



The Inlet

Newsletter for Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet

AUGUST

2019

The Inlet is a newsletter that brings together local and regional news affecting the Pāuatahanui Inlet and its environs.

The Inlet comes out three times a year and current or back issues can be downloaded from our website.

The newsletter includes items of concern that affect the area as well as general interest topics for everyone.

Please contact us if you would like to contribute to The Inlet.

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FROM THE CHAIR

In the next year, we will see some important activities that will affect the health and future of the Inlet. These are:

the review of the Te-Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour Strategy and Action Plan;

the implementation of decisions on Greater Wellington Regional Council's Natural Resources Plan;

public Notification of Porirua City's Reviewed District Plan; and

work by all local authorities and related agencies to implement the findings of the Te Awarua-o-Porirua Whaitua - which provides 75 recommendations designed to reduce contaminants, pollutants and sediments entering the harbour and improve the condition of the streams and waterways entering the harbour.



The Guardians will be involved in all of these processes with the sole objective of doing our best to protect and improve the condition of the Inlet and its ecosystems. We will keep you informed of action on these activities.

Local Authority elections will be held on 12 October with postal voting available from 20 September. Later this month we are going to ask candidates in the Northern Ward of Porirua City, Mayoral candidates and candidates for the Regional Council, some questions on what they think about, and what they will do to help protect and improve, the Inlet. The questions are:

What problems and opportunities do you see in the protection and enhancement of the condition of the Pāuatahanui Inlet and its contributing catchment?

What would you do about this if elected to the Council?

Do you have anything else you want to say about the Inlet and its protection and enhancement?

We will email you the results of their responses.

On the 3 November we will have our annual clean-up of the edges of the Inlet.

On 24 November, with a reserve date of 8 December, we will have our three-yearly cockle count.

Both events are important contributors to the management of Inlet health and for understanding the conditions affecting cockle growth and patterns of distribution.

From the Chair cont.....

Cockles are a useful index species that give us a reference point on the health of the Inlet's waters and the food chain.

We look forward to your participation in these events.

Finally, this newsletter contains two interesting columns: one on water-sensitive design; the other - the feature article - on the historical vegetation of the Inlet.

We consider water-sensitive design is the best form of stormwater management and we plan to make sure it is fully utilised on all new developments, and any redevelopments, around the Inlet.

The article on the Inlet's pre-European vegetation is a reminder of the importance of vegetative cover, especially forests, in protecting the Inlet from sediment and other pollutants. Sadly, much of this protection has long gone but we can help restore some of it on public and private land.

One area that deserves much more attention, with tree cover again, is Belmont Park. Its northern slopes are mostly grazed. They need to be restored to forest and other protective vegetation, especially in riparian areas. We plan to make sure this happens. 🌱

Lindsay Gow

PHOTOGRAPHIC COMPETITION 2019

This year's prize-giving was held on 26 May when over 50 keen photographers, family and friends, turned up to take part in the ceremony at Te Rauparaha Arena in Porirua. They gathered in Room 1 where a PowerPoint presentation of all winning and highly-commended images, selected by our judge Geoff Marshall, was set up ready to run.

Each successful entrant had their images displayed while their categories were read out by Tony Shaw, making his final public appearance as Chairperson before stepping down from this role in June. 51 images in all made the grade and prizes, chosen according to the winning category, were presented to the successful entrants.



Brian Rowe 1st for nature



*Shaughan McGregor
3rd for recreation*

Among the many stunning images created by the 24 successful artists was this shot by young Shaughan McGregor, who was under 13. She won third prize in the open competition Recreation category with this simple, but creative, photo of her own feet in mud and shells. Shaughan came from the Wairarapa to take part in the youth workshop, and returned as a winner for the prize giving. She was also successful with the Junior Human Impact and Scenic Prizes.

