

HISTORIC PLACES

CENTRAL OTAGO

The Voice of Heritage

HISTORIC PLACES CENTRAL OTAGO

Newsletter

July 2014



A WELCOME TO OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER

Historic Places Central Otago has been in existence for 2 years on July 1 and we are commemorating this milestone with our first newsletter, and you might well say “not before time” but “better late than never”.



Your organisation has been active over those two years in a number of ways. We have had great support on our many heritage tours and on a stone mason's course, and the attendance at our Annual General meetings has been an absolute thrill for the committee.

The committee of eight members is representative of the region at large and meets monthly through summer and winter. Our boundaries are those of the CODC.

Our role is to be a voice for heritage and to create awareness of heritage in our region. We have plenty of heritage to be concerned about in Central Otago and we do not want it to be lost for future generations. This is our sole reason for existence. We also want to enjoy the heritage we have and in the process have fun and fellowship doing it.

We plan well ahead for our heritage tours and have completed seven tours so far encompassing the Nevis Valley, Matakau/Thompsons Gorge, Cambrian/St Bathans, Roxburgh, Naseby, Lindis Valley and the Old Dunstan Road. Your support of these tours makes them a pleasure to organise and we know from the 'thank you' email responses that they are very much appreciated. We plan to continue with these for as long as you wish.

Now to the membership itself. We have almost 60 paid memberships comprising some 100+ people and without your support both financially as members and on tours we couldn't continue to work for heritage. So you are directly contributing to a very worthy cause.

We trust that you will enjoy our newsletter compiled by John Angus and Wendy Browne. We hope that it will inform, promote and justify the importance that we should all place on our past, present and future heritage values.

David White
Chairman – Historic Places Central Otago

BANNOCKBURN HALL SUCCESS

We are sure all of you will have read the many newspaper articles concerning the fate of the Bannockburn Hall over the last 4 years. Some of these have been informative and some confusing. Here is the real version of events as your society has primarily been the saviour of the hall.



The hall was completed in 1911 commemorating the Coronation of George V. It is built of stacked stone with a corrugated roof and a pediment at the front. It has been added to and altered over the years but primarily, is in its 'as-built state'.

The hall is owned by the CODC and is administered by a hall management committee. In 2009 the committee wanted to upgrade the kitchen and toilet facilities. A fairly modest plan was drawn up to achieve this and consent was sought. The cost was in the order of \$250,000. Meanwhile the September earthquake in Christchurch happened and all hell broke loose on building safety. An engineer's report was commissioned by the CODC and this deemed the Hall to only be at 25% of the New Building Standard (2004) and unfit to use for fear of casualties in a moderate to severe earthquake. The minimum standard is 34%. The CODC therefore closed the Hall.

Public meetings were held as to the future of the hall and this is where the plans to renovate the old hall and retain its character were taken over by a plan to demolish it and build a completely new hall costing up to \$1.3 million. The new plan would have seen the old hall completely demolished. *(Continued on p.2)*

COMING UP

HISTORIC PLACES CENTRAL OTAGO ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM will be held at



***Bannockburn Hall,
Hall Road, Bannockburn on
Saturday 13 September 2014 at 2 pm***

Reports and election of officers will be followed by a delicious afternoon tea. Everybody welcome.

SPRING FIELD TRIP

We are planning a shorter field trip (no date set as yet) looking at

Historic Trees in Central Otago

We would welcome your input into this tour. If you can recommend some trees for us to visit please contact David or me, preferably by 1 August with your suggestions.

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Bannockburn Hall cont.

Your regional committee (now HPCO) did not see the Hall going this way and led by David White fought an extremely long and difficult battle against the odds to have the hall re-evaluated by a suitable engineer familiar with restoration of stacked stone structures of a similar period. The comparative examples we used in our case presented to the CODC were Oliver's at Clyde and Butlers Farm at Fruitlands. After two years of constant pressure on the CODC, being subjected to derision at public meetings and several flat refusals to review the desperate situation of the hall, a new report was commissioned from Lou Robinson of Hadley and Robinson. This new report placed the hall at a minimum 80% of NBS (2004). You may well ask how two engineers working under the same building code could arrive at two diametrically opposed results. Whatever conclusion you may draw, the hall can be used again.

