
WARO BULLETIN

The Official Publication of New Zealand Women Amateur Radio Operators



September 2006

ZL6YL

NEW ZEALAND WOMEN AMATEUR RADIO OPERATORS

OBJECT: To promote and encourage interest in amateur radio amongst women

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Jeanne Gilchrist ZL4JG and Cathy Purdie ZL2ADK

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3.695 +/- Mondays 8pm

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ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTIONS

Transmitting, Associate and "Friends of WARO" \$15 payable 1st June, deduct a \$5 rebate if paid before 31st August. For each sponsored DX member an additional \$5

Cheques payable to Treasurer at above address.

President's Message

Greetings everyone, from a waterlogged North Shore City.

The weather seems to be a prime topic of conversation these days. Here in ZL we seem to have an over supply of rain yet in other parts of the world the opposite situation exists. I notice the days are lengthening and some spring bulbs are already flowering in my garden. That reminds me that there is a load of weeding and digging to be done before the summer arrives.



I have been thinking about change, and how we react to it. I mean the demise of the five cent coin and the issue of new smaller lighter coins that are replacing the silver coins of New Zealand currency. They certainly are different in size and weight from those we have been used to over many years. How are you coping with our new coins? Another change I am trying to get to grips with is the new postcodes

we have to remember and use. Some of you will have alterations to other parts of your addresses to remember as well as the postcodes.

Congratulations to Celia ZL1ALK on winning the recent Powder Puff Contest and to Jackie ZL1TZW who came third. The weather on the day of the contest was terrible, with rain and low cloud but that did not stop the participants who went mobile or portable to find a good transmitting site.

Our Monday night 80 metre nets continue but with a small number of check-ins.

Thanks to Val ZL3GW for her many years of service as net control for WARO Net on the first Monday of each month. Val has stepped down and Bev ZL3OV offered to take over controlling the first Monday net. I hope that some of you will remember to check in now and again. It is disappointing for the net controllers to have little or sometimes no response to their calls.

It is not long until the International YL Meet in Mumbai India. Gwen VK3DYL has kindly offered to carry a message of greetings from NZWARO to the YLmeet and we will look forward to reading about her visit later on. I do not know of any ZLYLs who plan to be at the YL International Mumbai Meet. I am sure that many of you retain fond memories of the YL International Meet that was held in Hamilton in 2000.

Winter illnesses seem to have affected many of our members this year and my best wishes go to all for a speedy return to good health.

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Rosemary ZL1RO

30 year Continuous Membership Certificate
Jacky Shaw ZL1TZW by Jacky Shaw ZL1TZW.

To firstly introduce myself, I'm Jacky Shaw ZL1TZW, daughter of Alma Wills



Jacky Shaw ZL1TZW

ZL1WA and the late Jack Wills ZL1TWB and wife of John Shaw ZL1BYZ. I live on a dairy farm in Paerata, Pukekohe. I have two children aged 18 and 11 years. I come from Amateur Radio hobbieist parents and that really is how I met my husband John. That fateful day occured through the Papakura Radio club, 20 odd years ago. John and Alma are very involved in the hobby, but I'm afraid that my life is more wrapped up in family and studying for a teaching diploma in early childhood. I try to attend the WARO get-togethers when I can, otherwise my social contact would dry up altogether!

Back to the beginning, I started in WARO sponsored by Alma, as an associate member aged about 15. There is a ghastly photo of me with mum and brother Rob in the archives, looking about 12. When one is that age, you accompany your parents in their hobbies, so that's what I did. I learnt about Amateur Radio, through a process of osmosis. The technical knowledge I would have to credit to Celia's husband Geoff who determindly kept me studying the physics and electronics stuff, till I finally passed the exam (thankyou Geoff).

My dad was also interested and did achieve his license quite late in life. He was more of a 'hand's on, building things' type of Amateur hobbieist. I remained an associate member till I finally decided to get my license in 1984. It took two attempts sitting the exam, but I got the pass on the second attempt that year. The prime reason for getting my licence, was more to do with my boyfriend John than my mum or dad (sorry guys). There were no cellphones back then and it was a toll call from my place to his, what an incentive!

There is not a lot more to say except, I'm still a WARO member, and I do enjoy meeting up with familiar and not so familiar faces. Amateur radio has been and still is a part of my life, now more through my husband's interests in Dxing and contests. I guess hobbies have to fit around so many other committments these days. I do anticipate getting back up on the air, once I finish my studies at the end of this year. That's a promise.

