

Protecting, preserving & celebrating our heritage



Spring 2022



*Ranfurly statue of John Turnbull Thomson:
First Surveyor-General of New Zealand*

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www.heritagecentralotago.org.nz

ABOUT US

The Central Otago Heritage Trust, established in 2008, comprises member groups within the local heritage community. The role of the Trust is to represent the collective interests of these groups in protecting, preserving and celebrating our unique heritage. It is governed by trustees nominated and elected by members.

The Trust is the founding organisation of **Heritage Central Otago**. Our community-based initiatives are represented under the Heritage Central Otago identity.

OUR TRUSTEES

David Ritchie (Chair), Russell Garbutt, Lynda Gray, Warwick Hawker, John Kerr, Ross Naylor, Kristy Rusher & Graye Shattky. Ann Rodgers (CODC Liaison).

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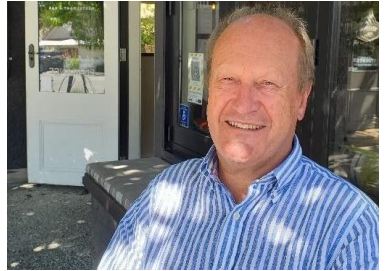
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HERITAGE MATTERS

FROM THE CHAIR

Spring is definitely in the air and with the warmer weather comes a busy events calendar. In this issue, you'll find a great range of events in the pipeline that reinforce Central Otago's fabulous heritage offerings.

Our Winter Heritage Series over July and August was a great success. All three talks at our local museums were booked out with a total of over 200 attendees. We've received great feedback and realise there's demand to continue these events throughout the year. We'd like your input into future topics and invite you to contribute your ideas below.



Our AGM on 20 July re-confirmed the COHT team, with Co-opted Trustee Warwick Hawker formally elected as Trustee. My Annual Report summarised what has been a busy year for the team. We believe we've achieved a good balance of work and projects under our three overarching goals:

1. Supporting the guardians of Central Otago heritage to identify, record, protect and preserve our heritage.
2. Working together to enhance best practice for protecting and managing our heritage.
3. Celebrating Central Otago's heritage.

You can read the Annual Report under the library section on our website - www.heritagecentralotago.org.nz.

Our member groups are making great progress in their endeavours. We remain committed to supporting their initiatives over the coming year. The member contributions to this newsletter illustrate the commitment they bring to protecting, preserving and celebrating our heritage.

Looking ahead, we see an opportunity throughout our region to strengthen links between the arts, culture and heritage sectors to support a collective focus on developing a vibrant, attractive and thriving district. Other districts across the country have already started on this journey. For example, Whangārei, Masterton, Palmerston North, and Invercargill have developed an Arts, Culture and Heritage Strategy that is supported by their respective councils. Arts, culture and heritage contribute to the foundation of our distinctive regional character and our region's prosperity and well-being.

David Ritchie, COHT Chair

CELEBRATING OUR HERITAGE

WHAT'S IN A NAME: THE PIGROOT

The 54 km section of the 'Central Otago Touring Route' between Palmerston and Ranfurly is known to locals as the 'Pigroot'. Winding over the saddle of wild tussock hills onto the Maniototo Plains, this is a stunning journey. Many inadvertently refer to this stretch of road as The Pig 'Route', but it's indeed 'Pigroot' as validated by several origin stories.



One such story is that the name originated from Pigroot Hill which was named in 1857 by New Zealand's first Surveyor-General, John Turnbull Thomson (see page 9). While mapping this terrain, Thomson encountered wild pigs that were so unafraid of human presence that an inquisitive boar approached and rubbed noses with his horse. Thomson painted this scene at Highlay Hill, near Macraes.



Horse and pig at Highlay Hill by J.T. Thomson
Source: www.teara.govt.nz

Another story tells of a time when pigs had rooted up a corner section of the wagon track making a mess around a nearby creek. This section of upturned land was close to a hotel used as a stopover for goldfields traffic. This hotel soon became known as 'Pigroot Hotel', a name eventually used for the whole route.



On the road to the goldfields, changing horses at the Pigroot Hotel
Robert Harrison 1884
Source: Toitū

The Pigroot was a treacherous wagon trail to the Central Otago diggings, especially in freezing winters. This area is not far from the small settlement of Eweburn, where the country's lowest temperature was recorded in 1903, at a chilly -25 degrees. Another story has the name originating from an occasion when two wagons were stuck on the road. One wagoner said to the other. "What does this remind you of?" The reply being, "a bloody pig root."



Wagons on the Pigroot
Source: Hocken Collections

Collectively, these stories provide a colourful account of the Pigroot trail. The label most likely started with Thomson and was reinforced by those who ventured into this remote stretch of land where wild pigs thrived alongside diggers tackling the dangerous journey towards the goldfields.