With the ceremony over our special guest speaker, the Mayor Mike Tana, talked about the event, emphasising how the Nature category meant a lot to him as his grandfather was a noted wildlife

photographer. He commented on the beauty of the winning photos and was surprised to learn that they were all taken by amateur photographers.

Once the formal proceedings had been wrapped up everyone gathered around the table to enjoy some snacks and drinks and have a good chit-chat. Judging by the excellent turnout, the successful photographers and their families clearly enjoyed the chance to get together and see each others winning photos.

The programme ended with volunteers helping to clear away the glasses, cups and plates, while Mike Tana lent a hand to move the display boards, covered in the printed photographs, over to the Library where they were on show until 10 June. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the event. 🌸



Roger Hayman
1st for Human Impact



Grace Shearer
2nd for Scenic

As always we want to take this opportunity to thank our sponsors who give such generous support in the way of prizes for the winning photos. This year the value of the sponsorship amounted to \$1595.

The sponsors were: 24/7 Fitness; Big Salami; Black Rose Florists, Plimmerton; Clark and Co Realty; Co-op Bar and Restaurant; Harvey Norman, Porirua Megacentre; Lavender Room; Leacroft Nurseries; Lighthouse Cinema; Little Black Caravan; Mana Cruising Club; Mana Pharmacy; Mexted Performance Sports Surfaces; Mitre 10 Mega; Natraj Indian Restaurant; Palmers Plimmerton; Plimmerton Motors; New World Whitby; Whitby Pharmacy. 🌸

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On 19 June our Annual General meeting was eventful, both for the election of committee members and for the presentation to a retiring member.

The formal stage of the meeting included the usual review of the year through our 2019 annual report. While this is not read out in full the Chair usually refers to salient extracts from the text. Tony Shaw referred to our submissions to PCC and GWRC and our activities during the year, such as last November's Inlet Clean-up and the more recent Photographic Competition.

Tony also talked about the new plans for the incoming committee. A different approach to running the various activities will be undertaken with sub-committees headed by a member of the main committee. Other volunteers can take on the various tasks required to run the activity and the team leader will report to the committee at the six-weekly meetings. People interested in contributing can advise us via our email address pauainlet@gmail.com.

Tony then announced his intention to step down from the committee this year, and that a new chair would be selected and voted in at this meeting. Tony is making plans to move back to his family town of Nelson at the end of the year. Tony described his time with GOPI as being very rewarding; he had enjoyed the work it involved, plus the many friends he has made with the people and organisations he came to know through his work with the Guardians. He thanked everyone on the committee, and in general, for their help and support throughout his tenure.

The new committee was then voted in with Lindsay Gow taking the vacated role of Chair for the coming 2019-2020 year. All current members of the committee were re-elected, together with a new member, Andre van Halderen, who was keen to join GOPI and contribute to the work of the organisation.

Our 2019-2020 committee is as follows:

Annual General Meeting cont...

Lindsay Gow	Chair
Helen Reilly	Secretary
Stephen O'Neil	Treasurer
Janet Ryan	Membership secretary
Michael Waldron	Webmaster and Newsletters
Christine Stanley	Committee member
John McKoy	Committee member
Andre van Halderen	Committee member

Following the formal meeting, John McKoy addressed the group about the committee's intention to grant an award of Life Membership to Tony Shaw in recognition of the huge contribution he made to GOPI both prior to, and following, his membership of the committee. A vote is required for this decision to be ratified and this was taken and accepted unanimously.

The evening ended with a talk by ecological engineer Stu Farrant who introduced the concept of integrating water reticulation into the design of new housing developments. A summary of his presentation can be seen on page 7 of this issue of *The Inlet*. 🌿

OUR NEW CHAIRPERSON - LINDSAY GOW

Lindsay Gow is our new Chair and we would like to introduce him to our membership.

Lindsay has had an extensive background in public policy and strategy, especially environmental policy, working as Deputy Secretary for the Environment. He retired from the Public Service in 2009 and now, amongst other things, does occasional part-time work on strategy, policy and related performance.

