

**Bringing the Past to the Future**

# THOSE WERE THE DAYS

NEWSLETTER OF THE UPPER CLUTHA HISTORICAL RECORDS SOCIETY INC.

(Upper Clutha includes Cardrona, Albert Town, Luggate, Queensberry, Tarras, Hawea, Makarora, Wanaka and Lakes Wanaka and Hawea)

WINTER 2022 - VOLUME EIGHTEEN

JUNE 2022

## PEG MATHIESON, LIFE MEMBER



*Book Committee member*



*Thanked for her service to UCHRS and WGG  
at farewell afternoon tea in June 2010*



*UCHRS Committee  
Life member*

Mathieson, Rena Margaret (Peg, n e Graham) passed away in Dunedin, on Friday, May 6, 2022; in her 98<sup>th</sup> year. Peg was a founding and life member of both the Upper Clutha Historical Records Society and the Wanaka Genealogical Group. She had a lifelong passion for both Local and Family History.

Peg arrived in Wanaka with her husband Jim in 1984. She soon found she was missing her previous involvement with genealogical and historical societies and decided to do something about it.

In 1985, Peg, in co-operation with Stan Kane helped resurrect the Museum Committee. It had not met since 1979. That same year Peg, with the help of Lyn and Dave Love established the Wanaka Genealogical Group. Both these groups had, as part of their mission, a responsibility to collect and preserve local history. As a result, the Upper Clutha Historical Records Society

(UCHRS) was also formed in 1985 with three representatives from each group on its committee. Peg was appointed as its secretary, a position she held for the next twenty years.

Peg played an important role in the early days of sorting and cataloguing the archival material being collected for the UCHRS. She started the Accessions Register and organised for a stamp to be designed, both still in use today. She also started a Card File which, while no longer used, served us well in the days before digital files.

Peg had a particular interest in houses and organised our first Historical Tour in 1994, "Architecture Past and Present" led by Ashley Muir, Architect with Mason and Wales. She continued to support our Annual Historical Tours over the following 15 years.

In 1996 Peg worked with Denis Schwartz listing houses and trees of importance for the District Scheme and later in 2002 started a file on early houses and buildings in this area.

Peg was on the Book Committee that worked with Rev Irvine Roxburgh to produce "Wanaka and the Surrounding Districts" and in 1993, organised a public lecture by Dr Peter Marshall on "The Disruptions, 1843".

In 2001, with spades in hand, Peg and June Hyde headed to Studholme's Nursery Plaque in the Cardrona Valley to plant daffodils around it. When they are flowering remember Peg.

## **LESLEY BURDON – PASSED AWAY 14 APRIL 2022**

Lesley Burdon of Glen Dene Station also recently passed away. Lesley took part in many community organisations in the Upper Clutha, including being the first woman chairperson the Wanaka Community Board and she served as a Councillor on the Queenstown Lakes District Council for two terms. Other organisations that she served on are too many to list and she contributed much to the area. Our condolences to Jerry and the family.

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – 25 MAY 2022**

The AGM was attended by 14 members and the new committee is:

President	Ken Allan
Secretary	Bruce Foulds
Treasurer	Bruce Foulds

Committee members: Erena barker, Graham Dickson, Pam Kane, Margaret Thomlinson, Kerrie Waterworth, Jo Wilton

A warm welcome is extended to the two new committee members, Erena Barker and Kerrie Waterworth.

## **RETIRING COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

The Society wishes to acknowledge the many years of voluntary service given by David Simmers and Ken Thomlinson. David has given many years of service and acted as both Secretary and Treasurer. Ken has also been with the Society many years and is an invaluable source of local history, especially about land ownership. He is a Past President. Steve Moss was our Secretary last financial year but is unable to continue as Secretary for the present, but hopefully he will be back.

## **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

The annual subscription of \$15-00 per person is now due. Please pay direct to the Society's account 03- 1739 -0012311 – 00 with the reference details "Subs".

Cash payments can be made on Wednesday mornings (9am to 11am) when the Records Room is open but we do prefer payments made by internet banking (less running around!).

Donations are also welcome at anytime, to the same account.

## **POPULATION GROWTH**

How many of you noticed the population figures for Wanaka at the end of an article on the front page of the ODT 22 April? According to Infometrics, the 2021 population of Wanaka was 16,250 (up from 4,840 in 2001 and 9,270 in 2011). It may have just been a "calculated guess" but it demonstrates the growth in the Upper Clutha – fast!

## **LIVING IN THE UPPER CLUTHA IN THE 1880'S – PART ONE**

Have you ever wondered what it was like, living in the Upper Clutha in the late 1800s? Well here is an absolute gem of the memories of Emily Ross n<sup>è</sup>e Elliott, who lived at Queensberry as a child. It is important, as very little has been written about the early history of the Queensberry area. Only the order of a couple of stories has been changed from the original document. Emily passed away aged 97 on 23 January 1978.

What follows has been reproduced from three copies, all different in some small amount of detail, that were created from the narration by Emily, recording her early life in Queensberry. Spellings, grammar and structure are mostly unchanged. The story largely follows the history of the area, only differing by some omissions and interpretation of events as could be expected given the passing of years. Emily truly had a good memory as was acknowledged by her mother.

