



CANOPY

Newsletter of the New Zealand Native Forests Restoration Trust

PATRON: Sir Paul Reeves, ONZ, GCMG, GCVO, QSO

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30th Anniversary of the NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust!

This year is the 30th Anniversary of the formation of the Trust in the wake of Pureora logging protests. Since then, an active approach to the protection and restoration of New Zealand's threatened native habitat has expanded to become the hallmark of our organisation. Over this lengthy period the Trust has been well served by Honorary Rangers, many other practical helpers, and our successive Field Officers David Wright and Sharen Graham. All this activity is guided and directed by Trustees; a body of dedicated people whose long-term commitment has proved truly remarkable. The Trust has also been very fortunate in sound leadership from the Chair by Owen Lewis 1982-1995, Jim Dart 1995-1998, Brian Davis 1998-2005, and currently Colleen Newton. Making all this possible has been the backing of more than 2000 generous supporters from throughout New Zealand.

In thinking of everyone who has been associated with the Trust, we remember with special affection and respect our Honorary Trustee Cynthia Hewett of Cambridge, Waikato. We have a

further Honorary Trustee, David Bellamy in the UK. Our first Patron was Sir Edmund Hillary; his successor in this capacity is Sir Paul Reeves.

To mark this special occasion we are holding a gathering to which all supporters are invited. Photographs and memorabilia connected with the Trust's activities will be most welcome for display at this function. If you would like to mark the Trust's anniversary with a donation towards our work, please see the Birthday Appeal slip on Canopy's back page.

The Trust's 30th Birthday Celebration lunch will take place in Auckland on Saturday 30 October at Oakridge House in the grounds of Unitec, Gate 4, Carrington Road, Point Chevalier.

Please refer to the card accompanying this CANOPY for details and booking arrangements, or else contact either Owen Lewis (09 845 1561) or Brian Davis (09 373 3859).

Marie Neverman Reserve

We are delighted to announce the addition of 113 hectares of wetland to our Marie Neverman Reserve at Tupare on the Kaipara Peninsula. This step was the target of our 2009 Appeal that has raised \$49,000 to date from a large number of Trust supporters to whom we are very grateful. Unfortunately the past two years have been a difficult time in which to obtain public grants, however acquisition of this important site has been possible by making up the balance from the major private donations which, combined with Marie Neverman's bequest, enabled the initial Tupare purchase.

Work has already been undertaken to control weeds in the new area that extends the reserve out to the harbour. Here the spring-time display of kowhai blossom has been a wonderful sight. Over the winter months a series of plantings has taken place to provide replacements for aging kanuka forest and to enhance the bush margin of the lake. Waterbirds are thriving: the shag colony has been active all year, and bird flocks on the lake can include up to 50 NZ scaup (the black teal, an attractive little diving duck). Fernbirds are heard on most visits and a bittern was sighted recently. To improve access in wet weather a metalled area is being installed at the reserve entrance, and other improvements for visitors are being planned.

Another Reserve!



In Canopy #54 we reported the prospect of a 200-hectare extension to the Four Brothers Reserve, a native bush block in the Raglan ecological district. Negotiations involving the QEII National Trust, Environment Waikato, and NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust have now reached the stage of a sale & purchase agreement. Our September meeting of the Trust received a positive report on progress and resolved to begin the acquisition by paying the deposit on the property. This block will be a valuable addition to native forest habitat to the west of Hamilton and provide future opportunities for restoration planting.

The Trust's Aims and Objectives

Arthur Cowan writes: At our most recent meeting of the Trustees it was widely discussed that we should consider a possible change of direction. For example, it would indeed be great if we had a keen Trust Representative in each district. However the old saying probably applies – 'If something is not broken - don't try and fix it.'

Many years have passed since Stephen King and the late Shirley Guildford, our visionary activists and founders, dreamed of restoring our declining native forest. Pureora was the initial target, following the successful 'tree-sitting' episode of January 1978 that saved the last of the ancient totara remnants. Some good planting was done there to replace pine trees with natives. The Tunawai Valley near the Rangitoto Ranges came next, where extensive logging had finished. Kokako were reported in this area by Barry Rowe and Bob Horsfall at the time, probably 1980. This was a thrilling discovery. Many thousands of trees were planted there and, along with the natural regeneration, a wonderful forest now exists.

The Trust bought Rangitoto Station in 1989. This action proved to be a move of national importance as a plan by DOC to save the kokako, an endangered species, required both access and accommodation, which was now available on the Station. Predator control was the key to saving these birds. 1080 aerial drops began in the 1970s as TB was spreading in cattle and infected possums were to blame. This proved to be a blessing in saving both the birds and the forest. TB was eliminated in due course. Then Lawrence Gordon, with the help of Howick Tramping Club members, intensified the rat control. The kokako population has rapidly increased along with all the bird life. The health of the forest has returned to normal with all animal pests under control.

