

## PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT

Presented to the Annual General Meeting held in October 1985.

Though the society has not achieved anything dramatic, steady progress has been made in the past year. The trips were a feature of the year's activities and proved to be very rewarding. In November a second visit to the Gibbston and Kawarau area with Mr Alex Miller as guide and commentator was an outstanding success. We are grateful for Alex's knowledge and humour which made the history to the area live. In January we set out on a traverse of the Nevis Valley but because of roading problems, the visit was limited to the lower valley. Here again the visit was made alive by Mr Ron Gordon who knows the area intimately and conveyed his knowledge in his inimitable style. In February, a visit was made to Cromwell and Clyde and although the question was asked, "What is new about these two places?", it was an interesting day. Personally conducted visits to the Cromwell and Clyde Museums and the new Pioneer Museum in the old herb factory were worthwhile. The highlight was the trip to the Rees Valley and the Invincible Mine. The day was perfect and to have so many climb the long, steep road to the mine area was about equivalent to a tramping club climbing Mount Cook. We hope that more members will join us in these trips which are always enjoyable and interesting.

Other activities during the year were:-

- \* The sponsorship of the William Rees Memorial Essay which was printed in the Courier.
- \* The donation of a book to the Queenstown Library. The volume was Glenaray by Peter Chandler and although of peripheral interest to the Wakatipu, the author is a member of the Society and it was requested by the Library.
- \* The redrafting of the Queenstown Historical Map. This has involved a great deal of research and the map which is about to be printed, will be an advance on its predecessor. There is still room for further research in this area.

\* Provision of plaques on historic buildings. A plaque is on hand for the Ballarat Street bridge and plaques have been ordered for Eichardts and the Mountaineer Hotels. The cost of these last two is to be met equally by the owner of the buildings Mr Jock Boyd and the lessees Lion Breweries.

\* A winter function was held in the Lake County Museum at Arrowtown. Mr Ron Gordon gave an illustrated address on the history and the centennial of the area. It was a satisfying evening and once again we are indebted to Mr Gordon.

So much has been written about the area, many would think that there was no room for anything new. This year has proved that this is not so. Mrs Ann Cook, a member of the Society, has written an outstanding book on the history of the Gibbston area which is recommended as an interesting and well-researched history of a local area. It is called "The Gibbston Story". Mrs Josephine Traill, who grew up in the Bullendale and Arrowtown areas, has written a series of essays called "Child of the Arrow". Her delightful stories are well worth reading. Finally, J. S. Murray's "Circlet of Gold" is a well written history of Central Otago with Wakatipu content.

An examination of the Couriers over the years shows the Society has achieved much. By strong membership and active administration such progress can be maintained.

A Post Office Box No 132 has been obtained which will give continuity of Address.

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'A.J. De La Mare'. The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of the first and last names being capitalized and prominent.

A.J. De La Mare,  
President.



Bullendale - Phoenix mine -

BULLENDALE

The centennial of the first commercial use of electricity which was first used at the Phoenix Mine, Bullendale, falls in February 1986. It is understood that the Electricity Department in conjunction with the Otago Central Electric Power Board intend to mark the occasion. This will probably take the form of a function at the site of the original power station in April in conjunction with the Arrowtown Festival Week. A book by Peter Chandler is due to be published and one or two exhibits are to be shown in the Arrowtown Museum.

As there will be not be a Courier before that date, much of the material in this issue deals with the Phoenix Mine, Bullendale and associated matters.

SOUTHLAND TIMES 5 February 1886 "An important preliminary trial of the electric transmission of power machinery erected by Mr Fletcher for the Phonex Co. at Skippers took place on Wednesday (3.2.86). It proved a thorough success."

SOUTHLAND TIMES 13 February 1886 "The Phoenix Mine reports a return of 1400 ozs from 730 tons of quartz. Mr Prince, who carried out the installation of the electrical plant at Bullendale, was thrown from his horse while proceeding to inspect the Phoenix Mine. His skull was fractured and no hopes are entertained for his recovery."

LAKE WAKATIPU MAIL 26 February 1886 "We are informed by wire this afternoon that the electric works at the Phoenix Mine, Skippers reefs, will probably finally start on Monday. The present delay is caused by a slight obstruction with the motor in the claim. A new run of gold has been struck 180 feet east of the former gold. It is quite new ground.

