

Height 4ft, Width 5ft 6inches

I am delighted to announce that the Ginger Group have commissioned an artist, Martin Rayner A.R.S.A., to produce a new Donations box for Camperdown House. Those of you who helped last year during the opening will know that we borrowed one, which has now been returned to its owners.

Martin Rayner is a local artist and has done a number of donation box commissions: in Broughty Ferry Castle, the General Hospital Ayr, and The Kirkcaldy Art Gallery. We are fortunate to get him as his artwork is now solely channelled through two prestigious London Galleries.

It will be a magnificent piece of work, and I hope that you will both admire it, and fill it with money!

## 2004 BICENTENARY EXHIBITION

*"Hero of Camperdown : Admiral Adam Duncan, 1731-1804"*

**CAMPERDOWN HOUSE**  
 OPEN SAT 19 JUNE - SUN 5 SEPTEMBER 2004  
 AND SAT 9 - SUN 10 OCTOBER 2004  
 WED TO SUN FROM 12.00 NOON - 4 PM.  
 [CLOSED MONDAY - TUESDAY]

We are planning a special exhibition for the summer to celebrate the Bicentenary of Duncan's death. Funded by a one-off allocation from Dundee City Council's Common Good Fund, additional display space will be achieved by opening up the Billiard Room. The main theme will be the story of Duncan's life and achievements.

Loan exhibits from many sources will include personal relics of the Admiral, oil paintings and a selection of the many engravings which were published to commemorate this popular hero's Glorious Victory. Very encouragingly our colleagues at the National Galleries of Scotland and the National Museums of Scotland are looking at possible loan material and we hope to be able to show some of the treasures from the collection of Lady Buckinghamshire, an avid Duncan enthusiast, who was the last occupant of the House.

Clara Young



# FRIENDS' NEWSLETTER

FRIENDS OF CAMPERDOWN HOUSE NEWSLETTER • EIGHTH EDITION • SPRING 2004



## Bicentenary Celebration

*from the Editor*

The Ginger Group have been working very hard to organise events which would be appropriate for the celebration of the bicentenary of Adam Duncan's death in 1804. The weekend we have chosen, 7th - 10th October, also commemorates Adam Duncan's famous battle in 1797. We are now able to let you have a skeleton programme of events. We will produce much more detail nearer the time together with newspaper coverage. As I write, we are also constructing a Website ([www.camperdownhouse.org.uk](http://www.camperdownhouse.org.uk)) which we hope to continually update on all our events and activities. This year it will also include a school quiz which should be fun for all of you to participate in, whatever your age; I hope you will find the questions challenging. The school "packs" on Adam Duncan which were produced in 1997 are to be updated and re-



The Ginger Group at Camperdown House with Lord Provost John Letford. From Left; Elizabeth Picton, Antonia Orr, James Crawford, Lord Provost, John Picton, Henny King, Sir James Cayzer and Hilary Foxworthy. Photo The Courier

produced and issued to all school-children in the Dundee area. In summary, the two main events this year will be the "opening of Camperdown House" on Saturday 19th June 2004 and the Celebration

of the Bicentenary between the 7th - 10th October 2004. Details of both events are set out on page 2, but it should be remembered that they have yet to be finally agreed with all concerned.



EIGHTH EDITION • SPRING 2004

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FRIENDS OF CAMPERDOWN HOUSE NEWSLETTER • EIGHTH EDITION • SPRING 2004

# Bicentenary Celebration

from the Editor continued...

## SATURDAY 19th JUNE 2004

11am Opening of Camperdown House by the Lord Provost, John Letford, followed by coffee/tea and biscuits.

## THURSDAY 7th OCTOBER 2004

am HMS Montrose arrives Dundee

4.00pm Flag Officer Scotland and Northern Ireland and Lord Provost lay wreaths at Adam Duncan's Statue followed by the Last Post/Reveille/Flowers of the Forest.

4.30pm Royal Marines Band beat retreat in City Square

6.30pm Reception on HMS Montrose: Royal Marines Band beat retreat.

## SATURDAY 9th OCTOBER 2004

12-4pm Camperdown House open to the public.