He was a founding member of the Porirua Harbour and Catchment Community Trust (PHACCT) and a member of the Pāuatahanui Inlet Community Trust (PICT). When PICT was disestablished in 2015, Lindsay joined GOPI to bolster our efforts with advocacy and submissions on environmental and resource management issues.

Lindsay has been active in advocating, writing and presenting submissions from PHACCT and GOPI on resource and council plans and consents. These include the Greater Wellington Natural Resources Plan, councils' long-term plans and the Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour and Catchment Strategy and Action Plan.

Lindsay lives in Whitby, overlooking Pāuatahanui Inlet. He is passionate about improving the quality of the harbour system, the condition of its contributing catchments and public access to the harbour and its edges. He is also interested in, and an advocate of, carbon-neutral energy systems and water-sensitive urban design.

Lindsay is an active user of Porirua Harbour's waterways and shores. He and his wife Denise, and their extended childrens' families, enjoy walking, biking, and kayaking in and around the Inlet and the wider harbour and its environment.

We are please to have Lindsay head our team for the coming year. 🌿



WE LOSE TONY SHAW

This AGM Tony Shaw, our Chairperson for the last six years, has stepped down and will be pursuing his long-term intention to settle back in his home town of Nelson. We are going to miss the energy and enthusiasm that he has brought to the Guardians and for the dedication he paid to the Pāuatahanui Inlet.

Tony took over from the late John Wells in 2013 and from that moment he directed all his commitment to the aims and objectives of the Guardians.

Growing up in Golden Bay and Nelson city meant he has had a long-life connection with that region but Tony spent his career with the Met Service, based in Wellington. The role he played there, managing networks of meteorological recording stations, meant that he was posted to a wide variety of locations including the off-shore islands of New Zealand and even Antarctica for a while. These experiences are what sealed in him a love of the natural world and its various landscapes. So when Tony settled in Paremata in 1985 he naturally gravitated to the beauty of Pāuatahanui Inlet.

After 1991 Tony became involved in GOPI's activities aimed at caring for this harbour, starting with the annual Inlet Clean-up and the triennial Cockle Surveys. In 2004 he joined one of the teams that regularly monitored water quality of waterways flowing into the Inlet and, as a consequence, he was invited to join the GOPI committee in 2005. As a committee member Tony, along with Janet Ryan who joined at the same time, took over the organisation of annual clean-up days, a role they together have continued until the present.

In 2013 Tony was elected Chair and became so involved with the activities of the Guardians, and the various like minded community groups and council departments, that it will be difficult to see how we will continue without him.

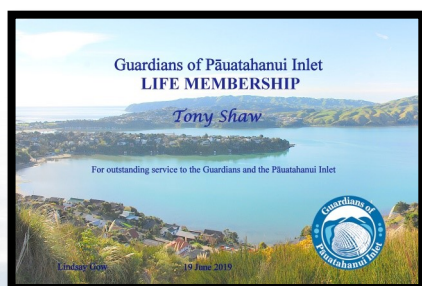
But, continue we must, so we bid farewell to you Tony, thank you for all your energy and enthusiasm and wish you well in all you do in the future. 🌸

TONY GETS LIFE MEMBERSHIP

One of the best jobs we have had in the past is to recognise an individual member of our organisation for the contribution they have made to the work of the Guardians and the promotion of values of the Inlet. We do this in the form of a Life Membership award and have previously selected Neil Bellingham and Professor John Wells to receive this honour.

It was with very little discussion that the committee decided Tony Shaw should be recognised appropriately for his 20 or so years of activities associated with GOPI, subject to a vote at the Annual General Meeting on 19 June.

John McKoy addressed the meeting to put this proposition to a vote and it was carried unanimously. Tony was presented with a framed certificate of Life Membership and was quite taken aback by the accolade.



