EDITORIAL ...

BY DAVID SCOUILLAR

As every Annual features 60 or so stories, it is hard to give a snapshot of all of them in the editorial. The best I can do is to mention some of the stories that stand out for me in the 2012 edition.

One of the exciting events was getting access to the photo album of Mangapurua Valley pioneers Barney and Ivy Dust. It is tempting to romanticise life in the valley but the album demonstrates how tough the life really was.

In a continuation of our series on settler life in the valley, we learn about washday there. As well, the tale is told of a hay shed which became a hut in the neighbouring Kaiwhakauka Valley.

Among memories of river trips are yarns from a former editor of the Annual, Phil Thomsen. Neil Tunnicliffe recalls an ill-fated excursion in which he and a companion were stranded below Taumarunui for a week. And we put on record the magnificent solo journey of Colin Quilter who canoed down the river and beyond Whanganui along the coast to Wellington.

Sharing remembrances of living on the river is an important part of the Annual and thanks to Jim Parnell we have two delightful stories from Bob Gray about events of yester-year in Pipiriki.

The rise and fall and rise again of Downes Hut, the picturesque hut over the river from Atene is documented. We also look at Hipango Park, once a popular picnic spot, which was gifted Whanganui 100 years ago.

Photos by the Ministry of Works taken in 1950 provide the material for an article about the department’s river clearing operations which it took over after the demise of the Wanganui River Trust.

The port of Whanganui has slumbered for decades but now there’s speculation that it could have a renewed future exploiting the resources of the sea and seabed.

So you can see that we maintain our reputation for being eclectic. And, I hope, being informative and entertaining.

Friends’ 2012 Executive

Chairperson: Murray Ware, 16 Jellicoe Street, Whanganui
Vice Chairperson: Alan Donald, 106 Springvale Rd, Whanganui
Secretary: Dawn Bramley, 14 Ward Street, Whanganui
Treasurer: Pauline Walton, 49 Putiki Drive, Whanganui
Editor: David Scoullar, 7 Wairere Road, Whanganui
Committee: Gloria Barr, Pam Kitson, Murray Laing, Ridgway Lythgoe, Bob McIntyre, Robert Wills, Judith Crawley
It's full steam ahead for river man Baldy

"I'm back in the driver's seat and my engines are humming"...
After having Adventurer 11 sitting for many months at the Whanganui Marina, skipper Robert (Baldy) Baldwin announced in October 2012 that he was ready to get his river tourist business on track.

Following a health scare which he admitted "had me by the short and curlies," Baldy has another lease on life spurred by marriage to long-time partner Trixie and getting his commercial launch master licence back.

He said he would not have got through without Trixie, who coaxed him back to health and happiness and performs multiple tasks as first mate, deck hand, office girl and general jack of all trades. Baldy said he still had a passion for the river – "for those of us who work on it and others who live beside it, it's very special. It helped me get my health back."

He said Adventurer 11 would offer a number of scenic trips, including down to the river mouth, a part of the river which was rarely boated but one of the most beautiful trips.

Adventurer 11, a 19.5m tunnel hull craft based on Hatrick river boat Wai-iti 11, was launched on 12 January 2010. When it sailed from Whanganui to Taumarunui in June that year it was the first such trip by a river boat for more than 80 years. Adventurer 11 was based at Whakahoro for a while but latterly Whanganui has been home base.

Editor's footnote: This is based on an article in Wanganui Midweek in October 2012.

When things go pear-shaped help is not far away  

BY DAVID SCOLLAR

The Whanganui River is usually a reasonably benign waterway and despite the thousands of canoeists who traverse it each year there are few serious mishaps. But they do happen.

In January 2012 a DoC boat taking wardens to John Coull Hut arrived just above the Drop Scene to see a Canadian canoe turn over on a rock. Though the occupants were not in any danger, the DoC crew was on hand to get them safely ashore.

A more serious event occurred in April 2012 when a 64-year-old man in a kayaking party suffered arm fractures after falling on rocks above Pipiriki. A personal locator beacon was activated and its signal was picked up by the Rescue Co-ordination Centre in Wellington which asked the Palmerston North Rescue Helicopter to respond.

The chopper located the man on the river bank. He was treated by the advanced paramedic and then flown to Wanganui Hospital.
Upper River

One of the greatest guardians of the awa.

