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## “FLIGHT”

FLIGHT 3/76 Issue 9

September 1976

### DU (NZ) APPOINTS FURTHER DIRECTOR

Your directors are pleased to announce that they have appointed Peter Meredith McLeod of Christchurch to the Board and it is anticipated his experience and ability will greatly strengthen DU activities, particularly in the South Island.

Peter, who holds an executive position with the Housing Corporation in Christchurch was a founder member of the Upper Butt branch of the N.Z. Deerstalkers Association; founder member and past secretary and treasurer of the Horitaunga Target Pistol Club; past secretary, treasurer and delegate of the Southern Branch of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society; and previously a Council member and Game Committee Chairman of the Wellington Acclimatisation Society.

His main interest is 'the preservation and expansion of wildfowl habitat and the fostering of endangered waterfowl species within New Zealand.' He lists among his hobbies - game shooting (he took up game shooting at the age of 13, hunted partridge, pigeons and wildfowl in Lincolnshire and Northumberland prior to emigrating to New Zealand in 1958 and has hunted duck and upland game in the Rotorua and Wellington Acclimatisation Society districts and Canada geese in North Canterbury since 1961); skeet shooting; target pistol shooting; black powder firearms; trout fishing (still a beginner!); handloading; gun dogs; ornithology and cartridge collecting.

Peter is a member of the Belfast Gun Club, Christchurch Pistol Club, North Canterbury Gameshooters Club, N.Z. Small Gameshooters Association, N.Z. Handloaders Association, N.Z. Cartridge Collectors Association and the North Canterbury Acclimatisation Society.



### WELCOME - NEW DU MEMBERS

We are pleased to welcome the following to our ranks:

J. Alexander (S)	*J.H. Davison (S)	Mrs T. Muir (S)	F.J.J. Tilley (T)
J.M. Ball (F)	M.J. Dench (F)	R.J. Outway (F)	Miss K. Tilley (F)
W.J. Brown (T)	M.W. Downs (S)	E.H. Priest (F)	T.W. Toy (S)
A.B. Catran (S)	G.R. Fairey (S)	D.B. Robertson (F)	*R.G. Vazey (S)
C.E. Clark (F)	C.E. Graham (S)	J.G. Schafer (F)	H.E. Wagner (F)
P.G. Coyle (S)	R.C. McCoy (F)	N. Stanley (S)	S.I. Wheatley (F)
Ed Davis (S)	G.A. Madgwick (F)	Dr M.J. Taylor (S)	B. Wilde (F)
J.D. Booth (F)	Miss A.H.J. Janssen (F)		Waitaki Valley Acclimatisation Society (F)

\* Sponsored by Laurie Godden, Waikato

### REPORT ON OPERATION HQ

Your directors are still investigating offers of suitable sites and evaluating such properties and their suitability for the establishment of Operation HQ. Such evaluations are undertaken with care and are time-consuming. We have appreciated some of the generous offers of land usage which have been forthcoming from members and friends of DU. We will keep you informed of progress in the next issue of FLIGHT.

## DU'S MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

In the last issue of FLIGHT, we set ourselves a target - of doubling membership in the next year. This is a rate of 20 new members per month. At the date of this issue, we have 31 new members since last reporting, rather below our target, but nevertheless encouraging. We are accelerating our advertising programme and there are ways in which present DU members can help also. One way, of course, is by word of mouth. There is another effective way - the use of DU gift cards, particularly at this time of the year. We introduced this programme last Christmas and it was very successful.

You, as the donor, complete the inside of the gift card, detailing the type of subscription and the name of the person and his address to whom you wish to give a year's subscription to Ducks Unlimited. The card is perforated - you forward the gift card portion to the person of your choice, and return the form with membership details and your cheque to DU in Hamilton. This is an ideal way to solve a difficult Christmas or birthday gift problem - for someone who has everything!

If you require supplies of this gift card, please complete the form below:

<p><b>DU GIFT CARDS - DU GIFT CARDS</b></p> <p>To: Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Incorporated P.O. Box 74, Hamilton</p> <p>Please supply me with . . . gift cards</p> <p>Name . . . . .</p> <p>Address . . . . .</p>
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THAT YOU ARE THE RECIPIENT OF

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IN  
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Your year's membership is presented  
with the very best wishes  
of

Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc  
P.O. Box 74,  
Hamilton, N.Z.