Callsign for the YL International Meeting in Mumbai
by Gwen VK3DYL

I've just heard from Sarla this morning details of the special callsign to be run at the MEET I quote: "The call AT6MYL is valid from the 15th to the 29th October. It will be used for publicity before the meeting and a station is going to be set up at the hotel for the 4 days. To clarify - the meeting is 25th to 29th October, so some of the local amateurs will put the callsign on air for the 10 days prior to then to give it some publicity.Hopefully some of the ZL YL will be able to contact the YLs at Mumbai..... "Ed"

Hamilton Market Day

This was held on Saturday 26th August at the Events Centre. A huge area which provides undercover. Just after we arrived at 10.00am, hams were departing with their purchases. It is always a great time to say hello to fellow amateurs only seen once a year. The YLs had again organised a social get-together. Something which now dates



Left to right: Maxine ZL1FW, Jenny ZL2RT, Clarrie ZL1BDZ, Alison ZL1TXQ, Bev ZL1OS, Rosemary ZL1RO, Biny ZL2AZY, Celia ZL1ALK and Lynnette ZL1LL.

back to the YL2000 event in Hamilton. Some 9 of us walked to the 5-CrossRoads McCafe and enjoyed a coffee break. Clarrie ZL1BDZ was able to put in an appearance this year from Welcome Bay, 3 YLs came from the Auckland area, 1 each from Kawerau, Thames, Mt Maunganui, Hamilton and Pirongia

DX News – Biny ZL2AZY.

It is good to keep in touch with WARO's DX members. Eine SM0UQW and OM Lars are off to Mumbai in October as is Gwen VK3DYL and Unni LA6RHA. Gwen will be carrying WARO's best wishes and will represent us at the Mumbai event.

Tuulikki OH7XX has undergone an operation but is home recuperating. With the projected 2008 YL Meet in Finland, Tuulikki has the responsibility for the web page and a link can be found from www.oh7xx.net

CLARA 40th Anniversary Challenge

A challenge for all YLs and OMs: Work 40 YLs on amateur radio between January 1st 2007 and December 31st 2007 - details will follow for the November/December Break-In Column.

YLRL Anniversary Party (YL-AP) CW: 1400 UTC October 3, 2006 to 0200 UTC October 5, 2006, **SSB:** 1400 UTC October 10, 2006 to 0200 UTC October 12, 2006
Logs - and more information contact Nancy Hall, kc4iyd@yahoo.com

Silent Key Joyce Wittaker ZL1CAB **by Donal Reid ZL1AIF**

It is with sadness for me to report the death of Joyce Whittaker ZL1CAB on Friday 1st of September at her home in Hamilton at the age of 82. The funeral was held at Knox Presbyterian Church in Whakatane Wednesday Sept. 7th 2006 with a good attendance of our Amateur Radio Club.



Joyce Wittaker ZL1CAB

Joyce was born in Whakatane Dec. 31st 1923 and attended the Thornton Primary School going there on Horseback often with her younger brother Jim Law on behind. Joyce did a short time at Whakatane District High School before attending Wanganui Girls High a Boarding School. She came home to the Dairy Farm at Thornton to work and later joined the Wrens in 1943 based at Porirua and Devonport in Auckland.

Married Rex Whittaker in 1950 and back to the Dairy Farm at Thornton where Rosemary, Janet, Gillian, Russell and Craig were born. Rex became interested in flying and Joyce spent many hours at the Aero Club, almost their second home. They bought a Cessna Cardinal and soon after Joyce obtained her Private Pilots licence. They spent time in Indonesia flying in remote areas for Catholic Missionaries from 1967 and returned in 1980 to a large house at Ohope with her Amateur Radio tower and antenna.

In 1985 her husband Rex died and then she moved to 4 Oak Place in Whakatane complete with tower. Having Diabetes in later years restricted her mobility but still turned out to run the base station for Toi's Challenge and other Amateur Radio communication events. Joyce became Vice President of our Amateur Radio Branch 51 on 8th of October 1986 and through that busy time with the NZART Conference we held here in 1988 in Whakatane and she held that position right through to 2000. Joyce was an active member of WARO and skilled CW operator too.

Donal Reid ZL1AIF

Reminders

Articles and photos for the next WARO Bulletin to Bulletin Editor before 12th November 2006.

Any photos of WARO members or paper clippings that may be of interest for our archives to be sent to Joline ZL1UJB. Joline is always on the lookout for photos.

Anyone wishing to sponsor a DX YL contact Celia ZL1ALK our sponsorship secretary.

Articles and photos for the WARO column in Break-In to be with Biny before 2nd of each odd month.

Don't forget to join in the WARO net Mondays 8pm on 3.695.

Powder Puff Contest August 6th 2006 by Rosemary ZL1RO



Left to right: Jaqueline ZL1JAQ, Lynnette ZL1LL, Rosemary ZL1RO, Celia ZL1ALK and Alison ZL1TXQ.

