



OTAGO CHESS CLUB

75th Anniversary



This Booklet . . .

celebrates the seventy-fifth anniversary of the Otago Chess Club—born 9th June, 1884, and still going strong. The volume is for the most part a history, but the occasion has caught some club members in humorous or poetic mood, or both, and these idiosyncrasies are reflected here.

AT THE 1959 CLUB OPENING.—
(From left to right) Dr. R. Gardner (President), T. van Dijk (Senior Champion), A. Henderson (Junior Champion and Perpetual Handicap winner), Sir Leonard Wright (the Mayor of Dunedin).



THE OTAGO CHESS CLUB
1884-1959



Patron:
Mr. J. J. MARLOW

Vice-Patron:
Mr. I. H. PENROSE

President:
Dr. R. GARDNER

Vice-Presidents:
Mr. W. B. PETRE (Senior), Mr. T. van DIJK (Junior).

Immediate Past President:
Mr. I. D. HAYES.

Secretary:
Mr. R. J. LOCKHART

Treasurer:
Mr. R. J. GLASS

Auditor:
Mr. J. F. LANG

Solicitor:
Mr. W. LANG

Committee:
Mr. R. COOPER, Mr. G. G. HAASE, Mr. A. D. HENDERSON,
Capt. J. B. MCGOWAN, Mr. W. A. POOLE.

Anniversary Booklet Committee:
Mr. R. J. GLASS, Mr. W. A. POOLE, Mr. R. MITCHELL (Editor).

HISTORY

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Chess in Dunedin goes back much further than the formation of the club: to the best of our knowledge, it arrived with the first settlers in 1848. We can well imagine them whiling away the long days of their sea-voyage over a chess-board, and after their arrival the lack of other entertainments must have been a great help to the development of the game here.

The first club formed in the city was the Dunedin Chess Club, founded in 1865. The population at that time was not big enough apparently, however, to maintain a club, and after a few years it fell by the wayside. In 1875 it was revived, but again lasted only a short while.

Chess was next catered for by the Otago Chess and Draughts Club, begun in 1883. This was still going at the time of the formation of the Otago Chess Club, but by then it was devoting most of its energies to draughts tournaments and the chess enthusiasts felt the need of a club of their own. The Chess and Draughts Club is the ancestor of the Otago Draughts Club.

THE OTAGO CLUB

The first meeting of the Otago Chess Club was in the Coffee Palace, Moray Place (now the Criterion Hotel building). The 30 members present elected Mr. E. E. C. Quick as their President for the first year and drew up rules for the club, which included a provision that new members had to be elected by ballot, "one black ball in five precluding election".

The club's first home was in the Occidental Chambers, part of the old Occidental Hotel building at the corner of Manse and High Streets. This served until 1895, when rooms in Reid's Buildings in Liverpool Street were taken over.

Since then, the club has had eight different meeting-places. Its present home is different from all the others in that it is not in the centre of the city but at Cargill's Corner. The rooms there have been occupied by the club since 1955; before that, the venue was for 14 years in the Electric Plumbing Supplies Building in Stuart Street.

The pattern of the club's activities has remained much the same right from the beginning. The annual championship tournament began at a very early date, although unfortunately the names of early winners have been lost. A feature has always been the classes for beginners, revived two years ago after a lapse of some years. This year improvers' classes are also to be held.

NEWSPAPER COLUMNS

March 19th, 1892, was a red-letter day in the history of the club. On that day the "Star" ran its first Chess Column. With a continuous history right down to the present, the column is the "Star's" oldest regular feature by far.

A Chess Column was also run at one time by the old "Otago Witness" and later by the "Otago Daily Times".

The first "Star" chess editor was R. A. Cleland, a famous name in the history of Otago chess; to-day Dr. R. Gardner, this year's President, conducts the column. R. A. Cleland came with his father, Robert, and his brother, H. J. Cleland, from Glasgow in the early 1890's and all were energetic members of the club. R. A. Cleland was New Zealand champion in 1898-99.

In the early days of chess in Otago, the Oamaru Club was very strong and often proved more than a match for the Dunedin players. On several occasions one club or the other travelled to the other centre for a match, while at other times they played each other by telegraph.

