

Gorge Gazette

News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and Streams

(Footbridges over the stream are numbered from 1 – 6 going downstream, excluding the old bridge off the side of Wightwick's Field).

Abbreviations:

WCC	Wellington City Council	GG	Gorge Gazette
GW	Greater Wellington Regional Council	OHS	The Onslow Historical Society
DOC	Department of Conservation	TPG	Trelissick Park Group

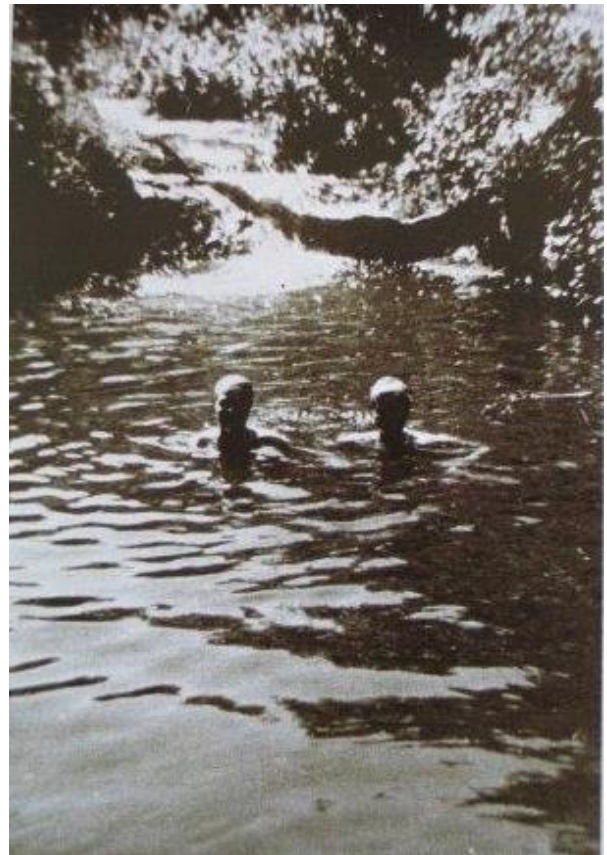
Website www.trelissickpark.org.nz (includes past Gorge Gazettes)

Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/TrelissickParkGroup> (you do not need to be a member to look).

MARCH 2014

The '18 - Footer'

The good news is that it is still there. But where have all the swimmers gone since the earlier parts of last



century? The '18 - Footer' is on the Korimako Stream just upstream of its confluence with the Kaiwharawhara, as it issues from the tunnel under the railway. The photo on the right is from the OHS archive. Access is via the track to the fish ladder, branching steeply down from the traverse track above the gorge.

Strange Occurrences

Recent additions to our burgeoning list:

- The case of the disappearing mustelid traps. We are in the throes of greater concealment. Another trap by the stream bank, well above flood level, was found at the debris trap at the other end of the Park, looking bedraggled from its watery transit (repaired by Barry Durrant).
- The brochure holder smasher - still at large. All three have suffered, some more than once.
- The horizontal rail thrower. The Waikowhai Street entrance used to have a horizontal rail. Alas - no longer!
- The collapsed Hanover Street map board mystery. Well, it did have one rotten footing, but was its demise caused by wind, car or person?

- The dog owner who built a log dam at the debris trap to re-create the upstream pool for dog-swimming purposes. To ensure no repeats the area is now bereft of likely logs.

More Rock Removal?

WCC/Capacity/DOC/Wildlands/TPG gathered recently at the debris trap to consider removal of more rocks, to further ease fish passage. As shown in the photo, it could still be a barrier to some species. But how deeply buried are the vertical rails?



The Body Shop Afternoon

Fish have an easier time behind The Body Shop warehouse. This backs onto the lower Kaiwharawhara Stream up from the Hutt Road. As shown, it is now aquatic perfection: shade and shelter for stream life, clear water, stream bed without silt... Three of us joined about ten of them at their monthly Friday afternoon staff working bee to clean up the stream and weed the riparian planted area. Our interest lies in improving the ecological corridor between the harbour and Outer Green Belt through Trelissick Park. The stream banks were landscaped and planted by WCC/GW/The Body Shop in 2005 and 2008, with infill in 2012. There is room for a little more planting.

Launch of the 'History'

Peter Reimann finished *The History of the Trelissick Park Group* for OHS, in the process admiring authors who painstakingly write biography and history books. A sunny Waitangi Day attracted a small gathering for the 'launch' next to the old powder magazine building. The 'History' covers the 22 years of trials, tribulations and rewards, along with some earlier background from the late 19th century. Frances Lee and others assisted. Barry Durrant and Frances provided most of the photos. Judy Siers from OHS, a WCC Councillor for much of the period, kindly edited and liaised with the publisher. Photos of the launch are on our website and Facebook page.

