

Article from Issue 17 of the Postcard Pillar August 1994

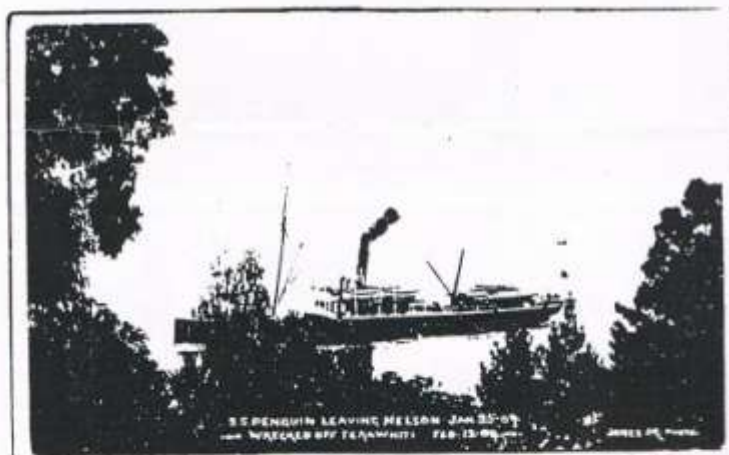
POSTCARD NOTES

-by RON SCARLETT.

FREDERICK NELSON JONES, Photographer.

Frederick Nelson Jones, Junior, was born in 1881 to Frederick Nelson Jones, Senior, and his wife Emeline Sophia Jones. The father was born in 1855. In 1877 he commenced business in Nelson as a saddler and harness maker, and also had a stables (Tattersalls Stables) in Trafalgar Street. This later became Wrightson's Garage. The elder Jones was buried in Wakapuaka Cemetery, Nelson, on 10 April 1910. Emeline Sophie was born in 1857, and was buried with her husband on 22 December 1931.

Frederick Nelson Jones, Junior, was born in 1881. After leaving school he worked as a saddler for his father for eleven years, but in 1904, after photographing the burning Nelson Boys' College, commenced making a living on his own account from his hobby of photography. His many negatives are held by the Nelson Provincial Museum.



Jones concentrated on outdoor subjects. He produced many postcards, mainly real photographs, and until his father's death, signed them "F.N. Jones, Jnr.". Some of his cards are dated by him. The earliest postmark date I have for one of his postcards is 23.11.1905. He is listed in the N.Z.P.O. Directory and other directories as "photographer", with an address at 42 Halifax Street, Nelson. In the 1952 Stone's directory his occupation was given as "company director", Halifax Street.

Jones' postcards are nearly all real photographs, mostly black and white, but occasionally blue-green, signed "F.N. Jones, Jnr", until after his father's death, when "Jnr" was omitted. He published most of his own postcards but "Jackson and Co, Booksellers, Nelson" (imprint on the reverse of the card) also published cards with Jones' signature on the front.

His obituary in "The Nelson Evening Mail" stated "as representative of pictorial weeklies he had many hundreds of photographs published. The 'Evening Mail Sports Edition' has often used his prints in it's 'Pages from the Past' column. As a photographer he became a familiar figure at public gatherings, juggling with plate holders, a bulky reflex camera, and black cloth, while balanced precariously atop his tall wooden ladder". Besides his photographic interests "Freddy", as he was known to many, had many others. He loved children. He opened "Coney Park" in 1921 on a site opposite Cock and Co's building in Haven Road. It had Merry-Go-Rounds, a miniature train, (on which I rode as a boy) and a Camera Obscura, swing boats, and a barrel organ. The train was "The Flying Scotsman". At the end of 1926 Jones sold the Haven Road Site, and moved "Coney Park" to a section facing Halifax Street.

After retiring from photography in the 1930s, F.N. Jones created "Pixie-Town", inspired in the creation of his long nose little people by a book he had as a child. His pixies featured in "The Magic Cave", first staged in Nelson in 1933 for Trathan and Co Ltd, when it went to Auckland it almost stopped business in the Farmers Trading Co. More than 6000 people passed through in one day. Later "Pixie-Town" was staged in many parts of New Zealand, in Australia, U.S.A., and England.

Jones also organised "Barnum and Bailey's Amateur Circus", A Punch and Judy Show, and many Carnivals and Parades. He had monkeys "Mutt", "Jeff", "Fits" and "Starts", and a donkey, attractions at Nelson galas. His collection of music boxes, many restored by him, was reputed to be the largest private one in New Zealand. In 1910 Mr Jones married Ivy Gertrude Florence Dougan, who was buried in the Wakapuaka Cemetery on 9 January 1947, aged 58 years. Later he married his second wife, Nina.

Frederick Nelson Jones died on 29 August 1962. The funeral cortege left from his residence at 65 Trafalgar Street, and he was buried with his first wife on that day.



The above article is reprinted by kind permission of Ron Scarlett and John Wilson -Editor, Captain Cook magazine.

Left: Coney Park
After the Storm
1922 - F.N. Jones

(Rob & Lyn Packer
collection)