**DONOR:** Please complete form below and return to DU Headquarters.  
Enter your name on the gift card, tear off and forward to person

**\*\* GIFT SUBSCRIPTION \*\***

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ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

of subscription where applicable

for \$

Life \$500	Full \$10	Supporter \$5	Junior \$5	Toddler \$20
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

*(if omitted)*

## DUCKS UNLIMITED 'T' SHIRT SALES

We are pleased to report that this project is now in profit, to the extent of \$ 80. The remaining shirts in stock (worth some \$ 500) represent pure profit for DU! What about helping us to turn this stock into cash? Each 'T' shirt costs \$ 3-95. There are two styles available - one portraying the DU symbol on a white background and the other is an adaptation of a famous 'T' shirt (Fly United) which has been very popular from a sales point of view with some DU members. The 'T' shirts have been well patronised by DU members but, since their production a year ago, we have many new members who may wish to take advantage of this offer. Complete the form below if you wish to order a shirt for yourself or friend/family.

*Note: Profits from the sale of 'T' shirts benefit Operation Greta!*

Shirts are top quality polyester/cotton and there is an assortment of sizes for both shirts as follows:

From 30-32" chest,  
SM, M, OS & XOS

Supplies are limited in some sizing.



<p><b>DU 'T' SHIRT OFFER * 1976</b></p>		
<p>To: Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Incorporated P.O. Box 74, Hamilton</p>		
<p>Please supply the following DU 'T' shirts:</p>		
	No.	Price
Type A (DU Symbol)		\$
Type B		\$
<p>Enclosed is my cheque for</p>		\$
<p>Name . . . . .</p>		
<p>Address . . . . .</p>		

*Note: Please include an alternative size preference because of limited stocks in some sizing.*

## REPORT ON OPERATION PATEKE

In the last issue of FLIGHT, members were invited to apply to DU to receive Brown Teal. The response has been quite overwhelming and DU headquarters has been inundated with applications.

Regretfully, we just do not have the birds to supply all those people who applied to take a pair. However, hopefully in 1977 - providing the existing birds DU members are holding breed well - we may be in a position to supply next breeding season. Applicants have been acknowledged and any change in the present situation will be advised immediately.

We are awaiting reports from members who are holding birds regarding their breeding success to date and such members have been requested to keep DU headquarters fully informed as to their success rate. President I.W. Pirani advises that one of his hens is currently on her third clutch of eggs.

A full report on this year's breeding will be in the Christmas issue of FLIGHT.



## KEEMAN INSTRUCTION COURSE

A very successful gathering of Keemen was held recently in Hamilton. On Saturday, 4 September, the Keemen met with other DU enthusiasts at Pokeno and assisted with the placement and erection of Operation Gretel nesting boxes (see below for full report) and on the Sunday took part in an instruction course supervised by Dudley Bell, Keemen Co-ordinator.

Activities covered during the weekend included general Ducks Unlimited information and questions, the nest box placement for Grey Teal at Pokeno, field identification of marsh vegetation and noxious weeds, planting to benefit waterfowl, identification of waterfowl and associated wildlife - field and captive, methods of counting waterfowl, habitat management and improvement.

A visit was made to Ian Pirani's ponds where the Keemen experienced firsthand identification of the waterfowl. The ducks were in good plumage and Keemen were able to note special features at close range.

Keemen have been asked to conduct quarterly counts of a selected area to assist in identification and also overall waterfowl data for use by DU and other agencies. It was felt that the weekend was an effective one and an opportunity for Keemen to meet and work with DU directors and Waikato/Auckland members.

## REPORT ON OPERATION GRETEL

ONE HUNDRED GREY TEAL NESTING BOXES ERECTED AT POKENO - by Glen Butts - Co-Supervisor

14 August Work party gathered at Jack Worth's property to assemble one hundred nest boxes, of which about 75 were completed. Craig Worth did a great job branding all the boxes.

28 August Remainder of nest boxes were constructed at Jack Worth's.

3 September Transportation of nest box poles to Tony and Bill Flexman's property at Pokeno, South Auckland. Three directors made arrangements for the nest box erection the next day. A trailer load of poles was 'temporarily abandoned' halfway over the property to the swamp area - too much for Ian Pirani's car!

4 September A work party, comprising 15 DU members, gathered at Flexman's property to erect the boxes. The boxes were placed in a grid 18 feet apart. 12 ft half round poles were then rammed into the swamp bottom, leaving the pole protruding 5 ft out of the water. Nesting boxes were nailed onto the poles, the bottom of the box about 2 ft above water level. Nesting box entrances were positioned north, south, east and west which is more appealing to the ducks than one position only. At the bottom of the boxes, wood chips and hay were placed, kindly supplied by the Flexman's. Each box has a lid at the top for ease of inspection and, inside, has half inch wire netting on one side for the young ducks to use when they want to leave the box.

