

QUEEN'S REDOUBT TRUST - CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2015-16

Those of you who came to the AGM last year may think that not much progress has been made since then, but in reality considerable progress has been made behind the scenes, most notably in the form of developing a concept plan for the visitor centre in conjunction with the creative guys in Waiheke Island-based Snapper Graphics. Once we had a concept plan we were able to get it costed (well over \$100,000) and go to funders. We secured a grant of \$68,000 from Foundation North (about half what we need in total) and were able to formally contract Snapper Graphics to begin work on the layout and displays following an outline of the stories we wanted to tell. We have also been working with Ngati Tamaoho, particularly through their representatives on the QRT- Hero Potini & George Wheatley, to make sure their story is adequately told. I acknowledge their contribution and interest in the project.

With regard to seeing anything on the ground, or more accurately in the display room next door, there won't be much to see until early next year. Snapper Graphics will get as much designed and built as they can with the available funds but prefer to install it in one hit rather than do lots of trips to install bits & pieces.

The perceived wisdom with regard to interpretive displays, i.e. story telling is not to try and tell too many stories and in particular not present them in a long-winded fashion (less is best). It is also important to identify a lead story and try and get key messages across- which in our case is outlining what lead up to NZ Wars and the impact of the Wars on NZ, both then and now - consequences which we all experience today. So we will be tweaking the displays right up to the last minute. I know from experience the guys from Snapper Graphics think outside the square. Before the displays are finalised they are likely to present us with suggestions for the displays we and they haven't thought of yet. The Snapper Graphics people have also been doing their own research and uncovered some great maps and other information in archives in London. Another job for the coming year is to try and get another grant of c\$60K to complete the displays which may include some outside panels.

As you can see we have made considerable progress on fitting out this room- which is a combined meeting room, work room and small research library but have been frustrated by the District Council's on-going delays to connect this building and our house to the new Pokeno sewage scheme. As a result we have not built our toilet yet, nor got our sink and fire hose plumbed in. The most recent communication we have had from the DC is that we will be connected in October 2016. It can't happen soon enough because we have been having on-going problems with the septic tank serving the house necessitating regular pump outs at \$400 each time.

As part of the fit out of the work room, we are establishing a small research library. To this end we applied for a grant from Waikato DC's community grants funds for a computer, scanner, printer and WIFI connection. While we were successful with our grant bid we have not established an internet connection here yet. Ian and I continue to photocopy everything we can about the Redoubt, and the NZ Wars in general, besides acquiring key reference books. Ian has compiled a spreadsheet of our library holdings and another one called a

'Chronology of Events relative to Queen's Redoubt (with special focus on the regiments and other forces that were here). Ian and I are intending to write a small history of the redoubt (the problem is deciding what to leave out- there is no shortage of information but unfortunately not a lot of images).

In the absence of any substantial displays yet the official opening has been deferred further. We want to have at least a few displays set up so people can get an idea of what we are about. Hopefully the building will act as a focus and advertisement for the Trust's endeavours and help attract a few more active members who are prepared to put in the time and effort to achieve the QRT's vision. Once we have some displays in the building, it will be opened on demand by volunteers that we need to recruit. We anticipate the first open days will coincide with the Pokeno market days which attracts a lot of visitors to the village.

This is the second year where we have had few of our traditional earthworks working bees, partly because we have been focussed on getting the visitor centre completed and up and running. But the other reason is that we have more or less replicated enough of the ditch and bank to satisfy our purposes and we are now into a maintenance phase which is not nearly as appealing as the building phase. As none of the committee members are getting any younger, we have begun investigating employing people to help with the earthworks but it will require an on-site supervisor.

During the year Ian produced two more editions of our Newsletter- 'Despatches' 18 (December 2015) & 19 (June 2016). I am sure those of you who have seen Ian's informative newsletters will agree he does a great job being a combination of reports on progress and interesting snippets of history or newly discovered information in archives.

One issue that seriously concerns me is future-proofing our Trust, i.e. basically ensuring its survival into the future. None of us are getting any younger. We really need to attract a few new members every year to keep things ticking over. In particular we need to get people in Pokeno involved. If this project is to survive it is absolutely essential that at least a few of the locals see value in it and want to be involved. To this end getting some displays set up is critical. It will hopefully encourage 'locals' to visit the site and learn about it and Pokeno's history. Once we have some displays set up I propose a letter drop to every household in Pokeno outlining the project and with a view to recruiting some volunteers. We can't open the visitor centre on a regular basis without local volunteers.

I would like to thank all the trustees, volunteers and supporters of the Queen's Redoubt Trust for their work in the 2015-16 year. But again I have to especially acknowledge Ian Barton's contribution. In the absence of site restoration working bees the past couple of years, Ian probably puts more hours into the project than the rest of us combined. Among the many things he has done this year has been standing in for me, writing grant applications, research and compilation of Despatches; updating our library accessions,

and on-going liaison on all the often vexatious dealings with WDC (especially the oft delayed sewage connection), besides doing both the secretary and treasurer roles. I hope someone else can take on some of the work this coming year.

Neville Ritchie

Chairman, Queen's Redoubt Trust, 22.07.2016

QR Milestones

Establishment of QR Charitable Trust	Feb 1999
First QRT Newsletter produced (last in December 2006)	November 1999
Purchase of QR property with ASB and NZ Lottery grants	March 2002
Bollards installed to define redoubt ditch	October 2002
QR roadside signs erected	August 2003
Initial concept & conservation plans produced	2003
Tool shed and 'smoko' shed purchased with ASB grant and erected	March 2004
First QRT funded archaeological excavations	April 2004
First earthworks restoration (west wall), ditch digging started in 2003	April 2004
First turfing on west wall	September 2004
Tractor with front bucket purchased	July 2005
QRT received NZAA 'Cultural Heritage Tourism Project' Award	2005?
More substantial concept plan produced including memorial proposal	November 2005
West & part south ditch & bank earthworks finished (w/o firing step)	December 2005
Commencement of east side ditch and bank with US crew	January 2006
Tractor shed construction began	February 2006
Web site livened	February 2006
First of monthly Pokeno Focus 'Queen's Redoubt Update' articles	March 2006
Work on post and rail front fence started	February 2007
First major open day – featuring 65 th Regiment re-enactment group	March 2007
QRT Strategy meeting with outside facilitator	June 2007
First hydro-seeding on embankments	June 2007
QR Registration proposal prepared for NZHPT	December 2007
QR Friends membership brochure produced	March 2008
East wall parapet completed to full length 84m	September 2008
Second major archaeological excavations at QR with US crew	January 2009
SE bastion area excavated & exposed	January 2009
Restoration of south ditch and bank commenced	January 2009
Bypass threat to the project finally averted	May 2009
Following QRT submissions QR Special Heritage Zone created	March 2010
Management of paper road vested in QRT by WDC	May 2012
3 grants totalling \$80,000 obtained for construction of the visitor centre	2012-2013
First upgraded 'Despatches' Newsletter produced & web site upgraded	June 2013
Construction started on the visitor centre/workroom building	August 2014
Construction of visitor centre completed	December 2014
Painting, carpet laying, shelving etc put in visitor centre	First half 2015
Work started on Visitor Centre concept plan	March 2015
Wooden fence built alongside visitor centre	April 2015
Obtained grant \$1.5K from Waikato DC for computer etc	
Contracted Snapper Graphics to design and build displays	
Obtained grant of \$68K from Foundation North for 1 st stage of displays	