clearing bush and forming tracks and roads. This work occupied them for six months. The rest of the year was devoted to work on their own newly allocated land. By 1896, 91 settlers had been granted in total about 10,000 acres: 64 houses had been built and 62 settlers - 37 married - had actually taken residence. Tahora, a northern extension, was established in 1897. In the same year the East Road was opened as far as the embryo Whangamomona township. Sections in this new township were first offered for sale in 1898. J. Hewer was now able - the state of the road permitting - to run his coach from Stratford to Whangamomona carrying mail and passengers.

The first school in the Whangamomona area was opened at Huiakama in 1896; at first named Mangare, its name was changed to Huiakama in 1900. A second school was opened at Marco Road in 1897. This latter school, initially known as Whangamomona, had its name changed to Marco in 1905, a year after a school had been opened in Whangamomona township.

In 1897 in Stratford, the Convent School was opened and the Stratford District High School established - with F. A. Tyrer as headmaster.

The agitation from settlers in the eastern districts to have their access improved appeared to achieve results in 1901 when William Hall-Jones, the minister of public works, turned the first sod of the Stratford-Okahukura railway line at Stratford - and predicted seemingly confidently that the line would be completed within ten years. In fact, 31 years elapsed before the line was completed. Meanwhile the eastern settlers suffered from isolation and neglect - and the further away they lived from Stratford the more they were isolated and neglected.

For much of the year - often for as long as eight or nine months - sections of the East Road (later called the Ohura Road) from Strathmore and Huiakama out to Whangamomona and beyond were impassable to wheeled traffic. The unmetalled road became a sea of

Photograph by courtesy of Mr L. Angus. A pioneer eastern districts settler and his family in front of their cottage, c. 1900. This cottage was typical of some early farm housing throughout the Stratford area - constructed of the material most readily at hand, planks for walls and overlapping shingles for the roof.

Photograph by courtesy of Mr L. Angus. An eastern settler's home - in the background a stark reminder of the difficulties faced by all Stratford district pioneer settlers in burning-off, clearing, grassing, fencing and stumping what they first encountered as virgin forest land.
Tangarakau to the Wanganui, but little benefit emerged from the visit except fair promises. State money was doled out very parsimoniously for the eastern roads. A whole generation of settlers was to experience poor and expensive communications.

Various expedients were used to attempt to make the roads usable by bullocks in winter. Some of the bad sections were 'corduroyed' with split slabs or 'fascined' with scrub. Burnt papa was used as road metal. But roading remained generally bad until the 1920's and 1930's. The settlers looked to the railway at first as the answer to their problems, but the slow progress of the line eastwards from Stratford gradually killed their hopes. The line's progress was hampered by political indifference, by the ebb and flow of loan moneys as borrowing policies altered, by the partial paralysis of public works caused by World War I, by primitive construction methods, and by the difficulties of terrain encountered by the construction gangs - particularly in the later stages of construction in the vicinity of Tangarakau. The line reached Toko in 1902 and Douglas in 1903. There a pause occurred for two years occasioned partly by government reluctance to steer loan money towards the line and partly by a wrangle as to whether the line should join the original track surveyed through Strathmore, a private settlement, or go through Huiroa, a government settlement. The latter route won and in 1908 the line reached Huiroa. Barely sixteen miles had been constructed in seven years.

Provisions and equipment had to be ordered months ahead and in large quantities to guarantee against shortages during the mud-bound months. Prudent husbands ensured that expectant wives were moved to Stratford weeks before the estimated time of delivery of baby daughter or son. Bullocks were used to tow sledges and to emulate pack-horses; even the Tangarakau and Wanganui Rivers were used as a means of transport - until the Tangarakau was blocked by logs and snags during a flood. The worst consequence, apart from the enormous inconvenience of suspension of deliveries of all kinds for weeks or months at a time, was that freight costs rose inordinately - despite government subsidies. The hard-pressed settlers petitioned Wellington. Seddon himself came north, borne in on the Hewer coach, and out by boat down the
Stratford’s Early Church buildings

The Anglican Church of the Holy Trinity as it looked soon after its completion — on the corner of Regan Street East and Juliet Street. c. 1890. McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Methodist Church on the corner of Regan Street East and Orlando Street. The two buildings began as separate churches. The nearer building was built in Broadway as the Primitive Methodist Church; the rear building was the original Wesleyan Church in Regan Street. After the union of the Methodist groups in 1913 the Primitive Methodist building was shifted to Regan Street. In 1958 it was shifted backwards to its present site to make room for the new church of St Stephen. McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Roman Catholic Church of the Immaculate Conception in Miranda Street.

