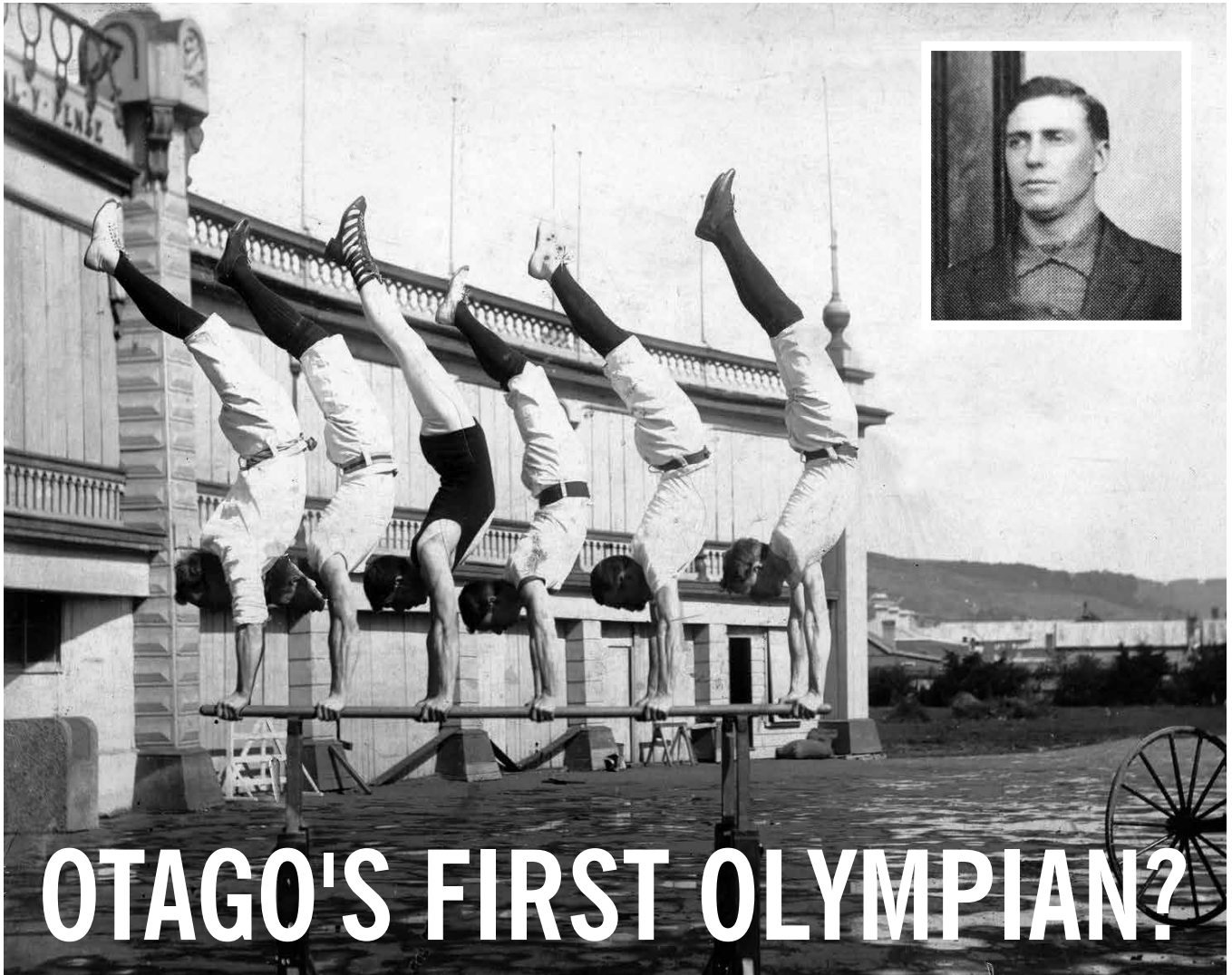


OTAGO SETTLERS NEWS

OTAGO SETTLERS ASSOCIATION *proud to be friends of* **toitū** OTAGO SETTLERS MUSEUM

WINTER 2016 ISSUE 129



OTAGO'S FIRST OLYMPIAN?