TELEGRAPHIC CHESS

In 1922 the first of the national telegraphic tournaments took place with the Auckland, Wellington, Canterbury, and Otago clubs engaged and the championship was decided between the clubs right up until 1957.

Last year in the Auckland and Wellington centres, both of which have more than one club, leagues were formed for the competition. Otago did not form a league but invited certain members of the Oamaru and Invercargill clubs to become country members of the Otago Club and play in its telegraph team.

In spite of strong opposition from the powerful Auckland League, Otago again won the tournament, for the sixth successive year.

In 1934 Lord Bledisloe, then Governor-General of New Zealand, presented the New Zealand Chess Association with a cup for the Telegraphic Championship which has since then been known as the Bledisloe Cup competition. Lord Bledisloe was presented with a gold key of the Otago Chess Club rooms when he visited the 1934-35 New Zealand Chess Congress here.

Although other clubs had made use of the telegraph long before Otago did (and in fact the Dunedin Chess Club played matches this way in 1875 and 1876), the local club claims a world "first" in an allied medium. The first team chess match ever played by radio was between the Sydney Millions Chess Club and the Otago Chess Club on 29th November, 1930. The result was a draw, three games all.

Matches were proposed with other overseas clubs, but the Government, fearful of losing revenue—the moves were transmitted by amateur stations—forbade any further experiments. The arrangements for the Sydney match were made at this end by Mr. R. Stroud, of St. Clair.

KOSTICH'S VISIT

A big event on 3rd August, 1924, was the visit of Yugoslav master Boris Kostich, who gave several simultaneous displays and demonstration games in the city. He was the first visitor of note that New Zealand chess had had. Even to date only two or three overseas chess masters have come to the Dominion—the game has not the crowd appeal here to pay for tours of this kind.

What was probably the Otago Club's one and only attempt at public spectacle was the "living chess" game played in the Garrison Hall in the 1880's.

The Otago Chess Club has itself produced one international chess master, R. Wade, although at the time he played in Dunedin his talent was as yet undeveloped. He left the city for Wellington with only the Otago Junior Championship to his credit. Wade won the New Zealand Championship in 1948 and then, giving his full time to chess, went to England and took the national title there.

FORWARD STEPS

Perhaps the biggest step forward in the club's programme over recent years was the introduction in 1948 of an Intermediate Championship for those who, while by no means beginners, feel rather overshadowed when drawn to meet the "big guns" of the club. This championship has been a success from the start, proving a satisfactory nursery for budding senior players, as well as setting a suitable standard of play for those lacking the time or the inclination for the book study necessary to further advancement.

Even more recently (1950) a Schoolboys' Championship was started, based not on a series of games through the year as the other championships are, but on an annual tournament. Through solid work by Mr. G. G. Haase at King's High School, and by Mr. Haase and other members of the club at a weekly chess evening for boys, the standard of schoolboy chess has been raised greatly and some of the top players are of intermediate-grade strength.

N.Z. CHAMPIONS

The club has had several New Zealand champions in its history. The earliest was V. F. Siedeberg, who won the title in 1891-2 and again the following year. His first success came only a very short while after leaving the Otago Boys' High School, where he had learnt the game through classes sponsored by the Otago Club.

Other champions from Dunedin were R. A. Cleland (as previously mentioned), D. Forsyth, and J. B. Dunlop. Forsyth was the inventor of the "Forsyth notation" for describing the set-up of the pieces on the board, now almost universal. He was champion of Scotland before coming to the Dominion.

J. B. Dunlop won the New Zealand Championship many times, but for most of his playing career he was a member not of the Otago but of the Oamaru Club.

OLDER MEMBERS

While chess has a strong following among schoolboys and young men, enthusiasm for the game does not die with age.

Among the keenest chess players in Dunedin is the club's Patron, Mr. J. J. Marlow, who is 97 this year: hardly a time does one visit him but he is found poring over a game from the Chess Column of some weekly, or over a problem from one of the many compendiums published. He has belonged to the club for more than 50 years.

There are two men, however, senior in membership, although not in age, to Mr. Marlow. Mr. W. H. Allen and Mr. G. D. Wright both joined in 1898, Mr. Allen beating Mr. Wright by a few weeks.