The Salvation Army Hall Fenton Street East. c. 1900. McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Presbyterian Church of St Andrew on the corner of Regan Street West and Miranda Street. c. 1916. McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Salvation Army Hall Fenton Street East. c. 1900. McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Gospel Hall on the corner of Portia Street and Regan Street West. c. 1905. McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.
The changing face of the Stratford Hotel

R. Carr's Stratford Hotel.
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

Lawless's Stratford Hotel.
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

William's Stratford Hotel.
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

Whittle's Stratford Hotel.
J. R. Wall Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

Stelin's Stratford Hotel.
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Stratford Hotel in its more familiar setting.
J. R. Wall Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.
Change and stability in other Stratford hotels

Hutcheson's Empire Hotel.
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library

County Hotel
(in the days of landau, cab and coach).
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library

Fitzgerald's Empire Hotel.
(when the horse was still king of the road).
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library

Empire Hotel.
(after a different kind of horsepower became dominant).

County Hotel
(with a new neighbour and a new form of transport, but still standing solidly as before).

F. S. Pollock's Commercial Hotel.
McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library

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Stratford's early sources of conveyance

On right: Commercial Stables (P. Collins)

On left: The Egmont Coach & Carriage Co.

On right: Crown Livery and Bait Stables (J. R. Jones)


On right: Brayshaw & Co. Carriage Importers.
Stratford's early trading banks

Bank of Australasia

The Bank of Australasia merged with the Union Bank of Australia after World War II, to form the A.N.Z. Bank. This site was occupied subsequently by the Stratford branch of the A.N.Z. Bank.

McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

National Bank of New Zealand

On the left can be seen part of the premises of the Union Bank of Australia which moved to a site on the other side of Broadway further north and which merged subsequently with the Bank of Australasia to form the A.N.Z. Bank.

McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

Bank of New South Wales

McAllister Collection
Alexander Turnbull Library.

National Bank of New Zealand — still standing sturdily after fire had levelled the Municipal Buildings next door — in 1914.

McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

The Municipal Buildings — before the fire in 1914.

McAllister Collection, Alexander Turnbull Library.

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The Stratford Borough continued to thrive. In 1900, loans were raised for the construction of drainage works and water works; in 1901 the public works department established its Taranaki office in Stratford; in 1902 a new Town Hall, the third, was opened; in 1903 the technical school in Cloton Road joined the local range of education amenities; in 1904 the Stratford Hospital Board was formed, with Joseph McKay as chairman; in 1905 the new Kopuatama Cemetery was made available for interments; in 1906 the foundation stone of the new District Hospital was laid by the Governor, Lord Plunket.

Dairying had continued to expand throughout the county. The Stratford Co-operative Company acquired the Toko factory in 1902. The Makahu Co-operative Dairy Company began operations in 1904. At the turn of the century a small privately owned cheese factory had been opened at Kohuratahi and in 1901 a further factory was opened near Whanganomona by J. McCluggage. Difficulties of transport hampered back-country dairying, but for more than forty years it remained a means of regular income for farmers in the east.
The Stratford railway station and yards c. 1903. The railway was then the major carrier of goods and people between New Plymouth in the north and Eltham, Hawera, Wanganui, Palmerston North and Wellington in the south. The motor lorry and bus were still a generation away as important competitors of rail.

Sharrock and Co., teams drawing logs in Regan Street, 1904. Saw-milling was an important occupation in the Stratford district for several decades. Bullocks were used in the forests and on rough tracks and roads; horses were swifter where wheeled traffic was able to be used efficiently on metalled roads.

In the background stands the Trocadero hotel which was to be destroyed by fire in 1911.

The laying of the foundation stone of the new Stratford District Hospital on 22nd February, 1906. If the expression of the onlookers appears to be sombre, perhaps this mood follows from the embarrassing realisation — precipitated conceivably by the Governor himself — that the name of His Excellency, Lord Plunket, had been mis-spelt. There, engraved on the stone before his eyes, the Governor's name has been rendered as Plunkett.

