



Community
Services Bulletin
March
2022

1. REPORT OF THE DISTRICT ARTS & HERITAGE CURATOR – December 2021 to February 2022 (*Jim Geddes*)

Eastern Southland Gallery

Exhibitions (Annual Plan KPI = 10 per annum)

Arts and Heritage Department staff installed three exhibitions for the December and January period:

- ***The Art of Felt*** – textile exhibition (from 16 December to 7 February) - **Croydon Aviation Heritage Centre**
- ***South by South East – The Bosshard Browne Collection*** - works by prominent New Zealand artists (11 December to 7 February) - **Eastern Southland Gallery**
- ***The Frank Checketts Collection*** – New Zealand Pottery (11 December to 7 February) - **Eastern Southland Gallery**

The Mandeville presentation featured Southland textile artists, while the two Gallery exhibitions incorporated gifts to the district collections from the estate of former Southlander **Frank Checketts**, and long-time gallery supporters **Patricia Bosshard Browne** and **Kobi Bosshard** of Otago. Final touches are being applied to the Gallery's 2022 exhibition and performance schedule, and a significant emphasis will be on added value education and community programmes. With the welcome support of **Creative New Zealand** we have been able to engage local artist and designer Jacqui Byars and popular community art worker Janet de Wagt to develop a range of studio activities and artist-in-residence projects. Many will dovetail into the on-going research partnership between the Eastern Southland Gallery and Hokonui Runanga. This partnership has successfully helped gather important information pertaining to the Maitua Valley that will provide a critical foundation for a new series of art projects.



We expect to meet or exceed our KPI target for 2021/22

Precinct events

Events (Annual Plan KPI = 10 per annum)

- ***Old Hokonui – Book Launch & Distillery Unveiling*** (30 November)
- ***Otago Museum Regional Museums Hui*** (6 December)

Attendances for events have been restricted in line with Level 2 directives, so all have been at maximum (albeit limited) capacity. We expect to exceed our KPI target for 2020/21.

Talks, tours and education programmes (Annual Plan KPI = 50 per annum)

In line with Covid related restrictions and protocols, a limited number of tour and special interest groups have been visiting our facilities between December and February. Our regular programme of talks to community groups and schools is being carefully managed and we are

only catering to small groups where appropriate social distancing measures can be managed. Unfortunately close to twenty four parties have had to cancel or postpone their planned visits to our facilities. However, those groups we have been able to safely accommodate have included:

TVNZ One, Southland Food Tourism Working Party, Gore District Historical Society, Gore Art Group, Community Trust South, Lottery Grants Board, Moatrek Tours (x2), Art Centre Tour, Gore Camera Club, Gore Boat Club., Clan McKenzie, Southern Mayoral Forum.

Owing to Covid related restrictions we may only just meet our KPI target for 2021/22.

Maruawai Project

Stage One – Moonshine Museum redevelopment: (LTP target)



Functional entrance to relocated Gore Visitor Centre

The Hokonui Heritage Centre Trust was fortunate to have the Minister for Regional Development the Hon Stuart Nash and the great grandson of Hokonui matriarch Mary McRae on hand to launch the first phase of the Hokonui Moonshine Museum redevelopment on 30 November 2021. The distillery section of the museum was funded by Kanoa - the former Provincial Growth Fund, and its completion now allows the trust to develop a valuable funding stream for the museum and its various events and programmes, along with working capital for its various lines of merchandise.

A temporary exhibition and function space has been established adjacent to the distillery wing, and in close proximity to the relocated Gore Visitor Centre. Post lock-down increases in a range of building, electrical, mechanical and plumbing services have essentially decimated the trust's original museum display budget. With the complex operational and partially opened to the public, concurrent fund-raising and display development is now the primary focus of the Arts & Heritage team.



Distillery wing with Visitor Centre senior Consultant and SBS Branch Manager, Raewyn Lindsay.

