

Spring Newsletter 2022

Heathcote Community



Spring arrives in the Valley

It's Spring...

Longer days, more sunlight, fabulous spring daffodils, bluebells, tulips, blossoms and baby lambs creates such a feeling of joy and renewed energy during the spring months.

I love spring.

It's also the time of my birthday around the equinox So why wouldn't I love this time of the year?

Over the last few months of hibernating through winter a lot of unseen work has been brewing locally by the Heathcote Community Valley Association, which Sooze Harris the Co-Chair has shared in her article.

The annual general meeting for the Heathcote Valley Community Association will be held at the Heathcote Community Centre, Bridle Path Road on the 26th October at 7.30pm. Come along to check out what's happening and how you could be involved or contribute to the community.

I visited Radio Ferrymead a couple of weeks ago and was fascinated by all their exhibits from a bygone era and shelves and shelves of archived vinyl LP records from which wonderful music is played, in their live recording studio at the Ferrymead Historic Park, open to the public over the weekends. I think it's free, but don't quote me on that.

I also popped in to see how our local Malt Works convenience store was managing after a break-in a few weeks ago. I am happy to say that they are doing well and are appreciative of our local support. They make the best cone served ice-creams that I'm sure would make a special treat when visiting them during the school holidays.

On a different community note.... A few weeks ago my



Yipteedooooo!

eighteen year old awesome puss failed to turn up in the evening which is unusual for him. So around 8.30pm I contacted my neighbours to check out if they'd seen him holed up in a shed or lurking around in some cosy cubby hole. The outcome was a picture of him on the local Heathcote Facebook page, sent to me by a buddy around the corner. He'd been found and picked up by a local resident, three kilometres away from home.

I'm not one to use Facebook myself but I must say that I'm truly thankful for the amazing support and networking through Facebook to reunite my puss with us. A huge thank you to all those that supported his home coming.

He's fine and doing awesomely well. After a visit to the vet it was discovered that due to the severe shock from being cornered by dogs, causing extremely high blood pressure, he'd become temporarily blind. I'm extremely happy to say that he has 90% of his vision back and is super happy, chillaxing at home again.

Thank you to everyone out there for all your wonderful communication and support.

Let's remember to keep it that way Positive, supportive and happy.

Keep in touch. If you would like to join the Heathcote email list and get all the local community events and news Contact me on heathcotevalleyproject@gmail.com

We will aim to have the next Heathcote newsletter out early in December so all articles will need to be emailed to me by the 20th of November 2022. All local stories, poems, points of interest, new start-ups, pictures and events are welcomed.

Jocelyn





Te Tihi o Kahukura

Heathcote Valley School

Kia Ora!

My name is Sian Williams, and I'm the 2022 community liaison for Heathcote Valley School.

Term 3 has been really great so far, and there have been lots of exciting events happening.



The coffee cart is now open to the public, and the school baristas work on Monday and Thursday making hot drinks from 8:30am - 9:30am.

In week 5, the Cantamaths team went to Horncastle Arena to compete in the 2022 Cantamaths.

Week 7 was Conservation Week, and the 2022 Head Leadership Team and Enviro Leaders took different classes for trips up to Birdsey Reserve to do a scavenger hunt and write an apostrophe poem. The Wednesday was fundraiser day, and students brought a gold coin to support New Zealand Forest & Bird, NZ's leading conservation organisation fund. They also brought a sprig of nature like a leaf, twig, or flower, and the leaders made the word 'CONSERVATION' out of them in front of the school oak tree.

The week after (week 8), was book week, and the Friday was dress up as a book character day, and students dress up as some of their favourite book characters.

Winter sport has come to an end, the last game being on the Thursday of week 6.

The Kapahaka group has gone to the Aupaki Cultural Festival to perform in the Sumner hall in front of schools Our Lady Star Of The Sea and Sumner School.

On the Monday of week 6, the year 7 - 8 seniors enjoyed orienteering in pairs or by themselves around the school.

On the Wednesday of week 6, the year eights went to an Aupaki Year 8 Conference to do transitioning into high school workshops.

Meanwhile, the year sixes come into the senior room and experience being year 7 seniors for a day, while the year sevens become year eights.

Monday the 19th was the rock fest, where the rock band go and perform the songs they've been practising.

For inquiry, the whole school focus is energy.

The juniors look at the sun and the wind, and the seniors look at the different types of energy such as kinetic, potential, gravitational, elastic, sound, nuclear, thermal, mechanical, electrical, chemical, and radiant energy.

Thanks, and wishing everyone a great year ahead.



Great excitement was had when choosing outfits for Book Character Day. A fantastic way to finish Book Week at Heathcote Valley School at the end of term 3, 2022. Children were encouraged to have fun while using creative thinking and imagination to spark conversations about their favourite books and celebrate special authors from near and far.



HEATHCOTE VALLEY COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION INC.

What is the HVCA?

That's an easy answer! It's our local Heathcote Valley Community Association.

Well yes, but what is it really? What does it do? Who is part of it? Does it have any relevance or use these days?

These are good questions and hopefully some that you will find answered by the time you reach the end of this newsletter. In the following reflection I share with you the journey of the HVCA over the last year, and where we are at now. Later in this newsletter you'll find another piece that gives a 'potted history' of the HVCA since its inception.

My hope is that not only will you feel a little more informed about the goings-on of the HVCA, but also that some of you might have your interest piqued enough to consider getting on board and helping us on the next part of the HVCA journey. Sit back, relax and enjoy a stroll through the journey of the HVCA.

HVCA AGM 2021...

At the HVCA AGM 2021, as a longstanding committee member of HVCA, I decided to put my hat in the ring alongside Luke Gardiner, to take on the role of Co-Chair of the HVCA committee for the term 2021/22. Luke and I, along with the newly elected committee of: Jen Saunders, Jos de Kort, Lewis Low, Lindsay Gordon, Margaret Jenkin, John Marks, Ken Lomax, and Nicholas McCauley, decided that the 2021/22 term was one for pausing, reflecting and rejuvenating the role and function of HVCA in order to move forward more strongly. Over time, systems, documents, and processes that have



Sooze Harris
Co-chair HVCA



Luke Gardiner
Co-chair HVCA

worked for us for a season can become less effective and relevant if not adapted to the changing environment we live in.

We realise that much of our work has gone unseen and it is for that reason we want to let you all see the shifts that have gone on in the background. What have we done, or started to do?

1. Three Committee members spent a significant period of this year **reviewing and rewriting our Constitution** to modernise it, as well as to ensure the values and vision reflected our focus moving forward. If you're interested in finding out more there is a succinct power point summarising the changes that we can send to you.

Our new revitalised vision is to promote the individual and collective wellbeing of the people of Heathcote Valley, and to build resilience in the face of challenges.

The HVCA does this by facilitating opportunities for all those living in Heathcote to be an engaged, connected, and empowered community with a strong sense of belonging.

2. We have worked toward gaining **charitable status** in order to open up our opportunities for funding

and recognition in our work. We are currently awaiting final approval.

3. We have engaged **Thea Mickell Financial Services** to streamline funding applications. This was previously done by our paid kaimahi (workers). This never made sense to us that they would have to scratch for funding for their own roles, so it's fantastic to be making progress on getting funding sorted through this avenue.
4. We have begun to explore **clear definition of roles of committee members** in order that we all know what part we play, and that no one person feels overburdened. Examples of this include a committee member who has committed to keeping her eye on 'wellbeing' issues within the Valley and responding and supporting as the HVCA.
5. Increasing and **formalising support of our kaimahi in paid roles**. This includes regular supervision and support.
6. **Creating separate meetings on the 1x a month Wednesday meeting** – we realise this has been the biggest outward change the people have seen, and some of you have loved it and others may well have been concerned by it. This is still a work in progress, but our intent has been to separate the work of the committee (which can frankly be rather boring at times !!!) from the role of the HVCA to provide a space for community members to have a voice, meet others, and receive support and connections for their ideas and issues.
Much like a board of an organisation meets separately from the function of the organisation in order to do the 'background' work, we meet to look at finances, contracted staff status, funding, etc.
We have also then been able to **run separate HVCA community meetings** where we support the development of connections, belonging, sharing of ideas, and support for initiatives. This part of our mahi (work) is still very much in progress but we have had a number of wonderful community meetings where we have been

particularly delighted by the range of people in attendance including some of our young people talking about their vision for a safe cycle route from Avoca Valley.

7. Increased **diversity and representation in the committee**. We are really delighted with the range of representation of this year's committee both in terms of age, segments of the community, and skillset. We have what we think is possibly the youngest ever community association member at just 14 years of age. Nicholas has been a breath of fresh air this year and 'keeps us honest' to our vision and values. We also are grateful to have representatives from the Maltworks, the school, recreation facilities, parents, grandparents, those within the valley and those from further afield.
8. We have begun to explore ways to increase our **bicultural competence** as a committee. We are in the early stages of this, but have as tangible examples of this journey, a commitment to **Te Tiriti O Waitangi** now in our constitution, and Te Ao Maori tikanga (Maori protocol) within our meetings.

