



Ōpōtiki District Council  
STRONG COMMUNITY STRONG FUTURE

# Pānui

Issue 86 // July 2021



Keeping you up to date with Ōpōtiki District Council



## Mussel factory opens its doors

I would like to extend my heartfelt congratulations to Whakatōhea Ōpōtiki Mussels Ltd as they start their new operation out on Waioeka Road.

During the week of Matariki celebrations, the company opened the doors of the new processing factory for tours and an inside glimpse of the world-leading facility.

This incredible factory expects to start processing mussels as early as August and a really successful training programme has already trained several groups of people to take up new roles in the operation.

This isn't the only change in town and it is great to see so much growth and excitement as new opportunities emerge in the district. More than 230 people have now been employed in a wide variety of new roles across the various projects Council has been leading over the past year. Whether in construction, trades, engineering or support staff, these are new and sustainable jobs that are making a real difference locally.



Ōpōtiki Mayor, Lyn Riesterer

## Ōpōtiki celebrates Matariki

In the first weeks of this month, Ōpōtiki celebrated Matariki in style with an activity each day. There were incredible events from manu tukutuku / kite flying, Matariki-themed events like a quiz night, night markets, art installations, nature night walks and even a Matariki disco! There were workshops on poi making or Taonga Takaro (traditional Māori games), a mini-film festival, public tours of the new mussel factory and the opening of the new Rawinia Rangi Reserve. What an incredible way to welcome in the new year. Thanks to everyone who helped organise and be part of this great week of events.



More than 700 people took the opportunity to look through the new facilities during the public open day on Saturday 3 July.



## New courtyard space with thanks to the Art Society

Council has joined with the Ōpōtiki Arts Society to create a new courtyard space behind Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangi once building work is complete. The agreement means that both buildings will have access to the courtyard space on King Street. The paved outdoor area will be part of the library and digital hub to sit, relax, eat, drink and chat. But the space will also be used by the Art Society for events and exhibitions and possibly some displays of outdoor art and sculpture.

While the final look and design of the space is yet to be agreed, several concept drawings have been produced to illustrate the way the space might be used and how it connects to both buildings.



## Ōpōtiki shines for Prime Minister's visit

Back in April, Ōpōtiki welcomed Prime Minister, Jacinda Ardern and the Minister for Economic Development, Stuart Nash to Te Rere Marae, one of the local marae that have benefited from upgrade funding through the PGF. The visit to the district was a great opportunity to tell our story and show the difference that central government funding and a lot of hard work at a local level is making in the district.

We also took our guests on a tour to see the new mussel processing factory, the harbour entrance and a small look at the town centre upgrades. There were also displays about local pathway to work programmes and education, training and youth opportunities.

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## Rawinia Rangī Reserve

Earlier in May, Council asked the community for suggestions for the re-naming of the Ford Street Reserve in Ōpōtiki town.

The area was historically the Rose Gardens with many unique and historic rose specimens on display. Those roses have been moved to a new home near the Waioeka Bridge where they are flourishing.

The Ford Street reserve has undergone a transformation with a new playground and facilities and the reserve was formally opened on 6 July for everyone to enjoy.

There were some great suggestions for names that reflected, for example, past uses of the site, its current and future use as a playground or our unique Māori and Pākehā history and culture.

Of the 19 names put forward, three were shortlisted for Council consideration and Rawinia Rangī Reserve was chosen.

Thank you to whānau and friends of Rawinia Rangitakatu for this opportunity to recognise the incredible life and times of this well-known and well-loved kuia. She was a founding member of the Delamare Cup, an avid gardener, a member of the Māori Women's Welfare League, a talented composer and translator. Her service and commitment to te reo Māori and Māori performing arts, made a great difference to the Ōpōtiki community and was felt nation-wide.



# Our library and Digital Hub

The library that just won't lie down – despite being closed for many weeks due to flooding through the floor of the temporary premises, the library staff are still providing a wide range of digital hub and library services at the Digital Hub space next to the Hospice Shop on Church Street. You can still access books, mags and DVDs, and all the regular printing and internet services.

