



New Year celebration causes fire at Piha

At four minutes past midnight on January 1, 2010 the bells went down and Waiatarua Fire Brigade was on its way to a most spectacular bush fire at Piha. Most of the brigade members saw in the New Year at Piha beach watching the whole hillside at the north end of Piha go up in flames.

Many brigades from surroundings areas were turned out to help battle the blaze, including Piha, Titirangi, Glen Eden and rural brigades Karekare and Bethells. Unfortunately with all this manpower it was still impossible to reach the fire by ground to fight it.

A helicopter was brought in from SkyWorks and a helicopter pad was set up. Volunteers worked hard to shuttle water into the monsoon bucket. Water tankers came from Bethells Beach

and Shelly Beach brigades and Whenuapai Air Base to provide extra water for the helicopter.

A team from Waiatarua was sent down Anawhata Road with the dubious task of visiting every house/bach to warn occupants of the raging fire creeping up the hill towards them.

Waiatarua was sent home at about 3.45am and Karekare Brigade stood down about 4am, but was asked to go back at 6.30am, with Bethells Brigade standing by to monitor the fire.

The purpose of this write up is to illustrate the damage that one firework/flare can do. The matter is still under investigation by the Police, but from sources so far it has been ascertained that the fire was started by a parachute flare set off at midnight. The wind caught it and carried it into the dry bush on the hillside.

One thoughtless act by someone cost a whole hillside of native bush, a sleepless night for about 40 volunteer firefighters and a bill of upwards of \$20,000. The cost could be presented to the individual who set off the flare, it may turn out to be a very costly new year celebration.

Waitakere Artists' open studio weekend

27 & 28 March 2010
10am - 4pm

Waitakere artists are opening their home studios or joining in cluster groups for the 6th Annual Open Studio Weekend. The public are invited to visit for **FREE** and:

- *meet local artists
- *see art in action
- *purchase local artwork
- *learn about the creative process

A **FREE** map and brochure available from local galleries, libraries or phone 839 0400.

A minibus tour is planned to selected studios. (Bookings recommended)

Phone 839 0400 for more info

View brochure online at:

www.waitakere.govt.nz/ArtCul/ae/index.asp#openstudio



Lauren Kitts - Sculpture



Waitakere City Council
Te Taiao o Waitakere

Community Breakfast. Sunday March 14th At the Waiatarua Community Hall 9.30am

Sit down with a cuppa and salivate over this menu:

- Fresh fruit salad, yoghurt and homemade muesli
- Croissants served with a selection of preserves
- Hash browns, poached eggs, bacon and sausages

Freshly made crepes served with fresh cream, maple syrup, lemon syrup and cinnamon sugar

Tea, Coffee and fresh orange juice

Produced by Elke Key so you know it's going to taste fine.

The cost for a buffet style full breakfast

\$24.75 per adult,

\$18.00 for those aged 5-13

Under fives are free.

All tickets to be pre-purchased from Jan James.

Call Jan on 814 9194 or leave a message with your details

Alternatively email her at pwmandjji@clear.net.nz

Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Waiatarua Ratepayers and Residents Association

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Community Hall & Library: 911 West Coast Road • **Hall hire (bookings)** John Goudge - Ph 814 9744

Library hours: Thursday 10.00am - 12.00pm; Friday 7.00pm - 8.00pm; Saturday 11.00am - 12.00pm; Sunday 11.00am - 12.00pm

WEB Site: www.waiatarua.org.nz

Environmental Report

Susanne Timms

It has been perfect weather for digging out ginger and other environmental weeds. A lot of you are working very hard at doing this as the weed bin at the Waitatarua Fire Station is now being emptied every week or two.

If you are not up to removing your ginger and agapanthus plants, it is really important that you remove the flower heads before they set seeds and put these in the bin.

From 1st March there will be an extra weed bin located on West Coast Road by Kauri Loop Road. This is for the War on Weeds campaign which lasts until 31st March.

Please remember these bins are for environmental weeds only, particularly ginger, wandering jew, jasmine, agapanthus, climbing asparagus and plectranthus, which seem to be most common weeds in our area. They are not for general garden waste. If you are unsure read the sign next to the bin.