The weather this year was terrible but that didn't stop keen contestants from joining in the contest. The OM and I parked the car in the low cloud, as did others in different parts of Auckland. The rain fell and the clouds closed further in and some participants wondered if they would need help to drive away from their sites on hilltops.

After two hours of frantic activity, the contest was over and we were glad to get home to a warm dry house. The results were determined on the 146.900 YL net on the night of the contest.

YL Section

1st ZL1ALK Celia

2nd ZL1RO Rosemary

3rd ZL1TZW Jackie

OM section

ZL1AOX Ian and ZL1WGL Gary tied for first place.

A get together and prize giving was held at the QTH of Jacqueline and Alwyn ZL1CCJ two weeks after the contest. The trophy and certificates were presented and the group of YLs and OMs enjoyed a pleasant afternoon together.



Jacqueline ZL1JAQ presents 1st place getter Celia ZL1ALK with the Powder Puff Trophy

Just a Thought

“Choose a friend like you'd choose a car, Because it's dependable, holds up well over the years, Helps you get to where you want to go and Makes you feel glad you made the right choice.”

South Island Tour On Way To Conference 2006

by Lynnette ZL1LL.

Before the Blenheim conference we did a tour of the West Coast and across from Haast to Dunedin and up the east coast. When we knew the 2005 conference was to be in Christchurch we decided that we would tour the bottom half of the South Island then. We decided to try campervanning for the first time and hired a Fiat Ducato which is one of the smaller vans. It was fairly small but adequate for our needs.



Lynnette ZL1LL enjoying the scenery

We flew to Christchurch and picked up the van. We went inland having two nights on the way to Lake Tekapo which had had a fall of snow which lay down to the shores of the lake and then spent two nights in lovely surroundings by the lakes. The first was on high ground with no houses for miles although the road was not far away above Lake Pukaki. From the campervan we looked straight across the lake at Mt Cook – the first time I had ever seen it. The next day we drove to Mt Cook village (which is not quite at Mt Cook) and had a look around there – also in the snow but fortunately there was no snow on the road. That afternoon we stopped at Lake Ohau and spent a nice night there on the shores of the lake on the other side of the range from Mt Cook.

We drove through a couple of high passes also with snow on the sides but none on the road luckily! In the Lindis Pass we were tailgated by a truck with a house on it. We spent nights on the shore of Lake Wakatipu in a little layby with a steep drop to the lake half way between Queenstown and Kingston and also at Cromwell motor camp before heading to Te Anau and Milford Sound.

We stopped a night right on the shore of Lake Te Anau north of the town at the Henry Creek Department of Conservation camp site. These sites are available to campers for a small fee on an honesty system. A ranger is supposed to check that the fees are paid and I think most people are honest! We stayed at Milford Sound overnight and had a trip out on the sound. It was not a very nice day, mist and occasional rain so we only saw the bottom of Mitre Peak but there were spectacular waterfalls everywhere! We went on the 11 am sailing which is one of the cheaper ones and when we picked up our boarding pass were given a free lunch ticket so that was nice.

We got off the boat and there were 12 buses full of tourists arriving for the 1 pm sailing. This was in the off season so summer probably has lots more buses! There are at least six tour boats. That night we stayed right on the beach by Lake Gunn at the DOC campsite.

We then spent nights just out of town at Lake Manapouri and Riverton before heading to Invercargill where we found Tom's great and great great grandparents' graves and then to Bluff. We headed east and spent the night at Waipapa Landing where there were huge waves as nothing between there and the Antarctic. There was a huge Hooker sealion in the grass. The Hooker sealions are an endangered species. We found



Lynnette in front of The Lighthouse and campervan

out his name was "Willy" and when spoken to he sometimes acknowledged it. He did not move overnight other than to turn around and we believe he was quite old. In the morning we saw some younger ones rush across the road without any thought for traffic etc. There was a lighthouse we attached the dipole to. (There is a good photo of Waipapa Landing in the latest AA Directions magazine.)

The next stop was Slope Point which is the southern most point of New Zealand and we splashed through swamp to the picture point! We stopped the night at Curio Bay where there is a petrified forest and we also saw two yellow eyed penguins (there is supposed to be a colony) but they are endangered because of rats and cats etc. Our last night in the Catlins, which is a very scenic area, was Pouneaweia. This is an area we would like to return to.

We went inland through Middlemarch stopping beside the Taieri River and on to Naseby where Tom's grandparents used to run the hotel having lunch there and Tom had a whisky as his granddad liked a whisky with his mates there. We then drove up Danseys Pass (never again) - it is a famous track and still not much more than that - only one way and steep drops. We then headed gradually back to Christchurch and spent two nights out on Banks Peninsula, one night at Akaroa, where I met up with an artist, and the other at Purau Bay, before handing back the campervan and going to a motel for the New Zealand Amateur radio conference which was very enjoyable although being in the South Island not as many YLs as usual.



