

CAMPERDOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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NEWSLETTER

October, 2012

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Bob Lambell

Vice President
Frank Rose

Secretary
Heather McDowell
Ph. 03 55933388

Treasurer
John Woods

Committee
Sue Cole
John Gronbeck
Robert Gunner
Marilyn Rippon
Gillian Senior
Ray Watson

Hello everyone,

Since our last newsletter we have held our Annual General Meeting which resulted in a couple of changes to our committee. As you will see from the panel on the left, Heather McDowell is now our Secretary and Ray Watson and John Gronbeck have joined the committee.

We have come to the end of a very successful inaugural Burn's Scottish Festival and there is a full report on our part in that in this Newsletter.

There are also more member profiles, telling you what we're all doing during our time at the Heritage Centre, and some interesting information about Camperdown's early suffragists – back in 1891.

We welcome new member, Joycelyn Heath, to our Society.

You can check our update page for a few extra excerpts from the James Dawson's Scrapbook. Just click on:

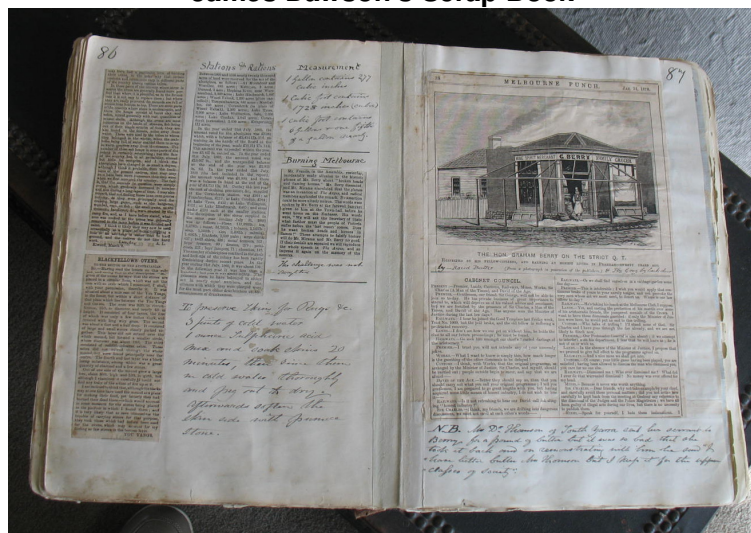
<http://camperdownhistorynewsupdates.blogspot.com.au/>. If you are not receiving this by email, you can type that address into the address-bar in anyone's computer. (We ARE becoming very modern!)

Gillian Senior Newsletter Editor

**From the Heritage Centre Collection:
James Dawson's Scrap Book**

Camperdown Heritage Centre
241 Manifold Street
Camperdown 3260
Opening hours
Tuesdays and 1st
Sunday of month,
10am-3pm
Or by appointment

In this issue:
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P5. Kate O'Shanter



This is a photo of the original scrap book, held by family descendant and CDHS member, Sue Cole. However, in the Heritage Centre, we have a photocopy of the whole book available for anyone to examine. It makes fascinating reading and is the subject of an article in this Newsletter

COMING EVENTS: NOVEMBER 2012 - JANUARY 2013

Field Trip to Narrapumelap Homestead and Garden



Situated west of Lake Bolac, Narrapumelap was built in 1873 and is an impressive French Gothic Mansion. It is set in an extensive and very beautiful garden. Its original owner, John Dixon Wyselaskie (1818-1883) was a successful pastoralist and philanthropist with a fascinating life story. Visit and discover more about his life and enjoy the dynamic revival of his wonderful house and garden.

Saturday, 10th November
Departing 9.30 am, from the Heritage Centre

BYO picnic lunch
\$25.00/person

(Includes tours of the homestead and garden, and afternoon tea)

Bookings:
Heather McDowell Ph. 5593 9313
Bob Lambell Ph. 5593 2213

Tuesday 20th November, 7.30 pm: Executive meeting at the Heritage Centre



Tuesday 4th November, 7.30 pm

Christmas break-up at the Heritage Centre

Enjoy a cup of mulled wine while you explore the Notable Scots exhibition and the many interesting items in the Heritage Centre collection.

As this will be our last general meeting for the year, please bring along something special for supper.