A mid-winter night out for music lovers with **Dr Ian Chapman and the Cosmic Jive Trio** was a great success as part of the Arts on Tour programme.

And in an unusual twist, the library hosted an upholstery boot camp with 10 local enthusiasts learning about upholstery from master upholsterers Rick and Cath Graham. The Grahams donated their time and expertise, tools and many materials to help cover a dozen decrepit lounge chairs into classy pieces for Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangī.



*Te Tāhuhu o Te Rangī is progressing well and on track for a formal opening in October. This incredible building will provide the same services as currently offered through our Library and Digital Hub and a wide range of new opportunities including meetings rooms, holiday programmes, new resources and social spaces.*



## Brad Scott provides insights

GNS Volcano Information Specialist, Brad Scott, provided a fantastic evening talk for Ōpōtiki locals about the Bay of Plenty's unique geology and the accompanying hazards in June. Brad was joined by Meagan Edhouse from Emergency Management Bay of Plenty to talk about the simple ways that individuals, whānau and communities can be prepared for the next natural disaster. It was also a chance to talk about new tsunami evacuation maps. They'll be out soon so keep an eye out for more information in the near future.



## NEW ENGINEERING AND SERVICES GROUP MANAGER

Stace Lewer has joined Council as the new Engineering and Services Group Manager. While Stace has strong connections to the Eastern BOP, grew up in Whakatāne and spent summer holidays at Maraehako Camping Ground, Stace was previously based in Australia and has moved to the district with his family. We welcome Stace to the team.



## In brief

Don't forget, like almost all banks, business and other organisations, Council is **no longer accepting cheques** for any payments. If you need a hand getting to grips with other payment options, particularly electronic banking, don't hesitate to talk to the helpful team at the library and Digital Hub.



Changes are happening around the country following the passing of the Local Electoral (**Māori Wards and Māori Constituencies**) Amendment Act 2021 earlier this year. Council has resolved to ask the community in a non-binding poll at the next local body elections in 2022 about whether the district would like to see Māori wards implemented locally. It will be important to consider the implications for Ōpōtiki as we don't want the change to lead to a less representative council than the 50/50 we have currently (we have a larger percentage of voters on the Māori Roll than most places).

Ōpōtiki's Harbour project was listed as a finalist in the **2021 LGNZ EXCELLENCE Awards**. These awards recognise and celebrate outstanding work by local councils around the country to promote and grow the well-being of their communities. When this Panui goes to print we still don't know whether we are a winner (they are announced on 16 July) but we are proud to be a finalist and celebrating Ōpōtiki's unique success.

A blockage during a heavy rain event in June led to a partial **wastewater shutdown** for some residents until the block could be cleared and the backlog run through the system. Council cleared the blockage within a couple of hours and service resumed but it was a timely reminder that our wastewater system is only designed for toilet paper and human waste. DO NOT flush wipes (even ones that say "flushable"), nappies, sanitary products or wash fats down your pipes. These lead to terrible "fat bergs" in our pipes and the blockages and outages for whole areas of the town.

Ōpōtiki District Council has adopted the **2021-2031 Long Term Plan** and a host of associated fees and charges and policies to set the path forward for the coming ten years. Our LTP outlines the many things a council does and how they fit together. This document is a huge achievement so thanks to all who took the time to provide their feedback and help us set our path for the next ten years.

At the same extra ordinary council meeting on 29 June 2021, Council discussed the current issues with **roaming horses** in Ōpōtiki and considered next steps for managing leases and grazing on council land in the town area. Councillors have asked the horse-owner community to get together and help work towards a solution that doesn't move the costs of horse management on to other ratepayers. The matter will be next discussed at the August Council meeting.

## ŌPŌTIKI WHAT'S ON



**Sunday 18 July, 9.30am**

Planting natives at Ōpōtiki Golf Club

**Sunday 25 July, 9.30am**

Coast Care Dune Planting at Ōhiwa / Bryans Beach

And keep up to date with a wide range of regular events (Girls on Bikes, Embroiderers Club, Future Leaders Youth hui and many more). Find our more at the i-SITE.

This newsletter is produced quarterly by:



**Ōpōtiki District Council**  
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