

MOTUEKA DISTRICT MUSEUM TRUST BOARD



Chairman's Report 2016-2017

This has been another very successful year for the Motueka Museum. Visitor numbers have continued to increase from 4372 in 2014-2015, to 5279 in 2015-2016 to 5954 in the current period. Particularly pleasing is that 1582 visitors in the 2016-2017 year were children. There are numerous reasons for the continued increase in visitor numbers: an increased focus on local subjects for exhibitions, extended summer opening hours, the education programme run in conjunction with the very successful Mai I Hawaiki Te Ahi Ka Roa exhibition, the ambience created by the popularity of Muses Café, the Museum's listing in Lonely Planet and the Museum's prominent position in Motueka's streetscape.

At the beginning of this financial year the Museum was facing a funding shortfall. The lack of operational funds had the potential to impact drastically on the type and quality of the exhibitions the Museum could expect to install. Additionally, the proportion of the cost of the required seismic upgrade the Museum would need to fund was unknown and the Museum's heating, ventilation and lighting systems were in drastic need of an upgrade.

Although Tasman District Council had agreed to fund 50% of the seismic work to a maximum of \$50,000 there was no guarantee that a successful application could be made to the Lotteries Commission for a similar amount.

It has been obvious for some time that the Museum's heating is inadequate for both visitors and staff. Additionally, if the Museum wishes to continue to borrow artefacts from other institutions it needs to be able to guarantee that items can be kept in suitable climatic conditions. Similarly, appropriate lighting is required for both the protection of and display of collection items.

A Board sub-committee began work to develop a fundraising strategy. Two quiz evenings were held and, thanks to the generosity of Wilsons Abel Tasman, a very successful cruise to Awaroa was organised. These events were successful but proved it would take many years in a community the size of Motueka for the Museum to be able to raise the tens of thousands projects the size of the seismic upgrade, or the heating, ventilation and lighting would require.

It was therefore extremely gratifying that in May 2017 the Lotteries Commission agreed to a grant of \$45,487 to fund the portion of the seismic remediation work not funded by Tasman District Council. The Museum was also fortunate to gain a grant from the Lion Foundation to fund the hire of a container to store equipment and resources during the building work.

In February the Board was thrilled that the Motueka Community Board granted the Museum \$10,000 towards the heating and ventilation of the building. It is anticipated that an application to the Rata Foundation for a similar amount is likely to be successful. That will allow the Museum to upgrade the heating, ventilation and lighting systems.

For several years the Museum Board has presented arguments to the Tasman District Council that the Museum's administration grant should be increased. This year the Council recognised the validity of that argument and increased the annual grant by \$15,000.

While the Museum is extremely grateful for the grants received from the Tasman District Council, the Motueka Community Board, the Lotteries Commission and the Rata Foundation it will still be necessary for the Museum Board to organise fundraising events each year. However, the total sum required each year will now be much more manageable.

Apart from increased funding the other notable change this year has been the building of a new relationship with Nelson Provincial Museum. The co-operation and collaboration on the Mai I Hawaiki Te Ahi Ka Roa exhibition was extremely successful. In particular the work of the education officer who was responsible for ensuring so many local school children were introduced to the history of the Motueka Maori community.

The Museum is very fortunate to have excellent staff. Jen has undertaken her first year as curator with enthusiasm. She has built excellent relationships with other local museums and has been able to make good use of her extensive local network. Celia's efficiency as administrator has allowed Jen to focus on the curatorial aspects of her role. Heather has continued to describe and digitize artefacts, assist with exhibitions while continuing to study towards a Museum qualification.

Like many organisations the Museum has difficulty recruiting and retaining Board members. It is with regret that I note the resignation of Stew Fowler and John Westall from the Board. Stew has contributed numerous hours assisting with the installation of exhibitions, front desk duties, assisting with building maintenance and preparing Health and Safety documentation. John Westall has also indicated he wishes to resign, however, John is prepared to remain on the Board until we find a replacement. John has completed a myriad of tasks for the Museum over many years. During the year Chris Sutton joined the Board, her experience in education

will be extremely helpful as the Museum moves to provide a more structured education programme.

Priorities for the new Board will be:

Ensuring the opportunity presented by the revamped building is maximised

Recruiting additional Board members

Enabling and supporting exhibitions that attract high visitor numbers

Fund raising to continue to maintain and improve the building and the static exhibitions

Establishment of an education programme

Anne Thompson

Chair, Motueka Museum Trust Board