River man Jock – first the legend, now the book

BY DAVID SCOU LLAR

The late Jock Erceg, a legend on the Whanganui River, will figure prominently in a book being produced about the Erceg family and the author is seeking anecdotes and photos to flesh out her portrayal of him.

Jock, who died in 2001 aged 77, farmed at Aukopae, 25km downriver of Taumarunui. Over the years he became steeped in a love and knowledge of the Whanganui and he was one of its greatest guardians.

Auckland writer Louise Maich’s research into the Erceg family has taken her as far as Croatia where Jock and three of his siblings were born. Her prime focus is Frank Erceg, younger brother of Jock. The Erceg project has grown from an article she wrote for New Zealand Outdoor Hunting magazine on Frank’s log cabin on the Arawhata River, South Westland.

She says how the cabin came to be built and that its original occupant, Frank, is the stuff of legend.

“He was a man larger than life and full of aspirations to be a writer and already a notable photographer,” Louise says. Sadly, his aspirations would not be fulfilled.

Frank was a deer culler for the NZ Forestry Service from the mid 1950s to 1961 when he began independent deer hunting for the export venison market. He died, aged 30 in 1965 along with hunting mate John Cummings when they were both struck by the rotor blades of a helicopter in the Upper Matukituki Valley, west of Wanaka. They were the first fatalities in the helicopter meat recovery industry.

Louise is also looking at the wider Erceg family and she is aware of the status Jock had on the river. His involvement began in the 1930s and he started boating regularly in 1948. Most people knew him for his river museum at Nuku Nuku and his work as Whanganui River Scenic Board chief honorary ranger and in many other voluntary roles.

He was instrumental in ensuring recognition of the importance of the river and its reserves by bringing it to the attention of the government in the mid-1950s. Through his efforts and those of Wanganui auctioneer John Coull, the scenic board was formed in 1958.

Jock saw the 1950s to the 1970s as a pivotal period of development and he was a tireless figure in this development – in clearing channels, building huts and in the endless task of noxious animal culling.

Believing the river would become one of our most valuable recreational assets, he managed to spread the word in high places. He helped row local MP Dave Seath and Minister of Tourism Dean Eyre down the river in a flat-bottomed dinghy and in 1963 he took the Governor-General Sir Bernard Fergusson for a trip.

In 1957 when Bill Hamilton brought the first jet boat up the river, Jock helped him navigate the upper river. Later Jock bought Bill’s ply board jet boat and his next jet boat, bought in 1959, was the first fibreglass boat on the river.

When he resigned from the board after some 23 years, Jock had worn out six jet boat engines and spent countless hours doing maintenance work. He estimated more than 50,000 goats were destroyed during his time as chief ranger, along with hundreds of thousands of possums.

His great knowledge was shared when he testified of changes he had seen at the river flow hearings in 1988-89.

Jock wrote a lengthy memoir in the Friends of the Whanganui River’s annual magazine in 1996 but Louise says she would like to hear more about this colossus who in his obituary was dubbed “the quiet man of the river, a strong man who did not seek the limelight.”

She can be contacted at loumajic@xtra.co.nz or 28 Fawcett Rd, Laingholm, Auckland 0604, phone (09) 817 3878.
Waata Hipango's generous offer gratefully accepted.

River park popular picnic spot for 100 years

BY DAVID SCOURLL

Hipango Park marks an important landmark in 2013. It will be 100 years since the picturesque bush area 22km upriver from the city was presented to Whanganui by the well-known Putiki chief Waata Wiremu Hipango.

The deeds were handed to the Whanganui Borough Council on 3 April 1913 at which Waata Hipango said his gift was a token of friendly relations between his people and the European. He added that he hoped the natural features of the place would be appreciated and the bush protected.

In the decade before the park was gifted riverboating day trippers picnicked on land upriver from Whanganui with the permission of farmers. Noting that it was becoming increasingly difficult for organisers of picnics to get permission to use such land, Waata Hipango wrote to the council in 1909 offering a site above Kemp's Pole.

The offer was gratefully accepted and Waata Hipango applied to have the land converted from a Maori to a European title after which the Mayor Alexander Hatrick and councillors inspected the area. When the legal work was accomplished the deeds were finally given to the council at a special meeting in 1913.

Lacking road access, this fine reserve is not used much by visitors now. However, in the days of the river steamers it was a favourite spot during public holidays and at weekends throughout the summer months.

