

Duntroon Digest December 2025

As the year 2025 draws to a close, most people are looking forward to having a chance to unwind, but here in Duntroon the town is busier than ever.

The Duntroon Domain and Camping Ground seem to be THE place for visitors to stay. The camp has become increasingly busy these last few years and while that is good for our local economy, the camp infrastructure has been tested at times.

The Duntroon and District Development Association (DDDA), which manages the camp, have contracted to upgrade the water system this season. Meanwhile, the caretaker Steve Smith continues to beautify the place with plantings of flowers that are a source of enjoyment to all the visitors.

Happening before Christmas is the refurbishment of the exterior of the Vanished World Centre building. This work is part of the major upgrade of the Centre. The intention is to bring the Centre up to international standards and to showcase the exhibits. Or as Waitaki Whitestone Geopark manager Lynley Browne stated, "It was important for the quality of the exhibition to match the quality of the fossil collection".

Furthermore, the Centre is to become a hub for research and educational and cultural resources. While the exterior will be done before Christmas, the interior will be done after the holiday season when things have quietened down a bit. If you are not sure what to buy someone for Christmas, then call in to the Vanished World Centre and check out the merchandise. There are so many excellent items to choose from.

Our man of many talents, Lloyd Grafton has restored another sign. Back in September Lloyd installed the original railway sign for Duntroon onto Campbell Street, having repainted the sign and created the word "Duntroon" using letters cut out and bolted on. This time he has given the "open" sign for Nicol's Forge the same three-dimensional treatment on both sides, and it really stands out.

The last Duntroon Wetlands working bee for the year will take place on the 13th of December. There will be lots of work to do as the growth has been phenomenal this season. Next year, the plan is to do plant more natives along the new track that has been cut on the northern side of the wetlands.

Also happening on the 13th of December at the domain is the end of year BBQ for the Duntroon Photography Group. The group enjoyed a variety of outings this year. The last one being a trip over Dansey's Pass to Saint Bathans. The settlement of Cambrian proved to be a revelation as was the Falls Dam. A trip to the Catlins is being planned for in the new year.

Yes, 2026 is upon us, the good folk organizing the Dansey's Pass Trail Ride have started their planning for next year's ride which will be held on Saturday the 21st of March. It will be here before we know it.