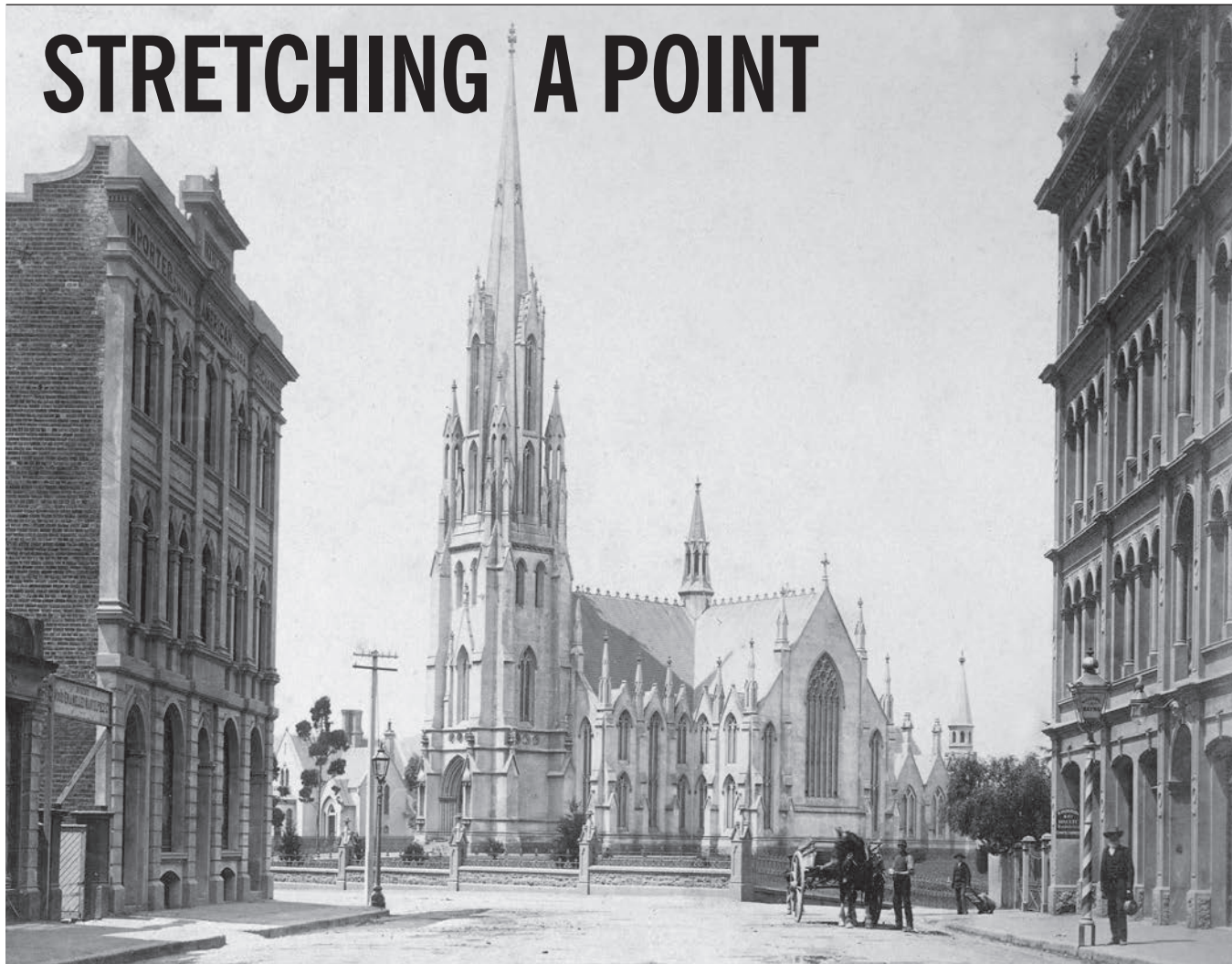


# OTAGO SETTLERS NEWS

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

SUMMER 2018 ISSUE 139

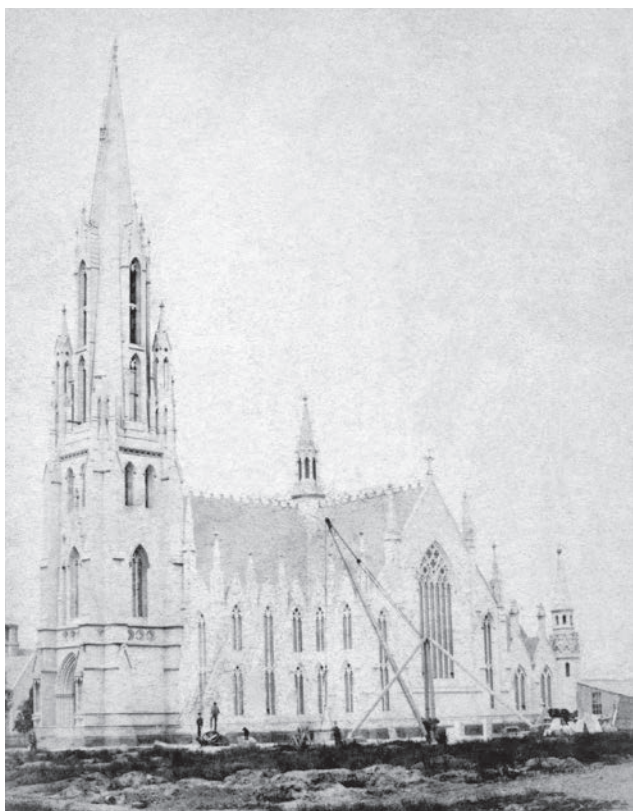
## STRETCHING A POINT



The scaffolding that had enclosed the tower and spire of First Church for more than a year was removed over the course of the winter and its slender proportions can be admired once again. Unusually, it is the oldest part of the building — a shipment of timber intended for the church was lost in a shipwreck, so the builders concentrated on the parts of the project that needed only stone. This was fortunate for posterity, given the well-known tendency for funds to run out and the building of towers to be put off until an unspecified future date, as has been the case with both Dunedin cathedrals and the Museum's own glass tower. The Melbourne architect Robert Lawson won the competition to design a new home for the First (that is, principal) Church of Otago in 1862. His modified design for the spire as built closely resembles that of the Tolbooth Church, dramatically sited at the top of the Royal Mile in Edinburgh, near the castle. It was built in 1842–45 to the designs of James Gillespie Graham and the renowned gothic revival architect AWN Pugin as the meeting place for the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland.

It was several years before any building work began on what James Macandrew called the 'Bell Hill Cathedral' because first the hill had to be lowered by about 40 feet and the site levelled. Once a start was made, progress was rapid: the foundation stone was laid in May 1868; the spire