In addition Michael Waldron presented him with a stunning 45 x 175cm panoramic photo on canvas. It is hoped that Tony will find room for it in his new home in Nelson when he moves there later this year. 🌸

Photo: Courtesy of [Karora](#)

Pāuatahanui Inlet
19 September 2007



WE WELCOME ANDRE TO THE COMMITTEE

Andre van Halderen joined the GOPI committee this June at the AGM to contribute to the work undertaken by the team.

Andre has lived on the edge of the Pāuatahanui inlet at Golden Gate for the past 10 years, drawn here by its uncanny similarity to Knysna, a coastal town in South Africa sited on a warm-water estuary, where he grew up. Choosing such a location, he says, offers a range of activities associated with living by the waterside for the whole family.

An environmentalist by nature, Andre is avid about the restoration of New Zealand's native wildlife and, for that reason, initiated Pest-free Golden Gate two years ago. He is also a member of Friends of Mana Island.

Welcome to the team, Andre. 🌿



CIVIC AWARDS CEREMONY

The Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet were a high profile element at this year's Porirua Civic Awards with presentations given by the Mayor Mike Tana on 17 June. Awarded by the PCC Grants, Awards and Events Sub Committee, these accolades are for outstanding voluntary community service by members of the public over a period of several years.

Nominated by different members of our committee, both Tony Shaw, our ex-chair, and Dr. John McKoy, our science officer, were two of the seven successful residents of Porirua City to receive an award this year for their services to the local community.



Mayor Mike Tana with Tony Shaw



Mayor Mike Tana with John McKoy

Naturally we were thrilled to know that our nominations gained the recognition we believed they deserved, and that both were presented with their awards on the same evening at the Spine in Pataka. All members of the committee, together with some friends and family, were in attendance, giving GOPI a strong presence among the many other supporters of the further five successful nominees.



*This year's seven award recipients L-R:
John Hannan, Tony Shaw, Geoff Mowday, Judi Doornbos, Chrissy Leggott, Kim Murray, John McKoy.*

Photographs courtesy of Mark Tantrum Photography

Congratulations to both Tony and John. We are very lucky to have been part of your lives in your contribution to the local community. 🌿

PRESENTATION - WATER SENSITIVE DESIGN

Stu Farrant (an ecological engineer with Morphum Environmental) gave a presentation on the many issues related to urban water reticulation, its impacts on the environment and the basics of a water-sensitive approach to urban design.

Apart from chairing the Te Awarua o Porirua Whaitua Committee, Stu has worked on a wide range of projects focussed on urban stormwater throughout New Zealand, Australia and Asia and, in this presentation, he shared his passion with us around how a more integrated approach to development can avoid the poor outcomes we have seen in our harbours and streams in recent decades.

A water-sensitive approach is founded on understanding the fundamentals of how natural water systems work and on recognising the impacts that changes in the catchment have on this.

Every housing development increases the area of impervious surfaces by adding roads, roofs and concrete pads. This results in greater rain run-off during heavy downpours with rapid increases in volumes of water entering streams. The effects are damage to aquatic ecosystems, reduced number of species and impacts on sedimentation, pollution and water temperatures.

The new water-sensitive approach aims at designing an integrated network for water capture and retention, water reuse and physical treatments that remove development-related contaminants. Such designs can protect, and even enhance, the environmental, social and economic values of downstream communities, reduce the demand on potable water resources and improve amenities in an urban environment.

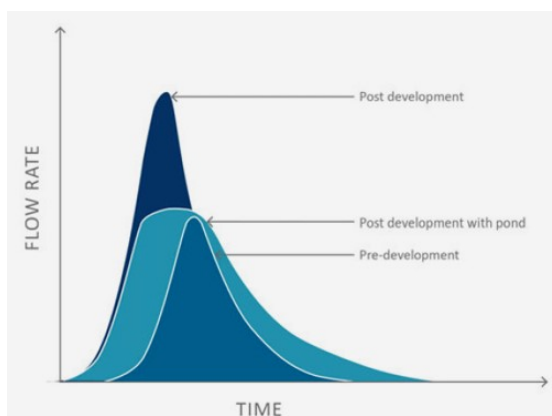


Figure 6: Typical post-development hydrograph with detention (adapted from Shaver et al. 2000)

The effects of current development and water-sensitive alternative on stream flow rates.



