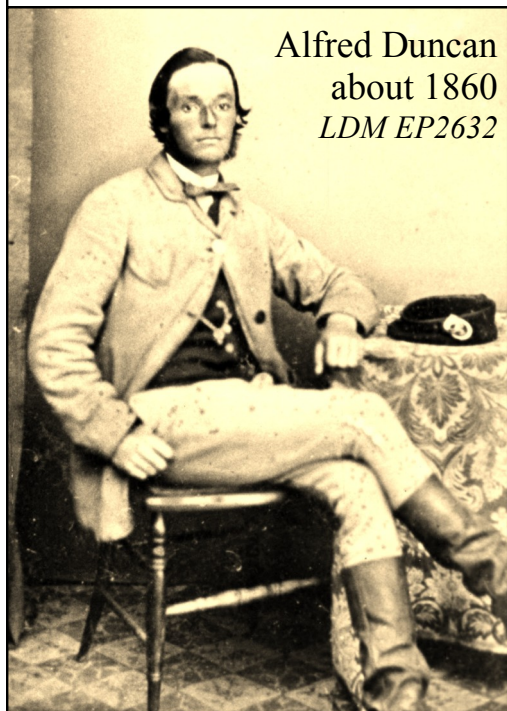
On the 1st of January, 1862, the first mouse was seen on the shores of the Lake, but we little thought what this New Year's gift would grow into before many months had gone by. Yet before the month of July the country was swarming with the little pests, and nothing was safe from their mischievous attention. (P.42)

The attitude of Rees and his staff to human invaders was, of course, very different. Duncan recalls being approached by starving men.

In 30 September 1862 near the Devil's Staircase, we met three men with huge swags on their backs, and picks and shovels in their hands, who looked as if they had not seen food for some days, which was indeed the case, and yet the first thing they said when they saw us was not a request for food, but, 'Have you any tobacco?' I, of course, had none, but the Mexican had, and he at once handed it over to them, and we gave them also what little food we had remaining. As we were talking they informed us that they had followed the Kawarau river up from the Dunstan diggings, and were very anxious to get on to Rees' country. I told them that Mr. Rees was to be at the foot of the Lake that day, and, if they pushed on and asked him, he might give them a lift up in the boat, which they accordingly did, and Mr. Rees gave them a sail up to the station, and having supplied them with provisions, sent them off to the Arrow river. The leader of the party was William Fox.... (P.43)



The wealth of the Arrow find was extraordinary. Duncan visited the gorge a week later:



Alfred Duncan
about 1860
LDM EP2632

I rode across to the Arrow gorge to see how the diggers were getting on, and Fox, giving me a tin dish, told me to wash out a trial dish for luck. Putting a shovelful of earth from under a tomatgorra bush growing on the bank of the river into the dish, he told me to wash away, showing me how to twirl the dish, gradually allowing the earth to float away, at the same time retaining the old and black sand. Being a novice at the work, I was naturally awkward, and Fox laughingly told me that I was washing all the gold away as well as the refuse; but, granting such to be the case, the fact remains that I panned out of that one dishful nearly four pennyweights of fine gold. It was my first and only attempt at gold digging, but there are few people, I fancy, who have washed out such a rich sample for their first attempt. (Pp. 43-44)

Through the early months of mining, groceries and the other provisions were carried from Clyde, while Rees's station became the supplier of meat. Miners were supposed to buy the meat, not steal it, but some were driven by desperation, and an incident demonstrates William Rees's tolerance:

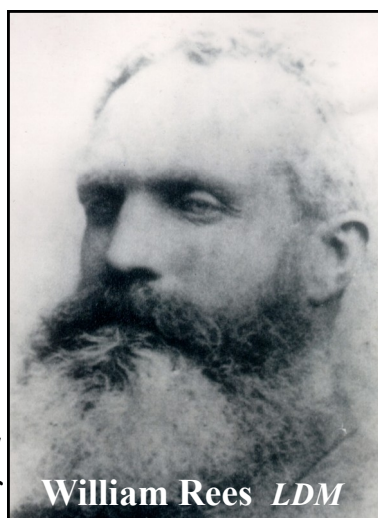
On one occasion Mr Rees, when riding across the Franktown flat, came on a digger busily engaged in skinning a sheep, which he had apparently killed. "What do you mean," said Mr. Rees, "stealing my sheep, in broad daylight too?" The man stood up, and looking him defiantly in the face, said, "I'll kill any ___ sheep that bites me." Mr. Rees was so dumbfounded by the audacity of the remark that he could not help laughing, and finding that the poor fellow was absolutely starving he said nothing more on the subject but rode on... (Pp. 50-51)

He also was realistic when two men he had employed to help with the shearing on condition they that did not go prospecting until the job was done broke the agreement. Thomas Arthur and Harry Redfern walked up Blow-Ho Gully to the Shotover at what is now Arthurs Point and found the gold extraordinary. When they returned, they told Duncan that they would abandon their job.

Although I reminded them of their agreement they said they did not care, and it was not until I pointed out the fact that they could get food from no one except Mr. Rees that they felt themselves somewhat in a fix. The men were completely off their heads with excitement, and when I took them to Mr. Rees he saw that it would be useless to try to keep them at work, so he paid them off, gave them flour, tea, sugar and let them go. (P. 47)

Rees continued to adapt to the circumstances. The lake provided an alternative route for supplies, and he soon launched a larger boat to bring provisions from Kingston. As the rush gathered strength, he was the leader of the district and oversaw its early development.

From the point of view of Invercargill, the trade to the Wakatipu goldfield promised to be a great boon. The writer of the *Invercargill Times*, in its 5th issue, 25 November 1862, relished the prospect of gaining an advantage over Dunedin:



William Rees LDM

How does this affect Invercargill and Southland generally? ...

From all we can gather from men who have carted from Dunedin to the Dunstan, the distance is as follows:—

Dunedin to Tuapeka	...	70 miles.
To Miltar's	..	30 "
To Manaburn	..	28 "
To Low's	...	14 "
To Camp on Molyneux, above junction Manu- herikia	12 "
		—
Total	...	154 "

This is to the highest point on the Clutha to which drays can go; from thence to all the country north and west of that river supplies must be taken upon pack horses.

