

Kuaotunu Residents & Ratepayers Association Inc

Newsletter No 1

Summer 09-10

Christmas Greetings to All!

This has been a busy year for our committee, which has worked hard on your behalf to re-build the Association, to establish a credible voice for Kuaotunu and to ensure good governance. The Kuaotunu Residents and Ratepayers Association Inc (KRRRA) is now incorporated again, has a new constitution and an improved bank balance, with a good response to the reinstated membership fees.

Thanks to the many people from the community who participated in workshops and had input to the Kuaotunu Futures Plan, and especially to the committee, which put huge effort into polishing the final document. The Plan is finally complete and will help guide us, TCDC and EW in our representations and decision making.

We have made several submissions to Council this year, and as your representatives remain committed to dealing constructively with TCDC and others. It is all too easy to criticise and the constructive approach certainly takes a lot more work and commitment for the long haul, but that is the philosophy we continue to work to.

Special thanks to the community groups who have contributed to this newsletter, which we hope to produce twice-yearly... you are a vital part of what makes Kuaotunu such a great place to be!

Best wishes from the KRRRA committee for a safe and happy holiday.

Carrie Parker, Chair

Financial & membership report

KRRRA has 70 active members and is financially secure. Assuming no unexpected events, we are well placed to move to our next stage, which is to establish a website to provide information to residents and ratepayers, and others interested, about Association activities and matters affecting Kuaotunu. The near-nominal membership fee of \$10 means that anyone connected with our area really should become a member!

Boat Ramp

KRRRA supported the introduction of boat ramp parking fees because we saw the opportunity for revenue to be used to maintain and upgrade our launching and parking facilities. We continue to pursue this with the Mayor and TCDC, who recognise the special challenges at Kuaotunu. TCDC has already helped by marking out the parking area and upgrading the Black Jack launching area (3.5m boat limit, please follow the posted rules). You can purchase annual and day permits at the Kuaotunu store (other sites listed on www.tcdc.govt.nz). Please don't vandalise the

signs as they only have to be replaced using our rates... stay calm and friendly, we just want to enjoy the fishing! To avoid holding up other ramp users please don't dither and be ready for a quick launch – load your boat and check your motor before you leave home, especially if you haven't been out for a while. To reduce congestion we suggest getting someone in the family to run a taxi service rather than wait while the driver runs over half a klick to drop off/collect your trailer! And finally, give boaties trying to come back in a fair go and leave space for them, especially if the weather has deteriorated.

Speed Limits

The posted speed limit remains 50km/h through Kuaotunu and we appreciate your cooperation in observing it. The NZ Transport Authority advises it is reviewing speed limits in this area and will be consulting with the community in the New Year. Meanwhile help our community stay safe - we don't have footpaths (KRRRA is working on this too) so watch out for pedestrians, and keep your speed down.

Fire Brigade

The Fire Brigade has had another busy year with callouts ranging from fires and medical assists to motor vehicle accidents, an aeroplane accident, setting up a helicopter evacuation site, flooding... and of course the tsunami evacuation, which really brought home to everyone how important it is to be ready for an emergency. A warm welcome to three fit young members this year – we are always looking for new members! Consent for our building repairs was finally received and remedial work is well under way. The new roof is on, the main inside work is pretty much complete and the exterior will be finished in the New Year. Do call in and have a look around. We have also purchased a Ford truck which is being set up as a replacement for the old Land Rover at Opito Bay which was our first fire engine approximately 28 years ago.

Important: there is a total fire ban in force until at least the first week in February and a special licence is required to set off fireworks... see the RFO's public notice overleaf.

Hall Committee

Restoration of the Kuaotunu Hall has started, to bring it back to a condition that will ensure its longevity. The sash windows on the Irishtown Rd side have been rebuilt and no longer leak, these and windows on the south side are being sanded and painted. Rotten weather boards and boxing on the library, and timber panelling under the leaking windows have been replaced (replacing kauri with kauri where possible). Next is sanding the door surround, library and front right windows, a new front door, and removing and repairing the front left window.

