



# The DUNTROON DIGGER

December edition 2020

Editor: Lynda Scott Araya

Greetings to all our Duntroon Digger readers,

Christmas is almost upon us and so it is a busy time for us all. We have been pleased to have begun hosting the cycle groups again and people have been giving us favourable reports of places that they have stayed at along the way, as well as some of the fabulous food to which they have been treated. Speaking of delicious food, John and I enjoyed sushi at the salmon farm recently and had fun both feeding the fish and watching a man catch one.

Our lavatera have begun flowering along the fence at Western House, although they are still very small and we have planted the new berry plants that we bought from Kat of Kowhai Cottage. Now, we will need to guard them carefully from our ducklings!

We are continuing to find out more about the history of the property and had a surprise visit from a man and his wife who wished to see our waterwheel. The man's great-grandfather was a Mr. Richard Thomas and, according to the family stories, had helped to construct the waterwheel. He had moved to Kurow from Whare Kuri and then later moved to Otekaieke. We would love to find out more about the original building of the wheel and about those involved.

There will be NO Duntroon Digger for January. The deadline for the next issue (February) is January 25<sup>th</sup>. John and I wish you all a happy Christmas and holidays.

Lynda Scott Araya

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**Next DDDA Committee  
meeting: 7:00 P.M.  
Thursday 10th, December  
at Vanished World Centre.**



## Tuition

I am offering tuition in study skills and motivation, literacy/reading strategies, essay writing, English and History as well as in English as a Second Language. Many of these are generic skills that can be applied across all secondary school subjects.

Previous experiences include: Head of the English Department at WBHS and Literacy Coordinator, as well as Workplace Literacy Coordinator at Literacy Aotearoa, and Education Tutor for the Corrections Department. I have qualifications to teach both English and History to Scholarship level as well and hold an MA.

Lynda 0275016534

## Potluck community meal.

The wider Duntroon community and beyond are invited to a shared meal at the Duntroon Hall Friday 4th December from 6pm, sitting to eat at 7pm.

It's a great way to connect with the people you haven't seen in a while and celebrate the end of a memorable year. Bring your visitors or invite friends from further afield who you think would enjoy a catch-up in Duntroon.

Bring:

- a plate of food to share
- your own liquid refreshments
- your own cutlery and plates if you're wanting to avoid single use paper plates and wooden cutlery.

Any questions or for further info  
Jan Keeling 0274978006.



### **You are invited to the:**

**Whalan Lodge Christmas Party!!!** Saturday 5th December 2020 Arrive from 1.30pm onwards Carol Service joined by Reach Church at 2pm. Shared afternoon tea to follow.

Attention all family, friends, trust members, volunteers, and members of the Waitaki community..... You are invited to come along and join us for Christmas fun and celebration with the residents and staff of Whalan Lodge. Fun and games for the kids and a visit from Santa Claus himself. Bring along a plate for our shared afternoon tea and of course your singing voices! RSVP 034360578. Look forward to seeing you there..... Whalan Lodge Residents & Staff



## **Kia Ora from the Duntroon Hotel**

The kids' Halloween day at the end of October had a good turnout. There were not as many as last year but it was still a good day. There are photos of the day on our FaceBook page, taken by Karan. We all hope the kids enjoyed the day. We also had a few markets set up out the front of the Hotel.

We had our first live musicians William & Lindy on Saturday the 7th of November. They did a couple of their songs live on our FaceBook page which you can view or check out their page "The

Squeeze" on FaceBook. They are keen to come down again sometime soon to do another session at the Hotel.

We have a new beer on tap, Burkes Brewing CO. Mackenzie Friday Pale Ale. We serve it by the glass, jug & riggers for takeaway.

The market day on the 8th of November got washed out due to the rain. Thank you to those who did come down. We are hopeful that the next one will have better weather.

