

# RIMUTAKA FOREST PARK TRUST

## NEWSLETTER - JULY 1995

Hello, from the Trust. It's been a while since the last newsletter, but we haven't forgotten you!

The AGM is approaching and, as always, we're looking for new members. At Committee level we particularly need candidates for President and Secretary, although candidates for other positions are equally welcome. Duties are not onerous - usually a couple of hours each month to attend meetings (February-November), with other duties now and then. The AGM is also the time to renew Trust membership - still a very modest \$5.

Since its inception in 1988 the Trust has undertaken a number of projects which have benefited Park users. However, if the Trust is to continue doing so in future, it must attract people willing to take on the responsibility of running the Trust. Otherwise, the projects outlined below may well be the Trust's last.

### PROJECTS

#### TURERE SIGN

A design has been approved and the sign is now in the process of being made. The sign will be located in the Orongorongo Valley near the end of the Orongorongo Track, and will provide information on the hire huts, camping and picnic areas, toilets and other useful information for visitors to the Valley. The finished sign should be in place within the next month. Funding for the sign came from a \$3,260 grant from Trust Bank in 1994.

#### CARPARK SEATS

The Trust has DOC approval to erect seats in the Catchpool Valley carpark. Two generous offers have enabled this project to proceed - Stan Hunt has provided a selection of designs for the seats and a donation towards their cost, and Keith Woods has offered to build them free of charge. The Trust will supply materials for the seats.

#### TURAKIRAE HEAD INFORMATION SHEET

A draft leaflet has been prepared. A poled route from the carpark to the Reserve is now being looked at by the Park but details still need to be worked through with the land-owners. When issues relating to access are satisfactorily resolved a final draft will be prepared and printed. A grant of \$530 from the Wainuiomata Licensing Trust in 1994 will cover production costs.

## TRUST NEWS

### SUMMER PROGRAMME

The Trust is investigating the possibility of taking a bigger role in the running of the Summer Programme. Present restrictions to DOC funding and staffing will mean reductions in the scope and duration of this years Programme unless alternative funding can be found. Two options are being considered by the Trust:

1. The Trust employs a person through the Employment Service for six months who is eligible for either Tourism Green, Taskforce Green or Community Taskforce funding.
2. The Trust seeks commercial sponsorship to help pay wages and advertising costs.

A combination of both options would be the preferred outcome. At present the Trust is awaiting a proposal from DOC outlining its requirements.

In August the Trust is planning to assist the Park with planning for the next Summer Programme. Any suggestions for trips or activities, or offers to lead trips would be welcome.

### INTERPRETIVE SIGNS

Following the abandonment of the herbarium project the Trust is looking at other methods of plant identification. The Trust would like to see more interpretive signs installed along some of the easier walking tracks in the Catchpool Valley but further discussion with DOC is needed before any definite plans are made.

### MANAGEMENT REVIEW

The Management Review of the Park has been an ongoing issue with the Trust for several years now. Originally there was talk of the Review being finished early in 1994 - it wasn't and still isn't.

The Problem: DOC has said it is unwilling to give approval for certain Trust projects until the completion of the Review. This has limited the ability of the Trust to plan future projects and the drawn-out nature of the process has tested the patience and goodwill of members. Furthermore, DOC staff don't have the resources to complete the Review in the foreseeable future.

DOCs Response: Mike Edginton, who is coordinating the Review, will now do the Review in (probably 3) stages. The first stage is nearly complete - a draft has been produced and is circulating within the Department for comment.

While this is at least some progress we don't yet know what this will mean for the Trust. It may mean we can soon plan for the future with greater certainty, or it may mean several more years of uncertainty until the full Review is complete.

## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

PLEASE NOTE: This years AGM will be held on Thursday 12 October at the Hutt Valley Tramping Club Rooms, Birch Street Reserve, Lower Hutt, from 7.30pm. Guest speaker will be Bob Brockie - well-known for his work at the DSIR Field Station in the Orongorongo Valley and for his book on their research - 'A Living New Zealand Forest'. Previous AGMs in Lower Hutt have been well supported, and we are hopeful of a similar turnout this year.

