

APC Newsletter

Mid Year Edition 2021



FROM THE PRESIDENT Gaynor Brown



Tena Koutou Katoa, Greetings to All

Ambury Park Centre began positively in 2021 with good numbers in all programmes - Riding Therapy, the Secondary School, and the Vocational Training. The February and March Covid 19 Level lockdown saw the staff readily slot back into the familiar routine as essential workers for the horses. The teachers and vocational staff communicated with and provided learning opportunities for the students and clients.

The first attempt for Ambury's car boot/gala day was a Covid 19 postponement but on March 20 it was held on a perfect, sunny autumn day. It was again a festive occasion with live music, numerous Ambury stalls, more car boot bookings and activities, and the ever-popular horse rides. The occasion had crowds to match,

which was wonderful given that the proceeds go towards students and the adults taking part in community experiences. The Centre's staff and volunteers are to be commended for their great efforts before, during and after the event. The Ambury volunteers are a treasure for the Centre with their support with fundraising events, not to mention for our Equine therapy programmes.

The year before last a Horse Welfare committee of board members and equine staff was formed to assess our herd of horses with a view to rejuvenating it. This has been highly successful to date in bringing about 10 younger horses into the herd and retiring others to ideal settings. We have been very fortunate with funding for horses from trusts and whanau. Really good things happen at Ambury. Another is the professional development. Ambury Park Centre has had staff professional development days with a focus on better understanding of what our clients and students present with and how best to support them behaviourally, emotionally and socially. Sessions have been facilitated by experts in the fields. Three Equine staff are enrolled for the two-year coach training qualification with NZRDA. Two are current coaches and the other is the Head of Equine. In Equine therapy the Intensive therapist continues to further develop her skills in Hippotherapy, a valuable adjunct in Equine therapy. Marjolein joined a three-day online conference from the US. The Professional learning is most beneficial for the Centre.

There is more. Ongoing support in the school from the Centre for Youth Health and visits from an MOE psychologist impacts the students physical and mental well-being. Through the pandemic the Centre was able to engage with SEED Consultancy, through MOE funding, to guide development for the new Digital Curriculum. The Sutherland Trust funded 10 laptops for the school. Vicky, our Director/Principal, has been proactive in seeking all the wonderful supports mentioned. Thank you, Vicky.

The board and staff are deeply grateful for the grants and donations from our many supporting trusts, friends of the Centre and whanau that help make Ambury Park Centre the success it is.



Very recently the Centre procured a smart replacement for one of its vans. The board is very thankful to the Mangere Market Trust for funding this much needed vehicle. Yet another positive, is that Elizabeth Warden who left Ambury about two years ago to travel initially, is returning as the Head of School and teacher of English. We are delighted to welcome Elizabeth back.

Nga mihi nui - Gaynor Brown QSM

FROM THE PRINCIPAL / DIRECTOR Vicky Cox



Tena Koutou Katoa Greetings to All

After a bumpy start to 2021 with two lockdowns before we had even got going with our programmes, it seems like those worries are behind us. I am extremely proud of the way that staff, students and clients displayed their resiliency and ability to be flexible during our lockdowns. We grew as a Centre, as a team, and showed that we can face anything when we work together.

Thankfully the rest of the year has continued smoothly, and it has been a settled time at the Centre. The programmes are all running well, and our clients, students and riders are flourishing.

The school currently has a roll of 25 students, all of whom are making progress in their programmes. We have recently welcomed 5 new students to the school, and they have settled in well. This year we are focussing on getting back on track with academic studies and NCEA after a disruptive 2020. Students are following their goals through their Individual Educational Plans and, for some, developing a plan for transitioning into their community post APC. We are looking forward to Elizabeth Warden returning to the role of Head of School on 21st June.

An on-going success in the school is the engagement of Centre for Youth Health, which provides a nurse for Ambury once a week. We have also recently engaged a counsellor, Jazmine, once a week. This has allowed us to provide a holistic support for the student, including their physical and mental well-being.

