

The Burkes Pass Heritage Trust Newsletter

Dec 2018



Christmas Carols – Sunday 9th December at 2pm - St Patrick's Church

Yes, the Christmas season has arrived and with a burst of snow on the hills to get us in the mood. Rev Andrew McDonald will lead the service with Lisa Forrester to play the organ. A warm welcome to afternoon tea over the road at the Gallery afterward, tea/coffee and soft drinks provided, a plate of goodies to share would be appreciated.

Shirley O'Connor Art for a Special Christmas Gift

Gorgeous art from the pen of our once local artist has been printed onto a very well made, trendy, navy blue denim apron with crossover straps and front pocket. The classic NZ image of the little hut at Rona is printed in white on the bib, great for summer cooking on the BBQ. A beautiful Alma Cottage printed cotton bag is ideal for tucking into your handbag for groceries or anything at all. Both are available from the stall in the church and very reasonable at \$25 for the apron and \$15 for a bag or order by emailing me janelbatch@gmail.com or by post (\$5 for delivery)



Working Bee

An enthusiastic and hard working team produced some significant improvements around the township in September. A huge thanks to Prue and David Clark and Caroline Thomson who came especially from Christchurch to help and much appreciated local assistance from Debbie Barron and Jasio Zyzalo.

The cemetery hut was given some attention with a makeover of its rear wall and roof. This resilient little red painted wooden building probably dates from the establishment of the cemetery in the 1870's and was used to store tools and materials. More tussocks and native trees were planted to enhance the township and the church garden was given a weed. Many people comment how good Burkes Pass is looking, so thanks again to those who spend a little time and a lot of enthusiasm to make a difference for everyone to enjoy.



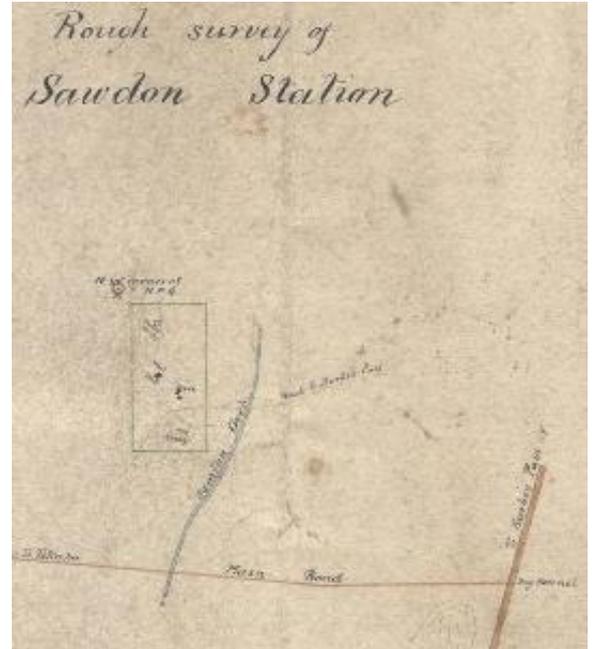
Travel and Strife

Michael Kerr recently found some gems from the past quoted in a 1977 copy of the Fairlie Creek Gazette. One of these reported on the advent of the Mt Cook Motor Company when they took over the contract for coach and mail deliveries through Burkes Pass along the Mackenzie road in 1907 “With their up to date luxurious one-day motor service, transformed in a single bound, the long journey to the Southern Alps, from a tedious bone-aching ordeal to one of infinite Pleasure”! Another recorded detail from the planting of the Queen Victoria Jubilee oak tree in 1897 was that the 20-year-old oak tree was taken from the cemetery without the council’s permission... oh dear

Catriona

Baker Memorabilia

Some delightful original documents relating to Burkes Pass have been gifted to the Trust from the estate of Catriona Baker of Mt Cook Station. These include an undated early sketch plan survey of Sawdon Station with a drawing so small that it needs a magnifying glass to see the intriguing detail. Possibly this came from her uncle Donald Burnett who owned the Station between 1903 and homestead subdivision until 1924. An ancient Gaelic bible, dated 1839, has the name W McConnell, Burkes Pass, inscribed inside it. He purchased Paddys Market (subdivided from Sawdon about 1912) in 1918. Also some letters addressed to Catriona’s father, T.D Burnett, one of which gives some biographical detail about A.B. Smith who took up Rollesby Station in 1872, and written by his son. A substantial collection of Burnett memorabilia can be viewed at the South Canterbury Museum or on their website.



Alma Cottage Stuff

The lambs arrived this year bang on the day when it snowed heavily which made us a bit busy making sure that they were OK. When you only have a few animals every one that survives counts that little bit more. Wet weather this spring means the grass is going mad and rabbits rampant despite all efforts at control. However it also means the trees in our patch of bush are thriving and recently have just had a couple of unlucky rats in our predator traps.

Last week an attempt to clean the coal range flue turned from a short job into a major exercise when the flue brush detached from the rod plunged deep into the works. No way to get it up or down and potentially 2 days’ work to dismantle the range and flue system. To add to the complications a long hook wire inserted also found a hole to fasten onto and would not come back out. A desperate cup of tea later helped hatch a plan. With the aid of a very shiny knife blade, small enough to fit up the access port to act as a mirror, a head torch the team of two to carefully freed the wire, and finally hooked it to the small ring on the end of the brush. With a heave and a cheer, the stove gave birth to the brush with its metre length of orange plastic pipe. The problem was not the screwed lengths of pipe coming undone but a manufacturers glued joint between thread and the rod that had parted. I wonder has this happened to others? A rescue line will be attached to every brush head in future.

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