Lynnette being painted by stone artist

Every night we came up on the Awards net as we were in interesting places and Tom talked to a friend from near Pukekohe on a net each morning so that kept us in touch as generally we were out of cellphone range. This meant we had to choose a site each night with a suitable place to string up the dipole!

On Queen's Birthday Monday with Bob ZL1BBZ (Friend of WARO) and Mardie we travelled on the Transalpine Railway to Greymouth and back. Snow was predicted overnight but there was only thick ice on the puddles at Arthur's Pass!

Congratulations.

Congratulations to Celia ZL1ALK and OM Geoff on their recent Golden Wedding Anniversary. 50 years together is a great achievement. We all wish you many more Happy years together.

European Holiday by Maya OH1MK.

Here comes the story about our journey I promised you. It could have been more colourful if I knew better English but this again good exercise for me in English. This was the third time we travelled with our old workmates and friends in Central Europe. We are travelling by bus. This year we were 32 participants from South part of Finland. We have always a fine big bus with air conditioning and a very skilled driver, the owner of the bus firm himself, and we can figure out what we want to do on our trip.

Our bus was in the harbour of Hanko early in the Sunday morning and we took a ferry to Rostock in Germany. The trip took 25 hours so we had to overnight on board. Next morning we drove 600km to Amersfort in Holland - one hotel night there - and then via Belgium 500 kms to Paris.

We spent four days in Paris. Ted and I we have visited Paris earlier so we have seen many tourist attractions but the Tour Eiffel with great views is a must as is Notre Dame, Sacre Coeur, Arc de Triomphe, etc. We have never been to Moulin Rouge. We decided to go there if we could get tickets. The tickets cost 100 ? but the program was good value and we were given a half litre bottle of champagne - he. We saw the famous French Cancan and many other fine things and a lot of feathers and squins. They say "....it's the world's most famous cabaret!" We agree.



Ted and Maya on third floor of eiffel tower

We also made a boat trip on the river Seine. There is Disneyland also in France, it is

situated about 20-30 km from Paris. We spent one day there. It was a real hot day 33C. On Saturday, we left Paris for Versailles, and the castle of Ludwig XVI in the town of Caen for the night.

On Sunday morning we headed for Normandy and the coast of the Atlantic Ocean and Point the Hoc. We visited the Musée du Débarquement Arromanches. We saw a film how they were building a harbour for the operations and another film about the battles - horrible. We could see some Floating Bridges reconstituted by a team of volunteers. In the museum there were photos, models and all kind of material, e.g. uniforms belonging to several troops of the Allies. We heard stories about D Day, operation Overlord and operation Cobra, etc. They are things I knew very little about because we in Finland were battling against Russia and had our own problems here.



Radio station of signals

Then we drove to the Cemetery of American Soldiers. I was really impressed of the view - 1800 white marble memorial crosses in straight rows. Now one can imagine how the young men felt to be in a foreign country far from home battling against the enemy troops. There were also Finnish names on the crosses and many soldiers were buried unknown.

We drove along Omaha Beach and Utah Beach to Cherbourg to a place also known by



The Monastery

the operations of the second world war. From Cherbourg we headed back North towards homes. We visited a monastery called Mont St.Malo. A very special one. They have built always higher and higher and the monastery church was on the top. It was not easy to climb up in the hot weather but we did it - hi. Next destination was St.Malo, an old fortress town and a nest of pirates. St.Malo was the only place we had use for our

umbrellas on our journey but in Rennes our next place to spend the night the weather

was sunny again.

Then we drove through the valley of the Loire to Chenonceau le Chateau des Dames (the castle of the queens) The castle is built over the river Le Cher in 16th C. Very fine place. Maybe the French love to build everything on water. In Briare we saw a river floating over the Loire river. Unbelievable. They have built an iron bridge (Mr. Eiffel was one of the constructors) and water comes from a lake and you can row a little boat there.



Next destination was Fontainebleau, the town where the kings came to spend vacation. They say they needed 20,000 horses to transport their belongings to the summer home! I find the castle Fontainebleau nicer and more pleasant than Versailles.

Our hotel was straight behind the castle. It was a 17th century residence. They said "the comfortable rooms and suites are cosy and cheerful". There was no air conditioning. With 30C we had to hold the windows open in the night and we got many mosquito bites during the night. I hope the mosquitoes did not bite Marshal Montgomery when he stayed there.

