



Waitakere Ranges  
Protection Society Inc.

# news

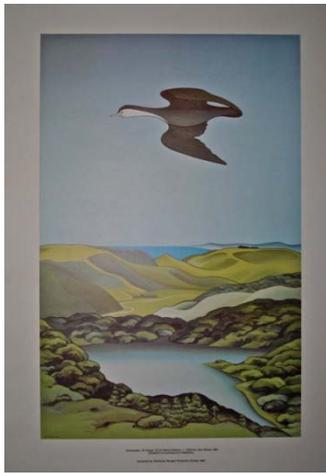
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**Issue 155      November 2012**

## Don Binney OBE 24 March 1940 – 14 September 2012



*Kawaupaku, Te Henga, 1967*  
(Published by WRPS 1983)

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Don Binney in September. Our most sincere condolences to his family and friends.

Don was one of New Zealand's most respected artists, and was a passionate advocate for the west coast and the ranges in both his art and his writing. He was overseas in 1973 when he heard of the Society's fight to stop the rubbish tip being created in the Te Henga valley and he became actively involved with the Society on his return later that year. For many years he had a bach at Te Henga, and from there explored the powerful landscape of the ranges as his wonderful and evocative paintings and drawings show. His paintings captured the essence of the ranges – the coast, the hills and the forest, the farms and the settlements, and very often had native birds soaring over the land.

In our early days, Don gave the Society permission to reproduce two of his art works as prints to raise funds for our work, and we still have some of these available.

In 2007 we interviewed Don as part of our oral history project and those of you who knew him will remember

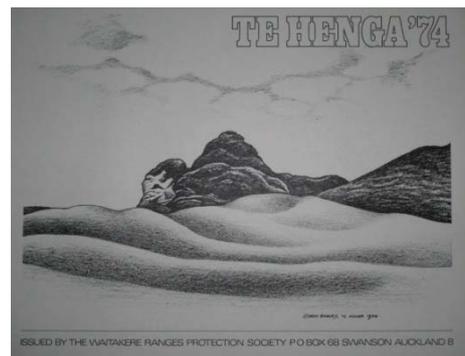
what an eloquent speaker he was and how he could address both the beauty and the fragility of the environment.

His book "Drawing the Waitakere Coast" (Random House 2010) is a wonderful record in words and images of Don's walk along the coast from Huia to Te Henga. The works in coloured pencil show his careful observation and love for this coast.

We have lost a great artist and conservationist.

"I regard what's left of the native bush in this country as really the shrine of Tane; I acquiesce to the power of the old authority. When you go into a major forest or walk along an undefiled stretch of coast you feel an accumulated force of experience - not just human experience. It's the sum total of the earth's gravity, the movement of wind, the cycle of seasons, the energy expenditure of millennia of plants, the life and death of ever so much wild-life. You feel it all around you, like wraiths, the whole miracle of what has been and what yet will be. It is these forces that presuppose the election by primitive peoples of gods of forests and gods of waters, be they Mexicans, Maori, Eskimos or our own Celtic forbears in Ireland or Scotland. Every natural ecology becomes a spiritual ethology, and we must come to terms with this - nothing less. The forest is the abiding place of Tane, and when, as a Pakeha, I go there I am prepared to acquiesce to the god of the Maori."

Don Binney, *Art New Zealand* #7, 1977



*Te Henga, 1974*

## Your President's Report



Spring is a wonderful season and has brought a succession of flowering trees to the ranges. Firstly the kowhai stood out showing with their bright yellow just how widespread they are from the valleys to the ridges. Then clematis showed up as the brilliant white clusters on the tops of trees right across the forest and this has been followed by a profusion of oleria and cabbage trees flowering amongst others. In recent weeks the kauri have burst into bud, changing the colour of the trees from the darker old growth to a bright green.

The Society has been active over the past months. Plan Change 35 (Oratia village and Waitatarua) was resolved by consent order in September. We continue to work with other appellants and Council in environment court-directly mediation on Plan Change 36 which allows for rural activities and social, cultural and economic well-being of communities in the ranges. We are currently preparing evidence for the Environment Court appeal by the Property Council of New Zealand on tree protection rules. No date has been set for the hearing.

We are involved in early consultation with Council on the Unitary Plan which will bring together the district and regional plans of the previous Councils into one document. The draft plan will be available for public submissions in March 2013.

