

The Burkes Pass Heritage Trust Newsletter

June 2019



Burkes Pass Dance 29th June, 8pm until late – Time to warm up those smile muscles and twitching toes for the dance of the year where anything goes as far as dance moves are concerned, and comfortable clothes are a must. Featuring the Redeal Blues Band, \$25.00 per person and supper included. Tickets can be purchased from Three Creeks at Burkes Pass, High Country Crafts at Tekapo and Heartlands, Fairlie.

Keeffe Silver Shilling

A silver shilling dated 1844 was recently gifted to Alma Cottage by members of the Keeffe family. It is thought to have been brought to NZ from Britain by their ancestors James and Bridget Keeffe, who built the cottage and ended up in the estate of their great grandson, the late Charlie Tait. Descendants Joyce Ranger, her granddaughter Amy and Sharon Lister visited to see it 'back home' where it now hangs framed on the wall.



St Patrick's Church Update

- A magnificent photographic portrait of three Burkes Pass children taken about 100 years ago has been donated by a grandson, Max Willetts. The three were the younger children of Mary and Elijah Smart and the photograph hangs near the antique lamp from their home, 'Dornie'.
- The new church fence and gates are steadily being painted ready for installation.
- Thank you to Debbie Barron and Nicole Tosswill for volunteering to be the new key holders for the church with the Ryalls as a back up and also thank you to the Three Creeks staff who now open and close the Musterer's Hut daily.
- A two minute silence was held on 22nd of March, kindly organised by John and Kathy Emery, in honour of the victims of the mosque terrorist attacks.
- Another lovely wedding was held in April for a Timaru couple and others are 'in the wings'.

Farewell to Julie, Jasio and Rosie

At the end of January we bid fond farewell to Julie and Jasio who set sail from the Gallery and motels for Central Otago. Our district was much enriched by all their skills, enthusiasm and dedication to the community through art, social activities, hard work and business acumen. Lucky Maniototo!

Welcome to Megan, Phil and daughter Ruby who have taken up the reins at the Burkes Pass Country Accommodation and hurray for Heather Capstick who has taken on leadership of the BP Residents Association.



Lance Corporal Charles Smart (service number 7/1142 N.Z. Mounted Machine Gun Squadron)

A white cross with Charles' name was one of 18,000 crosses in the Field of Remembrance, each bearing the name of a man or woman who lost their life in the terrible conflict during the years of WWI, installed in the lawn of Auckland War Memorial Museum for the 100th anniversary of Armistice Day 11th November 1918. Charles' cross has recently been affixed to the family grave in Burkes Pass Cemetery. He was the 5th son of Elijah and Mary Smart and attended Burkes Pass primary school. At the time of his call up to the army he was working at Mt Cook Station and he passed his mustering stick to Andrew Burnett saying "I will pick this up when I return". Sadly this was not to be the case, he was wounded and later died in Palestine on 31st March 1918 aged 27 years old and was buried in the Damascus Commonwealth War Cemetery. His stick remained at Mt Cook Station until 2015 and now is held at the South Canterbury Museum. When the Field of Remembrance was disbanded, Charles' nephew Max Willetts assisted by his son Terry returned it 'home'.



Coolgardie Vintage Saddle Donated

The late Len Waters of Coolgardie Station used this saddle for many years as a pack saddle for his horses on the steep hills and valleys of the property. It has been kindly donated by his daughter-in-law Ruth to the Trust and will be displayed in the Musterer's Hut. It is constructed with a wooden tree and I am sure would have a few yarns to tell if it could. Perhaps someone who has experience of heritage saddlery could give us some advice about its age and origin, perhaps a military one? From a brief internet search it looks similar to the 1912 British Army standard design.



Silver eyes (*Zosterops lateralis*)

An unusually loud chorus of small bird calls recently alerted us to a visit from a large flock of silver eyes (Maori name is tauhou meaning 'stranger' or 'new arrival') in the trees and shrubs behind Alma Cottage where they stayed for several days. They are small, friendly, olive-green coloured birds with a white ring around each eye, are apparently widespread in NZ although not common in deep forest or open grassland areas, and feed on insects, fruit and nectar. They self introduced from Australia in the early 1800s and are classified as a native species.

Annis Cob Cottage Restoration Progress

Many barrow loads of clay, tussock and fresh cow manure have been mixed, formed into 'cobs' and whacked, pushed and poked into place on the walls of the old cottage. At last the major external air gaps have been filled, and the walls now support the roof. A mile-stone moment was when some of the temporary end poles were removed. A central beam has been installed and an internal door framed and hung. Still a way to go but it is getting there, Whew!



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