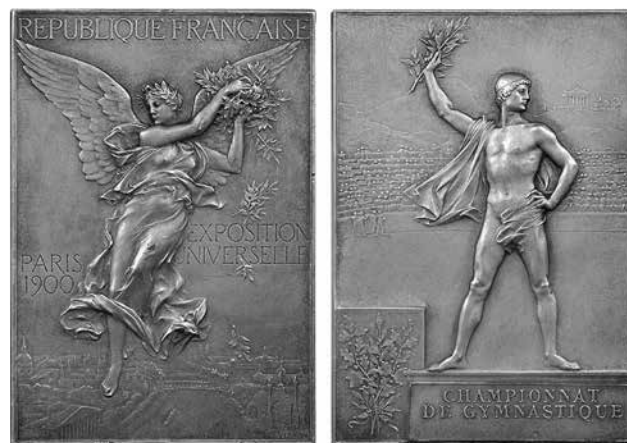
A Dunedin teacher was perhaps the country's first Olympian.* Lloyd Phillips, who was gymnastics master at both the boys' and girls' high schools from 1914 to 1919, had been a silver medallist at the Olympic Games of 1900. Or so Otago Boys' High School's prospectus claimed: whatever he got his silver medal for, it was not for winning anything (there were no gold medals in those days: first place got the silver, and second the bronze).

The performance of all four British gymnasts at the Paris Olympics was disappointing, and Lloyd Phillips came in 73rd place. Nonetheless, he received a *Diplome* from the organisers. He had more success in national competitions, winning the Championship of England (for German-style gymnastics) three times and coming second in the English Gymnastic

Championship, also three times (or so he told the newspapers at least). Still, as Pierre de Coubertin, founder of the modern Olympics, famously said, 'The most important thing ... is not winning but taking part ... the most important thing in life is not the triumph but the struggle; the essential thing is not conquering but fighting well.'

The Paris Olympic Games of 1900 were only the second to be held, and these early Olympics were not the slick operations of more recent times. In 1900, anyone who wished to compete could sign up, as there was no selection process for national teams. The competitions were held as part of the big Exposition Universelle and stretched out over five months, and many of them were low-key affairs. For instance, only French players turned up for the croquet matches, which attracted only a solitary spectator, an Englishman. The Paris Olympics featured a few what now seem quirky events which perhaps

Gymnasts display their skills at Dunedin's Caledonian Ground, after 1901. **Inset:** Lloyd Phillips - OBHS Archives.



understandably were never repeated, notably live pigeon-shooting and the swimming obstacle race. Revived ancient Greek sports such as javelin- and discus-throwing, which probably seemed just as odd at the time, have survived to become familiar features of the modern Olympics. Yet many of the more 'modern' competitions held in 1900 have fallen by the wayside: they included the equestrian long jump, kite-flying, tug-of-war, motor racing, hot-air ballooning, life-saving, and fire-fighting. For seven Olympiads from 1912, competitions in literature, music, painting, sculpture and architecture were held so that those arty types who were no good at games did not feel left out.

William Lloyd Phillips' Olympic glory was less a case of *Chariots of Fire* than 'pants on fire': having upgraded his *Diplome* to a medal, he was also economical with the truth in relation to more serious matters. He had been born in old South Wales in 1881 and emigrated to New South Wales in 1911. Earlier that year he had married Clara Dallas Hyams, an American he had met in London. Or so he told the authorities; he in fact already had a wife, Florence Maria (*née* Hicks), and two young children in the seaside town of Bournemouth. There he was part proprietor of a school teaching physical culture, fencing, gymnastics, skating and other energetic pursuits. They had married in 1904, so this was perhaps an extreme case of the seven-year itch. There is no trace in the official records of any divorce or remarriage.

The 'newlyweds' Lloyd and Clara sailed for Newcastle, NSW, where Lloyd planned to establish a school of physical culture 'if sufficient inducement offers'. This seems not to have eventuated, for within a couple of months they moved to Brisbane, where Lloyd became the Physical Director of the local YMCA. He had a teacher's diploma from the National School of Physical Education in London and taught 'all branches of athletics: fencing, boxing, wrestling, gymnastics, drill (Swedish and military), physical culture, and remedial exercises.' 'Professor' Phillips was soon lured to New Zealand by the recently established Leys Institute in Ponsonby, Auckland. It combined a gymnasium with a lending library, designed to improve both the bodies and the minds of idle local youth, and survives today in its attractive original buildings as a gymnasium and community centre.