The Owen Lewis Reserve, opened in August 1997, is a valuable addition to the Rangitoto district, with a certainty of kokako spreading down to this desirable forest. Not to be forgotten is the threat faced, because this forest was planned to be felled and cleared for farming. The Trust's offer to purchase it came just in time to prevent a disastrous habitat loss.

Our home district has greatly benefited by the work of the Trust. One of our earlier projects was planting in the Waitomo catchment. Indeed here we have made a landscape change of great value to the whole Waitomo Caves system. The purchase of Tui Glen Reserve in 2007 was the icing on the multi-million dollar cake that Waitomo represents.

So then the work of the Trust continues and Shirley Guildford's dream of forest protection has become a reality. Many more pages would need to be written to describe the value of our wetland properties, kahikatea stands and other native forest reserves with their bush covenants across the north and south. We all know that there is still much to be done, but these days we do not work alone, as across the country many have taken up the challenge.



Arthur & Pat Cowan tree planting, about 1990

Our Role as an Advocate



Objects of the Trust include supporting the protection of indigenous flora, fauna and natural ecosystems and educating the public, including the commercial sector and authorities, on the restorative and conservation acts that will best serve these conservation interests. An opportunity to work in this way recently arose when we became aware of attempts by Rodney County Council to sell a significant piece of rural land ahead of the transfer of assets to the new 'super city.' A bush-clad farmlot of 83ha at the end of Tapu Road, Huapai, north west of Auckland, acquired at a cost of around \$3 million for a treatment works, is not required as the sewage is to be piped away instead. The proceeds from this sale were to be spent elsewhere in the county. However offers for the block had not reached \$1.5 million so a big financial loss was part of the deal. Why sell?

The Trust's view is that the bush should be preserved through a restoration programme. Taking this stand, Trustee Geoff Davidson sought an audience with the Mayor Penny Webster and we were invited to put our case. Hence a deputation comprising Geoff, Owen Lewis and Michael Taylor gave a PowerPoint presentation before the Mayor and two of her senior officers demonstrating the value of the block to present and future residents. We stressed the proximity to the Ernest Morgan Reserve where a rare species

of parahebe occurs and noted the potential corridor to link Tiritiri and the Whangaparaoa Peninsula with the Ark in the Park of the Waitakere Ranges.

We also drew attention to the Trust's purchase in the Rodney district to protect coastal forest and wetland in our Marie Neverman Reserve at Tupare. Sadly we met with a rebuttal on all fronts. However, this may not be the end of the story. Using our information, the NZ Herald has brought the matter to wider public attention with an article by their reporter Wayne Thompson (September 15, page A7) and a follow up piece the next day. If the block fails to be sold, or the opinions of other councillors bring about a change of direction, the outcome promoted by the Trust may yet prevail. We believe that the block should become a permanent reserve as a backdrop to the Huapai-Kumeu community for recreational use by the public, while protecting the bush and natural habitat values of the site.

Taking a wider view, the Trust is keeping a watching brief on proposals relating to the future of forested areas of the Crafar farm properties, parts of Great Barrier Island adjacent to Motu Kaikoura, and the conservation estate on the Chatham Islands. The opportunities for positive conservation action are legion!

The founding of the NFRT and its initial achievements, at Pureora and Rangitoto Station, were in full swing when I was a teenager. I certainly got a first hand view of what sheer determination and dedication can accomplish. At the time these seemed to be hard-won victories with much planning and financial risk involved. I remember wondering sometimes if it was worth it.

Now 30 years or so down the track, thank goodness we did have someone prepared to take those risks and work so hard. The purchase of the forest, the work of restoration and the on-going predator control have had a huge impact. The forest health and bird numbers have increased dramatically since I was a child. Now my children can enjoy viewing forest and endangered species that would have only been a distant memory. What an incredible achievement!

The early members of the NFRT have done, and are still doing, a great job. They have saved and restored forests that would have been long gone. They have already proved how valuable and worthwhile this is, the results are there to see. From one generation to the next we need to get on board and keep up the good work.

Rosemary Davison

Exploring New Zealand

Many of New Zealand's natural areas remain under threat from intensive farming, urbanisation or other pressures, and the setting of land aside to conserve our unique environment is a high priority. However public support requires a wide appreciation of what there is to protect and what can easily be lost. A fresh publication from Random House serves this purpose: *Wild New Zealand: From the Road* aims particularly to expand the understanding and enjoyment of those travelling by car. In the process, the book focuses on the varied landscapes seen from the road together with scenic features, rare plants or special bird haunts reached by a short walk. Its approach should serve both tourists and residents. The author and photographer is Gordon Ell, a former President of Forest & Bird and ONZM recipient for his services to journalism and conservation, who draws on his countrywide exploration of the natural environment to act as guide. Hence this handbook forms an ideal companion in the search for those places you have always meant to visit.

