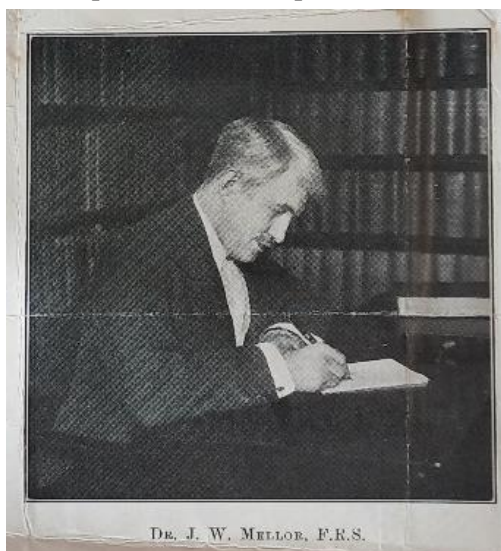


Flotsam & Jetsam No. 101, August 2023.

The Mellor Connection,
or Joseph's "Boss" and her "Joe."
*155 YEARS SINCE THE BIRTH OF
DUNEDIN'S FAMOUS CHEMIST.*

Joseph William Mellor CBE FRS (1869–1938) was an English chemist and an authority on ceramics who grew up in New Zealand.

Joseph William Mellor was born in Lindley, Huddersfield, England, in 1869. He moved to New Zealand with his family in 1879 and settled in Kaiapoi, where he attended Kaiapoi School. During his two years in Canterbury, he worked at the Kaiapoi Woollen Company. The family moved to Dunedin in 1881 where he went to Linden School (now Kaikorai School) in the suburb of Kaikorai Valley. The family was too poor to send Joseph to



Dr Joseph Mellor at work.

secondary school, but he continued to study in his spare time and undertook self-initiated study at King Edward Technical College. Mellor graduated from the University of Otago

in 1898. He won a scholarship to study for a research degree at the University of Manchester.

Mellor never returned to New Zealand, although he kept in contact with relatives there and represented the country as a governor of Imperial College, London. After his three years at Manchester, he based himself in north Staffordshire where he carried out research in the local industry, ceramics. In 1910 the separate towns which make up Stoke-on-Trent federated, and a decision was made to build a technical college, which opened in 1914 with Mellor as Principal. The college specialised in ceramics and mining: it was provided with a ceramics library by the Carnegie UK Trust.



The former technical college, Stoke, now part of Staffordshire University.

During the First World War Mellor's research was directed towards refractories, high-temperature ceramics relevant to the steel industry and thus the war effort. Although offered a peerage for his contribution towards the war effort, Mellor turned it down saying that he had freely given his scientific knowledge to help his country because ill-

health prevented him joining the army and fighting in France.

Mellor's publications include a sixteen-volume work published in 1922, entitled *A Comprehensive Treatise on Inorganic and Theoretical Chemistry*. He dedicated this work "to the Privates in the Great Army of Workers in Chemistry: Their Names Have Been Forgotten, Their Works Remain."

Mellor retained a boyish sense of humour all his life, and he was dubbed by colleagues the 'Peter Pan of Ceramics'. He was also a skilled cartoonist and his *Uncle Joe's Nonsense* (1934) contains a collection of humorous stories illustrated with clever pen sketches.



*Emma Cranwell Mellor (nee Bakes), called "Boss" by husband Joseph.*¹

Most notable is that in 1927 Mellor became only the second person to be elected to the Royal Society for work related to ceramics, the first having been Josiah Wedgwood in the eighteenth century. He was appointed a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 1938 New Year Honours.¹

¹ Wikipedia
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Joseph_Mellor

Emma Bakes and her family lived at Clark St (now Stanley St), Barrfield, Mornington, Dunedin.

Emma was an organist for the Mornington Wesleyan (Methodist) Church and respected music teacher.

She was born in Grantham, Lincolnshire, England and died in Putney Hospital, London on the 11th of December 1961. She was widowed since the death of her husband, Joe in 1938.

They married in 1900 in the Mornington Wesleyan Church. That church was on a corner section below the present church, at 31 Whitby Street. It is now the site of the old parsonage .

The late respected writer and teacher, Charles Croot, in his book, *Dunedin Churches Past and Present*, detailed the history of the three Mornington Methodist churches.² Emma Bates played the pipe organ in the first Methodist church building on the lower side of Whitby Street. By the time she and Joe were married, the first church, a wooden structure, had become too small to accommodate the parishioners of the burgeoning parish. In 1905, across the street and on higher ground, a new and substantial brick church was constructed, designed by renowned architect J L Salmond. By this time Joe and his "Boss" had departed for Manchester in England to take up his post-doctoral research degree.

