



# OTAGO SETTLERS NEWS

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

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## THE UNSINKABLE ARCHIBALD JACK

Doing their bit for the war effort, members of the North East Valley Women's Patriotic Association embroidered several quilts to comfort wounded soldiers and remind them of home while in military hospitals in Britain. Three of them are in the Museum's collection, and one from 1916 is on show in *The Women's War: Patriotism, Service & Dissent* until 24 June. Along with a few good-luck messages, the patriotic ladies' signatures and addresses were stitched into the quilt. Among the various NEVs and Roslyns appears the rather more unexpected Petrograd. Alma Street or Balaclava, perhaps, but Petrograd? It turns out that Winnie Gregory had been living in the capital of the Russian Empire since the start of the war because her husband Herbert was Physical Director of the YMCA there. Interviewed on his return to Dunedin, Herbert commented on the food shortages and

high price<sup>3</sup> of firewood in Petrograd (the once and future St Petersburg). Clothing and footwear had become very expensive, but on the other hand the imposition of wartime prohibition had reduced drunkenness and crime. 'The Czar and his advisers are determined to see the war through to a successful finish,' he told the *Otago Witness*, without any inkling that Nicholas II, Tsar of All the Russias, would be forced to abdicate within months. The Gregorys got out at just the right time. Herbert wanted to return home to volunteer for the army, so they were back in Dunedin by December 1916.

Another Dunedin man however turned up in Petrograd just in time for the shooting to start. Otago Boys' High School Old Boy Archibald Jack, a railway engineer, wrote to the school

<sup>3</sup>The Brilliant Exploit of the Noshido Infantry Company.' Japanese troops attack a train on the Trans-Siberian, late 1918. Library of Congress, Washington, DC.





magazine laconically mentioning he had been in the city during the revolution. He escaped unscathed, as he managed to do throughout his varied and at times highly dangerous career. While the Great War provided many young men and some women with the prospect of adventure overseas, for Jack the great opportunity had been the South African War at the turn of the century. Born in 1874, he was an exact contemporary of Winston Churchill. His father McLean Jack was a contractor and undertaker in Hokitika, where he was a local councillor and future mayor. After leaving school, Archibald joined the railways in 1893, becoming an engineer on the Nelson section. At the age of 27, he volunteered for the war in South Africa, and never looked back. He was an excellent marksman, having won the Challenge Cup for shooting while at school. He had been a lieutenant in the OBHS cadets, and was given the same rank as Paymaster to the 9th NZ Contingent. Once the Boer War was over, he stayed on in the Transvaal. Jack worked for the Central South African Railways from 1902, first as Divisional Engineer and from 1905 Assistant Engineer-in-Chief in Johannesburg, in charge of the construction of several new lines. In 1908 he left for China, where he was involved with railway construction on the Tientsin-Pukow Railway for two years. (The line now forms part of the main Peking-Shanghai route.) Then in 1911 he was appointed chief engineer of the Ferrocarril del Sud, the Buenos Aires Great Southern Railway in Argentina. There, Jack married an Englishwoman, Gertrude Millar. The couple sailed to Britain in 1917 so that Jack could offer his services for the war effort. As their liner approached Milford Haven in south-west Wales it was torpedoed and fifteen of the crew drowned. All the passengers were reported to have survived, though they lost all their possessions. Jack was to be torpedoed twice more in the course of his military career.

Once on dry land, Jack joined the Royal Engineers and was commissioned Lieutenant-Colonel. He was first sent to Romania with the British railway mission, under the command of British General Raymond de Candolle. Later, Jack was appointed head of the British railway mission to South Russia, helping the anti-communist White Russians and Don Cossacks beat back the Red menace. In the Caucasus in 1918 he was taken prisoner at Baku (now in Azerbaijan) by the Bolsheviks, but managed to escape and crossed the Caspian Sea to Meshed. While in Persia (now Iran) he

was attached to General Lionel Dunsterville's small force, a select band of British, Canadian and Australian officers and NCOs that included 34 New Zealanders. They were known as the 'Hush-Hush' brigade, and among them were the Dunedin men Major William Tracy MC, Captains Edwin Wells MC and Spencer Scoular, and Sergeants Robert Leeden and Alexander Nimmo, both from Mosgiel. Their job was to bolster local Georgian and Armenian forces in order to prevent the Germans and Ottomans from taking over the region following the collapse of Russian control in the aftermath of the Bolshevik takeover. While with Dunsterforce, Nimmo won the Distinguished Conduct Medal for conspicuous gallantry in helping protect a group of 70,000 Assyrian Christian refugees from Turkish and Kurdish attacks in northern Persia in August 1918.