We have our next AGM coming up on **Wednesday 26th of October** and we invite any of you to attend this. But we also want to ask you to consider if you'd like to be a part of this committee as we move forward in to 22/23. Our vision into 22/23 includes but is not limited to:

- Maintaining as well as **increasing funding** for our paid roles – we'd love to see the Community Connector role increase to its previous 15 hours a week which will enable amongst other things greater follow up and support for you and your ideas, and we'd love to employ a **Youth Worker** dedicated to our Heathcote youth.
- Further **developing our roles** within the committee so that we can work to our strengths and passions.
- Developing the idea of the **HVCA community meetings**, enabling these to become more useful to the community.
- Developing the HVCA/ school relationship,

- Further streamlining our **finance systems** including budget projection.

Would you like to come join us? We're especially looking for people with any of the following skills: financial skills and knowledge (not too complex), bicultural competence, interest in local government engagement e.g. Community Board deputations, facilitation, administration, community-led development, and governance. That said, if you are keen and passionate about our community then you'll fit right in regardless of your skillset. The commitment isn't huge – just one meeting a month,

some emails between, and whatever you commit to beyond that according to the role you wish to take on. **If you are interested get in touch with myself or Luke Gardiner, or Jen Saunders.** Our contact details are below.

Ngā mihi nui Heathcote Community
Sooze Harris

Luke Gardiner lukegardinernz@gmail.com
Sooze Harris sw.sl.harris@gmail.com
Jen Saunders hvcc.bookings@gmail.com

A Potted History of the HVCA

By Sooze Harris

What follows is a very brief history of the HVCA over the years. It gives a little of the back story to my early article – HVCA 2021/22, showing some of the journey the HVCA has been on. No doubt it has many holes as my personal history with HVCA only goes back 10 years, so if you're interested in more detail, hunt around for one of the many longstanding residents and ask them what they remember and have been part of over the years.

The beginnings....

The Heathcote Residents Association, was founded in 1961. Early members included; Mr G. Clarke – president; Mr D. Grant - vice president; Mr R. Cotton - treasurer and secretary; Mrs K. Papps; Miss P. White; Mr J. Brooks; Mr D. Gunn; Mr D. Lawrence; Mr C. Briggs. Some of these early members will be known to longstanding members of this community. Apparently, amongst other things, in 1964 they became quite vocal about the train service being dropped.

In February 1986 the Heathcote Valley Community Association (HVCA) was founded and established as an incorporated society. It was established as such by a passionate group of locals, who include some names you'll still hear around the valley such as John Marsh,

the energy and vision behind many of the planting projects around the valleys.

At the time of set up, residents associations had as a focus, the maintenance and development of the specific character of a physical locale or 'district' as it was referred to in those days. Our HVCA spoke up and advocated on this community's behalf on many developments, changes, and issues over the years including the development of the valley floor, water contamination run off from the maltworks site, rail bridge developments, road safety such as on Port Hills Road by the domain, the development of the driving range area etc.

Many a letter was written to the Council, ECAN, the Community Board, or developers requesting consideration of a particular issue as the HVCA actively advocated on our behalf.

At times HVCA turned its attention to other factors apart from the natural and built environment. For some years they supported the local youth group that ran down at St Mary's through the early 2000s.

A significant shift ...

When the earthquakes showed up in the Valley in

2010/11 this also stimulated a shift in the HVCA. Where up until this point much of the attention of HVCA was focussed on the physical infrastructure and environment of our valley, the HVCA began a shift toward a greater investment in the social ‘infrastructure’ of our community, our connectedness and belonging, our empowerment to change things in our community and to create things together. This change was driven by the development of the Heathcote Village Project (HVP), an organic resident-driven response to the challenges we found ourselves in as a community, that focussed on building a connected, engaged and empowered community. You can read about the many initiatives championed by locals and supported by HVP in the book, *Heathcote: The Upside* (in the local library, or can be purchased for \$10 from HVCA). In 2012, HVP formally came under the umbrella of HVCA, bringing its values and vision to broaden and deepen the HVCA Kaupapa (purpose and work).

A vision for Heathcote ...

Part of the work of the HVP was to run two ‘Epicentre@Heathcote’ events. Some of you may have been at these. These were exciting events where we came together as a community to name what we love about the valley, and to imagine our future here in the valley. Out of this came the Heathcote Vision document, a visual representation of our work which you can view on the wall of the Heathcote Community Centre.



Heathcote locals attend the Epicentre event

ONE YEAR after the great upheaval, the villagers sought guidance under Te Tīhi o Kahukura...

Epicentre@Heathcote was a community event in February 2012, that brought local people of all ages together to talk about our future. We shared our thoughts, ideas, dreams and hopes, talked, laughed, connected, remembered, ate, shared, bathed in the sun, listened to local musicians, dreamed and imagined. Here is what we found out...

TWO QUESTIONS WERE ASKED

Imagine Heathcote in 5 years time; what would you see happening?

What do you love most about this community and what drew you to live here?

WHAT WE LOVE AND VALUE ABOUT HEATHCOTE:

IMAGINE A TIME IN THE FUTURE when people look to the wider Heathcote Valley as an exceptional example of a thriving, attractive and sustainable community - what would you see happening?

Every idea is captured on the back, take a look! Be inspired!

PEOPLE AND CONNECTIONS Communal work, things you love, things you value, things you want to see. Community newsletter & book.
GATHERING PLACES Safe for community events. Multi use sports community centre.
RECREATION Working on the park. That will make you smile.
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES Community events that everyone can enjoy.
TRAVEL / STREETS Community by foot to city. Community trains.
BIOSCIENCE Public facilities for the community. The Bio Park.
POSITIVE The Bio Park.
RURAL Rural.
SMALL AND SAFE Small and safe.
HISTORY History.
COMMUNITY Community.
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES Recreational Opportunities.
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Natural environment.
VILLAGE FEEL Village feel.
NATURAL ENVIRONMENT Natural environment.
RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES Recreational Opportunities.

A new community centre ...

In the years following the earthquakes a huge amount of effort was given to negotiating with the council to gain insurance to rebuild our community centre and community library. This was a huge effort from many people, and through this time we showed ourselves to be a community that could respond to challenges with creativity and collaboration. Highlights from this time include the 'sit n read' protest at the old library site, and then an extensive collaboration process coordinated by locals from HVCA and HVP where we took control of the process and guided the Council in what we wanted for our community centre. The beautiful building we have now is a product of all that work, and of the amazing design of our own Jim McKie.

The first paid roles ...

In 2014, the first paid roles were established by the HVCA driven by HVP vision and work. Jackie Foulkes was employed as a Community Connector role in Heathcote. She stayed in this role for 7+ years where her role grew alongside her hours, to include maintaining the communication systems throughout the valley, building connections and supporting locals to initiate and create many, many, new initiatives in the valley. Jackie was in the background scenes of many of the initiatives that we've enjoyed over the years,



Jen Saunders

supporting and equipping community members to start and continue many great initiatives. These include such things as the 'free cycle' days, the fermenting session, the Wednesday morning teas, and many other initiatives. At the start of 2021 Jos de Kort took

over from Jackie, and continues in the role to this day.

In 2015, we had a community facility but now needed someone to coordinate the use of this space. We managed to acquire some finances from Red Cross to



Locals at the Library 'Sit n Read' protest— 3 March 2013

employ Maria Ayala in this role, and later Jen Saunders, both locals, who have done an amazing job of creating a community space that supports any community initiatives that locals have the vision for creating in the valley, creates many recreational opportunities, while also working to get the centre revenue generating.

AGM 2021 created another shift ...

2021/22 has been an opportunity to revitalise and work toward equipping the HVCA for the next stage of the journey. For more detail, read my earlier article.

UPCYCLE

Freecycle Day

Mark your diary now!

The spring Freecycle day will be on
Saturday 22nd October

Freecycle day is a great opportunity to pass on good but unwanted items to a new home. Simply place them at your gate in the morning for people to pick up. Anything left at the end of the day you need to please remove.

If you are looking for the ultimate bargain (i.e. great stuff for free) then check out the Heathcote streets on the 22nd.

What's on at Your Community Centre?



Hello Spring! I love the energy that comes with the lighter mornings and warmer days and it's so nice to smell the blossom, hear the birds and see the new growth on the trees. The lambs are arriving and a brood of ducklings was paddling in the culvert along Scruttons Road this morning.

Spring is a great time to get motivated and try something new. Why not pop along to your community centre and try one of the fabulous wellness classes, register for a workshop or come to craft group or community morning tea.