The construction team which built the hospital during 1906-07. It was completed in February 1907, and admitted its first patient in May 1907. The foundation stone can be seen on the left of the photograph. The error in Lord Plunket's name has been corrected, for posterity still to see, by obliterating the upper part of the 'T' and leaving the base of the stalk as a comma.
The traffic count on Broadway in a recent survey proved over 1600 vehicles per hour used the highway. In recent years most of the power and telephone cables have been placed underground in the retail section. A fine clocktower replaces the timepiece demolished with the old Post Office building. It is proposed to re-erect the original chiming mechanism and bells in another area of the town.

The Stratford District can regard with satisfaction its attitude to education. The plans of the early settlers always included schooling facilities. It was not always possible to provide school buildings but education was established as one of the prime activities, even if classes were held in the home of a pupil or teacher. Most of the schools have been renewed or updated and even the country schools now have a swimming pool, library, enjoy transport facilities, and use all the modern teaching aids available.

The present Stratford Primary opened in 1948 as one of the most modern school buildings erected after World War 2, and is an example of civic pride and public support. The grounds were landscaped with voluntary labour and the Assembly Hall plan modified to include kitchen facilities. Commencing with a roll of 570 and growing to 670 very quickly it was necessary to have prefabricated classrooms added within two years of its opening.

On the Southern Boundary of Stratford is the Avon School. Opened in February 1957 with 90 pupils and eight teachers, it has become a flourishing primary of 590 children with eleven staff, taking pupils to Form 2 level. The school has an excellent hall and swimming pool provided from public subscription through the P. T. A.

Marire Home Inc., accommodation for the ambulant elderly of the district is the result of a generous gift from the family of the late Dr Doris Gordon, an early medical practitioner. The Stratford Lions Club accepted the challenge to provide funds for the necessary structural alterations and went to the local citizens with a campaign which raised $50,000. An incorporated society was established with representatives from all Stratford's civic committees to operate a Marire Trust. Recently a ten bed addition was constructed using a gift of monies from the Alec McMullion Estate. Three flats have been erected for solo accommodation, with a covered access to the dining room of the main building.

The motto of the Stratford Technical High School has been retained but the description 'technical' was dropped some years ago. The structure remaining from 1921 has many new buildings around it today. The old school is rich in history and many former students have made their mark in New Zealand and world affairs. It was recognised in early years for its agricultural courses. Messrs Amess and Johnson of the early teaching staff were responsible for the first text book on dairy farming printed in New Zealand.
### Stratford District Centennial Celebrations
#### Calendar of Official and Other Activities

**SEPTEMBER 1977**
- Beard-growing competition commenced. Judging to be at County Fair on March 4th, 1978.

**JANUARY 1978**
- **Monday 2nd**
  - 7.30 p.m. — Stock Car Demolition Derby - Showgrounds
- **Friday 27th**
  - 7.30 p.m. — Stratford Marching Association Street March through Central Broadway.
- **Saturday 28th**
  - 10.00 a.m. — Stratford Marching Association Championships - Victoria Park.
- **Sunday 29th**
  - 10.00 a.m. — Taranaki Marching Centre Championships - Victoria Park.

**FEBRUARY 1978**
- **Wednesday 1st**
  - Release of limited edition of special Centennial First Day Covers.
- **Saturday 4th**
  - 7.30 p.m. — Stock Cars N.Z. Championships - Showgrounds.
  - (Reserved as alternative for Stock Car N.Z. Championships if previous day wet).
- **Monday 6th**
  - 10.00 a.m. — Welcome and Challenge - Receiving of Official Guests.
  - Official Speeches and Ceremony.
  - 12.00 noon — Maori Hangi. (400 meals for sale).
  - 1.00 p.m. — Concert Parties, Maori Haka, Traditional Pageantry.
  - Visiting and Taranaki Maori Cultural Groups.
  - Individual displays by various Taranaki ethnic and cultural groups.
  - 3.30 p.m. — Conclusion of programme.
  - Organised by Maori Centennial Celebrations Committee.
  - Stratford Businessmen’s Association - Window dressing competition.