(Only two persons got half-drowned - Kay and Dick Ball - as a result of over-enthusiasm on the part of Paul Pirani, both took a 'tumble' into the swamp!) Dick, one of our very keen Keemen, and Kay managed to keep their sense of humour!

The working bee comprised Barry Rowe and his son, Peter, from Otorohanga, Keeman Sig Bronger from Matakana Island, Murray Dench (KM), Dick Ball (KM) Kay Ball, Colin Paton, Lou Bell, Leigh Thompson (KM), Craig Worth, Neville Erwin and six DU directors. Special thanks to truck driver, John Ferguson, who kindly lent his vehicle and to the Flexman family for use of their facilities and with nesting box material.

On arrival at the site, before commencing work, numerous Grey Teal were observed and it is anticipated the nesting boxes will be fully utilised. Regular inspections will be made of the area and all boxes are numbered for easy reference. This brings the total number of specially designed Grey Teal nesting boxes in the Waikato region to 200.

\*\*\* SEE CENTRE PAGES FOR PHOTOGRAPHS \*\*\*





1 Dudley Bell (extreme left) D.D. Keenen co-ordinator and Keenen Murray Bench, Leigh Thompson Dick Ball and Sig Bronger (l. to r.) at Tokeno



2 Sighting up grids



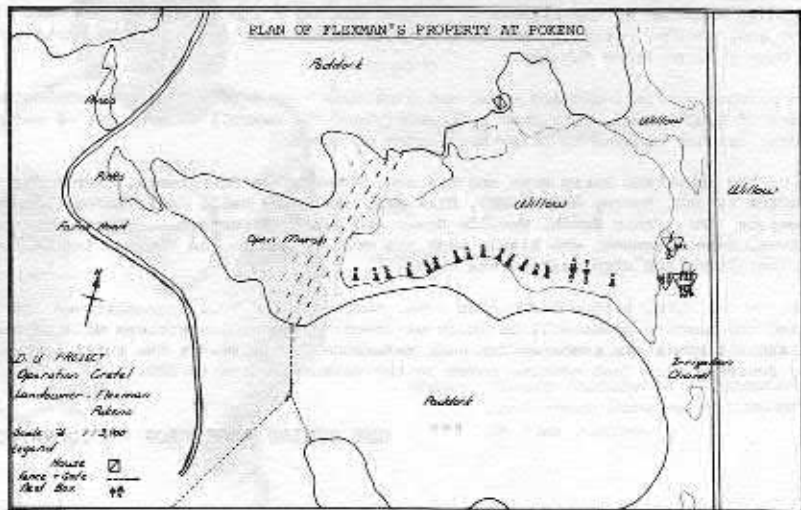
3 Raft transportation of posts



4 Unloading of boxes



5 Driving in posts



1976 nest box placement



6 Box assembly



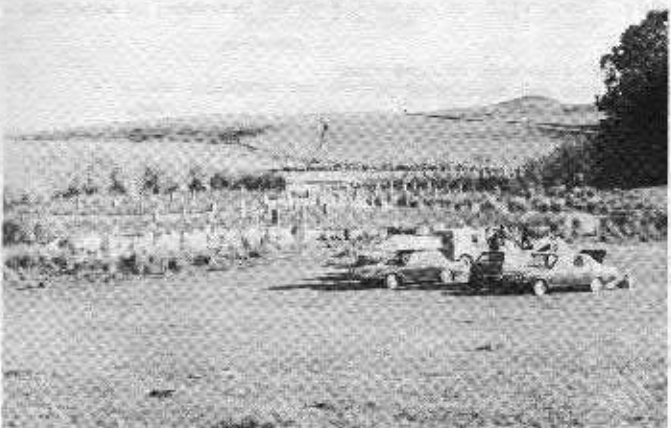
7 Transportation of boxes to poles



8 Attaching boxes to poles



9 View of boxes



10 Completion of box erection



11 Working Party - 'taking a well earned rest'





## KEEMEN REPORTS FROM AROUND THE COUNTRY



### from Tauranga

Hunting was generally poor in the district, with reports that greys in the bag far outnumbered the mallards. It has been noted that around Matakana Island, breeding is well under way with groups of males congregating. The Bitterns on the Northern Lagoon have been seen to be nesting again. On the South Lagoon, 3 pair shovelers appear to have taken up residence for the breeding period.