The footnotes have been added to clarify some items. For example many of the creek names Emily used have changed over the years or as residents arrived and changed the creek name, to their name. One or two creeks have all but disappeared with the passing of time and the effect of farming the land.

# Through the Eyes of a Child

## TALES AND A HISTORY OF QUEENSBERRY AS NARRATED BY EMILY ROSS NÈE ELLIOTT, PROBABLY IN THE EARLY 1970s

### Emily's Story

My name is Emily. I was born at Bannockburn on 23 April 1883, the fourth child of George and Harriet Elliott. When I was five years old, my family shifted to Queensberry. My father worked there as road surfaceman for many years. I went to school at Queensberry and after I left school, I stayed helping my mother until I left at the age of 19 or 20, to work in Alexandra.

I have always had a good memory. Although it is so many years ago now, I can still remember clearly, many of the people who lived at Queensberry and some of the incidents that happened there so long ago. They are only small incidents, but life itself is only a series of small incidents like these.

There were six other families living in Queensberry beside ours. There were two hotels in operation – Woodhouse's Hotel<sup>1</sup> and Holden's Hotel<sup>2</sup>. The latter also ran the Post Office and the stables where the coach horses were changed as it passed through.

The landmarks I remember were – Gravelly Gully, Woodhouse Gully (Kidd's Creek), Mills Gully, (Kings) the Eighteen Mile Creek (Creek beside the school)<sup>3</sup>the Nineteen Mile Creek (beside Smith's) and Poison Creek.

Cobb & Co's coach came from Dunedin two or three times a week, carrying passengers and mail and the returning one passed through the following day. All the supplies came by wagon from the railhead at Lawrence. The wagon which was pulled by an 8-horse team, took a week to travel up from Lawrence. They travelled slowly, delivering all the key supplies to the shops between Lawrence and Pembroke.

My mother and father were married in England and came to New Zealand soon after. They landed at Port Chalmers and came to Bannockburn where an uncle of my Father already lived.

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<sup>1</sup> This refers to the Liverpool Arms Hotel at Kidds Gully.

<sup>2</sup> This refers to what we know as the Queensberry Inn built by Thomas Anderson.

<sup>3</sup> Now called Schoolhouse Creek

Four days after they arrived at Bannockburn, my eldest brother was born on 27 January 1878<sup>4</sup>. A very short time later, the disastrous flood<sup>5</sup> of 1878 occurred. Years later, my mother told us that she and a neighbour went one day to where they could see the river in flood. It was filled with debris of all kinds. She saw tables and chairs and even a baby's cradle swept past. She never forgot that sight.

One incident I remember at Bannockburn was when, with my mother and a neighbour, I watched a funeral procession go by. I was about four years old then and I remember the black plumes above the horse's heads which moved up and down as the horses moved by. The funeral was that of Mrs Angel<sup>6</sup>, the Bannockburn hotel keeper's wife and it was probably going to the Cromwell cemetery.

When my father was appointed road surfaceman by the County<sup>7</sup>, nothing was supplied for him. Before we shifted to Queensberry, he went there and lived in a tent<sup>8</sup> while he built the first two rooms of our house. He built the walls of sod, and the iron for the roof, the windows, and the T & G boards for the floor must have been brought up on the wagon. The windows were the kind with many small panes of glass.

My mother and my four brothers<sup>9</sup> and I came up and we lived in those two rooms while my father built the rest of the house. When it was finished it was a good size but it had no floor coverings except the sacks we used for mats. There was a big fireplace in the kitchen and a kerosene tin and a large kettle on the open fire provided our hot water. We had a camp oven for making bread and doing the cooking. Later on, we got a coal range with a boiler on the side. For fuel we had wood which my father cut and dragged home from on the hill. It was mostly manuka wood.

There had been an old road along the bottom of the hill before we came and I remember playing on the clay banks of the cutting of this old road. The new road went along the other side of our house. At first there were no fences around the property. Later when my father could afford the money and the time, he fenced it in. We had a horse and a cow and kept a pig and hens and some ducks.

My Father was very good at growing plants and he had a very good garden. He also planted fruit trees. We had a large apricot tree which grew very nice apricots; peach, plum and apple trees, currant bushes and gooseberries. The peaches were grown from peach stones. If anyone gave us a peach to eat, we carefully kept the stone and took it home to plant it. The plums had to be grafted as they were useless otherwise. The apple trees came from a Mr Tamblyn who came around taking orders for them.

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<sup>4</sup> William Charles, 27 January 1878

<sup>5</sup> The Great Flood that started about 26 September 1878 and extended for a number of days. It damaged many Upper Clutha settlements

<sup>6</sup> Probably Margaret Angel, aged 55, who was interred on 11 April 1888 in the Cromwell Cemetery

<sup>7</sup> Vincent County Council

<sup>8</sup> He applied for a 10 acre plot adjacent to the road at "Seventeen Mile Creek"

<sup>9</sup> 1888

To begin his work, my father bought a wheelbarrow and a pick and shovel and that was all he had in the beginning. After a while he bought a horse to ride to work and later, a dray. Almost the only wheeled traffic on the road was the coach and the wagon and the road had to be kept in good repair for them. After a storm there was always repair work needed in Gravelly Gully and Mill's Gully and my father would enquire from anyone passing through, the state of the road further on. His work as road surfaceman took him from Lowburn to Alberttown<sup>10</sup>. If he was working near our home, he walked to work. If it was too far to walk, he rode the horse or took the horse and dray.