Our December market day on Sunday the 13th, will not only be the last one for the year, but also the last one on a Sunday. After talking over with stall holders we are changing things a little. Starting in January, Saturday the 9th, all market days will be on the second Saturday of the month and will start from 10am.

Our Sunday night steak has changed to \$15.00 chicken wings! We also have a new Thai menu for Monday & Tuesday & our main menu has also changed.

Chase the Ace was won on the 22nd of October by our first woman winner. She got \$190.00. Congratulations.

We will be closed Christmas Day this year. Our accommodation will be closed on the 24th & 25th of December. With Christmas coming up, don't forget we have a display cabinet with hand carved necklaces and other unique hand-made gifts for sale.

On behalf of the owners and staff, we wish you all a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. We all look forward to seeing you in the new year.

## Vanished World Update

Except for Christmas Day, Vanished World will be open daily over the holiday period and we are looking forward to seeing local people and their visitors come into the Centre to dig a fossil in the 'Dig Room', check out the latest merchandise (great for Christmas shopping), and reacquaint with our Waipatia Maerewhenua, giant penguins and the shark toothed dolphin and other 25 million year old fossils.



Good news! Vanished World has received funding for a part-time position to take over some of the management and operational tasks from the Committee, leaving them to concentrate on projects which will help Vanished World transition into the Geopark. Like to know more about the role? Please email Faye Ormandy, Vanished World Chairman for a job description. fayeormandy@gmail.com



This doesn't mean Vanished World won't need so many volunteers. Far from it! The Centre will continue to be staffed with volunteers every day and as Duntroon is becoming a destination for people to visit, Vanished World is getting busier we need more volunteers so that we can spread the load. If you'd like to help, Faye would love to hear from you.

## [Nicol's Blacksmith in December](#)

Open through December with live demonstrations most weekends, closed Boxing Day and the 27th Dec.

For our January dates check the online version of the Duntroon Digger and on the Blacksmith's website.

For bookings or more information on the beginner blacksmith courses phone Jan 0274979006 or [nicolsblacksmith@gmail.com](mailto:nicolsblacksmith@gmail.com)

[www.blacksmith.net.nz](http://www.blacksmith.net.nz) - Facebook Nicol's Blacksmith - Instagram @nicolsblacksmith

## Thank you to Robert Duff for the following letter.

Port Chalmers, Otago, New Zealand  
5th May 1848

From the Otago Journal Page 45  
Letter from William Duff to Mrs Robertson  
Gate side, Kirkliston

Dear Aunt

*It is with pleasure that I now write you to let you know that we have arrived safely at the end of our voyage, thanks be to the Almighty God for his goodness. I hope this will find you in good health, as it leaves us at present. We have all been in good health since we left you. We arrived here on the 15th of last month. We had a very pleasant passage of 116 days from Milford Haven. We experienced a storm about the middle of March which lasted for three days, through which we rode in safety in our good ship. We had a cautious and experienced captain. I was fortunate in having an office on board, as it led me in contact with the steward, who was very kind. We ate little salt meat in the hot weather. Many a one hurts himself by eating salt meat. We are living on board, as the houses are not ready for us, and the purchasers have not had time to choose their land. The appearance of the country is rather wild, but everything is green as in the heat of summer. Carrots, parsnips, and potatoes were newly sown and planted, and a settler, a Scotsman at Port Chalmers had a second crop of barley which he expects will ripen before winter. The soil is very rich and I do not think it will be ill to clear. There is a great deal of brushwood and there is level clear land a few miles back; but I have not been far in the bush. We have a visit from some of the natives every day; they seem glad to see us, and are very peaceable. Some of them are dressed in the native mat, and are very wild looking. There are a number of Scotch settlers here; some of them have been for a number of years. They seem quite at home with the natives, and have no fear of them so far as I have seen. The winter is beginning to set in. We have had heavy rains since we came, and some of the warmest days we have ever had in Scotland in the heat of summer. The settlers who have lived here for some years say that this and the next month ends their winter, and then I hope to commence farming in earnest. There are plenty of horses here running wild. Jones has between one and two hundred; their price is somewhere about 20 pounds, but I see no market for them yet, so I do not think I will deal in horse flesh for some time Mr B. and Captain Cargill think there will be a great demand for them so soon as the road is opened up between the town and country sections. Provisions are not very dear, the Company have a store, and sell meat at 2s 6d per tonne; flour at 3s per do; tea at 1s3d per pound; sugar at 3 and half per lb. The wages to labourers are 3s per day; mechanics 5s per day. I hope you will write us so soon as you get this. I now conclude as Mary waits to write you a few lines.*

