

4.3 KEY NATIONAL STORIES IN OTAGO CONSERVANCY

Otago was one of a series of places where the human ‘tsunami’ (to quote Belich) of goldrush immigrants crashed ashore. Stories associated with this movement of people are of international and national significance (Table 3). Goldrushes reflected a search for opportunity. The possibility of considerable wealth was the major instigator of immigration both from other countries and internally. Gold prospecting and discoveries extended the range of European movement into lands that had previously been known only to Māori. The scale of the Otago rush was such that not only did it bring settlers to Central Otago, but also the influx changed the demographic balance of the entire population and led to 40 years of the South Island exerting a considerable economic and demographic influence that it has never attained again. It also led to the migration of a significant Chinese population to New Zealand from 1865. The stories of this migration and the legal restrictions on Chinese migration are worthy of separate interpretation as well as within the context of the Otago goldrushes.

Otago power and influence is reflected in the opulence of architecture in Dunedin and in a range of heritage buildings. Gavin McLean has drawn attention to the role of the Provincial Hotel in providing hospitality to the incoming wave of miners. The wealth generated by the export of gold helped finance provincial and then national development. Dunedin capital was dominant in the colonial economy and is reflected in the formation of New Zealand’s first multinational, the Union Steamship Company.

Central Otago towns were goldfield towns. The names frequently displaced Māori place names, although many of the towns established in the 1860s live on only in memory. While stories of the establishment of settlements form one part of the heritage, another is the decline and disappearance of communities marked mainly by their transience. This goldfields heritage is still reflected in Otago, in Dunedin’s architecture, museums, and heritage groups.

TABLE 3. OTAGO CONSERVANCY (FIRST SUBSTANTIAL ALLUVIAL RUSH 1861).

HISTORIC THEMES	SUB-THEMES	STORIES THAT DEMONSTRATE THE THEMES	SIGNIFICANCE OF STORY AT OTAGO SITES
2.4 Migrating	2.4.1 Migrating to save or preserve a way of life	The whole story of goldrush miners moving from California to Victoria to Otago is about migrating to preserve the goldrush phenomenon. Dominance of British migrants. Advantage of having earlier goldfields experience. The story of Chinese migration, the poll tax and the development of a minority culture within the context of Otago. Early Chinese entrepreneurs such as Sew Hoy. (Stafford St, Dunedin; graveyards; NZHPT project.)	High international Otago is the NZ link to the international phenomenon High international/national
	2.4.2 Migrating to seek opportunity	New miners migrated in search of opportunity both internally and from overseas.	High international/national Numerous examples
	2.4.5 Changing the face of rural and urban New Zealand through migration	The scale of migration was such as to change New Zealand’s population balance and establish numerous settlements in Otago.	High national

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THEMES	SUB-THEMES	STORIES THAT DEMONSTRATE THE THEMES	SIGNIFICANCE
3.3 Surveying the land	3.3.3 Prospecting for precious metals	Many gold discoveries occurred when Europeans entered into areas for the first time, often with Māori guides, e.g. Jack Tewa at Arrow find, and guides for first pastoralists.	High national
3.4 Utilising national resources	3.4.3 Mining	Otago was the first site of the goldrush although most techniques were used elsewhere first, i.e. Coromandel, Nelson. The bucket dredge was a significant technological development. The scale and intensity of alluvial dredging was distinctive in Otago especially 1890–1910. While less of a people story this was briefly a significant industry, e.g. Jack Forrest, the last Clutha dredge.	Moderate regional High national
3.7 Establishing communications	3.7.3 Establishing postal service	Cobb & Co. coaches appeared in Otago first. The establishment of the postal service is reasonably well documented.	Moderate regional Similar stories in other new areas.
3.11 Altering the environment	3.11.1 Regulating waterways	The origins of NZ's mining and water legislation stem from goldfields administration. Alluvial mining has had a considerable impact on the environment, e.g. The Carrick water race still in use for irrigation.	Moderate national/regional/local Regimes refined elsewhere.
3.15 Developing economic links outside New Zealand		The explicit links, i.e. banks and port facilities, can be interpreted from goldfield sites but may be more usefully told from Dunedin. There are a variety of books on Dunedin architecture that can assist.	High international/national Dunedin retains many historic buildings.
3.18 Financing New Zealand		The explicit links, i.e. banks and port facilities, can be interpreted from goldfield sites but may be more usefully told from Dunedin. There are a variety of books on Dunedin architecture that can assist.	High international/national Dunedin retains many historic buildings.
4.5 Making settlements to serve rural New Zealand		Most of the smaller rural towns were originally goldfield towns. Some have disappeared but many remain.	High regional/local
5.1 Working in harsh conditions	5.1.2 Coping with dangerous jobs and workplaces	Goldmining was hazardous, as could be travelling to and from goldfields. There were also dangers associated with being a barmaid, a publican, etc. Getting used to the harsh conditions, e.g. Chamonix.	High national Much scope for personal stories about individuals.
5.6 Working in the home		The goldfields were a masculine frontier but women went there and worked in a variety of jobs, including the home.	Moderate national Home life was frontier life.
7.6 Administering New Zealand	7.6.3 Policing 7.6.4 Dispensing justice 7.6.6 Providing services and welfare	Otago's police force led by St John Brannigan was the model for the National service. At Hocken Library there are the diaries of police and Wong Gye the police Chinese interpreter. Some stories associated with law and order on the goldfields are interesting and distinctive, e.g. policing of Fan Tong, opium. Goldfields unemployment was a factor, particularly by the end of the rush period, i.e. late 1870s.	High national Moderate national Moderate regional/local Could be told from elsewhere.