We are glad to learn from Dr Douglas that Mr Prince is getting on as well as can be expected after the very serious accident which befell him on the Skippers road. The symptoms are favourable so far, but it may be weeks - even months - before the consequences of his accident will be definitely known. In contradiction to reports that have been commonly circulated, it may be as well to mention that there is not the slightest appearance of any fracture of Mr Prince's skull although that portion seems to have sustained the whole force of the fearful fall."



They used to hold sports near the Hotel but don't remember this and they played cricket at Casper's Flat. Evidently when the underground miners came off work at 8 o'clock Saturday, they did not have to go back to work till 4 o'clock Monday after. This gave them a long week-end and they went to Arrow or Queenstown. I heard Dad say one time when these Miners went away for the weekend it snowed that heavy they did not get back for three weeks. Dad had a big job that time getting round with mutton and bread. One time a bullock got out and Dad and some miners tracked him in the snow and this bullock went into a tunnel - I suppose to get shelter, when they found him he was laying down in 4 or 5 inches of water. He evidently was numbed with the cold and Dad crawled over the top of him and 'pithed' with a knife and they Dad and miners dragged him out and skinned him on the road. The bullock yard was about half a mile down Skippers Creek and when they would go down in the morning to pack the bullock to the shop (and by the way they packed half a bullock on each horse I remember the pack horses coming up with their load but don't know how the sides of beef were put on the packhorse), anyway the tail was always missing, someone always took it. This night Uncle Jack saw a light at the bullock yard and he sneaked over and there was a chinaman getting away with the tail. Uncle Jack rode to the store and told Uncle Dick, Tom Elliott and they down the road to the chow hut and there was the tail hanging up and the chow lay back in his bunk. Tom Elliott grabbed him by his tail and hammered hell out of the chow with the ox tail.

The frost must have been severe. I remember the horses coming up from the creek and their fetlocks' hair would be frozen, even the men's beards would have icicles on them. Pat Tobin, a fine chap who worked for Dad, said he would leave Bullendale 6 o'clock in the morning, go to Skippers and put his loads on the horses and then back to Bullendale. There was no Skippers Bridge in those days and could only bring the wagon to the depot at the Blue Slip. There were no 8 hours or overtime in those days evidently. The Phoenix Mine was owned by a Company in England and they would send a draft for money to their New Zealand attorney Mr W. Turton in Queenstown. I have heard Dad say that the bank has held his cheques for three or four thousand quid. As far as I can gather, if a chap left the mine, the mine manager (Jim Evans) would give him a cheque for wages. This chap would pay his account and Dad would give him his own cheque for the remainder and of course the bank held the cheque till the draft came from England.



My sister May may remember more about this than me. The miners got ten shillings a day and they paid one shilling a week towards a school teacher as the Education Department at that time would not recognise Bullendale. When I went to school, the Education Department did recognise it as I remember the Inspector coming to Bullendale.

They also had social evenings; one man put on an evening for his friend, the upper class I believe, however, this evening was reported in the Lake County Press but it had all the names altered. The Editor asked Pat Tobin about the chap who sent the report down; Pat said he did not know much about him but had heard he was an Oxford Scholar. This man could neither read nor write. The person who put the party on was furious and had the police up I believe but they could get nothing from anybody and as for showing the letter to old John Poulter, he did not know what they were talking about. I remember later on at Skippers if we did not know who done anything we would say, "Blame it onto Poulter!" When the mine stopped, it must have been a big knock to the miners and their family. They had to seek employment elsewhere. Dad had the store but no one to sell his goods to. He told me in later life that the miners had a meeting and offered two thousand pounds for the mine but Mr Turton would not accept the offer. My father was the Miners' representative and he asked Mr Turton what he wanted and he said five thousand pounds and gave Dad a week's option. He seen the miners and they could not find five thousand pounds but said they would give two thousand pounds in cash and pay the rest if they got the gold in three months. However this was not acceptable to Mr Turton and the deal fell through. In later years Dad told me he often whipped the cat that he did not go to the Post Office himself and send a cable to the company at home. It would one have cost sixteen pounds. He said they may have taken no notice of the cable but on the other hand they may have said we will carry on for three months as they had nothing to loose. You can seen by this the miners had great faith in Bullendale and during my lifetime I have heard it said from different ones these old miners said, "Bullendale would go ahead again" - a sixtyfour thousand pound question I suppose. A lot of people may not know that the reef at Bullendale ran east to west and the same gold could be got on Advance Peak, that is across the Shotover. Of course there were out croppers at different places but none as rich as Bullendale. I have heard it said that this reef crossed the Shotover at Strollers Flat. In later years Dad never tired of telling me of the gold hidden in Bullendale

reef.

