

# SAVAGES

Artists of the Christchurch Savage Club



at the  
Robert McDougall Art Gallery  
Christchurch  
8 April - 27 May 1993

## SAVAGES

Artists from the Christchurch Savage Club  
EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

*Unless otherwise stated all works are from the Robert McDougall Art Gallery collections.*

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**PETRUS VAN DER VELDEN** (1837 - 1913)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club April 1893

**Portrait of William Henry Wynn Williams first president of the Christchurch Savage Club 1893 - 1894**  
charcoal

Presented by the Christchurch Savage Club 1979

**The Satara Player**

oil on canvas

Marjorie Bassett Bequest 1964

**JOHN McINTOSH MADDEN** (1856 - 1923)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club May 1893

**Trout Fishing on the Dart**

watercolour

Presented by W J Dalton 1945

**WILLIAM MENZIES GIBB** (1859 - 1931)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club 1893

**Maori Village Oaro Kaikoura**

oil on canvas

Christchurch Polytechnic Collection

**Edge of the bush Pigeon Bay 1886**

watercolour

Presented by Mr G Britton 1960

**ALFRED WILSON WALSH** (1859 - 1916)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club April 1906

**Low Tide Kaikoura Harbour 1904**

watercolour

Presented by the family of James Jamieson 1932

**GEORGE HERBERT ELLIOTT** (1860 - 1941)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club April 1894

**The Faery Queen - Mt Spencer Range**

watercolour

Presented by the Canterbury Society of Arts 1932

**WALTER ARMIGER BOWRING** (1874 - 1931)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club April 1898

**Portrait of Sir Robert Heaton Rhodes 1924**

oil on canvas

Presented by the Canterbury Society of Arts 1932

**A Night with the Christchurch Savages 1899**

Pen and Ink

Christchurch Savage Club Collection

**E Hari Tatou 1901**

pen, ink and watercolour

Christchurch Savage Club Collection

**JAMES LAWSON BALFOUR** (1870 - 1966)

Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club May 1902

**Portrait of Samuel Charles Farr**

oil on canvas

**CHARLES NATHANIEL WORSLEY** (1862 - 1923)

Elected member of the Christchurch Savage Club July 1903

**Bern Switzerland 1892**

watercolour

Presented by the Canterbury Society of Arts 1932

*This exhibition has been prepared in recognition of the centennial year of the Christchurch Savage Club.*

*Its focus is the first three decades of the Club's existence when artist membership was at its height. By the 1900s a network of Savage Clubs had been formed throughout New Zealand and included many kindred Orphan clubs.*

*The Orphans of the Savage Club had their origin at a time when membership was closed and prospective members being 'shut out' formed their own association.*

*Over the years both Savages and Orphans have worked together and today form integrated branches of the same movement.*

*The gallery wishes to thank members of the Christchurch Savage Club, and in particular Mr R.O. Gibbens, for providing access to club archives and for making available art works from the Savage Club collection.*

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## THE SAVAGE CLUB

The original Savage Club was founded in London on 5 October 1857 by a group of writers and artists.

It was the inspiration of a Victorian journalist George Augustus Sala (1828 - 1895) who gathered together literary friends and associates at the Crown Tavern in Drury Lane. They decided to form a club of 'merry fellows' that was slightly bohemian but not too much so.

At first there was some debate as to what the club should be called but all agreed that it should be named after a famous British literary figure, but who it could not be decided. In jest someone suggested Richard Savage (1667 - 1743) and it received unanimous approval.

Savage who had been a contemporary of both Dr Samuel Johnson (1709 - 1784) and David Garrick (1717 - 1779) was a controversial poet and playwright. He claimed to be

the illegitimate son of the countess of Maccelsfield and the fourth Earl of Rivers.

His first major work of poetry 'The Bastard' 1728 was an expression of his feelings about the rejection of his parentage which brought him a pension to secure his silence.

Among Savage's most celebrated works were a poem 'The Wanderer', the comedy play 'Love in a Veil' 1718 and a tragedy Sir Thomas Overburg 1724.

Always in debt he lived on the charity of his literary friends especially Alexander Pope whom he supplied with gossip for 'The Dunciad'. In this heroic poem published in 1728 Pope launched a satirical attack on some of the literary pretenders of his day.

Savage ended his life in disgrace and died at Bristol in debtor's prison.

By the end of the nineteenth century the London Savage Club was far from being a bohemian circle and had a large membership that included the Prince of Wales and some of the most eminent artists, writers, musicians, politicians and military figures in Victorian society.

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## THE CHRISTCHURCH SAVAGE CLUB

On 13 April 1893 a similar social entertainment club to that in London was formed in Christchurch through the initiative of Heinrich von Haast, William Henry Wynn Williams, Justice John Denniston, Oscar T J Alpers, Alfred Merton and others.

Its membership quickly grew attracting many prominent citizens, among them the artists Petrus van der Velden, John M. Madden and William Menzies Gibb.

During the early decades of this century other artist members of the club included those who have been selected for this exhibition.

**SYDNEY LOUGH THOMPSON (1877 - 1973)**  
Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club  
May 1905

**Portrait of a Taupo Maori Chief with a Mere**  
oil on canvas  
Canterbury Museum Collection

**WILLIAM HOUNSOM BYLES (1872 - 1924)**  
Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club 1907

**The Hay Rick**  
oil on canvas  
Presented by H.G. and A. H. Anthony 1964

**RICHARD WALLWORK (1882 - 1955)**  
Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club  
June 1911

**The Drover**  
oil on canvas  
Presented by Mr George Humphrey

**Portrait of Mr G.W. Horsley Great Chief of the  
Christchurch Savage Club 1917**  
oil on canvas  
Christchurch Savage Club Collection

**Lightning Time Study 1911**  
oil on canvas  
Christchurch Savage Club Collection

**Portrait of Noble Savage 1920**  
pencil  
Christchurch Savage Club Collection

**ALFRED E. BAXTER (1878 - 1936)**  
Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club  
June 1911

**Mt Elliott and the Jervois glacier 1927**  
watercolour  
Presented by the Canterbury Society of Arts 1932

**DAVID EDWARD HUTTON (1866 - 1946)**  
Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club May  
1919

**The Stoddart Cottage Diamond Harbour**  
oil on canvas board  
Presented by the trustees of the K. Hutton Estate 1992

**WILLIAM SYKES BAVERSTOCK (1893 - 1975)**  
Elected a member of the Christchurch Savage Club May  
1920  
Life Member 1963

*Savage Club programme design*  
pen and ink  
Christchurch Savage Club collection

*Savage Club programme design Guest Night May 21st  
1927*  
pen and ink  
Christchurch Savage Club collection

*Savage Club programme design British Football Korero  
July 5th 1930*  
pen and ink  
Christchurch Savage Club collection

*Savage Club programme design T. Vernon Griffiths  
1927*  
pen and ink  
Christchurch Savage Club collection