was finished in June 1870; and the church was ready for its official opening in November 1873. The building was widely admired, though right from the start there were reservations about the proportions of the spire. One newspaper correspondent claimed the 'unsymmetrical appearance which the spire of this beautiful church presented was often the subject of remark by those who possessed a mathematical eye; in fact, I have had the remark made to me by a friend that it was quite an eyesore to him whenever he happened to be anywhere near the structure.' Lawson too was unhappy with the result. The story goes that he saw the completed spire from a boat in the harbour on returning from a visit to Melbourne, and saw it was not quite right. 'For his own satisfaction' he had the upper section of the spire, above the gablets (or blank lucarnes), dismantled and rebuilt at

A Burton Brothers photograph of First Church from Moray Place, after March 1885 when a gale brought down three small pinnacles. The striped pole on the right advertised Beissel's Turkish 'Baths,' and just beyond is Hudson's biscuit factory.



his own expense. Lauding Lawson as a 'Conscientious Architect,' the *Hawke's Bay Times* thought the 'name of so conscientious a man deserves to be handed down to posterity. What a number of people would be ruined if his example were generally followed.' There may have been structural reasons for the rebuilding also: the newspapers reported that 'Owing to some misunderstanding, the spire has been erected slightly out of the perpendicular; but arrangements have been made for heightening and straightening the upper portion.'