HERITAGE WINTER WARMER SERIES – MORE ON THE MENU

Our series of heritage talks over July and August was a hit with all three events booked out. Palaeontologist Dr. Mike Pole provided a fascinating window into Central Otago’s pre-historic treescape. Russell Garbutt put the life and works of historian John McCraw firmly in the spotlight. And Dr Charlotte King shone a fascinating light on the lives of women on the Otago Goldfields.

There is clearly an appetite among locals to learn about Central Otago’s rich heritage. Central Otago Heritage Trust is keen to hold more of these events throughout the year and would like to get your input into possible topics.

We’ve already received some great ideas. From the history of viticulture and merino farming to “what’s cooking” for diggers and early pioneers. If you have a burning topic you’d like explored, please follow the QR code to share them with us.

A special thanks to Central Stories and Cromwell and Clyde Museums for partnering with us to host these events.

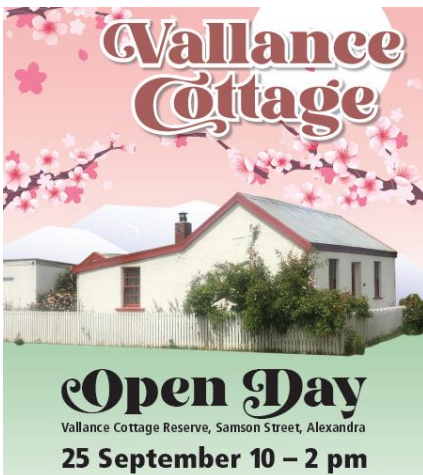


Dr. Charlotte King at Cromwell Museum



EXPLORING HERITAGE AT THE 65TH BLOSSOM FESTIVAL

The Alexandra Blossom Festival has been part of our springtime landscape since 1957. It’s great to see heritage on the menu at this year’s celebrations.



Vallance Cottage Open Day

Take a tour of the historic cottage and chat to the hard-working volunteers who play a key role in preserving this slice of pioneering history. Get a glimpse into what life was like in the late 1800s for a family of 10 growing up in this small mud-brick cottage.

Enjoy a family picnic under a tree in the Vallance Cottage Reserve’s community orchard.

'I Love Clyde' Heritage Day

Promote Dunstan is bringing back their 'I love Clyde' Heritage Day on **Sunday 25 September**. There will be music, including the Alexandra Pipe Band, children's games on the Clyde Railway Station Reserve, a tour of a replica of Clyde as it was in the 1860s, short talks on significant historic events in the Clyde Museum and the chance to explore some historic buildings. Scan the QR code for more details or visit www.promotedunstan.org.nz



Blossom Festival at Central Stories

Central Stories will be going through the years, from the first Blossom Festival in 1957. The multi-media exhibition starts on Monday 19th September to Friday 30th September.

Central Stories will also be hosting:

- Central Otago Art Society Blossom Festival Art Exhibition in the Henderson and Grant Galleries. Thursday 22nd Sept to Sunday 2nd October.
- Artists Quarter in the Heafey Gallery. Thursday 22nd Monday 29th September.



Swan and rainbow -1967

MEET JOHN TURNBULL THOMSON

Surveyor, explorer, engineer, artist and writer: John Turnbull Thomson (1821-1884) played an instrumental role in the infrastructure development of nineteenth century Otago.

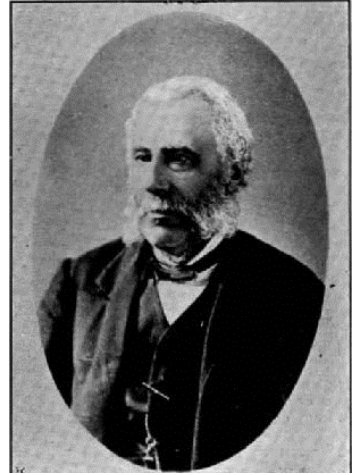
From 1856 to 1858, Thomson carried out his marathon reconnaissance survey of Otago, covering the province on horseback in a series of sweeps extending from Foveaux Strait in the south to Aoraki, Mount Cook in the north. This region was well known to Māori, but Thomson was the first to create accurately surveyed maps of the hinterland, just in time for the gold rush.

In November 1857, Thomson mapped the Maniototo district. Many names in the area bear witness to his rural Northumberland roots and dialect. The suffix 'burn' refers to a stream or creek. 'Gimmer' means ewe, 'Kye' is a cow and 'Wedder' is a wether or castrated sheep. It's perhaps not surprising that the wider area was referred to as "Thomson's Barnyard."

Further afield, Lindis Pass was named after Lindisfarne Island near his hometown of Bamburgh, and Mt 'Earnslaw' after his grandfather's farm. Many other landmarks and waterways such as the Twizel River, Cardrona River and Mt St Bathans also have Northumberland inspired names.