Now, from Invercargill to the foot of the Waikatip Lake, by the Great North Road, the distances are as follows:—

Invercargill to the Elbow —an easy and excellent road	52 miles.
To Rogers	18 "
To south end of Lake	..	14 "
		—
Total	..	84 "

Thus, by late 1862 two lines of supply had been established to the Wakatipu goldfields. Before long the town of Fox's, later Arrowtown, was formed, and Queenstown was converted from the homestead of a sheep station into a thriving town. Food supplies were assured.

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The Invercargill Times, Vol. 1, Issue 5, 25 November 1862.

This newspaper later became *The Southland Times*. Sourced from Papers Past, National Library of New Zealand, [hppt://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz)

Photographs from the Lakes District Museum, Arrowtown

WILLIAM BUTLER: STOREKEEPER, PUBLICAN, FARMER AND SETTLER

By Marion Borrell

The newspapers and Goldfields Wardens of the time measured a rush by the numbers of diggers and the weights of ounces gold produced. However, to paraphrase Napoleon, a gold-rush digs on its stomach, and soon the army of other occupations arrived to fill the need. Besides, many a canny miner, having tried his luck in the ground or in the river, concluded that surer returns could be made by supplying goods and services. Others took up land to secure their futures. Married men sent for their families; unmarried men sought wives locally or made trips away to find them, and an enduring community was established. Many descendants of the early settlers, including this writer, are the result of this pattern of arrival.

One of the first families in the Arrow was that of William Butler after whom Butler Green is named. He was born in Ireland in County Tipperary, and migrated to the Victorian goldfields where he married Mary Jane Neylon in 1861. When news of the Otago rushes reached him, he came promptly to Dunedin and reached the Arrow via the Kawarau Gorge in late 1862, shortly after the goldfield was discovered. With him came Mary who is said to have walked all the way from Dunedin, their baby, and toddler son Kingsley who, it is said, travelled in a gin case on a packhorse. According to F.W.G. Miller in *Golden Days of Lake County*, p.111, Kingsley



Eden George & Co. Ltd. DUNEDIN AND GUYTON SQUARE

Kingsley Butler
(Lakes District Museum EP3653)

long afterwards recalled his father explaining that 'he could make an ounce of gold a day on the river, but there were other ways of earning good money, too.' The miners were desperate for food as they lived on the verge of starvation. When William established the first store at the Arrow in a tent he was selling flour at three shillings a pound, an astronomical price.

About a year later the Butlers took over the Prince of Wales Hotel. An indication of the trials of shantytown life is revealed by an incident involving a cat: due to an infestation of rats, the Butlers had bought a tomcat, but it was apparently stolen by an opposition hotel-owner. They registered a complaint which was heard by the Resident Magistrate, Richmond Beetham, who ruled that the cat must be returned to its rightful owner.

From about 1869 the Butlers had the Ballarat Hotel on the corner of Berkshire and Buckingham streets where the Arrowtown Bakery is now. Kingsley remembered his father saying that he built the hotel with timber he felled himself.



Lakes District Museum EL2578



1874 photo from Museum EL 1278

This photo shows the hotel with its wide corner door, and also arrowed a site with three mining pipes stored on it. This is where in 1880 the Butlers had their house built beside the road to Macetown which was about to be constructed. Its restoration is the subject of the next article.



The Butler Family headstones today.

According to William Butler's obituary in the Lake County Press after his death in 1887 aged 52, he was influential in the development of Arrowtown from its beginnings as a shantytown to an enduring village: 'Mr Butler always took a practical and intelligent interest in public affairs, sitting for a number of years as a councillor of the borough of Arrowtown, and assisting in most of the movements having advancement of the district for their object.' He was one of the first to take up an agricultural lease and for several years before his death devoted himself exclusively to farming. 'He was generally successful in his undertakings, and being a careful man, died in easy circumstances.' Thus one of the early arrivals on the goldfield was successful in business, turned later to farming, and contributed to the establishment of the community.

The Butler family plot is in the cemetery overlooking the Arrow Gorge. As well as William, three sons, his wife Mary and her second husband William Lenthall are buried there.

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Lake County Press 25 November 1887

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BUTLER OR DUDLEY'S COTTAGES

New Uses In A New Era

By Marion Borrell

In the 21st century, tourism has become Arrowtown's source of identity and future. After many years as private dwellings, the two joined cottages beside Butlers Green have been granted a new lease of life by Scott Stevens, director of the Arrowtown Mining Company, as a base for tourist activities.



Restored cottages, 2012

The Cottages

The front cottage was built in about 1880 is one of the oldest schist cottages in Arrowtown, while the back cottage which is at a higher level was added some 17 years later according to photographic records. They remained in the Butler family until sold to George and Catherine Dudley in 1905. The couple brought up their six children in the cottages. Dudley family members continued as owners until 2007, just over 100 years. Although changes were made during this time, notably additions behind the front cottage linking to the veranda which was added to the back cottage, the street frontage of the older cottage remains true to its origins. The cottages have Category 2 classifications with the Historic Places Trust and QLDC, and are in the Residential Arrowtown Historic Management Zone. In addition the weeping spruce (*picea abies pendula*) which overhangs the cottage on the left is a protected tree. As a result, all renovations required an authority from the HPT and archaeological records were kept. The Historical Society supported the restoration work proposed in 2011 on the grounds that it would ensure the continued protection and preservation of the cottages, and meet the need to find an ongoing use and source of funding for maintenance.

Discoveries during renovation: revealing the past

The stone walls have to a large extent protected the original buildings, but the interior had been relined with pinex and gib-board, and a fireplace surround modernised. With little obvious maintenance in recent years, much work was required to bring the cottages up to a useable standard. During the process, great care was needed to protect the heritage features which lay beneath so that they could be revealed intact.

