

The heritage farm buildings of Terrace Station

By Isabelle Teresa

Terrace Station, near Hororātā, is steeped in 19th century agricultural and settler history, originating from its ownership by Sir John Hall with all heritage aspects upheld by the generations of descendants who have lived there. Legend has it that the Hall family throws nothing away! Great grand-daughter Kate Foster is the current guardian, fiercely valuing the station's history and welcoming tours to share its many aspects.

The woolshed is in the limelight right now. Built in 1869, it has a category 2 registration from Heritage New Zealand and a starring role in the soon-to-be-published Woolsheds book (see accompanying article). Shearers liked working in it for its spacious and air-circulating two-storey design. It is full of clever touches, such as the wooden windlass built into the rafters to winch bales to the extensive storage loft, still working as efficiently today as when installed.

Kate's son John, a fitter/welder living nearby, is the latest generation to contribute regular work to the site. He is currently restoring and increasing the safety of some elements of the woolshed, using timber from the property. The plan is to enable future woolshed tours.

The Station also displays many smaller scale but equally lovingly-restored farming buildings of significance.

The presence of an onsite blacksmith's shop was first recorded in 1869, ruled over by just one blacksmith, William McSweeney, for over 25 years. Richard, Kate's late husband, restored the building – now dubbed "The Smithy" – as a fascinating display. The massive bellows still feed the furnace and the handle is long-worn smooth.

The "Swaggers' Hut" was built in 1885, in use until possibly the 1950s, damaged by the quakes then transported and restored by Richard and John in

2018. Decades before social welfare, farms played a key role in feeding and supporting itinerant and unskilled workers. These people were respectfully referred to as "travellers" at Terrace Station, and their names often recorded. The restored, one-room hut shows the simple bunks and fireplace, and displays the original front doorstep, worn almost through by thousands of footsteps.

Terrace Station welcomes group tours by arrangement, when these and other heritage areas of the homestead and property can be viewed. Details: www.terracestation.org.nz/visit-us / Contact Kate: terracestationnz@gmail.com



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