



The Inlet

Newsletter for Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet

DECEMBER

2014

The Inlet is a newsletter that brings together local and regional news affecting the Pauatahanui Inlet and its environs.

The Inlet comes out three times a year and current or back issues can be downloaded from our website.

The newsletter includes items of concern that affect the area as well as general interest topics for everyone.

*Please contact us if you would like to contribute to **The Inlet**.*

P O Box 57034

Mana

Porirua 5247

pauainlet@gmail.com

www.gopi.org.nz

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FROM THE CHAIRPERSON

Just like you, I suspect, we are now flat out fitting in all the things there are to do before Christmas. The Inlet clean-up at the end of November was our last public activity for 2014 and we have had our last committee meeting for the year. This doesn't mean, however, that we are taking life easy and idly wondering what might be happening in 2015.

We have just had confirmation that Destina Munro is going to run a late afternoon workshop on Sunday 22 February 2015 to help young photographers prepare for our photographic competition in April. Destina is President of the Kapiti Camera Club and teaches photojournalism at Whitireia Polytechnic. The first workshop of this kind was at the start of 2014 and proved to be a great afternoon for everybody involved. If you know someone, 17 or younger, who might be interested in taking part please encourage them to get in touch with us. You, or they, can email us at pauainlet@gmail.com. Please note that the workshop is free and this year's participants are welcome to attend again.

And of course we'd like to remind ALL our keen photographers that the photo competition is open to everyone. The Inlet in summer presents wonderful opportunities to create images for great shots. Whether it's nature, recreational activities, or something else that takes your fancy, you have from now until April to see what you and your camera can do.

We have recently been involved in the first rounds of consultation with Porirua City Council for the next stage of the Te Ara Piko Pathway. This is an area that poses considerable challenges and there is a more detailed explanation about the plan in this edition. It is too early to comment on how the project will progress from here on but things are looking positive and we are feeling hopeful that solutions to the difficulties will be found.

To finish, I give a big thank-you to all members for your continued support and in particular to the GOPI committee, Beverly, Denis, Dick, Janet, John and Michael for their unfailing enthusiasm and efforts.

I wish everyone a safe and happy Christmas.

Tony Shaw

WELLINGTON AIRPORT REGIONAL COMMUNITY AWARDS - PORIRUA

In the August Newsletter we reported that the Guardians were finalists in the Heritage & Environment Category of the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards - Porirua. While being pitted against several highly worthwhile community initiatives we were naturally excited by the prospect of winning this award and four of your committee attended the awards evening on 25 August.



Tony Shaw, as Chairperson, came prepared to stand up and talk to the audience, in case we were announced as winners, by being smartly suited-up with a crisp shirt and tie. The rest of us were quite impressed by this rare display of formality on Tony's part - and inevitably thrilled when his efforts appeared to have paid off. As Tony

reported in an email the day after, we WON! and enjoyed a celebratory supper where we met people doing some great things in Porirua.

Our congratulations go out to all the other winners and runners-up, all of whom were well-deserving of their recognition.



Liz Kelly: Deputy Mayor (Porirua); Greg Thomas: General Manager Communications Wellington Airport; Tony Shaw

And the follow up.....

Having won the Porirua Award in the Heritage & Environment Category we automatically became finalists in the Wellington Regional Community Awards. The regional winners were announced at a dinner held at Te Papa in November. Tony again represented GOPI along with our Treasurer Dick Fernyhough.

The other finalists in the Heritage & Environment category were:

Clyma Park Community Garden (Upper Hutt),
Friends of Waiwhetu Stream (Hutt City),
Steam Incorporated (Kapiti), and
Wellington SPCA (Wellington).

In the end it was Wellington SPCA that took top honours having completed a restoration of the old Fever Hospital building in the Mt Victoria town belt which they have since occupied as their new home.

AUTHOR TALK: WE CHAT TO GILLIAN CANDLER

Anyone who has ever written for publication knows this: while it's difficult enough to decide what to **put in**, it's a lot harder to know what to **leave out**. When Gillian Candler of Pukerua Bay began her series of non-fiction books for young children which includes *At the Beach* and *Under the Ocean*, this was one of her biggest dilemmas. There was just so much that was important and interesting, and Gillian, formerly of Learning Media, was passionate about producing books that would fascinate, inform and motivate children and parents alike.

'There is so little non-fiction about New Zealand for young children,' Gillian told us. 'In the 2012 NZ Post book awards, for example, 40 fiction books were entered, and only 13 non-fiction books, most of which were for older children.'