Lloyd Phillips' YMCA connections brought him to Dunedin in late 1912, where he became Physical Director at the Moray

Place institution. Shortly after their arrival, the couple's only daughter, Dorothy Vallerie, was born, on the memorable date 12/12/12. Lloyd quickly organised programmes in 'physical culture' and within six months about three hundred young men and women had signed up. Classes in physical culture, gymnastics and games were offered for ladies, while gymnastic and other classes were aimed at boys, youths and businessmen. Not long after Lloyd's arrival he put on a public demonstration of what his pupils had already achieved: parallel bar work, forming human pyramids and vaulting the wooden horse. They gave an exhibition game of basketball, causing 'a good deal of amusement.' Lloyd Phillips himself demonstrated club swinging 'to the admiration of all present, and also showed himself to be an expert fancy, figure, and trick roller skater ... [he] performed some very difficult feats. He danced, he walked, he cut figures, he did wheels, and he stood still! He received a very pronounced encore.' Everything he does is clean and attractive', judged the ODT's reporter.

Over the next few years, the YMCA's gymnastic and other physical exercise classes became well established. They did not however monopolise Lloyd Phillips' expertise, for in 1914 he was taken on part-time as instructor of gymnastics, physical drill and swimming for both the boys' and girls' high schools. Later, McGlashan and Columba Colleges also employed him part-time. Lloyd taught the young ladies of Girls' High basketball (aka netball), though the Principal, Flora Allen, thought physical education largely a waste of time. She believed if the school's 'staff is at all efficient, its time is too valuable to be spent on teaching physical exercises to pupils', and the task could be left to a trained instructor with less 'mental power and capacity'; a man would do perfectly well. At Boys' High, Lloyd in addition taught fencing and indoor soccer, and organised competitions designed to bring out the best young gymnasts. The top performers were known as the 'Gymnastic Eight', and they gave public demonstrations for patriotic wartime charities. At one such event, they were described as being 'as lithe as eels in their gymnastic display'.

Lloyd Phillips was popular with his pupils but less so with those adults who thought since there was a war on he ought to be doing more for the cause. Though he was rather short for a soldier at 5' 4½", in his mid-thirties and married with a small child, he felt the heat of the popular prejudice against 'shirkers'.

Top left: Lloyd Phillips (front right) presides over an Otago Boys' High School gymnastics demonstration in 1917 - OBHS Archives.

Above right: Gymnastics medal from the 1900 Paris Olympic Games.



One of his colleagues later recalled that 'they made Mr Phillips' position so impossible by repeated pin-pricks afterwards that he resigned'. He was called up for the army in May 1918 but was lucky enough to be still in training at Trentham when the war ended. He returned to OBHS, but eventually the High Schools' Board of Governors found an excuse to dismiss him, against the wishes of the heads, staff, and many old boys and girls of both schools.

The war had put the spotlight on the physical training of high school boys since they were to provide the next generation of military recruits. It did not help that Lloyd Phillips specialised in what was known as the 'German' system of physical training, which entailed the use of gymnastic equipment such as the parallel bars. On behalf of the High Schools' Board, Dr Robert Fulton explained 'that the children who entered the Boys' and Girls' High Schools were the brains of the province, and it is found sometimes that the pupils coming in had not had the time to develop their bodies in the way they should have developed them.' The Board thought Phillips' training programme for these weedy swots was inadequate and they were determined to get rid of him. In March 1919 they called in a military medical man, Captain Arthur Brocks, director of military training for the Defence Department, to inspect the physical training provided by OBHS. Patriotically, he 'considered the British system of physical exercises was the best.' On the basis of a 20-minute visit, Brocks wrote a report 'condemning the whole system of physical instruction' and advocating the abandonment of gymnastics.

