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In ti the high Country - Early Explorers Memorial Essay

Into the High Country by Sally MacMillan Wakatipu High School

*Winner of the William Rees Memorial Essay on Local History.
Awarded by the Queenstown & District Historical Society in 1992*

The reasons why the early explorers came to the Wakatipu area come as far back as the lives they led before they emigrated.

The need to explore became rampant as nineteenth century colonisation broadened into the Pacific. The need for exploration in order to understand the colonies' configurations and estimate their resources brought 'out of the woodwork' men of all intent; be they the missionary, the scientist, surveyor, farmer, prospector, professional explorer, mountaineer, or otherwise, they were all impelled by the desire to solve mysteries, to push out the boundaries of human knowledge, and stirred by a simple quest for adventure.

This is what brought the explorers to Lake Wakatipu, but there are also reasons that attracted the men to this lake in particular.

No matter what the intent was of each individual explorer, they were all moved by the pulse of their time - which through my research and put simply seems to be; if you can't find what you want here, look for it elsewhere.

This is the case for many colonial emigrants as they left their troubled and overpopulated homelands to seek a better life in a new land. Would-be emigrants didn't need much persuading as the appeal of possible life in the colonies was a much brighter contrast to that which could be foreseen in competition with the governing Establishment at home. This is emphasised in the strength of word of mouth as word spread of the opportunities the colonies had to offer. For the middle working class, unemployment or the rigours of competition were potent reasons for migration.

Emigration also appealed highly to the middle and lesser gentry. These people, being wealthy and yet still a rank below the nobility, saw chances of a higher status in the beginning of a new country and a new society. Because of their wealth they were able to get a strong base in the opportunity field of their choice.

Indeed these classes made up a high percentage of those who went out to administer and populate the colonies. This was the kind of emigrant that many Wakatipu pioneers, including William Gilbert Rees and the White brothers of Mt Nicholas Station, represented.

These men also highlight the powerful part played by the family in persuading their off-spring to emigrate. Rees was imbued with a deep desire to make a life for himself which would fulfil his parents' early hopes as well as his own ambitions. It was a fulfilling step in the parental role of the White brothers' father to have secured land in one of the colonies to where at least two of his sons would start new lives.

Another similarity in the motives of the Wakatipu explorers, is their quest for pastoral lands.

Although not all of them had a history of farming from their lives in Europe, (most prominent of these was Rees, whose family background was that of cricketers), it was the search for suitable land that brought them to New Zealand, in particular Central Otago, which consists largely of tussocky plains, watered by immense rivers and surrounded by lofty mountains; ideal country for the sheep farmer.

Many of the explorers had spent time on the land in Australia but were attracted to New Zealand after a long drought, falling wool prices and stringent credit due to the withdrawal of British capital. These factors were causing a serious crisis in the Australian pastoral industry. People began to turn to New Zealand in search of land where they could prosper, temporarily free from licence fees and variable taxes on their flocks.

After spending some time in New Zealand, these determined young men were now looking for the chance to have first claim to some good sheep country. To have first claim you would only have to pay the moderate leases charged by the provisional government for depasturising licences, whereas, to simply take over the lease of a semi-established run proved a more expensive way of buying into land. Original leaseholders were able to demand a substantial profit margin from would-be buyers.

It was this search for country to lay a first claim on, that lured men like

Nathaniel Chalmers, John Chubbin, David McKellar, Donald Hay, Donald Cameron, N Bates, W Saunders, William Gilbert Rees and Nicholas von Tunzelmann, to the unknown country that lay behind the western mountain ranges, since virtually all the easier pastoral plains country of the South Island had been taken up under licence.

To these remaining mountain lands the determined explorers turned, seeking fulfilment of their dreams of high and dry hills for their sheep.

Exploring men were particularly drawn to the Wakatipu area after seeing maps drawn of the interior by Huruhuru (a Maori who knew the area well), indicating possible grazing land.

A 'chain reaction' happened as each explorer reached the lake and told of its beauty and possible farm land, and inspired others to make the treacherous journey into the interior. This was the case for David McKellar's journey inwards after he was intrigued by stories of the lake from Chubbin's party.

Many of the explorers came to Central Otago after failing to find suitable land elsewhere. Nicholas von Tunzelmann joined the expedition that was making for the Wakatipu area after he toured the North Island and found no land to his liking.