The craft group on Monday is a very friendly bunch and anyone is welcome to attend. There are all sorts of clever people working on interesting projects including knitting and crocheting, along with a ready cuppa and great conversation.

Likewise, community morning tea on Wednesday is relaxed and friendly. There is nothing better than some home baking, good coffee and great company. Anyone is welcome – come alone or bring a friend – and there is no charge. The library, also in the community centre, is open from 11am – 12pm on Wednesdays too so you can pop in and borrow some great books at the same time.

And if you have something to celebrate in the coming months then don't forget that you can hire the community centre for private events. We have a full kitchen, a ceiling-mounted projector, and tables, chairs, beanbags and a whiteboard for you to use. If you are interested in using the centre just pop me (Jen) an e-mail - hvcc.bookings@gmail.com

For the latest happenings at the community centre and updates keep an eye out on Facebook, our website, your local noticeboards and the e-mails from Jos.

Our regular schedule includes:

Craft Group

Mondays 10am-12pm: Enjoy knitting, crocheting or sewing with a wonderful group of ladies each Monday. \$3 per session and morning tea and great company provided.

Community Morning Tea

Wednesdays 10am – 12pm: Come and join us for a cuppa, some home baking and plenty of good company. Everyone is welcome, come alone or bring a friend. No charge. Please note that we usually take a break from Wednesday morning teas in the school holidays.

Puppy Training with Sit Happens

Thursday and Friday evenings and Saturday mornings: We are very lucky to have Sit Happens and their puppy classes at the Heathcote Valley Community Centre. The Sit Happens team are passionate about puppies so if you are looking for a pawesome puppy class, head over to <https://www.sithappens.co.nz/puppy-classes>

Tradie Yoga

Mondays 6pm-7pm: Keep your body and mind healthy with this great yoga class designed for tradespeople (and anyone else interested!).

Contact Michele (mlaingphysio@gmail.com)

Santosh Yoga with Breeze

Tuesdays 6pm – 7.30pm: Small group yoga designed for all ages and stages. Connect with your body, de-stress and get stronger and more flexible.

Contact Breeze (yogawithbreeze@gmail.com)

Yoga with Lucy

Wednesdays 6pm – 7pm: These classes are suitable for all levels of experience, and a wide range of ages. The focus is on linking the breath with our practise, flowing and stretching through a mostly simple range of asana (poses) the outcome of which brings you into a good alignment with your centre.

Contact Lucy (lucydolankang@gmail.com)

Movement Rewired with Nicky

Fridays 11am – 12.30pm: These are gentle floor-based lessons that will help you to improve your overall well-being. They utilise gentle movement, mindfulness and breathing approaches which are suitable for all age groups and all levels.

Contact Nicky (nickywoodwardnz@gmail.com)

Quilting Workshops

Kirsten Duncan is an internationally recognised quilter and we are grateful to have her running regular workshops at the Heathcote Valley Community Centre. Her work is exhibited, published and collected so you couldn't get a better tutor. You can find out more here <https://www.kirstyduncanquilt.com/> and contact Kirsten (kirstenduncanquilter@gmail.com)

Floristry Workshops:

The very talented Anna from Honey & Moss runs a wonderful range of workshops throughout the year including seasonally themed options and school holiday classes. The resulting creations are spectacular! You can find out more on Anna's Facebook page - <https://www.facebook.com/honeyandmossnz/> or you can contact her anna@honeyandmoss.co.nz

Celebration Day for Girls

Alice Tabak runs these amazing one-day workshops that educate and empower girls about their menstrual cycle, body literacy, health, self-care and well-being. Groups are kept small so be sure to book your daughter in soon. Contact Alice (cdg.alicetabak@gmail.com)

Heathcote Cricket Club

New season



The new cricket season is almost upon us, and as always, we are looking forward to it with eager anticipation. The valley will once again reverberate to the sound of leather on willow.

You will likely be reading this after our official Opening (registration) day, September 17th. However, if you are keen to play there is still time for you to register.

For adult enquiries, please contact our Adult Club Captain, Dan Nielsen heathcotecricketclub@gmail.com

For junior enquiries, please contact our Junior Club Captain, Matt House mhouse1818@gmail.com

For the adult morning grades, the season proper will begin as usual on the first Saturday in October, which this year is October 1st. Due to grounds renovation work, the lower grade adult cricket will start two weeks later on October 15th. The Friday night 'have a go' sessions for the younger juniors will start on October 21st, and the Junior grades will start Saturday morning cricket on October 22nd.

I have recently stepped down as President of the club. Local resident, Ralph Bungard, has taken on the role, and I am very confident that Ralph will continue to maintain the club's respected role within the Heathcote and wider community. I have thoroughly enjoyed keeping the community informed of cricket club news, through these newsletter articles. However, Ralph will be keeping you informed about our news in subsequent newsletters.

Ralph can be contacted at ralph@threeboysbrewery.co.nz

Ken Lomax

**Christchurch
City Council** 

We would like to extend our thanks to the Christchurch City Council for their financial support. This has helped us continue to support Heathcote, strengthen our relationships, remain a strong connected and engaged community.

Heathcote Community Sports Club

Our AGM held last month saw several changes in the management team of the Club. The Club Chairman Peter Murray decided to step down after many years in various roles and take a well earned break, but will remain on the current committee for the coming season. He now becomes Immediate Past President until the next AGM in June 2023.



Don Amyes who has been Secretary for the past six years has resigned from this role and later this year he and his family are moving to live in Australia.

The lawn bowls restarts around late September early October with a firm date depending on the readiness of the green. Petanque continues on throughout the year, and the indoor bowls is coming to the end of its season very shortly.

The Club has plans for the coming season and will hold various social functions like additional bowls/petanque barbeques and open days for people to come and try their hand at these sports, and to have a look over the Club's facilities.

This year will also see a new social members subscription of \$20.00 per person, for those who want to just come along and meet new people and just enjoy the social side of the Club. Playing days and hours will be notified shortly.

Annual subscriptions this year will be \$70.00 per person for all sports.

Social member \$20.00 per person.

Pay & Play on the Day \$5.00.

This covers the period 1st October 2022- 30th September 2023.

The club welcomes all new members who can come along and try out any or all of the sport the Club offers before joining up.

Contact for the Club is the Secretary Zella Askew email heathcotecommunitysportclub@gmail.com

Twinkle Tots



Song and dance activity for pre-school children, up to 4 years.

Twinkle Tots meet each Friday morning, during school term at St Mary's Anglican Church Hall, corner of Martindales Road and Truscotts Road.

Children must be accompanied by a parent or caregiver.

We meet 10.30am to 11.15am and then have a relaxed break for morning tea/coffee or water and something to eat – children can play safely.

Free to all, regardless of faith or creed. Gold coin donation.

For more information contact:
Suzanne Stewart **027 285 1843**

Heathcote Valley to Avoca Valley Adventures with Nature Green Projects - Spring 2022 Update



Spring Ramble

Whenever there are young people out planting with us up the hill....in the pre-teen age group particularly.... there is always great interest in what is found when they dig into the soil....bones are always a great find, worms can be absolutely fascinating, grass grubs are occasionally in danger of being eaten, millipedes, porina caterpillars and bronze beetles can use up most of an afternoon.

I was planting out some beetroot last week with my two year old grandson. His loud shrieks of surprise drew my attention to the pile of soil I had dug. After removing the more visible insects he continued finding smaller and smaller creatures that I hadn't noticed....tiny mites in the debris ("oribatid's" he told me), miniscule translucent worms ("nematodes" he muttered), small pearl like orbs ("slug or snail eggs" he said) and springtails.

We really need to slow down and take in all these creatures that are right under our feet and seemingly more visible to fresh young eyes. They are essential to soil health, the stuff that supplies us with nearly all our food.

Springtails for example, are small, six legged arthropods which live mainly in the soil and leaf litter. There are as many as 100,000 of them in your average square metre of soil. In many parts of the world they

knit together the entire soil food web: in other words, they are the channel that connects much of life on land.

The mites though are the most abundant arthropods living in the soil. In a forest the population density can reach hundreds of thousands of individuals per square meter.....up to half a million actually. There can also be maybe a hundred different species of mites in a clump of soil. I'm not sure that I believe this.

Mites are an important component of soil decomposers. The abundance and diversity of them in a particular habitat actually serve as good indicators of soil health as they break down organic matter making it more available for plant nutrition.