Tuesday 15th January, .7.30 pm: Executive meeting at the Heritage

MEMBER PROFILES

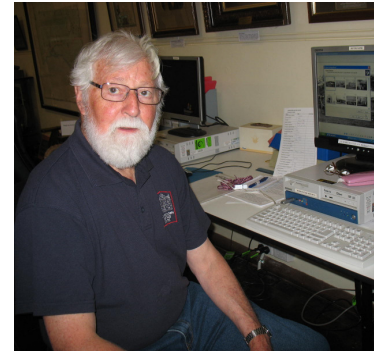
Bob Lambell:

Bob is our newly re-elected and VERY hard-working President. This is his sixth year as President and he never seems to stop working for the benefit of the Society, the Shire and many other worthy causes. Apart from being a very efficient chairman for all our meetings, he is responsible for writing applications for various council or government grants to enable us to develop and expand; he also arranges the speakers or events for our monthly meetings, co-ordinates the running of the Heritage Centre, hosts visits from schools, other Historical Societies, Probus Groups, etc., takes bus tours and is a mine of historical information about Camperdown and surrounding districts. He also master-minded a lot of the CDHS contribution to the recent Robert Burns Festival weekend.



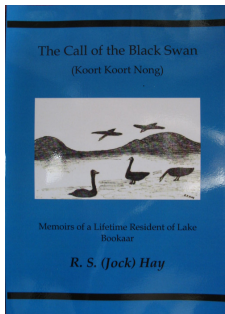
Ray Watson:

For the past two years, Ray has been our Secretary and, as of the last AGM, is enjoying a well-earned rest from that busy job as Heather McDowell takes over the reins. Ray's major expertise in the Society, however, is as a photographer. He is responsible for photographing ALL our collection for cataloguing purposes. From the biggest items to the smallest; from a WW1 matchbox to a pair of statues of almost life-size Cavaliers, from a snuff-box to a beautifully maintained side-saddle; and this includes, of course, all our hundreds of photographs. Each photo has to be photographed by Ray with a digital camera so that it can be numbered, described and added to our catalogue for electronic searching. There's probably enough work there to keep him going for about the next ten years!



Jock Hay:

Jock probably needs very little introduction to most long-time Camperdown residents. In 2006 he celebrated his 83rd birthday in the middle of Lake Bookaar – then totally dry – with a party arranged by groups of families from the Lake Bookaar region. He calls in every Tuesday afternoon to the Heritage Centre and is our resident 'consultant' on many and various subjects about Camperdown's past. If Jock can't remember it, it probably didn't happen! The Heritage Centre carries Jock's book: "Call of the Black Swan – memoirs of a Lifetime Resident of Lake Bookaar" which is the result of twenty years research and makes fascinating reading about early settlements, homesteads and family histories over a period in excess of 160 years.



Camperdown's Early Suffragists

Our guest speaker for the September meeting, Robyn Alexander was unable to attend due to family illness but we were very fortunate with her replacement, Merrill O'Donnell, who had just launched her book *Pioneers and Suffragists*. The book identifies many of the 360 women who lived in Colac and the surrounding districts in 1891 who signed the Monster Petition in support of Victorian women being granted the vote. The original petition, held in the Victorian State Archives, is approximately 260 metres long and 200mm wide and is made of paper pasted to cotton or linen fabric backing, rolled onto a cardboard spindle. There are approximately **30,000 signatures**.



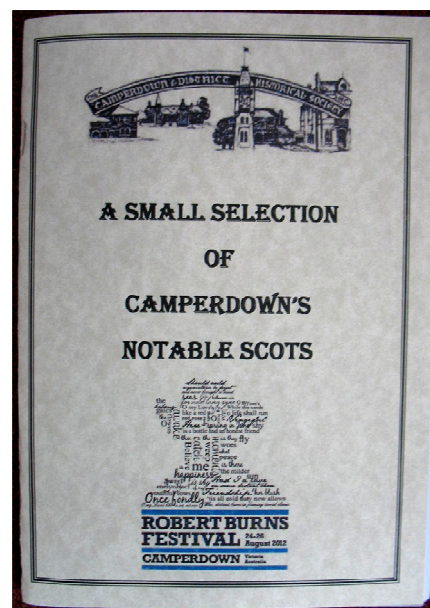
This website enables a search of every town in Victoria for the names of signatories: <http://www.parliament.vic.gov.au/about/the-history-of-parliament/womens-suffrage-petition>. It makes fascinating reading with many local names appearing.