What I believe to be the main reason for these early explorers coming into Lake Wakatipu and her surroundings, is not only the attraction of the lake itself, surrounded by lofty mountains, ideal country for the sheep farmer - these maybe reasons why many of them stayed here; but the men themselves, impelled by their love of adventure and sheer determination to achieve what they set out to do. The mountainous interior and difficulties of the unknown would not have been as inviting to any other men than these.

The backgrounds of the early explorers of the Wakatipu district didn't vary much as they were mostly of the moneyed and respected classes. All had a standard of good, if not advanced, education and most had a military or naval tradition in their family. The determination of these men is illustrated by the difficult conditions through which they journeyed.

The determination of Rees and von Tunzelmann in particular is notable when they became the only two out of a well-equipped party of six to continue on the

search for a way over the Cardrona and to find possible pastoral land, after the group had travelled for six weeks, meeting near tragedy in the Moyneaux River then viewing a disheartening sight of nothing but snow-capped mountains in the direction they were heading. This same determination and courage was displayed by Donald Hay when he paddled a mokihi (flax raft) alone up Lake Wakatipu from the Kingston end and became the first white man to discover the central and northern areas of the lake while facing wild storms and near death.

Most of the explorers were of athletic build and had the capacity to walk long distances, not always with the company of a horse, and face treacherous conditions. Most of them thought nothing of walking the many miles back and forth to Dunedin or Invercargill for supplies or applying for a lease. When von Tunzelmann reached New Zealand, he travelled all over the North Island. As Florence Mackenzie described in 'The Sparkling Waters of Wakatipu' von Tunzelmann had the 'wander-lust. John Chubbin was described as 'an excellent walker and loved travelling'. Rees, as described by G J Griffiths, was 'strapping in build, and a shade short of six feet tall and had also the deep chest of a swimmer and the muscles of an athlete'.

The Wakatipu explorers had youth on their side. Most were around the age of nineteen when they made the Wakatipu journey, Rees was the oldest at the age of 32. And so, most of them would have been ambitious and adventurous, with no obligations such as a family depending on them, to make them think twice about the journeys they made.

The Wakatipu explorers were determined where others were discouraged, they had the ability to handle the arduous journeys, they showed foresight and wisdom towards difficulties and all the time were backed by the driving force that there might be pastoral land between those snow-capped ranges

The difficulties the explorers faced as they made their way around the Wakatipu area, were difficulties that would remain for high country farming for years to come.

The discouraging sight of the precipitous mountains that in places plunged almost straight down into the deep waters, was the deterrent that for many parties stopped them from further advance.

Those, like Donald Hay, Rees and von Tunzelmann, who did continue, were met by harsh weather, wild dogs, rats, fast flowing rivers, fire, injuries and shortage of supplies. The persistent north-west weather which is such a feature of all the southern lakes, created great discouragement for Rees and von Tunzelmann when it held them up for two-three days, when they were trying to sail on a mokihi up the lake.

Because it was impossible or not advisable to travel on foot in many areas around the lake, travelling by raft became imperative. Though, with this form of travelling also came the difficulties of the strong winds, bitter lake temperatures and danger of being washed against rocks. (As Hay found out when he escaped near tragedy when the strong winds blew him towards the rocks at the base of Cecil Peak).

On two occasions, fire nearly cost the lives of explorers, as it spreads so quickly devouring the dry vegetation. Chubbin's party found that immersing themselves and their horses in the cold lake for three hours was the only escape from the flames, while Rees and von Tunzelmann had to out run the fire until the Shotover was between them and the advancing flames.

Vegetation was also a problem for the explorers. When Rees and von Tunzelmann arrived in the area, only about 3 years after Chubbin, the vegetation had already grown back to the same thick, impenetrable state in which it was for Chubbin. Chubbin had described the land in the Kingston area as covered with speargrass and matagouri which made the going difficult. As Rees and von Tunzelmann made their way between Cardrona and Lake Wakatipu they found the going tougher towards Lake Hayes. 'Our trousers from the thigh downward were filled with blood', Rees reported.

The men had to urge their unwilling horses through speargrass and matagouri. Although this vegetation didn't deter the men from their exploration it definitely would have slowed them down, wasting time and provisions. Most of the exploring in the Wakatipu area was done either on foot or on primitive rafts built from natural materials found on the lakeside.

Although most of the men made their way to the district on horseback, at times in their explorations it proved efficient to either guide the horses while they trekked on foot, or to leave the horses in a grassed area and continue without

them. Hay left his horse at Kingston Bay while he set sail on his mokihi; on his return he found the mare had foaled. Rees and von Tunzelmann had to leave their horses hobbled in Queenstown Bay when the hills became too steep and cliffs plunged sheer into the lake. Like Hay, they too decided they would have to take to the lake if they were to make any further progress.