### from Northland

It has been reported that 3 male Brown Teal landed in a set of decoys on the Maungaturoto Estuary on 8 May 1976. The waterfowl breeding this season in the North will be much improved on last year as the devastating floods which came during the nesting period have, this year, come earlier and all lagoons and swamps have a good, full water supply.

The Keeman of the district has observed back at the beginning of August good indications for the coming breeding season, with all waterfowl in courtship display. Nest boxes have been erected for mallards by the Hatake Estuary and hopefully will be used. The Hikurangi Swamp Drainage proposals are considering approximately 270 hectares of land to be set aside for wildlife management. This is very minimal when it is considered that approximately 9,500 hectares of flat land is involved in the scheme.

### from Palmerston North

A fair hunting season appears to have been had in the area and rain dispersed the duck. Mallard numbers appear good for the coming breeding season. Black Swan numbers appear to be reasonable in the district, with many being seen. The Commission for the Environment has called for public submissions on the Lands & Survey development area of 1,982 hectares at Moutoa between Shannon and Foxton - 229 hectares will be set aside as a wildlife reserve.

### from Wellington

The past duck hunting season in the district favoured the ducks and, generally, 'less in the bag' was the order of the day. Nest boxes for Grey Teal have been made for the DU programme. Mallard nest boxes have been made for placing on ponds.

The Wellington Acclimatisation Society are negotiating for the purchase of a substantial piece of land on the West Coast, near Levin. The Hutt Valley Electric Power Board is proposing to build several dams in the Akatarawa area for power generation - this will add more wetlands to the South Wellington region.

### from Waiwae

Waterfowl problems regarding crop depredations received an 'airing' at Ashburton between the Federated Farmers, Department of Agriculture & Fisheries, Department of Internal Affairs and Acclimatisation Society.

Irrigation waters in the Wainono Lagoon are a boon to waterfowl, especially swan production and their population last spring/summer increased three times. However, there appear to be differences in the Waihae Rivers control. It is hoped that all interested parties will reach a conclusion to the benefit of both waterfowl and agriculture - although it now seems that the lowering of the Wainono Lagoon may be inevitable. This will, of course, be to the detriment of waterfowl in the Waitaki Valley.

*(note: the observations of Keemen are personal opinions only on conditions in their respective areas for the information and benefit of DU members and friends.)*

## CONTINUING DUDLEY BELL'S TRAVEL REPORTS

Prior to leaving Manitoba a visit was made to a project area of which both Ducks Unlimited and Manitoba Department of Mines, Resources and Environmental Management, feel very proud. Oak Hammock Marsh Wildlife Management Area, only 14 miles north of Winnipeg, embraces 3,500 acres of marsh and 4,600 acres of upland habitat. The area has traditionally attracted large numbers of waterfowl, especially during wet years. It supports a broad diversity of resident fauna including Eurbearers, waterfowl, upland game birds, shorebirds and other animals. Thousands of ducks, geese, sandhill cranes and shorebirds use the area during spring and fall migration for nesting, feeding and courtship.



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Formerly a partially drained wet meadow, the area received Wildlife Management designation in 1973. Now it serves as a nature interpretive centre and recreation area for naturalists, hunters and students. Plans call for a permanent wildlife refuge to be established in a portion of the marsh with hunting allowed in other areas after waterfowl concentrations and flight patterns have been determined. Other management plans recommend 200 to 500 acres of cereal crops which will ensure an adequate food source for waterfowl. These 'lure' crops will help keep waterfowl away from adjacent grain fields. Such management schemes will reduce problems between sportsmen, waterfowl and landowners.

Oak Hammock Marsh is divided into three compartments - each dyked to control water levels - 16 miles of dykes altogether. In spring, water from snowmelt and natural springs is trapped and diverted into the compartments. Control gates between compartments allow regulation of water depths. This provides waterfowl with ideal breeding conditions and encourages growth of cattails, bullrushes, sedges and willows so important to the wetland wildlife.

There are 58 man-made nesting islands scattered throughout the marsh, which provide secure nest sites and loafing sites for waterfowl and shorebirds. The islands are approximately 4 ft high in the centre tapering to the water, oblong and 25 yards long.

There are three major objectives satisfied by the Marsh Management area:

- the encouragement of production and staging of waterfowl and other marsh wildlife for recreation
- the provision of a living outdoor classroom for observation and study of marsh ecology
- the offer of participation and understanding in ecologically sound marsh and land management.

