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THE LAKE COUNTY PRESS, JULY 20, 1883.

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ALL PERSONS found RABBITING with Dogs or Guns on our Run will be PROSECUTED.

BOYES BROS

Frankton, January 3rd, 1883.

Patronised by their Excellencies

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V.  R.

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QUEENSTOWN,

LAKE WAKATIP, NEW ZEALAND

This Hotel is situated on the margin of Queenstown Bay, and commands

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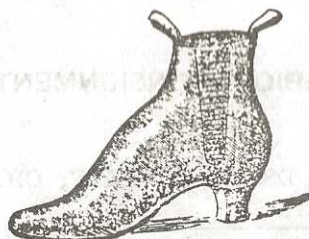
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Vehicles of every kind available for Tourists and others, with thoroughly quiet and staunch horses. Saddle horses can be had at all hours. Terms in this department very liberal.

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Repairs Neatly and Promptly Executed.
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THE undersigned begs to thank the inhabitants of the Wakatip District for the liberal support extended to him since commencing business as a Brewer and hopes to receive a continuance of the same.

J. R.'s Celebrated

"THE QUEENSTOWN COURIER"

The Official Publication of the

QUEENSTOWN AND DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Sixth Issue - May 1971

A SPECIAL LIBRARY EDITION

issued to coincide with the opening of the new Malaghan Wing of the Queenstown Public Library on May 1, 1971

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8

Annual Subscription to the Society - \$2

'COURIER' - included in Subscription price to non-members - 20c.

The Secretary is always pleased to receive suitable stories or material for articles for the 'Courier'.

Officers of the Society for 1970-71:

PRESIDENT	-	Mr Ian Daniel	
SECRETARY	-	Mrs H. H. J. Miller, 21 Hallenstein St.	
Treasurer	-	Mrs J. D. Knowles.	
Committee	-	Mr J. Grant,	Mr L. McCurdie,
		Mrs R. Skinner,	Dr Murray McGeorge
			(since resigned)

President's Message

The Society has great pleasure in being associated with the opening of the Malaghan Library on May 1st, 1971. Its conjunction with the 'Old Stone Library' is a satisfying end product of our efforts to retain the old building as part of the historical backdrop to Queenstown's growing tourist trade and to the cultural requirements of the town.

Our sincere thanks are due to the numerous individuals and organisations who supported our endeavours, and to the Queenstown Borough Council for its consideration of the desires and needs of residents. The result has proved well worth the effort.

Ian Daniel

President

Mayor's Message

As residents of Queenstown, we must always be conscious of its early historical associations, and it is most important to ensure that the more interesting links with the past are preserved.

The provision of the Malaghan Library, through the generosity of the late Mr Len Malaghan, has enabled the Council to provide a most attractive cultural asset for Queenstown, and I am certain that both residents and visitors will gain considerable enjoyment from it.

It has been written that "books are no substitute for living", but they can add immeasurably to its richness. When life is absorbing, books can enhance our sense of significance. When life is difficult, they can give us momentary release from trouble, or a new insight into our problems, or provide the hours of refreshment we need."

In conclusion, congratulations to the Queenstown and District Historical Society for their unspareing efforts to preserve for posterity these fine links with the early history of the Wakatipu.

Warren Cooper

Mayor of Queenstown.

Library Grace Ratcliff

- 3 -

Comment from the Present Librarian -

Mrs Grace Ratcliff

1869 - 1971

It is difficult to realise that the dream of a new Library is shortly to become a reality. While retaining the old, and enjoying the new, we will have the best of both worlds. The outside appearance of the new building has caused many favourable comments. I am sure that the interior will prove equally pleasing. Going up the stair from the old reading room, one will ascend straight into 1971, with it's emphasis on natural light, clear pastel colours, and modern comfortable chairs and fixtures. There will be a well lit corner with books for browsing, magazines, and reference books, where one will be able to spend a quiet hour. In fact, all the amenities that are taken for granted in this day and age.

Up to two years ago, we, and former Librarians were forced to do all 'behind the scenes' work in the library. The 'packing room' was under the table which also served as a desk. Naturally, when packing was in progress, things became somewhat congested, and cartons spilled out on to the floor. If one was unwary, or in a hurry, it was quite within the realms of possibility to take an undignified 'header' over a full carton. The mending and cleaning was another problem, having to be dealt with in 'off duty' hours. When the Council made their old Archive room available to us, with a door through to the Library, a Zip and running water, this was luxury indeed!

After the controversy over the old building had subsided, visitors frequently said, "Arn't you pleased that you are still working in this lovely old room?" We couldn't always agree, but we knew what they meant. There is a certain charm in the old room, but it is like comparing the kitchen of a hundred years ago with the stream-lined affair of today. The former had a certain old world charm, (some of them anyway), but the latter is so bright and functional that I cannot imagine any modern house-wife choosing to retain the old.

In point of fact, we have outgrown the old - it is now too small. Anyone wishing to check on this should drop in on a Friday night between 7 and 8.30 p.m., when it is usually uncomfortably crowded. With the growth of the district, and the increase in visitors, (who make good use of the Library), the issues have naturally increased. They have been steadily climbing at the rate of approximately 1,000 per year, until they now top 21,000, and with Queenstown's expansion, and the increase in tourist traffic, there is no reason to believe that they won't go on increasing at an even greater rate. In January, for instance, this year we issued 2,152 books in 19 working days, and enrolled 56 visitors with temporary membership cards.