Mokihi proved very useful in transporting men around the lake. For Hay, floating around the lake on a mokihi meant that he was able to cover much more ground than otherwise possible and therefore enabled his discovery of the central and northern arms. For Rees and von Tunzelmann the mokihi enabled them to make slow and laborious progress in the face of the north-west weather that would otherwise have been impossible to make on foot along the precipitous mountain drops.

Not all of the early Wakatipu explorers ended up staying and farming the land they discovered. McKellar, who applied for the Mt Nicholas run, decided the climate was too severe for the safety of his stock and gave the offer to the Hamilton brothers.

Many of the explorers, who had only seen the southern end of the lake, were discouraged from applying for land due to the roughness of the country, but of these parties D A Cameron and A A MacDonald probably penetrated the furthest and secured licences for the gentler southern portion. It was in the land surrounding the northern arms of the lake that the most desirable land was discovered.

Applying for the land in the Wakatipu came with many complications. It was the race to the licence application offices that was the downfall of many hopeful land claimants, as Donald Hay discovered when he applied for the land he had explored in the Wakatipu basin and was told this area had already been spoken for and so returned to Australia in disgust. This is an example of the land speculation that was common during this period. Many of the applicants for pastoral licences had never even seen the land applied for. The land authorities, busy with the orderly settlement of the easier areas, simply did not have the time or the resources to adequately oversee the issue of licences, and often granted them in accord with the information supplied by the applicant, generally with indefinite boundaries.

In my opinion, the common land speculation was a direct result of the strong demand for land that had made the Otago Provincial authorities decide to throw open the unknown lands to public lease. This was done before there was any opportunity to have the ground surveyed, and dozens of prosperous settlers queued up at the land office to pay their deposits on any land available.

Early stocking of the runs, once the applications were accepted, was mandatory, to ensure that land went to genuine pastoralists and not simply to speculators. This, as Dickson Jardine says in his book, 'Shadows on the Hill', meant that the 'men were sorted from the boys' by the requirement, failure involving cancellation of the application and the loss of an often substantial deposit.

The true locations and boundaries of runs applied for, created much confusion because, as the land had not been surveyed, they were not factual and boundary disputes became common. Such as that which was litigated in McKellar v White; a suit which after several hearings in the Supreme and Appeal Courts came to an end without either side being successful, although in Florence Mackenzie's 'Wakatipu Pioneers' it is stated that the Whites went back to Europe wealthy, subject to the outcome of the case. Even when a triangulation survey was finally carried out in the area in 1866, the Kawarau Station's boundaries were not defined and established until 1909.

Getting sheep to the runholds came with many problems so the Waste Land Board became increasingly willing to grant extensions to the time by which runholders had to have their runs stocked. The routes for getting sheep to the lake follow similar if not the same routes as the explorers. Crossing the rivers with stock proved to be a great obstacle and in many cases loss of stock was common, as the usual custom was to swim the sheep and horses across.

The wild dogs that roamed the Wakatipu area became a curse to the vulnerable stock. Another pest was the rats that ate the men's provisions and scuttled about them during the night. Even apart from these difficulties, driving the stock in Otago in those days was a very arduous and difficult job. Weeks would sometimes be consumed in traversing a few miles. It took three months to drive Rees' first mob of 300 sheep to his Wakatipu runs. It was a long and dangerous journey over 200 miles of trackless ranges and valleys, crossing immense and dangerous rivers on three occasions and making use of mountain passes over

4000 ft high. Crossing the Arrow and Frankton flats would have been impossible with sheep had not Rees on his first visit burnt off the scrub which covered these plains.

Life, before the gold rush, for the high country farmer consisted of hard work from daylight to dark, dangers and hardships, lack of accommodation, sometimes shortage of food. This was the period when the runs were just becoming established. Men were just learning about the land they had acquired. The runs were being stocked, make-shift accommodation being built, routes being sought for the movement of stock and supplies. It was a time when the determined men stayed and others gave up.

For some the isolation was too much for them. Bad weather would mean it would be impossible for their produce to be transported out (which was usually done by boat) and supplies wouldn't be able to be transported in.