The 'rather perilous work' began in late April 1874, and it was confidently expected the 'addition to the altitude will very much improve its appearance.' (Nothing more was said about its allegedly defective verticality.) The spire had been built by David Hunter, of the contractors Hunter & Goodfellow, together with his foreman of works Thomas Thomson, the mason Archibald Bennett and his labourer Thomas Weiks. The decorative detail was by the talented carver Louis Godfrey. Thomson and Bennett were brought back to rebuild the spire, as they seemed 'to be the only men in Dunedin who have the ability, and the pluck, to tackle the work.' For Hunter, who had to watch his work being undone so soon, worse was to come. He was never to see the spire finished: working as contractor on the Waitaki Bridge in September 1874, he slipped off one of the girders into the fast-flowing river and was drowned. At the start of December the photographers Burton Brothers took advantage of the still unfinished spire to take a panorama of the city from the top. 'The work of getting the apparatus in position was one of considerable risk and difficulty.' Almost seventy years later Fred Millier could remember as an eleven-year-old having to hand up the delicate glass plates to the photographer. The resulting ten photographs were sold as a small book, with First

Church and its truncated spire as the frontispiece. (The Museum displays an enlargement in the round in 'Dunedin's Dark Side.')

Progress on the spire was slow as 'There is only one man known in the Province ... who can work at such an elevation on so narrow a base,' and 'the indispensable was engaged in his trade elsewhere.' He was reported to 'suffer terribly from earache, so he can't go up on a windy day, but *nous verrons* [we'll see]. One of the four lower pinnacles had been blown down in December 1871, so pains were taken to anchor the new section of the spire securely. A 70-foot iron rod ran through the upper stonework and was bolted to four beams that crossed at the centre of the spire. The workmen high up reported they could feel almost no vibration in the spire despite its height and slender proportions. The spire was now 185 feet high, 15 feet more than originally intended. A flag was stuck on the pinnacle to mark the completion of the work at the end of February 1875. The original finial was eight feet high, with a beaver sculpted on one side and an ermine on the other (both were symbols of chastity). A family of mynah birds promptly took up residence and started terrorising the local starlings. The new stonework quickly weathered to a darker colour, so for many years afterwards the join line remained clearly visible. The stretched spire was generally thought a great improvement, one observer declaring it 'a thing of grace and beauty, having a very different effect now to what it had before, when it looked dumpy, and therefore clumsy and out of keeping with the general effect of the building.' Some however thought the whole affair reflected badly on the city. On visiting Dunedin in December 1873 the Governor, Sir James Fergusson, a notoriously frugal Scot, thought the spire of First Church showed the citizens delighted 'more in ostentatious display than in works of sober usefulness.'

**Left:** The church as completed in 1873. The spirelet that blew down on Christmas Eve 1871 is still missing.

**Right:** The church showing the darker stone of the rebuilt section of the spire.



# Director's Annual Report

## Highlights

**It has been yet another year of record visitor numbers at Toitū Otago Settlers Museum! Last year we welcomed 316,836 visitors, which represents an increase of 7,345, or 2%, on the previous year and brings the overall number of visitors since our 2012 reopening to 1.7 million. We are also delighted to report that there were 51,194 visitors to Lan Yuan, the Dunedin Chinese Garden, a slight increase on the previous 12 months. It has attracted just over 250,000 visitors since 2012.**

This year we have presented a rich and varied temporary exhibition programme featuring *Sketched in Stone*, an exhibition showcasing the considerable talent of Dunedin's lithographic artists working in the city during the Victorian and Edwardian eras. We also exhibited *The Belgians Have Not Forgotten*, a travelling exhibition created by the Memorial Museum Passchendaele. It came here with funding and support from the Belgian federal government and served to commemorate relationships forged in the First World War between the people of New Zealand and Belgium. We were also delighted to present *The Women's War: Patriotism, Service and Dissent*, which was inspired by the commemorations of the Dunedin women who were awarded the Queen's Medal by Queen Elizabeth of the Belgians last century. Focusing on the wartime experiences of these Otago women, the exhibition explored their contributions to life during the war, including their patriotic activity and service as nurses and volunteers, as well as recognising the contributions of those in the minority who stood fast in opposition to the war.

It has also been a special year for the Chinese Garden, which celebrates its first ten years. Events to mark this milestone include *The Peony Pavilion*, a traditional Kunqu Opera performed during the summer in the natural outdoor garden setting. Further events to mark the anniversary are planned for the second half of 2018.