From Otago Journal Page 74:  
Letter from W Duff to W.R. Douglas  
Anderson's Bay, Dunedin, Otago

New Zealand 4th May 1849

Dear Friend

I have just received your letter by the ship "Mary" dated October, and was glad to hear that you were all well. This leaves us all in good health at present, thanks to God for his goodness, and in circumstances of comfort, having got up a house of clay wall and shingle roof. The shingles are of split wood a foot long four inches broad, and half an inch thick nailed and make a good roof. I have leased for three years a ten acre section. I pay 10 pounds for three years, and have about two acres fenced in and planted with potatoes and vegetables - fine crops. I have a cow and a calf, two pigs, nine hens, a pair of geese, three cows in milk, and take the butter to Dunedin, and sell it at 2s per 1b. I have 15 cow and heifers belonging to a gentleman here, and have the produce and a third of the increase per year for taking charge of them. I have about three miles to walk to Dunedin, but can cross the bay in a boat in about 20 minutes. The tide flows up to the door at high water. My house stands on a face of a hill opposite to Dunedin, on a very pretty spot. Dunedin is now about the size of Mid-Calder, and the colony is now going on pretty well. We want a few more purchases to come out with capital. You wish to know what encouragement there is for your trade. You might do very well with your machine for cutting firewood, you might soon make money, wood being in such demand and plenty of it. You might get water power, or hire bullocks to work your machine, and supersede hand labour. A man can cut, with hard work, a cord of wood per day, - he gets 6s a cord, - a cord is six feet long, four feet wide, four feet high; the best firewood is very hard wood called Manuca the largest trees you have to cut for firewood are about two feet through. Sawyers get 16s per 100 feet for sawing trees, turning out from 1000 to 2000 feet. I think very highly of the country, both as to soil and climate, - the soil in its natural state bears abundant crops of oats and barley.

You can have three crops from one sowing. A settler here told me that he had thrashed upwards of 100 bushels of oats per acre; the second crop is always better than the first, the third not so large. The ground that I am on a man of the name of A. had it for some time. I had a good crop of potatoes from the seed he had in the ground. In bush land you can raise large crops of potatoes, - a man beside me, when raising his counted 30 large potatoes, besides some small, one from seed - cabbages 56lb., and a beet root 21lbs.; such is proof of the land. The climate in summer is not very hot, and in winter it is not cold; in the coldest morning last winter the ice was about an inch thick, and any snow that fell disappeared by mid-day. Seldom any thick weather, but clear and windy. The wind blows very strong from the N.E. Every one who has come here agrees with the climate. We are all in excellent health, though we have all been a good deal exposed. You could not do better than come out, you would all do very well. If Marion were here she would get from 16 to 20 pounds a year. Mechanics get from 5 to 7s a day; labourers 4s per day. Beef 7d per lb; bread 10d 4 lb loaf; tea 2s 6d; and sugar 5d per lb. if you come out bring all the clothes you can. Boots and shoes very dear. Tell your mother to bring your pots and pans and a camp oven for baking your bread, all your bedding, dishes, and everything you can pack up, - you will find everything useful here, - tools and ironmongery are very high. If you could bring some corduroy trousers you would sell them well here, or moleskins, but I think the former keep better on the sea. Bring me two pair of boots from Mr Finlay, 14 South St. David Street, he has my measure, - strong double soled, with plenty of nails, to lace up the front, and leather caps on the toes, and toe plates. If you could bring some children's

