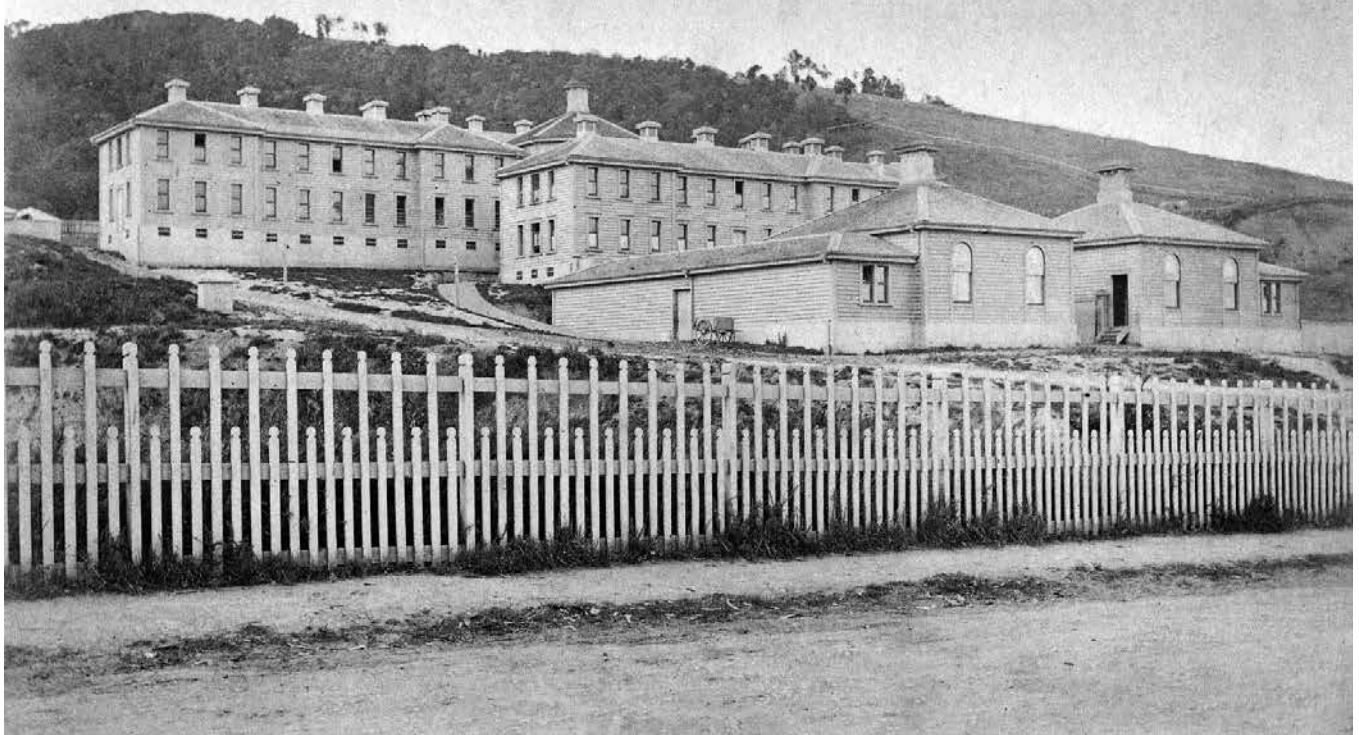




Graffiti at Caversham Messages from the 1880s



One of the great benefits of the Museum's redevelopment project is the close examination of the collection that is part of that process. As we look to develop the new displays, we are discovering new treasures in the collection stores to share. A good example is the recent uncovering of some 'graffiti' left behind by newly-arrived migrants at the Caversham Immigration Barracks in the 1880s. Some years ago a set of four wall boards from the old barracks was deposited at the Museum. These promptly went into storage and were lost sight of amidst the thousands of other objects 'out the back'.

They turned up again during the auditing of the collection stores that was part of the mass relocation of all the stored collections last year. Since they showed evidence of insect infestation the boards were removed from storage and fumigated. They also received a basic clean. At this point it was noticed that the boards had some faint pencil markings on them.

