

CAMPERDOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/camperdownhistory>

Volume 26 - No. 3

NEWSLETTER

July, 2016

President

Maree Belyea

Vice President

Bob Lambell

Secretary

Heather McDowell

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Frank Rose

Committee

Gillian Senior
Ray Watson
Jan Whamond
Rob Wuchatsch

Hello to all members

It's Annual General Meeting time again so we're letting members know in plenty of time. It's certainly EXTREMELY cold right now (must be winter!) but we can assure you of a well-warmed venue, a short meeting and an interesting DVD starring a couple of local residents, as well as pleasant company, a warm cuppa and some home made goodies to eat. Hope to see you there!

On our Coming Events page you'll also find a very special event – something we are all looking forward to. Well known and respected author, Maggie Black – yes, from our Camperdown Niel Black family – will be our guest and will bring us her latest book filled with the results of her intensive research. Lots of details about her and the book further on in this Newsletter. There's a report about our activities at the Heritage Centre and some interesting reminiscences about the Theatre Royal sparked by our last Newsletter; a letter from Life Member Jim Wilson and a report of his early activities as a Historian.

Finally, the Nomination Form for the AGM. If you're at all interested in nominating for a Committee position, you can print the form and send it to us or email us a scanned copy.

And welcome to new member Wayne McIntyre. Here's your newsletter!

Gillian Senior Newsletter Editor

Camperdown Heritage Centre

241 Manifold Street
Camperdown 3260
PO Box 243
Camperdown.

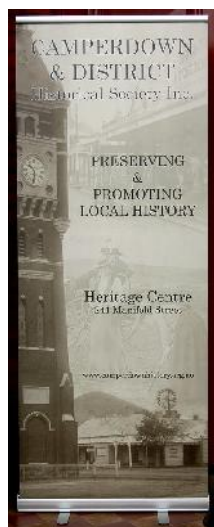
Opening hours

Tuesdays and 1st Sunday
of month, (Market Day)
10am-3pm
Or by appointment

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From the Heritage Centre Collection: OUR NEW BANNER.



Perhaps this is not strictly 'from our collection' but it's an important addition to our ability to publicise our society.

It's a free-standing sign which can roll down into its stand and be taken to other venues – wherever we are holding an exhibition or event.

It arrived in time for us to use for the recent Burns Festival and was displayed at the Old Council Chambers where the speakers program was held. That part of the Festival was arranged and managed by the CDHS so we were able to keep our name well in the public's eye.

COMING EVENTS: JULY TO OCTOBER 2016.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Tuesday 2nd August, 2016.
7.30 pm at the Camperdown Heritage Centre**



Nomination Forms for Committee enclosed.

**Followed by screening of
“SOLDIER ON”**



**DVD produced by the ‘Soldier On’ Exhibition at
Old Treasury Building, Melbourne.
Featuring: Jock Hay, Jim Kidman and others.**

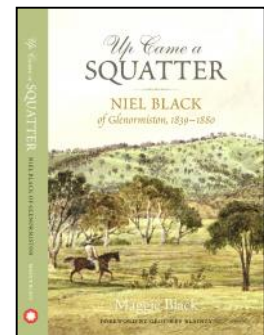
**Members: Please bring a plate of supper.
Visitors most welcome.**

VERY SPECIAL EVENT

Sunday, 2nd October 2016

2.30 pm at the

KILLARA CENTRE



**Author Maggie Black – great-granddaughter of local settler Niel Black –
will be celebrating the launch of her book**

**“UP CAME A SQUATTER:
Niel Black of Glenormiston 1839-1880”**

More details of this fascinating event later in this newsletter.

**All are welcome to join us at the Killara Centre.
Members please bring a plate of afternoon tea.**

Tuesday 13th September, 10.30 am: Executive Meeting at the Heritage Centre.

HERITAGE CENTRE JOTTINGS AND NEWS

CHOCOLYN AFTERNOON VERY POPULAR

Despite the wintry weather about 25 members and friends arrived at the Museum to help us “Celebrate Chocolyn”. Our speakers, Lynette Hedger and Alan Fleming, talked about the history of the district and shared their memories of how things were in their childhood. There were many in the audience who had been there during those times and really enjoyed re-living those days of shared community events in the local school hall, the picnics and sports days, and the strong feeling of mateship that existed.