*shoes, you would be sure to get them sold here. Bring two pairs of boots to Mary, cloth, to button, large woman's size; some cala tartan for dresses. Bring all your money in goods, as you know the house to come to. Remember us to all our friends and relations. - I am, , &c*

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2025 marks the 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Nicol's Forge and preparations are now underway, spear-headed by Jan Keeling. We hope to have a commemorative book as well as to have a range of other events. Please contact Jan Keeling, in the first instance, if you have, or know anyone who has, old photographs of Duntroon and its surrounds, as well as the forge.

Currently, Lynda is going through years' of "Duntroon Notes" which Jan has been collecting. There are some very sad stories such as that of a Private who had been earlier rejected for World War One and then later, once he was married, called up in the ballot. He was the fifth son to serve in the war and had one brother deceased and one crippled in the war effort.

In the past, just as now, Duntroon was very caring and a few of the "Duntroon Notes" refer to fundraising for a man known as "Old Mackenzie" who was roughing it in the Duntroon hills. There were also frequent basket socials – there's a new phrase to Google!



**Well done to the winners of Western House's Inaugural Short Fiction Competition.**

The winners were: 1<sup>st</sup>: Adrian McCauley, 2<sup>nd</sup> Eddie Robinson and 3<sup>rd</sup> Errol Wills.

Errol's short story is printed below.

**Let's go to New Zealand**

Bernie the Badger was thinking that with Covid19 sweeping across the UK his family might be impacted by the repercussions. Up to now they had been very well protected by the various rules regarding badgers and their habitat. Being a protected species, no one is allowed to interfere with their sets, as their homes are called, and definitely no one is allowed to move them on to a new location. However, with famine in the UK imminent, what people do in the hours of darkness had Bernie worried. Badgers are very clever, and they can communicate telegraphically with other species, so when Bernie went to communicate with the local policeman regarding his worries, the indications were that anything that happens in the hours of darkness, was outside of the policeman's control.

"What do you think about emigrating" Bernie said to his partner Judy. "I have been on the fibre optic cables that run past us, and it looks like New Zealand is the place to be". Bernie

was a clever badger, and when the phone company put these underground cables in his area, he found they went past his home, so telegraphically, he was able to hook into the Internet and do a lot of research. "It looks like those people in New Zealand like teddy bears, because everybody has one in their window" he said to Judy. "We look a bit like teddy bears, even though we have a bit of a bushy tail, but we still have the same kind of sweet face" he said. Judy looked at him and smiled. She was a very loyal partner and everything Bernie said made sense. It was a bit like the 2 Degree ads she had been following on the Internet. Everything made sense." What about communicating with those people and animals in New Zealand? " she asked. Bernie's reply was quick, "You know that the people in New Zealand are called Kiwi's". he replied. "Well they are one of the few countries in the world that have a dual naming system for their inhabitants" Bernie had obviously done his Internet homework and had been following the social media from that far flung country. "Don't they talk funny?" asked Judy. "I hear they kicked out a guy called Simon Bridges from his job because he talked funny" she said. Well, said Bernie, " I think that Jacinda, their Prime Minister also has a bit of a twang with some of her words, and she has held onto her job, so there should not be anything to worry about."

