



# newsletter

## FRIENDS OF WAIUTA

### AUGUST 2005

Here it is - the last newsletter of the first century of Waiuta! That is, if you count the Birthday Reef discovery date (the King's birthday, 9th November 1905) as the starting date for the town.

It's good enough for us, and as you'll see in the accompanying reunion newsletter, plans are very much in advance not only for the 'reef rediscovery' and barbecue on 9th November this year, but also for the reunion at Easter 2006.

### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

There was another good turn-out at Reefton, on a typically mild sort of mid-July evening, for an AGM that also marked Friends of Waiuta's 20th anniversary.

We were glad to welcome some of the 'Over the Hill' contingent - the title having nothing to do with their physical condition, especially considering that they've volunteered to do all sorts of jobs around Waiuta, of which we'll say more later.

With some relief we can announce that Frances Hunter agreed to remain our president. Actually, Fran is the only one we've ever had and we're certainly not going to trade her while there's so much to organise.

Speaking of great organisers, our reunion secretary Sarah Clarkson is now Friends of Waiuta secretary as well, replacing Ian Davidson. We're so pleased to have Sarah as part of the committee and can only offer her the advice given Blanche Hogg on her arrival at Waiuta: "The first 10 years are the worst." Mrs Hogg remained for 35 years, but we'll be happy with just half that from Sarah.

Ian hangs up his fountain pen after being secretary, it would seem, ever since his alter ego Jimmy Martin discovered the reef. We thank Ian and wish him a long and busy retirement.



**Spot the future president? The Thorn family some time before the youngest member took on her present role.**



***These fine old photos just keep turning up, especially now we're right into the search for childhood anecdotes and cute kiddypix for our next book. This one shows Jill Malloy (née Taylor) as a tot in the beautiful garden her Grandad Anderson created "from a wilderness" below the far end of Bottom Road. The Anglican church is just visible top left. Jill has also sent some great reminiscences - and there's still time for you to do the same.***

Ronnie Buckman continues in the treasurer's role. On her behalf may we say: "Subs are due, \$10, payable to Friends of Waiuta, c/- PO Box 83 Reefton." The fact that they've always been \$10 points to sound financial management.

Les Wright, the only newsletter editor we've ever had, will continue to turn them out so long as nobody reintroduces old traditions such as horsewhipping editors who sometimes stray from the exact truth. Somehow no vice-presidents were elected, but we'll sort them out later in the year.

The rest of the committee remains the same - in other words, whoever turns up on the night. That system's always worked well and means any member who happens to be in town can always join in.

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### GILLS COTTAGE SPRUCE-UP

The cottage bought by Friends of Waiuta for the Department of Conservation about 15 years ago, will be repainted in spring.

A formidable foursome has volunteered: Graeme Farrant, Bill Laugeson, George Lindsay and one who actually lived in the cottage as a child, Alan Stephens.

Replied and referenced by the Conservation Corps under Ian Davidson some years ago, the cottage was inspected earlier in the year by master builder and FoW member Martin Cordes, who pronounced it to be in generally sound condition.

Some repair work is also planned and the cottage will also be rewired and reconnected to the power supply once our very own 'sparky' Bede Cordes returns from his O.E. Then it will provide accommodation for visitors who want to stay somewhere truly vintage.

### MEMORIES OF THE BIG GUY

At a time when many are remembering the late David Lange, Frances Hunter has a recollection of the former prime minister that beats most.

Mr Lange visited Reefton when the visitor centre was being planned. He listened carefully, showed some of his renowned wit, returned to Wellington - and resigned his prime ministership the following day!



***Gills Cottage as seen through a telephoto lens from Lighthouse Hill - a viewpoint that's become accessible again only recently. Be sure to take a stroll up there during the reunion and see the repainted cottage.***

His departure couldn't have been out of fear that our request would blow the budget, because the requested grant money came through, and of course the centre with its "mine experience" was duly built.

### PRO TIMBER PRODUCTS

Some fine articles are being made from timber recovered from the Prohibition shaft during Oceana Gold's reopening attempt. We'll probably have some for sale on Birthday Reef anniversary day, and certainly at the Easter reunion.



***The photos of the miniature Waiuta village in our last newsletter drew a lot of interest, so here's another - from behind the Red Huts and Fred Thorn's store with the Catholic Church at right, South Shaft top centre and the Post Office top left. Sorry there's no size comparison this time, but that's a full sized house in the top right distance.***

### NEXT MEETING

Thursday 24th November at 7.30pm in the Reefton Visitor Centre on Broadway - entrance off the Strand.

We normally have a barbecue at Waiuta for the year's last meeting, but of course we're doing that on the reef discovery anniversary day, Wednesday 9th November, and if we have too many treats we might start getting spoilt.

After a meeting there's always a cuppa and more cake and things than are probably good for you, so come and join in if you happen to be in town at the time.

If you can't make it to either event, best wishes for Christmas etc, make sure you're here at Easter 2006 - and don't forget your \$10 sub!

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