It is believed that Thomson originally intended to use Māori place names but turned to his homeland for inspiration when surveying authorities refused to acknowledge indigenous references.

John Turnbull Thomson was born in 1821 at Glororum farm, near Bamburgh in Northumberland, England. He was educated at Duns Academy in Scotland where he mixed with the sons of large estate owners on Penang Island, which became the El Dorado of his boyhood dreams. After completing a course in mathematics at Aberdeen University and studying engineering at Newcastle upon Tyne, he sailed



*J.T. Thomson (1821- 1884)
The first Surveyor-General of NZ
Source: Victoria University*

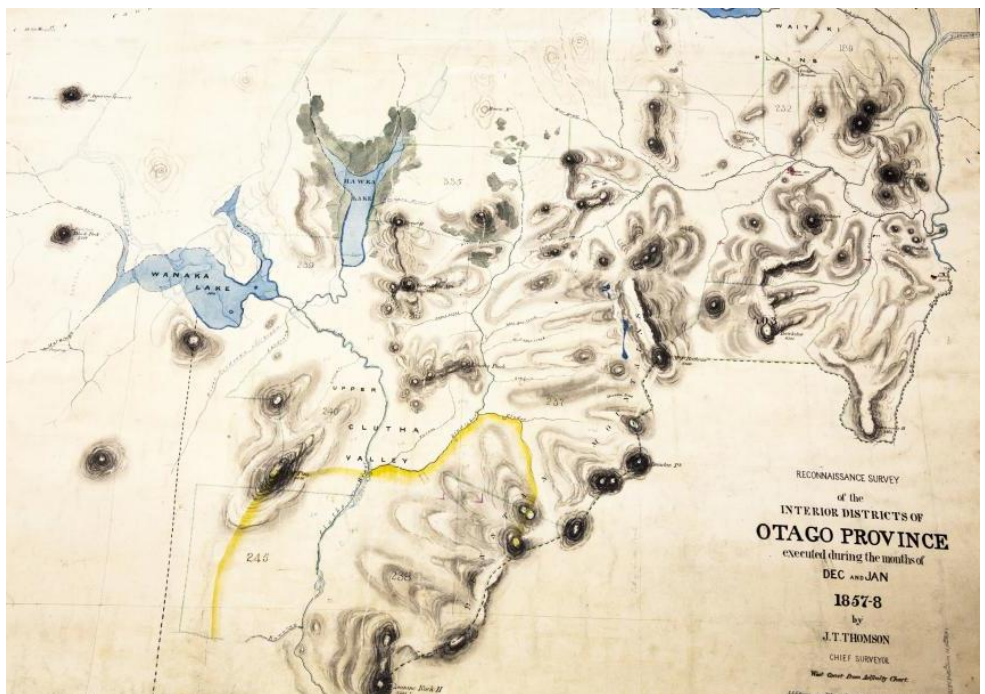


*Statue of J.T. Thomson
Turnbull Thomson Reserve, Ranfurly*

from England with a commission to survey the estates of Scott, Brown and Company in Penang.

From 1838 to 1841 he led a rough, lonely life, surveying in the jungles of Penang and shortly thereafter was appointed government surveyor and engineer. Over the next 12 years, Thomson produced a series of maps of the pioneering town and Singapore Island and completed a marine survey of Singapore Strait. He also constructed bridges, buildings and roads, and the impressive Horsburgh lighthouse on the eastern approaches to Singapore Strait. Designed and constructed between 1847 and 1851 it's still in use today – a legacy of his work in the East. Two years on the exposed lighthouse rock caused health issues and in 1853 he was invalided home to England. On recovery, he was advised to seek employment in a more temperate climate and so came to New Zealand.

On his arrival in Auckland in early 1856, he found that his reputation in Singapore had preceded him and was immediately offered the position of Chief Surveyor of Otago. At that time, only the coast of Otago had been mapped. The vast interior was uncharted territory and the perfect mapping challenge for Thomson. His first priority was to choose the site for the proposed town of Invercargill which he achieved in September 1856. With considerable foresight he made the main streets

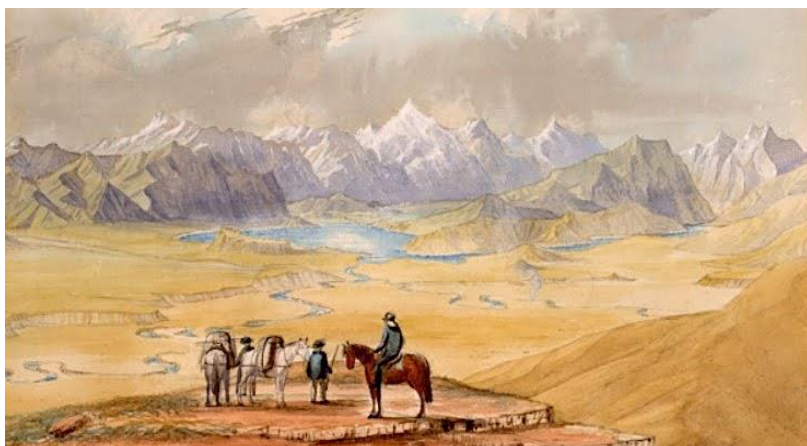


Early map of Central Otago and Upper Clutha by J.T. Thomson
Source: John Hall-Jones

twice the normal width and surrounded the whole town with reserves. In 1876, Thomson was awarded the title of Surveyor-General of New Zealand.