Scott Stevens reports: The original floor boards were found under layers of old floor coverings including newspapers from the 1930's which is estimated to be when the two cottages were joined together to form one house. With the front of the second cottage protected from the weather by the veranda, the original whitewash finish consisting of lime, mutton fat and cream was still in good condition. In the gardens many of the original heritage roses survive, some close to 100 years old. A lot of work was done to restore the garden and the old stone terraces at the back of the property constructed by George Dudley using stone recycled from abandoned Chinese miners' huts.

Overall, the project took 18 months to get through the resource consent and restoration process, but Scott says the time and expense were worth it.

Society members are encouraged to visit the cottages to see the layers of construction and change as the dwellings have been joined and added to over the years. The original materials have been left exposed where possible. There is also a display a collection of old photos, maps and plans.

New functions in the new era

With restoration completed in 2011, the cottage, right, is now a cafe-tearooms with retail space, gallery and gold-panning troughs. The intention is for it to become a base for guided tours of the Chinese Village, guided gold-panning in the Arrow River, and guided mountain-biking and four-wheel-driving trips.

Sources

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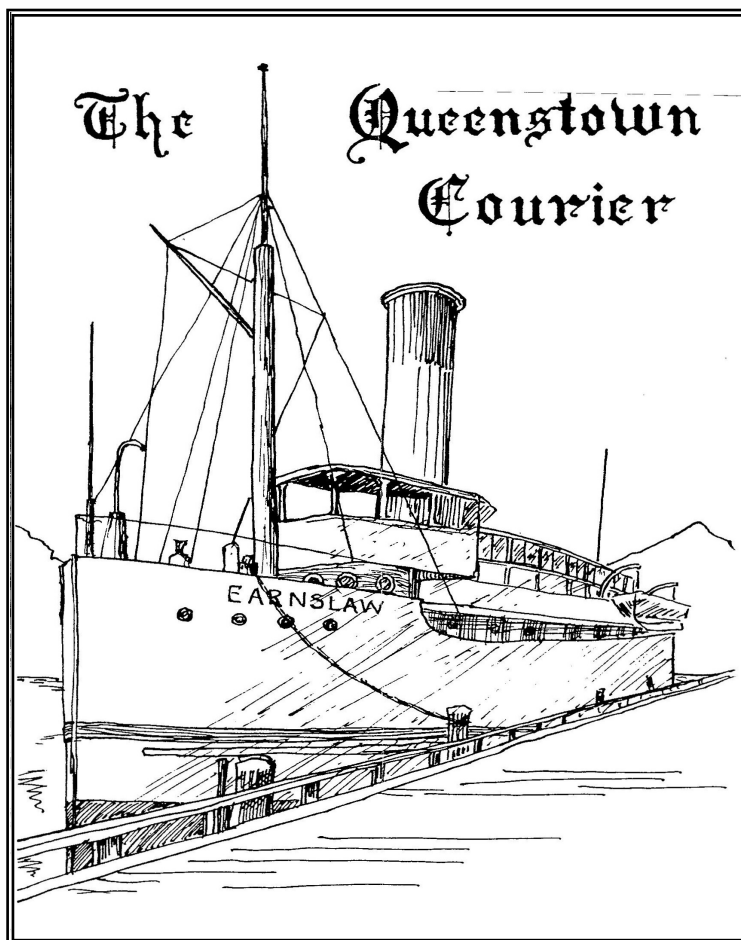


Interior Before Renovation: This photo taken from the floor level of the older cottage shows the four steps up to the level of the second cottage. The wall on the right still has its original whitewash of lime, mutton fat and cream.

Source: Andrew Winter of Jackie Gillies + Associates

SALUTE TO *THE TSS EARNSLAW* Centenarian Lady Of The Lake

The *Earnslaw* has been a notable feature on Lake Wakatipu for one hundred years now, in the past providing transport to sheep stations and the Head of the Lake, and now a highlight of many tourists' visits; she continues to be a visual and vital force in the economy of the district. Naturally, she has featured in the considerations of the Historical Society, and Roma McAndrew's ink drawing, right, graced the cover of *The Queenstown Courier* from 1981 to 1994. On the occasion of her centenary, we celebrate our relationship, with items from past *Couriers* and recollections of the Society's contribution to her survival in 1967-9 when she was in danger of being scrapped or scuttled.



A 36-Hour Day for the *Earnslaw* in the '30s **From *The Queenstown Courier* Number 2, 1967. No author is given.**

This day started as usual, with the *TSS Earnslaw* setting off on its scheduled run up the lake. On board were a number of stock buyers and drovers all set to buy sheep at Glenorchy. It was particularly dirty weather, and it was after dark when the boat arrived back at Queenstown. The order went out that the sheep were to be left on board for the night, and would be taken on to Kingston the next day. But the stock buyers were very hostile to this idea; they wanted to carry on to Kingston and unload the sheep there for the night. Finally after considerable argument the officer in charge in Queenstown was persuaded into agreeing to this course, and the crew were given time off for a meal before setting off again.

They arrived at Kingston between 10 and 11pm, and a very dirty night it was, in blizzard conditions with the snow driving horizontally. Nevertheless, unloading of the sheep went ahead. On such a night Kingston people were mostly indoors, though there was one fellow about who volunteered to lend a hand. He

was a locally well-known character with an insatiable thirst. Poor fellow, his thirst was quenched for good that night, for at some stage without anyone aboard knowing a thing about it, he fell overboard, and was drowned.



The Earnslaw with sheep. LDM EL 448

The storm had not eased at all when the unloading was finished, and after several unsuccessful attempts had been made to get away from the wharf, it was decided to remain tied up for the night. At six in the morning the *Earnslaw* did get away successfully.

Meanwhile, when it was discovered in the morning that the boat was not berthed in Queenstown, there was some consternation, and as soon as the telephone exchanges opened contact was made with the stationmaster at Kingston. No, the *Earnslaw* was not at Kingston, nor had she been there as far as he knew. No, there were no sheep in the Kingston yards either.

