



# CANOPY

Newsletter of the New Zealand Native Forests Restoration Trust

PO Box 80-007, Green Bay, Waitakere 0643  
[www.nznfrt.org.nz](http://www.nznfrt.org.nz)

## The Passing of our Patron

With the whole of New Zealand the Restoration Trust was saddened to learn of the death, in August this year, of our Patron, Sir Paul Reeves.

When our foundation patron, Sir Edmund Hillary, died in 2008 we sought a person of like stature and one with a keen interest in conservation. The name of Sir Paul was, in many ways, an obvious one. As a former Governor-General and Archbishop he was widely known and respected. He had been appointed director of the Queen Elizabeth the Second National Trust in 1995 and became the chairperson in 2000 holding that office for two years. He was well known to the Restoration Trust having opened the Ross Bishop Reserve, in pouring rain, and the Marie Neverman Reserve on a sunnier day. We have sought his wise counsel on a number of occasions and are only sorry that he could not be more fully involved in visiting some of our reserves as he had hoped.

Trustee Brian Davis represented the Restoration Trust at Sir Paul's State Funeral, noting the use by more than one speaker of the reference to the falling of a giant totara. We express our sincerest sympathy to Beverley, Lady Reeves, and her family.

## Trustee Changes

The Native Forests Restoration Trust is remarkable for the length of voluntary service of many of those involved. However changes are inevitable and Jenny Rattenbury is now standing down having been a valued trustee for some years in Auckland, then Wellington. Jenny's contributions have included work on Management Plans for our Reserves and other help with business in the Wellington area. With her special skills, she has been responsible for the design and presentation of many of our appeal brochures, each carefully planned to bring out the features of the area concerned.

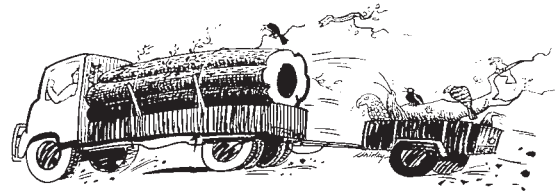
Thank you very much, Jenny.

We are constantly on the look out for potential Trustees and anticipate making at least one fresh appointment this year.

## Expanding the Trust Reserves

### Extension to Puhoi Far North Reserve

Bought in 1995 with the aid of an appeal to our supporters, Puhoi Far North is the Trust's northernmost reserve, comprising 241 hectares of native bush. To extend the reserve, and as protection against nearby subdivision, we have successfully negotiated the purchase of an adjacent 12.5 ha of land highly suitable for forest restoration. Acquisition of this block is encouraging several landowners to put QEII covenants on their own neighbouring bush and the combination provides a corridor through to the Maungataniwha range. This will benefit the impressive population of kiwi that are established in this area.



*Shirley Smith's illustration for the Honeymoon Valley (Puhoi Far North) appeal brochure*

### Waikato Reserve a step nearer

Under the theme of 'Looking Forward' the previous issue of Canopy described steps being taken to develop a substantial native bush reserve in the Waikato, west of Hamilton on the main route to Raglan. The Trust has now paid a deposit on the property which, together with funds set aside by Environment Waikato, should enable the acquisition to proceed. In addition, two adjacent blocks of land have been identified as suitable for restoration planting which are at present for sale. We expect to announce full details of this wonderful opportunity in a special issue of Canopy in the near future.

## Bequests to the Trust

The Native Forests Restoration Trust relies on the donations from supporters for much of its income, particularly when we seek help with large projects such as reserve purchases. Bequests are in a special category and the Trust has been fortunate to receive a number of very generous gifts; without these progress would have been impossible. A leaflet "**Creating a Legacy that Lasts Forever**" is available from the Trust. In addition, an item in Canopy #52 that can be found on the website [nznfrt.org.nz](http://nznfrt.org.nz) provides more information about bequests.

# Honorary Rangers

This year has seen several changes in the ranks of the Trust's Honorary Rangers. Our August meeting received with regret the resignation of David Burson. As ranger for nine years at **Pigeon Bush** in the Wairarapa, our largest reserve, David has faced a challenging series of tasks, including track maintenance and construction jobs, restoration planting, goat culling, and much removal of wilding pines and other alien plants. Fortunately Neil Challands has agreed to take over as Honorary Ranger. Neil, who has been involved in the recent track cutting at PBR, is a keen trumper and has been Chief Guide of the Tararua Tramping Club. Peter March will continue to be an assistant ranger at Pigeon Bush.

The **Steuart Russell Reserve**, north of Awakino, with an area of 645 hectares is the Trust's second largest property. For some time it has been cared for by Dennis and Dorothy Lowry, but sadly Dennis recently died. We are very grateful to his son Grant for being willing to assume the ranger duties for this property in which Trustee Roy Dench takes a special interest.