1.30pm Dignitaries, Public and all Friends assemble around Camperdown House

2.00pm Concert and Band display by the Royal Marines Band and the Tayside Police Band

3.30pm Small eats and tea/coffee provided for all members of the public under tent at the completion of the musical display.

## SUNDAY 10th OCTOBER 2004

3.00pm Church Service to be held in Lundie Kirk followed by Tea/biscuits in the Kirk Hall.

We ask all "friends" to give these events their full support. Bring along all your friends and relatives. Those of you who remember the Bicentenary in 1997 will recall what an excellent concert was given in the City Square by the Royal Marines Band. Well, we have remembered and it is going to happen again; be there to enjoy it and all the other events that will follow on from there. Please put all dates in your diaries now, and we very much look forward to seeing and talking to you then.

James Crawford



Photo: The Courier

Sir James Cayzer with Henny King in front of Sir James's gift to Camperdown House - a framed collection of photographs depicting scenes in and around Camperdown House in the early part of last century.



The Ginger Group admire the Camperdown Elm: John Pictor, Elizabeth Pictor, James Crawford, Henny King, Hilary Foxworthy



Our Musical "Star" at Camperdown House: Sir James Cayzer, Suzanne Henderson (Soprano), James Crawford & Lord Provost John Letford. In 2003, both receptions finished with marvellous short recitals by Suzanne Henderson accompanied by Kathleen Rennilson (Piano).

# CAMPERDOWN HOUSE

## A Backward Look at Last Year's Opening



It now almost seems a miracle that the House was able to be opened at all. Discussion between the Friends and Dundee Arts and Heritage (now Leisure) had been going on for some time. The main stumbling blocks were finance, personnel, building control, planning, health and safety and fire prevention: the greatest of these being the first two.

The possibility of a Lottery Grant emerged in early 2002 and it was agreed that "application should be made" but by whom? It was made clear that the House could not open without the assistance of volunteers and after assurances were given the necessary forms were completed and the application was lodged in December, which was leaving things somewhat late as a decision on a grant was expected to take 3 months and the House opening was planned for July.

It was always going to be a scramble to have the House ready on time but eventually we were in overdrive and the House opened with a well attended reception on Friday 25th July. A schedule of volunteers was drawn up to cover the open period and the main door of the House opened for the public the next day.

Over the next 12 weeks there were 7322 visitors to the House. About a fifth of this number came over the Flower Show weekend early in September. The display featured within the House was on Dundee's Maritime

History including a number of items relating to Admiral Duncan. The spaces opened included the impressive reception area and entrance hall, the library, the dining room (with a new café) and the public restrooms.

The last visiting day was Sunday 12 October which was preceded by another reception hosted by the Lord Provost the previous Friday, which co-incided with the 206th anniversary of the Battle of Camperdown.

Taking all things into consideration this initial opening period can be considered a success. Comments and helpful suggestions have come from many sources relating to available rooms and spaces, items on display, the café, available seating, house temperature and last but not least, publicity. All these matters are under discussion and views expressed will be taken into consideration while planning the next opening.

It goes without saying that apart from the receipt of the Lottery Grant the 2003 opening was only achieved as a result of much effort on the part of many unnamed individuals. However it is only right and proper that the 20 or so volunteers should receive special mention if only because their or their successors participation is an absolute requirement for any foreseeable future opening of the House.

## Calling all volunteer Friends

Do you have ONE afternoon a month to give to Camperdown House between 19th June 2004 and 5th September 2004? We were delighted with the response in 2003 – can you help again this year during our special bicentenary celebration? Please contact John Pictor for further information Tel: 01334 474545.

## Camperdown House RE-OPENING 2003

With the help of a generous grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund and with the much valued assistance of the 'Volunteer Friends', part of Camperdown House was successfully opened to the public from 26 July to 12 October 2003. Open 5 days a week from Wednesday to Sunday from 12.00-16.00, the visitor numbers totalled 7,322, giving a daily average of 122.

