



FEATHERSTON

community centre

Annual General Meeting
26 July 2018

From the Chair

I would like to start by recognising those who came before us and made it possible for us to be here celebrating this wonderful community-owned Featherston Community Centre.

Twenty six years ago, in 1992, a group of forward-thinking neighbours came together and recognised that Featherston needed a space where people could come together to support each other and help improve the social, mental and economic vitality of their town.

A trust was established and this building, which like so many buildings in town at the time was surplus to needs, was first leased and then purchased for a token amount.

I would like to recognise those Rangitira and the community who twenty-six years ago followed their vision and created the Featherston Community Centre.

We continue to be owned and operated by a trust. Most people assume we are owned and run by Council, but no we pay rates just like the rest of you.

Today

Our Annual Report outlines our financial health and how we are tracking against our Strategic Plan.

I just want to highlight a few items, share some of my favourite memories from the past year and offer you a glimpse of what the future offers.

This past financial year we continued to raise approximately half of the needed \$45,000 for annual expenses through our very reasonable rental rates. For many of our users, rental is paid as a two-dollar gold coin collected at each meeting. Those gold coins add up and they are used to keep the lights on and the rates paid. We also raised a few thousand dollars through our annual art sale. Speaking of art, the community donated \$600 through a Givealittle campaign which was used to purchase the six wonderful portraits by the artist Kathy Bartlett. These portraits are attached to the fence as you enter the driveway.

The rest of the money needed to keep the Centre running was generated through the Board and our Centre Manager applying for grants and donations. I want to take this time to thank our Centre Manager, Siv Fjaerestad for her excellent work with the Centre finances. I also want to thank our current and past Board members for your hard work in this area also.

During the last financial year we were fortunate to get a large donation from the Lion Foundation which allowed us to rip up the quarter-of-a-century-old carpet and replace it with new carpet throughout. This donation also allowed us to replace the lino in the kitchen, which was way past its use-by date. Let me take this time to thank our Custodian, Kim

Belham, who comes in each morning for one hour to vacuum and clean. I think the new lino has made her life just that much better.

Siv and Kim are our only paid, part-time employees and therefore the Centre also relies on the continuing effort of volunteers. The board is a working board and each of the members are volunteers who donate their skills in fundraising, human resources, marketing and building maintenance. In addition we rely on volunteers to help with front office duties and to help maintain the buildings and grounds. We also rely on an extensive number of businesses and individuals for everything from marketing to provision of firewood.

In particular I want to thank our volunteer Jocelyn Konig for her support in the office and Alan Brook who mows the lawns. This year we were also pleased to welcome back the Department of Corrections to help maintain the grounds. This past month we also said good-bye to our electric vehicle that we won for a year in a competition from Genesis Energy.

Favourite Memories

This is my last AGM as Chair. I'm stepping down as Chair and will spend one more year on the board. During my five years on the board people have served and moved on and the Board has remained strong and steady. During this time our reporting requirements under the Charities Act and for our funding agencies have become more and more stringent. Fortunately at the same time, the Board has revised the constitution, streamlined our Strategic Plan, and have set up a series of useful policies, processes and portfolios that allow each board member to focus on their interests and strengths.

This last financial year has been a bit of a roller-coaster. We missed submitting, due to a technical glitch, on a key grant that we have always relied on. However this financial shortfall forced us to be better at sharing the fundraising portfolio and to explore new funding sources.

At the same time, our Centre Manager's focus on community outreach and social service networking has resulted in a Centre that is now home to the Toy Library, Connecting Communities and Fab Feathy with their three new community facilitators.

The Centre is buzzing.

I also have to mention the annual art sale that has built on the Featherston Booktown weekend. Not only is the art sale a valuable fundraising event for the centre, it is a community event that gives artists an opportunity to show and sell their art and brings over 20 volunteers and hundreds of people to the Centre.

Future

The future of the Community Centre is very much in tune with the future of Featherston. This is obvious if you look at the groups and people who are using the Centre.

In addition to the community support groups Connecting Communities and Fab Feathy, the Centre has a number of groups that are there to support their own members, such as Alcoholics Anonymous and the various health and exercise classes, as well as groups that provide support to others, such as the Featherston Knitters and Meals on Wheels.

The Art Sale event has a close association with the Featherston Booktown organisation who are helping to shape the identity of our town and the Centre itself is owned and managed by a community trust whose members live in the area.

The Board is pursuing other potential partnerships and cooperative efforts that we are excited about and that will keep the Centre at the centre of the community and which will help grow the financial sustainability of the Trust.

Special Thanks

As Chair, I'd like to give a special thank you to each of the board members past and present. It's great working with such talented and dedicated people. It's really been a great team effort.

Thank you to Graham Evans who has recently stepped down as Treasurer. You did a great job. Thank you also to Shannon Steven, this is her last meeting and we will miss her roles as Secretary and as our behind-the-scenes project manager.

Finally, on behalf of the Board and our staff, I'd like to thank the communities of Featherston and South Wairarapa for your continued love and support over these past twenty-six years of the Community Centre's existence.

With kind regards

Emily Greenberg

Chair, Featherston Community Centre Charitable Trust