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# Ben Rudd's Management Trust

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*Benjamin Rudd*

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## Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter, No 14

15<sup>th</sup> October 2009

Welcome to the 14<sup>th</sup> Edition of the Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter. This issue lets you know what the Trust has been doing since we last wrote in 2004 and about the upcoming picnic at Ben Rudds on the 1<sup>st</sup> November.

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2008 marked the 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the Ben Rudd's Management Trust. Since August 2008 when foundation Trustees Richard Pettinger, Teresa Wasilewska, Ken Mason, Bevan Blackmore, Geoff Jackson and Anthony Hamel were elected, much has been achieved on the property. Over the past ten years mention must be made of the work done by these people in seeking to achieve the objectives of the Trust. They have been aided by Peter Mason; long time working stalwart on the property who until recently was also the organiser of the Friends of Ben Rudds and Ian Sime who has served on the Trust since 2003. We owe all these people a debt of gratitude for the asset we continue to enjoy. This last year Club members Alan Thomson and Henriette Rawlings have also joined long standing Trustees; Ian, Richard and Teresa on the Trust. To celebrate ten years of achievement and to thank the people that have been involved with this, a Club Picnic and Day Trip to Benn Rudds will take place on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November. Bruce Campbell's Rhododendron Dell on the property should be in full bloom at the time. A cup of tea and scones will be served.

In December the Trust was awarded an MWH grant of \$2,500 for weed control work on the property. These funds have also been used to apply for a further \$2500 from the DCC Biodiversity Fund, which operates funding criteria for projects on a 50:50 share basis. With this funding the Trust intends using the DCC Task Force Green Group co-ordinated by Alex Griffen, on an ongoing basis to carry out weed control work on the property. This work is planned to coincide with the start of the growing season.

In February 2010 aerial weed spraying of targeted areas on the property above the firebreak by Helicopters Otago has been arranged in conjunction with the DCC and their work on Flagstaff Scenic Reserve. To enable this spraying to be carried out accurately, the Trustees have undertaken GPS positioning and marking work on the property. We are also in the process of renegotiating a hunter to control pigs.

We are also currently reviewing our obligations under the QE II National Trust Open Space Covenant on the property and have met with a representative from the QE II Trust; Rob Campbell on site to discuss the ongoing management of the property.

### **Ben Rudd's Picnic**

The 2009 picnic will be held at the Ben Rudd's Shelter on Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> November. An OTMC day trip will arrive via Spiers Road and will descend by the Davies Track to Glenleith. You are welcome to join the Club for this option. Meet at the OTMC rooms, 3 Young St, South Dunedin; by 9am with leader Roy Ward phone 473 9518. If you want to attend the picnic only, people will be leaving from the Bullring from 10.30 onwards. Things to do while there include lying about in the sun, chatting, visiting Big Rock and Bruce Campbell's Rhododendron Dell via the Jim Freeman Track.

### **Task Force Green Lends a Hand**

The Trust has negotiated a deal with the keen lads of Task Force Green (TFG) to help us in the battle against broom and gorse on the property. A group of seven had a morning up there, on 30 September, and Trustee Richard Pettinger went along to show them the job. We could see where ex-Trust stalwarts Peter Mason, Geoff Jackson and Bevan Blackmore had got to in their previous efforts, and the TFG chaps showed they would be equal to the task of carrying on and where necessary going back over the sections already treated. Their focus is below the firebreak, especially at the former skidsite, to start with, clearing back a few metres of broom to encourage trackside native regeneration and to try to keep the remaining tussocks from being shaded out. They are cutting stems and treating them with lethal substances, and will if necessary go back to lightly spray the inevitable regrowth.

In due course, if they have enough manpower still looking for work, the TFG folk are happy to help us minimise the helicopter spraying work that's needed above the firebreak. It is not an expensive option to use them, and it should not eat into the Trust capital, raised from the sale of the trees, at all. They will use minimal materials, so it's mainly their modest hourly rate we have to pay for. Their work is funded by the grant money mentioned elsewhere in this newsletter.

TFG will also keep an eye on and control where they can, wilding conifers and rowan, and will no doubt let us know of other emerging problems that they spot, such as Darwin's barberry. They are well experienced in this kind of work. They will do a few days up there as it suits them, and hold a DCC Water Dept key to the Bullring gate. Please, if you encounter them up there, be observant of any signs on the track about workmen or spraying, and give them your warmest encouragement.

One of the pleasant surprises for Richard, with engaging TFG, was encountering old friend Jonathan Lewis, who was a very keen OTMC member in the 1970s. He is back in town, and helps run TFG. We think with his understanding of the OTMC, the Ben Rudd's property and its objectives, the future work to control weeds up there is in very good hands.

Richard Pettinger

### **INVITATION TO A DUNEDIN BIODIVERSITY FORUM**

Are you interested in the protection and management of biodiversity in Dunedin City? If so the City is organising a forum on biodiversity to be held in the **Skeggs Gallery, Municipal Chambers, on Wednesday 21 October from 6-8pm**. Refreshments will be provided.

The establishment of a forum is listed as an action in the Biodiversity Strategy, adopted by Council in 2007. The City recognises that there are an increasing number of projects being undertaken within Dunedin related to biodiversity conservation and management. As these projects gain momentum it is an appropriate time to consider establishing a forum or network, which could provide a useful platform to share information, ideas, research and resources. Items being considered for discussion at the forum include: an overview of projects being undertaken within the city; identifying gaps, overlaps and opportunities to work together; things that work well; funding opportunities; promotion of conservation work; scope and frequency of a forum/network.

The forum will also provide an opportunity to look forward to 2010, which has been designated by the United Nations as the International Year of Biodiversity ([www.countdown2010.net](http://www.countdown2010.net)). The Dunedin City Council has signed up as a partner to Countdown2010 and is putting together an events programme for 2010 to celebrate biodiversity and increase the profile of conservation work within the city. The forum provides an opportunity to discuss co-ordination of events. If you would like to attend the forum please respond by **16 October 2009**. If you have any questions regarding the forum or would like to suggest agenda items for discussion, the DCC can be contacted on 474 3331 or [dhogan@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:dhogan@dcc.govt.nz). An agenda will be distributed to attendees prior to the meeting.

**SEE YOU AT THE PICNIC – 1st NOVEMBER!!**

Please contact The Trust if you have any contributions, advice, suggestions, etc, for these newsletters.

We can be emailed at [henriette.rawlings@dcc.govt.nz](mailto:henriette.rawlings@dcc.govt.nz) or contacted on (03) 474 3445 during work hours or (03) 474 3445 after work hours.