WELL-KNOWN MEN

Many well-known men have belonged to the club in its history. Mr. Marlow was a Dunedin City councillor for many years and Mayor of St. Kilda for a period, and is even now Chairman of the Ocean Beach Domain Board. S. S. Myers, a prominent member of the 1900-20 epoch, was Mayor of the old North-East Valley Borough. Mr. B. A. Todd is a former Mayor of West Harbour.

Nationally-known personalities connected with chess in Dunedin include Sir Robert Stout, later Premier of the

colony, who was one of the founders of the Dunedin Chess Club; Sir William Sim, Supreme Court judge, Vice-President of the Otago Chess Club in the 1890's; J. A. Millar, Minister of the Crown during 1906-12; A. R. Barclay, M.P. for Dunedin and then Dunedin North about the turn of the century; and Dr. (then Mr.) J. D. Mellor, later Director of the British Pottery Manufacturers' Association. A finely-carved ivory chess set presented to Dr. Mellor was given by his widow to the club, and is preserved as a show-piece in the club rooms.

Present and former members well known in the city generally include Drs. W. M. Stenhouse, Geoffrey Barnett, Noel Fulton, E. W. Bennett, E. J. Rawnsley, S. J. Webb, and P. W. Searle; Professor R. M. Gabriel and Mr. J. Fowler of the University of Otago Mathematics Department, and Mr. W. A. Poole of the Department of Economics; the Revs. Dr. E. N. Merrington, Rabbi A. T. Chodowski, N. Friberg, Canon B. King, and the Ven. Archdeacons H. G. Gould and A. Neild; Messrs. B. Thropp and J. B. Dunlop, dentists; Messrs. G. D. Wright and James and J. F. Lang, accountants; and Messrs. John and W. Lang, solicitors.

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MORPHY PLAYS CHESS

(Paul Morphy's famous game with Duke Karl of Brunswick and the Count Isouard, played in the Royal Box at the Paris Opera House, carefully annotated by T. v. D. and W. B. P.)

P-K4 is the way to play, This move was popular in his day. It's still, of course, very fine, As it opens up the Bishop's line. It also brings pressure to bear On the important centre square.

Black here doesn't mind, And immediately replies in kind. With N-B3 attack is born, Develops a piece and hits a pawn. Black plays weakly here you see, Guarding the Pawn with P-Q3 ???.

N-B3!! was really Black's next, Much "stronger than the text". P-Q4!! is White's move of course, Aiming at advantage in space and force; This is not merely shifting wood, "The move as played" is "logical and good".

His opponent now has a troubled mind, A good move here is hard to find. B-N5?—the text is a sin, Because it is a premature pin. After the powerful PxP!! Black's position is already torn.

He must now play B takes Knight; The Queen retakes with a plus for White. Black captures the Pawn at his K4, And now his game is very poor; After B-B4 White's position is great: It develops his game and threatens mate.

N-B3!, the move to play, Develops a piece and saves the day. White now plays Q-N3, A defence to which is hard to see: Black is now well caught in a net— The attack on two Pawns is not easily met.

He plays for exchange with Q-K2!, The check at N5 might just see him through; But N-B3!! brings a piece into play, And also takes Black's check away. As the Pawn is not protected at QN2, Black hopes P-B3 will do.

Now B-N5!!, the best move on the board, "The pin is mightier than the sword". Black's next move is P-N4, But White's reply closes the door. He strikes now with the speed of light, Capturing the Pawn with his well posted Knight.

Now PxN seems the sensible thing, But BxP is check to the King. This might of course seal Black's fate, "Never miss a check, it might be mate". So now he plays N-Q2, Not expecting the thunderbolt out of the blue.

NxB is Black's final fling, For now he must lose his King. Q-N8 check!!! is White's next you see. My goodness! he has left his Queen en pris! But after the capture it's all too late, For R-Q8!!! announces mate!

Black's grasp of the position is quite wrong; White continues by castling long. Now N-B4 seems the thing, But fails against the logical B takes King:

Here it must be realised, "The Knight is pinned and paralysed".

R-Q1 may be all right, As it brings defence to the helpless Knight.

Now RxN!!!. A surprise you say? It continues the attack in the strongest way.

