

CAMPERDOWN & DISTRICT HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

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NEWSLETTER

October, 2013

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Hello everyone,

Following our Annual General Meeting on 6th August, we now have some new faces in the Executive Committee. We say farewell and many thanks for all the hard work and loyal service to Sue Cole, Marilyn Rippon, Ray Watson and John Gronbeck; and we welcome as new members of the committee Maree Belyea, Jan Whamond and Gaye Wuchatsch. The full committee and their specific roles can be seen in the side panel.

In this newsletter we have some news about a new display the details of which are on Page 6.

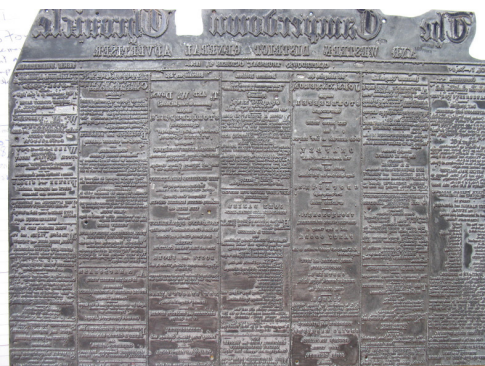
Our Post Office celebrates 150 years in the beautiful building on the corner of Manifold and Church Sts. and Maree Belyea has give us a short history for this newsletter. Her research resulted in a great amount of detailed information about the building's development, the costs and the personnel involved. All this valuable material has now been added to our files for the use of future historians. Volunteers have as usual been very busy at the Heritage Centre keeping records up to date, welcoming visitors and answering research requests. We welcome new members Karin Blomquist and Trevor Harrison.

Gillian Senior Newsletter Editor

From the Heritage Centre Collection:

Metal plate – Copy of Page 1,

First edition of the Camperdown Chronicle – 1st October, 1874



The society has had this plate in its possession for some time. It has now been professionally framed and is on display with detailed information about its use and its history. (See article later in this newsletter)

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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Camperdown & District Historical Society
COMING EVENTS: NOVEMBER 2013 - JANUARY 2014

Tuesday 5th November
7.30 pm at the McCabe Room

Historic Photo Night

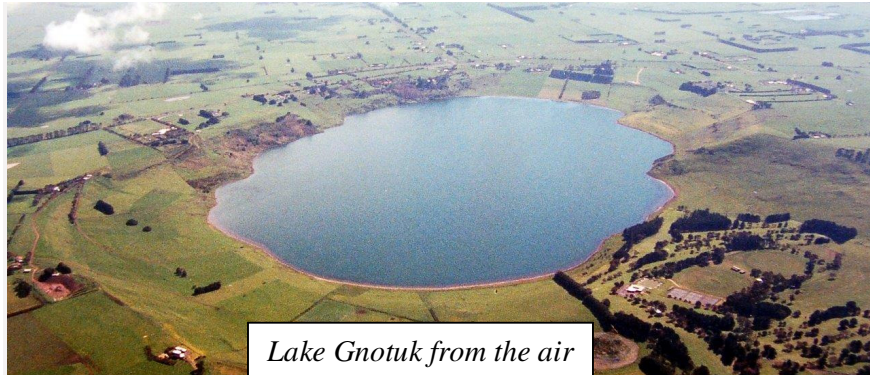
At this meeting, we will view and discuss some of the intriguing photographs in the Camperdown Heritage Centre collection.

Camperdown George, c1870
A recently discovered photograph



Tuesday 19th November, 10.30 am: Executive meeting at the Heritage Centre

Visit to
Gnotuk House and Garden



Lake Gnotuk from the air

As a special treat for our last meeting of the year, we will visit historic Gnotuk House and garden. After a picnic tea, proud owners Fiona and Alun Morris will tell us about the history and restoration of their wonderful house and garden.

Tuesday, 3rd December
Departing 6.00 pm, from the Heritage Centre
(Share cars)

BYO picnic tea

Bookings:

Heather McDowell Ph: 5593 9313 Mobile: 0409 903 588

Tuesday 21st January 2014, 10.30 am: Executive meeting at the Heritage Centre

Condolences to Member & Local Historian, Allan Willingham.

The Public Notice reprinted here tells the sad news of the death of Jan Willingham. Jan was a wonderful friend and host to the CDHS, making her restaurant available during one of the Society's visits to Melbourne. Her sudden death while she and Allan were holidaying in Greece shocked all those who knew her. Our President, Bob Lambell made the journey to Melbourne for the Tribute at Montsalvat and passed on our condolences.