## Collections and Exhibitions

The teams from the Museum and Garden have enjoyed delivering rich and wide-ranging experiences for the public over the last year. As well as creating two innovative exhibitions and hosting a touring exhibition, the collections and exhibitions team fielded many public and research enquiries regarding our photograph, archive and object collections as well as for exhibition-related items. *Toitū Te Whare Taoka*, a photographic display showcasing Kāi Tahu whānui's ongoing relationship with the Museum, was staged in the NZR Lounge (bullnose) from 29 November 2017 until 22 May 2018. From December the *What If? Otago's Harbour Vision* display was also installed in the NZR Lounge. Showcasing architectural models detailing the proposed long-term harbour development, this display provided a great opportunity for the Museum to become a venue for discussions about the future of our city and in particular the harbour and heritage precincts of which we are such an important component. The *Creative Dunedin* display was updated on 22 May and was developed by guest curator Michael Findlay. Titled *Vogel & Bond*, this continues the focus on urban renewal in the warehouse precinct and spotlights



new and innovative developments and newly repurposed heritage buildings. As well as looking at the burgeoning street art in the area, the audio-visual display has been expanded to include a new video from musical artists featured on Dunedin's Fishrider Records label. A new information station has been installed in the bus station foyer which traces the history of the Museum's buildings. This has been created in response to visitor requests for more information on the eclectic architecture which makes up the Museum. Installed in May 2018, *Field Punishment No 1*, a video artwork by Pirate & Queen Productions, is screened at the southern end of the Museum. It is a subtle and moving look at the punishment meted out to conscientious objectors such as Archibald Baxter during the First World War.

Our Archivist, Emma Knowles, responded to 874 involved enquiries and, of those, 491 new contacts were established over the 12-month period. The most popular subject of enquiry is photographs, comprising 539 queries. These are over and above the day-to-day casual enquiries from members of the public to the Research Centre. Volunteers working in the archives two or three days a week contributed significant value to various projects including inventory, cataloguing, digitisation and description. Building maintenance carried out in the archives has improved storage space and assisted in the control of environmental conditions. New pallets for stacking objects were purchased for the collections stores. Proper storage of these objects will help rationalise the use of space in the Large Object Store and improve access to all items located there.

New acquisitions for the collection have included a First World War patriotic quilt worked by staff at the Brown, Ewing department store; a field tile from the Carisbrook rugby ground; a piano accordion that belonged to a member of the 4ZB piano accordion band in 1937; a typewriter that belonged to a Presbyterian chaplain to the NZ Expeditionary Force during the First World War and was used to write letters to soldiers' bereaved families; and banners and signs from the Country Women's Institutes (now disbanded), whose activities included craft demonstrations and competitions, and sales of produce from the 1920s onwards.

### Learning Experiences Outside the Classroom

Throughout the year, 6,032 school pupils (4,462 primary and 1,570 secondary) took part in the LEOTC education programme at the Museum. Primary school programmes promoted studies in settler immigration using *Across the Ocean Waves*. Some groups visited the Chinese Garden and made dragon shadow puppets in the education classroom. Pupils explored toys, games and childhood from an early settler perspective. Some created screen prints inspired by Kāi Tahu rock art and embraced opportunities to research the history of specific schools and regions, as well as participating in old-fashioned classroom drama. A synergy of education and drama resulted in secondary pupils devising an original piece of theatre to commemorate the signing of *Te Tiriti o Waitangi* at Ōtākou in 1840. This was performed during June 2018 and was incorporated in the Museum's advertised visitor programme. Performances to the public and school community attracted approximately 100 over two evenings. In the latter half of the year, a new children's trail was developed for the winter school holidays. 'Around the Museum in 80 Objects' entails finding objects and where they came from. This trail is proving to be popular entertainment for children and adults alike, and will also be used by primary pupils on an ongoing basis. These are just snippets of what has been an outstanding education programme over the year.

### Communications and Operations Team

Retail, functions and events continue to do well, with retail revenue experiencing a peak in December 2017. The Josephine Foyer continues to be a highly popular choice for private functions, school balls and formal occasions. TRENZ, New Zealand's biggest annual business-to-business travel and trade event, was held in Dunedin from 7 to 10 May 2018, with 1,200 delegates representing international travel and tourism buyers. The Museum and Garden collaborated with Olveston to market a combined offer as part of a wider city programme for tourism buyers.