The **Omoana Bush** property, east of Eltham in Taranaki, was acquired by the Trust several years ago. We are pleased to confirm the appointment of Philip Smith as the Honorary Ranger. A keen conservationist and life member of Forest & Bird, Philip has a strong commitment to pest control which he shares with a friend, Gary McCracken who will assist with the ranger duties. Gary, whose interests include propagating and raising native plants, is currently a committee member of North Taranaki Branch of Forest & Bird.

Terry Higginson of our **Puhoi Far North Reserve** was farewelled in the previous issue of *Canopy*. In his place, Greg Wilkinson has accepted our invitation to take over as ranger.

*With thirty widespread properties in NZ NFRT care the Trust is highly dependent on the dedicated efforts of all our rangers. We are very grateful indeed for their work on behalf of the Trust.*

## FOR SALE

### Conservation Shareholding



Opportunity to buy a share in Marunui, a unique 420ha Brynderwyns bush property, QEII covenanted, 10 mins from Mangawhai Heads, 110km from Auckland. The share includes own delightful architect-designed cottage, alternative energy systems. The land was bought for conservation purposes and founding shareholders included the late Professor John Morton and his wife Pat. You will have joint land ownership with others and enjoy privacy, mature bush, diverse fauna, streams and walking tracks while helping with management activities. Active conservationists sought. A special place for special people.

Details & POA.

Ph: 09-376 4069, Email: marunui.share@gmail.com

# Help for the Trust

In *Canopy* #55 we appealed for assistance with a range of the Trust's operations. Considerable progress has since been made and several new helpers have joined our operations in the category of **Management Assistants** (a category that covers a multitude of unpaid jobs). In particular, we welcome Prue Scott with skills in writing, communications and website affairs, and Ralf Hohweiler with a strong background in money matters whose consultancy is proving extremely valuable as the Trust takes cautious steps to strengthen our financial base.

Voluntary helpers with the background work are the Trust's unsung heroes whose commitment is vital. We remain deeply grateful for the loyal support of Hugh & Pam Corbett with membership records and related matters and to Sandra Jones who attends to mail collection and distribution. Judy & Roy Hanbury look after the bookings of accommodation at Rangitoto Station and Jo-Anne Vaughan has a similar role for the Mangarakau Reserve. Like other conservation groups, the Trust depends heavily on the practical application of goodwill, for instance in dealing with the mail out of *Canopy*, undertaken by a team led by Trustee Guy Nash.

Other needs are still to be met but the signs are hopeful. We are about to advertise the post of **Administrator**. This breaks new ground for the Trust by being a paid appointment made necessary by the growth and increasing complexity of the Trust's work. In taking this step we are encouraged by proven success in creating the position of Field Officer, now very efficiently filled by Sharen Graham. We are continuing to seek a **Minutes Secretary**, and young people with enthusiasm for conservation are always welcome!

Please contact Brian Davis (09 373 3859) or Owen Lewis (09 845 1561) if you are interested in helping.

## News from Mangarakau

The AGM of the Mangarakau Swamp Society was held in May. Chairman John Gilardi praised his committee for their work on renovating the buildings and went on to thank individual members for their contributions in maintaining visitor amenities, recruiting volunteers, spraying weeds such as hakea and honeysuckle, curtailing regrowth of blackwood, and for the loan of a track-cutting mower. Although new planting had slowed, the releasing of young trees had continued. Records of a robin and a kiwi were high-lighted. A ring of traps was placed around the territory of the robin, only to find that it had moved to another area of the swamp. A kiwi was heard by a visitor and also by neighbour Mandy Tomlinson to whom John played the call of a great spotted kiwi for confirmation.

A report of trapping work at Mangarakau over the years 2004 to mid-2011 was presented by David Morgan. The total capture from 102 traps amounted to 2084 pests and predators, made up of 407 stoats, 1092 rats, 52 weasels, 513 mice, 7 hedgehogs and 13 possums. Traps are also maintained in plots set up by DoC where snails endemic to the area have been found.

A programme to monitor both birds and pests throughout the Mangarakau wetland has been initiated by Ian Price which shows pest numbers are low enough for biodiversity to thrive in the swamp. Robins, brown creepers and fernbirds are present. Four bitterns were seen together and a DoC wetland specialist, Philippe Gerbeaux, has visited to record bittern calls. An exciting botanical discovery at Mangarakau is of a plant which hadn't been reported in the South Island within the past 10 years, *Pterostylis micromega* or swamp greenhood. A specimen was seen by two visitors and subsequently a wider population was found growing in the swamp. It is a tall orchid of wetlands with small (micro) leaves and a large (mega) whitish flower – hence the specific name 'micromega'.

*This 145 hectare reserve acquired by the Trust in 2001 with the help of the Rosemary Middleton bequest is cared for by the Mangarakau Swamp Society (Inc).*



## Kokako Recovery Projects

*Major conservation efforts are taking place in the King Country, adjacent to the Trust's Rangitoto Station which serves as a base for operations. In 1980, at the time of the Trust's formation, "Save the Kokako" was little more than a battle cry. But now read on!*

The Howick Tramping Club's kokako recovery project in the 1594 hectare Mangatutu Valley has completed another year of pest control. Rats are the main predator and although we were not able to reduce their numbers to the target levels, bird life is flourishing and next year DoC intend to carry out a kokako census – the official statistics which we await with high expectations! In 1995, just seven pairs of kokako were recorded, but since that date there has been a steady increase until the last census in 2008 which found 62 pairs. Although kokako are the key indicator species, our aim is to assist all bird life, and the ecosystem in general, to recover. Several other bird species found in the Mangatutu are also of national concern – karearea (NZ falcon), North Island fernbird and kaka.