The present grant from the Borough Council is, I feel, a generous one, and enables us to keep up a steady supply of new

- 4 -

books, but we would be badly off without the 500 books from Country Library Service continually on our shelves. These are exchanged, except where we feel certain books are still in demand, every three months, when the Field Librarian comes with the Van. This enables us to have, in addition to free fiction, large and expensive books we couldn't otherwise afford out of our buying quota. The C.L.S. is also very generous with loans for young people and children. The request service, too, is of inestimable value to borrowers wanting special information not covered in our Library, and the staff at C.L.S. go to a great deal of trouble to see that the borrower gets what he wants. Sometimes this means borrowing from private Libraries, e.g., Universities etc.

We have a roll of over 400 children and young people under the age of 16 years. To maintain interest, and with the ready co-operation of the teachers, we have the younger children visit the Library at the beginning of each school year, mainly to show them the kind of books we have for them, and to explain a little about Library procedure. This helps to keep the Library alive and relevant for them. The highlight of this year's visit was a tour of the new Library.

There is much to be said in favour of the smaller Library where borrowers become personally known to the Librarians, and their reading tastes can be catered for. One or two generous members show their appreciation of this by giving a yearly gift of new books. This helps in a practical way, and also boosts the morale of the librarians!

The old Library has served the reading public of Queenstown for over a hundred years. I hope that the new one will serve them even better. Personally I cannot imagine Mrs Dunlop or myself getting more enjoyment from our work than we do at present, but it will be done with much greater ease.

Library 1965-1971 QUEENSTOWN LIBRARY - 1965-1971

A resume of the drama of saving the Old Stone Library from demolition and the subsequent events culminating in the new Library Building, written by Mrs A.M. Miller, Secretary of the Historical Society, and present Chairman of the Library and Hall Committee of the Borough Council.

The question of demolition was first mooted in 1963, and in 1965 the Queenstown Borough Council made the decision to replace the Queenstown Library. The Library building was one of the early stone buildings of the goldrush age, and as there had been a shortage of finance at the time the building had been abutted on to the Justice Department building for economy sake. This Atheneum was planned with two rooms and a small central store room. Over the years the rooms have been interchanged, sometimes one being the reading room and the other the actual

library, and then for reasons which were put forward by the librarians of the time, the roles would be changed. Little was done to the building as the years rolled on, and only the charm of the outside remained, and that tarnished somewhat for lack of care. Inside it became hopelessly out of date, and was so neglected as to be almost sordid, cracks showing in the dirty walls, and the dim lighting, high ceiling, grimy windows and shabby furniture made it a depressing and inadequate place to read or work in. The Borough Council decided that renovation was out of the question and the building must go. A vacant section beside the library, which had been known as the Athanaeum Reserve, was rezoned, and it was decided to build new Council Offices combined with the new library. The space made available by the demolition would, except for four feet, be empty. Mr Len Malaghan, who had been brought up in Queenstown and had a deep affection for it, gave £5,000 for the new library, and plans were prepared.

However people were not happy with this decision or the plans. The beauty of the corner with the sunlight filtering through the huge Wellingtonia trees, throwing light and shadow on the stonework of the characteristic old building had won the hearts of people from all over the world.

VOICES BEGAN TO BE RAISED IN PROTEST! The first letter addressed to the Queenstown Borough Council came from the newly formed Queenstown and District Historical Society, the aims of which are as follows:

- 'That we use all in our power to advise concerning the saving of historical aspects of the district.
- 'Preservation and education in all aspects of historical research and interest.'

In the fight that followed the Society stuck strictly to these aims, and their first letter read as follows:

- 'Dear Sir, I have been instructed by the Society to lodge a formal protest with the Queenstown Borough Council regarding the proposed destruction of the present Library Building to make way for the new Council offices.
- 'While this Society realises that the present building is inadequate for the requirements of a Borough Council in a growing community, it is felt that the Library should not be destroyed. Though this building is not as old as the Court, it is nevertheless part of the past history of this town, of which, regrettably, there are so few reminders.
- 'This Society earnestly appeals that due consideration be given to the preservation of this building.'

Signed - F.D. Barnes,
Hon. Secretary.

It was the first letter, but not the last!! The Council appeared to take little notice, and the Historical Society took no further immediate action.

However individual citizens became more and more alarmed, and finally some of them met together in a small room at 'The Old House'

in Beach Street, and formed themselves in to a group, calling themselves 'The Friends of the Old Stone Library', and they took immediate action.

Once a lead was given many people joined the protest, all forces merged to form a strong body to follow up the Historical Society's original protest.

A systematic plan was developed. The first thing was to prove that the library was structurally sound and there was no urgent need to demolish it.

Then alternative plans for a new Library and offices had to be drawn and alternative sites found for these buildings. A financial proposition had to be prepared and put to the Council, so that it could be proved that their needs could still be met without the demolition of the old building. Positive proof had to be offered that the majority of ratepayers were in favour of retention of the old building, for the Council made it clear that it was not interested in the attitude of overseas tourists, visitors, or locals who did not pay rates.

All this was a formidable task for the new and struggling Historical Society, and a lot of midnight oil was burnt. However once the plan of campaign became clear to the public, magnificent support was forthcoming from all sides. The newspapers from all over New Zealand took up the cry for preservation of their own free will, with the exception of the Southland Times which maintained a dignified silence throughout the campaign, except for some fascinating letters to the Editor, both signed and unsigned. The New Zealand Herald, The Auckland Weekly News, the Listener, and many others took up the cudgels for preservation enthusiastically. During the Parliamentary Elections week it rated the front page of the Otago Daily Times three days running! All this and more for a tiny stone building of three walls!!!

Professional assistance was sought by the Society, who employed an architect, a solicitor, and an engineer, all of whom did yeoman service.

All this, of course, cost a great deal of money, and The Evening Star in Dunedin, with the assistance of some dedicated Dunedin residents who loved Queenstown and the library corner, launched a financial campaign to help the Society, who by this time were pitifully short of funds.