Wildlife which has been observed on the Management Area include

171 birds, 24 mammals, 3 amphibians, 2 types of fish and 1 reptile.

From Manitoba, we then drove to Saskatchewan Province where we met the personnel of Ducks Unlimited at Regina which was to be our 'base' for 8 weeks of our 5 months in Canada. I was initiated into 'Transect' duck counts immediately. We found ourselves for the first week driving approximately 200 miles per day on these counts. The counts were made from the vehicle on 4 mile long road stretches which have been used for many years and the area observed is 200 yards each side of the road, using high powered binoculars. Counts are initially made of the waterfowl but note is also made of water levels in the 'sloughs' (natural ponds), predominant vegetation types, agriculture surrounding the sloughs. The transects are made in May, July and September.

The next Transect was a walking one on an 8 mile section of highway - this was to evaluate the waterfowl use of the road verges and ditches as nesting cover. 400 yard sections of the highway verges were maintained, cut or uncut in co-operation with the Roads Board. Nests were located, plotted and checked every 2 weeks for the duration of the nesting season.

Many other DU projects were counted for waterfowl use during the breeding season with special emphasis on Canada Geese and an area of natural potholes, called the Missouri Couleau - more of these in later issues of FLIGHT!

D.G.B.

#### BRIEF ITEMS OF NEWS!!

- At the board meeting in June, the following project co-ordinators were confirmed -

Operation Gretel	Messrs G. Butts and K. Mackie
Operation HQ	I.H. Pirani
Operation Pateke	I.H. Pirani
Keemen Group	D.G. Bell
- a new brochure has been prepared for use with publicity material - see opposite - it highlights the Brown Teal programme and we hope will be a useful advertising aid.
- Mobil Environmental Award - DU was not successful with its application for an award. Mobil have advised that, from 129 applicants, 14 grants were made totalling \$ 10,000. While this is disappointing news, the company points out that all the applicants supported worthwhile causes and they had a difficult decision selecting the final few.
- we express our sincere thanks to Jack Tilley of Wellington who has made a generous donation to DU's work - Jack has been closely associated with DU directors and members over the years and we welcome him warmly to the group.
- The next annual conference of Ducks Unlimited (NZ) Inc will be held in Auckland in June 1977. Watch for further details! Remember last year! 1977 promises to be even more exciting and interesting with auction goods, DU dinner etc.





BRIEF ITEMS OF NEWS - contd

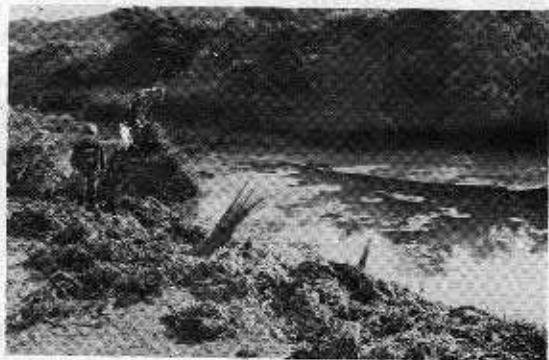
- DU has received a postal note for \$ 5 from a friend (in mid August) in an envelope postmarked Auckland - but with no other identification. We are regarding this as an anonymous donation meantime but if one of our readers recognises this as his contribution, or a friend's, please advise DU headquarters in Hamilton as we would like to record his/her name in our list of members.
- DU Auckland directors were pleased to welcome Pam Newhouse of Vermont U.S.A. to New Zealand in September. Pam was making a flying visit to this country and spent some time in Rotorua and called at Queenstown and Milford Sound - areas she has longed to visit for many years. Pam works for the Orvis Corporation, U.S.A. and is quoted by Keith C. Russell, DU U.S.A. Vice President based in Cleveland, as 'a good friend of Ducks Unlimited'. Pam is responsible, among other duties at Orvis, for allocating charitable donations by Orvis to the various DU chapters in the United States.

PICTORIAL REPORT ON DU ACTIVITIES IN WELLINGTON REGION

Picture No 1 shows DU member, Arthur Thomas of Lower Hutt at work on weed clearance on a pond in Wainuiomata, Wellington district. This pond was previously good waterfowl habitat, but it had deteriorated over recent years because of the weed problem. On two occasions, Arthur and director Neil Hayes, have restored the pond to something like its former condition - as can be seen in pictures 2 and 3. This is the type of work which DU wants to get its members involved in, and there are many areas in New Zealand which lend themselves to this sort of work.



1



2



3