Whanganui-based riverboats, which often appeared to be alarmingly overloaded, carried hordes of people. Sometimes two or three steamers were chartered, as was reported by the Whanganui Chronicle in February 1913 when the Manuwai, Waimarie and Wairere took more than a 1000 people to Hipango Park for an outing. The newspaper's report was headed: Picnic at Hipango Park spoiled by the rain.

Today a large wooden jetty provides good access. A walking track (slippery in wet weather) leads in a few minutes to a large, flat grassy clearing with picnic facilities – seats, fireplaces and toilets.

The facilities are a tribute to the Rotary Club of Wanganui Daybreak which takes an active interest in the park. Each February members travel with other interested groups to spend a weekend camping there with a list of jobs to be accomplished.

The early Maori name for this reserve was Potakataka and the remains of the pa of this name can be seen. The pa is claimed to date back to the end of the 12th century. The area is fringed with native bush and there is a marked walk with signage indicating different species of native trees.

The Friends have chartered the riverboat Wairua and will journey to the park on Easter Monday, April 1, to mark the centenary with a picnic recalling the halcyon days there.
Friends’ Trips in 2012
Cycle trail “exciting adventure”
BY DAVID SCOLUM

Development of a national cycle trail through the Mangapurua Track is an “exciting venture”, chairperson Murray Ware told the Friends of the Whanganui River’s annual general meeting in the Whanganui Riverboat Centre on 29 April 2012. He said this will bring the river to the attention of many more visitors.

In his report to the meeting on the year’s activities Murray noted that the group’s membership and growth remain steady and that its activities continue to be successful. However, following an overall loss of more than $1500 for the year the executive has decided to increase the cost of membership by $5, the first increase in the sub since the Friends were formed.

The new figure is $25 for adult, family or organisation.

Murray acknowledged the efforts of David Scoullar, who has now edited the Annual for 10 years, and also thanked the Friends who put pen to paper and contribute articles. “You add to the success of this publication,” he said.

The Friends’ executive remains unchanged.

Guest speaker Hannah Rainforth described her adventures on board a traditional sailing waka which voyaged with a fleet of six others across the Pacific Ocean in 2011. Hannah spent three months on the 22m double hull fibre-glass vessel and enthused the audience of 16 with her description of her experiences.

Whakahoro trip marked by lavish hospitality
BY MARGARET WALFORD

Early in 2012 we had seen an old Country Calendar programme about the Steele’s property at Whakahoro, including the start of building the Blue Duck Lodge. This made me determined to go one day so when the Friends organised a trip there, I said “We’ve gotta go!”

A happy group of 23 Friends enjoyed the fine weekend (March 31-April 1) arriving at Richard and Rachel Steele’s Blue Duck Station in time for lunch enjoyed on the River Quarter’s verandah.

The afternoon was spent at Heather and Fritz Bonk’s property about a 10 minute jet-boat ride up river where we were first welcomed by Jackie before the traditional welcome by Heather and Fritz in this lovely peaceful place. Nearby was the remains of the old Chappell homestead where some
of the group wandered around.

The sumptuous afternoon tea laid on for us had to be seen to be believed. Amazing!

Jim Mason, who originally formed the NZ Canoe Association, shared with us stories of various canoe trips, including on the Whanganui River, and passed round some greatly enlarged photographs he had taken 50+ years ago.

Hokio Tinarau concluded our afternoon’s informative talks before we passed on our grateful thanks to the Bonks and returned to our accommodation to relax, chat and pass the time with a happy hour prior to the barbecue meal enjoyed on the large covered deck of the Steele homestead. Fallow deer were spotted on the flat across the river and as darkness fell, the fire in the brazier burned brightly.

Mist hung over the tops on Sunday morning while we breakfasted and watched the fallow deer grazing in the sun on the grassy flat across the river — probably the same ones we had seen the previous night.

The morning was ours to fill as we chose. Richard took a small group to see a dam he was building while others explored the area. Our group walked up past the DoC Whakahoro Hut on the way to the Blue Duck Café for coffee before having a look at Whio Lodge, Honeymoon Cottage with four beds (?) and the Sow’s Ear Eco-Lodge.

Back across the Retaruke River some walked up the farm track for about half an hour then joined the others relaxing on the homestead’s deck chatting till time for lunch.

By 1pm the trailer had been packed and our grateful thanks given to Richard and Rachel for their excellent hospitality. Back along the dusty road, we had a brief detour to view Richard’s sister Rosemary’s new home nearing completion with its great views of the valley.