The most significant event at this critical stage was that two Councillors and the Borough Architect were won over to the view that the Society should be supported, and these people played a vital part in the eventual result.

The Historic Places Trust, which is the body set up by Government to deal with such thorny matters as those involved with history, had been constantly bombarded with letters from the Society, but had remained noncommittal. Suddenly, out of the blue, the local Historical Society received the news that the Trust were prepared to donate £500 towards the preservation of the Old Library Building. Unfortunately tempers were running high and relations between the Council and the Society were strained

to say the least of it. So it was agreed that it would be more diplomatic to make the money available direct to the Council rather than to the Historical Society, thus giving the Borough Council full say in the matter of restoration etc.

However the Council remained unmoved. The news that the Trust was giving this money, which had the approval of the Minister of Internal Affairs, did not influence it one bit. The Borough Council was still determined on demolition!

So much for diplomacy and a correct and formal approach. A meeting of war was held by the Historical Society and the Friends of the Old Stone Library, and for the first time they agreed to fight with every weapon they could lay their hands on. After all the Aims of the Society say "That we use our power...! Help came from the most unexpected places and usually just when all seemed lost. The greatest moment of all was when a telegram was received from the Maori people in Dunedin which offered to support this move to preserve Culture in Central Otago the Chief said (jokingly) that the Maoris would send a war party from Dunedin to fix things if necessary. In more serious vein he said that Europeans had helped to defend his culture, and it was only right that the Maoris should reciprocate..." "Those of us who are fighting to retain and defend our cultural integrity need to back each other up." A delightful picture appeared on the front page of the Otago Daily Times of this gentleman in war regalia with a Mere in hand, obviously ready to do battle if necessary. This humorous approach in offering support did give us great moral uplift, there hadn't been much to laugh about, and it raised our spirits tremendously.

The Society had made it clear from the outset that it was quite in sympathy with the Council that a new Library was most necessary, but they refused to concede the point that in order to achieve this it was necessary to demolish the old one. It has always adhered to this view and never deviated from it.

On November 15, 1966 a Special Meeting of the Councillors was held, and those in favour of retention fought manfully and achieved an equal vote, but the Mayor dashed all hopes when he used his casting vote in favour of demolition. This controversial move was described in the papers as "a further big setback to those wanting to save the old building". At the same meeting the Council reaffirmed tenders which had already been let, which included the demolition of the old building.

In spite of this seemingly crushing blow the Society refused to admit defeat, the newspapers continued to support them, and they battled on.

A Councillor had made arrangements (unofficial) with the Borough Architect to produce a sketch plan showing that the old library building could be blended with a new one successfully, which would mean that the best of both worlds could be had, but it failed to move the others. Then our two Councillor allies instigated some brilliant manoeuvres and a referendum on the matter was sought and agreed to by the Council.

It had been a long hard battle and both sides were exhausted. There had been some very dramatic moments, perhaps the most notable being the time when a well known and highly qualified engineer had been called to meet the Council to explain the structural position. He had the motors of his private plane warmed up while he waited at Momona Airport for word that the Council had finally agreed to meet him. Meanwhile the Historical Society were asked if IT would pay for the visit if the Council decided not to. The poor demented Secretary hadn't a clue where fees like that were coming from, but basing her answer on faith, agreed. The engineer immediately flew from Dunedin, and some members of the Historical Society were allowed to be present at the interview. (After all it was the Society that was paying!) It was not the most genial of conferences, one member of the Council kept his back to the speaker, while others muttered opinions they considered to be superior. However in spite of these attitudes this competent and highly professional opinion had its effect; and this meeting proved to be a turning point. (And no account for this professional service was ever presented).

The Referendum was set for Saturday, February 11, 1967, and The Society were granted the right to a referee at the vote counting. As more than half the ratepayers live outside the town it depended very much on whether that sector of voters took the trouble to cast postal votes or come specially to record their opinion. The day seemed endless to the organisers of the fight for preservation. They sat despondently around, drinking coffee and bolstering each other up with optimism when they could think of anything which would give them the slightest hope that they would win. They hung around the Borough Office until the Town Clerk came out and announced the result, which was at an hour described in the newspapers as '0.15 a.m.' - a dead hour indeed! The proposal was to demolish the building, and 120 people for this proposal, and 156 people voted against - i.e. to preserve the building. Still to be counted were 286 special votes which, as the newspapers reported, could easily reverse the decision. The suspense was long and very wearing. But victory was at hand, the final result showed an overwhelming opinion in favour of preservation. In fact 175 voted for destruction and 343 for preservation. THE BUILDING WOULD REMAIN.

Six Months Later.

The Otago Daily Times describes "an uneasy six months armistice which followed the bloodless battle of the Queenstown Library".

At this stage the Council started to reassess and organise plans for a new Library. After some difference of opinion a plan was produced by the Borough Architect to use the gift of Mr Malaghan to completely renovate the interior of the Old Building. At this stage Local Body Elections took place and a new Council was elected. This Council disagreed with these proposals for the reason that more area was urgently required for Library purposes, and this plan would not increase the floor space, but would spend all available money inside the old building. So although once more tenders had been let the decision was reversed, and a further and final plan was made which has now been implemented.

This plan was the result of consultation between a local builder, the Librarian, who had travelled to Christchurch to consult there with experts from the Country Library Service, and the Chairman of the Library and Hall Committee. A Library brief was available to them which had been prepared by the Wellington Headquarters of the Country Library Service and previously presented to the Council.