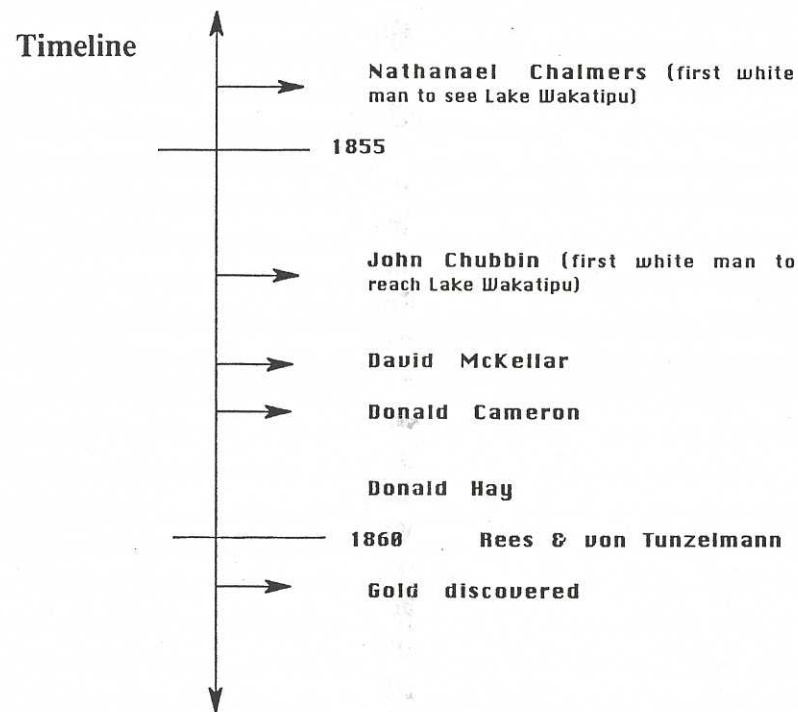
Rees had put a boat on the lake soon after the arrival of his sheep to the Queenstown run which proved a very valuable possession as it assisted as a means of travelling and transporting. The boat also provided a connection between stations. The only other connection between stations in the early days were the pack tracks that led from one block of high country to another. Chains of horses walked, carrying supplies, and sheep were driven over these windy tracks. Although sheep were the main stock brought to the back country cows were also introduced but not favoured for the terrain.

The high country farmer faces much the same problems as farmers lower down, but within his towering acres, battling with the storms that sweep them and the pests that plague them, a style of shepherding was formed that is only similar to that in parts of the British Isles. In this period before gold was discovered, the Runholders were just beginning to experience the problems that they would face in the years to come with the plagues of rats and rabbits, the heavy snowfalls, and cheeky keas that would terrorise the flocks.

When gold was discovered and the miners arrived, farmers had another 'pest' to deal with as sheep stealing became common if stock was not watched intensely.

It was when gold was discovered in the district that station life was disrupted a great deal.

Most of the runs were just beginning to reach stability when gold was discovered on their runs and upset all their plans. Rees had runs No 356 (Queenstown) and No 346 (Glenorchy) stocked and permanent quarters nearing completion when gold was discovered. His run was declared a goldfield and he was awarded \$20,000 compensation. He was forced to move to his Kawarau Falls run, not allowed any right to the Queenstown area.



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Thoughts on a Queenstown Sunset

by Ron Gordon

(now residing in Mosgiel)

I was thinking just last evening of the happy days gone bye
As the sun was slowly sinking where the mountains meet the sky
And I watched the lovely Queenstown being laid to sleep in peace
Then my thoughts turned to the Queenstown that was known to William Rees.

Just a lovely out back station, just a camp beside a stream
That's all there was to Queenstown, a budding squatter's dream.
Then I pictured there before me another evening scene
Of the Queenstown of the gold days when Victoria was Queen.

Beneath the shaded mountains that mainly canvas town
Was busy in the twilight ere the darkness settled down.
The campfire at the tent door in the evening glowing bright
The horses at the chaff box being covered for the night.

A wagon moving slowly beneath a heavy load
Was plodding gaily homeward along the Frankton Road.
The packer with his horses like camels on a string
Had taken stores to Moonlight and returned without a thing.

The last stage of their journey down the earthen streets of old
Past the diggers at the corner talking ways of winning gold.
Then out upon the water was the wonder of her day
The paddle steamer Antrim coming slowly up the bay.

As the last rays of daylight that day was ere to get
Were reflected in that diamond in the mountains' platinum set
I closed the book of history I left this early page
And thanked God for a lovely romance I'd had in a bygone age.