The pencil marks were clearly words and it seemed likely that closer examination might enable us to decipher the inscriptions. We soon worked out that the markings were written by female immigrants in 1883 and 1884. Three ships' names could be identified: the *SS Victory*, *SS Coptic*, and the *Forfarshire*. We could also see the names 'Maggie Rankin' and 'Mary McNeil'. The rest was a bit harder to see. An infra-red light was brought down from the Art Gallery and the boards rephotographed under its light. More words and phrases appeared. One was a completely new inscription that we could now decipher in its entirety:

*"Bridget Keelan
Carrickmacross
Co Monaghan
Ireland SS Coptic
going to Hokitika in West Coast"*

The Immigration Barracks at Caversham which opened in 1873 – Otago Settlers Museum collection.

The *SS Coptic* arrived in Port Chalmers on 29 November 1884 carrying 15 assisted female immigrants for Otago. Ten were Irish (mostly from County Galway), four Scots and one English. All were 'nominated migrants', meaning that someone already in Otago had put their names forward for assisted passages. But there was no Bridget Keelan among these Otago-bound girls in the *Coptic*. Further research at National Archives, however, found her name on the ship's full passenger list. Bridget was a 20-year-old housemaid from Co Monaghan and was the ship's only passenger bound for the West Coast. She must have spent some nights at the Dunedin barracks before continuing her journey to the West Coast, probably by train.

With the help of the infra-red light we could also read the whole of Maggie Rankin's message:

"Maggie Rankin & Janet

c/o Mrs Park Caversham came in the Forfarshire

If I can get down when the next vessel comes in I will be down to see if there is a Mary McNeil and if not I hope she will come up."

We found Maggie Rankin on the *Forfarshire* passenger list easily. She was a 19-year-old general servant from Renfrewshire who came to Otago on the ship which arrived in Port Chalmers on 26 June 1883 carrying 267 passengers. Next on the list after her name was a Janet 'Risk' (according to our transcript), a 19 year-old dairy maid who may well be the 'Janet' in the inscription. A Mary McNeill arrived a couple of months later in the immigrant ship *Nelson* which reached Otago on 19 October 1883.

There are a couple more inscriptions that we are still trying to decipher. One relates to the *Coptic* while the other is by passengers on the *SS Victory* voyage from late 1883.

So far we can make out the following words:

"SS Victory

Agnes Hannah Dal---

we started from plymouth on the 27 october and landed on the 24 December

we had a good voyage and a good captain and -- but --- matron but we had a pleasant crew and we-- no marriages no death 1 birth and plenty of general -- your ----"

"SS Coptic

--- --- Nov ---

-ery good ---

but we had a pleasant -----"

It's not quite the Pyramids of Egypt but reading these messages from our 19th century immigrants has felt a little like deciphering hieroglyphics at times. The girls' inscriptions have added extra interest to the plain old wall boards. The faint and fading pencil marks open up a little window into the excitement of those young women, fresh from their great journey across the oceans, catching their breath at the Caversham Barracks and poised to 'make their mark' on a new land.

Seán Brosnahan



Maggie Rankin's message as it currently appears on one of the boards from the Caversham Immigration Barracks.

A Summer on the Buses



I had the privilege of working at the Otago Settlers Museum over the summer, as the Otago University history intern. When I undertook my research project, which was the history of the NZR Road Services Bus Station, I really didn't know what to expect. I knew very little about the Bus Station and its significance, despite being a local of Dunedin. I didn't even know that it had even been a Bus Station – it stopped operating as one the year I was born. So, to me the Bus Station was just another building, a quick flash of art deco when driving down Cumberland Street. However, because I was working in, looking at, reading about, writing about and talking about the Bus Station for forty hours a week for the six weeks I was at the museum, suffice it to say, I quickly became familiar with it.

It was initially a challenge for me to think about how to approach my research topic. After looking at architectural plans and drawings for the building in the museum archives, I thought, well, what more is there to say about it? But as I came across more sources, including letters between the architects and engineers, newspaper articles, and pamphlets about the history of the New Zealand road transport services, I realised that I was not just researching the nuts and bolts of a Bus Station building, but rather the stories behind its creation,

the accounts of its workers and the memories of its passengers. Public transport is something we often take for granted, but when you think about it, it can tell us a lot about society – for the simple reason that heaps of people use it.

