

## 2019 TALK SERIES PROGRAMME

**Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> April, Seminar Room, Hocken Library**

**Refreshments at 5.15pm; Talk to follow:**

**Life on the Otago goldfields - Insights from recent excavations in Lawrence.**

The presenters are Prof. Hallie Buckley and Dr Charlotte King (Department of Anatomy, University of Otago) and Dr Peter Petchey (Southern Archaeology Ltd and Department of Archaeology, University of Otago).

**Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> June, Seminar Room, Hocken Library**

In connection with the 150th Anniversary of the foundation of the University of Otago. Dr Warwick Brunton, Honorary Senior Lecturer, Department of Preventive and Social Medicine will be the speaker, his subject being:

'If we have been extinguished, yet there rise a thousand beacons from the sparks we bore' - An Antipodean Appreciation of William Lauder Lindsay (1829-1880) and the establishment of the Otago Medical School.'

---

### FRIENDS OF THE HOCKEN COLLECTIONS RESEARCH PROJECT 2020

To mark the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016, the Friends of the Hocken Collections offered an award of NZ\$10,000 to support a research project on some aspect of the historical development of culture and society in Aotearoa/New Zealand, primarily using the resources of the Hocken Collections. Joint winners of the Anniversary Award (for work carried out in 2017) were Laurence Fearnley and Paul Hersey, and their book, *To the Mountains: A Collection of NZ Alpine Writing*, was the very pleasing result.

As the anniversary Award competition attracted a wide range of applications – for many eminently fundable projects in which the Hocken Collections' resources were of vital or key importance – the Friends' executive committee resolved to continue to offer The Friends of the Hocken Collections Research Award as funding permits.

The intended outcomes of the 2020 Award are creatively open for project applicants to develop and propose. Both collaborative and singular applications are welcome, and salient aspects such as medium, genre, scope, and purpose are prescription and proscription-free.

The Closing Date of applications for an award to be held in the calendar year 2020 is 18 October 2019. Application documentation will be available on the Friends of the Hocken Collections website – <https://hockenfriends.org.nz/> – from 1 July.)

Applicants will be advised of the competition result by 29 November 2019.

---

### WIKIPEDIA

Everybody uses Wikipedia, and anybody can edit it. This month New Zealand's own Wikipedian-at-Large, Dr Mike Dickison, will teach you how to assess the reliability of an article, fix mistakes, and speak about what we in New Zealand can do to improve Wikipedia's coverage of us.

Hosted by the Department of Physiology, the University of Otago, and the Otago Museum, there will be a gathering at Ombrellos Kitchen and Bar, 10 Clarendon St, Dunedin, on April 30<sup>th</sup> at 5.30pm. **Admission:** Free

## A BUSY HUB

### LAWRENCE – MID-APRIL 1869

There aren't too many reminders of the Lawrence of 150 years ago still standing. One of these, however, is the Wardens' Court, standing on Colonsay Street, and registered as a category 2 historic place by the NZHPT. It was built of brick and local stone in 1867 to the design of R.A. Lawson. Peter Entwistle described it as a single storey, Italianate building with a T plan, the stem of the T being a forward reach terminating in a porch. There are rusticated pilasters. 'Considering it is not a very large building it succeeds in achieving a suitable dignity with limited means.'



Warden's Court, Lawrence

When the later court house was built along the road the Wardens' Court moved there and the building became the Post Office. It later passed into private ownership. That porch had its purposes, the most obvious being to provide a measure of protection for the considerable number of people who had business to do inside. Though its title suggests a quite specific task, by 1869 the building had become the focal point for an extraordinarily wide range of official activities. The Government surveyors had their offices here. As did Major Edward Croker, a farmer from Tokomairiro, who had been appointed Warden in 1861, and had accumulated a variety of other responsibilities. As a Local J.P. he was also the Resident Magistrate, hearing both criminal and civil suits. He issued licences for the conduct of retail and wholesale business, for the sale of alcohol, and for saloons that offered facilities for gambling, or for billiards and bagatelle. He was the Registrar of Births, Deaths and Marriages, and the Returning Officer – being the 'final arbiter in just about everything.' In 1869, however, all this came to an end for him when he was declared bankrupt, and his place taken by Mr W.L. Simpson.

Apart from the diggers from Gabriels Gully, Wetherstones and Evans Flat, and from Waipori to Beaumont, with their claims and counter claims, there must have always been a

host of people to-ing and fro-ing in the vicinity of the Warden's Court, wanting the ear of the Warden. Lawrence was quite literally, in the 1860s, the hub of the Tuapeka Goldfields.

This account looks at the centre of Lawrence – the rectangle outlined by Whitehaven St., Ross Place, Peel and Colonsay Streets. Along the Whitehaven St/Ross Place thoroughfare passed much of the considerable traffic between Dunedin and Central Otago. This is where the crowds gathered – to shop, to meet, to catch up on the latest gossip, or just to see what was going on.