When he worked in the Alberttown area, he stayed with friends there. His wages were 8/-<sup>11</sup> a day, and he was the highest paid county employee at that time. He worked six days a week. If he was working from home, it would be very late when he got back. He would try to organise his work so that he would be working near home, when there was much work to do in the garden. Sometimes he would tell mother to get the boys to thin the carrots or do other jobs in the garden, when they came home from school. Only in this way could he keep up with the work. He never worked in the garden on Sunday. That was the only day on which he got a rest.

We children always ran to meet father when he was coming home. No matter how tired he was, he always got off the horse and put us up for a ride. Once when he was opening the gate and I was sitting on the horse, it shook itself and it shook me off. That frightened me and I was always a little afraid of horses afterwards. After that I always said I didn't want a ride and held my father's hand instead. Years later, after I left home, I learned to ride properly.

My mother, like all the other women, always wore a long dress that came right down to her ankles. In summer it would be a light material and in winter a heavy material and it would be lined for extra warmth. There were no woollen jerseys or cardigans then. Flannel petticoats provided extra warmth. I can remember one dress which my mother wore on special occasions. It had a frill at the front at the lower edge of the skirt, and right up the front were frills each one of less width until the one at the waist was only a few inches long. Those were the days of small waists and my mother would have her corset laced very tightly when she wore her best clothes. Her hair was so long that she could sit on it and she wore two plaits wound around her head.

There were seven children in our family and I was the middle one. William, Edwin<sup>12</sup>, and Fred<sup>13</sup> were older than me and Robert<sup>14</sup>, Annie<sup>15</sup> and Elizabeth<sup>16</sup> were younger<sup>17</sup>. I remember once that my mother told my eldest brother to go out and meet the coach because Granny Barr was

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<sup>10</sup> An old spelling – now known as Albert Town

<sup>11</sup> Eight shillings is 80 cents in decimal currency. 80 cents in 2021 currency has the buying power of about \$172 so if George worked eight hours, his pay was about \$21.50 per hour. But remember he spent many hours travelling, lived a long way from a settlement like Cromwell and had to provide all his own tools and transport.

<sup>12</sup> BDM records his birthname as William Charles born 27 January 1878

<sup>13</sup> Frederick James born 1881

<sup>14</sup> Robert John born 1887

<sup>15</sup> Harriet Annie born 1889

<sup>16</sup> Elizabeth Mary born 1892

<sup>17</sup> Edwin is named as a brother but cannot be identified on BDM records.

coming on it. My brother's reply was "Huh! Another baby". (Granny Barr was the midwife and lived in Bannockburn). My father woke me the next morning and told me to get up and be very quiet because I might wake my new baby sister. That was when my sister Annie was born. The midwife was always known as "Granny".

My mother must have worked hard with seven of us to bring up. She made all her own bread and the yeast to make it with. We skimmed the cream off the milk and made our own butter too. To make the yeast, my mother would boil some hops in water, with some sugar and salt and mix in a little yeast from the last batch. She strained it and bottled it. She made bread two or three times a week. We had a bucket which was kept especially for making bread in. Mother put in flour and malt then the yeast and warm water. She mixed it all up, covered the bucket with a cloth and some other covers and left it overnight near the range where it was warm. During the night it would rise and in the morning she put it into tins and cooked it. At first she cooked in a camp oven putting embers on the top to make the cooking even. Later on we had a coal range.

Making lunches for my father and children who were going to school needed a lot of bread. We bought our flour in large sacks. When my father was working in the Luggate area, he would bring home a sack of flour in the dray from the flour mill at Luggate. Sometimes if we were out of bread, we children would come home from school for our lunch. It was really too far to walk home and back at lunch time and seldom did it. Sometimes when my father went to Cromwell he would bring home some baker's bread. We liked it because it was a change from the home-made bread.

My mother realised that I had a good memory. When my father was going through his accounts and he asked my mother if she could remember something, she would say, "Ask Emily". Once when I told him some item that he had bought from Cromwell on a certain day, I said, "I can remember because of the lollies that you brought that day. They were Jubes." He usually bought boiled lollies and occasionally 'conversation' lollies. Usually our groceries came on the wagon from Bowies store in Cromwell. They were put off at our gate.

I can remember many times running along the road behind the coach etc. To keep up, we would hang on, but if the horses trotted and went too fast we had to let go.

I am very fortunate that my childhood memories are happy ones. Our parents never raised their voices to us and we were never knocked about. I can remember my Mother telling my brothers to go to bed but they did not go. She would say, "It won't be this in the morning when you have to get up." Finally my father would look up from his paper and say "Boys, you heard what your mother said." Gradually, one by one, they would disappear away to bed.

There were two Chinese miners working in Gravelly Gully. They used to come to our house to buy eggs. Once, my mother sent me out to count out the eggs for them. The price they paid was 2d<sup>18</sup> a dozen!

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<sup>18</sup> Two-pence which in 2022 currency is two cents.