The most interesting stories, I found, came from interviewing people who had used or worked at the Bus Station. This was an entirely new skill for me, and it introduced the possibilities of using oral history as a source. In total I spoke to eleven people, most of whom had been workers at the Bus Station. It was amazing how passionate they still were about their old workplace, and all had fond memories of their time there. I learned a lot about the social rituals surrounding their workplace, and what it was like to be a bus driver, auto-electrician, manager or mechanic there. Unfortunately, the scope of my research was limited somewhat because the earliest employee I could get hold of was there in 1960, but the Bus Station opened in 1939, so I missed out on finding out about what it was like working there in the earlier years. But the workers I interviewed still had plenty of fascinating stories and a lot of insightful information that gave me a better imaginative sense of how the Bus Station operated in its peak years.

Bus drivers in the NZR Bus Station, circa 1940s or 50s. Supplied by Ms Marie Forman whose father Bernard O'Malley was a driver, seen here middle row, second from right.

The best part about my experience at the Otago Settlers Museum was getting to put history into practice beyond the classroom. I gained new skills, new ways of thinking about history, and lots of new library cards to various research institutions around the city! I had access to a range of sources that I had not used before, particularly those found in local archives. I have been able to effectively use these tools as I continue my studies in history. It was also really interesting looking at a topic that was a little bit different to what I might normally have studied, and was a great opportunity to look at a piece of local history. I've got really good at spotting art deco buildings around town, too!

I would like to thank the Otago Settlers Association and the University of Otago History Department for making this internship possible. I really enjoyed my time at the Otago Settlers Museum, and I am so grateful to the staff for making me feel welcome during my time there. I would especially like to thank my supervisor, Peter Read, for his guidance.

Siobhan Downes
Summer Intern 2011

Mature Motorists

Do You Remember This?

The recent acquisition by the Museum of a distinctive pedal car has brought back memories for many of being taught road safety in schools more than 40 years ago. According to an article in *New Zealand Memories* magazine, Shell Oil demonstrated a traffic trainer unit at Karori School, Wellington, in February 1958 and subsequently presented the Transport Department with two traffic trainer units – one for use at schools in the North Island and one in the South Island.

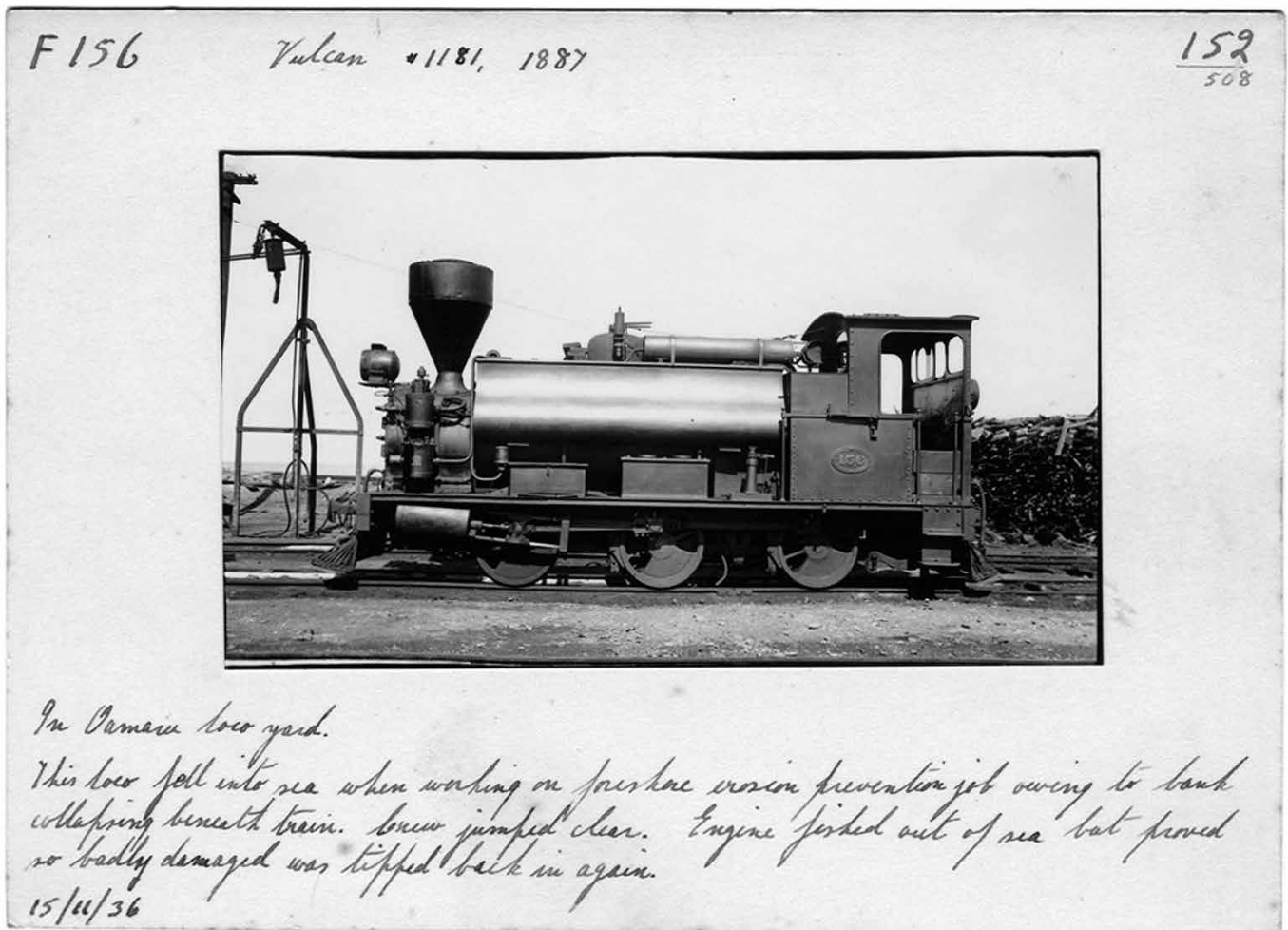
Each trainer unit comprised six pedal cars and six bicycles, plus model shops, fences and road signs. The fibreglass pedal cars were initially painted in Shell's colours (red and yellow) but this one has been repainted dark green. The pedal cars were manufactured by Gunske-Fahrzeugbau in Hamburg and the buildings and fences were made by carpenters at Shell in Miramar, Wellington.