Kauri dieback disease continues to be of great concern in the ranges. We welcomed Council's decision to decline the application for a Hillary Trail Challenge running race involving 500 participants in March 2013 (see this newsletter for more information). Track closures are also welcomed, but Council park staff have indicated that not all track users are respecting the closures, and that many people are still not using the boot cleaning stations provided on the tracks that remain open. There is also concern around future funding of monitoring, education and research into the disease.

We are sorry to advise that Dr Graeme Ramsay, the longest serving member of our committee, suffered a stroke in September but is improving well. For many years we have held our monthly meetings at Graeme's

home and we are missing his enthusiasm and commitment to the Society's work.

It was with great sadness that we heard of the death of Don Binney in September. Don was an ardent supporter of the Society since our foundation, and he will be greatly missed. Our most sincere condolences to his family and friends.

On behalf of the executive committee I would like to thank members and friends for their support over the past year. We hope you have many visits to the ranges and coast over the summer and wish you all a happy Christmas and new year.

*John Edgar*  
*President*

## Update: the Hillary Trail Challenge

We are pleased to announce that the application by Shaun Collins of Lactic Turkey Events to hold a large scale running event in 2013, entitled "The Hillary Trail Challenge" with up to 500 participants, has been declined by Council. It had been proposed by the applicant that this would be an annual event with up to 800 runners in the future, and that it would be promoted internationally.

The Society has worked for months to oppose the event going ahead because of the increased risk of spread of the deadly pathogen *phytophthora taxon Agathis* (PTA or kauri dieback disease). WRPS has written submissions and attended meetings to argue its case along with other community organisations and we are relieved that the event will not go ahead next year.

Council's decision was based on a "thorough review" of the event application, as well as empirical evidence from a special biosecurity assessment of the risk to and status of kauri along the Hillary Trail from Council's own Biosecurity team, as well as acknowledging that 10% of walking tracks in the Waitakere Regional Park have been closed to prevent the spread of kauri dieback disease. Although there were proposed measures that would possibly reduce the risk of the runners spreading PTA, Council correctly identified that promoting events "of this nature," which run the risk of spreading the disease is inappropriate in the Ranges "at this time".

Any questions or comments can be directed to the Parks Policy Advisor, Annette Campion by email [annette.campion@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:annette.campion@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)

## Possum Control

Timms Traps are available from Maureen LataFord - Customer Service, Auckland Council, 1 Greys Avenue.  
DDI: +64 9 373 6369 EXT: (40)6369  
[Maureen.LataFord@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Maureen.LataFord@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)  
Cost: \$25 incl GST

## Heritage Area Coordinator's Report

Editor's note: Our Heritage Area Coordinator is on parental leave. We welcome our newest member, Lily Ngaio Lockie, born on Tuesday 20 November to Saffron and Tai.

## The WRPS History Project update

The WRPS History is coming!

It all started with the tip proposed for the Waitakere valley, and the huge swell of horrified public opinion that this provoked. From this came the beginnings of WRPS 40 years ago.

The society's history, is well on its way and will be published and ready for the 40th birthday in June/July next year. We expect the text and photos to go to the designer in December and printing to take place early in 2013. The book will be about 150 pages and will contain some colour but in the main black and white photographs.

Thank you all those members who sent us photographs, and gave us information about the early days and the people who were so important then. We have visited a number of members who have special memories, read and listened to the oral histories which have been compiled, and read the newsletters and archives, which fortunately have been well looked after by successive presidents of the Society.

The story of our society is interesting. Many of the problems seen by the committees of the 1970s have recurred over the years and some are still with us today. However, there has been a 'greening' of the general public since the 1970s, much greater awareness of environmental issues and a desire for better outcomes. Sometimes this does not translate into better informed local bodies, but the work done in previous years has resulted in improved district plans, better regulations and fewer 'brush fires' to fight. Not that there isn't plenty yet to do!

We hope members will find the history interesting and relevant and it will be a resource for new members joining the society to find out what we are all about.

*Bruce and Trixie Harvey*

## The Waitakere Ranges Oral History Project Update

The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Oral History project has progressed in 2012 with funding support from the Lotteries Commission and thirteen interviews will have been completed and lodged by the end of this year.

Those who have agreed to participate include Geoff Davidson, Warwick Brown, Dave and Barbara Harre,

John Staniland, Bob Ussher, Jack Colmar, Lynne Pillay, Dennis Hamblin, Arnold Turner, Ewen Cameron, Stanley Palmer, Paul Walbran, Bruce Hayward and John Carlson.

