

From the Co-presidents

It is with much pleasure that we, Gill Dodson and Sue Mortlock, as co-presidents of Friends of Pātaka, present the Annual Report for the year 2023-2024.

Committee and membership

Kerry Anne Scott and Sharon Taylor Offord stepped down midyear, and we thank them for their contribution and miss their valuable skills. This has left the committee with the minimum number of members to operate according to our constitution. As with many volunteer organisations, we are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit new people with the right skills. Currently our team is able to manage our events and commitments. We have completed four years as Co Presidents and now relinquish this role.

We had slight increase in membership in 2023, from 248 financial members in 2022 to 262 members in 2023. We are tracking well to further increase our numbers in 2024. This is contrary to the trend of many Friends organisations.

Re-registration

In line with the new 2022 Act for Incorporated Societies, we are required to re-register with the Companies Office and submit a Constitution compliant with the new Act. Although we had until 2025 to complete this process, our committee decided to get it underway before a change of president. We are indebted to our committee member Frances Austin for interpreting the Act and rewriting our Constitution.

Rather than work through the changes at an AGM, we held a special general meeting in November to agree on the changes. We are grateful to those members who came along to support the re-registration process. We are happy to report that our application was accepted immediately with no questions or alterations.

Friends events

We organised a history tour of Porirua, which, after several postponements, happened on 18 April 2023. We had a full bus for the tour, which was led by Taku Parai of Ngati Toa. Most participants enjoyed this trip, but not all feedback was positive. We are conscious that some of our members are interested in the historical components of Pātaka Art + Museum, and we plan to support that interest with events in 2024.

We hosted two exhibition related lectures at Pātaka in 2023. In May, Dougal Austin, the curator of the very popular 'Kura Pounamu: Tō tātou Kōhatu: Our Treasured Stone' exhibition, spoke to a large, appreciative audience at Pātaka. This event was co-hosted with Te Papa Friends. Following the talk, we co-hosted, with Pātaka, Classical Voice students from the New Zealand School of Music who presented a magnificent one-hour concert. This event was free to members, with a koha collected for the pianist.

And in September, Pātaka's lead curator Ioana Gordon Smith gave an enthralling overview of the 'Naadhobii – To Draw Water' exhibition. This event, where we hosted Friends of Toi Mahara, drew a capacity audience.

In late May, a group of us visited the Old Government Buildings for a guided tour. Although the group was small, it was agreed that this was a worthwhile, insightful tour which led to a better understanding of the history of Wellington and our legislature.

Our annual Winter Music Series, which was held over four consecutive Sundays in July and August, was extremely well attended, and brought to Pātaka many new visitors. Our performers included the ever popular Andrew and Kirsten London, Robert Ibell and Guy Donaldson, Te Kāhui Kuratea kapa haka group from Aotea College and the Klezmer Rebs. All the performances were outstanding and very well received.

We participated in the 25th Anniversary events of Pātaka in September and October. We hosted the cake-cutting ceremony in late September. In October, we sponsored a month-long haiku poetry competition, providing prizes and payment for a haiku workshop, conducted by Lyn Davidson. Pātaka produced a wonderful book, *Ka Mua, Ka Muri: Looking Back, Looking Forward* to mark the occasion. Friends of Pātaka was delighted to contribute to this publication, which featured, among its 25 chapters, one on the Friends of Pātaka Art Awards.

In late November, we made a reciprocal visit to the newly opened Toi Mahara gallery in Waikanae. The Director, Janet Bayley, and the Friends of Mahara committee treated us to morning tea, and a very interesting and informative tour of the Gallery.

Our biennial Art Awards will be held again this year and planning has been underway for some time to transition the organisation of the awards from the capable hands of Meryll Evans, to a sub-committee lead by Gill Dodson. We couldn't hold this event without our sponsors, who return every two years. We thank the Smith family, Tommy's Real Estate, Jane Hyder, Leina Liso and The Learning Connexion for their support. We look forward to another great Art Awards exhibition in Bottle Creek gallery in August-September 2024.

Communication and website development

Our thanks go to Roger Joyce who maintains and develops our website. We are planning to have the Art Awards registration through our website this year, and Roger and our developer, Andrew Russell, are working on this. Andrew also transferred all our documentation to the Google workspace platform during the year- this is free for non profit organisations.

Our newsletters have been written by Frances Austin and designed and laid out by Roger Joyce.

We are very proud of our colourful, informative and graphically stylish newsletters. Thanks to Frances and Roger for their continued work in this area.

Interface with Pātaka and other key organisations

We have strong relationships with Pātaka staff. As Friends we enjoy opportunities to meet new staff and to share information about our roles. In July, Pātaka staff hosted a morning tea to mark Volunteer Week and we provided an end-of-year function with staff in December. We have enjoyed supporting Pātaka with events like exhibition openings, and the National Museum Visitor Survey

We appreciate the invitation to attend the Pātaka Foundation Board Meetings and we have a regular presence at these meetings..

Several Porirua community groups, led by Christine Jacobsen, organised the 'Show us your harbour' photo competition and exhibition in February. Friends of Pātaka was pleased to sponsor a prize for the Artistic category of this competition.

Thank you to all our friends and supporters

We would like to thank local businesses who give us great service, and our generous members who donate money to us, over and above their membership fees.

We also thank Ana Sciascia and the Pātaka team for their help and support through the year. It is wonderful to be part of the Pātaka growth, development and evolution.

Lastly, we thank the Friends of Pātaka Committee, for all their hard work and great ideas over the year. We believe that Friends of Pātaka makes a worthwhile contribution to the work of the wonderful Pātaka Art + Museum.