The Queenstown Courier

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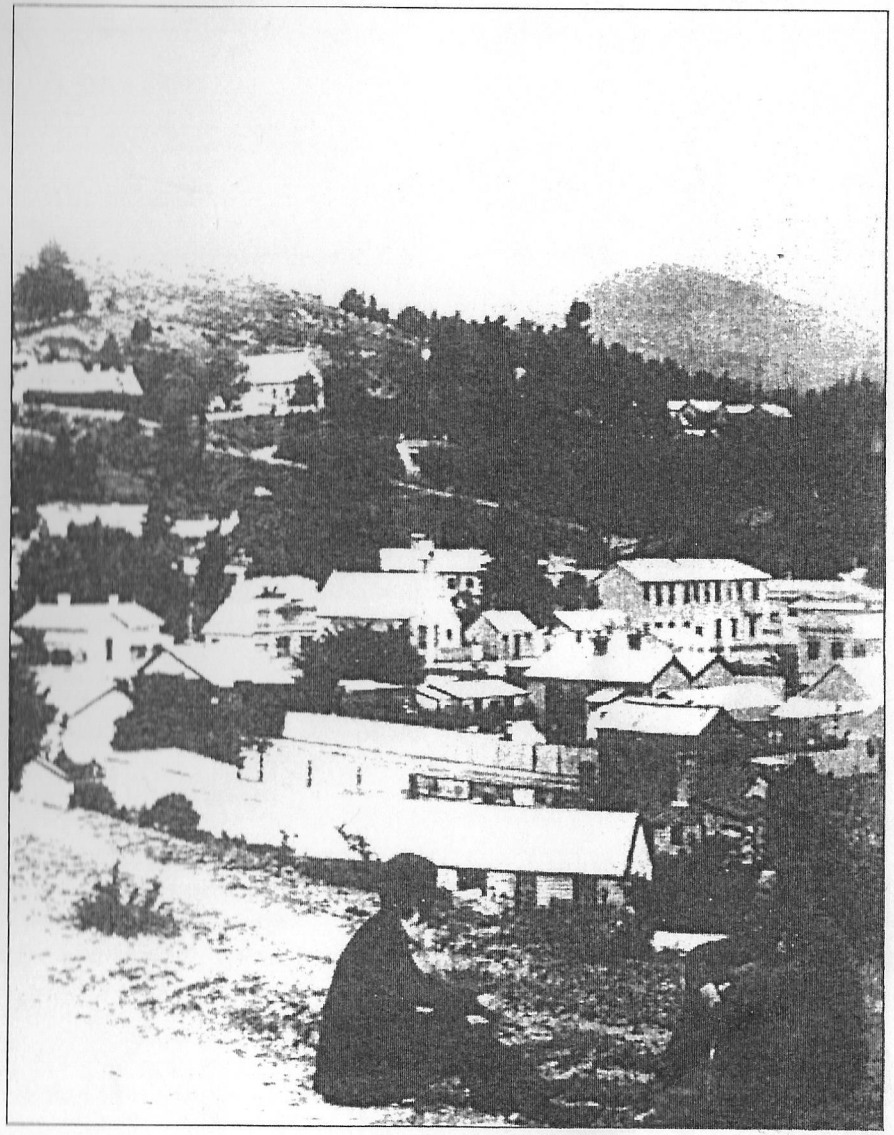


Queenstown – Early 1900s

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE QUEENSTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

QUEENSTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2006

It is a privilege and a pleasure to present this annual report on the activities of your Historical Society over the 2005/6 year on completion of a year as President.

I would like to record my grateful thanks to all the members who have contributed their time, talents and knowledge so freely and capably to make the year both successful and enjoyable. In particular I wish to thank the members of the committee for their contributions and support given so willingly.

Looking back over the meeting agendas and minutes reinforces the fact that the Society is playing a valuable role in its attempts to protect district heritages items and issues. I believe it is filling a very necessary role in the community.

The heavy strain of the Ngai Tahu proceedings has brought the Society an improved profile. Some developers and designers are now consulting with Society representatives early in their planning. This is probably a time when maximum benefit for protection of heritage values can be achieved. It is a benefit resulting from the Ngai Tahu challenge.

Rex Austin has been awarded life membership of the Society. This is a well earned recognition of his generous input into the affairs of the Society over many years.

The purchase of the WG Rees silver tea service by the Lakes District Museum is particularly gratifying. Your Society quickly advised the Museum Director it would support its purchase and display by the Museum. The Society donated $3000 towards the purchase price. This and other donations enabled the Museum to negotiate its purchase.

Mesdames J Robertson and B Hamilton are the Society's nominees on the Museum Trust Board. With the planning, building of the extensions and new lay out of the museum their duties have been heavy ones. Thank you both for your Museum input.

Planning issues are an almost continuous matter for consideration by the Society. We are very fortunate that some of our Committee members are prepared and able to effectively represent the Society and pursue its goals of heritage protection. A few examples of these issues are:

Skippers road, Mountaineer redevelopment, Robert Lee memorial relocation, Laurel Bank relocation and upgrade, Arranmore farm buildings protection, Heritage tree protection.

QLDC heritage plan change: This required considerable work under pressure and the efforts of Liz Macdonald and Ray Clarkson were outstanding.

Society members enjoyed field trips to Moa Creek and Poolburn dam in November, Goldfields, Kawarau Gorge in March and Kinloch in April. A most informative and enjoyable local visit to the Frankton Cemetery and the Kawarau Bridge was held on 12 February. Many thanks to John Heenan, Barbara Hamilton and Ray Clarkson for organising these very successful occasions which were informative and most enjoyable. Thanks are also due to those volunteers who were "disinterred" to enable them to relate something of their lives as district pioneers.

A new initiative undertaken by the Society is recommending suitable names for new and unnamed Council reserves. I believe that many members of the Society have such a depth of local knowledge that their suggested names could add considerably to a recognition of many of the early residents and history of the Wakatipu basin. Suitable information boards could give brief details of the reasons for the park name, thereby sharing some of earlier local history. The Society fully recognises that it is the role of QLDC to make the naming decisions but Council staff are grateful for suggestions and reasons for these. Council will be encouraged to record the reasons for the recommended names so future historians will have assistance in establishing historical details. The first example of a successful recommendation is the naming of Jack Reid Park – part of the Arrowtown former camping grounds. You will enjoy hearing from Jack Reid, the younger, later.