These are only some of the bits that we can see in the soil. Micro-organisms like fungi, bacteria and algae in the plant root zone combine with plants in a network that is continually replenishing the soil's fertility. We see fungal fruiting bodies from time to time, like the small toadstools and turkey tail bracket fungi pictured above, but under the soil there is more. Much, much more. Thousands of different species spread in a network of minute threads or filaments transporting moisture and nutrients (and information they say) to and from plant roots as well as using nutrients supplied by plants through photosynthesis. So much wildlife going on under every square metre of land around us. I

often hear people calling soil “dirt”. This seems such a disrespectful way to address this remarkable, complex and important substance....soil is amazing, though we generally take it for granted.

I am just reading George Monbiot’s book, *Regenesi* – *Feeding the world without devouring the planet* published this year. All about soil and farming and food production and what we eat. Some of the above ramble is prompted by the book....it’s a worthwhile read for anyone who eats food.

Alternatively, listen to this:

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/saturday/audio/2018857285/george-monbiotpresenting-alternatives-to-farming>

Anyway, here we are in mid spring. Kowhai and poro poro in flower, the reveg. planting season over again and young trees establishing some fresh growth before the dry months set in. Updates from our various neighbourhood planting projects are below.....thank you all who have contributed. If you think there is potential for another planting initiative in your neighbourhood reserve or valley and would like to talk about how to get something underway please get in touch...it pays to start at least a year ahead of when you want to plant.... so don’t delay.

Otherwise, if you would like to get involved with one of the projects below just get in touch with the contact persons to see how you can best fit in. There is always something to do.

John Marsh

~~~~

## **Bridle Path Reveg Planting**

**Heathcote Community and CCC**

I can almost hear the grass and weeds growing with the longer and warmer days! Clearing the long grass from around the newly planted trees and laying this around their base to form a thick mulch layer to get them through the summer is the main spring job up at the Bridle Path site. Both this year’s trees and at least the smaller of last year’s will benefit from this. I plan to have two working bees up there to do this in October – Sunday 16<sup>th</sup> and Sunday 30<sup>th</sup>. I will confirm these dates closer to the time, so keep an eye out for notices.

Of course, if you have the time and inclination, please feel free to go up there anytime to do some releasing and mulching independently of the working bees. Just reach out (my details below) if you want instructions on what to do.

In the meantime, a big shout out to Sue Piercy, who has been a wonderful kaitiaki for this site – reinstalling the rabbit guards when they get blown over in southerlies and tackling the re-emerging thistles. Thanks Sue!

We will look to set up a watering roster again for this summer – potentially through December, and then kicking off again at the start of February, depending upon what weather conditions we get this year. Please get in touch if you are able to help with this.

It’d be great to get a bigger team committing to the follow-up work of releasing, mulching and watering, as well as the planting. This follow-up work is really important to optimising survival rates in these crucial first few years.

If you would like to get involved in helping with watering, weeding/mulching, planting prep and/or planting at this site, please get in touch with Tamsin Page ([tamsin.page@gmail.com](mailto:tamsin.page@gmail.com) or 0276423555).

**Tamsin Page**

~~~~

Birdsey Reserve Reveg Planting

Heathcote Valley School - Sumner Girl Guides and CCC.

Releasing, mulching and watering are also the priorities for Birdsey through the spring and summer. I hope to find a way of getting the tamariki from the school up there some time during Term 4 to assist with this, although the releasing and mulching can be a tricky task for small hands, and much easier with appropriate tools. It was exciting to hear that some of the student senior leadership team and Enviro leaders at the school organised outdoor classroom sessions up in Birdsey Reserve during Conservation Week in early September. Such a fantastic resource for the school to have ‘on their doorstep’, so it was great to hear of this initiative. Hopefully there will be more in the future!

An enthusiastic local rangatahi undertaking her Duke of Edinburgh bronze award this year, has elected to do an hour per week assisting with local planting/re-vegetation projects as her community service component. She has started with releasing/mulching in Birdsey, so this will be a great help. If anyone else out there has rangatahi keen to do something similar, please get in touch – we have a growing number of native regeneration projects around the valley, and there is almost always some task that will help the trees to thrive...and these things are always more fun if you have some company!

We hope to discuss potential planting plans for Birdsey for next winter with the CCC ranger soon. This winter’s plantings pretty much filled all the main gaps remaining in the core revegetation spaces, so we’re keen to find out what potential there is to expand these areas.

If you would like to get involved in helping with native regeneration at Birdsey Reserve, whether watering in the summer, weeding/mulching in the spring and autumn, planting prep and/or planting in the autumn/winter, or all of the above, please get in touch with Tamsin Page (tamsin.page@gmail.com or 0276423555).

Tamsin Page

~~~



*Heathcote Valley School students and Conservation Week studies at Birdsey Reserve.*

## Morgans Valley No. 1

It has been all go in Morgans Valley over the winter and early spring months. We have got approximately 1000 plants into the ground with the support of our planting volunteers. Special thanks to Meridian Energy and Christchurch Foundation for providing plants as part of their @tuicorridor project. There are more recent sightings of kererū who are finding winter food in the valley.

Over the past few months, our projects in the valley have also helped several students reach their community work goals (Duke of Edinburgh, World Vision, Scholarship). There are dozens fewer possums in Morgan’s Valley now thanks to all our predator trapping efforts and we are noticing an increase in birdsong.

Everything is starting to spring into life at this time of year so if you're out enjoying the valley tracks, feel free



to stop and pull the weeds from around our young plants. Our long term goal is to continue to bring the community together to help regenerate native bush and birds to a large part of the valley and partner with CCC to be kaitiaki - guardians of the land.

A huge thank you to everyone for their help.

**Rachel Wells**

~~~~

Morgans Valley No. 2

Since the last planting day in March most of the time has been spent on mulching and releasing plants to ensure a good survival rate. We were donated some native trees that had to be transplanted and these are doing well.

The volume of rain created some issues on the track over winter, this was sorted by digging some channels to divert the water into gullies and we are now planting the gullies with natives. On the 3rd of September we had our last planting day of the season

on the Field of Dreams track. Over 20 people turned up and helped to plant over 200 donated trees We also had enough people that we managed to plant over 50 trees at the start of the Beer Bum track.

We are hoping for a summer like last year with rain and sunshine in equal measure to allow growth in the plants. A working bee will be held in January or February to release plants that are being smothered by grass and top up mulch where required.

A huge thank you to John Marsh for his ongoing support and answers to my many questions and also a huge thanks to Matt Sharpe, Hans Knutson, Colin Powick, Mark and Rachel Wells and James Manser for all their extra help during this year transplanting trees, spraying, growing seedling etc, etc If you are interested in helping with weeding or watering over summer then please contact Callum Templeton by email - mngcallum@hotmail.com or cellphone 021 024 19742.

Callum Templeton

~~~~



*September Planting Day*

## Duncan Park

### Heathcote and Avoca Community and CCC.

Work along the Avoca Stream park boundary and walkway picked up over the winter with the removal of a huge thicket of brambles, ivy, willow and elderberry that had been impeding progress in the south west corner. CCC arborist contractors sorted this out making way for planting by our Friday afternoon team with assistance from the staff of Hughes Developments and Avoca Valley residents. The native bush and waterway margin species planted were given some immediate impact by five magnificent kahikatea specimen supplied by CCC. Some areas have been left unplanted, to allow weed control to be completed over the summer, and it is hoped these can be planted out in the 2023 season. Plantings undertaken over the last two seasons are now making good growth along the stream and getting special attention from serial weeder, Sue Piercy.



Mulching and muffins with the Avoca Valley residents team.

Other work in Duncan Park has been the ongoing planting out of the gorse covered slopes on both the Horotane and Avoca sides of the spur. A further 1500 plants went in over the winter planted by half a dozen different corporate groups assisting the local Friday team. There is some impressive growth up there now and the City Council have started looking after the new track, making the walking circuit easier.

Anyone happy to spend a couple of hours on a Friday afternoon weeding around our new plants, please contact John at [jmarshtree@gmail.com](mailto:jmarshtree@gmail.com) .

### John Marsh

~\*~

## Linda Woods Reserve

### Summit Road Society - Horotane and Avoca Valleys

Our restoration project in Avoca Valley has been going full steam-ahead. Volunteers and staff from Waiora Forest Landscapes have planted nearly 30,000 plants and trees this year – so that's 39,000 plants and trees since we started in May 2021. It is quite a sight to see thousands of trees up the length of the valley.

Heavy rain presented a number of challenges in July. We had several slips across the reserve, including three big slips in the restoration area which washed away some of our new trees. These heavy rain events show the importance of revegetating the gullies of the Port Hills.

Our regular volunteer work party has also been hard at work clearing weeds and supporting the planting programme. The group meets fortnightly on a Wednesday morning. Work includes weed control, track maintenance, planting and general reserve maintenance. If you are keen to join, please contact Graeme Paltridge on [graeme\\_sue@slingshot.co.nz](mailto:graeme_sue@slingshot.co.nz).



Upper Avoca Valley – looking forward to another good growing season.

Boffa Miskell, environmental consultants, are helping to develop a predator control plan for the reserve, focusing on possums, rats and mustelids. We are also encouraging predator control in adjacent reserves and households through our Predator Free Port Hills programme.



Volunteer work party remove rabbit guards from year one plantings along Avoca Stream.

Our QEII National Trust covenant for Avoca Valley has now been lodged on the title. This will ensure that remnant vegetation on the rocky bluffs and our newly-planted forest will be protected in perpetuity.

Sincere thanks to our hardworking volunteers who support our work in Linda Woods Reserve.

**Marie Gray – Summit Road Society**

~~~~

Avoca Valley Stream Care Group Planting Day

There was a good turn out from the Avoca Valley residents on July 24th - given it was a pretty cold and damp Sunday afternoon. As part of the wider Summit Road Society Avoca Valley



Restoration Program, locals planted about 390 trees up on Tussock Farm adding to the 2000 planted last year. The planting was focussed along and around the Avoca Valley Stream which was in full flow after all the rain. As well as stream protection another aim of the planting is to create an ecological corridor for birds.

