

CAMPERDOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

PO Box 243 Camperdown 3260 camperdowndhs@gmail.com www.camperdownhistory.org.au

Volume 23 - No. 3

NEWSLETTER

July, 2013

President

Bob Lambell

Vice President

Frank Rose

Secretary

Heather McDowell
Ph. 03 5593 9313

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John Gronbeck
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Gillian Senior
Ray Watson

Hello everyone,

Where does the time go? Suddenly it's Robert Burns Festival time again and we find ourselves busily preparing for another Scottish themed exhibition. This has involved the writing, editing and printing of a second book of Camperdown's Notable Scottish Settlers, rearrangement of our display cases and a big clean, dust and polish of the whole Museum for the occasion.

One of the items we have moved to make room available is the papier-maché model of Mt. Leura and Mt. Sugarloaf. It's been there for quite a few years and while it is always of great interest to visitors, it did take up quite a bit of our limited space. We would really like to replace it with something similar but smaller so, if there is a school or organisation somewhere in the town that would like to take on that project, we'd be very grateful to talk about it.

Members are enjoying being able to use our newly renovated kitchen for lunches, "cuppas" and meetings. Some are raiding their 'top shelves' and donating unneeded kitchen equipment so now we are able to toast our sandwiches, use proper cutlery, plates, etc. and it's really beginning to feel like home.

We are happy to welcome new members since our last newsletter: Jan Savage and Marion Boyd

Hope to see you at the Burns Festival,

Gillian Senior Newsletter Editor

Camperdown Heritage Centre

241 Manifold Street
Camperdown 3260

Opening hours

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

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From the Heritage Centre Collection: Coat of Arms from HMS Camperdown.



A most unusual addition to our collection is this Coat of Arms. It is companion to a Ship's Brass Bell from the same source and the question might well be asked: Why would we have mementoes from a ship of the British Navy? That question can be answered by visiting the Heritage Centre and seeing our full display of "The Battle of Camperdown".
It's well worth a visit

COMING EVENTS: AUGUST - OCTOBER 2013

Tuesday 16th July, 1.00 pm
Executive Committee meeting at the Heritage Centre

Tuesday 6th August
7.30 pm at the McCabe Room
Annual General Meeting
Followed by "Show and Tell"

Our AGM will be followed by a "show & tell" night. These nights always create a lot of interest. They are an opportunity to show your collectables, antiques, family heirlooms or mystery objects.

Jock Hay as a young lad.
Now nearing his 90th year, Jock is a respected long time member of our Society. He has a wealth of knowledge of our local history.



Tuesday 3rd September
7.30 pm at the Heritage Centre
Our Notable Scots



Our researchers will talk about the fascinating lives of a selection of "notable Scots" of Camperdown and district.

This meeting at the *Camperdown Heritage Centre* will also give you the opportunity to explore the excellent displays prepared for the 2013, *Robert Burns Scottish Festival*.

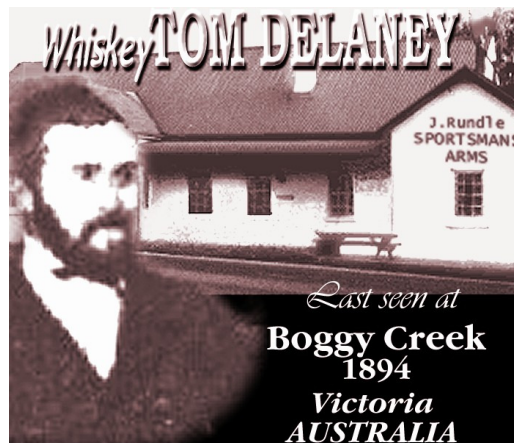
Duncan "Dixie" Walker
Born 1827 at Cantyre, Argyleshire, Scotland
First publican at the Leura hotel

Tuesday 17th September, 1.00 pm
Executive Committee meeting at the Heritage Centre

Tuesday 1st October
7.30 pm at the McCabe Room
"Whiskey Tom" Delaney and the moonshiners of SW Victoria

Our guest speaker is local historian and tour operator, Wendy Reid.

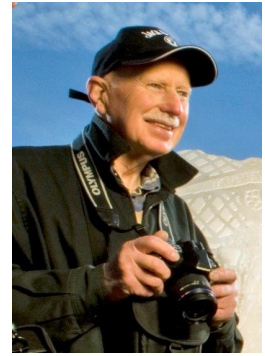
Wendy will talk about "Whiskey Tom" Delaney and the infamous moonshiners operating in the Curdievale area in the late 1800s and early 1900s.