Members will be aware that the last *Courier* was in a clearer type face. The Society is indebted to Karen Boulay and Mike Lynch for their initiatives in content format and printing method. I believe the last Courier the best yet. It is now easier to read and its content of considerable interest. Many members have expressed their appreciation of the *Courier* to me. The research value of

The Courier will be improved when an index of contents is completed. This is now underway. I hope that in the near future a separate index of contents to date will be forwarded to all members.

Sales of the Society's Walking Guide are progressing. The Society has authorised a number of nicely made oval brass plates be erected on the sites. This has taken longer than hoped but some signs are made and the work is underway.

Rob Blair has efficiently and quietly fulfilled the role as Treasurer. He took over the roll from Peter Mills who had enthusiastically fulfilled this role for nine years. I want to thank Peter for all his hard, reliable work supporting the Society over those years and for the assistance he has given to Rob.

It is extremely pleasing that our immediate past president Malcolm Boote has been awarded a Certificate of merit by the NZ Historic Places Trust for his hard work on the Power House restoration project – itself the winner of the David Cox Memorial award in 2006. Malcolm continues to be vitally interested in all the ongoing issues of the Society and has been a great help to me ensuring lines of communication are kept open and freely giving his views and encouragement.

Looking to the future the Society has concerns over the loss of heritage items caused in part by the speed and extensiveness of development. The scale of developments such as the Mountaineer proposals and the completed redevelopment of the Royal Oak site in Arrowtown is a concern. The change of streetscape is alarming. The lack of even basic maintenance on the Arrowtown miners cottages and other heritage buildings is devastating. Adequate protection and future use of the old buildings on the Arranmore farm and the old Courthouse are a concern as is the future of the Kawerau bridge. These and many other matters concern your committee who are determined to do all that they reasonably can to protect heritage items for the benefit of future generations.

Finally I want to thank all our members for their continuing support. Your membership is greatly valued. We request your assistance in recruiting new members. We have no minimum joining age and would welcome new members of all ages. The larger our membership, the greater our chance of persuading community leaders and civic administrators to be reasonable and see things our way.

Brian R Bayley
9th November 2006

Arrowtown remembered

Notes for a talk to the Historical Society by Jack Reid, former Arrowtown Mayor and descendant of a pioneer local family.

In turning the clock back nearly 80 years, to my earliest memories of this district, largely centred around Arrowtown, and my own family in particular, and contrasting what we see and take for granted today, one is immediately struck by the tremendous changes that have taken place in those four-score years.

I was born in 1921, and my memory has recorded only a few occasions or events until perhaps 1927 or 1928. From that time on I can recall most of what went on in the district, from a child's perspective – especially those events and matters that affected ourselves and our friends.

Much earlier in the district's history, gold mining had largely given way to farming, though a few men had continued with their search for gold, and gold was still a fairly common topic of conversation amongst my parents and their friends. Why the rich finds in the Arrow petered out at Big Beach, and where had the river with its heavy gold deposits flowed after reaching there? Downstream, the gold recovered was only a fraction of what was found at Big Beach and upstream. There seems no logical answer. Possible theories were discussed, but no convincing answers seemed to emerge.

My brother-in-law sank three shafts in our property, directly in line with the river's flow, but without success. I think all he proved was that the river hadn't flowed through our place for he got no gold and there were no river wash-stones. That was during the Depression years of the '30s when a few ounces of gold would have been most welcome.

My grand-parents had emigrated to New Zealand from the Orkney Islands in 1864, to join those early gold miners, and though I don't think they found riches, they must have had some little success, for they were eventually able to buy some land of their own and commence small-scale farming. Grandfather was listed as a Dairyman originally, but he was able to acquire other adjacent land as it became available, until he achieved his goal of owning his own farm. That outcome would have been highly unlikely had the family remained in the Orkney Islands. The property was just out of Arrowtown, and was my father's farm as I first remember it.

Like most of the neighbouring farms, it was not a large property, and like them also horses were the source of power for most of the farming operations.

There were very few tractors around in those years. Mr Jack Butel, of Willowbank, had one of them and he used to cut firewood for folk on his portable sawbench. He also had a chaff-cutter and was frequently in demand for that purpose. He was a returned soldier from W.W.1. and was a victim of poisonous gas, from which he suffered for the rest of his life.

Sadly, he was not the only victim amongst those who returned from that conflict, but he was one of the worst affected that I knew. He was a clever, inventive man too, and was often called on for his largely self-taught skills.

Most of the farms that remember were, in the main, mixed farms. Ours was typical, I suppose. We kept about five or six cows, which were hand-milked twice daily, although I think 9 or 10 had been the herd a few years earlier. We also had about 200 sheep. Some of our milk went to the Co-op Dairy, the rest was sold from our licensed dairy, across from our back door. Cream, eggs, home-made butter were also sold from our Dairy, which retained its licence until after W.W.2.

Crops were usually the main activity of the districts farmers, Chiefly barley, oats and some wheat. Fine grass seed such as mother-seed white clover, timothy, ryegrass and fescue were also grown, but the district's main crop was barley, grown under contract for Speights Breweries in Dunedin.

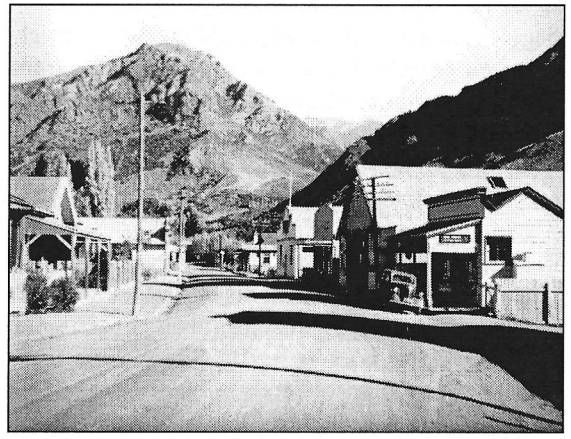
I sometimes went to Dunedin with my Father when he took samples of grain from the different paddocks to Speight's office. Mr Adams, the buyer, would open the little sample bags one by one, check for seed brightness and colour, and try each one in his little sieves. Even as a kid I noted that the top price he offered (5/- a bushel), always seemed to be for a line with the fewest number of bags in it, and the sieve always seemed to let through a few smaller grains (seconds) -- or the largest lot of bags seemed to have a little discoloured grain, and he would drop the price to 4/6 a bushel. The farmers had little choice but to accept whatever he offered, as I was told Speights could import any shortfall they needed from Australia, at an even lower price.