Project summary to 14 February

- September:** Final interior paint finishes applied.
HVAC system fully commissioned.
Fire & Security systems commissioned.
- October:** Relocation of Gore Visitor Centre to front-of-house.
Temporary exterior signage installed.
Installation of audio visual and data infrastructure.
On-site display work in progress.
- November:** Distillery commissioned
Distillery wing formally launched
- December:** On-site display work in progress
- January:** Bond store fit-out in progress
Design for building exterior complete
Design for AV theatre fit-out complete

Concurrent to this work a range of off-site display fabrications are underway and the trust is developing additional lines of merchandise in readiness for the eventual full project launch.

2. REPORT FROM COMMUNITY EMPOWERMENT COORDINATOR (Mark McCann)

Youth Council report

Over the last year we've seen a real increased confidence in the members of the Youth Council and a group of young people ready to take things to the next level in 2022. To this end, a new youth council structure will give each member of the youth council an increased sense of responsibility. To support this, guest speakers have been invited to share their knowledge and skills to enable the youth councilors to grow in their role.

Again, the youth council will have to adapt to the current climate but instead of saying at the end of the year that many things were cancelled or affected by Covid, this year they are going to work smarter and positively and continue to make some exciting things happen for the community.

Swearing in ceremony

An online swearing in ceremony for the new Gore District Youth Council took place on 22 February with His Worship in attendance. This year we have some new members and a Youth Council with 22 councilors that is more representative of the community including more community members, a voice for Maori, a voice for newcomers and a voice for people with disabilities.

We received a large number of nominations and applications for vacant positions on the Council and would like to congratulate those joining the Youth Council this year.

Gore District Youth Council members 2022

St Peter's College – Myah Kortbaoui

JB Acuna (Vice-chair)

Laura Heads

Aidan Sheddan

Mikee Omega

Amy Davidson-Watts

Gore High School – Sam Copland

Lachie McWhirter

Saffie Hare

Heidi Goatley

Liesl Musto

Cynthia Mwangi

Blue Mountain College – Olivia Crawford (Chair) and Sophie Crawford

Menzies College – Paige Richards and Summer Edwards

Longford Intermediate – Mikayla Doorey and Matthew Clinton

Community – Charlotte Rudd, MacKenzie Johnstone and Jordyn Moseley

3. REPORT FROM THE EVENTS COORDINATOR (Jessica Swan)

Gore District advent calendar

We delivered the Gore District Advent Calendar, Best Decorated Competitions and Santa on Tour in December.

Spread over 24 days, the events were our substitution for the cancelled Christmas Carnival and Santa Parade. They saw a combination of giveaways, retailer offers and Santa visits available to the community. The Best Decorated Competitions showed great potential for community engagement and show there is an excellent opportunity to make this an annual occurrence.



On the Fly Mataura River festival

Planning for On the Fly had been well underway, with an open fishing licence granted, celebrity chef locked in and more when New Zealand was put into the red level of our COVID traffic light system.

We made the tough decision to cancel the event, as red was predicted to last a long time and would impact all aspects of festival delivery. The date for 2023 has not yet been set, but we will be looking at March once more.

Parks Week

Similarly to On the Fly, our planned event for Parks Week had to be cancelled after going into red level. The theme for this year had been insects, using fantastic creepy crawlies that students from Gore High School created late last year.

All progress was able to be placed on hold and will be resumed next year.

Hokonui Culture Feast

The date for the Hokonui Culture Feast was Thursday 28 April. However, this has now been moved to our postponement date of Thursday 6 October. We chose October as it is after calving season. The weather will be starting to improve again, hopefully allowing us to utilise the outside space at the venue as initially planned.

New posters are currently being designed, as we want to refresh our promotional material and build more excitement for the event. The design will be bright, fun and more in line with the essence of the event.

Freeze Ya Bits Off busking

The organisation of Freeze Ya Bits Off Busking has been progressing well. However, Tussock Country has decided to cancel the festival for 2022. The busking finals were to be held at the St James Theatre for the first time.

