

Whareroa Guardians Community Trust Inc

Minutes of 7th Annual General meeting

held at the Paraparaumu Library at 7pm on 29th April 2014

Present: Rachel Kiel-Taylor, Liffet Stewart, John Lancashire, Ann Evans, Theo Barsanti, Michael Keith, Sue Blaikie, Jenny Rowan, Bobbie Taylor, Penny & Ian Redward, Jan Nisbet, Dan Tuohy, Rachel Salive, Sascha Wassong, Helen & Tony Griffiths, Michael Stace, Nigel Wilson, Peter Kentish, Thomas Farrow, Dawn Bush, Natalie Stone, Decclan Evans, Ian Cairns, John McLachlan, Paul Callister, Jonathan Waterworth, Dinah Hawken, Bill Mansfield, Mike Joy.

Apologies

Received from June Rowland, John Porter, Jill Waterworth, Scott Hill, Shane Williamson, Shane Cave

It was moved that the apologies be accepted (moved Theo Barsanti, seconded Liffet Stewart) approved.

Minutes of the 6th Annual General Meeting

It was moved that these be accepted as a true and correct record (moved Jonathan Waterworth, seconded Ann Evans) carried.

Matters arising from the Minutes

Fencing of Ramaroa Wetland: Ann advised that it is hoped that funding for fencing will be allocated this year. An application has been put in to the new DOC Community Partnerships Fund to purchase plants for the area and even if not successful there are some plants available to start the process.

Chairperson's Annual Report

7th Annual Report 2013-2014

This year again I have been a somewhat hands-off Chair due to study commitments and the barrier of distance, having now settled in Wellington. A big thank you to Ann Evans who has carried the development project of Whareroa Farm for the community and without her passion and energy many of the projects mentioned here could not have happened.

Projects and Events in the Past Year

Architect Hugh Tennent designed a cairn that has been built by Sascha Wassong (who also coordinated the project) and Theo Barsanti (and landrover), supported by volunteers. The Cairn project was an idea hatched by Leon Kiel around the time that the Farm was saved from development. The purpose of the cairn was to be a permanent commemoration of those who saved the land from private development, those who contributed to its development and those who will contribute in the future. A public unveiling was held on the 22nd February, 2014, and the Cairn was blessed by Don Te Maipi and Carol Reihana, followed by a picnic and barbecue at the hub.

There have been many other projects undertaken this year. Approximately 3,000 plants were planted by volunteers over six days at the following locations: Ti Kouka; by the new toilets at the Hub; The Dell; the edge of the Matai Bush; and above the entrance quarry. Working bees have continued on the 1st Sunday of the month and are attracting regular volunteers. A connecting path has been built by volunteers so people can walk among the Ti Kouka plantings and a track to the picnic area at the Dell has been completed by volunteer Bernard Cammack. The Mountain Bike Track is proceeding and there will be an Open Day for the public on May 11th, this year.

Some of the public highlights on the farm have been Kohekohe Sunday, organised by Trustee, Sue Blaikie, on Queen's Birthday; a chance to see these wonderful trees flowering. A successful event in June 2013, run by Kapiti Joggers that attracted 150 participants was the "In the steps of the Marines" walk/run. This event will be repeated on May 25th 2014. Jan Nisbet, Sue Blaikie, and Dawn Bush ran a successful school day. Jan has developed some

great resources for children including weta motel building with kits provided by the Menzshed. Orienteering will become a regular event after a successful day and 'geocaching' sites are being set up.

The Whareroa Guardians Community Trust also had a presence at the Kapiti Coast District Council's Sustainable Garden Show, where we shared information about the farm with the public.

Forest health is improving, especially around the bush edges, and now there are plenty of seedlings on the forest floors. The pest control team caught 498 pests, the largest number of which were rats and mice, followed by possums. This work is crucial to the ongoing health of the biodiversity on the farm. Thank you to Shane Cave, Shane Williamson, Scott Hill, and Jason Bohmer.

Visitor numbers are demonstrating the public's interest in the farm, as Department of Conservation records show 8753 mountain bikers and 3635 walkers visited Whareroa in this year. This is a conservative figure as not all access points were monitored.

The East-Ridge Track is due to open this winter. This track serves horses and trampers and was a major project for volunteers over this last year. Signs have been funded by the Walking Access Commission with additional signs funded by the Department of Conservation.

With the onset of Climate Change, extreme weather events are likely to become more common and Whareroa Farm sustained some storm damage in one of the big storms in 2013. Gum trees that had fallen and blocked the Link Track were cut up and sold for firewood logs.

Facebook/Nature Space

Trustee, Scott Hill, has set up and administers, these Whareroa Farm web pages and they have been very successful. They are a great way to stay informed about what is happening on the farm so check them out.

Projects for 2014 - 2016

A planting project to connect Matai Bush to the Upper Bush will be undertaken to enhance biodiversity in the area.

Planning for the Ramaroa Wetland planting is underway. Fencing for the area is anticipated soon and the Trust is applying for funding to purchase the plants.

An application to fund the Ti Kouka/Rocks Track has been submitted.

Liffet Stewart is coordinating a project to create a Commemorative Planting area on the farm.