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THEMES	SUB-THEMES	STORIES THAT DEMONSTRATE THE THEMES	SIGNIFICANCE
7.8 Establishing a regional and local identity		Dunedin as New Zealand's financial capital.	High national Probably easiest to tell from Dunedin itself.
9.5 Living outside a family partnership		Alluvial goldmining was a frontier activity and miners were disproportionately single men. This led to a distinctive frontier-type society. 1862 Census a valuable resource for demographics.	Moderate regional Otago a good place to tell these, esp. regarding Chinese.

DOC Otago Conservancy VAMS sites

Otago Goldfields Park

VAMS SITE NO.	NAME	TYPE OF VISITOR ACCESS	PRIMARILY QUARTZ OR ALLUVIAL
1302015	Dead Horse Pinch	Short stop	Alluvial
1302016	Golden Point, Macraes	Short stop	Alluvial
1302057	Pioneer Stream and Otago Pioneer quartz historic reserve, and Waipori	Back-country	Quartz
1302049-51	Gabriels Gully, Lawrence	Short stop and day visitors	Alluvial
1306069	Lonely Graves, Horseshoe Bend	Day visitors	Alluvial
1306005	Gorge Creek and Chamonix	Short stop	Alluvial
1306028	Mitchell's Cottage, Fruitlands	Short stop	Alluvial
1306026	Alexandra Courthouse	Short stop	Alluvial
1306055	Earnsclough Tailings	Day visitors	Alluvial
1306009	Golden Progress Mine, Rough Ridge	Back-country	Quartz
1306022	St Bathans	Short stop	Alluvial
1306003	Bendigo	Back-country	Alluvial and quartz
1306067	Quartz Reef Point	Non-visitor	Quartz
1306000	Bannockburn Sluicings and Stewart Town	Back-country	Alluvial
1306045	Young Australian Mine, Carrick Range	Day visitors	Quartz
1301039	Kawarau Gorge Mining Centre, Gees Flat	Day visitors	Alluvial
1301031	Kawarau Suspension Bridge (bungee)	Short stop	Alluvial
1301046	Arrowtown Chinese Settlement	Short stop	Alluvial
1301033	Macetown and Arrow Gorge	Day visitors	Alluvial and quartz
1301016	Oxenbridge Tunnel	Day visitors	Alluvial
1305007	Invincible Mine and Concentrator, Rees Valley	Day visitors	Quartz

Other Otago goldfield sites

VAMS SITE NO.	NAME	TYPE OF VISITOR ACCESS	PRIMARILY QUARTZ OR ALLUVIAL
1302105	Nenthorn Buildings	No visitors	Alluvial
1302058	Canton Battery	Short stop	Quartz
1307008	Tunnel Hill	Short stop	Alluvial
1306027	Bannockburn Post Offices	Short stop	Alluvial
1306003	Come in Time Battery	Day visitors	Quartz
1306009	Golden Progress Poppethead, boilers, cottage and amenity area	Back-country adventure	Quartz
1306005	Gorge Creek Grave/memorial	Short stop	Alluvial
1306022	St Bathans Post Office, St Bathans Hall	Short stop	Alluvial and quartz