### Museum Staff

New staff welcomed to the Museum included Visitor Hosts Jack Conroy, Helen Reynolds, Mary Dawson, Lily Boyce, Natalya Latysheva, Ed Ritchie and Claudia Muldrew. We said goodbye



to Public Programmes Developer (Lifelong Learning) Helen McDermott and Visitor Hosts Olivia Conroy, Tracy White, Tim Soper, Nick Austin, Karen Bayne and Jennie Henderson. Aoife McCloskey, the History Intern for the year, arrived through the generous annual OSA scholarship. The top second-year history student from Otago University, Aoife worked on researching and writing extended biographies of Otago soldiers and early settlers for the 'Lost Generations' Roll of Honour and the Smith Gallery portrait display respectively. During the Christmas–New Year period Madalyn Fox worked alongside the administrative and archival teams, mainly cataloguing. Madalyn came to the Museum through the DCC and the Otago Polytechnic work experience programme. Twenty-six interns in total were accepted as DCC interns over this period. In early 2018 Susan Tolich joined the collections team for a 600-hour placement, working toward her Master's in Heritage Studies through Victoria University. Susan focused on progressing projects across the collection area and assisted in developing the Museum's digital strategy. The OSA scholarship recipient, Anita Zuercher, has been trained in Vernon database cataloguing and has made strong progress with the Rockliff Collection. Museum staff members continue as office holders in the Archives and Records Association of NZ Otago/Southland Branch, the NZ Conservators of Cultural Materials, and the Emerging Professional Group of Museums Aotearoa. The volunteers Peter Holland, Ingrid Emerson, Jan Wilson and Priscilla Porter assisted the Collections team regularly throughout the year.

## Publications

*Sketched in Stone: Selected Lithographic Prints from the Toitū Otago Settlers Museum Collection* was produced to coincide with the exhibition. Seán Brosnahan presented a paper on Irish dissenters to the 'Dissent and the First World War' conference at the Stout Research Centre at Victoria University.

## Regular Events and Highlights

Robert Burns' birthday and the Burns Supper were again a highlight of our January programme of events. With the oldest Burns Club outside Scotland, Dunedin Burns enthusiasts have been celebrating the poet's birthday since 1855. Our celebrations also included the Robbie Rocks song interpretation



contest in late January. Regular public programme activities this year have included Music Saturday, which continues to be popular, attracting 70–80 people each month. Toddler Time has also grown, with the support of the OSA, and offers high-quality preschool activities to a growing number of families. Pixie Town also continues to be a popular, regular event on our calendar, with thousands of visitors attracted to this much-loved display.

The commemorations of the First World War have also provided a number of programme highlights this year. Talks included Freddy Declerk on 'The Cost of War,' Seán Brosnahan on 'Triumph and Tragedy: The Otagos at Passchendale,' Charlotte Descamps on 'Life on the Battlefields 100 Years Later,' Prof Charlotte Macdonald on 'Redcoat and Rifle: New Zealand's 1860 War in Otago and Across the Empire,' Peter Trevathan's 'The Royal East Surrey Regiment,' Jane Tolerton's 'Women and Gallipoli' and Prof Richard Wright's 'Exhumations of World War I Dead at Fromelles.'

As part of iD Fashion Week we staged *Toitū Te Awa, Toitū Te Whenua, Toitū Ngā Wahine*, showcasing the work of the Maori designers Amber Bridgman, Fiona Clements and Darlene Gore. This was a prelude to the week and attracted over 100. Other public programme highlights have included back-of-house tours as part of the Southern Heritage Festival, events to mark the fifth anniversary of the completion of the redevelopment project and a talk by Dr Dorothy Page entitled 'Suffrage and Before' to the monthly Tuesday Club, sponsored by the OSA.

## Partnerships and Collaboration

The Cultural Mapping Team from Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu assisted Museum staff with the transfer of the Bill Dacker Collection during May 2018. It was delivered to the runanga in Christchurch and will be digitally archived, making a historical resource available for both the runanga and Toitū. A carved waharoa, or gateway, is planned to be installed at the entrance to the Museum galleries. Ngāi Tahu contributed funding for this project and we look forward to working with a carver on site in the second half of 2018. Recently, members of the Visitor Experience team met with manawhenua to develop migration stories as part of exploration toward an exhibition scheduled for 2020. During the year, the Registrar worked with two skilled embroiderers on the signature patriotic quilts for *The Women's War* exhibition.