The present library, i.e. the Old Stone Building which had caused such a rumpus, was first redecorated and repaired. A store room was made out of the old dungeon-like archives room, and for the first time in its history running water was laid on - the Librarians could wash their hands, make a cup of tea, and had a work room in which to pack, store, record, and do all the other task which have to be done. The off white paint and gold fittings, new signs and gold and red curtains blended with the newly restored old furniture to create a completely new look, while still maintaining the dignity of the old building which was now 94 years old. The money donated by the Historic Places Trust was used for these improvements and the Trust was pleased with the work carried out. It did not entirely finance the renovations which was partly met by the Council. Thus the increasing pressures on the Library were able to be met while the plans for the new building were prepared and carried out.

The new building had certain difficulties and limitations. The cost was to be within the gift from Mr L. Malaghan for this new modern building, which had to blend with the now well known old stone building without being in any way discordant. It was felt it should also blend with Cecil Peak which stands behind it, and with the Gigantic Sequoia tree which would dominate it. The style of architecture was decided on with these things in mind, and the colour scheme was designed to compliment these natural features.

The Malaghan family increased the gift in order that the front could be faced with natural stone to merge happily with the stone of the last century on the old building. The floor area was worked out so that the building could be repeated again on the spare section, exactly half of which remains for future development. This is the reason for a rather stark wall which is seen as one approaches down Stanley Street, but it will soon have a Virginia Creeper camouflaging it until such time as further development is required, when it can be removed.

Paraplegics have not been forgotten, and it has been a definite policy to make certain that wheelchairs can easily enter the building. These factors meant that the joining of the two buildings was not easy owing to extreme differences in floor levels. However a doorway cut in the massive wall makes a good entrance to the reading room, which will continue in its present role. A pleasing stair gives easy access from the new library down to the reading room.

The present library room, where the books are issued, will become a much needed Council Room and visitors reception and waiting room. Once the books are moved to the new Library the Council will take steps to furnish this room suitably for this purpose.

Many community organisations have taken an interest in the progress towards completion and have made known their desire to present gifts for use in the Library. All will be most welcome as there is never enough finance to meet all needs. In particular the school children have shown great interest and have involved themselves. 'The Picture of the Month' has been displayed in the Library since the renovations, and will be continued in the new building. Some beautiful pictures by local artists have been enjoyed. A dramatic mural has been promised as a gift for the new building.

So we move towards the completion of this stage of a saga which began with those early pioneers of Queenstown who felt the need for literary culture in their rugged mountain settlement, and continued through the days of the slump and the wars, to these more prosperous times, when tourism promises to become the dominant factor in this town's future. Let us hope that development will continue with discrimination, so that the best of the past is preserved to good effect in the present, and goes forward into the future so that subsequent generations can enjoy the results of the labour of their forebears.

Mrs Miller here appends a personal footnote:

I have been personally involved in this fight for what I have always believed is one of the most valuable possessions of this town, - the Library Corner. This little complex of buildings combined with the trees and the bridge make an area of simple charm in what will one day be a highly sophisticated tourist town. So many people of note have enjoyed it, as well as the rest of us who love it, not only because it is part of the past, but for its unique textures and beauties which can never be achieved with modern construction and planting.

Many people played a part in the battle to save the Library, and it was my job to stream their efforts into one channel to create an effective force for preservation, so I feel a personal gratitude towards everyone who so loyally made their contribution to what I believe to be a pleasing result for all concerned. I have gone to great pains in the previous article not to pick out anyone by name. There were so many I could have mentioned, but then there would be so many which I would have had to leave out. All of you who helped will know that I remember your efforts with gratitude and hereby thank you. I hope you find the present joining of the old and new to be rewarding.

May I pay tribute to the late Mr Len Malaghan, the late Mr Rewa Throp, and the late Mr Arthur Milne, all of whom will be remembered for their part in this story.

Mr Len Malaghan was brought up in Queenstown and would often reminisce on earlier days. Success changed him not at all, he remained sensitive to the natural beauty he had known here, and his gift will be a fitting reminder to us and future generations of his love for this town.

Mr Arthur Milne was a staunch ally and joined the fight with

outspoken vigour. He made the hardest move of all when he admitted that he wished to change his opinion and battle towards keeping the fine old building. His support was much appreciated and went a long way towards achieving the present happy situation.... I like to think he would approve and enjoy the new building.

Mr Rewa Throp was a tower of strength throughout the campaign, his kindly concern, and practical assistance always seemed to tide things over when a crisis arose. He showed his confidence in the work of the Historical Society by leaving a bequest. For his sterling effort during the fight for preservation he was made a Life Member of the Society.

Old stone Library

THE OLD STONE LIBRARY

In this section we are presenting material collected about the Old Library - bits and pieces which seem to illuminate its history in one way or another, and we hope our readers will find them interesting and entertaining.

The first article is reproduced from our last issue, as it seems so relevant in this Special Library Number of 'The Courier'.

The New Zealand Historic Places Trust instructed its Research Officer to endeavour to establish the date of construction of the Queenstown Library Building, and the resulting research, though not very conclusive regarding the date of construction, does indicate that controversy over Library building in Queenstown could almost be termed traditional!

Sources of Information:

I have had to rely solely on newspaper references. I had hoped to find the dates recorded somewhere in National Archives, for though the library was originally a private building in a sense, being erected by a committee of the subscribers, the Otago Provincial Government provided the site and part of the finance. Furthermore the library has an interior wall in common with the Queenstown courthouse which is, of course, Crown property.

The courthouse was under construction from November 1875 to September 1876 and its progress is well documented in Otago Provincial Government records. But there is no mention there of how the library was faring on the other side of the party wall. Justice Department records seem to have no references either.

