



NEWSLETTER – JANUARY 2012



AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Grovetown Lagoon Incorporated Society was held on December 13th 2011. At the meeting an election was held to form the Grovetown Lagoon Executive Committee for the next year. The Executive Committee is made up of 4 foundation members (from iwi, Department of Conservation and Council) and 3 elected members.

The Foundation Members for 2011/2012 are:

- Alan Johnson (Marlborough District Council),
- Dave Hayes (Department of Conservation),
- Howard Sadd (Ngati Rarua and Rangitane),
- Rangī Joseph (Ngati Toa).

The Elected Members for 2011/2012 are:

- Rosanne Marsden,
- Doug Hislop and
- Tim Barton.

Mike Harvey was also co-opted onto the Executive Committee, and Tim Barton was elected Chairman. The Executive Committee is looking to have their first meeting in late January or early February to work on planning for the next projects to be undertaken at Grovetown.

Lynda Neame officially retired as Co-ordinator at the meeting, and Lynda was thanked for the huge amount of wonderful work she has done over the years. Lynda's work has been a fantastic contribution, and we know that Lynda will continue to be involved with the project. Lynda is handing over the role of Co-ordinator to Jenny Keene.

All of the Incorporated Society extend a huge thank you to Lynda, and a warm welcome to our new Executive Committee and look forward to a very productive year.

Meetings and Working Bees

Here is the interim schedule of Working Bees and Working Group meetings for 2012, up until the AGM in September. These can be discussed and dates finalized at the first Working Group meeting in March. Hope to see you there!

February 2012

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon – Sunday 19 at 9.30am

March 2012

Working Group Meeting MDC Committee Room – Tuesday 27 at 3.30pm

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon - Sunday 25 at 9.30am

April 2012

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon - Sunday 29 at 9.30am

May 2012

Working Group Meeting MDC Committee Room– Tuesday 8 at 3.30pm

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon - Sunday 27 at 9.30am

June 2012

Working Group Meeting MDC Committee Room – Tuesday 19 at 3.30pm

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon - Sunday 24 at 9.30am

July 2012

Working Group Meeting MDC Committee Room – Tuesday 31 at 3.30pm

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon - Sunday 29 at 9.30am

August 2012

Working Bee Grovetown Lagoon - Sunday 26 at 9.30am

September 2012

AGM Wairau Rowing Club Boathouse – Tuesday 18 at 5.30pm

What's new?



The new signs that have been installed in the area behind the Wairau Rowing Club are a great success.

They provide information about the lagoon's history, the birds that can be seen on and around the lagoon, as well as how lagoon ecosystem works. The signs are a great resource for visitors who want to find out more about this environment and how it is being restored. The signs also describe the iwi connection and how the project has been the result of many parts of the community working together.

These signs were funded through the Reserves section at the Council and are a wonderful next step in encouraging recreational use of the area.

What birds call the lagoon home ?

The lagoon is currently home to a variety of birds – and it will be a great development in the project when the public has easy access to walk around and see the birds and the lagoon from different viewpoints. Currently birds can be most easily viewed from on the water, and the eventual installation of pathways will enable a greater range of people to experience the wonderful wildlife of the lagoon. Birds seen at Grovetown include pukeko, coot, mallard, shoveler duck, paradise duck, grey teal, black shags, black swan, little white throated shags, black backed gulls, welcome swallows, blackbirds, song thrushes, goldfinches, starlings and harrier hawks.



As restoration proceeds, and the willow dominated vegetation is converted to vegetation more typical of an east coast wetland, we may see the mix of species change. The results of the work to remove the willows is obvious in the picture below. Inter-planting with native species is ongoing and we look forward to seeing the changes as the years go by.



What's ahead for Te Whanau Hou



Planning is already underway for the work that needs to be done over the next ten years, and funding that needs to be found in order to advance these projects. The planning has been in the form of a written document - the Te Whanau Hou Grovetown Lagoon Draft Development Plan. This draft Plan is currently under review with the Executive Committee, as they look at what they hope can be accomplished around the lagoon in the coming years.

The creation of this Draft Development Plan was initiated by Marlborough District Council in an effort to capture all the hard work that has been done over the years, and that has gone into previous plans and discussions, and put it all into one document. This document will outline actions that can be undertaken in order to achieve the future goals of this joint partnership between the Council, the Department of Conservation, the iwi and the community.

The Executive is hoping to fully discuss the Draft Development Plan at a meeting in February, as they progress towards the creation of a work plan for the year.

