

*Flotsam and Jetsam Number 97: September 2022*

**In view of the recent death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 8 September at 5.30pm some changes have been made to the material presented for this edition. Editor G F Davis.**



Source: [townandcountrymag.com](http://townandcountrymag.com)

Many of you will have been following the television coverage of the preparations for and State Funeral of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II on 19 September 2022.

It was a commemorative occasion of great note. Not only did her reign span greater than any other English monarch, but it was the nature of the reign and the person of the monarch which created such affection for her and her family, both within the United Kingdom and far further abroad. She left a legacy of what it means to be “The Good Prince” in a period of twentieth and twenty-first century change and turmoil.



Source [businessinsider.com](http://businessinsider.com)

As was stated many times before and during the funeral, three pillars formed the centrepiece of her reign: family, Church and service. Early at the beginning of the reign she committed herself to a lifetime of service on behalf of the nation and Commonwealth. Indeed it became clear as she moved through the years that this was to become her modus operandi for the relationship of the Crown with others.



Source: [britannica.com](http://britannica.com)

On a personal level she inspired others, not from a lofty position of power as had been the habit of the past, but by a close and personal contact with all sorts of people. She was passionately interested in her own royal world but also in the whole variety of human achievements beyond the palace.

In truth, she was the epitome of a woman for all seasons.

## Speedy trials and tribulations



### **Professor Robert Jack, University of Otago physicist, early researcher in radio transmission**

Photo Early 1940s, N Z Ministry of Culture and Heritage

The first radio transmission in New Zealand, which came out of an Otago University lab 100 years ago, headed by Professor Robert Jack, who was the Head of the Physics Department.

Together with some of his students he constructed a small transmitter with parts imported from Britain to create the first successful transmission on 17 November 1921.

Professor Jack was a legend, and without him, Radio Dunedin may not have come into being, at least not so early

Under the heading ‘Imperial Wireless Chain’ the *Poverty Bay Herald* announced in August 1921 that a great change was to hit the world. Professor Jack, who at the physics department of the University of Otago had been experimenting with aerials, valves, coils (for tuning different lengths of wireless waves) reported he could hear wireless broadcasting stations in Norway, Denmark and Holland. He boldly stated that one nation was well behind the times: Britain, the Motherland. This was because that nation had contracts with large telegraphic cable companies.

He also reported that the new French transmission stations such as Paris Central which began on 9 January 1921 with three machines of 500 Kw power each could be easily picked up in New Zealand by an amateur listener with a small receiver and a small outside aerial. He, with others heard the famous heavyweight title fight between Jack Dempsey and Georges Carpentier held on 2 July 1921. The fight was

successfully broadcast an hour after it finished at 7am New Zealand time.<sup>1</sup>

In October 1921 Professor Jack was appointed Chairman of the OU Professorial Board. He was held in very high regard by his peers.<sup>2</sup>

By November Prof Jack reflected on USA President Harding’s inaugural broadcast message “girdling [around] the world” and foretold a day when people of all sorts would “Chat around the world” by radio telephony.<sup>3</sup>

His prediction was not foolish, but based on sound experimentation and a keen eye to the recent developments overseas

Then telegraphy is not telephony. To-day Mr Massey can be spoken to by President Harding as a business man in Bluff can be spoken to by his agent in Auckland. Soon—no one knows how soon—they will be able to speak as the grocer in Stafford Street speaks to his customer in Otipua Road. Already we can speak across a Continent. It can no longer be doubted that we shall one day chatter round the world.

By January 1922 criticism arose when the Postmaster General wrote to the Minister of Internal Affairs, Hon. W Downie Stewart about a delay to the issuing of a broadcasting licence which had been caused by Professor Jack. Postmaster General Coates stated he had already given “25 times the power “to broadcast than would normally be given to UK transmitting stations. Also Prof Jack was to notify the Dunedin district engineer of his intention to broadcast signals. And as well, while Jack requested a wavelength that was also used by commercial shipping traffic for a strictly limited time, this was disallowed by Coates.

This was a uncomfortable setback in the progress for the newly born project of Dunedin transmission. However, by late February 1922 the experiments continued and transmitted messages could be heard at a distance of 800 miles in New Zealand. Citizens with receivers heard the broadcasts in Auckland, Gisborne and Hamilton. Prof. Jack then released the times and wavelengths he would broadcast on – Saturdays 8-10pm on a 1000 meter wavelength.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Poverty Bay Herald*, 31 August 1921, p.2.