When living at Skippers, we would go to Bullendale of a Sunday for a picnic. Boil the billy and have lunch as the Battery sight or up to where Mum and Dad lived. We had to cross the creek fifty times in the six miles.

End of Macetown

### THE END OF MACETOWN

The buildings and mining equipment at Bullendale and Macetown were abandoned when the mines ceased to operate because of the difficulty and cost of shifting them. We are grateful to Mr and Mrs Borrell of The Branches Station for letting us have a letter to them from Mr Duncan Macnicol which describes how some of the buildings at Bullendale were shifted to build the Ballarat Hut on the Branches Station. It follows:-

Dacre  
AUGUST 13th '84

Ballarat hut shifted to the Branches

Dear Lorraine and Arthur,

Thanks a lot for the Photo of the Ballarat Hut, also for your letter written on such nice writing paper, sorry I can't match it, perhaps next time.

It was quite an effort to put that hut there, the floor timber was off the walls of the Manager's House at Bullendale, the other timber and iron off the Hall & any other buildings with usable material.

The timber was all cut to the right lengths up there, then by pack horse, first day to Skippers, next day to the Branches, next day to Shingle creek, next day to the site at Ballarat.

We had to make tracks first to get the horses there which took a bit of thinking out, the hut was built by "Ward Brothers" who mined at the mouth of the Floodburn. I carried the window on my back, from the Branches Hut, my brother Colin and myself papered the hut with Auckland Weekly & Otago Witness Illustrations. We made the paste on the spot, put Little's Poison Powder Sheep Dip in the paste to stop the mice eating the paper, hope it done the job; the hut was a great



improvement on the old one which was right beside the creek. We had to pitch a small tent inside to keep dry as the thatched roof leaked so badly.

I am very pleased that you have restored the old hut, it is in a very handy position when mustering that part of the run.

My brother Colin & myself were out looking for stragglers on that country past Duncan's flat. I was on the top part when I picked up and old double bladed pocket knife, one blade was broken in half, the wooden part was bleached white, it must have belonged to Ewan Duncan who ran sheep on that country when Mr Aurum was then three small runs. How I managed to find it in all that area I'll never know. I left it in the Ballarat Hut, if you find it there, keep it as a relic of the past.

I am enclosing a copy of the Dynamo & Shed at the Dynamo Flat when I first saw the building, it was intact, housing the motors although it had not been working for some time. Next time I seen it all the iron had been taken off, nothing else touched, the 6 inch leather belting were still on flywheels & motor. Next time the motors were dismantled & all the Brass and Copper taken, also the metal bearings, they were beautifully made motors. The stud bolts that held the motors in the frame were 6 inches long & 1 in & half diameter. They were nickel plated thread & all.

The motors were driven by two pelton wheels. The two intake pipes would be two feet in diameter reduced to about one inch jet to the pelton wheels, the power taken over the hill to Bullendale to work the quartz Battery. The manager's house was lit by electric light, also the hall which had a two foot mirror with a cluster of light bulbs in the centre, the mirror & bulbs still there after the iron was removed. Bullendale Hall was reputed to be the first Public Hall to be lit by electricity in New Zealand.

I was told that these generators were bought by the Phoenix Mining Co Bullendale from the Suez Canal Co When it was completed. Whether this is true or not, I am not sure.

## Eichardt's Hotel

## EICHARDTS HOTEL

While Bullendale was using electricity to power their battery, others were also interested in this source of energy. Early on the scene was Mrs Eichardt who in October 1886 had electric lighting installed throughout the hotel including the new addition. As early as February 1886, Mrs Eichardt was experimenting with providing electric lighting and the Borough gave permission to lay on service pipes from the main to supply the necessary water power. It could not have been successful because in September she was again 'trying the electric apparatus' by tapping into the main in Ballarat Street. On this occasion, she must have succeeded as it was in operation when the extensions to the hotel were opened in October. It is hard to imagine a pelton wheel being operated by water from the town mains but presumably this happened. Perhaps the quality of the light was of a poor standard.