This year we are very excited to be working on some fun new merchandise for the event, including creating a penguin mascot. As our event has a lot of children involved,

we thought this would be a cute way to appeal to them and make them feel more included overall. Once we have the design and plush toys on hand, we will run a digital campaign to find a name for him, with a prize pack for the winner.

Gore District Community Awards

We are in the early stages of planning for the community awards, with the date, venue and MC locked in already. New categories for awards are being investigated, including a cultural award in collaboration with the Hokonui Rūnanga. Our aim is to have nominations open in March.

4. REPORT FROM THE COMMUNICATIONS/MARKETING MANAGER (Sonia Gerken)

Projects

The Council has been fortunate to have a robust digital engagement platform given the continued restrictions courtesy of COVID-19 and the arrival of omicron in our community.

Since December, we have launched three public consultations and have created two project pages on our Let's Talk portal. These are:

- Keeping of Animals, Poultry and Bees Bylaw review – consultation closed Friday 4 March
- Stormwater Management Bylaw – consultation extended to Friday 25 March
- Cemeteries Bylaw – consultation closes Monday 11 April
- Matai Ridge subdivision
- Elizabeth Street pipeline renewal

We are also continuing to update the new library/community centre project. Let's Talk has 1,141 registered subscribers. All our consultations have online submissions forms supported by a hard copy that can be downloaded or picked up at the usual Council facilities.

Digital statistics

Website

Statistics for the Council's website from 1 January to 22 February were:

- Users: 8,854. Of that, 56% used their mobile phone to access the site
- Page views: 41,812
- Top three pages: Property search, Gore Aquatic Centre and Rubbish Collection/Transfer Station
- MyGore accounts: 231

Antenno

Subscribers: 2,132. This is 35.4% of our rating database, meaning GoreDC retains its place at the leading Council in New Zealand for downloads of Antenno.

Facebook

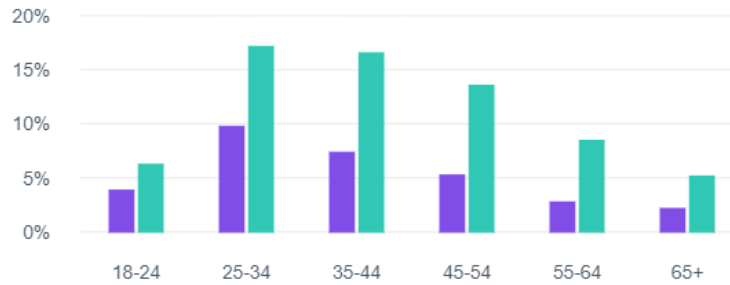
Last month, Meta, formerly known as Facebook, introduced significant changes for local government pages. As with any change, some teething issues have been experienced, although the GoreDC account seems to have transitioned smoothly at this stage.

One of the new features is removing the 'like' button and only having 'followers'. This is a more meaningful representation of how many people are engaging with our Facebook page as followers represent people who receive updates from our Page in their Newsfeed.

GoreDC currently has 7865 followers. A breakdown of followers is shown below

Age and Gender

Men 31.80%
Women 68.20%



GoreDC continues to have a good reach. Below is the figure for the period 1 January to 22 February.

