

## Cycling Adventures in the 1950s

Part III of Frank's Excellent Adventure

Waiouru in late December can be, and was quite cold, but replenished by the cold chicken, cold salad and warm tea, served at a pace that ensured a rest for over an hour. I was almost ready to set out on the next section of this somewhat ambitious cycle ride from Auckland to Wellington. The nicest part of this stop was a conversation with a young guy who knew someone that I also knew quite well. It was to prove to be the only conversation with anyone on the journey, apart from the ute driver approaching Wairakei. So having massaged my frozen knees I set out 8.30 p.m. for Taihape. Darkness soon approached, so I used my hand held torch to throw some light on the road ahead, not a great help but as my eyes adapted to the dark, I managed to hold onto the centre of the road. The tarseal was uneven which doesn't help one's confidence, especially as rain begins to fall, but amongst this hilly country was not unexpected. In the dark it is not possible to see approaching hills, giving the sensation that the bicycle is dragging for some reason or the rider is tiring.

The township of Hihitahi comes up but there is little activity at about 9.30 on a cold and damp evening. The torch batteries fail so it is push on, no sightseeing or interesting horizons to draw one on, just savour the warm bath and bed about, hopefully, an hour ahead. The road narrows somewhat, not unexpected in hilly country, and with poor vision ahead, one can't make full benefit of the downhill stretches.

At the cafe in Waiouru I had read of some of the history of the town of Taihape, about 6 miles ahead. The district was settled in 1893 by a small number of Christchurch citizens, who took up land in what was a complete wilderness, but the heavily timbered hills proved to be an incentive for quite an industry of timber milling. Having come from Christchurch I felt quite comfortable and doubly anticipating my arrival at this rather remote settlement. A road junction hope fully indicates a change to less remote country. I can't read the road sign but assume that it is the Napier-Taihape road and surely the welcome lights of the hotel and a warm dry bed will lift my spirits mightily.

The last two weary miles were dark, and the road surface less than smooth but yes, Taihape is ahead, the Gretna Hotel still lit up at 10.20p.m. I made myself known to the night porter and find my room. Not the classy standard of the Wairakei hotel but any bed was welcome. The bathroom has a shower only but that was just fine and I soon find myself in the silence of my room. SILENCE? I had not realised that Taihape was a busy rail junction and shunting was to give a sound backdrop to a good night's sleep despite the efforts of the train crews.



Taihape - a few years before Frank's visit

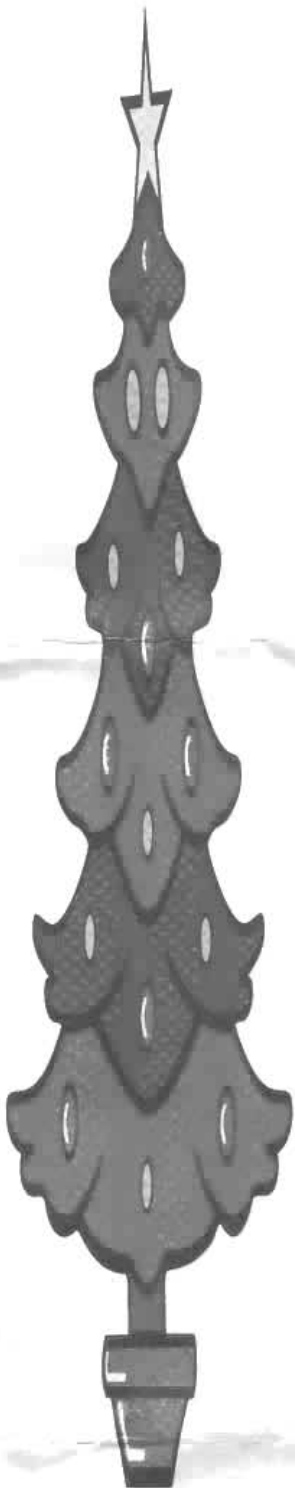
A good breakfast is a good start to any day and replenished I find that the bicycle has a puncture-not a great way to start the day. At least the weather is fine. After repairs I was away to what I expected to be mostly downhill and easier going to the next town of Mangaweka. The country is still steep hills with some long uphill slopes through Utiko and Ohutu.