The main barley-growing areas were the Wakatipu and Garston areas, and Hawea Flat, in those Depression years, but many years later I noted that Canterbury had become the main barley growing area. Speight's were very particular about how the grain was harvested also.

The crop had to be cut by the reaper and binder at exactly the right time to ensure its best condition, and the sheaves stooked, before being stacked for a minimum of six weeks. Harvest was a very busy and labour-intensive time. My father was quite expert at estimating the number and sizes of the stacks of sheaves required to contain the amount of crop in each paddock. He built the stacks, either round or oblong, after stepping out the size he estimated would hold that paddock's crop, and he very seldom got his stack sizes wrong.

With luck, the last dray-load of sheaves would finish up as a miniature stack beside the perfectly symmetrical main stack, or stacks. The district looked really special with stacks of grain, mainly barley, dotted over the countryside. Stack-building was an art form.

Small birds were always a problem in grain-growing areas, being very fond of the grain. The Lake County Council paid 3d a dozen for birds eggs, (and for the heads of small birds), and bird-nesting was one of the sources of school-children's pocket money.



Buckingham Street, early 1950s

Most kids were fairly expert at tree-climbing, and at robbing birds' nests of eggs or heads, or both, which they then sold to our school's head-teacher, Mrs Douglas, who broke and buried them in the school gardens. In the later afternoon, huge flocks of starlings gathered at Butel's farm trees, and made a tremendous chattering noise for about half an hour before sundown, after which they flew over to the sycamore plantation above our racecourse paddock (now known as Mr Jim Boult's "Butel Park") for the night. I remember seeing a hawk attacking the rear of that great echelon of starlings, and the leaders turned and with them, the whole echelon, attacked the hawk. The last I saw of it they had the hawk nearly at ground level, along Malaghan Road, before returning to roost in the sycamore trees as usual.

The district's roads at that time were always very dry and dusty in summer. The few cars that used them were followed by clouds of dust. Tour buses were more

of a rarity, perhaps one a day, but when one came along it was customary for everyone to wave to everyone in sight. The harvesters in the paddocks, usually stripped to the waist, despite the hot sun, always returned the waves of the bus passengers, and vice versa. Cars and buses passing along the road used to frighten the sheep and it was amusing to see them run to the other side of the paddock each time a motor vehicle came along the road. Horses, too, were alarmed at the unfamiliar noise, and it was common practice for the driver, or someone else, to get out of a dray, or other vehicle, and stand at their heads to reassure them when a car came past. Animals adjusted as time went by, and I was amused to see sheep carrying on grazing beside the roads later, and not being at all bothered by the passing traffic.

In winter the roads were very different. After a frosty night they were just about as hard as concrete – very heavily rutted concrete. The steel tyres of farm drays, buggies and carts, cut deep ruts in the roads, which froze at night and could prove a trap for bicycles etc caught in them. Once the frost had thawed, probably late morning or afternoon, the roads just became a soggy mess. That process kept on repeating, and was sometimes further affected by falls of snow. The gravel used to build them up was either dug from grave pits locally, or river gravel, and it was soft schisty stuff which was soon ground into dust.

Rabbits have long been an ongoing pest, and the bane of many a farmer's life. Often when a farmer was at his busiest, he would receive a demand from the rabbit inspector, saying that his rabbit population was too high, and immediate action was to be taken to rectify the situation – or else! That was before the days of rabbit boards, of course. I was surprised at the number of men who gave their occupation as "Rabbiter" in the Council's rating records during the big Depression of the '30s. Other unwelcome demands for action came from the Post &Telegraph Dept., requesting immediate action to cut back hawthorn hedges which were interfering with telephone or telegraph lines. To hard-pressed farmers, these demands always seemed to arrive when he was at his busiest, and least able to comply with them.

Hawthorn hedges enclosed most of the paddocks on our farm and on those of most of our neighbours, and the high hedges were probably the bane of Mr Donald Gray's life, whose job was to keep all the telephone and telegraph lines in working order.

Mr George Romans was the butcher here for many years, sometimes in partnership, but not in my times. His son Reg, helped in the shop and he

employed bakers to make the bread. Wattie Jones used to deliver orders round the town. These he carried in a very large basket which he steadied on the pommel of his saddle, as he rode his horse round the town. On reaching our gate he used to call "YIP" in a loud voice, when someone would go to the gate, collect the bread and/or meat, and pay for it. Waffle was probably the tallest man in the district, I would say. He was 6ft 8ins tall. If he stood in our doorway, he could rub his head on the frame above. I don't ever expect to see that kind of delivery from local trades-people again.

Another unforgettable sound constantly heard was Mr John Jenkins' hammer on the anvil as he shod the district's many horses. The two quick tap-tap sounds at the end of the anvil work each time must have been his trade-mark.
The hammering always ended that way.

Arrowtown continues to grow. A fine new hall has also been built and is almost continually in use, and space is already appearing to be a restrictive factor for future expansion. It is difficult not to compare this new beautiful school with the descriptive comment on the first school by the Magistrate of 1873, on the occasion of the opening of the new stone Presbyterian Church. He congratulated Church members thus; "If it were only for the great contrast with the old school-house, with its pool of water at the door, its many draughts, its uncomfortable narrow stools with the legs always coming out, its primitive posts supporting the low roof."

On leaving the Convent School, in 1929, I think, for the Public School, I did not go to the stone school first, as it was being upgraded at that time, A new heating system was being installed, ventilators were fitted, and other desirable improvements done. School activities had been transferred to the Parish Hall, formerly the Wesleyan Church of 1904, and now, currently, the One Stop Shop, part of the local garage complex.

My teacher there was Miss McLees. I was then in Standard 2, and in the little room where Miss McLees taught. On the two music lesson days each week, (at the Convent) I was strapped for being late for school. Sister Fehin was paid to teach me until 9 a.m., which she faithfully did. No matter how fast I ran to the Parish Hall, I could not arrive there in time for classes, so I received the strap for being late. I complained bitterly to Mum about this, and I think that may have been the end of my future great musical career. I was excused having to go to music lessons after that. Sometimes one has to wonder how talented one might have become? Sometimes.

