



the Duntroon DIGGER

Established 2005

October 2026 - November 2026 Edition Email: duntroondigger@gmail.com

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Next issue: 1st Dec. Please send your contributions to us at duntroondigger@gmail.com by 25th Nov. See Duntroon Digger Dates 2026 on the 2nd to last page of this issue.

Proudly sharing our district's heritage



The year is flying past, and already the Duntroon and District Development Association (DDDA) is planning its Annual General Meeting on the 16th of November.

There are several vacancies to be filled on the committee, and newcomers will be welcomed.

The first step to joining the committee is to become a member. The membership form is available on the Duntroon website at www.duntroon.co.nz on the DDDA page. Download the form and send the signed form to the secretary at secretaryddda@gmail.com. Alternatively, you can pick up a form at the Museum of The Vanished World.

Once you are a member, you can then be nominated by two members to the committee, or you can nominate another member to the committee. The Committee nomination form is also available on the Duntroon website and the Museum of The Vanished World.

All nominations for the committee must be received by 5pm the day before the AGM.

The committee is looking forward to being joined by some new faces with fresh ideas. See you there.

Supper is to follow.

The Flying Pig will be Extending its Hours

The Flying Pig will be extending its hours from the first of October. Open 7 days a week. Week days opening at 7.30 till 2/3pm. Sat & Sun 8am till 2/3.

A Note from the Editor

An unexpected family event has halted the completion of the Stringer history article for this edition of 'The Digger'.

I hope to have it ready for publication in the December edition. In the meantime enjoy reading Peter Ellis' article on the Campbells. Thank you Peter for your contribution.

The Campbells after Campbell Park

An article in the New Zealand House and Garden magazine revealed another saga in the Campbell family.

Robert and Emma Campbell died in 1889 and 1890; they were childless. Their vast estates had already begun to dwindle due to pressure from the New Zealand Government to subdivide the great sheep runs.

The invention of methods to chill lamb had made sheep farming in New Zealand more lucrative. Sheep were no longer reared just for wool. The market for meat in England was vast. Smaller farms could be successful. There was a call for the subdivision of the estates of the sheep barons.

Although Robert Campbell had joined parliament in 1866 as a Liberal Member of Parliament, his liberal views did not include smaller farm holdings. He clung to his beliefs and land until his death. The Campbell family owned vast sections of the Waitaki Valley and beyond.

Campbell had made an attempt to placate the call for smaller units. The Otiake settlement was surveyed (I believe in the late 1860s). Some recognisable families settled at this time: for example, Hille, Grant, Simpson and McCone. Others found the holdings too small to be viable. Amongst them was that of my great great grandfather Duff Ellis.

The Campbell Estate transferred to the hands of nephew Robin O. Campbell after Robert and Emma's deaths. Robin was also a grand nephew of former New Zealand Governor Sir George Grey. Another relative of his was a strong suffragette advocate.

It is difficult to find information about Robin. The Liberal Government, elected in 1906, put pressure on Robin Campbell to subdivide. Rather than reduce his holdings he sold the lot



Campbell House, the Campbell Clan's former residence at Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory. Today it is the Duntroon Royal Military College's officers' mess.

to the government and returned to the family's estates in England. The Campbell family owned 860,000 acres (280,000 hectares) in the area.

The mansion and 400 acres of land were retained by the government and turned into Otekaieke Special School in 1908.

Robin served in World War I as a colonel. He was awarded the D.S.O. (Distinguished Service Order).

The New Zealand House and Garden article revealed that Robin had a son named Ivar who was born at Otekaieke. Many years later Ivar purchased Tiverton Castle in Devon. Another son died in infancy and is buried in the Duntroon Cemetery.

The Campbell Clan (originally Campbell and Clarke) had roamed the world purchasing land; they had holdings in India, Australia and New Zealand. Their Australian holdings included Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory. Their homestead is now the officers' mess at Duntroon Royal Military College.

Government regulations had pressured them out of their New Zealand holdings. While their palatial mansion remained, the Campbells had moved on. Their love of stately homes never ceased. Tiverton Castle is today owned by Angus Gordon. He is Ivar's nephew from Ivar's sister Moir.