A gentle downhill sweep to Mangaweka gives a welcome break, and the town sports a dairy that stocks ice cream, a good energy source. And I needed it too, because there is a climb out of town, and I enjoy lovely gorge views when the country opens up, and the sun warms the air and my soul as well. In a car it would be interesting country, but the undulating terrain means stiff climbs and the sweeps down do not make up completely for the energy expended earlier. Ohingaiti appears and my map says, pass the rail viaduct and

before, watch for some relics of the timber industry of the turn of the century. Sure enough there were two old engines which powered a wire rope upon which Totara timber was carried across the Rangitikei river. I believe that some of the locals and timber workers would venture across on the rope but most relied on horseback. But this venturesome cyclist must press on through a gorge and on my trip they were sweetened by the thought of the easier grades around Hunterville which should be three or four miles ahead. Yes the country is more open and I recall the very pleasant scenery with the river bed stones shining in the sun, and the river meandering, always a sign of flatter country, even though we are still 875ft up. I expected to

have lunch at Hunterville arriving at 2.30 p.m. I enjoy "Pea Pie and Pud" which is deservedly famous New Zealand pie cart fare, hardly 'Cordon Bleu', but really hit the spot as far as I was concerned.

To be continued...



Opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the Editor or the Waiatarua Ratepayers and Residents Association.

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Thursday	10.00am - 12.00pm
Friday	7.00pm - 8.00pm
Saturday	11.00am - 12.00pm
Sunday	11.00am - 12.00pm

### WEB Site:

[www.waiatarua.org.nz](http://www.waiatarua.org.nz)



## Otimai Celebration

On Saturday 29th November there will be special birthday party at Otimai, the Girl Guide home in Oratia.

It is 80 years since this beautiful place was opened and over the years hundreds of women and girls have had exciting holidays, trainings, workshops, meetings, and camps in the buildings and grounds. Many hours have been spent laughing, talking, singing, sharing ideas, trying new skills and learning about living together with new and old friends.

Otimai means 'welcome, come and stay', and we certainly do this. The motto Faith, Love and Service and the values of our organisation, Girl Guiding New Zealand are evident in the programmes that are carried out.

On Saturday 60 friends, girls, leaders and special guests will enjoy a day of activities, including the confidence course, orienteering, treasure hunts, walks along the bush paths to the chapel and stream, a special afternoon and campfire. A day full of reminiscing for those who have stayed at Otimai.

Otimai is used most weekends by Guiding groups and during the week we welcome business and other organisations to enjoy the peaceful surroundings. It has also become a popular small wedding venue.

We look forward to the next 80 years with many of our girls being able to come and stay to enjoy the experience of being in a Girl Guiding home.

## TABLE TENNIS will be back in the Autumn

### FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER

Copy needs to be in the hands of The Editor,

by **FRIDAY 16TH JANUARY, 2009 – 5PM**

Dave Pocock Ph 814 9697  
davepocock@xtra.co.nz

### Advantages of being a WRRR member?

Show your membership card at the following businesses for a 10% discount

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**Auckland's Waitakere Estate**  
573 Scenic Drive. (Thursday–Sunday)  
(applies to max 2 adults per visit)

## From the President

Dave Pocock

Hi All

Well it is hard to believe that we are in the silly season again, and here is me only just got used to putting 08 down as the date.

Last month I announced the resignation due to ill health of Jenny Bebbington, our Editor, but as this was a last minute announcement I did not have the opportunity to thank her. For the past year I have filled in part of the Editor's position as Jenny has undergone a number of major operations, but in spite of this she has assisted me with the newsletter when able. She had hoped that the last round was the end of it but unfortunately that was not to be, hence her resignation. Thanks Jenny for all your efforts as Editor and I sincerely hope that 09 is much kinder to you than 08 has been.

This of course means that we are looking for 1-3 people to produce the newsletter in the following capacities:

- 1: Set up, ready for Longleys to print, would require a suitable program for layout and provide final copy in PDF.
- 2: Source articles and deal with advertisers.
- 3: Proofreader.

All positions call for computer with internet access, preferably Broadband.

Interested? Please email me: davepocock@xtra.co.nz.

At our November committee meeting we had two new faces at the table with both people joining us as co-opted committee members. They are Lynda Hogsden and our replacement treasurer John Stagg, a big thanks to both. John will take over the reins from Jan Haine when our financial year ends, at the end of December. Of course they will be officially elected along with the new committee at the AGM, which will be on a Sunday next year. Yes we are trying something different and the AGM will be at 11 am Sunday 22<sup>nd</sup> February 2009, so mark it on the calendar.

We will be hoping for some more keen souls to join us on committee to fill some gaps and provide new blood but I promise you that nobody will be pressured to join, so don't stay away in fear of being railroaded, as I believe it should be totally voluntary.