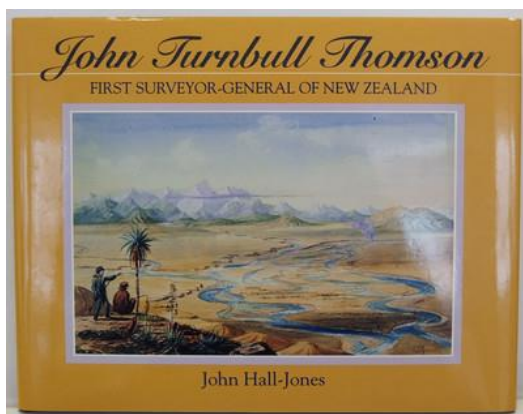
In his other capacity as engineer to the province, he was responsible for constructing the main roads and bridges leading out of Dunedin. Two of his bridges over the north and south branches of the Waianakarua River are still in use today.

Thomson was also a self-taught artist and prolific author. He was a founding member of the Otago Institute (of Arts and Sciences) in 1869, and Southland Institute in 1880. He penned an impressive number of articles on surveying and scientific subjects, as well as six books. 'Rambles with a Philosopher' (1867), gives a personal account of his life as a surveyor in New Zealand. The book is full of humour, belying the commonly held description of him as a stern man.



Roys Peak by J.T. Thomson (from John-Hall's book below)

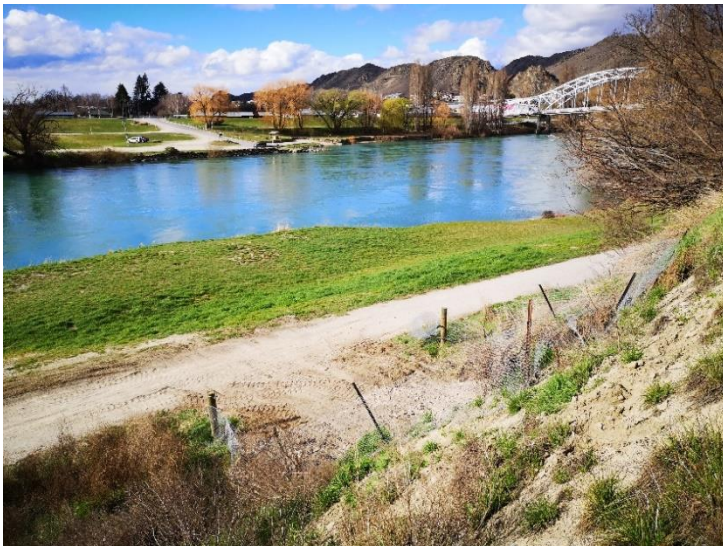
After his retirement, John and his wife Jane (nee Williamson) moved to Invercargill where they lived with their nine daughters. The remarkable life and works of John Turnbull Thomson have been recorded by his Invercargill-born great-great grandson, John Hall-Jones. His Central Otago vineyard 'Domaine Thomson' was named in recognition of his brave, clever, creative and tireless forebear and nineteenth century dynamo.



A MODERN DAY REMINDER OF OUR PAST: ANTIMONY MINING IN ALEXANDRA

The recent appearance of a sinkhole immediately opposite the Alexandra boat ramp piqued my curiosity to dig deeper and dredge up the history of a little-known and short-lived mining industry.

The Central Otago District Council dealt with the immediate risk to passing cyclists and walkers by tipping a truck load of gravel down the hole. This appeared to fix things for a while, but the sinkhole rapidly expanded in depth and area of about 25 sqm. LINZ, whose land it is, fenced the hole off, but within days further slumping took away some of the fencing.



The filled-in sinkhole at the edge of the cycle trail near Alexandra Bridge

The incident led to some thought of just why this sinkhole appeared and drew me to past research by local historian John McCraw. He had noted an instance where a sinkhole suddenly appeared on a rural property near Alexandra, caused by the collapse of an underlying coal mine. Could this be another example of a collapsing coal mine? Or a gold mining shaft?