Hard-done horse hobbles 1870 Clyde gold heist

By Alan De La Mare

In the early hours of Sunday the 7th of August, 1970 a lone horseman rode up the steep Gentle Annie track from the Kawarau, leading to the Crown Range and Arrowtown.

The horseman, an Arrowtown shoemaker called Rennie was worried his horse was incapable of carrying on to Arrowtown, and the grey light of dawn meant that in a short time he would lose the cloak of darkness and be seen and perhaps recognised.

That the horse was exhausted was to be expected, as it had been ridden that night from Arrowtown to Clyde, and on the return trip had carried some heavy weights for part of the journey.

Rennie was anxious to get to Arrowtown before daylight as he had that very night robbed all the cargo of the regular Gold Escort from the Clyde lockup, where it had been placed overnight on its journey to Dunedin. Rennie had taken the steep Gentle Annie track rather than the flatter road up the river, where he would have been seen, and perhaps recognised at the two punts en route. This decision could have been his undoing.

When his horse could go no further, Rennie hid the saddle and turned it loose. He then lit a fire on which he placed his outer clothing, the bridle and some false whiskers. Having done this he headed off on foot to Arrowtown. He probably thought his nights journey had been unobserved, but his unusual activities when his horse had failed had been seen by an accommodation-house owner by the name of Smith.

It was customary for the Gold Escort to go through to Dunedin every fortnight but on this occasion because of the weather and the state of the road it had been held over for a month, and contents were greater than usual. The normal security at Clyde was to lock the gold and notes in a lock-up cell, with the key held by the Escort commander, in this case Inspector Dalgleish.

The scene at Clyde when the doors were opened next morning to reveal the inner area where the treasure was locked had been forced open and the entire lot was missing can be imagined. The robbery was huge, and was finally confirmed as;

Bank of N.S.W. Cromwell	**980 oz of gold**	**£2528 in notes**
Bank of N.S.W. Clyde	**350 oz**	**£3065**
Bank of N.Z. Alexandra	**377 oz**	**£1470**
Bank of N.Z. Teviot	**392 oz**	**£766**
Bank of N.Z. Queenstown		**£810**

The total weight of the gold was 2099 oz, valued at £7871, which together with the notes of £6110 amounted to £13,981. Such a loss was a serious reflection on the police and on Inspector Dalgleish who had been escort commander for over seven years. The fact that the cell door had been opened with a key and the safe normally provided for security had been transferred to the Pigroot and not replaced both reflected on the police and pointed to it being an inside job.

With an absence of clues the police were baffled, although the two boxes in which the treasure had been stored were found in a water race nearby. The robbery was big news, as was the £500 reward offered by the Provincial Government for information leading to a conviction, along with a pardon to an accomplice dobbing in the thief .

After some days, with the police still without leads, Mr Smith came forward to tell of the unusual activities he had witnessed on the Gentle Annie track. When the police examined the scene they found a bridle and clothing partly burnt. The evidence, particularly the bridle which looked as if it had been repaired by a shoemaker rather than a saddler, pointed to Rennie and he was arrested on suspicion.

Rennie denied being involved, but while in custody saw the notice offering the £500 reward and the pardon to an accomplice. He confessed his involvement in the mistaken belief he would receive the pardon. He took the police to several caches where he had hid the treasure on the road from Clyde and it was reported all but a small amount was recovered. He also implicated the Clyde constable Malcolm McLennan, who had supplied the key to the cell door and stood watch while Rennie removed the treasure.

Rennie and McLennan had worked together at the Royal Montrose Lunatic Asylum in Britain and had emigrated together on the E. P. Bouverie to Dunedin some twelve months earlier. McLennan had obtained his position as constable at Clyde and Rennie had become a warder at the Queenstown hospital until a few weeks previously when he became a shoemaker in Arrowtown. No doubt the two

had during their long association discussed carrying out the perfect crime, and McLennan's appointment of trust made this possible.

Rennie was charged with the robbery and McLennan an accomplice. The police and public were very pleased with the outcome.

Just as the robbery was big news, so too was the case when heard before Judge Chapman and jury in the Supreme Court. Rennie pleaded guilty, no doubt relying on their offer of immunity. He was soon disillusioned as it was apparent the public were supporting McLennan. They cheered his counsel Barton and the judge when he summed up in his favour.

Rennie was found guilty while McLennan was found not guilty. Although it was a travesty of justice it was an extremely popular verdict. Rennie was sentenced to six years hard labour but did not serve his full term as the authorities recognised he had been hard dealt with.

The robbery was soon forgotten but the memory of Rennie riding back from Clyde was revived in May, 1897 when miners working on a sluicing claim above the Roaring Meg found a bag containing 100 oz of gold. It was reported at the time this must have been one of the two bags missing from the robbery of 1870. This seems likely as gold was usually dispatched in 100 oz bags.

We can only assume the police accounting of 1870 was as rough and ready as the times, and there may yet be an opportunity for someone with a gold detector to finish the story.

Although the police escorted a vast amount of gold and notes over many years, the Rennie robbery was the only occasion there was any loss. By a fluke they managed to keep their record intact.

References:
"Early Days in Central Otago" Gilkinson
Dunedin Public Library
"Otago Witness"
"Southland Times"

First Schools in the Wakatipu Established in a Rush

By Danny Knudson

The discovery of payable gold in the Arrow and Shotover Rivers in 1862 transformed the history of the Wakatipu. William Fox, together with several others, mined secretly in the Arrow River, and Thomas Arthur and Harry Redfern discovered gold in the Shotover River at about the same time. Word of new gold strikes filtered to the outside world and a rush followed, first to Fox's (which became Arrowtown), then to the Shotover. Queenstown developed as the major lakeside port closest to the Shotover.

Within a year, adults in each of the two towns agitated to have schools provided for children who had accompanied their families to the new goldfields. As with other districts, locals had to raise money and construct a school, then guarantee half of a teacher's salary. The Otago Education Board provided the remainder of the salary if satisfied there were enough children to warrant a school and a willingness on the part of each community to guarantee salary payments. Adults in both towns were determined to open schools and even miners who had no children supported schemes to raise money for school buildings.

Preliminary requirements for establishing a school were that a school district was approved by the Otago Education Board. The next move was for a school committee to be elected by male residents over the age of 21 years. No women were enfranchised in these elections, Those requirements satisfied, a school could be established on a subsidized basis.