We are very fortunate to have a weed bin to dispose of these weeds as pulling them out and leaving them in a pile will not kill them as they will just keep on growing. I have had success with covering a large pile of plectranthus with black polythene and after 4 months it was dead but this does not work with ginger roots or wandering jew.

Spectacular Book Offer

The fabulous book "Spirit of the West" which retails to the common folk at \$45 will be available to Waitataruans at \$40 and to financial members (2010) of the WRRRA, a mere \$35.

This could be considered a cunning ploy to increase membership but no!

Then again, the book and membership to the WRRRA are available for the full \$45.

Many thanks to Cathie Wells for donating part of the proceeds to our funds.

Books will be available at the library or by phoning Dave at 814 9697 or emailing davepocock@xtra.co.nz. Payment by cash or cheques made out to WRRRA.

Advantages of being a WRRRA member?

Show your membership card at the following businesses for a 10% discount

(does not apply to already discounted or sale items)

Glen Eden Landscape Supplies

293 West Coast Rd. Ph: 818 6129

Elevation Licensed Cafe & Restaurant

12.00pm 'til late - 471 Scenic Drive

Ph: 814 1919 (applies to max 2 adults per visit)

Colourplus Paint & Wallpaper

Glenmall, Glen Eden. Ph: 818 8263

Auckland's Waitakere Estate

573 Scenic Dr. (Thursday-Sunday)

Ph: 814 9622 (applies to max 2 adults per visit)

From the President

Dave Pocock

Hi all,

Gosh, these months just fly past don't they, got the shock of my life when Robyn sent the email asking for my report.

There has been a bit of activity on the roading front this last month with of course the new stretch of footpath from Bendalls lane down West Coast Road, and I must say a lovely job has been done. The stretch of road from Rimu Road to Bendalls Lane has also been resealed. As well as that, various areas of repair work have been carried out and Old Forest Hill has been re-metalled.

I attended the February Community Board meeting at which Mark Tollemache gave an update on the Oratia/Waiatarua LAP plans and I must say it was a pleasure to listen to Mark who really does have a feel for both Oratia and Waiatarua, recognising

the differences in the two areas. He really has taken on board what has been discussed at the workshops and I encourage you to attend our AGM and listen to Mark's report.

Remember the London Deli in Glenmall that was next to Colourplus Paints, well they have opened another shop along the road from North Shore Hospital: Thornburys London Deli 11 Shakespear Rd Milford, ph 489-8606.

Last month I mentioned our new Fire Chief Helen Longley. Since then I have found out she would appear to be the first female fire chief in Auckland. In fact, only about 1% of the 400 or so CFOs in New Zealand are female. Way to go Waiatarua! Helen has been with the brigade since 1995 and held the position of Deputy for the past 6-7 years of which there were only two females in this position in Auckland. The other female deputy is also called Helen and is at the Piha Brigade, must be something in the water out this way. Anyway, Helen Longley we are very proud of you and I know I am in trouble next time we meet.

You may have heard of a book called Spirit of the West with photography by Ted Scott and text by Bob Harvey being a pictorial journey though West Auckland, and what a great book with absolutely spectacular photos. What you probably didn't know is that our own Cathie Wells is the designer and joint publisher of this book and through her we are able to offer the book at below retail with a further discount for WRRRA financial members, see details elsewhere.

Talking about membership, have you joined for 2010 yet? For those that have, do not forget to let me know if your email address changes so I can change my records.

Well that's me for now, next newsletter will be after the AGM where I hope we gain some new committee members to join our dedicated group.

Dave.

From the Editor

Robyn O'Sullivan

I have been pondering over the last few days as to what to write about this month as everything has been going extremely well. My visitors have been enjoying the countryside now that the jet-lag is behind them. One has learnt to surf, albeit for a few hours, but nevertheless, it is one more thing she can tick off her list! The others are out and about, riding horses, tramping through the bush and along our west coast beaches. Next week, they're descending on Rotorua to luge and zorb.

