

APC Newsletter

Christmas Edition Term 4, 2021



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Gaynor Brown

Tēnā koutou katoa



When I last wrote in July, we were enjoying an active, free from restrictions time at Ambury Park Centre. How quickly life can change in this Covid 19 world. We have at Ambury, along with all in Auckland, experienced the longest lockdown to date. This has been disappointing but with measures in place, we are with small steps, returning towards normality.

Many of the students have returned for parts of the week and in the last two weeks the adult clients have a morning when they can return. It has been a logistical challenge to create exclusive sections of the Centre for each group and

the staff working with the horses. It is excellent that several are re-connecting with the Centre before the summer break.

With all the change that came with the lockdown the outcome for me, and I know I speak for the board, is the enormous pride I have in what the Ambury staff, led by Vicky Cox, have achieved, and sustained over this extended period. First there were again the small bubbles of staff caring for the horses and seeing to the pooper scooping. As time went by it became clear that the staff were very much enjoying their time together in their bubbles caring for our horses, and more and more was being done to pamper the horses and take them for gentle exercise. When restrictions eased a bit some serious exercise for the horses began and they are now regularly being ridden. We have all been connected to the Centre with delightful posts of the horses, chickens and now resident peacock, Barry. Amazingly eleven beautiful orange hens donated by Martin Bourke arrived at the Centre, as planned, and are clearly loving their Ambury free range in green pasture. The vocational clients who are to look after them have seen many photos on their Facebook page. Very recently there have been perfect additions sought and added to our herd of beautiful horses. People have been busy!

The school and vocational staff have made extraordinary efforts to engage with the students and adult clients. Packs of schoolwork were distributed as far as Clevedon, students and adult clients met for online teaching, discussion and connection with their peers, and several creative Art and other activities have been offered. The adult clients were also connected to community dancing groups and their usual singing group.

There was so much that was positive and achieved prior to and during lockdown.

All at Ambury wish you the best Christmas and New Year. We look forward to a full opening in February 2022.

Ngā mihi nui – Gaynor Brown



FROM THE PRINCIPAL / DIRECTOR

Vicky Cox

Tēnā koutou katoa



Well, this time last year I said we were looking forward to 2021 and leaving Covid-19 behind, but what a challenging year it ended up being.

Through the lockdowns, as before, we stayed open under the Ministry of Primary Industries so that we could continue with the care of the horses. The staff attended daily to provide essential care and, as we moved into Level 3, a time for us to spend training the horses. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the staff during this year – their commitment to the Centre, to the horses and to our community members continues to be exemplary. I am so proud to be a part of this team.

But the year was not just Covid-19 and lockdowns. We enjoyed 2 ½ terms at the Centre fully engaged in our programmes and a lot of success was experienced by our students, clients and riders. It is a such a pleasure to work here – to be a part of their journey and to celebrate alongside them when a new skill is achieved. I welcome you to visit at any time to see the work that we do.

The Vocational Programme, based around life skills and community participation, has been hugely affected by the pandemic. This year has seen dramatic changes in the vocational programme under the fantastic leadership of Julie Wharton. The clients have undertaken a number of new activities around the centre, including developing a wonderful garden, more time with our beautiful horses learning more horsemanship skills and, more recently, a flock of chickens to care for.

The school currently has a roll of 25 students, all of whom are making progress in their programmes. This year we have focussed on students following their goals through their Individual Educational Plans and development of a transition plan to ensure that students have personal goals for transitioning into their community post APC. We have developed the garden and enjoyed many meals together, cooked by our students using produce from the garden.

After a great start to the year and welcoming several new riders, the Riding for Disabled Programme was, unfortunately, closed during the lockdown and we have been unable to safely open this year. However, we look forward to a positive start to 2022.

Luckily, we moved our Ribbon Day Programme to earlier in the year and July saw our students and clients displaying their riding and horsemanship skills to parents and caregivers in our Ribbon Day celebration. Congratulations to all the participants – you did yourselves proud.