Lyn had brought many photographs which we showed on our TV screen and during the afternoon tea, there was plenty of talk and reminiscing.



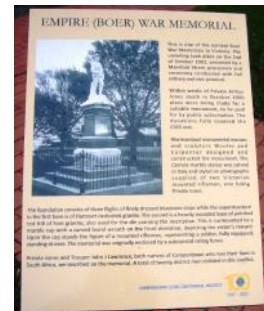
Left is Lynette Hedger with her book: 'Golden Days of Chocolyn'. Behind her on the screen is a photo of her family. Her father is on the extreme right with her grand- parents, uncles and aunts.

Right is Alan Fleming with the book he produced for the Chocolyn reunion in May, 2012. Entitled "Soldier Settlement Subdivision at the Chocolyn Estate 1920", it lists the names of soldier settlers and tells of their stories.



A number of people bought our speakers’ books which are filled with Chocolyn history and family names – a great record of a once-vibrant community – for families to pass on to their children and grandchildren. We have a few of Alan’s booklets at \$2 each and Lyn’s “Golden Days at Chocolyn” is obtainable at Camperdown Newsagency for \$40.

LIONS’ SIGNS AT CLOCK TOWER



One of our very busiest members, Maree Belyea, is also a dedicated member of Camperdown Lions and she was a major contributor to the project that has produced the signs that are beginning to appear around the town. The ones at the Clock Tower are only the start. A posting on Facebook on 16th June was viewed by 1,416 people by the next day! This is what the Facebook posting said:

GREAT JOB LIONS!

Excellent signs are going up around the town explaining our historical buildings and monuments to visitors and locals alike. The Camperdown Lions have been working on these signs for some time, and now we're seeing the culmination of all their hard work - the research, the planning, the funding - and it's all VERY worthwhile.

CDHS records have, of course, been very important during this process and we are delighted to see the final result of such a high quality. Congratulations to all involved! Many Facebook watchers are still sending comments, and all are full of congratulations.



Peter Conheady commented:

Congratulations to Camperdown Lions Club on the first instalment of their historical signs in Finley Avenue. The Lions have taken this on as a project to commemorate 150 years of the Lions movement

Over the weekend the first 6 signs were installed by Lions around our town square. In total stage 1 will see 18 signs installed.

Thoroughly researched by Maree Belyea and her friends at the Camperdown Historical Society, each sign gives a brief, yet precise, history of many of our buildings, monuments and streets.

Our school children, locals, visitors and tourists will gain so much as they meander through the elms reading each plaque.

It has been a pleasure to play a small part in this project which brings so much to our town.

(Peter was the graphic designer for the project and also facilitated the framing, etc.)

Here are a few other comments:

- Do yourself a favour and go and check them out.
- Such a great idea and a wonderful way to inform tourists.
- Tripping around the country I find these type of signs interesting, especially when it's close to my home town.
- They look fabulous
- Great job & very informative.
- Beautiful town
- Our home town family
- Will be in Camperdown with family for a nostalgic trip early July. Looking forward to reading them.

Theatre Royal early history sparked some memories:

Laurie Clementson remembers seeing soldiers riding into town from a nearby camp on a bren-gun carrier. Further research on Trove turned up this item from the war years:

QUIETEST NEW YEAR ON RECORD IN CAMPERDOWN

Theatre Royal Ball Provides Only Sign of Life

GAY SPECTACLE USHERS IN 1942

Reflecting the seriousness of the war situation, New Year 1942 was one of the quietest on record in Camperdown with the exception of the ball held by the management of the Theatre Royal. Apart from the theatre, there was no sign of life in the town whatsoever. About 300 dancers, mostly young people and including a number of soldiers from the Stoneyford Camp attended this and had a jolly time for the function was well arranged.

Tammy Discher remembers Winifred Atwell, Eisteddfods and choirs from all the schools around and, best of all, the time when Frank Trainor & The Jazz Preachers played there. He and Mrs. Mary Bould, an accomplished jazz pianist, were the only two patrons! The band played the full concert and he says: "it was just fabulous trad jazz!"

