



CAMPERDOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Opening hours
Tuesdays and 1st Sunday of
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3pm

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Hello to all members

Last Newsletter we included a notice of the AGM which has now been and gone. Elections were held and we ended up with substantially the same committee as before. One major difference is the absence from our committee of Frank Rose who has retired from the role of Treasurer. He has also left his long-time address and established himself as a very happy member of the Sunnyside community. Many thanks to Frank for his sterling work on committee for many years. However, that doesn't mean we've lost him altogether. We still see him at the Heritage Centre as a volunteer on Tuesdays and he's joining Jock Hay as one of our necessary 'consultants' on the history of Camperdown.

As you'll see from the side panel, we haven't replaced Frank yet and are definitely in the market for someone to take on the role of Treasurer. And we'd also love to see a couple more members join us on the committee. Most of us have been there for some time and it's always good to see new faces and get new ideas to help run the Society.

The major article in this newsletter covers our trip to "Lakeside" at Pomborneit North and incorporates a lot of the history of that property and its homestead.

There's also a suggestion that we might need a name for our newsletter. Have a look at the idea put forward, think about it and perhaps come up with a brilliant idea of your own. We always love to hear from our members and need to know what you think.

Our Christmas break-up is the next event to put in your diary. It's a chance for members to meet each other and share their own news at the end of the year. So, bring along a picnic tea and let's enjoy a very special place together.

Heaps of new members this quarter and we're happy to welcome Lanii Douglas, Emma Bell, Anthony Hyland, Colin & Delia Kerr, Rosemary Joseph and Daniel Lee to our society. We hope you enjoy your membership.

From the Heritage Centre

A puzzle

solved.



This item was discovered stored in our safe in a plastic bag. It had no identification and no indication of who gave it to us or where it came from. We put the photo on our Facebook page and asked for help in identifying it. Within a day or two we had a link to Museum Victoria with an almost identical photo which was labelled: ***This jawbone from an ancient kangaroo, 26,000 years old may contain ancient DNA.***

COMING EVENTS: NOVEMBER 2017 - JANUARY 2018

Monday 20th November, 9.30 am: Executive meeting at the Heritage Centre

**A visit to
"WUURONG", near Camperdown
Tuesday, 5th December**



"Wuurong" Homestead

For our final meeting of the year, Caroline and Dr John Menzies have kindly agreed to allow us to visit their historic home "Wuurong" overlooking Lake Bullen Merri.

This is a rare opportunity to visit this wonderful property and to learn about its fascinating history.

Depart from Camperdown Heritage Centre at 6.15 pm.

BYO picnic tea

Bookings:

Bob Lambell, Ph. 0424 220 809

Gillian Senior, Ph. 5593 1592

Email: camperdowndhs@gmail.com

RSVP by Friday 1st December

NOTE: This event is open to members and their guests.

Wednesday 17th January, 9.30 am: Executive meeting at the Heritage Centre

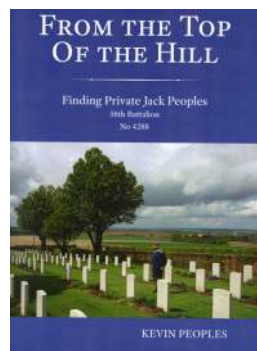
HERITAGE CENTRE - Jottings and News

A New Book in Our Reference Library

Our library at the Heritage Centre covers a range of subjects and often takes in a wider area than we can accommodate in our exhibitions. The book, "From the Top of the Hill" by Kevin Peoples was published last year and reviewed in one of our history periodicals. The review sparked our interest and we now have it available for members to refer to.

The writer's father grew up at "Wooriwyrite", the sheep and cattle station of some 30,000 acres between Terang and Mortlake, which was then owned and operated by Thos. Shaw Junior.

The title refers to the writer's father who, in 1915 at age eleven, watched his eighteen-year-old brother Jack walk across the paddock to Mortlake to enlist in the army and join the Great War. The brother never returned and the book details the search by the author to discover Jack's story. It is a moving story, interesting and well told, and adds to our col-



Probus Geelong Members Visit—and bring a very happy member with them.



Mrs. Joan St. John & the clock

On 25th August the Geelong Probus Club had arranged for their members to visit our Museum. About a month before the due date, we received a letter from Mrs Joan St John asking us about a clock which is dedicated to the memory of Flying Officer John Callahan who taught at Koallah State School. She was eager to see the clock because, as she said in her letter: ***I am the oldest (85 y.o) of his 27 nephews and nieces and the only living relative who knew him.***

As it turns out, we had done quite a bit of research on that clock to find out just who the dedicatee was, so were able to share that knowledge with her.