Ambury Park Centre continues to be a place where children and adults who are challenged by the world around them, can find a place to grow in confidence, to build friendships and become more resilient to the world around them. I feel very fortunate to continue to be a part of this. I wish you all well for the remainder of 2021 and hope that your 2022 doesn't have as many challenges as this year has. Meri Kirihimete x



Equine

Andrea Menzies

2021 seems to be going out on less of a bang and more of a whimper. I'm sure most of us had optimistically assumed we'd seen the back of Covid and stifling lockdowns when we gladly farewelled 2020. Few could have foreseen what was lurking in the wings.

Consequently, our students will sadly not get to show case their riding mastery with a rousing end of year performance to friends and family. Purely by good fortune, we were able to hold our ribbon day earlier this year as some consolation.

As an equine team, we are very proud of every one of our exceptional students and clients. We get to witness the journey from nervous beginner to capable horseperson, absorbing life-changing lessons from our remarkable horses along the way. Patience, empathy, kindness and responsibility, just a few of the many virtues the human-horse connection can foster.



This year has seen the addition to our Ambury herd of both our smallest and largest horses: Spy a very appealing 12 hand Welsh pony, and the complete polar opposite, Highlander a strapping 17.1 hh purebred Clydesdale. Somewhere between the two we have Luka, the purpose-bred show jumper who didn't like jumping. Luka is a 9-year-old 15:3 hh gelding, perfectly content just taking in his surroundings and letting the busier competitive lifestyle pass him by. Swelling our numbers further, we were kindly offered Bella to lease, a very sweet older lady of 21 years with

valuable life experience behind her. Both have had the benefit of the Covid break to commence training into the Ambury way of life.

Earlier this year we took a huge loss when medical complications forced us to farewell our lovely Cindy. She is greatly missed in her position held for many years as the matriarch of therapy horses. She knew her job well and challenging her authority never sat well with her.

On a happier note, we were able to find Khan his perfect home on Waiheke Island, where we still receive regular photos and glowing updates on his progress.

Correspondence

Belinda Sharp



What a strange year we have experienced, with students working from home. Like we have all discovered of ourselves, some students excelled with home learning, whilst others struggled. It is just as important for all to stay safe and enjoy the slower pace and extended family time. Thank you, Vicky for

steering our ship during this extremely difficult period and keeping us all in check.

Students have returned on a staggered roster and are enjoying the reconnection with staff and horses.

It is with great sadness that I am saying goodbye to Ambury Park Centre. I am ready to retire and enjoy the rest of my twilight years. May you stay healthy and happy always.



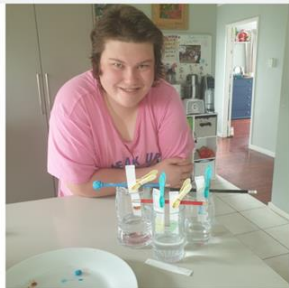
School

Elizabeth Warden



Term 3 and 4 were not quite what we had planned for this year, but students and staff got creative to ensure we stayed connected. Our students showed their flexibility and skills through some great learning and social activities.

Students extended their English skills through writing Lockdown diaries, researching horses and work, exploring simple poetry and text, or stories about the pets they were spending more time with. Home kitchens and gardens became the classroom, with students trying new recipes for their correspondence learning and dabbling in kitchen science. We investigated the different colour dyes in lollies and identified household items that were acidic or basic.



Extending the “coloured dyes” theme, art activities included extracting dyes from foods and plant parts and then using them to make natural paints.



Lots of photos of our student’s activities have been shared on our new Ambury Seesaw class page. Here are a few photos of their amazing work. Access to digital tools has been key to keeping us socially connected, we have been missing each other and the horses! We got to know each other’s pets very well through our weekly Zoom calls and the horse and chickens joined us from Ambury on the weekends! Here is a snapshot from one of our calls.

Art

Ellen Williams



At the start of Term 3, the Secondary Students worked towards an exhibition on Ribbon Day about Matariki. They presented a range of work that celebrated the Māori New Year, including drawings of the Southern Lights, a marae sculpture, paintings depicting the Seven Sisters, and more. The Vocational

Clients contributed with koru/stars which we hung from the ceiling of the exhibition. In conjunction with our Matariki work, we looked at our whakapapa, both individually, and as the Ambury community.