**Monday 6th to Monday 20th**
- **Thursday 9th**
  - Stratford Ladies Golf Club - Picnic day. Visitors welcome.
- **Saturday 11th**
  - CENTENNIAL PARADE & CARNIVAL AFTERNOON - Main Highway and Showgrounds.
  - (In the event of wet weather cancellation, the Parade & Carnival will be held on Sunday the 12th commencing at 12.00 noon i.e. all times will be advanced 1½ hours on the Saturday programme. The Civic Garden Party will in this event be cancelled). Admission, Charge at Showgrounds.
  - 10.00 a.m. — Static Musical Programme. Band of R.N.Z.A.F. - Prospero Place.
  - 10.30 a.m. — Official Opening by His Worship the Mayor - Miranda Street opposite War Memorial Hall.
  - Citizens Band Item.
  - Band of R.N.Z.A.F. give Marching & Drum Display in Central Broadway immediately Parade passes through.
  - 11.30 a.m. — Parade arrives at Showgrounds and circulates through arena. Floats then on static display for afternoon.
  - 1.00 p.m. — Special displays in Showground Arena.
  - Bullock team of six steers and cart.
  - Horses and Horse drawn equipment.
  - Vintage and Modern Tractor & Machinery.
  - Traction engine and Old Time equipment.
  - N.Z. Fire Services display “Through the Ages”.
  - 2.40 p.m. — Official welcome by Chairman of Stratford County Council.
  - 2.45 p.m. — Band of R.N.Z.A.F. - “Beating the Retreat”.
  - I.H.C. Presentation.
  - 3.00 p.m. — Presentation of three $100 prizes to Float Competition winners.
FEBRUARY Continued

Saturday 11th
3.15 p.m. — Conclusion of formal programme.
— Parade Floats and Special Equipment on static display for open public viewing. "Organised by Combined Committee of the Stratford Jaycee and Roundtable Service Clubs."

Saturday 11th

Sunday 12th
CENTENNIAL OPEN AIR CHURCH SERVICE - Victoria Park. Grandstand and limited seating available. Congregation requested to provide own seating where practicable. No offering will be taken. If wet to be held in War Memorial Hall.


11.00 a.m. — Conclusion of Service. “Organised by Stratford Ministers Association.”

12.00 noon — Reserved for Parade & Carnival in the event of wet weather cancellation. Advance Saturday times 1 ½ hours.

Sunday 12th
2.00 p.m. — CIVIC GARDEN PARTY - McCullough Dell, King Edward Park. If wet a reception will be held in the War Memorial Hall. Admission — No Charge. Guest of Honour His Excellency Mr Harold Smedley, C.M.G., M.B.E. British High Commissioner. Music by the Band of the Royal New Zealand Air Force. Light Afternoon Tea provided.

4.00 p.m. — Conclusion of Function. “Organised by Stratford Borough Council and assisted by Stratford Rotaract Club”.

Tuesday 14th
Stratford Amateur Swimming Club - Turnbull Cup and other special events.

Wednesday 15th
Euchre Tournament - Old Folks Association Hall, Juliet Street. “Organised by Stratford Old Folks Association”.

Friday 17th

Friday 17th
Stratford Women’s Club - Open Afternoon Tea, 1.30 p.m. to 5 p.m. Centennial Rest Rooms, Fenton Street. All ex members and visitors welcome.

Saturday 18th
Centennial Trotting Meeting - Stratford Racecourse. “Organised by Stratford Trotting Club”.

Saturday 18th
Stratford Squash Tournament - Stratford Squash Courts, Orlando Street.

Saturday 18th
Taranaki Athletic & Cycling Championships - Victoria Park.

Sunday 19th
1.00 p.m. — OPENING OF STRATFORD CENTENNIAL PLAYGROUND. Victoria Park. Free admission.
— Skate Board Championships.
— Music by Stratford Citizens Band.
— “Playground built as combined Lions, Rotary & Jaycee projects”.
— Stratford Horticultural Society Flower Show and Taranaki Cat Club Display - War Memorial Hall.
— Judging of Garden Competition and announcing of awards.
— Stratford Centennial Bowling Tournament - sponsored by Stratford and Avon Men’s Bowling Club at both rinks.
— Stratford Centennial Mixed Bowling Tournament - sponsored by Stratford and Avon Women’s Bowling Clubs at both rinks.
— Girl Guides “Thinking Day” - camp fire at Den.

MARCH 1978

Wednesday 1st
CENTENNIAL RACE MEETING - Stratford Racecourse. “Organised by Stratford Racing Club”.

Saturday 4th
10.30 a.m. — Stalls open. Aircraft fly-over. Helicopter display.
11.00 a.m. — Lyndsey Yeo with the Children.
1.30 p.m. — 500 voice Children’s Choir conducted by Mr Ian Menzies.
2.00 p.m. — Maori Concert Party.
2.30 p.m. — Children’s Choir.
2.45 p.m. — Bullock team “Guess the Weight Competition by 7 Teams”.
— Announcement of Beard Competition results.