Panic! ... and great relief when the boat steamed out of the snow at the beacon at the entrance to Queenstown Bay about 8am.

Again the crew were given time for a meal at home before getting away again for that day's run - to Kingston! And when they arrived back at about six that night some of the crew had done a good 36-hour tour of duty with no extra pay.

The sheep, of course, were well down the road south by the time the Kingston stationmaster got up, and the reason for the buyers' insistence on getting them to Kingston and unloaded in spite of the weather subsequently leaked out: there were far more sheep on board than were officially listed on the loading ticket. The bad weather played right into the hands of the buyers and such of the crew as were aware of the fiddle, for the stationmaster was well-known as a most meticulous public servant of the New Zealand Railways; had he been about all those sheep would have been counted off against the loading docket!

Only in a place miles away from officialdom could such a thing happen, and in those days Queenstown was such a place.

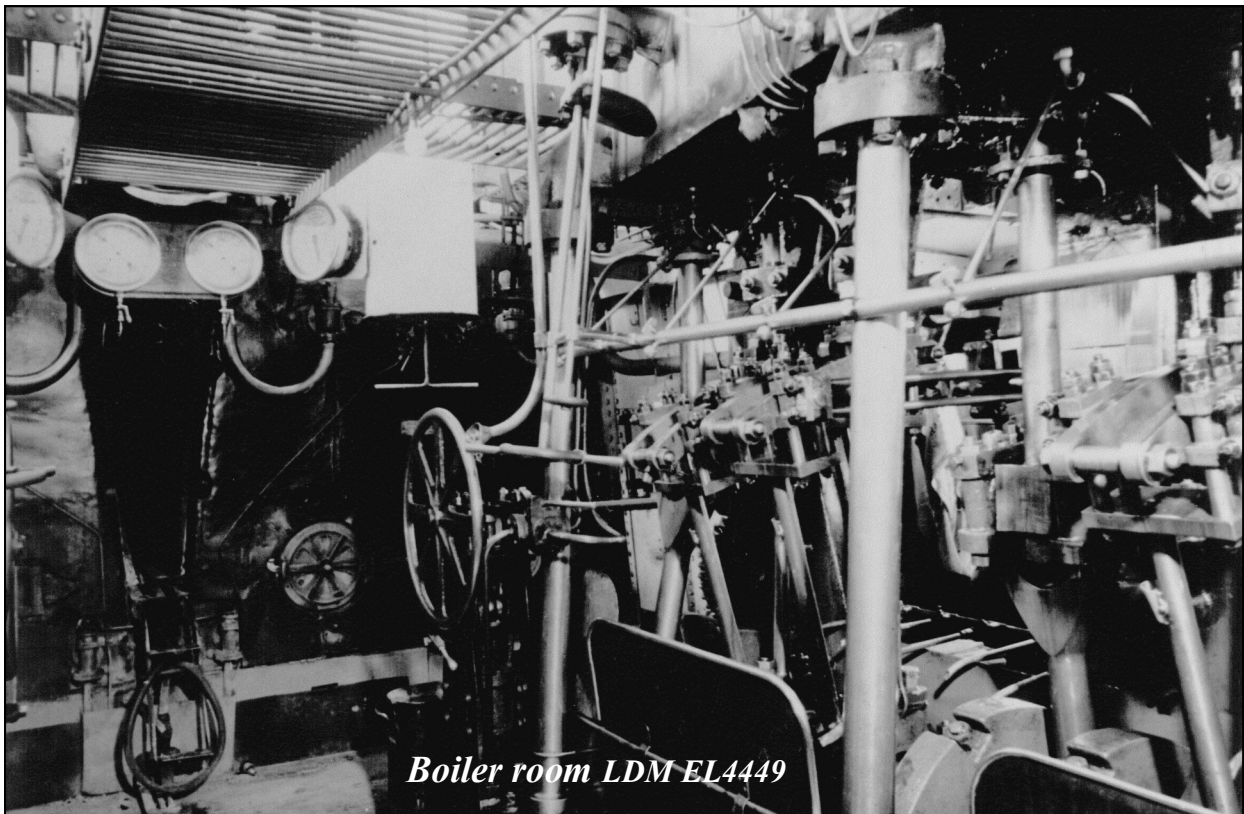
Former Engineer Recalls Thirty Years on the *Earnslaw*

By Thomas Davidson, engineer for the Lake Steamer Service from 1930-1960

This article was published in *The Queenstown Courier* Number 11, December 1974:

Named after the mountain at the head of Lake Wakatipu, and registered in Dunedin, the Twin Screw Steamer *Earnslaw* is small, even tiny, compared to most of the ships you hear about. But, as Professor Einstein neatly said, 'Importance and size are matters of relativity,' and as she, with two other even smaller vessels, occupied most of my time for thirty years, to me she was important, and she was big.

She was built and engined in Dunedin, and launched in 1912. H.McCrae was the naval architect, John McGregor the builder, but it was John McGregor Junior who designed the engines and boilers. He loved the job, and for many years took a real interest in the *Earnslaw*. At this time, and for many years after, John McGregor Jr was the top man in the southern hemisphere in the designing, casting, machining, and the balancing of ships' propellers, and it must have knocked him when the Railways Department (who had bought out the private owners of the Wakatipu Steamer Service) decided to replace his four-bladed cast-iron props with three-bladed, phosphor bronze polished props. But John was right: the bronze ones of greater pitch were a curse, and were scrapped. The trouble was, and still is, that the *Earnslaw* was designed to run at about 17 knots, but there is not enough coal in Southland for that, and her economical speed is twelve to thirteen knots. All the bigger pitched props did was to scoff more coal, and the cure was to reduce the diameters of the cylinders. So back went John McGregor's propellers. The present props have been cast from his patterns.



