



## **SUPPORTERS' NEWSLETTER**



*Become part of this journey. Help to retain and manage the Matai Bay Hut in its unique location for future generations to enjoy.*

## Perfect Seclusion



Sometimes, the only way to truly get away from it all is to go someplace only accessible via boat. Spend a night at Matai and listen as the world's problems fade away with the lapping ocean.

### Hut Fees

**Adult:** \$7.00 per night per person.

**Youth/child:** \$4.00 per night per person.

**Exclusive Occupancy:** \$40.00 per night.

In the first instance please contact:

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## Chairperson's Welcome

Kia ora koutou. Hāere mai ki tō panui – greetings and welcome to this newsletter.

As winter arrives, it is great to see interest in the Hut remains high. Bookings have continued to come in as people take advantage of the fabulous surroundings of Matai Bay. Let's hope the relative absence of COVID in the community continues, enabling DOC huts to remain open. Good hygiene practices continue to be both a high priority and one of the critical ways to limit the spread of COVID (and lots of other bugs as well).

The Trust has had few changes recently, with two Trustees stepping down and three new ones taking up the challenge. Our thanks to Ellie Cooper and Jeremy Cooper for their service as they depart, and welcome to Sarah Archer, Kim Rogers and Mark Secker as new Trustees. We have also had a change in respect to the Trust Treasurer. Sharon Rose has stepped down, and Tim Durkin-Wright will be fulfilling this role going forward. Sharon has done a fantastic job in this critical role – thank you.

As you would expect, work on the famous Matai Bay Hut Calendar is underway. Thanks to Beryl and her team for driving this. Now is a great time to get your incredible snaps up on-screen and send them in for consideration.

I would like to close by thanking HUT users, Trustees and Friends for stepped up to support this fabulous example of a public-private partnership between the Department of Conservation (DOC) and our community. Members of the Matai Bay Hut Trust and volunteers give their time to ensure users have the best experience possible.

The positive way the Hut is being used and the great comments we receive back confirm that our collective effort is worth it. This is also confirmed by the positive comments DOC regularly make about the work of the Trust and the immensely positive influence of our community – well done.

Mā te wā

Greg Durkin

## Pesky Pets in Matai Bay

War with the wasps around Matai Bay Hut continues to wage. The wasps invade visitors' tranquillity; they destroy the environment, and they eliminate the food sources of many birds and insects.

The 23<sup>rd</sup> of February 2021 saw the third salvo of bait stations around Matai Bay and the adjacent areas. Although their numbers dwindle, a few stragglers still hand around the Hut and beech trees. Previously, hoards had congregated around the stations before the Vespex baits were even dispensed. The stations required many replenishing reloads and, even then, ran dry by battle's end and were empty upon collection.

We hope that there'll be fewer wasps next year and in the years to come

It is rewarding to see the beech trees clad in honeydew once more, enjoyed solely by our allied bees. You can almost hear an appreciative buzz when collecting the stations at the season's end.

The campaign was initially funded by Matai Bay Trust but is now financed by Wasp Wipeout. **Wasp Wipeout** is a collaborative partnership between Conservation Volunteers **New Zealand** (CVNZ), the Department of Conservation, Stuff media, the Tasman Environment Trust, and Councils. The partnership aims to reduce *Vespula* **Wasp** populations and to spread awareness of the threats caused by these species.

The Trust is also undertaking **Possum and Rat** eradication around the hut area, deploying the Good Nature self-setting Traps - A24 for rats and A12 for possums.

Reports for this year show the traps have taken out 13 possums and 45 rats. Few have been sighted when checking the traps, although the area's weka now appear well fed.

# Matai Bay Hut Trust

**IMAGES WANTED!**

**PHOTO IMAGES ARE NOW NEEDED  
FOR THE 2022 CALENDAR**

**Email, one drive or drop box to  
[berylarcher@xtra.co.nz](mailto:berylarcher@xtra.co.nz)  
Call - (03) 576 5292**



**PHOTOS MUST BE ;**

- \* Submitted Electronically with a file size of 2-5 MB as jpg file.( OR LARGER )
- \* Please Note: Photos from some phones do not print as clearly as shown on the LCD screen.
- \* Only cropping, sharpening and tonal or exposure adjustments allowed
- \* Available for the calendar and other hut promotions/ advertising.
- \* We can resize them but months are LANDSCAPE and cover PORTRAIT.
- \* Photos of sights, scenes and actions taken within the Marlborough Sounds.
- \* Submission limit of 6 photos per submitter

**Please send your entries to BERYL BY THE 30th MAY**

## Rival Timber Mills

The lush forests of the Marlborough Sounds, abundant with food, wood, and places to settle, have long been an attraction for both Māori and Europeans. The sheltered waterways and high rainfalls only making the area more inviting. Nydia bay was no exception.