We are already noticing more birds in the valley. Earlier in the month some of the residents spent time up in the areas planted last year counting birds as part of the NZ Bird Garden Survey. Over time this will enable us to track any changes in species and numbers of birds as the restored bush habitat advances.

In the next few months we will also be helping the Summit Road Society with trap checking in the newly planted areas of the Valley.

Brigid Casey

~~~~

## Predator Free Port Hills

We need landscape-scale predator control to reduce predator populations and bring back native birds, lizards and invertebrates to our neighbourhoods, and that includes the many residential households living on and around the Port Hills.

The Summit Road Society sells a range of traps at subsidised prices and run regular trapping workshops and events. We now have over 1300 households trapping on the Port Hills. Please join us by signing up to our website [www.predatorfreeporthills.org.nz](http://www.predatorfreeporthills.org.nz)

We have a trapping workshop coming up in Hillsborough on 1 October, all welcome. And please check out our Facebook page for other upcoming events. <https://www.facebook.com/PredatorFreePortHills>

A big thank you to our volunteer coordinators and our many backyard trappers who are helping to make our vision of Predator Free Port Hills a reality.

**Marie Gray – Predator Free Port Hills**

~~~~

Discover Nature In and Around Heathcote Valley... using iNaturalist

By Rachel Barker

Come wandering with me within Heathcote Valley to learn about plants of the surrounding hills, the Opawaho Heathcote river and estuary...

My bet is that, like me, you've seen plants you never knew existed, or never recognised, or you've forgotten their names. Recently I discovered iNaturalist, which will help you become a plant expert.

What is iNaturalist?

Seriously, I am a digital clux. But I use iNaturalist as a free digital application on my phone because it's straight-forward and fun: I've downloaded the app from the app store. I press the Observe button, take a close-up photo, and a photo of the whole plant. Then select the photos I want to record, the location (from a satellite map already loaded) and choose "what did I see?"



Magic! The app suggests the plant name for me. I share my observation and it gets recorded as part of Citizen Science. The other cool thing is that plant experts will check my record, or they will make a correction. Voila!

A group of us have been planting the saltmarsh edge off Tunnel Road, and have often seen unfamiliar plants. What was the cute little plant with yellow button-like flowers? I loaded my photos into iNaturalist. Up popped the plant, and sure enough, they were called brass buttons (*Cotula coronopifolia*).

What could *you* do to help wild nature in Heathcote? Anyone can help record what we've got here, and what we may be losing. Prof Jon Sullivan is a creator of iNaturalist. Jon says:

"What's going on with the city's moths? What about the mushrooms? Or the butterflies? Wild nature is all around telling us stories of change, but most of those stories are going unnoticed. If you're interested in learning more about wild nature in the Heathcote Valley, and how it's faring, join the thousands of others in the iNaturalist NZ-Mātaiki Taiao community across Ōtautahi-Christchurch and help us tell these stories, one nature observation at a time."

Boneseed



This noxious weed has been found in Morgan's Valley, Mt Pleasant and Redcliffs. It spreads rapidly and can be recognised at this time of year by its bright yellow flowers. If you find it in your garden, please remove it as its seeds will spread near and far. More info can be found here: <https://www.ecan.govt.nz/document/download?uri=3720070>

The Long Drop

A poem from Honeysuckle Cottage

By Moya

1989

My Grandad had a long drop, at the bottom of his yard
It was made of Macrocarpa, and the wood was very hard
He must have dug it very deep; it was as silent as a grave
T'was best to jump off straight away, OR the blowflies misbehaved

It was wise before you entered, to take a nice deep breath
For the smell that assailed your nostrils, wasn't really all that fresh
To hold one's nose became an art, nearly all of us acquired
As you went about your business, which nature did require

There were big hairy spiders, all sitting in the corners
Who spun their webs to catch those flies, sent our faint hearts into
traumas

Now hanging on the sack hook, beside the dunny seat
Were squares of the daily papers, cartoons being quite a treat
You often heard a giggle, a loud guffaw or two
Which probably caused some faces, to acquire a bright red hue

What was great though, let me tell you, when the oranges arrived,
Were the tissues they were wrapped in, a blessing in disguise
You didn't have to wrinkle it, to make it nice and soft
You must admit the 'news' was hard, to really wipe 'it' off

Those days have gone forever, the farm it has now gone too
And so have Gran and Grandad, life's reward ...
not only for the few
It was such fun down on the farm, when I was just a tot
And I will always remember...
That old long drop.

1997

There's a sequel to this story
And I'd like to let you know
That Jos has saved the old farm house
From the developer's bitter blow

And when I was invited in
having knocked upon her door
To enter and to look around
at what was done and more.

What I felt was all the love and joy
What I saw was all the charm
And it brought back lots of memories
of what's left of Grandad's farm.

The old coal range no longer there
nor the fireplace in the front room, cold
and square

So changed in its appearance
and yet not that changed at all

For it always was a happy place
where our family had a ball
We used to meet on Sunday
and Christmas every year.

And there were the few odd flagons
of sparkling golden beer
Now there's dappled sunlight
which filters through the trees,

The old brick paths which Jos has made.
and flowers for the bees
And happy children once again enjoy a
way of life
Which is loaned by our creator, to the
few who want no strife.

Moving into the Heathcote Valley

with a love of garden and connecting with the community

By Diana Madgin

My husband and I began to building a house here, on Port Hills Road, Heathcote Valley, in 2012.

We had lived a happy life on a quarter acre section on River Road in Richmond right along from the old Medway Street pedestrian bridge. The block along River Road lent itself to close neighbourliness and a strong sense of community. A local woman and long-time resident was an early and active friend who visited each new family in the street. She always brought Dutch biscuits or a sweet pie.

Neighbourhood support began in the 1970s. Meetings were held in local homes. That way we were kept in touch with who was who and who had concerns the community needed to be aware of. By the time of the earthquakes we were a really strong community.

Coming to Heathcote was very different. We had stayed three weeks with River Road neighbours on Cannon Hill until the new house in Heathcote was finished and our huge load of furniture and junk filled every room. My husband Bill had recently had a stroke, and we felt anxious each time there was an aftershock, especially not knowing anyone or the established valley connections.

