

MACKENZIE CHARITABLE FOUNDATION

Two men's generosity benefits many

By SUE NEWMAN

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Charitable trusts and charitable foundations are the lifeblood of many organisations in the Ashburton District.

Applications are made, grants are received and those organisations go about their business, often with little knowledge of the benefactors from whose generosity those trusts and foundations have grown.

One of those, the Mackenzie Charitable Foundation, has been in the philanthropy business since 1976 and since then has given away \$7.828 million in grants.

The story of the Mackenzie Foundation began simply enough – two brothers Alan and Don, both unmarried – who wanted people living in the community they had loved and lived in all their lives, to benefit from their estates.

Alan Mackenzie was born in 1921, his brother Don in 1925. Both attended Ealing School.

In their post school years, Alan came home to the family farm while Don worked at Winchmore Irrigation Research Station.

Their property was originally bought by their father Kenneth John Mackenzie in the 1920s. It was increased in size in 1960 when Mackenzie bought a neighbouring 296 hectare property. The enlarged property saw Don return home to work with his father and brother and the large property was then farmed by the KJ Mackenzie and Sons partnership.

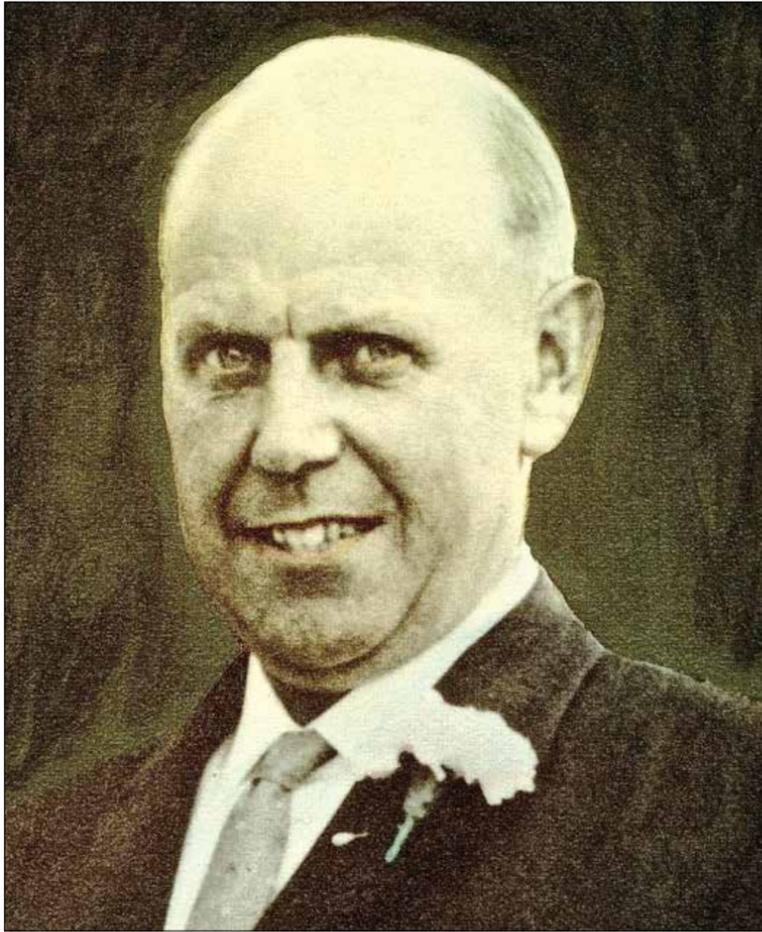
Don later became a Nuffield scholar and was active in rural politics and was involved in the development of the Mayfield Hinds Irrigation Association.

Alan's focus was the farm and farm forestry.