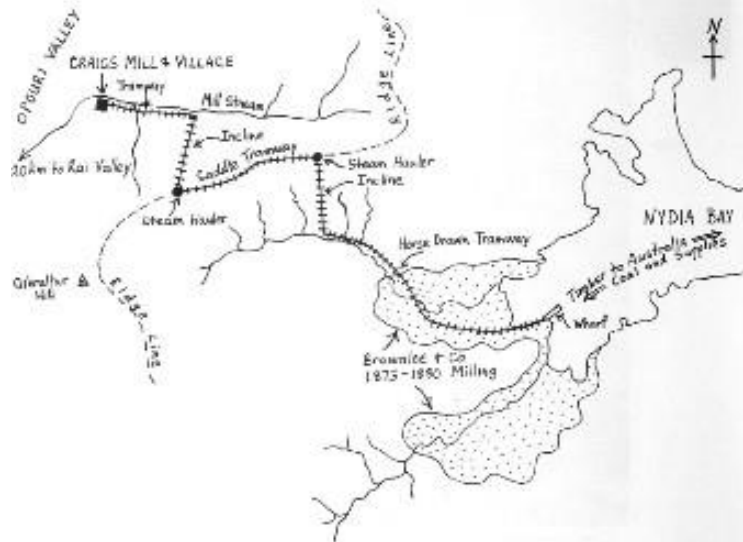
Māori who settled here built a Pa on the bay's northern side. Name Opouri, meaning 'place of sadness', in reference to a battle that occurred there between members of the same Hapu (sub-tribe).

In 1871, William Ross Brownlee was prospering greatly from his recently opened Mahakipawa sawmills. Looking to expand, he bought a failed Havelock mill, located on the present Havelock marina, from the Havelock Milling Company. Five years later, Brownlee moved the mill to Nydia Bay. The mill processed mostly Rimu but also milled Matai, Miro, and Kahikatea. Rimu was a valued material for buildings, doors, windows and furniture. At the same time, freezing works prized Kahikatea for use in tallow casks. The mill moved to Kaiuma Bay four years later, by which time it had produced three million meters of timber from 1,000 acres of the valley floor.

Brownlee's milling business blossomed, and it wasn't until 1906 that they encountered series competition in the form of John Craig. John and his partner Daniel Reese gained the rights to mill 800 acres of the upper Opouri Valley. Reese was oft to describe the Opori forest as, 'Magnificent, probably the best ever grown in New Zealand.' A significant problem, however, hampered their admiration and ambitions. Brownlee controlled the only route to a port from which to sell the timber.

The solution was to carve a route over the 450-metre Saddle between the Oporui Valley and Nydia Bay. A tramway would transport timber from the sawmill (named Craig's Mill) to a spur at Mills Stream, where a steam haulier would drag it up an incline to the ridgeline. Another tramline ran 700 mtrs along the ridge to the Oporui saddle. A second steam haulier would drop the timber down a 1:3 incline from the Saddle into Nydia Bay. Once in Nydia Bay, it was a short tram ride to the wharf. The partners fall short on capital during the construction. Fortunately, eight business associates joined them in 1907, forming the Marlborough Timber Company.

MARLBOROUGH TIMBER COMPANY  
OPOURI VALLEY OPERATIONS



Not wanting to be outdone, Brownlee extended his tramline into the Lower Oporuri Valley (founding a village called Carluke) in an attempt to gain another 800 acres of bush. Unfortunately for Brownlee, Reese beat him to the punch in his application to Wellington by 24 hours.

Craig and Reese's second mill (also named Craig's Mill) quickly went into operation. The tramways and inclines proved invaluable and were capable of supporting the combined output of one and a half million meters per year (although days were 10 to 12 hours long). The partners sold timber in Sydney, often in exchange for coal (for Christchurch) or Australian hardwood (expansion of Lyttelton and Wellington Ports).



A load of sawn timber reaches the base of the incline in Nydia Bay. MHS.

