

A letter from Kaikora (Otane) written by Mr George Smith (who with his wife Maria and three children; George, Ellen and Lydia, sailed on the 'Chile'), dated 28th May 1873, back to his friend in Wychwood Forrest, Oxfordshire, England...

"If any of you are willing to come out to this sunny land you don't need to fear for the sea; if you have a passage like ours it will be quite a pleasure trip... The day we arrived in the port of Hawkes Bay (Napier) we had a first rate dinner on board... fresh beef, young potatoes and carrots... I had no difficulty in getting work. I was employed soon after I got here. I am now working on the road for the government. I have 6 shillings a day from eight o'clock in the morning to five o'clock in the evening. If I had been in Boufoud I should have worked three days for that. Working men in this country don't believe in much walking; I have a horse and new saddle and bridle to go to work on. I bought the horse for £4, and a saddle and bridle for about £3, so you can see I got rigged out very soon, and now I am getting a cow; my wife has got her fowls. The house we are living in is a two roomed cottage with a garden. I give 5 shillings per week, and I have firewood and food for my cow for that. You must understand that we burn nothing but wood. Most provisions are cheap. Flour is about the same as home; beef is three pence or four pence per pound and mutton two and a half pence. We used to be told that the beef and mutton of this country were not so good as at home, come and try them, and I assure you that you will find out your mistake. We thought it a fine thing to get a pigs cheek for three or four pounds of bacon in old England; but now I get half a sheep at a time, and sometimes a whole one, and about eighty or ninety pounds of beef. We can sometimes get a leg of mutton for six pence. This is really the land of Goshen, and if you acted wisely you would come; there is plenty of work for you. Shearing is a fine trade in its season, a good shearer will get £1 a day. A shepherd with not more than one or two children will get from £60 to £70 a year, and all found. Clothing is a little dearer here, but not a great deal. If you come, provide yourselves with a good supply, but if you cannot, still come, you will soon clothe when you get here. I will send you a newspaper, and enclose two papers showing you how you can come. Read the papers well and lend them about, and please send me a newspaper sometimes; you can send one for a penny stamp. George has been at school, but has now gone to work. He gets 6 shillings per week and his food. I am very glad that I came here, I wish I had come years ago. I have no anxiety now about how I am to get food and clothing for my children... I have not been to class out here, but as I am now living within five miles of Waipawa, where the class is held, I intend to go and give my name as a member with the United Methodist Free Churches. Be sure to write and tell me how the Union is getting on and how you are getting on with your chapel affairs..."

(This letter was written for George Smith by the Rev George Taylor of Waipawa)

Many of the men who worked on building the railway line came from Wychwood in Oxfordshire, England.

Otane bi lingual Historic Pavement Walk is another community project funded by Otane Progressive group. Some funding also came by way of the CHB District Council and the Mayoral Fund and local families

Otane Progressive Group is a group of people living in Otane who organise and fund community projects for the betterment of the community.

Otane Progressive Group is a non-profit organisation.

Notes:

Otane once sported a racecourse with a fine grandstand on the main road into Waipawa. We are not able to include this in the walk due to the location.

There is a model of Otane Village circa 1900 made and donated by John Mudgway that can be seen at our small museum in the Town Hall. Open on Sunday mornings.

Otane Progressive is in possession of the original stage curtain for the Town Hall. The curtain is painted in a biblical scene by E. L. Williams dated 1876. If you have any information on this artist, please contact us.

During this walk if you are approached by a wandering dairy cow or horse or if you have any comment to make please send us an email.

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OTANE

BI LINGUAL (ENGLISH / MAORI)

HISTORIC PAVEMENT WALK

2.6KMS

Otane provides enchanting traces of early settlement.

Henry Stokes Tiffen arranged for a township to be surveyed on this site, part of a block of land he owned. The sections went to auction in March 1874. This site was chosen to work in with the establishment of the railway (Otane became one of the biggest railheads in the North Island).

Otane (Kaikora as it was known then) circa 1874, was made up of approximately 175 sections ranging from one quarter acre to a little over one acre with suitable reserves for churches, a school, post office, court house and a railway station. Otane was governed by a town board from March 1887 and the town clerk was the valuer. The first rates struck were at a fixed amount of 6 pence in the pound of annual values of all properties.

A section of a letter written by Mary Tod to her uncle in England in May 1891... *"Everyone rides here and you seldom meet anyone on foot along the roads. Children ride from school, old ladies and young ladies, workmen, trades people and everyone. Maori woman ride with their children attached to their back"*.

Pavements and curbing were first formed in 1892. The pavements were built up and metalled with shale, and sawn totara planking was used as curbing.

The milkman and the baker delivered to the residents every day. The general store was a popular meeting place and was where you learned all the current news of the day and district.

Swaggers and drovers frequented the township. Drovers brought flocks from as far away as the Wairarapa Coast.

In December 1910 the name of the township changed from Kaikora to Otane.

A gasworks piped gas to gas street lighting until the advent of the electrical hook-up in September 1925. Mr A. V. Collins donated the posts for the gas street lighting.

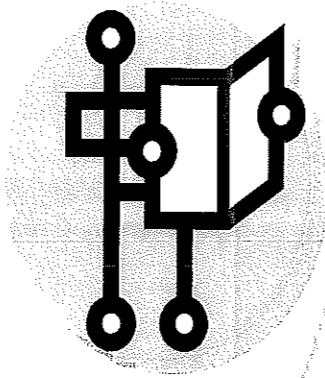
In days gone by most Otane residents had one or two cows each, to supply their needs for milk, butter and cheese. At the time, one cow per rate-paying resident was permitted to graze upon the roadside without fear of being impounded. With payment of a weekly fee of one shilling a second cow or a horse could be grazed upon the public way.

The soap factory <number 11 on the walk> is the oldest working wooden factory in New Zealand.

Otane is 315ft above sea level.

Otane residents welcome you and wish you an enjoyable walk down memory lane.

Otane Historic Pavement Walk is dedicated to Martyn Janssen, friend of many and dedicated visionary of Otane.



OTANE

1. Library
2. Avenue of trees
3. St Hilda's
4. Church and vicarage
5. Sports ground
6. Stock route
7. Sale yards
8. The pound
9. Stock and rail yards
10. Whare
11. Soap factory
12. Cemetery
13. Town clerk's house
14. Station master's house
15. Chauton
16. Railway station
17. Hotel
18. Butcher
19. Post Office
20. School
21. Bakery
22. General business district
23. Otane Town Hall