Making it to Tehran, Archibald Jack travelled via Baghdad and Basra to the safety of British territory at Bombay. The army next ordered him to Tokyo, from where he was to travel to Vladivostok to become the British representative on the inter-allied board that controlled the Russian railways that had not yet fallen into the hands of the Bolsheviks. As head of the British Railway Mission on the Trans-Siberian railway, it was Jack's task to restore order and reorganise traffic in co-operation with Russian railway engineers. He worked with the representatives of the other allied forces that had been sent to Siberia to help the anti-communist White Russian forces crush the Bolsheviks. Nine countries were involved in the intervention, and each had its own agenda: the British were trying to create a strong Russian force to defeat the Bolsheviks, which the French hoped would divert German attention from the Western Front. The Japanese sent a very large force to extend their sphere of interest in eastern Siberia and Manchuria, while the Americans aimed to keep the strategically vital railway running. A vast stockpile of military equipment and supplies had built up in Vladivostok for transport inland, but bottlenecks on the Trans-Siberian made this very difficult. A colleague later recalled that 'for the carrying out of his work, Jack required tact, resourcefulness, and abundant energy. He possessed these qualities in outstanding measure, together with a cheeriness which made it a joy to be in contact with him. He had, too, a singular directness and charm of manner which enabled him to establish at once the most cordial relations

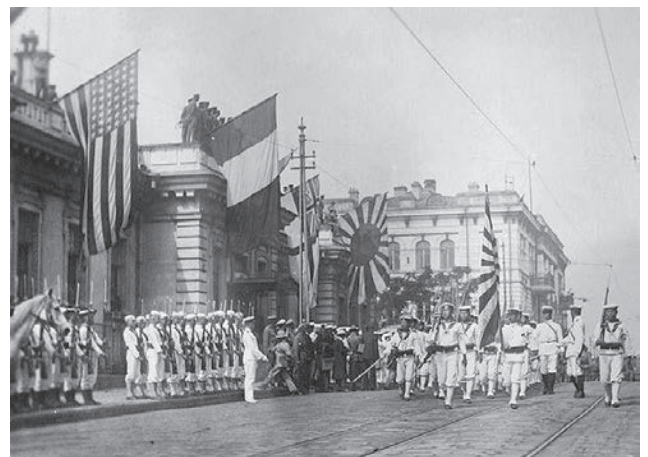
**Top left:** 'Furious Fighting at Amur.' Imperial Japanese and White Russian forces capture a major railway hub, September 1918. **Top right:** 'Camping of the Expeditionary Army in Siberia.' The American Expeditionary Force in Siberia, late 1918. Both from Library of Congress, Washington, DC.



with his colleagues.' In difficult conditions, Jack was to show great presence of mind: 'he was capable of acting with uncompromising severity on occasion ... when Ekaterinburg was on the point of falling and a discreditable *saive qui peut* [mad rush] had started, it was Jack who saved the situation and checked the stampede. It was thanks to him that the rolling stock which a few panic-stricken generals had got hold of and were using for effecting their own escape was stopped, and the evacuation carried out in an orderly manner.' As readers of *Doctor Zhivago* will know, control of the Trans-Siberian railway was gradually lost to partisan forces and the Red Army in the course of 1919. All the Western troops withdrew the following year, followed by the Japanese in 1922.

Ending his military career as a Brigadier-General, CB, CMG and CBE, in 1920 Jack headed for Cuba for a new job managing the United Railways of Havana. Peacetime did not bring an end to danger, however. There was a great deal of labour unrest in Cuba, and on one occasion near his office Jack's car was surrounded by a group of strikers. One of them shoved a revolver through the window and fired at Jack point-blank, hitting him under one eye. The bullet came out through the back of his skull, 'yet his incredible vitality saved him and a few weeks later no traces of the wound remained,' according to *The Times'* obituarist. Jack needed such recuperative powers, for his luck was to be tested again a few years later. He retired in 1925 and visited Dunedin briefly for the first time since 1902. He returned to England, and one summer's day in 1927 he left London for the south coast on the Southern Railway's afternoon express. The train seemed to roll more than usual on fast curves, something an

experienced railwayman like Jack would have been only too well aware of. Passing through a small country station too quickly, the train came off the tracks and hit a bridge near Sevenoaks. Many passengers were injured and 13 killed, but Archibald Jack 'was saved as if by a miracle.' He was to die in January 1939 'after two years of suffering borne with wholly admirable fortitude. For his friends – and there were many – it is a poorer world since he left it, for in him there has passed away a most attractive personality and a very gallant soul.'