The Vocational Programme have been working hard on the farm – their gardens are looking fantastic. Please do take some time to admire them when you visit. Each client has their own focus and we are all enjoying the produce that is being made into scrumptious café meals. The clients even had a wonderful Farmer's Market at the car boot sale, selling their produce.

The Riding for Disabled programme continues to excel under Marjolein, Katja and Ashleigh. Our new horses have settled well into their work and are being enjoyed by our riders. Thank you to our riders and their families who have this year contributed to the cost of new horses and new rugs, so our ponies stay warm and dry.

In terms of property, the centre has been well maintained this year. We are extremely grateful to Mangere Market for their kind donation to fund our new van.

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. Please reach out if you would like to find out how you can become more involved with us.

School Anna Edlington

In the English classroom, our older students have been working on their CVs, filling in forms accurately and writing formal personal correspondence. Our younger students have been working on their booklets provided by Te Kura (Correspondence School). These have covered a variety of topics including interpreting symbols, signs and gestures, identifying their own strengths and how to be a good friend. Most of our students also did a reflection brainstorm as we looked back at being in Lockdown Level 4 one year later.



Equine Andrea Menzies

Now that we are fast approaching the shortest day, the Covid disruptions of earlier this year seem but a distant memory. It was around this time we sadly farewelled two of our much-loved horses into retirement. Max and Wolf gave us many years of service, and both were firm favourites of scores of riders and staff members alike. We were very fortunate though to have found them a super retirement home together in the winterless far North. They are now enjoying fabulous views and rolling pastures with new friends, living the idyllic lifestyle they both so thoroughly deserve. It would not stretch the imagination too far picturing them relaxing in their Lazy-boy recliners, regaling the younger ones on just how much things have changed since the good-old-days when they were once leggy colts. The month of March saw our entertaining duo Gilbert and Rinny pack their bags and follow their owners to a new property, coincidentally also in the far North. Although it was sad to wave them goodbye, it was nice to see them off to new beginnings and semi-retirement, knowing they are back in the hands of the people they know so well. We always knew replacing these boys would never be easy, and we are still facing a real mission, in particular, to find another gentleman giant from the same rare mould as our Maximillian. We can though welcome to the Ambury herd another two gems. The first is Quest, a lovely bay thoroughbred type of 16 hands. He has settled into his new home and routine at Ambury and proving to be a very kind and obliging mount, helping build the confidence and riding skill of our students. The other recent arrival and proving himself to be a pocket-sized superstar is the impossibly cute welsh mountain pony Spy. This little fellow at just 13.1 hands high is as sweet as he is handsome. Already he is showing his versatility, perfectly at home in both the therapy and student programmes. And one final thing deserving of mention, is a project to watch out for shortly on our screens. An episode of the youth TV programme 'Head High' was recently filmed at Ambury using a few of our horses, who feature not surprisingly as themselves, playing very convincingly the role of therapy mounts. This will soon go to air along with a promotion for Ambury and RDA. Watch this space as we let you know further details as they come to hand.

The Vocational Clients Julie Wharton



The Vocational team have had a busy start to term 2. Apart from the normal daily mahi our clients do, they have enjoyed attending some events in the city. The 'Happy Place' at Spark Arena was a very joyful experience and moving from room to room the sensory activities provided lots of smiles. The Auckland Art Gallery - Toi Tū Toi Ora exhibition was an inspiring showcase that told the rich story of our country's history

informed by a Māori worldview. Both trips were very positive and enjoyed by the clients.

New van- Yes we have a new van! Our new 12-seater transit van has been a great addition to our transport fleet. It is comfortable with an automatic step for easy access. Our car grooming team will be keeping our vans looking spruce every Wednesday.

This term we continue with our waiata classes in Otāhuhu and on Tuesdays we attend a Dance Therapy class in Onehunga.