As our Hall is the last public building remaining from Kuaotunu's pioneering days we are attempting to preserve both its unique architecture and history, including a display of historic photographs. We recently found nine fantastic images from the Auckland Library. If anyone can donate frames in reasonable condition, they will be greatly appreciated. *Rebecca Simpson, kuaotunuhall@gmail.com.*

Reserve Management Group

The Reserve Management has re-formed with enthusiastic new members Glenda Mawhinney (chair), David and Sue Ting, Chrissy Tegg, Kaye Ferguson, Barb Meredith, and Craig Lidgard. We want to continue the good work of former members and consult with the community so reserves reflect your aspirations and needs. We met with Council's Louie Pooley and put together a draft programme of works... consultation at the last ratepayers meeting was helpful in affirming this and gaining more ideas. While there are conflicting views we will try to work with a consensus where possible. (Note, however, that we have little control over some works undertaken by TCDC.)

This spring we held successful working bees eradicating weeds, tidying tracks and planting dunes, with more planned. We look forward to 2010, working with the community to make the most of our reserves. We are very aware of how important these are to everyone and take our role as caretakers on your behalf seriously. If you have suggestions, need an advocate or want to help, contact Glenda Mawhinney (glenda@beegee.co.nz).

Matarangi Reserve Walking Track

This track is still a work in progress for the volunteers of Coromandel Coastal Walkways, but it's ready for day walkers. We suggest you go in from the Rings Beach car park / Vodafone tower end. It will take about 2 hours to complete the circuit so take water. For your safety, please stay on the track (beware of mine shafts) and make sure your footwear is clean (see Kauri Dieback item below). Above all, enjoy the panoramic views! To register as a volunteer for 2010 contact Bruce Smith, 866 4742.

Kauri 2000

Kauri 2000 celebrated its 10th birthday in 2009 and here in Kuaotunu where it all started we've been especially busy. There are now about 6000 kauri up at our flagship Matarangi Reserve site and many more to come. The walking track passes through our 2004 and 2009 plantings. Check out the Waitaia track too... you'll be amazed at the height of the trees planted in 2000. Special thanks to the Community Max team who are clearing wind throw and doing a survival count, and also cleared the Waitaia and Black Jack walking tracks. If you would like to help next planting season phone Viv McLean 866 5776 or visit www.kauri2000.co.nz for more information.

Bush Walking & Kauri Dieback Disease

Please do your bit to prevent the spread of kauri dieback disease, which is killing kauri young and old in Northland. If you are using any walking tracks, or going bush at all, MAF says please clean your footwear before and after leaving areas of kauri forest to prevent this disease spreading to the Coromandel. Stick to defined tracks,

clean tyres and any equipment that come into contact with soil, and avoid disturbing kauri tree roots. To report suspected diseased kauri phone 0800 NZ KAURI (695 2874) or visit www.kauridieback.co.nz for more info.

Mark your new diaries

The next general meeting of the Association will be in the Kuaotunu Hall at 10am on Sunday 3 January. See you there for a catch up!

Chair: Carrie Parker 867 1299
Secretary: Sue Ting 869 5439
Treasurer: John Birkbeck 869 5484

THAMES VALLEY RURAL FIRE DISTRICT FIRE PREVENTION, SUMMER 2009/2010

No permits will be issued for fires in the open in the Thames-Coromandel District from 21 December 2009 to 8 February 2010 inclusive. Fire Bans have been invoked by the Rural Fire District and Department of Conservation for this period.

The fire ban applies to all of the Thames-Coromandel District, including off-shore islands, reserves, beaches, and part of the Hauraki District.

BARBEQUES

The fire ban does not apply to gas fire barbeques and at this stage does not apply to solid fuelled proprietary barbeques, solid fuelled permanent brick-concrete barbeques and fires in concrete or brick incinerators that are fitted with spark arrestors, but please take the following safety precautions:

- To be at least 5m from buildings, timber fences, trees or other combustible material.
- Not to be lit during strong wind conditions.
- Pressure water system with hose to be available nearby.
- To be supervised by an adult.
- To be extinguished on completion.

Should weather conditions cause the fire risk to increase to an unacceptable level, solid fuelled barbeques and incinerator fires may need to be more strictly controlled.

HANGI FIRES

Hangi Fires are allowed at this stage, provided the safety precautions as for barbeques (above) are complied with.

BRAZIERS

Braziers are classified as a fire in the 'Open Air' and are prohibited during the Fire Ban.

FIREWORKS

Fireworks are classified as a fire in the "Open Air" and are prohibited during the Fire Ban.

District Fire Officers wish all residents and visitors a happy festive season. We hope we will not be fighting fires at your place.

Del Read

Principal Rural Fire Officer