Anthony Hyland remembers playing in a St. Patrick's school concert.

JIM WILSON REMEMBERS:

Every now and then we receive an interesting letter from one of our very first Life Members, Jim Wilson, originally of "Puunyart", Gnotuk. We publish this latest letter in full because in it he talks about both the Theatre Royal and the Chocolyn Settlement – both subjects of this current Newsletter.

Thank you for sending on the latest newsletter, so many items brought back wonderful memories. As a child I remember helping my dad J. C. Wilson, chop down wattle blossom and gum tree tips as tall bundles of decoration in the Theatre Royal for the annual hospital ball. He was then President of the Hospital Committee, I well remember going to many movies at the theatre and remember the Camperdown Model Train Society used an empty room above Scott's Theatre Shop for model train lay-outs. Mr. Scott always reckoned the best chocolate milk shakes were made with

cold fresh milk. He always kept threepenny bags of sweets for us kids at half time. I always remember the magician Houdini hypnotizing the whole theatre full of people and telling them to cuddle the nearest girl.

Our Historical Society used to meet at the High School and then used the spare room in the theatre where our museum started. The grey showcases now in the Oddfellows Hall were made by carpenter, Keith Nelson. We also had our meetings and supper in that small room at the theatre, stacking up the chairs in piles of 8 and re positioning the showcases after. When James Dawson died his collection of natural history items were displayed where the projector landing now exists. This collection was eventually split up between the high and states schools. The state school items would have been destroyed in the huge fire and some of the aboriginal artefacts are in the present museum and used to be stored in the tin trunk presented by Cr. and Mrs. Rahles Rahbula (who used an amazing battery hearing aid which crackled away during meetings).

I was also involved with the Chocolyn Young Farmers Club, the only one in the immediate district. We once won a P&O Trophy for being the most progressive club in the state. The Chocolyn State School always conducted a junior farmers group. I remember the Spiers family were always keen members and debaters, often winning inter-club debates. I also made a lifelong friendship with Arthur Dease who lived in Camperdown. Les Cook's mother, of Gnotuk, kept a dairy farm at Chocolyn and was the first to deliver milk and cream to the Camperdown Leura butter factory in her six-can milk delivery wagonette.

The Chocolyn district was originally called North Purumbete and of course was owned by the pioneer Manifold family who made butter using a butter stamp Pelican brand. The Manifolds imported a few white swans from England but they didn't want to breed with the Lake Purumbete Australian black swans. (The swans certainly didn't know about the later White Australia Policy!)

JIM WILSON PROFILE



As one of our very long-term members, it seems appropriate at this time to include something about Jim's life-long involvement with all things historical.

The following are excerpts taken from an article in the Camperdown Chronicle of March, 1968:

JIM COLLECTS ANTIQUES.....

Even a Door From A C'down Jail (By Geoff Brown)

Mr Jim Wilson of Gnotuk has been interested in collecting antiques ever since he traded several marbles for a native fishing gaff when a pupil at Gnotuk State School.

He has been busy over the past weeks preparing exhibits for a historical and antique exhibition at "Purrumbete" homestead at Weerite on March 10 and 11.

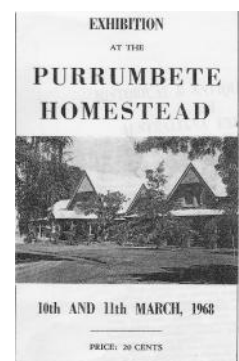
Mr Wilson's love of antiques was probably inherited from his grandmother, the late Mrs. G. D. Cumming, of Darlington, who had a private museum.

100-year-old Polyphon

The highest price paid for any one item in Mr. Wilson's collection is \$80 for a 100-year-old Polyphon. Similar to a record player, the records are made of steel in which holes have been punched. The record rotates and the holes strike a number of needles which cause a tune to be played.

Mr. Wilson is secretary of the Camperdown Historical Society, a member of the Lake Goldsmith Steam Engine Preservation Society, a member of the Antique and Historical Arms Collectors Guild of Victoria, a member of the National Trust and a member of the Royal Historical Society of Victoria.