The task of getting four rooms in the house physically ready for opening was a great achievement in itself for project leader, Elspeth Alexander, and the team. This involved fitting blinds and UV filters to windows, installing environmental monitoring equipment and a great many more building works. Of the four spaces - the Entrance Foyer, the Salon, Dining Room (cum Café) and Library - the last three housed a new exhibition on Dundee's Maritime Past. This included cased ship models and related material from the McManus Galleries museum collection. A highlight was the local shipping paintings, 15 of which had been specially conserved for the project with the HLF grant. The Camperdown Video, specially commissioned by the Friends, was played regularly on a new plasma screen and proved a very popular feature.

**Clara Young**  
Heritage Officer (Art)  
Dundee City Council Leisure and Arts



Photo The Courier



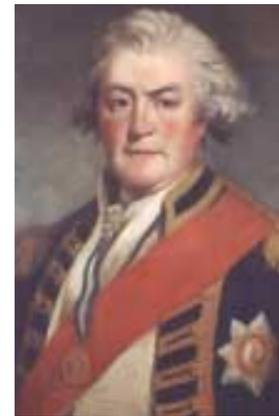
## SUNDIAL *Captain Duncan, St Fort*

Louisa and David Scherchend very kindly allowed me to photograph their Sundial on St Fort Estate, near Wormit, Fife. It has Captain Duncan, St Fort, inscribed with the makers name ALEX FLIGHT, Cupar, Fife and is dated 1784. Captain Adam Duncan was promoted to Rear Admiral in 1787 - Editor.

[www.camperdownhouse.org.uk](http://www.camperdownhouse.org.uk)



HMS Montrose at Bicentenary Celebrations in 1997.

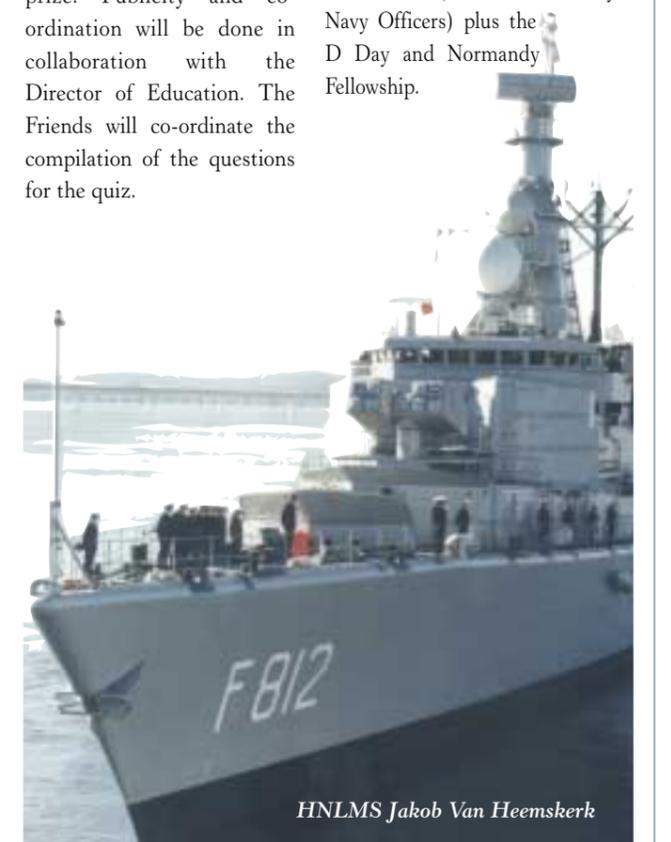


A web site is presently being established with the domain name camperdownhouse, and is likely to be available to look at by the end of March. Apart from giving you information on Admiral Duncan and Camperdown House we will also give the latest information on events and in particular the forthcoming bicentenary celebrations. In time we hope to put our Newsletters on the web

site, so that you will always be able to refer to them on line for information.

There are plans to add an online quiz which is aimed at Scottish Schoolchildren. The quiz can be done anonymously and is designed to provide an instant score. Those with full marks will then be offered the opportunity to register via their school, for their names to be put into the hat for a prize. Publicity and co-ordination will be done in collaboration with the Director of Education. The Friends will co-ordinate the compilation of the questions for the quiz.

