

## Ōpōtiki Youth - Outstanding!

Ōpōtiki's youth are making their mark on a national scale with a range of achievements ticked off in the last few months.

The Ōpōtiki Cadet Unit has won the Imperial Daughters of the Empire Trophy for the Northern Area New Zealand Cadet Corps Annual Efficiency Trophy for the fourth year running, the Unit is now a finalist in the National Efficiency Competition.

"The Cadets provide fantastic opportunities for young people and also a service to the community with their participation in community events and ANZAC services etcetera," says Mayor John Forbes. "It is always such a pleasure to see such professionalism and pride on display and I believe these cadets are great role models for their peers."

Ōpōtiki District Council formally acknowledged the achievement of the unit at its November meeting.

In September a delegation of 12 young people representing their schools under the umbrella of the Ōpōtiki Children's Art House, travelled to Te Papa National Museum to exhibit the Ōpōtiki murals project. This major opportunity has put Ōpōtiki's youth talent on display to some 40,000 museum visitors.

Ōpōtiki College students have also been showing their talents with the media studies winning the Fair Go advertising awards and achieving runner up status in the national Plan B4 U Party short film contest.

The college's chess team won the regional competitions and went on to compete in the national competition for the first time ever. The Kapa Haka Group took 11<sup>th</sup> place, competing against 40 other secondary schools, in the National Secondary Schools competition. The young enterprise group won the regional competition and went on to compete in the nationals in Wellington with their product My Pocket - a nifty carry-all for young people on the go, and a total of five scholarships have been won by students of the college, including an Auckland University Scholarship for \$35,000 which was awarded to college dux, Jannell Dymus.

Ōpōtiki actor James Rolleston (Boy)



Ōpōtiki Youth travelled to Wellington for the opening of their exhibition at Te Papa.

continues to promote the district at every opportunity and won Best Actor in the Visa Entertainment Screen Awards in December, and our own Ōpōtiki Star Quest winner Crystal Albert moved straight on to win the talent quest held at the Kai Moana Festival in Tauranga the very next weekend.

"This is a fantastic list of achievements for the last three months of 2010. Our community can be very proud of the young people of our district. If we continue to support and get involved we can look forward to seeing many more accomplishments by youth over the next 12 months," says Mayor Forbes.

## Iconic Bridge for the Otara River

Designers are working on a theme that is unique to Ōpōtiki for the Mōtū Cycleways bridge across the Otara River.

The construction will be similar to the Waikato trail bridge (picture right) but work is underway to give the bridge a design that is distinctly Ōpōtiki and creates an iconic gateway to the town.

The cycle / pedestrian bridge will be situated at Memorial Park and will connect St John Street to Snell Road. Construction is scheduled to begin in March and it will not be long before Ōpōtiki residents have access to the beach and those who embark on the trails have an attention-grabbing start or the end of what is bound to be a fantastic holiday experience.



The Waikato Trail bridge design will be replicated for the Otara River bridge. Construction begins in March.

## Mayoral Comment...



**John Forbes**  
Mayor of Opotiki  
Phone Council 315 3030

Every three years we have the opportunity in local government elections to choose those we feel can best run our council on behalf of our community. The recent election has seen one change with new councillor Shona Browne being elected. Shona has hit the ground running and is already making a positive contribution to your governance team with her knowledge of the community and her balanced approach.

Our new chief executive officer, Aileen Lawrie was appointed in June 2010. Aileen has already grasped the size of the challenge we face as a community if we are to achieve our vision of a strong future for our district and has made some changes to the way we will operate from this point forward.

We have already begun to see how partnerships and collaboration can help get us over the line and Aileen has a strong network of connections to people in the Bay of Plenty and nationally.

Two senior officers will leave the Council in the next three months. Donna Adlam left at the end of the year after eight years of excellent service to Ōpōtiki.

Donna has been our Corporate Services Manager and has done some great work during this time. Fun Unplugged, and the mud slide, is just one example of Donna's neat ideas. We have a photo of her coming up for air from the mud hole at the bottom of the slide that has been used on many occasions to demonstrate staff commitment.

Our long serving finance manager, John Rollo is retiring early this year and he will be a great loss to the Council. John has worked here for fifteen years and he has been a great asset. His financial management skills are widely acknowledged in local government circles. We will have to look hard to find a replacement with his experience and capability.

We are entering another phase in our growth. As a community, we will be asked to re-state our commitment to our vision for the future. We will be challenged to take the bull by the horns and to stare down those that doubt our gumption and resourcefulness. Having come so far already I believe we can, as a strong community, create a strong future for Ōpōtiki.

## Community Survey gets underway in January

Residents of Ōpōtiki will be asked their opinions on council's performance in the tri-annual residential survey, starting 21 January and running through to 2 February. The results of the survey help council to measure the organisation's performance over time and against other councils.

The 15 minute telephone survey will be conducted by research company National Research Bureau (NRB) who have carried out the survey for a number of years. The findings of the survey help keep council up to date with what residents want and think about the service they get from the Council.