We will celebrate the saving of the Bannockburn Hall by holding our Annual General meeting within its treasured walls on Saturday September 13 at 2 pm. It will be a proud moment for us all to share.

NOTABLE TREES IN CENTRAL OTAGO

Did you know that some 26 trees or groups of trees are listed in the CODC District Plan schedule of heritage places and objects as 'notable trees'? The list includes the cypresses at Alexandra Primary School, the Ponderosa pines in Pioneer Park, the Wellingtonias at the bottom of Inniscourt Street in Cromwell (pictured below), the linden trees in Derwent Street in Naseby, the walnut trees in Conroy's Gully Road, the trees around Mitchell's Cottage at Fruitlands, the oak tree at Roxburgh Area School and various rows of poplars.



There is, of course, a story behind many of these trees, as there is behind the fruit trees and rowan trees that mark a former residence, the rows of Lombardy poplars as illustrated below and the stands of walnut trees.



We will explore some of that history in a field trip we are planning with local arborists. It will take place in the spring and will take participants around some of the notable trees as well as other sites where trees are evidence of our heritage. We have a few ideas but you may know of an historic tree near you or one that should be looked at on such a tour, please let us know.

NEW STREET LAMPS FOR NASEBY

On a cold frosty night, May 30th 2014, new and old Naseby residents gathered outside the old Post Office in Derwent Street to celebrate the return of the old street lamps.

The official turning on of these lamps would have been almost as exciting as when power first came to the small township in 1947 and the old kerosene lamps were used no more. Mr W. Jacob was the old lamplighter and made his rounds nightly with a ladder and a can of kerosene putting just enough in each lamp to last till dawn. The lamps cost 15/- a year to maintain and he was paid nine shillings a day for this important work.

It is thanks to 'Naseby Vision', grants and many volunteers that the lamps have been reinstated. A lone piper escorted the official party to the Post Office and amidst great cheers the power lit up the 20 new lamps. Two of them were originals and were dedicated to early families in the district, carrying a plaque of their names. A poem written especially for the occasion by Naseby's poet 'Blue Jeans' (Ross McMillan) was read and then all hurried to the Town Hall to continue the festivities.

Kay Dundass

DISTRICT PLAN SCHEDULE TO BE REVISED

The *CODC District Plan Schedule 19.4: Register of Heritage Buildings, Places, Sites & Objects and Notable Trees* is to be reviewed and revised over the next two years as part of the District Plan review to be completed before 2018. The Central Otago Heritage Trust, which is the lead heritage organisation in developing a heritage strategy for Central Otago has undertaken to review how Schedule 19.4 should be drawn together. Historic Places Central Otago (your organisation) is one of the organisations that make up the COHT and we have undertaken to look at how the heritage schedule is put together and what is suitable for inclusion after developing the appropriate criteria.

A subcommittee of David White (COHT/HPCO), Graye Shattky (COHT), John Angus (HPCO), and Nick Taylor (HPCO) is charged with this task. The committee has had one meeting so far. Our next move is to have a

meeting with Jonathon Howard, the new area manager for Heritage New Zealand in Otago/Southland on 2 July, to see, inter alia, what assistance HNZ might be able to provide. In the meantime Central Otago District Council has asked us put a moratorium on the work until the heritage aspects of the Regional Policy Statement of the Otago Regional Council are completed and the CODC has considered its implication in regard to its heritage responsibilities.

We will advise further progress when we know more precisely how Schedule 19.4 will be expected to uphold the preservation of significant heritage in our region.

