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Above: Joe de Jong and Esmæ Jamieson tread the new ramp to Paeroa's Scout and Guide Hall.

New era for community hall

and has served the community well, needs have changed with the times.

The committee's vision of making the hall more user-friendly was shared by another community-minded resident, Joe de Jong, whose family has long been involved in Scouts and Guides membership and leadership. He offered to take up the challenge of project managing the project.

Joe learned that the construction of an access ramp suitable for mobility-impaired people, wheelchairs and pushchairs would require upgrades to car parking, toilets and fire exists, too.

In conjunction with these necessities, it was a good opportunity to plan for other much needed renovations: closing in the porch to provide more storage space, extending the small kitchen "to bring it into the present century" as Joe puts it, installing a new gas hot water system for the kitchen and shower, and resurfacing the floor.

"We've been working on the project for about nine years, including a long period when the Scouts were in recess and it was hard to do anything," says Esmæ. The groundwork has been achieved around other commitments, and on a shoestring budget – right down to Joe doing the drainlaying and helping the builders on site.

There has been a lot of support from the community, the Council and the Lions Club which has always been actively involved in hall initiatives. And a major contribution has been the drawing of plans by architectural designer Kate McLaughlin (nee Mudford), who grew up in Paeroa.

The recently completed \$14,000 ramp has been funded mainly by a Lotteries grant, boosted by \$17,000 from the Paeroa Ward Committee support which is paying for additional parking, pathways and necessary consents.

The staged project is still a work in progress – with funding applications for the internal renovations now in the pipeline.

"But at the end of the day, the hall will get a total makeover and the community will have a much more versatile facility, which we hope will be good for another 35 years," says Joe.

How long does it take to build an access ramp to Paeroa's Scout and Guide Hall? It's been a nine-year labour of love for two volunteers – after the planned improvements "snowballed" into a major building upgrade.

"It started as a dream," says hall committee member and bookings administrator Esmæ Jamieson. "A lot of elderly people find steps difficult, and having no other access has deterred a lot of potential hall hirers." That has curbed the already modest income that can be invested back into the facility.

Esmæ is also the Guides District Coordinator, but despite the building's name (acknowledging the families involved in Scouts and Guides who built it) she says it is a community hall. "It's owned by the community and is on Council land." As well as being a centre for Scout and Guide groups, the venue at the base of Primrose Hill is used regularly by line dancers, the L&P Rock'n'Rollers and the Paeroa Lions Club – all of whom are represented on the hall committee.

The facility hasn't had a structural upgrade since it was opened in February 1977, replacing the original hall that burnt down in November 1975. While it was solidly built

Cyclone an exercise in preparedness



It's always good to be prepared – but rain and strong winds delivered by Cyclone Lusi caused no significant damage in Hauraki or problems for the Council.

Civil Defence and infrastructure resources were checked and closely monitored in readiness for the forecast storm event on March 15 and 16, and staff were briefed and on standby.

More than a month's worth of rain fell in some of the eastern parts of the District in the 24 hours from 8.00am on Saturday to 8.00am on Sunday: 65mm at Waihi's Golden Valley, 95mm at Queen's Head between Waihi and Waikino, 145mm at Golden Cross, and 130mm in Paeroa. River levels didn't trigger any alarms, though, and none of the region's pumps were needed. And Netherton and Ngatea, which received only 43mm and 22mm of rain respectively, could have done with more water.

Over the weekend, about 229 hits were received on the Thames Valley Emergency Operating Area's new Civil Defence www.thamesvalleycivildefence.co.nz, serving Hauraki, Matamata-Piako and Thames-Coromandel. This is the first internet resource to be updated in the event of an emergency; and also offers information about how to prepare for and survive a disaster situation. It's easily accessible by clicking the Civil Defence logo on the Council's website.

Over 120 views were also recorded on the Council's Facebook page which was launched early this month.

District Emergency Operating Centre Manager John McIver said the organisers of outdoor events took a sensible approach by postponing or calling off activities. The severe weather warning also spurred some residents into putting household emergency kits together. However he hoped that any media "over-reaction" wouldn't cause people to be complacent in the face of future Civil Defence alerts.

We are now on Facebook



Want quick news updates and information related to the Council and Hauraki District? Want to share your thoughts on Council activities? You can now find us on Facebook.

Our new page launched early this month complements our website, and will keep you posted on what's happening and on topical issues. For instance, about 120 views were received during the weekend that Cyclone Lusi passed through. The Local Alcohol Policy appeal issue also generated a great deal of public interest and support.

Respectful opinions are also welcome; and we'll try to respond to any queries as soon as we can.

Our Facebook address is www.facebook.com/haurakidistrictcouncil, or you can simply click on the Facebook logo at the bottom of our website home page.



New loos at Whiritoa just beachy

Whiritoa Beach's new public toilets are open, after the precast concrete building was hoisted into place by crane last month.

The Permaloo, designed for harsh environments such as coastal sites, was chosen for its robustness and durability and the way it will blend with its surroundings.

The structure's two unisex toilets with disability access, replace the facilities attached to the surf club, which would have needed a lot of work to upgrade. The old toilets are now closed to the public, and will be converted into changing rooms.

PUBLIC NOTICES

CREATIVE COMMUNITIES SCHEME Funding for local arts



Applications for funding assistance to local arts projects and initiatives within the territory of the Hauraki District Council are now being received.

The scheme's three funding criteria are:

- 1. Broad community involvement** – Your project will create opportunities for local communities to engage with and participate in arts activities;
- 2. Diversity** – Your project will support the diverse arts and cultural traditions of local communities, enriching and promoting their uniqueness and cultural diversity; and
- 3. Young people** – Your project will enable and encourage young people (under 18 years) to engage with and actively participate in the arts.

Application forms are available from council offices at: William Street, Paeroa; Seddon Street, Waihi; Orchard Road, Ngatea.

Applications close 4:00pm Wednesday 30 April 2014

for further information contact:

Administrator - Creative Communities Scheme
Hauraki District Council
Ph: 07 862 8609 or toll free within District
0800 734 834

COUNCIL & COMMITTEE MEETINGS

Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is hereby given that the following meetings will be held on the Paeroa Council Chambers, 1 William Street, Paeroa during the month of April 2014.

Judicial Committee (if required)
Monday, 7 April 2014, 9.00am
Monday, 28 April 2014, 9.00am

District Licensing Committee (if required)
Monday, 7 April 2014, 1.00pm

Ward Committees - Tuesday, 15 April 2014
Plains Ward - 9.00am
Paeroa Ward - 12.30pm
Waihi Ward - 2.30pm

Operations Committee
Wednesday, 16 April 2014, 9.00am

Western Plains District Drainage Committee
Tuesday, 29 April 2014, 10.30am

Eastern Plains District Drainage Committee
Tuesday, 29 April 2014, 1.30pm

Ordinary Meeting of Council
Wednesday, 30 April 2014, 9.30am

LD Covers
Chief Executive
Hauraki District Council

FLUSH OUT YOUR TAPS

Ministry of Health Notice

Some plumbing fittings have the potential to allow minute traces of metals to accumulate in water standing in the fittings for several hours.

Although the health risk is small, the Ministry of Health recommends that you flush a mugful of water from your drinking water tap each morning before use to remove any metals that may have dissolved from the plumbing fittings.

We are recommending this simple precaution for all households, including those on public and private water supplies.

Hauraki District Council