Features such as raingardens and constructed wetlands (pictured) help to retain the rainfall run-off, while inclusion of maintenance regimes into all aspects of the urban development, plus landscaping planned around the current landforms, are all part of this approach.

Based on national and international experience, positive results are readily achievable in a cost-effective and efficient manner by inclusion of water-sensitive design into urban planning from the earliest stages.

With reference to Pāuatahanui Inlet, future community developments with such an approach can have enhanced and protected waterways woven into the urban layout. Coupled with improvements to existing stormwater networks in already established areas of the catchment, there is an opportunity to accommodate a sensible level of additional development that will support a progressive improvement to water quality and biodiversity in the Inlet and its surrounding streams. 🌿

FEATURE ARTICLE

When Captain Cook discovered the islands of New Zealand the only human inhabitants were the Māori tribes from Polynesia. While they used the previously untouched resources found here, the population was too low to have more than a minimal effect on the landscape. The arrival of European settlers however was to change all that and in a few decades most of the forest cover had been cleared. The following is a review of the known vegetation cover on the hills surrounding Pāuatahanui Inlet prior to the European invasion.

The Historical Vegetation of Pāuatahanui Inlet

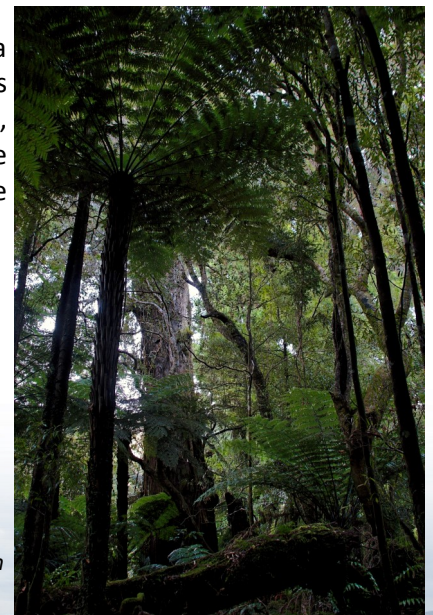
Pāuatahanui Inlet has a mixed topography with rugged peaks, rolling hills, steep valleys and lowland coastal swamps. Because of this, the character of the vegetation around the Inlet, prior to European settlement, varied from place to place.

By far the most extensive vegetative cover was forest, in this case a mixed podocarp/broadleaf forest dominated by magnificent rimu trees mixed with mātaī and tōtara. The rimu was often paired with northern rata which used the rimu trunk for support during the first few years of growth. These 'emergent' trees, many exceeding 30m in height and once described as being tall enough for a large merchant ship's mast, towered above the forest like sentinels overlooking their hoard.



Emergent trees above the canopy of a lowland forest - Kaitoki Forest Park

Growing in profusion among these trees were tawa and tītoki, forming a leafy canopy that shaded everything below. At the higher elevations kāmahi and hīnau became more prominent while, close to the summits, hīnau, rimu and rata disappeared to be replaced by miro. Some of the highest peaks would have been steep and rocky, offering a surface where trees were sparse.



A massive rimu tree surrounded by ponga, tītoki and tawa trees. This rimu is being climbed by a northern rata not easily seen in the photo. Kaitoki Forest Park.

Historical vegetative cover cont....