We visited also a Media Musee and Le Musee du Pere Noel (Santa Claus museum). One of our former workmates moved to France many years ago and started to collect all kinds of technical equipment. He has many familiar old TV cameras, tape recorders, receivers, jukeboxes, etc. He was a very close workmate of Ted's when he started in YLE (The Finnish Broadcasting Company) and they reminisced how they were fighting about ladders in the TV studio, one was light and the other sound and both had a need for the ladders. Nice to meet old workmates.

In the Santa Claus museum they had all kinds of Christmas figures and decorations not only Finnish but from all over the world. We thought we had to spend the last night of our journey in Central Europe in Koln (Cologne) in the Hotel Kaiserhof. But it turned out that the Hotel Kaiserhof was in Munster, 150km away. No problem, we drove there after visiting the Cathedral of Cologne. We were pleased to leave Cologne because of the world championship in football.

After two nights and one day on board the ferry, we arrived home after a very nice journey".

Visit To Oz - Expanded - by Biny Owen ZL2AZY.

This is a further account of our recent trips to Australia, both occasioned by the need to use up some Frequent Flyer points which were going to disappear if no commitment to travel was made.

Sydney - Toronto - Brisbane - Noosa

In May, we decided to visit friends and family and hopefully some YLs, since some 4 years had passed when we were last in Australia. Our first stopover was at Toronto just South of Newcastle on Lake McQuarrie. To get there from the airport meant taking the train into Sydney Central, then we had to make an onward connection. It did not take us long to realise that none of the trains in Australia are 'user-friendly' if you have suitcases to carry, but train travel itself was pleasant enough taking some 2 to 3 hours.

Lake McQuarrie is an idyllic spot especially when your friends have a house on the waters edge where you can watch pelicans fly by and fish jump for joy. A visit such as ours always elicits special visits to places of interest. An exploratory drive took us to an Agricultural Show where we bought lots of sox. This was followed by a short trip to Maitland to again experience the joys of a steamtrain ride on an abandoned coal field track. Then next to the Alligator Park at Gosford where we were invited to visit the locals, which included snakes, koalas, turtles, bats and kangaroos.

It was when we sat down for our picnic lunch in an enclosure designed for that purpose, that the emus homed in on us to partake of our lunch and being very persistent we were obliged to go someplace else! The Spider's World was a drawcard, especially the Introductory Model seen on entering the complex.



Welcome to Spider World

Our next port of call was Noosa. We elected to fly Jetstar from Newcastle to Brisbane. Having seen plenty of outcomes for late arrivals on the TV series, we were well aware it would not be wise to be late. The same security was in evidence at the Newcastle airport even though it was an internal flight, resulting in a hasty relocation of my metal items into the to-be checked-in luggage. Half an hour was the turn-around time allowed for when Jetstar landed its passengers and then took off. No seats are allocated, which is fine if the flight is not full.

At Brisbane we collected our rental car and commenced the 2 hour drive North to Noosa where brother Norman was awaiting our arrival. He had to wait longer than anticipated since we got lost in the dark and had to put out a call for help. Lots of road development had taken place since we were last in Noosa and we just could not sort out the right route.

As we were now independent travellers, we took ourselves off for the day to Gympie and another steamtrain ride which this time took all day. There were stops en route from Gympie to Imbil where we had the opportunity to buy crafts and on the way back another stop was made at a 'disused' railway station where wine tasting and cheese purchases could be made. A great way to rejuvenate declining communities.

Our next venture was to the Everglades on a conducted tour leaving from Noosa. Everglades are something you do not expected to find in Australia! After crossing a huge lake, I can recall us gliding up a narrow estuary with trees overhanging and the

reflections in the water seemed never ending as well as perfect. On both sides, the land was described as a bog and very squelchy underfoot. A BBQ lunch was provided along with wine which topped off the day nicely.



The everglades

June VK4SJ lives inland from Caloundra which was on our way back to Brisbane. We had visited June once before at her QTH and had every intention of doing so again. But communication broke down between our cellphone and her answer machine. So we had to give the visit away and took the opportunity to pay the GlassHouse Mountains a visit instead.

My niece Lesley and husband Roger live in Brisbane, so that became our next port of call. A walk along the South Bank was a must-to-do day trip, as well as a visit to the Roma St. gardens set right in the heart of Brisbane where the old railway station and yards used to be. Well worth the visit.

Melbourne:

We went to Melbourne for 4 days to attend a wedding. Having heard such a lot about how people enjoyed Melbourne it was good to experience it for ourselves. Melbourne is invariably associated with the VK-YLs. To make sure we did not miss the opportunity of a get-together, I had been e-mailing Gwen VK3DYL well in advance of our visit. The venue chosen was the one that the VK-YLs had used for years in downtown Melbourne. A homely cafe run by volunteers offering a range of good home-cooked meals. What's more, you could stay nattering away for as long as you wished without being shooed away.