The answer is fascinating. While it's clear that the sinkhole was the result of a collapsing mine, the purpose of the mine was not coal or gold extraction but rather stibnite, the principal source of antimony.

The Alexandra mine was started by Mr Blair and Mr Miller who, by accounts published in the Otago Witness (31st October 1900), were experienced and hard-working miners. Their aim was to extract stibnite for the smelting of antimony, a semi-metal alloyed with other metals to improve hardness and strength.

Known as Sb on the periodic table, ancient Egyptians used powdered antimony in cosmetics (often known by the Arabic name of 'Kohl') as well as other medicines. By the 16th century antimony was being used in Europe as a hardening agent for everything including the metal used for typeface in the early printing presses and cast iron in church bells to make their ring sound more pleasant. By World War 1, antimony was widely used as an additive to lead used in ammunition and batteries.

So, in New Zealand at the end of the nineteenth century, antimony was a desirable and potentially profitable resource. Stibnite, from which antimony is extracted, was first discovered in New Zealand during the 1870s. Antimony mining sites sprung up near Furneaux Lodge in the Marlborough Sounds, Waipori, Mt Stoker near Hindon, Stoney Creek near Lawrence, near the top of the Carrick Range, Nenthorn and Patearoa.

In Alexandra, Mr Blair and Mr Miller took up their prospecting around May 1899 and “with considerable vigour” sunk two shafts alongside the Molyneux (Clutha) River to a depth of around 40 feet. Several experts including Robert McIntosh of the Otago School of Mines, Mr Green, Government Inspector of Mines, and Mr Carson, an Alexandra coalpit manager, all reported a “fine body of ore of good quality” and that the mine promised substantial amounts of very rich, pure antimony. About four tonnes were sent to Dunedin for shipping, presumably to Melbourne, for smelting.

On 8 November 1900, the Otago Witness reported that although the Molyneux River was still about nine feet above the normal level, Mr Blair and Mr Miller were working hard on their antimony mine and had introduced two shifts a day and a good quantity of ore was “coming to grass.”

The cost of exporting the stibnite for overseas smelting meant that it was becoming uneconomic to continue, so the decision was made in 1908 to build an on-site smelter using a new process. Within months of being finished in mid-1909, disaster struck when there was an explosion in the smelting unit. This brought the mining venture to an end. Like all other mines, no real attempts were made to fill in the drives, shafts or underground workings.

Today the ebbs and flows of the river and seepage through the gravels surrounding mines all add to the possibility of slumping or sinkholes and the recent appearance of such a sinkhole is a stark reminder of a little-known activity of our historical past.



Antimony is a lustrous grey brittle metalloid. Today China produces about 80% of the world's supply of antimony, but many mines are closing due to its toxicity and environmental risks.

HIGH COUNTRY MEETS HIGH FASHION THIS SUMMER

The Eden Hore Central Otago photographic exhibition will be on the road again this summer, with plans to share the photographs and their accompanying stories with residents and visitors alike, throughout the Central Otago district.

Last summer the exhibition was hosted throughout Central Otago with many hundreds of people coming to view the stunning photographs in our amazing local landscape. It was a resounding success. This year the plan is to re-invent the exhibition by adding new material and delivering the story of the collection to a new audience in both new and previously visited venues.

'Eden Hore Central Otago' is a compelling story, set in the timeless and majestic Central Otago high country, of an unlikely fashion enthusiast who amassed a collection of ladies' 1970s and 80s garments that personify the flamboyance, vibrancy, and elegance of an industry he loved.

The photography project was developed in partnership with the Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongawera and Central Otago District Council, to bring alive Eden's exceptional collection and to demonstrate its relevance to contemporary fashion and design, within its Central Otago 'home'.

The roving exhibition will start at Bannockburn on 5 October. Walk or cycle between four cellar doors and get a taste of the Eden Hore photographic collection by renowned photographer Derek Henderson.

From there the exhibition will move across various Central Otago locations, including our local museums.

Keep an eye out for upcoming exhibition dates and venues on www.edenhorecentralotago.com.



PROTECTING & PRESERVING OUR HERITAGE

OTAGO GOLDFIELDS HERITAGE TRUST

It's official! The Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust has won the bid to hold the world gold panning champs in New Zealand in 2026. This is the first time the Champs will be held in New Zealand in the competition's 45-year history. Around 600 are expected to attend and compete at this event.



If you'd like to get involved, or find out more about this event, join us at the New Zealand Gold Planners AGM on **25 September (12-1pm)**, 52 Erris St, Cromwell. A Zoom option will also be available.

In the meantime, OGHT have two exciting events over the coming months.

The **NZ Goldpanning Championships** will be held on **Saturday 24th September** at the Alexandra Blossom Festival. We're looking forward to seeing you there competing amongst the best gold panners in the country and catching up with old friends. And it's not just for the old-timers! Bring along the kids and try something new. Registrations open at 9:30am with prize giving at 4pm. Entry fees are the same as last year - \$10.00 per event and a one-off \$5 administration fee.