Lieutenant Commander Leo Patrick RN and latterly attached to Tay Division RNR, has offered generous concession rates for his company, Eurosurf Limited, to build the web site and online quiz for the Friends. His keenness to help may have been spurred on by his wife Gail, daughter of Captain Andrew Mackie of Broughty Ferry. Eurosurf's naval clients include the Naval Club, Britannia Association and ARNO (Association of Royal Navy Officers) plus the D Day and Normandy Fellowship.



HNLMS Jakob Van Heemskerck

## Administration NOTES

Please Note that annual subscriptions ( kept at £10 for a single membership, £15 for a family) are due on 31st March 2004.

There will be no separate letter to remind members, this notice in the newsletter will be the only notification. If you pay by banker's order, it is a good time to check that the order you have placed with your banker has in fact followed your instructions.

Also, please examine your address label carefully, and let me know if you wish any change(s) to it.

Contact address for the secretary/treasurer:

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# Whither The Vrijheid Figurehead?

We are assured the Figurehead is in safe keeping but its ownership and current whereabouts have still to be confirmed!

The importance of the Figurehead has been emphasised by the following independent sources:-

1. *"The historical significance of the Vrijheid figurehead is considerable and is perhaps not sufficiently recognised in Dundee circles. 18th century figureheads are rare outside the confines of Royal Dockyards and that alone makes the Vrijheid carving of considerable interest, especially in Scotland. Added to that, it is the largest surviving relic of the great victory which Admiral Duncan achieved over the Dutch Fleet at Camperdown. Even in its present damaged state it has a powerful effect on the imagination of those who see it and this could be greatly enhanced by appropriate steps to conserve and interpret the object. Something definitely needs to be done to give the figurehead the care and consideration it merits."*

RGW Prescott MA, Phd, FSA Scot  
Director - Scottish Institute of Maritime Studies, St Andrews.

2. *"Out of the most important Lion Figureheads in the World (in my opinion) the Vrijheid Lion in Dundee is number 5 in the World and 2nd in the United Kingdom and without a doubt the most important Naval relic in Scotland. The fact that this carving had been allowed to fall into such a condition is almost scandalous."*

*I think that this is an important Historic Naval relic and even in the condition we find it now, it should be preserved in some way and put on display in a way that members of the public can see just how magnificent it once was. An interesting thought would be to have the original Figurehead conserved as it stands now and then recreate the lost carving in a secondary material in a neutral colour, say grey. This would look very effective indeed."*

Richard Hunter  
Figurehead Historian

*In due course, it is hoped to produce a replica of the figurehead for display at Camperdown House - Editor.*



# To be Kept in the Family Forever

## How Lady Mary Duncan bought a Painting

Early in 1802, Mrs Copley, wife of the American Artist, John Singleton Copley, wrote from London to one of her relations in the United States:

*"Lord Duncan has purchased the picture of his 'Victory' - we think through the influence of Lady Mary Duncan. The old lady has indeed shown a spirit and interest in the picture that would do honour to one of the first patrons of art. She said it was a very fine picture: that it ought to be in and remain in Lord Duncan's family, and she did not wish to have it placed in any public situation. She wrote to his Lordship on the subject, and he desires to have it sent to him. For this her Ladyship has paid 1000 guineas"*

However, her account of the purchase of her husband's picture does not do justice to a much more interesting story.

In February 1802, Admiral Viscount Duncan received a letter from his Aunt, Lady Mary Duncan, daughter of the 7th Earl of Thanet, the wealthy widow of his uncle, Sir William Duncan, formerly Physician to George III. He was also a financier and colonial entrepreneur of some significance.

The Battle of Camperdown was the point of Lady Mary's letter.

*"Mr Copley the painter from losses he had with want of money, propos'd selling your Picture by Auction. Don't you think it is a shame it shou'd go out of your Family, that your Posterity may look up, and remember actions of that great Man who sav'd this country, and to stimulate them if possible to follow if they can. Therefore why don't you purchase it to be intail'd upon the Head of the Family"*

John Singleton Copley had indeed fallen on hard times. Advancing age and failing powers had not helped an artist who had always been notoriously difficult to deal with.