Edward Ings sets Arrowtown education gold standard

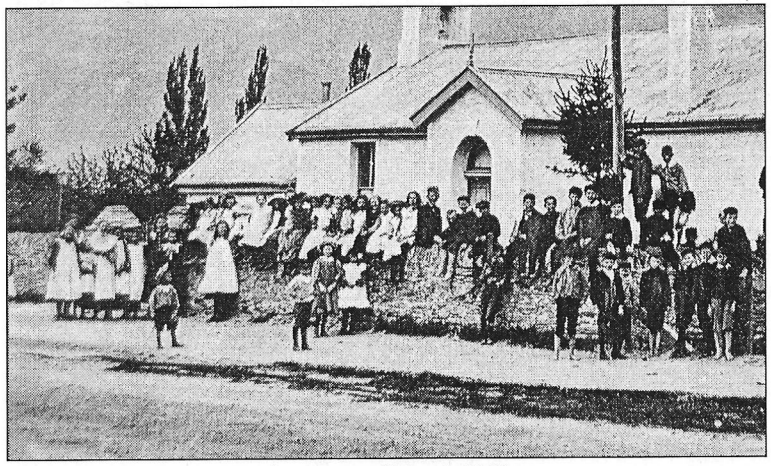
A simple structure was built as Arrowtown's first public school in 1864 on what later became the garden of the Royal Oak Hotel.

Edward Ings was appointed first teacher at the new School. Ings received £104 18s 6d for teaching 21 pupils. The Government's grant for salaries (£40 3s 9d) was considerably less than what the community raised by way of taxes and fees (£64 14s 9d).

Arrowtown had an impressive average attendance of 18 in its initial year. Given that some children would have enrolled later in the first year, there must have been close to perfect attendance by those on the roll.

It may be expected that when children first started school at Arrowtown, they would have registered quite modest achievements, but that was not the case. At Arrowtown, 19 of 21 children could read easy narrative or general information books and 12 worked on simple rules in arithmetic.

Fees charged for attendance at schools on the Otago goldfields was typically one shilling a week. Historian, John Bell Thomson, recorded what happened at Arrowtown if children did not have their fees for Ings. "The charge was one shilling for each pupil, and any child who did not have the money for him on Monday mornings was sent home for it. At the same time, however, he [Ings] held out the offer of an escape clause in his terms. As a substitute for payment of the nimble shilling he announced his willingness to accept a curl or lock of hair." (Thomson, p.9)



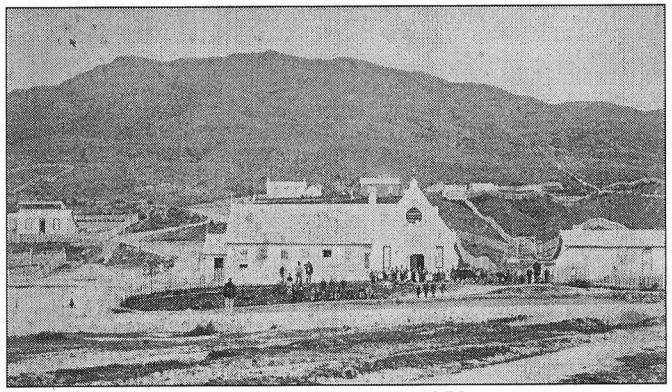
Arrowtown School, 1903

Several parents were prepared to pay higher school fees so that their children could study additional subjects other than the three Rs. At Arrowtown, eight pupils studied geography and grammar, while two studied book-keeping. This range constituted an expanded curriculum taught by Ings, and a willingness of goldfields parents to invest in advanced studies for their children.

There are four signs that Ings was an effective teacher. First, average attendance by children at Arrowtown School was higher than was the case in other schools throughout Otago at that time. Pupils tended not to attend schools unless their parents approved of the teaching being provided. Second, the achievements of pupils compared favourably with those in other goldfields schools in the mid-

1860s. Third, Ings was capable of presenting more than the minimum curriculum of the three Rs to his pupils. Fourth, Ings demonstrated in subsequent years that he was a career teacher, dedicated to his profession. A further point is that Ings was first in the field of teaching in the Wakatipu.

Ing resigned from Arrowtown in 1865. He later taught at Clyde, Warepa in South Otago, then on the West Coast where he completed his teaching career. Edward Ings died on the West Coast in 1913.



Queenstown School, 1875

John Brown's schooldays in the Wakatipu

According to noted historian F.W.G. Miller, the first school in Queenstown was a private institution conducted in the Church of England by teacher, John Brown. Fees were a half-crown (two shillings and sixpence) a week. "The school was later transferred to the 'Camp' Hotel at the corner of Camp and Church Streets. The Education Department of the Otago Provincial Council erected a school on the present [Stanley Street] site in the latter part of 1864 and this marked the birth of the public, or State, school movement." (Miller, p.242)

John Brown was confirmed as teacher at Queenstown School when the school was authorised by the Otago Education Board. Brown received a salary of £109 6 shillings for teaching 56 children in the sole-charge school. The Otago Education Board contributed £50 towards Brown's salary, the remainder came from school fees totalling £346 shillings, and local rates and subscriptions which amounted to £44 12 shillings.

Children at Queenstown demonstrated impressive achievement levels from when they first attended the school. Clearly, parents had been active in helping their children become familiar with elementary literacy and numeracy skills. Records of the first year, 1864, show that 26 of the 56 children could read easy narrative and general information books, 12 could write on paper or slates from dictation, and the same number worked on compound rules, proportion or fractions. Brown was qualified by his own studies to teach an extended curriculum to include geography and grammar, each of which were studied by 12 pupils, and history, studied by two pupils. History in this case involved English history.

By 1865, the roll at Queenstown had increased to 66, generating an impressive salary of £218 11 shillings for Brown. In 1866, the *Wakatip Mail* reported that annual examinations had been conducted by local dignitaries and five boys, but no girls, were named as having performed with distinction.

Several children were quite young when they started at Queenstown. In 1867, 11 children were under five years of age, but unlike many other schools in Otago, no students were aged over 14 years. This may reflect the availability of work in the Wakatipu where girls could help at home or in local accommodation houses while boys were available for farm work or mining.