I have been fortunate to attend two Oral History workshops this year run by the Alexander Turnbull Library along with expert Megan Hutching, author of the book "Talking History, A Short Guide to Oral History". These workshops provided valuable practical information both for the interview and lodgement process and also for projects such as ours which are 'topic-based' rather than being a life history project.

Oral history has been described as a 'modern research technique for preserving knowledge of historical events as recorded by participants'. (Willa K Braum, 'Transcribing and Editing Oral History, Nashville', 1977, p5).

Those who have kindly agreed to participate in this project are providing a vivid insight into the beginnings of the Society, its achievements and how the protection of the Waitakere Ranges evolved. Moreover these interviews are an invaluable record of stories of a time of issues and passion that if not recorded would have only survived in memory. From my point of view, it is a privilege being involved in this project and thanks to all interviewees for giving up their time and sharing their stories.

*Anna Fomison*

## "The Piha Story" by Mary Woodward

Seventy-two pages of a light-hearted look Piha's history illustrated by over 40 photographs both old and new.

Book launch at Piha Gallery, Seaview Road, Piha on Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December, 2.00 – 4.00 pm. Special launch price \$30 (RRP \$35)

## Kauri dieback disease

TV3's flag ship current affairs show *60 Minutes* ran an extensive feature on kauri dieback disease on Sunday 14 October. If you missed it, it's on the following website in the media section

<http://www.kauridieback.co.nz/home/media/video-footage.aspx>

It was a wide ranging piece covering the devastating effects of the disease and the efforts to stop its spread. *60 Minutes* interviewed a number of scientists and people involved in the stopping the spread of the disease, including Dr Nick Waipara and John Beachman.

Amongst other information there are many very good publications listed on this website <http://www.kauridieback.co.nz>.

## Report from Friends of Regional Parks (FORParks)

The Friends of the Regional Parks is dedicated to keeping the new Auckland City on track as far as the Regional Parks and their management is concerned. Representatives from many Regional Parks are represented on our committee, and I represent WRPS. Bill Burrill, formerly chair of Parks for the Auckland Regional Council, is our chairperson. We attend meetings of the Parks forum chaired by Sandra Coney and sometimes some other Council committees.

Friends of Regional Parks (FORParks) have been granted a place in preliminary discussions with the planning staff compiling the Unitary Plan, which is to be an amalgam of all the district plans from the 'legacy' councils, including the former ARC, into the one document.

The October meeting of the operations committee of the Council was chaired by Councillor Ann Hartley, and Cr Mike Lee complained that the draft Unitary Plan omitted an item on regulating genetically modified organisms which had been in the Gulf Islands (his constituency's) original plan. This is important because it illustrates that if items in the original district plans are left out, or other items put into the draft, they may be fixed in planning legislation without the public realizing or debating the issue. As the original district plans were the result of much public consultation only a short time ago, it is a democratic principle that they be truly represented in the Unitary Plan.

Another item of interest at this meeting was the Council's support for the Maui dolphin set net restrictions. This seems to be supported by most Councillors, and their support is critical.

The decision by the Council staff to deny permission for the running of the marathon in the Waitakere Ranges was upheld at this meeting, which was pleasing to WRPS and FORParks as both had submitted against the marathon on the grounds that it would spread kauri dieback, already a big problem in the Waitakeres. The committee of FORParks will suggest to the marathon organizers that a different regional park, one without kauri would be more suitable for their event.

The committee of FORParks is trying to visit all the regional parks over a period and have recently visited the Botanic Gardens and Ambury Regional Park. Both were enjoyable visits and we learned a lot about each park, the aspirations of the staff and supporters, and the particular place each park has in the network, to provide for the values of recreation for Aucklanders or conservation of natural values. FORParks will continue to monitor the Council and if necessary defend the network of Regional Parks.