Practical road safety lessons using the traffic trainer units were conducted under the supervision of traffic officers and teachers. Jack Henderson was one of these traffic officers providing road safety instruction during the era of the traffic trainer units. Jack had joined the traffic department in 1941 and was stationed in Oamaru from 1942 until 1951. From then until his death in 1972 he was based in Dunedin as a traffic safety instructor and spent a major part of his working life instructing thousands of children in the principles of road safety. For eight years Jack also ran a bicycle training school for children in his spare time. It was estimated that he taught 5000 children to ride. In 1968 Jack Henderson was awarded a British Empire Medal for meritorious service in road safety. The traffic trainer programme ended in the early 1970s.



The traffic trainer pedal car – a recent addition to the Otago Settlers Museum collection.

The Rockliff Collection



In my article on the Archives redevelopment in the last issue of *Settlers News*, I mistakenly stated that photographs in the Rockliff Collection were taken by the late Arthur Rockliff and his son Stan. This was an error on my part; Stan was in fact Arthur's father. While I regret the mistake, it has given me the opportunity to write about this amazing collection of transport photos.

In 2005 the Rockliff family generously gave the Museum a large collection of photographic prints and negatives of locomotives, railway lines, railway stations and other transport subjects taken by Stan and Arthur Rockliff. The main collection was taken by Stan between 1930 and 1956. While the majority of his shots are of Dunedin and parts of Otago, he photographed throughout the South Island. He captured times and places not covered by other photographers. His images are well known among New Zealand railway enthusiasts and have appeared in numerous publications. Stan had organised and catalogued much of his collection, and members of the Otago Railway and Locomotive Society have entered this information in an Excel database.

In 2010 the OSA funded a project to begin digitising the Rockliff Collection. Rainy McMaster, one of the Museum's Visitor Hosts,

