



PARKSIDE

community centre for 55+

Annual Statement
2020-21

TE TAHA O TE PAPA TAKARO



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Chairman's Report



The 2020/21 year was an extraordinary and tumultuous year, yet a lot was achieved. It began with Parksyde being closed for 10 weeks thanks to COVID.

This caused the Board a great deal of apprehension, as non-profit organisations struggle within a no-income environment, but also there was anxiety for the well-being of those members of the community who rely upon Parksyde for their social, recreational, health and education needs. A number of our regulars live alone in bubbles of one, and the loneliness and fear generated by COVID was a real problem for them to cope with. Our manager, Robyn Skelton, worked tirelessly using a number of initiatives to support 120 of them. Our community is in debt to her.

Returning to normal operations was a slow process as people overcame their fears and came to terms with the new reality. An exhibition of works of art conceived during the lockdown was held. This exceeded our expectations many times over as 138 works were displayed. It also helped kick start the return from lockdown.

Since then Parksyde has gone from strength to strength. Activity numbers are 25% up on last year which has led to similar increases in participation numbers. At the onset of COVID an eNewsletter was started with 90 enrolments which now goes to 800 recipients. Volunteer numbers now stand at 95 and they have contributed 8900 hours to keep Parksyde functioning over the 37 weeks we were open this year. Attendances at the cafe, hairdresser and pedicure salons are growing also. The cafe in particular had a difficult time in the period after reopening as numbers slowly built. Now they are averaging better numbers through the cafe than last year. The caterers are to be congratulated for seeing this challenge through to the end.

Last year, following on from a Strategic Review, an action plan was put in place to provide development on our site. Inevitably, progress on this has been affected by COVID and in particular the feasibility study for a new building. Nevertheless, other things have proceeded. The Trust's house at 5 Tarewa Place has been repurposed from a custodian's residence to offices. Aged Concern now occupy it as tenants.

Financially we survived the year in good shape thanks to the Government subsidies and support from a long list of philanthropic foundations and trusts. These organisations have been, and are critical to our ability to provide a service to the citizens of Rotorua. Our deep felt thanks go to the Rotorua Trust, the Lottery Community Fund, the Rotorua Lakes Council, the Southern Trust, the Phillip Verry Foundation, the Four Winds Foundation, the Bay Trust, the Ironman Foundation, the Geyser Foundation, the Community Organisation Grants Scheme, and the Rotary Club of Rotorua North.

The building is now nearly 20 years old. This shows an increased expenditure on maintenance. The flat roofs are sheathed with butynol which has reached the end of its economic life. A number of leaks have plagued us over the last few years, so it is now time to replace the butynol. Funds are being raised for that purpose and conversations held with suitable roofing contractors. This is a major task. Other maintenance tasks such as furniture replacement, carpets and floor coverings and painting have occurred over the years as and when necessary. Fibre has been installed and computing facilities upgraded, which leaves the internal network to be attended to, as all users both commercial and activity are demanding more modern access to tools that are available elsewhere.

Finally, I wish to thank my fellow trustees, volunteers all, for their wisdom and the care and consideration that they hold for Parksyde in making their decisions about its future, Wendy Fraser, Peter Farrell, Terry Hefferen, John Murray, and Dennis Walsh. A large part of the success of this year lies at the feet of our manager, Robyn Skelton. Her willingness to go above the call of duty and beyond normal expectation to rebuild Parksyde after the trauma of lockdowns and to restore its heart, making it the home away from home, that for many is hard to overstate. We thank you.

Peter Fitchett | Chairman
The Older Persons Community Centre Trust

Background

Parksyde is a community centre providing facilities for people aged 55 and over.

It is governed by the Older Persons Community Centre Trust and employs one permanent staff member.

A not-for-profit, the trust was established, and the centre built in partnership with Rotary in the year 2000, as part of the Rotorua Energy Charitable Trust's identified and funded Millennium Projects.

The facility caters for organised activities, club activities, social occasions, events and more; **aimed at the social, recreational, health and educational needs and activities of the older people within the Rotorua District.** Over 1,000 attend Parksyde per week. It is fundamentally run by volunteers and managed by the users. There is no other centre like it in New Zealand as there is no membership fee, and the average age is 74 years old, although the age ranges from 65 to over 90.

