

President's Report

Presented Gerry Brackenbury at AGM 2023

The committee met 6 times, both face-to-face and via Zoom. I would like to formally thank my Committee for both their sterling work, keeping me honest and steering our environmental "ship" on a straight course, with a weather eye on any looming icebergs!

Each Committee member has brought their own skills and talents to the table, to affectively achieve a well-run Trust.

Without showing any bias, I would like to thank several of the Committee. Karen Baker our Treasurer, who does a fantastic job with our finances, and makes my heart sink when she texts me to say another six accounts need signing off. Whatever happened to piggy banks!

Our Secretary Fanny Leduc, who with calm efficiency has kept us all on song. To me Fanny has given a whole new meaning to the art of "cool". Winifred Long, who is sadly leaving us, and whose incredibly succinct reports on our pest control puts fear and loathing into all those rats out there. Rosemary Thompson, who has kindly mentored me in my first year as President. Everyone on our Committee has pulled their weight and played their part, our Kiwi seem to be thriving, there is money in the bank and the Trust is in good heart.

Some Highlights of the year include:

Another successful funding application to the Save the Kiwi Foundation by Alan Peck. I would personally like to thank Alan for letting me into his home to do our bi-monthly Zoom Committee meetings, and I enjoy being monstered by his lovely dog, who knows more about Zoom than I do! Alan is responsible for our Communications folio, including the Remutalker and notifications to members and keeps a sharp eye on our website, which is popular, and Facebook.

It seems we will be receiving money following the pine harvest near Catchpoole, and I would like to thank our past President Geoff Cameron for keeping a close eye on the action, and his mentoring.

Our Community Agreement with DOC has been renewed. This gives us permission to do work on Crown Land for another 5 years, and allows our doughty volunteers to do our incredible pest control work, clear tracks and species handling.

Health and Safety is ours and DOC's top priority.

Rosemary Thompson continues to induct new volunteers and organized a well attended, and well fed, volunteer meeting, and Melody McLaughan made an

excellent presentation on the state of our kiwi and the trapping needed to keep them safe. I also thank Melody for her Trap Audit Report, and many thanks to the Fixit Team.

Last, but not least, many thanks to Peter Cooper. I met with Peter recently at Catchpool Reserve for him to show me around. He gave me a grand tour of the area, as we metaphorically beat off Tui as we walked around. Peter's work enhancing the conservation values of the Catchpool reserve is legendary, and it was heartening to see so many of the public, from grandies to littlies, heading off into the Park. Standing next to a young mistletoe that Peter has brought on, I know Peter has a lot to be proud of.

Last February the Trust hosted some American Bigwigs, the Secretary of State, Debra Haaland and the American Ambassador, Tom Udall, to the joys of the Catchpool area, with Peter once again doing the honours.

Looking at the excellent newsletter produced by Rachel Thompson, it features a report by Winifred Long on a Bird Survey done in the Forest from 2015 to 2020, using acoustic recorders. Interesting, the miromiro/tomtit was the most seen and heard. There was no record of kokako... funny that. A forest the size of Remutaka should have Kokako in it. And Kokako expert "Scratch" Jensen also thinks we should have Kokako in it.

To news both good and sad. We received a bequest from the Asmuss Foundation to celebrate their Centenary. We also received bequests from the family of Jack Skellett, who tragically died in a kayaking accident in the Wellington Harbour, and from the family of Cathye Haddock, who also tragically died off the Kaikoura coast in a boating accident. They will both be sadly missed.

Finances.

Karen Baker has presented the Financial Statements of the Trust for the year ending 30th June 2022. Accounts and Statement of Service Performance are complex, and Karen has shown her usual skill and dedication to the task and is greatly appreciated by the whole Committee.

Our financial position is sound. The biggest call on funds is the renewal of a number of traps, some of which can only be described as venerable, some up to twenty years old. The Trap Audit has been completed and the job is now to be achieved. I need to again acknowledge the teamwork of our various volunteers such as the Fixit Team and others that goes into keeping our foot on the throat of all those pesky pests out there.

Acknowledgements

I first would like to thank and acknowledge the Taranaki Whānui Iwi who give us their encouragement and support, and who blessed our mahi to have kiwi back into the Remutaka ngahere. They will be happy with our progress. A good, long-term relationship with our local Iwi and hapu is vital for us to progress our conservation goals.

Over the year we gratefully acknowledge the generous support of Te Papa Atawhai/ DOC, Hutt City Council, Pharazyn Trust, Asmuss Foundation and Placemakers Seaview, amongst others.

Also thanks to the various external Agencies and Groups who have supported the Trust in so many ways. We have mentioned DOC, on whose rohe we do so much of our work, Jobs for Nature, Wellington Regional Council, Zealandia, Botanical Society, Capital Kiwi (we got kiwi first), Victoria University. E mihi nui to you all.

Finally, if I am allowed, and as a naive observer, I believe the Management Plan states that its objectives is to enhance the biodiversity of the Remutaka Forest. We were encouraged by expert "Scratch" Jensen to think about returning kiwi back to the Forest, because, through pest control, they would thrive, and they have. I believe it is time to do it again, this time with another iconic species, the Kokako, also recommended by Scratch.

I will leave it at that for the moment.

Appreciation

As the new Chair, I wish to say thank you to my Committee for your help and guidance, and to all the volunteers and supporters that have made our Trust one of the most successful in the country.

Without your work, guidance and aroha, New Zealand's special place on our besieged Planet would be the poorer.

Thank You.

Gerry Brackenbury
President
October 2023.