Peter K Ellis



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Mōkihi Waiora
Clinic Duntroon 
07.09.2026
Please note: The clinic has
finished at Duntroon. Thank
you to those who have
supported this free hauora
(health) service.



Duntroon community potluck dinner



BRING A MEAL TO SHARE,
YOUR OWN PLATES AND CUTLERY &
YOUR OWN DRINKS

All welcome! Please invite your friends
and neighbours.

See the event page on Facebook for
more info

6pm
Duntroon Hall

Friday 16 October

RURAL MEN'S HEALTH GATHERING

Building better blokes

FREE EVENT

Awamoko Hall | **Sunday 11 October 2026** | **1pm**

SPEAKERS

Dr Richard McLeod
GP on Men's Health

Sam McBride
Mental Health and Wellbeing Coach

Bring your mates, staff, sons, any bloke in your life
— *All rural people welcome* —

FREE BBQ

Tea & Coffee

BYO Drinks

An afternoon of practical health advice, both mental and physical

Please reply 027 203 7970
email georgetown.contracting@gmail.com
for catering requirements

Tuition in Music, TaiChi and Chess

Rick Loos of Tokarahi is offering tuition in music, TaiChi and chess, in the Tokarahi Hall.

Contact Ric on Home. 03 4312812 Cell. 02041899752

Coffee and Catchup Group

You are most welcome to join the Coffee and Catchup Group which plans to meet this month on Wednesday 21st October at the Oamaru Gardens car park at 11.00am. We will stroll around the gardens, then have lunch at 'The Galley'.

Contact Fiona Conlan on 027 2013339 if interested or would like to car pool.

Free Business/Services List

Please contact us at duntroondigger@gmail.com. Please keep your entry to 2 lines maximum.

Seed/Seed Mixes: fodder beet, grass, oats and kale seed. www.dufffarming.com.
duffs@dufffarm.co.nz or call Grant 027 7379518

MASSAGE: Therapeutic & Relaxing. Qualified massage therapist available Tues, Wed & Thurs 10 am - 2 pm. Sat by appt. Papakaio area. \$60 per hour - \$35 per 1/2 hour.
Ph. Sam (female) 021 701 518

What is in a Name?

Our decision, in 2019, to move to a road by the name of Earthquake, greatly amused our friends and relations as well as the rep from whom we were seeking house insurance. My Australian relatives, who still refer to New Zealand as 'the Shaky Isles', were particularly amused.

Of course we were quick to tell them about the famous landform a few kilometres up the road and explain that its formation had not been directly related to any known earthquake.

I was soon to discover that ours was not the only quirkily named road in the North Otago region. At the top of the list was Enfield's no exit Slaughteryard Road which I regularly passed during my commutes to Dunedin. Others that came to light were Devils Bridge Road near Weston, Waianakarua's Breakneck and Mount Misery Roads and Ōmārama's Prohibition Road. No doubt, they will all have interesting stories behind them.

In researching further afield I came across such beauties as Mount Horrible Road, near Timaru, and Dead Horse Road, near Tokanui in Southland.



Discovering the existence of Mount Misery and Mount Horrible Roads had me figuratively heading for the hills.

The track at the end of Mount Misery Road actually leads to a Mt Miserable rather than a Mt Misery. However, I soon discovered that there is no shortage of Mt Miserys around the South Island.

I found eight in all, spread from Owaka in the south to Nelson's Matiri Range in the north. There may be more. The nearest Mt Miserys to Duntroon are in the Silver Peaks near Dunedin and the Two Thumb Range, near Tekapo.

Likewise, I also found an abundance of Mt Horribles. In all I counted five, with the closest one to Duntroon being at the east end of the St Cuthbert Range, near Sailors Cutting.

No doubt most these mountains were named by early European explorers, surveyors and shepherds during times of extreme hardship and frustration. Some, however, may have been named purely in jest.

To top off the exploration I was greatly amused to find a Mt Misery and Mt Horrible sitting side by side at the end of the Black Range, near Arthur's Pass.

