

# THE QUEENSTOWN COURIER

WINTER 2019

Issue No.101



## **The Sainsbury Family**

**Standing: Mary, Egbert Junior, Frances, Edgar, Fanny**

**Sitting: Edwin, Egbert, Edward, Ernest, Lavinia, Edmund, Martha**

*Lakes District Museum*

QUEENSTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY 2008 INC.

[www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz](http://www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz)

# Queenstown & District Historical Society 2008 Incorporated

## *Our Heritage Today - For Tomorrow*

### BOARD OF THE SOCIETY

**Chairperson: Marion Borrell**

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

**Deputy Chairperson and Secretary: Denise Heckler**

3 Jenkins Pl, Arrowtown, Ph 4420204 hecklerdenise@hotmail.com

**Treasurer: Gavin Jack**

68 Devon St, Arrowtown, Ph 0274729882 gdmj@xtra.co.nz

**Russell McGrouther**

21 Balmoral Drive, Kelvin Heights, Ph 4428783 mcgroutherqtn@xtra.co.nz

**Ray O'Callaghan**

34 Caernarvon St, Arrowtown, Ph 4420420 rayocallaghan07@aot.com

**Barbara Kerr**

PO Box 603, Queenstown 9348, ph 44274444 bdkerr@outlook.com

**Patrick Beehan**

355A Little Rd, RD1, Queenstown 9371, Ph 4428460 ppbeehan@gmail.com

**Pauline Lawrence**

9 Devon St, Arrowtown 9302, Ph 4098938 paulinelawrence3@gmail.com

**Honorary Solicitor: Graeme Todd**

### ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTION

Individual or Family Membership: \$25 a year

Corporate Membership: \$50 a year

Life Membership: \$250

*The Queenstown Courier* is posted or hand-delivered to members.

Correspondence and accounts to: PO Box 132, Queenstown 9348

**Editor:** Marion Borrell, as above

**Designer:** Michael Anderson, 196 Speargrass Flat Rd, RD 1, Queenstown

Ph 4098115 m.j.anderson@xtra.co.nz

**Photo Editor:** Bob Cranfield

*The Queenstown Courier* is produced with the assistance of the Lakes District Museum.

Thanks to the Director, David Clarke, and the Archivist, Anne Maguire.

Printed and supported by Print Central, Queenstown.

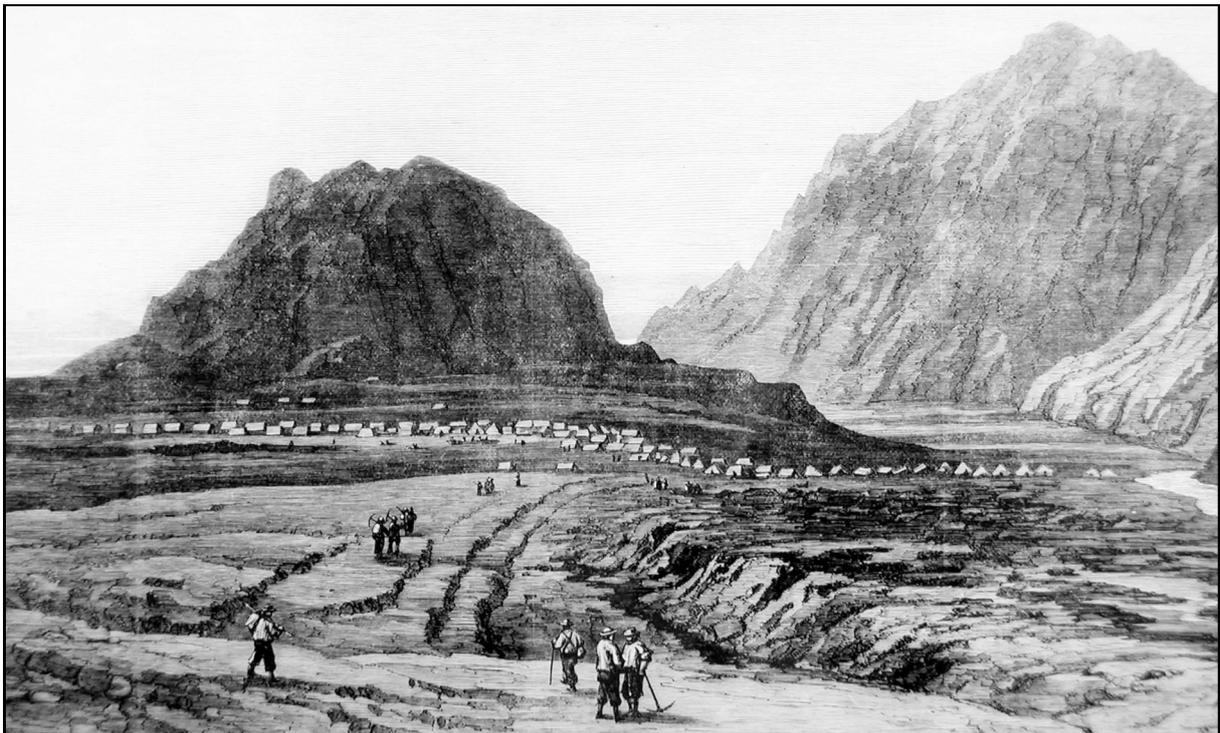


[www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz](http://www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz)

## CONTENTS

- Page 4: The Feehlys of Feehly Hill – Rita L. Teele, J. Taylor Reed, Benjamin Teele and James J. Feehly
- Page 11: Historical Cuttings: Cocksfoot Grass *Dactylis glomerate* – Rita L. Teele and J. Taylor Reed
- Page 13: Childbirth in Earlier Times – Marion Borrell
- Page 17: The 1918 ‘Spanish’ Influenza in the Wakatipu – Marion Borrell
- Page 23: Bessie Kinross of Gibbston – from her memoir *Gibbston Writings*
- Page 27: Nurse Stella Poole – David Hay
- Page 31: QDHS Annual Report 2018 – Marion Borrell
- Page 34: Award of Honorary Membership to Danny Knudson – Brian Bayley

Cover Photo: See page 13 for more information about the family

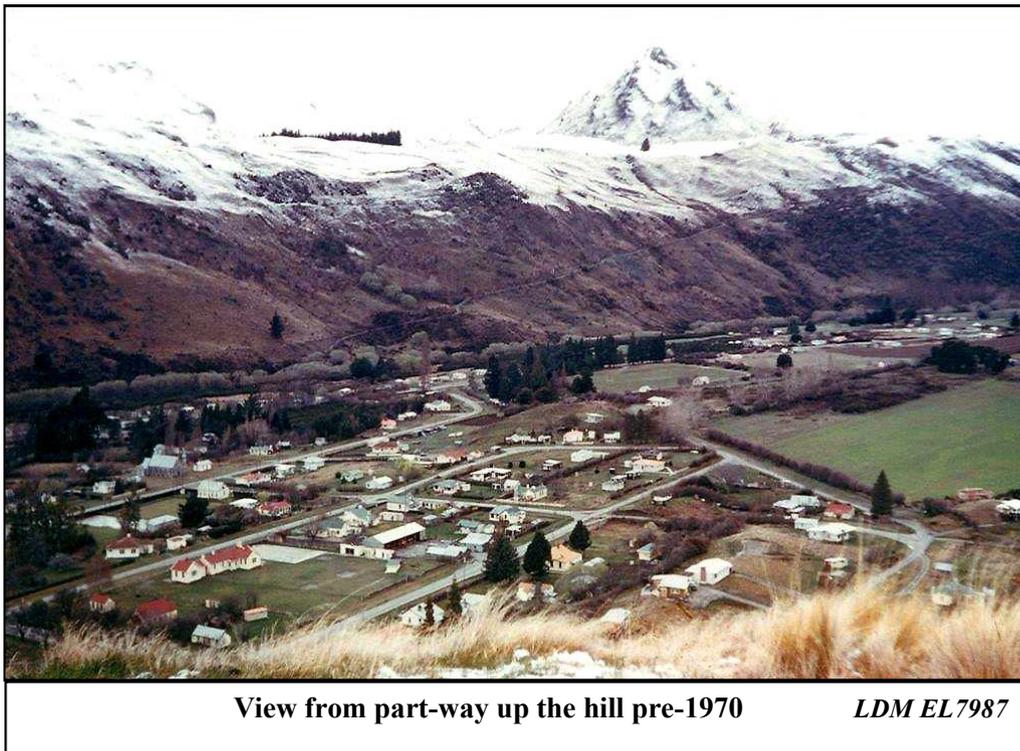


Lithograph printed in the Illustrated London News in 1863  
This unrealistic artwork exaggerates the dominance of Feehly Hill, Arrowtown.  
*Lakes District Museum EL4662*

## THE FEEHLYS OF FEEHLY HILL

By Rita Littlewood Teele, J. Taylor Reed, Benjamin W. Teele, & James Jopp Feehly  
with Anne Maguire, Archivist, Lakes District Museum

If you'd like to feel on top of the world, follow the steep rocky track behind the newest section of Arrowtown Cemetery to the summit of Feehly Hill. You will pass through the grove of kowhai planted in 2010 by Barry Lawrence of DOC with help from Arrowtown Scouts and other volunteers. Since then, many more native trees and shrubs have been planted at that site by members and volunteers of the Wakatipu Reforestation Trust. Members of Queenstown Rotary have added to the effort by planting native species near the water tanks. When you reach the top of the hill you can see Arrowtown's houses, shops and churches spread out below to the east.



Now, if you make the climb in autumn, the trees flanking Tobins Track unroll a red and gold leafy backdrop for the toy-sized buildings.

The hill was formed by glacial action. The craggy, rough, more vertical eastern side of Feehly Hill eases into a smoother, gentler slope on its western side where the track exits onto Manse Road.

From the establishment of Arrowtown borough, the boundary ran north-south across the hill. The Arrowtown cemetery was established in 1863 at the base of the hill in Arrowtown Borough; the side of the hill was gazetted as 'Tree Planting Reserve' in 1879. See map on the next page.

