

November 2013

When we assembled for our meeting at 3pm it included a small group of relatives, friends and work associates who had already said our goodbyes to Les, firstly at a sombre ceremony at the Lodge where we each briefly shared the manner in which Les had touched our lives. We then moved down to a recently cleared opening amongst some mature and regenerating Beech trees alongside Greek Creek that Les had noted as being special because of the prolific birdlife. Here, each person was invited to take a small cup of his ashes and to say their private goodbyes in a



Down at Greek Creek Les' sister, Judy, turns from the mourners and with a sad prayer says goodbye to her brother.



Something we never expected to see at Waiuta; Les' ashes, a memorial stone and a memorial book

part of nature that Les loved. Noted was someone who partially spread his ashes in the creek remarking that he would travel as far

there in the hidden spaces of the Coast as he had in life.

At the conclusion of our meeting Bruce Watson, a long time friend and work associate of Les' gave a comprehensive report of his life on the Coast. It was certainly full. We will include a précis of it in our newsletter next time.

Les' name, incongruously, is now inscribed on our "**Whose Ashes are Spread Here**" Memory Board inside the Lodge.

DOC Developments

We have lots of news here.

Jim Staton reports that two sets of Jos Divis photographic signs have been placed in the town. One is up at the old Post Office and the other just to the side of Jos' house. There are plans for another at the entrance to the town.

Poisoned Ground Remediation.

Jim introduced us to Dave Trumm and James Pope, Hydrogeologists and Environmental Scientists from CRL Energy Ltd, who are currently advising DOC on the remediation of the ground surrounding the Prohibition Mine. Apparently the Alexander Mine, which also has a badly contaminated area is now to be included in the cleanup. To cater for this an extra \$200,000 added to the former total of \$604,000. Work now is expected to start in March of next year. I never cease to be amazed at the numbers of highly educated and motivated people who are associated with Waiuta.

Gill's Cottage.

The paint has now arrived and is stored at the DOC Centre in Reefton. Probably in autumn next year a group of the willing will assemble for several days of water blasting, preparation and the wielding of paint brushes. We are keen to have good weather for this. If you have abilities in predicting this then get in touch with Frances.

Blackwater School:

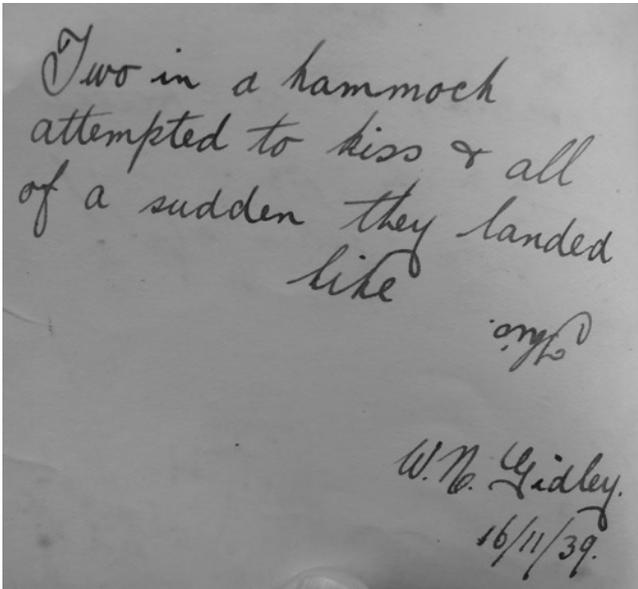
A copy of 'The Deed of Lease for the Blackwater School' was distributed at the meeting. It has been back to the lawyers and uncertain matters been revised. We now have the right to work around the building while the landowner retains responsibility for the fences.

Oceana Gold:

Hamish Blackmore of Oceana Gold informed us of recent developments. They have recently drilled to a level 750 metres below the former lowest levels of the Blackwater Reef. This made it the deepest hole ever drilled in NZ. The quartz encountered was about 65 cm in width with samples giving gold returns varying between 20 to 130 grammes per tonne. For those of you like myself who grew up with imperial values, of ounce to a ton being a good working mine, this converts to 32g to the tonne. This represents extremely good returns. However they are working somewhat deeper than our forebears were. No decision has yet been made on when Oceana will proceed with the reopening the mine.

On a Lighter Note

Remember the days of the autograph books.



Well, one of these has recently come into my hands and with the wonders of digital photography, humour of 75 years ago presents itself for our wry inspection. Perhaps this is an early rendition of Facebook. Bill Gidley wrote this in 1939.

Markelo

Darryl Robertson writes movingly of his experiences in Markelo.

"I found the family as part of my research and Lesley and I were invited to lunch at the castle

in Austria where the pilot, Prince Egmont Zur Lippe Wiessenfeld's family now live.

The prince died in 1944. But his 89 year old sister and all the family came to meet us. It was a special time. So 70 years on some good things happened.

The prince was a high ranking and highly decorated pilot who shot down 51 bombers .. one of them Andrews.The sister greeted me like a long lost son constantly holding my hand. It was special."

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War is a terrible terrible thing that must at times be engaged in. Doesn't this add a poignancy to it all. It brings to mind Rupert Brooke's poem "The Soldier" where he writes '*That there's some corner of a foreign field that is forever England.*' We might easily substitute Waiuta for England.



Andrew McEwin's headstone

Subscriptions

Please continue to pay these. They are now due. Having held them for many many years at \$10 at the last AGM they rose to \$15 per person. Please pay them soon.

We trust that you all had a great Christmas and the year to come promises the goodness of life.

Next Meeting

Our next meeting will be held at Waiuta at 3pm on Saturday 29 March 2014. It will be followed by our customary BBQ. We will provide the meat. Please bring a salad or a dessert.