Boiler room LDM EL4449

The *Earnslaw* is 160 feet long, has a 24-foot beam, and draws 7 feet. She is twin-screwed and has two engines and boilers. The two boilers that supply steam to the engine are known as locomotive-marine boilers, and is the loco design adapted to shallow-draft vessels for quick steaming. On the *Earnslaw* the steam is superheated in two nests of curved pipes situated at the base of the funnel and directly in the path of the hot gases coming through the smoke tubes. They are remarkably rugged, and with a drop of only 10 pounds psi for appearance's sake after fifty-nine years. This type of boiler was used in early gunboats and the Clyde paddle-steamers before water-tube boilers became the fashion.

The engines are the standard marine up-and-downers, developing 450 ihp together at 145rpm, driving her at thirteen knots, her economical speed. She did seventeen and a half knots on her trials, but devoured our soft Southland coal at an enormous rate. At thirteen knots she does eleven miles to the ton. But as she lies banked at night the consumption goes up somewhat, so her average annual amount used is 1,200 tons for 12,000 miles. She has jet condensing handled by an independent Edwards air pump, steam steering, one steam winch, two capstans, carries either 1,200 sheep or 1,200 passengers, though her ticket is now only for 1,150 passengers. One duck-shooting season's opening day she carried thirteen cars and one motorcycle, plus the usual passengers and cargo. Often 60 head of cattle would be carried in addition to the passengers.

Well, that is the machine. Why is it that men still love her? To me she has dignity, poise, and is of good appearance.

She has quiet power, far more than she needs to do her regulation thirteen knots, and she has beautiful white smoke coming out of her red and black funnel, setting off the white hull.

She has personality too. Like a cow, she tucks her stern into the wind, and some skippers have learned to deal with this the hard way. It is the same down below - no new engineer has got through his first few days without one or other of the engines sticking on the top dead centre, and left the skipper on the bridge wondering if the engineer has gone to sleep. But in fact he is finding the virtues of the Admiralty all-round-reversing gear, also the hard way.

By the way, she has no return telegraph, and the knowing skipper, after ringing down for 'full astern, both engines', keeps an ear cocked for the distinctive sound of the stuttering exhaust of the reversing engines, and starts growing grey hairs when there seems to be no response. And so engineer and skipper soon get to know each other, and become a team. Of course, a skipper who gives a lot of unnecessary orders - and there have been some - is a source of annoyance to the black squad, and if he listens hard he will hear a voice coming up the engine-room ventilators saying, "When you make up your mind, we'll give it to you."

She has survived many adventures. She has run aground many times, and once a pleasure craft that was moored across the end of the wharf got inadvertently cut in half. But no matter who was to blame for the mishap, the skipper was bound to appear at the engine-room door and inquire of the three innocent upturned faces of the black devils down below, "What the clickety click were you cast-iron baths DOING back there?" The firemen and the deckhands got their share too. But they were all part of the team, and passing the buck was part of the game.

All in all, it was a great life. Just imagine it: playing with boats; with good pay, seldom; good food, sometimes; lots of fun, mostly; and lots of work, always. And so the old girl claimed a lot of our waking hours, and a lot of our fickle affections.

The old hands who later ran her, and who are still about, look back on the days when the Lake Steamer Service was a continuation of the railway system from Kingston, days when the *Earnslaw* had real dignity, and was the lifeline for the sheep-runs round the lake, and a source of joy to thousands of holidaymakers and tourists. Now with the roads and bridges being built around the lake, her cargo-carrying days are all but over,

and she is mostly used for short pleasure cruises. But with the care she is receiving now, plus a bit of luck, she will give thousands more, even though, as boats go, she is an ancient - and expensive - lady, a relic of the past.

The Historical Society in Defence of the Earnslaw, 1967-9

When the Ministry of Transport proposed removing the *Earnslaw* from the railways network, the Historical Society understood the economic reasons but hoped that the ship could continue to contribute to the district.



The Society wrote to the Minister in, and Marygold and Hugh Miller attended a meeting with him in 1967 to express the Society's views 'that the steamer should be kept on the lake as long as was practically possible and until alternative transport to isolated stations could be found.' And that the society 'wished to be certain that the Minister was aware that the *Earnslaw* was a unique vessel, the like of which would never be seen again, and it hoped that the vessel would be preserved, perhaps in dry dock, and some useful purpose be made of her. The Society believed that an economic use could be found for her as a tourist attraction.'

In *The Queenstown Courier* Number 3, 1969, Marygold Miller wrote:

The news that the Minister of Transport is to visit Queenstown to discuss proposals with regard to the future of the *Earnslaw* is being met with some reserve. There are few people who are indifferent to the fate of the Lady of the Lake for visitors and local residents have grown fond of the dignified vessel, and her beauty, as well as her usefulness. She has never failed to run, which is a great achievement on such a rough and treacherous lake. It will take a very versatile replacement to fulfil the needs of the lake's shore community. To the connoisseur of vintage vessels she is a gem indeed. Many have travelled from overseas to have the privilege of stepping aboard. As time goes on this value can only increase, for there is more and more interest being taken in the past, for it is now emerging as history, New Zealand History, which we are now beginning to take pride in. Doubtless Mr Gordon cannot concern himself with such intrinsic value, but must concentrate that the steamer is an extension of the railway network, and as such he expects to obtain revenue from it. ...

The outcome of the meeting will be of great significance to the area, and to the primary industry which is now developing at such a rate. The Visitor Industry. We have a unique asset in the *Earnslaw* which, with certain modern innovations could be a grand attraction. The question is, can private enterprise handle this and should not the Tourist Department have made a bid for its control? Who has put in tenders? Are any acceptable?

All these burning questions will have to wait until the Minister acquaints us of his decision.

Although the tone of these writings is reasonable and constructive, some members of the Society expressed their strong feelings through more direct action: Ian Daniel, a teacher and former time President of the Society, organised a group of school children to travel on the *Earnslaw* round and round Queenstown Bay in protest when the 'bigwigs from the Railways' came to Queenstown.

Now, in 2012, we can celebrate the success of our centenarian Lady of the Lake in the ownership of Fiordland Travel which has become Real Journeys. Long may she reign.