### Awards Received

For the fifth consecutive year the Museum received a Trip Advisor Certificate of Excellence, allowing it to qualify for the Certificate of Excellence Hall of Fame. The Museum continues to be ranked number one of 124 Dunedin attractions. The Sustainable Tourism Business Award was given to both the Museum and Garden by Qualmark for 2017 and 2018. The Chinese Garden is a five-star Garden of National Significance, awarded by the NZ Gardens Trust. The annual DCC Residents' Opinion Survey gave the Museum a 94% satisfaction rating, while the Garden has shown great improvement, from 85% to 91%.

### Media Coverage

There has been great coverage of Museum and Garden activities during the past 12 months, including many articles in the Otago Daily Times and local television, as well as national media. The Museum and Garden are also very active on a number of social media platforms.

### Conclusion

This has been a positive year in so many respects, with some outstanding exhibitions and public programmes, the continuation of our high tourism impact, and very pleasing visitor numbers. The team and I want to thank your President, Susan Schweigman, and her committee members for their ongoing support of our activities, events and programmes. I'd also like to thank you, the members, for your continued support — there isn't a day that goes by without seeing at least one of you at Toitū Otago Settlers Museum!

**Cam McCracken**  
Acting Director

Copies of the full report, specially written for the OSA, are available from Anne Tipa at the Museum.

## The OSA's AGM

President Susan Schweigman opened proceedings for the 119th Annual General Meeting of the Otago Settlers Association on 6 September. After she presented her annual report, Treasurer Keith Clifford summarised the financial report. Both expenditure and income are down, and though there is a small deficit the Association is 'pretty much on a break-even point' and has been able to 'ramp up' contributions to the Museum. New officers were then elected. The committee members were re-elected, though Denise Montgomery has stepped down. Mandy de Leeuw was elected but soon afterwards withdrew in order to help Ann Barsby at the Southern Heritage Trust. Pete Smith was elected unopposed as our new President, and Bob Hopkins Vice President. On former President Melville Carr's nomination, Jennifer Evans, the former Director of the Museum, was also elected Vice President. The Acting Director, Cam McCracken, then gave his annual report, reprinted above. Long-service badges were presented to two committee members, Pete Smith and Danny Knudson. Thanking 'President Pete,' Danny quoted the late, great Muhammed Ali who, on being asked to come up with a poem at a Harvard graduation ceremony in 1975, extemporised the shortest one ever: 'Me? Wheel!' Susan Schweigman was presented with a large bouquet and a piece of jewellery from members of the committee. Thanking them, she said she hadn't expected to be President for as long as four years, but in that time the organisation had been brought into the 21st century. Seeing everybody had been 'a joy' to her.

The evening's guest speaker was Damien van Brandenburg. He said the Museum is 'really one of the pillars of Dunedin' and when visiting he particularly enjoys the transitions from one part of the building to another. Damien showed many photographs of a recent major project, the headquarters of the Chinese fashion company Marisfrolg in Shenzhen, just over the border from Hong Kong. The buildings' organic shapes incorporate many elements from the natural world. Damien 'always looks to nature for inspiration' — birds' wings, feathers, shells and palm fronds are all evident in the design. Unusually, the architects start with large-scale models rather than drawings. The models are beautiful objects in their own right, and ease communications with clients. The finished buildings involve a great deal of handcraft and make use of a range of recycled material, from old bricks and terracotta tiles to rejected porcelain vases from Jingdezhen. They provide a colour and texture that should age gracefully, an important consideration given the level of air pollution.

Organic shapes reminiscent of the Spanish architects Antoni Gaudí or Santiago Calatrava feature in Damien's proposal for the Steamer Basin in Dunedin. He was inspired by the birds and sealife that could be seen from his former office on the Birch Street wharf, from where spectacular views of the harbour and city can be had. These views are exploited by the proposed waterfront buildings, reached from the city by a winged bridge that can generate its own electricity. The models and animations of the Dunedin Harbour Vision project are no longer on display at the Museum, but can now be seen on display to the left of the Octagon entrance to the Civic Centre.



