

# CENTRAL OTAGO HERITAGE TRUST



**Minutes of the Meeting**  
**4pm Monday 21 January 2026**  
**Clyde Museum Blyth St**

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**PRESENT:** Jenny Dixon (Chair), Warwick Hawker, Pene Morris, Russell Garbutt, Ross Naylor, David Hurd, Kate Goodfellow, Joanna Leigh (Oral History Manager), Ann Cowie (Heritage Coordinator).

**APOLOGIES:** Marco Creemers, Ann Rodgers

## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

Jenny clarified this is not in relation to Trustees' associations with other Trusts or organisations, but specific conflicts relating to items on the agenda.

Nil conflict of interest declared.

## MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETINGS

The unconfirmed minutes from the board meeting 22 September 2025.

**Motion:** That the minutes be confirmed as a true and accurate record of the meeting.

**Moved:** Warwick Hawker

**Seconded:** Russell Garbutt

## FINANCE

Kiwibank Statements were circulated to Trustees prior to the meeting.

Current Account balances as at 31 December 2025:

COHT Working Account: 38-9009-0215973-00	\$46,263.86
Oral History Account 38-9009-0215973-02	\$22,914.85
COHT Debit Account: 38-9009-0215973-04	\$581.64
COHT Podcast Account: 38-9009-0215973-05	\$5,000.00
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$74,759.65</b>

The Board agreed to accept the Financial Statements as true and correct.

## GENERAL BUSINESS

### 1. Welcome to Jenny and introduction

Following individual introductions prior to the meeting starting, Jenny thanked the Board for electing her as Chair, acknowledged the work the Trust is doing and the support in the community, and noted she is looking forward to getting to know the Trustees and a busy year ahead.

### 2. Oral History Project – general update and the year ahead: where to from here?

Updated from Joanna:

We now have a total of 128 recordings archived, 126 interviews have been edited and

there are currently 20 interviews waiting to be edited. In 2025, 22 interviews were conducted, and we had 8 active volunteers, 5 of whom completed 3 or more interviews over the year. We will be looking for more volunteers in the coming months.

Joanna noted interviews are generally more successful when the volunteers can choose their interviewee (rather than being assigned), and that there is some reluctance from volunteers to make the initial call to interviewees. One of the challenges is a number of interviewees have been suggested, but lacking necessary information such as contact details and suggested topic/theme of interview.

**Action: Ann to include on the website an e-form to submit where members of the public can suggest interviewees, which would also include the collection of other relevant information such as contact details, reasons for suggesting this person etc.**

There is a move away from 'life story' interviews to topic-based interviews – this requires more planning but makes for a more cohesive and enjoyable interview. Interview abstracting is progressing well – two volunteers are primarily responsible for this.

Joanna mentioned the volunteer function to be held at Orchard Garden next week. Several of the Trustees, including Jenny, will be attending.

Joanna noted she is keen to be involved with digitising the various older recordings currently held by Central Stories (and other local museums), though Jenny suggested some preliminary work was necessary to understand the scale of the job, as this is likely to be a discrete project which may be suitable for a separate funding stream.

**Action: Ann/Joanna to work with the five museums to determine approximate quantities and formats of the recordings they currently hold.**

### 3. Podcast Project update

Russell provided an update on the first podcast episode, on the Hyde Railway Disaster, and that it is progressing well. The working group's next meeting is Tuesday 27 January.

### 4. Vallance Cottage Working Group update

No significant update. The next meeting is Wednesday 28 January (Ann is unable to attend).

### 5. CODC engagement re heritage provisions in the Heritage Plan

No update following that provided by Ann Rodgers late last year that the community engagement is indefinitely postponed due to central government directive. Warwick suggested we may need to pursue our own community engagement.

**Action: Jenny to meet with Ann Rodgers and Paula Penno.**

### 6. Heritage Talks – what's in the pipeline

Eva Forster-Garbutt has offered to do a Heritage Talk on her PhD topic, which relates to wallpaper in the goldfields era. The Board agreed this sounded like a suitable and engaging topic.

Other suggested Heritage Talks topics:

- Vallance Cottage – ideally one of the family members who used to holiday at the cottage – it was noted this would also make a good Oral History interview
- Coalmine fire – Russell to do this talk later in the year
- Fire Brigade – history, bucket brigades, former deputy Mayor Neil Gillespie suggested as a speaker, or John Grenfell?
- Clyde Damn – construction etc, but also (a separate talk?) on the social impact

**Action: Ann to send Trustees a list of the previous suggested topics, so they can suggest possible speakers to be approached.**

7. New members – Central Otago Hydeaway Ltd (Hyde Hotel)

A membership application has been received from Central Otago Hydeaway Ltd. David questioned whether a commercial organisation is suitable to become a member, and the Board agreed to put this application on hold in order to look at the constitution. In the wider context, it was discussed that we need to better understand our membership strategy.

*Follow-up: The Heritage Central Otago website states criteria for membership is “Any organisation with an interest in protecting and celebrating Central Otago’s heritage”. The Trust Deed doesn’t provide anything specific, while one of the objectives in the Strategic Plan is to “identify and promote membership to organisations concerned with safeguarding and celebrating Central Otago heritage”.*

*Note: At the July 2025 Board meeting, Clutha River Cruises was proposed (I believe by the former Chair) as a prospective member. A membership form had been submitted by Clutha River Cruises in November 2024 – though I’m not sure if/how this was progressed or discussed as I can’t see mention of it in subsequent board meetings.*

**Action: Discussion topic to be added to the agenda for next board meeting.**

8. Heritage Trail

The Board discussed the Heritage Trail that was on the plan as a project. In light of the existing various Heritage Trails by members of the heritage community, and other projects and priorities, this is not a current priority for the Trust. As an interim measure, Ann suggested an update to the website linking various resources.

**Action: Ann to add a ‘Heritage Trails/Resources’ update/page to the Heritage Central Otago website.**

9. Other Business

a. CO News contributions to Heritage

Russell updated the Board that Julie Asher from CO News is interested in running a regular heritage-themed column, and has come up with dates for 8 columns (each approximately 400 words) relating to people/places. Russell has already got 5 drafts together: Proffits Rock, irrigation system near Ophir, water races in the Dunstan/Waikerikeri Valley, historic fruit trees from an old Coal Miner’s land, and the big snow event.

b. David George email

The Board discussed an email from David George (circulated to the Board in advance of the meeting). Due consideration was given, but it was agreed in light of current priorities, COHT would not be acting on this. It was felt if anything, OGHT may be a more suitable organisation to address this.

c. Media outreach

It was agreed by the Board that in the event of any contact from the media, the Chair should respond on behalf of the Board (and reflect the intent and purpose of the Trust).

d. Next meeting

**Action: Ann to send StrawPoll for next board meeting date – looking at the Wednesday or Thursday of the first or second week of March.**

**Meeting closed at 5.20pm**