WILLINGHAM. — Janet Laureen (Jan). Suddenly at Athens, Greece, on July 4, Jan Willingham, beloved wife of Allan. Daughter of Dennis and Robena Irwin (late of Adelaide) and elder sister of Jim Irwin. Guiding light to the Rowett, Gordon, Bowden and Willingham families. consummate private and public host, discreet mentor to the hospitality industry. Cordon Bleu chef and restaurateur, at La Cucina, Romeo's, Napoleon and The Granary in Toorak - South Yarra (1974 - 1983) and founder of De Lacy, the celebrated Melbourne lunch haunt in Niagara Lane (1985 - 2002). Craftswoman extraordinaire in textiles and mosaics, lover of fine red wine, generous supporter of the Arts. A devastating loss.

Private cremation. Public Tribute to Jan to be held in The Great Hall, Montsalvat, 7 Hillcrest Ave, Eitham 3095, at 3.00 p.m., TUESDAY (July 16, 2013).

Robert Burns Scottish Festival

Surely the festival is over by now!! Well, it is really but the echoes still linger. Our Scottish display is about to be put into storage and this will mean new artefacts can be brought out, dusted off and set up for a whole new look in the Heritage Centre.

Also lingering is a feeling of pride that we again coped with the extra numbers of visitors on that weekend and also that our contribution to the Festival has been recognised all the way across the world to Kilmarnock, Scotland.

In the *Robert Burns World Federation Newsletter*, there is a two page article sprinkled with ten photographs praising the festival and describing the various events.

"The statue is a community asset, enjoying ever-increasing awareness and affection. This awareness has just been reinforced by a hugely successful 3-day Burns Festival 5-7th July 2013 which saw the town alive with the sights and sounds of Scotland. Ceilidhs, piping and highland dancing competitions, a kilter dash, mini-highland games for the children, storytelling, a deer stalkers ball, music workshops and some stunning musical concerts were staged for the benefit of the hundreds of visitors."

The full article can be read at the Heritage Centre.

More news from Jim Wilson.

Long-time member of the CDHS, Jim Wilson, has responded to the article about Steam Ploughing in our last newsletter. He requested a copy of the original article from the 1885 Chronicle which we were happy to send him and his reply to that has enlarged our information and understanding of the steam ploughs' workings and how they were used on Meningoort. All the information supplied by him, including illustrations, is now available in our "Steam Plough" file for anyone interested. We are very grateful to Jim for his continuing interest in the newsletter articles – thanks Jim. (Ed.)

MEMBER PROFILE

Gaye Wuchatsch

As mentioned above, Gaye is a new member of our Executive Committee. She has been a member of the Society for some years and recently became one of our regular volunteers, answering our call for some help in sorting through the files in our archive room. She has since been working in cataloguing as well and now has agreed to the extra responsibility of being on the Executive. Naturally, we are very pleased to have Gaye with us!



WEDGE MOTORS		
SUNDAY BUS SERVICE TO		
South Beach, Lake Bullen Merri		
Commencing Sunday, December 11, 1949		
TIME TABLE		
Depart Clock Tower	Depart Lake	
10 a.m.	12 noon.	
1.30 p.m.	1.45 p.m.	
2.30 p.m.	5.30 p.m.	
FARES:		
Adults	Single 1/-	Return 2/-
Children	6d.	1/-
Watch for Special Time Table to Rowing Club's Regatta on Saturday, December 31.		
*Phone: Camperdown 44; Cobden 119.		

Now THIS sounds like a good idea!

From Camperdown Chronicle, December, 1949.

CAMPERDOWN POST OFFICE – 150th ANNIVERSARY

The Camperdown Post Office celebrates
150 years of continuous service to the public this month.
It opened for business at the present location on the corner of Manifold and Church Streets
on 6th October, 1863.



Post Office building with Manager's residence. c.1870

The first official post office in the district was at Old Timboon in 1849 when the mail came from Geelong by two-horse mail carts twice a week. From this early start, other developments took place until, by 1860, a Post Office had been established in Camperdown which was managed by John Walls who had a blacksmith and wheelwright business in Manifold St opposite the current day Apex Park.

By 1862, the electric telegraph line was on its way and a telegraph station would be needed. On March 20th, 1863, Richard Pimblett's tender of £1,594/4/- was accepted for the construction of the Telegraph Station and Manager's residence. This is the building that remains in use today, with extensive additions, repairs and alterations made over the years.

The new official post office, which included the Telegraph Station, was opened on 6th October 1863, and John Duigan, previously a sea captain, then lighthouse man at King Island, and by that time a permanent officer of the Victorian Post Office, was appointed "manager of electric telegraph, collector of imposts and also to act as postmaster".

From the date the new Post Office opened telegraph facilities were provided, meaning a speedy alternative to the mail coach. This service was not without problems, however, as the lines were, at times, affected by heavy dew, fog and spider webs. The remedy? A brush attached to a 20ft (6 metre) bamboo pole and a hardy linesman walking the lines.