By the following week Bernie had made up his mind. He had communicated with all his cousins, and uncles about what he was wanting to do. It seemed like he had their support because as he said to them "Beware, for I am fearless, and therefore more powerful" meaning that the big trip ahead of them was not a worry. Who would challenge a badger as they boarded a ship or plane? He had the might of the UK government on his side with all the rules regarding the protection of badgers. His only problem was getting onto some sort of vessel that was going to New Zealand. Taking a plane was quickly ruled out, as most of the flights had been cancelled. The ones that were still flying meant you had to have a Covid19 test before you got onto one. Who would they find that would want to do a Covid19 test on a badger by sticking a swab up the badger's nose, remembering that badgers have sharp claws, and may react to this intrusion? So that ruled out the option of flying. "How about one of those roll on roll off ships" said Judy. "Don't be silly" said Bernie, "I want to be sober before we depart, remember that it takes about six weeks to get there by ship, so we will have to be really sharp if we are going to pull this off." Judy just smiled, she was a very loyal partner, but sometimes she had to correct Bernie's thinking. "Don't be silly" she told him, "By roll on roll off that is what they call the ships that cart cars, big tractors and bulldozers by sea. They just drive on and drive off, so that is why they are called that. You do not have to be drunk and just roll onto the ship, and you would probably miss the big ramp anyway and fall into the water if you were drunk, and that would be a waste of time." Bernie thought for a while. "Maybe we could get the cousins to all come down to the port and make a disturbance while we sneak on board" he said. This had been done before, masses of badgers all gathering in one place, and no one was allowed to disturb them because they are a protected species. "We could get David Attenborough down to witness us all gathering, and he could film it for the BBC" said Bernie. Smart thinking. Not only would the gathering of masses of badgers cause a distraction, it would

give the badgers some free airtime to reinforce their importance to the country. It had also been done before, with local people setting up road blocks and the police having little power to stop them because they claimed they were just protecting their patch. And with the TV cameras there, no policeman was going to step out of line and get criticised for doing his job. Best for them to just sit back and make the right noises to keep the public happy. Great idea.

The 10th of October seemed like that would be the date the ship was due to leave port. Careful planning had to be made so all of the great ideas would come together. Most of the cousins were keen, although disappointed that Bernie and Judy were leaving. They both were seen as great leaders, and the leaving would leave a great hole in the badger family, as well as a great hole in the ground. Cousin Bill was keen to take over the hole in the ground, as Bill had also worked out this Internet thing and the fibre optic cables that travelled past Bernie's home. The newspapers were all full of news that the tech industry was going to be the next big thing, the same as when steam changed the country from horses to rail, then electricity changed homes from candles to electric lights, and the invention of truck and cars meant people could move further afield and still be home at night with the family. How exciting will be this tech thing when it arrives.

So about two days before the 10<sup>th</sup>, masses of badgers started to move towards the docks under the cover of darkness. Remember the policeman had told Bernie that anything done under the cover of darkness was not able to be controlled by him. Bernie and Judy had packed everything that they need for the six week long trip, and had even found out that the big boat that they were going to board only went as far as Australia, and they would have to catch a smaller roll on roll off from there to New Zealand. There was a worry that the political situation in New Zealand was changing, with the rugby teams from Australia and New Zealand arguing who was going to have Christmas away from their families. Even the World Champions from South Africa were getting into this argument and were thinking about just playing during their summer in the northern hemisphere in the UK and Europe because someone had sent an email that had upset them. All of this made Bernie say "Have a little compassion on my nerves, you tear them to pieces" Because of all the organising of the cousins, arranging to survive six weeks on a ship, and the prospect of having no communication with other animals except rats, and everything else that emigration meant, Bernie's nerves were a little frazzled. Then on top of that Judy said to him "Why didn't you tell me there was a danger? Why didn't you warn me?" Bernie was a bit thoughtful and what went through his mind was everybody, soon of late, sits down to a banquet of consequences, so why worry.

So the big day arrived. All of the badgers emerged from the darkness and started to move onto the port to distract the shipping people. David Attenborough had arrived with a full BBC film crew. Cousin Bill was excited about getting his new home once Bernie and Judy were on board the ship. But, stop here, what has gone wrong, who made the mistake, did someone nark on them? Did Bernie and Judy get lost on the way to the port? No, the roll on roll off ship left yesterday.