What might have been happening in mid-April 1869?

Let's start with the weather. During the week ending April 10<sup>th</sup> it was, according to the *Tuapeka Times*, 'entirely changeable.' There had been a slight frost on the Tuesday, but on Thursday and Friday it was 'almost sultry.' For the editor this appeared to 'presage that winter had not yet begun.'

Probably the most important event in the daily routine of the township (now with its Mayor and Council) was the arrival of the daily Cobb and Co coach from Dunedin. J.T. Chaplin & Co of Dunedin managed the business, and their South-Western service ran a daily coach from their headquarters at the corner of High and Princes Streets. The fare was £1.5.0. The coach left at 7.30am, and all being well, reached Lawrence about 6pm – weather permitting – and it didn't always permit in winter. Its arrival, presumably at Cobb & Co's Commercial Hotel, was 'one of the great events of the day' when the citizenry gathered in Ross Place in large numbers, according to an *Otago Daily Times* correspondent. Not so much to greet the passengers, of whom there might be 25 or so, as to get their parcels and their copy of the Dunedin newspaper.

Where the Commercial Hotel stood isn't noted in the advertising, but most likely at the initial centre of Lawrence – the junction where Ross Place intersects with Peel St and the road to Gabriel's Gully. The photograph shows a substantial building on the northern side. Peel St was the site of the Post Office, for example, a busy place, open six days a week from 9am till 5pm, and even on Sundays. The mail for Dunedin (via Waitahuna, Glenore and Tokomairiro) closed at 8 am; daily deliveries to Blue Spur and Wetherstones, on Tuesdays to Clyde, and on Friday to Tapanui. Mr H.W. Barber, the Postmaster and Telegraphist, must have been a very busy man, and a person of significance within the community.

Also on Peel St was the business of Jonas Harrop, chemist and druggist. He had come to Lawrence in the early days of the gold rush, initially involved in more than one retail business. He was the town's source of proprietary brand

medicines in 1862, and though not professionally qualified his advertising claimed that the grandly named Medical Hall, provided 'preparations from the New British Pharmacopeia'. Some of his stock, like Holloway's Pills and Dinneford's Milk of Magnesia, household names nationally, for decades. He was certainly a public-spirited man, as J.P., Mayor of Lawrence, and as committee and board member.

Along the road was Monteagle House, Dr Ebenezer Halley's home. His principal task was as Superintendent of the Hospital in Harrington Street, but those who needed no more than a consultation, or a free vaccination, could arrange to meet him at Ross Place. He was quite a remarkable man, and on the occasion of his early death tributes were paid to him for his exceptional gifts as a surgeon. Goldfield accidents were an everyday occurrence, and many of them required major repairs. One might wonder, as an aside, whether any of the good doctor's visitors discussed astronomy with him – he was a great-nephew of Edward Halley of comet fame.

There were several hotels at Ross Place. They tended to come and go, in terms of their ownership, and even their name. But while there may not have been so many thirsty miners in 1869 that way of life was firmly established. About this time you could choose between the Ross Place Hotel, the Masonic, the Shamrock, the Victoria, and the Commercial Hotel, owned by Horace Bastings, the Lawrence Mayor in 1869. This later hotel was the booking-office for the Cobb and Co. Of course there was more to these hotels than the bar – there were travellers to be fed, there were horses to be stabled, and there were horses to be hired.



Lawrence in 1870

But for the *Otago Daily Times* correspondent, the hotels were not the most imposing buildings on Ross Place. The article made it clear that the finest structure there was the business premises of Herbert and Co., wholesalers and retailers. Edward Herbert was another prominent businessman who, as mayor, councillor and committee-member gave much time to the improvement of his town. Living near the eastern entrance to it he was responsible for the planting of the memorable tree-lined avenue that until fairly recently welcomed visitors from Dunedin. His new shop, opened early in 1869, sold general merchandise. However, his regular advertisement in the

*Tuapeka Times*, particularly emphasised the drapery department, 'replete with a choice selection of goods suitable for the season.' The McKinley family were associated with this business, and it is worth noting that through that connection the archives of Herbert & Co were deposited with the Hocken Collections.

The list of shops and businesses in this part of Lawrence is extensive. There were at least two places for dining – the Tuapeka Dining Room, and the Café de Paris which promised to supply those travelling by the various coaches with a cup of coffee before starting. It had a room for those wanting to play chess or draughts, and a reading-room. There was a saddler, a boot and shoe-maker, and a watch-maker jeweller. There was Mr Anthony Brough the itinerating lawyer, the only member of the legal profession in the whole Dunstan area. The list goes on – suffice to say that Lawrence was a busy and growing town. The newspaper was proud to give as evidence of this growth the fact that a new ginger-beer and soda water manufactory was in the process of building.