*To What Extent Was Central Otago in the 1860s
a Microcosm of Colonial New Zealand?*

by Rachel Burt

James Hargest High School

*Winner of the William Rees Memorial Essay on Local History.
Awarded by the Queenstown & District Historical Society in 1992.*

Gold was the catalyst in the evolution of Central Otago in the 1860s. Gold accelerated social, economic and political development to such an extent that Central Otago was essentially different to the rest of the country and thus not a microcosm of Colonial New Zealand in the 1860s. These differences were a result of inhospitable terrain and climate, miners' frantic gold lust and brotherhood, the goldfields' demography and living conditions, and the generated prosperity and confidence.

Central Otago was a mountainous, isolated area, with an extreme climate, and would ordinarily have been undesirable as a location for settlement. It provided no natural supplies of food, few fish in the rivers or lakes, few trees to support bird life and no native fauna. New Zealand settlements were invariably on the coast as inhabitants depended on shipping for trade and communication as roads were little more than dirt tracks. Wellington was situated where it was because of its large natural harbour. However the gold in Central Otago drew thousands of people and quickly roads and communication links were developed as necessity dictated. Throughout New Zealand farming was seen as the economic base of the country. Wellington, Nelson, Canterbury and Otago were pastoral provinces whereas small mixed farming was more common in Auckland and Taranaki. Most early settlers' desire was to own and farm land, but in the 1860s Central Otago was seized by gold fever. Although farmers were heavy handed in the early days, eager to exploit a rich soil, they learnt to live with the land and to respect its needs and moods. The miners respected only their own rights.

Unlike the usual New Zealand settlers, the miners had nothing to give, but were only takers and spoilers. In 1848 the Free Church of Scotland adopted Wakefield's ideas and settled immigrants in Dunedin, whose street plan had been drawn up on an Edinburgh model. The Church of England did the same

with Christchurch in 1850, with its classic grid pattern streets, gracious parks and cathedral giving it an English air. But in contrast Central Otago's settlement was haphazard and unplanned. During the 1860s the population in New Zealand steadily rose but in Otago it exploded. The population doubled in a year and the goldfields caused the biggest wave of immigrants to New Zealand. Miners poured in from all over the world - Europe, Australia, America, South Africa and even China in a frantic rush to seize the gold and become rich. Often they were only transitory settlers as their sole intention was to gain as much gold as possible.

In New Zealand there was a new aristocracy developing, the great run holders who mimicked the British gentry in behaviour, but Central Otago was a very egalitarian society, the gold immigrants levelled society. Social distinctions dissolved and equality prevailed, they wore the same uniform of moleskin pants, blue shirt, wide hat and nugget boots. They usually owned little else than their 'swag' - blankets, clothes and their mining equipment.

Women played an important role in the new country as 'Colonial helpmeets' (Dalzeil 1977). They were the homemakers, the educators of children, nurses to the sick, and preservers of social and moral purity. In Auckland in 1864 there were 2.27 males to every one female, but on the goldfields there were approximately five males to every one female. Two thirds of these males were between twenty-one and thirty-nine years old. Such a situation encouraged heavy drinking and prostitution. Central Otago became noted for its wildness with numerous hotels and saloons. Women usually took care of the sick throughout New Zealand, but on the goldfields there were very few women and extremely limited medical services. Many miners died of the frequent diseases caused by the harsh climate, poor sanitation and limited food supplies.

Living costs were very high compared to the rest of New Zealand. Butter cost 15 cents per pound and bread - a four pound loaf - cost 10 cents in Christchurch, but on the goldfields these sold for 35 cents and 50 cents respectively. Most New Zealand families enjoyed a wide and varied diet often from their own farms but miners had to survive on a boring diet like damper, mutton, beef, tea and spirits which often led to malnutrition and scurvy. It was difficult to transport food anywhere round New Zealand, but especially to the miners who often lived in very secluded, remote areas. Suppliers could charge high fees as the miner had little recourse but to pay, or die of starvation. Many New

Zealand settlements struggled with a lack of water supplies. In Christchurch they attempted to dig deep wells, which soon ran dry, but in Central Otago there were numerous lakes and rivers, and often these were dangerous. Many miners and young children drowned or were swept away by floods. By 1860 grand houses or homesteads were being built around the country replacing the earlier raupo huts. However, the miners' shelters were only temporary, usually only a canvas tent or an overhanging rock.