So she set about writing books that would have wide appeal. 'The books bring features you would see in an educational text to a book for the public, but I didn't want them to be restricted to classroom use only. What I wanted to do was to write books for the whole family – books that parents [and grandparents!] could read to their pre-schoolers, and which older, more independent readers could enjoy too.'



GILLIAN CANDLER

Photo: Gabrielle Pascoe

We asked her to tell us more.

'I wanted to give a sense of life, interactivity, detail. I was keen to show the whole ecosystem – for example the inter-relationship between the rocky shore, the sandy beach and the mudflats. I wanted to write in a way that presented universal ideas in a New Zealand context.'

When guided in a way that engages them, youngsters can be introduced to important concepts such as conservation from their own observations. 'I was talking to some children and one of them said she had seen a starfish chasing a paua in a rock pool. That was a start to recognising a key concept of conservation – the importance of the food chain.' Many young children will have had a similar experience on a family visit to the beach, and Gillian wanted to build into the books the opportunity for parents to use children's own experiences to explain such things as the dangers of interruption to the food chain. She uses the example of two marine animals familiar to many children – crayfish and kina. 'Crayfish eat kina and kina eat seaweed. If the crayfish are taken away the kina don't get eaten, and their numbers get out of control. If they eat the seaweed and it disappears, the little fish disappear too.'

Diversity is another key concept children can be helped to understand. Through the books children learn that marine animals come in a variety of colours, shapes and sizes: whales can be toothed or have baleen, some rays poison their prey while others electrocute them, and not all fish look like Nemo. The books feature plants and animals that children all round New Zealand will be familiar with – although an exception was made for Bryde's whale and mangroves, which are only found in the north.

Making sure children can relate to both content and illustration is always a challenge but Gillian says she and talented illustrator Ned Barraud made a great team. *At the Beach* and *Under the Ocean* are both crammed full of pictures, with over 120 creatures and plants illustrated in their habitats. On every page

AUTHOR TALK: cont....

even the youngest child will find something they might have seen or at least can relate to – a seabird, a shark, a crab, waves, stones – all in appealing colours that beautifully reflect the marine environment. Preschoolers can spot the differences between creatures and observe their habitats while absorbing important, positive messages about the environment. Older children will be fascinated by the amazing amount of information packed into the easily absorbed chunks of text – text that was carefully put together. Gillian says she didn't have it all her own way. Sometimes the illustrator called the shots: 'I had to be prepared to move or change the text if it wasn't working well with the illustration.'

We feel privileged to have been able to find out at first hand from Gillian about the creative process behind the production of two beautiful books that we believe should find a home on every family bookshelf. Do buy them! You can get both books from good bookshops or online at <http://www.craigpotton.co.nz> (where you will also find ideas on using the books with children).

Gillian's blog is at <http://explorediscovernature.blogspot.co.nz/> and you can see more of Ned's beautiful illustrations at <http://www.nedbarraud.com/>

2014 INLET CLEAN-UP

This year's annual Inlet Clean-up was held on Sunday 30 November. As usual the event was organised by Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet in conjunction with Keep Porirua Beautiful together with support from Plimmerton Rotary and Paremata New World.

Two aspects of this year's event were notably different from that of previous years.

Firstly was the significant reduction in the amount of rubbish found by all the volunteers this time. This is great news. Members of the Forest and Bird team who manage the Pauatahanui Wildlife Reserve tell us they have also observed a lot less litter thrown from cars along the stretch of Te Ara Piko pathway adjacent to the reserve since the last stage to Pauatahanui village was completed. It would seem people are being deterred from littering by the presence of those using the pathway.

The second difference this year was the large increase in the number of people who came along to help on the day. GOPI committee members Tony Shaw and Janet Ryan have been organising the annual clean-up since 2005. Over this time the number of volunteers involved has varied from 50 to 70 depending upon the weather. This year, however, expectations were exceeded when more than 100 arrived. Tony says: 'What we were aware of is the increase in other groups and individuals getting involved. In addition to members of the local communities, volunteers came from as far away as Waikanae, Miramar and Masterton.'



Jenny & John Boccock, Geocachers

'The most distant participants, we think, were geocachers who made the day a 'Cache In Trash Out' event for the second year running. We thank Andrew Myers for organising their contribution to the event.'

Several local schools were represented by groups of families. There was a large group from Papakowhai School and others from St Theresa's, Plimmerton, and Paremata Schools. The St Theresa's School group was instigated by year 6 student, Toi Royal, who completed the Gold Level of a leadership programme by making posters about the clean-up, writing a paragraph for the school newsletter, visiting classrooms and speaking at assembly.