THE ROBERTS BURNS SCOTTISH FESTIVAL

There is no doubt that the inaugural **Camperdown Roberts Burns Scottish Festival of 2012** was a resounding success. The town was buzzing and played host to many visitors; the numerous events were well attended by locals and visitors alike and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

Just so that members are aware of all the hard work put in by our volunteers, the following is a list of the activities of the CDHS during this busy weekend:

- The Centre was open and manned by volunteers for the Saturday and Sunday, from 9.30am to 4pm.
- A short history of eleven of Camperdown's notable Scottish settlers, comprising two to four pages of each of their stories with photographs, were displayed on our beautiful new display boards.
- A booklet of those same Scottish settlers, kindly printed for us by the Shire, was given to all who paid to enter the Centre or went on the conducted walks or bus tour.
- A glass-topped cabinet displayed a biography of Burns, his poetry and a collection of chinaware dedicated to Burns' quotations, which was kindly lent to the society by Darren Maskell.
- The Society's DVD of old Camperdown was playing continuously and many visitors found the seats in front of the TV a pleasant place to rest and relax and enjoy the old movies.
- One of our computers had a continuous display of photographs, illustrating many early events in Camperdown's history. Again, this was well-patronised by our visitors.
- Two "Heritage Walk and Talk Tours" with Allan Willingham, were organized by the Society for Saturday morning and afternoon and left from the Heritage Centre. Both were well attended by locals as well as visitors.
- A "District Heritage Bus Tour" on the Sunday morning also left from the Heritage Centre and was very well patronised.
- The use of the Freemason's Hall for the Scottish Breakfast and various other events was organized by the Society. The hall was also cleaned and prepared for use by three of our hard-working members.
- A two-page History of the Masonic Hall was produced by Bob Lambell and made available to all members and visitors.
- The Heritage Centre had approximately 250 people pass through the doors – whether simply for viewing or for attending one or more of the walks or the bus tour.
- We have had to order a reprint of the Notable Scots booklet as we are still receiving regular enquiries about it. This will be available at the Heritage Centre from Tuesday, 9th October. It will also be available from Camperdown's Newsagency and from the Shire Office.



All in all, a very satisfactory outcome and a most gratifying result for all the hard work put in by many members.

KATE O'SHANTER'S TALE

At the Festival Finale Concert in the Theatre Royale, visiting Scotsman and Burns authority, Len Murray recited for us a poem, not by Robert Burns but referring to a well-known Burns poem: "Tam O'Shanter". This was such a success and such a light-hearted finale to the week-end that we reprint it here for your enjoyment.

(Readers probably need to know that Tam regularly spent the nights after market days drinking and carousing. Maggie – or Meg – is Tam's horse and, during the terrible ride home in the poem "Tam O'Shanter", he was set upon by witches and warlocks and Maggie's tail was torn off by the witch, Nannie.)

And whaur do you suppose was Kate
When market days were wearin' late.
While Tam frequented wretched dives
And fooled around with landlord's wives.
And rode poor Meg through mud and ditches
And had an eye for handsome witches.
Played 'Peepin' Tam' at Alloway
And yelled and gave the himsel' away
And fled from there amid the din
While Maggie barely saved his skin!
Whaur was Kate? Not whaur you think!

Kate slaved awa the live-long day;
They had so mony bills tae pay
The twins just had tae have some shoes
And Tam he spent that much on booze.
She does the wash she mends the clothes
And what all else- God only Knows!
She keeps the hoose all neat and trim
And makes the lunch for ploughboy Jim
A neebour lad they hire by day
Who does the work while Tam's away.

She herds the sheep and cattle too.
Feeds hen, milks cows, and when that's
through
She maks the cheese and butter tae,
For Tam tae sell on Market day
Though truth to tell, it's hard to say
Tam drinks the proceeds half away.
In harvest time, from early morn
Her sickle reaps the oats and corn,
And many a sunny, summer day
She and ploughboy Jim make hay....

But to our tale:

Tam won hame that night at four
When Maggie found the stable door
Tam tumbled senseless tae the floor
Tae sleep it aff eight hours or more.
His dreams went through that ride again

He tossed and turned "mid hail and rain"
At noon Tam woke from his lowly bed
And saw Meg's rump above his head
An awful thought came to his brain
"Oh God that wisna hail and rain!"

He struggled slowly to his feet
He was not clean, he was not neat
He scraped off what he could and then
He made his way from But to Ben
And stood dumbfooner! What the Hell!!
Kate had gone, the twins as well.
But she had left a note for him:
"I've sailed tae Canada wi' Jim
And we expect tae settle doon
In a nice wee farm near Saskatoon !

Forgive me, Tam, and don't be sore
I couldna take it any more
I have tae find a better day
Before I slave my life away.
Don't fash yersel' about the twins
I might as well confess - they're Jim's."

Now wha this tale o' truth shall read
Ilk man and mother's son tak heed
Just try tae live a sober life
Remember Tam O'Shanter's wife.