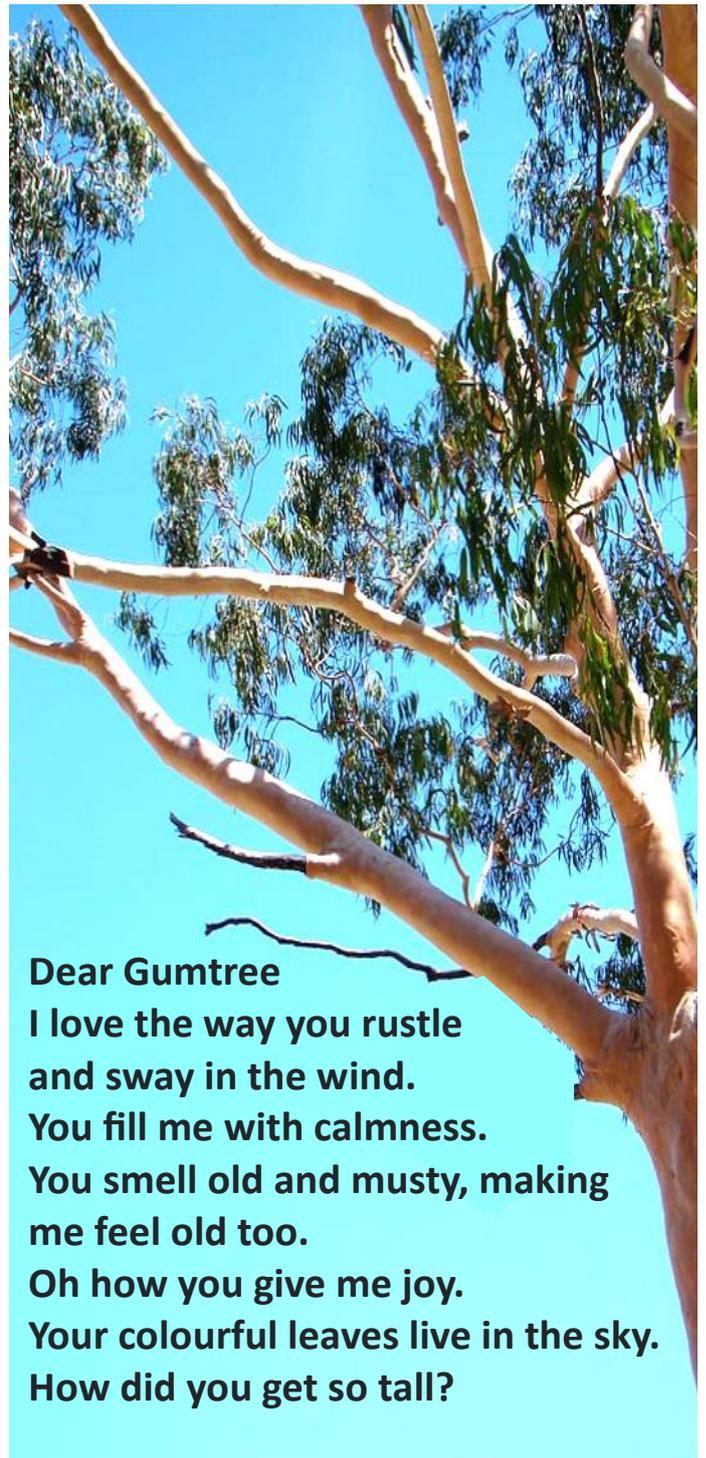
Despite that there was great beauty in the surrounding hills and I had a whole new garden to create. Writing for *The Press* garden page I could share what I was learning about seriously clay soil that stuck around my property like a skirt. I have made big differences to the garden by digging extra-large holes for plants and putting a liberal dollop of gypsum in the bottom followed by good compost. Of course apples, blackcurrants and roses won't thank you for such kindness because they love the acid density of clay.

So my socialising in Heathcote Valley began by talking to pram and dog walkers, as my gardener friend, Chris and I, worked in the front garden. It helped foster a feeling of belonging, which has slowly but surely expanded.

Heathcote Valley School

Poetry Competition

Children at Heathcote Valley School were encouraged to consider the environment around them. Poems were written for nature, in nature, by children of all ages during the outdoor classroom experience for Conservation Week at Birdsey Reserve. There were a lot of submissions for the school Poetry Competition. Here is one from Levi Y4 (3rd place)



**Dear Gumtree
I love the way you rustle
and sway in the wind.
You fill me with calmness.
You smell old and musty, making
me feel old too.
Oh how you give me joy.
Your colourful leaves live in the sky.
How did you get so tall?**



Do you know that there is a Heathcote Valley Community Facebook page? Just search for **Heathcote Valley Community** and you should find it.

The group is intended to share information about local happenings, things that are lost and found including pets, items for private sale and to give away including surplus food, fruit and vegetables, help needed or offered, and anything else that supports the wellbeing of our local community.

Occasionally we see a 'hot topic' that sparks some debate. That's not always a bad thing, but every now and again such debate gets out of hand with inappropriate and strongly worded posts being exchanged, which have resulted in complaints from some members.

We do want people to feel safe as part of our Facebook community and therefore it is necessary to have some ground rules. Please, therefore, be aware of the following as a guideline.

Be kind and courteous

Treat others with respect and politeness. Keep it friendly please.

We don't like hate speech or bullying

Heathcote Valley is made all the richer through having a diverse range of residents and it is important that we all feel safe and valued. Bullying of any kind isn't allowed, and degrading comments about race, religion, culture, sexual orientation, gender or identity are not appropriate.

Mind your Ps & Qs

Our group reaches a wide range of readers, young and old. Most readers will not appreciate bad language and swearing, so please choose your words appropriately.

Respect others' privacy

Our group is not a place to name and shame. Nor is it a place to share other people's private information without their permission. Think carefully before sharing anything that could discredit or defame anyone.

Pause before you post

Your post will be seen by many people within a short time, and it may also stay on the Facebook feed for a very long time. Before you hit the Post button, pause to make sure you are happy to share your words with

everyone. Are you happy that what you are about to say now is how your neighbours will remember you in the future?

Only local advertising please

It's great to be able to support local businesses and tradespeople, but there is a risk of the group becoming overrun with advertising. Therefore any advertising should only be from local businesses or about the activities of local groups. Generally speaking, if people will need to travel outside the local area to obtain the product or service, then it shouldn't be advertised here.

Hello Heathcote family

My name is Dhruvkumar Rav, Dhruv for short, owner of the Maltworks Convenience store.



Previously I worked as the store manager but recently I bought the business from my boss because I love Heathcote Valley and the locals that live here.

When I heard the news of the ram raid on the store I was so shocked. I never believed that this sort of event would ever happen in an area like Heathcote. Thank you to the community for all your support during this time.



The shop is back in order and looking good again with a new glass front window fitted. Thanks again for all your support.

We are always ready to help and serve you and open to suggestions.

See you soon at the Maltworks Convenience Store. Come and try out our ice creams during the school holidays.

Applications for vendors are still open.
Please contact Jane at: vjfortune@gmail.com

Heathcote Valley
Xmas market
2022!

Heathcote Domain, Bridle Path Rd
outside cricket club

SUNDAY NOVEMBER 27TH
10-2PM

Come along and buy local!
coffee-food-gifts-garden

Recipe

Spiced Quinoa, Kumara, Broccoli & Cranberry Salad

- 700g orange kumara, peeled and cut into 1.5 cm cubes
- 60ml olive oil
- 200g quinoa (see tip) briefly rinsed
- 1/2 teaspoon ground turmeric
- 1 teaspoon ground cumin
- 250g broccoli , trimmed and cut into small florets
- 1 bunch asparagus, trimmed and cut into 2cm lengths
- 50g sweetened dried cranberries
- 1/3 cup coarsely chopped mixed herbs (such as chives, parsley, mint)
- 2 tablespoon fresh orange juice
- 1 tablespoon white balsamic vinegar



1. Preheat the oven to 200°C. Place the kumara on a large baking tray lined with non-stick baking paper. Drizzle with 1 tablespoon of the olive oil and season with sea salt and pepper. Roast for 25-30 minutes until golden and tender.
2. Meanwhile, put the quinoa, turmeric, cumin and 500ml water in a medium saucepan and bring to the boil. Reduce the heat to low, cover and simmer for 12 minutes or until the water is absorbed. Remove from the heat and set aside to cool slightly.
3. Blanch the broccoli and asparagus in a saucepan of boiling water until tender-crisp, then drain and refresh under cold running water.
4. Put the cooked quinoa, kumara, blanched vegetables, cranberries and herbs in a large bowl. Whisk together the remaining 2 tablespoons of olive oil, the orange juice and then balsamic. Add to the salad and toss to combine, then season with sea salt and freshly ground black pepper, to taste.



GLUTEN
FREE

PREPARATION TIME
20 MINUTES

COOKING TIME
25-30 MINUTES

SERVES 4

(TIP. We used equal quantities of red and white quinoa in this recipe. There is no need to cook them separately.)



Community Fruit Harvesting

Picking unwanted fruit for charities

Find us on Facebook - search 'Heathcote Valley Community Fruit Harvesting'

Heathcote Valley Food Forest Spring Open Day and Fundraiser

Sausage sizzle.

Baking and plant sale

View our landscape plan.

*Scavenger hunt for the
children!*

Friday October
28th, 4:30-6pm
Birdsey Reserve,
Bridle Path Road

Pleasant Valley Sunday

By Tony Forster

Jocelyn de Kort and Barrie Woods recently visited Radio Ferrymead in search of an article for this newsletter. We were treated to a most interesting tour by Station Manager, Tony Forster who agreed to write this article. Thanks Tony! If you get a chance, we can say Radio Ferrymead is well worth a visit!

It's difficult to believe that a local radio station has been broadcasting in Heathcote Valley for 31 years, and we may never have listened to it.

1413 Radio Ferrymead started in a building that was being used to store valve radios for restoration. Along with radio donations came collections of vinyl and 78rpm records. Members acquired an old 1960s Gates broadcast desk and a mast brought back from Twizel.

Originally the station broadcast for four hours on a Sunday, to show visitors to Ferrymead Heritage Park a working exhibit of an older style radio studio. In recent years broadcasts have been extended to Friday, Saturday, Sunday and Monday and the station has moved to a new purpose built complex on the other side of the Edwardian Village, in the Park.