## Hello from President Pete Smith

It is a privilege to have been elected as President of such a prestigious society. I was born in Dunedin, attended Kaikorai Primary School and Otago Boys' High School, and graduated with a BSc Dip Sci from Otago University. I was employed by the Ministry of Works and Development as a water and soil scientist, but was made redundant in 1989. I became an investment adviser with the BNZ and worked for the solicitors Downie Stewart before becoming self-employed as an Authorised Financial Adviser in 2004. I retired in 2014. I have been married to Lesley for 48 years and we have three adult children and three grandchildren.

I have been involved with the OSA since 2006 when I was persuaded by the late Barry Clarke to become its honorary investment adviser. As President, I desire to increase our membership base and continue to support the Museum as greatly as possible. We also need to raise the Association's profile. We are grateful for a very excellent group of volunteers who are hard-working and make innovative suggestions. We have excellent resources now, moving into the modern age with an updated database, computer system, website and accumulated financial assets. We should not rest on our laurels, though, and I suggest that it is time that we started improving our profile with wider publicity and targeted fundraising. Recent products such as the pens, bookmarks, e-newsletter, Facebook advertising and online membership applications are all helping. We just need to keep it rolling. I look forward to working with you all and welcome your suggestions and participation.

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## Ready When You Are, Mister DeMille

The inaugural OSA video competition was held over the spring school holidays in early October. We asked for creative and inspirational short films with a message which develop a narrative within the Museum. The judges were Luke Chapman of Channel 39 and Joseph Brosnahan, who filmed the documentary 'Journey of the Otagos.' The winners received \$200 and a year's free family membership of the Association. Joseph 'applauded each entry for picking up a camera and making an effort to create a film. It's never an easy task, so credit for the effort. I hope they all continue to do so.' The winner of the 6–12 age group was Ariel Holloway (aged 10) for 'Lucy, Tiggly and Pooh find the best place in Toitu' ([www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOKA6-II2Ag](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NOKA6-II2Ag)). Joseph 'thought this was a cute little film ... funny in a charmingly childish manner, and I liked how it showed the various areas of museum in a creative way.' Nate Lachmann (aged 13) won the 13–17 age group with 'Otago Settlers Museum Alive!' Joseph judged this 'well filmed, with nice camera work; good quality —

and the visual effects were a nice addition.' Nate 'did such a nice job with the film you could probably use it as a promo video for the museum.' You can watch it at:  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffdRcrgiXXY&feature=youtu.be](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ffdRcrgiXXY&feature=youtu.be)

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## Receipts and membership cards

The OSA Committee has decided that due to rising postal costs we will no longer send receipts and membership cards by post in return for subscription payments. It is hoped this will save a few thousand dollars annually. If you would like a receipt sent by post, please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope with your cheque or, if paying online, please contact the Administrator directly to collect your receipt and membership card from the Museum. To those paying online who do not have easy access to the Museum we are able to email you your invoice on request.

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## For Your Diary

### Christmas Meeting

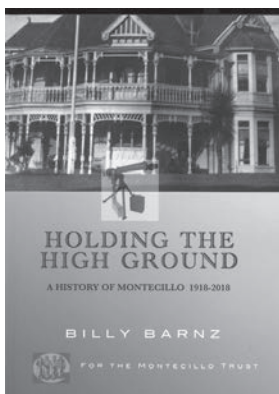
St Kilda Brass will perform a range of favourites for us on Friday, 14 December in the Museum foyer: 6:45 for 7 pm. They have long been a fine band of musicians: founded in 1901 as the Mornington Brass Band, they have performed at A-grade level continuously since 1906. Singing and dancing are optional; a festive supper and raffles will follow. Pixie Town will be open specially for a preview.

In the past, the members of the committee have provided the goodies to fill the baskets raffled at the Christmas meeting to raise money for OSA events. If any other members would like to contribute comestibles as well, or even the baskets themselves, they will be very gratefully received. The items should not be worth more than about \$10; due to health regulations only ready-made items can be raffled, so this unfortunately rules out home-made victuals. Drop them in to the OSA office before 1 pm any day until Tuesday, 11 December.