Charles Croot made the singular observation that "Outstanding music has been a feature of the Mornington congregation for generations, and in recent times has had the valuable services of Professor Colin Gibson, composer of a large number of ecumenical hymns that are used throughout Australasia."³

There is a connection between Joseph Mellor and the present Mornington Methodist Church – Dr. Rex Weavers BSc (Hons) 1969, PhD (Chemistry) 1971 who was a senior lecturer in the University of Otago Chemistry Department

² Charles Croot, *Dunedin Churches Past and Present*, Otago Settlers' Association, Inc, Dunedin, 1999, Section 14.1, pp.168-169.

³ *Ibid*, p.169.

at one time held a “Mellor Post-Doctoral Fellowship” and is now a Methodist Lay Preacher based at the Mornington Church. And, just by the way, Charles Croot was a member of the same Mornington Methodist Church for a time in the 1950s.

‘ESTABLISHMENT’ A PUBLIC READING EVENT AND RESEARCH PROJECT DESCRIPTION

Event Title: *Establishment*

Date/Time: Saturday 7th October 2023 at 2pm (duration approx. 90 mins).

Venue: Seminar Room, Hocken Collections, Anzac Avenue.

Event Type: New play reading.

Admission: FREE

‘Food is our common ground, a universal experience.’ – James Beard (chef and cookbook author)

Establishment is a series of monologues researched and written by playwright and dramaturg Dr Emily Duncan, which explore and celebrate a range of 20th century food venues and the people who dined and worked there. This project is made possible by the [Friends of the Hocken Collections Award 2022](#). In addition to the Hocken Collections, Dr Duncan has consulted Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, the McNab Room at Dunedin Public Library, and the National Library.

Establishment is to be presented as part of the [Ōtepoti Dunedin Southern Heritage Festival 2023](#) programme in conjunction with the Friends of the Hocken Collections, the Hocken Collections, and Ōtepoti Theatre Lab.

Christopher de Hamel Public Lecture

Wednesday 16 August at 5.30pm.

Medieval Manuscripts in Dunedin in the 1960s. Venue: Dunningham Suite, Dunedin Public Library.

• Talk Series - 2023

When?	Topic / group
2 nd September 2023 (Saturday) – Deed of Trust anniversary	Sarah Gallagher – <i>Hotere studio</i> Venue – Port Chalmers Town Hall complex Lunch – Carey’s Bay Hotel Optional site visit – for members Hotere studio
5 th – 15 th October Dunedin Heritage Festival 7 th October 2023 Saturday - 2pm	Emily Duncan’s presentation of: ESTABLISHMENT Hocken Library – Seminar Room (is booked)
15 th November 2023	AGM @5.30pm FOHC Chair Report and Report of the Hocken Librarian. Then a Talk Series @ 6.15pm <u>Speaker:</u> Alan Roddick, will speak on Charles Brasch 50 years on from his death – primarily as a poet, but also as a diarist, as a collector and benefactor.

Plans are in place for the 2023 programme of talks and activities. Do check our website for information: see www.hockenfriends.org.nz

Funding of the Friends of the Hocken Collections Award

The Friends of the Hocken Collections Inc. is currently fundraising for the \$10,000 needed for the Award described above. If you would like to make a donation towards this, you may do so online, by direct credit transfer, to **WESTPAC Bank 03 0903 0393175 000**. (Please use [your surname] as Reference and “Award” as Code.)
FOHCs Charities’ Commission number: CC20114.

If making a donation to this account in-person at a Westpac Bank branch, please advise the Friends Treasurer, Carol Melville, of your contact and deposit details.

Current exhibition

Bev Moon : *Fortune*

Saturday 12 August – Saturday 21 October 2023.

A family feast lovingly made from knitted wool will be revealed when the exhibition *Fortune* by Bev Moon opens on Saturday 12 August at Hocken Collections. Moon's work is exhibited alongside archival material from the Hocken Collections and New Zealand Chinese Heritage Research Charitable Trust. Auckland-based artist Bev Moon (Cantonese, Taishanese) explores cultural constructs through drawing, sculpture, painting, and textiles.



Receipts will be provided.

With any donation-related queries, please contact Carol on 021 617 466 or email carolmelville@xtra.co.nz

FOHC MEMBERSHIP

Subscriptions for 2022-2023: Individuals: \$30 per annum; Family: \$35 pa; Students: \$10 pa; Life: \$300; Life (Joint): \$350 pa; for Corporate Sponsor rates, please contact Carol Melville carol.melville@xtra.co.nz
NB these increases in subscriptions applied from 1 July 2022.

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