

# **GREEN RIBBON AWARD 2007**

**NOMINATION OF FRANCES M C LEE**

**Category: Community Action for the Environment**

## CONTENTS

1. Nominator Details	2
2. Nominee Details	2
3. Nominator/Nominee Relationship	2
4. Summary of Frances Lee's Environmental Work	2
5. Nominator Comments	3

### Appendices

- Supporting Letter: Ngaio Progressive Association
- Supporting Letter: Peter Reimann
- Examples of Nominee's Work
  - 1999 Lower Kaiwharawhara Project
  - 2003 Paper for WCC Wadestown/Onslow/Wilton Community Planning Project
  - 2003 WCC "Branch Out" Volume 8, Autumn 2003 - Article
  - 2004 Paper for Report on Ecological Restoration of Kaiwharawhara Catchment
  - 2005 Statement at Hearing on Ridvan Gardens Subdivision, Crofton Downs
  - 2005 Statement at Hearing on Meridian's "West Wind" Windfarm
  - 2006 Requests for Inclusion in Wellington City Council 2007/8 Annual Plan
  - 2007 Trelissick Park – Action in 2006 (Calendar Year)
- Photographs

## **NOMINATION OF FRANCES LEE FOR GREEN RIBBON AWARD**

### **Category: Community Action for the Environment**

#### **1. NOMINATOR DETAILS**

Ian Shearer, President of Highland Park Progressive Association, 206 Barnard Street, Wadestown, Wellington. Ph (hm): 04 473 0610, or 027 430 6004, hppa@energyservices.co.nz

#### **2. NOMINEE DETAILS**

Frances Lee, Secretary of Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group, 24 Orari Street, Ngaio, Wellington. Ph: 04 479 2600.

#### **3. NOMINATOR/NOMINEE RELATIONSHIP**

The Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group is made up of a number of community organisations, of which the Highland Park Progressive Association is one. Members of our Association have had the pleasure of working with Frances over many years.

#### **4. SUMMARY OF FRANCES LEE'S ENVIRONMENTAL WORK**

Before retirement in 1988, Frances became involved in local affairs in the mid-1980s and was Secretary of the Ngaio Progressive Association (NPA), becoming involved in community meetings and discussions, particularly on issues of hillside subdivisions and the need to preserve/restore the attractive Ngaio surroundings, including the neglected Trelissick Park.

In following up restoration plans for the Park with Wellington City Council (WCC), she was elected Secretary at the first meeting of the Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group in 1991 (and still holds this position). After a short time, she gave up secretaryship of the NPA to devote more time to the Park.

During the intervening years she has organized and has been fully involved in a wide range of improvements and work connected with restoration of the Park, such as:

- Removing loads of rubbish, which was a big problem initially.
- Reducing weed infestations.
- Assisting in the development of the 1995 Trelissick Park Management Plan.
- Developing annual plans of work in the Park.
- Arranging tree plantings (many thousands over the years).
- Clearing and opening old tracks (initially only the Northern Walkway between Wadestown and Ngaio was open).
- Requesting WCC action on removing many old sewer pipes, restoring eroded stream banks with rock walls, reporting stream pollution.
- Petitioning WCC to purchase land at both ends of the Park – at Waikowhai Street and at the historic magazine site, plus addition of land below Oban Street
- Assisting in the covenanting of adjoining private land to the QEII National Trust.
- Preparing numerous formal submissions to WCC on Annual Plans, on subdivision applications, on WCC draft policies such as Pest Management, Open Space Access, Outer Town Belt, Mountain Biking Policy.
- Appearing at a range of WCC Committee and Council meetings, as well as the Environment Court, to present a case for the Park.
- Liaison with other environmental groups.
- Introducing an Adopt-a-Spot scheme.
- Liaison with a range of WCC officers (as well as Councillors) over action to improve the Park.

- Working with a WCC officer in the preparation of the “Wet and Wild Policy 2001”, with Conrad Pharazyn over various landscape plans, with P Blashke over “The Priorities for Ecological Restoration of the Kaiwharawhara Catchment” etc.
- Close involvement with the Kaiwharawhara Catchment Project (WCC and Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC)).

Apart from work connected with the Park, Frances has been heavily involved in a range of local issues, such as trying to preserve the Old Coach Road, Johnsonville, from subdivision development, recently in a liaison capacity and in the Environment Court. This is still ongoing after about 14 years. She was also secretary of the Kaiwharawhara Reclamation Working Group formed to try to keep the reclamation as an open space – again still ongoing. She has been in submissions/hearings on many subjects which touched upon some damage to the environment, eg Meridian Energy’s “West Wind” wind-farm at Quartz Hill, the Marine Education Centre, waterfront developments including the Hilton Hotel, as well as amendments to the Resource Management Act. It was disappointing when GWRC aborted its “significant landscape” exercise some years ago (involving a series of meetings) which could have provided a useful benchmark for development considerations.

She believes there needs to be strong support for the wonderful Wellington landscape, providing its features with a definite value when housing/commercial developments are being considered. This generation has the responsibility to foster environmental sustainability and to pass on significant and natural areas to future generations for their recreation and general enjoyment.

Some papers are in the Appendices as examples of work produced by Frances.

## **5. NOMINATOR COMMENTS**

Trelissick Park has suffered from major interference over the years, included farming, building the road and railway and sewage pipe installation, with resulting excavations, deposition of spoil, erosion, large areas of weed infestations and accumulation of rubbish. Over the last 15 years Frances has worked tirelessly to transform the Park into an attractive natural wilderness, providing a safe habitat for native flora and fauna, enjoyed by increasing numbers of visitors. She has been the main driving force behind the Trelissick Park/Ngaio Gorge Working Group, giving priority to:

- Pest weed control and rubbish removal.
- Re-vegetation of disturbed areas and of areas cleared of weed infestation.
- Follow-up pest weed control of re-vegetated areas.
- Riparian land management.
- Developing a simple track system for the Park.
- Addition/covenanting of suitable adjacent land.

This has been achieved by recruiting, motivating and inspiring other volunteers through working bees, the “adopt-a-spot” scheme and by working in close collaboration with WCC and GWRC, as described in Section 4. This has been almost full-time voluntary work for Frances, the required work achieved with a combination of persistence, passion and enthusiasm. It is largely through the efforts of Frances that the Working Group has flourished and that the Park has become the “gem” that it is today.

Apart from the exceptional work for Trelissick Park, Frances has been a selfless advocate for many community causes for protection and sustainability of the environment in the face of pressures for development over the last 20 years.

Further information on Trelissick Park and the work of the Group is on [www.trelissickpark.org.nz](http://www.trelissickpark.org.nz).

## APPENDICES

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