



Newsletter

Friends of Waiuta

P O Box 493 Greymouth 7840 - www.waiuta.org.nz

March 2017

Our numbers were down 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 demonstrated that.

Our AGM

The following office holders were elected:

President: Margaret Sadler

Chairperson: Paul McGirr

Vice Presidents: Alan Stephens

Trevor Robertson

Secretary: Aileen Morris

Treasurer: Aileen Morris

Newsletter: Graeme Farrant

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

We have also decided to have all future meetings start at 2 pm as we have so many travelling significant distances to attend and this will give them much better options regarding travel times and accomodation.

DOC Developments - Jim Staton

Jim, reported this will be his last as he retires on 30th June. We will miss him, both for his efforts for Waiuta over the years and for his dry, calm attitude to life - something we have valued over the last few years.

Up on the recently reopened Prohibition site work is ongoing with fencing areas off to direct foot and car traffic and in preparing for new interpretation panels to be installed in September / October.

Although not part of our brief now, we retain a keen interest in developments nearby. So we were pleased to hear that Westland Heritage Park have donated 60 piles for the repiling of Blackwater School. Likewise we are delighted to hear that the Alexander Mine remediation is only weeks off completion.

DOC Turns 30

Thirty years ago, on 1 April 1987, the Department of Conservation was born from the merger of the conservation aspects of the Forest Service, the Department of Lands and Survey and the Wildlife Service. Margaret and Aileen attended the celebration at Reefton - a BBQ - on behalf of FoW.

Les Wright's Tapes



Remember those old reel to reel tape recorders. That is what Les Wright was using to record oral

reminisces of identities on the Coast in the 1980s. These have been located amongst his extensive historical collection and been forwarded to Wellington for transfer onto CD's and memory sticks. We now have permission to have these transcribed to written text so that we can turn these into a book which we can then sell - and thereby create another income stream for F.o.W. This has already been done and work to find appropriate photos is under way. The people interviewed are from a range of occupations (including Waiuta) and so we are hoping that this will increase its overall appeal.

Advertising Titbit: Ron Reeve, a Waiuta miner reports that they could often easily see the gold in the quartz they were hewing. And then he said something about dolly pots and Sundays!!

Waiuta Lodge Improvements

Our two stoves which have been 'interesting' to use for some time now have been replaced with new ones. While the electrician is installing them we are fitting the spotlights over the posters that were donated by Simon Nathan. And while you are admiring these, note also the Divis photos that have been placed under the glass on the altar.

Hidden Valley Lodge - aka - Holy Cross Church

Margaret recently had a brainwave (*she has lots of these!*) when she suggested that our next meeting should be held in the old Waiuta Church now a holiday lodge situated in secluded bush with panoramic views overlooking Lake Poerua and the mountains beyond.



Idyllic I know - it's not as close to heaven as its former site but nearly so 😊

We have booked the Lodge from midday, Saturday 29 July for our meeting at 2pm ... through till midday on Sunday. There are a few of us who are staying overnight. If you would like to join us let us know as

soon as possible. The larger the numbers the cheaper the cost. Either let Margaret (margsadler@xtra.co.nz) or myself (g.far@clear.net.nz)

The address: 2261 Lake Brunner Rd, Inchbonnie. The drive is alongside Homestead Creek. I will be emailing a map and more precise directions a week before the meeting.

Bakery Mixer

The Harvey's Bakery Mixer is now on display in the Reefton i-Site Centre. Call in and view it when passing next. It is just past the the Tas Hogg / theodolite display. FoW have a significant footprint inside the centre now.



The mixer that prepared the dough for the bread sold in Waiuta and the surrounding district.

In Frances Hunter's Seat it was wonderful to see Gwen Jones (91 years old) who made the considerable journey from Christchurch.



Gwen Jones (middle) with niece Margaret Sadler (left) and daughter in law Louise McGuinness (nee Boyle) on her right.

Requiescat in Pace

It is sad to report the recent passing of 2 Waiuta-ites. From the Tauranga West Coasters Association Newsletter is the news of the death of Fay Lewis (nee Gill) who died in January. She spent her early years in Waiuta where her father was an engineer..

And it is sad too to record the passing of Johnny Jones who was later to come to fame as the last surviving Gilbert Islands Coast Watcher in WWII. He died in Takapuna in February aged 96. Johnny was Gwen Poole's (nee Jones) brother and Margaret Sadler's uncle.



Johnny Jones, post boy in Waiuta. It was this occupation - his Post Office skills in radio transmission - that lead him to be a Coast Watcher in the Gilbert Islands in WWII resulting in his capture by the Japanese and internment in a POW camp.

Subscriptions Due

Aileen, our much appreciated treasurer reports that subscriptions for the year 1st April 2017 - 2018 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 - Note the Changes of Time & Place!

When: Saturday 29 July 2016 **at 2pm**

Where: The Old Catholic Church at Inchbonnie (now the Hidden Valley Lodge) - see directions elsewhere.

Please: bring a plate to share with the afternoon tea.

Christchurch Meeting

Our next meeting is about to happen.

Where: Paul McGirr's house at 9a Wittys Rd, Avonhead

When: Sunday 30 April - **Time:** 10.30am

Let us know if you're coming by phoning either : -

Diana 027 217 1701 or Alva on 021 257 6098.

We start at 10.30 am and finish about 3 pm. To keep costs down we ask that you bring a plate.

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