<sup>2</sup> *Otago Daily Times*, 19 October 1921, P.6.

<sup>3</sup> *Timaru Herald*, 9 November 1921, 6

<sup>4</sup> *Ashburton Guardian*, 17 February 1922, p.4.

## NEW ZEALAND SUCCESSES.

### VOICES FROM TOKYO,

Jack was not afraid of plainly stating the challenges and successes in the newspaper. When Postmaster General Hon J G Coates had taken issue with his criticism that the PMG's department was "Too bureaucratic and showed incompetence" in refusing to allow 500 watts power for transmission and that enough time had to be allowed for Wellington [government officials] to be informed. As Jack reported the issues were settled following "public discussion."

In the same news column the matter of amateurs being allowed to transmit was raised. Jack's response was that overseas – mostly America, amateur broadcasters were of great help in times of emergency and that a recent experiment showed that even low powered transmitters could be heard clearly at great distance with the appropriate receiving equipment. He quoted the case of a 1Kw (one and one-third Horsepower transmitted successfully from coastal America and was received at Ardrossan on the west coast of Scotland. In the US amateurs were allowed to use between 500 watts and 2000 watts depending on their distance from other transmitting stations. In Britain most amateurs were only allowed 10 watts of power to use for broadcasting. Prof Jack then finished pointing out the advantages for reception in farming communities in the NZ backblocks.<sup>5</sup>

In rapid succession there came reports of successful transmission and reception. Mr F D Bell of Shag Valley station, over 30 miles distant gave a glowing report of Prof Jack's Wednesday night broadcast as a "veritable triumph" and as plain to hear as on the best telephone device.<sup>6</sup> (See below) Frank Bell's success in reception was a direct result of Prof Jack and his team's work.

Professor Jack, of the Otago University, Dunedin, New Zealand, has been engaged for some time past in experimenting in the field of wireless telephony, and a recent issue of the "Otago Witness" contains an extended account of his success. The following extracts from it will be read with interest.

The receiver in wireless telephony, it is explained, is exactly the same as in wireless telegraphy. With the continuous wave of the telegraphy, however, the note is all of one pitch, whereas in the telephony there are all the variations corresponding to the voice or music or whatever is being sent. One or more valves may be employed, the greater number of valves giving the greater strength of sound. The possibilities of the present position are indicated by the fact that an observer in Christchurch (nearly 200 miles distant) with only one valve was able at five feet distance from the telephone receiver to hear Dr. Jack's voice. The cost of a complete receiving set with everything necessary need not be more than £30, and the cost of upkeep is really negligible.

At present speech and music are being received by amateurs in Dunedin by using a crystal receiver, and no valves at all. The cost of such an apparatus is a few pounds. One of the keenest of the amateurs, Mr. F. D. Bell, of Shag Valley Station, over 30 miles away, reported to Dr. Jack. "Your concert on Wednesday was a veritable triumph. We are now satisfied that radio telephony can be made plainer than the land variety. When Mr. Sutherland was speaking his words were the plainest I have ever heard over any 'phone, wired or wireless." Mr. Bell also mentioned that the bells in the gramophone record "Laughing Water" were really extraordinary, and seemed to be ringing right in the room.

It is interesting to learn that messages carry much better in the dark than in daylight, that they can be sent very much farther in midwinter than in summer, and much farther over water than over land.

Dr. Jack's statement of the capacity of his simple amateur set are astounding to anyone acquainted with the possibilities of such instruments. He can pick up, without fail Press and commercial messages in English from Tokyo and America and in French from Bordeaux between 9.30 and 10 o'clock any morning of the week. Bordeaux he can get distinctly using only two valves. Home boats he can follow for seven days out, which means something well over 2000 miles, and he has heard a warship's wireless 4000 miles away. He has identified messages from Adelaide, Brisbane, Esperance, Sydney, Hobart, Noumea, Germany, Rome, and other European stations as well as the three high-powered French stations.

The report gives a full description of one of the concerts given regularly, which are enjoyed by listeners throughout the town and suburbs, in country districts, and even in Wellington, about 400 miles from Dunedin.

<sup>5</sup> *Otago Witness*, 21 February 1922, p.37.

