



The Godley Beacon

The Godley Head Heritage Trust Newsletter no 9 June 2005

Fort Taiaroa Trip

Fancy a trip to the south to view some jolly interesting coastal defence sites?

Some of these are rarely open to the public as they coincide with an albatross colony.

An exciting opportunity has arisen. Several years ago a national conference on Historic Coastal Defences of New Zealand was held in Wellington. It was a great success and though there has often been talk of holding another one nothing has been organised until now.

Taiaroa Head enthusiasts are organising a three-day seminar on the coastal defence history and emplacements of the Otago Area. These are an excellent cross section of the rest of the country's history.

The Godley Head Heritage Trust is considering organising a party of members, friends and enthusiasts at large, to attend the seminar. We anticipate sharing the hire of a mini-van and block booking accommodation to hold costs down.

A outline programme is overleaf.

If you are interested please ring Peter Wilkins on Christchurch 03 942-1942 or email peter.Wilkins@paradise.net.nz. Peter will let you know of costs, timings and the anticipated program.

Museum closer to reality

As you know, the Trust applied to DOC for a ten year lease of the RHQ(Regimental headquarters) and QMS (Quartermaster's Store) at the Head so we can establish a museum.

DOC completed the formal process of public notification and the Trust now has formal tenure of the building.

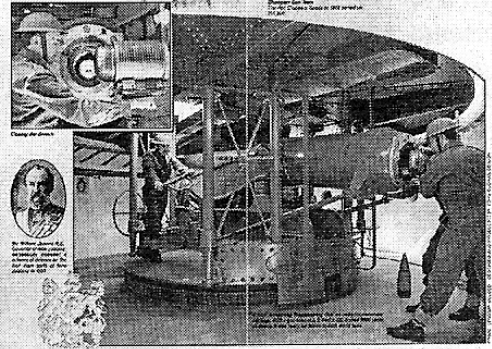
Peter Wilkins and Graeme Hines have drawn up plans of the interior and submitted them to DOC to obtain an engineers report.



Guided Tours
After a talk on the gun, the group moves through to the ammunition chambers to view a historical display of various kinds of colonial arms, including vintage pistols depicting the life of the soldier. Illustrative models showing the variety of uniforms, and a nostalgic display of photographs and memorabilia of the past.

The General
The General's carriage was used to transport the General and his staff to the fort.

The Artillery
The first successful breech-loader mounted on a heavy pneumatic carriage represented the latest in technology in 1868. It was fired while the breech was open, then raised, fired and returned back into the set by the recoil or retarding.



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Rogues Gallery



Matthew O'Sullivan

Matthew is a new member on the Godley Head Trust Board.

He was born and raised in Christchurch, New Zealand and is employed as the Keeper of Photographs at the Air Force Museum in Christchurch.

Before this he was a contract draughtsman for the Department of Conservation. Matthew is the co-author of an upcoming publication, due for release in September 2005, entitled "New Zealand Army Personal Equipment 1910 - 1945". This is a photographic reference book about personal equipment used by soldiers of the New Zealand Army. A companion volume about clothing used by the New Zealand Army for the same period is also underway.

For many years Matthew has had a huge interest in things military and specialises in collecting WW1 German and WW2 Japanese militaria.

Matthew brings to the Board a decade of museum background. This knowledge and skill will be hugely beneficial as the Trust develops a Museum in the former Quartermaster's Store at the Head.

He brings a fresh perspective to the Trust and we welcome him to the board.



Gnome Hannah-Brown

Gnome comes to the Godley Head Trust Board as representative of the Department of

Conservation, where she is a community relations programme manager in the North Canterbury Area.


Part of her job is working with community groups and it was in this capacity she assisted the Trust in its establishment.

She acts as liaison between the Trust and the relevant staff in the Department.

Before the Trust became established, Gnome had enjoyed visiting Godley Head and walking around the tracks and old installations. Apart from meeting some great people, another of the enjoyable aspects of working with the Trust has been gaining knowledge of this unique area.

As part of her studies in journalism she wrote a feature article on Godley Head, printed in the Christchurch Press. She interviewed some of the soldiers deployed at the Head during the war and through this became friends with Madeline Manning - a WAAC who served out there.

Gnome is excited about the work of the Trust as it preserves and educates about the past for the benefit of the future .

	<p>You are invited to the Godley Head Heritage Trust - AGM</p> <p>Canterbury Officers Club 26 July 5.30 - 7pm pm Mystery guest speaker Nibbles provided, bar open.</p>
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Taiaroa trip - draft program

Friday 2nd September

Morning: Drive to Dunedin

Afternoon: Welcome. Talks on coastal defences by Laurie Stewart and Brigadier Graham Birch retired Director of NZ Artillery. Wind up with a social at Taiaroa Head.

Saturday 3rd September

Morning: Bus Tour: Taiaroa Head via Queens Gardens to view the buried gun; the Oval, to the Boer War Memorial; St Clair, site of a Victorian 7inch RML battery; Tomahawk; Highcliff to the Peninsula war memorial; followed by an inspection of the disappearing gun and onto Channel Battery and Howlett Point emplacements. Lunch at Taiaroa Head Visitor's Centre

Afternoon visit military museums with a talk on archives, and to Rerewahine to inspect the battery site.

The day winds up with a social and dinner at the Taiaroa Head Royal Albatross Centre .

Sunday 4th September

Morning Bus tour to Kuriheka Estate at Maheno North Otago. Probably the greatest collection of Victorian artillery pieces in New Zealand, and an outstanding collection of military memorabilia and Oamaru stone farm buildings. Lunch at Estate.

Afternoon Oamaru - Visit historic precinct and fortifications at Cape Wanbrow. Here our group leaves to return home.

AGM The Canterbury Officers' Club is in Gloucester Street. Parking at the rear of the building. From the east, the drive to the carpark is on the right hand side of the building. Access the Officers' Club through the rear door.

If you are interested in being on the committee, contact Gnome on 03 3713 761 or Email ghannah-brown@doc.govt.nz

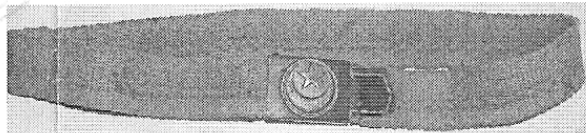
Memorabilia

The Trust is frequently offered historic items for its collection. Early on our Curator had to decide on what were our primary interests. These were defined as those military units based or operated on Godley Head at any period during its history.

Some items clearly outside our primary interests are accepted on the understanding that if they don't qualify for inclusion in our collection, we will offer them to more appropriate public collections or serious private collections.

Our main aim with acceptance is to preserve our military heritage from loss or destruction.

The decision between public and private collections is whether the item is significantly unique or simply worth preserving.



1915 Turkish webbing belt

Recently a lady gave us significant items which unfortunately do not qualify for our collection. They are unique and we will be extremely careful where we deposit them.

One of the items was a simple webbing belt with a brass buckle. Unfolding the piece of attached paper we read "*Turkish Belt Gallipoli - 1915*".

At any time touching such a piece of history is a thrill, to touch it on the ninetieth anniversary of the landings is breathtaking and awfully poignant.

How did this belt find its way to New Zealand? Was it picked up by a kiwi lad at Gallipoli, where the Turkish army suffered over 250,000 in killed, wounded and missing whilst British casualties amounted to over 200,000 men?

What stories, written in blood could this belt tell? We will treat it with care until we find a worthy home for it.