Leslie Manor Community Hall

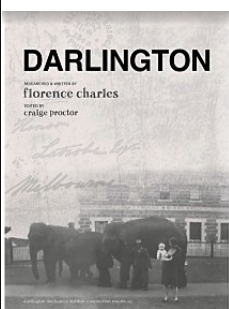
On 6th October, the Camperdown Chronicle reported that the committee which managed the hall had sold it back to the homestead owners, Dan and Patrice O'Brien. Throughout the 1940s and 50s the hall had been well used by the community for dances, table tennis, temporary schooling as well as for local dances and other events. It had now become less and less used and was difficult to maintain. The new owner plans to clean and paint the hall, restoring it to its former glory. No doubt there are CDHS members who have many memories of good times held there in the past.

(Many thanks to the Camperdown Chronicle for use of this news item and



Tom Fleming, Kane Fleming, Gilbert Brooks, Debbie Marshman, Averil Gardiner and her son Aidan and Andrew Rahles-Rahbula

Launch of "Darlington" by Florence Charles.



A highly successful afternoon took place at the Darlington Mechanics Hall on Sunday 15th October at 1.30pm. An enthusiastic crowd of 150 or more people assembled there to hear Florence Charles speak about her research and share some of the stories from the book.

The baby on the front cover, held in his mother's arms, was there—a good deal older and very pleased to be able to talk to other community members about his memories of growing up in Darlington. The day was fine and sunny, and tables and chairs outside were well-used as old friends and ex-neighbours caught up with each other.

Enquiries about purchase of the book can be made by ringing 0434 926 732

Colac Family History Exhibition—Saturday, 21st October

We were there—with our CDHS banner and a stall complete with signs, pamphlets and books for sale. We were in good company with stalls from Colac, Terang, Birregurra, Ballarat, Cressy and Lismore/Derrinallum groups as well as many others from as far afield as Frankston and other Melbourne societies.

Our hard working secretary, Maree Belyea was there looking after our stall and she reports that she was kept busy answering questions, selling books and also gathering a few research projects to take back home for further investigation. Having a presence there was a very worthwhile



Australian Garden History Society

Members of the AGHS visited us on Wednesday, 23rd October as part of a three-day tour of Western District gardens and properties. They were particularly interested to see the original Guilfoyle plan of the Camperdown Botanic Gardens and Arboretum which we have displayed.

CDHS member, Pamela Jellie was in charge of the organisation of the tour which included transport, accommodation in Camperdown, and all meals and refreshments—a

Australian
Garden
HISTORY



International Dendrology Society



Yet another important group visited our Heritage Centre this month. CDHS member and organiser of the tour, Janet O'Hehir, hosted a group of 45 on Thursday, 19th October and she was able to take them to visit the Clocktower as well as our Museum. Included in the party were members from Qld, NSW and Tasmania as well as some from New Zealand and one from Switzerland.

And who knows what Dendrology is? Asking Google tells us that it is the study of trees. A check of their website tells us that, among many other things, they *“organise tours, all over the world, visiting arboreta, including botanical and private collections, and see trees growing in their*

What's in a name?

Shakespeare had Juliet ask the question—and she was convinced it made no difference to the essential thing or person. *“A rose by any other name would smell as sweet,”* she said.

However, a newsletter is a slightly different matter. Without a name, a newsletter is without character, without purpose—it could be a newsletter about any subject at all.

We are beginning to think that our newsletter needs a name which indicates that it is all about history, people, research and those who are interested in such things.

What do our members think about this as a suggested title?

bers think about this as



PAST CARING

A quarterly newsletter

It's a little cryptic, perhaps, and can be taken two ways. BUT—it always brings a smile to the lips and it's certainly a name one would remember.

Comments or suggestions for another title are welcome. You can email us on

NBN where we're at right now.

All we can say at this stage is that “It's on the way”.

For the past few years we have been waiting for the right time to upgrade our internet connection. With the imminent arrival of the NBN, we decided that now was the time. A date was set for the NBN to connect us, their technicians arrived and were all ready to go—until it was discovered that there was NO phone line to the building and there never has been.

This means that we now have to wait for a team to travel from Melbourne to install a phone line before anything more can be done. When will that be? No one seems to be able to tell us. Hopefully, by the time our next newsletter is out, we will be able to report that it's all done and work-



A VISIT TO “LAKESIDE” AT POMPORNEIT NORTH



We had a great turn-up of members to this much-anticipated event on Sunday afternoon, 1st October. There were 40 booked in to attend but, due to illness, we ended up with only 38—quite enough for our hosts to cope with!

After threatening rain, the day turned out to be quite fine and *almost* warm, so after wandering the full extent of the grounds and into the front rooms and tower in the homestead, we were able to enjoy our afternoon tea on the veranda.