Elections for the Trusts Executive Committee will take place at the AGM. Nominations are needed for President, Vice-President, Secretary, Treasurer and between 5 and 7 Committee members. The Trust is in particular need of two people willing to be Secretary or President. The Trust has been without a permanent secretary for several years now. Committee members (notably Bruce Cockburn) have helped fill the void, but this situation cannot be relied upon indefinitely.

The Trust is also in need of a new President. After two years in the role Don Millward has announced he will not be standing again for the position at this years AGM. Don has done an excellent job in difficult circumstances, and while the Committee is sorry to see him stand down, that may not be the end of his involvement - he is willing to stand as a Committee member if elected.

Any person may be nominated for a position on the Executive Committee. However, to be eligible for election, they must be a member of the Trust and their nomination must be moved and seconded by two people who are members of the Trust (Committee members will gladly help with this). To become a member write to the Trust or contact one of the Committee. There is a \$12.50 joining fee (\$5 membership fee, \$7.50 membership badge), with an annual fee of \$5 thereafter. For more information contact one of the Committee members listed below:

Viv Auty (Treasurer)	564-6840 (H)
Ian Cameron	564-3048 (H)
Bruce Cockburn	388-7717 (H)
Vera Johnstone	566-1954 (H)
Bill McCabe	564-5029 (H)
Don Millward (Chairman)	569-8610 (H)
Bill Milne	569-4644 (H)
Ivan Morrison (DOC)	564-8551 (W)
Poko Morrison	564-3648 (H)
Shirley O'Kane	566-0874 (H)
Bob Pomeroy	564-8115 (H)
Anthony Stephens	564-7239 (H)

A nomination form is attached to this newsletter. If you wish to be nominated for a position on the Executive Committee complete this form and return it by September 12 to:

Rimutaka Forest Park Trust  
c/- Rimutaka Forest Park  
Private Bag 43-902  
Wainuiomata

## **PARK NEWS**

### **ABLUTION BLOCK**

The Park is now awaiting resource and building consents for the new ablution block in the camping ground. Subject to the issuing of these consents building should begin in the next few months and be finished in time for Summer. The building has been designed by a DOC architect and will be built by DOC staff. Originally the Trust was to help fund the ablution block, but DOC now expects to cover the cost from its own funds. However, should there be a shortfall in funding an approach will be made to the Trust.

### **TRACK MAINTENANCE**

Tourism Green workers are in the process of upgrading the Whakanui Track. At the time of writing, about half the track had been upgraded (from the Sunny Grove, Wainuiomata end) and the rest had been cleared of overgrown vegetation. Workers will continue towards the River end upgrading the track where necessary. Minor track maintenance is also planned for the Five Mile Loop Track and the Big Bend Track.

### **'CAVE CREEK' CHECKS**

In the wake of the Cave Creek disaster DOC staff have checked all wooden structures in the Park. All tracks in the Park with wooden footbridges have been checked by a registered engineer contracted for the job. No problems were found.

### **BIG HUNT COMPETITION**

Big Hunt '95 is over. 260 hunters entered the competition (175 entered in 1994), and returned double the number of trophies compared to last year. The increase in numbers is more notable given last years Big Hunt included a possum category which was dropped for this years competition. Top prize of a new 4WD Toyota Hilux was not won, however five consolation prizes of \$1000 were won for various categories, and numerous spot prizes.

### **1995 SUMMER PROGRAMME STATISTICS**

934 people participated in 96 activities.

24 activities were cancelled through insufficient numbers or bad weather.

## **TRUST ACTIVITIES**

### **CHRISTMAS BARBECUE**

The Trust hosted a barbecue on December 8 last year for people associated with the Trust. The night was a relaxed and enjoyable opportunity for members and supporters to get together.

