

The Railway Station



Digging deeper...

George Troup's ornate design of the Dunedin Railway Station earned him the nickname of 'Gingerbread George'.



Inspired!

Of the section between Port Chalmers and Karitane, poet Charles Brasch wrote, 'I cannot read with great concentration on this journey, here is too much to look at – the smooth soft hills sloping down to meet a gentle unruffled sea... a riot of marguerites & valerian in the cuttings & open spaces.'

The 1906 opening of the present Dunedin Railway Station building by New Zealand's Premier, Sir Joseph Ward, was a major event for the city. The press described 'a large gathering of ladies, representative business men, and others, who were provided with seats on a platform erected in front of the station and gaily decorated with bunting.'

Designed by the architect George Troup, this was Dunedin's fourth central railway station and quickly became the busiest in New Zealand. It is built of kokonga basalt, quarried near Ranfurly, with Oamaru limestone facings, columns of pink Aberdeen granite, and an impressive interior featuring stained glass, wrought ironwork and Royal Doulton tiles.

The Railway Station serviced local goods and passenger trains to and from Central Otago as well as the legendary Southerner, travelling up and down the island on the main trunk line.

In 1979, the Taieri Gorge Railway Limited was formed. Thousands of passengers (70,000 in 2006), have been introduced to the unique scenery of Otago as far as Middlemarch, through the regular Taieri Gorge train. More recently the station platform has become a Saturday morning destination for the Otago Farmers Market, while the main building itself now houses the New Zealand Sports Hall of Fame, a restaurant, and the Otago Art Society's Art Station Gallery.



The Railway Station platform



The Taieri Gorge train at a viaduct crossing



Photo: ODT/ www.otagoimages.co.nz