

# WATERWHEEL HERITAGE PARK

WATERWHEEL HISTORIC TRUST



## NEWSLETTER December 2010

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## Funding and Sponsorship

We have continued to market the Waterwheel as much as possible hoping to secure significant sponsorship as well as attracting new members and making people aware about the Waterwheel Heritage Trust and what our vision is.

To date we have not been very successful in regards to sponsorship but we will continue to apply for grants and will mail out the "Power of the Past", promotional booklet to businesses again.

If you can help in any way or know of a business that is interested in sponsoring the Waterwheel please phone Helen Stewart at the Kawerau Enterprise Agency on 07 323 7377.

## The Waterwheel Heritage Park

As the year looms to a close we have much to be pleased about in what we have achieved during the year.

Our most significant achievements have been:

### The Opening of the Heritage Park

On 5<sup>th</sup> June (Queen's Birthday weekend). The event included the official launch and operation of the wheel, with the wheel turning and the water being pumped around. There were displays of heritage equipment by Waterwheel, Te Amorangi Museum Rotorua and the local vintage car and motorcycle clubs, and various other stalls and attractions. Trustee Lee Barton took a lead role in organising what we plan will be the first of an annual "heritage" theme weekend each Queen's Birthday in the future.

Also, due to the open day it prompted an investment by

the Trust in high quality signage for many of the larger collection items.

We will be holding another Queen's Birthday weekend event next year so watch this space.

### Collection

We were very fortunate last year to gain the use of some vacant commercial space in the KEA buildings in Paora Street, Kawerau. In various work days, we have relocated most of the collection from Stan and Phyllis Fretwell's and from Owen Rivers' properties to the two KEA buildings and to a temporary (outdoor) compound on the park site in Spencer Ave.

The relocation was given unwelcome urgency by a fire in January which destroyed some outbuildings and a number of smaller collection items on Owen Rivers's property.

The Trust is grateful to Owen and Luzy Rivers for providing storage for much of the collection over recent years.

### Workshop

With generous support from John and Morella Rogerson at MetalTech Charitable Trust, Kawerau. Waterwheel gained funding from Work and Income's Community Max scheme to employ a supervisor and six employees to carry out a range of restoration tasks for 6 months from mid September 2010.

Trustee Chris Hansen has been employed as the supervisor and has set up a workshop in a building provided by KEA.

Chris and the Community Max participants have been busy cleaning and restoring to working order collection items, many of them damaged in the January 2010 fire and also cleaning up the compound; spraying weeds and cutting down growth.

The workers are very enthusiastic and have enjoyed getting things to work e.g. Seed Drill Junior and Planet Junior Seeder.

Well done to Chris for doing such an excellent job!



Chris Hansen and Community Max workers.

# Waitangi Celebration Country Fair – A date for your diary!!!

5<sup>th</sup> February 2011

10.00am – 3.00pm

Waterwheel Park - Spencer Avenue

Our Waitangi Celebration Country Fair is aimed at celebrating the shared history of the area – an exciting event with lots of opportunities to participate and have FUN!!

## 1909 Spring Tip Cart

The Spring Cart was an all purpose vehicle such as taking the milk to the Dairy factory, carting fencing material etc. It has a carrying capacity of up to 1 ton.

This was given to us by the Tauranga Museum and was in derelict condition when we received it.

All iron work was saved and the springs were in very bad condition. All timber work was copied carefully and rebuilt with treated timber.

This took Stan Fretwell 80 hours labour to rebuild and is not quite completed as we need timber for the shafts.



- The Waterwheel will be working – come and see how they were used in the past.
- Have a go at doing your washing the hard way – with a washboard! Learn about the times before washing machines and dryers!
- Crafts – from flax weaving to carving – demonstrations and workshops.
- Learn about the farm machinery from past days – how it worked – see some demonstrations – sheep shearing to milking..... see butter being made.
- See our wagons and engines – the “power of the past”
- Enter our “Dirty Hands – Green Fingers” competition, or just

## 1916 Block Dray

The Block Dray was used for heavy duty Rooding work and general heavy work around the farm. It was the forerunner to the Tip Truck.

The date was stamped on the axle and has a carrying capacity of up to 4 ton approximately. This was given to us from the Tauranga Museum and was in derelict condition. All iron work was saved. All timber work was copied carefully and rebuilt with treated timber to save all design work.

This took 85 hours to rebuild by Stan Fretwell.

## WATERWHEEL CELEBRATION COUNTRY FAIR

Saturday 5th February 2011  
Spencer Avenue, Kawerau

WATERWHEEL HERITAGE PARK  
WATERWHEEL HISTORIC TRUST

come and see the exhibits. We have categories for Kumara to Kamokamo and fun categories for kids – best vegetable animal plus gardening tips and advice

- For the kids, big and small, young and young at heart, there will be races – sack races, egg and spoon races, poi poi and more.
- And of course food and music – all the ingredients of a fabulous day out for you and your family.

To keep up-to-date on the

range of activities happening on the day visit the Waterwheel website at [www.waterwheel.org.nz](http://www.waterwheel.org.nz) and keep an eye out for our adverts.

Do you have some spare time????

We are looking for **volunteers** to be involved in helping to organise some of the fun aspects of our day. You can do as little or as much as you want – but your help is needed.

To find out more phone Stephanie on 07 307 8032 – or contact her on e-mail at [wendoverhq@gmail.com](mailto:wendoverhq@gmail.com)



Block Dray before.