The **2nd Postie Bike Rally** will cover 270km around the stunning Mackenzie Country on **Saturday 12th November**. Motorcycles 150cc and below will pass through back country farm roads. It's fantastic fun with a bit of adventure thrown in. You can find more information about the course at www.postiebikerally.co.nz

The Postie Bike Rally is a fundraiser for the John Douglas Memorial Fund. The funds raised from this event are used for our signage and brochure projects throughout Otago.

For further information about these events, contact the Otago Goldfields Heritage Trust team on 03 4450111. We look forward to seeing you there!



OTAGO CENTRAL RAIL TRAIL TRUST

Lauding a winning effort from locals

A national award for the restoration of the Lauder Station building earlier this year was recognition for a job well done by the local community.



The Lauder Station closed in 1985 and, along with other buildings, was sold to private buyers and subsequently relocated. However, in 2013 the building was gifted back to the community by the owners Bruce and Esme Macdonald. The Lauder Beautification Society (LBS) took on ownership and started in earnest the enormous job of fundraising for the relocation and restoration of the building.



Lauder Beautification Society Members

The award-winning Lauder Station is now a popular stop-off along the Otago Central Rail Trail.

The Otago Central Rail Trail Trust (OCRT) now owns the building and is responsible for ongoing maintenance. But the return and restoration of the building was driven by the local community, particularly the LBS.

“Commitment and passion from the local community has driven this project and ensured the building remains a visual reminder of New Zealand’s railway history.” says OCRT Trust Manager Tania Murphy.

The hard-working group raised \$120,000 through grants (Central Lakes Trust, NZ Lotteries and the Omakau Lions Club) and community fundraisers including quiz nights, car boot, book and flower bulb sales, raffles and even a couple of ukulele



Lauder Railway Station building makes its way back to its original site

festivals. By October 2016 sufficient money was raised to kick off the first phase of restoration – hauling (very carefully) the 112-year-old building 400m by crane and truck, back to its original site.

In December 2016, structural restoration commenced with the replacement of internal and external timber cladding, and painting. The next stage was landscaping with native plants, installation of an irrigation system and the relocation of a nearby toilet to better service visitors to the area.

The recently installed interpretation panels tell the backstory of the station and history of the local area. The building was officially opened in October 2021 with much fanfare.

“It has been a huge and successful project” Earl Harrex, Chairman of the LBS explained. “Hard work and fun went hand-in hand, boosting community relationships in the process.”

In June this year, Rail Heritage New Zealand presented a Restoration Award to the LBS. It was a just reward for an eight-year project, which LBS chairman Earl Harrex described as a “labour of love.”

The station’s award-winning status will be acknowledged with a prominently displayed commemorative bronze plaque on the outside of the building.



Visitors learn about the local history

TELLING OUR STORIES - THE ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Students enjoy stories from the past

In late August, Dunstan High School years 10-13 history and social science students got to experience first-hand the process of collecting oral histories. Organised by head of faculty Jo McKay, Central Otago Heritage Trust's Oral History Manager Carolyn Squires shared tips and techniques on conducting in-depth interviews, highlighting three key ingredients in the process: curiosity, listening and deep questioning.

Deep questions she said, were those which enabled the interviewee to relay experiences from their own unique perspective, describing their emotions, thoughts, expectations, challenges and strategies for coping. "These questions are more about the 'how' and the 'why' and will often stimulate richer memory recall."

Thanks to the participation of some interesting interviewees, students were able to witness how oral history interviews create a unique and meaningful perspective of history. The first was Carolyn's interview with Alan ('Bones') Hamilton who was both a student and then a Physical Education teacher for many years at the school. Alan recounted some fascinating stories of what a school day looked like for him and some of the escapades he and fellow students got up to. He reflected on the changes in curriculum and the greater range of opportunities which are now available to students.

The next interviewee was equally engaging. Rosie Turnbull, also a teacher and an ex-pupil at Dunstan High, recounted the journey of researching her family's Chinese heritage, tracing it back to her great-grandfather Charles Henry Wong-Gy and his home village in the Guangdong province.

Charles Henry served as a police constable on the goldfields, interpreting and translating for the numerous Chinese people who worked there. Rosie described how it felt to have her heritage finally recognised and to be able to travel back to Guangdong province in China.



Oral History manager, Carolyn Squires interviews Alan Hamilton, a former Dunstan High student and teacher.

Jo anticipates building a long-term archive at Dunstan High to preserve these and other oral histories collected by students.