After RxR Black gets no rest, "The move as played" is "relatively best".

White's R-Q1 now threatens to win, Because of the power of the pin. Black now tries to continue the fight With Q-K3 to free his Knight. BxR then announces check!!: Black's game is now a hopeless wreck.

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CHESSMANSHIP

By PETER FAMA

Stephen Potter, the well-known authority on the delicate art of One-upmanship, has as yet offered no advice to the chess player. Perhaps it would not be presumptuous to compile a short guide to this neglected but important field, for—to quote a master almost in his very own words—"chess, like love, like music, has the power to make the novice desperately unhappy".

Chessmanship is something quite distinct from actual playing ability, and not to be achieved without continual practice. We know one expert who perfected a neat routine by which he successfully confused his strongest opponents: he would boldly offer to "play them for supper", the stake of sixpence effectively distracting them from the game itself. Such techniques must be assiduously learnt and polished, as a half-hearted gambit is worse than useless.

OPENING THEORY

Even the placing of the pieces on the board offers opportunities. After ensuring that you have White (by noting whether your opponent is right- or left-handed and offering him a black piece in your corresponding fist), you should carelessly arrange the men so that in the process your first move is already made. If your opponent points out that one of your pieces is incorrectly placed, reply nonchalantly, "Oh, it doesn't matter—that will do for my

move." By this means he is immediately disarmed.

A close knowledge of a little-known opening is indispensable to Chessmanship. We have for some time employed the Greco Counter, which may in turn lead to the Corkscrew. The very name of the latter is likely to terrify your opponent, leaving him helplessly floundering from the start.

Continue to play in an apparently careless manner, letting it be known for a few moves that the opening is for you routine M.C.O. When, however, any difficulty arises, a brief respite is necessary. Sit back, fill and light your pipe elaborately, and offer some comment such as:

"I seem to recall this variation in the Hastings tournament of 1894."

Or, "This was a favourite of Bole-slavski's—of course Rubinstein worked out two answers to it."

Or simply chuckle quietly and say, "I've seen that one before."

COMPLICATIONS

If in doubt about the best of several available moves, always choose the most cryptic. A good device, for instance, is to retire a Knight to its original square—that is, to N1; the initial effect may be added to by subsequently moving the Knight about the board in an intricate and seemingly purposeful pattern. You can off-handedly refer to the piece as a "Nimzovich Knight", ominously suggesting that you are preparing for a crushing series of forks.

Equally useful for this purpose are Pawn moves such as P-QR4, which may be made deadly by the intimation that the Pawn is eventually to be queened. The phrase "On to Queen!" is unfortunately rather worn; a better expression is "I don't think this one can be stopped." Accompany such moves by a confident smile.

Perhaps the most important technique to be mastered, however, is the announcement of check. Various forms are in common use. The word "Check" may be spoken in a matter-of-fact voice that nevertheless conveys to your opponent an air of impending disaster. Cruder is the strident "Check to your King!", delivered with a thump of the checking piece on the board. If the check is easily countered, merely re-

mark "As I expected", and continue with a cryptic move of the kind previously described.

MORE ADVANCED TECHNIQUES

Here it is time to consider the *lost game*. When your position has deteriorated beyond saving, never let it be seen that you are at all disturbed. Convenient phrases to use are:

"It is more important to look around than to look ahead", or "It is not enough to have a won game—one must also win it."

When all else fails, several procedures may be tried:

1. Leaving the game to study someone else's.
2. Puffing smoke across the board and dropping ash on your opponent's side.
3. Upsetting a few of your opponent's men (never your own) by a clumsy movement of your sleeve.
4. Forgetfully pushing the lever on the clock so that your opponent loses time instead of you.
5. Suddenly remembering an appointment, so that you may regretfully agree to a draw before you are forced to leave.

USE OF THE CLOCK

In spite of all this, you may finally find yourself about to be mated. At all costs resign before that event and recover your Chessmanship by pointing out that the situation reached is not the result of skill on the part of your opponent, but of a slight error which you made 20 moves ago while pressed for time. Remember that "time trouble" is the most honourable form of defeat; you can suggest also that playing with a clock is a cumbersome artificiality unsuited to your naturally deliberative style.