Among the other mountains that have probably been named by explorers nearing the end of their tether are Mt Bitterness, on the St Marys Range above Kurow, Mt Hopeless in Nelson Lakes National Park and two Mt Difficultys, one in the foothills of the Kakanui Mountains and the other near Cromwell.

The Wilkin River catchment in Mt Aspiring National Park, an area I was quite familiar with during my tramping days, harbours some particularly quirky names. For instance, at the

head of one of the Wilkin's major tributaries, the ominously named Siberia Stream, Mounts Awful and Dreadful can be found standing in defiance of their names.

All was not doom and gloom however. Further up the main valley the bush gives way to a grassy flat known as Jumboland which, together with nearby Mt Jumbo, was apparently named after an early grazier's oversized horse. Here the Wilkin is joined by the Wonderland Stream, which, you would have to think, was named by someone full of admiration for its impressive U-shaped valley.

But, returning to Earthquake Road. At this point in time I have found no other road in the world bearing that name. So our road may well be unique. **Allan Kynaston**

Term 4: Duntroon Circuit Class

Every Wednesday evening 6.30pm at the Duntroon Hall. All welcome. Follow the Facebook page "Sore Today, Strong Tomorrow" for more information/cancellations or contact Mel Duff Ph: 0273088167.

A Visit from Members of the North Otago Branch of Forest and Bird New Zealand.

For the benefit of those who are not on Facebook.

On the 12th of September it was an ideal day for the DDDA members to host a visit from members of the North Otago Branch of Forest and Bird New Zealand.

The sun was shining and the snow on the mountains behind us was a perfect backdrop to the wetlands. Our guests even helped us plant some trees in the newly developed section of the wetlands.

It was a pleasure to be able to show them around and talk about our wonderful volunteers. Then, over a coffee at the Flying Pig, we showed them the photos that document the development over the years.

A great bunch of people and we look forward to having them call again.



Left to right are Hazel, Chloe, Mark, PDR (with dog), and Gay.

Next Duntroon Digger Date 2026

Please send your content, such as letters, articles and advertisements, to us by the 'Pre-Digger' Deadline date shown.

Month	Pre-Digger Deadline	Publishing Date
December	25/11/2026	01/12/2026

Duntroon & District Development Association Annual General Meeting, Monday 16th November 7pm at the Duntroon Hall. Supper to Follow. All Welcome

The Duntroon & District Development Association

has represented its members during the last 24 years and has many achievements to date:

- It is a registered Incorporated Society and registered with the Charities Commission.
- It is a member of the Waitaki Tourism Association.
- It has produced a district brochure and published Heritage Trail Brochure, it also maintains the www.duntroon.co.nz website. These publications aim to promote the various attractions and businesses within our district.
- It has regularly championed the needs of the community with the Waitaki District Council. e.g. Return the village roads to a 50 kph speed limit, challenge the removal of the public toilets, held public meetings (Alps 2 Ocean Cycle Trail).
- It has raised funds for various projects throughout the district. e.g. return of the Duntroon Gaol to the village green, improvements in the Hall kitchen, maintenance and improvements to the Domain building, plantings and maintenance of Duntroon Wetlands, picnic benches on Village Green
- It is currently responsible for maintaining and managing the Duntroon Domain Camping Ground, and the daily cleaning of the Duntroon public toilets.
- It meets regularly every month and keeps the community informed through the bimonthly Duntroon Digger newsletter.
- Supports other community volunteer led activities where appropriate.
- 2015 we were the Supreme Winner in the Trustpower Waitaki District Community Awards.

If you appreciate our achievements and agree with our objectives, then you can help us.

Simply become a member of the Association.

(Membership means you support our objectives and are entitled to elect the committee at AGM. You do NOT have to serve on the committee.)

It is important that we can not only claim to represent the community but also demonstrate your support by having your name on our membership list.

**Please complete the form below and email it to us
secretaryddda@gmail.com**



Application for membership to Duntroon and District Development Assoc

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Email:

Signed:

Date: