

# **HAWKES BAY DIGITAL ARCHIVES TRUST**

**(THE KNOWLEDGE BANK)**

**ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 March 2021**

## **Background**

The Knowledge Bank is a Hawkes Bay community-based organisation, established in 2011 to create a living record of Hawke's Bay and its people through the creation and development of a digital archive.

Using a team of volunteers, old family photographs, film, letters, diaries, community group records and business archives are digitised. This material is returned to donors once processed. The Trust also has an active program of archiving oral interviews. These electronic copies are made available on the Trust website [www.knowledgebank.org.nz](http://www.knowledgebank.org.nz).

The Trust is located in the historic Stoneycroft historical building at 901 Omaha Rd, Hastings. These premises are owned by the Hastings District Council and are provided to the Trust at a nominal rental, with the Council assuming some other ownership responsibilities and the Trust meeting most operating expenses.

## **Introduction**

Notwithstanding the need to shut the premises for several weeks from late March until May and cancel some activities because of COVID the Trust processed and added a record amount of material to the database/website, thanks in part to the efforts of many volunteers, who worked from home during the shut-down.

The Trust has developed to become a well-known and respected feature of the Hawkes Bay historical and cultural scene, as described later in this report. However, there is scope to further develop its impact in the region including our connection with Napier City and with local Iwi and our Maori community, as discussed at the end of this report.

## **Governance and Management**

The Trust has a board of six trustees - Peter Dunkerley (Chair), Bev Watkins (Secretary), David Shand (FCPA)(Treasurer), Barry Cole, Kevin Atkinson (MNZM, FInstD) and Helen Walker (QSM). Kevin and Helen joined the board during the year, providing additional knowledge and expertise. Kevin brings extensive local business experience to the board.

Helen is our first board member from Central Hawkes Bay, and has had long involvement in community governance and business activities there.

The Board is assisted by a seven-member advisory committee (chaired by Grant Ancell) which oversees the evaluation, acceptance and processing of materials by our many volunteers and deals with administrative matters such as equipment and premises issues.

The Trust has an office administrator and an IT administrator working a total of 30 and 20 hours per week respectively. The Trust also has the services of a technical advisor on website issues who provides his services free of charge. There is a need for further part-time administrative support but this will require additional operational funding.

To guide its planning and operations over the next three years the Board has adopted a three-year business plan (2021-24). It has also adopted a risk management plan focused on protection of the Trust's financial sustainability, reputation, data base, equipment and other assets and adherence to legal requirements, including health and safety and copyright issues.

### **The Data Base (website)**

The Trust recognises the need to protect copyright which it holds over website content and has developed and publicised on the website appropriate conditions for the non-personal use of any website material. It is also conscious that material on the website should not breach any privacy requirements.

During the year the Trust received some 160 new collections of which approximately 100 were placed on the website and 300 collections which include some received in previous years have been processed for uploading to the website. The website now contains around 6,200 text documents 25,000 still images and some 370 oral history interviews

During the year the website received about 45,000 visitors a month, of which around 6,000 were new users.

The Covid-19 shutdown resulted in a record amount of work done by the volunteers at home, although naturally some did not choose or were able to do so. During the shutdown volunteers completed transcribing 30 collections and uploaded several large collections to the website. The shutdown provided an opportunity to learn to work more collectively on projects rather than as individuals and as a result output has increased considerably.

We continued to work on the A&P Society records and are now in the process of adding them to our website. At this stage we are only adding catalogues to website without being transcribed and are asking the public and volunteers to assist us with this task.

We completed scanning the Waiapu Scout collection and returned the 45 boxes to their National Headquarters. We continued to work on scanning other items for the very large A&P Society collection.

New collections received in 2020-21 include the Hawke's Bay Girl Guides, The Red Cross, Stortford Lodge Sale Yards and the Te Mata Park Trust.

The turn-around time for scanning materials was able to be reduced to approximately 3 - 6 months, depending on the size of each collection, having previously been up to 2 years. This reduction in the backlog of material for processing reflects the excellent work of our volunteers. However, the uploading of processed material to the website will always be a slower process. The transcribing is now covering material completed in 2018-19

The Trust recognises that its database should complement and not duplicate material held by other organizations. Accordingly, it is developing a collections policy to guide the evaluation and prioritisation of material offered to the Trust.

## **Volunteers**

The Trust's work relies on the efforts of its 120 volunteers, who undertake digital processing, scanning, data entry and research as well conducting oral history interviews. The Trust records its grateful thanks to all these people for their commitment and professionalism. We have volunteers working from Australia and other parts of New Zealand. Many are students who are undertaking the volunteering requirement of their study.

Logging into Stoneycroft by volunteers reduced to an average of about 1200 hrs per month due to the Covid shutdown but off-site proofreading and transcribing increased to about 300 hours per month.

In addition, three volunteers from the Disability Resource Centre (DRC) provided useful assistance. An exchange student from Germany studying at EIT (Eastern Institute of Technology) completed an internship with us during lockdown.

## **Outreach**

The Trust seeks to keep its supporters and the public aware of its activities, so that collections are donated, use of the website increases and fund raising is improved.

