

## Vision Motueka Chairman's Report for 2013

Presented by David Armstrong to the Annual General Meeting, January 30th 2014

This is our first official birthday. It was 13 months ago that we officially became a Charitable Trust. Before that we were a loose collection of people sorting out our mission and purpose, and thinking about or starting a few challenging projects. I'll call 2012 our infancy - learning to crawl - and if that's an accurate metaphor then 2013 was the year we learned how to walk tall. 2014 will hopefully be the year we learn to run.

### Achievements of 2013

This past year we have achieved much on several fronts - in projects undertaken, profile raised, and community acceptance. We've been ambitious and had great success in several endeavours, along with a few stumbles, thankfully all relatively minor. Here is a quick summary of the projects that we took on.

- **Library and Community Hub:** The concepts and analysis achieved during 2012 came together in a well-researched proposal put to TDC in March. We trust this is being used as part of its consideration of the redevelopment of a new town library. The total hub concept remains an active long-term consideration.
- **Vision Murals:** Two outstanding murals have been almost completed, and considerable community publicity, approval and praise has been expressed. The project team is well placed to continue with this 5-year effort, both in raising funds and painting walls.
- **Celebrating Children's Day:** A successful event last year puts us in a sound position to support the event in 2014, along with the Family Service Centre and others.
- **Motueka Photo Library:** The first set of about 150 photos were collated and provided to several viewing points, including occasionally at the town's two cinemas.
- **Resources for Community Groups:** A suite of documents aimed at helping community groups get started and improve their performance have been made available on our website (and Motueka Online), and we are aware of several groups that have made use of them. They include an online database of contact details for all community groups and clubs.
- **Motueka Volunteer Awards:** This October event was a huge success, with much praise from those attending, strong positive reactions and excellent media coverage. The foundations are now in place to make this an annual event of some standing.
- **Motueka Music Network:** This website-based community has been running for some months now, with moderate success. Providing a platform for people to find local music teachers and performers and see local musical events coming up, it requires further work to get solid funding to keep it going, and to modify the website to add some key functions, including greater use and sharing by performers, venues and teachers.
- **Community Christmas Dinner:** This event was an outstanding success, thanks to the tireless organising team and scores of volunteer helpers and generous donors. The foundations are in place to make this an important annual event with which we can be proud to be associated as partners.
- **Motueka Moments:** Our fortnightly Fresh FM radio show has been well received and the station managers have encouraged Kahu and I to make it weekly starting yesterday. We have a line-up of people for the 15-minute chats who are doing interesting, positive things in the community.

- Motueka Shopfronts: Our work with Our Town Motueka to facilitate community groups prettifying vacant shop windows has had a good response and comments from people who say it's making the town look brighter and busier. This project has plenty of scope to get even better.

All these projects have involved a range of people on project teams, some being our own committee (aka "seed group") members and many being people working within other community groups who are working collaboratively with us on specific projects. My thanks to all those within and outside our numbers who have contributed time and effort to one or more of these projects.

The profile and community acceptance of Vision Motueka has improved considerably. It was understandable that when our ideas and goals were first aired in the media and at meetings, people would be sceptical and, in some cases, a little hostile. Our first major publicity, about the community hub proposal, would have caused quite a number to see us as stirrers and upstarts. A change was seen during 2013 as firstly the murals drew praise and then the Volunteers Awards event and now the community Christmas dinner highlighted some of our tangible goals. Now many residents are aware of our existence and beginning to see us as another major agent of community improvement, on a par with groups such as Our Town Motueka, Keep Motueka Beautiful, Motueka Arts Council, Rotary and Lionesses. Our occasional email reports and newsletters are now received by 101 people. Sadly, some people still see us as a threat to their settled existence, and we must work to convince them gently that we have the town's long-term benefit at heart - after all, some of them have done visionary work for the town in the past.

During the year we also set up some sound principles and practices of governance, which helped us to receive registered Charity status with the government. Our public mission and purpose statements made sure we could provide a clear profile of what we are trying to do, and stay on track with all projects. One task the trustees are tackling is to fine-tune these statements to accurately match our activities and make our goals even clearer.

#### Goals for 2014

This year I see further work being done on two fronts:

1. Continuing our on-going projects, starting a small number of new projects, and consolidating and improving those event-based projects which will get their second outing.
2. Strengthening and broadening our project and governance teams to include more people happy to help in specific ways, and bringing more younger people into community leadership roles.

1. One large and ambitious project that several people have said they will commit to this year is a kind of Neighbours' Day community 'treasure hunt', probably in early spring. These types of extensive community events have run successfully in a few other NZ towns. This will require a decent sized project team to get it off the ground, so we'll hope to get a better feel for how this goal will plan out in a month or two.

Our Strategy Group - an informal meeting of people interesting in long-term strategies to improve the town - has nearly sorted out its own purposes and this year we hope it will begin its first key activities - to critique and prepare a submission for Council's Annual Plan, and to seek better engagement with the Community Board.

It is likely that some of our group will be parts of some large and important town projects which are being, or may soon be, mounted by other groups. Examples are: the Museum/Parklands forecourt redevelopment; planning for the new library; seeking ways of helping Motueka make best advantage of the cycle trail; a possible sports facility initiative; a 'jobs for youth' programme; and a Motueka economic summit.

2. As with so many other community groups, we face the challenge of attracting new participants in our work, especially younger people. I'm asking those who are active supporters of Vision Motueka to talk with any of their friends and colleagues, especially those in the 35 to 50 age group, to see if they would like to commit some of their

time and energy to working on one or more of our project teams. I mention the 35-50 age range because (a) that demographic is the most likely to provide the influential community leaders of the next 20 years, (b) many of them have children moving into the high school (or beyond) age and may be looking for ways to broaden their horizon and devote some creative energy to community work, and (c) they are settled and likely to see a long-term future for themselves in the Motueka area, which they can help to shape.

We have seen already that while some people like to be general organisers within the Vision group itself and come to meetings (the committee of "seed group"), others prefer to work on one particular project but have little personal interest or available time for other projects. So the helpers we wish to "recruit" don't necessarily have to come to our meetings and take an active interest in all our projects. Some would rather get involved with projects that resonate with them - especially event-based ones where they can help build an event and then go into recess after it is over for one year. I believe that this second type of association is closer to the mindset of many younger people these days.

The project management model that is evolving and seems to be working for us is like a hub-and-spokes structure, like the diagram below. We had not planned this, but it has emerged and is now working really well for us. We have a central core of seed group members, in particular of about five people who are actively involved in at least one project (and some in a few projects), and around this and partly overlapping are project leadership teams that include specialists in each project but otherwise with no connection to us. I am very keen this year to see an even stronger and more broadly active seed group who can use their leadership skills to inspire others to work with them. Who would like to work with us in this way?

*"Leadership is not about being the boss and deciding and telling people what to do.*

*Leadership is the art of inspiring others to commit to and strive for shared aspirations."*