If there is no clock you may resign effectively by suddenly pushing all your pieces into the centre of the board, conveying the air that it was a poor game anyway.

Occasionally you may be mated without a chance to resign. Never fail to hold a post-mortem in such a case: you will often be able to turn the event to advantage by showing your opponent how he could have mated you *two moves earlier*.

PRESIDENTS AND CHAMPIONS

PRESIDENTS

1884-5-6-7	-	E. E. C. Quick	1923	-	R. J. Penrose
1888-9	-	C. S. Reeves	1924-5	-	O. Balk
1890-1-2-3	-	Dr. W. M. Stenhouse	1926	-	J. S. M. Lawson
1894	-	R. A. Cleland	1927	-	S. S. Myers
1895	-	W. Elder	1928	-	L. D. Grigg
1896	-	H. J. Cleland	1929	-	Dr. E. N. Merrington
1897	-	Canon B. King	1930	-	Dr. G. Barnett
1898	-	O. Balk	1931	-	W. Herbert
1899	-	J. Edwards	1932	-	R. S. McDermid
1900	-	A. R. Barclay	1933	-	A. J. McDermott
1901	-	L. Warsaw	1934	-	D. Harris Hastings
1902	-	J. T. Johnstone	1935	-	E. F. Evans
1903	-	J. Crow	1936	-	W. Lang
1904	-	J. Stone	1937	-	J. J. Marlow
1905	-	Rev. A. T. Chodowski	1938	-	Dr. E. W. Bennett
1906	-	S. S. Myers	1939	-	J. F. Lang
1907	-	J. H. F. Hamel	1940	-	Dr. E. J. Rawnsley
1908	-	G. D. Wright	1941	-	J. C. McAnsh
1909	-	J. J. Marlow	1942-3	-	P. D. Williamson
1910	-	A. Ellis	1944	-	G. G. Cook
1911	-	F. J. Mowat	1945-6	-	D. Langley
1912	-	H. J. Armstrong	1947-8	-	A. E. B. Ward
1913	-	Archdeacon H. G. Gould	1949	-	A. C. Twose
1914	-	P. McLaurin	1950	-	W. G. Stenhouse
1915	-	D. Harris Hastings	1951-2	-	Dr. R. Gardner
1916	-	L. D. Coombs	1953	-	H. L. Abbott
1917	-	W. H. Allen	1954-5	-	H. E. Hewitt
1918	-	R. A. Cleland	1956	-	R. B. Hamel
1919	-	H. H. Henderson	1957	-	R. J. Glass
1920	-	Rev. N. Friberg	1958	-	I. D. Hayes
1921-2	-	T. M. Gillies	1959	-	Dr. R. Gardner

