



# The DUNTROON DIGGER

December edition 2018

Editor: Mike Gray



## Next DDDA Committee Meeting

6:00 p.m. Thursday 13th, December 2018, at Vanished World Centre.

## Wetland News.

Due to the extreme wet conditions the scheduled Wetland working-bee had to be cancelled.

However **Duntroon School** combined a trip to the Wetland in their busy "Help Out Duntroon Day."

They weeded around the plants and studied the amazing growth that has transformed this gem as we see it today, flora and fauna abundant.

**Thank you,** Owen King.



**You are invited to join our local Community and Volunteers  
at a combined “End Of Year” barbeque.**

on Friday December 7<sup>th</sup>, from 6pm

To be held in Duntroon Hall or on the Village Green

**Barbeque food will be provided\*\*** - Please bring a salad or dessert to share.

Bring your own DRINKS and UTENSILS (plates, cutlery, cups..)

**\*\*For catering purposes, please RSVP numbers attending  
to [ddda@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ddda@xtra.co.nz) or phone 4342565**



A photo taken on the recent **Help Out Duntroon Day**

**Waitaki Valley Singers**

**Christmas Community Singing Service.**

St. Martin's Church, Duntroon  
at 7pm on Sun 16<sup>th</sup> December.

Come along to hear our local choir' beautiful  
singing and join in the singing of some  
Christmas carols.

**Supper to follow.**

**Tokarahi Rural women invite you to their**

**Annual Pot Luck Christmas Tea.**

At the Tokarahi Hall, 6.30 pm  
on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> December

Bring:

- Food to share.
- Gift exchange to value of \$10.00.
- Non perishable food item for food bank.

**All welcome.** Enquires to Evelyn 4312789



## **Nicol's Blacksmith Shop, DUNTROON**

Working Blacksmith 10 a m – 3 pm  
Sat 3 & Sun 4 November

**Tool Sharpening on Sunday 9<sup>th</sup>  
and 16<sup>th</sup> December:**

Bring knives + gardening tools.

More details:

[www.blacksmith.net.nz](http://www.blacksmith.net.nz)

### **Duntroon Saleyards Trust** - An interesting piece of local history

*Contributed by Eion Rutherford*

Before I give you a resume of what has happened to the Trust I think it would be of some interest to give a history as far back as my memories go and what a read of the minute book can also tell me.

The Duntroon saleyards were on the ground immediately behind where the present toilets are, and back as far as the deep cutting where the railway line was to the north, and from the loading ramps to the east which are still there to the present fence on the boundary with the Sutherland property to the west, an area of a little less than one hectare.

Up until 1954, the yards, which included both sheep and cattle yards, were owned by the same company as the hotel. The owners of the hotel were Milne and Bremner, a liquor wholesale company from Dunedin. The proprietor of the hotel at that time was a Mr Fred Ferris.

The reason that the hotel owned the yards was that prior to motor vehicle transport, when the main mode of transport was by horse, it gave the travellers somewhere to put their horses when they stayed at the hotel for the night. I presume the sheep yards were there for anyone who was driving sheep up the valley to put their mobs of sheep for the night .

At that time the sheep yards were in a state of disrepair but the cattle yards were of reasonable condition.

A public meeting was called for on the 7<sup>th</sup> of July 1954 which was attended by 20 farmers and also a Mr A. S. Bisset representing the Oamaru Stock and Station Agents. Mr. Bisset was manager of the mercantile company Wright Stevensons in Oamaru at that time.

He explained to the farmers present that the yards required urgent repairs and ongoing maintenance. From this meeting came a proposal to purchase the freehold land and yards off the present owners. The yards and land had been valued at 300 pounds [\$600] and the present lessee

was willing to relinquish the lease on the consideration that 100 pounds [\$200] of shares in the new company which was to be formed, be allotted to him.

The yards were duly purchased for 400 pounds [\$800]. Financed by a loan from Wright Stevensons, & guaranteed by those present at the meeting.



In August 1954 a further meeting was called and a committee was elected to run the yards along with the decision to finance the purchase of the yards and land and also the upgrading and enlarging of the sheep yards by farmers and stock firms contributing by way of 10 pound debentures which would be noninterest bearing and paid back to the farmers when the company was in a financial position to do this.