The Board dismissed Lloyd Phillips without explanation, but later claimed it was because 'they desired to thoroughly reorganise the physical training, with special regard to modern developments'. They could not however provide any evidence of his unsuitability to carry out this reorganisation and several Old Boys who were army officers disagreed strongly that Phillips' methods were at all outdated. *Truth* sank its teeth into the 'Bumble-Board', declaring 'the case furnishes glaring evidence of the menace of militarism'. The Board tried without success to cast doubt on Phillips' teaching qualifications; perhaps they had somehow got wind of details of his private life and were simply determined to get rid of him whatever it took, though there is no hint of this in the official files. In the end, the Teachers' Appeal Court in December 1919 found Phillips'

dismissal to have been wrongful and ordered his reinstatement; as he left the court buildings a crowd of OBHS boys gave him an ovation.

The High Schools gave Lloyd his old job back at a higher salary, but despite his successful appeal, he had had enough. In May 1920 the family left for New York, where Lloyd became a physical instructor for the YMCA. The staff of Girls' High gave them a travel rug as a parting gift, and Lloyd 'promised to keep in touch with the school and to send from America any hints about games or sports likely to be serviceable.' He worked first for the YMCA at Rutherford, New Jersey, but soon moved to Brooklyn, near where Clara had grown up. Clearly unable to resist the temptation to fib, Lloyd knocked four years off his age when he entered the United States and declared his intention of becoming an American citizen; he was naturalised in 1927.

For many years, Lloyd Phillips worked as a physical instructor for the Bedford branch of the YMCA in Brooklyn. In 1932 the *ODT* reported he had moved to the west coast to take up a post as physical instructor at the University of California. He would have arrived just in time to have been able to attend the ninth Olympic Games in Los Angeles. Yet by 1939 he was back in Brooklyn, if indeed he had ever left the borough. Lloyd was still working for the Bedford YMCA in 1942 when he was again caught up in the military draft. This time, though, he had good reason to tell the truth about his age: he was by then 60. Lloyd seems to have died in 1950, though I wouldn't take his word for it.

*The rival claimant for the title of New Zealand's first Olympian is the champion swimmer Victor Lindberg. Born in Fiji to a Swedish father and an Irish mother, he came to New Zealand while young. He soon left for England and joined the Osborne Swimming Club in Manchester. The club's team won the Olympic water polo competition in 1900 with ease. However, there is no hard evidence that Lindberg was actually in the winning team, and he did not receive a medal. (New Zealand first participated as part of a combined Australasian team in 1908 and 1912, and sent a national team to the 1920 Olympics.)

For more about the Paris games, see Bill Mallon, *The 1900 Olympic Games: Results for All Competitors in All Events, with Commentary* (Jefferson, NC: McFarland, 1997) — there is a copy in the university library. The enumerators' books from the British censuses of 1891, 1901 and 1911 are available at ukcensusonline.com or through ancestry.com, and more detail about Lloyd Phillips' career can be found by searching the National Library of Australia's 'Trove' website (trove.nla.gov.au) and the National Library of New Zealand's 'Papers Past' website (paperspast.natlib.govt.nz). The records of the Teachers' Appeal Court are in the Otago High Schools' Board papers in the Hocken Library, ARC-0530. Some official documents relating to Lloyd's life in America can be found in ancestry.com

For more about physical education at OBHS, see Rory Sweetman, *'Above the City': A History of Otago Boys' High School 1863–2013*, available from the Museum shop for \$75 (with OSA member's 15% discount: \$63.75; add \$5 for packing & postage. Please make out cheques to the DCC.)

Lloyd Phillips (back row, centre-right, without a tie) photographed with OBHS staff in 1916. Rector William J. Morrell can be seen centre-left in the front row.

The Examined Life is Worth Living



The Museum's latest temporary exhibition tackles an unusual subject — the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study. In 1975 health researchers from Otago University began studying a group of 1037 children born in Dunedin three years earlier. A short-term investigation of infant health issues was planned. The Study proved so useful, however, that it went on, and on, and on ... forty-plus years later, the 1972–73 babies are about to be assessed again as they reach middle age. The Dunedin Study has meanwhile become internationally renowned as one of the most significant longitudinal (long-term) health and development projects ever conducted.