JAMES DAWSON'S SCRAPBOOK

Dawson had an enormous influence in Camperdown and District and was a man of many interests and talents. In 1881, with the help of his daughter Isabella, he published the book, "Australian Aborigines: The Languages and Customs of Several Tribes of Aborigines in the Western District of Victoria, Australia".

His scrapbook reflects the many diverse facets of his personality and has a story all to itself.

After being handed down to his daughter, Isabella Taylor of Renny Hill, it was passed down to Isabella's daughter, Katie Winter who lived in Toorak. When Katie died, she left certain items to her niece, Winifred Carstairs – a granddaughter of Isabella. When Winifred went to collect the items she had been left in the will, she found the executors cleaning out the house and a lot of stuff being thrown onto a truck to be taken to the tip. On the truck, Winifred happened to notice a very ordinary-looking book which she thought may have been interesting so she surreptitiously retrieved it. How fortunate that was, as it turned out to be the Dawson Scrapbook.

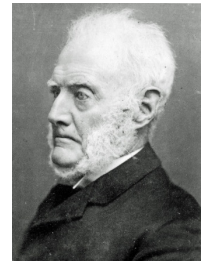


Sometime later, in the 1980s, Winifred passed the book on to Sue Cole, as the eldest member of the family at that time.

Even then, the book's value was not totally realized until Sue took it to the Latrobe Library – at that time, the Australian section of the State Library of Victoria – to ask whether it was of interest to them. "They became very excited," Sue says, "and immediately arranged to have it recorded on microfiche." In 1998, it was loaned to the National Gallery of Australia in Canberra to be part of an exhibition of paintings of South Western Victoria by Robert Dowling and Eugene von Guérard. It was returned to Sue carefully packed in acid-free paper in a special storage box where it is now safely kept.

Two photo-copies of the whole book have been made. One is in the possession of Sue's brother, Jock Thornton, and the other is in the CDHS collection, carefully protected by plastic sleeves and available for visitors to examine.

Even a short browse through this scrapbook reveals a man of many passions, with an inquiring mind and deep moral convictions. He kept in close touch with his Scottish roots through newspapers and letters; he championed the cause of Aboriginal rights and their treatment by white settlers; he was an accomplished amateur taxidermist and his scrapbook includes items ranging through newspaper clippings, home recipes, quotations, opinions, letters to the editor and more. He had humour, he had strong opinions and he kept a close watch on his environment. The following few examples give a slight flavour of the book. You can see more by clicking on:



<http://camperdownhistorynewsupdates.blogspot.com.au/>

**Handwritten note – with Editor's transcription.
(Maybe this is why the Scots are so tough! – Ed.)**

<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Morning Dram</i></p> <p><i>Beat up 3 Eggs, shells & contents, add juice of 2 lemons, let stand 3 days, strain and add half a pint of Jamaica Rum and quarter pound of honey, shake well and bottle. Half a wine glass full a dose before breakfast.</i></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MORNING DRAM</p> <p>Beat up 3 eggs, shells and contents, add juice of 2 lemons, let stand 3 days, strain and add half a pint of Jamaica Rum and quarter pound of honey, shake well and bottle.</p> <p>Half a wine glass full a dose before breakfast.</p>
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Bullen Merri

Subsidence of Bullen Merri from 1st January 1878 to 1st January 1886 - 2 feet 4 inches.

From 1st January 1886 to 20th March 1887 - 1 foot 2 inches (Wash of storm wave 2 feet 2 inches above calm water.)

From 20th March 1887 to 4th April 1889 - 2 feet 7 inches - 6 feet 2 inches

Total subsidence from 1st January 1878 to 2nd April 1889 - 6 feet 2 inches

14th May 1890

Subsidence since 1st January 1878 5 feet 2 inches

An interesting record from the 1880s

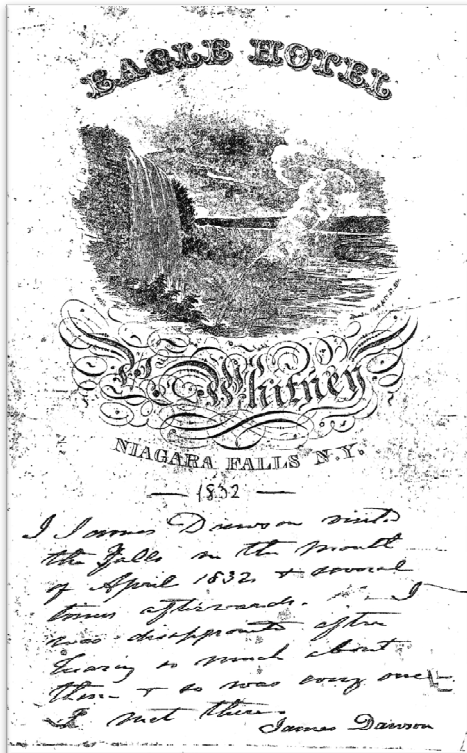
Newspaper cutting:

