



The Godley Beacon

The Godley Head Heritage Trust newsletter, June 2006

Pill box recce

Trust members recently recorded positions of WWII pill boxes around the Sumner/Godley Head area. Many are now on private land - some already lost to development.

Dug-in guard posts, known as pill boxes, were developed during WWI for machine gun use in the Hindenburg line. They acquired their originally jocular name from their similarity to the cylindrical boxes in which pills were sold.

They are often camouflaged to conceal their location, some with grass growing on the roof, while others are still well concealed in rocky nooks.

They were usually in pairs to provide covering fire for each other.

The rapid advancement of the Japanese in early 1942 placed New Zealand under threat of invasion. To counter this the peninsula east from St Andrew's Hill, including the Lyttelton area to Godley Head, was declared a Fortress Area and placed under martial law. A system of infantry and anti-tank defences was constructed. Locally prefabricated concrete pill-boxes, made by Hume Industries were installed in strategic positions.

If you are interested in looking at a very accessible pillbox, one by the yacht club

in Redcliffs has been cunningly transformed into a stone seat.

Trust work day

Sunday 11 June saw a busy team beavering away in the fresh air at the Head. Trust member Pat Lyons supervised a team of 18 PD workers. Assisted by Lynn Lochhead from the Trust, they dug out an area to the south of the QMS for a concrete pad. This will be used to display the 3.7 Heavy AA gun on open days.

Matthew O' Sullivan tidied up the former RHQ, while others cleaned, moved timber, tidied and hefted rocks. At the end of the day the graffiti in E2 magazine

had been limewashed, a considerable amount of dirt and rock had been shifted to clear the pad, and the store had been cleared in preparation for constructing the ramp between the two levels of what will be the new Heritage Centre.

Photo: Great views for a cunningly concealed pillbox above Scarborough. Grant Campbell noting details.



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ROGUES GALLERY

Grant Campbell

Grant is the new Department of Conservation (DOC) representative on the Trust Board. He lives in Mt Pleasant and has a big love for Godley Head, spending hours keeping fit, running and mountain-biking around the area. As a kid he remembers staying at Boulder Bay, his Dad parking his Vauxhall where the old garages were and at night lighting the tilley lamps in the bach. He well recalls catching what was then plentiful butterfish, off the reef.

For 14 years Grant was a policeman – three of these based at Lyttelton. He was also part of the Armed Offenders and Special Tactics group.

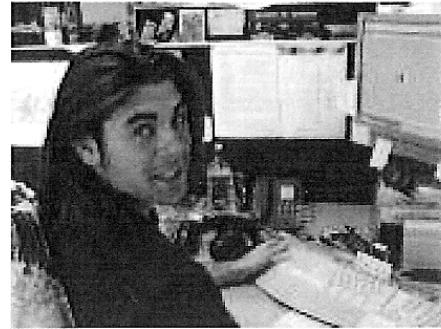
He has worked for DOC in a range of jobs, including Field Centre supervisor at Mt Thomas, and also as an investigation officer for Ecan.

He also worked for an engineering company developing a new process for cycle helmets. After the 2005 DOC restructuring, he became Gnome's replacement and is delighted to work with the Trust in developing the Head.

Apart from an excellent sense of humour, Grant brings a good set of practical skills and invaluable knowledge to the work we are doing.



He collects fine British vehicles - 2 B S A motorcycles, 1964 Jaguar E type, 1961 Jaguar MK 2, Lotus 7 and is now looking for shares in an oil well!



Tim Davidson

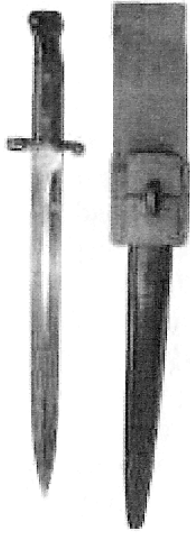
Tim is a South Canterbury bred lad from Clandeboye. An amateur historian and 'techno-geek' he has a graduate diploma in computer modelling and animation. Even after two years of teaching he's still interested in graphic design and electronic media, and says he has developed a fascinating bent for concrete!

Tim says he never grew up - as a kid he played soldiers with his chums and this developed into a life-long interest in military things and a strong aversion to living in mud. He firmly supports the work of the Trust to remind others of why the facility was built, and tell of the people based there. 'It's that old corollary, what we don't remember we forget and repeat' he says. 'Godley Head is a unique facility, and the only battery in the South Island that doesn't have limited access'.

Tim works for DOC, advising, editing and creating content for their website.

He brings technical skills to the Trust Board and is working on a brief for a documentary on the Head, to be used as part of an audio visual in the Heritage Centre.

He has ideas of an interactive display on life at the Head during the war, that would be fun for kids of all ages to play (including himself), as well as giving an insight into those times.



OUR COLLECTION

This new section in our newsletter will highlight items recently donated or acquired by the Trust.

Bayonet and Frog

This 1903 Pattern Bayonet is still in the 1911 Pattern Bayonet frog in which it was issued.

These bayonets were introduced for use with the Short Magazine Lee Enfield rifle. Many of these double - edged blades were manufactured

by Wilkinson Sword of London, who made over 2.5 million bayonets.

This bayonet is marked with the maker (M.E.Co. – Mills Equipment Company), date (1911), NZ, the unit (1st Regt. – Canterbury) and the set number (6?0).

The frog is khaki webbing and has a 6 inch long tab on the back for attaching the entrenching tool handle.

Soldiers fighting on Gallipoli used this equipment before having it replaced with 1908 Pattern equipment in Egypt after the evacuation.

It was later used for training and by some non-frontline units.

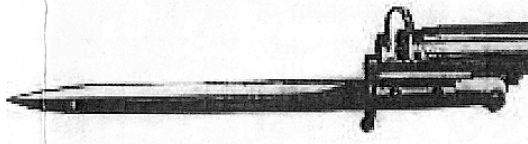
While it looked impressive on parade, the bayonet was not a very practical weapon. When attached, it altered the rifle's shooting capabilities and in windy conditions, made the rifle more difficult to hold steady.

The long blade glittered, even in moonlight, and the cross-section of the blade made penetration difficult, though it produced a nasty wound.

As a hand-held weapon it was terrifying for the enemy fronting a bayonet charge, but patrols and raiding parties preferred knives, clubs and knuckle-dusters.

The most common uses found by soldiers for the bayonet were as a poker, a can opener, or stuck in a trench wall as a hook for equipment.

Sword Pattern, 1903



Detail showing how bayonet attached to rifle.



You are invited

Trust Annual General Meeting

18 July, 6pm

Canterbury Officers' Club

64 Gloucester Street

Report on the year, nominations, **free nibbles,**
interesting keynote speaker.