A Mr. Charlie Crisp who had a business which made concrete posts in Oamaru was duly engaged to oversee the repair and enlarging of the yards and he was assisted by a very large number of farmers who gave their time along with their expertise in various forms to carry out all the work required. Back in those years there was no such thing as treated posts and timber so it was done the old way with concrete posts and four rimu 150 x 75 boards bolted to them and also making all the gates out of timber as well. The posts were concreted into the ground as well so it certainly wasn't going to ever fall down although in time the timber rails and gates rotted.

Over the years the debentures were paid out and by 1968 there were sufficient funds to pay them all out. Also in 1968 the toilets were built, but an interesting thing about them is the fact that they were built the wrong way around and the pipe work should have been on the sunny side facing the Waitaki river which would have helped to stop frost damage. As well as the fact that the entrance to the toilets wouldn't have faced the main road. I add, this was not a committee decision to build it in such a way.

**This story will be continued in the next edition of the Duntroon Digger (February 2019)**

In 1974 by advice from their solicitors and accountant that the administration of the yards should be formed into a company, this was duly done and it was called the Duntroon Saleyards Company.

In 1975 the funds in the bank of the company were nearly \$6000 so it was certainly quite a revenue earner with up to four sales per summer season. Over the years the yards were maintained by various farmers, mainly the directors, and in 1984 a section of land on the western boundary was purchased off the transport company Waitaki Holdings and this enabled a further 16 sheep pens to be built. The cattle yards down behind where the toilets are now had been removed a number of years earlier and that area had further sheep yards built on it. The capacity of the yards by now was in excess of 13000 and on a number of occasions the yards were filled to capacity and one year there were so many sheep brought to be sold that some were left on the trucks until some were sold to allow the pens to be used a second time.

A welcome fundraiser for the Anglican Church, which was totally reliant on the sale day, was providing the morning teas and lunches from a small area of land at the eastern end of the Anglican Church. It is fair to say there was a certain amount of competition amongst the ladies as to who could provide the best baking to butter up the stock agents. Their cups of tea or coffee were also most appreciated by the truck drivers and farmers as well. They had a small hut probably a relic of the construction of the Waitaki dam where about 6-8 dedicated women beavered away making sandwiches and providing tea and coffee to those people who had arrived very early to get the stock organised for the sale. In the later days of the sales, the stock had to be yarded the night before the sale day so that the stock agents had time to get them sorted and into their pens.

Another business that did particularly well was the pub where I am sure many farmers found the banter there considerably more interesting than the actual stock sale.

So from the early 50's through to 1998 the sale yards were very much a part of the farming industry of the district, and Duntroon community, with sheep being drawn from around the Duntroon /Tokarahi area as well as the Hakataramea Valley. I understand that earlier in the century there were weekly sales held there but as the minute book only starts in 1952 there is no record of this.

With reducing number of sheep due to the growth of the dairy industry the stock coming to the sales got less and less and the last sale held there was in 1996. After 2 years of no sales to 'see what happens' it was decided by the directors with consultation with the stock firms to close the yards permanently and sell off the assets. The yards were sold by tender and removed and then the land was sold also by tender. The toilets are still owned by the land owner but are leased to the Waitaki District Council .Probably the only privately owned public toilets in the country.

Once the yards and land were sold along with reserves held by the company there was over \$24000.00 in the bank.

After considerable debate it was agreed by the then directors to place the money in a 'Trust' and it be called the Duntroon Saleyards Charitable Trust and that \$1000 from the interest earned from the money invested in the trust be paid to a student leaving high school and going on to a University or Polytechnic{Tertiary Education}. In the first year of the scholarship being in operation 1999 there were 11 applicants.

Over the following 15 years the scholarship has been run every year but in the later years the applicants have been very few and if I had not gone out and canvassed for applicants some years there wouldn't have been any applicants at all and the trustees had serious reservations as to whether the scholarship should continue. Last year, the first year the scholarship was not advertised or run, there was only one enquiry and as well as the fact that the interest on the money that was invested was not enough to cover the advertising and \$1000 for the actual scholarship it was decided to terminate the scholarship.

So it was a combination of factors that made the trustees come to the decision they did.

So what to do with the money held by the trust.

The trustees were at complete liberty to do what they liked with it but after considerable discussion by the trustees and our lawyer it was decided to do the following, taking into account that the saleyards where the money originally came from was an asset of Duntroon it was decided to do the following.

The money to be divided into 3 and the Duntroon Hall , Duntroon Blacksmith Trust, Duntroon Development Association be given an equal amount of \$8383.00 each.

So that ends an era of the saleyards which for over 65 years played an important role in the history of Duntroon and the surrounding district.