

Friends of Baring Head Newsletter



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February 2012 Number 2

Message from the Chair

Baring Head must be one of the most diverse and interesting places in New Zealand.

Last year, as we developed the Friends' submission on the draft management plan for Baring Head we became increasingly aware of the extent of the geological and natural features, as well as those relating to human occupation.

Baring Head has a Maori cultural landscape within the site or nearby, that includes a pa site, midden and stone wall. More recent historic structures include the lighthouse, keepers' houses, pump-house and World War II military installations.

Geological features are as varied as the marine terraces and open sweep of headland. Nor should we forget the indigenous flora and fauna including rare and endangered plants.

These are the sorts of areas that those interested in Baring Head will have opportunities to explore over the coming months. See *More dates for your diaries*, for more details.

Finally, thanks to Gordon Brailsford of NIWA. Members and friends who attended the information evening on 24 November are now aware of the international importance of atmospheric monitoring carried out at Baring Head. The Friends intend to host further information evenings in 2012.

Joy Baird
Chair

Contents

Message from the Chair 1

About the Trustees 2

Paid-up members 2

Volunteering 3

Dates to put in your diaries 4

How can I join the Friends? 5



About the Trustees

In the last Baring Head Newsletter we introduced a number of trustees. We continue that in this issue.

Graham Wolf describes himself as a 'very blended' Kiwi of Pakeha, Maori, Moriori, Cook Islander, Tahitian descent, while his descent from Te Rauparaha makes him tangata whenua of the region. Years of climbing, camping, fishing, biking, photography and scientific observation at Baring Head have made him a keen advocate for its conservation; he campaigned vigorously to ensure Greater Wellington Regional Council bought the site, and is now delighted to be actively contributing to Baring Head's future as a trustee.

The Trust, too, has representatives from the Greater Wellington Regional Council. Gareth Cooper, Ross Jackson and Broniek Kazmierow, profile themselves and their fascinating and rewarding jobs:

Gareth Cooper has been the East Harbour Regional Park Ranger since official opening in June 2004. He is no stranger to the region, having worked with Greater Wellington Regional Council since 1997 and, prior to 2004, working at Queen Elizabeth Park, Kaitoke Regional Park and in the Wainuiomata catchment area.

Ross Jackson trained at Lincoln College in Horticulture and Landscape Architecture. As Senior Advisor Parks Community Projects, he co-ordinates and facilitates friends' and community groups on environmental and recreational projects on Greater Wellington Council land. He works with Council as well as with other agencies and the community in planning, designing and developing regional parks. So it is a big liaison job that can get him involved with anything from creating facilities such as new trails to restoring wetlands or remnant bush.

Broniek Kazmierow As Greater Wellington Parks Principal Ranger responsible for Assets and Maintenance, Broniek manages park assets across the Greater Wellington Parks network. His responsibilities include leading GW's Parks' maintenance crews, and maintaining facilities, including tracks, roads, buildings, bridges and other structures. Broniek's background is in parks management, having worked for Department of Conservation in various recreation management roles (Bay of Plenty and Southland Conservancies) and social and historic science management roles nationally.

Next up coming event - 23 February 2012:

Morrie Love, who as a director of Raukura Consultants was very involved with the February 2011 publication *Orua-Poua-Nui Baring Head Cultural Values Report*, talks about Maori heritage at Baring Head and its environs.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Venue: Pelorus Trust Sports House, Hutt Park.

This is accessed by taking the entrance off the Hutt Park roundabout.

Gold coin koha

Paid-up members

We welcome the following as new members: Graham Wolf, M. E. Tonks, Y. H. Lawrie, Colin Ryder, D. Milliard, S. Pearce.

We have also received some donations for which we are extremely grateful.

New members are more than welcome. We've sent all those not on email a membership form and details of how to join. The rest of you can simply [click on this link for the information!](#)

Volunteering

Small animal monitoring

Volunteers have already proved their worth – and have had the opportunities to discover the beauties of the site! Paula Warren, co-ordinating the effort, wrote the following account of the first monitoring exercise.

Small mammal presence and numbers can be monitored using tracking tunnels. Long plastic tunnels are attached to the ground and left for a few weeks to allow the local fauna to get used to them. Monitoring is then done using inked cards. The cards are the same size as the bottom of the tunnel, and have an inky patch in the middle. A bait (peanut butter for rodents and meat for mustelids) is put in the middle of the ink. When the animal enters and goes to the bait, it gets inky feet, and then deposits footprints on the clean part of the card as it leaves.

Rodent cards are put in on day one, left overnight, collected the next day and replaced with mustelid cards. Then those are collected three days later.

Greater Wellington has put eight lines of ten tunnels on Baring Head, two in each of the main habitats (beach, terrace pasture, river flats and escarpment grey scrub). We have agreed to arrange to put out and collect in the cards four times a year.