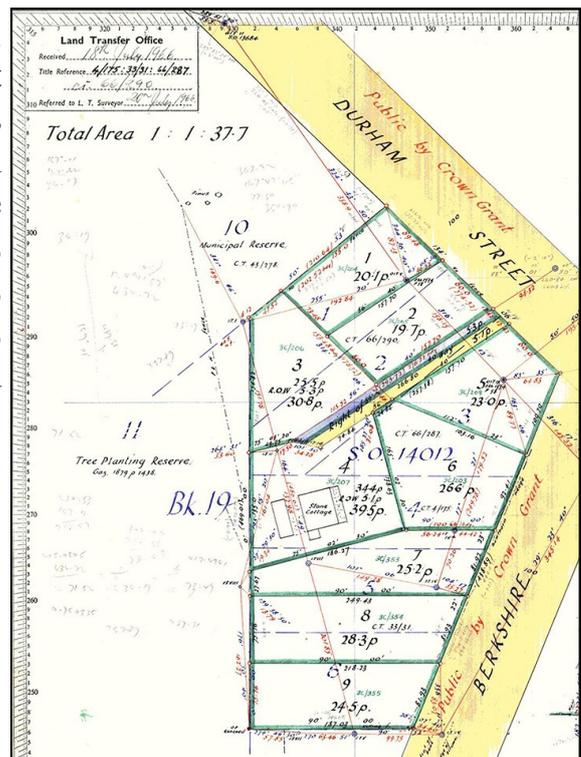
In 1919, William McBride, who owned and farmed the land on the western side of the dividing line, requested that his lease of the other side of the hill, owned by Arrowtown Borough Council and known as Cemetery Hill, be transferred to Thomas Alfred Feehly. (It must have been a tree reserve in name only at the time.) Coincident with that request, McBride also sold his farm to Thomas Feehly.



**Feehly Hill and Arrowtown viewed from the southeast circa 1884**

**LDM EL440**

There is good evidence that Patrick Feehly was the first of his family in the district. He was born circa 1831 in County Longford, Ireland, but was with his family in Bradford, Yorkshire, England by the time of the 1841 census. It is possible that he made his way to the gold rush in Victoria and thence to the gold rush in New Zealand, but he was definitely in Arrowtown by 1865/6 when he was listed on the Arrowtown electoral roll. In 1868 he married Catherine Josephine Crowe from County Clare in 'Healy's house, Arrowtown.' How Patrick met Catherine has yet to be discovered. Their marriage certificate was witnessed by Catherine's sister, Bridget, and Michael Moran, a miner. Healy and Moran were listed on the certificate, and newspaper articles of the 1860s linked each of them with Feehly as proprietors of the Royal Oak Hotel. These facts suggest that the three men may have travelled together to New Zealand's gold rush.



**Portion of a survey map from 1966 noting the Tree Planting Reserve as gazetted in 1879. It is now part of Feehly Scenic Reserve that was officially gazetted in 2009.**

Patrick and Catherine had five children; birth certificates for all but their third son have not been discovered:

John David was born circa 1869 and married Catherine Vera Fleming of Kawarau Gorge in 1903. They had no children of their own. He died in Edendale in 1930 and is buried in Gore.

Catherine Josephine was born circa 1870, and as a young woman worked as a dressmaker in Arrowtown. She married William Morrison, a miner. In 1896, according to documents related to her brother Michael's estate, she was in Waihi.

Thomas Alfred was born in 1872 or 3. In 1904 he married Margaret Cecilia Fleming (sister of Catherine Vera Fleming, who had married his older brother).

A third son, Michael Patrick, was born in 1874. He farmed at Lake Hayes, and died a bachelor, in 1939.

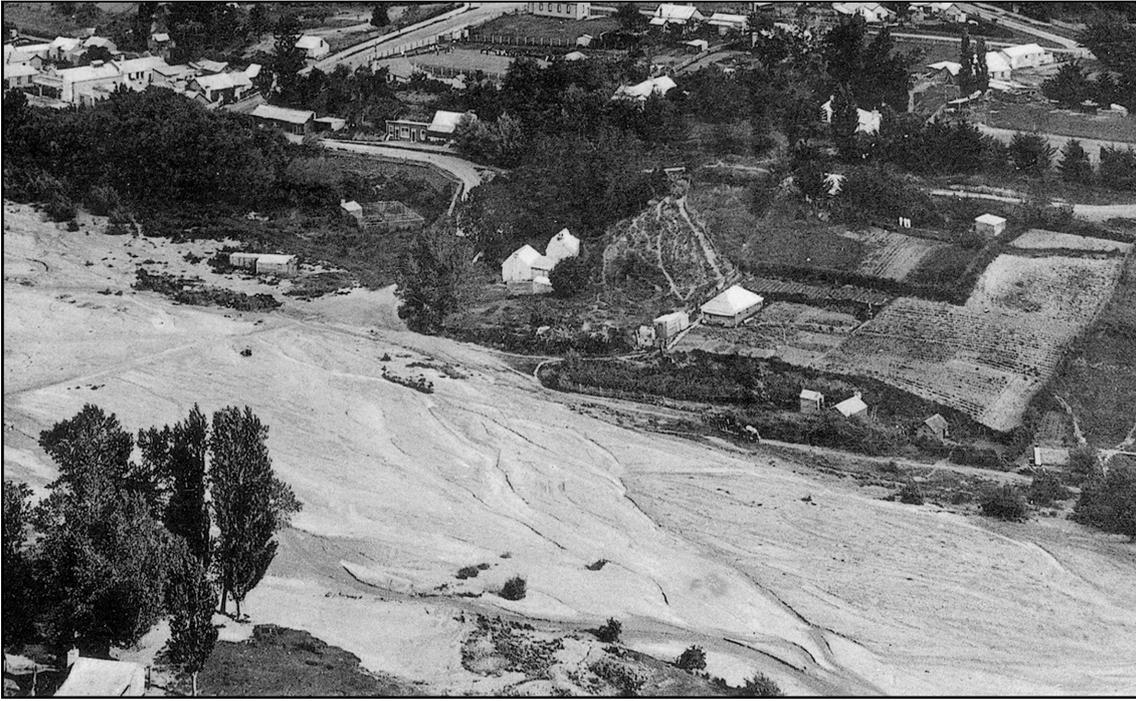
Mary Theresa Feehly, born in 1877, died at 19 years of age after 18 months of 'anaemia and extreme general debility' and is buried in Arrowtown Cemetery.

Because of misspellings in documents - probably due to the silent 'h' in the Feehly name, and also to errors in transcriptions - the capture of all references to the pioneer Feehly family is likely to be incomplete. (For example, Catherine Feehly became 'Catharine Feckly' in one transcription.)

The district newspapers first made note of Patrick Feehly when he, with Healy and Moran, were partners and owners of the Royal Oak Hotel - bought in August 1872 from Mr Galloway. In the obituary in the *New Zealand Tablet* in 1901, Patrick Feehly was described as a pioneer of the Arrow District, 'having followed the calling of miner and contractor for a number of years and later on being engaged in business.' The obituary does not make mention of the difficult decade of the 1870s when Patrick Feehly was in and out of court for drunkenness, for abusing his wife and children and for bankruptcy - all documented in the newspapers of the time. His stone house at 57 Buckingham Street (originally built to be a cordial factory by Fritz Eichardt, brother of the Queenstown hotelier) was put up for auction and later sold to the Oddfellows who used it as their Lodge.

In the 1880s and 1890s, Patrick Feehly's name was rarely mentioned in the newspapers. When his name was printed, it was in reference to roading contracts and work on a water-race. It appears that reconciliation of Patrick and his wife occurred as their oldest daughter was married from their home in 1896. Patrick died in 1901 and his wife died in 1904. Both are buried in Arrowtown cemetery. The first and third sons had no children, therefore Thomas Alfred Feehly carried the family's name into the next century.

According to his published obituary in 1943, (which misprinted his father's name as Thomas instead of Patrick) Thomas Alfred Feehly was born in 1872 or 1873. He spent thirty years mining on the Crown Terrace. Newspaper articles from 1902 and 1904 mentioned that Feehly and Hay were at work on a hydraulic claim near Arrowtown: 'the methods pursued would afford great interest to the majority of visitors to our parts....' Tourists had long been in the district!



**The buildings in the left foreground belonged to Feehly and Hay, and were near their hydraulic claim. Note buildings and gardens of the Chinese miners across Bush Creek.**  
*Undated Photo, LDM EL6219*

Thomas Feehly was also farming in the district at the time. He owned the 18-acre farm on the Arrowtown-Lake Hayes Road known as ‘Spruce Grove’. The reporter for the *Lake Wakatip Mail* in 1906 wrote: ‘Mr Thomas Feehly, near Arrow, I understand, recently sold several tons [of potatoes] at the handsome price of £8 10s per ton.’

As noted above, William McBride asked the Arrowtown Borough Council to transfer his lease of ‘Cemetery Hill’ to Thomas Feehly. The request was granted and recorded in June 1919. In April of the same year, McBride had sold his farm on the southwestern side of Cemetery Hill to Feehly.

Thomas had married Margaret Cecilia Fleming of Kawarau Gorge in 1904. Their first child, Nano Margaret, born in 1906, was followed by Thomas Patrick in 1908, John Michael in 1910, Cuthbert James in 1913, and Mary Theresa in 1915. A stillborn infant, born in 1919, is listed as being buried in Arrowtown Cemetery.