On 1st December 1865, a Savings Bank was added to the services provided.

By 1876 Mr Duigan had a staff of two to assist him and on his retirement, he was succeeded by Mr John Hannah who continued as Postmaster until 1891.

In June 1878 George Ford, a young shepherd employed on Glenample Station, rode on horseback fifty miles (80.5 km) from the southern coast to Camperdown with the news of the sinking of the Loch Ard and the loss of all on board except two young people. The first news of the tragic wreck was sent to Melbourne and the world from the telegraph station at Camperdown Post Office.

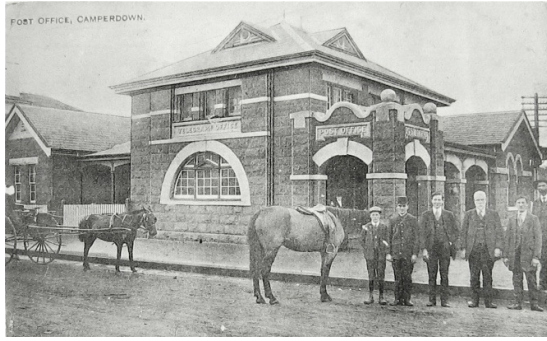
During Mr Hannah's management many additions and alterations were made to the building.

A new room was added for writing and despatching telegraph messages, and letter and newspaper boxes were moved to each side of the delivery window. By 1886, the Post Office staff had increased to six. Further stone additions to the building consisting of a Receivers and Paymaster room were undertaken in 1888.

From 1900 lobbying for better accommodation at the Post and Telegraph Office commenced and continued for a number of years. During this time it was mooted that a new Post Office be built to the east of the Court House but no further action ensued.



Post Office c.1907. State Saving Bank on the left.



Post Office and staff c.1910

In 1905 the Camperdown Telephone Exchange commenced and by the end of the year had 26 subscribers.

As post office activities increased, continuing dissatisfaction with the facilities eventually resulted in major alterations in 1909. These included the building of a large and lofty hall for public and official accommodation (the present day retail area), and additions to the postmaster's residence.

Eventually, in 1929, a new second storey was added above what is now the mail sorting room. Measuring 25 feet by 25 feet (7.62 metres), this was needed to accommodate the fast growing telephone exchange.

By 1948 there were 439 telephone subscribers and by 1968, numbers had increased to 890. At this stage, the Automatic Telephone Exchange opened in a new red brick building at the rear of the Post Office in Church Street. Postal staff by then numbered fourteen, and 18,067 telegraph messages were handled for the year.

After Federation, ownership of the building changed from the Victorian Government, to the Commonwealth of Australia, when the Postmaster General's Department (PMG) was formed (now Australia Post).

Some of the early services no longer exist but many residents will be able to remember cashing in the monthly Child Endowment Orders, sending and receiving telegrams for all sorts of occasions, sending and receiving parcels wrapped in brown paper securely tied with string. Not to mention lovely handwritten letters, and "number please" at the other end of the phone (and being quite sure someone was listening in!).

These and other services have now been replaced with many modern developments: emails, internet banking, BPAY, mobile telephones, etc.

The Post Office is one of the oldest established postal and telecommunications buildings still standing in Victoria. It is one of the earliest public buildings in Camperdown, being erected within ten years of settlement of the new township of Mount Leura. It sits proudly in the Clock Tower precinct and streetscape of Finlay Avenue and Manifold Street, and is on the Victorian Heritage and National Trust Registers.

I am sure the majority of locals, past and present, have great fondness for our Post Office building and appreciate its part in our history.

Let's hope she retains her good looks and usefulness the next 50, 100 or 150 years.

Maree Belyea

Sources: Camperdown Chronicles; Camperdown – A Heritage Study; CDHS files.



**“The first cost the last cost”
sadly, we had a lot to learn!**

Here's a contribution from member, Tony Duplex: an advertisement from a 1948 "Farmers & Graziers Handy Book".

It did sound like the perfect building material in those days, didn't it?

Roof with "FIBROLITE" Corrugated Sheets. Rust Proof, permanently durable, no painting required. The first cost the last cost.

NEW DISPLAY AT HERITAGE CENTRE.

We're extremely happy to report that we have just taken delivery of a very special piece of Camperdown's history. The very first edition of the Camperdown Chronicle, dated 1st October, 1874, has been carefully preserved by the society for many years and we have now had the front and back pages expertly copied and framed. We also have the metal plate of the front page which was reproduced by the Chronicle for the paper's 100th anniversary, as well as the anniversary edition which was printed from this plate.

