



Rakiura Haupukapuka

MAY 2006

Tena koutou

What's been happening?

The 2005 AGM was held at the Awarua Marae, Bluff, in late September. Mr Paul Morgan, the CEO of Wakatu Incorporation, was a guest speaker. Paul spoke of the Incorporation's early day experiences in trying to unite owners in a common vision. What the Incorporation lacked in capital and expertise was quickly overcome by the owners' desire and resolve to see their vision become a reality.

Today they can reflect on their accomplishments spanning 20 years of endeavours where they have established a highly respected Maori entity having commercial enterprises in many facets of the community in the northern part of Te Waipounamu.

Email addresses needed

In future, more information will be made available to owners through our web site. If owners have email addresses send them to the office, (rakiura@ihug.co.nz). This way we will be able to email owners relevant information.

Mahara Project (the beginning)

The trustees had the pleasure to present at last year's AGM a 20- minute video of the Mahara project. This comprised snippets and excerpts taken from work completed so far. Judging by the feedback the video was received positively.

Work is now under way to produce a commercial DVD from the Mahara material. This is scheduled for release around the time of the 2006 AGM and owners will have priority to purchase a copy.

Kia ora

Richard Manning, Secretary

Your 2006 AGM will be held on Rakiura on the last Sunday of September (24th). Programme details will follow closer to the time. For those who have never visited the Island, this is the opportunity to set aside a weekend to become acquainted with a unique part of Aotearoa. The most successful AGMs have all been held on Rakiura.

Message from the Chairperson

It is with a great deal of pleasure that I am able to provide you with a few comments as Chairperson of the Trust. The Trustees have been making good progress on a number of fronts as we continue the implementation of the business objectives achieved within the planning process we have been working through.

One of the highlights of the last few months has been the Trust's initiative to get a website up and running. We now have the basic framework of a website operating that will be progressively developed to meet a number of communication needs for the Trust, its beneficial owners and customers.

Setting up the website provides another means of keeping you up to date with the Trust and the activities it is currently involved in. It will give you access to information on the Trust any time you choose to go take a look. It will also develop to help the Trust market its services such as the hunting and camping opportunities. This will help the Trust get better and more valuable usage from our land through more bookings, ultimately providing more income.

The Trustees have recognised the need to

provide better access to information through the electronic media and the website will become one of the foundation stones in this area. The ability to dynamically up date the site with current information will mean a better service to owners than the distribution of the written word through newsletters. The newsletter will continue as we appreciate large numbers of owners will still need and rely on this very important aspect of the Trust's communication with its owners.

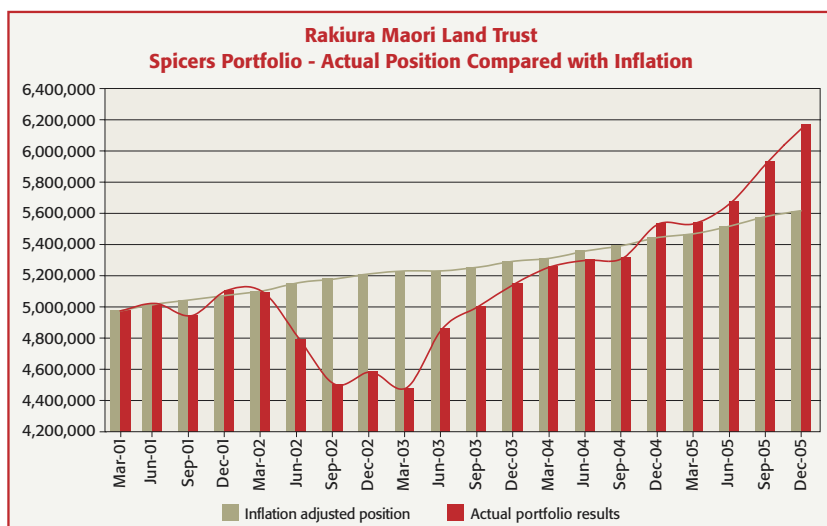
In addition to current information, the site will also be developed to provide access to a wealth of information on the history of Rakiura and the Trust's connection with this land. An excellent resource for all to use.

This will especially help the coming generations who have a connection to this land but may not be able to access and learn about Rakiura directly. We hope that you will take the time to visit our website and stay in touch as we develop it for you.

Please check out the start of your website.

www.visitrakiura.co.nz

Investment portfolio on the rise



As the end of the financial year has concluded, it is satisfying knowing that our Investment Fund Manager, Spicers, is at the top end of the national spectrum based on performance.

As the graph above shows, our investment has grown considerably over the last year and is now showing superior returns compared with the inflation adjusted graph.



Budgeting well advanced

Budgeting for the coming year is well advanced. Maintaining a consistent level of return on capital funds is never far from the trustees' minds, especially as global growth is forecasted to soften in the approaching years. Commissioning independent advice to identify land use options on a commercial footing will help to give direction to future investment.