1413 Radio Ferrymead is unique in many ways. There are no advertisements, sport or talkback and much of the music is played off records from its large vinyl record library. The music is selected from the decades



1413 Radio Ferrymead studio with Warren

of the 1940s through to the 1990s. Families and other visitors can see the announcers at work, through the large foyer viewing window on Saturdays and Sundays.

Individual announcers choose their own music selection from the record library as well as popping in some occasional quizzes, jokes, comedy tracks, radio serials every so often throughout the months.

Saturday's programs are a general music mix with two specialist shows, **Country Roundup** at 1pm and at 3pm, Jazz and Swing during **Swing in The Groove**.

Sunday has a general music mix as well. At 12 noon it's the popular **You Ask, We Play** phone-in request program, Requests are received and collated the first Sunday and played over two hours the following Sunday.

Learn more about **1413 Radio Ferrymead** through its website: radioferrymead.co.nz Visit there for contact details, programs, music streaming, a free **Community Noticeboard** and details on the **Museum of Sound and Radio**, next to the radio studios.

1413 RADIO FERRYMEAD

taking music's past into the future

Phone 384 5678



Heathcote Valley Mountain Biking



Roll on long summer evenings

Since our Autumn update, we've been busy fundraising, building and planting. An upside to a wild wet Winter is you get a good go at improving your drainage. Thankfully our skill park was well above July's water table. Wet dirt is soft dirt, making it easy to get creative and shape up some new features.

We have raised over \$5000 over the past six months to help develop our skill park. Many thanks to Summer Ferrymead Foundation, CCC Discretionary Response Fund and all who purchased a sticker. The funds have allowed us to begin surfacing our trails and features to endure many more years of fun. Donations are very welcome and we have plenty of stickers available. All funds raised go directly into our park.

HVMB has now planted and mulched over 1500 native plants in and around our skill park. On Saturday 28th May, Orion NZ sponsored our Autumn Family planting day with 150 plants in, and a BBQ lunch to finish. Special thanks to Meridian Energy and the Christchurch Foundation who donated over 250 plants to our cause through the Tui Corridor programme. We look forward to seeing the kahikatea and totara trees towering over us... one day.

It's great to see HVMB being enjoyed by friends and families, young and old. Riding bikes and eating birthday cake at the same time is such fun.

Enjoy!



Scan this QR code to visit the HVMB Facebook page



Railway Billie's Tunnel

By *Barrie Woods*



The early settlers of Christchurch were faced with a dilemma. There were only two ways to get from the port of Lyttelton to the new town of Christchurch. One was by “scrambling over the hill, either by line of the bridle path, or by Cass’ Bay to Riverlaw”. The other was by “taking a boat and going round by Sumner and up the Avon to the Bricks Wharf”.

There are many still among us who can recall the feelings of dismay and disappointment with which the lofty hills surrounding Lyttelton were first regarded. Beyond lay an almost interminable plain, which, even to the unpractised eye of the new comer, gave promise of full return for the labour that might be expended upon it. But before this could be reached a barrier of formidable dimensions interposed in the shape of lofty abrupt hills, and no available means existed of overcoming the difficulty.

Lyttelton Times, 25 May 1867

A commission was appointed which duly recommended the building of a railway via Sumner, with a tunnel below Evans Pass to Gollan’s Bay, or, if that scheme proved beyond the resources of the province, to construct a cart road via Sumner with a tunnel through the top of Evan’s Pass. The cost of the railway option was estimated at £155,000 and was strongly opposed

by the then Superintendent, Mr James Fitzgerald, who preferred a road option.

After consideration the government decided on the road option via Evan’s Pass and work commenced around 1855. Four years later, on 24th August 1859 the road was formally opened by the Superintendent, Mr Fitzgerald, who drove a dog cart over it, arriving in Lyttelton without damage.

Whilst the new road formed a link between the port and Sumner it proved unsuitable for heavy cart traffic. Consequently, the only way to move freight between the plains and the port remained by sea, via the Sumner bar.

Various efforts were made to improve the sea route, and wharves were built on the Heathcote river to receive and discharge cargo arriving and departing by steamer. The Heathcote river was considered unnavigable past Ferrymead and only light craft could venture up the Avon. The arrangement was far from ideal, as freight needed to be transferred between cart and coastal steamer for the trip to Lyttelton, then transferred again to larger vessels to go further afield. The reverse was required for incoming freight. Worse still, the Sumner bar was perilous, and a number of vessels came to grief attempting the crossing. A more efficient means of communication between the port and plains was essential.

A second commission was appointed in 1858 to consider rail routes between Christchurch and Lyttelton. William Moorhouse, who had replaced Fitzgerald as Superintendent of the province, exhorted the council to “consider and determine the best method of securing safe and expeditious transit of our marketable productions to the place of export”. He was passionate about the railway proposal, which earned him the nickname ‘Railway Billie’.

The commissioners considered two routes. One would run between Sumner and Gollan’s Bay, and the other via a tunnel under the hill from Heathcote Valley. The



An early sailing vessel at the Ferrymead Wharf

Sumner route was felt unsuitable due to the sharp curves and steep gradients, but the tunnel proposal, while more direct, presented its own challenges. This would be the first time, anywhere in the world, that a railway tunnel had passed through the wall of a volcano, and the nature of drilling volcanic rock for such an undertaking was unknown.

Near the same time, another commission was established in London to investigate the technical aspects of the proposals and consult with railway experts. Mr Robert Stephenson, son of George Stephenson, renowned as the 'Father of Railways') was asked for advice and deferred the matter to his cousin, Mr George Robert Stephenson. He recommended the direct route, via Heathcote, and also recommended the London civil engineering firm Smith and Knight to do the work. A sum of £235,000 was allowed for the project, with the work to be completed over five years.

The contract awarded to Smith and Knight was subject firstly to the government securing the funds, and secondly to the contractors examining the site in Canterbury to determine if the work could be done for the money. The government would pay for making trial shafts at each end of the tunnel, and a decision on whether to proceed would be made within four months. As the first railway tunnel to be built in New Zealand, this would also be the country's biggest engineering feat of the time.

Messrs McCandish and Baines, agents for Smith and Knight, arrived at Lyttelton on Christmas Eve of 1859 with a team of workers, and immediately began exploratory work.

Bureaucracy got in the way, and the Provincial Government was unable to confirm the funding for the

project by the due date of 24th April, and an extension was requested. It was not until November that the government signalled that funds were available, but in the meantime Smith and Knight had become disillusioned and abandoned the project, citing that it was too difficult.

The Provincial Council was faced with a dilemma as there was pressure from both the port and the plains for the project to proceed. Edward Dobson, the Provincial Engineer, proposed that work continue to open out the ends of the tunnel using local labour while the tenders were requested for the remainder of the work. The Council would not commit, and a long delay ensued, though Dobson, with the help of the remaining Smith and Knight workers, negotiated with Moorhouse for some work to continue on a day-work basis. This was justified on the grounds that the Council had promised to look after and provide work for the Smith and Knight immigrant workers if the project did not proceed.

Keen to get the project back on track, Moorhouse travelled to Melbourne to recruit new contractors. He received interest from three firms and in May 1861, the government accepted a tender from George Holmes and Co. They were awarded £240,500 to complete the line from Christchurch to Lyttelton, with the exception of the stations. Of this £195,000 was for the cost of the tunnel, estimated at 2838 yards long. The project was expected to take five years.

A ceremony to commemorate the official start of the project was held at Heathcote on 17 July 1861, at which Mr Moorhouse cut the first sod. Dobson and his team had already made some progress, so work by the new contractor could begin in earnest almost immediately. However, problems were soon met when the Otago gold rush broke and many of the new workers recently employed left for the goldfields. Tunnelling work was undertaken from both ends making progress at a rate of about three yards a day. At the Heathcote end the digging was initially through clay and sand which, despite being wet during the winter months, made for reasonably fast progress. The tunnel was shored up using timber to begin with, then a brick lining was commenced the following year. Mrs Moorhouse laid the first stone on the 29th of September 1864. In all 1.5 million bricks were used in the construction of the

tunnel, and they were all made in Heathcote, at the site of the old malt works (known at the time as The Kilns). The tunnel is lined up to the point where solid rock is encountered, with a thickness of five bricks. The original bricks are still in place after more than 150 years.

The tunnelling work was done by pick and shovel, with the help of gunpowder to fracture the rock. Water was a big problem during construction. It was estimated that as many as 50,000 gallons per day needed to be removed. To begin with large wooden vats were used, but then a new solution was found for the Heathcote workings. A syphon system was designed to draw water from a sump, then discharge it into ditches some 600 yards down the valley. At the Lyttelton end, the water simply ran out of the tunnel and into the sea, but there was more of it, and it rained down from above. An iron shield on runners was devised to keep the workers dry. The downpouring water at times extinguished the lights, and played havoc with the explosives, meaning misfires were common.