Parksyde provides a facility (whakarunga) that caters for the needs of the older persons (kaumātua) in Rotorua.

Parksyde is committed to:

- Promoting a better quality of life for kaumātua (manaakitanga).
- Fostering a safe and caring community through community spirit, community support and social connection (whakawhanaungatanga).
- Supporting a healthy community for personal health and emotional well-being through the encouragement of physical activities, mental stimulation, and social engagement.
- Maintaining the whakarunga and environment to an attractive, welcoming, and high standard.
- Ensuring easy access for kaumātua with no membership cost and ample, free car parking.
- Providing a Café (whare kai) to support on-site activities.
- Planning for future and additional community services for kaumātua at Parksyde.
- Supporting community organisations to be connected and/or working collaboratively to deliver effective social services for kaumātua, allowing greater efficiencies, impact, and benefits (kotahitanga).
- Empowering volunteers with opportunities to be well trained and supported to sustain quality services (whakapiki pūkenga).
- Encouraging kaumātua to be connected to their communities through support and services that address isolation (tātau tātau).



Activities overview

NUMBER OF ACTIVITIES RUNNING

28 prior to 1 April 2020

33 as of 31 March 2021

ACTIVITIES

Bokwa, Book Club, Canasta, Chess, Card Making, Counterpunch Parkinsons, Dance Sport, Embroiderers' Guild, Indoor Bowls, Line Dancing, Mah-jong (x3), Parksyde Café Knitters, Probus North, QE Health Balance Upright Standing, Rotorua Hospital Auxiliary Knitters' Group, Rummy-O, Scrabble, Seated Aerobics (x2), SeniorNet, Square Dancing, Table tennis (x2), Tai Chi (x2), Travel Club, U3A History Group, Yoga, Zumba (x2)

PARKSYDE SALON

Hairdressing – every Tuesday and Friday
Toenail Care – every Thursday

PARKSYDE CAFÉ

Open weekdays for morning tea, lunch, and special occasions by arrangement. Offers both cabinet food and daily specials

PARKSYDE LIBRARY

Free borrowing
Jigsaw library with over 250 jigsaws
Fiction library with over 1,000 books



Our statistics

OPEN

We were open for

37 WEEKS

Closed due to COVID-19 for

10 WEEKS

Parksyde closed 26 March 2020 and re-opened 8 June 2020

Level 4 – 33 days; Level 3 – 16 days
Level 2 – 25 days; Level 1 - opened

Christmas closure for

5 WEEKS

VOLUNTEERS

95 Parksyde Volunteers

8,900

Volunteer hours given to 'run' Parksyde

ACTIVITIES

33 PARKSYDE ACTIVITIES

(11 new in 2020-21)

ATTENDANCE (WHILE OPEN)

200 PEOPLE per week on average attended our Café

560 PEOPLE per week on average attended our activities

300 PEOPLE per week mix-aged on average attended commercial activities

E-NEWSLETTERS

31 e-Newletters sent during the year

90 PEOPLE receiving the e-Newsletter prior to 1 April 2020

800 PEOPLE receiving the e-Newsletter by 31 March 2021

Covid-19

Impact on older people

Parksyde shut its doors Thursday 26 March to Sunday 7 June 2020 due to COVID-19.

Lockdown identified that elderly people were particularly vulnerable to COVID-19, not only due to being susceptible physically due to their age and possible pre-existing medical conditions, but also due to the risk to their mental health, because of lockdown isolation.

Research from the University of Auckland shows older people can continue to make friends at any age, providing there is a connection over mutual interests and a level of reciprocity is achieved and sustained. Professor Merryn Goff, of the School of Nursing, states that there are health benefits to being connected in general. A recent Otago University analysis of 292 centenarians free from common-age related diseases showed having social activities of long-lasting interest helped decrease the chances of developing chronic illnesses and increased the chances of living past 100.