Lockdown meant we had to get creative from home in Term 3 and 4. Both the Secondary Students and Vocational Clients made some very imaginative and resourceful art while at home.

Projects include; how to make your own paints at home from garden and kitchen materials, a still life treasure hunt around the house, photography projects, self-portraits and more!

On return to Ambury, the students have focused on reconnecting and have been spending time outside in the vegetable garden. We weeded, planted seedlings for spring and painted murals on the side of the vegetable beds.



The Vocational Clients

Julie Wharton



Plans can change and we learn to adapt. The past two terms have seen this happen for our Vocational clients, staff and whanau. Starting the term, we envisaged having our clients running the cafe and heading out into the community seeking work experience. This was not to be, but as usual our staff and clients went with the flow and we began our online distance programme.

Over the past 100 or so days, clients and whanau have navigated their way through Zoom, breakout rooms, mute, unmute, Facebook posts, emails, texts, and phone calls – the sharing of daily activities from the comfort of our homes with the great support of mums, dads, siblings, and carers. We have done art, Te reo, dress up, waiata, favourite colours, animals and even viewing Ambury horses in their paddocks and stables! It was great to have so many clients engage, not only in our activities but also in the waiata and kanikani offered by Mapura studios and Dance Therapy NZ. We are very grateful that these programmes continued on and still provide for our clients.

Over the lockdown the chickens arrived! Martin Carew-Bourke and Tom arranged the delivery and set up of the chickens. A support team oversaw their first couple of weeks whilst they settled into their new Ambury home. The clients have now named all 11 girls, which we had a lot of fun doing. They have all been laying a great number of eggs which we look forward to using in our cooking sessions in the future.

In the meantime, our last 2 weeks of the year will see small groups of clients attend Ambury, reconnecting with the horses and their friends before the end of the term. Best wishes from the team – Stay safe and keep well over the break. Kia haumarū, kia ora.

RDA/adaptive riding and Physiotherapy sessions

Marjolein Harting-van Ree

We had so much rain



We had spring visitors and, beautiful visitors



We had snuggly horses, Sleepy horses, and new horses – Luka & Highlander



Now we are looking forward to seeing YOU back too in 2022! Meri Kirihimete



Thank you to so many donors in 2021

Throughout the year our many trusts and donors have supported Ambury Park Centre programmes. The board and staff are deeply grateful for this. I huge thank you to the below and many more:

Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust, Maurice Paykel Charitable Trust, J M Thompson Charitable Trust, Woolf Fisher Charitable Trust, Peter and David Picot Charitable Trust, Foundation North, NZ Lottery Grants Board, Mangere Market Trust, NZ Community Trust, ARA Lodge No.348 IC Charitable Trust Board, Blue Waters Community Trust, Lion Foundation, Grove Hardware Ltd, Chenery Memorial Trust, Kelliher Charitable Trust, Samar Kand, Four Winds Foundation, Trillian Trust, Rotary Club of Mangere, Auckland Council Mangere-Otahuhu Local Board, COGS, Michael Otto, Tim Chan, Ross and Sheryl Christian, Godfrey Hirst Carpets NZ, Vincent Maire, Longmuir Trust, Geoffrey and Nell Erne Adams Trust Foundation, Shelley Truman, Leigh Skinner, Caroline Grove, Vicky Latta, Gaynor Brown, T.W Thomas-Stone, Lisa McFarland, Carol Wiltshire, Chris Bowden, Sue Bowden, Arletta Ven den Bosch, Martin Bourke, Kaye and Brian Pilkington and other individual donors.
Sue and Tony Crang, Melissa Johannsson and the Tipene Family all gave donations for new horses.



THE APC STAFF & BOARD
WISH YOU & YOUR FAMILY
A SAFE & HAPPY HOLIDAY



PROGRAMMES START BACK
ON THURSDAY 3RD
FEBRUARY 2022