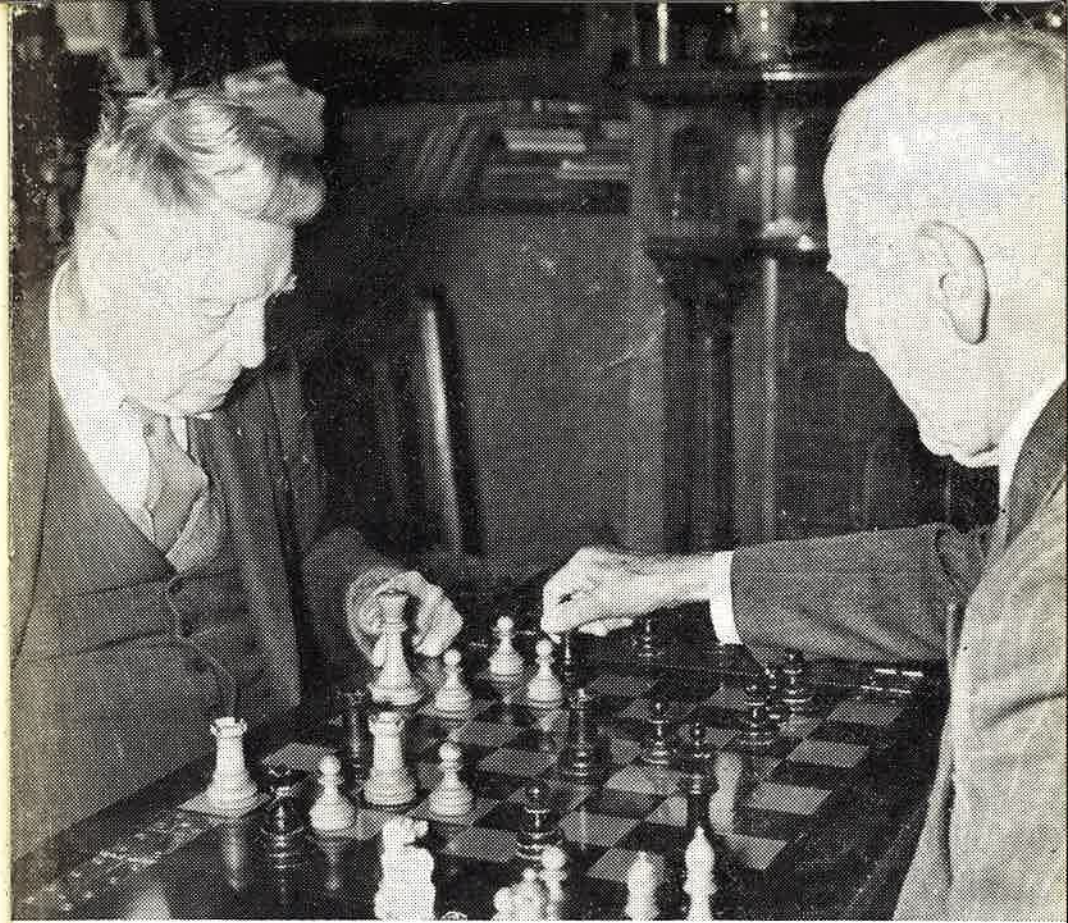
CHAMPIONS

1896-7	-	R. A. Cleland	1927	-	R. S. McDermid
1898	-	H. Lyders	1928	-	O. Balk
1899	-	O. Balk	1929	-	W. G. Stenhouse
1900	-	J. Edwards	1930-1	-	L. D. Coombs
1901	-	F. W. Clayton	1932-3	-	R. S. Watt
1902	-	D. Forsyth	1934-5	-	W. Lang
1903	-	O. Balk	1936	-	R. S. McDermid
1904-5	-	D. Forsyth	1937	-	W. Lang
1906	-	H. Mellor	1938	-	R. S. Watt
1907	-	D. Forsyth	1939-40	-	J. F. Lang
1908	-	G. F. Dodds	1941	-	Dr. E. W. Bennett
1909	-	R. A. Cleland	1942	-	R. S. Watt
1910	-	J. Dunlop	1943	-	Not awarded
1911	-	R. A. Cleland	1944	-	Dr. E. J. Rawnsley
1912	-	H. J. Armstrong	1945	-	R. S. Watt
1913	-	O. Balk	1946	-	J. F. Lang
1914-5-6	-	H. J. Armstrong	1947	-	R. W. Lungley
1917	-	R. A. Cleland	1948-9	-	W. Lang
1918-9	-	L. D. Coombs	1950	-	Dr. S. J. Webb
1920-1-2	-	A. W. O. Davies	1951-2-3	-	R. A. Raza
1923	-	W. G. Stenhouse	1954	-	J. F. Lang
1924	-	A. W. O. Davies	1955-6-7	-	R. A. Raza
1925	-	B. W. Stenhouse	1958	-	T. van Dijk
1926	-	Not awarded			

THE KING

(One of a series of chess sonnets written by Dr. W. M. Stenhouse, a late member of the Club.)

The King can never die! A saying trite
Of English law. In chess it is the same:
The King or chief of this most loyal game
May suffer check, or mate, or headlong flight,
The utmost rigours of disgrace and slight,
With all attendant consequence and shame,
As broken honour and a tarnished name,
All which his royal breast may well affright.
His woes stop short of death. While all around
He sees his loyal clansmen fight and die,
He winces not nor budes from the ground,
Till conquest or defeat provokes the cry—
Checkmate! and his high valour is obliged to yield
Unto his stronger foe the glories of the field.



J. J. Marlow (left), the club's Patron and oldest member, enjoys a game at his home with G. D. Wright, member of 61 years' standing and now a life member of the club.