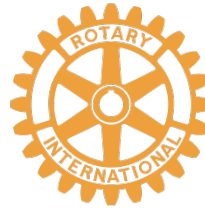


Rotary

Christchurch South



MEL OPIE –1860'S A FAMILY DIASPORA TO LYTTLETON & BEYOND

What started out as quip to the Larkins soon became a heartfelt and well researched introduction into the family history of one of our own, Mel Opie.

The years Mel held centre stage in front of a class room soon became apparent as Mel led us through some one hundred and fifty years of the Opie diaspora. Mel so wondrously demonstrated how far presentation technology has moved on since those days.

Mel started his search into the roots of his family in 2005 it was 3 years later in 2008 Mel first shared his research and three years later that we were able to see first-hand the culmination of his efforts

Determined not to use the big genealogy web sites and rely instead on his own abilities to dig out from the world wide web the names, places and dates of his kin. Mel describing this challenge as a cryptic crossword. Made perhaps more simple as Opie is not a common surname, but not easy. Names change, spelling changes, written records are often illegible after years of poor storage. Birth certificates were frequently not issued and it's the christening where the first written record was made. Many of the old parish documents have not yet found their way into the public domain where they are in the great genealogy hunt the essential marriage and death records.



So setting up his own template Mel was able to create a diorama of the Opie journey, starting out from the shores of the homeland in 1860 facing a five month perilous sea journey. The cost of steerage passage was £13.6s each or \$3200.00 in 2021. By Mel's account not an altogether pleasant journey with bedding infested with lice and other vermin, the ships rife with rats and plagues. Infant mortality was high on such ventures, reaching as high as 20% in some age groups, surprisingly many of those on board believed themselves to be better fed on board than they were back home. From the docks of Lyttelton the ancestors of Mel dispersed throughout the Canterbury region applying their skills of trade before the one we know as Melville settled here in Christchurch.

Mel's dissertation started with the reference to Bradley Walsh and the Larkin family and finished with the question answered "Who do you think you are?"

Huge thanks to Mike Bruce – meeting reporter

JOIN THE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

What: School Christmas Party
Where: Sacred Heart School, 40 Spenser Street
Date: Tuesday 14th December
Time: 1 – 3pm

If you are able to help please let Chris Ayrey (mrs.chris@xtra.co.nz) or Sara McKenzie (saramackenzie61@gmail.com) know you will be joining in. Please reply asap and by Friday 10th December.



Upcoming Meetings

1st Dec - Paige Sullivan (298 Youth Health & Rotary Project)

8th Dec –2020-2021 Accounts & Trust changes

15th Dec – Christmas Function

22nd Dec - Cake and Port

Notices

Duties

	1 December	8 December	Who
Cash Desk	K Gunasekara	M Bruce	M Whitehead
Cash Desk	P Mears	D Conroy	J Wylie
Reception	S Mackenzie	G Fowler	S Haye
Speaker Host	D Buist	N/A	K Moss
Grace	D Buist	D Peterson	R McKinney
International Toast	S Mackenzie	G Fowler	
Thanks to Speaker	P Mears	N/A	
Quote	K Gunasekara	M Bruce	
Speaker Reporter	V Ellis	J Chamberlain	
Sergeant	S Harris	A Mckinnon	

Leave

	From	To
	09/09/2015	TBA
		TBA
	11/08/2020	TBA
	04/07/2019	30/06/2022
	03/11/2021	31/03/2022

Reminders

Record your apology by:

- Notifying the Reception Desk
- Email alan.barbara.mckinnon@gmail.com before 11am on that Wednesday
- Emergency apologies to Liz Bermingham on 021 2456875
- You will receive an email reminder a couple of days before the meeting re apologising or bringing a guest
- If you are unable to do your allocated duty, it is your responsibility to arrange a substitute and advise the President
- Please advise all leave of absence (three or more weeks) to the Secretary by email or in writing