

Gorge Gazette - January 2023



News about Trelissick Park, the Ngaio Gorge and streams

Abbreviations:

WCC	Wellington City Council	OHS	Onslow Historical Society
GW	Greater Wellington Regional Council	WW	Wellington Water
TPG	Trelissick Park Group	CVNZ	Conservation Volunteers New Zealand

What a legacy!

Frances Lee's photo albums cover 1991 to 2009 and have now been digitised by Anne Tuffin. Bill Hester put the more than 600 images on the TPG website on the 'Links' page - see [Archive of Frances Lee photos](#). Anne and Peter Reimann visited Frances at Malvina Major to scroll through them on Anne's laptop. A sample is in the Appendix.

What a debt we owe to Frances, aided by WCC, GW and all the volunteers!

OHS has put 'Onslow Historians' on-line – see [Historian \(onslowhistorical.nz\)](#). For more on the history of the park, see Volumes 39 and 40.

Access at last

Tim Harkness's contractor has finished the new track with steps above the wash-out below the debris trap. With the gate currently open at entrance 6, people are now walking through the magazine area, admiring the lofty fennel groves and other weeds. Access was banished for more than two years because of the Ngaio Gorge Road slip stabilisation project above. The finish date is now mid-February. Bated breath...

A leap into the 21st century

We have dispensed with printed working bee brochures. Much of the text has been transferred to the website 'Projects' page by Bill Hester. There is the usual prior notification of the next two working bees on the website, and further details of each via email.

While in 'website mode', we also updated the 'History' page and the adopt-a-spot guidelines (via the 'Projects' page).

On the biodiversity front

WCC's Daniela Biaggio ran a workshop at the Leonard Cockayne Centre at Ōtari, seeking comments from representatives of restoration groups, to assist with her update of 'Our Natural Capital' – now to be called 'Taiao/Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan'.

TPG's concerns are mainly about our legions of weeds, disastrous stream erosion from fast stormwater runoff and stream pollution.

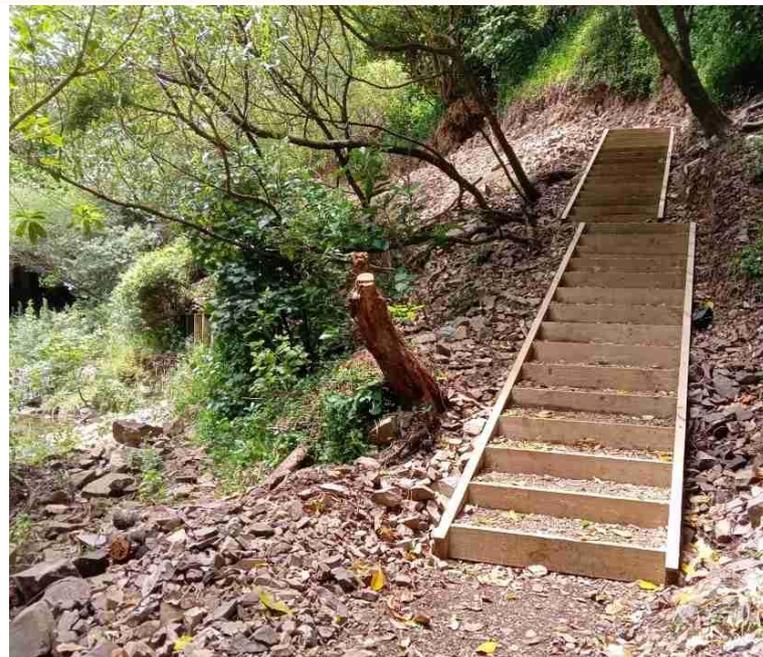
We look forward to the final document.

