

newsletter

FRIENDS OF WAIUTA

MARCH 2006

Greetings from incandescent Inangahua where we're still happy in the glow of the November reef 'rediscovery' and running hot as we round off preparations for the Waiuta Centennial celebrations at Easter.

CENTENNIAL EVENTS

Just in case you've mislaid that very important centennial programme, here are the basics.

Registrations will be confirmed from 2pm on Good Friday (the 14th) in the Reefton Visitor Centre. The get-together will follow at 7.30pm in the Reefton Community Centre.

Saturday morning will be free, giving people the opportunity to explore old haunts (or enjoy the Reefton market day) before the old-time sports day from 12 noon to 3pm.

Then there'll be the centennial dinner at Reefton on Saturday night, again at the community centre. On Sunday morning there'll be a special Waiuta church service at the Reefton Union church, with several denominations joining in.

ALL THE TRIMMINGS

We are happy to announce the important news that the cake is under preparation for cutting on Saturday night. Old-time music will be turned on live to get toes tapping and even a good few legs dancing. We plan to have 'Silver and Gold', our exhibition of Jos Divis photos, on display during Friday registration, and other people will no doubt add their own there and at the get-together.

The Department of Conservation has been busy getting Waiuta ready for the big Saturday. There's been

more work for them since the four-legged lawn mowers were retired, but there are plusses in no more broken board walks, heavily trampled areas and cow pats to cope with. Apart from all their other tasks they hope to mark the original reef discovery site.

OLD FRIENDS TO LOOK OUT FOR

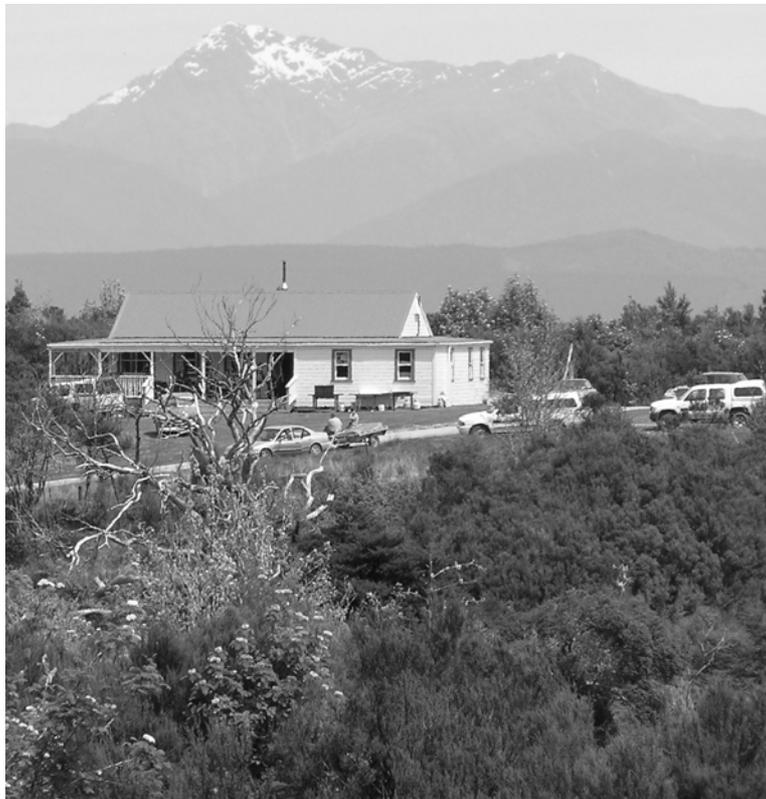
One of the most exciting prospects with these sorts of events is the likelihood of spotting old friends. Among those we look forward to seeing are Alf Saunders, perhaps our oldest member, who'll be over from Brisbane, Johnny Jones, well known to every-

one as the mailman, down from Auckland, and Pam Stephens, mother or grandmother of about half our present committee, over from Christchurch. The farthest ranging traveller seems certain to be Lindsay Jones from Calgary, Canada. We hear that even Jimmy Martin the pioneering prospector could be there on Saturday in the hope of making another strike.

SIGN OF THE TIMES?

The only set-back so far has been in our quest for a big brown signboard pointing out Waiuta from the main Grey Valley highway. The people who put up these things have told us that if we give them \$5000 they'll do it and if

we give them \$2500 they'll think about it. We knew the roading budget was getting tight, but never dreamed it was as bad as this. It's just as well all roads lead to Waiuta and most people know where to turn off. (Don't look out for the substation though, as it's now part of a house in Reefton.) Our very own special sign could just turn up too, on the day.



Waiuta Lodge from Top Road on the day of the Birthday Reef discovery re-enactment in November when Mt Alexander still showing signs of the winter just past. Here's hoping for a similar scene at Easter.

PRO TIMBERS MADE BEAUTIFUL

A sneak preview of woodware made by John Askin and Graham Hunter from old Prohibition shaft timber had everybody at the last meeting impressed. Miners who rattled up and down daily in the cages could never have guessed they were passing such beauty. The superbly turned and polished items range from turned keyring ends to plates, bowls and clocks, so whether you're after a souvenir, a gift or something to enhance your home, look out for them at the reunion. We hope there'll be more for sale afterward too.

NEW BOOK LOOKS BACK

Hours of work have gone into the new book of childhood reminis-



Production of the new book has brought still more old photos to light, including this one of someone's wee bundle of joy in a backyard below Top Road. Margaret Sadler, who provided the pic, thought it was her among the daisies, but that looks like the old Miners' Hall up to the left and we're sure Marg isn't from that era.



As promised in the last newsletter: our treasurer Ronnie, long-time committee member Paul and their baby Emma. The photo was taken at the November 9th reef discovery re-enactment so one of them has grown quite a lot in the time since.

cences - well, that's part of the editor's excuse for this newsletter being ever so slightly late and of course we believe him.

A stunning cover in Waiuta gold colours has been designed by Vaughan Brett (son of Allan and grandson of Mick) and while nobody is suggesting that the contents should be judged by the cover, we're certainly looking forward to it.

People's stories have continued to flow in right up to and beyond the deadline date, adding to others that have been gathered over the past 20 years or so. Fingers crossed that it'll be ready to launch on the Friday night. Failing that we'll at least have the cover to look at.

LATE REGISTRATIONS

If you've read all that and then had the sinking feeling that you haven't registered, that's quite okay. Although they've officially closed we can still take a few more - just find the form and send it to us at PO Box 83, (No longer Box 100, please note). Registration is free to all current financial Friends of Waiuta.

At the last report more than 100 people had put theirs in, and we've heard second hand of others who are intending to come but haven't let us know. It is very important for catering purposes that everyone who turns up to the Friday night get-together and the Saturday night dinner has registered previously.

NEXT MEETING

Thursday 4th May, 7.30pm, at the Reefton Visitor Centre (entrance from the Strand). With the centennial over we'll be looking ahead to the next 100 years - all members welcome.