At Slalom Motel, Raurimu, we stopped to view and admire all the fabulous driftwood sculptures on display — horse, eagle, moa, crocodile, boar, tuatara, etc, all amazing and well worth the stop to wander around. Our only grizzle was that there were no brochures, business cards or other information about the artist.

After the compulsory ice-cream stop at Raetihi, it was homeward bound to conclude a great weekend with thanks to the Steele family, our competent drivers Ray and Murray and all who participated in the journey.

Another memorable river trip

BY PAM KITSON

On Friday 30 November 2012 at 5.30pm the MV Wairua left for Upokongaro with 25 Friends. The day was cloudy and cool but no rain and the journey was pleasant and once the valley narrowed, it was much warmer.

David McDermid and his assistant Sam made a great job of the tricky wharf landing as the tide was low.

We were joined by Winston and Heather Oliver for the meal as they were on their way home to Ruatiti. The barbeque was well-cooked and presented, followed with a nice sweet.

Robert Baldwin also arrived with a group on the Adventurer 2 and tied up to the Wairua. It took a bit of manoeuvring with both boats to get sorted for our departure to the city at 9.30pm.

Although the moon did not show, it was a special experience to be on the river with all the reflections from the city lights. We enjoyed our evening. We always have a happy time together.

Another memorable river journey. How fortunate we are.

Enjoying the dinner voyage on the way to Upokongaro.

Photo by Pauline Walton.
New director offers fresh approach

Redeveloping the Whanganui Riverboat Centre, including a makeover for its museum, is high on the to-do list of Grant Collie, who took over as centre director in November 2012, replacing Stuart Perry.

And the transplanted Scotsman knows his museums. After completing a BA in history, he did a postgraduate diploma in museum studies and was senior consultant for a museum specialists company. As well, Grant has worked for Te Pāpāpā. He has appointed a museum specialist to implement the plans to redevelop the centre.

But he is also keen to get volunteers back, with a call to fill roles on the Waimarie, the wharf and in the museum. Grant says the museum side is a very important part of the operations but without help from volunteers it’s always going to be a struggle.

They have already tidied up the back end of the museum building and opened it up so people can walk from the front door, past the museum exhibits and out the back door straight on to the Waimarie.

The Waimarie Operating Trust had its ups and downs in 2012, including a request to the Wanganui District Council in October for extra funding. For 2012-13, $70,000 was already budgeted. The council’s resolution was for additional funding of almost $40,000. There was also a resolution that funds be allocated to market the Waimarie.

Since 1996-97 the council has contributed $388,000 to the Waimarie with all the payments up until 2010 for marketing.

The trust told the council that poor weather in February and March was reflected in lower than expected passenger numbers. While Waimarie had some excellent sailing over the summer of 2011-12, the business had still not caught up with losses of previous years. One of the trust’s biggest costs is insurance premiums which alone are nearing $30,000 a year.

Trust chair Christine Jones hopes that with developments taking place at Upokongaro, including the new café, planned shared pathway to Whanganui, and proposed collection of antiquities in the Upokongaro hall, an enhanced visitor experience will be offered.

Mayor Annette Main says the Waimarie restoration is a distinctive and unique visitor attraction which is supported by the community and she is confident the trustees have the skills needed to guide it through what are difficult times for many businesses. However, it is likely ratepayer backing will continue in future years.

Meanwhile, from November the Waimarie and Wairua again began a double act to provide a seven days a week service. The Waimarie sails from Friday through to Monday while the smaller Wairua operates from its Taupo Quay jetty Tuesday to Thursday. The same thing happened at the end of last season when Waimarie dropped back to a reduced schedule and Wairua filled in on those other days through until May.
PEOPLE AND PLACES - NEWS BRIEFS

Anzac Day at trig
Mike and Raewyn West are planning to hold an Anzac Day service this year, April 25, at the Mangapurua trig for families and original settlers of the Bridge to Nowhere settlement and anyone else who is interested. It will be followed by a shared pot luck lunch. Expressions of interest to westco@kol.co.nz or M West, RD2, Taumarunui.

Whanganui tuna time
Maori Television’s Kai Time on the Road with Peter Peeti featured the river in February 2012. Peeti hooked up with local relatives who showed the style they use to catch long-finned eels (tuna) that have lived in the river for many years. They demonstrated a method of bobbing where they flick tuna into bins.