**Four children of Thomas and Margaret Fleming Feehly.**  
*Undated Photo, courtesy of James Jopp Feehly.*

John Michael

Thomas Patrick

Cuthbert James

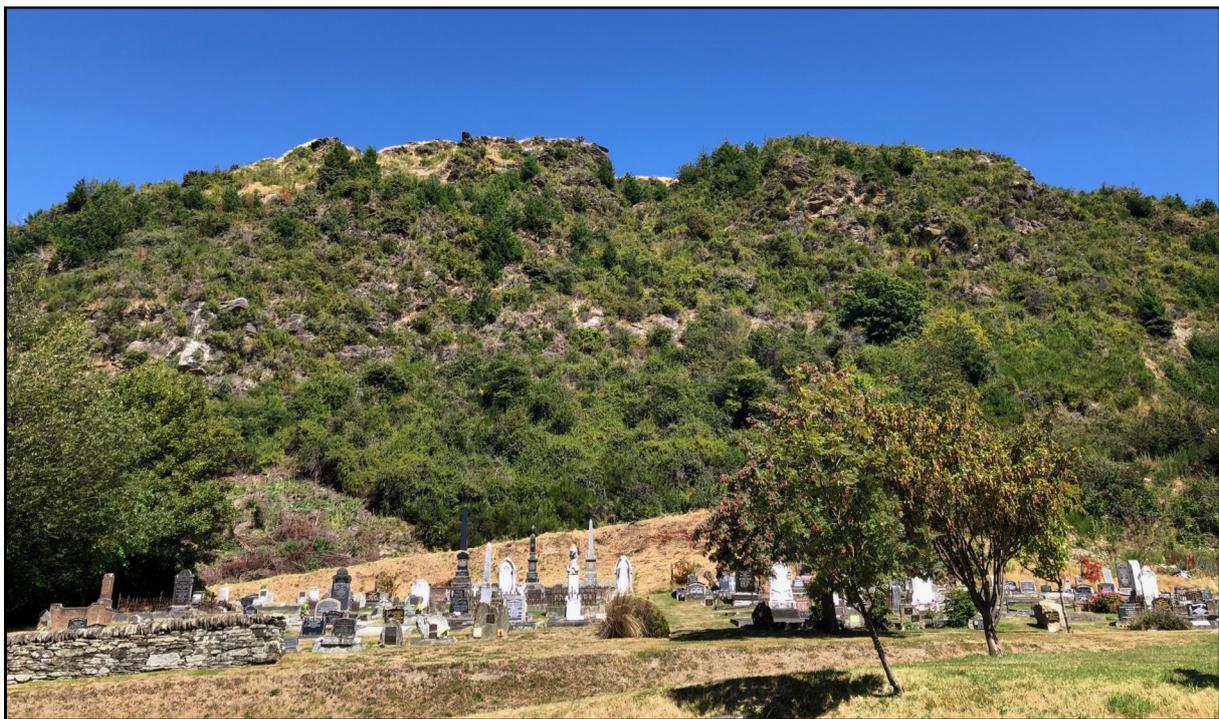
Nano Margaret

Nano Margaret, known as ‘Mag’, married Charles Kitto in 1926 and had four children. The other daughter, Mary Theresa, known as ‘Tess’ married Albert David Collins and lived in Albert Town. Sadly, two of their four sons drowned in Lake Wanaka in 1946.

The local newspapers of the early 1900s were filled with the exploits of the three Feehly sons and their father, Thomas, who were known for their skill at playing rugby. John gained employment at the post office as did his brother Thomas. They each rose through the ranks in the postal service with Thomas being assigned to Winton and John to Kelso in 1929. The community expressed congratulations at their promotions but regrets at their departure from the Arrowtown Football Club.

The Feehly family members were loyal parishioners of Saint Patrick’s Catholic Church in Arrowtown. Thomas Patrick Feehly left the postal service for Holy Cross Seminary in Mosgiel and was ordained as a priest in December 1936. He returned to Arrowtown for a farewell party at Spruce Grove, the family home, before beginning his ministry in Queensland, Australia.

Cuthbert and his wife, née Margaret Jean Jopp, stayed at Spruce Grove to help his parents run the farm. In the 1930s, Cuthbert, known as ‘Cuth’, worked alongside his father, Tom, to farm dairy cows and provide Arrowtown with milk that was delivered in large milk cans hauled by horse and cart. Tom died in 1943 and is buried in Arrowtown Cemetery.



**Feehly Hill with cemetery in front, 2019**

When Cuth and his wife moved to Riversdale to run her family’s farm after the death of her father, the Kittos shifted to the homestead in their place. This arrangement lasted until 1949 when Father Thomas, returned from Queensland with a housekeeper and her mother! After much shuffling of family members, Cuth and his family ended up as the sole householders in 1953, staying at Spruce Grove until 1964 when it was sold to Bruce Beadle.

For twenty years, the Feehlys, beginning with Thomas Alfred, were associated with the hill that bears their name. Known tongue-in-cheek, as 'Feehly's High Country', it later became McLean's Hill, when sold to Hugh McLean of Mt Soho. In the 1970s it was known as Dagg's Hill, after Jack Dagg acquired the farm. Part of that farm, on the western side of the hill, is now a housing development known as Linksgate. In 1978 and 1979 there was communication between the Lands and Survey office in Dunedin and the Arrowtown Borough Council regarding reserves within the district. Minutes of a special meeting note the presence of 'Feehly's Park' adjacent to the cemetery (Council Minute Book, 21 February 1978, LDM) and it is likely that the label evolved to include the entire hill.

A century ago, the view of the hill would have been completely different. Tussock covered the top at least into the 1950s. Taylor Reed remembers that Bill Given, who took him fishing, used the tussock in the notch of Feehly Hill as a wind gauge. If the tussock grass was moving, the wind would be too much for decent fishing on Lake Hayes. A roughly painted sign on the rock face, 'Burn Black Diamond Coal', was visible for years.

In 1964, Russell Styles, headmaster of Arrowtown School, members of the school committee and school children, planted ornamental trees at the base of the hill behind the old cemetery. Most of these did not survive for lack of water; others, near the wall, were later cut down. An apple tree, and four other trees that are now abutting the wall inside the old cemetery, may be the offspring of that effort of 50 years ago.

In more recent times, summer concerts at Millbrook could be enjoyed, free of charge, from the top of the hill - if one was young enough to lug blankets, picnic baskets and grog up the steep track from the cemetery!

Feehly Hill has also been the site of historical events. On the 15 August 1945, Arrowtown celebrated VJ Day in style. Ernie Thomson organised youths of the town to carry tyres and burnable rubbish to the top of the hill. A straw effigy of the Japanese emperor was placed in the centre of the pile before it was set alight. The fire could be seen for miles! The hill was off-limits when Commonwealth Heads of Government assembled on Soldiers Hill for a memorial service in 1995, and the hilltop served as a bivouac for soldiers during President Clinton's stay at Millbrook after the APEC meeting of 1999.

Weeds took over the hill after grazing ceased, but reforestation with native shrubs and trees is gaining ground and flourishing behind the cemetery thanks to volunteers from Wakatipu Reforestation Trust. The next photo was taken in 2019.

For a century, the Feehly family was firmly established in the district - from the early days in mining, and later in the farming community, the Catholic Church and on the football field. Feehly Scenic Reserve includes half of what is known as Feehly Hill - ironically, the half that was not actually owned by Thomas A. Feehly. Having been gazetted as a Crown Tree Reserve on the Arrowtown side in 1879, it is fitting that trees are again being planted there, with natives now the chosen species.



### References

1865-1866 Electoral Roll (Patrick Feehly)

[https://www.findmypast.com/transcript?id=ANZ/DWILSON\\_1865TO1875NZ/26171](https://www.findmypast.com/transcript?id=ANZ/DWILSON_1865TO1875NZ/26171)

New Zealand Birth Deaths and Marriages (Feehly family members)

<https://www.bdmhistoricalrecords.dia.govt.nz/search>

Multiple articles referencing Feehly family members

<https://paperspast.natlib.govt.nz/>

J. Taylor Reed and James (Jim) Jopp Feehly: personal recollections and family histories. (2019)

Russell Styles, personal recollection (2019)

# HISTORICAL CUTTINGS: COCKSFOOT GRASS, *DACTYLIS GLOMERATA*

By Rita L. Teele & J. Taylor Reed

This is the seventh of occasional botanical notes for *The Courier*



Ripening seedheads of cocksfoot along the Arrow River track, April 2019

A century ago, the coming of autumn on the South Island presented an economic opportunity to those willing to spend the time and effort collecting the seedheads of cocksfoot grass from the waysides and wastelands. The practice continued into the war years of the 1940s. Taylor Reed and Oweena Frew remember harvesting the ripened seed heads of the grass, *Dactylis glomerata*. Taylor was particularly interested in saving for his first car. Each year, after the rose hip harvest, which was more lucrative at a payout of four pence a pound, he tied a hessian sack around his waist and gathered the ripe seed heads of cocksfoot from the sides of roads and tracks. His harvest was transported to the railhead in Cromwell by a driver working at Shaw's Motors. In Cromwell it was picked up by the train to Dunedin and delivered to the Wright Stephenson grain store. After threshing, the seeds were packaged for sale, and Taylor was paid by cheque. Compared to rabbits and rose hips, the harvest of cocksfoot was decidedly less remunerative, but Taylor got his car!