*Trixie Harvey (WRPS Representative)*

### Friends of Whatipu - beach clean-up



Collecting rubbish in orange bags *Photo: Marty Sanderson*



Gathering for lunch in the dunes *Photo: Marty Sanderson*



Driftwood

*Photo: Marty Sanderson*

# Juliet Batten

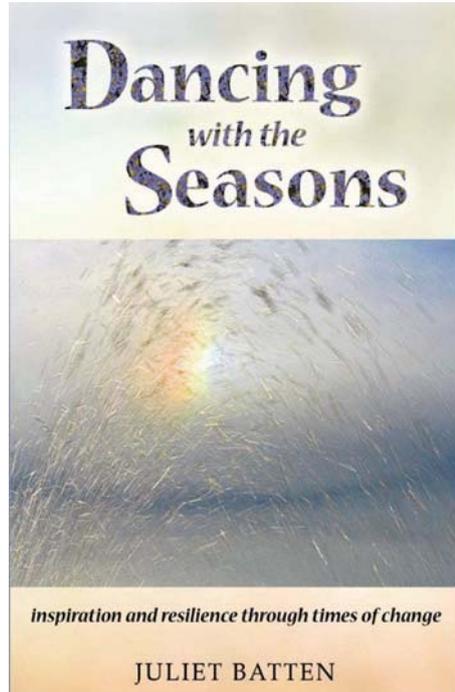
(founding member of WRPS)

## Dancing with the Seasons: Inspiration & resilience through times of change

### Learn how ~

- to connect and flow with seasonal change, in body, mind and soul
- to access the spiritual tasks and learnings of each season
- to develop the art of resilience

“Imagine if we could meet every twist & turn of fortune with flexibility. Imagine if we could embrace change, not as an affront to our existence, but as a natural & positive part of life.” — Juliet Batten.



*Dancing with the Seasons* guides us to work consciously with nature as ‘a great & constant teacher’. Through interviews with other New Zealanders, research into traditional wisdom, the telling of stories & myths, this seasonal expert reveals the secret to being both productive, & peaceful — achieving great goals with minimal stress — to inspire us to understand the gifts of every season & how we can use these gifts in our lives.

**Juliet Batten** is a psychotherapist, artist, teacher & author of the successful book *Celebrating the Southern Seasons*, on the value of cross-cultural celebrations. She has been actively involved in environmental protection & collaborative art projects including co-creating rituals for the seasons over the past 25 years. Among her other books are *Growing into Wisdom*, & the award-winning *A Cup of Sunlight*. Juliet lives in Auckland.

“In 1972 after living in Paris for two years & yearning for the wild west coast, I returned with my two-year-old son to live in my bach at Te Henga. The plan was to become a potter. No sooner had I arrived than I heard that the Council was planning to dump Auckland’s rubbish in a valley at the head of the Te Henga wetland.

My first reaction was flight; the second was fight. I stayed, quickly got to know my neighbours, & together we formed the Waitakere Ranges Protection Society. I was first secretary, & then president. We won the tip battle, & then went on to fight on many other fronts... My love of the wilderness & willingness to fight for it evolved into educative work. For years I’ve observed the seasons closely, always carrying a sketch or notebook with me on my bush and coastal walks.



This book is intended to assist in the *enhancement & affirmation of our relationship* with the changing earth by observing seasonal change, helping us to work in harmony with the natural rhythms & to find a balance between being highly productive & being at peace. Stories, reflections & ‘tasks’ are presented for each season.

I offer *Dancing with the Seasons* to WRPS for members & friends to support the work of the excellent committee, led so ably by John Edgar.

To receive my free *Seasons* Newsletter please email me, [jbatten@pl.net](mailto:jbatten@pl.net) & mention you heard about it through WRPS.

Juliet Batten

*Ishtar Books, 2010*

**\$34.95 (RRP)**

**\$20 from each sale donated to WRPS**

To order, turn over to the back page of this Newsletter.

## YOUR COMMITTEE

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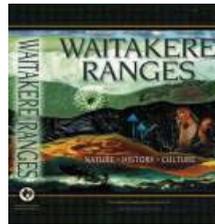
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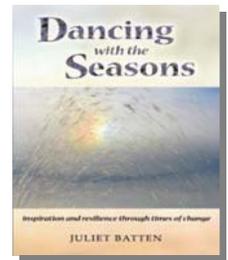
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*Committee meetings are held monthly, from  
February to November, on the second Tuesday of  
the month.*



1st edn. almost sold out.  
Special price for members:  
**\$85.00** incl p&p



**\$35.00** incl p&p

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

Number of "*Waitakere Ranges*" (\$85 ea): \_\_\_\_\_

Number of "*Dancing with the Seasons*" (\$35 ea): \_\_\_\_\_

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- (1) Email your order information to the Treasurer at  
kemsdale@ihug.co.nz
- (2) Make online payment to Kiwibank 38-9010-0379887-02

OR

### **PAY BY CHEQUE:**

Send your order and cheque to:  
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