There was a family name Vlietstra living on the road to Luggate. Once when Father was working up there, Mrs Vlietstra offered him some black currants if us children would go up and pick them. Father took us up on his way to work next day. There was a very large patch of currants and we must have got tired of picking them because I remember my brothers running about between the rows. At first I was frightened they would get into trouble, but later I joined in too. Our father picked us up on his way home. We had a meal at Vlietstra's at mid-day. They had a family of two girls and three boys, I think.

A gold dredge was built on the river directly below our place. I went with my family to the launching. I remember Mrs Morris, the wife of the Doctor at Cromwell at the time, hurling the bottle and saying "I christen you, The Maori".



QUEENSBERRY SCHOOL IN 1931<sup>19</sup>

When we arrived at Queensberry there was no school in the district. My three oldest brothers walked up to Andersons and drove from there to the Luggate School with the Anderson children.

My Father set about to collect money to build a school. He collected all around the district and also went to Tarras and Bendigo collecting for it. I think he would have crossed the river in the chair and walked, or perhaps had the loan of a horse to cover the district. When we lived at Bannockburn, he had worked with the miners at Bendigo and he knew them all and the people of Bendigo. I remember a dance being held at Holden's barn also, to raise money. The floor was clear in the middle and the people sat on bags of chaff laid around the walls. They had items as well and my father sang a song.

I started school at Queensberry as soon as it was opened. The first school teacher at Queensberry was Miss Hitchcock. She came from Dunedin and she was there for only a short time. I think she found it too quiet. The next teacher was Miss Wardell (we called her 'Waddle') and she stayed for many years. Her name was Elizabeth Wardell and I think she was one of the

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<sup>19</sup> First named the Wanaka Road School. Opened 1889, a new school built in 1925/6 and the old one demolished. It was added to maybe in the 1950/60s and finally closed in 1964.

first teachers to go through Teachers Training College in Dunedin. Her parents lived on the main street in Cromwell in a house near the bridge on the river side of the street. The door of their house opened right on the footpath. She had a younger sister and brother, Barbara and Joe and sometimes they would stay with her for a few days at Tobin's place.

I remember the first Arbour Day after the school opened, we all planted a tree. My father gave me a little blue-gum tree to plant. I don't know where he got it. He must have grown it himself. He always took an interest in that tree and in later years, he always told me if it was growing well.

I remember also a little cave in a rock on the hill behind the school. It was just big enough to hold two small girls and Alice Holden and I would go there to eat our lunches. The path to it was very narrow and if we had slipped we would have fallen on the rocks below. Agnes Clark sometimes came to the cave with me, but she was bigger and there really wasn't enough room.

There was quite a stream of water in the Eighteen Mile Creek beside the school. Around it and up the gully there were many native trees (as there were also in Mill's Gully). At lunch time we would sometimes eat our lunch in the shade of these trees. It was lovely there beside the stream. Afterwards we would cross the road and throw stones into the pool on the other side and watch the rings made by the stones in the water. We also sailed paper boats under this culvert and watched them come out on the other side. The teacher showed us how to make paper boats. There was a bush growing beside the stream with a supplejack growing on it. It had a flat top and two or three children would sit up in it at lunch time.

We girls always wore dresses to school. In summer they would be made of cotton material and in winter, a heavy material with lining. We would also have a flannel petticoat. We had no jerseys or cardigans in those days. We always wore boots to school, even in summertime. The roads were too rough to go barefoot. My father said I must wear boy's boots to school because girl's boots were lighter and wore out too easily. I was most upset about that at the time. However, when another child taunted me for wearing boy's boots, I retorted that I liked them because I could kick anything I liked. Fortunately they left it at that, because if they persisted I would have thrown stones at them. That was my favourite way of retaliating and I was continually getting into trouble for doing it.

The Anderson children were the only ones that did not walk to school. They drove a horse and a spring cart. There was no horse paddock at the school then and the horse was tied to a fence while they were at school. At playtime or lunchtime it was taken to the creek for a drink. It was fed with chaff in a nosebag.

Miss Wardell left Queensberry after I left school, about 1895. The next teacher was a Miss White.

**Part 2 of Emily's stories** will be in the next Newsletter due on 1 September. I hope you can wait that long!

## **BUSH LICENCES**

Whilst reading through old newspapers, the term “bush licence” was a term that appeared in the early newspapers. A bit of a mystery – at best I knew they related to inns or hotels but no one could tell me exactly what they were. Some belated research has disclosed that the term comes from the Licensing Act 1863. It granted a right (subject to application and a payment of not less than £5) to sell “fermented and spirituous liquors to travellers in remote and thinly populated areas by a keeper of a ‘Common Inn, Ale House, or Victualling House”. The licenseholder had to be resident on the premises, hence the use of the description “householder”. They also had to be situated at least 10 miles from any other house with a bush licence. Accommodation Licences also had to be held if accommodation was to be provided and it is evident that not all applicants were successful, including one or two from the Upper Clutha. At least in the 1860s, the Upper Clutha could be described as “remote and thinly populated”!

