

# Janet Stewart Reserve

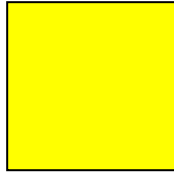
## HISTORY AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE RESERVE

Edmund Stewart bequeathed this area to the Christchurch City Council on condition that the farmland be used for the purposes of a reserve and named in memory of his mother, 'Janet Stewart'.

The development of the reserve (1996 – 2000) recognises the lands important relationship to the Styx River (Pūkaunui) with the construction of the ponds, jetty, and carpark together with extensive riparian planting. In 1998, a PūHarakeke was also established.

At a community planting day in September 1996, members of Janet Stewart family, planted the trees behind this sign in remembrance of Janet Stewart and Edmund Stewart.

Development of Janet Stewart Reserve was undertaken in partnership with the Stewart Family, Christchurch City Council, Shirley/Papanui Community Board, Burwood/Pegasus Community Board, Waiora Trust, Landcare Research, Te Korari, local scout groups, Guardians of the Styx, and members of the wider local community.



(1896 – 1957)

## **MARGARET JANE STEWART**

*(Also known as Janet)*

Janet, the third daughter of a family of five girls, spent her childhood in Governors Bay. In 1919 she married John Henry Stewart, who had recently returned from active service in World War I. A rehabilitation farm was purchased at 119 Lower Styx Road where Janet and John raised their family of seven children - John, Lily, Edmond, Ethel, Roy, Bruce, and Joan.

In addition to caring for the family, Janet helped in the cowshed alongside her husband. They milked the cows by hand morning and evening until a milking machine was finally installed in 1945. During the Depression years in the 1930's Janet and John were unable to continue selling milk to vendors, so they commenced selling direct to the public in the suburbs of Papanui, St Albans, Shirley and Richmond. Milk was then sold for two pennies a pint, or four pence for a quart.

On 19 July 1946, Edmond purchased a 5-acre property on the corner of Marshland and Lower Styx Roads. At that time this low-lying land, now known as Janet Stewart Reserve, was covered in rushes and frequently flooded. During the mid forties John (junior) and his bride Jean lived in the original cottage located near the ash tree that grew from a stake placed in the ground to hold the food safe. At a later stage, during the 1950's, Bruce and his wife, Doreen, used this cottage as their home.

Edmond (who never married) and his younger brother Roy cleared the property of rushes and cultivated it for growing onions and a type of cow fodder called mangolds. Eventually the cottage was demolished and the whole area sown in grass. For more than thirty years the grass was used for making hay and grazing cattle from the family farm along the road at 119 Lower Styx Road.

When Janet and John died (Janet 1957, John 1959) the family farm was taken over by two of their sons, Edmund, and Roy.

Family members remember their mother, Janet Stewart, as being a hard worker who possessed a well-developed sense of humour. Even when times were tough during the Depression years she always had a meal on the table. These occasions, often shared on Sunday with relatives from the city, were a "time of lots of laughs."

***JANET STEWART RESERVE NOW STANDS AS A SON'S TRIBUTE TO HIS RESOURCEFUL AND HARDWORKING MOTHER***