

# Gorge Gazette

News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and Streams

## Abbreviations:

WCC Wellington City Council

TPG Trelissick Park Group

GW Greater Wellington Regional Council

Website [www.trelissickpark.org.nz](http://www.trelissickpark.org.nz) (includes past Gorge Gazettes and Park map)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TrelissickParkGroup>

## DECEMBER 2020

### A World-first for Trelissick Park?

The two-year project to stabilise the slope and improve parking below the lower Ngaio Gorge Road slips has started. Thinking of the trees to be removed on the road reserve, Park Ranger Adam Groenewegen asked where we wanted the mulch heap. A huge pile duly appeared at the suggested location, next to the magazine building ruin.



To our chagrin, the pile was then imprisoned behind

an imposing, human-proof fence encircling the whole area – the start of a two-year ‘sentence’. Does anyone know of incarcerated mulch heaps elsewhere on this planet?

### A Hint of Nostalgia

This is what the much-used lower Ngaio Gorge Road entrance once look like. It was Tim Mclvor’s ‘spot’, carefully planted and lovingly tended over the years. A verdant splendour of



native grasses, flax, cabbage trees and shrubs. No more!

The slope stabilisation and parking project has started. Now it is all fenced-off, public access banned for two years. What a pain.

Before the bulldozer arrived, we uprooted as much as we could, and replanted along the Trelissick Crescent verge (see Facebook photos 19 October). Fortunately, the wet and cool spring aided survival. Tim has taken on half of the verge, while Marilyn Hester is continuing with her great work on the other half.

### **The Proposals for Lower Ngaio Gorge Road**

The upper photo shows part of the big slip 1/3 of the way up the road, with a retaining wall below and layby next to Park entrance #5 (off to the left). There will be a new retaining wall, as shown, below the road, down from the layby.



The lower photo shows the new parking area up from the lower Park entrance #6 and new retaining wall above the entrance. The information shed at the entrance is now opposite the magazine building ruin.



## The Bridge Opening Ceremony

The new bridge across Kaiwharawhara Stream was officially opened on 26 September – a happy occasion and the culmination of years of struggles.<sup>1</sup> Even cutting the ribbon was a struggle.

Mayor Andy Foster and MP Greg O'Connor spoke, as did major funder and 'motive force' Frances Lee. Peter Reimann filled in some gaps. TPG's Anne Tuffin was the MC and Amanda Dobson started proceedings with a karakia.

Bridge builder Chris Logan of Outsiders Ltd is at the far left of the crowd in the photo. Engineer Trevor Butler of Frame Group was unable to travel from Auckland. We owe a debt of gratitude to both for such a smooth operation, also to WCC's Tim Harkness for project management and associated track and Oban Street entrance work. More photos are on our 26 September Facebook page.



*Peter Reimann, Mayor Andy Foster and Frances Lee after cutting the ribbon. Photo: Barry Durrant*

## **Bees Paradise in Trelissick Park - Eva Durrant**

Barry and I live in Wadestown and have a few beehives on our property that slopes very steeply to the Kaiwharawhara Stream and the boundary of Trelissick Park. It is an idyllic spot for our hives as they face north and are sheltered from the cold southerly winds. There is an abundance of nectar to be found in the many species of native trees that flower in the spring and summer.

Wellington's weather is a challenge for beekeepers. We wait for hot weather (above 20 degrees) so that our new season's queens can go on their mating flights. Sometimes this may be as late as December, which doesn't leave much time to build up the bee workforce to a respectable 50-60,000 per hive to collect the nectar which becomes the honey we love so much. Happily, there is usually a long spell of good weather in January and February. This is the time when I put on extra honey boxes as the bees work long hours bringing in nectar.

In a good year, one hive can produce around 40 kgs of honey. And wonderful honey it is – a sparkling clear liquid amber blend of native 'bush' honey. I like to extract honey every couple of weeks in small batches, taking advantage of the different flowering times of the trees and their unique nectar. When the rewarewa flowers, we can see the bees making a bee-line for the red velvety blossoms for the nectar, and once the bees have converted this to honey it is extracted

from the frames and poured into jars. Before I became a beekeeper, I thought that all trees flowered every year – not so – for example, the rewarewa in Trelissick Park did not flower last year or the year before, but we are in luck this year.

