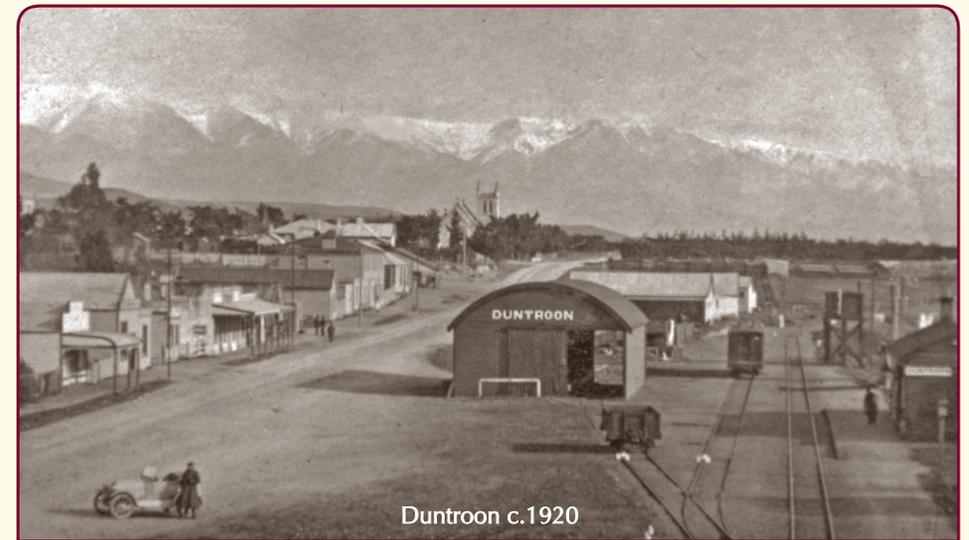


THE TOWNSHIP OF Duntroon

HERITAGE TRAIL

Discover the rich history of Duntroon through its fascinating landmarks and preserved heritage sites

Duntroon was founded in 1875 by the Hon. Robert Campbell, who named it after his ancestral home of Duntrune in Scotland.



Duntroon c. 1920

Initially Duntroon's economy greatly benefited from its role as the terminus of the Waitaki Valley railway. However, after the line was extended to Kurow in 1881 the town settled down to servicing its surrounding district.

In recent years Duntroon has developed as a busy tourist stopover. In addition it provides a relaxed environment for residents and holiday home owners alike.



CELEBRATING 150 YEARS

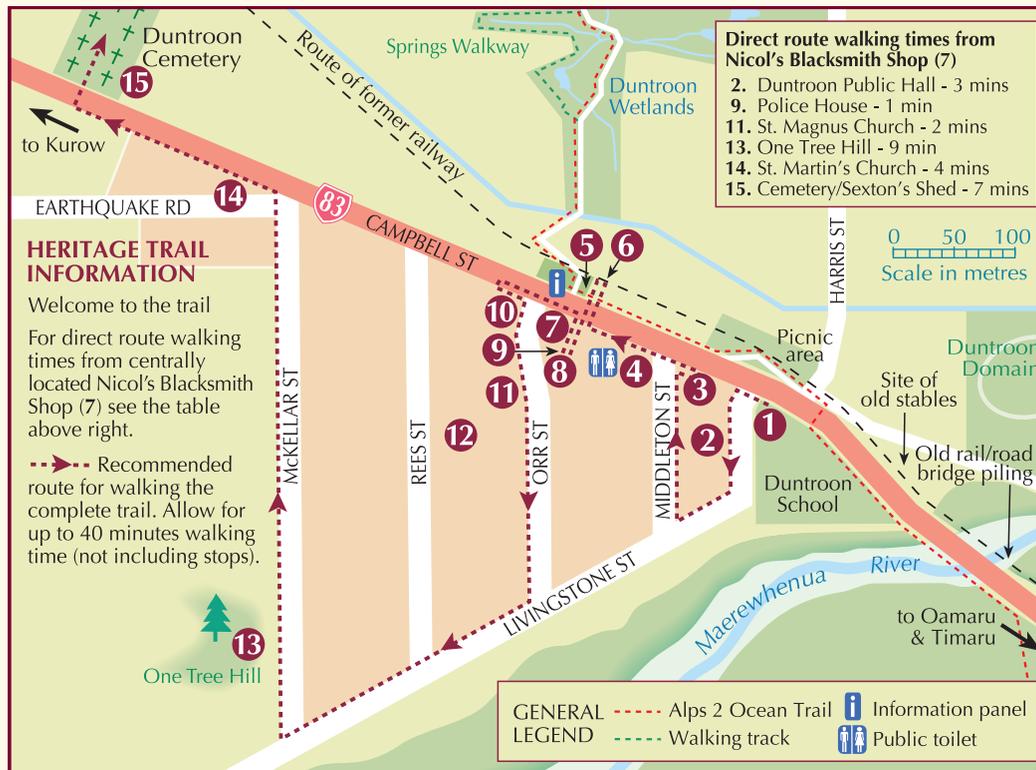
DUNTROON

OCTOBER 25 & 26TH 2025

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Brochure produced by
the Duntroon & District
Development Assn Inc.