All these artefacts have been beautifully framed and are now on exhibition at the centre. We encourage you to come and visit us and see this early part of our history.



The Camperdown Chronicle (and a VERY short history of Camperdown's Newspapers.)



"Chronicle Office"
undated photograph (after 1 September 1888) of the original timber and weatherboard Chronicle Office building which stood on part of allotment 2 near the corner of Manifold Street and Pike Street.
(with permission from the Allan Willingham collection).

The first paper in Camperdown was the *Western Press* which was established in 1866. This paper lasted only until 1871, being forced to close because of competition from *The Hampden Guardian* which began in 1870.

The *Hampden Guardian* had the field to itself until, in 1874, the *Camperdown Chronicle* was set up in opposition by a group of local squatters who were unhappy with the editorial policy of the *Guardian*. James Allen, the proprietor and editor of the *Chronicle* stated, in his first editorial, that 'we are far from wishing to convey the impression that we have no decided opinions of our own' and the policies he pursued meant that the paper came into direct conflict with the *Guardian's* anti-squatter policies. By 1877, the *Guardian* had lost the battle; it was no longer viable

and the paper was sold to the *Chronicle*. There were a couple of other short-lived papers: the *Camperdown Times* – 1895-1897 and the *Camperdown Herald* – 1903 to 1939.

The *Chronicle*, however, continued to flourish and continues to this day.

Developments in typesetting & printing over the years.

Hand typesetting

Until 1909, most newspapers were type-set by hand. Each page had to be slowly and carefully put together by selecting various pieces of metal "type" (or letters) and composing them into the words, sentences and paragraphs of the news item. These 'blocks' were then formed into the pages of the newspaper and finally, inked and pressed onto paper by means of the printing machine.



Metal type pieces in a composing stick.



Linotype Machine

Linotype Machine

In 1909, the Chronicle purchased its first Linotype Machine – one of the first in Victoria.

With this machine, the operator was able to type the required letters on a 90-character keyboard. The machine had a reservoir of hot metal which cast the letters – including punctuation and spacing – into a line, called a slug. The lines of copy were then assembled and placed into position on the page for printing. After their use, the metal slugs were returned to the Linotype Machine reservoir and re-melted for later use.

On one occasion during this period, one whole page of classified advertising was accidentally dropped! It took six people four hours of solid work to re-set the entire page in time for the paper's deadline. I imagine the editor was NOT pleased!

Offset Printing

Further advances in printing meant that by 1980, an Offset Web Press was purchased. This is a photographic process, whereby the typewritten copy is transferred to a rubber blanket. The blanket is placed around a cylinder in the printing press for inking and printing. More and more, getting those letters onto the printed page was becoming quicker and more efficient.

Computers

Computers were the next major development and the Chronicle was up there with the latest technology when, in 1993/4 they purchased their first computer.

During all these advances in typesetting, printing machine technology was continuing to develop. The latest machines now being used by the Camperdown Chronicle are able to print in full colour with an aluminium printing plate being cut by UV light directly from the computer. Any upgrade to equipment of course does not come cheaply and the CTP (Computer to Plate) machine was purchased at a cost of over \$150,000.

News for the whole district.

Of course, the Chronicle is not the only paper printed here in Camperdown. The parent company, Western District News Pty. Ltd. is also responsible for the Cobden Timboon Coast Times, the Terang Express and the Mortlake Dispatch. This means that the presses are working four days per week and print a total of 5,000 to 5,500 papers very week.

Staff

The current Managing Editor of Western District News is Stewart Esh who began working at the paper as a photographer. Back in the days before digital photography, this meant long hours in the dark room developing and printing his photographs to capture that important moment – either in sport, latest news or a wedding.

The company has a staff of more than 16, including office staff and, with four papers to put together each week and covering areas in both Corangamite and Moyne shires, they are obviously kept very busy.

With local staff, local news and a commitment to local communities, the district would be a much poorer place without our local newspapers.

In the old days

On a recent tour of the chronicle building by CDHS members, Stuart Esh told a story about the Terang Express newspaper building which used to stand in Baynes St. If you looked up inside this old building you would see a long shaft running the length of the building. When the Terang paper was printed locally, it was from this shaft that all the belt-driven machines were operated.

One of these was a long horizontal belt which was used to dry the Western Star Butter wrappers. The print run would be timed so that two schoolboys could be employed after school. As the wrappers came off the press, the first boy would place each one to the moving belt which was heated by regular lights placed along its length. The second boy had to climb a ladder to reach the other end of the belt where he stood on a little enclosed wooden platform. By the time the line reached the second boy, the wrapper was dry and he could take it off the belt and stack it.

Not too high-tech perhaps butit worked! And the boys earned some pocket money.