Our first monitoring outings were blessed with lovely weather. So our volunteers on all three days had fun in the sun, and opportunities to scramble up the steep escarpments, stride over the terraces, or fossick for the tunnels among the shore vegetation – Baring Head offers a wide range of terrains! The volunteers on the escarpment lines also got to see some scrub vegetation at very close quarters. The clematis had flowered well, and was at the lovely fluffy seedhead stage, the orchids were out, and copper butterflies were abundant. The flaxes were flowering, and it was odd to see them without tui, given the prolific numbers of tui in flaxes in central Wellington. The family group doing the line on the southern beach reported a very satisfactory (for the small children) range of interesting seaweeds and bones, as well as finding all the tunnels. And those on the terraces had glorious views.

Unfortunately our success with the weather and picnicking was not matched by complete success in the monitoring. Spring grass growth had hidden many of the tunnels, and we didn't manage to find them all. The extra time taken searching, too, and a few teething problems, meant not all lines were done on the first day. But with the clear instructions provided by the volunteers from day one the team on day two did manage to do almost all tunnels for the mustelids. The few tunnels still lost will be found or replaced for February, and clearly marked. We would expect the February monitoring to provide a full set of data.

And the data to date? Surprisingly few of the rodent cards had rodent tracks, and those seemed to be rats rather than mice. We also recorded skinks on two cards and ground wētā on one. The second lot of baits, for mustelids, did show some mustelid tracking, but only on a few cards, and the prints were probably only stoats. Necessary expert identification is in the offing. Overall, however, those results indicate that the indigenous fauna are holding their own.

Do note – we shall be needing volunteers again for the end-of-February tracking on 18/19 and 22 February. It's a marvellous job for those aged from three (or younger) to seventy-three (or older). It takes you to quite diverse parts of the site, and you can choose what sort of terrain you want to work on. Get in touch with Paula Warren at work 4713118 (leave a message if necessary). Otherwise, text to 021 101 4824 (not turned on frequently) or mail to pwarren58@yahoo.co.nz



Volunteering - cont



Pump shed

Volunteers will shortly be needed to help undertake much needed maintenance and provide a re-paint to the pump shed. A contractor is currently being arranged to re-clad the roof. Once this is done then phase two will begin which will be to prepare and paint the walls of this unique little shed. Watch this space or our facebook site for further details.



Weed control

Greater Wellington Regional Council has done some initial work identifying weeds that need to be managed. We have offered to help with controlling those that volunteers can easily remove, particularly where that involves considerable time searching for individual plants. GW would then focus their contractor time on control of large patches of plants such as gorse and difficult plants like boxthorn. Work on species like karo depend on us having at least one volunteer with a chemical use certificate. Timing of our work on weeds is still unclear, but if you might want to be involved, let us know and we'll notify you of opportunities as they come up. And if you are a certified herbicide user, we would particularly love to have you involved.

More dates to put in your diaries

On 24 November 2011 Gordon Brailsford, NIWA's Group Manager, Tropospheric Chemistry spoke to a good turnout about NIWA's atmospheric observations at Baring Head, explaining, among other things, how the observations are carried out, the particular importance of the Baring Head observations, and New Zealand scientists' unique and international contribution to this area.

Now, further events provide opportunities to explore physically and mentally Baring Head's cultural and physical landscapes.

23 February 2012: Morrie Love, who as a director of Raukura Consultants, was very involved with the February 2011 publication *Orua-Poua-Nui Baring Head Cultural Values Report*, talks about Maori heritage at Baring Head and its environs.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Venue: Pelorus Trust Sports House, Hutt Park. This is accessed by taking the entrance off the Hutt Park roundabout. Gold coin koha

3 March 2012: Explore Baring Head. This is one of the Greater Wellington Regional Council walks. Join the ranger and the Friends of Baring Head for a guided walk around this fascinating area. Visit the NIWA research station in the Lighthouse reserve and hear more about what happens there. It is a free event, but with a maximum of 35 people, so bookings (and good fitness) are essential. Bookings commence on 5 December 2011 – bookings@gw.govt.nz or phone 04 830 4041.

Getting there: Follow the Coast Road for 14km from Moore's Valley roundabout in Wainuiomata to the park entry at the concrete bridge. Look for the sign - parking available.

19 April 2012 7.30 p.m: Michael Kelly talks about 'Baring Head and aspects of its European settlement.' Michael's background in historical work and conservation studies, and his oversight and knowledge of, or involvement in, various of the recent research studies on Baring Head will make for an informative and interesting evening.

Time: 7.30 p.m.

Venue: Pelorus Trust Sports House, Hutt Park. Gold coin koha

31 May 2012, 8.00 p.m. NOTE time change: Lighthouse Cinema, Petone shows *Guardians of the Light*, a documentary in which 20th-century lighthouse keepers return to some of the stations at which they served to talk about their lives. Baring Head station features as local identities Kitty and Bill Kemp reminisce about their time there.

How can I join the Friends?

There are four levels of membership – individual (waged \$20 or unwaged \$10), family \$30, or organisation \$50.

The financial year runs from 1 July to 30 June. However this year inaugural subscriptions paid between February and June 2011 will be valid until 30 June 2012.

For those with web access, [click here to get a membership/renewal of membership form](#). For those without email, a membership form has come with your newsletter. Please send your form and subscription to:

Friends of Baring Head Charitable Trust,
PO Box 38 076
Te Puni Mail Centre
Lower Hutt 5045.