2014 INLET CLEAN-UP...cont.

As usual the clean-up concluded with a barbecue at Browns Bay carpark. New World, who donated the food, also gave us a voucher to be won in a lucky draw.

This year there were two special prizes: the children's books *At the Beach* and *Under the Ocean* donated by Craig Potton Publishing. If you have read our previous item, Author Talk, you will now know these books were written by Pukerua Bay author Gillian Candler and illustrated by Ned Barraud of Weta Workshop. Many thanks go to Gillian who was there to autograph and present the books to winners Sienna Tonkin and James Vandervoort.



Tyler Scholtz

Photo: Beverly Fairfax

TE ARA PIKO PROGRESS ON FURTHER EXTENSION

Following on from the article in our last newsletter we are pleased to be able to tell you that Porirua City Council has now produced a plan on how to extend the pathway from Motukaraka Point around to the Camborne walkway. Towards the end of November the Council called a meeting of interested parties to discuss the plan. Tony Shaw and John Wells represented GOPI. The plan is very detailed. You will appreciate that most of the route will have to run alongside Grays Road and a great deal of discussion centred on the options given in the plan on how a board walk should be constructed and how to make it as safe as possible for users. The pathway will also have to cross the environmentally important saltmarsh around the mouth of the Kakaho stream. Obviously there was a great deal of discussion about how to do this without damaging the environment. Fortunately the engineers assured us that construction of a boardwalk through the sea rushes can be done without lasting damage and a route was then agreed that would be far enough back from the beach to avoid disturbing roosting birds.

We now await decisions on when construction will start, which part will be done first, and how long it will take before you can walk or cycle all the way from Camborne to Pauatahanui in safety and comfort.

PAUATAHANUI SCHOOL LAMB AND CALF DAY

We are very grateful to the organisers of Lamb and Calf day for once again inviting GOPI to the 1 November event this year giving us the chance to have a display at this highly popular attraction. The Lamb and Calf school gala is a superbly organised affair and attracts a huge crowd ever year. It gives us an excellent opportunity to tell people about the issues facing the Inlet and how they can support the work being done to protect and restore it.

ON THE HORIZON

As usual at this time of the year we begin to plan the next Photographic Competition which reaches competition stage in April 2015. It's time now to consider your entry into this ever increasingly popular event and get out with your camera over the summer.

FEATURE ARTICLE

At the eastern end of the Pauatahanui Inlet lies the focus of attention for a group of volunteers from Forest and Bird, New Zealand's national environmental watchdog. The Pauatahanui Wildlife Reserve Management team has, for the last 27 years, transformed this corner of the Inlet shoreline from a public domain to what is now a splendid area of native wetland habitat. This month's Feature Article brings to life the evolution of this reserve and emphasizes the importance of this amazing collective achievement.

PAUATAHANUI WILDLIFE RESERVE



It was way back in 1979 that two members of Forest and Bird had a dream: that of establishing a wading-bird sanctuary in the lower North Island. After a search for suitable locations in the region, Pauatahanui was singled out as the best site for such a project. An application to purchase was made in 1980 and the area gazetted a wildlife reserve the following year. A two-year study of the reserve land was undertaken and a draft action plan submitted to government in 1982. Management of the land was taken over by the Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society in 1984.

Originally classified a public domain Pauatahanui had for years hosted sporting activities, including a BMX track, as well as a stock yard and pound. The draft action plan of 1982 defined the reserve as a low lying coastal wetland, predominantly of saltmarsh vegetation, bordered to the west by the Pauatahanui Inlet Wildlife Refuge. This is the adjacent body of water bounded by a line joining Ration Point with Duck Creek. It was considered then, and still is, that the Reserve and Wildlife Refuge together comprised an important natural ecosystem running from shallow water to dry land. Because similar communities on coastal river terraces had virtually disappeared from the Wellington Ecological District it was hoped the new reserve could become an important site for the preservation of these types of communities.

Vegetation at the time was primarily estuarine wetland, with several tidal creeks crossing the reserve, but there were freshwater areas not affected by tides and these were inhabited by introduced grasses. There was an extensive saltmarsh and ribbonwood shrub zone at the interface between the salt and fresh water

FEATURE ARTICLE cont....

zones and a small section of coastal lowland forest at the northern end. The reserve did contain three rare indigenous plant species (bachelor's button was considered as endangered, while the other two were New Zealand musk and a sedge) and the Inlet was already rich in birdlife, having around 36 species recorded in 1980 including summer migratory species like eastern bar-tailed godwit and sharp-tailed sandpiper.

