

2021 ANNUAL REPORT INTRODUCTION/OVERVIEW

During 2020-21 Ngā Manu continued to fulfil its conservation mandate and serve its community despite the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic (COVID-19) which continues to rage around the world. Within that context Ngā Manu largely met its financial and non-financial targets thanks in part to Government's wage subsidy scheme, increased fundraising and the Department of Conservation's (DOC) Wildlife Institutions Relief (WIR) fund. This challenging operating environment, and a failed bid for Provincial Growth Funding prompted a closer examination of our long-term financial viability and a rethink of how we address overdue maintenance of aging buildings.

Prior to Christmas 2020 the Board approved organisation structure changes which effectively doubled our paid staff. New positions are focused on business development opportunities, fundraising, marketing and communications, and administration. Our new team members joined Ngā Manu in March.

At the same time work commenced on the upgrade of our existing Visitor Centre and planning for more extensive renovations to improve the safety and comfort of visitors, staff and volunteers is now underway.

Highlights

As these changes to our operation were taking place, connecting people to nature and the joy and satisfaction this brings flourished and there are many successes to celebrate:

- Despite the absence of international tourists and significantly fewer school visits, we recorded 20,033 visits for the year compared to 19,978 in 2019-20. Ngā Manu was a favourite venue for locals as we all emerged from lock-down and we thanked our community by making Queens Birthday weekend free entry which attracted many first-time visitors.
- The Royal Society supported Winter Lecture series of six talks was attended by over 300 people.
- We achieved Accreditation under Zoo and Aquarium Association Accreditation Program as recognition of our commitment to providing positive animal welfare opportunities for the animals under our care.
- Our conservation programme successes kept Ngā Manu alive in the minds of many of our supporters and visitors. The most compelling of these stories was the success of our breeding pair of kiwi which by the end of the season had produced six eggs and three chicks.
- Our Kiwi Night Encounters continued to enchant visitors with the opportunity for an intimate insight into the behaviour of kiwi. Over 550 people attended the events.
- The breed for release program involving our Yellow Crowned Parakeet produced twenty juveniles which were released on Puangiangi Island to help re-establish the species.
- We celebrated a notable botanical milestone when *Dactylanthus*, (Te pua o te rēinga), was discovered in flower. It was the first record of the plant being established on privately managed land.
- Our Barking Gecko breed-for-release program produced another five babies which are destined for release on Mana Island to supplement its population.
- The effort involved in protecting the native fauna and flora of the Reserve required the volunteer pest team to complete 20,919 trap checks during the year.

Financial Performance

We are reporting a net operating surplus of \$30,544 (\$14,608 in 2019-20). Revenue from trading and investments was down by just over \$98,000 due to the various impacts of COVID-19. Continued community support raised over \$125,000 through fundraising and donations, an increase of \$83,000 in 2019-20.

Our overall financial position is healthy and will enable us to underwrite plans put in place during the year to increase trading and fundraising revenues.

Supporters and Funders

We are grateful to our supporters who have stood by us through an extraordinary year of many competing needs and helped us to fulfil our commitment to our work.

- Our community rallied around us with almost \$32,000 donated through the period of a Give-a-Little campaign to help support our captive animals; this included several substantial anonymous donations. The awareness of Ngā Manu raised during the campaign stimulated a level of giving which continued through the year. We received a significant donation of \$40,000 from Ruth McKenzie.
- Harbour City Funeral Homes contributed \$5000, under an arrangement which will see Ngā Manu receive in excess of \$50,000 by 2029.
- The Deane Family Endowment Trust contributed \$7400 towards the installation of heat pumps for the Visitors Centre.
- The Philipp Family Foundation continued its support of the annual collaboration between Ngā Manu and the Mahara Gallery for the benefit of schoolchildren of the Kāpiti region.
- The Royal Society of New Zealand, Te Apārangi continued its support of the Winter Lecture series
- Our 299 Friends of Ngā Manu contributed \$16,330 through their annual memberships (\$13,463 in 2019-20).
- As noted above we benefited from significant funding through the Department of Conservation administered Wildlife Institutions Relief Fund which provided \$125,000 for wages and animal food. A proportion of this funding will be used in 2021-22.

Ngā Manu also enjoys support from a range of individuals and businesses who regularly offer their services on a pro bono or subsidised basis. We would like to especially thank Entire Electrical, Space Architecture Studio, and Bohanna Motors for their support and assistance over the last year.

In Memorium

We were saddened by the death of Phil Palmer, a long-time supporter and Friend of Ngā Manu, and thank his family and friends who directed their generosity toward Ngā Manu in remembrance of Phil's financial contributions to the organisation.

As we prepare this report, we were also saddened by the news that Rick Goodman had passed away. Rick was part of the team who worked with Peter McKenzie to shape the distinctive features of the Reserve. Rick's goodwill and generosity has continued since then with Goodman Contractors Limited helping Ngā Manu in many practical ways.

Staff and Volunteers

We thank our dedicated staff team led by Reserve Manager, Matu Booth and the contribution that our team of over 60 active volunteers make to the success of Ngā Manu. This year volunteers provided 1252 days (10,016 hours) spread across every aspect of the Reserve.

Trustees

We thank our Trustees for their service during the year. Trustees bring skills and experience to the Board and contribute to the success of Ngā Manu through their leadership and commitment to community service.

This year we farewelled Trustee Tony Ward who joined the Board in 2011 and became Chair in 2012. During his tenure as Chair, he ably represented Ngā Manu's interests with Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency during the building of the Kāpiti Expressway and helped to shape Ngā Manu's governance and championed the development of business systems.

Peter Kettle who retired from the Board in February 2020, joined in 2012 and took over as Chair in 2017. Peter carried on the work started on the Visitor Centre development and garnered funding support for the project including significant stakeholder pledges. He also oversaw the development of a major capital investment proposal which created a body of information that is invaluable for our future planning. Under his leadership the Board signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Kāpiti Coast District Council designed to strengthen the relationship between Ngā Manu and Council.

Like all our Trustees Tony and Peter brought to the role their passion for conservation and their belief in the importance of Ngā Manu to the preservation of fragile ecosystems and its focus of connecting people with nature.

Looking Ahead

We have commenced a review of our strategic plan with the objective of consolidating our plans to improve our financial viability, our commitment to improving the visitor experience and our overarching commitment to conservation and being an assessable place for people to enjoy the natural world.

Part of our strategy will include improving our facilities for staff and volunteers and to make our Visitor Centre a welcoming place for visitors. Improvements to facilities for animals is ongoing and supports the many conservation programmes we undertake.

Our tourism focus will be on widening our reach within the Wellington Region and becoming an accessible destination for nature lovers wherever they are from.

Pat Stuart
Chair, Ngā Manu Trust

Matu Booth
Reserve Manager