### Old Gold

The OSA Summer Outing is planned for 8 February 2019. A bus (fitted with a WC) will take us inland to Lawrence, with stops for refreshments and lunch, al fresco if the weather is good. If this sounds appealing, please register your interest with the Administrator as soon as possible so she can estimate the numbers. The gold rush town was named after Sir Henry Lawrence, Chief Commissioner of Oudh, famous at the time for his defence of Lucknow (south-east of Delhi) in the Indian rebellion of 1857, during which he was killed.

## Book News



**Billy Barnz, *Holding the High Ground: A History of Montecillo 1918-2018***

(Dunedin: Montecillo Veterans Home and Hospital Trust, 2018). 330 pages, paperback. Available from Montecillo in return for a donation of \$20 or more. Write to admin@montecillo.org.nz or telephone 4664 778.

The Otago Red Cross Military Convalescent Home was founded in June 1918 when it

still seemed the Great War could go on until 1919 or even into the 1920s. This new history marks the centennial of an institution that has since then cared for more than two thousand veterans of the nation's wars. The author, Lieut (Ret) Billy Barnz RNZA, served in the Vietnam War himself, and published a history of the Rannerdale Veterans' Home in Christchurch in 2006. His choice of title consciously alludes to the moral high ground: he says 'doing the right thing ... is the essence of honour,' and Montecillo is 'a place of virtue, charity and honour.'

From 1915 onwards the war created unprecedented numbers of casualties, many of them still requiring lengthy treatment on their arrival home. The Convalescent Home was set up to relieve pressure on the public hospital. A public fund-raising campaign enabled the Red Cross to buy a large, modern house in extensive grounds in Mornington, which provided room for up to 30 men. Although there was a decline in admissions by the mid-1920s, there were still about 400 chronic and incurable cases being treated throughout Otago in 1932. At the end of the decade, a second global conflict brought more demand for Montecillo's services. Extensions were built in 1956 and 1998, and the Home eventually left Eglinton Road for a new, purpose-built facility in Bay View Road in 2006. (A separate chapter is devoted to the history of the buildings themselves.) There is much detail here of the growing bureaucratic requirements in the 1990s and the changing needs of the increasingly geriatric residents that eventually led to the move. This is not an anodyne 'official' history – the author describes the negotiations with the

government at this time as a clash of politics and morality, 'a very scrappy business,' and the disposal of the Eglinton Road site as 'shameful.'

The bulk of the book is devoted to the residents themselves and their varied and adventurous lives. All the servicemen and women are listed by cohort, and a selection are given short illustrated biographies, along with some of the chaplains, nurses and other staff. (Most of the residents were old army men, but in the 1970s at least the gardener was named Admiraal.) The final chapters deal with life in the Home, occupational therapy, entertainment and diversions – a television set arrived from Tisco in 1963, Philip Larkin's *Annus Mirabilis*. Montecillo was visited by a range of military and civic dignitaries, but also in 1926 by Thelma McMillan, the first Miss New Zealand. She gave all the 'boys' cigarettes and they presented her with a leather bag they had made. The beauty pageant's contestants visited again in 1961. Former servicewomen were admitted from 1985, the first being Flight Officer (Ret) Margot Woodhall, who had commanded the WAAFs at RAF Duxford during the Battle of Britain.

The men were used to military discipline, but they had to take it from the Matron now, not the Sergeant Major. To cope with the stress of war, many young soldiers had become heavy drinkers, and alcoholism was a major problem among the Home's residents. Eventually by the 1960s a locker system was devised for controlling alcohol consumption, but in the early years the young men were wont to sneak out to local hotels: they 'would often come back to Montecillo, much the worse for wear, after crawling through the gully and scrub — they used their military training to get back undetected — and often they were covered in mud at the feet of Matron, who was standing on the porch, waiting to pounce on them.'

The Alfred & Isabel Reed Fund, administered by the OSA, contributed towards the book's production costs.

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Members of the Association are entitled to a handy discount of 15% on the cost of books and other items from the Museum shop. Christmas is coming, and the shop is an ideal source of gifts. It will be open specially at the Christmas Meeting.



**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

 **Otago Daily Times**

*The Otago Daily Times supports Toitū Otago Settlers Museum*

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