About 200 people will be asked what they think about how the council functions, the standard of services and facilities provided and the priority of community outcomes. So surveyors can ensure the sample surveyed matches the composition of the district, some personal information will also be asked. All information is kept confidential by the company and disposed of immediately following the survey.

## Town Water Supply

The Opotiki township has continued to have sporadic problems with coloured water over the Christmas break. This has been a long standing problem because of deposits of iron and manganese that has built up inside the pipes over a long period of time. From time to time the deposits get stirred up and cause a nuisance. Over the last year the Council has had two new bore supplies developed which will be put into action at the end of January. Once the new bores are in operation, Council expects significant improvements in the water; however residents can expect some short term discolouration as the pipes clear.

In the meantime:

- You do not need to boil the water
- You should try to flush the water to waste until it becomes clear before using it for consumption or for washing clothing
- You may drink the water when you see that it is clear or if you have allowed the sediment to settle to the bottom of a container
- The settled water is not a health hazard to consumers

## Annual Report

Ōpōtiki District Council has received an "all good" report from the Auditor General for the 2009 to 2010 Annual Report.

The Annual report provides details of how the council operated over the 12 month period from June 2009 to June 2010.

Council has received unqualified (not faulted) reports for at least the past fifteen years and credit for this must go to councils finance manager, John Rollo. Unfortunately John is retiring at the end of April and will be greatly missed by the organisation.

*Council's Finance Manager John Rollo retires April 2011. John has been with Ōpōtiki District for over fifteen years ensuring during that time that council's financial processes have not been questioned.*



## DoC - i-Site Centre

The construction of the combined DoC and i-Site centre is likely to begin early in the New Year if Council approves tenancy arrangements for the building.

The decision to continue with the Council's Bridge Street Depot site was made after Council heeded calls from the community to look at sites in the town centre. Several sites were investigated but the Bridge Street site was considered the best option because Council already owned the land, there was room to provide large vehicle parking and secure vehicle storage for Motu Trails visitors and to develop more amenities as required.



"The concerns of the business sector were taken into account but it was felt that as the trails begin and end at the other end of town, visitors will inevitably be passing through the business centre at some stage. The Bridge Street site also allows for improved directional signage to the main centre and offers an opportunity to capture the interest of travellers who would otherwise pass through the town without stopping," says Council's Chief Executive Officer Aileen Lawrie.

## Pathway 2 Health Programme - Participation Great

Participation in Ōpōtiki's Pathway 2 Health programme continues to remain high with residents getting involved in all the activities on offer.

The Boot Camp which is fun for people of all ages and fitness levels, continues to attract some 30 people to each of the two sessions a week.

The Lets Du It Duathlon, held in December, attracted 126 participants and double that in spectators and supporters.

"It was great to see every one getting involved, dressing up, live music, and heaps of laughs," says Pathway 2 Health coordinator Jacqueline Hayes-Kingi.

"The next event, on 22<sup>nd</sup> February at 5.30, is the Mayoral Bike Ride from the wharf through town and back to the wharf for a swim and free sausage sizzle.

Then on 24 Feb the Business House Challenge Duathlon will take place. So get your bikes polished and work teams together, 2011 Pathway 2 Health is going to be even better," Mrs Hayes-Kingi says.



*Ōpōtiki Tae Kwon Do Club give the Christmas duathlon the thumbs up.*



*Daughter Celine Claridge and Arna Wenhan help Libby Palmer over the line.*

## Mōtū Trails

A Motu Trails workshop held in December focused on how to make the most of opportunities that may arise from the development of the walkway/cycleway trails.

Tourism consultant Craig Wilson explained that the ingredients of successful cycle trails would include a safe route, safe bikes and equipment, community support, breathtaking scenery and social and cultural interaction.

Mr Wilson also focused on the need for sustainable operation.

"Like many other regions around New Zealand where the majority of tourism operators are small or medium sized businesses, there is a need to work together to build awareness, generate interest and desire (consumer, trade and other stakeholders) and to increase visitation and expenditure."

"Working together also reduces marketing costs and allows operators to run marketing campaigns or events to build business outside the peak season or to reduce or share operating costs."

"Visitor spend into New Zealand and its regions comes mostly from retail sales and food and beverage services so it is important for other businesses outside accommodation and transport to consider the opportunities to benefit from such as, hosting or serving visitors who come to the region to enjoy the cycle trail," Mr Wilson said.

