



**Community Newsletter from the Committee of the Mahurangi East Residents
& Ratepayers Association (MERRA)**

December 2023

www.scottslanding.org



Welcome to our last newsletter of 2023. The warmer weather has arrived, the pōhutukawa are out in force and we are looking forward to a great summer - anything would be better than the last one!

Seawall and Ridge Road Improvements



The new sea wall at Scott Point is due to be completed before Christmas but finishing touches to landscaping etc are not expected to be finished off until the new year.

Once this is completed MERRA will install the last of its six historical trail benches at Scott Point. We encourage residents to take visitors and family on the trail over the summer. You can get details of the seat locations with their commentaries on our website at <https://scottslanding.org/historic-trail/>

Unfortunately, the work to repair and improve the gravel section of Ridge Road has been delayed until the new year and the physical works are scheduled to commence in the middle of January. This has been a deliberate decision by the contractor to avoid conflicting movements of trucks and machinery with the sea wall project.

Although the carpark is expected to be reinstated at the completion of the seawall project, it remains unclear as to whether the carpark will be sealed. MERRA understands that the carpark is not included as part of the road improvement project, as the delineation is just before the toilets. MERRA has reiterated the need to contour and surface the carpark at the same time as the road.

Watch this space!

Grant funding for new emergency equipment



MERRA has successfully applied for Ministry for Primary Industries (MPI) funding to support the recovery of rural communities affected by North Island weather events. A grant of \$11,500 from MPI has enabled MERRA to invest in new community response equipment, including:

- a fully self-sufficient solar powered battery backup system with inverter to run emergency communications, lighting and power in the event of an emergency.
- a Starlink communications satellite system which will provide us with full time communication during any blackout.
- two Honda EU22i suitcase generators, each being capable of running most appliances and only half the size of the two 4.5kva generators we have now trailered for ease of delivery. The new generators are capable of being connected together to operate as a 4.4kva generator, providing us flexibility and greater resilience in the event of any future emergency.
- eight handheld rechargeable radios for use in the field should this be needed. These can also be used by our fire trailer team or our Local Network team, allowing us to stay connected in any emergency.

Thanks to Peter Seers and Stuart Windross for their work on preparing the grant application and sourcing the equipment.

Remembering Lindsay Crocker



It was with great sadness that we learned of the passing of Lindsay Crocker earlier this year. Lindsay was a tireless supporter of our community and a valued member of MERRA, serving on the Committee up until his death. Lindsay provided positive energy to our meetings and consistently challenged us. He was a very active member of our community and was seen regularly walking his dog Ernie whenever he could. His positivity and enthusiasm will be sorely missed.

In memory of Lindsay, the Redford Crocker family has been actively engaged in a fundraising campaign to support the establishment of a Healing Garden at North Shore Hospital. MERRA has made a donation to the fund on behalf of our community, as have a number of individuals in the community, and we commend this to you as a worthwhile donation.

Lindsay's wife Robyn Redford wishes to acknowledge the generosity of so many locals who have supported the Healing Garden fundraiser already. She has provided the following background:

"For those unaware, I am keen to tell you about a project our Redford Crocker family is involved in. We are fundraising for the Healing Garden to be created in the atrium of a new hospital currently being built on the North Shore Hospital campus. It will benefit patients, visitors and healthcare workers daily. The new hospital will service greater Auckland and Northland opening in April '24.

"We are fundraising in Lindsay's memory since, as you may know he spent his last 23 days in the renal ward of North Shore Hospital, cut off from any sign of nature or greenery and too far from his beloved Scotts Landing. If our family can raise enough funds they promise to put a plaque for him in the Healing Garden. His ashes were scattered at his favourite beaches and launching spots around here and on his family farm, so he has no gravestone and this public indoor garden will be his memorial spot.

"Every dollar donated goes towards the garden. It's tax deductible and a receipt is generated immediately. Rotary are chipping in for December to match dollar for dollar for every donation up to \$25,000. If you choose to donate in Lindsay's name, please add the word "Crox" in the dedication/comments section and put where you live to show the geographic spread. They're keeping a separate tally for funds raised in his name and I'm sure he'd appreciate the competitive element of our quest. The website is: <https://www.giveabitofgreen.co.nz/en/>

"With many thanks for your support if you'd like to".

War on Rats Update



In the three months since MERRA launched the war on rats, 72 catches have been reported. November saw a steady catch rate which is to be expected as our trap line settles into its place in our overall animal pest control programme. Alongside our other trapping activity targeting mainly mustelids (stoats & weasels) and our very wide bait station activity, our back-yard trapping programme is definitely making a valuable contribution to MERRA's overall predator free goals.

For those who have back-yard traps, a reminder to keep your traps set and refresh your baits every two weeks. If you have yet to catch anything and want some help, email merra.pests@gmail.com and we can arrange a review at your place to see if there are any techniques that can be deployed to improve your chances.

Working bees



A big thank-you to the 25 people who helped out at recent working bees to release new native planting at Mahurangi East Regional Park. Around 60 person-hours of work meant that sufficient releasing was done to satisfy the Ranger for the 2023 spring release. MERRA has scheduled further working bees at the park in 2024, in autumn (6 April and 27 April), and again in spring (5 October and 26 October). There is also some weed spraying needed, which will be done in or around the Spring working bees.

Native planting funding applications



MERRA is inviting applications from landowners for the next round of native planting as part of the Mahurangi Land Restoration Programme (MLRP) which aims to reduce sediment entering the harbour by restoring the natural vegetation cover, which will help to bind and stabilise soil, absorb rainfall, and reduce erosion and the overland flow of sediment. Over the last two years MRLP has funded over 6,000 seedlings on private land in Scotts Landing.

Funding is available for planting on:

- Waterways - permanent or intermittent streams, springs, headwaters
- Coastal margins
- Wetlands
- Critical source areas e.g., steep, erodible land
- Native bush that contains a waterway

If you would like to discuss the project or apply for some plants for next year, please email merra.localnetwork@gmail.com

Dog poop on the rise



A friendly reminder to please do the right thing and clean up after your dog when you are out and about enjoying a walk. There has been an increase in the amount of dog poop on the roadside, beaches and grassed areas recently, so please take a bag and clean up after your furry friends!

Save the Date

Sunday 10 March 2024 – The annual MERRA Picnic at Scott's House. The picnic is a great opportunity to mix and mingle with others in the community in a relaxed, informal setting, with a light lunch provided. The picnic is free for MERRA members, and a small charge is made for non-members. (Rain date 24 March)

Saturday 6 April and 27 April – autumn working bees at Mahurangi East Regional Park

Sunday 5 May 2024 – MERRA Annual General Meeting, at Scott's House

Saturday 5 October and 26 October – spring working bees at Mahurangi East Regional Park



MERRA thanks you for your support this year.

Best wishes for a safe and happy festive season!