The project is in good heart with volunteer numbers steady and funding available for another year, thanks to the generous donation of \$6,000 by the ANZ-National Bank Staff Foundation. The house at Rangitoto Station, which the NZNFRT makes available to our volunteers, provides us with welcome accommodation at the end of a long day in the bush and we appreciate the Trust's generosity!

Meanwhile a new and exciting development in kokako recovery is beginning in the nearby Tunawaea area. Kokako were previously known to have been here but current numbers were unknown. It came as some surprise last year when 11 kokako were caught for translocation to Ark In The Park in the Waitakere Ranges and a kokako census carried out by DoC in May also found 13 pairs and 2 single birds. It is thought that some Mangatutu-bred kokako may be dispersing into the Tunawaea boosting the resident population. This initiated plans for predator control and track work has already begun. With strong support from DoC Te Kuiti, volunteers co-ordinated by Rosemary Gatland aim to have approximately 260 hectares covered by a bait-station grid for the coming season, with up to 800 hectares of protected area to be developed ultimately, as time and resources allow. Working parties went into both areas during the first weekend of September.

*Colleen Grayling*

## Arthur Cowan reflects on the Trust's progress

This is indeed a very good time to remind ourselves of the early and continuing conservation work of the Native Forests Restoration Trust. To re-establish a rapidly declining forest was our first objective. Pureora was a prime example of wide spread destruction of forest containing ancient totara. The successful tree-sitting campaign prevented the last of the ancient totara being destroyed. The Forest Service was not supportive of any native forest replanting but finally agreed to allow a small block of *Pinus nigra* to be replanted. Large quantities of kahikatea and totara seed gathered in Pureora by Stephen King were already planted in Geoff Davidson's nursery at Oratia and seedlings became ready for planting when the Trust was established.

This restored forest is now known as the Shirley Guildford Memorial block and was the Trust's first achievement. The Pureora planting was quite small but Rangitoto, our next project, was more ambitious. Logging had ended and much planting was required. This would have been our first major planting and a big team of people was involved. Te Kuiti Tramping Club had joined in all our planting activities and Jim and Jean Swindells were establishing a native plant nursery supplying trees for the Trust. Annton Nursery of Cambridge also grew trees on contract for us over those many years and gave great support by donating end-of-season surplus stock. The Trust and its supporters should be aware that this planting has been going on for over 30 years. Well over 100 different areas have been re-vegetated by now; some large where planting continued year after year, and some small and so completed in one visit. All this has been of great benefit to a region that has extended well beyond the King Country and Waitomo.

As with land purchase we have also worked closely with the Queen Elizabeth II National Trust in restoration projects. Many QEII covenants have had enrichment planting where it was required or advantageous. Much more detail will be available soon, as we are at present completing a comprehensive list of planted areas with accompanying photos.

*Arthur Cowan*



## Restoration Activity at Tupare

Over the winter months, Trust supporters have been joined by members of the South Kaipara Landcare group in planting operations to enhance the native vegetation of our **Marie Neverman Reserve** at Tupare on the Kaipara Peninsula. This project, begun last year, aims to enrich the native vegetation around the lake which forms the central feature of the reserve. Kanuka is being planted to replace the ageing trees, with understorey species such as *Coprosma*, kawakawa, mingimingi, hangehange and wharangi to add variety. Sited among these are specimens of rewarewa, totara, puriri, kaka beak, kahikatea and cabbage trees that should prosper in the local conditions. Many of the plants have come from the nursery maintained by the Landcare group, care being taken to use locally-sourced material.

Three planting days brought out small but keen teams, some of whom planted along the escarpment while others devoted their efforts to weed removal, targeting woolly nightshade especially. After several hours work, proceedings were rounded off with a welcome brew of tea, courtesy of the custom-made thermette which is a trademark of SKL field days.

When not occupied with spade or saw we could enjoy the sight of the water birds of the reserve, dabchicks, NZ scaup and shoveler ducks. The colony of pied shags has spread into further trees since last season and grey teal have staked a claim to nest boxes placed for them. Reports of bitterns, fernbirds and crakes have been confirmed during recent visits by sightings or by hearing their calls. Further monitoring is planned for the spring period.

On the administrative front, the survey work needed for a QEII covenant - an essential component of all NZ NFRT reserves – has been completed. Other aspects of conservation are also in hand, including regular predator trapping, and the hydrology survey work needed for effective management of the extensive wetland.

## RESTORING NATIVE FORESTS

*Yes, I should like to give a contribution supporting the work of the Trust.*

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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