# Opotiki Harbour Transformation Project Publication

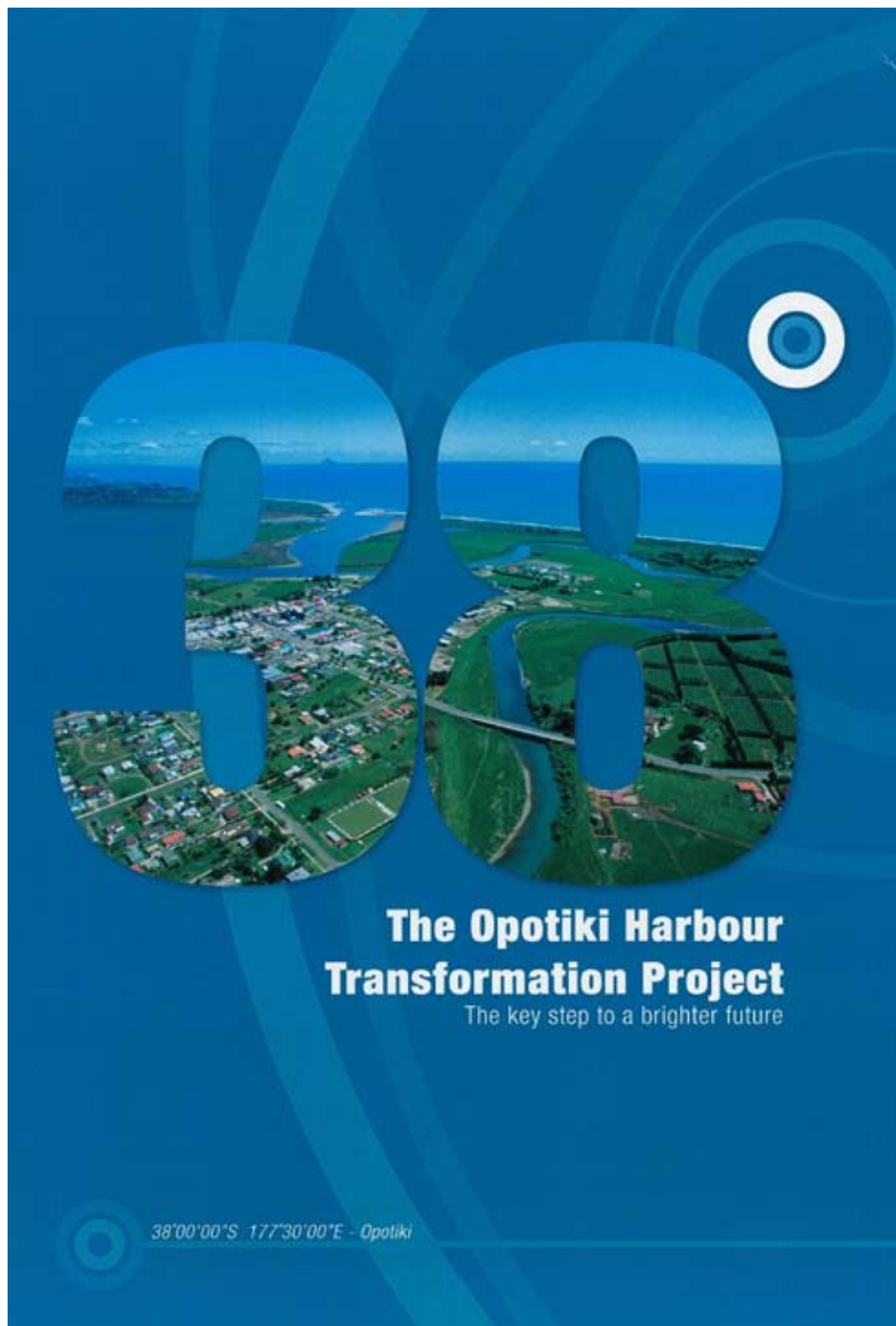
The Opotiki District Council has produced a new publication called the Opotiki Harbour Transformation Project. It was finished just days before Christmas and already a second print run is needed. The document is based on the concept of the “ripple effect” of opportunity putting Opotiki on the aquaculture map at 38° latitude.

The production of the document was made possible by funding from BayTrust, and is intended to provide a high level overview of the harbour entrance proposal that Council has been working on jointly with Whakatohea Iwi for over a decade.

The support of the following people and groups in creating this publication is appreciated:

- The Opotiki Marine Advisory Group
- Eastern Seafarms and the Whakatohea Maori Trustboard
- Bay of Plenty Regional Council, who have been a staunch supporter over the last 5 years across their range of functions.
- Tim Fergusson of Harrison & Grierson
- Barbara MacLennan of Inspiring Communities
- Anna Kominik of the Ideas Shop

The document is available at [www.opotikiharbour.co.nz](http://www.opotikiharbour.co.nz) or copies are available at the library and Council offices.



## Did you know....?

The Opotiki District Council Panui often has stories about collaboration and relationships beyond our district boundaries. The rest of the region is really important to us. As ratepayers, you will be aware that you pay two sets of rates - one locally and one to the regional council. But **did you know** that the rates you pay to the Regional Council are offset by around 60% by incomes from the regional council's investment structure that stems from a 55% ownership of the port of Tauranga? The port is a truly regional asset that benefits every ratepayer in the Bay of Plenty, as without it, every ratepayer would pay the Regional Council around 60% more than they currently do.

The Port is supported by many industries in the bay of Plenty (and beyond) such

as the forests of the Kaingaroa plateau, the mills in Kawerau, and the kiwifruit industry scattered across the Bay. When those industries do well, that success is reflected in the earnings of the port and flows through to the dividend income received by the Regional Council, and that flows on through to a rate reduction or increased service delivery across the Region, including in our district.

This is just one illustration of why we should be interested in what happens to the industries and the economy in the rest of the Bay of Plenty. Conversely it is a reason why our economy is important to the rest of the region, for the goods that flow through to be processed and exported from the Bay.

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