From the beginning the aims of Forest and Bird were to provide a national wetland and ornithological reserve with a visitors' information center incorporating a historical and natural history museum. The plan was to preserve the tidal flats, salt marsh and coastal vegetation, thus protecting the current natural habitat for wading and migratory birds, while developing and enhancing native vegetation communities. For education and community awareness the plan also included provision to build observation hides and pathways to important areas of the reserve and to refurbish the nearby 'Pauatahanui Cottage' (known also as the Taylor Stace Cottage) as a visitor centre and museum, creating in the process a typical early-settlers house of the 1860s with gardens characteristic of those times. This 'cottage' was eventually sidelined when, as a result of various financial initiatives, substantial funding from Stout Trust was received. It was decided then that a purpose-built centre should be designed and located at the entrance to the reserve. This henceforth has been known as Stout Cottage.

A large number of projects was needed to establish the reserve. Boundary fences, ponds, tracts and hides were all built and a sewage system was essential for Stout Cottage. A shed to house a lawn mower and a potting shed were required for landscaping tasks, and car parks, signs and an information shelter had to be built for the expected visitors.

Along with the infrastructure, activity in the reserve needed to focus on restoration of habitats to encourage the wildlife. In order to transform the old domain vegetation into the planned reserve, pest control was paramount. Both plant and animal pests were targeted with differing methods and varying success.

Weeds were found throughout in abundance and, because of this, they are still a problem today. Apart from the grasses which covered the reserve, invasive weeds were everywhere and some were impossible to completely eradicate. Ox-tongue thistle is still a particular problem and so are the invasive Japanese honeysuckle, convolvulus and wandering willy.

Of the animal pests mustelids and rats have been the main threats to bird life, targeting eggs and young. Traps and bait stations are still used throughout the reserve, and tracking tunnels are employed to monitor the activity of a range of animals seen visiting the area. In recent years Canada geese have started to make their presence felt by increasing numbers to the point where they dominate nesting sites and pollute the waters. Currently this problem is handled by interrupting the breeding cycle at the egg stage although, with repeat invasions from outside the area, the effectiveness of this process is insufficient to fully control populations. Cats and hedgehogs present an ongoing danger, cats often preying on the young, hedgehogs on the eggs.

The weather has been an enormous enemy on occasion with a particularly devastating flood in 2004 that damaged fences, the irrigation pump and the bio cycle, and covered the land in a lot of debris.

And then there is human interference from graffiti and litter to burglary, but on the whole most come to respect and enjoy the reserve.

A re-vegetation programme was begun in 1987 with strict guidelines. Plants were to be propagated from those already found in the reserve boundary, with other natives, not found there, to come only from within a 15km radius of the reserve. Propagation needed a shade house, heaps of potting mix and a means of irrigation. With determination and persistence these were all acquired and over the years the management team, together with regular groups of volunteers, have planted thousands of trees and

FEATURE ARTICLE *cont...*

shrubs.

Since 1984 the original area of the reserve has been increased by the purchase of adjacent blocks of land from owners surrounding the reserve. Now it is considered mature in its development and the management team are focused mainly on the management of the reserve.

Pauatahanui Wildlife reserve was eventually opened on 15 April 1989.

Stout Cottage was opened some time later on 1 November 1991.

In our next issue of The Inlet we will look at the current issues involved in the ongoing management of the reserve.

GOPI POLICIES

In 2007 the proposal to site a large wind farm on the eastern ridges of the Inlet catchment created considerable local controversy. The potential damage to the Inlet ecology and environment from sediment and other pollutants during construction was obvious, but the siting of the turbines on the ridge would also impact on aesthetic and visual values of the Inlet. Unlike pollution, visual values are subjective so we surveyed members' opinion and found this was about equally divided. As a consequence the following policy was developed.

GUARDIANS OF PAUATAHANUI INLET

Wind Farms Policy

The Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet (GOPI) opposes any activity associated with wind farms that may potentially have a negative impact on the ecology of the Inlet. GOPI will advocate for the prevention or mitigation of potential adverse effects during all stages of construction and operation of the wind farm, including accessory activities, e.g. associated roading and transport activity.

GOPI will not take a strong position regarding potential adverse impacts of wind farms on the landscape and amenity values of the Inlet. It will, however, monitor developments and argue, if necessary, to keep these to a minor level where this will not affect the viability of the operation of the wind farm.