**Top:** The first American Red Cross train that reached Vladivostok with 300 refugee children from the Urals. **Bottom:** Japanese troops parading past the allied headquarters building in Vladivostok, September 1918. Both from the Library of Congress, Washington, DC.





## GETTING SETTLED IN

No book could be closer to the *raison d'être* of the Otago Early Settlers' Association than Ian Dougherty's new history of Dunedin from its beginnings to 1860. On its foundation in 1898 the Association restricted membership to the Old Identities who had arrived before the end of 1861; it wanted nothing to do with the New Iniquity, the riff-raff who had been drawn to Otago by the prospect of gold from that time onwards. The OESA's attitude gradually softened, and well-behaved settlers who had made it here by 1864 began to be let in on sufferance. *Dunedin: Founding a New World City* covers the period 1844–60 that is often skimmed over by historians in their eagerness to get to the gold rushes. It 'is concerned with the early European settlers of Dunedin – who they were, why they came, how they survived and mostly thrived – and with the decisions they made that continue to profoundly affect the appearance and personality of the city nearly a century and three-quarters later.' There are good stories to be told, but most of the existing writing on this first decade is out of date, if not out of print, and pretty hard going for modern readers. Newer work is typically hidden away in unpublished theses or postgraduate student dissertations.

The book's first chapters deal with the plans for a Scottish colony somewhere suitable in the South Island, and, once the site had been chosen, the on-the-spot arrangements for a township, as well as the religious nature of the enterprise. Next, various aspects of the earliest colonial life are explored: housing, political-religious and personal squabbles, Kirk and school, making 11 very readable chapters in all. Ian Dougherty provides a fresh perspective on several well-known stories. The decision to emigrate was typically a male one, and

the example of James Adam has sometimes been given to support this. He heard Thomas Burns talk about the proposed New Edinburgh colony after evening church one Sunday, signed up on the spot and went home to tell his wife. Or at least that was his version of the story. Ian however points out that Margaret Adam was not best pleased. She urged her friends and relations to try to change her husband's mind, and even persuaded their minister to withhold the necessary 'certificate of good character' from him. It was probably her sister's decision to join their young family in emigrating that eventually won her over.

Once the new settlement was up and running, an intense rivalry developed between the rich, established settler John Jones and a brash newcomer, James Macandrew, who stepped off the boat in 1851. This was a time before there were any banks in the town – they did not arrive until 1857. Macandrew had promissory notes printed that could be used in his store, and Jones, who had been the chief merchant up to that time, decided to break the bank, as it were, of his upstart rival. He accumulated a great supply of Macandrew's notes and turned up at his store, pockets bulging with £1,000-worth. But Macandrew was prepared for this move and had stashed away enough gold sovereigns to redeem the notes. Jones then also had his own, more elaborate, promissory notes printed in Melbourne.

Ian Dougherty makes several striking points about the early years of the Otago settlement, 'a Colony which aspire[d] to become the centre of civilisation in the Southern Hemisphere,' as the *Otago Journal* put it in January 1848. Dunedin at first

The wattle and daub cottage of Archibald Macdonald built on the upper corner of Stuart and Cargill Streets. Macdonald's five-year-old son is standing outside the door. Macdonald ran a private school in Andersons Bay in the 1850s. Watercolour painting by David Henderson.