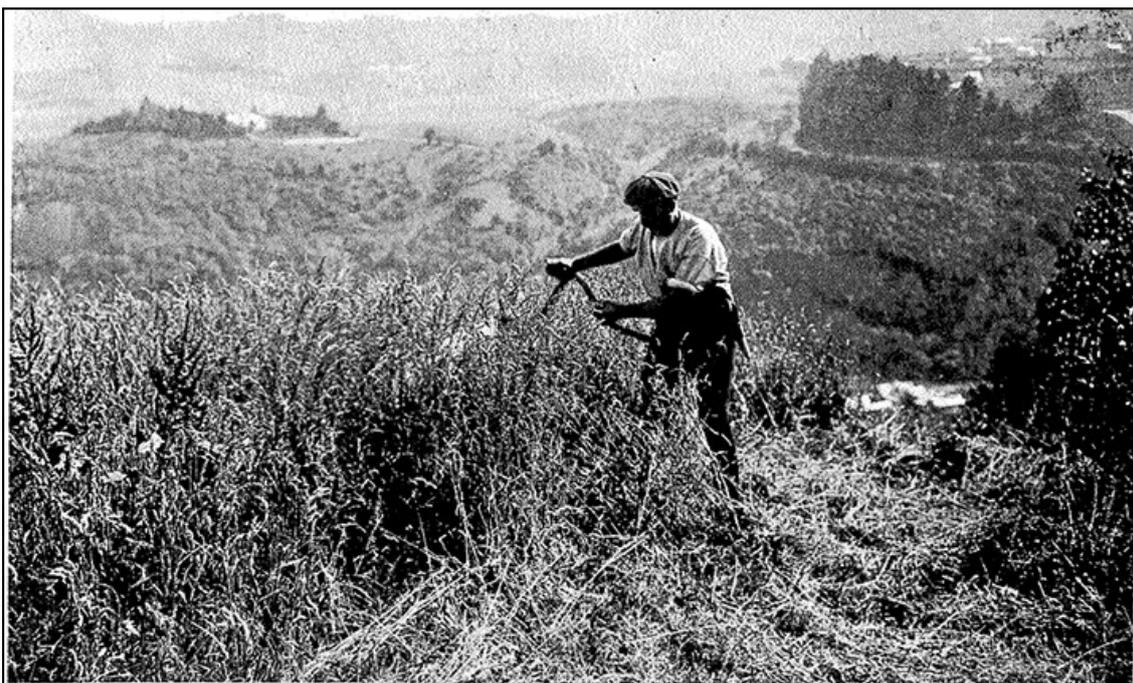
Farming the land became the major means of survival for those hardy families who stayed in Central Otago after the gold rush. Seed was imported for pastures, animals were grazed, and crops such as wheat and barley were established. *Dactylis glomerata*,

or cocksfoot as it was commonly known, was a popular perennial species of grass for paddocks. According to information on the website of Massey University, the grass is considered variably tolerant to drought, shade and frost, and can re-sprout after physical damage and fire. Cocksfoot was naturalised in 1867. Seed, dispersed by wind, water, boots and animals settled along tracks, roadsides and wastelands and was free for the taking.

*Dactylis* refers to the finger-like appearance of the seed head (the panicle). *Glomerata* refers to the appearance of the clumped panicle, which consists of individual one-sided clusters of flattened spikelets. The comparison to a cock's foot is a little fanciful but the long-standing nickname for the grass was imported from the British Isles, along with the seed, in the early days of European colonisation. Over time, as pastures were established, the seed was harvested in New Zealand. Banks Peninsula was renowned for its production of cocksfoot.



*Photo courtesy of Josh Salvin M.D.*



THE COCKSFOOT HARVEST: CUTTING INTO A HEAVY CROP WITH THE SCYTHE  
(Photos by Guy.)

*Otago Witness, 1 February 1911 from Paperspast, National Library of New Zealand*

It is the exotic trees and flowering weeds that tend to capture our attention when we walk along the roads or on the tracks around Arrowtown and Queenstown. Cocksfoot and other imported grasses are equally exotic; this year they seem to be particularly prolific. In their seeds they carry the history of farming in New Zealand.

## CHILDBIRTH IN EARLIER TIMES

By Marion Borrell

Lavinia Smith was born in Wiltshire 1852 and immigrated to New Zealand when young. At the age of 17 she married Egbert Sainsbury, a gold-miner. They lived at Sainsbury Terrace on Skippers Road for 25 years. Lavinia gave birth to 13 children. When this photo was taken, their eldest daughter Ellen had died. They later had two more children, Beatrice and Walter.



The Sainsbury family

LDM

Maternity services have been on our minds in the past year. The former maternity hospital in Sydney Street, Queenstown, which served us well from 1947 to 1989, has now been demolished. It was a cottage-style hospital, homely and relaxed, as our members whose babies were born there will recall. The hospital at Frankton now includes a maternity wing. Also last autumn, our community midwives and their supporters marched in Queenstown, calling for adequate pay and conditions.

Now let's look back to Rees's station in 1862 when Mary Flint, the wife of shepherd James, was expecting her first child, and the question arose what to do if the birth was difficult. The entire population of Queenstown Bay was about ten people including maybe two other women, and the journey by land and lake from Invercargill was impossibly long for help to arrive. However, Nicholas von Tunzelmann, who owned the station across the lake, was a qualified veterinarian, so it was agreed that he would come. In fact, the birth went well, and he wasn't needed. The baby, named William Wakatipu Flint, was the first pakeha child born in the district. Sadly, he died when about four years old.

During the gold-rush and thereafter, home births were the norm, sometimes unaided, but usually with assistance from unofficial midwives, other women, husbands, older children, and sometimes a doctor. Doctors charged fees for their services, but in many cases were not paid in money.

Some mothers from outlying areas such as Skippers and Macetown stayed in Arrowtown or Queenstown from late in pregnancy. Others might have intended to, but their babies arrived early, or as in this case in 1900 the weather prevented travel from Bullendale, beyond Skippers:

*When frozen snow prevented Mrs Jemima Cotter from travelling to Arrowtown for the birth of her baby, midwives assumed responsibility, ordering the prospective father, Tom Cotter, to boil water and keep out of the way. In due course twin daughters were successfully delivered. That was a surprise for Jemima who did not know that she was carrying twins. Incidentally, Tom Cotter complained later that he was the only man sober in the town that night. All the others celebrated at Bullendale's Phoenix Hotel.*



**Jemima Cotter née Hamilton with Alex (the youngest), Grace, Eileen and Jean**

*LDM*

*After leaving Bullendale, the Cotters brought up their twelve children in a small cottage opposite Skippers on a high promontory known as Packers Point. Because of her experience in childbirth, Jemima was sometimes called on to assist in delivering babies in the Skippers district. ('Call the Doctor' by Danny Knudson in *Queenstown Courier* Issue 89 2013)*

Another mother whose plans to go to town were prevented by the weather was Bessie Bobsien in Glenorchy in 1909. When seven months pregnant with her first child, she slipped on icy steps and fell, precipitating labour. The doctor and midwife in Queenstown were called but a violent storm caused the boat to turn back. Neighbours assisted Bessie, and a tiny weak baby was born, so small that she was put in a shoe box. She was blue, so a male neighbour advised them to rub her with warmed whiskey. Bessie's life was in danger too as the placenta was retained. At this critical time, an old Scottish runholder came to the door and offered his services. What could he do? they asked. Well, he'd saved many a ewe's life over the years, hadn't he? He filed his fingernails on the sandstone doorstep, washed his hands, and delivered the placenta. Success! Bessie went on to have five more children. In time, the baby, Nancy, had children of her own, including Colin Macnicol who told us of this perilous birth.

**The first midwives** (the word means ‘with women’) were local women who had no training but did have skill, often from their own extensive experience in the days of multiple pregnancies. It was a case of ‘Call the midwife!’ and they would indeed come at any time of day or night in any weather.

One of the early midwives was Elizabeth Cockburn, as her granddaughter Mary Salmond relates: ‘*A child would come knocking at the door on a stormy winter night with a message, ‘Mum wants you.’ She would light her hurricane lamp, collect her bag, and probably a blanket to wrap the new-born babe in if the call was from one of the many very poor and ill-equipped households there were in those days, and set off on foot. She was very proud of the fact that she had never lost a mother or child, and when legislation was passed in about 1905 that only certified midwives could attend births, she was most upset, and particularly heart-broken when she could not deliver her daughter’s last child because of this law.*’ (QC Issue 2 1967) Because midwives sometimes stayed at the patient’s house after the birth in order to nurse the mother and baby and run the household, they could be away from home for days at a time. In Mrs Cockburn’s case, her daughter Sarah (later Salmond) left school at eleven years old to keep house for her father because her mother was so busy being a midwife. (*Dictionary of NZ Biography* Vol 2 p.439)

Catherine ‘Granny’ Philp was a long-serving midwife. She had lived first in Arrowtown where she worked with Doctors Dutton and Thomson at the Arrow District Hospital. After the Midwives Registration Act 1904 she did work independently at times although she was unregistered. In 1916 she was charged in the Queenstown Magistrate’s Court, pleaded guilty, and explained that she ‘was often called on as there was seldom any registered nurse in the place.’ The magistrate told her that she was liable to a penalty of £20 and that if she came before him again, he would have to impose this fine. On this occasion she was only ordered to pay court costs of nine shillings. Clearly the magistrate accepted her explanation. (*Lake Wakatip Mail*, 29 February 1916)

Doctor Bill Anderson, in his book, *Doctor in the Mountains* (p.118), described Catherine Philp as ‘a big, strong woman who had a wonderful philosophy of life. ... Her methods



Midwife Catherine Philp LDM

seemed very rough and ready, but I never had to doubt her cleanliness or honesty. ... She attended her own daughters at their deliveries and later her granddaughter.'

**Maternity homes** were at first simply houses where the unofficial midwives could have several women staying. Catherine Philp opened the first one with three bedrooms in Queenstown in Athol Street, and later used it as a convalescent home into the 1930s. The last of the private maternity homes in Queenstown closed in 1944, and the Southland Hospital Board took over at 'Tutuila' which is now 'Hulbert House.' The Sydney Street maternity hospital opened in 1947.

**Unmarried mothers** were in a very difficult situation both practically and socially. If the woman had a supportive family, her mother or a married aunt or sister would sometimes claim the child as her own. But friendless women were in dire straits. In 1875, one such woman, Kate Walders, a solo mother who worked at a hotel at Arthurs Point, was charged in the Queenstown District Court with concealment of a birth and infanticide. It was rumoured that she had been seen to throw a new-born baby into the Shotover River. She pleaded not guilty. Doctor Douglas stated that although she had recently been pregnant, he could not swear that she had given birth to a live baby. The jury duly acquitted her. Not all such cases were so fortunate.

Now New Zealand's maternal health care is much improved with low rates of maternal and neo-natal mortality compared to those early days. As our population here grows, we continue to ask for more medical services in this district and better pay and conditions for our community midwives.

