

Newsletter

Friends Of
WAIUTA Inc.

P.O. Box 493
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www.waiuta.org.nz

April 2016

There is so much to report on it is difficult to know where to start. So let's try at the beginning I hear you say.

The Easter Reunion:

What a superb and well organised event this was. Right from the Friday evening get together, to the Saturday BBQ lunch with reminiscing and walkabout in Waiuta followed by dinner at the Reefton Golf Club, which in turn was followed on Sunday morning by the viewing of the 'Ghost Town Ball' DVD along with morning teas, looking at photos and saying goodbyes. Barring the somewhat inclement Saturday weather there was nothing negative to report. Right from the beginning the general ambiance was warm and congenial, so facilitating much animated discussion as we renewed old acquaintances and relived past lives, experiences and stories.

As is usual with things Waiuta there are so many to thank for the successful running and organisation of this event - right down to the smallest details that added to the genuine authenticity, a Waiuta reunion should have. Margaret Sadler and Aileen Morris (*both were shattered after its completion*) immediately spring to mind. However, behind them lie many others who in varying degrees gave of their time and skills making it the success it was. Thankyou, thankyou, to you all.



Typical of the care to detail taken. Note the placemats, the 'gold' nuggets and the conversation starters each person sat down to.

Our AGM

Our numbers were down a little for the AGM which was followed by the usual general meeting. This in no way indicated any decline of interest or activity as you will read below. To listen to the year's account of things achieved, all publicised through the year in this newsletter, demonstrated that. We would like to thank retiring treasurer Aileen for her dedicated work over the past few years particularly in the finance portfolio and latterly in helping with the Reunion. Thankyou Aileen.



Aileen receives a thankyou gift in recognition of her outstanding efforts for FoW

The following office holders were elected:

President: Margaret Sadler

Chairperson: Paul McGirr

Vice President: Alan Stephens

Secretary: Pauline Barnett

Treasurer: Paul McGirr

Newsletter: Graeme Farrant

We decided that our subscription remain at \$15 pa.

DOC Developments - Gavin Collis

Although we don't have a report this quarter it is quite evident that DOC have been busy in the period leading up to the Reunion and the later AGM. In evidence were the freshly mown and tidied areas in all parts of our town. I was particularly taken with the new track alongside Greek Creek to where Les' ashes were scattered. It's a pity that the weather on the Saturday 'Waiuta Afternoon' was not conducive to more free wandering which would have made this and the various other areas better noticed and appreciated.

Also appreciated is the new vinyl that DOC have gone halves with in the kitchen and hall area of the Lodge. It gives the whole area a refreshing and much needed uplift where the original cork tiles were rather dingy and long past their best.

Appreciated too was the quick intervention of DOC in the provision a power generator when the electricity lines supplying the Lodge were cut with windfall trees. Without that gift we would have been unable to run our various activities over the reunion and the AGM.

The power supply to the Lodge remains an issue that is under discussion. We will keep you informed.



A fresh and clean looking interior of the Lodge following the laying of the vinyl

Did You Know?

That before the AGM Alan Stephens and Brendon Wiltshire came a day or two early to install two new road signs 2 km either side the Waiuta turnoff on Highway 7. This sign is the result of the collective efforts of retired ex Waiuta resident, sign writer Tony Becker using the skills of computer expert John Tan to embed a Jos Divis photo in a large 3 by 1 metre in the sign. It now prominently advertises Waiuta and should encourage a substantial increase in visitors to our town.



Alan Stephens and Brendon Wiltshire stand alongside the recently erected Waiuta Sign

We would also like to acknowledge the generosity of Graham and Gillian Prendergast in generously giving FoW the land on which one sign was erected. It was his brother Trevor who put the posts into the ground with his post driver. The other, opposite site was donated by Wallace and Joy Marsden. The generosity of people towards our society is always humbling. Incidentally it was the 'Prendergast's paddock' that the 'Faith in Australia' and the 'Southern Cross' landed in January and March of 1934 - all duly recorded on glass plate negatives by Jos Divis. Graham took us there. Aaah, that was special!

I looked but couldn't find the control tower. 😊

And, did you know that there has been another book about Waiuta printed. During the reunion the Stephens family launched the 175 page book 'The Life of Stan Stephens'. It is the collation and retyping by granddaughter Sharon Roder of several manuscripts Stan laboriously typed over many years while in retirement.

Buy it from waiuta1951@gmail.com - It's only \$30 plus \$5 postage.

Raffle: Colin Wynn's Painting

At the the Reunion on Saturday evening Alva Morgan 'drew' the magic number deciding who won the painting. We were delighted to find that Brent Tomlinson was the lucky winner. Hmmm, he tells me that he purchased books rather than tickets so perhaps it was probability rather than luck that was on his side.

Register:

We are setting up a register of workers who would be able to come to Waiuta at a few weeks notice to help out with our various projects. See the attached form for details.

Requiescat in Pace

We are saddened to report the recent passing of two Waiuta-ites.

Ivy Williams (later Riley) in early March aged 82. Ivy worked in the Post Office in Waiuta before moving to Reefton about the time of the mine closure.



Joyce Jones (later Newton) in May aged 91, in Auckland 2018. She will be always remembered as being 'that girl on a trike' from the photos Jos Divis took when they were leaving to go to Auckland. Her father, Percy, was suffering from miners phthisis. It is gratifying to learn that she lived a full and happy life there. Her daughter, Claire attended the reunion and was able to see through the house her mother had lived in and also the position that Jos took that photo all those years ago.



To both families we extended our sympathies and condolences.

Attachments:

With this newsletter are notices regarding:

- the 2018 - 2019 - **Subscriptions are now due.** Payment details are on the form.
- details regarding our Register of Workers
- a reunion photo montage - with details on access to about 60 other online photos

Next Waiuta Meeting

When: Saturday 28 July 2018

Time: 2 pm

Where: George and Carol Lindsay's home
2 Main St. Reefton

Please: as usual, bring a plate for afternoon tea.

Next Christchurch Meeting

When: Sunday 12 August 2018

Where: Paul McGirr's house - 9a Wittys Road - Avonhead

Time: 10.30 am - finishing about 3 pm

As usual bring a contribution for morning tea / lunch.

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