Copies can be obtained from the OHS rooms at the old Khandallah Automatic Telephone Exchange, 86 Khandallah Road, open on Sundays from 1 - 4 PM.

Rabbit Wisdom

GW lent us two rabbit traps, which Bill Hester deployed at known haunts at Waikowhai Street and Trelissick Crescent. Despite a range of tempting morsels, rabbits treated them with disdain. Not so for an annoyed domestic cat (released).

The Summer of Pests

In previous Gorge Gazettes we have waxed lyrical about our unique blend of weeds in the Park². Combined efforts by TPG volunteers and the WCC/GW contractors are not stemming the tide.

Steve and Hilary Newby are pulling wandering willie into piles while dog walking. Bill Hester is having adventures with sycamore, sometimes helped by Gottfried Theiler. He is also after old man's beard. He did a sweep of the valleys for Himalayan balsam. WCC dealt with balsam upstream of Otari Wilton's Bush and we waded down from Churchill Drive to the tunnel under the railway to pull out more. David Hames is keeping the Waikowhai Street entry area weeded.

Michael Courtney has joined the animal pest control team and Barry Durrant is back in action again after leg repairs.

The 'Scour'

The balancing act is no longer needed at the track scour downstream of Wightwick's Field.¹ Now we are waiting for the aftermath from the next big flood.

The contractor left all remains of the cut trees by the stream bed, ready to be carried away and cause downstream mayhem at the next 'fresh'. Fortunately it was a very pleasant sunny afternoon at this idyllic spot for carrying the remains to above flood height.

Karamu (*Coprosma robusta*)



Who said natives are not colourful? This is one of our most useful re-vegetation species for rabbit-free areas. It is very hardy, likes the sun and tolerates frost. Birds love the berries and it is ideal for riparian banks. It grows to about 3 m tall x 1.5 m wide. It is characterised by domata seen as swellings on the upper leaf surface at the junctions of the branching veins with the central vein (just visible on one of the leaves at the right of the photo). It has a black-tipped stipule on the main stem between where the opposite leaves branch off. It belongs to the same family as the coffee plant. Possibilities for desperate coffee addicts...

Raising our Profile

Early in March, TPG was once more at the Wadestown Fair, with display stand and brochures, also plants and 'Histories' for sale.

Bill Hester kindly put us onto WCC's *Our Living City* website.

GW are Departing

Following the recent end of the GW 'Take Care' funding, sadly GW are withdrawing from animal and plant pest control in Trelissick Park in July. We have had a long and excellent relationship with GW and owe a lot in particular to John Holmes, Robyn Smith, Megan Banks and Bruce Brewer.

WCC are taking over animal and plant pest control. In these straitened times we are worried about things going backwards, wasting previous progress. This was the gist of our submission on the WCC Annual Plan, to plead for more funding for pest control in the Park.

Sea Week

Malcolm McDonald organised a successful clean-up at the Kaiwharawhara estuary on a calm, sunny morning. 14 volunteers filled 16 bags with rubbish and collected other items, eg metal pipes. There was

less rubbish than last year. Malcolm reports that skinks were observed sunning themselves on boulders on the southern bank of the estuary. CentrePort say that their contractor will be dealing with the old man's beard and pampas grass on the reclamation in April.

Another "Island" Session

The sandy southern bank upstream of the debris trap is no longer an island, but the name has stuck. Plants get swept away in the floods and weeds thrive. The Sathya Sai Organisation have persisted with this difficult area over the last three years. Some of the karamu, toetoe and cabbage tree are now thriving - cause for optimism for the remaining area just planted with toetoe (see photo).



A Walk in the Park

For anyone unable to indulge in a restorative walk in the park, it is a tonic to look at the excellent video (with the sound turned on): <http://vimeo.com/38672267#at=0>,

Wanted

Someone experienced in the art of rain dancing.

References

1. GG, December 2013.
2. GG, September 2013

Contacts

Chairman & Adopt-a-Spot: Peter Reimann (04) 938 9602, peter.reimann@paradise.net.nz
Working bees: Peter Reimann (04) 938 9602
Wellington City Council (reporting slips and fallen trees across tracks, other problems): (04) 499 4444
Greater Wellington pollution hotline: 0800 496 734

Working Bees

Usually 1st Sunday of the month at 1.30 PM and 2nd Tuesday at 9.30 AM. See web-site for updates.

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.