An Unusual Opportunity

Joy and Owen Lewis, an NZ NFR Trustee, are reluctantly selling their native bush property in the Waitakere Ranges Heritage area. The land is a block of 2 acres (0.8ha.) with mature and regenerating native forest with some trees 150 or more years old, bordering on the Regional Park and near to the Scenic Drive.

The house is a small modern cottage built in 1987, with good access. The property would appeal to anyone who wants to enjoy and nurture their own piece of bush in a place that is only 40 minutes from Auckland city.

For more information phone: (09) 845 1561,
or email: lewisoj@xtra.co.nz



Can You Help?

The Trust urgently needs assistance where gaps exist and also to cover some crucial new developments. Can you help us in this growing activity? If you have experience of one or more of the following areas would you consider joining us?

To fulfill our wish list, we are seeking:

- Helpers to expand our support base through publications and to widen public awareness of the Trust by developing **public relations**.
- A **finance manager** to explore new sources of funding such as carbon trading, sponsorships, and auto-pay schemes.
- Assistance in setting up a **computer-managed control system for our reserves**.
- A **webmaster** to take advantage of the possibilities of the internet.
- A **minutes secretary** to keep records of the Trust's monthly meetings.
- Prospective **new Trustees**, particularly from regions outside Waikato and Auckland.

And apart from these specific jobs, we are always on the look out for **young people with an enthusiasm for conservation**.

If you feel you may be able to help, **please make contact** with any Trustee, particularly Brian Davis (09 373 3859) or Owen Lewis (09 845 1561)

Support from the Heseltine Trust

We are very grateful to the Heseltine Trust for a recent grant of \$1000 that has been put towards preservation of NFRT archives which are a very precious part of New Zealand's conservation history. Both oral and written material is being securely stored. Oral records, in the form of interviews on disk and biographical notes, have been gathered from four Trustees: Owen Lewis, Stephen King, Arthur Cowan and Geoff Davidson, with others to follow. Next, our extensive paper records are being sorted by a professional archivist, Alistair Carlile. He is working with a thorough profile of the Trust's various activities that enables past material to be retrieved when necessary and additions to be kept in their appropriate places

Steuart Russell, after whom the Trust's **Awakino Beech Reserve** is named, was a strong supporter of the Trust at its foundation. Something of his outlook is present in the poem below written in the last year of his life.

Spirit . . .

*To come from the mystery of the mists of time,
To float on the clouds of romance into eternal silence,
This is to walk in the forest and live.*

*You and I, friend, have experienced this,
And although we may pass into that eternal silence,
Somehow I know that between us this will live forever;
Part of the beauty and wonder of the New Zealand native
forests.*

*For we have worshipped together in the great and sacred
Forest of Tane.*

Steuart Russell, 1989

BIRTHDAY APPEAL

Yes, I should like to give a contribution supporting the work of the Trust and marking this 30th Anniversary

Here is my tax-deductible donation of \$

Name:

Address:

Phone:

Please make cheques payable to **NZ Native Forests Restoration Trust**
Send to NZ NFRT, PO Box 80007, Green Bay, Waitakere 0643

IF YOU WISH TO KEEP YOUR COPY OF CANOPY INTACT, PLEASE SUPPLY THE ABOVE DETAILS & INDICATE ITS INTENDED PURPOSE WITH YOUR DONATION

Come and stay at

Mangarakau Wetland Field Centre, NW Nelson



Attractive 10 bed lodge situated amid wonderful scenery with walking tracks around the swamp. Close to outstanding natural wilderness areas with access to Kahurangi National Park, Farewell Spit and Te Tai Tapu Marine Reserve. Bring own bedding and food.

For more information and Lodge Bookings:

Ph/fax Jo-Anne Vaughan (03) 525 6031

javn@xtra.co.nz

Come and stay at

Rangitoto Station Reserve



Modern 3-bedroomed house, 34km from Otorohanga, King Country. Well-equipped and ideal for small to medium groups but sleeping space depends on how many workers are there at the time. Camping permitted near the woolshed. Hours of walking tracks through bush or open country with superb views. Many native bird species including kokako, kaka and falcon.

Relax and enjoy the peace and quietness.

House Bookings: Ph. Judy (09) 817-7604 (pte)

jrhanbury@actrix.co.nz



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New Zealand
Permit No. 98632

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