Because canopy trees like tawa and tītoki capture most of the sunlight and shelter the interior from loss of water, the understory species are adapted to a dim, damp environment. Here were a mix of smaller trees, shrubs, tree ferns and vines. Species such as pigeonwood, kawakawa, māhoe and nīkau palm were in abundance, interspersed with tree ferns like ponga and mamaku. Trailing between them all were numerous vines of supplejack and kiekie. These vines used the other trees to give them a hand up to reach for the light at the top of the canopy, and, because of them, the forests were almost impenetrable without the aid of a slasher to cut through the undergrowth. The character of such indigenous forest can be more like that of the tropics than of a temperate environment, such was the moist and equable climate under which it evolved.



Small section of Colonial Knob Reserve illustrating how the original forest interior may have appeared. These trees are mostly kohekohe with nīkau, ferns and supplejack.

High up in the forks of the trees were numerous clumps of astelias, long fronds of ferns and ancient lycopods or clubmosses, species of orchid and shrubs of various kinds. These plant assemblages formed virtual elevated 'gardens' of vegetation while, down below, tree trunks were festooned with mosses, liverworts and delicate filmy ferns. The forest floor would have been covered with a deep leaf litter and many fallen branches, the latter also providing a further foothold for masses of mosses, lichens and fungi.

Areas of the hills more exposed to sea breezes would have been home to a semi-coastal forest where kohekohe and karaka, both frost-tender but with thick shiny leaves that survive desiccation from salt-laden winds, would have been common. Nīkau and tawa were also frequently found, along with other canopy trees like hīnau and rewarewa.

The sheltered low-lying valley floors between the hills are poorly drained and provide an environment for swamp forest. Here plants are variously adapted to waterlogged soils. In pre-European times such valleys were dominated by towering trees of kahikatea and pukatea, many with buttress roots spreading out at ground level for support. Between them were the swamp maire with roots that send up small aerial branches to absorb air where soils are oxygen-starved. Few sub-story species are found in these oxygen-deprived conditions but kawakawa and māhoe were common, their branches bridged by keikei and supplejack resulting in an impenetrable tangle.

Pāuatahanui Inlet is an estuary where daily tidal changes alternately flood and drain the harbour, and coastal erosion is minimal. Where the streams meet the Inlet's waters the build-up of silt and sand results in swampland conditions. Here plant roots experience emersion much of the time and salt concentrations increase close to the water's edge. Prior to the 1855 earthquake, the coastal saltmarsh was less extensive than it is now but still contained representative species of this environment. At the mean high tide mark very specialised plants that thrive in high salt habitats covered the muddy shores. Species like succulent glasswort and sea primrose occurred here, while just above this line extensive areas of rushes covered the ground. Further up was the realm of cutty grass while away from the shoreline coastal tree daisy and saltmarsh ribbonwood were found, with ngaio, toe toe and cabbage trees on the dryer ground. Fresh water swampland, too wet for trees, was populated by flax, mingimingi and raupo.

The landscape around Pāuatahanui Inlet today is an expression of the progressive effects of European colonisation from 1840 onwards dominating the historical and bio-physical condition of the Porirua

Historical vegetative cover cont....

Harbour catchment and its water systems. The early settlers' need for building materials resulted in harvesting of the tallest trees for timber, particularly rimu, mātaī and tōtōra. The second half of the nineteenth century and first half of the twentieth saw an uninterrupted process of clearance of the native forest by felling and burning. The original forest cover was progressively replaced by introduced pastures that the settlers used for grazing their sheep.

By 1938 photographic evidence showed that almost all the landscape had been stripped bare.

More recently urbanisation of the southern hills has replace much of the vegetation with impervious surfaces associated with buildings and roads, while some re-forestation has occurred in other areas although this is mainly cultivated for harvesting at a later date. 🌱

Bibliography:

New Zealand Plants and their story: L Cockayne 1910

The Historical Geography of the Tawa-Porirua Basin: Thesis by B A G Murray 1965.