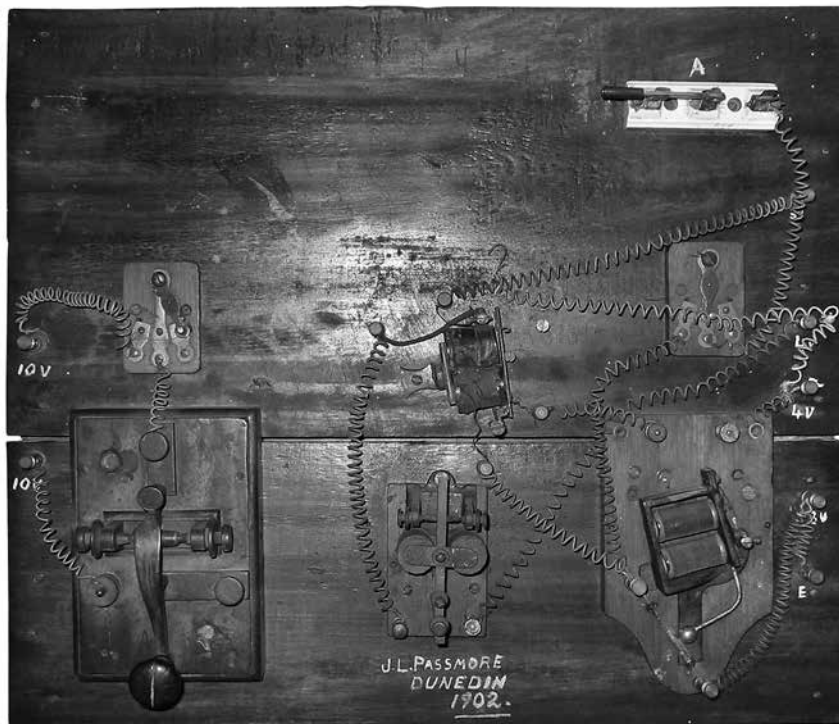
scanned over 1800 images from Stan's main collection of nearly 3000 photographs and negatives. Scanning of the remaining 1200 images is planned for later in 2011. In addition, there are an estimated 3500 prints, negatives and glass plates taken by Stan and Arthur that are still awaiting cataloguing and digitising. The Rockliff Collection will be available to researchers when the Museum re-opens in late 2012, but enquiries about the collection can be made to me at jill.haley@dcc.govt.nz or telephone 474 2721.

Jill Haley
Archivist



A catalogued photo from Stan Rockliff's main collection. He recorded a number of engines that no longer survive. (Rockliff Collection, 2006/35/152/2)
A railway line snowplough at Ranfurly, 1936. This represents one of Stan Rockliff's more unusual photographs. (Rockliff Collection, 2006/35/94/2)

On the Air



Radio broadcasting in New Zealand is celebrating its centennial this year, although for the first decade all you would have heard if you had tuned in would have been dots and dashes. The first regular broadcasts of speech and music were from the Physics Department at Otago University. A plaque near the back entrance to what is now the Examinations Office marks the basement laboratory where Professor Robert Jack made these broadcasts 90 years ago. One of the very earliest radio sets to survive is in the Settlers Museum collection. The seventeen-year-old James Passmore constructed it in 1902 to receive and send radio signals. At the time these were mainly confined to warships, and the use of radio by civilians was theoretically illegal. Passmore gradually improved the range of his equipment until in 1904 he was able to pick up signals from *HMS Powerful* off the Otago Heads, fourteen miles away.

Many keen amateurs followed Passmore's example, and in 1908 three Dunedin teenagers staged a public demonstration of the new wireless telegraphy by sending messages back and forth across Otago Harbour. The first government radio stations were set up in 1911, for naval and military communications. They were at Wellington and Auckland, and it was decided Otago did not need one of its own. In 1913 a ship unable to find the entrance to Otago Harbour in fog had contacted the Wellington radio station, and the message to send out a tug was relayed to Port Chalmers by telegraph. The government concluded this showed the system was working well and there was no need for a local radio station. Opening the Wellington station two years before, in 70-mile-an-hour winds, the Governor, Lord Islington, said it would form 'another link in the chain that bound Australia closer to New Zealand, and both, Imperially speaking, to the Motherland.' It was anticipated that wireless telegrams could be sent to Britain at a rate of two shillings a word (in terms of the retail price index, this is about \$15 now).

Otago made a major contribution to the pioneering work in sound broadcasting, or what was then called 'radio telephony.' Professor Jack returned from a visit to Britain in 1920-21 with radio valves and high-voltage DC generators. With the assistance of his technician Jack Sutherland, he set about constructing a transmission station. For an aerial they stretched a single wire from the university's clock tower (which was yet to get its clock) to the roof of the Physics Department at the other end of the building. On 17 November 1921 Prof Jack began to broadcast music and speech in two-hour evening programmes twice a week on the 450-metre band. They could be heard over much greater distances than was anticipated, up to 400 miles away: there were listeners-in at Wellington and Auckland, and even on one occasion a ship in the Tasman on its way from Melbourne. From Newtown in Wellington two 'enthusiastic radio amateurs' sent a telegram to Prof Jack reading: 'Picked up radio 'phone music, "Bells of St Mary," 10 o'clock Wednesday last, muffled conversation followed. Please confirm if same was yours.'