Further reading:

McLeod, Jenny, *TSS Earnslaw: Celebrating 100 Years, 1912-2012*, Real Journeys, 2012

Stevenson, Alma, *Joe's Journey on the Earnslaw*, with illustrations by R.B.Rob, self-published, 2012 - a children's book

www.tssearnslaw.co.nz contains details of the celebrations, and more stories, including one based on a recent interview with Marygold Miller.

Sources:

Issues of *The Queenstown Courier* Numbers 2, 3, 4, and 11

Interview with Marygold Miller recorded by Tish Glasson in 1993, Lakes District Museum

Photographs: Lakes District Museum

Society News, Spring 2012

Farewell, Malcolm and Trish Boote

We are sorry to farewell our long-time committee member, former president and honorary life member, Malcolm, who has moved to Mosgiel with his wife Trish. Malcolm has understood the purposes of our Historical Society and upheld them superbly. He appreciates the Wakatipu community, has communicated thoughtfully with Society membership at large, and been a mentor to his Board colleagues. We should never forget that he led the Society through its darkest hours. He has been Churchillian in preserving Wakatipu's heritage for the past eighteen years, and will be greatly missed. We wish him and Trish a happy resettling in their new home.

Donation of Computer to the Lakes District Museum

We are pleased to announce that using funds from the sale of previous calendars, we have donated \$3000 for a new computer for the Archives Room to replace and upgrade one which had come to the end of its usefulness. We are always grateful for the support of the Museum staff, and are delighted to be able to reciprocate in this way.

Motto, Enhanced Logo and Banners for the Society

After much thought and voting, the committee has selected a motto to take us forward:

OUR HERITAGE TODAY – FOR TOMORROW

Also we've developed our logo: after 150 years, Heigh-ho the dairy-oh, our digger gets a wife, and a baby and a dog. Now he's a settler. The dog represents the pastoralist first colonisers, while the woman holding the baby symbolises the permanent settlement of the district. The design was created by Dean Williams, a student at Wakatipu High School. These additions will appear on our website and letterhead, and on banners for use on stalls and at events. We are grateful to Queenstown Signs for their generous community discount and for donating two of the banners.

Offer of Honorary Solicitor

Graeme Todd of GTODD LAW who is a well-known local lawyer specialising in planning and a former student of Ray Clarkson, has offered his services pro bono if required. We have gratefully accepted and appointed him our honorary solicitor.

Acting President: Marion Borrell has been elected by the Board to see us through to the AGM on 12 November. The details of the Frankton cemetery tour and AGM are printed in the Programme of Activities for Members at the back of this magazine.

***Our Heritage Today
- For Tomorrow***



**Queenstown
& District
Historical
Society**

www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz

TALKS FROM THE 2013 CALENDAR LAUNCH

THE ERA OF HAND-TINTED POSTCARDS EARLY 1900'S

By Marion Borrell

Two factors combined to create a boom in the sending and collecting of postcards, and for a time the production of these hand-tinted ones.

New Zealand Penny Post 1901

When the 'Penny Post' was introduced, it reduced the cost of sending a postcard overseas to a penny, and a half-penny inland. So postcards became very popular and widely available. Not as cheap as email, but almost.

Photo Technology

Secondly, the development of photo-lithographic techniques allowed photos coloured pictures to be printed in large numbers at low cost. The world centre for this was Germany, and many of the postcards we selected from had 'Printed in Saxony' on them. A black and white photo would be hand-tinted with coloured inks the reproduced. Unfortunately, the ink contained lead which took its toll on the health of the colourists who were mainly women. When printed, the result was these ethereal pictures which are a cross between a photo and a painting.

Messages

People bought the cards not only for 'Wish-you-were-here' holiday messages, but for general greetings, and messages of a not-too-private nature. The wording I've found on the cards is just chatty, so unless the writers were using a code, they weren't communicating anything very private. And sure enough, there were language purists who believed that postcards were a threat to 'the art of letter-writing' and correct spelling and grammar. Some things don't change.

Postcard Collecting

The practice of collecting postcards – properly called DELTIOLOGY – is thought to be the third largest collecting hobby after with stamps and coins. The golden age was in the early 1900s. Many of the cards we saw have never been posted, so must have spent the past 100 years in albums, gaining value all the time. We're very grateful to the collectors in our midst who contributed to this calendar. Perhaps if you have some old postcards at home, you should be treating them as an investment.

On the Wane

The craze for postcards began to wane from about 1913 for several reasons. First the market became flooded with cards, resulting in lower returns to the manufacturers. Then the outbreak of World War I cut diplomatic relations between Germany and New Zealand so that local publishers no longer had access to the high-quality printing-works. And thirdly, telegrams and phone-calls became cheaper or more accessible than before.

So, postcards are no longer the global phenomenon they were, and it is likely that digital cameras, camera-phones and emails will further reduce their day-to-day use.

Our 2013 Calendars On Sale Locally & by Mail Order



The 2013 calendar consists of hand-tinted postcards of the Wakatipu printed in the early 1900s. So this time every picture is in colour.

They are an unusual combination of photo and painting.

The A4 calendars are perfect gifts for posting, and are our main fundraiser.

Price: \$15.

Available in Arrowtown at the Museum, Post Office and Village Dairy; in Queenstown at Paper-Plus; in Frankton at Summerfields Pharmacy; and at Remarkables Park at Hamills Restaurant.

Mail Orders: \$17 (to include postage)

Send orders with return address to:

Historical Society Calendar Sales, P.O.Box 132, Queenstown

Cover Postcard

Here we have the view seen from upstream of the lake outlet at Kawarau Falls in about 1906, after the Brunswick Flour Mill had been removed and long before the dam was constructed about where the large gum-tree is. This building is at a jetty near the end of what is now the lakefront reserve. From here barley, oats and flour would have been taken by boat, some to Queenstown, but most to Kingston to travel south by train and shipped from Bluff.

It's interesting to consider that the photo was probably tinted by a woman in Germany, using guesswork in her choice of colours. She must have imagined a very red sunset reflected in the snow. And the golden bloom of gorse or broom on the hillside probably seemed pretty to her.