Gwen VK3DYL made the trip in to meet with the OM and myself, and then Robin VK3WX turned up

Gwen was able to tell us about her projected Mumbai YL2006 meeting, and we learnt from Robin that she is a multi-tasked person, driving bridal cars on weekends, doing flower arrangements and mending broken soft toys. Gwen will be taking WARO's Greetings to Mumbai, which she did for us at YL2004 in Seoul. India will be an experience in itself and over 50 DX-YLs have apparently booked.

The motels we stayed at were in Essenden. Quite a way from the Centre of Melbourne but served frequently by trams. We enjoyed riding on these. It meant buying tickets in advance but there was a free circular tour offered for tourists once we hit the main shopping area downtown. One highlight was a visit to the Immigrants Museum in the old Customs Buildings - a must-see again venue. We have even promised ourselves a return to Melbourne one day. As to the wedding, it went off without a hitch.

THE BLUE SPRING - Joline ZL1UJB.

Not all that long ago there used to be an advertisement on TV. It was a romantic advertisement featuring an ethereal looking girl speaking rapturously about the pure water from the Blue Spring. I half took notice of this ad the way one does, thinking it was a bit soppy, but not thinking anything more about it. Anyway don't they say that most bottled water is only tap water and that people are just being gullible paying good money only to be fooled with common old tap water. Why spend money on bottles of water when you can get a drink of water for free from a tap any old time.

Speaking of TV, back in the year 2000, we saw a piece on the news featuring our Prime Minister opening Te Waihou Walkway. As usual I didn't take much notice of this piece of news. I merely thought that because our P.M. Helen Clark is a fit and active mountain climber, it was appropriate that she should be featured on the news opening a new walkway. But the name Te Waihou seemed familiar because the Waihou River runs through our town. Was it something to do with our river or was it just a coincidence? I think I dimly realized that this walkway must be at the source of our river.

The Waihou River bisects our town. I used to drive across it over the bridge that links our community, every day of my working life. These days Morris and I walk across the footbridge over the river at least twice a week. It is from this vantage point that we watch the wild rabbits on the river bank. When they sense us they suddenly go very still and one rabbit will stand up on its hind legs making twitchy gestures with its forepaws - sending warning signals to the others.

The footbridge that we walk over used to be the railway bridge. It was built in 1912 and was originally a combination road/rail bridge for a short time before the Coulter road bridge was built nearby. That rail bridge is fixed in the memories of those of us who lived in Te Aroha during the night of the great storm of 18-19 July 1978, when many houses in town had their roofs blown off. At least a couple of houses were smashed to smithereens by the wind that night. It was an unforgettable and extremely noisy and frightening night. Even today, I can never hear the wind whistling around our house without remembering the night of July 19 1978.

I drove to work across the Coulter Bridge the morning of July 20 1978. That was the morning I struggled to keep the car upright as I drove through the wild winds which were blowing debris everywhere. Trees and power poles were down all over. Broken power lines were thrashing about in the storm, sheets of corrugated iron and all sorts of other hazardous objects, including small tree trunks and branches were flying around at car window level. There were deadly unguided missiles coming at the car from all directions.

The wind was swirling dangerously the way it does close to our mountain. When it blows, it doesn't just blow round here, it is like being caught up in the middle of ever

changing and shifting horizontal and vertical whirlpools in the air. All kinds of debris, including contents of houses, was swirling around in every direction. The entire town dump was in crazy flight at a perilously low car height level. Visibility was seriously limited by everything blowing everywhere.

I belatedly began to realise, as I drove on to the bridge, that it was very dangerous to be attempting to drive under such conditions. I should never have tried to go to work. I should have stayed at home. At that moment of horrified realisation, while trying to desperately to keep the car from being flung ignominiously against the side of the road bridge and wrapped around it, I somehow happened to glance across at the rail bridge to my right.

What on earth!!! There I saw the incredible sight of the train engine somehow still on the bridge but attached to 13 linked wagons which had been blown right off the bridge and were trailing from the engine on the bridge right down into the river. Some of the wagons, still attached, were completely submerged. I can never walk across that footbridge these days without remembering that moment and the utter shock of that sight. The engine and the wagons stayed like that for many weeks while engineers figured out how to rescue the wagons. As a result, those of us who lived here then, have that amazing sight permanently imprinted on our brains.

I got to work that morning shaking all over, only to be told that work was cancelled and I was to go back home. It took me over an hour to get up the courage to get back into the car and drive back over the river through that storm again. That wild, noisy night and day and the sight of the train engine and its wagons, is one of those unforgettable moments of the story of our town's Waihou River.