The North Island had been the richest island, but with its land wars of the 1860s and the discovery of gold in Central Otago this changed. Otago became the wealthiest province. In 1861 the total revenue of Otago was £220,000 and the next richest was Canterbury was £145,000. By the end of the 1860s Otago had one quarter of New Zealand's people, provided half of her total exports and had passed Auckland in manufacturing.

Because of its gold, the people in Central Otago were optimistic and progressive. Development was hindered in the North because of the war so Otago took the initiative. Settlers around Auckland wanted the rich lands of Waikato and Taranaki owned by Maoris. The Maoris united under the King movement and in 1863 the fighting began. The war dragged on for 10 years but eventually the Europeans won. In Central Otago though, business was booming, the gold dredge was invented, industries such as brick making and soap manufacturing sprang up. Breweries multiplied to quench the miners' big thirst. Engineering and clothing manufacture started and flour sawmilling became profitable. Christchurch was aided too by the gold, but many of her young men left to try their luck on the goldfields and she had trouble in the late 1860s as a result of overspending/ Auckland was in constant threat of being attacked by the Kingites, and Wellington was adjusting to being the new capital. However, though Otago was the wealthiest province, the miners were very poor and were the largest poverty stricken group in the country. Many families in New Zealand were comfortable and lived well, the miners barely survived. Because Otago was the richest province she had the most power in the General Assembly and her Provincial Council reaped the rewards. It was partly due to this power that the Capital was shifted from Auckland to Wellington so as to be more central and closer to Dunedin/Otago.

Central Otago in the 1960s was a unique settlement leading New Zealand economically and politically. The cosmopolitan miners added variety and

enterprise, the transitory nature of the gold rushes led to haphazard development and only a temporary boom. Although there were a few similarities between Central Otago and other settlements throughout New Zealand, it was largely different. When the effect of the catalyst had dissipated Central Otago became more representative of other New Zealand provinces.

Queenstown in the 1930's Diana Deans (nee Herbert)

Queenstown in the 1930s

by Diana Deans (nee Herbert)

now residing at Katikati, Bay of Plenty

Queenstown, a small town in the mountains, population 1000. It did not seem to be a small town to us, we knew everyone, and exactly where everyone lived, even though street names weren't used much. Just next to 'Joe Bloggs' was a very precise direction to us.

The Primary school (there was no other) was on the corner of Stanley Street and Ballarat Street, opposite the Library, (had to look up the street names!!), and consisted of 3 large classrooms, a teacher's office, a storeroom and connecting passageway and that was it.

One room was for all the primer classes, Miss Fraser being their teacher. Then the middle room was for Standards 1, 2 & 3 with Miss Leslie and later Miss McKinnon as teachers. Miss McKinnon later married Willis Shaw of Arrowtown. We all loved Sally McKinnon and always went to visit her if we were lucky enough to be in Arrowtown. Later a Miss Strang came from Invercargill. The 'big' room was so-called as the senior pupils had that as their classroom - Standards 4, 5 & 6. The Headmaster was their teacher. During my schooling days we had Mr Stuart MacDonald and Mr Sam Barclay (with a wooden leg). Of great interest to us was that wooden leg. Then came Mr Nicol MacDonald, a great football player and so encouraged that game amongst the boys. This would have been from 1930 to 1937.

Playgrounds at the School

The playing areas were neatly divided into 3 areas, one for each room. Infants to the area around the school building, Standards 1, 2 and 3 up on the first level, about 6 steps higher than the Infants, and then up about 20 steps to the larger playground for the seniors. A playshed was at one end for use when it rained. Toilets for all were nearby. What a drag that was on a wet day, worse on a snowy day.

Oh, yes, each classroom was heated by a closed-in stove which was fed voluminous amounts of wood. Then we had water-filled heaters which were along under the windows of each room, fed by hot water from the stoves. I don't remember being cold but I daresay we were some days.

Round about 1937, maybe 1938, a Secondary School was started, with about 12 pupils, in the Boardroom of the County Council. Miss Strang was the teacher. The same Miss Strang we had had some years earlier at the Primary School. A year or so later the school was moved to the Anglican Church Hall. The stage was used as a classroom too, but the main body of the hall was our general classroom for all forms. A large fireplace was lit during the winter months. Mr Fussell, the Anglican minister, allowed us to use an empty room in the Vicarage next to the hall for our typing room. During these 2 or 3 years there would have been only 20-25 pupils drawing in some from the surrounding district and 1 from as far as Kingston, a long way in those days. He only went home at weekends, staying otherwise with an Aunt and Uncle at Frankton.