Not so good for farming on Kawarau Falls Station – note the row of fence-posts across the hillside.

I also own the black and white version of this card. It's one of 'Hotop's series of lake views, Queenstown, NZ'. The message is on the front as there's only space for the address on the back. It reads, 'A Merry Xmas & Happy New Year to you all. With love from Bella.'

Sources

Wellington City Library: <http://www.wcl.govt.nz/heritage/constable.html>

www.emotionscards.com

Acknowledgements For Postcards

Thanks to George Singleton, Robert Taylor, Fay McLaren and Bruce Borrell for allowing us to use their postcards to make the calendar.

February: The Kawarau Bridge

By Gavin Jack

When you first saw this picture, did you think, "Oh that's the bridge I once fearlessly jumped off, with a flimsy elastic chord strapped to my ankles!" Yes, we are, of course, looking at what we now know as the Bungy Bridge.

When the bridge was opened in December 1880, it was described as "a model structure in design and workmanship". 132 years later I think we can say those words remain true. Indeed, the Kawarau Suspension Bridge

was described by NZ Industrial Heritage as the finest example of a suspension bridge in New Zealand, and won for its designer, H. P. Higginson, a highly prestigious award from the Institute of Engineers.

Interestingly, suspension bridges are the earliest known man-made bridge structure. The oldest surviving suspension bridge is in China and was built of iron bar suspensions in 1470. In Roman times suspension was replaced by Arch and Truss bridges, but as engineers became more skilled, the suspension bridge re-emerged when crossings were too long for other construction methods. Some experimental bridges using a new wire rope technology were built in 1830, but it was not until 1867 that a bridge using wire rope suspension was built at Niagara. So I think it



was to the great credit of the engineering fraternity in New Zealand that just eleven years later, in 1878, a wire rope suspension bridge was proposed for the Kawarau.

We might well wonder now why such an apparently challenging location was chosen for the bridge. In fact, it was one of four sites to be considered. Initially the most favoured site was 4km upstream at the Morven ferry, but a disastrous flood in 1878 put paid to that idea.

Plans for the new bridge were completed on 3 June 1878 and with eye-watering speed the site was pegged out by 13th June. Invitations to tender were out that same week and the contract was let and work commenced, by builder, John McCormack, on 26 June. We might well long for similar alacrity for the new bridge currently proposed over the Kawarau Falls at Frankton!

The bridge itself was to be 91.5m wide, and sit 41.5m above the normal river height. It was designed to carry a total possible load of 270 tonnes and would be suspended by 28 wire cables supported by 4 towers of dressed schist masonry, with cable anchorages embedded into the natural rock. All 28 cables were fixed into position within 8 working days. As we can see very clearly in the photograph, in addition to making the cables taut lengthwise they were also drawn together by almost two metres at the centre of the span to increase lateral stability.

The timber for the decking was beech, sourced from the head of Lake Wakatipu; the ironwork came from the Otago Foundry in Dunedin; and an excellent lime for the mortar was produced at Twelve Mile on the shores of Lake Wakatipu.

John McCormack firmly believed that “good men with good wages were the cheapest in the long run.” And so it proved. Despite one or two hiccups with foundations and bridge alignment, the bridge and the approach roads were completed within 18 months, and were officially opened on 30th December 1880. So, what was the impact of the new bridge? Well, the Morven ferry could never take both horses and coaches together on one crossing, which evidently meant that both the coachman and the horses got very wet – presumably because the horses had to make the crossing on foot. It also meant that heavy machinery could be moved into the district. On one occasion it evidently took some eight hours for a threshing mill to cross the bridge, albeit with much additional protective planking.

As we might imagine, the opening of the bridge was a great occasion! The County provided a generous supply of food and drink, catered for by Eichardts; the Queenstown Garrison Band supplied the music, and the “notables” supplied interminable speeches and toasts. The *Lake Wakatip Mail* of 14 January 1881 printed a rather delightful account from a reader:

“I think, myself, that the opening of the Kawarau Bridge was a very creditable and enjoyable affair and there was certainly no distinction of persons. For out of the 400 present, at least 250 must have sat down to the table with the ‘nobs’..... Any well-conducted miner, farmer or labourer was equally welcome and did sit down and was served with fowl, turkey or ham, either by the County Chairman, who presided, or Dr Douglas, who officiated as croupier; while all had their share of drinkables.”

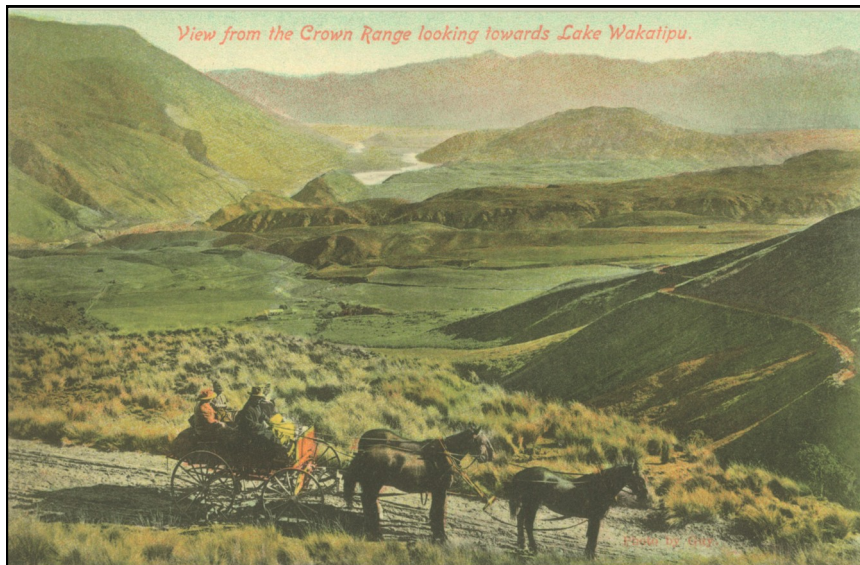
But, perceived Civic profligacy was as unpopular then, as it is today. There were complaints from ratepayers who had not attended the function, that £79 11s was a lot to spend on the celebrations. But, after all, the bridge itself had cost £5,373, and the whole project almost £17,000, so the County certainly had something to celebrate.