Email:
secretarydda@gmail.com



14. St. Martin's Anglican Church

Heritage New Zealand Category 2 Historic Place | List No. 2429

St. Martin's was funded through a £6,000 bequest by Emma Campbell in memory of her husband, Robert. It was named after Kilmartin Parish Church near Duntrune Castle in Argyle, Scotland, the Campbell's ancestral home.

Designed in the Gothic in style by Thomas Cane and built by John Menzies, the church has many detailed carvings, including the Campbell family and Otago Diocese crests. Consecrated in 1901, it is considered one of the region's most striking churches.



15. Duntroon Cemetery and Sexton's Shed

Proposed by local residents in 1880, the cemetery was established on land donated by Hon. Robert Campbell. Over 300 native trees were planted around the grounds, generously contributed by Campbell, Mr. Sealey, and Mr. J. Borton. The cemetery was overseen by the Duntroon Cemetery Trust until 1989, after which it came under the care of the Waitaki District Council.

The Sexton's Shed, which is constructed of limestone sourced from Otekaieke, was restored in 2025 by way of an initiative led by the Duntroon & District Development Association.



PLEASE NOTE: Where listed sites are marked '(private property)' please view from the street and do not enter the property.

1. War Memorial

Erected to honour local soldiers who died during World War I (1914–1918). An additional plaque commemorates Douglas Peterson, who died in World War II (1939–1945).



2. Duntroon Hall (formerly Defence Hall)

Built in 1902, with funding from community contributions and a government subsidy, the hall was used for military drills, meetings and social events. In 1938 It also became the home of a public library. The distinctive weathervane was rescued from old stables, located near the Maerewhenua bridge (see map), when they were demolished in 1966.



3. Duntroon Hotel

Built in 1879 for the first proprietor, Jessie Grant, the hotel once featured 17 rooms, a large dining room, stables, and paddocks. Renovations over the years, include external plastering in 1955 and a significant upgrade in 2019. The hotel remains a central landmark of Duntroon's hospitality and history.



4. Vanished World Centre

Constructed c.1978, the Duntroon Store operated from this building until 1989. From 1988 it also housed a post office. After the store closed, the building was taken in hand by a group of passionate locals and subsequently transformed into the Vanished World Fossil Centre. The centre, which opened in July 2001, is now internationally recognised and serves as the hub of the Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Geopark.



5. The Gaol

Built c1910 this was one of two cell blocks originally located at the police house on Orr Street. Following its closure in 1989, the cell blocks were shifted to the Oamaru Police Station. When they were no longer required, a group of locals organised to have this block returned to Duntroon.



6. The Water Tank (private property)

Installed in 1878 to serve railway operations on the Kurow branch line, the original 2,000-gallon wooden vat was replaced by a steel tank in 1934. The branch line closed in 1983.



7. Nicol's Blacksmith Shop

Heritage New Zealand Category 1 Historic Place | List No. 9237

This authentic 19th-century blacksmith forge was named after Nicol Muirden, its last full-time blacksmith. Rescued from decline in 1974 by four local farmers, it was restored and reopened in 2015. Live demonstrations and workshops are now offered.



8. The Brewery Hole

Known to Māori as Waikoakoa (happy waters), this natural spring is steeped in legend. Tradition has it that early Māori travellers used it as a mirror. It supplied water to a small brewery in the 1870s and to the Duntroon township in the 1970s.



The water streams from under the town and divers occasionally investigate the many caverns upstream from the brewery hole.

9. Old Bridge Span

Part of the original 1885 Maerewhenua River rail/road bridge, this span was relocated to the current site after the opening of the new road bridge in 1975. A remnant of the old bridge piling can still be seen from the new bridge (see map).



10. The Flying Pig Café

Over the years this building has housed a number of businesses including a billiard saloon, a bootmaker, a hairdresser and a takeaway shop. It is now home to the beloved and internationally known Flying Pig Café.



The sheds next to the café sit on the site of a two storey hotel, which was known as the Terminus Hotel from 1877 until 1898 and then the Empire Hotel until it burnt down in 1922.

11. Police House (private property)

Duntroon's first police station was established in 1870 but closed by 1890. Owing to the town's growth, a new police house was built in 1908 and a standalone station was erected at the rear of the property in 1955.



By 1981 there was talk of closing the station, but pressure from locals saw it remain open until 1989.

12. St. Magnus Presbyterian Church (private property)

Heritage New Zealand Category 2 Historic Place | List No. 3255

Constructed in 1897 using locally sourced Oamaru stone, this church once served a parish stretching from Omarama to Tokarahi. Its name was inspired by a church located on the Orkney Island's Main Island, from which many local settlers originated.



The structure originally featured a bell tower. However, this was later removed because of concerns over its stability. The church officially closed in 2010 due to a decline in parishioners.

13. One Tree Hill (private property)

The tree crowning the summit of this knoll marks the burial site of Henry Lawson (24) and Henry McLean (23) who both drowned at Takiroa in January 1857. Lawson, who lost his life while attempting to rescue McLean, was later reinterred in Wellington.



See more entries and numbered map overleaf