For more about early medical services, see articles in the *Queenstown Courier* magazine on-line at [www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz](http://www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz). Go to Magazine Archives and search the index.

#### Sources

*Always Plenty to Do – Women in the Wakatipu 1860-1920*, Lakes District Museum

Anderson, W.A. *Doctor in the Mountains*, Collins, 1964

Duncan, Alfred H. *The Wakatipians* first published in 1888, reprinted by Lakes District Museum

Knudson, Danny, 'Call the Doctor', *Queenstown Courier* Issue 89 2013

Knudson, Danny *Skippers: Triumph and Tragedy* Lakes District Museum & Queenstown and District Historical Society, 2016 – see Museum advertisement at end of this magazine

*Lake Wakatip Mail* and *Lake County Press* accessed from [www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz)

Macnicol, Duncan and Margaret Trotter, *I, Duncan, from Skippers*, self-published, 1987

Macnicol, Terri, *Echoes of Skippers Canyon*, AH & AW Reed, 1967

'Salmond, Sarah' Dictionary of NZ Biography Vol 2 1870-1900, Dept of Internal Affairs 1999

Photographs: Courtesy of the Lakes District Museum, Arrowtown

# THE 1918 ‘SPANISH’ INFLUENZA IN THE WAKATIPU

Compiled by Marion Borrell

## Quick facts

The ‘Spanish Flu’ pandemic killed between 50 million and 100 million people world-wide – about 5% of the world’s population. Just as World War I was ending in late October 1918, the virus New Zealand and spread rapidly throughout the country. It remains NZ’s worst public health event, and by far the largest epidemic.

About 9,000 New Zealanders died of the flu in two months, which is about 1 per cent of the population; between a third and a half of the population was infected. This was a cruel blow as soldiers were returning home. By comparison, about 18,000 New Zealanders had died in the four-year war.

Young adults and Maori were particularly susceptible to the influenza; on the troopships and in military camps many became infected. Of the regions, Southland suffered the worst toll per head of population.

## In the Wakatipu District

Although many people were ill, there were only three deaths, the victims having caught the disease elsewhere then travelled here.

The *Lake Wakatip Mail* and the *Lake County Press*, recorded events and passed on official advice, though the *Mail* apologised for the paper not being up to its usual standard on account of illness among the staff.

On 11 November news of the Armistice was greeted with relief and joy, and celebrations went ahead as planned in both towns even though some people were sick. However, the Children’s Day celebrations and the Arrowtown Young Helpers League Concert were postponed.

On 19 November the *Lake Wakatip Mail* reported: *Unfortunately, we have the influenza epidemic in our community, and there are few houses where there are not victims. Still, we have much to be thankful for, in that the complaint cannot be said to have developed in the ultra-severe form which is causing consternation in the cities and many smaller towns.... The local medical men are having a strenuous time, as is the dispensing chemist. The local public bodies have been taking all possible steps to combat the outbreak. ... Last evening the local Council received ...a ten-gallon drum of disinfectant. This is being broken down today and will be distributed to households free of cost for use about their premises.*

*Both schools [in Queenstown] have been closed indefinitely, and no services were held in the Anglican or Presbyterian churches, or the Salvation Army Hall, on Sunday. The local billiard saloons, library, reading room and all other places of public resort, including the hotel bars, have been closed.*

*Representatives from the Lake County and Queenstown and Arrowtown Borough Councils conferred on Saturday regarding... placing a cordon around the district to minimise the risk of infection from outside parts. As a result, a telegram was sent to the Minister of Public Health requesting that all passenger traffic to Queenstown via Waimea and Otago Central railways should be stopped meantime.*

The cordon was not approved, but due to illness among the staff, the number of trains from the south reduced and the *TSS Earnslaw* ran less frequently to Kingston and Head



**PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT,  
NEW ZEALAND.**

**INFLUENZA.**

**PRECAUTIONS AND WARNINGS.**

Absolutely avoid intimate contact—  
e.g., kissing and dancing.  
Avoid places where persons congregate indoors—e.g., public meetings, trams, entertainments, etc.  
Avoid draughts.

Ammoniated tincture of quinine is a drug that is much recommended.

By order.

**J. P. FRENGLEY,**  
Acting Chief Health Officer.  
Wellington, 8th October, 1918.

**LAKE COUNTY COUNCIL  
INFLUENZA EPIDEMIC.**

**PREVENTIVE MEASURES.**

The Co-operation of the Public is earnestly invited in assisting to Com.

**DISINFECTING DWELLINGS.**

**OFFICIAL SUGGESTIONS.**

Spray or wipe floor and furniture in rooms that have been occupied by infected persons with a solution of about half a breakfast-cup to a gallon of water of any reliable disinfectant.

Isolation should be practised where possible, and only one member of family should visit the patient's room.

of the Lake. People were advised not to travel beyond their own locality. Children were to be kept at home. Hairdressers had to be closed, and so were all the banks. At the public meeting in Arrowtown there was some discussion about whether stores should also be closed. But as one woman pointed out, they 'could not do without food, but drink could be dispensed with.' At the request of the local authorities, hotels and accommodation houses cancelled all bookings for two or three weeks until the danger had passed.

In short, normal life and travelling ceased for a time.

The *Lake County Press* on 5 December reported that 'Dr Watt, medical superintendent of the Lake County Hospital has been down with the flu, as have also two of the three nurses at present in the institution. Upon Sister Ross, consequently, has fallen the bulk of the nursing, and to her credit, be it said, she has done it faithfully and well.'

By 26 November the epidemic here was diminishing, and no cases of the pneumonic form of the disease developed in the local population. There were reported to be no cases of flu at all at the Head of the Lake, and few in Arrowtown.

It seems that a mixture of comparative isolation, good luck and sound management spared the district from most serious illness and deaths. Among those who caught the flu and survived, the memories are of a severe illness and very slow recuperation with months of tiredness.

We were not spared from grief. The newspapers reported the deaths elsewhere of people with local connections, especially family members. There were 33 such notices in the two newspapers, but no doubt many more people were in mourning, including my own family who lost a young man who was a teacher in Dunedin, and a young girl in Timaru. These events become part of one's inherited history, and the names of those who died have often been given to children of the next generations.

### **The Local Fatalities**

**James Paterson**, 43, a ploughman from Mataura, was in Queenstown on his honeymoon when he was struck down by pneumonic influenza which he would have caught before his arrival. He died at Frankton Hospital and is buried at Frankton.

Ex-Trooper **William McLelland**'s death was reported in the *Lake Wakatip Mail* on 19 November:

*We regret to chronicle the fact that Mr Wm McLelland, son of Mrs and the late Wm McLelland, of Queenstown, died in the Lake County Hospital of pneumonic influenza on Friday morning. Deceased, who was invalided home a few months ago from the war (he having left New Zealand as a trooper in the Second Reinforcements) became a victim of influenza whilst in Dunedin. He was confined to his bed there for some days, and though in a very low state he assayed the journey to Queenstown on Wednesday, with the result that on the morning after his arrival he collapsed. Medical aid was immediately summoned, and the deceased was found to be suffering from acute pneumonic influenza. His removal to the Lake County Hospital was ordered, but he succumbed to the malady a few hours after his admission.*

*The late William McLelland, who was 38 years of age, was born at Arrowtown. Up till the time he left the Dominion on active service he was engaged principally in mining, being employed in the Nokomai and Garston districts when he enlisted. Deceased was*

## Public Meeting in Arrowtown

On Saturday evening, at the request of the Minister of Public Health, a public meeting to consider ways and means of combating the influenza epidemic was held in the Council Chambers, Arrowtown. The Mayor (Mr H. McKibbin) presided, and the meeting was attended by about forty, including a number of ladies.

the assistance of the St. John Ambulance Association, any Women's Social Societies, or other organisations should be brought in. It is not necessary that women who nurse in homes should hold nursing certificates. Any who have had experience in nursing can obtain any advice from medi-

... and do useful service. I make an appeal to the manhood and womanhood of the country to volunteer for this work, as our brave soldiers volunteered to fight in the war. We now have an enemy in our homes which has already carried off a very large number, and which, unless controlled by organisation and direct effort, is likely to greatly lessen the population. This is a matter that demands the entire organised strength of the people of the Dominion, and as Minister of Public Health I make the appeal to Mayors and Chairmen of Town

Mr Vidal thought they should close the stores as well as the hotels, as people congregated in stores as well as in hotels.

A lady present remarked that they could not do without food, but drink could be dispensed with.

Mr T. J. Cotter said it might be arranged to close stores if people sent in their orders.

... who had been called

ceived by Constable McMahon. Dr Watt's instructions were to the effect that all children should be kept in their own back yards; all schools, churches, pictures, and other entertainments to be closed at once; ... and ... to be removed

twice gassed at the Front, and in all probability this fact reduced his chance of recovery from the fell disease.

The late Mr McLelland was of a quiet unobtrusive disposition, a man of strong courage and fearless in the face of danger. When the call to arms first sounded he did not delay to give answer, and his mother will have the consolation of knowing that he did his duty to his King and Country in the days of dire peril, and that to a large extent probably his demise was due to mischance on the field of battle.

### **Kinross Family Victims**

One family which suffered badly was the Kinross family of Gibbston when two adult daughters died of the flu within four days of each other.