Farewell to a long-time member

Robert Gunner:

We were all very sad to hear the news in May of the passing of our friend and member, Robert Gunner. Of course this was reported in the papers and also on our Latest News Online blog but it is still fitting that we acknowledge his long-serving membership of the society. Robert had been a member of CDHS for many years and on the Executive Committee for almost as long. He was always a friendly – and entertaining – friend and worked in many areas of our research and organisation. There are many stories about Robert and his wicked and very dry sense of humour and he is remembered with much affection. He is sadly missed.



Robert Burns Scottish Festival

All our volunteers have been hard at work with various tasks to have the Heritage Centre ready for extra guests during the weekend of 5-7 July. Pictures, cabinets, floors and silver-ware – all were cleaned and polished within an inch of their lives



but we still found time for a tea-break in our new kitchen!

MEMBER PROFILE

Marilyn Rippon

One of our Executive Committee members for many years, Marilyn is a regular attendee and contributes to our discussions and decision making. Health concerns prevent her from being very active at the Heritage Centre but she is always there for our monthly meetings and enjoys the featured speaker or event as well as catching up with fellow members. As a long-time resident of the district, Marilyn's memories are a valuable historical source.

Marilyn is the sixteenth of our Members/Volunteers who have been profiled in our newsletter. There's one more to come and will be profiled in the next edition.



Original burns portrait at Heritage Centre

We're pretty excited about having a copy of the original portrait from the National Gallery of Scotland to display for this festival.

An authorised copy of the original Burns portrait sent from Edinburgh, Scotland is taking pride of place in the Heritage Centre display for this year's Scottish Festival. This portrait, painted by Peter Taylor in 1786, was the model for the Camperdown statue by sculptor, John Greenshields.

It has been kindly donated to the Camperdown & District Historical Society by Marie Thornton of "Mt Myrtoon" whose husband, Jock Thornton, is descended from William A. Taylor of "Renny Hill". It was William Taylor who brought the statue out from Scotland and gifted it to the Camperdown Botanical Gardens.

In September 2012, Mrs. Thornton contacted the National Gallery of Scotland in Edinburgh and made enquiries regarding purchasing an official copy of the portrait. After many frustrating negotiations over more than six months, the portrait finally arrived in Camperdown last month. Mrs. Thornton has had it beautifully



This copy is from the internet. The 'Authorised Copy' is of MUCH better quality and we urge members to come and see it.

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Snippets of news:

Donation: Local store, Laff's, of Manifold St. Camperdown have been generously donating money from their sales items to various local community groups and charities. The Historical Society was the grateful recipient of \$83 for the month of May and we thank Laff's for their community spirit.

Sitting on Robbie's knee: Some time ago we asked if there were any local people who had photographs of the Burns statue in the Botanical Gardens from years past. A number of people have said they have photos of their children with the statue but only one has been forthcoming – Val Coverdale of Park Lane has given us this picture of her son, Ross, taken by his sister in 1981. Val swears she didn't know they were doing anything so naughty! You can see this photo displayed at the Heritage Centre.



Vietnam Nurses: At our last monthly meeting our guest speaker was Lauren McIlveen, a year 7 student at Camperdown College. Her research and 1000-word essay on *Australian Nurses in the Vietnam War* took out the top award in the *National History Challenge* for school students and her very capable presentation made for a very interesting – and educational – evening for us all.

Statue on Victorian Heritage Register: After some concerns from an early report suggesting that the extensive repairs to the Burns statue would have to be removed, all has now been sorted out with the people from Heritage Victoria and the statue, together with the broken fragments in the display case, is now on the register.

A repeat of last News Letter's information about the Robert Burns Scottish Festival for 2013 – Friday 5th to Sunday 7th July.

The Heritage Centre will be open for visitors as follows:

Friday 5 th July	1pm	to	4pm
Saturday 6 th July	9am	to	5pm
Sunday 7 th July	9am	to	5pm

Displayed in the Heritage Centre we have:

Burns Memorabilia:

Memorabilia – loaned by Melbourne Robert Burns Society & by local collector, Darren Maskell.

Portrait – Copy of original portrait which inspired the Burns Statue, purchased from the Scottish National Gallery and donated by Mrs. Marie Thornton.