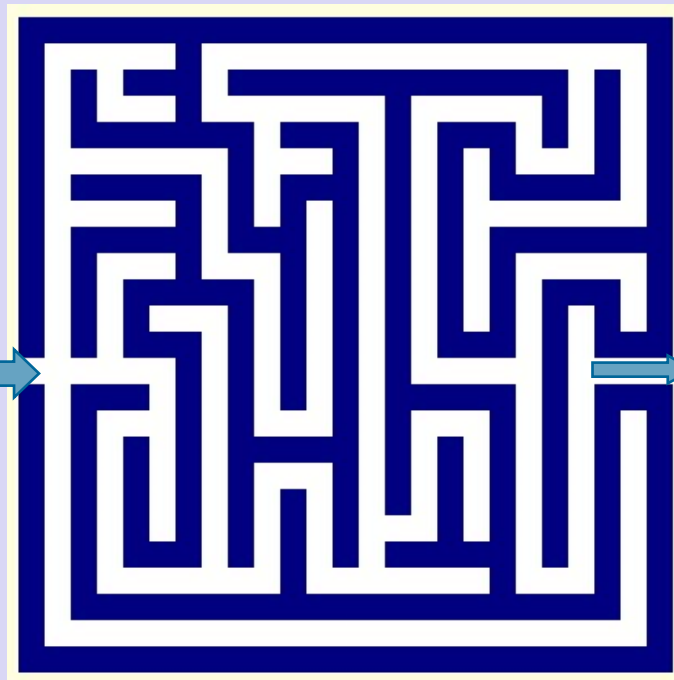
Policy formulated May 2008, amended August 2009



FAMILY CORNER

Wildlife Reserve Maze

Here is another maze to challenge you. From one of the observation hides in the Wildlife Reserve see if you can find the pied stilt and take a photograph of the bird. Just start at the left hand arrow and work your way around until you reach the other side. There will be many dead ends but only one way will take you all the way through.



Photos: Gabrielle Pascoe

PLEASE SIGN UP A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOUR

Sign up a neighbour, friend, or another family member. Just explain to them that membership numbers really count in giving us a strong voice to argue for what we all value about the Inlet. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website www.qopi.org/nz/membership-form or copied from the one at the back of this newsletter. Better still, if you've received this newsletter by email, just forward it to others with a note encouraging them to join.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR THE PAUATAHANUI INLET

Pollution: Discharges of contaminants to air, land, storm-water drains, streams, rivers or sea and for after hours consent enquiries: Greater Wellington 0800 496 734 (24 hours)

Boating infringements: Greater Wellington 384 5708 (24 hours)

Illegal fishing activity: Ministry for Primary Industries 0800 476 224 (24 hours)

Pauatahanui Wildlife Reserve: Department of Conservation 0800 362 468

Let us know what you have reported so we can keep an accurate record and follow up if necessary.

233 9391 (Chairman, GOPI) or pauainlet@gmail.com.



Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet

www.gopi.org.nz
pauainlet@gmail.com

Membership Form: new members

To join the Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet, you can pay your subscription either online or by post.
IF YOU ARE PAYING ONLINE, PLEASE REMEMBER TO FILL IN THIS FORM WITH ALL DETAILS, AND EMAIL OR POST IT TO US.

Online payment

1. Pay your sub via e-banking into our Westpac account 03-1533-0009387-00. In the 'Particulars' or 'Reference' columns, **YOU MUST** write your surname **AND** initials **AND** the period of your sub (1-yr or 5-yr).
2. Then fill in this form and either email it to us at pauainlet@gmail.com or post it (see next column for our postal address)

Postal payment

1. Write a cheque made payable to 'Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet'.
2. Then fill in this form and send it, along with your cheque, to: Membership Secretary, Guardians of Pauatahanui Inlet, Box 57034, Mana, Porirua 5247.

Please fill in your details for our records. If you are filling in this form electronically, **click** at the beginning of a dotted line and then type.

Name:

Address:

E-mail: Phone:

Please put next to the subscription you are paying (electronic completion – **highlight** the box and type lower case x.) We are also very grateful for donations. (We are a registered charity for tax purposes: registration number CC47523.)

| | | | |
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| One-year individual (\$12.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> | Five-year individual (\$50.00) | <input type="checkbox"/> |
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| Donation: \$ | Do you require a receipt for your sub? <input type="checkbox"/> or your donation? <input type="checkbox"/> | | |
| Date subs paid: | Reference appears as: | | |

(e-banking only)

We'd like to send you newsletters and notices via email. May we do this?

Please tell us which of our activities you would like to be part of.

| | | | |
|----------------------------|--------------------------|--|--------------------------|
| Annual Clean-up day | <input type="checkbox"/> | Submissions to local bodies | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Three-yearly cockle survey | <input type="checkbox"/> | Our educational programmes for schools | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Website and video clips | <input type="checkbox"/> | Other: | |

NOW EMAIL OR POST THE FORM. THANK YOU AND WELCOME