Bessie Kinross recorded this in her memoir, *Kinross Writings*. She was aged about 20. *Jane and I had gone down in the train to Orepuki to attend [brother] Andrew's wedding to Chrissy Garden. The wedding was at 11 o'clock. ... That morning there was no sign of the influenza epidemic in Orepuki, but by the same afternoon people were dropping in the streets with it, some dangerously ill, just like that. ...*

*We left the following morning for Winton and stayed ... for a couple of days, during which time Jane did not feel at all well. So we left for home, taking the train to Kingston then the steamer to Queenstown, much sooner than our original plans intended. When we arrived in Queenstown we found no transport available from either Queenstown or Gibbston so we stayed the night there, and next day travelled ... to Gibbston in the coach.*



**Jane Kinross died aged 35**



**Wedding of Mary Kinross and John Bardsley**

*I remember it was a Wednesday about 2pm when we arrived and Jane went to bed immediately. By now I wasn't feeling too good either so later on was sent to bed also. The next morning Dr Watt from Frankton Hospital was called, and pronounced it the influenza epidemic and said Jane had double pneumonia. He examined me also but I did not have pneumonia. He came again several times but he knew, as we did, that there was really nothing that he could do for her. Just before 11pm on Saturday night, 23 November 2018, Jane died, courageous to the last. ...I believe Jane's death was one of only a few in the Wakatipu area.*

*Three days later a telegram from Dunedin informed us that [sister] Mary had been a victim also and had died at Dunedin Hospital. [She was aged 37, married and with a son John aged 9.]*

*I gradually recovered, but it was eight months before I felt anything like well again. All my hair came out in handfuls.*

This is a very matter-of-fact account of what must have been a grievous time for this family. The deaths were reported sensitively in the newspapers, with Jane described warmly: 'Of a most amiable disposition, she was held in the highest esteem by all who knew her, and sympathy is general for the parents, brothers, and sisters in their sad and sudden bereavement.'

There are only seven memorials of the Influenza Epidemic in New Zealand. The recent centenary has brought this major event once more to the attention of the public at large. Plans are now being made for a national memorial to be built.

#### Acknowledgement

Use of Kinross family history and photos courtesy of Judy Blackman

#### Sources:

McKenzie, Raewyn, 'Influenza', *NZ Geographic* accessed from [www.nzgeo.com/stories/influenza/](http://www.nzgeo.com/stories/influenza/)

Kinross, Bessie, *Gibbston Writings*, ed. Judith Blackman, Wickliffe New Zealand Ltd, 2015

*Lake Wakatip Mail* and *Lake County Press* accessed from [www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz](http://www.paperspast.natlib.govt.nz)  
Templeton, Fleur, 'Pandemic Disasters: what have we learnt?' *University of Otago Magazine*, April 2018

## BESSIE KINROSS OF GIBBSTON

*Monologue presented at our 2018 'People From Our Past' event, using sections of Bessie's memoir.*

Hello, I'm Bessie Kinross. I'd like to tell you a bit about my childhood at Gibbston in the early years of the 20<sup>th</sup> century - since I can see that none of you were alive back then.

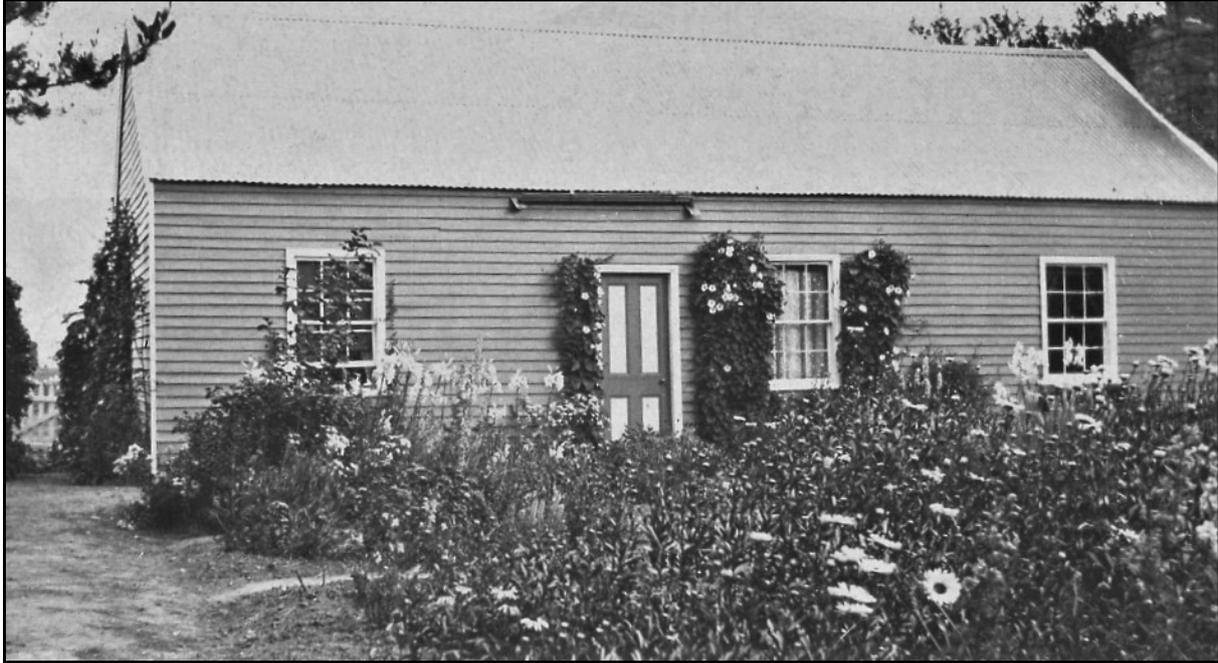
You could say I was one of a clan. My father Thomas had come from Scotland to Otago in 1860 and worked as a drover and bullock driver to the goldfields before settling at Gibbston as a farmer and storekeeper. He returned to Scotland in 1879 and married my mother Helen. After my sister Margaret was born, they came back here and never left. You'll know our place, it's close to the main road with a stone wall in front.

Nine more children were born, 3 girls and 6 boys including twins. And then there was me, in 1898, making eleven. I had plenty of brothers and sisters to bring me up, and I wore their hand-me-down hand-me-downs because, fit or misfit, for both girls and boys, they were handed down. The first new dress I ever had made for me was for my sister Mary's wedding – when I was eleven years old. As the youngest, I tagged along with the others. Perhaps I was a bit of a nuisance really, but they were very tolerant, and I learned a lot by copying.



**The family before Bessie was born.**

We all had our chores. The older boys worked our farm, where there were lots of animals to look after.



**House and garden**

We girls helped Mother in the house, the vegetable plot and the large flower garden.

I've always liked to try new things. I taught myself to ride my brothers' big bike when I was nine or ten. It was awkward because I had to sit on the bar. Even then my feet couldn't reach the full round of the pedals, so with one foot in the clip of one pedal, I pumped my way along.

The winters were very severe back then. There could be inches of ice for up to six weeks in shady places, such as on the flagstones at our back door. During these winters, Helen and I used to select a lovely long icicle each from the spouting of the house. They were 8-10 inches long, and we sucked them all the way to school. It was so cold that the poor hens' feet froze to their perches. In spite of fires burning day and night, the house was so cold that once even the bread froze. For hotties we used heated flat-irons wrapped in old blankets, and we also had a 'pig' which was filled with hot water.

We were lucky that the school was only a quarter of a mile away so we went home for midday dinner. One family at Roaring Meg walked six miles each way. The school had an open fire so we would warm up before class. Our slates had to be warmed up too. Father was chairman of the School Committee for many years and was a keen reader, so we always had a good supply of books at school and at home. When I was almost through primary school my brother Andrew was our teacher. Later on, I was offered the job, but I was needed at home as Father was ill.





**Bessie on right of middle row beside her sister Helen**

Concerts were held at the school followed by supper and a dance, with the forms arranged around the walls for the ladies to sit on. The music was provided by a piano, violin, cello and cornet. During the war there was a monthly concert and dance to raise funds for the war effort and sometimes as a send-off for one of our local boys. Many a good time have we all had in that tiny school.

All the church services were held in the school too, for Presbyterians, Anglicans and the Salvation Army. We're Presbyterian, and Father was the Elder. All the girls in our family were

organists, and I played there for over 20 years. We provided a meal for the minister and his horse before they returned to Arrowtown for the evening service. Many years later, after I was widowed, I married Montague Jackson who had been one of our ministers in those days.

Apart from our Gibbston social life, Arrowtown was our next attraction for dances, balls, travelling shows or even a circus. We'd all pile into the horse-drawn cart. Once we had cars, we went to pictures there most Saturdays – the silent movies with a pianist providing music, then the first talkies.

The first car to pass through Gibbston travelled so fast that we didn't have time to see it – the road was so dusty. Our first car, bought in 1919, was a Model T Ford. Its first journey to Queenstown was to meet Jim on his return from camp. The roads were dreadful that winter with ruts as deep as halfway up the wheels – the Kawarau Gorge



**Bessie behind the wheel of the Model T Ford, with sister Helen in the back seat.**

was in a terrible state. The safest technique was to get in a rut and stay there, hoping not to meet a car or other vehicle using the same rut. I learnt to drive as soon as I could, and we young folk had jolly expeditions in fine weather, including driving over Cardrona to Hawea. After Father died in 1921, Mother bought a little Austin 7 so that Helen or I could drive her every day, down the road to the Nevis Bluff then around the Gibbston back road, just for an outing.

Now I'd like to tell you about the general store, post office and gold-buying agency. We sold everything from bully-beef to steel-rimmed spectacles, and of course 'conversation' sweets for the children. To collect the goods and go on errands, Mary used to drive the spring-cart to Arrowtown and sometimes to Frankton wharf, taking either Helen or me for company.

Father gave his customers credit until they could pay the debt. Sometimes they couldn't pay at all. Perhaps the gold-mining had been a failure, perhaps hard luck or illness had struck. But most of them did what they could to pay eventually, and various items came our way as payment. Once a smart black trunk containing beautifully bound books of *Dr Spurgeon's Sermons*. It was a great gift for Father as he loved reading and religion.

With so many customers for the store, post office and later the telephone, we had lots of people dropping in. Mother was very hospitable and no one would leave without a cup of tea and bite to eat. I think that sometimes she was overly generous, and we girls were kept very busy with baking.

So much has changed in the way people live now and what they take for granted. There's much more I could tell you about those days at Gibbston before I was married in 1932.