When Albert Eichardt bought the Queens Arms Hotel in 1866 it was a fairly primitive building but he and his wife set about bringing the place up to a high standard and that they achieved this end is well known. Eichardts had a reputation for top standards and its guest list read like a "Who's-who" of the rich and famous.

In 1872 the former wooden building was replaced with one of stone and concrete and this is the building on the lake street frontage. Mr Eichardt obtained permission from the Borough Council to erect two pillars on the street to support the portico on the front of his new building. Photographs show this portico and perhaps the best known one is of the 1878 flood with Mr Eichardt looking down from the portico with dry feet on the flooded streets below. At some later date the elegant portico was dismantled. What a pity.

Albert Eichardt died in 1882 and his wife, who must have been very capable, carried on the business. She decided to extend in 1886 and Invercargill architect Burwell was commissioned to plan the work, which was a building of 60 ft by 30 ft. The ground floor contained a gentleman's rendezvous parlour with a piano and a ladies parlour 40 ft by 30 ft with two pianos, all the fittings being of high quality. The upper floor was devoted to bedrooms, parlour, and bathroom with water laid on to the bed and bath rooms. The contractors were McLeod and Shaw of Invercargill and the Inspector of Works was Thomas Luckie. A detached wooden building of 10 rooms for commercial people was built at the same time, the contractor being Thomas Luckie.

The exterior has from that time practically remained unchanged.



## Quartz Mining in the Wakatipu

### QUARTZ MINING

Quartz mining in the Wakatipu area was subject to problems which had a significant affect on the profitability of the operation. The main problem was power to operate the batteries and the only practical one was water power. This was subject to the complication of a shortage in the summer time and water supplies freezing in the winter. For these reasons, the experiment of installing electric power at Bullendale was watched with close interest by other quartz mining companies, as the following report of January 1886 shows:-

"The owners of the Premium Mine Macetown are confident the mine is established and it is generally considered that in the event of the dynamo electric motor crushing power about to be inaugurated by the Phoenix Company becoming a success that a central wheel driven by the Arrow River will impart sufficient power by wire to many companies at Macetown. This will enable them to pay at 15 dwts to the ton as they will be able to crush at the mouth of the tunnel and not have to cart the quartz to the battery which in many cases is some considerable distance away."

The report went on to say that 686 ozs of smelted gold worth at least two thousand five hundred pounds was not a bad Christmas cake to come from four claims in the Lakes District. The individual results were:-

Phonenix	291 ozs
Southberg	35
Invincible	136
Premier	224

### SCHELITITE MINING GLENORCHY

There has been schelite mining at Glenorchy from about 1880 with varying degrees of success. A report on one of the earliest ventures appeared in the Southland Times in July 1885. It read:-

"Mr J. B. Neale, manager of the schelite company, Buckleburn, advises that the road from the mine to Glenorchy of one and a half miles is complete and the company is carting schelite to Glenorchy. It is proposed to ship 40 tons of pure schelite to Cologne and Mr Neale is to visit Melbourne to check on procedures."

## Charles Edward PRICE

### Charles Edward Price - Shipping

One hundred years ago, Charles Edward Price died of heart disease at Millers Flat. He was an interesting character having served in the Royal Navy with distinction with the rank of Warrant Officer. He was the recipient of prize money and other honours. The last vessel he served in was the frigate Winchester on a slave hunting expedition on the coast of Africa which he left on New Years Day 1849.

After leaving the Navy, Price went as foreman shipwright to the King of Siam. He was afterwards seven years in Victoria before he emigrated to New Zealand where he took part in the Waikato War.

In 1865, Price commenced boatbuilding operations at Kaipipi Bay, Patersons Inlet, Stewart Island, after apparently plying the same trade at Bluff and the New River. Before the end of the year, a fair-sized vessel was on the stocks and Price was reputed able to undertake the building of vessels of up to one thousand tons. He had no difficulty in obtaining spars of up to 90 feet in the vicinity of his yard. The enterprise had in itself every prospect of success but Price is said to be erratic and fiery tempered who would brook no interference with his ideas. Tradition has it that Price quarreled with a customer resulting in the abandonment of work on his vessel which stood uncompleted on the stocks for some time. Whatever the reason Price abandoned boat building at Stewart Island but his name is now given to the area. Many years later, the bay he used became the headquarters of the Norwegian Ross Sea Whaling Company and was a scene of much shipping activity for many years.