David White

CONTACT DETAILS FOR HPCO COMMITTEE AUGUST 2013-2014

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ABOUT THE HPA ORGANISATION AND WHY WE ARE IN EXISTENCE

In one of the more confusing restructurings of government the former Historic Places Trust ceased to exist in June and became more closely tied to government as a Crown Entity, Heritage New Zealand. This made it inappropriate for it to have a branch structure with responsibilities for advocating for heritage related actions that government may not support.

The changes led to the creation of a new organisation, Historic Places Aotearoa, unfettered by the restrictions on the new Crown Entity. Branch members of HPT were encouraged to join Historic Places Aotearoa and in Central Otago the local HPT branch became an independent group, Historic Places Central Otago, affiliated to Historic Places Aotearoa.

What this meant for individuals was well explained in a note to one, understandably-confused, potential member earlier this year:

Now to HPT and HPA. HPT – Historic Places Trust is a Government Crown Entity responsible for administering the Historic Places Act (they changed their name to Heritage New Zealand in April 2014). There was, until June 2012, a Branch committee of HPT in Central Otago until the new Heritage New Zealand Bill came before Parliament. HPA – Historic Places Aotearoa was formed to replace the HPT Branch Committee structure. We are part of HPA but we operate as an independent Incorporated Society in Central Otago through the membership of HPA.

So if you want to be part of the Central Otago Society (HPCO) and enjoy the benefits of tours etc. at discounted rates, support us and have a vote at our AGM, you would join HPA. HPCO run 2 tours every year. We have also organised stone restoration projects and, in general, we are actively involved in establishing better heritage outcomes in Central Otago. We are currently working on establishing an inventory of significant Heritage properties for inclusion in the CODC District Plan.

We work closely with other heritage organisations to promote awareness of Heritage issues. You can however also join Heritage NZ separately and enjoy the benefits of their properties in New Zealand and overseas, discounts at National Trust and English Heritage plus get their magazine. We are two separate organisations but still connect on heritage. Our local membership of HPA is far more active and more numerous than HPT as there is now no local HPT group to be part of. That is why we reformed to actively involve people in local heritage and it is working very well with great support.

David White



THE FUTURE HPA AND HPCO ORGANISATION

Over the next five months we are reviewing the structure and relationship of HPA and the Regional Societies of which Historic Places Central Otago is one of six. Five other regional societies like us exist in Mid Canterbury, Canterbury, Wellington, Hawkes Bay and Tairāwhiti (Gisborne region).

The membership issue is a little confusing as you become a member of HPA but participate in a Regional Society (HPCO). This will, in all inevitability, change in November and you will become a direct member of Historic Place Central Otago with an affiliation through our regional society to the national body, namely HPA.

As you can see HPA is represented in only six regions and there are many more Heritage groups scattered throughout New Zealand. The affiliation process would allow HPA to represent a wider body of heritage and be far more effective. This evaluation process is being conducted by the executive of HPA, through workshops in July in Christchurch and the HPA AGM process in November in Wellington. All our local membership will have the opportunity at our local AGM in September to vote on this process and be part of the decision making process.

We will circularise more information on this when the evaluation process is more formulated and decisive. Whatever transpires we will continue to be as effective an organisation in Central Otago as we have been to date and hopefully a lot more effective nationally.

David White

REPORT ON A FIELD TRIP OVER THE OLD DUNSTAN ROAD TO THE DUNSTAN GOLDFIELDS ON 13 APRIL 2014

On Sunday 13 April over 50 members of HPCO and more than 20 friends and associates travelled over the Old Dunstan Road (ODR) in a fleet of 26 4WD vehicles. The field trip started at Olig Station near Galloway and finished at Clarks Junction on Highway 87.

The objective of the trip was to follow the original route of the road as closely as possible, learn about historical points of interest along the way, experience the terrain and vistas the travellers of 150 years ago experienced, and to understand better the challenges they faced.

Thanks to the knowledge of Mike Floate, David White and others, the knowledge and generosity of the private landholders whose land we crossed, we were able to traverse most of the original course of the road, something not achieved by most trips over the ODR.