I hope you got to see "Stepping Out" being probably the most ambitious show yet from the drama club and what a spectacular resounding success this was, being directed by local resident Kathy Lowe who took a cast of a mixture of dancers that couldn't act and actors who couldn't dance and turned them in to very talented actor/dancers.

On November 15<sup>th</sup> Shirley and I were privileged to attend the Gold Star Presentation Dinner for Waiatarua Chief Fire Officer Ian Ford at the Settlers Country Manor at Waimauku, and what a night it was. The Gold Star is for 25 years of service and Ian joins fellow Waiatarua volunteer fireperson, Lyndsay Whittle for this honour, pretty good for our little establishment. It was a spectacular event with a number of top brass from the volunteer fire service attending and all fire personnel in full dress uniform complete with medals.

Ian and his family arrived in great style at the conclusion of a one hour helicopter ride they enjoyed over Auckland to be greeted by a guard of honour of his peers. Lyndsay Whittle was on great form as MC and a number of our local members received awards before a beautiful buffet meal followed by Ian's presentation.

Our local councillor Paul Mitchell represented the Mayor, who was still on his way back from China, and we did learn to keep Paul away from matches judging by the stories he told. All in all an enjoyable night honouring a person we can be very proud of, who is held in high esteem by his peers. Congratulations Ian.

On that note I will wish you all a MERRY XMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR and we will be back in February.

Dave

## It's that time again!

WRRR subs become due on 1st January, so please help us by filling in the form below and sending us your cheque as early as possible. If you are not sure why you should join WRRR, the list on the left shows some very good reasons.

2009	Please accept my Membership to the Waatarua Ratepayers & Residents Association	
	Name	_____
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		I ENCLOSE: <input type="checkbox"/> \$10 household
	To: Treasurer, WRRR, 911 West Coast Road, Waatarua, Waitakere 0604, or leave at the library	

## Fire Brigade

Ian Ford

At our annual Brigade dinner in mid-November we presented service honours to our volunteer firefighters. Ian Ford received the United Fire Brigade Association's Gold Star for 25 years service, just the third to be awarded to a member of Waitatarua Brigade. UFBA 5-year Silver medals were presented to Maxine Arden, Kerry Chislett and John Hinde while silver bars for an additional 2 years service were awarded to Aaron Offenbaker, Karl Nuttall, Derek Renata (all 7 years service) and Helen Longley (13 years). Ryan Groves received the NZ Fire Service Long Service and Good Conduct medal for 14 years service.

## Recent Calls

9:48pm, Sat 4 Oct – False alarm, Garden Rd, Piha.

2:08pm, Mon 6 Oct – Car off road, no injuries, Piha Rd.

7:23pm, Tues 7 Oct – Trees across road, Piha Rd.

11:20pm, Thu 9 Oct – Car fire, Piha Rd.

00:30am, Sun 19 Oct – Car fire, Scenic Drive.

11:32pm, Thu 23 Oct – Rubbish on road, Scenic Drive. Some lowlife decided the easiest way to get rid of his get rid of his truckload of rubbish was just to put the tray up and drive away. We moved it off to the side of the road before someone drove into it.

8:50pm, Sat 25 Oct – Gas bottle on fire, Scenic Drive.

3:48pm, Sun 2 Nov – Car rolled, Piha Rd. Two people escaped with minor injuries after failing to take a bend (at twice the recommended speed!)

## Fire Permits

Christmas is fast approaching, and along with that the hope of great weather. On the 1st December we move into a Restricted Fire Season in the rural area. This will mean that all open fires will require a permit. If you wish to have a fire then contact the Waitakere City Council on 839-0400 and request to speak to a Rural Fire Officer. Generally 3 days notice is required, but normally an Officer will be round to visit either the same day or the next business day. It is worth noting that fire permit visits are not carried out in the weekend. Fire permits are free. Yes, you read that right, free.

## Contacts

For anything you want a fire engine to attend you should always dial 111. Otherwise please call Ian Ford (814 8871), Helen Longley (814 9855) or Karl Nuttall (814 8777)

## Garden Group

Eileen Powell

We wish all you gardeners out there a very happy Christmas and hope you have plenty of time to relax and enjoy your garden over the holiday period. Our first get together in the new year will be the first Wednesday in February and we look forward to another fabulous year of garden visits.