Highland Heaven

"Ah!" said an old Highland piper, as he was describing to his comrades at home his recent experience in Edinburgh, "Ah! There was ae nicht I'll ne'er forget. There were eighteen pipers beside mesel' in Mrs Grass's wee back parlour in the (pub) and we were a' playing at the same time, an' a' playin' different tunes, an' I just thought I was floatin' in heaven."

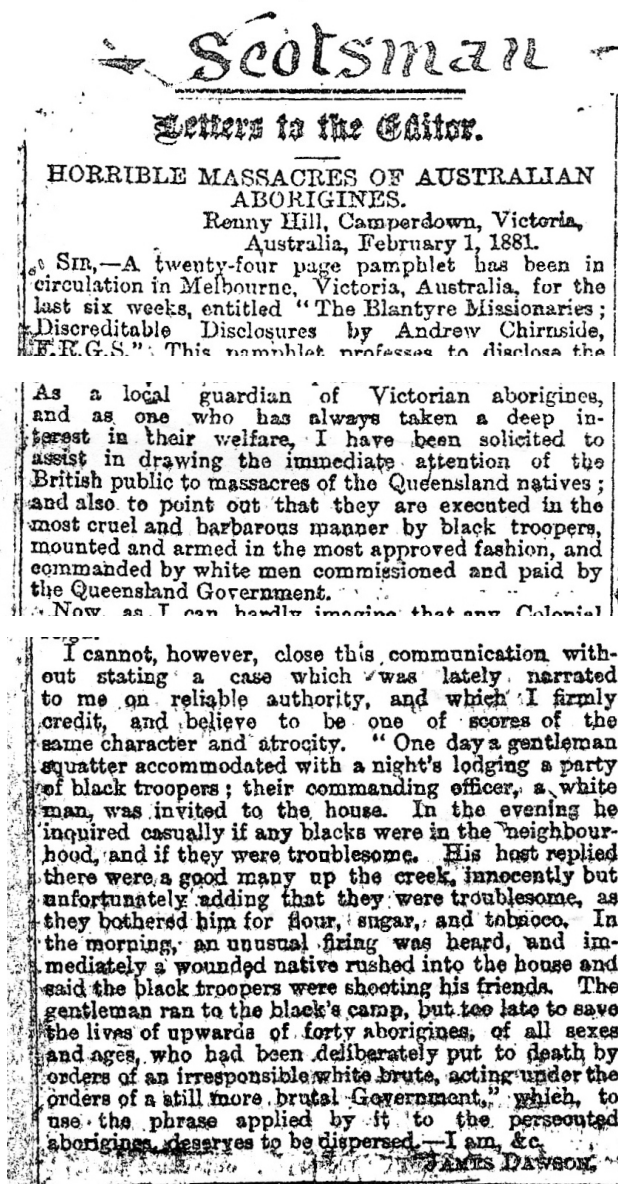
Transcription of an original letter from noted Landscape Gardener and Botanist, W. R. Guilfoyle.

Tell Mr Dawson that the 'yam' plant of which he submitted a flower is "Microseris Forsteri" named by Sir Joseph Hooker, and is found not only in Victoria, but throughout Australia generally, and also in New Zealand. It belongs to the (?) order "Compositae" of which the Dandelion is a member, as also the common Yellow weed – a native of the Cape – which is generally known in the Western District as "Dr. Curdies Sheep Tonic." (W. R. Guilfoyle)

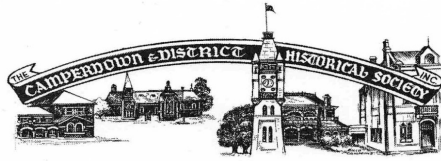


Transcription: I James Dawson visited the Falls in the month of April 1832 and several times afterwards. I was disappointed after hearing so much about them and so was every one I met there. James Dawson.

The following are excerpts from a long and passionate letter which demonstrates Dawson's ongoing dedication to the cause of the Aborigines in South Western Victoria and his fearlessness in confronting colonial authority. You can see the complete letter in the scrapbook if you call into the Heritage Centre.



Don't forget, a copy of the whole James Dawson Scrapbook is available at the Heritage Centre.



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**POSTAGE
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AUSTRALIA**