ON THE RECORD: ORAL HISTORY COLLECTIONS IN OTAGO/SOUTHLAND

In October 2021, the Ministry for Culture and Heritage Manatū Taonga and Tūhura Otago Museum launched the Tū Tonu Regional Museums Project to offer additional support to arts, culture and heritage organisations in Otago and Southland. Out of this project, an interest emerged in more regional connectivity in relation to the recording, preserving, and sharing of oral histories.



In April 2022, the first networking session was held online as part of the Tū Tonu events programme for anyone with an interest in this area. Since then, these meetings have continued to be held on a monthly basis.

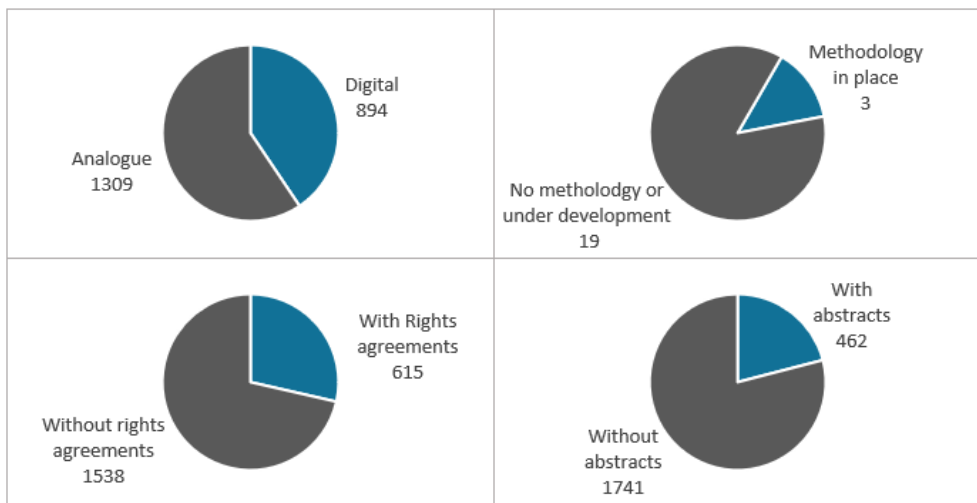
A survey was also carried out to better understand the challenges and opportunities faced by those working in this space. The survey received 18 responses on behalf of groups across Otago and Southland, as well as a small number from Canterbury and Rēkohu / Chatham Islands.

This process identified that the majority of oral history recordings currently held within Otago and Southland are located in Ōtepoti / Dunedin, spread across the collections of Dunedin Public Libraries Kā Kete Wānaka o Ōtepoti, Toitū Otago Settlers Museum, and the Hocken Collections Uare Taoka o Hākena. The full scale of these collections is currently unknown as, to date, these organisations have not had the resourcing required to document the individual recordings that make up these collections.

Other large collections identified were those of the Southland Oral History Project based at Invercargill Public Library (consisting of approximately 500 recordings) and Waitaki Museum and Archive in Oamaru (consisting of just over 200 recordings). The remaining collections consist of between 20 and 100 recordings.

In total, the survey indicated that there are well over 2,000 individual oral history recordings held across the area. As this figure excludes the holdings from Dunedin Public Libraries and Toitū, the real number of recordings is likely closer to 5000. Eight of the respondents reported that they actively collect oral histories. But of these, only two have a designated budget for this purpose.

The survey also offered a glimpse into the status of the recordings, looking at whether they are held in analogue or digital formats, if abstracts are available, if the appropriate rights agreements are in place to allow them to be made accessible online, and whether there is a methodological framework in place to direct future collecting. The results are illustrated in the diagrams below.



Some of the key challenges identified by respondents included:

- The lack of access to ongoing reliable funding to support the work involved in collecting oral histories.
- With over 1300 recordings still in analogue format, how to resource the digitization and care of recordings is a key concern. International guidelines identify 2025 as the best practice deadline for this work.
- Improving public access to the collections (only three groups reported that their collections, or part thereof, could currently be accessed by the public online).
- The need for greater advocacy around the value of collecting and preserving oral history collections.
- The time sensitive nature of collecting oral histories, with a need to get this work undertaken to prevent the loss of knowledge from older community members.
- Future-proofing collections and keeping up with how younger generations record their memories.
- A need for greater coordination of information and support across the region, including the provision of affordable training opportunities.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to the oral history forum this year.

Kimberley Stephenson
Project Manager - Tū Tonu Regional Museums Project

THE GOOD OIL ON GOOD GOVERNANCE

Errol Millar had plenty of practical pointers and stories of good and not so good governance in action at a recent Otago Museum TūTōnu Project Governance Hui hosted at Central Stories. About 15 people listened in and contributed to, what for me, was a very worthwhile half day workshop.