In 2020, UN Secretary-General António Guterres noted that "The COVID-19 pandemic is causing untold fear and suffering for older people across the world. Beyond its immediate health impact, the pandemic is putting older people at greater risk of poverty, discrimination and isolation."

On 31 March 2021, almost a third of Rotorua's population were classified as older people. A significant portion at that time lived alone and while many were still active and independent, according to the Lakes DHB statistics, a quarter of them experienced loneliness. This was exacerbated during Lockdown given the over-70s were told to stay home.

During COVID-19 lockdown, the Trust proved that it could quickly adapt its services to ensure it looked after the "Parksyders" that needed assistance during their lockdown isolation given the average age range for Parksyde attendees was between 70 to 74, the majority living alone. Parksyde had the systems and volunteer processes already set up to respond by providing support.



Parksyde took action

120 older people were supported during Lockdown with deliveries (mail, books, puzzles, groceries and more). Delivery petrol and operational costs were supported by the Geyser Foundation.

The support included direct communication and the establishment of support networks. Parksyde turned its "business-as-usual" from activity and facility management to supporting its Parksyde family.

This was done through:

- eNewsletter connection
- Over-the-fence visits
- Support with deliveries (mail, books, puzzles, groceries and more)
- Phone call support (involving the Parksyde Activity Leaders).

In addition, the "Parksyders" were challenged to "make something" over Lockdown. This gave them something to aim for each day during Lockdown. It motivated them to be productive and gave them something to look forward to after Lockdown, by a celebratory opening and Exhibition of their work. There was tremendous support from the older people. Comments included how it helped to get them through the Lockdown period.

- Exhibition over two weeks
- 138 pieces of art and craft displayed

The Exhibition was so successful Parksyde was asked by Rotorua Mayor Steve Chadwick to a limited display of it at her Concert for Seniors. Approximately 500 older people attended.

Lockdown also had a significant impact on Parksyde's financial situation. Parksyde could only re-open at Level One due to the social distancing safety requirements, so while the overhead costs to the facility were still accruing, there was no activity attendance fees to offset the costs.

Reliance was therefore sought from the various COVID-19 assistance funds including:

- The Phillip Verry Foundation
- Four Winds Foundation
- Bay Trust
- Ironman Foundation
- MSD wage subsidies
- Geyser Foundation
- The Community Organisation Grants Scheme (COGS)

In addition, for the year, assistance was received from:

- Lottery Community Fund
- Rotorua Trust
- Rotorua Lakes Council Partnership Agreement
- Rotorua Lakes Council Neighbour Matching Grant
- The Southern Trust
- Rotary Club of Rotorua North



Event Highlights

Parksyde COVID-19 Exhibition **June 2020**

- Celebrating work completed by Parksyder during Lockdown
- Open for two weeks
- Attracted 40-100 people per day
- Supported by the Rotorua Civic Arts Trust

Mayor's Exhibition and Concert **October 2020**

- Invitation to some of the Parksyder COVID-19 Exhibitors
- 37 pieces on display at the Rotorua Energy Events Centre

Bee BBQ Open Day **December 2020**

- Parksyde Gardens' clean up and Parksyde Open Day
- Attracted 25 volunteers who rejuvenated the Parksyde Gardens – special thanks to the Rotary Club of Rotorua for organised this and a number of days in the gardens
- Supported by the Rotorua Lakes Council Neighbour Matching Grant Fund

Parksyde Jazz Happy Hour Evening **November 2020**

- Social occasion to live Jazz performed by Jazzanova
- 100 people attended

Parksyde House Opening **December 2020**

- Official opening of Parksyde House, number 5 Tarewa Place
- House blessed by Father Tom Poata and ceremony opened by kaumātua Monty Morrison
- The Trust-owned house officially opened by Mayor Steve Chadwick, Older Persons Community Centre Trust Chairman Peter Fitchett, and Age Concern Rotorua Chairman Glenys Searancke
- Attended by over 40 people

FriendZone **February 2021**

- Social opportunity – an early evening supper amongst Parksyde Friends
- Last Thursday of the month in the Parksyde Cafe
- Started February 2021