After a break for the Christmas holidays, Prof Jack resumed occasional broadcasts the following year. The programmes included the playing of gramophone records and sometimes even live performances. One such was a concert given by the University Musical Society in Allen Hall in August 1922. This was almost three months before the BBC was founded, and six months before its own first outside broadcast, an opera from Covent Garden. The Otago Radio Society set up Radio Dunedin (4XD, but then just 'DN'), still going strong today. It was the first station established outside Europe and the Americas, and was five weeks older than the BBC itself, which makes it the fifth oldest radio station in the world still broadcasting.

Based on Patrick Day, *The Radio Years: A History of Broadcasting in New Zealand*, volume one (Auckland University Press in association with the Broadcasting History Trust, 1994)

James L Passmore's early wireless set, now in the Otago Settlers Museum collection.

Frank Pogson, Philosopher and Mountaineer



Among the many fine memorials in All Saints' Church in North Dunedin is a simple brass plaque to a former parishioner, Frank Lubbecki Pogson, Student of Philosophy, who 'died from exhaustion on Mont Blanc' on 6 October 1910 at the age of 31. Born in Dunedin, he had a short but brilliant academic career. At Nelson College he won many scholarships and prizes, and he graduated from Auckland University College MA with honours. From there in 1901 he went on to St John's College, Oxford to study classics. On graduation, he worked as a 'coach' in Oxford and moved on to study philosophy, translating several works of major contemporary German and French philosophers. Of these, his translations of Adolf von Harnack and Henri Bergson's works were perhaps the best known. As one obituarist wrote, 'after many months of close application to study he felt the need for a holiday ... Mountain climbing always had an extraordinary fascination for him, and he had an indomitable will and absolute fearlessness of all danger, which led him to take great risks.' Frank Pogson, with a guide and a porter, set off on the Grands Mulets route (starting at 3051m or 10,000ft) in 'splendid weather', though it was very cold and windy. At more than 4300 metres (14,000 feet), the guide noticed he was becoming weak and advised against continuing. Nevertheless they pressed on, but were forced to turn back only five minutes' climb from the summit of Mont Blanc (4810m or 15,781ft). Observers at Chamonix watched through telescopes Frank Pogson's difficult and painful descent. He was almost unconscious on reaching the refuge at Vallot (4362m or 14,311 ft), where he died, either of 'congestion' (an abnormal accumulation of blood in an organ's vessels) or oxygen starvation.

Pogson's memorial is just one of many interesting features of All Saints'. The church is approaching its sesquicentennial, its foundation stone having been laid on 11 February 1865. It is the oldest church building continuously in use in the city. The parish was founded in 1863 when North Dunedin was relatively sparsely populated, the university yet to appear, and the North Ground still boggy. Designed by William Clayton (of the architectural practice of Clayton and Wales,

which later became Mason and Wales), the building is remarkable for its polychrome brick decoration. All Saints, Margaret Street in London and Keble College, Oxford, are the best-known examples of this mid-Victorian technique, which is also seen locally at Lisburn House in Caversham but is rare in New Zealand. The interior was also once richly decorated. Among the original benefactors were Sir George Grey, William Larnach and Sir James Allen. The original plans included a bell tower on the street frontage linked by a corridor to the west door, but this was never built. Building proceeded rapidly: by 6 July, within six months of the foundation stone being laid, it was in use for weddings, though the church was not consecrated until 23 July.

The church building was last restored in 1969 when, fortunately for posterity, the parish vestry went against expert advice and did not demolish it and rebuild. The 'Decramastic' mock-tile metal roof put on then now needs replacement, and the plan is to return to slates as were originally laid. St John's Anglican Church in Milton was re-roofed in early 2010. About two thirds of its slates proved suitable for re-use at All Saints, most likely on the smaller roof areas such as the sanctuary, vestry, and organ chamber.