It was great to be able to finish our learning about anti-bullying with dressing up in pink for 'Pink T-shirt Day'.

We welcome Tina Olsen to the Vocational team are pleased to have her working on Thursdays and Fridays.

Volunteers



NZRDA has held several volunteer training sessions throughout the year. Spot the Ambury faces in this session which was held at South Auckland Group.



20 – 26th June is National Volunteer Week where the Ambury community will be celebrating our team of amazing volunteers. This year's theme is 'Recognise, Connect, Reimagine'.

If you see one of the team, please take the time to thank them for the time, energy and hard work that they put into Ambury.

Therapy Marjolein Harting

Welcome to the teachers and six students of Otahuhu Primary School - a new school to our adaptive riding/intermediate programme. They are very happy to be a part of the Ambury community learning about horse's behaviour, safety and how to ride as independently as possible.

We also welcome a new group of volunteers of whom we hope to have a longstanding relationship with. We rely on our volunteers for both the adaptive/intermediate riding and the physiotherapy sessions and without these talented people we would quite simply not be able to offer our sessions.

Welcome also our newest little helper Spy, who is a 13.1 HH Welsh cross pony. He has settled in quickly and is proving his weight in gold, taking all his riders for lovely sessions in and out of the arena.

Ribbon Day will be earlier this year on July 2nd. In the past we have organised this event for the end of the school year but as we have lots of other activities planned a mid-year event will be trialled.

We would like to acknowledge the ongoing financial support we have received from some of our volunteers, clients, and some of the previous owners of our ponies. It is heartening to see the interests these lovely people show and help us with paying vet bills and rugs to keep the ponies warm and dry over winter.

And finally, we have started a new project and will be building a sensory trail on our grounds. The start has been made by building a bridge. We will do planting and building other obstacles over the next few months. If anyone has a spare letterbox in good condition, we would love to take it off your hands to be used in the trail. Or if you would have access to wood chips or bark, we would love to hear about it too.



Blues Activities



Thank you to so many donors

The board is deeply grateful for all generous grants and donations towards 2021.

The Centre's success is dependent upon this generosity. We are indebted to all.

Joyce Fisher Charitable Trust, Maurice Paykel Charitable Trust, J M Thompson Charitable Trust, Woolf Fisher Trust, Peter and David Picot Charitable Trust, Foundation North, Milestone Foundation, NZ Lottery Grants Board, Mangere Markets Trust, NZ Community Trust, ARA Lodge No.348 IC Charitable Trust Board.

Blue Waters Community Trust, Lion Foundation, Mt. Wellington Foundation Limited.

Lindsay Foundation, Chenery Memorial Trust, Kelliher Charitable Trust, Geoffrey and Nell Erne Adams Charitable Trust (Foundation), Samar Kand, Sutherland Self Help Trust, Four Winds Foundation, Lois Dalley, Mercury, Fresh Choice, Fraser and Lucy Whineray, Trillian Trust, The Wilson Home Trust, Rotary Club of Mangere, Sara Turbott, UPS Power Solutions, Sam Hugli, Auckland Council Mangere/Otahuhu Local Board, COGS, Michael Otto, Tim Chan, Brian and Kaye Pilkington, Ross and Sheryl Christian, Godfrey Hirst Carpets NZ, Mike O'Connor, Sue and Tony Crang, the Tipene family and Melissa Johansson for new horses, and other individual donors.

Dates to remember

Term 3	Start of term 3 – Monday 26 th July 2021 NCEA Accord Day 3 – Tuesday 10 th August End of term 3 – Friday 1 st October 2021
Term 4	Start of term 4 – Monday 18 th October 2021 Labour Day – Monday 25 th October 2021 NCEA Accord Day 4 – Thursday 25 th November 2021 Teacher only day Friday 26 th November 2021 Prize Giving and end of term 4 – Friday 10 th December 2021



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