A new host for groups

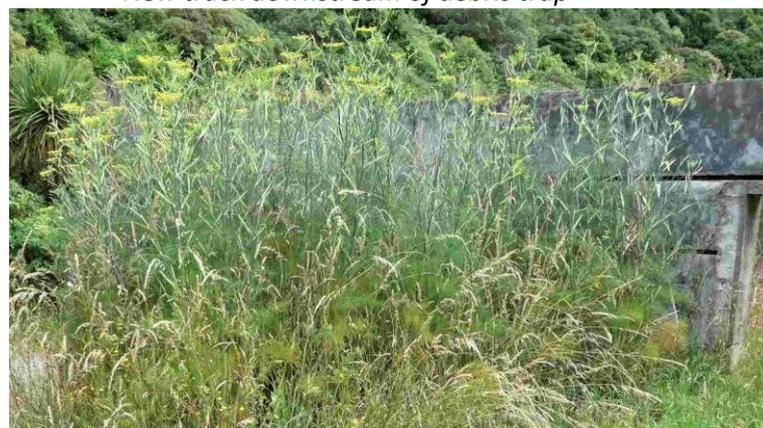
Angus Napier will be taking over the hosting of CVNZ and corporate groups (he can be contacted via the TPG email address).

500 WCC plants due in May

For Marilyn Hester's Trelissick Crescent verge, north of the Waikowhai Street entrance and Finn Illsley-Kemp's riparian spot downstream of bridge 7. Five tōtara and five kahikatea were also ordered.



New track downstream of debris trap



A healthy 2.5 m high fennel grove at the magazine area

Catchment matters

Eugene Doyle from the Owhiro Conservation Group and *Martin Payne* from the Friends of the Owhiro Stream are looking at forming a network of groups working on catchment issues.

Although TPG is part of Zealandia's Sanctuary to Sea project, which coordinates with groups in the

Kaiwharawhara catchment, it seems there would be benefits for all local catchment groups to be speaking 'as one'.

Anne Tuffin and *Peter Reimann* revealed our stream woes on a fine morning walk in the Kaiwharawhara valley, accompanied also by *Annie Yeates* of Manawa Karioi Society.



L-R: Peter, Annie, Eugene, Martin.

Photo by Anne

A fish passage improvement is coming

Daniela Biaggio advises that GW, in partnership with WCC, Ngāti Toa, and others, secured fish passage funding from the Ministry for the Environment. GW has appointed fish passage rangers. The downstream ramp for the tunnel under the oil tank beyond the park is a major barrier. The rangers are at first doing a trout survey (concerned that better fish access might introduce a trout problem upstream).

Sanctuary to Sea Project

Cat Ayres of Zealandia has initiated some business and community volunteering as part of the Sanctuary to Sea project. TPG will collaborate with half-day sessions in the February-March period.

Draft Seedling and field guide for restoration planting

WCC's *Anita Benbrook* is preparing a 'Field Guide' to supplement WCC's booklets: 'Restoration Planting Techniques' and 'Restoration Planting

And...

Track upgrades - *Tim Harkness's* contractor was busy at:

- The Northern Walkway gouge below Hanover Street (needs future checking for pipe blockage at inlet).
- Rocky sections downstream of Wightwick's Field, and between bridges 3 and 4.

Hungry rodents - *Bill Hester* reports no shortage, based on trap catches and bait station consumption.

From Adam Groenewegen - Our WCC Ranger has organised bridge numbering pictograms, wielded

Sites'. She sent a draft to *Peter Reimann* for comment. He is using it already and we eagerly await publication.

his chainsaw on errant trees, chased a sewer leak and liaised with WW on debris trap clearance and unsecured sewer access gates.

Nikau palm seeds - Just received by *Peter Reimann* from *Susan Pearce* for hopeful propagation.

The '51 trees' Mosque victims' site - The Sathya Sai Group cleared weeds for the Interfaith Group.

Below the Hanover Street entrance - *Anne Tuffin* and *Joan Waldvogel* still minister to their spot.

Attention garden waste dumpers! - *Marilyn Hester* has installed a sign at her Trelissick Crescent verge planting, hoping to thwart the serial offender(s).



The tunnel downstream of the park

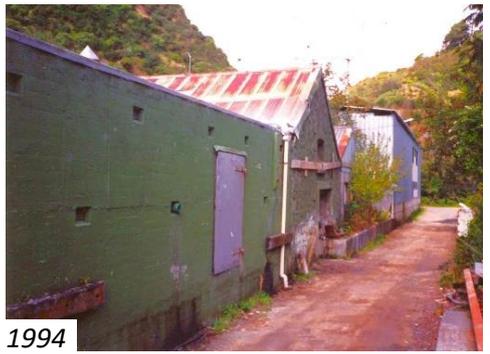
Contacts: See p.5.