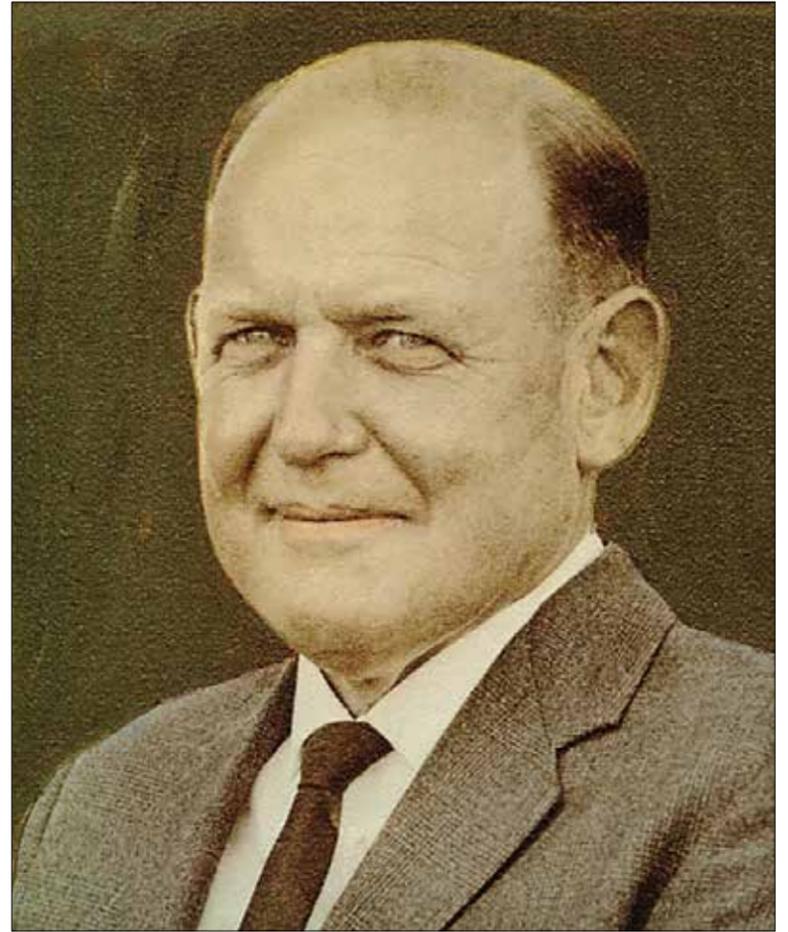
During their lives the two men were strong supporters of the Temuka Children's Home.

Their deaths were to come sooner than either expected, with both dying from cancer while in their 50s.

Knowing their lives were limited, the brothers decided to put their 825 hectare farm at Ealing into a trust and from the first grants in 1980 until 2002, when



Alan Mackenzie



Don Mackenzie

the farm was sold, profits were distributed in the form of grants to various community groups.

With the sale of the farms, grant funds came from investments.

In 1991 the smaller block of land was sold, with the homestead block sold in 2002. Proceeds from those sales became part of the foundation's investment portfolio which stands at \$13.608 million as at March 31, 2018.

In the past year, the foundation gave away \$798,976 in grants.

Over the last two years grants totalling \$1.720 million have been made.

A stipulation of the brothers was that grants were strongly weighted towards cancer research, education and agriculture research and training.

They also wanted their trustees to make general grants to other

charitable purposes, but particularly to meet the needs of younger people who were disabled or disadvantaged.

In the early days of the trust there was a strong emphasis on supporting cancer research and sizeable grants were made to a cancer unit that was being established at Christchurch Hospital.

A lump sum was also made available – \$25,000 in seed funding – to establish the CCS Mackenzie Centre in Ashburton's Mona Square (now the Cancer Society headquarters).

With the exception of some small holdings in equities in Australia, all investments are New Zealand based.

While many smaller grants are made each year, the foundation has for many years continued supporting two major initiatives,

the Mackenzie Chair in Freshwater Ecology at Canterbury University and the Mackenzie Chair in Cancer Medicine at Otago University. Together, grants to these two chairs, will exceed \$4.475 million over a 10-year period.

The trust continues to support both the Ashburton and Geraldine Benevolent Trust, both of which provide assistance to needy families in their respective communities.

Support is also ongoing to the Ashburton Learning Centre's BOOST child literacy programme, Presbyterian Support and the Ashburton Mackenzie Community group.

Over the last two years the foundation has supported the Ashburton Museum and Historical Society, K2Youth Development Trust, Ashburton Multi-Cultural Bite,

Seabrooke McKenzie Centre, the Cancer Society, The Champion Centre, Battered Women's Trust, Community House Ashburton, Youth Café, Hinds School, Starjam, Riding for the Disabled and the Family Help Trust.

It also provides continued support to Ashburton Hospital and was one of the contributors to the \$1.5 million funding pool for the hospital rebuild.

With the Advance Ashburton Community Foundation, it supports the operation of the Rural Health Academic Centre at Ashburton Hospital.

Currently the Mackenzie Foundation's trustees are; John Acland, Don Church, Graham Kennedy, Mary Ross and Don McFarlane.

Previous trustees have been the late Pat Morrison and Graham Sinclair.

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