And some 132 years later, I think we would agree!!

APRIL: VIEW FROM THE CROWN RANGE ROAD, EARLY 1870's

By Shona Blair

What a view! The first Europeans to see this were William Rees and Nicholas Von Tunzelman in February 1860. Von Tunzelmann later wrote for the *Lake Wakatip Mail* about their exploration from Cardrona up onto the Crown Range which Rees named because of the shape of its summit. 'We arrived on the top and you may imagine our delight and surprise when we beheld the magnificent panorama presented to our view ... of the lake below us and of the surrounding mountains.' This was the pastoral land they were seeking.



The following year Alfred Duncan

drove Rees's sheep over that same route. In his memoir, *The Wakatipians*, he wrote: 'Nearly three decades have gone since I stood on the summit of the Crown Range, and looked for the first time the Promised Land of Rees, and yet I have only to close my eyes in order to see the whole view start up before me as I then saw it. Away in the distance the middle arm of the Wakatipu Lake lay glistening between those precipitous ranges... . Nearer at hand the Shotover and the Arrow rivers flowed like silver threads through the blackened, tomatagorra scrub-clothed plains which form the rich alluvial flats Hayes Lake glittered in the sun as it lay with scarce a ripple on its waters at the foot of a smooth and grassy hill, unnamed then, but christened by me shortly afterwards, the Hill of Morven, owing to its striking resemblance to the hill of that name on Deeside in Scotland. Those who visited the district some few years later would scarcely believe that all the open grassy plains over which it was delightful to ride were densely covered with the charred remains of the tomatagorra bushes, which Rees had fired when he first crossed them. Indeed had he not cleared the country by burning it, it is quite certain that we would never have taken sheep over it.

This route was also used by the hundreds of gold seekers heading to the Arrow and Shotover diggings after 1862. Some of us are descendants of these early miners. The track was made a road in the 1860s using picks and shovels. In 1877 the first tourist trips using horse-drawn coaches drove over the pass. But it was not until 2000 that the road was finally sealed.

The farm buildings in the foreground were built by Joe and Alfred Miller.

Sources

Banks, I., Darby R. & Haig, A., 'Crown Range Road; a case study of pavement rehabilitation in an alpine environment', Winter Maintenance Symposium Queenstown, QDLC.

Duncan, Alfred H. *The Wakatipians, or Early Days in New Zealand*, 1888 reprinted 1969, John McIndoe, Dunedin.

Mcdonald, Bill, *Queenstown's Farms and Sheep Stations: Families that Farmed the Land*, self-published, 2010.

Von Tunzelmann, 'Reminiscences and Troubles of a Wakatipian Pioneer', *Lake Wakatip Mail* 21 September 1900, reprinted in *The Queenstown Courier* No.3, 1968.

Queenstown and District Historical Society
Activities for Members Spring 2012 to Autumn 2013

The programme and updates will be published on our website:
www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz .

Sunday 26 August: Launch of the 2013 Calendar: Hand-Tinted Postcards from the Past
2pm St John's Presbyterian Hall, Arrowtown.

50 members attended and heard talks on the era of hand-tinted postcards and the 14 photos.

19-22 October: Goldrush 150th Commemorations, Arrowtown

Friday and Monday at 10am and 2pm: Guided Historical Walks

Meeting outside the Museum. Three separate routes with Rupert, Russell and Rita as guides.

We would appreciate help from members to distribute flyers about Society and sell calendars.

Saturday: Market Day 10am-3pm

We would welcome help from any members who could take a turn on our stall to sell calendars.

Sunday: Town Meets Country Day 10am-4pm at Millbrook Corner

Again, some help for an hour or so on our stall would be welcome.

Monday: Guided Walks as above. **Help would be appreciated.**

Sunday 11 November: Frankton Cemetery Tour and Annual General Meeting

2pm. Talks introducing some of the people buried there – a different selection from the 2006 tour.

If you can provide family information or wish to present a person, please let us know.

Afternoon tea at St Margaret's Presbyterian hall, followed by the AGM.

Wet weather plan: The talks will also be held at the hall.

Sunday 9 December: Annual Society Picnic

From noon at Reidhaven, 5 Villiers St, Arrowtown. Jack Reid has offered to speak.

Sunday 27 January: Early Buildings in Queenstown : Talks and Walks

2pm at St Peter's Anglican Church Hall.

Talks and handouts on the establishment of the town and selected buildings in that vicinity, but not including St Peter's as their 150th celebrations will occur later in the year.

After afternoon tea, small groups will walk around the buildings.

2 or 3 March: Wanaka Transport and Toy Museum and the Warbirds and Wheels Museum

Saturday or Sunday. Whole day. Travel by carpooling.

19 and 21 April: Arrowtown Autumn Festival - Cemetery Tours

2pm. A fresh selection of former residents.

If you can provide family information or wish to present a person, please let us know.

We intend to have an indoor venue available in case of rain.

Sunday 19 May: Launch of the Winter Courier featuring Doctors in the District 1862-1962

2pm at St John Ambulance Rooms in Frankton – appropriately.



Gold

IS WHERE YOU FIND IT

150 YEARS OF GOLD IN CENTRAL OTAGO, LAKES DISTRICT MUSEUM & GALLERY, ARROWTOWN
OCTOBER 20, 2012 - FEBRUARY 10, 2013

Queenstown & District Historical Society
2008 Incorporated

OFFICERS OF THE SOCIETY

Acting President: Marion Borrell

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

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



COMMITTEE

Brian Bayley

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

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

Honorary Solicitor: Graeme Todd

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

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Life Membership: \$250

The Queenstown Courier is posted to members.

Correspondence and accounts to: PO Box 132, Queenstown

THE COURIER

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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www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz

Our Heritage Today-For Tomorrow