Of the various regional histories I consulted only one referred, and that in an oblique way, to the date of the Library. F.A.P. Mackenzie in 'The Sparkling Waters of Wakatipu' says that the first meeting of the Lake County Council, on 4 January, 1877, took place in the Athenaeum, in Queenstown. The Athenaeum was a common contemporary name for the Library. However, as contemporary newspaper reports on the Council meeting say it took place in the courthouse I had to disregard this date.

Newspaper References:

I examined the Lake Wakatip Mail, Cromwell Argus, Arrow Observer,

Dunstan Times, Otago Daily Times, Illustrated N.Z. Herald and some issues of the Dunedin Evening Star, Southland News and Southland Times for what seemed to be the relevant period, late 1875 to early 1877. I found references indicating that construction started prior to June 1876, continued through the remainder of that year and was completed early in 1877. I shall summarise this evidence then discuss the probable date of commencement, for which I could find no specific references.

On 21 March 1876 the Queenstown correspondent of the Cromwell Argus wrote: "Our Courthouse and Athenaeum are being erected in a most substantial style and will reflect great credit on the architect and inspector of works as well as the contractors." I do not think this proves that the library had started, as the two structures, being contiguous and of similar design, might be referred to as one building.

It definitely started before 1 June however, as is shown by a press report of a court case, Miller v Clark, which was heard on that day. "Mr Miller", said the Lake Wakatip Mail, "is the Government clerk of works and until recently had charge of the Athenaeum building as well as the Courthouse. Mr Burwell, architect, relieved him of this duty last week but he (Miller) contended that he had a right to see certain attached works to the Courthouse properly built in by the defendant (Clark) who is sub-contractor for the building of the Athenaeum. The defendant (Clark) denied he had any right to be there and that his presence near the only doorway in the building was an obstruction to work being properly carried on. A dispute arose between the parties the throwing upon Miller of a bucket of lime was not denied."

More seemly evidence of activity was a progress payment of £100 passed by the Library Committee at its meeting on 12 June.

On at least 4 occasions between July and December 1876 the building was mentioned in the press in terms indicating it was still under construction. The last report, on 26 December, stated it would soon be finished. On 10 January there was a report of a small fire in the library, but this apparently referred to the temporary library premises, not the new building, as one person was reported to have 'rushed downstairs'. This could not have been done in the existing library which is one-storied. On 23 January the library was again referred to as 'drawing towards completion'.

A concert to celebrate the opening of the building was held on 17 March. On 14 May the Library Committee passed an account for the carriage of books and a vote of thanks to those who had helped transfer them to the new building. In July, at the annual general meeting, they congratulated subscribers on the acquisition of 'the handsome and commodious building to which the Library has lately been removed'.

Commencement Date:

The evidence at the court case, particularly the reference to obstructing the only entrance, suggests that the building was fairly well advanced by the last week in May when the quarrel took place. I doubt, however, that it was begun as early as 1875 for the following reasons:

1. On 17 November, 24 November and 9 December it was mentioned in the press that the building had not been started.
2. The contract was probably not signed until after Christmas. On Christmas day there was an emergency meeting of the Library

Committee because the contractor, Mr Campbell, had threatened to withdraw 'in consequence of the difficulty of putting floors into the Court-house hall, the greater portion of which was already erected.' Mr Burwell was called in to sort things out and it was at the next meeting, 10 January, that the signing of the contract was reported.

3. In January, February, March and April the Committee talked about laying a foundation stone. Nothing further was recorded and I understand from Mrs A.M. Miller that there is no foundation stone in the building or at least none recognisable as such. (Mrs Miller is, or was, secretary of the Queenstown and District Historical Society and was very active in the campaign to save the library from demolition. She is now chairman of the Borough Council's Hall and Library Committee).

Conclusion:

The Queenstown Borough Council have been asked to confirm that the building has been used continuously as a library and to advise what information they have on the date of construction. They have not yet replied. I would suggest that unless they supply some contradictory evidence the date 1876-77 be adopted. It is conceivable that Mr Campbell did some preliminary work on the site between 10 December and 31 December 1875 but it is unlikely in the extreme that the Library Committee would be discussing the laying of a foundation stone 4 months later if the work had begun in earnest. In all probability nothing was done until after 10 April - the date when the Committee instructed its secretary to confer with the contractor 'as to securing a suitable place for laying the foundation stone'.

FINANCE: A report of a deputation from the Library Committee to the Borough Council, culled from a report in the Wakatip Mail dated September 22, 1876

Cnr Tully introduced the Rev Mr Jones, Messrs Beetham and Malaghan as a deputation from the Queenstown Public Library. Mr Beetham stated that the object of the deputation was to ascertain whether the sum of \$150 voted by the corporation some time ago towards the Library funds, would yet be paid over to the institution, this the committee were most desirous to ascertain as an offer had been made to finish the new building for a certain sum, the contractor stating that he would be prepared to wait for the amount for which bank interest would in the meantime be charged. The deputation suggested that if the council was not in sufficient funds to pay the whole amount at once, the payment might extend over three years at a rate of £50 per annum. Cnr Crofts considered that want of funds would preclude the council from paying the money in question and there was no probability of there being funds for the purpose during the present financial year. Cnr Clark stated that he looked upon the promise of the former council as binding on the present one and should be regarded as a debt of honour to be discharged as soon as practicable. The library was an institution of great importance to the town as such and should

and should be supported by the corporation. Cnr Tully stated that it was mainly on the promise of assistance from the council that the library committee had entered upon contracts for the erection of the present building. Cnr Haines considered that the council were not bound by the previous promise and being heavily in debt could not pay and moreover he was convinced that the ratepayer would object to their so doing, and proposed:

"That the subject be deferred for a month in order to allow the public an opportunity of expressing an opinion as to the advisability of paying the money!"
Seconded Cnr Crofts.