## HUT TOURS

As part of this years Summer Programme Trust members led 5 trips to visit the DOC hire huts. Many new people were introduced to these huts as a result.

## BIG HUNT

Trust members were active at the Launch and Prizegiving of the Big Hunt - both held at the Fitzroy Tavern in Wainuiomata. At the Launch, on February 25, members raised funds selling iceblocks and set up a display to promote the Trust. (The interest with which the display was received suggests a permanent display may be worthwhile. This could perhaps be set up as a display in the Park Information Centre and be used at certain events to promote the Trust).

The Prizegiving, on May 14, was another opportunity for the Trust to raise funds. An invitation to provide food for the day saw members culinary skills tested preparing chips, hotdogs and barbecued sausages. Although crowds on the two days were less than expected, a good effort raised almost \$190 for the Trust.

## OTHER NEWS

### TURERE TOILETS

The new toilets in the Orongorongo Valley have provided a much needed facility in this high-use area - although their popularity as overnight accommodation has been somewhat unexpected!

The vandalism to the toilets supporting posts over Queen's Birthday weekend last year appears to have been an isolated incident. However, a more recent concern is the amount of rubbish being left in the toilets. Over recent weeks bags of rubbish have been left inside the toilets - one bag was even taped to the floor! This is of concern to the Trust as it makes the toilets unpleasant for visitors and for Park staff who must clean them. DOC has adopted a rubbish-free policy in the Orongorongo Valley and removed all rubbish bins from the area, so visitors are expected to carry their rubbish out with them. If anyone knows anything that may identify the culprit(s) please contact the Park Information Centre on 564-8551.

### CONSERVATION MANAGEMENT STRATEGY

The Wellington Conservation Management Strategy directs how DOC will do its job during the next 10 years on all its land in the Wellington Conservancy. In April last year the Trust hosted a public meeting with DOC representatives to discuss the CMS. Subsequently, Bill Milne wrote and presented a submission from the Trust supporting DOC plans for the Rimutaka Forest Park. The revised CMS is now with the Wellington Conservation Board. The Board can request changes, and will then refer the CMS to the NZ Conservation Authority for approval. Lastly, it will go to the Conservation Minister for signing - probably later this year.

## NEW RIMUTAKA-TARARUA LINK

The NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust plans to purchase 830 hectares of land adjacent to the northern boundary of the Rimutaka Forest Park. The land lies to the south of State Highway 2 between Featherston and the Rimutaka summit and will form a permanently protected reserve between the Rimutaka and Tararua Forest Parks. Donations towards the \$100,000 purchase price can be made to:

NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust  
P.O. Box 80-007  
Green Bay  
Auckland 7

## 'A CHRONOLOGY OF THE TARARUA & RIMUTAKA RANGES'

A completely revised edition of Ross Kerr's 'Chronology' is now available. Earlier editions and supplements have been replaced with a new 64 page format, containing separate information on the history, huts and peaks of the two ranges. Copies are available from the author for \$10 each (including postage):

R.A. Kerr  
P.O. Box 540  
Levin.  
Phone: (06) 368-4796

## BILL McCABE QSM

Congratulations to Trust member Bill McCabe who was awarded a Queen's Service Medal in the Queen's Birthday Honours List announced last month. The award recognises Bill's involvement in setting up and serving on the Wainuiomata Bush Fire Force. Bill is actively involved in a number of community organisations and this award is well-deserved.

Remember, the Committee is there to serve the Trust and its members. If you have any ideas, views, criticisms or suggestions regarding Trust or Park activities let us know. If you have any comments regarding the contents of this newsletter, or wish to be more involved in the activities of the Trust, let us know. Either:

- \* contact the writer of this newsletter - Anthony Stephens 564-7239
- \* contact one of the Committee members listed on page 3
- \* write us a letter - the address is on page 3
- \* attend one of our monthly meetings (2nd Thursday of every month at 8pm)
- \* attend the AGM (October 12)
- \* stand for a position on the Trusts Executive Committee.