

# Early settlement

## Stat attack

According to the 1861 census, of the overseas-born population of Otago, 42% were born in Scotland, 36% in England, 15% in Ireland and 4% in Australia.

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The most recent census in 2006 has indicated that the present population of Dunedin includes the following ethnic groups:

- European: 78.7%
- Māori: 6.4%
- Asian: 5.3%
- Pacific: 2.2%

## Digging deeper...

Several hundred English, German and Polish Jews were among the wave of immigrants that arrived during the goldrush. Many of these families established successful businesses in the South, and became prominent members of Dunedin society. Names such as Hallenstein, Fels, de Beer, Brasch and Theomin have left a significant mark on our city. Many of Dunedin's cultural organisations are very richly endowed because of the generosity of these families.

Traditionally, Dunedinites have been fiercely proud of their roots, be they Presbyterian Scots, Māori, Chinese, Lebanese, Pacific Island, European... the list goes on.

Probably the most famous of all Dunedin's settlers were the hardy Presbyterian Scots who first arrived in 1848 on the ships *John Wickliffe* and *Philip Laing*. Their intention was to establish a new Free Church of Scotland settlement – an 'Edinburgh of the South'.

With the beginning of the goldrush, people began to pour into the new province, quickly making Dunedin the largest city in the country. A significant portion of these new settlers were from Great Britain – mostly English and Scottish, but also some Irish and a small number of Welsh. Many others came via the Australian goldfields, as well as from China, Lebanon and Europe. By 1864, only one third of Otago's population had been born in Scotland.

The Chinese are remembered for the scores of hardworking, but isolated goldminers who often endured extreme prejudice. Some Chinese, however, such as Choie Sew Hoy, became successful businessmen.

Population growth in Lebanon led many Lebanese to emigrate in the late 1800s. Lebanese in the Dunedin community were quick to spot opportunities to sell wares to goldminers and rural families in Otago, and subsequently to set up permanent stores and businesses.



The entire Dunedin Lebanese community came together for this 1899 wedding



Choie Sew Hoy – one of the founding members of Dunedin's Chinese community