Then came the exciting day of moving to the Headmaster's old residence, as a lovely new residence had been built above the top playground, on part of Mr Clayton's property. Miss Annie Calder was in charge of the school, but now had an assistant, Mr Stewart Mehaffie. Actually I think he was with us for a year in the Parish Hall. I began my secondary schooling at the Parish Hall under the capable tutorage of Miss Calder, whom we all loved too. When we moved to the Headmaster's old house we thought we were made, with the various rooms being used for different subjects. The ex front bedroom was turned into a typing room, the kitchen a science laboratory, with the lounge used as the general classroom.

Believe it nor not, we did not feel underprivileged in any way by these rather unorthodox schools. We accepted it as normal and were really happy there.

Sport

I don't know much about football and cricket - think the boys were taken to the Recreation Ground for that. The women teachers took the girls for basketball and tennis in the Park, probably only secondary pupils and we all went (walked) to the One Mile for swimming in the lake in the summer. Later we joined in with schools from further afield for winter sports, trips to Cromwell or a weekend trip to Winton.

A highlight in the winter was a heavy fall of snow when the schools would close for several days. Didn't stop us 'townies' from tobogganing down 'Tutuila' hill all day trying to see who could keep going until we reached Horne Creek. It was a great achievement if you could. Also at these times of snow no-one's paddock was out of bounds. Mr Davidson, the butcher, had glorious slopes on his paddocks. All houses are there now. Mr Veint, also a butcher, had paddocks opposite on the Frankton Road but we didn't use those, too steep! But Mr Francois St Omer had just the right amount of slope to his land out the Gorge Road.

Then if the frosts lasted we used the pond in the Park for ice skating. We couldn't use the part near the fountain, or on the far side of the bridge as those parts never froze enough. These winter sports were long before the area became a winter playground for thousands. There was just 'us' there.

New Year's Eve

Everyone gathered, along with visitors, by the Pier. Crackers of all sorts were let off (those awful sand crackers!!), a time to meet old friends, make new ones, singing too, especially as midnight drew near when all joined hands and sang 'Old Lang Syne' over and over. Then First Footing would begin. Some pranks went on too - seats tossed into the lake by the waterfront, gates removed from properties and put behind hedges. One year our front verandah posts were swathed in toilet paper. What a shock next morning when we went out the door and couldn't get off the verandah.

Then as we became teenagers we were allowed to climb Ben Lomond to see the sunrise. That was an ambition of most of us and most of us would have done it several times. Night climbing was better, not so hot, and with a full moon was nearly as light as day. We'd go as far as the hut, light the fire there to boil the billy and then wait until an hour before sunrise. Then came the steepest part

which did take an hour. You haven't lived until you have seen that sunrise twinkle and crackle over the Remarkables.

How many have done the gentle climb to the Waterworks? What a lovely bush walk that was on the lower slopes of Ben Lomond.

Of course, Queenstown Hill was something we climbed so many times, a gentle walk after Ben Lomond. A popular Sunday afternoon outing when we were full of energy and had no-where to go. The echo over the Gorge Road side was always tried out and never failed. There is even a small lake up over the top of Queenstown Hill. Now the houses are built so far up even the Commonage seems to have gone - but what glorious views they must have!!

I don't suppose we thought much of glorious views, those wonderful mountains and that cold, cold lake we happily swam in, but there's one thing I am sure of, Queenstown is one place we will never forget and always love returning to.

