

Thursday, 24 July 2014

Waihi Ward Reflections

This advertisement is authorised by the Hauraki District Council



New bridge will keep railway on track

A \$30,000 grant and \$30,000 loan to the Goldfields Railway recently approved by Council brings literal meaning to the term 'bridging finance'. The money will be used to help rebuild the substructure of the wooden trussed Waitete rail bridge, built in 1905.

The bridge is one of three on the Waihi to Waikino line, which annual inspections of the track and bridges identified as needing replacement or complete renovation. Work has been completed on the Victoria Head SH2 overbridge, and replacement of the remaining Waitekauri Bridge is planned within the next five years.

Goldfields Railway Society Secretary-Treasurer Chris Hale says the Waitete Bridge project has been on the drawing board for about two years, since an engineering and site investigation, aided by a Council grant, showed there was some deterioration to the wooden piles below the ground. As a short-term measure, concrete reinforcing was placed around the foundations.

The new bridge substructure will cost \$328,000, with \$28,000 available from the society's own funds. While the predominantly volunteer-run railway has an ongoing works programme financed from its income, most of that is used for maintenance or restoration of the track and rolling stock, and preservation of the historic railway buildings.

"The Council is one of our key supporters and its assistance is really important," says Chris. The Council loan is for a five-year period, and the grant is being provided by the Waihi Community Recreational Facilities Development Fund.

A Lotteries Heritage grant of \$150,000 toward the bridge has also been approved, as well as \$35,000 from Trust Waikato. Applications to other prospective funders are still pending.

Chris anticipates that the rebuilding will begin in late August, and be finished by Christmas, depending on the weather. Much of the job can be done while the train is still operating, but a disruption of up to six weeks will be necessary when work begins on the abutments – the pressure-bearing substructure at the ends of the bridge.

"We'll try to fit around the school holidays, which are a very busy time," says Chris.

Goldfields – the only working example in New Zealand of a heritage-listed railway precinct complete with original infrastructure – attracts about 25,000 visitors annually, including 6,500 school children. Numbers are expected to rise significantly in conjunction with growing use of the parallel Hauraki Rail Trail.



Above: The rail bridge over the Waitete Stream is a vital link on the Waihi to Waikino line.

PUBLIC NOTICE

REMINDER TO DOG OWNERS REGISTER YOUR DOG NOW!

Council is urging dog owners in the Hauraki District to register their dogs and avoid extra payment.

This reminder gives you an opportunity, if you have not already done so, to register your dog(s) before 31 July 2014.

Dogs remaining unregistered after 31 July 2014 will incur the 50% penalty fees and are liable for an infringement fine of \$300.

So be in quick to pay your dog registration before 31 July 2014.

LD Cavers
Chief Executive
Hauraki District Council

Last chance to make a submission!

The submission period will close at 4.30pm Monday 28 July 2014 for the:

- Draft Class 4 Gambling Venue and New Zealand Racing Board Venue Policy
- Draft Local Approved Products (Legal Highs) Policy.

Submission forms are available at the Council service centre in Waihi – or submit online at www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz.

Your submission can also be emailed to submissions@hauraki-dc.govt.nz, or posted to PO Box 17, Paeroa 3640.



Above: Alison Collings uses her recycled puppets to educate as well as entertain.

Puppets take centre stage

What do an old dressing gown, the spokes of a broken umbrella and a scrubbing brush have in common?

Waihi puppeteer Alison Collings used them all to help create the puppets and sets for The Little Bang Fairy Show, which she performed as part of the Waihi Library's school holiday programme. That was in keeping with the strong environmental message threaded through the story and accompanying quirky original songs.

Three years ago Alison received a Creative Communities grant from the Council toward setting up the show, which she now takes to schools and other young audiences. But she volunteered her time and talents to play a part in the library's free holiday activities.

Different hour-long sessions in the library each weekday were extremely popular, especially when wild weather raged outside. Almost 30 local and visiting children enjoyed origami on day one, and almost 50 children (plus parents) rolled up for some of the subsequent sessions which included art and crafts, storytelling, magic tricks, and meeting guests from the SPCA and St John.

Big beach clean-up

One hundred cubic metres of windblown sand – more than 12 truckloads – was last week removed from the Fishermans Bend carpark at Whiritoa and taken to the beach by the surf club. The unwanted sand dumped across the carpark originally came from the Lagoon area.

There were also several days of "high winds and huge high tides" that took so much sand out to sea that there was a two-metre vertical drop in the sand dune in front of the club, hampering lifeguard service vehicles, said Council Parks and Reserves Manager Steve Clark.

This month's storm also meant that some of the pedestrian beach accesses were almost unusable. A digger was called in to fix these problems.



Keep New Zealand Beautiful



The annual "Keep New Zealand Beautiful" campaign this year will be carried out from 14 to 20 September 2014. Groups, schools, volunteers, and businesses will get together to clean up their local areas.

All those who register will be provided with plain black bags with a Keep New Zealand Beautiful (KNZB) yellow rubbish sticker.

Smart Environmental Ltd, Council's refuse collection contractor, has offered to accept all the stickered bags generated from the "Keep New Zealand Beautiful" campaign at no cost, as part of the company's policy of working with the community. The bags will be accepted at the Paeroa and Waihi refuse transfer stations.