The route was set by Mike Floate and David White with the assistance of some of the landholders whose land was crossed. Three reconnaissance trips were made and the route was marked as necessary.

The route picked up the ODR at Olig Station near Galloway, and followed the track, sometimes

uncertain, up to the top of the Raggedy's and then down to the valley floor south of Moa Creek. Our route then went across Webster's Lane to the old Moa Creek Hotel and then up the formed road to the Poolburn Dam and across South Rough Ridge, before dropping steeply down. We followed the true line of the ODR across private land and down a narrow gully rather than the newer formed road to the west until we met the Linnburn Runs Road.

Crossing the road, our route then followed the original ODR over private land, steeply up and across Stonehenge and then down to the Upper Taieri - Paerau Road and on to Valpy's Hotel at the Styx.

From Valpy's the route followed what is more familiar to travellers as the ODR, climbing up onto the Lammermoor Range, sidling to the west of the prominent McPhee's rock before heading south along the Lammermoor summit plateau. We passed to the east of what was the great Moss Swamp, now Loganburn Reservoir, before beginning a long descent to the Deep Stream crossing at Rocklands Station. Our route then went east across the tar sealed road to Clarks Junction. There our traverse of the Old Dunstan Road came to an end.

Looking back to Dunstan
on the way up from Olig
Station

Photo: John Angus





An original section of the road running down from Rough Ridge to Moa Creek *Photo: John Angus*

Some highlights of the trip were:

- A drive past old buildings on Galloway Station as a reminder that the pastoralists Watson and Alexander Shennan preceded the goldminers.
- Following the original road over Orlig Station and seeing the benching and stone culvert work done to make it more passable.
- Noting the prominence of Leaning Rock atop the Dunstons, behind us on our journey but for the miners coming to the Dunstan Fields, a marker of their destination.
- Working out where the original road, now flooded, went at Poolburn Dam.
- Following local run holder Jim Hore down the original and seldom traversed 'track' off Rough Ridge on Linnburn Station to the site of the old Blackball Hotel.
- Seeing the grooves made by wagon and coach wheels in the rock surface of the road as they made their way slowly down from Stonehenge. The rear wheels were chained so they could not

turn and thus could act as brakes as they skidded over the rock.

- Lunch at the Styx with its set of buildings including the 'gaol', primarily used as a secure lock up for the gold carried by the gold escorts staying there on their journey to Dunedin.
- Experiencing the sorts of conditions that many miners must have faced as we drove up onto the Lammermoor plateau: low cloud shrouding Mc Phee's Rock, a cold dampness in the air, and the mist coming and going and creating murky and limited viability.
- The knowledgeable and informative commentaries provided by Grahame Sydney at various stops en route, and at our lunchtime stop at Valpy's Hotel.



Heading up Stonehenge

Photo: John Angus

THANKYOU

Support from the following people was essential to the success of the field trip and we would like to thank them.

- *David White, Jeni Steele and Mike Floate for identifying and laying out the route*
- *Grahame Sydney for commentaries*
- *Jim Hore for guiding us off Rough Ridge on the original ODR*
- *The Odrig, Idavale, Linnburn and Stonehenge landowners for permitting us to cross their land*
- *Helena Heydelaar for being 'tail end Charlie'*

Grooves in the road surface formed by the locked wheels of coaches and wagons

Photo: John Angus





Grahame Sydney talking at lunch at the Styx in front of Valpy's Hotel

Photo: John Angus

All in all, the Old Dunstan Road field trip was an outstanding success. Many of those taking part expressed their appreciation to us,. Commentator Grahame Sydney was enthusiastic and the society gained several new members.

The participants had the privilege of travelling a route much closer to the Old Dunstan Road than that open to general members of the public.

We already have suggestions that we do it again in a year or two!

John Angus



Fireplace in the Styx Gaol

Photo: John Angus