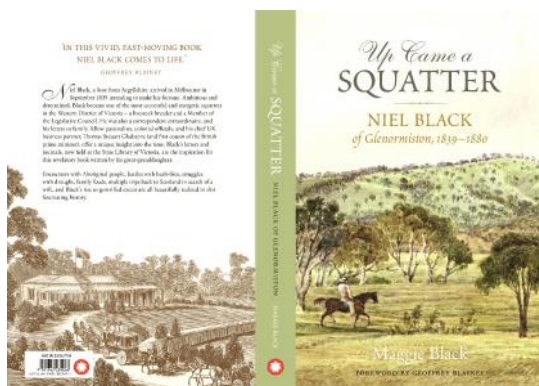
I have never been much frightened of going to the dentist but, after seeing the dentist's old drill, I would not be too happy about having a tooth drilled by it. While the dentist held his patient with one hand, drilled with the other, he had to keep his foot moving up and down on the drill pedal (pedal sewing-machine fashion) to keep the drill turning.



One of his prized pieces kept tightly beneath a sheet of glass, and yellow with age, is a prisoner's information sheet. It gives the details of a James Gibbons who was tried in 1829 and lists details of several lashings given the prisoner for wheat stealing, neglecting his duty and other offences.

All of these will be on display at "Purrumbete" homestead on March 10 and 11.

UP CAME A SQUATTER and Author, Maggie Black.



We are very excited about this event coming up in October. As you'll read below, Maggie Black is a well-known and respected writer and her close connection with the original Niel Black of Glenormiston has given her the impetus to tell the full story of his life. There has been considerable contact between the writer and the CDHS and we are delighted to host and celebrate the final result of her meticulous research.

We have chosen the Killara Centre for this event because we expect interest to be high and to attract more than our usual number of visitors. Put it in your diary: 2pm on Sunday, 2nd October.

THE WRITER:

Maggie Black is a writer whose work up to now has been mainly about the development of disadvantaged people in poor countries. This has proved a surprisingly useful apprenticeship for a study of her great-grand-father's pioneering life in Victoria, whose themes include Aboriginal exclusion, 'improvement' of the land, and the shaping of a new colonial society. Maggie has written several books, including histories of Oxfam and UNICEF, explorations of the crisis of water and sanitation scarcity around the world, and awareness-raising studies of child marriage and domestic servitude. Her father, Archie Black, was born at Glenormiston, but educated in the UK. The Second World War prevented him from coming back to Australia to develop his career. Hence Maggie is English, and lives in Oxford, enjoying many visits to Victoria in the pursuit of her great-grandfather's story.

THE BOOK:

Up Came a Squatter : Niel Black of Glenormiston 1839-1880 by Maggie Black tells the pioneering story of a remarkable man. Black, a Scottish tenant farmer, secured backing from wealthy investors and arrived in Melbourne in 1839. Pleased to find an 'altogether Scotch settlement', he packed his shepherds and their wives into bullock drays, set off westward across the plains, and on the run he called Glenormiston began his battle for land and fortune.



REMEMBERING GAYE:

Remembering friend and CDHS member Gaye Wuchatsch. Gaye's husband, Rob, has sent us this picture and we'd like to share it with those who knew and loved Gaye.

Rob is still an active member of the Society and we thank him for sharing this with us.



CAMPERDOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

PO Box 243, Camperdown 3260

ABN 54 877 430 900 Inc No. A0020588V

Nomination Form for the election of Office Bearers, 2016 - 2017

Positions to be filled: President, Vic President, Secretary, Treasurer and a minimum of three ordinary Committee Members.

Nomination of Office Bearers

Position:

Name of nominee:

Signature of Nominee:

Nominated by (name):

Signature:

Seconded by (name):

Signature:

Please mail, or email this nomination form to the Secretary, by Friday 26th July:

**Secretary,
Camperdown & District Historical Society
PO Box 243
Camperdown 3260**

Email: camperdowndhs@gmail.com **Web:** www.camperdownhistory.org.au