Cnr Clark proposed as an amendment:

"That the sum of £50 be paid to the library committee on 31st July next as a first payment."

Seconded Cnr Tully

As against the postponement of the question the deputation urged that the matter should be determined at once otherwise in the month the contractor might withdraw his offer and there would be no chance of another tender on such favourable terms. It was also pointed out that the money was not needed at once, in fact it need not be paid until the expiration of the three years, but the interest would be running on. Cnr Crofts in reference to this promise of the amount by a former council said that the sum had been voted at the last meeting of an expiring council and had been arrived at under very hasty circumstances.

On the resolution and amendment being put the resolution was declared carried.

At the OCTOBER COUNCIL MEETING it was moved:

"That the matter be postponed until the end of the Municipal Year."

Mrs GLADYS CARTER.

Gladys Carter

Mrs Carter, who lives in Napier, read of the new Malaghan Library and of the work of the Historical Society in a recent press report, and was kind enough to get in touch with us. The following are some extracts from her letters which interested us, and we hope will appeal to our readers.

"You will be wondering why I am interested in the Historical places in Queenstown. The fact is that my grandfather helped build the Old Library, his name was George Richard Bishop, and he also built the first cottage hospital at Frankton where my mother was born. My grandparents went to Queenstown from Dunedin. They landed from Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada in 1868, grandfather was a stonemason and they moved to Queenstown. You

will find my mother's birth there in the records, Mary Elizabeth Bishop. He also built the stone abutments of the old Bridge at Alexandra. They came back to Dunedin where he built the old stone convent, and several other places in Dunedin. Queenstown is a beautiful place and I admire those who want to preserve the old historical places. You will find what I have said to be true if you look back at the Early Settlers list there.

Grandfather was also a ship builder in Nova Scotia and he came to N.Z. in the Brigantine 'Emulas' in 1868.

I am a widow of two years and today (29th Dec.) is my birthday, I am 76. My parents died years ago, 24 years ago really. I was born at Middlemarch so I am a South Islander and proud of that too. I do hope one day to go to Queenstown to see it all in its beauty, and I do trust you will be able to preserve all the old places for there are so many places being destroyed of their beauty I like beauty and I love my country, I will be interested to hear how you progress with the work.

God bless you. "

In another letter:

"I am not sure just what year Grandfather Bishop came to Queenstown, but he arrive in N.Z. in 1868 and my mother was born on March 1st, 1875, and should she have lived she would have been 96 years old this March, so I should say the Old Library would be getting towards 100 years old. I should think they went to Queenstown between those dates, you see I am 76 years old and when I was a child my grandmother used to tell me tales of their days in Queenstown and the babies she helped to bring into the world. She was the town's midwife in those days and known as 'Granny Bishop' I wish I could send you a photo of my grandparents but the old photos have been burnt.

I was born in Middlemarch on Murray Roberts sheepstation 'Gladbrook', that is how I got my name 'Gladys'. My maiden name was Gladys Lewenston. My father came from Edinburgh of Jewish parents, I was married in Palmerston North 50 years ago to Reginald Leslie Carter."

With all these interesting connections with the area the Historical Society hoped very much that Mrs Carter would be able to take part in the opening of the new Malaghan Library, but.....

"Thank you so much for your very nice letter asking me to be at the opening of the New Library, I would just love to be able to take the trip down to Queenstown and be with you, but unfortunately visitors are coming from Australia. However I have written to my cousin Jim Blatch asking him if he would come in my place, his mother was my mother's sister, so he is a grandson of our grandfather Bishop. I will be so interested to hear all about the function down there, do write and tell me all about it."

THE HALF-WAY YEARS.

We thought it would be interesting to have a report from an earlier librarian, so we contacted Mrs Barbara Lewis, who held the position from 1926-1931, and her story is a startling comparison with today's conditions of work and duty.

Mrs Lewis, then Miss Barbara Dagg, succeeded Mr Harry Upsdale, who died suddenly of a heart attack in the Library in the round backed wooden chair which is still part of the furniture.

Mr Charlie Inglis was Town Clerk, and Barbara was appointed to a newly created position of Assistant Town Clerk and Librarian. Her duties included those of Dog Tax Collector, Secretary to the Cemetery Committee, and Electric Meter Reader, (the Borough Council at that time owned the Power Plant). For all this she received £42 per annum! (The Town Clerk's salary was £156 p.a.).

At this time the Library was where the Reading Room now is, it is the colder of the two rooms as it gets very little sun, and Mrs Lewis cannot recollect ever seeing a fire in the grate, though she sometimes had a small heater.

Her Library duties were quite a tie, to say the least. She unlocked the Reading Room at 9 a.m. and locked it again at 9 p.m. from Monday to Saturday, - on Sunday the hours were 9 a.m. to 5.30 p.m. The Lending Library she attended every evening except Sunday from 7 O'clock to 9. So as Librarian her duties covered seven days of the week, and there was no annual holiday. Fortunately she had a co-operative mother who would do the locking and unlocking when Barbara was otherwise engaged, and sometimes attend during Library hours, and she would take over completely during her daughter's annual fortnight holiday from her Assistant Town Clerk's position. Such a job couldn't have given Barbara much time for leisure and recreation, it wouldn't do for today's working girls!

The Council had very little money to spend on new books, it could afford perhaps twenty a year to add to the considerable original collection of leather bound volumes. The Chairman of the Library Committee insisted that the Librarian should know what was between the covers of every book in the Library, and would quiz her about the stories. Of course she hadn't time to read them all, and naturally resorted to a bit of cheating. She had an ally in one of her subscribers, Mr Bill Powell, who was a tremendous reader, and he would give her a run-down on all the stories, so she could satisfy her Chairman's demands.