The trust is fast approaching a time when they will need to consider direct investments in commercial ventures on Rakiura and to engage people with expertise in those respective fields.

Governance (succession planning)

The trustees have spent the past 12 months completing the Trust's "Governance Policy Document". While this document will continued to evolve, its existence will help to guide any new trustee appointed to the Trust with a clear understanding of Trust procedures and policies.

The trustees also felt it prudent to undertake a review process of the Trust's financial investments. This was a very worthwhile exercise and while no action has been implemented yet from the review paper, it has helped to focus future thinking in terms of policy and planning of capital reserves.

Reviews of other Trust activities are also planned in the coming months, such as the hunting operation. These independent reviews are seen as necessary to ensure the Trust seeks independent advice on how best to improve and strategically position Trust assets in the interest of the owners.

Strategic planning

This aspect of planning work is also drawing to an end. As an outcome, the trustees hope to commission a significant business case study.

Hut Building Programme

The fourth hut from our current building programme is scheduled to be erected at the North Lords River site in May. Occupation and response from hunters to the new facilities has been positive. Judging by the kill returns, deer numbers remain constant.

Management plan implementation – monitoring of flora and fauna

In the third week of December 2005, Roger Lough led a team of four people to measure species distribution, density and size of trees across the Tutae-ka-wetoweto forest.

Working in two pairs using GPS and compasses, the team measured tree species in nearly 60 7m-by-7m plots spaced at 500 metre intervals along nine parallel transects one kilometre apart.

In line with its commitment to the Trust's management plan, the Department of Conservation, at no cost to the Trust, provided two very capable staff (Richard Clayton and Charlotte Skeet) and field equipment for this five-day survey. The fourth member of the team was Carol Jensen, a very experienced South Island botanist.

The data collected is currently being analysed by Landcare Research Ltd at Lincoln and will help to determine requirements for long-term monitoring of tree mortality and recruitment in the coastal and inland forests of the Lords River.

The establishment of this long term monitoring will enable ongoing measurement and interpretation of future changes in forest health and will be essential for measuring the success of any future pest control.

Richard Clayton overview

Richard Clayton gives a realistic but sobering description of the situation at the Lord's River and reinforces the resource condition assessment in the management plan of 2003.

"In general, the forest condition is currently severely depleted in all strata with complete canopy collapse having occurred locally in some areas. It seems that for some species, (e.g. Southern Rata and Fuchsia) this has occurred increasingly over recent history. "Figure 1 shows the hillside behind the South Lord's Camp at Surveyors Bay with almost all of the dead trees being southern Rata. A good comparison photo of this is located in the management plan with much less extensive dieback apparent then.



Figure 1:
Dead rata at South Lord's Camp - Surveyors Bay

"Closer inspection of some of these trees near the track revealed very heavy possum scratch marks on trunks, confirming the cause of this high mortality. Hall's totara is also being selectively eaten out of the area, with many dead standing trees obvious from trips up the river. The heaviest areas of dieback were concentrated along, but by no means limited to, the southern banks of the Lord's River with the heaviest damage apparently nearer the coast. This suggests that sea-spray or extreme coastal weather might have also contributed to the problem.

"In the management plan there are photos of the banks behind the South Lord's with heavy defoliation/browse but with some individuals still alive. During the recent 5-day trip, only one fuchsia seedling was found and no foliage whatsoever on any of the mature trees.

"The high mortality of fuchsia has not been helped by a human component whereby many trees had been chopped or sawn down [near South Lord's] (figure 2).

"It would appear (based on forest condition) that hunting efforts tend to be concentrated around the areas which are accessible to camps, or likely drop-off points. These areas e.g. along the peninsula south of the Lord's River, tend to have extensive areas of regenerating saplings. However, the overwhelming majority of seedlings and saplings are of one species - Coprosma foetidissima, which is only mildly palatable to both white-tailed and red deer.





"In order to allow the most palatable species to replace themselves in the forest (such as broadleaf, fuchsia, wineberry, five-finger and seven-finger) the density of deer will have to be further reduced markedly. In comparison, the areas further inland (and therefore presumably less well-hunted) are often completely devoid of understorey vegetation and have areas with very heavy tracking.

"It should also be noted that even if a dramatic reduction in deer numbers is achieved, the regeneration of the forest will take many decades and centuries before it even resembles the state in which it once existed.

"Moreover, possums are having an enormous effect on many tree species in the area, some of which will continue to decline to the point of local extinction. During my extensive time conducting surveys of forests on Stewart Island, I have not seen damage this extreme. Although the majority of the Lord's River is in a comparable state to most of Stewart Island (e.g. along the northern coast), there were many examples of forest which is completely collapsing and effectively changing state into shrub land. As this continues to happen, there is a real danger that the process accelerates due to increasing

gap formation and edge effects.