Duncan's victory at Camperdown provided him with an opportunity to resolve his difficulty. He took a long time to finish "The Victory of Admiral Duncan". The process of engraving it took even longer and he found that the moment had passed, other victories claimed the public's attention, sales of the engraving were disappointing, and by 1802 he was left with the picture.

Whereupon, Lady Mary pounced.

Her letter to Lord Duncan continued: *"he did not expect to sell it for 1200 guineas, will now accept One Thousand Guineas ready Money"*. Probably realising that Lord Duncan was not sufficiently vain to expend such an immense sum - even if it was a bargain - on a monument to his own glory, Lady Mary made her move:

*"If you don't approve, have another scheme, first I must borrow a thousand Guineas off Mr Coutts, paying the interest during my life, upon my demise it will be a debt upon you, out of the money I bequeath you"*.

It was at this point that Lord Duncan, whether he liked it or not, must have realised he was going to have the picture anyway, and whatever the scheme Lady Mary adopted to pay for it, ultimately the cost would be his, since he was her heir at law.

When his uncle died in Naples in 1774, Lady Mary had complied with Sir William's last request and made young Captain Duncan her heir. This transformed his life: henceforth from being merely a younger son and a half-pay captain in the Royal Navy, he was now the heir to great expectations, including a huge property with its

own town in East Florida, just north of Cape Canaveral. It certainly improved his marriage prospects. Being tall dark and handsome had not hitherto been sufficient to make him a viable catch in the circles in which he moved: his credentials were now impressive enough to allow the prickly Lord President Dundas - who had had trouble with suitors for his daughters in the past - consent to let him marry his second daughter, Henrietta.

Lady Mary pursued her point: *"Think of the Ancient and honourable Name of the Duncans"* and opened up a final prospect of horror if they did not act. *"Wou'd it not be a pity that some rich Tallow chandler, who from cheating the Publick shou'd hang it up in his Greasy hall."* Whether she had a particular tallow chandler in mind in this quaint denunciation of persons in trade is not clear: certainly candles were dear, taxes were high and there was a war on.

What happened next is not clear either, since no letter from Lord Duncan survives, though clearly he responded. But, on March 4th, Lady Mary acknowledges his reply, which evidently signified his consent to her second scheme. She had, in the interval, lost no time, since she had already been to Coutts - who was banker to them both - borrowed the money, paid Copley, retrieved the picture from Christie's the auctioneers and sent it back to Copley's studio. There is was to stay until better weather allowed its transport to Scotland by sea.

Lord Duncan had sent measurements, one suspects in the forlorn hope that the picture might turn out too big, but Lady Mary breezily informed him: *"it will do very well for your room (in George Square) or at Lundie House, as you think proper."*

And now that the picture was secured, Lady Mary added a final detail to her scheme: *"I intended in my will to entail that Picture for ever if possible upon the head of the Duncan family, knowing too much of the World, to trust entirely to Posterity."*

Unfortunately, she was right not to trust to Posterity. Lord Duncan died before she did. Two years later, in 1806, shortly before her own death she added a Codicil to her will, leaving to *"her Executors"* two pictures *"Upon Trust to permit them to remain in the Mansion House at Lundie"*.

One of these pictures was the extraordinary double portrait of herself and Sir William that she had bullied Johann Zoffany into completing in Florence long before. That other was, of course, Copley's 'Victory'. Despite affixing a plaque to the picture proclaiming her intention, *'to be kept in the Family forever'*, it now hangs in the City Art Gallery in Dundee on loan from the National Galleries of Scotland, to which institution it was left by Lady Mary's great-great-great niece, the Dowager Countess of Buckinghamshire.

It is an odd fact that since the Copley was hung there in 1997, the rate at which the Dundee Galleries were sinking into the ground has accelerated so much that drastic remedial action is having to be done. And Lundie Church, where Lady Mary is buried, is really not far. Perhaps the weight of her displeasure is pressing them down.

*The writer wishes to thank Mr Ian Flett and Dundee City Archives for allowing him to quote from the Farrar-Duncan Papers in the writing of this article. Also Mrs Anne Parker-Jervis for information about Lady Mary's portrait.*

C. R. Macintosh July 2003