Waihou means new water. I had never wondered just why our river was called 'New Water'. Just as I had never wondered exactly where the water in the river came from. Although the Waihou River runs through Te Aroha, and is skirted by our favourite Wetland Walk, I just thought vaguely that it came from somewhere south of Matamata. I did know that north of our QTH, it runs along the eastern side of the Hauraki depression that used to be swamp, and in some parts still is, until it reaches the sea at Thames.

I knew too that Captain Cook had rowed up the Waihou, or as he named it, the Thames, as far upstream as Kopu and that in 1969 on the 200th anniversary of Captain Cook's voyage to New Zealand, a monument to commemorate this was erected beside the Waihou River a little beyond Kopu. The local papers made a bit of a fuss of it at the time. And then we all forgot about it. For some reason that neglected monument was moved to a site alongside State Highway 25 a bit closer to Paeroa, where it remains neglected, un-sign-posted and disregarded in its somewhat messy and unprepossessing surroundings. I also knew that the Waihou River itself had been a main highway for Maori canoes in pre European times, and that in the 1850s, it became an important route for goods traffic for the newly arrived European settlers. As

well, I knew that about then the river was cleared for small steamers from Thames all the way south to Matamata. Even today it is possible to navigate the river by small steamer from Thames to

A couple of years after the Prime Minister had opened the Te Waihou Walkway I began to think that it might be a nice idea some day to drive to the beginning of that walkway and walk to the source of our river. It was round about then that the TV advertisement about the water from the Blue Spring began to impinge on my consciousness and eventually my sluggish mind put two and two together and came to the conclusion that the Blue Spring must be the source of our river. Our river? Really? It starts as a spring? I was enchanted by the romanticism of the idea. I had always previously assumed that our fast flowing mud colored river had been formed by little streams and waterfalls from the two mountain ranges in the vicinity, the Kaimais and the Mamakus.

So it was that on 27 June 2006 we set out on the Te Waihou Walkway to see the source of our river for ourselves. We had had miserable cold wet weather for much of June. It had been raining the day before and there was quite a heavy frost that morning. However I didn't think that that mattered because I assumed that the Walkway would be quite wide and well paved, an all weather pathway, not just a simple track. After all with an impressive name like Te Waihou Walkway I was expecting an equally impressive path.

There is a map on several websites that show how to get to the parking area where the walkway starts, three kilometres north of Putaruru. When we got there workmen were working just above the start of the track which was narrow and muddy at that point. Alas, within 50 metres of the start, in front of the workmen, I had slipped and fallen



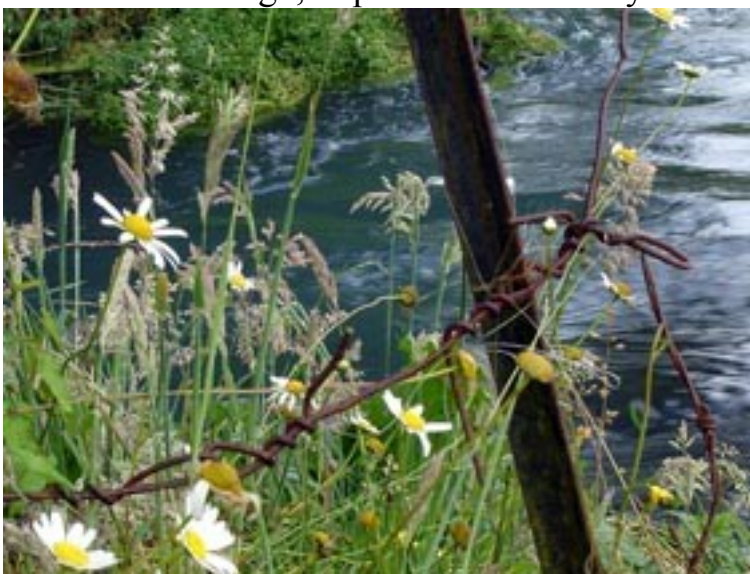
Waihou River

over on the quite steep wet muddy track. My trousers were instantly soaked and coated with a thick layer of wet mud. My lower body was suddenly freezing cold and I felt miserable, humiliated and cross. I had not brought a change of clothes with me.

But five minutes later I had forgotten my misery. The rapidly flowing river beside the Walkway was the most amazing clear blue. I was incredulous. A blue coloured, see through river! The water is so clear that you can see right through to the river bed, all the stones and rocks and water plants can be seen in brilliant detail. It is astonishing and quite, quite delightful. The five kilometre walk to the spring (I know it was five kilometres because I was wearing my pedometer) covered quite a

variety of territory. There was easy walking beside the stream, there were steps up steepish parts, there were two small beautiful gorges where the rushing stream formed a series of pools and little waterfalls beside the path.

