

Newsletter

Friends Of
WAIUTA Inc.

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

April 2019

If it was ever thought that we just coast along in a cloud of nostalgia reliving the past then our last meeting certainly dispelled that notion. It was very well attended with many new faces portending exciting new developments in our town. There are times where I wonder whether we have too much happening! LOL. It was our AGM and looking at the officeholder results there seemed to be little demand for change so a simple 'cut and paste' of last years results yielded the following for this year too. ...

President: Margaret Sadler
Chairperson: Paul McGirr
Vice President: Alan Stephens
Secretary: Pauline Barnett
Treasurer: Paul McGirr
Newsletter: Graeme Farrant

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

DOC Developments - Jim Staton

The reason for name change above is that Gavin Collis has transferred to DOC in Rangiora. We thank him for his efforts on our behalf over the past few years and wish him well in the future.

Jim doesn't seem to have retired for it seems his name comes up regularly in matters regarding Waiuta. This is fortunate for his deep knowledge of the Coast and of our area is certainly being called upon.



Janet and Jim discussing her presentation

One of these is the recent engagement of Janet Bathgate, with a commission to improve visitors' experience of Waiuta by upgrading orientation, information and interpretation panels to high quality national standards. Part of this is the creation of several new self directed walking tracks directing the visitor around the town in a coordinated way that gives them an overall historic view of Waiuta.

Janet is a very highly regarded artist and printmaker with special skills in public place interpretation. Janet

did the original small pictures that currently dot the town and with the imminent gain of Landmark status has exciting proposals that lift the experience of Waiuta to a whole new level. Recently Janet has been intensively quizzing many of our members calling upon our Waiuta knowledge which with judicious use of our extensive library of photos will culminate in a world class educative facility that will attract and inform New Zealanders and tourists alike.

Incidentally Janet reports that we have no photos of the Whippet Track. Are you able to help us fill this gap?

- Although ElectroNet have advised us that the Lodge should have been on mains electricity in the first months of 2019 we have yet to see this. Apparently the line is being rerouted for greater line security and where it passes over a new property consent needs to be granted by that owner. When these happen we will have mains power again. We look forward to this!
- in the week prior to the meeting severe vandalism was done to Jo Divis' house with nearly every window smashed, a door and some exterior walls kicked in. It's fortunate that we moved some of the more 'collectible' items from the house a year ago.

General News

It was a pleasure to see Nigel Slonker with Tasman Mining Ltd managing director Mark Le Messurier and his wife Dayna at our meeting. Their presence foretells exciting new developments which he briefly described to us. Mark's company has a history of taking mines like Blackwater and turning them into highly successful gold producers. There have been extensive underground drilling which have shown excellent prospects, some with gold clearly visible running the length of the sample. The deepest of these probes went 650m below the old workings. The Prohibition mine at the 17th level went down 879m. (that means they will be working a 1½ kilometres below the surface!!) An expected 700,000oz of gold is expected to be mined over the anticipated ten year life of the mine.

Work on the two 3.3km access tunnels is expected to begin later this year. The tunnels with dimensions of 5.5m X 5.5m, will have the entrance on the Snowy River near the old Millerton Mine. 30 jobs will be created initially with 100 jobs to be added when it is full production. To date \$18m has been spent with more than \$500m being raised for later work. Mr Le Messurier believes that Blackwater is a 'tremendous opportunity'.

Documentary

Because of a number of unforeseen factors Dave Kwant has taken over the production of our documentary. Dave, a West Coaster, heads 'VISIONCO' a local film company well known for several award winning video and film productions. It was great to see Dave, along with Robyn Janes (*you'll have seen her on TV*) being very active at the meeting filming Janet's presentation, the acceptance of the Wynn paintings and interviewing many of the 'old timers' present.



This photo represents the past and future of Waiuta with Dave Kwant, filming our meeting recording Mark and Dayna Le Messurier along with Diana Calvert and Alva Morgan in attendance

Colin Wynn Paintings

We have recently been gifted two valuable Colin Wynn paintings by Mrs Jo Dolan (nee Chandler) who now lives in Australia. Being aware of this Kath Waghorn (nee Chandler - and sister of Jo) was at our meeting and so was called upon to do the honours of publicly accepting the gift.

Following a valuation we are hoping that they might be hung in the Reefton i-site centre for all to see.



Kath accepting the the paintings from facilitator Tony Fortune

Gill's Cottage - Working Bee - Volunteers Needed

From Thursday 25 July to Monday 29 Alan and Graeme are planning work on Gill's Cottage. We plan

to replace the verandah floor, replace rotten weatherboards around the back porch and if time allows, to commence replacing the fence. Bring good cheer and tools appropriate to your skill. Come for as long as you are able.

Incidentally the prolific lichen growth on that fence was photographed over the summer by a British tourist, who forwarded it to a scientist colleague who in turn forwarded it to her friend at the British Museum. Interesting eh!



Filming for Posterity: In the pouring rain next to mullock heap Kath Waghorn points out to Margaret the location of her house close to the sawmill

Attachment: *Subscriptions are now due*

for the year the 2019 - 2020 - Payment details are on the form.

Did You Know:

That an All Black captain was born in Waiuta. His name was Ron King and was the first boy born in our town in August of 1909.

In Memoriam

That it was six years last May since we lost Les Wright. It only seems as though it was yesterday such was his influence and spirit. *Ka ngaro matou ia Les.*

Next Waiuta Meeting

When: Saturday 20 July 2019

Time: 2 pm

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

Please: bring a plate for afternoon tea.

Next Christchurch Meeting

When: Sunday 18 August 2019

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.

Long Term Planning - - - 9 July 2021

That day marks 70 years since the mine closed.

Mark this in your diary - for we will be remembering this somehow ! ?