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A weekly feature on the  
communities in  
Horowhenua & Kapiti

# Caring for Our Community

## This week's feature – Waikawa Beach Ratepayers Association

Waikawa, means 'bitter water,' in Maori. The area with this namesake near Levin used to be a swampy place rich with flax. The commercial flax mill sited at Foxton was testament to the commercial activity that this once created. Some residents have lived in the area for 30 to 40 years and have put together books outlining Waikawa Beach's rich history.

One of the newer residents, having lived in the area for just six or seven years, is John Hewitson, chairperson of the committee for the Waikawa Beach Ratepayer's Association. He describes the group as locals who give a helping hand to look after the area. "Basically it's a small committee that looks at things the community might need."

He says they are concerned with how the place looks and have worked on improving the entrance to Waikawa Beach with good signs and planting. "Everything is voluntary" he says of the work put in by locals to upgrade the area. The association liaises with the Horowhenua District Council with regard to issues such as safety signs for swimming and keeping people off the sand dunes. The association tries to seek solutions to issues such as driving speed on the beach and in the village. Hewitson says they do get a few hoons. Some residents want speed humps and some don't.

One of the tasks the association undertook 10 to 15 years ago that is now reaping rewards for the community, was the planting of maram grass on the opposite side of the river to the Hank Edward Reserve (named after an early stalwart of the association). Thanks to the



efforts of the locals back then, the dunes were saved from the ravages of the sea and the reserve which was originally on the beachfront is now sited about 500 metres back from the beach. Hewitson quips that the toilets and changing rooms are now quite a long way from the sea.

Labour Party Minister of Works in the late 1930s, Bob Semple, was an early batch owner at Waikawa and is famous in the area for practising his driving of some of the first bulldozers in New Zealand on the sand dunes. Hewitson says Semple goes down in Waikawa Beach history for flattening the sand dunes for further development.

Nowadays residents can make their mark on the area in other ways. The association helps organise the setting out and naming of park benches and picnic tables by those who want to remember people from the community.

One of the major events of the year for Waikawa Beach residents is the Annual Boat Day.

Hewitson says it is the biggest family event of the year for the community. Christmas is also a busy time for the locals, for that is when they have their golf tournament held at the Otaki Golf Course and the Annual General Meeting. It is events like these and the efforts of the Waikawa Beach Ratepayers Association, that help to unite the community.

Contact John Hewitson phone (06) 352 6926

## Adventure of the week



### Waikawa Beach

Situated 5kms off State Highway 1 historic Waikawa was the site of the first pa established in the district by Te Rauparaha. In 1844 Thomas Bevan built his home and rope walk. The common mouth of the Waikawa and Ohau rivers was an important port for coastal ships to load flax, rope and produce.

The Waikawa River forms a small estuary and there are easy walks along the beach and river. White-faced Herons are to be seen stalking small native fish in the shallows.

## Hot Water - Low Pressure or Mains Pressure?



Traditional electric systems are low pressure, where the cylinder is fed with cold water from a header tank in the ceiling or through a pressure reducing valve.

The cylinder liners are usually made from copper and have very long life spans (30 years or more is not uncommon). Low stress levels and few valves mean maintenance is kept to a minimum.

There are two types of low pressure systems. One is open, being vented through the roof, and the other is closed and can be slightly pressurised.

When plumbed correctly either type of low pressure system can provide very good service including excellent showers with little or no temperature and flow variation occurring when using other taps in the house.

Mains pressure means the water in the cylinder and delivered at the tap is kept at the same pressure as the cold water. Because of the higher stresses involved, these cylinders are usually made from steel that is enamelled on the inside and they have a life span of

around 15 years or sometimes less.

The high pressures involved require safety valves and as a result, maintenance can be higher than low pressure systems.

When choosing the pressure of your hot water system, consider the tapware you wish to use. Some modern taps require equal mains pressure but others will work perfectly with unequal pressures.

**Larger dual element cylinders can save you money using either low or mains pressure.**

Large hot water cylinders make more hot water immediately available at high demand periods.

An electric hot water cylinder that's sized to store all your hot water needs for the day can be heated at night when electricity is at a low price. They are, on average, 50 per cent larger than many 'standard' water heaters.

Additionally, if a dual element (top and bottom) cylinder is used, the bottom element can be used to heat the water overnight and the top element can be used during the day to boost the temperature of the top of the cylinder if necessary. Talk to your plumber or plumbing supplier for more information.

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