Thanks to all our volunteers, supporters, WCC staff and weed control contractor Kaitiaki o Ngahere.

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.

Appendix - samples of Frances Lee's photos

The magazine area - WCC purchased the industrial area in the lower Kaiwharawhara valley to add to the Park in 1994. The plastics factory and out-buildings were demolished, but the two stone buildings built in 1879-80 to store gunpowder were retained.



1994



1994



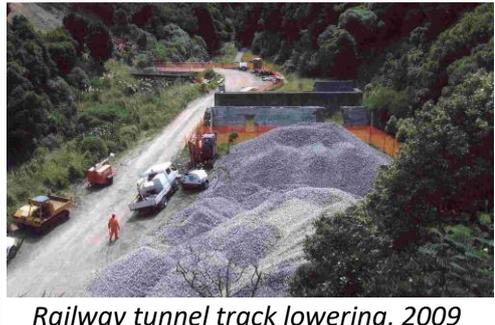
1997



1997



WCC planting, 2005



Railway tunnel track lowering, 2009

Just as work was starting on restoration of the magazine buildings in 2000, a Chubb security van was robbed of nearly \$1 million outside a bank in the city. The van was driven to one of the buildings and the 'loot' transferred to a get-away car. Next day the van was set alight inside the building, destroying the roofing. Work was then changed to preserving the buildings as ruins.

Streams: never a dull moment



Old above-ground sewer pipes were removed in 1992 by helicopter



Gabion construction, 1996



Logjam Korimako Stream, 2005. Kiwi in foreground.



Kaiwharawhara in spate at debris trap, 2006

No more blackberry harvests for locals



Carolyn Theiler down from bridge 2 prior to planting, 2007

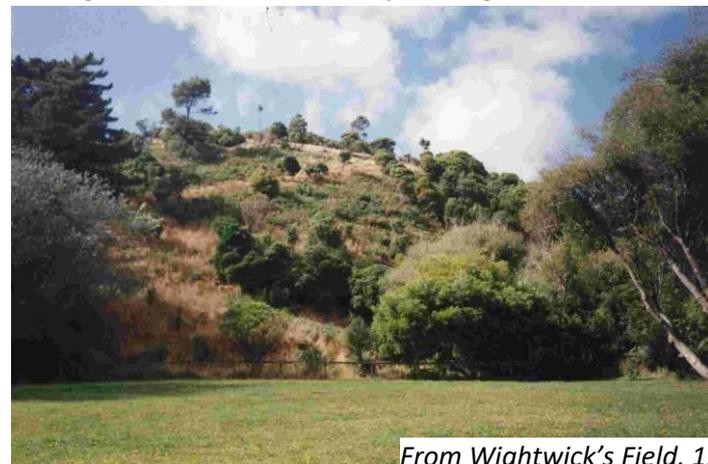
Spraying blackberry slopes in 2003

At the northern end



Wightwick's Field donated by Mr Wightwick, 1994

Flax below entrance 3 in 2000, prior to yellow leaf disease



From Wightwick's Field, 1994 and 2004. Gorse slope now forested.



At addition to Park below Waikowhai Street and new entrance track, 2001. L-R: Richard Northmore, Judy Siers, Frances Lee, Kiwi, Mary Munro

Gravity in action



One of our more monumental slips (from railway line below Crofton Downs in 2000)



Trees have a penchant for falling across tracks

The forsaken northern beach in 1999



Frances Lee persistently advocated for public access to this sheltered gem at Kaiwharawhara point – access denied. Soon it will be half-obliterated during the new ferry terminal upgrade.

Contacts

Note new email address: trelissickgroup@gmail.com

WCC (reporting problems): (04) 499 4444 or [WCC Fix-It](#)

GW pollution hotline: 0800 496 734

Website: www.trelissickpark.org.nz (with past Gorge Gazettes & park map)

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