## **THE LIVERPOOL ARMS HOTEL MYSTERY**

This hotel was mentioned in the last newsletter. Subsequently, it was discovered that it was built by Francis and Elizabeth Woodhouse down on Section 8, probably near to where Thomas Anderson had built his Way-Side Inn about 1864 in what we now know as Kidds Gully, about 5 km below the Queensberry Inn. Francis had been a gold miner down at Teviot and after fluctuating fortunes, they decided to obtain a Deferred Payment Licence on Section 8 of 320 acres that was previously owned by the well-known Robert Kidd. Robert had owned inns and hotels at Albert Town, Cromwell, and on this property (but it burned down in 1882), Long Valley, and Lake Hawea). I suspect that Section 8 had been taken from Robert as he was neither farming it nor resident on it (a requirement of the issue of the licence) and hadn't paid the lease payments for some time. In June 1888 when Francis and Elizabeth completed the building of their house, they applied for an accommodation licence from the Warden's Court but were declined (probably due to close proximity to the Queensberry Inn). They renamed Kidds Creek to Woodhouse Creek, as occupiers in the area were want to do for any creek crossing their property, and advertised the property for sale, even putting it up for auction (Sept 1889). There were no takers, so they stripped all the iron roofing off the house and went off to Bannockburn where Francis had arranged a lease of the Carrick Range Hotel. Woodhouse Creek returned its name to Kidds Creek. It appears that Robert Kidd had renamed it from an earlier name to his name when he built his hotel there – the Kidds Halfway House.

## THE FIRST “AIRSHIP” TO LAND IN THE UPPER CLUTHA

On 31 May 1921, the first “airship” (aeroplane) to land in the Upper Clutha arrived. It was in charge of Captain Buckley and piloted by Stanley Millard (Both men were experienced pilots from WW1). They had flown up from Cromwell where they had landed on 21 May as part of a tour of Central Otago to demonstrate the value of aircraft as a means of transport. They landed at Pembroke Flat about 12 Noon witnessed by a large crowd which had gathered. In the afternoon, the aircraft was shifted to one of Sir Percy Sargood’s paddocks where “a better landing ground was found.” During the afternoon, three flights with passengers were made (costing a reported 1 guinea each). The next morning, there were a number of persons intending to “go up” but the wind was unfavourable and the aeroplane returned to Alexandra at 10 am. The aircraft was an Avro 504K owned by the New Zealand Aero Transport Company of Timaru. It was an Imperial Gift Aircraft that had arrived in NZ in July/August 1920.

In 1924, Captain Buckley and his mechanic, W Harrington were the first to fly an aircraft over the Sothern Alps, flying from Greymouth to Wigram aerodrome, Christchurch. It was reported that the men were “stiff with cold as they clambered out.” (sourced: Lake County Press 2 June 1921, ODT 17 May 1921 and Ashburton Guardian 5 June 1924)



**Photo of the Avro 504K E4242 at Cromwell Racecourse on 21 May 1921**

**(photo courtesy of the Cromwell Museum)**

## RABBITS IN 1923

This almost qualifies for the usual 100 Years Ago contribution – just one year short! A tape-recording of Charles Norman (1892-1987) talking about some of his memories was found in a box in the Records Room and it proved to have some interesting stories on it.

Back in the 1920s, Charles and his brother Robert boosted their incomes along by killing rabbits and selling the skins (£10 per 100). Charles spoke of a 6-week season up at Mt Albert Station and it taking 9-10 days to prepare for a kill. The rabbits were killed using strychnine and boiled oats. It took them a while to work out the most effective “recipe”, but the successful mixture was 1 ounce of strychnine to 26lb of boiled oats. He described strychnine as being expensive at ten shillings an ounce. First the rabbits had to be “baited” with untreated oats a couple of times before using the “real McCoy”. It was apparently very effective and he spoke of two to three thousand rabbits being strung up on a wire ready for skinning from just one “kill”. He and his brother would start skinning before sunrise and finish after sunset - all 2 - 3,000 in one day! The interviewers worked it out at about 80 to 100 rabbits per hour, each.

For 1923, the returns were very good and the word got around. “Lawyers and doctors were coming up from Dunedin and looking us up for the ‘info’ on how to kill so many rabbits.” Charles’ brother set up what we might call a scam. He would put a teaspoon of cochineal in a small essence bottle and fill it with water and cap it. He would then tell these men seeking out the Norman’s “secrets” that they needed to have this mixture – “You won’t get a rabbit unless you use this stuff!” It sold for ten shillings a bottle. He would take the doctors and lawyers and anyone else interested, out to a small area or island where they knew there were about 50 rabbits living. He would show the prospective customers how to feed out clean oats two or three times for baiting, and then take them out the next day, still promoting his cochineal mixture, and lay the “special bait”, except this time it was his own, with strychnine laced through it. End result was 50 dead rabbits and a steady income! As Charles said, “About effective as pouring a cup of tea on them”.

The full tape has been converted to a computer file so that it can be best saved for the future (and backed up!). Tapes tend to deteriorate over time. The next job is to find someone to listen to the tape and record an abstract (a record in writing) of all that was said. Any volunteers? If so contact Jo Wilton. ([admin@uppercluthahistory.org](mailto:admin@uppercluthahistory.org)) or on 021 104 0405.