On a slightly more serious side there was the Athenaeum, founded in 1865. Its library (the largest in the Province) and its meeting hall (holding over 500 people) was a very busy centre for the people of the area. There were 'Sixpenny Readings' every week, and this was where the Brass band practised. Even the somewhat patronising *Otago Daily Times* correspondent spoke of the band as if it were something of a feature. Hocken Collections has Richard Hay's memories of that time – and for him the band filled his life, as seems to have been the case for many of his boyhood contemporaries in the 1860s.

Finally it's Sunday. Colonsay St comes to life because that's where the three principal congregations gather to worship. There was the Presbyterian at the corner of Peel Streets, the brick and timber Wesleyan chapel, shortly to move to Whitehaven St because its section had been incorrectly surveyed, and the Catholic church, an iron structure also soon to be replaced. There was no Anglican church yet - they met in either the Wesleyan church or school room. While national statistics are not much of a guide, using one known local statistic might suggest that at least 200 or so walked to church each Sunday.

Lawrence was no longer the large centre it had been at the height of the gold-rush, but it was a bustling community-minded place. Its local world was changing, and it was busy planning for the future.



The death of Ray, in his 90<sup>th</sup> year, brought to an end a long and extraordinarily creative life, and one that benefited the Hocken Collections at many levels. Much of his contribution was made behind the scenes. For that he was made a Hocken Fellow in 2000, having been first associated with the Hocken Library Committee as far back as 1971, when he was part of the Department of Geography with a special interest in and responsibility for historical geography.

His first enthusiasm was maps, and he was personally responsible for hundreds of maps being added to the Hocken Collection, and always fighting for them to be both properly housed and available for use. Ray accompanied this work with such bibliographies as: *Maps of NZ Appearing in British Parliamentary Papers*, *Maps in NZ Provincial Council Papers*, *Nineteenth Century Otago and Southland Maps* and others, all issued over the Hocken Library imprint. He joined up with Terry Hearn to produce the 'Victorian New Zealand' reprint series from 1976 onwards.

He was a foundation member of the Friends and served on the Committee from 1991-1996. He was responsible for producing our Bulletins on maps, surveying, the NZ Wars, genealogy, transport, and 'The Demon Drink'. Much of his research was undertaken with the help of his wife Cleone. At the time of his retirement in 1991 the Department published a festschrift – *Southern Landscapes: Essays in Honour of Bill Brockie and Ray Hargeaves*.

In retirement Ray continued writing, contributing vivid recreations of Dunedin's local history: *The Top of the Hill*, *Straphangers and Grips*, and *Barmaids, Billiards, Nobblers & Rat-Pits*. And he continued in other ways to research the history of Roslyn and the development of the Town Belt. Ray's was a very productive life, and Hocken Collections has been a major beneficiary. As with his colleague Peter Holland, he will be missed, though his contribution to the Collections remains a living memorial.

[The Hocken Blog](#) is always worth a visit. By a coincidence a recent entry, researched and written by Jennie Henderson, Hocken Collections Assistant, is on the subject of surveying, something not too far removed from maps. With her permission I am summarising one aspect of the very early development of Dunedin.

'As a researcher, the promise of what *might* be hiding in a primary source can be irresistible. Primary sources can convey a sense of time, place, and personality like nothing else. There is a great satisfaction that comes from connecting the dots between sources and watching a narrative rise up from your research.' Jennie's topic, 'Surveyors and surveying', introduced her to John Reid and Sons, a firm of surveyors. Their business records – contracts, diaries, plans, and correspondence - are in the Hocken Archives. One of their employees, John Cunningham, worked for them in the early 1880s. Reading through his diaries, for example, gave Jennie a sense of just how busy urban surveyors were – working on several jobs at a time, travelling considerable distances, juggling the vagaries of the weather and the field/office requirements of their job.

Slowly, a narrative emerged – of surveyors working six days a week to meet the needs of an expanding city, of a town opening up to new construction, of the changing shape of Dunedin, of the influence of religious interest groups in deciding the layout of the town – of many interconnected factors. One of the biggest challenges with researching primary material is to know when to stop. As Jennie found, there is always further digging to be done. Go to the blog and find out why - <https://blogs.otago.ac.nz/thehockenblog/>.

#### **FOHC MEMBERSHIP**

*Subscriptions: Individual: \$30 per annum; Life Member \$250 Joint: \$30 per annum; Joint Life Member \$300*

*Cheques to: Friends of the Hocken Collections. Online payment: Westpac 03 0903 0393175 000 - "Subscription" in Particulars field, surname/initials in Code/ Reference fields.*

*Prepared by Donald Phillipps for the Friends of the Hocken Collections P.O.Box 6336, Dunedin North 9059 - [donaldphillipps@gmail.com](mailto:donaldphillipps@gmail.com)*