

The Burkes Pass Heritage Trust Newsletter December 2011



CHRISTMAS CAROLS St Patrick's Church, Burkes Pass
Friday 23rd December 4.00pm
Service taken by Rev Michael Kerr.
Hang a message on the Christmas tree for someone special.
The door is open every day.

Loads of Good Stuff Happening Thanks to:

- **Lion Foundation** who gave a grant to employ an arborist for tree trimming.
- **Alan Moody** for doing a wonderful job of repainting the church so it now looks very smart.
- **Community Post** for providing more post paid envelopes.
- **Gavin Marriott and family** for donating a lovely new picnic table and seats near the Musterer's Hut as a memorial and the working bee team who helped Gavin install it.
- **Corcoran family** for fencing off an area to plant shelter trees for the church.
- **Liz and Ken Batchelor from Hook Bush Nurseries** for the supply of 15 large grade mountain beech trees at cost for future church shelter.
- **The October workday team** for tidying the church grounds and planting the trees.
- **Neville Smith** for making his truck available to cart mulch donated by the Mackenzie District Council for our native beech tree plantings.
- **Graham** for making and installing an alarm for the donation box.
- **Max** for cutting firewood from the church trees and delivering it to Moreh Home.



A Splendid Couple of Weddings

The swirl of a kilt accompanied Colin MacDonald and his beautiful bride Karen Verbo down the aisle at St Patrick's church with Jenny Rayne conducting the ceremony in her warm and wonderful manner on the 8th of October.



Charmaine Burt and Peter Gudsell married on a once in a lifetime date of the 11/11/11. Peter made a symbolic return to family roots at Burkes Pass when he and Charmaine chose St Patrick's. They include the Burgess family who donated the land for the church, and the Foster and Annetts who were early village inhabitants. The bride, in a gorgeous cream dress with beaded detail, with her elegantly attired groom and entourage had photos in the spring garden at Alma Cottage.



Dog Trials, Balls and a Trophy for Good-looking Blokes

While dog trials were a major item on the calendar at Burkes Pass for nearly a century, one or two trophies I suspect have faded into obscurity and I wonder if they still exist? The Otago Witness newspaper reported in 1898 from the Mackenzie Collie Dog Trials the outcome of a foot race for competitors (presumably the men rather than the dogs) and that

“Mr J Robertson won the other handsome trophy given by the ladies. This event was for best looking bachelor – spinsters attending the ball only voting”

The Spinsters' Ball at Burkes Pass was another regular highlight that attracted large numbers of unmarried women and men as well as their families and keen observers. Starting at 8.30 in the evening and continuing into the wee small hours of the morning, it was an important opportunity for men and women to meet and for romance to flourish in this remote area. The organising committee would spend much time and effort into planning the invitations, supper and decorations for the schoolroom where it was held.

One of the delightful invitations from the Spinsters of Burkes Pass, to the ball held on 2nd June 1890, has been preserved in the Alexander Turnbull Library in Wellington. They have recently given permission for the Trust to reproduce this gem for fundraising purposes, so watch this space.

Wishing you all a very enjoyable and safe summer season.

Cheers
Jane Batchelor

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