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Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter, No 13

(Stamp)

6 October 2004

Welcome to the thirteenth Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter.
This issue lets you know about the upcoming 2004 planting day and a picnic day

Joining the Friends, donations of money, time or expertise

- If you know of anyone who might be keen to join the Friends of Ben Rudd's, please let them know about us, what we do, and how we can be supported.
- Thank you to all our Friends for your continuing membership. If you haven't sent in your subs for this calendar year, we'd love to hear from you. Donations help the Trust and the Friends in the important work of rehabilitating Flagstaff for indigenous ecology and, importantly, for all trampers from Dunedin City and beyond. Money and offers of assistance or expertise are always welcome. Subs are \$5 per calendar year per membership. Membership can be individual, family or club. Please send any money to the above address.
- Just to remind you, Antony Hamel (phone 453 5240) is the keeper of funds, files and the clearer of the mailbox. Ken Mason (phone 476 7100) is Project Officer, keeping all work coordinated and true to the Trust's objectives, which are now embodied in the QEII Open Space Covenant. Peter Mason (phone 455 7074) is the convenor of the Friends of Ben Rudd's organisation itself.

Upcoming event:**This year's planting day**

The planting day for 2004 will be held on **Saturday 30 October**. Meet at the Bullring on Whare Flat Road at 1 PM, and join the Trust in an afternoon of very positive and non-strenuous property improvement! We have more locally-sourced silver beech to get in before the weather gets dry. If you can't make it at 1 PM, come along when you can in the afternoon, and you should see us at the former plantation area (below the skid site).

You will be impressed by the results of previous years' planting: the property is starting to look like it might have looked thousands of years ago. This is a really exciting project to be involved with. But, it doesn't come without some effort. We must acknowledge the energy of the Mason brothers and also Vincent and Rosa Pettinger, who have never missed one of our planting days yet. We will have all the necessary tools, so just bring yourselves and usual clothing for a day in the hills. If Saturday is wet, it is possible that Ken will get up there on Sunday. Phone him on 476 7100.

News from the Trust

- The OTMC held its AGM recently. The following are extracts from our report to the Club.
 - The Trust membership is now Ian Sime, Teresa Wasilewska, Richard Pettinger, Antony Hamel and Ken Mason and we're a fifth of the way through our term already. There has been one meeting in the last year and, you probably noticed, only one newsletter in that time. Largely fiscally neutral, the Trust has \$16,590 in the bank, having begun six years ago with \$16,170. All the work so far has been paid for by donations, interest and subscriptions.
 - Overall the property is looking in better condition than it has for many years. There has been a near 100% success rate of silver beech plantings and they are thriving. All this season's plantings and maintenance were completed despite a very disappointing work day turn out. The Covenant sign and "no fire" sign have been installed on the shelter and no vandalism has occurred to either these or the Linda Mercier memorial seat. After some initial ignoring and, what I believe was defiance, no fires have been lit recently. I believe the general public is respecting the property more, as a consequence of the place looking more cared for. The appearance of the sprayed area above the firebreak is mellowing and the recovery of surviving snow tussock has been very good. This was the spraying programme part funded by ORC.
 - Ken will be taking the Rhododendron Festival event through to view our Bruce Campbell dell on the morning of Saturday 30 October. If you want to join him, come along at 9.30 at the Bullring till about 12.30, that day, for "Rhodies Gone Wild". In the afternoon, we'll be planting the silver beech (see above).
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Ross Adamson: A True Friend.

It is with great sadness that the Trust marks the passing of Friend and supporter Ross Adamson. Ross was an enthusiastic and well-liked Otago trumper who knew Dunedin's hills better than most. He witnessed several decades of degradation and sheer reduction in the tramper's area of these hills and was delighted to become a member of the Friends of Ben Rudds, and contribute towards securing this precious Flagstaff property for all.

Upcoming event:**Picnic!****NOVEMBER 21**

Previous picnics have been very pleasant gatherings, with an Otago Tramping and Mountaineering Club day trip arriving to join us via Spiers Road and descending the Davies Track. The next one will be on November 21 2004. It will be great to have OTMC daytrippers and the Friends of Ben Rudd's all together again. Turn up at the Shelter from 11 AM onwards. If you would like to get a ride, or can offer one, please phone Richard or Tracy Pettinger on 487 9488, up until 8.15 on the morning. The last picnic, also a combined OTMC and Friends of Ben Rudd's one, was cancelled due to poor weather on the day. And that was in February, supposedly our best time of year!

Colourful characters: History of the property, of Ben, and of the wider Silver Peaks

If Ian Sime gets his way, the Trust and OTMC may do a major set of articles on Ben Rudd in the next OTMC "Outdoors". Ian has done, at the Trust's request, sterling work on researching Ben and the history of the property as well as the general Flagstaff area with a view to some sort of publication. With Ross Adamson's passing, there is a possibility of incorporating stories about these 2 important figures in the one book. Anecdotes, photos etc about Ross would also be appreciated. I'm sure you can imagine how important it is to get this picture together before too long! Part of the money from Friends' subscriptions will go towards the publication.