Brown's teaching was valued in the community to the point that the School Committee reported favourably about the school; "It is only to he hoped that its usefulness will continue to he felt throughout the district, that its high character as a national institution in the interests of our youth will be maintained." (Miller p242-243)

John Brown left Queenstown School in 1869 to open Lower Shotover School, a smaller school with a roll of around 50 children in 1870. An assessment of Brown's teaching was made by John Hislop when he inspected Lower Shotover on 13 November 1872.

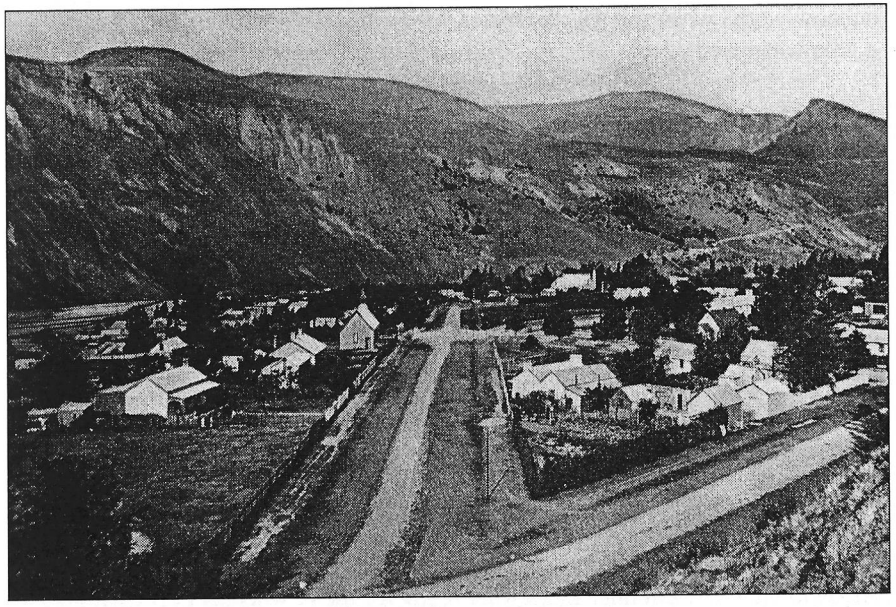
> This school is in the charge of a very able master. There is a fine tone in the school.
> The discipline is mild but effective. The method and classification are most excellent.
> The subjects are necessarily elementary, but are all very thoroughly taught. (Otago Education Board Annual Report 1873, p.45)

To be described as "very able" by none other than John Hislop, Otago's Inspector of Schools and Secretary to the Otago Education Board, was high praise indeed.

John Brown taught at Lower Shotover until 1873, when he left teaching to spend the rest of his life farming land he bought near the school.

There are several indicators of Brown's ability as a teacher. He completed a kind of trial in the community while teaching a private school. He would not have been appointed to the public school if unsuccessful. He presented an extensive curriculum to his scholars. The roll at Queenstown increased markedly during Brown's time at Queenstown. His teaching at Queenstown would have been well known by the School Committee at Lower Shotover when they appointed him to open their new school. He received favourable comments from Otago's esteemed Inspector of Schools.

Incidentally, Brown's successor at Queenstown, employed on a temporary basis, was D.M. Scott, an untrained teacher who was subsequently appointed to open Macetown School when it started with a roll of 24 in 1870. K. Sutherland was the permanently appointed successor to Brown at Queenstown in 1870.



The beginnings of Catholic education in the Wakatipu

By Danny Knudson

Arrowtown

The first Catholic school in Arrowtown, St Patrick's, was opened with 25 pupils in attendance on 5 July 1873. Dr Patrick Moran, first Bishop of Dunedin, inspected the school in November of its first year. He examined all classes then declared his satisfaction with the children's work and progress in the new school taught by Miss Carden.

One year later, Father Royer reported on St Patrick's:

> At Arrowtown there are 27 children on the roll – 11 boys and 16 girls. The school is held in St Patrick's Church. The children are clean, orderly and respectful in their manners. The Christian Brothers' books are used.
> The teacher, Miss Kate Carden, is very diligent and attentive to her duty and much interested in the usefulness and success of the school. (J.B. Thomson, p.32)

In January 1875, Miss Carden left for lnvercargill and her fine work was acknowledged when she was presented with a signed testimonial, together with a gold watch and chain. T. Horan from Wellington continued the good teaching work started by Miss Carden and the roll grew to 41. Pupils distinguished themselves in presenting a concert in aid of school funds in 1876. The district responded generously each time the children presented a performance in aid of their school funds.

In February 1883, the congregation rejoiced in the opening of a new purpose-built Catholic School in Arrowtown, blessed by Bishop Moran. The building was large enough for 100 pupils. Bishop Moran continued to examine the children through the years 1884 to 1892.

Major changes occurred in 1897. Bishop Verdon, second Bishop of Dunedin, had expressed his hope that St Patrick's School could he taught by a Community of Nuns. In October 1897, Father Keenan, parish priest in Arrowtown, heard that four Sisters of St Joseph's from Adelaide were arriving at Bluff en route to Port Chalmers to establish a convent and school in that district. Keenan met the Josephite Sisters on their arrival in Southland and persuaded them to redirect to Arrowtown where circumstances were ready for them, whereas Port Chalmers did not yet have a building prepared for them.

A special community welcome was arranged for the Sisters as they approached Arrowtown by coach from Queenstown. This left no doubt about their welcome and relevance of their service.

The school was renamed as St Joseph's in recognition of the new teachers, Mother Mary of the Cross, and Sisters Margaret Mary Sexton, Cecilia Cavalier and Leonard Schmidt.

J.B. Thomson, in his history of schools in the Arrowtown district, recorded, "The Sisters of St Joseph's were always held in the highest esteem by people of all denominations in Arrowtown and the surrounding district. They proved themselves capable teachers in all phases of education." (J.B. Thomson, p.34)

Queenstown

The settlements in the Wakatipu were initially part of the Catholic Parish based in Invercargill but when Wakatipu was declared as a separate parish, Father John Mackay was appointed parish priest. MacKay, a Scot, was ordained in Paris, but he came to New Zealand for health reasons He regained his strength and applied to transfer from the Aberdeen diocese. Mackay divided his time between Arrowtown and Queenstown, and supported the formation of education in both settlements.