Price came to the Wakatipu in 1872 and was involved in lake shipping. The newspaper report of his death said that Price had known of his ailment for ten years and though his death was sudden, it was not unexpected by him. It added in typical fashion of the day that he died without a struggle and with a smile on his countenance.



## UNDERCOVER WORK AT GLENORCHY

Sly Grogging Glenorchy - revenue officers

In December 1886, the locals noticed some increased police activity in the form of the presence of members of the force from out of town. Tongues were already wagging when it was learnt that the man staying at one of the Glenorchy hotels was a revenue officer and a prosecution for sly-grogging was to be laid. At this time, Glenorchy boasted three hotels namely the Earnslaw, Glenorchy, and the Alpine Club. There must have been some very thirsty people in the area to enable three hotels to remain in business in a small town.

The case followed a meeting of the Greenstone Licensing Committee. In those days, each riding in a county had a separate licensing committee, and the Greenstone Committee had jurisdiction over eight hotels and one wholesale licence that of Bordeaux. The hotels were three at Glenorchy and one each Kinloch, Long Gully, Maori Point, Skippers, and Bullendale. The committee met to decide the validity of the local option vote and decided to postpone consideration of the three Glenorchy licenses for 14 days. F.H.Daniel, licensee of the Alpine Club Hotel and one of the three concerned, immediately appealed to the Supreme Court for an issue of mandamus calling upon the Committee to issue a renewal of his licence. The Court so ruled and the Committee had to pay legal costs and solicitor's fees of over forty pounds.

Upon meeting subsequently, the Committee refused to issue two of the licences, namely that of Daniels and T. Wilson of the Glenorchy Hotel. These two were naturally upset at the Committee not observing the Supreme Court ruling and decided to carry on business. It was at this point that the police got into the act with an undercover man and several charges were laid against the two publicans. Daniels was convicted on one charge of selling liquor in an unlicensed house and was fined twenty five pounds and costs of eighteen pounds ten shillings. He was also convicted and fined for having a quantity of liquor in his possession which was ordered to be confiscated.

On the face of it, the two publicans had a pretty raw deal but at this time, liquor licensing was a very delicate subject as the forces of prohibition were on the march and licensing committees and the police were very careful to carry out the letter of the law.

This episode did not prevent Daniel having the license of the Alpine Club transferred to him in 1888 although the police opposed the transfer on the grounds that Daniel had been convicted of sly-grogging. The F.H.Daniel is presumably the person who was at the same time Mayor of Queenstown and Chairman of the Lake County. This was earlier in the decade.



## James Reid - Mayor- Conviction

### CONVICTION OF THE MAYOR

James Reid was a popular Mayor and served from 1883-87 and had been Mayor of Riverton before arriving in Queenstown. It therefore caused a stir when he was convicted in the Resident Magistrate's Court Queenstown in March 1886. Reid was the owner of the brewery on the waterfront. Under an Act of 1880, a tax of six pence in the gallon was imposed and brewers from that time had legal responsibility to record details of quantities of beer sold and to purchase duty stamps which were affixed to the cask over the bung hole so that they were automatically defaced when the extractor was inserted to draw off the beer.

Information was laid against Reid by the Customs Department for not having entered in his business books the actual quantity of beer removed for consumption or sale over two months and for not having fixed duty stamps on two casks of beer.

Reid pleaded guilty to both charges and was fined the maximum penalty of fifty pounds on the first charge and forty pounds on the second with costs of seven shillings on each charge and forfeiture of the plant ordered. This represented a very severe penalty and would seem to indicate that Mr Reid may have been making a practise of dodging paying beer duty.

The Magistrate expressed his regret at being obliged to inflict such heavy penalties but said he had no doubt that on proper representation being made, the government would not enforce the forfeiture.

Reid paid the fines immediately which must have made a very large dent in his cheque book and despite he, the first citizen, being before the Beak, managed to be re-elected Mayor later in the year unopposed.

## Skippers Road

### SKIPPERS ROAD

The Skippers Road was constructed in the 1880's and was a difficult undertaking. The job was divided into a number of contracts and an incident is recorded involving the McConochie Bros working for Messrs Welsh, Davis & Co on the Number 4 contract. They were blasting away rock on a precipice and were fastened with ropes around their waists. While boring a shot hole, the whole face of the rock began to move. There was no time to think and the two literally ran up the moving face to safety. It was not a moment too soon as the whole went over the face into the river below.