World Wetlands Day

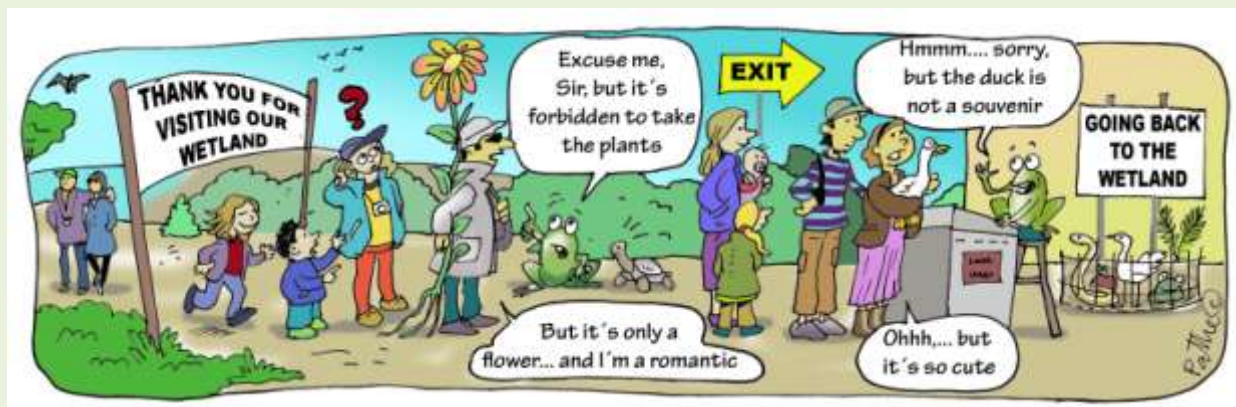


2 February is **World Wetlands Day**. This marks the date of the adoption of an international treaty with the following mission: **“the conservation and wise use of wetlands by national action and international cooperation as a means of achieving sustainable development throughout the world”**.

Whew! A big job! But each year groups of citizens from all over the world tackle this job, and use World Wetlands Day to **raise public awareness of wetland values and benefits in general**.

Of course wetlands differ all over the world, in terms of the types of plants and animals which live there, but all wetland ecosystems provide benefits to people that are far-reaching – benefits such as flood control, groundwater replenishment, water purification, shoreline stabilization and cultural, to name just a few. We really can't do without them.

The World Wetlands Day theme for 2012 is **Wetlands and Tourism**. This is something timely for us to think about at Grovetown Lagoon as we plan for increasing recreational use, so our community can access and enjoy the lagoon area, without negatively affecting the ecosystems that we want to thrive there.



A word from our new Chairman

Contributed by Tim Barton, Chairman, Te Whanau Hou Grovetown Lagoon, Executive Committee Chairman.

Welcome to this the first Grovetown Lagoon Restoration newsletter. This newsletter is reflective of some of the organizational changes proposed for the Executive and Working Group over the next few months.

I am grateful for your confidence in electing me as chairman, and thank for your support. As well as me, and coincidentally I think, the group gets Jenny Keene as our new coordinator, a role funded by the Marlborough District Council. We sincerely thank Lynda Neame for her stewardship of the group over many years. Without Lynda the group would not have achieved the cohesion it currently has. We hope Lynda continues on as a member of the group, volunteer and Working Bee organizer.

I also need to thank Dave Barker and Steve Dower who have acted as both contractors and guides for much of the project. Without their hard work and dedication the Lagoon wouldn't look any different now than it did 10 years ago. It has been this duo who have slain the willows and pulled down the creepers, all of which has made such a difference.

The first task of the group is to consider the Development Plan currently being drafted. Decisions need to be made as to which parts of the wetland receive attention in the first instance, and our 5 and 10 year goals for the Lagoon. I look forward to doing this with you all. Ours is a diverse group of people with differing concerns, involvements and enthusiasms in this precious resource. It will be an interesting journey across water, land, and the fascinating place in which they meet.



And lastly...

The Te Whanau Hou Grovetown Lagoon newsletter is for anyone who is interested in the Te Whanau Hou Grovetown Lagoon restoration project, so please feel free to pass it on to anyone who you think may enjoy it. Also if you have ideas and information that would be helpful to the project, please get in touch, so they can be included in the next issue.

It is my pleasure to be continuing Lynda's work on the project and I look forward to meeting and working with you all in the future.

Jenny

For more information contact Co-ordinator Jenny Keene at 572-7288, email Jenny at jennymkeene@gmail.com