

Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia
An exhibition developed and presented by the
National Museum of Australia

OBJECT BIOGRAPHY

The Bagot Cup

Known as the 'Copper Kingdom', by the 1850s South Australia was producing a third of the world's copper. It was an industry greatly associated to this day with Cornish miners who poured into the colony in the mid-1840s to work the mines and smelters of a booming industry. Forgotten here is the contribution of an Irishman to this story.

Captain Charles Harvey Bagot, aged 52, arrived from Ireland with his family in Adelaide in 1840. Bagot undoubtedly saw his future as a pastoralist on land granted to him in the developing country 100 kilometres north of Adelaide, but in 1842 his younger son Charles picked up a surface rock which proved to be copper ore. Bagot soon became manager of a developing copper mine and smelter at Kapunda, a town which grew and prospered from the export of high grade copper.

The miners of Kapunda certainly valued Bagot's work on their behalf. When he retired in 1859, they presented him with a handsome silver cup. Part of the inscription reads, 'to mark their appreciation of those exertions which have characterised his public and private career, to the energy and perseverance displayed during the 16 years that have elapsed since the opening of the Kapunda Copper Mine'.

The 'Bagot Cup', made by Adelaide silversmith Charles Edward Firnhaber, displays, intricately carved in miniature, the main above ground elements of the mine buildings. Today the prized possession the Kapunda Historical Society Museum, on the occasion of its presentation it was filled with 'Mr Auld's excellent colonial' wine', and many toasts were drunk to the health of



The Bagot Cup, 1859, by Charles Albert Firnhaber, is on display at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra in the exhibition *Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia*. The Bagot Cup is on loan from the Kapunda Historical Society, South Australia

Captain Charles Harvey Bagot.

Not Just Ned: A true history of the Irish in Australia is on show at the National Museum of Australia, Canberra from 17 March-31 July 2011. Admission charges apply.

For more information about the exhibition visit www.nma.gov.au/exhibitions/irish_in_australia

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