It is very important that no work be undertaken on the property without Ken's knowledge. His phone number is 476 7100. If you think you can help with work at any time in the future, please give your email addresses to Ken at kdmason@xtra.co.nz, so he can organise teams at short notice. Future work includes clearing of the legal access to the property - Spiers Road is getting a little overgrown in places.

Please contact me if you have any contributions, advice, suggestions, etc, for these newsletters. I can be emailed at pettal@clear.net.nz, or phoned at home at (03) 487 9488.

- Richard P.

We qualify quite well, having private land which is covenanted, open to the public and with wonderful biodiversity objectives!! They should fall over themselves to give us dosh. Lots of dosh. But, maybe we don't need any yet?

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> What planting or work to follow-up the spraying is needed in the next few months?

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Applications for the August-September round of the Biodiversity Condition and Advice Funds are now open.

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> You are recorded on the Ministry for the Environment's contact database as having an interest in the topic of biodiversity. Please note, you may receive this information from other agencies if you are listed on their contact databases as well.

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> The funds are a government initiative to enhance management of indigenous biodiversity outside public conservation lands (e.g. private land or Maori land). This includes areas of native vegetation, wetlands, and the habitats of native fish, birds and other species. The closing date for applications is 5pm on Monday, 27 September 2004.

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> Condition Fund

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> The Biodiversity Condition Fund aims to improve and maintain the condition of areas of indigenous vegetation, species and habitats (including wetlands and water bodies). The fund seeks to broaden community effort in the management of indigenous biodiversity, and to complement contributions for its enhancement. It will fund projects that enhance biodiversity outside public conservation lands, and particularly areas under legal protection. Projects could involve, for example, fencing or pest control.

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> Advice Fund

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> The Biodiversity Advice Fund supports the provision of information and advice to land managers to assist them in managing indigenous biodiversity. It will fund projects that inspire landholders or groups to improve the condition of indigenous biodiversity (outside of public conservation lands). The advisory services may be one off or ongoing. Methods of providing information and advice could include field days, expert advice, wananga, publications (including electronic material), training, workshops and seminars.

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> Applications

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> You can make one application to each fund. This can be for a single project, or you can apply for a package of projects as part of a 'Partnership Arrangement'. Potential applicants for a 'Partnership Arrangement' include local authorities, non-government and semi-governmental organisations, iwi, hapu or primary production and industry groups. Applications can also be made for multi-year funding (up to June 2005) for either a single project or for a package of projects.

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> Decisions on applications will be made jointly by the Director-General of Conservation and the Chief Executive of the Ministry for the Environment. Ministers will announce decisions in December 2004.

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> To apply to either of the funds, you must fill in the relevant application form. The application forms and criteria for evaluating projects can be found on www.biodiversity.govt.nz/land/nzbs/land/condition.html or obtained from the Department of Conservation at:

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> Biodiversity Funds

> Department of Conservation

> P O Box 10420

> WELLINGTON

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Hi Jocelyn

There hasn't been an issue of the Friends of Ben Rudd's newsletter since issue 12. We haven't had anything to do a newsletter about. We want to keep up our planting programme, but I have to be honest and say there is some disillusionment over the poor turnouts on working parties.

I do apologise for the inconvenience to you, and no doubt others, but I had a system crash at home and lost many address updates I'd made since before Issue 12. Someone told me the XY contact was a Mrs Scrymgeour, and I just had to look you up in the phonebook to find out the address. Thanks for giving us your information. If I can find the latest contacts for the Taieri Recreational TC and the WEA Over 50s TC, I think I'll have everyone's address back again. It is possible that Peter Mason, convenor of the Friends, has it. Or, then again, I bet Ian Sime can help me out. I'll copy this to the Trust members and Peter M.

The last mailout was a quick notice about the last picnic in February. I'm hoping the Trust can have a picnic this coming November, to coincide with a trip I'm leading for OTMC on Flagstaff about then. We would do the usual combination trip.

I hope the XYs will be able to join us. And once again thank you very much for the financial support over the years. It has been very important to us to be able to fund the work. I hope you have enjoyed the view from Linda Mercier's seat, also provided by the generosity of long-term users.

Regards

I've carried in and stashed about half the silver beech trees that we have for planting this season. My schedule is getting rather full these days but I'm able to pencil in 1pm on Saturday 30th October for a tree planting etc at Ben Rudds. In the morning (9.30am - 12.30pm), I'm taking a public walk to the Bruce Campbell Rodo Glen. (will check & tidy up the track beforehand) Peter can take a scrub cutter in (plus ferry all the planting etc gear) on the morning to tickle up the track and the skid site.

Would this arrangement be suitable for ewe guys? Is there enough business for us to have a meeting? If this OK could you put out a notice Richard? If short of material for a newsletter, perhaps Ian has some tasty snippets about Ben Rudd available. Whad-da-ya think?

Standing by and receiving
Ken
