

# KRRRA Annual General Meeting

4 April 2021

## Chairs Report

Let's "keep Kuaotunu, Kuaotunu" was the clear message from you all during our Community Plan refresh and this year your Committee has kept this top of mind during its discussions and decision making, whilst also acknowledging changes that may need to be made.

Our AGM was cancelled last year due to COVID restrictions, however we managed to conduct critical business electronically and you will see we have continued to refine this with elections this year. Our paid up membership is now 194 and we urge you to get involved, stay connected and give us your opinion whenever you feel the urge.

We have had some good wins over the last 12 months:

- an additional AED mounted on the notice board
- our own KCERT group justifiably received accolades from TCDC for their outstanding work during lockdown
- kiwi recorded back in the Rings Beach Wetland Reserve thanks to the indefatigable work of all their volunteers
- Carrie Parker was elected on to the Coastal Panel Group and will be an able advocate for our Community, as well as partnering with TCDC on our Dune planting projects.
- Committee funded another 2 x new EPI pens for our Fire Brigade.
- Four of our volunteer environmental groups worked together and have been awarded \$365K in funding from MPI for the killing of wilding pines on the Peninsula.

The Committee agreed to take over the Kuaotunu historical photo archive project originally instigated by the Hall Committee and we thank Danny Bay for putting his hand up to drive this and for quickly coming up with innovative ideas for storage and access.

Over the holiday period we supported the Opito Bay Ratepayers association and Ngati Hei with their voluntary scallop rahui and we have just been formally notified (March 23rd) that Fisheries NZ has instigated a full consultation process on Ngati Hei's request for a two year closure of the Eastern Coromandel scallop fishery. This is huge progress and we urge you to formally support this with a submission. Closing date for this is May 17th.

Your Committee made written and spoken submissions to TCDC's review of the current Reserve Management Plan. We stressed, once again, our Community's desire to be consulted prior to any proposed activity and/or changes on our Reserves.

Alastair Brickell as our representative, along with the Opito and Otama Ratepayers Associations, has been tirelessly advocating for Council to adopt standards that would enable our Peninsula to achieve International Dark Sky status. At present it appears that an International Dark Sky 'Community' status would best suit our area and, if successful, we would be the first in NZ or Australia with this particular designation.

We fully support this project, as other areas of NZ have been awarded similar designations and are experiencing greater respect and understanding of their unique dark skies as a result. In the longer

term it is hoped that our area could eventually be expanded to protect dark skies and our night time environment over the wider Coromandel Peninsula.

At our November meeting, your Committee voted unanimously on a resolution to join a working group to further investigate the aspiration of creating a special Biosphere Region (working title) for our Peninsula. This group, made up of two representatives from Kuaotunu, Otama & Opito R&R groups, plus a representative from Ngati Hei and DOC, met for the first time on March 14th. The next step agreed was the holding of a hui at the end of May for all environmental groups working around the peninsula and Ngati Hei, to share their great work and their aspirations with the aim of establishing some common goals and perhaps a joint way forwards.

Without raising expectations too high, we finally managed a full meeting in Kuaotunu with key representatives from NZTA and TCDC to again lobby for a safe walking/biking path from Cemetery Rd into Kuaotunu West and to receive draft ideas on traffic calming measures for the centre of our Village. Courtney Linnecar lobbied brilliantly on our behalf, getting a positive response and we are confident that if we submit to TCDC's LTP and continue the pressure on NZTA, we will see progress this year.

The Committee wishes to thank those people within our partner organisations, especially TCDC who respond brilliantly, whenever possible, to our requests. Our community is chokka with fantastic, colourful and creative, clever people and it is not always easy to arrive at decisions that make everybody happy. Your Committee, of course, is made up of passionate individuals who care deeply about preserving the magic of Kuaotunu Village for future generations and as Chair, I am deeply grateful for their untiring efforts, enlightened input and ability to make sure we all work well together - thank you to them and big thanks to you, our community for trusting us to advocate on your behalf.