Monday 6th
INFORMAL GET-TOGETHER: SOCIAL REUNION.

Monday 6th to
Saturday 11th
Anniversary Weekend

Saturday 11th
Evening — Stratford & District Scottish Society Tattoo - Stratford Showgrounds.
— Centennial 750 Golf Tournament - Stratford Golf Course.
— “Organised by Stratford Golf Club”.

Saturday 12th
Evening — Wet weather alternative for Scottish Society Tattoo.
— “Organised by Stratford Old Folks Association”.
— Stratford Antique and Collectors Club Society 1978 Centennial Exhibition - Community Centre Hall. A full programme of times and additional detail will be extensively publicised later.

Monday 13th
9.15 a.m. — National Dancing Competition - Community Centre Hall. “Organised by Braeside Dancing Society”.

Saturday 18th
STRATFORD CENTENNIAL BANQUET AND BALL - War Memorial Hall. Admission by Ticket only. Tickets $30.00 double and $15.00 single. Available from the 10th February at the Centennial Centre, Broadway. Guests of Honour - His Excellency The Governor General, The Right Honourable Sir Keith Holyoake and Lady Holyoake.

6.15 p.m. — Arrival of Vice Regal Party.

6.45 p.m. — Arrival of Vice Regal Party.
— Official Welcome and Speeches.
— Cocktails Hour.
— Centennial Banquet.
— Commencement of Centennial Ball.

2.00 a.m. — Conclusion of Centennial Ball. “Organised by Stratford Rotary Club”.
— Centennial Ball music will be provided by the Stratford Centennial Ballroom 7 Piece Orchestra. Official and detailed Banquet and Ball Programmes will be provided to all those attending.

9.00 a.m. — Special events for cricketers, civic leaders and old timers.
— Cricket ball throwing contests, 100 yard dash, plus other special events for the public.

6.00 p.m. — Conclusion of activities. “Organised by Stratford Cricket Club”.
— National Autumn Rose Show and Convention - War Memorial Hall.
— Stratford Centennial Easter Tennis Tournament - Stratford Tennis Courts. "Organised by the Stratford Tennis Club".

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APRIL 1978
Saturday 1st
- YOUNG SET CABARET - War Memorial Hall. "Organised by the Stratford Musicians".

Saturday 8th to Saturday 15th
- North Island Billiards & Snooker Championships - Stratford R.S.A. rooms and Stratford Club. "Organised by the Taranaki Billiards & Snooker Association".
- CENTENNIAL ARTS FESTIVAL - War Memorial Hall. "Organised by the Stratford Art Society".
- Champagne Opening Night. ANZ Art Award.
- Musical play - Stratford High School Hall. "Organised by the Stratford Theatre Group."
- Centennial Concert - Stratford High School Hall. "Organised by the Stratford Music Society".
- Taranaki St John's Ambulance Brigade Senior and Cadet Competitions.
- Cardiff Entertainers Club - Cardiff Hall.
- Multi Media Historical Tableau - Stratford High School Hall. "Organised by Stratford High School teachers and pupils".
- North Island Wrestling Championships - War Memorial Hall.
- Stratford Cage Bird Club Show - Stratford High School Hall.
- Stratford Badminton Club - Centennial Tournament. Secondary & Primary Schools - War Memorial Hall.
- Stratford Benedicts Ball - War Memorial Hall.
- National Colts Hockey Tournament - Stratford High School grounds.
- Taranaki Stock Car Club Cabaret - War Memorial Hall.
- Stratford Mountain Club 50th Jubilee Celebrations & Ball. War Memorial Hall.
- Stratford & District Scottish Society Debutante Ball - War Memorial Hall.
- Hockey Tournament - N.Z. Primary School Boys' Representative 'Hatch Cup' Tournament - Stratford High School grounds.
- Stratford Toastmistress Club Speech Competitions - Stratford Primary School.
- New Zealand Angling & Casting Association annual meeting. "Organised by Stratford Angling Club."
- N.Z. Veteran Ladies Foursome Golf Tournament.
- Stratford Agricultural & Pastoral Association Show.
- Stratford Citizens Band Reunion.

For detailed information of all functions refer to radio and newspaper advertisements, or call at the CENTENNIAL CENTRE, adjacent to the South Roundabout.