



# Newsletter

## Friends of Waiuta

P O Box 493 Greymouth 7840 - [www.waiuta.org.nz](http://www.waiuta.org.nz)

### April 2106

At our last meeting and AGM I think we crossed a point where, in the future we will look back and say that was when we took the reins over of our group from Frances and Les and began to forge a new and confident future. The reasons I say this are to be seen in the number and diversity of 'things happening' enumerated below.

#### Our AGM

At a very well attended meeting we elected the following:

President: Margaret Sadler

Chairperson: Paul McGirr

Vice Chairperson: Bede Cordes

Trevor Robertson

Secretary: Aileen Morris

Treasurer: Aileen Morris

Newsletter: Graeme Farrant

#### The Theodolites Have A Home



*A close up view of Tas Hogg display with his theodolite*

When we last reported on the theodolites we said they had "come home." Now we are able to report that they have a home. It's at the Reefton Visitors Centre.

Before the meeting we officially opened the display cabinet showing a life-sized Tas Hogg with the very theodolite he used surveying the drives and shafts that lie beneath Waiuta. It was opened by Buller Deputy Mayor Graeme Neylon, Diana

Calvert, Tas Hogg's granddaughter and FoW chairwoman Margaret Sadler.

It is an arresting feature so ensure that you pop in and see it next time you are passing through Reefton.

#### DOC Developments - Jim Staton

Our thanks go to DOC for the very high standard of general presentation of our township at the time of the meeting. Even the newly cleared track alongside Greek Creek to where Les' ashes were spread had been mown.

- Contaminated Ground Remediation

The clean up continues apace up at the Prohibition. It and its watershed, which includes Coorang Creek remain off limits to the public and will likely be so until mid December. However the Lodge is not being used by the remediation contractors and so is available for public use again. This is great news as I've missed the ability to spend time in Waiuta over the past months.

- there has been continued spraying to contain the gorse and rowans. This is particularly noticeable near Middle Track and the top end of Skip Road.

#### Simon Nathan

Simon Nathan, author of 'Through the Eyes of A Miner: The Photography of Joseph Divis', attended our last meeting. While here he very generously donated to FoW a memory stick of all the Divis photographs he gathered in writing his book. This is of huge value to us for we now have a record of these very high quality glass plate photos detailing people, events and places during his life in Waiuta. Remember that Jos arrived in Waiuta in 1912 mainly living there until his death in 1967. Therefore his photos constitute the history of



*The Jos Divis display of the three posters now on display in the Lodge*

Waiuta. Already there have been excited email exchanges over details noticed in these photos. For instance in one photo the skip clearly shows wagons ascending and descending as well as three towers being erected in 1935 for the aerial ropeway that ran from the Prohibition to the Snowy River Battery. The value of these photos will only grow in the future.

Furthermore he has also gifted to us three high quality large posters detailing Jos' life and work in Waiuta. We have had these framed, mounted and spotlighted in the Lodge. Now everyone who stays in the Lodge will be exposed to the work of this fine photographer thereby learning of the history of this unique town.

These complement the large 3 x 1m Divis photos mentioned at our last meeting. Our Lodge is becoming a learning centre in itself.

### John McVicar

John McVicar of McVicar's Timber, Christchurch, dropped in to see us at our last meeting. Literally! He arrived in his helicopter (**arriving via Culverden where his son played football!!**) with his young family and with a large dose of good will towards FoW. John hails from the McVicar family who have extensive mining roots in the Alexander Mine, the general Waiuta area and a gold dredging venture in the Grey River. Simon Nathan's photographic gift to us details many instances of his family in these areas. He recently offered to help us with timber for Gill's Cottage and came to assess how he might be of help. He landed just as Graeme was about to take a group of 'those interested' on a walking tour of the town. Invited to join us he enjoyed our stroll before going to look over Gill's Cottage.



*It's not often we see one of these on our front lawn!  
John McVicar's mode of transport to our last meeting.*

He has offered us considerable help in the way of building materials. More on this later.

### Waiuta Meeting: Bede and Martin Cordes

Following the expression of concern from some of our members at our ability to meet the costs of

upgrading Gill's Cottage, we appointed a subcommittee to help guide future decisions. Bede Cordes was one of these appointees. In February he and his father, Martin spent some days developing a very professional and detailed '**Scope of Work**' outlining with photos, the work and materials needed to bring Gill's up to a reasonable standard.

Of course this is just what we needed when consulting with John McVicar. It gives us credibility both when meeting with the likes of John and when we seek external funding.

### Christchurch Meetings

In Christchurch we have about 4 or 5 meetings a year for those interested in Waiuta. They are always well attended.

Let us know if you'd like to attend one of these meetings by phoning either : -

Diana 027 217 1701 or Alva on 021 257 6098. We start at 1030 and finish about 3 pm. To keep costs down we ask that you bring a plate.

Our next scheduled Christchurch meeting is on Sunday 31st July at Paul McGirr's residence at 9a Wittys Rd, Avonhead, Christchurch.

For those on our email list I will be sending a reminder notice a week or two beforehand.

### Requiescat in Pace

It is sad to record the recent passing of Alan Hunt. Alan was the son of Waiuta resident, Jean Hunt (nee Lewis). Alan invested considerable time and effort in the creation of a model village of Waiuta sited out on the Runanga Road. This aroused considerable interest from viewers by who on seeing this model then altered their itinerary to visit the real town.

### Subscriptions

Aileen, our treasurer reports that subscriptions are now due. For those doing internet banking our bank account number is:

02 0880 0037433 00

Remember under the heading of:

**Particulars** write "*Subscription*" - and under **Reference** to write your name.

Otherwise simply post it to the post box listed above.

Our subscription remains at \$15 per person.

And remember too that being a member allows you to stay at the Lodge at a discounted price.

### Next Meeting:

**When:** Saturday 23 July 2016 at 2pm

**Where:** Graham Hunter's residence.

31 Victory St - Reefton

**Please:** bring a small contribution towards a light afternoon tea.

The printing of this newsletter is kindly sponsored by the Anisy Funeral Homes, Greymouth and Richmond, Nelson. This is very much appreciated.