*Sawn timber reaches the base of the incline in Nydia Bay*

The rivalry between Craig's and Brownlee's continued through the late 1910s. Although the owners certainly didn't get along, their respective workers found no issue visiting each other's mills and villages. Taking part in each other dances was not uncommon, with their respective tramways used to transport party-goers.

The Pelorus' inter-mill rivalry finally came to an end in 1915, when the Marlborough Timber Company gained the rights to cut 1600 acres in the Upper Oporu Valley. Unable to compete, Brownlee moved (rails, saws and all) to untouched forests down in Ben Hill, Greymouth. A sad change for a company after that had seen fifty years in the Pelorus region.

As for Brownlee's competition, the Marlborough Timber Company, the facts are less clear. The dates for closure of the Craig's Mills in Opouri span 1915-1925. What is known is, they eventually followed Brownlee to Greytown, their competition for milling rights being far from over.



The wharf in Nydia Bay about 1913. MHS.

Sources:

*Orchard, J. A Short History of Sawmilling in the Nydia Bay Area, Journal of the Nelson and Marlborough Historical Societies, Volume 2, Issue 1, 1987*



**Biz Cool Matai Bay Hut Polo Shirts**  
Polos  
\$50.00

The Matai Bay Hut Trust has stylized "Biz Cool" Polo shirts available for purchase.



These have Matai Bay Hut Trust on the front, with a graphics of the Hut on the back. The colour is slate grey with a lime green trim.



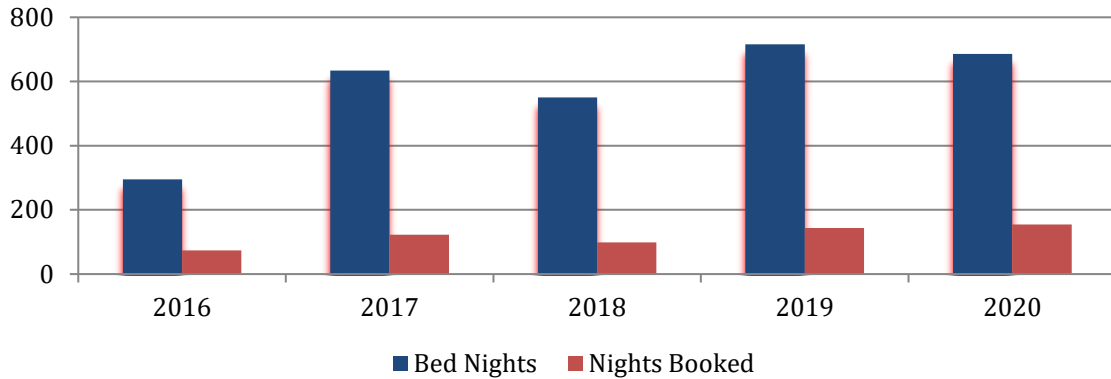
These are great wearing and very cool.  
Ladies and Gents sizes available.  
\$50.00 each.

To purchase contact Linda,

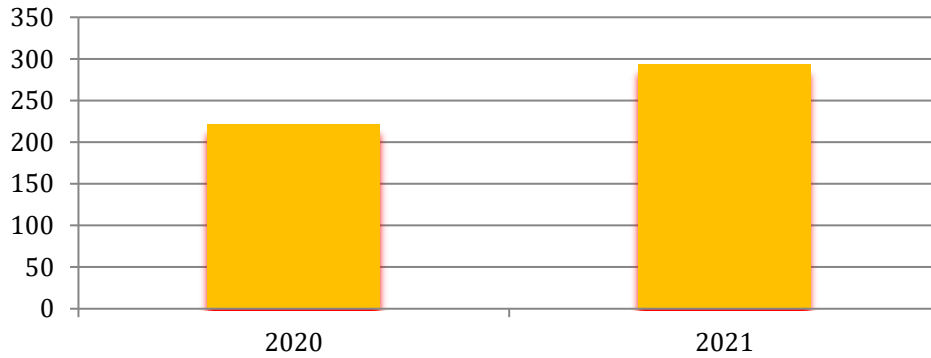
Email: [mataibayhut@gmail.com](mailto:mataibayhut@gmail.com)

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## Hutt Booking Trends



## Jan - March 2020/21



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[www.mataibayhut.org.nz](http://www.mataibayhut.org.nz)