Rotting timbers in the roof structure need to be replaced, and the bonds between the roof and the walls require strengthening. With the sad fate of many fine Christchurch and Lyttelton churches in mind, the consulting engineers, Hadley and Robinson Ltd, have followed the guidelines outlined in the New Zealand Society for Earthquake Engineering's publication *The Assessment and Improvement of Performance of Buildings in Earthquakes*. The end gable walls will be securely attached to the upgraded roof structure. This will mean that the internal tie rods, added in 1969 to brace the roof, will no longer be necessary, and will be removed. The many fine stained-glass windows also will be secured. They can be seen in detail on the parish's web-site: allsaintsdn.org.nz/features.php

All this work in 1969 came to \$35,000, but now, the cost will be more like \$1,700,000. (Coincidentally, this is virtually identical to the 'purchasing power' of the original construction cost of £1330, if calculated by comparison with average wages then and now.)

If you would like to help, contact the All Saints' Restoration Appeal, PO Box 6431, Dunedin 9059 (telephone 477 8300; fax 477 8300; <http://allsaintsdn.org.nz/restoration.php>)

With thanks to Felicia Wade of All Saints'



Vallot refuge on Mont Blanc as it appears today (www.summitpost.org/refuge-bivouac-vallot/410643).
All Saints' Church and hall - *Dunedin Churches Past and Present* by Charles Croot (OSA 1999)

OSA Winter Meeting

The Association's Winter Meeting, held on Friday 15 July in the former bus station, was very well attended, with about 80 members there. Mulled wine was served to encourage the midwinter spirit. The location was appropriate because the theme of the evening was a busman's holiday: 'Around the World in 80 Museums.' As part of the planning for the new organisation of the Museum, members of staff have been looking at how other related museums around the world present their collections in order to keep in touch with the latest ideas. There were not quite 80 museums – in the event, the total was closer to 60, but they encompassed a wide variety of approaches. The Association helped fund visits to Australia (Sydney, Melbourne and Ballarat), China (Beijing, Xi'an and Guilin), Britain (London, Birmingham, Manchester, Edinburgh and Paisley) and the United States (New York, Boston and Washington). Linda Wigley, Bronwyn Simes, Jennifer Evans and Tim Cornelius (designer of this newsletter) spoke about their experiences and showed many interesting slides. On their visits they had looked out for how the various museums get their messages across to their audiences: new ways of doing things and different ways of displaying items. Attention was given to how different museums make use of new technology and how they make provision for children, such as the Tinytozeum at the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney. Another example was the Museum of London's display on the original Vauxhall Gardens, which provided a comparison for the Settlers Museum's planned pleasure gardens display featuring our own Vauxhall Gardens. Here and elsewhere, the arrangement of displays, how they are labelled, and the use of timelines, 'ambient material' and 'hands on' items were all noted. Sometimes this meant that Settlers staff visiting incognito were recognised by the local staff as fellow museum people because the sorts of things they were interested in gave them away. Other experiences were unexpected; Bronwyn for instance found it very difficult to gain admission to the Boston Children's Museum as a lone adult carrying a camera.



For Your Diary

The 112th Annual General Meeting of the Otago Settlers Association Inc. will be held in the Social Hall, Otago Settlers Museum, Dunedin, on Thursday 15 September 2011 at 7.30pm. The entrance to the Social Hall is through the green door adjacent to the traffic lights (just to the right of the main bus station entrance), and up the staircase or lift to the second floor.

Business to Arise: Presentation of the Annual Report and Financial Statements for the year ended 30 June 2011; Election of Officers; Otago Settlers Museum Report: Director Linda Wigley.

The Annual General Meeting will be followed by a presentation by Norman Ledgerwood entitled 'The Deborah Bay Torpedo Boat Corps: New Zealand's Answer to the Russian Scares of the 1880s.' This will be a light-hearted look at New Zealand's coastal defences.



Editor: Austin Gee; Designer: Tim Cornelius; Publisher: Otago Settlers Association.

This newsletter was produced by the Otago Settlers Association, founder and supporter of the Otago Settlers Museum. Membership of the Association is open to everyone interested in the heritage of this region. Details of membership are available from the Museum Reception desk or Otago Settlers Association Secretary, Box 74, Dunedin. Phone/fax 03 477 8677, email otago.settlers.assn@xtra.co.nz

Otago Daily Times

The Otago Daily Times supports Otago Settlers Museum

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The entrance to the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens display at the Museum of London.

Two exhibitions from the Powerhouse Museum in Sydney; 'Wild: Amazing Animals in a Changing World' and the 'Tinytozeum' display for children.