was effectively an island: with no roads or bridges to link it with the hinterland, it was a great deal easier to get about by boat. Early on, it was much faster to sail to Auckland via Sydney than to go direct. If you sent a letter to Christchurch, you could wait up to six months for a reply. Even the English newspapers took only four or five months to get here. The important local news was announced by the town crier, Sandy Low, walking up and down Princes Street, ringing his bell. Dunedin was like a large village, with a strikingly young population. Of the 1,712 inhabitants in 1857, 949 were under 21, with a mere 16 over-60s. They were a notably well-behaved lot: only 21 convictions were recorded for 1853, and for several years no offence was committed that was serious enough to justify a jury trial. Ian points out that Dunedin was one of the most law-abiding of all colonial towns. The Dunedinites of 1854 were described as 'a people under the spell of a high moral influence.' The moral example was not however set by the medical profession: the first conviction for speeding came in 1855, when Dr Henry Manning was fined for 'galloping furiously' along High and Princes Streets, shouting and swearing at pedestrians and spattering them with mud. Yet in the early 1850s, there were not enough rowdy doctors or drunken sailors to keep the small police force occupied, so they passed their time 'drinking, gambling and quarrelling.' They were replaced in 1855 by a better-behaved, unarmed force of five men, all named John.

This book is lively and readable, and one special feature adds hugely to its attraction and value: it is superbly illustrated. Paintings and photographs from the Museum's own collection, the Hocken and further afield are very clearly reproduced, and provided with unusually informative captions. However well you think you know the history of Dunedin, there will still be pictures here you have not seen before. It is well worth getting out the magnifying glass for the very useful, comprehensive bibliography at the end. It shows how much detailed research Ian has brought together in this concise history.

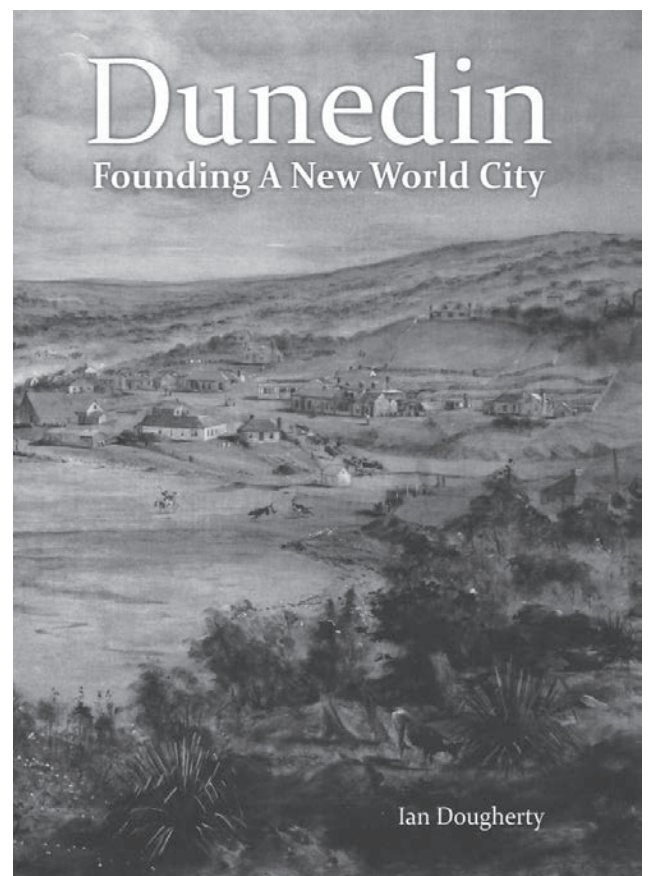
The author has strong Dunedin roots: Ian was born here, and educated at East Taieri Primary School, King's High School and Otago University, where he specialised in New Zealand

and Pacific history and took an MA in 1975. He worked as a journalist and as a professional historian at the Department of Internal Affairs. Ian has been a free-lance historian for the past two decades, and this is his 25th book. *Heart of Gold: People and Places of Otago*, his biographies of Arawata Bill and AH Reed, his history of Vauxhall Gardens, and most recently his book on the Hillside railway workshops will be familiar to anyone with an interest in local history.

*Dunedin: Founding a New World City* ends with the comment the pilot Dick Driver made to Thomas Burns as he guided the *Philip Laing* into Otago Harbour: 'Why, sir, I'd rather be hanged in Otago than die a natural death in Wellington!'

(Adapted from Dorothy Page's address at the launch of the book at the Museum last November. The Alfred & Isabel Reed Fund, administered by the OSA, contributed towards the book's production costs.)

Ian Dougherty, *Dunedin: Founding a New World City* (Saddle Hill Press, 2017) 128 pages, paperback; 75 colour and monochrome illustrations. \$39.99 (With OSA members' 15% discount, \$33.99 plus \$5 packing and postage. Please make out cheques to the DCC.)