St Joseph's, Queenstown, early 1920s. Lots of McBrides, Lynches, Kellys, Powells and McSorileys

By 1875, a Catholic School was operating in Queenstown. Average attendance in that year reached 65. The teacher was Mr Sproule although Mackay provided teaching assistance intermittently. Financial resources reduced the viability of Queenstown's school and it was forced to close in November 1879.

Prompt action led to the appointment of Father James O'Neill as an assistant for Mackay who then spent more time in Arrowtown, leaving O'Neill to concentrate his efforts in Queenstown. In another constructive move, Dominican Sisters was assigned to help re-establish a school in Queenstown. They received a sterling welcome when they arrived by steamer *Mountaineer* from Kingston.
The day after their arrival, St Joseph's School, Queenstown, reopened under Sister M. Columba, assisted by Sister M. Rose. There is some suggestion that the school reopened before Christmas 1879, but it seems more likely that teaching recommenced when the sisters arrived in early February 1880. McCarthy reported, "During the first week only a few children attended the school but the roll number grew steadily." (McCarthy, p.89) A convent was built in Queenstown as a complementary development.

actually 1883

From 1883, a form of composite school existed. Senior pupils over 10 years of age attended St Catherine's and those in the primary division attended St Joseph's. Until a school was constructed, lessons were conducted in St Joseph's Church. Primary pupils paid fees of ten shillings a week, but students at St Catherine's paid £12 a year for attendance as day students or £40 as boarders. All pupils helped in fund raising for the new school with successful bazaars and popular concerts
The new school was opened in July 1885 with St Joseph's downstairs, sharing accommodation with church facilities, and St Catherine's upstairs. The grand opening was followed within days by another concert in which children performed to the pleasure of their audience.

References

Power, Sister Anne Marie, *Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart: New Zealand Story 1883 – 1983,* Auckland, Sisters of St Joseph of the Sacred Heart, 1983.
McCarthy, Sister Mary Augustine, *Star in the South: The Centennial History of the New Zealand Dominican Sisters,* Dunedin, St Dominic's Priory. 1970.
Thomson, John Bell, *A Tale of Six Schools,* Dunedin, Evening Star, 1963.

Robert Wilson's Diary

Reminiscences of an Old Southland Hussar

(Outing to Queenstown Easter, 1885)

When Easter comes I always think of the exciting times we had in the early Eighties when preparing and doing up our horses, harness, accoutrements and uniforms for the pending review, which is usually on Easter Monday.

Our first outing was to Oamaru and subsequently Pareora and several times to Dunedin but the last that I attended was to Queenstown, and that trip was a memorable event and we were to perform the great feat of riding over the "Devils Staircase" between Kingston and Queenstown. This took place on Good Friday 1885.

There was a special train from Invercargill with the men and horses from there and other places. A few more joined at Winton, making a total of about 40. Arriving at Kingston at about 11pm we fixed up our horses in stockyards. Our horses and Company spent the night not very quietly, until 5am when after a good breakfast we left for our journey along the hills to Queenstown. Only one man, the lake prospector Fox, had ever been over the track before, and he led us. After we went round the corner of the lake we started to climb until we got about half way up the ranges then we commenced to go along the face. We were instructed to keep at least half a dray length apart so as not to crowd when we came to these gutters or dry courses. Some of them were several yards deep and as wide and only a narrow track cut in the bank just enough to let a pack horse through. We had to dismount when we came to them and lengthen our reins, get the horse to the bottom then get up on the bank and let him jump up.

This continued for several miles and was certainly tiring. Anyway we started to descend and all arrived at what was called the Lumber Box. We could see the whitened bones of a mob of cattle, which had stampeded there and they all went over and were killed. We had a spell there and when the roll was called it appeared we were two men short. It turned out that the rear trooper, who was a venetian-blind maker, and our farrier were wanting.

Immediately two troopers were sent back and after going about a mile the two lost men were met and came on all right. It appears that the rear trooper got tired getting off so often to cross these gullies, that he tried to cross one on horseback, with the result that on the horse, scrambling up the steep bank, the trooper slid over his tail and the horse went on and soon caught up with the next man. The farrier who caught him and then turned back and soon met the venetian-blind maker.

On the arrival of the lost men the Major asked if anyone had a drop of spirits to give the lost trooper. One man said yes and then produced from his sleeve a small bottle with about a thimble full of whisky in it. The Major grinned and remarked that apparently he didn't want to get the worse for it.

The Major, being an architect, took a sketch of the descent from the Staircase and it appeared in the *London Graphic* afterwards with a number of troopers riding down a very dangerous looking place and it was wonderfully like the place.

We then got out to a mile or two of plain and had a fine refreshing gallop. Then we got up to the Remarkables which are very high and steep and the track around these hills is just a notch out in the side of the hill a few feet wide. Just wide enough for packhorses, and a disquieting thing was that the horses would persist in walking within about a foot from the outer edge. Well we managed to negotiate that all right but it was rather nervy looking down on the lake 100 feet below.

Then we came to the Kawarau, which we crossed in a punt one half of us at a time. The punt was operated by a winch from the bank. We were not long in getting down to Mr O'Kanes hostelry at Frankton where we tried to drink him out as it was a very hot day and we got a good blistering with the sun. We arrived at Queenstown about 3pm and after doing up our horses and had a wash we sat down to one of the most enjoyable of dinners. Saturday we drilled and on Sunday we went to Arrowtown. Monday had the review on the Frankton Racecourse and had some races in the afternoon where the writer won the Hussar Race, 10 pounds, with Juno, 1½ miles, no

weight, under 12 stone in full uniform. I got another trooper to ride for me as I couldn't ride within two stone of that weight and my rider was a very good rider.

The next day the *Antrim* steamboat was chartered to bring us back to Kingston so we had not to repeat our trying experience of again riding over the Devils Staircase. It was a most enjoyable outing but what I wondered at was how a goodly number of troopers were waiting at Queenstown when we got there. I found out that these men had been at the lake diggings in the early days and knew all about the Staircase and had sent to Queenstown and hired horses and came up in the morning by the *Mountaineer* steamer.

Another incident occurred during our Queenstown trip. On the Saturday we had drill on a piece of flat country behind the town and were having a spell before stabling. A couple of troopers were having a race for a short distance. One of them was a big sawmiller and the other was a law clerk, they hadn't gone more than 100 yards, when a lame boy with a crutch rode right across in front of them. They hadn't time to pull up and the big sawmiller's horse hit the pony just behind the saddle and knocked them both sprawling. The big trooper shot clean over his horse's head and he got a severe fall and had to be assisted to bed and a doctor sent for. He seemed all right however couldn't attend the review on the Monday. The boy and pony were not hurt; only they got a big fright.

