



FRIENDS OF WAIUTA

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April 2013

Greetings from the Golden West, where the drought has broken and everything's pretty well back to normal (if such a term can ever be applied). It's often said Waiuta's finest gold was in its people, so we're glad to report that one of them, Margaret Sadler senior, is turning 90 - an event that was marked slightly ahead of time at our annual general meeting, as shown below. However while everyone's getting older, there could be gold again from the Birthday Reef in just half a decade. Details coming up!

AGM

First though, news from the annual general meeting that drew 32 and saw all officers re-elected. One change: With some major outlay ahead, particularly on Gills Cottage, it's been decided to raise the subscription for the first time in our 27½ year history - so it is now \$15. Hope that's OK with everyone and we carry on keeping the old town together.

OGL

As always there was great interest in what Oceana Gold Ltd's Reefton operations manager Nigel Slonker came up with - and this time there was even more than usual. It seems that as ever the Birthday Reef has revealed its contrary nature - even at a depth of hundreds of metres. Drilling from the Blackwater valley located the reef farther north than before (beyond the fault) but with a disappointing yield of four grams - just two or three pennyweights per ton. However a slight change in direction brought the rich result of 134 grams - or 4.3 troy ounces!

Whether that means a resumption of mining is still for the OGL board to decide, with factors like a dropping gold price to consider. Meanwhile, designs for tunnelling into the reef from the Snowy Valley near Hukawai are proceeding and all going well there could be more Waiuta gold in just five years. We'll watch and keep you informed.

DOC DEVELOPMENTS

Amid anxieties about funding and jobs, Department of Conservation staff have stuck to their tasks. Jim Staton outlined plans to repile the barbershop (or rather pile it, for it stands on very little) and complete a ditch to Gills Cottage so it can be powered. Masses of rowans have been knocked back as part of a six-year programme and a 'Round Nob Hill' walking and cycling track is still under investigation. We wish all at DOC well during 'restructuring'.

HOMEcomings

When Edna May McLeod (nee McCracken), died in Australia two years ago her family had no clear indication as to where her ashes should be scattered. However Edna had often spoken with pride of her New Zealand birth in 1919 - in a little mining town called Waiuta. So three generations of her family made a special trans-Tasman trip in April to 'bring her home'. There's a photo on the second page.

Also over from Australia that month were relatives of William Tomlinson who had left Australia as a young man and raised a well known Waiuta family. It just happened that their visit coincided with a NZ Tomlinson family reunion, so distant cousins became acquainted as well - another photo on the next page.



Margaret Sadler receives a 90th birthday card from newly re-elected president Fran Hunter while at right, assistant candle extinguisher Grace (granddaughter of our secretary Graeme Farrant) eyes up the target for a really big blow.

McEWIN RELATIVES TO MARKELO

Relatives of Waiuta's Andrew McEwin will be among hundreds gathered for another memorial at Markelo in the Netherlands during June. In 2008 local people erected a memorial to Andrew and his six crewmates near the spot where they were killed when their RNZAF Stirling bomber crashed near Markelo in 1943.

To complete the field of honour at their local cemetery they will erect a new monument alongside of the graves of 17 fallen airmen (four New Zealanders, an Australian and 12 British), who died in the crashes of the Stirling and two RAF bombers in March, May and June 1943.

Darryl Robertson, an Ikamatua cousin of Andrew and now from Nelson, has done a wonderful job tracing the relatives of 18 of the 21 crew members involved. He will be heading to Markelo with Waiuta memorabilia for the local people, including copies of our book of childhood memories *Our Own Fun* that includes reminiscences of Andrew's childhood 'down at the Snowy' written by his brother Ian.

CORA CROZIER

We were sad to lose an accomplished member with the death of Cora Crozier. A daughter of Franette and 'Darky' Mangan, Cora spent much of her girlhood at Waiuta on Lighthouse Hill, a time she recalled in a chapter of *Our Own Fun*. Her writing talent covered



other places, including Denniston where the family moved from Waiuta, recalled in *From the Gold Mine to the Coal Mine* which we hope will also be published one day. Our sincere sympathy is extended to Cora's family.



Three generations of Edna May McLeod's family scattering her ashes at the site of her birth, Waiuta Hospital - see the previous page.



Tomlinson relatives from Australia and New Zealand who unexpectedly got together at Waiuta in April - see first page.

TEA TO ORDER

Waiuta memorabilia just keeps turning up - first a fascinating order book that shows where the mining company bought things (including cyanide from its sister company, Progress Mines on Globe Hill) and second, this teapot. The full inscription around the rim is "Compliments. J. Tyron. The Busy Grocer. Waiuta." Anybody heard of Mr Tyron (probably early) or the Busy Grocer chain? Let's know if you have.



AID FOR ASSAY ROOM

Something we omitted to mention in the last couple of newsletters - perhaps because we hate being the bringers of appalling news - was the terrible vandalism that occurred at the former Prohibition Assay Room. For the past 60 years it has served as a scout den near the mouth of the Taramakau River, where countless children have enjoyed stays. Vandals who broke in last year caused so much damage there was still a shortfall of \$5000 after insurance paid out. Upset over this destruction relating to a Waiuta remnant, we have made a donation of \$100.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday, 25 July 2013, 7.00pm at Hunters' centrally heated home, 31 Victory Street. Out-of-townners welcome to dinner beforehand - just let Fran know a bit in advance. Also note that we have the correct year this time and apologies to people who thought they'd have to book a time machine to make the AGM. Anyway, best wishes for winter, whenever that might be.