### Source

The full memoir, edited and published by her great-niece:

Kinross, Bessie, *Gibbston Writings* ed. Judith Blackman, Wickliffe New Zealand Ltd, 2015

## NURSE STELLA POOLE 1911 - 2002

By David Hay

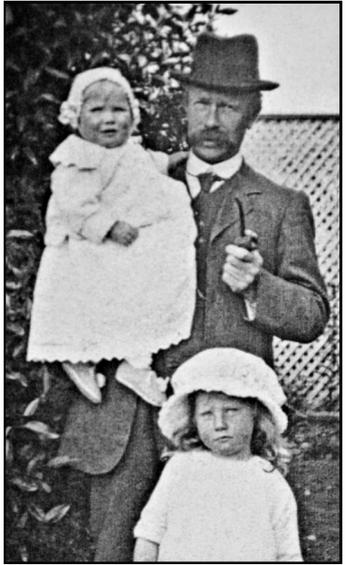
*Many of our locally-raised members will have memories of Nurse Poole who was the district's Public Health Nurse from 1958 to 1976.*

*This autobiographical monologue, written by her nephew David Hay, was presented at the 'People From Our Past' event in 2015 by Shona Blair.*

My full name is Elizabeth Stella Poole. I was born in Invercargill on 21 January 1911, growing up in our home in Woodhouse Street. Here I am when I was about three – that's my sister, Joyce, being held by my father. There were six children altogether.

I went to South School, then to Southland Girls High School where I was a reasonably good student although according to my reports, one could always do better! We had a happy childhood, my parents also owning a crib at Otatara where we would spend the summer with lots of friends and family visiting, playing tennis and swimming in the Oreti River.

After leaving school I worked for three years in the office of our family business, George Poole & Sons – we were timber



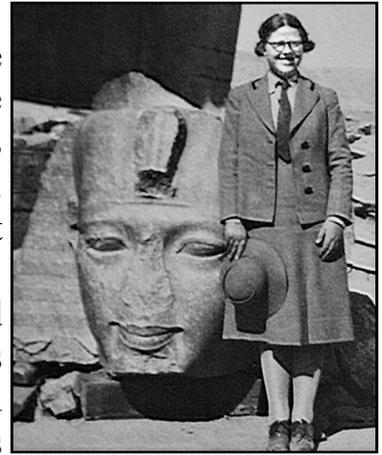
merchants – but I always felt called to be a nurse and had always felt sorry for children who were in pain or sick. My brother next to me had rheumatic fever which caused a heart condition and he died in his teens. So, between 1932-1935, I trained in General Nursing at the Southland Hospital when it was sited in Dee Street, then went on to gain my Maternity Certificate at Otaki Hospital in 1938.

Then came the Second World War.



In 1939 I volunteered and was accepted as a nurse for the armed forces and along with about fifty other sisters sailed for Egypt on the troop ship *Mauritania*.

My first post was at Helwan about twenty miles from Cairo. A large hotel for tourists had been turned into a hospital where I was a Charge Sister and it was there that the casualties came from the fighting in the Western Desert, with an endless procession of war wounds, burns, dysentery and hepatitis. Many nights had to be spent in trenches as a precaution against Italian bombing raids.



Then we were sent to the Western Desert. We lived and worked in tents dug into the ground and slept on canvas stretchers. Water was rationed, nights could be very cold and sand was ever omnipotent. During the sand storms it was impossible to see outside and once we got lost getting to the hospital. When it rained, we had to bucket the water out of the wards and duty room. There were ants to eat our clothes, flies to eat our food and mosquitoes to eat us. But despite these trials we did have time for fun and we nurses were really looked after extremely well.

At one time there was an Australian detail of Bren gun carriers in the local village, so we asked if we could have a ride. They took us out over the desert and down about a 20-foot drop. They were so built that they didn't tip up. Later the driver asked if we would like to drive so I did and drove for about a mile. It was very exciting.

We also helped with the soldiers as they were convalescing from their injuries. I remember once being invited, with several other nurses, to a picnic out in the desert but it became clear that our hosts were interested in a lot more than the sandwiches. I was horrified and demanded to be taken immediately back to the hospital.

But, you may ask, was there ever a special person in my life? That's my secret but I did keep this poem:

What made me love you?  
Was it just your smile  
Or that you allowed me  
To hold your hand a while?  
Maybe I was lonely  
And you seemed lonely too  
Anyway I'm lonely now  
That I'm away from you.

Author unknown

I spent the final two years of the war stationed in several hospitals in Italy.

After nearly 6 years of War Service I was eligible for the Decorations of

the 1939-45 Star;

the Africa Star;

the Italy Star;

the Defence Medal 1939-45;

the War Medal 1939-45;

the New Zealand War Service Medal 1939-45



**Shona Blair wearing the medals**

After the War, like many others, I found it hard to settle and decided to further my interest in preventive medicine. Antibiotics – penicillin and sulfa drugs - had only become available towards the end of the war, so in 1947 I spent a year studying Public Health in Wellington, then in 1948 gained my Plunket qualifications at the Truby King Harris Hospital in Dunedin.

After spending the next 4 years back in Invercargill working with the Health Department I went to England in 1952 where, again, I furthered my experience in Public Health working at Banbury, in Oxfordshire, for a year.

When I came back in 1954, I was asked to go to the Roxburgh Hydro where I remained until the project was completed. This was a demanding job involving Public Health and Plunket, but as the only nurse at the dam I frequently found myself in the back of an improvised ambulance with a seriously injured patient being transferred to Dunedin. Not good, as I was very prone to motion sickness. Actually, the war injuries work stood me in good stead with this role.

From Roxburgh, I took a bursary to train as a midwife in Wellington but following that was bonded to Reefton for six months, which was not an exciting place. I did a lot of embroidery!

In 1958, a public health post opportunity arose in Queenstown, a place that I had always loved from childhood.

A lot of work was required to get a new clinic built in Park Street and to attend to vaccinations for poliomyelitis, immunisations, hearing and sight tests on the children as well as the Plunket job of weighing and progress checks of the babies.

Although I was based in Queenstown, my ward extended from Te Anau/Manapouri to Wanaka as far up as Makarora, and included Arrowtown and Glenorchy. In those early days as the roads were being upgraded, the mere act of getting to these places in my small, unreliable Health Department car was often exciting to say the least – especially in the winter.

The Devils Staircase was always a cause for great anxiety. On my first journey I had to be helped past a huge rock and pushed through mud by a number of men stationed there for that purpose, but this proved to be the customary thing for long enough, with my car invariably being the first to negotiate the road in the rough.

One time I had to stay in Kingston overnight because the road had completely fallen away into the lake. On another occasion I became sandwiched between two massive earthmoving machines, wondering whether the drivers could actually see me because of the dust.

When the road to Wanaka was blocked at the Nevis bluff – as it often was – it was a nightmare wrestling my car through the ice and snow over the narrow, unsealed Crown Range road – sometimes without chains! Shades of driving the Bren gun carrier! After one of these trips I had to give a talk on Rescue Breathing, which was strangely appropriate as I seemed to have been holding my own breath for most of the drive back to Queenstown.

Before the road to Glenorchy was built in 1961, my work entailed a trip on the Earnslaw which I always enjoyed, visiting the high country stations on the way. The Captain would let me use his cabin so the mothers could bring their children aboard for



the immunisations.

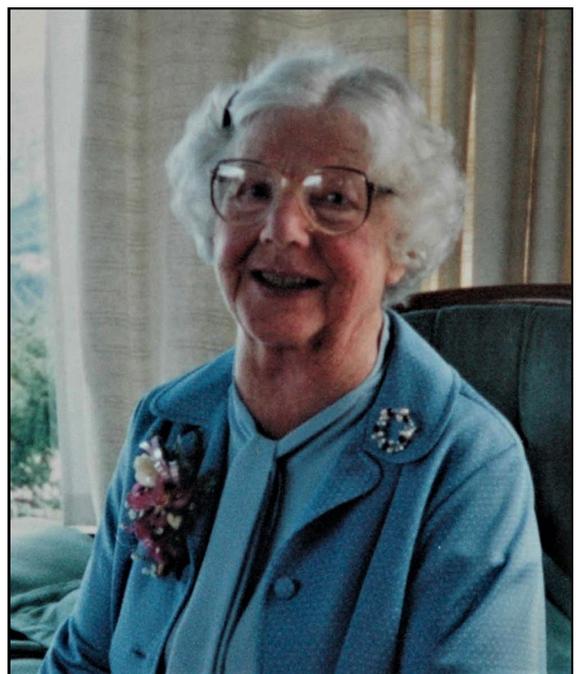
As the population of the region increased, so did my workload, and although I found my duties satisfying and fulfilling in the extreme, especially with all the vast advances that had occurred in preventive medicine, I was rather glad to retire in 1976 - but I continued to take a keen interest in health developments.

To my great surprise I was awarded the Queen's Service Medal in 1982, and it was a great honour to receive the decoration from the Governor-General, Sir David Beattie, at the ceremony in Christchurch.

You may be surprised that I had other interests apart from my vocation – embroidery, St Peter's Church responsibilities and gardening.

And so we all grow old – a most unflattering process – and, after a period of unpleasant illness, I relinquished life on 28 March 2002, then to be placed in the family grave at the St John Cemetery in Invercargill.

Life had gone full circle back to Invercargill.



# Queenstown and District Historical Society

## Chairperson's Report for the Annual General Meeting, November 2018

Marion Borrell

The Society's major emphasis in the past year has been on sharing our local history with people here and everywhere. This we do through print and internet publications, and by arranging events for members to which the public is invited.

Our membership numbers are unchanged at about 200 memberships or 300 individuals.

Our financial position is that we have about \$38,000 accumulated of which about \$12,000 is allocated to projects which are under way. As our largest source of income is now subscriptions (\$4500), we are looking to develop other sources so that we can undertake more projects as well as covering our normal costs.

### Promotion of Local History

- Queenstown Courier Issues 98 and 99 featured some monologues from 'People from Our Past - Law and Justice'; the history of the Lake Lodge of Ophir; the people after whom Arrowtown's reserves are named; and two articles about local World War One soldiers. We are grateful to all our generous contributors, especially Rita Teele and Taylor Reed for their eleven articles about Arrowtown's reserves.