## MAPS AND THEIR STORIES BY DAVID SIMMERS

Interestingly in the Society’s collection, is a series of maps retrieved in 2016 from Wanaka Wastebusters - “one man’s trash becomes another man’s treasure” - incorporating the Upper Clutha Region from Cardrona, the Lower Lake Wanaka and Hawea Survey Districts to Tarras, and including both Luggate and Albert Town. The series was requisitioned by the Ministry of Works from the Department of Lands and Survey courtesy of the Surveyor General, to be used

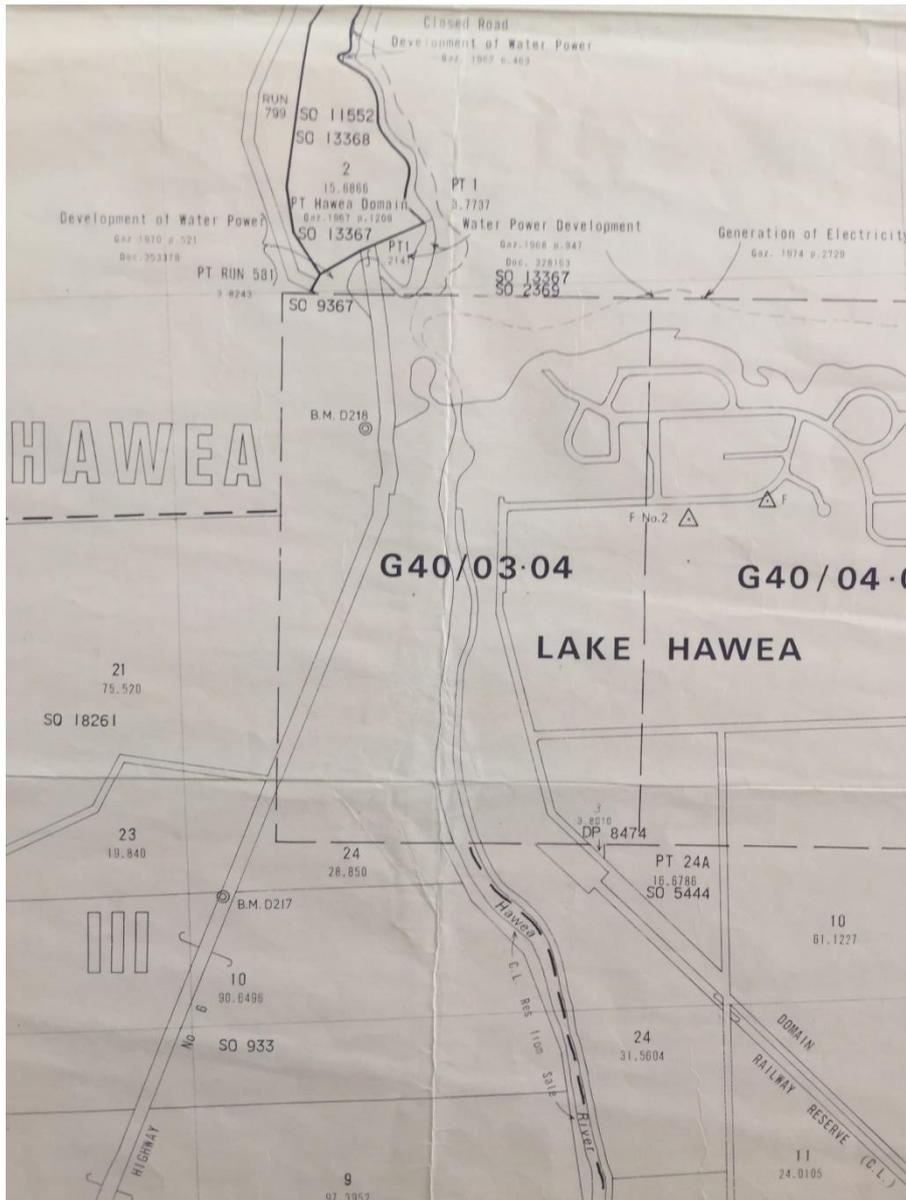
as Working Plans by the Electricity Department, for the purpose of Waterpower Development in the Upper Clutha.

This is a compelling if not frightening story. In the late 1950's a large high dam was proposed at Lowburn effectively flooding the Upper Clutha including rich farmland around Tarras and other areas below Mt Burke, West Wanaka, Makarora, and including Lower Helwick St and Pembroke Park. Until recently, high on Sugar Loaf above the Lowburn dog trial course, a row of stones marked the height of the proposed dam. Under the Land Act 1948 the Department, in order to avoid any large compensation claims in the future, took the precaution of acquiring 26 acres in the middle of the town of Wanaka (part of Pembroke Park). Breathing space was gained however by the completion in 1958 of the Lake Hawea control scheme, thus securing water storage for the Roxburgh dam.