With the Library only open at night, country subscribers in town during the day would come into the Office, and Barbara would then oblige them by running round and opening the Library. What an active life she must have led, coping with all these multifarious duties.

Mrs Lewis also reminisced a little about her predecessor as Librarian, Mr Harry Upsdale, who had a little quirk which afforded the townspeople some merriment from time to time.

Mr Upsdale was a very sober, upright man who endeavoured sincerely to avoid such temptations as the demon drink. However human frailty occasionally caught up with him and he would fall from grace. Whereupon black remorse would smite him, to end his sinful life seemed the only expiation, and he would head for the lake. He had a small white fox terrier which, as his master strode purposefully into the water would run frantically up and down the beach barking madly. This would be the well known call to rescue and the locals would head for the scene. By this time Mr Upsdale's short and very broad person would have waded out until the water was up to about his waist, and the sobering chill brought with it a laudable desire to Try Again! He would be standing with his arms stretched above his head, crying 'Help, Help, Help!'

Mr Upsdale was also the Town Cryer, bell and all, but his successor did not inherit this duty, the office was discontinued.

1959

The Librarian's report of twelve years ago makes interesting comparison with today, and also highlights the difficulties of working in the old building before it was renovated.

June 1959.

During the months of April and May and up to the 19th June, the sum of £38.12.11 was collected in fees.

In April a total of 1,183 books were issued and in June up to the 19th, 832 books were issued. There was no record of book issues for May.

The total book issues for the year up to the 31st March were 11,232 plus 212 request books issued.

During the last 3 months 64 books have been added to the library. There are still 18 books to be processed and covers made for them. The processing of books and the making of plastic covers takes quite a lengthy time due to the interruptions etc. and as there is no work room that is the reason that sometimes book covers and cards are spread on the tables and give an untidy appearance. In April we had a visit from the Book van and also the Intermediate books were changed.

A new selection of periodicals has been made and some of these have started to come forward but it will be six months according to the Country Library Service before the new rota for the periodicals will be in full working order.

We have had no copies of the National Geographic Magazine for many months, I understand the subscription was due for renewal at the end of the last year.

If the Council are agreeable, I would like to re-arrange for children's story time in the August term holidays. The suggested times would be 10 to 11 a.m. on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. This story time is the usual thing in other libraries and I think it should be tried here.

Could something please be done about shelving immediately? A

mobile book stand is what is needed. I understand these book-stands are manufactured in a light metal. Some sections of the books are now so congested that they can no longer be sorted or displayed as they should. If some more paper stands were erected in the Reading room the papers on the tables could be moved and leave room for Weekly News and Free Lances etc, and so ease the congestion of periodicals on the Library table. If we had a Proper magazine stand, similar to what is used in the shops the big table could be moved into the reading room, the smaller table that is in good order in the Reading room could be put in the Library and the old table removed. This would mean that there would be more room in the Library and still provide seating for four or five as required in the Standard regulations of Libraries.

The Reading room is still in need of attention as far as cleaning up is concerned. I would be agreeable to assist some weekend in spring cleaning, if the Council could make a decision on what is to be done with the books which as they are, are neither use nor ornament, all the old papers and magazines and also the broken pictures that are still lying on the floor.

The co-op system between Alexandra, Cromwell and Queenstown has now ceased to function, the books from Alexandra have all been returned weeks ago, as I returned their books, but to date there is no sign of the books from Cromwell.

If the outside door could be fixed so that it could be kept shut all the time, it would be a big help in keeping the cold out of the Library and Reading rooms.

During the fortnight I was on holiday the Town Clerk deemed it necessary to go into the Library and have a tidy up, with the result there was confusion over some books that had been shifted. I think that this action was most unnecessary.

EDITORS COMMENT: Frustration obvious but commendably understated!!

To Round off Our Historical Survey

we present

Sequoia gigantea trees of Justice

"THE TREES OF JUSTICE"

One of the features of the Library Corner are the two trees. These giant Sequoia have been called the mightiest of living things by Donald Culross, the wellknown nature writer.

This magnificent specie was first discovered by a miner in 1852. Mr A.T. Dowd was chasing a grizzly bear in Sierra Nevada, and found himself amidst a magnificent stand of giant trees. He was so awe inspired that he forgot the bear! He was in a forest of trees some as tall as 330 feet. In 1853 John Lindley, an English botanist, formally named these mighty conifers 'Wellingtonia Gigantica', after the Duke of Wellington, victor of Waterloo. The Americans were not pleased as the tree had been named by them 'Sequoia Gigantica', in honour of the great Cherokee Chief, Sequoyia. It was proved that this name had been registered some time before in Germany, so Sequoia is the true name.

In the eighteen fifties a disappointed gold seeker named G.H. Woodruff of New York, collected seeds from the cones of the big trees, in an empty snuff box, and paid \$25 to send them east to the nursery firm of Ellwanger and Barry. From these seeds sprang 4,000 tiny trees. They did not sell well in the Eastern States, but in England, where they were retained as Wellingtonias, they sold rapidly. It seems it was the 'in Thing' to have an avenue of these giant trees, and no self respecting wealthy estate owner could afford to be without one. Botanical Gardens, Local Authorities, both in England and on the Continent, demanded them.

It has been estimated that the original BIG TREES are approximately 3,100 years old. They have stood for thirty centuries. Many stop to look and wonder at our own big trees, even though these are saplings compared with their forebears in that forest of the big trees, they cannot fail to impress. People often ask how they came to be planted in this remote spot, Queenstown, dwarfing the small scale buildings with their magnificence.

