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Editorial

THE COMMITTEE is happy to present the 15th issue of the Otaki Historical Journal. As the years roll on it is becoming clearer that there is no shortage of local written and oral records to be tapped into. Given continuing goodwill from contributors, sufficient money and enough people to carry out the preparation of the journal, there is no obvious reason why it should not continue. This year the Kapiti Coast District Council revived a tradition of both the former Otaki Borough Council and the Horowhenua County Council in making a grant towards production costs, enabling us to tread water again. We take this opportunity to thank the Council publicly for their gift of $2,000.00.

The contents this year range geographically from Wellington to Levin with one journey into Taranaki. Robin Startup and Joan Maclean deal with transport along the coast, the first with mail delivery on foot and by coach and the latter with the construction of the coastal highway from Plimmerton to Paekakariki. History was brought close to members with the presence of the great, great, great grand-daughter of Henry Burling, mailman in 1842, at its August meeting. Joan Maclean illustrates how the solution to one generation's transport needs becomes the problem of a latter period.

National Archives, now suitably and accessibly housed in the former Government Print building in Mulgrave Street, Wellington, continues to be a treasure house. Anthony Dreaver uses archive files to show us how the 12 year old Leslie Adkin, exiled at school in Wellington, hand-drew maps of his home area. He also demonstrates through James Cowan's memorandum and other material the issues relating to Lake Horowhenua in 1903. Reproduction of parts of a contemporary booklet of the Horowhenua Lake Domain Board almost 90 years later illustrates current concerns.

Daphne Meyer has recovered 16 people who were 'member for Otaki' over the last 140 years. The maps from Alan McRobie's Electoral Atlas, simplified by Bruce Jones, show more dramatically than words can the growth and shifts of population. It is not just at present that Otaki seems to be far from centres of power.

One contribution only is located out of the area - An Armed Constable at Parihaka - but it is thanks to a local woman, Rosli Adams, grand-daughter of the lively and articulate Alfred Fromm, that his journal, printed for the family, has been made available.

Queenie Rikihana Hyland's article on her interviews with six Otaki kuia for a World War II oral history project is a foretaste of what we hope will be a considerable section on local women in the 1993 Journal.

Margaret Long
Editor