"Although there is a real need to address some large issues with introduced mammals at Lord's River, I would stress that the entire area is not beyond help and if it is well-managed could one day return to a pristine state."

Ulva Island success

On a more positive note, the Trust might like to consider the huge biodiversity gains that have been achieved on Ulva Island, a pest-free 'sanctuary' in nearby Paterson Inlet. Over the past three decades there, white-tailed deer and rats were removed from the island and the restoration of a fully-functioning and healthy ecosystem is realistically being achieved.

Birdlife numbers down

Sadly, observations of birdlife seen during the survey were well below statistical requirements for valid interpretation. This reinforces earlier observations of very low bird populations, a disturbing feature and almost certainly a reflection of the pressure the forest and its wildlife have suffered from possums, rats, deer and cats.



*Figure 2:
Many trees have been chopped down near South Lords.*

Profile

Harold F. Ashwell – origins of the trust

My name is Harold F. Ashwell and I am an advisory trustee with Rakiura Maori Land Trust.

My association with the trust began in 1979, when Stewart Island was managed by the New Zealand Forest Service on behalf of the Lands and Survey Department.

Unhappy with the manner in which their hunters were treating the Maori lands, a few of us caring and concerned beneficiaries told them to clear out and took over the management ourselves.

We introduced rules of entry on to the lands to which the hunters readily conformed. In 1980 we had to withstand a challenge from

the Ngai Tahu Trust that we had no authority to do what we were doing. After a series of meetings throughout the North and South Islands, they lodged an application with the Maori Land Court to take over all Maori Land in Murihiku, Stewart Island and Ruapuke Island and develop them.

The Rakiura Maori Landowners Committee, which we called ourselves then, lodged an application for jurisdiction over the Maori Lands but in respect of the Rakiura Maori Lands only.

The hearing took place in the Maori Land Court in Invercargill in May 1981 at the end of which the judge reserved his decision but advised us that we should become an incorporated society because as a committee we had no teeth, no grunt.

We obtained our certificate of incorporation in September of that year and in January 1982 the judge vested all Maori Lands on Rakiura, some 101 titles, to the Rakiura Maori Land Incorporated Society under a 438 trust. Ngai Tahu's application was turned down.

In February 1982 the society held their inaugural meeting in Bluff and although it was advertised in 32 newspapers throughout New Zealand, the response was two people from Oamaru turned up along with 20 to 30 locals - a pretty poor response when you realise there are about 5000 beneficiaries in Lords River Block alone.

Rewi Fife was elected to the chair and I was elected secretary, a position I held for the next 14 years.

*Harold F. Ashwell
Advisory Trustee*



Half Moon Bay developments

Extension of the residential sewage system in Half Moon Bay and Horseshoe Bay took place in late 2005. The economic benefits of installing connections at this time on several Trust sections out weighed waiting for a later period in time.

The construction of a new roadway on the east side of Half Moon Bay is proposed, this could help to improve the development potential for some trust sections.



The Half Moon Bay township.



The proposed ridge road area on the east side of Half Moon Bay.

Contact details

Your views and comments are important to us and all feedback is welcome.

For information about the minutes of Trust meetings, the management plan, or any other correspondence with the trustees, please contact:

The Office, PO Box 77, Bluff, email rakiura@ihug.co.nz, or phone 03 212 8075.

Profile

David Bragg

Tena Koutou Katoa, my name is David Bragg, commonly known as crocket. I am a descendant of Kaiporohu Bragg on my father's side and of Teone TopiPatuke on my mother's side.



As such, I am proud to call myself a Rakiura Maori with bloodlines from the Waitaha and Kati Mamoe and Kai Tahu tribes running through me veins.

I was educated at the public school and had secondary training in Invercargill. At age 15 I left to go fishing on the deep blue sea and after a few years I gained my skipper's ticket.

I am presently employed as skipper of the cargo vessel "Explorer Douglas" running freight from the salmon farm in Big Glory Bay in Paterson Inlet to the processing factory in Bluff. These trips are taken in all types of weather.

I am a member of the Rakiura Maori Land Trust in whom all Maori land on Rakiura is vested and also of the Rakiura Titi Committee and of the Ruapuke Management Committee which was formed to control entry on to Ruapuke.

Since the advent of the Foreshore and Seabed Bill, Ruapuke landowners have been almost swamped by people trespassing on to their private lands necessitating the setting up of a committee to guard against encroachment on their property.

Ruapuke Island has many absentee owners who seem unwilling or unable to look after their lands but leave it to others thinking that its isolation makes it inviolate, but in these days of fast modern runabouts and helicopters, nothing is beyond reach.

Although my health wasn't the best when I was a small child, I survived and now I propose to serve my relatives and compatriots for as long as they want me.

*Heoi Ano
David Bragg, Trustee*