They were planted by Philip Boulton. He is reported to have been Town Clerk by Sumpter in his book 'In Search of Otago', and County Clerk in Millers book 'Golden Days of Lakes County'. As at one time these offices were combined it is likely that he held both of them. He vowed that every Court House in California had 'Trees of Justice' outside their doors, so that the witnesses could sit in the shade while waiting their turn to be called. Mr Boulton ended his days at the head of the Lake, where there is a fine stand of sequoias to remind us again of the Town Clerk who surely must have had very green fingers.

As for the trees themselves they are a masterpiece of nature. One of their amazing features being that once fairly well matured the bark can be a foot or more thick, and resists fire as asbestos does. The sap is non-resinous and therefore only slightly inflammable. If a specimen is damaged in a forest fire it will begin to heal itself at once, even if it takes hundreds of years to completely repair the wound. The tannic content of the sap has a healing action for humans also. It is highly antiseptic and deadly to fungus spores. In order to reproduce, the trees become loaded with millions of male and female conelets, and showers of greeny gold pollen falls, sometimes onto the snow, for late winter is when the flowering takes place.

The flaky seed produced is so tiny that it takes 3,000 of them to make one ounce. There are from 96 to 304 to each cone, and the cones themselves are small for such a giant tree. They do not mature until the end of the second season, and not till the end of the third at the earliest do they open their scales in dry weather and loose the seed, which drifts a little way from the tree. About 15% of seed has the vitality to germinate. Of a million seeds from a tree perhaps only one is destined to sprout. These trees have little timber value, the wood being very brittle and splits even as the tree is felled.

The trees by the Library have only escaped destruction by 'the skin of their teeth'. In 1923 the Borough Council made the

decision to fell the trees because they suspected they were causing cracks in near by buildings. This decision was voted infamous by some of the rate payers, and they made a loud protest, and an old resident, Mr P.P. Anderson, led a vigorous campaign. The local paper took it up and here follow some of the letters that were printed. The first one is somewhat obscure, whether because of misprints, or because of some topical allusion which has been forgotten, we do not know, but the sarcasm is apparent.

Correspondence from The Lake Wakatipu Mail, Tuesday, August 7, 1923.

Sir, Queenstown Tourist resort has at last reached the unique position of becoming too beautiful. Our City fathers with commendable forethought have decreed that we lose the Wellingtonia trees that enhance the library buildings. Doubtless such a proceeding was the outcome of great concentration, - trees of such age and uniformity must be obliterated. Writing this in dazzling lamp light my eyes dimly discern a geyser of deep blue water careering from a valley caused through trenching the roads and hungrily obliterating the Public Library. Such "cutting" measures do not apparently charm a Town Council.

Should this merit publication I trust our Council will leave us what little forestry we are fortunate to possess, I am, etc, 'Loyal'

and another on the same subject -

Sir, In conversation with a resident of your town this morning I remarked on the beauty of the two large trees near the Public Reading Room. Imagine my surprise when he told me that the Local Borough Council had just decided on cutting down one of the trees as the roots were affecting the building nearby.

I have not the pleasure of knowing personally any of the members of the Council - doubtless they are all honourable men - but I should like as a visitor to your town emphatically protest against such wanton destruction. Queenstown is known throughout New Zealand as a tourist resort of great natural attractions, but judging by such an example of short sighted policy on the part of the council its members do not seem to be proud of the fact.

Many towns would make a song and dance about such a possession of two trees, but familiarity breeds contempt in the case of your local body.

Surely it would be possible by cutting the roots on the side nearest the building to remove the cause of the damage. Anyhow the experiment could be made without too much trouble.

Trusting the trees will still be standing when next I visit Queenstown, I am etc, 'Kelburn'.

Where is record of another correspondent writing under the name 'Woodman Spare that Tree'.

Every town has its practical jokers, and the bright boys of the day put some axes and saws under the tree as if ready to fell it, just to see the effect on Mr Anderson and his fellows. This really upset the townsfolk, and they raised a howl of rage

which finally persuaded the Council to spare the trees. When a Government survey was made in 1966 it was set down that the trees, old stone buildings, and the bridge should be preserved for all time.

In 1931 Philip Boulton wrote to the Town Clerk in Queenstown as follows:

"Regarding the tree in front of the Law Office in Queenstown I planted that in the seventies when Mr J. Malaghan was Mayor (1874-1877), together with the other sequoia gigantea at the Library gate. I happened to have been reading about the American custom of planting such trees in such situations as to afford shelter and seating for attendant witnesses or perhaps others ordered out of Court pro tem, and that the trees were then called 'The trees of Justice'. These trees were raised from seed myself, given to me by Dr Hector who had imported them from California at the time."

As well as being a tree lover Mr Boulton was a man of some wit. This story is still repeated at the Head of the Lake:

While driving some people in a coach Mr Boulton was unfortunate enough to have a spill and the coach flipped over, leaving the occupants and himself sprawled on the ground. Quite unperturbed he turned to his passengers and said, "You should never fall out with the driver".

Obituaries

It is with regret that we record the deaths of three of our supporters, and extend to their families the sympathy of The Queenstown and District Historical Society.

Mr REWA THROP was elected a Life Member of the Society for his continual encouragement and assistance. His legacy to the Society is a measure of his interest in its aims and activities.

Mr ROBERT CHARLES ROBINS was Mayor of Queenstown from 1956-62 and a Councillor of long standing. His extensive knowledge of the history of the district and memory for past events was of great assistance to us, and his help was always generously granted.

Miss Florence Gregory (Tosti) MURRAY was an early member of our Society. She was well known for her interest in New Zealand Historical matters, and this allied with her love for Queenstown, which was her favourite holiday resort, caused her to give her support to this Society from its inception.

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