Pauatahanui Inlet – an environmental study: W.B.Healy 1980

Wellington's Living Cloak, Isobel Gabites. 1993

Pauatahanui inlet: effects of historical catchment land cover changes on inlet sedimentation: NIWA Client Report HAM2004-149 April 2005

Photos: Michael Waldron (GOPI)

ON THE HORIZON

Inlet Clean-up

This is our annual event aimed at removing as much rubbish as possible from the shores all around the Inlet. Last year saw a much reduced amount of material collected by the many volunteers that help out on this day.

This year the date is 3 November, come rain or shine.

Cockle Survey

A tri-annual event to estimate the numbers of these highly important shellfish that live in the Inlet.

This year's primary date is Sunday 24 November.

Back-up date is 8 December if the earlier date is cancelled due to poor weather conditions. 🌱

PLEASE SIGN UP A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOUR

Sign up a neighbour, friend, or another family member. Just explain to them that membership numbers really count in giving us a strong voice to argue for what we all value about the Inlet. Membership forms can be downloaded from our website <http://www.gopi.org.nz/assets/membersForm/Membership-new.doc> or copied from the one at the back of this newsletter. Better still, if you've received this newsletter by email, just forward it to others with a note encouraging them to join.

EMERGENCY NUMBERS FOR THE PĀUATAHANUI INLET

Pollution: Discharges of contaminants to air, land, storm-water drains, streams, rivers or sea and for after hours consent enquiries: Greater Wellington 0800 496 734 (24 hours)

Boating infringements: Greater Wellington 384 5708 (24 hours)

Illegal fishing activity: Ministry for Primary Industries 0800 476 224 (24 hours)

Pāuatahanui Wildlife Reserve: Department of Conservation 0800 362 468

Let us know what you have reported so we can keep an accurate record and follow up if necessary.

233 9391 (Chairman, GOPI) or pauainlet@gmail.com.



Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet

www.gopi.org.nz
pauainlet@gmail.com

Membership Form: new members

To join the Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet, you can pay your subscription either online or by post.
IF YOU ARE PAYING ONLINE, PLEASE REMEMBER TO FILL IN THIS FORM WITH ALL DETAILS, AND EMAIL OR POST IT TO US.

Online payment

1. Pay your sub via e-banking into our Westpac account 03-1533-0009387-00. In the 'Particulars' or 'Reference' columns, **YOU MUST** write your surname **AND** initials **AND** the period of your sub (1-yr or 5-yr).
2. Then fill in this form and either email it to us at pauainlet@gmail.com or post it (see next column for our postal address)

Postal payment

1. Write a cheque made payable to 'Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet'.
2. Then fill in this form and send it, along with your cheque, to: Membership Secretary, Guardians of Pāuatahanui Inlet, Box 57034, Mana, Porirua 5247.

Please fill in your details for our records. If you are filling in this form electronically, **click at the beginning of a dotted line and then type.**

Name:

Address:

.....

E-mail: Phone:

Please put ☒ next to the subscription you are paying (electronic completion – **highlight the box and type lower case x.) We are also very grateful for donations. (We are a registered charity for tax purposes: registration number CC47523.)**

One-year individual (\$12.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Five-year individual (\$50.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>
One-year family (\$15.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Five-year family (\$60.00)	<input type="checkbox"/>
Donation: \$	Do you require a receipt for your sub? <input type="checkbox"/> or your donation? <input type="checkbox"/>		
Date subs paid:	Reference appears as:		
(e-banking only)			

We'd like to send you newsletters and notices via email. May we do this? ☐

Please tell us which of our activities you would like to be part of.

Annual Clean-up day	<input type="checkbox"/>	Submissions to local bodies	<input type="checkbox"/>
Three-yearly cockle survey	<input type="checkbox"/>	Our educational programmes for schools	<input type="checkbox"/>
Website and video clips	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other:	

NOW EMAIL OR POST THE FORM. THANK YOU AND WELCOME