Our visit began around 1.45pm, when a parade of about twelve or more cars made their way up from Pombo Mart along the Foxhow Road, past Carter’s Swamp and parked outside the gates of “Lakeside”. It was a lovely walk up the main drive to the house where we were greeted by the owners, Brian and Ruth Arnst. After a brief introduction by our President, Bob Lambell, Brian gave us a short history of the property and the homestead.

One of the surprises of this visit, was the fact that a descendant of the original owners, the Baker family had seen our trip advertised on Facebook. Here’s his online reaction:

Anthony Hyland: Ohhhh, wow. Built for my great-grandfather, John Baker. That’s him and his family in and around the car.

Anthony and his cousin, Helen Pearce—another descendant—both attended our visit to “Lakeside” and brought with them a full, 10 page history of the Baker family which they kindly gave us to copy. Helen also had a wedding photo of her aunt, with her mother as bridesmaid (seated), which was taken inside the homestead in about 1912. Much to the delight of Helen and Tony, Brian and Ruth were able to find the exact spot where the photo was taken.



Here’s another post from Anthony to his family members:

Anthony Hyland: Attention all Hyland relations. Some of you know, some don’t—but we’re all descended from John Baker, seen here in about 1910, showing off his new car in front of “Lakeside” Pomborneit, the Baker family home at the time. His daughter Nora married Peter Hyland snr., and is grandmother or great-grandmother to us all. She died in 1949, so none of us ever met her. I’m off to visit the property this coming Sunday, with other members of the Camperdown Historical Society. Should be interesting.

Tony also passed on to us, a history of the Hyland family. It’s remarkable how far-reaching a Facebook post can be and how much history can be uncovered and shared.

However, that was not the end of our surprises. Another reaction to the Facebook posting was from Lanii Douglas (nee McKenzie) whose grandparents were managers of “Lakeside” from 1929 to around 1963. Purely by accident, Lanii saw our posting and here’s her reaction:

Lanii Douglas: Oh my gosh! My grandparents lived there.

Lanii immediately rang our secretary, became a member of CDHS so she could attend, and booked a place for herself and her husband. Some of Lanii’s family stories are incorporated later in this article.

HISTORY OF THE BAKER FAMILY

(We thank Brian Arnst, Tony Hyland and Helen Pearce for the information that follows)

The Baker family, who built the homestead in 1908, provides a typical story of hard-working immigrants who were able to rise from the poverty of their original homes in Ireland to become land-owners and successful stock breeders in their new country.

The original immigrants were Edmund and Bridget Baker and their three children, Thomas (14), John (11) and Nora (8). Landing at Port Phillip in 1852, they were offered immediate employment by J. Ware to work on his property, “Koort Koort Nong” which they happily accepted. Tragically, two years later, Edmund was killed in a horse riding accident and Bridget and her children had to leave Koort Koort Nong and move to Camperdown. The older boys found work to support the family which now included another son, James. Through hard work and saving, the boys prospered, buying plots of land when they could afford them, mostly around the Koort Koort Nong area. By 1874, the Baker brothers decided to sell and consolidate their holdings by buying up leasehold land at Pomborneit North. They named the property “Lakeside” from the fact that the land was on the south-western shoreline of Lake Corangamite. By 1880, the size of their property had been increased to 1800 acres.

Both brothers eventually married, the partnership was dissolved and Thomas and his wife moved to a

property on the shore of Lake Colac. John and his wife stayed at “Lakeside” and produced a family of 12 children between 1876 and 1901. The family lived in a weatherboard house of eight rooms about a mile north of the present homestead.

It was in 1908 that Michael McCabe, a friend of the Baker family and architect of the Camperdown Clocktower, was asked to design the present homestead. Camperdown builder, McCrae and Fullerton were the builders.

“Lakeside” homestead is a Federation style, solid brick home of fourteen rooms with a triple brick foundation based on bluestone. Thirty-four thousand bricks were used in its construction. The complete home without furnishing cost 3000 pounds. It had a hot water service through a large stove in the kitchen and carbide gas lighting throughout the house. (Baker family history)

As Brian pointed out, the brickwork and pointing are perfect—typical of the workmanship of the day. He also mentioned that in the house there are ten fireplaces—each one of a different colour!

For many years, from the time the Bakers bought “Lakeside”, they grazed Lincoln sheep. In 1872, John Baker had a Lincoln sheep stud, with 300 ewes and rams and won major prizes at agricultural shows. By 1919, the “Lakeside” Lincoln Stud had grown to be the largest registered in Australia with a total of 1590 ewes and more than 500 registered rams for sale.

The property also had a herd of cows which were milked by a team of 10 milkers.

Not a bad outcome for a practically penniless immigrant from Ireland.

By 1920 there was a decline in the demand for Lincoln rams and, with John Baker in failing health, he and his wife and three unmarried daughters moved to Bendigo, leaving the farm in the hands of his sons. The sons eventually sold the property in 1925. The homestead block with 425 acres went to P. Lock and the remainder to W. Harlock.

