

KRRRA Annual General Meeting

17 April 2022

Chair's Report

Living through the last 12 months has meant experiencing a wide range of emotions for both our community and your Residents and Ratepayers Committee. Despite the challenges, there have been many examples of generous social support, stirring volunteer environmental action and selfless, creative contributions!

In this spirit, it is fitting that we reflect on the recent passing of Dave Simpson, a local who truly embodied the spirit of Kuaotunu with his lifelong contribution to our community through his work as a member of the Fire Brigade, the Domain Board and for 25 years the Chairman of KRRRA. He is sorely missed.

A big shout out to Jenny Crawford who has reinvigorated the Dune Care Group. Her infectious energy has galvanized an impressive turn out of volunteers and the result of their work is very recognisable.

Quietly and unheralded, Chris Charteris has again added to the visual richness of our village with his crafting of a memorial seat for Cliff and Julie Heraud on the Simpson reserve and, working with the Kauri 2000 Trust, the erection of a memorial arch at the entrance to the Blackjack walking track. We are lucky to have this man.

Your Committee fully supports Isabel Gilbert Palmer in her project to create a Heritage & Cultural Arts Centre on the Domain, in partnership with Ngati Tamatera and DOC.

We have struggled this year to gain traction on two key projects that we know the Community is firmly invested in - traffic calming through the centre of our Village and safe walking/cycling from Cemetery Rd through to Hilldale Crescent. Despite our best efforts, clearly reflected in our minutes and correspondence, and undertakings we thought were agreed on, Waka Kotahi and TCDC continue to offer delayed responses (if at all) and convoluted reasons as to why things can't be done. These frustrations boiled over in early December and the result was a hasty adjustment to the speed limit in our village which proved extremely successful during our busy summer. We will continue to advocate for permanent solutions to make our environment safe for all.

Linked to this, we are working hand in hand with the Matarangi Residents & Ratepayers group to ensure that the Bluff Rd is kept open as a walking/biking recreational asset, linking our beachside communities from Matarangi through to Opito. We have had an on site meeting with an Engineer and Project manager, both experienced in trail creation and are confident that the case for a point to point suspension bridge is feasible. We are now waiting for TCDC to respond to our approach on this.

You will have noticed that the rest area at top of Kuaotunu Hill has been remodelled and opened up in response to our requests to prevent further fly dumping. We hope this works and have requested that low growing natives be planted early this winter.

The Biosphere Working Group has not been able to convene over last 12 months for a variety of reasons but your Committee remains supportive and individual members are working in the background to research options and create a public document that will outline aspirations to restore and protect the biodiversity of the Kuaotunu Peninsula.

The MPI funding grant, administered through Waikato Regional Council to eradicate wilding pines on the Matarangi Bluff Reserve, Blackjack Hill, Opito and areas identified by Project Kiwi has almost been completed. A brilliant example of local volunteer groups, once well funded, being able to have significant, positive impact on our environment. Congratulations to all involved, especially Celine Derouet and Travis Boyd's brilliant team. Over 34,000 pines eliminated on the Blackjack reserve alone!

Again this year, we funded two new epi pens for the Fire Brigade and we have purchased a number of branded (Kuaotunu Kleenup) high vis vests to be worn when we can organize a volunteer roadside clean up gang.

The Committee has been liaising with TCDC and Domain Board with regard to pushing forward with the resurfacing of the tennis court area. We met on-site very recently with Sue Costello and outlined a new vision for the use of this area that would better serve our changing demographic and allow for a wider variety of activity. We are optimistic this will go ahead.

I would like to thank the many individuals within TCDC, WRC and DOC who have continued to work positively with us through a difficult 12 months and it is their respect for our community that keeps our advocacy positive. Your committee likewise is made up of individuals who care deeply about Kuaotunu and donate hours of their time without complaint! My heartfelt thanks to them all for their dedication and unshakeable belief in local democracy. It's a flawed system and does not always deliver the results many of us desire but the alternative is unthinkable.

On that note, I encourage members of our Community to keep engaged, give us your feedback, attend meetings, put yourself forward to work on the Committee, let us know what you think and how you want Kuaotunu to be as the best little place in the world to live, work and play.

Brent Page

Chair - KRRRA

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