**Bottom:** The house of resident magistrate William Strode, with a New Munster armed policeman standing guard outside, 1848. Drawing by Walter Baldock Durrant Mantell, Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington: E-333-110.





## Christmas Cheer

More than 80 members attended the OSA's Christmas meeting in the early evening of Thursday, 7 December. After downing a glass of champagne or non-alcoholic punch and paying a visit to the Pixies in their freshly refurbished Town, the audience settled down for the show from the Sixty-Plus Entertainers. They began with a railway theme, performing in front of *Josephine* and on the 61st anniversary of the much larger locomotive outside, J<sup>A</sup>1274 (Hillside 397/56), having entered service. John Williamson the compère introduced the entertainers, many of whom are nearer 70 than the troupe's name suggests. The total age of the dozen performers might even reach the three-quarter millennium mark. They are all amateurs, in the best sense of doing it for the love of music and performing. The musical accompaniment was provided by our own Chris Pike on the piano. First to leave the station was Noel Stanaway, in engine driver's uniform, who recited the comic monologue 'Kiwi Express' about the travails of travelling by steam train. Then came the railway-themed songs: 'Whistle Stop' (1973); 'Morningtown Ride' (1957; not Mornington – you needed a cable car to get there); 'I've Been Workin' on the Railroad' (1894); 'Chattanooga Choo Choo' (1941); 'I'm Alabamy Bound' (1909); 'In the Middle of the House' (1956); and as a recessionary, 'Down by the Station' (1948).

During the intermission, the raffles were drawn and cakes, chocolates and strawberries were served. As it was five years to the day since the Museum reopened after its major rebuilding, a specially made birthday cake, decorated with a photograph of the Museum's sharp end on the icing, was cut. Everyone sang 'Happy Birthday, Toitū.'



Then the Sixty-Pluses returned, now in spangly red, silver and black 1920s-style costumes, to sing some classic show-stoppers: 'There's No Business Like Show Business' (1946); 'Ain't She Sweet?' (1927); 'You'd Be Surprised' (1919); 'Thoroughly Modern Millie' (1967); 'Puttin' on the Ritz' (1927); and as a finale 'There's No Business Like Show Business' was reprised. Mary Billington the Lancashire Lass then performed a comic monologue, 'Wash Day,' about memories of grandma's laundry. The audience then joined in to sing a selection of familiar Christmas carols: 'Silent Night,' 'Jingle Bells,' 'O Come, All Ye Faithful,' and 'We Wish You a Merry Christmas.' For a grand finale, everyone sang 'Happy Days are Here Again' (1929, and with luck, 2018).



**Top left:** OSA members Rhondda Martin and Janet Hopkins on duty at the raffle table. **Top right:** Jennifer Evans and Susan Schweigman with the Museum-themed Christmas cake. **Bottom right:** The Sixty-Plus Entertainers performing in 1920s glad rags.



## Barry Clarke MNZM 1939-2017

Barry Clarke, a former President and Treasurer of the Otago Settlers Association and a long-serving committee member, died in December. A sparkling personality always ready with a good joke, he was active in a wide range of charitable organisations, several of which he helped found. Barry started as an accountant at the age of 16 and became a partner in the firm of Turpin & Clarke at 22. He was very generous with his time and expertise, not least as chairman of the committee and chief fundraiser for the redevelopment of the Otago Settlers Museum. The Museum would not be what it is today had it not been for the millions Barry helped raise. He had joined the OSA Committee back in 1991, and served as President from 1999 to 2001. Barry then chaired the Museum Board for three years, retaining a seat for some years afterwards. He returned to the OSA Committee in 2007 as honorary Treasurer. He then put his financial expertise and considerable persuasive skills to work as chair of the Association's fundraising committee.

Barry extended his activities in heritage-related causes by helping organise and run several related organisations, among them the Dunedin Gasworks Museum Trust and the Dunedin Prison Trust. As chair of the Southern Heritage Trust in 2007 he supervised its steady expansion to becoming a respected advocate for Otago's built heritage. Barry also chaired the Tapestry Trust of New Zealand; members of the Otago Embroiderers' Guild can regularly be seen at the Museum working on part of this nationwide project to depict the country's history in tapestry. The panel depicting the development of motoring gives pride of place to Barry's British racing green Jaguar XK150. He was President of the Otago Automobile Association in the 1980s

and a founding member of the Otago Motor Club Trust, which shepherds the assets of the Otago AA to support good causes. The range of Barry's interests and the high regard in which he was held was made clear at an event held at Toitū last year at which he was thanked by representatives of many voluntary organisations to which he had made a great contribution.