The Wellington Beekeepers Association (WBA) holds an annual honey competition, and this year I won the Honey Cup for the best liquid honey. The competition is usually held in March or April but was delayed several months due to Covid.



*My cup runneth over*

The trees in the park that provide nectar for honey include ngaio (*Myoporum laetum*), lemonwood (*Pittosporum eugenioides*), wineberry (*Aristotelia serrata*), kohuhu (*Pittosporum tenuifolium*), mānuka (*Leptospermum scoparium*), kānuka (*Kunzea ericoides*), five-finger (*Pseudopanax arboreus*), koromiko (*Veronica stricta*), karamu (*Coprosma robusta*), kānono (*Coprosma grandifolia*), broadleaf (*Griselinia littoralis*), māhoe (*Melicactus ramiflorus*), kawakawa (*Macropiper excelsum*), taupata (*Coprosma repens*), akiraho (*Oleria paniculata*).

#### Large Canopy Species

Rewarewa (*Knightia excelsa*), tawa (*Beilschmiedia tawa*), northern rātā (*Metrosideros robusta*), rimu (*Dacrydium cupressinum*), miro (*Prumnopitys ferruginea*), matai (*Prumnopitys taxifolia*), tōtara (*Podocarpus totara*), kahikatea (*Dacrycarpus dacrydioides*), pukatea (*Laurelia novae-zelandiae*), tītoki (*Alectryon excelsus*), hīnau (*Elaeocarpus dentatus*), pigeonwood (*Hedycarya arborea*).

### **Barry Durrant says Goodbye to Two Projects**

The upgrade of 'Barry's Track' from Oban Street is complete and new volunteers for animal pest control have been recruited. Barry has been heavily involved and is now withdrawing from those. TPG is very grateful for his help over many years.

### **The Animal Pest Control Team**

Andrew Mclver, Tamara Friedmann, Steve Mackle, Finnigan Illsley-Kemp (replacing Barry Durrant), all organised by Bill Hester.

### **Catch us in Cyberspace**

Scroll down Facebook to look at what Treasury, Conservation Volunteers, St Benedict's School and our regular volunteers have been doing recently. Currently we have 567 followers. Then feast on the vast store of information on our website. Thanks for Bill Hester's updating and Deidre Burke for website subscriptions.

### **Stream Problems Still Dominate**

Every time it rains heavily, we think about polluted stormwater from our huge urban catchment gushing into our streams, streamside planting washing away, sediment burying invertebrates in stream beds, plastic/rubbish rushing down to the sea and the debris trap getting blocked again.

Our March and June newsletters listed stream monitoring links. GW are keen to put all the monitoring information on one user-friendly site. Anne Tuffin and Peter Reimann have been assisting with their model. This should provide better ammunition for educating the public and

advocacy. However, GW are aiming to apply the model to the many catchments in their domain – when will they get to ours?

Meanwhile, we look out on our hillside slopes with houses nestled amongst the trees. Gradually, infill housing is replacing the trees. What with that and the concentrations of buildings in WCC's Draft Spatial Plan... Isn't Wellington supposed to be a 'Biophilic City'<sup>2</sup>?

### **Rounding Off**

WCC asked us to estimate volunteer hours for the year and we were surprised that it came to just over 2,000.

900 plants were put in this year, sourced from WCC, Forest and Bird and home nurseries. Peter Reimann also supplied rengarenga and native grasses to Colleen and Bob McClymont, who are restoring a patch below Kenya Street.

### **References**

1. Gorge Gazettes June and September 2020.
2. <https://www.biophiliccities.org/wellington>

### **Working Bees**

See website 'Projects' page for dates, locations and health and safety information.

### **Contacts**

Peter Reimann	(04) 938 9602, <a href="mailto:nz.peterreimann@gmail.com">nz.peterreimann@gmail.com</a>
WCC (reporting problems)	(04) 499 4444 or <a href="https://forms.wellington.govt.nz/s3/Council-Fix-It-Contact-form">https://forms.wellington.govt.nz/s3/Council-Fix-It-Contact-form</a>
GW pollution hotline	0800 496 734

***Thanks and season's greetings to all our volunteers, supporters and staff from WCC and GW.***

Membership drawn from Highland Park Progressive Association Inc., Ngaio Crofton Downs Residents' Association Inc., Onslow Historical Society Inc., Private Landowners' Group, Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society Inc. (Wellington Branch), Wellington Botanical Society Inc., Wadestown Residents' Association.