Recognising the importance of outreach activities, the Trust has adopted a communications strategy to strengthen this. The Trust is grateful to Diane Joyce of Joyce Communications for her invaluable assistance in our outreach program.

The results of this strategy have already been reflected in a number of ways, including press coverage of a number of events. A monthly newsletter was sent out during the year to the Trust's 1,200 members and supporters. The use of social media is also important and the Trust has its own Facebook page which includes Trust activities and information on some of the material which is available on the website.

Unfortunately, the proposed open day on 20 March had to be cancelled due to Covid-19.

Community talks explaining the work of the Trust are an important part of outreach and visitors are welcome and encouraged. However, these were affected by the Covid shutdown. Nevertheless, we were pleased to welcome visitors from Ahuriri Men's Probus Group, Ladies Group of Ahuriri and Princess Alexandra Retirement Village.

### **Information Technology**

A well-functioning and efficient IT system covering the Trust's servers, scanners, computers and associated software is a key component of the Trust's activities. It is also an important factor in maintaining volunteer morale and productivity.

However, equipment replacement and upgrading has fallen behind because of lack of funding. The Trust needs to replace the current computers and monitors most of which are over six years old to improve the reliability and efficiency of the IT system generally. Some recent grant funding has enabled some replacement of old computers and monitors as set out below under Finances. This included the need during the year to replace one of our servers which became non-operational with the cost being largely met by a private donor. Continuing problems with the serviceability of our old computers and monitors have slowed processing of materials and also discouraged our volunteers.

A prioritized equipment replacement list is being developed to solicit further funding from a major trust and from members and supporters later in 2021. This covers computers and monitors as well as a much needed but costly new camera.

### **Finances**

The financial statements for the year ended 31 March 2021 are attached to this annual report. They show an operating deficit for the year of \$10,125 and working capital (current assets minus current liabilities) of \$40,584.

The Trust operates with a modest cash operating budget (that is, excluding depreciation cost of around \$20,000 er annum) of about \$6,000 per month. Covering these operating costs has been a major concern over the years, although revenue during the year largely covered these cash costs. The operating deficit reflects lower grant income and a GST adjustment from the previous year. But greater funding for operational costs is needed for the Trust to be fully viable in the medium term.

In this respect we gratefully acknowledge the \$23,000 grant from the Hastings District Council for annual operating costs (as part of a three-year funding agreement) and a grant of \$25,000 from the NZ Lotteries Commission, also to assist in funding operating cost.

As a community-based organisation the Trust also receives income from its 120 members who pay an annual subscription of \$30 plus additional donations from these members and other supporters and from various community activities. A fund-raising campaign from November to February aimed at members and supporters raised an additional \$4,500 to assist with operating costs. The Trust is most grateful for the generosity of those who contributed and pleased at the extent of community support for the Trust which this assistance demonstrates.

The Trust also received a further grant of \$12,500 from the Hastings District Council's Community Grants Scheme for the operating and of processing of the A and P Association records and for the purchase of much needed replacement computer equipment.

Significant upgrading IT equipment is dependent on such specific funding from Trusts and Foundations. Apart from the support from Hastings District Council Community Grants Scheme the Trust gratefully acknowledges a private donation of \$5,000 and a \$1,000 grant from the Hawkes Bay Foundation for the purchase of a replacement server.

The Trust's had modest working capital of just over \$40,000 at the end of the year, sufficient to provide a buffer against any downturn in revenues or unanticipated increases in operating costs and to provide some funding for small equipment such as computers and monitors used by its volunteers, if the funds cannot be found elsewhere. It can also be noted that this amount includes the \$25,000 received from Lotteries Commission for operating expenditure in the 2021/22 year.

### **Maori History**

The Board is conscious of the need to recognize the history of Hawkes Bay from a Maori perspective. While some general discussions have previously been held with some local iwi, it will develop an engagement plan to further discuss with iwi and other local Maori institutions how a Maori perspective and content may be incorporated in its work.

## **Summary**

The Trust continued to make significant progress during the year notwithstanding the problems of the Covid shutdown.

- Through its outreach activities it is becoming increasingly well- known and appreciated across Hawkes Bay.
- This will grow as it receives more and more useful material for adding to the website
- However, it needs greater capacity to manage this, including ongoing upgrading of its IT equipment
- Thanks to the great work of volunteers, processing times and the backlog of material for processing have been reduced, notwithstanding the impact of the Covid shutdown.
- While it is now able to just cover cash operating costs, thanks to generous assistance during the year from Hastings District Council, the NZ Lotteries Commission and its members and supporters, the Trust continues to operate on a modest budget and has only modest financial reserves.
- Additional funding for upgrading IT equipment is a key requirement
- Recognizing Maori history in Hawkes Bay is an important issue to be addressed in the coming year.

## **Acknowledgements**

The Trust gratefully acknowledges

- the work of its volunteers and the oversight provided by its advisory committee
- the hard of work of its administrator and IT support and technical personnel

On behalf of the Board

Peter Dunkerley

Chair

29 October, 2021