At the Lyttelton end eels and whitebait made their appearance within the drains far up into the tunnel. Rats also abounded, feeding on leftovers from the workers' meals, horse feed and candles.

Fumes and smoke from the blasting also presented problems and a ventilation system needed to be contrived. To begin with fans were used, somehow driven by horses, then later by a steam engine, but as the tunnel progressed further this became ineffective. The solution came by building a wooden floor or partition to divide the tunnel along its length. A furnace was then positioned above the tunnel head, which pulled its air from the top partition, so drawing a steady current of air from within the tunnel.

The tunnelling work was interesting from a scientific perspective, particularly as this was thought to be the first time a volcano wall had been tunnelled in such a way, from the outside through to the crater. The geologist Dr Julius von Haast was involved from early in the project and made a detailed study of the strata as work progressed.

It was not just the scientists and engineers who were interested either. The public were invited to inspect the workings of the Moorhouse Tunnel on Boxing Day of

1863. Around 2000 people attended the 'Illumination' on the Heathcote side, and another 400 at Lyttelton, with detailed descriptions printed in the newspapers. Candles were used to light the interior of the tunnel, and festivities were held on the outside at each end.

Also of interest, was how the engineers lined up the two portions of the tunnel to meet perfectly in the middle. Here is how they did it, as described in the Lyttelton Times:

The system employed to secure the correctness of the alignment of the two ends of the tunnel was very simple. A permanent mark was fixed in the centre line of the tunnel, on a tower built on the dividing range, nearly midway between the two ends. A transit instrument being placed on the meridian of the tunnel as well as of the tower on the hill, it could be seen at once whether the flame of a candle placed in the centre line of the work inside the tunnel was in a vertical plane with the mark on the tower. But it was also desirable, in case of error, to have the means not only of correcting but of calculating the amount of such error, and this could be readily done. The permanent mark on the central tower, consisted of a batten six inches wide, with a black stripe one inch wide down the centre. The eye-piece of the transit instrument being furnished with five vertical wires placed at equal distances apart, the value of the space between any two wires at a distance equal to that of the mark on the tower can be ascertained by reference to the width of the batten, which thus gives a scale by which the error in the position of a light placed in the tunnel under the tower can be rated with great exactness. It has been by this means that the alignment has been tested from time to time, and the proof of the correctness of the system has been established by the present results.



perseverance of key figures such as Railway Billie (William Moorhouse) and Edward Dobson, the tunnel still provides a reliable and efficient communication between Port and Plains. As most locals will no doubt be aware, it is used by several freight trains each day and is operated by KiwiRail.

If you want to learn more about the history of the Moorhouse Tunnel, David Welch has written an excellent book on the subject called 'Port to Plains'. You will find a copy at your local library.

Pilgrim, aka No. 1 —the first locomotive in New Zealand, which worked the Christchurch to Ferrymead and then the Christchurch to Lyttelton line.

Hole-through, the technical term of the day, was achieved in the morning of 24 May 1867 when an iron rod was able to be passed through from one section to the other. It took a further four days for the full width and height of the tunnel to be excavated. To celebrate, the public were invited to walk through the length of the tunnel on 10 June 1867. Can you imagine that being allowed today?

Temporary rails were laid through the tunnel enabling the passage of the first locomotive on 18 November 1867, followed by the first goods train a week later.

However, the tunnel was not considered complete until June of 1874, as work continued for further widening and drainage. The trains would run through during the day and the tunnel work would continue at night.

These days the tunnel is officially known as the Lyttelton Rail Tunnel. The Moorhouse Tunnel name dropped from common usage way back in the 1920s. Thanks to the foresight of the early colonists, and the

Sources for this article:

- Port to Plains, David Welch, 2017
- Canterbury—Full Steam Ahead 1873– 1878, Alastair Adrian Cross, BA Dissertation, University of Canterbury, 2015
- The Moorhouse Tunnel, Lyttelton Times, Volume XXVII, Issue 2006, 25 May 1867
- Papers Past, National Library of New Zealand
- Lyttelton Rail Tunnel, Wikipedia
- Lyttelton Railway Tunnel, Engineering New Zealand Heritage
- Christchurch City Libraries



News From Heathcote Valley Library



Greetings to our fellow Heathcote residents. Hope you are all keeping well and warm. A great time to come to the library and choose some books from our great collection. We are pleased to list our new titles below. Come and choose a good read on Wednesday mornings when you are having a cuppa and a scone.

The library is based at the Heathcote Valley Community Centre in Bridle Path Road is run by local volunteers and provides a library service to the residents of the Heathcote, Horotane, Avoca Valleys and Mount Pleasant.

Its catalogue includes children's, teen and adult books that can be borrowed for up to three weeks at a time.

Heathcote Valley Community Library operates independently of Christchurch City Libraries and has its own membership requirements and loan periods.

Free Lifetime Membership for children and adults.

Library Hours

Monday 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
 Tuesday 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
 Wednesday 11:00 am to 12:00 pm
 Thursday 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
 Friday 2:00 pm to 4:00 pm
 Saturday 10:30 am to 12:00 pm
 Closed on Sundays and public holidays

Our Latest Titles

Atkinson, Kate	When Will There Be Good News
Owens, Delia	Where The Crawdads Sing
Umrigar, Thrity	Honor
Slaughter, Karin	Pieces of Her
Mosen, Corey	Ajax The Kea Dog
Quinn, Joanna	The Whalebone Theatre
Pearse, Lesley	Deception
Lauren, Christina	Something Wilder
Baldacci, David	The 6-20 Man
Bennetts, Marlene J	Whakaaetanga Acceptance
Lando, Veronica	The Whispering
Gerritsen, Tess	Listen To Me
Davis, Stephen	Operation Trojan Horse
Klaussmann, Liza	This Is Gonna End In Tears
Hoover, Colleen	Without Merit
Barr, Lisa	Woman On Fire
Bennett, Michael	Better The Blood
Cleeves, Ann	The Rising Tide
Marshall, Owen	Return To Harikoa Bay
Herron, Mick	Nobody Walks
Horowitz, Anthony	The Twist Of A Knife
Alexander, Claire	Meredith Alone
Grisham, John	Sparring Partners
Taylor, Ross	Black and White
Green, Sophie	The Bellbird River Country Choir
Clarke, Lucy	One Of The Girls
Spencer, Matthew	Black River

Support Your Community Association

Currently the Heathcote Valley Community Association (HVCA) depends on grants and residents' donations to fund its activities, including the creation and distribution of our printed newsletters, support of community events and the maintenance of community facilities such as the community centre and noticeboards. We would love it if you could show your support and ensure our work continues by making a donation to the association. Any financial support is welcome, however our suggested donation is \$15 per household per year. It would be greatly appreciated if your donations for the year are received by 31st July.

You can donate by cash or direct credit. We will not send a receipt unless you specifically request one.

Cash:

Post or drop off your donation to Lindsay Gordon, Treasurer, Heathcote Valley Community Association, Villa 50, Maltworks Villas, 60 Port Hills Road, Heathcote Valley, Christchurch 8022. Please remember to include your details (name and address) in the envelope.

Internet Banking:

The Heathcote Valley Community Association's bank account number is: 03-1369-0182187-00

Please use the following codes:

Particulars: Donation

Code: Your family name

Reference: Your address

Queries: Heathcotevillageproject@gmail.com

COMMUNITY MORNING TEA

ENJOY TEA OR COFFEE, HOME BAKING AND GREAT COMPANY AT
THE HEATHCOTE VALLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE

Each Wednesday 10am - 12pm during school term time

Everyone welcome, come alone or bring a friend

No charge



In Case of Emergency ... Local Defibrillators



Although we hope you never need one—it's good to know there are some about.

- Lyttelton Road Tunnel Control Room
10 Bridle Path Rd. Access 24/7
- At the top of the Gondola
- The Valley Inn—open every day 10am to 11pm
- See <https://aedlocations.co.nz> for more locations around Christchurch.

Heathcote Valley Online

Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates and local events at :

www.facebook.com/heathcotevillageproject/

Snap Send Solve

Snap Send Solve is the Christchurch City Council's smartphone app to help make reporting issues easy.

It works by identifying the location the photo is taken using the phone's GPS data. It sends an email to the Council from your email address, including the incident type, notes, address of incident, photo, and contact details. The report is then allocated to the relevant Council department.

The more information provided, the better they can help isolate and investigate the issue.

You can download the app to your Apple (Apps Store) or Android (Play Store) phone and have it ready to use at any time.

You can still report issues online, at a service centre or by phoning 03 941 8999. Urgent issues should be reported by phone.