- Stories of Wakatipu - Queenstown Courier Issue 100. Danny Knudson has created a fascinating commemorative 100<sup>th</sup> issue containing the history of the district through excerpts from past issues.

- Blog on [www.queenstown.com](http://www.queenstown.com): Six more articles by Marion Borrell have been published this year on topical subjects – the Kawarau Falls Bridge, the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Queenstown Gardens, childbirth and midwifery, and the history of the airport. All 20 articles are on our website.

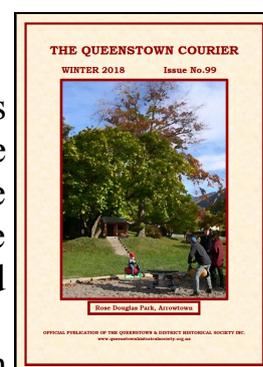
- Website [www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz](http://www.queenstownhistoricalsociety.org.nz): This has had a spruce-up to make it easier to navigate. As the contents have grown, we exceeded our site's capacity and have now increased it. It has had up to 800 visits per month. Past *Couriers* can be read on-line and the index enables searching.

- Historic Places in Queenstown brochure: Because we have sold out of the booklet *Historic Sites of Queenstown - a walking guide* (2003), Marion has written and Print Central has designed a brochure which we intend to sell to hotels to give to their guests. Once the arrangements can be made with the various hotels, we will proceed to print them. We envisage that this will in time provide an income.

- Skippers – Triumph and Tragedy: Sales of Danny Knudson's excellent book have continued at the Museum. As it will not be reprinted, we advise people to buy copies while they are still available.

- Queenstown and District History app for smartphones: Frustrations have continued this year due to technical difficulties.

- Edith Cavell – a bridge and bravery by Danny Knudson has lasting appeal and has been reprinted.



## Historical Information Panels Project

The aim of this new project is to donate panels in places where locals and visitors will see them. As soon as we started compiling a list of locations, ideas flowed, and now we have ten suggestions for panels on QLDC and DOC land. Three of these have had their contents written and are being processed by the relevant authorities. Board members have offered to prepare material for four more locations. We will find out soon how much the panels will cost.

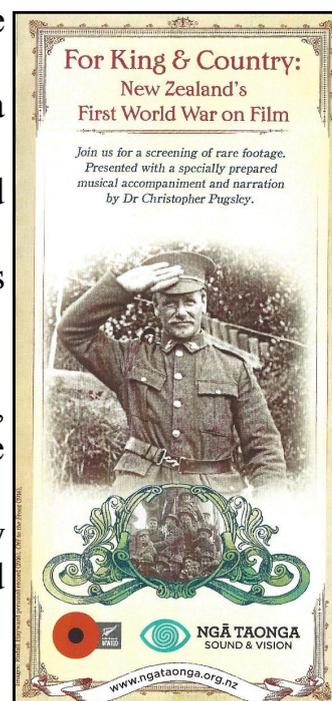
At Kawarau Falls Bridge we hope to use Ray Clarkson's bequest for further panels once we see that NZTA will provide.

We were pleased to assist the developers of Hanleys Farm with material for their historical panel.

## Activities and Events from September 2017 to May 2018

These have been well-attended, including by members of the public.

- 'Southern Adventures' film compilation from Nga Taonga Sound and Vision
- Talks on the restoration of the Arrowtown Gaol by David Clarke and Roy Bagley
- AGM, *Courier 98* and 'Stories of Dusky Sound's Early Ships and People' by Colin Cassels
- Visit to Cardrona with Ray O'Callaghan and Tim Scurr
- 'People from Our Past' presented by Bob Young, Ann Mann, Tony Hanning, June Thompson with Denise Heckler, Sue Harcombe and David Clarke
- Launch of *Courier 99* and screening of 'For King and Country – NZ's First World War on Film' from Nga Taonga Sound and Vision.



## Heritage Protection

We continue to monitor Resource Consent Applications. As a result, the Board decided to submit our concerns regarding the 'Olive Leaf' building proposed beside St Patrick's Church in Arrowtown. Our points are strictly historical and within the parameters of our Rules: the protection of the Category 2 listed church, and Arrowtown's longstanding community values and policies regarding history. Note that we also support Resource Consent Applications that protect historical sites and features.

## Community Involvement

- Lakes District Museum: Jocelyn Robertson has once again served as our representative on the Board, and has agreed to continue for another year. We donated \$2500 towards the cost of equipment to project images onto the outside wall of the bank building.

- Glenorchy Museum and History Group: The film presentation 'Heritage Viewing' proved to be an excellent fundraiser for the group. It was a pleasure to contribute by organising the Frankton event.

- Wakatipu Heritage Trust: As I am a trustee, we can readily collaborate. This year we have provided letters of support for funding applications for the project to erect a replica building over the machinery at the Bullendale Dynamo.

### **Board**

The Board currently consists of Marion Borrell, Denise Heckler, Gavin Jack, Danny Knudson, Russell McGrouther, Barbara Kerr and Ray O’Callaghan.

Danny is retiring after 12 years on the Board. We are grateful for his generous contribution especially as an historian including writing the Society’s history in *Heritage Alive*, writing *Edith Cavell – a bridge and bravery* and compiling *Stories of Wakatipu* as the 100<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Queenstown Courier*.

We welcome interest from members about joining the Board. Several current board members have indicated that they will not be able to continue for much longer, and our numbers are approaching the minimum permitted in our constitution. Being a Board member is always rewarding as we promote our history today, for tomorrow.

### **Post Script**

At the AGM Patrick Beehan was elected to the Board, and in May 2019 Pauline Lawrence agreed to be co-opted onto the Board.



**Ray O’Callaghan at Cardrona Cemetery**

# AWARD OF HONORARY MEMBERSHIP TO DANNY KNUDSON

Citation by Brian Bayley



Danny as Jimmy Hamilton in

The flyleaf of Danny's book *The Story of Wakatipu*, published in 1968, has a charming photograph of a young man which records:

'D.A. Knudson is a school teacher who lives in Dunedin with his wife and small daughter. He has a BA degree from the University of Otago. The author first became interested in the history of Wakatipu after a holiday there in 1957. He began reading and collecting information about the area and, of course, visited it many times. He saw the need for a handbook and decided to write one himself. Hence *The Story of Wakatipu*.'

My copy, purchased 46 years ago was my first introduction to Danny.

Since then Danny has actively pursued the history of many facets of the Wakatipu. In 1974 he published *The Road to Skippers*. This was reprinted in 1980 and a new edition printed in 1995. He published *Goldtown School: The story of Macetown School and Standard V 1892*. Since then he has written two additional books published by this Society - *Edith Cavell – a bridge and bravery* and *Heritage Alive – Queenstown and District Historical Society 1965-2015*.

More recently he completed the wonderful *Skippers Triumph & Tragedy*, jointly published by Danny, the Society and The Lakes District Museum. This beautiful book, packed with information, could have easily filled two volumes. Reducing it to its published size was a painful experience for Danny such is his knowledge of, and passion for, recording local history.

Now, 50 years after his first local book, Danny has created a commemorative 100<sup>th</sup> issue of the *Queenstown Courier* magazine – a book entitled: *Stories of Wakatipu*.

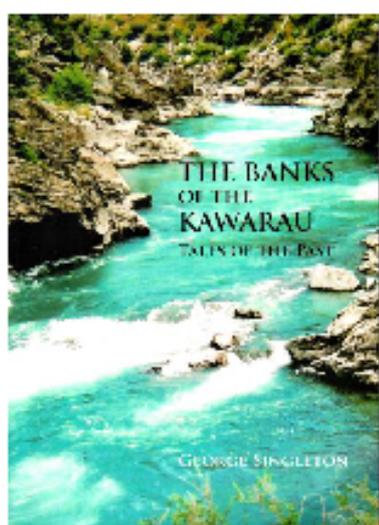
Apart from many of the public, all members, and the Society itself, have greatly benefited from Danny's knowledge, patient research, and thorough checking of so many records, in addition to his completing and seeing his manuscripts published.

Since 2006 Danny has given richly to the Society as a member of its Board. He has planned his Wakatipu visits to allow him to attend Society meetings and events. His play-writing scripts and enactments of the past have been a cause of great merriment, incorporating an odd pun or two!

This written nomination for honorary life membership of the Society is a brief reminder of the valuable, informed, dedicated hard work Danny has carried out to benefit not just us, but future researchers, historians, teachers, students and the public both within NZ and overseas.

This award is an honour richly deserved.

## In our bookshop...

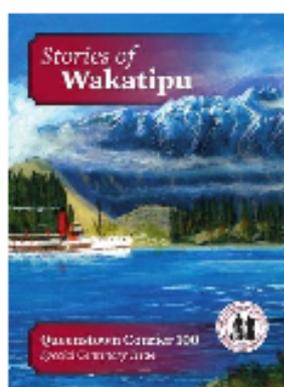


### ***On the Banks of the Kawarau – Tales of the Past***

By George Singleton

From geological and pre-European history through to the present, and from the outlet of Lake Wakatipu to Cromwell, George takes us on a fascinating journey, enlivened with many 'tales' and photos from a wide range of sources. This is George's second book of local history, the first being *Our Place in the Sun – The Kelvin Peninsula* in 2013.

*Self-published, 2018 \$40*



### ***Stories of Wakatipu – Queenstown Courier 100***

Compiled by Danny Knudson

This commemorative book celebrates all the magazines since the first issue in 1965.

66 extracts cover eight major themes of Wakatipu's history, and are enhanced by illustrations including paintings.

*\$20*



### ***Skippers – Triumph and Tragedy***

By Danny Knudson

Time is running out to purchase this splendid book which is the culmination of dedicated research into the place and the people of the Upper Shotover. It is beautifully illustrated and designed.

*\$48*