Things haven't been going well for Tom though. I don't actually know who Tom is, but I have seen the end result of his driving ability or lack thereof. Just down from my place early this morning, I found a car in a ditch in the bush... completely hidden from view if you were driving and just barely noticeable if you were walking. 'Toms' was emblazoned across the back window in huge letters.

Nobody was around so I guess wee Tom made it home somehow although judging by the damage to the front window; he may have a very sore head. So, Tom, if you can't remember where you 'left' your car, just give me a call.

And may I just remind everybody else to be extremely vigilant when walking around these roads.

On an entirely different note, there must be people out there who have something they may wish to get off their chest. How about a few letters to the editor to make life interesting? I promise to read all!

And please remember the community breakfast coming up on March 14th...we'll see you there!

Please accept my Membership to the Waitatarua Ratepayers & Residents Association

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone No: _____

Email: _____

I ENCLOSE:

\$10 household

2010

To: Treasurer, WRRRA, 911 West Coast Road, Waiatarua, Waitakere City, or leave at the library

Fire Brigade

Louisa Ferguson

Hi all! Hope you had a great new year. 2010 has been very eventful for the Waiaatarua Fire Brigade so far.

Helen Longley has been appointed to the position of CFO. Interviews have now been done for the position of Deputy Chief Fire Officer. (This position became vacant with Helen moving into the Chief's role.) Outgoing Chief Ian Ford has now moved into a Station Officer role.

Restricted Fire Season and Fire Permits

During the Restricted Fire Season, a permit is required to light any fire in the open air. The Restricted Fire Season is usually from 1 December to 30 April.

To obtain a fire permit contact the Waitakere City Council Monday to Friday between 8.30am and 5pm. A site inspection by a Council Rural Fire Officer is required before any fire can be lit. Permits will not be issued outside of Council business hours.

Rural Fire Officer must visit and view the proposed fire site before a permit can be issued. A permit cannot be issued over the phone.

The person whom the permit is made out to must be on site as the permit is to be handed to the person who wishes to have the fire.

Note: It requires 3 working days to issue a permit, however generally it will be arranged as soon as possible. The visiting Officer will arrange a specific time suitable to you to visit the site. This will be during the working hours of 8am to 5pm Monday to Friday.

To assist the Rural Fire Officer conducting the inspection, the following general conditions must be met before a permit will be issued:

- Fire must be supervised at all times
- Fire must be out by sunset each day
- Fire must be 10 metres from any structure
- Fire must be 3 metres from any boundary
- There must be a cleared area around the fire site
- There must be a means (water etc.) present to control the fire
- The fire must not present a nuisance to others

There is no charge for the issue of fire permits.

A fire permit is generally issued for one week; this is due to the uncertainty of our weather conditions. An extension of the permit can be arranged providing certain conditions are met.

However any fire officer (including a New Zealand Fire Service Officer) can put out your fire if it is deemed a hazard or a nuisance to your neighbours.

Recent calls

21/11/09 00:25am - Motor Vehicle Accident, Piha Road. This was a severe crash with one person seriously injured. Piha Road was closed for quite some time while the occupants of the car were treated and the Serious Crash Unit carried out its investigation.

26/11/09 17:30pm - Car Fire, Vineyard Rd, Henderson. Waiaatarua was called to assist the Henderson appliance, as the car was burning in a paddock and the Henderson truck was too large to gain access. However it was no problem for Waiaatarua's little Mitzi.

26/11/09 19:10pm - Burst Water Main, Vineyard Rd, Henderson. As a result of corrosion the water main burst during use for the above car fire. Waiaatarua Appliance relieved the pressure on the water main until the council could come and repair it.

10/12/09 20:10pm - Rubbish Fire, Scenic Drive, Waiaatarua. A small amount of rubbish was deliberately lit.

28/12/09 09:25am - Fire Causing Concern, Tui Cres, Waiaatarua. A non-permitted bonfire.

01/01/2010 00:01am - Fire Causing Concern, Karekare Rd, Karekare. The very first call of 2010 was another non permitted fire that was dealt with by the Karekare brigade.

01/01/2010 00:16am - Scrub Fire, Garden Rd, Piha. While on the way to the previous call Waiaatarua was turned out to the Piha fire detailed on the front page.