Politics then became an issue. The National Party's Murray Rose was non-committal about Lake Wanaka's future, while Labour's Ian Quigley, gave an assurance that if it became Government, they would introduce the Wanaka Preservation Act. On 2 June 1973, the local citizens formed a group called Hands off Lake Wanaka (HOWL) as a pressure group. In November 1973, the Kirk Government passed the Lake Wanaka Preservation Act and saw the appointment of a Guardians of Lake Wanaka committee whose important task was to guard against any proposal that would interfere with the lake's natural levels. A similar committee was set up in 1979 for Lake Hawea, whose task was to monitor and set minimum lake levels. Further reading on these matters can be obtained in Paul Power's book – *Who Killed the Clutha?*

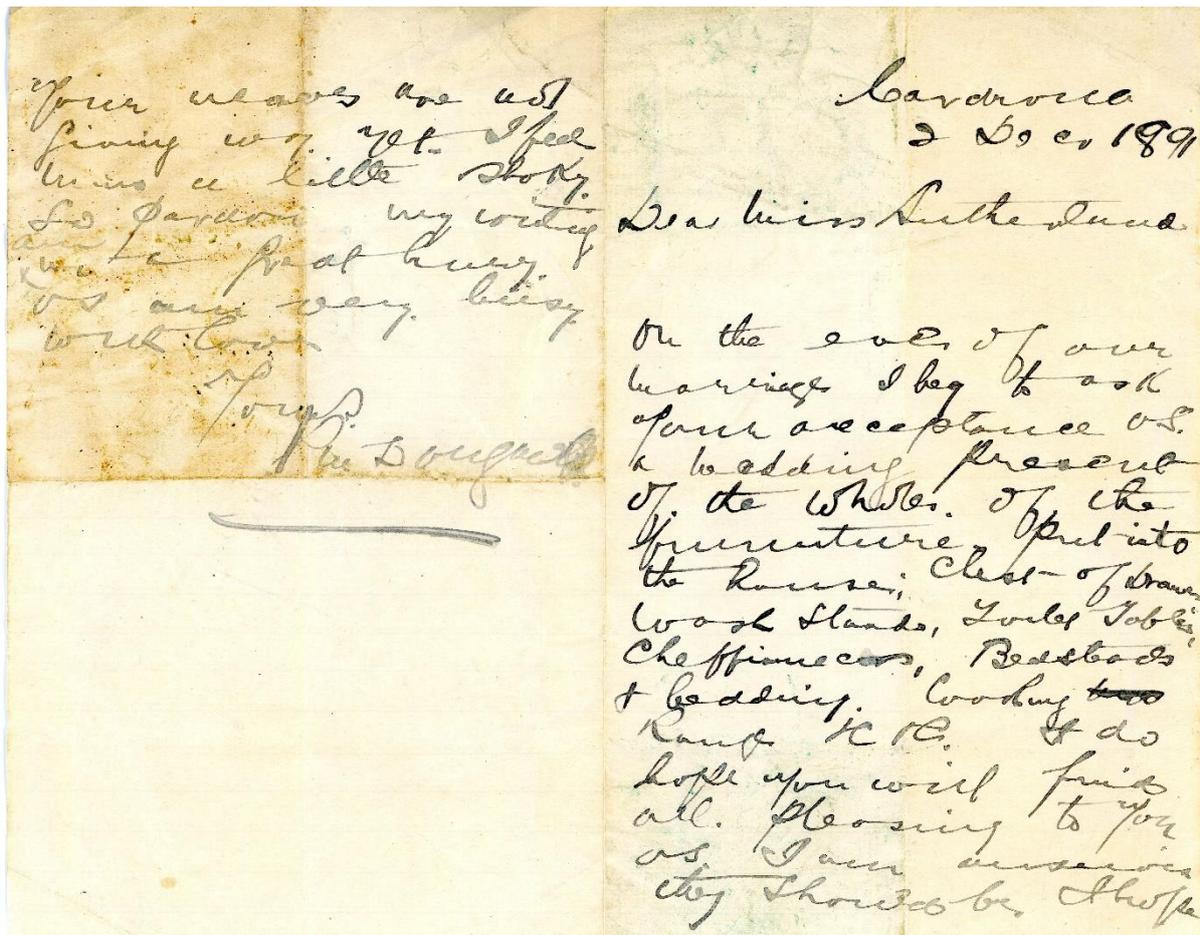
The map segment on the next page of the Lake Hawea outlet area shows that -

- 1) Significant areas along the edges of the Clutha, Hawea and the Cardrona rivers were designated Crown Land and reserved from sale.
- 3) Gold mining plans for the entire Upper Clutha and Cardrona Valleys are noted.
- 4) Much of the Lake Wanaka foreshore became known as 'The Wanaka Islands Domain', was available exclusively for public use, and reserved from sale.
- 5) The map also highlights expected areas of inundation caused by raising the level of the Lake Hawea to varying heights (including the dates when they were first gazetted), from the maximum height - indicated by a solid line to the original lake level - represented by a line of dashes.
- 6) A railway reserve running beside Domain Rd towards Hawea Flat, would indicate that at the time of publishing (1976), the concept of a railway from Cromwell was still being entertained.



## A LETTER ON THE EVE OF HER WEDDING

How many of you received a letter from your spouse to be on the eve of your wedding? I suggest it is a rare event. Well, Christina Sutherland received one from her husband to be, Robert McDougall on 2 December 1890 and it has been preserved all those following years (132 so far).



It reads:

Cardrona

2 Dec., 1891

Dear Miss Sutherland,

On the eve of our marriage I beg to ask your acceptance of a wedding present of the whole of the furniture put in the house; chest of drawers, wash stands, toilet tables, cheffianers (sic), bedsteads and bedding, cooking range etc. I do hope that you will find all pleasing to you as I am anxious they should be. I hope your nerves are not giving way yet. I feel mine a little shaky so pardon my writing as in a great hurry as am very busy.