NZ Historic Places Trust registered sites

NO.	NAME	LOCATION
50	Kawarau Suspension Bridge	State highway 6, Kawarau Gorge
331	Gold Office	Loop Road, St Bathans
342	Young Australian Mine Co. waterwheel	Adam's Gully, Carrick Range
2081	Former Alexandra Courthouse	Alexandra
2254	St Bathans Hall and Post Office	St Bathans
2371	Miners' rock shelter	State Highway 8, Gorge Creek
2393	Young Australian Mine Co. battery	Gully opposite Waterwheel, Carrick Range
4771	University of Otago School of Mines	Union Street, Dunedin
5175	Sainsbury's house	Skippers
5176	Mt Aurum homestead	Skippers
5603	The Invincible Mine	Glenorchy
5606	Murphy's Creek Syphon, Mt Aurum	Skippers, Mt Aurum
5607	Mining Tunnel (Oxenbridge Tunnel)	Arthurs Point, Shotover River
5610	Settlement	Bannockburn, Central Otago
5611	Dam	Bannockburn, Central Otago
5612	Sluice workings	Bannockburn, Central Otago
5613	Chinatown	Arrowtown
5616	Battery/dam/hut	Carrick Range, Central Otago
5626	Lonely Graves	Miller's Flat, Central Otago
7490	Murphys Flat historic area	Golden Bar Rd, Macraes, Palmerston

Key associated sites and groups

The Otago Early Settlers' Museum

The Otago Regional Museum

Goldfields Heritage Trust

Lawrence Information Centre

Alexandra Museum

Cromwell Old Town Centre (Cromwell and Districts Promotion Group)

NZ Historic Places Trust

Stafford Street including the Provincial Hotel
Dunedin cemeteries especially the north cemetery

Otago images



Goldfield at Gabriel's Gully, Clutha District, 1862. Photo by Harry G. Gore. Reproduced by permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Ref. no. F-96648-1/2.



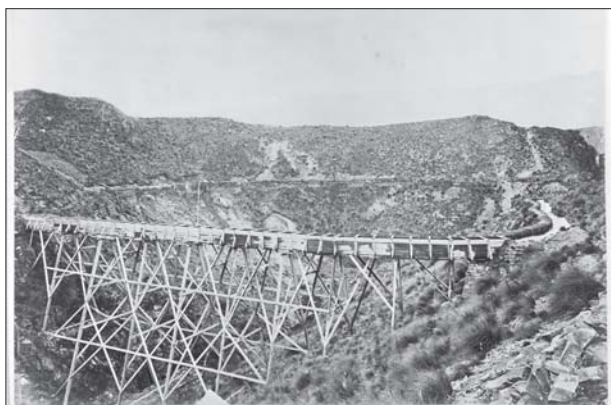
Harley and Reilly's Dunstan diggings 1862? Watercolour, artist unknown. Reproduced by permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Ref. no. A-253-035.



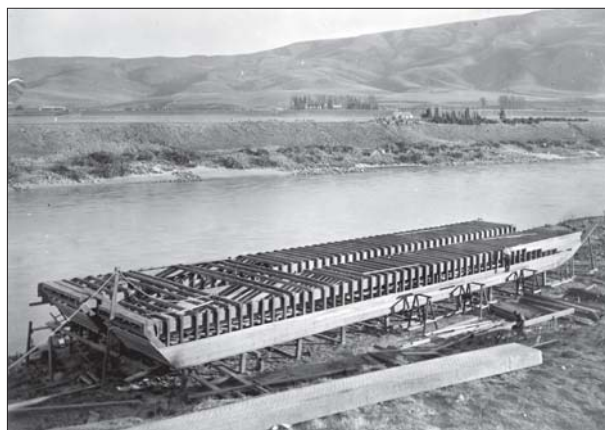
Chinese miners with Rev. G.H. McNeur, at Macetown. Reproduced by permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Ref. no. F-19150-1/2.



Sluicing on the goldfield at Spec Gully in Naseby. Shows miners and Rev G.H. McNeur. Reproduced by permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Ref. no. F-19157-1/2.



Chinese flumes crossing the road to Greenstown. Reproduced by permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Ref. no. F-53127-1/2.



The Clyde No. 2 Dredge under construction. Reproduced by permission of the Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, N.Z. Ref. no. F-62630-1/2.

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