<sup>6</sup> *Auckland Star*, 23 February 1922, p.7.; *Otago Witness*,

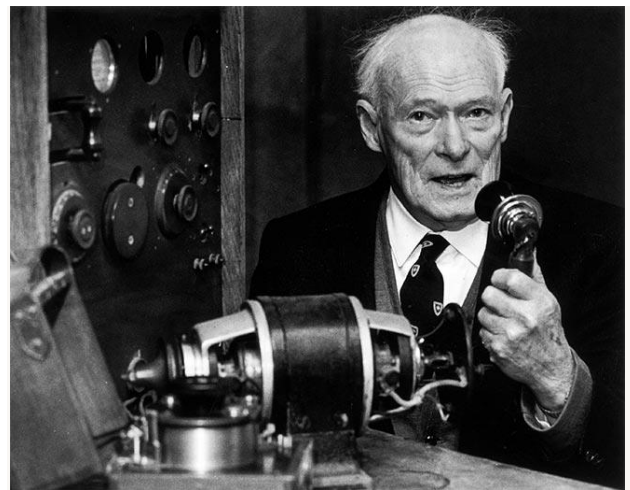
Francis Wirgman Dillon Bell (F.D. Bell) and his sister Margaret Brenda Bell of Shag Valley Station, Otago

Francis Wirgman Dillon Bell was born in Dunedin on 12 June 1896.

Alfred Bell, the father of Francis (Frank) and Margaret, was more interested in science than sheep. He set up what was probably the first telephone connection in New Zealand, between two farmhouses, and experimented with the new-fangled wireless communication. The two children took up their father's interest. Frank in particular spent long periods listening to radio signals on a home-made crystal set.

Frank served as a gunner in France and Belgium until he was invalided home in 1917. The returned soldier's boyhood interest in wireless was revived while he recovered at home from his war wounds. Along with handful of fellow New Zealand amateurs, he helped pioneer the use of short radio waves to communicate over long distances, initially through Morse code telegraphy.

He achieved spectacular success. In April 1923 he made New Zealand's first overseas two-way radio contact, with a fellow amateur in Australia. In September 1924 helped by his sister Margaret, he made New Zealand's first contact with North America. The following month, on 18 October, he and a student in London held the first-ever two-way radio conversation from one side of the world to the other. It was a feat that every radio operator had been striving to achieve, and made world headlines. Frank Bell's international status was such that, in his absence, he was elected to the five-member executive committee of the International Amateur Radio Union at its formation in Paris in 1924.



Stan Hughes demonstrates some of Robert Jack's pioneering broadcasting equipment at Otago University, in 1991. Jack, a physics professor at the university, and his technician Jack Sutherland built a radio transmitter from British equipment. Professor Jack made the first New Zealand radio broadcast of voice and music on 17 November 1921. Stan Hughes joined the physics department in 1924 as assistant to Sutherland, and worked with Sutherland and Jack on further innovative research. ODT 20 May 2006, p.42



Standing alongside the radio transmitter used in New Zealand's first voice and music radio broadcast is Toitu Otago Settlers Museum curator Peter Read at the museum yesterday. PHOTO: LINDA ROBERTSON ODT 16 November 2021

## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR

(this piece was written before Jonathan West's seminar on Winsome Wanaka...Ed.)

### Friends of Hocken Collections Committee News

Greetings to you all. I do hope you are well and staying safe. Your Committee has been busy planning for the 2020-2021 FOHCs Award recipient Dr Jonathan West presentation of his work, "Winsome to Worldly Wanaka: Lake, Land & People". I do hope you will join us on 2 September at the Hocken at 5.30 pm. After a few false starts due to Covid it will be great to hear his historical discoveries and the current contrast. Dr West has a book coming out by 2024.

As we are still in the Orange setting, masks will need to be worn and we will provide spacing in our seating. It was a privilege for the Committee to welcome Catherine Hammond who is now in her position as the Hocken Librarian taking up challenges ahead for her and her team with the implementation of the Hocken Review. Our appreciation to Lynn Benson for sharing the Hocken news and activities till Catherine joined our Committee. We hope to have Catherine to speak to us all in 2023.

Subscriptions are now due and we look forward to your renewing and participating with us in the year ahead. Thank you to those of you who have paid. My appreciation to those of you who have donated to our Award Fundraiser too.

If you wish to nominate a committee member in anticipation of the AGM in November please let us know. We are happy to meet with anyone keen to join the committee and give them an idea of what is involved.

Our website, [hockenfriends.org.nz](http://hockenfriends.org.nz), is available for any one peruse, to join, pay a renewal, make a donation, or read background about The Deed Of Trust in the care of the Otago University Council. What a

treasure we share now after 114 years. The Award details are there too. A valuable resource.