There was a plantation of pine trees to walk through, a paddock shared by a most interested herd of cows, a number of stiles to climb over which were a bit tough for a short legged person like me, and some wonderful plantings of native trees that are going to be very attractive in about 15 years time. In some places the track was well formed and good walking, there were even board walks in places and wooden steps up the steeper slopes. In other places it was a bit of a scramble. Sometimes there was just grass to walk on. In good weather for anyone in reasonable condition it is a relatively easy walk. For the entire five kilometres we walked beside this enchantingly blue colored fast moving river, crossed the occasional bridge, and were thrilled.



By Waihou River

Part way along the track we encountered an unexpected comfort stop - an outdoor composting toilet complete with toilet paper and sawdust to use instead of water to flush. When we got there, the Blue Spring itself was quite a surprise to me. Instead of a single spring as I had expected, there seemed to be myriads of springs welling up in a wide body of water. It is impossible to find a beginning to it. Now I know why the



Composting loo

word Waihou translates as “new water”. It is all fresh new pristine water. The Blue Spring turned out to be the source of the Putaruru water supply and there was a building there that I assumed was a pump house. Putaruru tap water really is pure spring water. In Putaruru you actually can get pure spring water when you fill bottles from the taps.

Near the spring and the pumphouse was information about the spring and the water. It was so interesting. The water is a blue colour because it is so pure. Before it wells up out of the ground it has been in natural underground aquifers in the Mamaku ranges for what is estimated to be between 50 to 100 years. It seems that the blue colour and the clarity of the water is because it is so incredibly pure that it lacks light absorbing particles and light absorbing constituents. These have been removed during the lengthy

time of storage. The temperature of the water remains constant at 11 degrees Celsius all the year around.

The spring is so wide and the water flows so fast because it is flowing from the Spring at 2 cubic metres (9240 gallons) per minute. At the top of the steps up the hill behind the pump house is a memorial to a woman who died less than three years ago at 36 years of age. There is a poem with each verse in a plaque, each plaque is attached to a separate rock.

It is entitled DUST IF YOU MUST.
Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better
To paint a picture or write a letter
Bake a cake or plant a seed
Ponder the difference between want and need.

Dust if you must but the world's out there
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain
This day will not come round again.

Dust if you must but there's not much time
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb
Music to hear and books to read
Friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind
The time will come and it's not kind
And when you go, and go you must
You yourself will make more dust.

What a splendid spot it is for a memorial to a woman who died before her time. We were pretty tired after walking the five kilometers, all over again, back to the car but we felt exhilarated. At last we had seen where our river began and we had seen the Blue Spring. We felt so very glad that we had finally walked the Te Waihou Walkway. By then the sun was shining, the ice in the shady patches was thawing, and I was able to brush most of the mud from my clothes. If you ever have a chance to go there, I recommend that walk alongside a genuinely blue river to the Blue Spring.

Thank you to All our Contributors – Bev ZL1OS

I would like to thank all of our members both NZ and DX for taking the time to write very interesting articles for our magazine. It is especially pleasing to hear of the activities of our DX members. The comments received show that many of our members always look forward to receiving the WARO Bulletin. Please keep sending articles about your travels or anything you may find interesting.

The WARO Bulletin can now be read on the website <http://www.qsl.net/zl6yl>

NZ WARO Supplies

WARO BADGE "A" pin clasp	\$6.00
WARO Badge "B" with bar for callsign	\$6.00
WARO Badge "C" with ring for neck chain	\$6.00
WARO Charm	\$2.50
WARO Lapel Pin	\$2.50
WARO Cream silk Scarf with logo	\$17.00
WARO History Booklet or CD	\$20.00

These items can be obtained from our Treasurer:
Margaret Bretherton ZL1MB
24 Iles Road
Rotorua 3201

NZWARO AWARD

General

Contacts may be any mode, any band or mixed, with applicants contacts all from the same QTH (except as in VHF Section), but contacts via repeaters, in WARO Nets or contests are not eligible. No QSLs required. Send full log details certified by one other licensed radio amateur to Awards Custodian:-Lynnette McDonald 25 John Street Pukekohe 1800 New Zealand with sufficient postage for return of award.

HF Section

ZL and VK stations work 10 WARO members resident in New Zealand, DX stations work 5. Endorsement seals available to ZL and VK stations for each additional 10 contacts DX stations 5. Contacts with DX members of WARO qualify for endorsements but applications must contain at least three ZL contacts.

VHF Section

Stations work 10 WARO members on VHF or UHF. (Repeaters allowed) Endorsement seals for each additional 5.

SWL Section

ZL and VK stations list 20 contacts heard with WARO members, DX list 10. Send full log details with call-signs of both stations. Endorsements for each additional ten (five for DX stations).

February 2004