Other artefacts etc. from statue restoration, Scottish heritage, books, etc.

Photographic slide-show of the statue, vandalism, repair work and many historic scenes of Camperdown.

Display of Notable Scots No.2

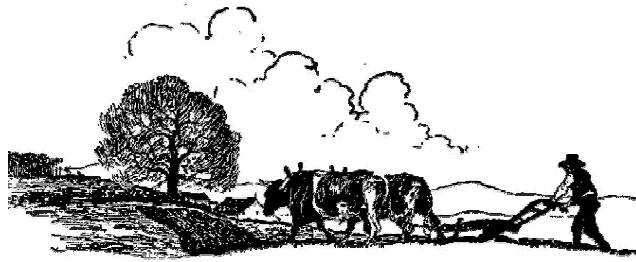
Booklet of Notable Scots No.2 available for purchase - \$2.00

Booklet of Notable Scots No.1 available for purchase - \$2.00

TOURS – both with our very knowledgeable CDHS President, Bob Lambell.

Heritage Walk – Saturday 6th July, 9.30am – 11am. Cost: \$8.00

Heritage Bus Tour – Sunday 7th July, 9.30am – 11.30am. Cost: \$15.00



FROM THE CAMPERDOWN CHRONICLE - 1885

Mr. Peter McArthur of Meningoort is one of the local settlers featured in our new Notable Scots Booklet, so this abridged version of an article from the Camperdown Chronicle of 22 April, 1885 seems appropriate. The editor apologises for all the technical details; however, since a number of our members are, or have been farmers for many years, we thought they may be interested in reading about the old days and ways.

Steam and Agriculture

Since the time Watts first made known to the world his simple discovery of the power of steam, there have been many inventions for the economy of labour and time.

The agriculturists of the earlier part of the present century would be astonished if they were now permitted to see the improvements that have been brought about through the utilisation of steam in connection with the farm. And there are not a few agriculturists of the present day to whom a steam plough is a decided novelty. In Victoria there was none until a few weeks ago, when Mr. Peter McArthur, J.P., of Meningoort, had the honour of introducing the first one into the colony. The machine has been at work for some days, with satisfactory results. A few words regarding its appearance, the quality of work done, cost, &c., may not be out of place here.

Mr. McArthur's reasons for purchasing the plough might, perhaps, be stated. He is a grazier, and owns about 13,000 acres of land eight miles from Camperdown in the direction of Mortlake. About 4,000 acres comprised within the estate have been reclaimed by means of a drainage scheme.

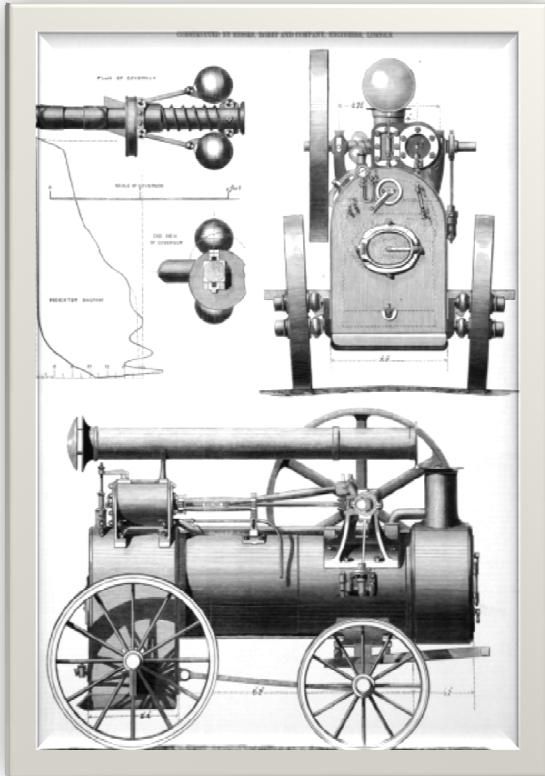
In the drive to the Meningoort station from Camperdown a large portion of the reclaimed land is passed through and the value of the work done is at once apparent. Some years ago a vast morass extended right through the property, taking its rise near the Cloven Hills, and continuing its course near to the western boundary of the estate, where it terminated in a creek which is one of the tributaries of Black's river (Emu creek). The formidable nature of this morass in the old days may be estimated when it is stated that it was covered with water in the summer, and when bushfires have been raging in the district the flocks have been driven into this swamp for protection.