Despite its enormous international reputation, the Dunedin Study remains something of a mystery to locals. Most people have heard of it, many are connected to it in some way. But what exactly is it all about? And why is such a fuss made about it? *Slice of Life* attempts to answer those questions by showcasing the history of the Study and some of its major research findings. Alongside that, the exhibition also offers a trip down memory lane for anyone who lived through the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s and 2000s.

Melding these two elements together was one of the challenges of developing the exhibition: how would we tell a science story in a social history context? The answer was to weave together the research insights generated by the Study over four decades

and the 'lifeways' of the participants in the same period. In other words, with the perspective of Study members — the babies born in Dunedin in 1972-73 — as our lens, we traced the material culture of the different stages of their lives and set these against what was happening in Dunedin and the wider world. Not everyone who was alive in the 1970s, for example, would place the Wombles at the heart of their memories of that decade. The babies of 1972-73, however, were children at exactly the point when the Wombles of Wimbledon Common were all the rage.

If the Wombles weren't your thing, there are plenty of other bits and pieces in this display that are sure to stimulate memories. Even the rich patterns and colour schemes of the carpet and wallpaper in our recreated 1970s living room will bring back a flood of nostalgia. Who can look at a rotary dial telephone and not think of the sound of it actually ringing — a once-everyday sound that has now largely become part of history. Or to see Selwyn Toogood's cheery face as he presents an episode of *It's in the Bag* from Dunedin's Mayfair Theatre. The sights and sounds of popular culture animate the room sets and act as prompts to memory for anyone who lived through these decades.

The research findings are also arranged by decade, presented as stories on touch-screens, each featuring a dozen or so key

One of the 1037 anonymous participants in the Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study is measured during the early phases of the ground-breaking research project.



findings of the Study from the relevant period. The subjects covered reveal another aspect of the Study: its gradual evolution from an investigation of early childhood development and its associated issues, to a focus on adolescence, and then young adulthood, and now middle age. In fact, one of the primary interests of the Study as its participants reach 45 is issues of ageing. With people living longer, future Study research promises to reveal valuable insights into how an ageing population can best prepare for an old age that is healthy and vibrant as well as simply long.

Key to the success of the Dunedin Study has been its ability to retain the loyalty of its participants. It is in fact unique among international studies of this type in having a retention rate of 95 per cent from the original study group. This is some 30 per cent higher than any other longitudinal study in the world. Part of that success has been attributed to the time and place where it began: Dunedin in the 1970s. Whatever the explanation, it is one more reason for our city and our nation to be proud of this world-leading scientific enterprise in our midst.

It is of course not the only one: the first large-scale study of this kind was of all 13,000 babies born in Britain in one week in March 1948. It was so successful that cohorts born in 1958, 1970, 1991 and 2000 were also selected: a total of more than 70,000 people over five generations. The first cohort,

now in their seventies, are probably the most studied humans there have ever been. More than six thousand academic books and articles have drawn on the data generated by these British birth cohort studies. Like the Dunedin Study, these have been an important influence on health and wider social policies. For example, among the earliest findings in the late 1940s was that the poorest mothers were 70% more likely to have a stillborn child than were the richest.

Slice of Life – The World Famous Dunedin Study is on show in the Temporary Exhibitions Gallery until 27 March 2017.



Top: A part of the 1970s living room recreation in the 'lifeways' section of the *Slice of Life* exhibition.

Above right: The Dunedin Study continues into the twenty-first century, with the focus moving onto the effects of ageing.



Laying Up Treasures Where neither Moth nor Rust Doth Corrupt

Old soldiers never die — they simply fade away ... and so do their flags. Traditionally, when a military unit receives new colours or is disbanded, its old banners are deposited in a church to hang until moths and ultra-violet light take their toll. The guidon (a swallow-tailed banner) of the Canterbury Yeomanry Cavalry in Christ Church Cathedral, Christchurch, for instance has deteriorated so far that little but the staff and tassels remain. This is not going to happen to the colours of the NZ Scottish Regiment if the Museum has anything to do with it. The weekend before Anzac Day the regiment's colours were paraded for the last time and then handed over to the Museum for safe-keeping. Major Kevin Williams, second in command of Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles, said 'There is a certain amount of sadness in laying up the colours, but instead of being laid up in a church where they will decay, we are pleased they are going to a museum where they will be well preserved for ex-members of the Regiment and future generations to view.'