With love.

Yours

Robt. McDougall

## WHAT WE ARE UP TO AT THE MOMENT

- The Editor has been researching the early history of Queensberry. Did you know that four “accommodation houses” (including the Queensberry Inn) operated on that stretch of road between 1864 and 1888 (but not all at once)?
- Jo has been working with Dennis Pezaro on the Wanaka and Districts Doctors Club records and trying to find the missing first minute book which records details before 1917.
- Jo and Ken have been working on information to update and make corrections to the Website Timeline.
- Scanning our written records into digital files has paused at the moment, due to an illness but if there is someone else out there who can spare a couple of hours (or even just one!) on Wednesday mornings to continue the work, please contact Jo.
- Rev. Catherine Little has just deposited a photo album (photos all named) with many photos of the McDougall family at Cardrona.

## JO'S UPDATE

We welcome Diana Cocks to our active volunteer team who is working with Erena Barker learning the intricacies of our database, that is quite a challenge.

A recent start has been made to complete a review of all our audio records and devising a plan for the way forward. This is one project that will receive a close focus during the coming few months. As mentioned earlier in the Newsletter, many tapes are getting frail and the sound quality is deteriorating. We need to ensure we have digital copies of all tapes and CD's and that they are all accessioned into Past Perfect database. Each tape/cd needs to have a written abstract or transcription of the contents completed – just the job for a winter's day! Any offers to undertake the abstracts or transcriptions will be very welcome.

## RECENT PHOTOS ACQUIRED

Three photos from Catherine Little's recent gift of Cardrona photos:



Cardrona Miners Hall that became St Bridget's Church



Jack McDougall wiring rabbit skins to dry them



Snow in 1918 – On the left is Bob McDougall (grandson of Robert McDougall Snr)

## THANKS

Thanks must be given to the various publications that were the sources of the information in the newsletter. Individuals are too numerous to list but references have been sourced from Paperspast.co.nz, a number of out-of-print publications and the records of the UCHRS.

## OUR PUBLICATIONS

The Society has published a small number of books and booklets over the years.

**Skirt Tales – 100 Historical Stories of Women from the Upper Clutha Area, Central Otago** - \$25. This is the 4<sup>th</sup> time this book has been reprinted. It is available from the Society, and the Wanaka Library. Postage is \$7-50, if required.

**The Sequel** - \$25. A sequel to Skirt Tales. A small number of copies of this book are available from the Society and the Wanaka Library. Postage \$7-50.

**125, Look Alive – 125 Years of Schooling in the Wanaka District** - \$15.00. Available from the Society or the Wanaka Library. Postage is \$7-00, if required.

**The Upper Clutha – 150 Years** - \$5. A short history of the Upper Clutha district. Available from the Society or the Wanaka Library. Postage is \$6-50, if required.

**Courageous and Free** – \$30 -Stories of Upper Clutha WW1 Soldiers and Nurse who died due to war service. This is the second edition. Postage \$7-50.

NZ Post “Bubble Bags” are used to protect the books.

## PHOTOS

Copies of the photographs held in our records can be provided either as a digital file or a printed copy.

Costs are:

### **For individuals:**

Digital file:                 \$10-00

Printed Copy:                \$10-00 plus the cost of printing the image at Kodak, Wanaka.

### **For Non-profit Community organizations:**

There is generally no fee for digital copies but a donation would be welcome. For printed copies, the Community organization will need to pay for the Kodak Wanaka printing cost.

### **For Commercial Organizations:**

The fee is \$30.00 plus the cost of any printed copy.

**Please note** that ownership of the image lies with UCHRS and further copying requires our written approval and possibly an additional negotiated fee.

## **WHO ARE WE?**

**President and Editor:** Ken Allan

**Secretary/Treasurer:** Bruce Foulds

**Committee Members:** Erena Barker, Graham Dickson, Pam Kane, Margaret Thomlinson, Kerrie Waterworth, Jo Wilton.

The Society was established in 1985, Incorporated in 2010, and became a Charity in 2014, to collect and preserve records and images of the history of the Upper Clutha region and make them available to members of the public. The records are held in a special room in the Wanaka Library and a small team of volunteers provides research assistance (appointments are necessary) to members of the public who may be looking for their family history or for persons searching for aspects of NZ history. Copying costs apply.

Please contact a Librarian at the Wanaka Library who will pass on the request or send us an email to [admin@uppercluthahistory.org](mailto:admin@uppercluthahistory.org).

The Society is a Registered Charity. Funding is reliant on the assistance of a variety of community funders and individual gifts. Donations are very welcome, as are new members.

**Donations may be made to our bank account 03-1739-0012311-00 with the reference – Donation. As we are a Registered Charity, donations over \$5 are tax deductible – please ask for a receipt. Please note that the IRD require donor’s full name and full address**

Membership Subscriptions for year ending 31/3/2022 are \$15-00 per person.

**Website:** <http://www.uppercluthahistory.org/>

**Email:** [admin@uppercluthahistory.org](mailto:admin@uppercluthahistory.org)