Multicultural Council Senior Migrant Programme at Parksyde

- Run by the Rotorua Multicultural Council
- Aimed to help senior migrants of all cultures to keep physically fit and build their personal networks in Rotorua
- Over 70 attended from 15 countries
- Funded by the Office for Seniors



Projects

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, Engari he toa takitini

Strength and achievement come from everyone working together

Older Persons Community Services Hub at Parksyde

- In 2019, the Older Persons Community Centre Trust agreed to provide more facilities for the older people in the Rotorua District
- Stage One was to re-purpose the former Parksyde Custodian's accommodation to make it available to a service provider
- December 2020 renovation was completed and Parksyde House was leased to Age Concern Rotorua
- The House Renovation was funded by the Rotorua Trust
- Stage Two was to work with its people (Parksyders), agency and organisation partners to develop an approach for more services at Parksyde
- December 2020, stakeholder kōrero started, to gather ideas and establish interest for a community services Hub at Parksyde - specifically targeted to support the older people in the Rotorua District. Sufficient interest was indicated
- February 2021, the development of a project plan was initiated







Parksyde profiles



Sheila

"Putting the world to right" is one of the things Sheila Ray enjoys on her visits to Parksyde Activity Centre in Rotorua. Widowed six years ago, the energetic and vivacious 88-year old attends four different activities at Parksyde: Tai Chi, Zumba, Travel Club and Probus. "Parksyde allows me to keep active and stimulated. It's a place I feel I belong". She notes it is where she first came as a stranger and now comes to "meet friends who used to be strangers".

She describes it as a facility that allows older people often living alone to not only keep mentally and physically active, but also gives them a great place to socialise during an activity, over lunch or a cup of tea.

In 2011, the Tai Chi class asked their Chinese Activity Leader to help them organise a trip to China. Sheila describes her trip as the highlight of her then recently single life. She says it was something she would not have otherwise been able to do were it not for the Tai Chi class, initially strangers, who have now forged an incredible group friendship.



Mavis

Talking about her medical woes over a cup of tea was not something Mavis McDonald ever saw herself doing as she got older. She was diagnosed at the age of 73 with Parkinsons. Three years on, she is still not inclined to talk about her health and not 'over a cuppa'. Rather, you will find Mavis at Parksyde lifting weights and doing a good workout with the punching bag as part of the Counterpunch Parkinson's programme.

Five years ago, Mavis noticed a slight tremor and was shocked when a neurologist told her she had Parkinsons. What she didn't want was sympathy, nor did she want to be labelled. "If you are over 60 with grey hair, and a woman, you are often invisible to others. Add this to the fact that I had Parkinsons meant people didn't really see me; they didn't know what to say or do. It's a very lonely place to be".

Mavis decided she was going to "fight back". She joined Counterpunch at Parksyde; the programme specifically developed for people with Parkinsons and delivered by a team of volunteers supported by the Charity Books Before Boxing.

"Being able to punch a bag is wonderful therapy. It is not only left/right brain therapy but also lets out a lot of frustration, and we have a lot of fun".

Mavis attends the programme at Parksyde Centre once a week. She says her friends have noticed a huge difference, telling her they had found her very grumpy after the diagnosis, but now find her quite a changed woman. Mavis reports that she is even "planking".

Parksyder comments

*“It's my home
away from home”*

*“Love it, it keeps my
body and brain active”*

*“It's a place I feel
comfortable, where
I belong”*

*“Great place to come,
plenty of parking, and
great food”*

*“We've got carpet going
down at home today, it
seemed the perfect place
to come and relax with our
book and newspaper”*





Trustees



(Left to Right) Robyn Skelton (Parksyste Manager), Peter Fitchett (Chairman), Peter Farrell (Treasurer), John Murray, Wendy Fraser, Dennis Walsh (Deputy Chairman), Terry Hefferen (Secretary).

Parksyste Community Centre
7/9 Tarewa Place, Rotorua 3010
Phone: 07 348 9882 Mob: 021 275 8034
Email: office@parksyste.org.nz
Web: www.parksyste.org.nz

Sponsors

Nga mihi maioha ki nga kaitautoko o 2020-2021

Thank you to our 2020-2021 Sponsors







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