List of members 1993

Mr & Mrs L J Ryan P O Box 131, Queenstown
 Mrs M Salter 11 Bay View Road, R.D. 1 Queenstown
 Mrs M Sanders 13B Brisbane St, Queenstown
 Mrs I Scott Rees Valley Stn, Glenorchy, R.D.1 Q'town
 Mrs P Sewhoy Arrow Junction, R.D. 1 Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs W J Sharpe 116 Hallenstein St, Queenstown
 Mr J Shaw P O Box 258, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs N C Simpson P O Box 478 Queenstown
 Mrs S Skinner P O Box 36, Wakatipu, Queenstown
 Mrs J P Skinner 45 Robertson St, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs R S Slater Whitechapel, R.D. 1, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs A T Smeaton 6 Park St, Queenstown
 Miss D & Mr R Smith 52 Panorama Tce, Queenstown
 Mr L F Smith Cabin 41, Q'town Motor Camp, Man St, Q'town
 Mr & Mrs N Smith 13 Stafford St, Arrowtown
 Mr & Mrs W N M Smith 23A Canning St, Gore
 Miss E Smolenski P O Box 821, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs A Snelder 8 Anderson Heights, Queenstown
 Mr C J Speight Lake Hayes, R.D. 1 Queenstown
 Dr & Mrs Stack-Forsyth 5 Larch Court, R.D. 1 Queenstown
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 Mrs M Stark Lake Hayes, R.D. 1 Queenstown
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 Mrs J M Stevens 89 Frankton Road, Queenstown
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 Mrs H Stirling 4 Alamein St, Riverton Rocks, Riverton
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 Mrs I Stringer P O Box 71, Wakatipu, Queenstown
 Mr E A Sturt 68 Ballarat St, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs G F Swan P O Box 362, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs R A Thompson P O Box 91, Queenstown
 Mrs A B Thomson 47 Oregon Drive, R.D. 1 Queenstown
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 Miss L Wilks 54 Oregon Drive, R.D. 1 Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs D B Wilson 56 Panorama Terrace, Queenstown
 Mrs P Wilson 66 Fryer St, Queenstown
 Mrs M Wright P O Box 58, Roxburgh
 Mrs J Young 20A Peninsula St, Queenstown

QUEENSTOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY (INC)

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 Miss M Anderson 25 Como St, Maori Hill, Dunedin
 also 16 Brisbane St Queenstown
 Ashburton Hist. Soc. 248 Cameron St Ashburton
 Mr & Mrs R Austin 171 Fernhill Rd Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs W Baillie 21 Suburb St Queenstown
 Mrs Baird c/-B M Smith 10 Holly Grove, Maungaraki, Lower Hutt
 Miss M Barnard Frankton Court, McBride St, Queenstown
 Mrs E Barnett 8A Caernarvon St Arrowtown
 Mrs M Barrie 38 Norfolk St Arrowtown
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 Mr L Best 122 Pine Ave, Sth Brighton, Christchurch
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 Mr & Mrs P J Chilwell 68 Peninsula St, Queenstown
 Mrs N Chisholm 42 Lake Ave, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs A Cook 6 Thorn Cr. Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs B Cowan 44 Stewart St, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs A J De La Mare 18 Isle St, Queenstown

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 Mrs D Eade 7 Cornwall St, Arrowtown
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 Mrs N Edgar 21 Berkshire St, Arrowtown
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 Mrs H I Grant Coast Road, Karitane
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 Mr & Mrs G B Hamilton Lake Hayes, R D 1, Queenstown
 Mrs K Harbord 38 Lake Ave, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs F M Haworth P O Box 58, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs J D Henderson P O Box 723 Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs G Hensman 10 Peregrine Pl. Queenstown
 Mrs M Hensman Sunset Lane, Queenstown
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 Mrs J Herron 76 McBride St, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs J Hinsen 4 Isle St, Queenstown
 Mr R E Holland 363 Stuart St, Dunedin
 Mrs M Hood 15 Oregon Dr, Kelvin Heights, R.D. 1 Q'town
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 Mr & Mrs W Hutton 26 Cedar Drive R.D. 1 Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs R Iles 1 Stafford St, Arrowtown
 James Hargest High School Layard St, Invercargill
 Mr & Mrs D G Jardine Kelvin Grove, R.D. 1 Queenstown
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 Mrs D Jenkins Four Views Ave, R.D. 1, Queenstown
 Mrs A Johns 3 Thomson St, Arrowtown
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 Mr & Mrs W Jones 20 Brisbane St, Queenstown
 Mrs M Keenan 17 Thomson St, Arrowtown
 Mr & Mrs O S Kennedy 19 Hobart St, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs S Keyse 23 Greenstone Place, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs C R Lewis 7 Veint Cres, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs E H Lewis 46 Man St, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs R E Livingstone 25 York St, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs L McAndrew 12 Malaghan St, Queenstown

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 Mrs W P McDonald Wakatipu Home, Douglas St, R.D.1, Q'town
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 Mr & Mrs A M McKenzie 46 Stewart St, Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs S N McKenzie P O Box 538 Queenstown
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 Mr & Mrs J S Morton 19 Shaw St, Arrowtown
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 Mr & Mrs H J Royds 6 Lake Esplanade, Queenstown
 Mr & Mrs J A Russell 121 Gala St, Invercargill
 Mrs R Russell P O Box 70, Arrowtown
 Mrs V Russell 39 Swinton St, Invercargill
 Mr & Mrs W J Rutherford P O Box 201, Queenstown