Following centuries-old British military tradition, New Zealand regiments are presented with 'colours', comprising two flags: one the imperial flag (the Union Jack, or in recent times the New Zealand ensign) as a symbol of allegiance to the crown, known as the King's or Queen's Colour; and

the other bearing the regimental badge on a background of the distinctive colour of the regiment's uniforms, called the Regimental Colour. Battle honours, scrolls listing the more significant engagements fought by the regiment, are added to this latter flag. Both colours are less elongated than conventional flags and use the distinctive old-style Union Jack with a fat white St Andrew's cross. Until 1881, British regiments carried these colours into battle so that in the confusion soldiers would know where to find their comrades and rally round the flag. They were defended to the death, as it was considered a great dishonour for one to be captured by the enemy. One of these very rare events happened in 1811 at the Battle of Albuera in Spain, when the second battalion of the 66th (Berkshire) Regiment was destroyed by Polish cavalry of the French army. Only 52 men survived, and one of them reported: 'I am sorry to say that the French got our colours, but not until we had two officers killed, two wounded and nine sergeants killed and wounded defending them.' (During the second Afghan War, the same thing happened again. The regiment lost its colours and almost two thirds of its men at Maiwand in 1880.) The colours are felt to symbolise the spirit of a regiment: when new, they were consecrated by the regiment's chaplain, and if they remained uncaptured, the battle-scarred banners were eventually laid up in the garrison or parish church to decay.

The NZ Scottish Regiment's colours are a little more than fifty years old, having been presented by the Governor General, Sir Bernard Fergusson, on 23 February 1963. An armoured unit would normally have a cavalry-style guidon, but the NZ Scottish was originally an infantry regiment so, uniquely, retained its pair of colours. Laying up regimental standards in a museum is not entirely unprecedented: the colours of the third Auckland (Countess of Ranfurly's Own) Infantry Regiment have been preserved at the Auckland Museum for more than forty years, but that institution incorporates a war memorial, unlike Toitū Otago Settlers Museum.

It was clear when the NZ Scottish Regiment was formed in January 1939 that another war was coming sooner or later and that the country would again need to do its bit for the imperial cause. This new Territorial regiment recruited throughout the country from men of Scottish birth or descent, and adopted a Highland uniform with Black Watch kilt and glengarry bonnet. When in December 1942 the first (North Island) battalion was sent overseas, its destination was appropriately enough New Caledonia. There the third NZ Division took over the defence of the northern part of the island, though it had to be disbanded in July 1943 due to lack of manpower. The second (South Island) battalion stayed behind to defend New Zealand itself. Many men transferred to the forces fighting in North Africa and then Italy. Having fought no battles of its own, the NZ Scottish Regiment's colours instead carry the battle honours of the second NZ Divisional Cavalry Regiment: Mount Olympus (Greece) and Crete (1941); and then as part of the Eighth Army at Tobruk (1941); El Alamein (1942), Tebaga Gap and Enfidaville (both in Tunisia, 1943); The Sangro (central Italy, 1943), Monte Cassino and the advance to Florence (both 1944), and finally Bologna (1945).

Queen Alexandra's Mounted Rifles commanding officer Lieutenant-Colonel Hamish Gibbons presents the Queen's Colour to Toitū Otago Settlers Museum director Jennifer Evans – Photo by Peter McIntosh, *Otago Daily Times*.

After the victory, the NZ Scottish was reformed in 1949 as the first Divisional Regiment, Royal New Zealand Army Corps, including both regular army and Territorial soldiers. It comprised four squadrons, one of which (C Sqn) was stationed in Dunedin. Cutbacks in 1963 reduced the unit to two squadrons, the second still stationed here. They were a reconnaissance unit with Daimler scout cars, and later Land Rovers. The unit's role changed in the 1970s, becoming an armoured personnel carrier squadron. In 1982 they took on the anti-armour role and were equipped with 'Carl Gustav' 106mm recoilless rifles (a sort of large tube that fires modified artillery shells). The end came in early 1990 when the regiment was disestablished and the NZ Scottish became a mere squadron within the fourth Otago Southland Regiment (Territorials). One troop and the headquarters however remained in Dunedin.

