



MERRA Newsletter – December, 2018

Welcome to Summer..!



Broadband

Scotts Landing remains part of the government's Ultra-Fast Broadband roll-out. Chorus advises that Snells Beach's upgrade will begin next year with Scotts Landing residents to get a fibre to the door option hopefully the following year (2020-2021).

However in the interim MERRA has continued to work in the interests of residents north of 107 Ridge Road whose broadband (and phone) services remain very slow and unreliable. The recent upshot of this long-term representation is that:

- Chorus has had local contractors undertake a detailed on-site feasibility study of MERRA's case for residents north of 107 Ridge to get new connections back to the fibre-fed Charles St cabinet (rather than remain connected via copper wires all the way from Algies).
- We understand this recent scoping looked promising and has now been followed up by a detailed costing exercise in the past few weeks (you may have seen the Chorus vehicle in the area).
- Chorus (Wellington) has promised to advise MERRA as soon as the technical costings have been considered and a decision made.
- We are hopeful that this further round of advocacy will see all residents in the settlement have access to broadband to that is reliable and fit for purpose.
- We will update via the MERRA website as soon as we have further information.

Highfield Donkeys

MERRA has become a member of the Highfield Donkeys Society Inc. in support of their efforts to maintain this unique attraction in the area. We will also publish their newsletters on the MERRA website to further support them. Feel free to also join them as a private citizen. An application for this is on their newsletter.

Charles St Noticeboard & Produce Share Table

The project to upgrade the Charles St corner noticeboard to include a sheltered seating area is now complete. Thanks go to MERRA's working bee volunteers, **ITM Matakana** for supply of timber and hardware and to local residents for donations of materials including...

- Anna and Rob Friend for new white board, pin board and dog bowl
- Chris and Helen Russell for paint and hardware
- Denis and Tineke Wilde for retaining timber
- Alan Seelye for roofing iron

None of these improvements would have happened if it weren't for the dedication and skill of Stuart Windross who oversaw the design, procurement and building works – this is an asset at the heart of the community now and one we can be proud of.

The addition of the produce share table (under the little library) is also proving very popular. We invite all residents to give and take produce as availability allows. If you wish to display a notice please 'post' it between the Perspex covers and we will place it for you.

Annual Cleanup day

A big thank you to all the residents who showed up on November 4th to help make Scotts Landing beautiful again. A big haul of rubbish was collected. Thank you to Auckland Council for disposing of the rubbish as part of their regular collection. Thanks also to David Legg ably assisted by Jude Nye for coordinating the event.

Fire Trailer Shed

Another working bee on 14 November resulted in the fire trailer shed (top of Roberts Rd) receiving new door hinges, a new roof, and levelled foundations.

Thanks to Alan Seelye for the donation of new roofing iron and flashings and to Bill Townson, Mark Croft, Hubert Boeinghoff, Peter Seers, and David Legg for their construction work on the day. The community acknowledges and thanks Stuart Windross for spearheading this project. The fire shed should be good now for another 25 years!!

Neighbourhood Support

The Police have given us great input recently visiting on Deodar III to run a very informative and interesting evening for us all. A great turnout from the Scotts Landing Group and others from Mahurangi West also attending. It is very pleasing to see we have such a focused and committed attitude from both the Maritime and Land based officers who reiterated never to be afraid to call. They would rather attend a false alarm than miss a potential serious situation requiring police intervention. The message to share was 'don't be vigilantes' – call the Police.

Mark Topping took the stand on our behalf from a Boat watch perspective and his notes have been shared I understand – if you have not seen them, please be in touch with us via the MERRA website online enquiry page and these can be sent through to you. During the meeting the live-a-boards with their dogs and vehicles was raised. The Police are on to this and monitoring the situation.

When out and about, residents can take photos on their phones of anything suspicious and send it onto us at merra.nhs@gmail.com to relay to Police.

Recent sales of properties will mean some changes in residents and I am monitoring this via the local Coordinators to ensure we get the Neighbourhood Watch information to them – if anyone does come across a new neighbour while out and about, please let us know via the MERRA website contact page.

On 04 Nov, a message was sent out from someone at Jamieson Bay concerning someone in distress on an upturned dinghy. This was resolved successfully.