As an independent management consultant and accountant, Errol has walked the talk in his various roles as chair or director of boards and groups, ranging from local Lions clubs to national organisations. His governance skills were pushed to the limit during an almost two-year tenure as chair of the Otago District Health Board/Southern District Health which ended in December 2010. It was a turbulent time to lead a board beset with financial woes and the pressure to meet government-set performance targets and deadlines. Nowadays he is the chairperson of the Philips Search and Rescue (Helicopter) Trust, a role which he finds imminently more satisfying and enjoyable.



Errol Miller: Workshop facilitator

Errol talked through the governance and management basics of not for profit (NFP) groups by first covering off the recently revised Incorporated Societies Act. The Act doesn't come into force until April 2026, but if you're part of an Incorporated Society, get familiar with what's coming, including the requirement to reregister your society. There's an excellent summary of how to prepare for the law changes on **www.companiesoffice.govt.nz**. And if you're not sure about the legal status of your organisation, take a look at your 'Rules'.

Talk then moved to a governance checklist which included the must haves for a well-run and effective organisation: a strategic plan; robust financial reporting; policies to achieve the group's purpose and meet regulatory obligations; risk management; health & safety; and crisis management plans and procedures. Mention of the word 'strategic plan' can bring on a default zone out and glazed eye reaction, but Errol was quick to explain that the process didn't have to be onerous.

For me, the discussion on how to chair an effective meeting was particularly useful, covering off: reasons for and importance of distributing a formal agenda and financial reports before a meeting; monitoring of financial targets; reviewing of goals and priorities; and the managing of culture and teamwork. Succession planning was also discussed. There's lots of textbook advice on how to be an effective chairperson and run an effective meeting but consensus from Errol and the rest of us was it was an art rather than a science!

If it all sounds a bit daunting, there are some great governance resources and templates for NFPs on www.communitygovernance.org.nz/board-resources. This website includes a Community Governance board pack and practical tips and templates for running effective meetings, volunteer management, conflict of interest guidelines and more. Te Papa National Services also provides planning guidance for museums and galleries.

Thank you Otago Museum's Tū Tonu Project and Central Stories Museum and Art Gallery for supporting this practical initiative.

Lynda Gray
COHT Trustee

Historic police lock-up on the move

The Clyde police lock-up made its third move on the 5 September to the Clyde Railway Station Recreation Reserve off Fraser St.

Built in 1938 next to the sergeant's house on Blyth St, the lock-up made its first move in 1960 when it was relocated to the rear of the Clyde Courthouse, also in Blyth St. When the courthouse was sold in 2003, the lock-up was moved a short distance to the rear of the Clyde Historical Museum, where it has been used for museum storage.

Let's hope this historic piece of policing history will now stay put to be appreciated by locals and visitors at its newfound home.



CENTRAL OTAGO MUSEUMS TRUST

The buy in from participants at a recent Central Otago Museums' Trust workshop shows there's enthusiasm and commitment to work as a network in identifying key tasks and priorities for the year ahead.



The Action Plan that will emerge from this process will be a core document in establishing the direction museums want the Trust to work in, on their behalf, and setting priorities ensures that those areas of greatest need are being addressed. The workshop was well attended with opportunity for everyone to put forward their ideas and priorities. The main topic areas were:

- caring for collections
- finding that point of difference each museum has to offer
- maintaining relevance to our communities
- shared funding opportunities for resourcing and skill development
- volunteer contributions to the sector.

A gem from the workshop came from exploring ways that networking will bring greater outcomes for the sector. Sharing skills and having a pool of resources to tap into will enable each of our five museums to achieve greater results than each one would alone. Networking with our partners such as Otago Museum and National Services Te Paerangi (Te Papa) brings additional expertise which can guide us in achieving our goals.



*Central Otago Museums planning workshop
24 August at Central Stories.*

Finding funding is a common challenge for museums. There's tracking down what funding is available, associated opening and closing dates and understanding each fund's priorities - all before starting to fill out application forms. This all takes time, which is a scarce commodity for museum volunteers.

Which brings us to our volunteers. Small museums rely on a small pool of volunteers to undertake a multitude of tasks. Too often important work around the care of collections goes on the back burner. It is so important to care for our taoka for future generations. From these collections comes each museum's stories and point of difference. We're looking forward to exploring ways in which these stories are told so they are engaging and relevant to locals and visitors to our region.

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CONNECT WITH US

Become a member

We can help you and your heritage organisation with:

- Applying for and accessing funding and grants
- Identifying opportunities for collaboration and resource sharing with other heritage organisations
- Promoting your project and initiative in the community
- Providing advocacy to members through our participation in heritage decision-making forums.

Share your heritage news and events

Send your news and events to our Heritage Coordinator for our website or next newsletter: maggie@heritagecentralotago.org.nz

Our website

Get the latest news and events at:
www.heritagecentralotago.org.nz

OUR SUPPORTERS

Heritage Central Otago acknowledges the generous support from our partners.





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