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EDITORIAL

SONG OF THE SWAN

WHEN THE then President of the Otaki Historical Society, the Reverend Gordon Dempsey, was asked — following the publication of the Society's first Journal in 1977 — how long the Journal would run, the answer was "ten".

This year sees the twelfth and, possibly, the last in the current series — two beyond the estimated lifespan. Many and varied have been the topics covered over the past twelve years; a place of record for a great deal of local history that may well have otherwise never seen a wide readership.

A decision as to the continuation of the Journal rests with the Committee of the Otaki Historical Society, taking due reference to material and resources available.

That the Journal continued beyond its lifespan is in large part due to one person. Researching steadily, writing — pecking away on a portable typewriter, drawing on her many memories of life in Otaki stretching back into the days when the century was young, giving up her drawing room to piles of paper and photographs for a good four months of the year and supplying an endless procession of tea and biscuits to the editorial "staff" — for this, and more, the Otaki Historical Society owes a major debt to Barbara Swabey.

A glance through the volumes will establish that Barbara played a major part in each.

This issue — the 12th — carries several of Barbara's articles including "Grannie's Camp" — a flashback to days at Otaki beach that can only be imagined today.

To Barbara — the grateful thanks of the editorial staff over the years and, on behalf of the readership of the Journal, their thanks likewise.

Ross Macpherson