'Tis the season to be watchful, especially of your land stored water toys. Ideally, these should be secured and away from waterways or view. Boaties are encouraged to keep a look out for each other's craft and to report any suspicious activity on or nearby.

More people, boats and vehicles will be around and most just going about enjoying the amenity. Let's just be vigilant for the exception who might be looking to take off with your stuff.

Community Response Group

The Scotts Landing CRG (Citizens Response Group) held a "Shake Out" exercise on 18th October 2018 at Fergusson House where around 25 residents met for a shared morning tea and a discussion about being prepared. Scotts Landing residents are well aware of issues that can affect us, including road slips, power outages, etc. Fergusson House is our designated Citizens Civil Defence Evacuation meeting point. We hold our emergency radios, generators and other equipment there for emergency use. We made our tea & coffee with power from the generators to simulate a power outage.

Scotts Landing CRG is part of the Rodney area collective CARRE (Communities supporting Awareness and Readiness - Rodney East) previously known as “the Mothership”, and through this collective we are working on securing 4 x handheld radios for our area for use in emergencies. These will be in addition to the radios we have currently which we can use to communicate with Auckland Emergency Management during any emergency. Through our collective group we are developing material for distribution to help households, street and communities prepare for unexpected events.

We have been invited to attend an emergency training exercise at Bledisloe House Auckland Emergency Control Centre which takes about two hours and immerses participants into a real emergency situation. Anyone interested in attending please contact Peter Seers. peter@seers.me or 021 373835

Defibrillator

Auckland Council generously provided MERRA with a defibrillator 2 years ago. After an extraordinary process with Auckland Council lasting 2 year (!) we are very close to siting the device on the noticeboard on the corner of Ridge Road and Charles Street.

The device will be housed inside a marine grade stainless secure cabinet. Access to it will be via a call to 111 to obtain the key code. That call will also initiate the dispatch of emergency services.

Once we have everything in place, we will be running a training session annually to help people in various situations to access the device and to plan for a unique strategy for them to get the device in a timely manner when it is necessary.

Stay tuned in the New Year for more.

Roads and Walkways

MERRA has worked with Council to reinstate the maintenance of paths and walkways that had fallen off the radar with the change of contractor. It now seems after a few reminders that the walkways around Burton Wells, Schoolhouse and Ngaio Bays are again receiving periodic clearing/mowing. We will continue to monitor this.

The serious road subsidence by Lawrie’s farm is finally under repair after the initial June date was abandoned due to technical concerns. It is good to see that a substantial retaining job is now being carried out and that MERRA’s repeated requests for it to be completed prior to the busy summer season may have been heeded.

Chorus is yet to repair its eroded-out trench inboard of the slip below Ferguson House despite a formal request from MERRA (via Auckland Transport) over 2 months ago followed by a reminder just recently.

Fire Team

If you are unsure of your ability to have a fire, check out the Auckland Council web site and type in your address.

<http://www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/EN/LICENCESREGULATIONS/RURALFIRE/Pages/aucklandrural.aspx>

In general however, summer is the time to watch any fire very carefully and to act quickly if it gets out of control. Please take the following link to the MERRA website and download and print off the instruction in the event of a fire. It is wise to have these instructions on hand and close to the phone in case you need them in a hurry.

<http://www.scottslanding.org/fire/>

Our first line of defense is the fire team who train regularly to be first responder to small local fires before the Fire Brigade arrives. Please ensure you call 111 first though..!

If you want to join the fire team and learn how to use our first response equipment please contact Bill Townson (425-6121 or bimon@xtra.co.nz) if you want to volunteer – the team trains for an hour every second month so not much impact on your time.

MERRA have started a tank register service where the location of your water tanks is logged with the fire team. This advance information can save precious minutes and therefore property so we urge residents to register the water tanks on their property as soon as possible by taking the link to our fire page <http://www.scottslanding.org/fire/>. Note you need to complete the form for each tank you want to register. Our thanks to fellow resident Rhys Lewis for compiling the register for MERRA.

The Mahurangi Cruising Club Year Book 2019

The latest edition of the Year Book is now available by contacting Kelsay (Kelly) Grovehills, 66 Ridge Road – 021 981 261. The usual purchase price is \$20 but Scotts Landing residents who buy or order copies before Christmas may buy the same for \$15 a copy. You can also order online at <https://scottslanding.org/mahurangi-cruising-club-year-book-now-available/>

The Year Book continues to grow. This year its 108 pages include stories ranging from round the world sailing adventures to green-lipped mussel re-instatement in the Mahurangi Harbour as well as the traditional full paged photographic record of the classic yacht regatta held here every Anniversary Weekend.