## Library Report

Jeannette Ziesler

A new delivery of the latest titles is expected before Christmas, just in time for holiday reading. Our last day of opening is Sunday 21st December and we re-open Thursday 8th January. From all the library helpers Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### Waiaatarua Rainfall (October 2008)

	Rain Days	Wettest Day	Mth Total	Year to Date
Mountain Road	14	6th – 35 mm	153 mm	1723 mm
Brabant Road	21	7th – 37 mm	174 mm	1664 mm
Quinns Road	20	8th – 35 mm	129 mm	1349 mm
Forest Hill Road	17	6th – 24mm	149mm	1596mm
Auckland City	–	–	92 mm	978 mm

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## Weedfree Trust Helps To Restore Waitakere Wilderness

Now that our wettest winter for years is almost behind us, spring sunshine is bringing forth generous growth in the Ranges. Unfortunately many of the plants that are now feeling the surge are not the ones we would most like to see. Though providing stunning floral and olfactory displays, Wild Jasmine, Kahili Ginger and Bartlettina are continuing to advance into the bush margins. These plants are at the forefront of many such invasive nasties residents will be faced with this summer.

WeedFree Trust, in action since 1998, is still here to help!

Working year round to assist residents who are already taking action against environmental weeds on their own patch, WeedFree also wants to hear from new residents who have just realised what might be lurking behind the Kauri and Kahikatea. WeedFree can undertake a comprehensive management plan tailored to your property that gives a clear course of action for the eradication of weeds and re-vegetation of natives. This service is provided to residents at no extra charge by Waitakere City Council. Through WCC Green Network, residents may also be eligible to receive free herbicide, bins, transfer station vouchers, or a subsidy towards the cost of a contractor. Residents are entitled to plant vouchers.

There are other practical ways that WeedFree can assist you, from providing giant containment bags for Tradescantia, large barrels for drowning Wild Ginger, and colour native and weed identification field books. There is a small cost for these products.

WeedFree is able to provide many of its services to the community through the generous support of Waitakere City Council, The Trusts Charitable Foundation and ASB Community Trust.

Whether you require a management plan or some advice over the phone, or if your community group could benefit from mentoring and advocacy, the Trust is here to help. You can find further information about the Trusts' programmes at [www.weedfree.org.nz](http://www.weedfree.org.nz) or by calling 826 4276.

## BRICKBATS and BOUQUETS

Sponsored by the Fairy Flower Shop,  
423 Titirangi Road, Titirangi. Phone 817 3780

There have been no bouquet nominations this month (surely there is someone in the neighbourhood who has done something worth recognizing!)

**BRICKBAT:** To the driver of the late model white ute who dumps dead carcasses over the bank on West Coast Rd between Bush Road and Tui Crescent.

## HALL HIRE

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# Advertising & Community Notices

Commercial advertisements are welcome and can be arranged by contacting Dave Pocock via email [davepocock@xtra.co.nz](mailto:davepocock@xtra.co.nz) or phone 814 9697.

Community Notices are free to financial members 2008, January to December.

**CELL PHONE SAFETY:** Protect yourself and your family from harmful EMF. Attach a Biopro Cell Phone Chip, \$60. Phone Emily 835 3777.

**GARDENER:** Trained and experienced. For regular garden maintenance. Phone Hugh 838 3594.

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**LAWN MOWING:** Local, reliable. Phone Eric 837 2333.

**OTIMA:** Events and training centre is available for hire (Guides Auckland) and is open to view by appointment. Phone Lynne & Walter on 814 9992 for bookings.

**PLANTS:** taros, bulbs, cannas and various perennials for sale. \$1 - \$3. Also some shrubs. All sales for charity. Phone Margaret 814-9859.

**THE ORATIA COMMUNITY CHURCH :** On the corner of Parker & West Coast Rds. Fellowship (trips, meetings etc.): 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursdays of each month.

**TOASTMASTERS:** - meetings held on every other Thursday morning from 7-8:20am - for more information call Adith Stoneman 818 7728.

## Lopdell House Gallery Portage Ceramic Awards

10 October until 7 December

Lopdell House Gallery and The Trusts Charitable Foundation are delighted to be hosting the Portage Ceramic Awards 2008. This is an annual event in which the 170 entries compete to be selected for exhibition and a \$12,000 top prize award.

The exhibition represents a diverse cross-section of work from intricate installations and sculptures to traditional vessels, an array of styles and techniques fill the gallery with such a broad collection that any visitor can find a favourite piece.

### Upstairs Gallery at Lopdell House:

Free entry. Open 7 days, 10am - 4:30pm.

### The Shape of Clay - Titirangi Potters 13th Annual Exhibition

Thursday 13 November until Sunday 7 December.

The group's annual exhibition, with an array of delicious and diverse ceramics.

Selector: Waiaatarua resident Jan Cockell

### I See What You Said - TCAC Members Show

Thursday 11 December until Sunday 21 December.

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