On the Sunday evening a few of us looked in to see the trooper who got the fall the day before, and looking around the room we noticed his uniform. And the spirit of mischief supervening we stuffed a pillow into the tunic and rolled up the blankets, spreading the counterpane over the lot, sticking the busby at the head and the Wellington boots at the foot.

Robert Wilson was born in Stow near Galashiels, Scotland in 1851. He emigrated to New Zealand in 1874 aboard the Parsee. He worked as a blacksmith in Winton where he lived until his death.
This was copied from Robert Wilson's diary and contributed by one of his descendants, Sarah Broad.

The Courier has been indebted to many writers over its forty years, but perhaps none more than local historian Alan De La Mare: he has contributed articles to all but a couple of the issues, and his knowledge is both encyclopaedic and immensely valuable.

In collaboration with the Arrowtown Museum he has just brought out a couple of well-illustrated little books we urge members to buy for their Christmas stockings.

Mining Pipe Dreams of The Wakatipu – A brief history of mining operations on the Shotover River
takes a look at some of the magnificent, expensive and ignominious failed schemes, right up into the twentieth century.

Arrowtown – Born of Gold – 1862. A brief history of the gold rush and settlement in Arrowtown
Is a general history of the town, right up to the present. Nothing quite like it has been done.

The books are priced at $7.50 and $9.99. They are available from the Museum, which is getting all the profits.

Clear out the drawers

The Arrowtown Museum is thinking of an exhibition of the post-War Wakatipu. It is looking for pictures, slides and memorabilia – the more people-oriented the better. Contact archivist Karen Swaine.

High country runs info wanted

The Lakes District Museum tells us that an Otago University masters student Ross Scrivener is doing a thesis on high country runs around Lake Wakatipu. He is short on information, especially cadastral maps, on the runs around the southern side of the lake in the first half of last century. If anyone can help his contact is 100 Albany St, Dunedin; ph 027 310 9298, or email at **scrro163@student.otago.ac.nz**

QUEENSTOWN AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY
Statement of Receipts and Payments for the Year Ended 30 September 2006

2005	Receipts	2006
21,997.96	Bank Balances fwd	13317.65
3,160.00	Subcriptions	2845.65
587.88	Donations	880.85
413.41	Trips & Luncheons (Net)	356.00
563.49	Interest	777.46
930.75	Qn Historical Book Sales	1615.67
600.00	Ngai Tahu Appeal Receipts	
28,253.49		19793.28

2005	Payments	2006
3,345.00	Subs, Grants, Donations	105.00
391.09	Printing, Stationery, Typing	76.20
83.33	P. O. Box	41.33
38.00	Bank Fees	1.50
2,010.47	Couriers	1456.12
97.80	Hall Hire	
164.59	AGM & Meeting Expenses	155.54
90.00	Bronze Plaques & Signs	1203.75
175.00	Prizes	
8,500.56	Ngai Tahu Appeal Payments	
40.00	Sundry	162.16
	Rees Silver	3000.00
13,317.65	Bank Balances Closing	13590.68
28,253.49		19792.28

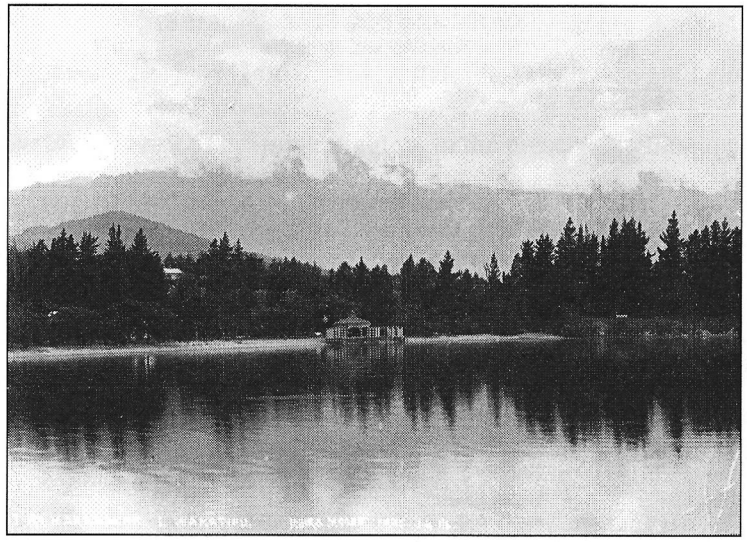
Bank Balances as at 30 September 2006

Current Account	2,402.50
Term Deposit Building Society	1,746.65
Term Deposit Building Society	5,187.78
Term Deposit Building Society	4,253.75
	13,590.68

Hotop's trade-off

A couple of issues ago we had a criticism of the new Queenstown Resort College rather cheekily appropriating a chunk of the historic Hotop's Rise reserve, below Frankton Road, for its front entrance.

It still has the bit of reserve, but as a quid pro quo it has refurbished, walled, railed and paved the Rise rather prettily. In addition former QLDC librarian Sue Kelly has set up a reference collection of local and national historical and current publications. She says society members are more than welcome to come in and browse.



Look forward to a bumper issue next time round. The Society has engaged a computer-literate compiler to update and elucidate the index of the 40 years of *The Courier.*
This will form the bulk of the next issue and an expanded version will be available, along with all the back issues, at the Lakes District Museum.

Aims of the Queenstown & District Historical Society

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

Officers of the Society:

President:	Brian Bayley
Past President:	Malcolm Boote
Secretary:	Karen Boulay - 442 8564
Treasurer:	Robert Blair

Other committee members:
Mike Lynch and Karen Boulay (Courier)
John Heenan (trips)
Ray Clarkson (submissions)
Elizabeth Macdonald (submissions)
Barbara Hamilton
Bill McDonald
Verona Cournane
Jocelyn Robertson
Danny Knudson

Annual subscription:	$10 per person or family
Corporate membership:	$ 50 per annum
Life membership:	$100 per person

(*The Courier* is included in the subscription.)

All correspondence and accounts should be addressed to
P.O Box 132, Queenstown

The Society acknowledges the assistance afforded by the Lakes District Museum in the production of *The Courier.*