Brilliant Christmas stocking filler!

MERRA Membership – have you paid your dues..?

Thank you to all those residents who have made a financial contribution to MERRA via the annual subscription of \$12.00 per property or in some cases a donation included with the subscription. Your contribution assists MERRA to bring community events and enhancements to the Scotts Landing area for the enjoyment of the residents and its visitors, some of which have been mentioned in this newsletter.

We have been fortunate enough to receive two sponsorships which will go towards the hosting and domain name renewal of our Scotts Landing website, these have come from Jacky Brock and Karl Hodgson of Harcourts Snells Beach and from Wendy Milne of L J Hooker Warkworth so if you looking for a local agent check their listings out on the Scotts Landing website.

For those residents who may have missed our email reminders or have simply not yet got around to it, we are still accepting MERRA subs of \$12.00 per property for the current financial year. You are able to pay the subs via internet banking as per the details below, by cash or cheque which can be given to Susan Jelicich (Treasurer) 74 Ridge Road or Mark Croft (Chairman) 88 Ridge Road. If you require a receipt please email Merra.treasurer@gmail.com and I will send a receipt by return mail.

BNZ Bank Account Details
Mahurangi East Residents & Ratepayers Assoc Inc
02-0480-0033353-000

Animal Pest Control

THE GOAL – Scotts landing Predator Free by 2023.

We held a very successful predator workshop in October this year with close to 60 residents attending to learn about predator species – their habits and how to control them. Attendees were given a dual purpose trap and bait station.

Residents controlling predators in and around their homes is a big part of the MERRA strategy to be predator free.

In addition, we will shortly be installing 30 stoat traps around the peninsular to target mustelids who are by far and away the most successful killers of native fauna, particularly ground inhabiting species.

Spring and summer sees a natural increase in animal pests. The breeding season and an abundance of food can make animal pest numbers swell.

If you have seen or trapped or killed an animal pest, please report it on the MERRA web site. It only takes a few moments but provides valuable information to us. Visit <https://scottslanding.org/animal-pests/> and bookmark the page.

If you would like to talk to us about an animal pest issue at your place or join the Predator Free campaign, please call Mark on 425-4919 or 021 632 240 or drop into 88 Ridge Road.

Plant Pests

The Ngaio Bay Working Group has achieved its goals for 2018. – Thanks Team

1. Completed clearing the triangle at the edge of the Ngaio Bay carpark which after removal of a massive pile of growth has been successfully grassed.

2 Removed regrowth of jasmine and Japanese honeysuckle, etc. in recently cleared areas and planted more natives which have been supplied by Council.

3 Planted the area that has been cleared twice in front of “Maggie” the goat’s home.

Additionally:

4. Planted native shrubs and grasses on sea side bank of path where 2 large macro trees were taken down.

More work is now required in newly planted areas which have taken very successfully as the recent warm weather and wet conditions has seen an outburst of weeds and possible watering/monitoring over summer.

The group will reconvene in 2019 with Beckie (Ak. Council) to plan next steps. We thank Roy and Beckie from Auckland Council for their continuous support and welcome any other interest in joining our group. Phone Heather (4256684) if you are interested in helping.

Chris Russell continues to be a great source of advice and help for weed treatments. Call for advice on 425-5672.



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The Ngaio Bay working group and Beckie at the volunteer lunch hosted by Beckie (Auckland Council) at Tawharanui Regional Park. Absent Chris and Helen Russell

Upcoming Events

Now is the time to put the following events in your diary:-

Annual Cricket Match at the MCG (Mahurangi Cricket Ground) – Tuesday 1st January, 2019 2pm weather permitting. Check the MERRA website and noticeboard on the day for a weather cancellation notice.

Annual BBQ at Scott House – Sunday 3rd March, 2019

MERRA Annual General Meeting & shared lunch at Scott House – Sunday 28th April, 2019

Everyone is welcome at these events.

Season's Greetings

The MERRA Committee wishes all of our residents and their families a happy and safe holiday season.