Block Dray after.

## Article in the Rural News Newspaper

Recently this article was published in Rural News about the Waterwheel Historic Trust by Tony Hopkinson. Here is the article for those of you who missed seeing it.

### 120 truckloads later...

#### COLLECTING

**MACHINERY** is Stan Fretwell's life-long experience.

He is passionate about showing today's generations the technology used in times past.

Fretwell, of true pioneering stock, left school aged 13 to manage a dairy farm in Pirongia district when family members went away to WWII. "I've always responded to a challenge. If someone said 'You can't do it, it can't be done', I've gone ahead and done it," says

Fretwell.

Apprenticed to a builder, he spent some years building in Wellington and Hutt Valley.

Then for family reasons he set up a business, Stronghold Engineering, at Thornton, 10km north of Whakatane, where he and his wife Phyllis and family have lived 35 years.

The business at times involved all members of his family, sometimes employing eight staff. "We serviced clients from Te Puke to Opotiki to Galatea in a region where many farms ere settled by returned servicemen."

Some farms had several different owners as successive floods wiped out their efforts and they just walked away. "We concentrated on service and we retained older customers and kept adding new ones."

Over the years

Fretwell realised a lot of history lay parked under trees and stored in sheds. He began to collect, store and document the ownership and how machines were used. The collection grew at Strongholds yards, the machinery saved there, but documentation on settlers' or Maori history was given to the local museum.

A lot of history has been lost, Fretwell says. Only recently have New Zealanders begun to wake up to the value of this machinery.

A major change came in 1990 when the Waterwheel Historic Trust was set up, organising a band of amateurs into a more businesslike grouping.

The trust commemorates a water wheel that first ran in 1860 at Braemar Hill, west of Whakatane. Its water came from a spring from Lake Rotoma which fed into the Tarawera River.

Governor Grey commissioned this to grind wheat to save the cost of time of freighting to and from Auckland. It was later used to process flax.

The trust now has a permanent 5ha home at Kawerau, where members have built a full-scale replica of the water wheel, powering it with water from the

adjacent Tarawera River.

"We've had great cooperation from the local district council and businessmen. We just need funding for building for displaying all our stock.

Much stored material has been shifted from Stronghold Engineering to Kawerau and another property there. This entailed 108 trips with a 3t truck and two trips with a 44t truck and trailer. Fretwell foresees another seven 3t truckloads.

Sausage sizzles and the like have so far paid for all activities. Volunteer numbers have varied from 15 to 25.

Phyllis at first maintained the records of the collection; recently these have gone to computer. About 30,000 items are now recorded – previous ownership, brief history and how they worked. At least 70,000 hours voluntary work is documented.

"Our aim is a live machinery park with training facilities, 'live' days with hands-on operation and video commentary on how things work. These and static displays will make the collection a tourist attraction second-to-none."

*Thank you to Rural News and Tony Hopkinson.*



Work being done on the pond by trust members for the full scale replica water wheel built by Stan Fretwell.

**Waterwheel Historic Trust**

OFFICE ADDRESS  
The Waterwheel  
C/- Kawerau Enterprise Agency  
60 Onslow Street, Kawerau,  
Bay of Plenty, New Zealand

SITE ADDRESS  
Spencer Avenue, Kawerau,  
New Zealand

PHONE  
(07) 323 7377

CONTACT  
Helen Stewart  
Email: [helen@kea.org.nz](mailto:helen@kea.org.nz)

**We're on the Web!**

See us at:  
<http://www.waterwheel.org.nz>

**Harvest Weekend**

Horowhenua Vintage Machinery Club Inc. will be hosting its Harvest Weekend on the 12<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> February 2011 at Grahame & Sue Cottle's property, 307 Heatherlea East Road, Levin.

They have 4 acres of hay to mow, rake, sweep and stack with horses and tractors, then stationery bale. 4 acres of barley will be

bound and carted to a tin mill with vintage trucks for thrashing and baling of straw.

Traction engines will be giving rides and also on display, along with vintage tractors, stationery engines, Clydesdales, potato digging, vintage cars and trucks, grain and maize binding and much more.

Exhibits from other clubs are welcome to help boost the variety of machines for everyone's enjoyment.

Cost: Adults \$5 and children under 12 are free.

For further enquiries phone Rod Clifton 06 364 3105 or Wally Dyson 06 368 8981.



**Acknowledgements**

Once again the Trust gratefully acknowledges the wonderful work done by the many volunteers who turned up to help at our Working Bees. Without your support, this Park would be much further from completion.

We also thank our members, whose support helps to secure the future of the Waterwheel Historic Park. The Trust has been very fortunate in receiving a number of items to add to its collection and also

money and sponsorship from a number of locals and businesses. We thank you for this. We would like to wish all a very Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year. Take care over the holiday break!

If you are interested in becoming a member or know of someone who may be interested, please complete the following form, tear off, and send in to the Waterwheel address above.

**APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP** Annual Membership is: \$25 per family

Name: .....

Address: .....

Tel: ..... Mob: ..... Email: .....

Do you want to receive a Newsletter?

By Email

By Regular Mail

Yes/No

Yes/No

Yes/No

**Charitable Status:**

The Waterwheel Historic Trust has secured Charitable status and will provide receipts for donations for tax deduction purposes.

You can also help by: - Please tick

Making a cash donation \$ .....

Offering your time to help carry out restoration or site development

Donating items