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Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter, No 7

(Stamp)

8 June 2001

Welcome to the seventh Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter. This issue lets you know about a possible QEII covenant.

Joining the Friends, finding lost Friends, Donations of money, time or expertise

- If there is anyone you know of who might be keen to join the Friends of Ben Rudds, please let them know about us, what we do, and how we can be supported. Thanks again to all those who have supported us so far. We are grateful to everybody on the current mailing list, for paying year 2000 subscriptions, and to most of you for paying your 2001subs. Year 2001subscriptions are now due if you haven't paid. If there is a red asterisk on your address label, this means Peter Mason hadn't received any money from you for this year by the time this newsletter was prepared.
- With this newsletter, we welcome:
Trevor Pullar as a member of the Friends of Ben Rudds. Trevor lives at 148 Chapman St, Dunedin, ph 473 0518. Also **John & Nicki Cocks**, of 11 Northfield Ave, Dunedin, ph 473 0518. Great to have you folk on board!
- Can anyone help us find Robert Peters of Waitaki district, who has gone AWOL?
- REMEMBER: Donations help the Trust and the Friends in the important work of rehabilitating Flagstaff for indigenous ecology and, importantly, for trampers. Money, or offers of assistance or expertise, are always welcome. Subs are \$5 per year per membership. Membership can be individual, family or club. Please send any money to the above address.

Last year's picnic

The year 2000 picnic was held on Sunday 5 November. An OTMC day trip arrived via Spiers Road and descended the same way. Several picnickers spent a pleasant day sitting chatting in the sun, and visiting Bruce Campbell's rhododendron dell down the Jim Freeman Track. Make sure you don't miss this year's one.

Bits and Pieces report:

- The City's ambitious effort to fell wilding trees in the Silverstream catchment is progressing, and the work on the Ben Rudd's land has been completed. Follow-up work in the future will keep them under control. The landscape has certainly changed, now that all of the previously visible exotic trees on the land are gone.
- Trustees Peter and Geoff used scrubcutters on 'old man' broom above the firebreak on the weekend of 28 - 29 October last year. They made great progress, and follow-up work will be much easier. The stacked broom will be sprayed and then monitored for regrowth. Ken will investigate getting that whole area sprayed, by helicopter if necessary. Recent spraying by the DCC on the reserve, near the firebreak and in the vicinity of our land has made the control of this broom a high priority. Effort after the spraying can be put into tussock regeneration. The Trust will look at several possible sources of funds, including using the Trust's own funds.
- The locally-sourced silver beech planted in the vicinity of the skid site, planted last September among the rotting logs (to protect the trees from pig damage) have been successful, thanks to the small keen team and Ken's follow-up watering. April Fool's Day 2001 saw a group including two from the University planting 20 silver beeches outwards from the 11-year-old trees. Ken has been side-pruning some of the older beeches.
- Damage has occurred to the shelter over recent months. Vandals have led to the removal of the boards on the south side, which Ken thinks "on reflection" has made the shelter lighter and more appealing.
- With the loss of the pine trees, views from parts of the property are opening up again. There is the possibility of putting in more seats for walkers and workers to rest upon, in the style of the "Douglas Seat". The Trust has approved Ken to spend \$100 on a seat under Bruce Campbell's Silver beeches behind the shelter.
- A work party to reclear the track to Big Rock would be appropriate now that the DCC wilding control team has put in access tracks in the area. There is a possibility of putting in an anchor for rock-climbing there.

COVENANTING OPTION

The Trust has approached the Queen Elizabeth II Trust about the possibility of placing an Open Space Covenant on the entire Rudds property. The OTMC committee, supports this idea in principle. A proposal will be put to our landowners at the OTMC AGM in August. Helen Clarke, local representative of the QEII Trust has visited the property and met the BR Management Trust. She stated that the advantages are: possible rates relief, assistance with weed control, the enhanced status and, as there would be no survey or fencing costs, possible assistance in other areas. There are very few covenants that do not require fencing, but a fence on the Ben Rudds property boundary would be totally inappropriate and unnecessary. Recent efforts by Chris Pearson and Ken have helped to fix the boundary. Thanks guys, especially to Chris who is soon to leave us for a job in the US. If the OTMC agrees to applying for a covenant, it could be a year before one is obtained.

Extract from the *Otago Witness* 1 October 1913 (page 9):

"Mr Ben Rudd, the hermit of Flagstaff, who is known both personally and by repute to many people in Dunedin, met with a painful accident at Kaikorai on Monday September 22. He had a swag on his back and was riding a young, restive horse, and losing his balance as the horse played up, fell heavily to the ground. He was taken into an adjacent chemist's shop, and Dr Russell Ritchie, who was passing at the time, was called in. He found that Mr Rudd was suffering from several bruises and a cut on the head, and advised him to go to the Hospital to have his injuries attended to. This course, with characteristic independence, Mr Rudd declined to follow, and, with his swag on his back and his arm slipped through the bridle, he set out for his home on the hill. Some doubt has arisen as to whether the old man would reach his home safely."

The Trust is examining the possibility of publishing a book on the life of Ben Rudd. We believe he is worthy of being remembered in such a formal way. If you have any comments on the idea, please contact the Trust, especially Ken or Antony. Such a book would be long overdue.

BIG PLANTING DAY COMING UP --- SATURDAY 28 JULY (rain day Sunday)

Please help out, there are lots of plants to stick in, and others to maintain. Past efforts have been well-attended and are always lots of fun. (Even if only to poke the borax at Ken, who so richly deserves it sometimes.) Bring your warm clothes and sturdy footwear. You may well have to walk from the Bullring. Material will be already on site. Meet at the Bullring 1 PM. Phone Ken at his new phone number 476 7100, for further information.

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

- Richard P.