“Lakeside” History Continues

The next owner of the homestead, in 1929, was Lionel **Weatherley**, who had lived in Camperdown at “Wuurong”. At this time, Anthony and Gladys **McKenzie** were installed as managers of the property. They lived there with their family until 1963/4. This was the family of Lanii Douglas (nee McKenzie). Lanii told us that her father, Geoffrey McKenzie, told his children stories of growing up on the property. He went to school at Pomborneit North Primary School until he was sent to Geelong High School as a weekly boarder. He told about coming home from school on Fridays and finding his dog waiting at the gate for him every week. And he swore that the dog was never there on other weekdays!



Gladys McKenzie & her daughter

She said her father used to complain that because there were no made paths around the homestead, he was only able to use his roller skates on the veranda! Lanii thought he was a bit hard to please—the veranda is wide, tiled (with beautiful mosaic tiles) and runs almost all around the house!

After Lionel Weatherley sold the property around 1974, the property was bought by Peter **Boyd** who never lived in the homestead and it was left empty and derelict for a number of years. Brian Arnst has stories of hay being stored inside the house and cattle allowed to roam up onto the veranda. He pointed out a couple of places where the white pointing between the bricks had been rubbed off by cattle scratching themselves against the walls.

In 1976, the property was sold to Daniel **Hartley** who was there for 26 years. Brian reported that Daniel had done a lot of work restoring the condition of the homestead and had redecorated the inside influenced by the style of the 1970s.

When Brian and Ruth **Arnst** bought it in 2002, they were determined to restore it to its original style and have worked continuously to achieve this aim. The visitors to the homestead on Sunday needed no convincing that they have succeeded brilliantly.

OUR VISIT

The only structural change Brian and Ruth have made is to the rear of the house where they have incorporated two rooms into one and installed a kitchen with modern appliances.

All the rooms have been repainted, plaster ceilings repaired, and the interior decorations of furniture and fittings are all of a quality and design to show off the rooms to their utmost; and all this has been done by the two owners. Because there were so many of us, we were invited to split into two groups—one to tour the inside of the house and the other to wander the gardens, swapping



over when we'd finished each tour.

The entrance foyer and the two front rooms were open for our inspection and it was suggested we check out the huge domed ceilings, the cornices and the ceiling roses.

We were also invited to go up the stairs to the tower. They were unsure why the tower had been incorporated into the design of the house but had heard that there was a daughter who wanted to become a nun and it was thought that this would be a private escape for her.



With dampness all around the house, at Bob Lambell's suggestion, those who were to tour inside the house left their shoes outside on the veranda.



Inside

The first thing most of us noticed in the front reception rooms was the beauty of the stained glass windows. They were in perfect condition and were featured surrounding a very large plate glass bay window in each room. It seemed quite unusual for a house of this era to have such large windows, and it was very special to be able to look out to see trees in the paddocks, camellias in full bloom and even some friendly-looking cows grazing close to the house.

The furnishings, pictures and interior design created the atmosphere of the past—one could imagine the weddings and receptions held in these rooms back in the days of the Bakers and their large family.

Ruth was on hand inside the answer questions and describe how all the work had been done.

Next, we ventured up the stairs to the tower where we found two small, white rooms with sloping ceilings, one set up as a bedroom and the other as a sitting room. Small doors in the walls led into the roof space and may have been used for storage or simply to access the space for repairs to roof or ceilings.



The view from the tower looked over the front garden and entrance to the property (illustrated) and on the other side, away out over the surrounding countryside.



Outside

Brian walked around the garden with groups of us and pointed out various things of interest. The cottage in the grounds was made from two small houses joined together which, in the old days, was used for storage and/or stables. The Arnsts had established the beautiful cottage garden surrounding the cottage. In fact, they were the ones who had done ALL the work in both homestead and garden—a fact that was astonishing, considering the amount that had needed doing and the final result that we were admiring.

Brian had been up on the roof of the homestead, making repairs and replacing some of the special metal tiles on the tower roof. He said it was 'some years ago now' and he's not sure he'd like to be doing it again!

All the boundary of the property consists of drystone walls, some of which have needed repair. No professional stone-waller has been called in; Brian has been responsible for all the repairs. Self-taught, he assures us that it's easier to start from scratch than try to make repairs. He says it's 'really quite easy; the stones just seem to go into the right place'. I don't think he convinced too many of us!



They survived the Black Saturday fires of 2009, with fire coming right up to the boundary but stopped by the stone walls—as well as the fact that Brian was there putting out spot fires. They were fortunate that they didn't lose power so were able to keep using their water pumps.

In a delightful courtyard at the back of the house Brian pointed out where the cattle had rubbed against the bricks during the years when the house was left derelict. There was also an ancient vine—an ornamental grape ("Glory Vine") -