Married in museum
When Sharon Crossley and Terry Casserly got married in March 2012 they became the first couple to exchange their vows in the Riverboat Museum. Later the newly weds and guests boarded the PS Waimarie and sailed up to Upokongaro and return. “It was a really nice combination,” Ms Crossley said.

Waimarie steams on
Riverboat Centre manager Stuart Perry announced in March 2012 that the Waimarie would sail every weekend through the year apart from its August maintenance shutdown. In recent years the vessel has ceased sailing around the middle of May but it had been decided to sail right through winter.

Booking system works
The online booking system for the canoe journey through Whanganui National Park, now in its second season, is working well to smooth out numbers and stop people racing to huts and camp sites to ensure they get a place overnight, according to a DoC spokesperson. The system also lets the department know how many people are on the river.

Memory reinforced
The memory of Mother Aubert of Jerusalem has been reinforced with the formation of the Associates of Suzanne Aubert. The groups inaugural meeting was held in Palmerston North in early 2012 and the associates include a number of women from the Whanganui region, Sue Seconi, Maureen O’Sullivan, Virgina Sullivan, Helen Codlin and Sr Helen Hart.

Canoeist numbers up
Over 2000 people completed a canoe journey on the Whanganui River between 1 October and the end of December 2012. This was a 9 percent increase on 2011. In this period more than 2400 people cycled the track from the Ruatiti Valley to the Mangapurua Landing, which meant it was meeting its target, a DoC spokesperson said.

Faith and light pilgrimage
The Kiwi Ora Faith and Light community in North Taranaki celebrated the international movement’s 40th anniversary in January 2012 with a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Seventeen community members with parents and friends took part in the event. They got off the bus at the foot of the hill and carried their banner up to the old convent.

Protest against fracking
The river was used as a vehicle of protest in April 2012 when Dominico Zapata paddle-boarded from Taumarunui to Whanganui in opposition to fracking in New Zealand. He said there was not enough evidence that fracking was safe. The protest was in line with other environmental groups which claim fracking and its waste materials threaten the water table.

Learning to love awa
One aim of the pilot programme Taimaru Whananga was to instill into students a love of the Whanganui River – and project manager Turama Hawira thinks it has done that. About 20 teenagers who had been trained in Whanganui tribal knowledge received certificates and graduated from the one-year programme in Whanganui in 2012.
My first impressions of Whanganui River

BY WILLIAM P MEAD

Shortly before the outbreak of World War 1, I went with a mate on a fishing trip to Taumarunui for the Christmas holiday, instead of my usual mountain holiday. We decided to spend Christmas Day at the Houseboat, which was moored just below the Ohura River junction, so went down the morning before on the riverboat Otunui, a long narrow tunnel-boat specially built to negotiate shallow rapids.

Most of this part of the river has quite a fall even between the rapids, but in a few cases there were short rapids running down to almost still water, and it was in these places that it was evident that the rapids were really steep.

With a sudden change at the bottom of a rapid to level water, the boat would run her bow under, and there would be a rush of water over the foredeck.

At one place where we had parcels to deliver at a Maori settlement, the current was fairly swift and the landing, a sand bank, was hidden behind a big willow. The river being wider than the length of the boat, the captain started the turn in before he could see the landing.

As it came in sight below the willow, we were going ahead towards the sandbank and also drifting sideways in the current, and there against the bank were several Maori boys playing in the family canoe, thirty or forty feet long. They had shifted it so that its whole length was against the bank, instead of at its usual mooring downstream.

There was nothing our captain could do. We rammed it amidships and cut it clean in two, as the Otunui's bow went in to the sand bank. The boys' father came rushing down, and if I had been quick enough I would have learned some extra Maori words that are not in the dictionary as he yelled at the boys.

As we stopped, our stern swung round downstream with the current, and I wondered how we would make the turn down again, but it was quite simple for the Maori crew, brought up to poling canoes on the river.

We went ahead slowly, across to the other bank, and then with the bow turned slightly out, a crew member held a pole on the bottom on the downstream side of the stern, the current swung our bow round, and away we went.

At the Houseboat there were a few visitors staying over Christmas Day, the others going on to Pipiriki. After lunch I borrowed a dinghy and rowed up to the upstream side of the Ohura junction, which looked a likely place for a fish, but had no luck, and after an hour or so, I gave up.

As I was rowing back I heard my mate excitedly calling to me to hurry. He had decided to try his luck fishing off the Houseboat, and had hooked a monster trout and had it pretty well played out but was too high above the water to land it.