On Saturday, 16 April the colours were paraded through the city for the last time by a hundred-strong guard with swords drawn and bayonets fixed, together with the Army band, a piper and veterans of the Regiment. The laying-up ceremony formally marked the disbandment of the last components of the NZ Scottish Regiment and emphasised its long association with Dunedin. The Museum's Director Jennifer Evans said it was a significant event for both the Regiment and the Museum: 'We are privileged to be taking over the care and preservation of its colours. This recognises Dunedin's Scottish heritage, and its connections with the New Zealand Defence Force'.

Committee Update

As the end of the financial year approaches, it is time to reflect on what your Committee has been up to. The big achievements this year have been, first, the implementation of a new financial package through Xero. The changeover began with the start of the new financial year. Keith Clifford, our Treasurer, is now satisfied with the quality of financial information available to the Committee, who are becoming familiar with the new format for the figures. And Kerry is happy with the ease of recording financial transactions.

The second big achievement has been the shift to a new membership database on Outreach CRM. So far the transition is going smoothly. Vice President Pete Smith was instrumental in our choice. The system enables us to create a single source of membership information, allowing interaction with prospective, current and past members. We are still in the set-up and learning phase, and it should be ready in time for the next mail-out. The next challenge is a website. Again thanks to Pete Smith this is coming closer. The website will complete our communication network of printed newsletter and electronic e-news. If you want to receive the e-news, send an e-mail to Kerry at otago.settlers.assn@xtra.co.nz, and she will set it up. With Outreach, mailing lists are so much easier to manage. In fact we may be able to explore special-interest groups within the membership: watch this space.

One of the recommendations from the Ignite Consultants report was to compile a list of the items donated by the OSA to the Museum since the handover in the 1990s. It has taken a while, but it is now underway. I wonder what surprises it might reveal. Dot Page had a surprise for the Committee at a recent meeting. She and the Archivist, Emma Knowles, have unearthed the actual handover certificate. For some older members that will bring back memories. Looking beyond the OSA, we are continuing our relationship with Friends groups in Dunedin, with a short seminar looking at the DCC Arts and Culture policy, again organised by Vice President Hilary Allison.

The Association has been involved in several events so far this year. In spite of the rain (in a remarkably dry summer), the Summer Outing was fun. The Events Committee went out on a limb with this, and it worked. Anniversary Day celebrations were slightly different this year. Yes, there was the traditional church service followed by morning tea. And there was the Anniversary Day Dinner, at which Annie Villiers spoke about Dunedin as a Unesco City of Literature. The large gathering enjoyed the gracious atmosphere of the Dunedin Club. This year there was a third event on the official Anniversary Day holiday. The OSA joined with Toitu staff in welcoming visitors to the Smith Gallery and the Research Centre. There they had the opportunity to track back to their particular early settler ancestor. The 'Who am I descended from?' event was a pilot for what might become a more extensive ongoing project.

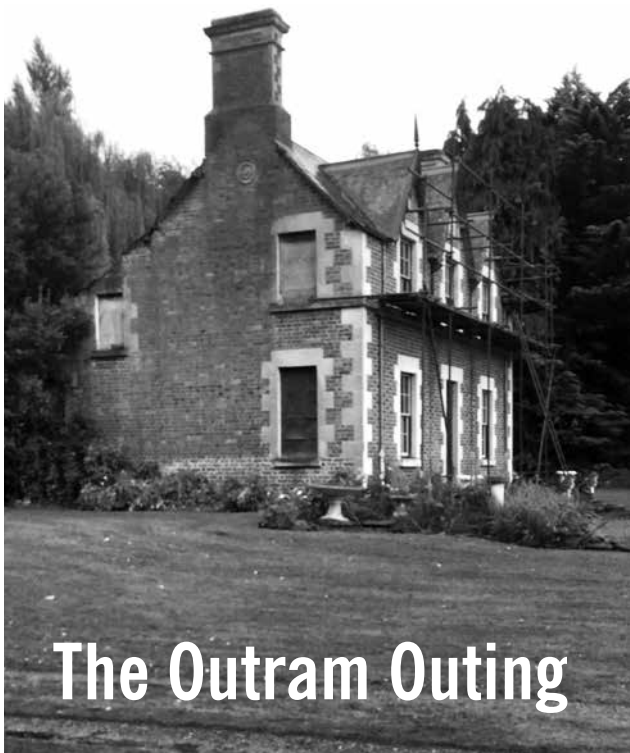
On a brisk autumn morning, OSA members and Toitū OSM staff served hot drinks to those who came in from the cold after the Anzac Day Dawn Service, not as many as last year, maybe, but still a welcome offering, and part of the tradition. The poppy project associated with the day was completed also. A giant poppy made of donated poppies, sewn into a wall hanging on the Craft Wednesdays, was finished and hung at the Montecillo Veterans Home and Hospital. Again a poppy wreath was laid at the Cenotaph during the Dawn Service by Jennifer Evans and me.