To plough 4,000 acres of land with the ordinary appliances was too formidable a task to undertake. There was not merely the question of cost involved; but there was also the question of time to be considered which was the more important matter of the two. Ploughing with teams of horses or bullocks on such a vast extent of ground would be an expensive and laborious task. This was foreseen by Mr. McArthur who, whilst in England recently, had the value of the steam plough brought under his notice.

An order was given to Messrs. Barford and Perkins, the well-known agricultural and general engineers of the Queen Street Iron Works, Peterborough, (England), for one of these ploughs and the implement, or whatever it may be called, came to hand a few weeks ago. The firm sent out with it a young man, R. J. Chaundy, who had been accustomed to work the machine in England, and who is under engagement to Mr. McArthur for a term of years. The plough is worked by an ordinary eight horse power portable engine, one of Robey's manufacture, which was obtained from the Victorian agents, Messrs. J. McEwan and Co. The cost of engine, plough, &c., delivered on the station, considerably exceeded £1000. After the arrival of the machinery at Meningoort it took a little time to get everything into working order, but the initial difficulties seem now to have been overcome, and the steam plough has been at work for some days with satisfactory results.

On Saturday we visited Meningoort for the purpose of seeing the plough at work. Leaving Camperdown shortly after nine o'clock, the Meningoort estate was reached in good time after a pleasant drive. On the way out the reclaimed swamp to which reference has been made was traversed, and the nature of the operations was lucidly explained by Mr. J. N. McArthur, under whose care we were. On arriving at Meningoort, a start was at once made for the paddock in which the plough was at work. This was nearly a mile from the mansion in an easterly direction. Steam was up,

and the plough at work when we reached the locality. It was a strange sight that lay before us when we had surmounted the small height at the foot of which the machine was operating. Near us was the engine, whilst at some distance from it in another paddock the plough was at work at right angles with the engine, and with nothing apparently to guide it. It is almost impossible to give a technical description of the operations, as, without an accompanying plan, the reader might fail to comprehend it. **(Nevertheless, the writer attempts an explanation. Ed.)**



This is a drawing of Robey's 8 HP Portable Engine as referred to in the article. This particular illustration is dated 1871 but is the closest to 1885 that could be found.

Attached to the engine is another bulky piece of machinery, which comprised two revolving drums around which was coiled the immense length of wire rope, 1600 yards in all, which is used to work the plough up and down the field. These drums are connected with the flywheel of the engine by an endless band of iron of immense strength, which is claimed to be more durable and better than the ordinary band of leather. The revolving drums are constructed on what seems to be the same principle as the drums attached to the winding gear of mining machinery. One or both can be thrown out of gear at the pleasure of the engineer. The two lengths of wire rope pass out from the lower part of the drums through what is termed a double-snatch block, which is placed a few feet away from the drums. This block consists of three pulley wheels placed in a horizontal frame-work which rests upon the ground. The wire ropes pass around two of these wheels and, when the machinery is working in a large field, thence run equal distances in the same straight line in opposite directions to points at each of which there is a single-snatch block. The rope passes through the pulley wheel and takes a rectangular direction. Three sides of what may be termed a rectangular figure have thus been formed. The plough is found to be at work on the fourth side.

The plough itself is of the ordinary three furrow description with this important exception that it is double-headed, or that at each end it is provided with plough-shares. This saves any labour in reversing the implement. When the plough is at work the end not used occupies a semi-perpendicular position so that it is not in the way of operations.

When in full work, two men and a boy are sufficient to keep the steam plough going. One man is required to attend to the engine &c., a second to guide the plough, whilst the boy is to assist the ploughman. In England the steam plough has been known to turn over from eight to nine acres per day. It is estimated that at Meningoort six acres will be possible. From this it will be seen that some years of work will require to be done before the 4,000 acres have been brought under cultivation, even if it were possible to carry on operations for nine or ten months of the year. With manual labour the land could scarcely be reclaimed in a generation without keeping a large number of three-furrow ploughs and good teams constantly at work. Judging from what could be seen of its work on Saturday, Mr. McArthur will have no reason to be dissatisfied with his purchase.

NOTE: There is considerably more detailed information available about the workings of the Steam Plough. The full article can be seen at the Heritage Centre filed under: "Steam Plough".