Volunteers

Many volunteers took part in projects supporting the farm including planting and working bees. Some return regularly to volunteer on and for the farm. The Whareroa Guardians Community Trust would like to thank:

Dawn Bush: minutes secretary

Rachel Salive: fund raising (with Trustees)

Helen and Tony Griffiths: bird monitoring

Dick Caldwell: track mowing

Bernard Cammack: Dell Track and picnic area

Don and Mary Beggs: gorse grubbing and fence post removing

June Rowland and Laura Van Peer: catering for planting sessions (BBQ) and working bees

"Morning Maidens": Jan Nisbet, Liffet Stewart, Sue Blaikie, Ann Evans, Dawn Bush and Penny Redward

Ian Redward: weed eating

Youngsters: Ruby and Kieran Durrant - Bush, Tatiana Bailey, Miyako and Enzo Cammack, Alex and Rosie Barsanti were regular attendees

Theo Barsanti, Jonathan Waterworth, Jools Joslin, Jenny Rowan (also loan of caravan): 4WDs

Julie Lines and Bruce Bulmer: carpet squares

Chain saw gang: Theo Barsanti, Bernard Cammack, Scott Hill, Shane Cave, Bruce Bulmer, Matt Callaghan, Steve Lewis, Ann Evans and Ian Redward (undertook 4 days of training)

John Porter: campaign for correct spelling of "Mackay"

Sascha Wassong: for Cairn construction and benches

Rachel Kiel-Taylor and Harry A'Court: developing brochure
Sue Blaikie, Liffet Stewart, and Ann Evans: potting up
Grant and Dawn Wilson: maintenance of The Link track

Grants and Donations

- Walking Access Commission: \$2,800 towards East Ridge Track
- Living Legends and Living Legends Plus (Project Crimson and Tindall Foundation): \$1,500 for Schools' planting in winter 2013, and \$5,000 a year for 3 years for restoration planting in 2014 to 2016.
- Wellington Community Trust: \$6000 towards the joining of Matai Bush and Upper Bush in 2014
- Kapiti Pakeke Lions: \$500 for plants
- Lions Club of Kapiti: \$400 for planting tools
- Waikanae Garden Group: \$150 for walnut trees at entrance

Picnic tables: two at the Hub from AD Architecture (Peter Davis) and one above Matai Bush from Pat Menzies. Also, Ann Evans' Kaitiaki Award money provided two picnic tables in the Dell.

The Trust express their strong appreciation for all these donations and grants which allow the continued development at Whareroa.

It was moved that the Chairperson's report be accepted (moved Rachel Kiel-Taylor, seconded Jenny Rowan) carried.

Rachel was thanked by Jenny for the report, for continuing to give conduit leadership and for her commitment, passion and love for the land as it had been a privilege to have her around.

Treasurer's Report.

Michael Keith thanked DoC for their grants for the Cairn and advised that one of the things that had taken place over the past year was the establishment of a fund-raising group consisting of Rachel Salive, Scott Hill and Sue Blaikie. There had been a lot of activity and many good ideas.

In answer to a query it was noted that paid-up members number around 45-50 and the newsletter is circulated to approximately 400 people.

Penny Redward and Sascha Wassong mentioned having difficulty in finding out how to join up as a member through the Facebook page.

It was suggested the matter be put on the agenda for the next trust meeting to be held in May. *Agreed.*

It was moved that the Treasurer's Report as circulated be accepted (moved Liffet Stewart, seconded Penny Redward) carried.

Election of Trustees.

The three year term of three trustees expired: Michael Keith, Liffet Stewart and Sue Blaikie. All were prepared to stand again. Scott Hill is resigning.

Rachel verified receipt of nominations for Michael and Sue to stand again and for Sascha Wassong. *Nominated by Jenny Rowan/seconded by Theo Barsanti.* There being no other nominations, those four persons were elected to the Board. *Approved.*

Any other Business

(a) Mountain Bike Club

Theo reported there is a new downhill track being built but progress is slow. Guardians are going to get behind the club's efforts to try and speed up the process as only 400-500 metres out of 2½ kms have been completed and it is rough terrain. The new track would relieve traffic on the zigzag track. It was suggested the club organise regular volunteer days that do not coincide with Guardians' volunteer days.

(b) Visitor Numbers

In answer to a query Dan Touhy advised there are counters specifically designed for mountain bikes or walkers. If more counters are needed a request could be made to either Dan or Rob Stone as DoC are trying to get as many counters as possible in their "Gateway Reserves)

(c) Cairn Fencing

Jenny asked whether anything further had been done regarding protecting the cairn from cattle. Ann replied there has been progress. A map has been made showing a post and rail fence below the level of the cairn and Colin is discussing that with Rob along with fencing for the cut face so it could be planted.

(d) East Ridge Track

Ann indicated on a wall map where the track will go for horses and trampers to take pressure off core tracks. She said volunteers had worked very hard and with Dan were planning to erect signs on the coming Sunday. An application to DoC is being made through a new fund for money to connect the Cairn Track to the Rocks.

Rachel thanked Ann and Bernard and Sue for the hours put in compiling the recent funding applications.

(e) Fishing

John Lancashire advised that fishing is not permitted as the farm is a reserve and Jenny suggested a sign to that end be discussed at the May meeting. *Agreed.*

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.00pm.

After a tea break John Lancashire introduced Dr Mike Joy from Massey University to talk about local waterways and freshwater ecology.

Mike gave an excellent talk and slide show on the types of native fresh-water fish and what is found in the streams at Whareroa, including a 100 year old eel. He explained that 68 percent of freshwater fish both migratory and non-migratory are on the threatened species list and if the decline keeps going as it has in the last 40 years there will be no native fish left in 50 years time. Threats to fresh-water fish are loss of habitat due to weeds, wetland drainage and water abstraction.

Rachel thanked Mike and said his talk validated one of the reasons why Whareroa was saved – because of the special undeveloped character of the streams and their wild life.