Life on the OSA Committee continues to be busy, entertaining, and remarkably satisfying.

Susan Schweigman
President

Send a Search Party

The editor is confident that readers carefully preserve their copies of this newsletter, and if they do not go so far as to have them bound in red morocco, at least they do not use them to line the bottom of the budgie's cage. The Museum's Archive alas lacks issues 2, 3 (1976) and 41 (1989). If anyone has a copy of any of these, Emma would very much appreciate having them. If you feel unable to part with an original rarity, having a photocopy would be just as useful. If you turn up a copy of any of these, please contact Emma.Knowles@dcc.govt.nz or phone 474 2721.



Ray and Eve Beardsmore have been prominent and active members of the OSA for more than forty years. After greeting their visitors, they led them to their stable which houses a very impressive collection of ... well, nearly everything: vintage cars, a child's pedal car, dolls, pianos, mannequins dressed in vintage clothes, china ware for all occasions, an old till, and much more. Small groups then took it in turn to visit a children's cottage hidden in the enchanted forest beside the stables. This too was chock-full of things: a loft bed had blankets and pillows and a quaint little ladder up to it. Below was a room with two children's pianos, amongst other things. The back room held a number of children's toys, dolls and a bike, and one had to remember to duck as the door height is not forgiving to anyone taller than three feet. After about forty minutes browsing the stables, members were taken to see an Aston Martin DB4 Vantage with Superleggera coachwork by Carrozzeria Touring of Milan — a precursor of the motor made famous in 1964 by Connery; Sean Connery.

The day was a great success and everyone had a lovely time. The final viewing took place at the Pixie Town cottage. Visitors were dared to take a chocolate out of the treasure box which threatened to slam closed on their hand if they took too long making their choice. Most of the visitors then rounded off the afternoon with tea at a café in Outram.

For Your Diary

Midwinter Meeting

Look out for the flyer which will be posted together with this newsletter for details of the Association's midwinter meeting. Entertainment will be provided by the Gasworks Guild of Gadgeteers, a steampunk group based at the Gasworks Museum in Braemar Street. This year the function will start at 6pm and run till 8pm so that members can make it home safely through any fog, ice or snow that may materialise.

The Association's visit to the Beardsmores' collection on Thursday, 25 February was very successful, despite the deluge. Sixteen members travelled to Woodside Manor near Outram by bus, while others came in eight cars. Ray Beardsmore greeted the bus and gave the visitors a brief history of the early years of the district. Their house, completed in the mid-1860s, was originally named 'The Poplars', and was home to the McDiarmid family for about a century. Francis McDiarmid (d. 1897) and his wife Janet (*née* Milne, d. 1881) had arrived in the *Philip Laing* in 1848. They chose to settle at Woodside because it reminded them of Ben Lomond, Stirlingshire; they had the swampy area drained and in the early years supplied building materials and provisions to gold miners who passed through the district on their way towards Middlemarch for the diggings. The house was constructed with bricks made on site. When the Beardsmores bought the house in 1974 it had been empty for 16 years and they have had a massive task of restoration.



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This newsletter was produced by the Otago Settlers Association, founder and supporter of the Toitū 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 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 Toitū Otago Settlers Museum

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