06/01/10 20:40pm - Scrub Fire, The Cutting, Karekare. This was a camp fire that got a little big, it was dealt with by Karekare Fire Brigade.

10/01/10 19:30pm - Fire On Lion Rock, Piha. A small area of scrub on fire on lion rock. Piha brigade extinguished this using hand tools and a portable pump (after a bit of a climb).

23/01/10 12:51 - Person fallen off cliff, Pararaha Valley, Karekare. Piha, Karekare, Waiaatarua and Henderson appliances called to assist Police, search and rescue, and ambulance staff to locate and move patient from bush.

07/02/10 02:03 - Car Fire, Scenic Drive.

07/02/10 18:49 - Car Over Bank, Piha Rd.

09/02/10 21:09 - Motorcycle off road, Scenic Dr.

As you can see we have had a busy start to 2010.

Annual General Meeting

Waiaatarua Residents and Ratepayers Association

Wednesday March 3rd at 7.30pm

Waiaatarua Community Hall

The guest speaker is going to be Mark Tollemache and he will be giving us the latest on the Waiaatarua LAP.

Hope to see you all there!

Library Report Jeannette Ziesler

We have some great new books at the library this month.

"Life Is So Good" - George Dawson. And so is this book. George learnt to read at 98 and had his life story published at 102.

"Open" - Andre Agassi. The tennis great tells his story.

"Daughter Of China" - Meihong Xu & Larry Engleman. The story of a young woman's life under Chinese communism and a prohibited love affair.

"Sissinghurst - An Unfinished History" - Adam Nicolson. Dealing with a family treasure and renowned garden now owned by the National Trust.

"Under The Dome" - Stephen King. An enormous transparent dome comes down on a rural town. Another King success.

"The Palace of Heavenly Pleasure" - Adam Williams. A romantic adventure set in China at the time of the Boxer Rebellion.

"Swan Thieves" - Elizabeth Kostova. A man attacks a painting in a museum and a psychiatrist searches for answers. From the author of "The Historian".

"The Blasphemer" - Nigel Farndale. This moves from the trenches of WWI to terrorism on London streets today.

If you are new to our community, call in and join the library. Our borrowers range from those who take 1 book a year to those who need 1 a day.

Borrow a book and have a quiet read.

Garden Group Eileen Powell

Our March 3 visit is a return visit to Mincher Garden at 338 Coatesville/Riverhead Highway at 10.30 am. This garden is now officially a Garden of National Significance and is over 4 hectares of native walkways, kitchen garden and perennial borders. Entry fee \$10. We then go on to Brookgreen Park for lunch and a wander round the beautiful garden. \$20 entry includes lunch. Further information from Eileen on 814 9298.

Our April 7 visit is to a Sylvan Avenue, Northcote garden at 1 pm.

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APRIL NEWSLETTER

Copy needs to be in the hands of the Editor

by FRIDAY 12th MARCH 2010 - 5PM

Robyn O'Sullivan Ph 814 1143

munster@ihug.co.nz

Advertising & Community Notices

Commercial advertisements are welcome and can be arranged by contacting Contact Robyn O'Sullivan, munster@ihug.co.nz, ph 814 1143.

Community Notices are free to financial members 2009, January to December.

Handyman Out West. Any work undertaken. House and property maintenance, renovation and decoration eg gutter cleaning, water blasting, deck building, tree felling, painting etc. Reliable and no GST charge. Phone Mike 814 9708

Otimai: Events and training centre is available for hire (Guides Auckland) and is open to view by appointment. Phone Lisa and Aaron on 814 9992 for bookings.

Plants: Taros, bulbs, cannas and various perennials for sale. \$1 – \$3. Also some shrubs. All sales for charity. Phone Margaret 814 9859.

Professional couple looking for 2-3 bedroom home in Waiatarua. Close proximity to the fire station is desired. Can provide references. Lock up garage also preferred. Please contact Kerry 027 272 9312.

The Oratia Community Church: On the corner of Parker & West Coast roads. Fellowship (trips, meetings etc.): 2nd Thursday of each month.

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