Your committee has also finalised the details for the 2023 FOHC Award and applications are now open. It has been widely advertised including in The Listener. Thank you Dr Claire Matthewson for all the work you have done for the Award 2020-2021 and now the new Award for 2023. We are appreciative of donations towards our FOHC Award Appeal and look forward to receiving more donations as we have not yet reached our goal. We have some ideas about further activities but have been reluctant to proceed due to Covid and flu risk. Hopefully that may change as we look forward to springtime. Do enjoy the blossom and spring flowers about. At our next committee meeting we will plan further for 2023. If any member has thoughts or ideas for a future speaker or research you are doing at Hocken you would like to share do let us know. We look forward to you participating in our planning. Looking forward to seeing you on 2 September.

Louise Croot

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### Office Bearers for 2021-2022

President - Louise Croot

Immediate Past President - Donald Phillipps

Vice-President - Lorraine Isaacs

Hon. Secretary - Mark Hughes

Hon. Treasurer - Carol Melville

Committee - Tom Brooking, Claire

Matthewson, Sarah Gallagher, George Davis

Hocken Library representative - Anna

Blackman, for attendance and liaison role,

Lynn Benson (Acting Hocken Librarian).

### What's happening? 16 November AGM @5.30pm then Talk Series @ 6.15pm

Paul Barton 'Dr Hocken at the Benny? Was Dr Hocken's time at the Otago Benevolent Institution insignificant?'

**Hocken Staff:**



Kia ora! My name is Gini Jory and I am a Collections Assistant in the Publications department. My role includes processing new purchased and donated serials and newspapers, repackaging fragile material, and working on the reference desk helping readers with their enquiries. I also work with our central library colleagues to purchase subscriptions and get material reclassified and added to the collection.

**GINI JORY** (She/her)COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT Te Uare Taoka o Hākena - Hocken Collections



**Emma Scott, Publications Collections' Assistant.** In 2011 I began working for the University of Otago Library on a project at the Hocken Library. I liked the Hocken so much that I did not want to leave, and so applied for my current role. In the past I have been a Communicator at the Otago

Museum and have a Bachelor of Education degree from the University of Otago.

**Emma Scott**  
PUBLICATIONS COLLECTIONS ASSISTANT  
Te Uare Taoka o Hākena - Hocken Collections

The Friends of the Hocken Collections Inc.  
**THE FRIENDS OF THE HOCKEN AWARD 2023**

**Background**

To mark the occasion of its 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2016, the Friends of the Hocken Collections (FOHC) offered an award of NZ\$10,000 to support a research project on some aspect of the historical development of culture and society in New Zealand, primarily using the resources of the Hocken Collections.

Joint winners of the anniversary Award were Laurence Fearnley and Paul Hersey (for work undertaken in 2017), and their book, *To the Mountains: A Collection of NZ Alpine Writing*, was the very pleasing result.

In addition, as the Award competition had 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 Award as funding permits. The winner of the second Award (for tenure in 2020) was Dr Jonathan West for field work and research towards his proposed book *Mirrors on the Land: Histories of New Zealand's Lakes*.

**The FOHC Award 2023**

The Award's value continues as \$10,000. Its intended outcomes in 2023 are – as in previous rounds – creatively open for project applicants themselves to develop and propose.

Salient aspects such as the project's medium, genre, scope, and purpose are prescription-free.

Both collaborative and singular applications are welcome.

**Timelines**

Detailed Application Information will be available on the Friends of the Hocken Collections Inc. website <https://hockenfriends.org.nz/> from 1 July 2022.

The Closing Date for the Award to be held in the calendar year 2023 is 15 October 2022.

Applicants will be advised of the competition result by 30 November 2022.  
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**Funding of the Friends of the Hocken Collections Award 2023**

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.)  
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. Receipts will be provided.

With any donation-related queries, please contact Carol on 021 617 466 or email [carolmelville@xtra.co.nz](mailto:carolmelville@xtra.co.nz)

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**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](mailto:carol.melville@xtra.co.nz)  
NB these increased in subscriptions applied from 1 July 2022.

*F&J is prepared by George Davis for the Friends of the Hocken Collections P.O.Box 6336, Dunedin North 9059 - [georgedavisnzer@gmail.com](mailto:georgedavisnzer@gmail.com)*

This issue was prepared with thanks to Mark Quarrie and Emma Scott