I pulled alongside and landed it for him in the dinghy. It was big enough to make a welcome course of fresh trout for Christmas dinner for everyone, both tourists and staff.

We went back to Taumarunui in the Ongarue, and there were a couple of things about the upstream navigation that particularly interested me. We had mailbags to leave and pick up at two landings which were alongside sandstone shelves, and this was done without stopping the boat.

As we approached a crew member would go forward with the bag, and with the boat at slow ahead, would jump ashore, taking the new bag hanging ready on a pole, hang up the one he was leaving, and have just nice time to get aboard again at the stern.

Hatrick's had another boat on the top run, besides the two already mentioned. The Wai-iti was smaller and faster, and being very lightly built drew about a foot less than the Otunui and Ongarue.

Wai-iti was returning to Taumarunui from a trip downstream and we saw her coming up when we were about halfway between the Houseboat and Taumarunui.
At the next rapid we were just over it when she reached the bottom of it.

At the next rapid she was halfway up when we got to the top, and both crew and passengers were enjoying the race. In the next two rapids she was within a few feet of our stern, but we were well ahead before she reached slack water.

Then we came to a rapid on a bend, with some rocks in mid-river and a shallow and shorter channel on the inside of the bend - too shallow for us but not for the Waiiti. They went past wavy and laughing and we did not see them again. They had tied up and gone home before we got to the wharf.

My next trip on the river was with Mr T W Downes from Whanganui to Pipiriki. I was back from the war and on bridge work. Downes had just installed an engine in a forty foot canoe which we used on its first trial run, going to Pipiriki where we had a repair job to do on a bridge on the road to Raetihi.

The River Road at that time ended at Jerusalem and with no tourist traffic and a drought making the river in places too shallow for the steamers, we saw no other boats on the river. There was sufficient water for the canoe.

The first rapid was no more than a ripple but at each side of the boat the water was only six inches deep. The scouring action of boat's paddles or propellers kept the shingle cleared out of a narrow channel no wider than the width of a paddle-steamer. We had started in the late afternoon, so camped that night on the river bank.

There was very little cleared country, native bush and occasional willows covering the banks. At that time goats and opossums had not spread into the river area to destroy the natural protective cover as happened in later years.

The boat went up the rapids without any trouble except once, where Downes did not anticipate a cross-current at a slight bend in the rapid. Our bow was forced round so suddenly that we charged into a shingle bank.

We poled off and drifted broadside on to the bottom of the rapid, where we swung round in an eddy till Downes started the engine again when our bow was pointing in the right direction. He knew the cross-current then and made no mistake next time.

We had our job finished and camped the night at Pipiriki with a day to spare, intending to try the canoe out in the very severe Ngaporo rapids, a few miles upriver, but in the morning the local Maoris came to ask Downes to assist them with the motor-canoe.

A chief had died at Jerusalem, and was to be buried in Pipiriki. They had got a coffin up by road from Whanganui, but had been unable to get a launch to bring the body on to Pipiriki, and of course there was no road then. People were already arriving in Pipiriki for the tangi.

So we missed out on our proposed trip upstream. Downes went down to Jerusalem with the motor-canoe. I borrowed a dinghy to cross the river and walk up the bank looking at the Paparoa rapid. The river was so low that the long shelf which is usually just underwater there, was about a foot above the water, and the whole river was rushing down the channel (about forty or fifty feet wide), that had been blasted out for the riverboats.

While I was looking at this, a forty foot canoe came down paddled by a Maori woman. I admired her skill in managing such a big canoe single-handed. She went on round the bend towards Jerusalem.

I returned to get my lunch at the camp and had some time to wait till I saw Downes approaching. His canoe was packed full, and in addition he was towing the other canoe I had seen going down, also packed full. Downes was very pleased with his motor, which had no difficulty in driving up the swift Te Puha rapid with such a big load.

Next morning we returned to Whanganui, calling in at a desolate orchard to collect apples and pears to take home. There were a number of these old orchards then. Most of the trees have since died of old age or disease.

We called also at a section Downes had bought, on the right bank a little above Atene. He had put up a ponga whare there, at an old orchard, and some friends of his had come up from Whanganui for the weekend. They had a small launch which they had to help out with poles in the swiftest rapids.

Downes afterwards built a three-roomed cottage there, and when he was appointed River Trust supervisor, he sold the section and the motor-canoe to the trust. The apple trees in the old orchard are