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Benjamin Rudd

Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter, No 18

(Stamp)

18 July 2014



Welcome to the eighteenth Friends of Ben Rudd's Newsletter.

This issue lets you know about on-going work on the OTMC's lovely property.

Hello Friends! It's been over a year and a half since you had a newsletter. Hasn't the time flown by?

- *If you are reading this on paper, it's because we are giving you another chance to give your email address to me at pettal@clear.net.nz, or by phone on 03 487 9488, if you do or don't wish to receive paper copies.*
- *If you wish to rejoin at any time, or if you know of anyone who might be keen to join the mailing list for the "Friends of Ben Rudd's", please contact us with email addresses. Please let others know about us, what we do, and how we can be supported. -- Read on to see how you could contribute or participate this year!*

Donations: We are very grateful to have received donations in 2012, from the following Friends: Gwen & John Allison, Barbara Markby and June Bullock. *Thanks!* **Friends are invited to make donations direct to the Trust, but we are no longer actively seeking Friends' membership subscriptions.**

The OTMC's real estate needs some maintenance! Sunday 7 September 2014

Work on the property has been done by an amazing team of enthusiasts some of whom we know little or nothing about! Thanks to whoever it was who framed our boundary welcome signs along the firebreak.

Turn over to read more.

Last year, work on wilding tree control (especially rowans) was carried out by Paul Cunliffe with a little help from Richard, and also by Trustee Sam P and Christine Keller. Sam and Trustee Alan arranged for the promised funding to be collected from DCC's Biodiversity fund to pay for the job. Sterling work. Task Force Green has carried out work, but they needed to be reminded to bill us for it! We are keen to keep them working on the broom and gorse along the Firebreak and especially at the skidsite.

Thanks to the DCC for helping us out. The property is a huge asset to the City, and we are very happy to keep it looking like a scenic reserve! Latest news is that the DCC have promised us \$3000, which Trustee Kathy applied for. Thanks, Kathy! That is for animal & plant pest control and plantings for indigenous biodiversity but the DCC require *volunteer* work be valued to either exceed or match that amount. This is where the Trust would like your help! *See below*.

The 2013 winter snowfall that damaged so many tracks around Dunedin did not spare our property. Quite a lot of trees were down, around the shelter and blocking the tracks. Various groups around Dunedin volunteered to help clear the damage. Sterling work by Bill Houston and his cobbers is much appreciated.

We do have to ask if any group is doing work up there that the Trust be advised. This could save us arranging to get work done and sending a team up only to find the work was already finished! Also, when it comes to broom and gorse, it is very important that it not be simply pruned, but stump-killed as well so we don't end up with a denser regrowth.

Animal control: The Trust may have to find a new hunter to work on eradicating pigs and hopefully possums. We are currently in discussions with various people.

Dogs: Apart from the hunter, we ask please to not take dogs onto the property. They are welcome, if under control, on the Firebreak, in line with the Flagstaff Walkway.

The QE II Trust's local rep, Rob Campbell, has retired and we look forward to working with his replacement, Robin Thomas who was formerly with DoC. Thanks for all your helpful advice, Rob, and have a happy retirement.

The shelter: Paul C got the shelter itself looking good for the 90th. There is a little block-sealing work still to be done.

OTMC 90th Celebrations: Members saw the property at its best when we held the OTMC's 90th anniversary picnic last year. (Watch out for the 100th!) The picnic was a great success with about a hundred in attendance at the shelter. John Monaghan and Alan had done a fine job opening up the views with some judicious felling and trimming. This work is in accordance with the QE II Trust's management plan. A big thanks to John ("Branch Manager").

Obituary – Marie Macdonald

It is with great sadness that the Trust marked the passing of a good old Friend of Ben Rudd's. A prominent member of the Otago Tramping Club since the 1950s, Marie and her late husband Gordon organised the Family Tramping Group with Lyall Campbell. One of their most frequent destinations was of course the Ben Rudd's hut site, and your editor plus Henri and Jeanne Rawlings and countless others will well recall sitting around chatting to Marie as she boiled the billy by the remains of the (newest) hut there. We learnt such a lot from Marie and will always treasure those memories.

Ben Rudd's Property Maintenance! Sunday 7 September 2014

A Sunday day trip with a difference! This is advertised on the OTMC trip programme card. A working bee.

The Trust and OTMC members as owners of our freehold estate need to put in some effort above the firebreak, to work to retain the tussocks in a manner that is compatible with the adjacent Flagstaff Scenic Reserve. We also need some keen people to go after rowans and other unwanted trees that are spreading very rapidly.

This work will be in conjunction with the Trust managing and supervising Task Force Green workers, and Alan is asking them to do some follow-up treatment of gorse and broom along the firebreak.

We will meet at the OTMC rooms at 9 am on Sunday 7 Sept, or at the Bullring at 9.30. We cannot promise a vehicle will go up to the property, as that depends on recent weather and the state of the firebreak.

Phone Richard on 487 9488, or Alan on 455 7878. In the event of bad weather, give us a call. We may reschedule for the next Sunday.

We reckon the property will be looking really good after this combined effort. Your volunteer assistance would be very welcome! (And is required for the DCC grant.) Please let us know if you can help. Thanks.

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

- Richard Pettinger.