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## We've Had Five Years

In December the Museum marked five highly successful years since its transformation and reopening under a new name. The Director, Jennifer Evans, gave a special morning tea party to commemorate the anniversary. Since the reopening, the Museum has had more than 1.4 million visitors. Strikingly, the high visitor numbers were sustained after the initial novelty wore off; last year, the total was 309,421 people: fat-skinny, tall-short, the nobodies and the somebodies – we never thought we'd see so many people.

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## How Did You Get Here?

If you are 12 years or older, and still at school, write us a story about your family's migration to Otago and you could win a prize. Your essay can be historical or set in modern times, fictional or non-fictional, but it must be based on a journey someone in your family has made to Otago. There will be a year's OSA membership for the top three essays, together with \$200 for the winner and \$100 for the runner-up. The closing date is 30 April and all the best entries will be published on the OSA website. For the full details and an entry form, see [otagosettlers.org.nz](http://otagosettlers.org.nz)

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## Keeping in Touch

The Queen sent her first e-mail message in March 1976, choosing the user name 'HME2.' If you have belatedly followed her lead, please drop Kylie Darragh a note at [admin@otago.settlers.org](mailto:admin@otago.settlers.org) to let her know your e-mail address. The Committee would like to keep in touch regarding events that crop up at short notice. Because of the production process this newsletter cannot give notice of events that happen close to its publication date, and it costs a great deal to post out occasional flyers. The Committee however is keen to assure members these electronic messages will not mean the loss of this printed newsletter.



## Book News

**Ferguslei to Hawthorne: The History of North East Valley: People and Places Involved in its Development**, by Carole Hendry (Dunedin, 2016). 37 pages, paperback. \$16.95 (With OSA members' 15% discount, \$14.41 plus \$5 packing and postage. Please make out cheques to the DCC.)

North Road was for many years the main route to Port Chalmers and all points north, so the North East Valley was a busy place. Carole Hendry published a well-regarded short history of the Valley in 1976, which was quickly snapped up. Second-hand copies will now set you back anything from \$40 to almost \$95. Everyone except owners of the original will therefore be pleased that 40 years on she has brought out a reprint. The text has been reset and, taking advantage of improvements in photographic reproduction, the illustrations are better than ever. Back in the seventies it was still possible to interview people with memories of the early residents of the Valley. Carole was told of a family who lived at the bottom of Selwyn Street: the parents slept in a tent, while their children had to make do with an empty piano case. Not quite one of the Four Yorkshiremen's 'hole in t'ground covered by a piece of tarpaulin,' but near enough.

## For Your Diary Anniversary Day

The dinner to commemorate the 170th anniversary of the foundation of Otago will be held at the Dunedin Club, Fernhill, on Friday, 23 March, everyone to be seated by 7 pm. The Hon Dr David Clark MP will be guest speaker, and places are limited. Tickets cost \$55 and can be obtained from the OSA office or the Scottish Shop at 17 George Street.

The anniversary service will be held at First Church at 10 am on Sunday, 25 March. The guest speaker will be the architect and theologian Professor Murray Rae of Otago University. The St Kilda Brass Band will play.

Members of the Association are entitled to a handy discount of 15% on the cost of books and other items from the Museum shop. They also have free access to the archives, and for those living outside Dunedin an hour's free research each year by the Archivist, Emma Knowles.



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

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 [admin@otago.settlers.org](mailto:admin@otago.settlers.org)

 **Otago Daily Times**

*The Otago Daily Times supports Toitū Otago Settlers Museum*

### OTAGO SETTLERS ASSOCIATION

31 Queens Gardens  
PO Box 74 Dunedin 9016  
Ph / Fax 03 477 8677  
email [admin@otago.settlers.org](mailto:admin@otago.settlers.org)

### TOITŪ OTAGO SETTLERS MUSEUM

31 Queens Gardens  
PO Box 566 Dunedin 9016  
Ph 03 477 5052 Fax 03 474 2727  
email [osmmail@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:osmmail@dcc.govt.nz)

North East Valley photographed by Muir & Moodie in 1912. The Town Hall (bottom right) was demolished in 1972. Te Papa Tongarewa (C.025239)