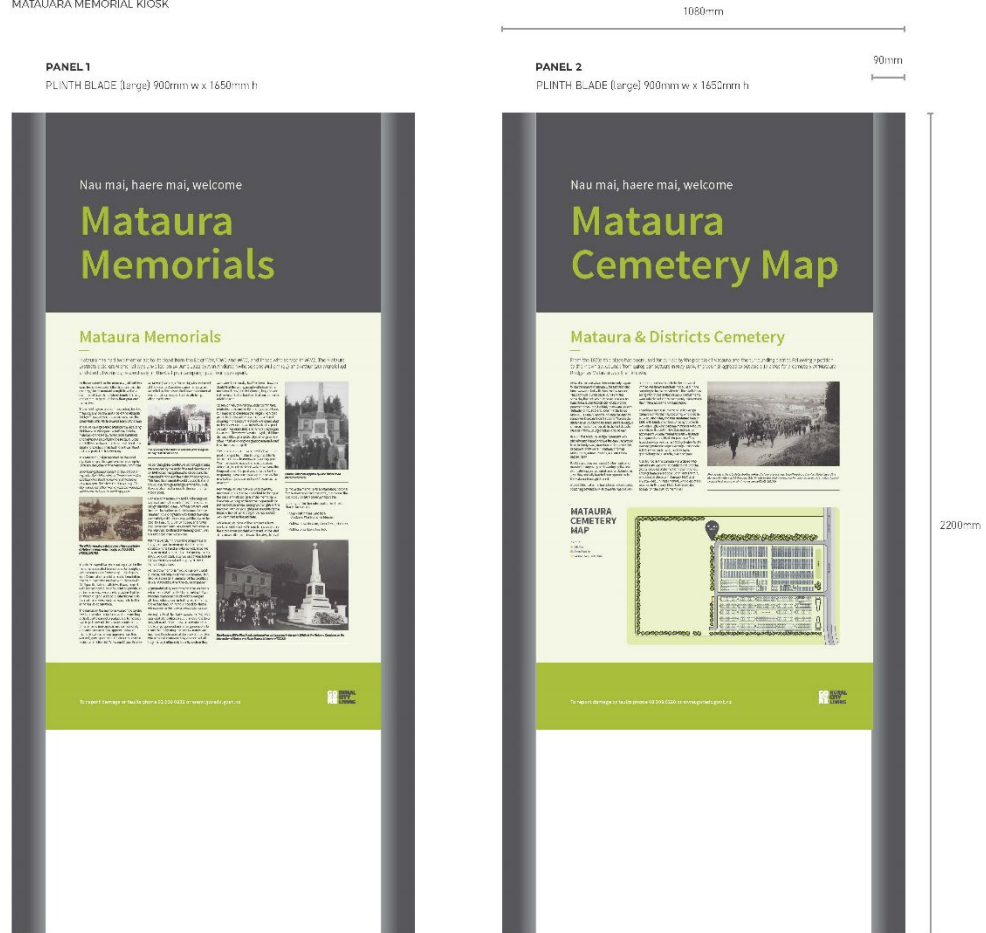
Facebook Page Reach ⓘ

35,509 ↑ 21.5%



Interactions

- Working with the Roding team and its contractor on the waste minimisation community engagement project *Rethinking Waste*.
- Working with the Roding team and its contractor on community engagement for the Irk Street revitalisation project.
- Working with the Parks Manager on rolling out information and directional signs around the District in the new design suite. Below are two plinths for Mataura, a project that involved heritage, parks and communications staff.



- Leading the redevelopment of the GoreNZ website onto a Datacom content management system, similar to our corporate website.
- Coordinating a photoshoot to build up our library showcasing Council staff and services.
- Working with the Community Strategy team on promotional photo shoots focusing on capturing hero images of the District and images that talk to our identity.
- Leading a review of visitor services to maximise our positioning in the visitor market. Despite Omicron, Gore is still seeing a steady stream of domestic visitors.
- In collaboration with the Community Strategy Manager, establish a digital image library for Council and District images. Brandkit is a friendly, flexible Digital Asset Management software that assembles all our brand and marketing content in one place.
- Collaborating with other Southland local government communications managers on a campaign for this year's local body elections.

5. REPORT FROM THE LIBRARY MANAGER (*Lorraine Weston-Webb*)

Library and community spaces redevelopment

The building work on the previous James Cumming Wing is progressing as planned and is expected to be completed by late 2022.

Much of the original interior has been demolished to make way for new internal structures to support the new open layout.

The original main access to the James Cumming Wing will be the library entrance. Access to the first floor will be via a new internal open staircase and a lift. The end closest to the Senior Citizens will be the James Cumming Community Centre, with the entrance off Ardwick Street, as seen in the drawing below.



The site is managed by Signal Management staff and is closed to the public for obvious safety reasons, but some progress can be viewed from Ardwick Street.



There have been some materials delays to work around, but this is unavoidable given the nationwide building supplies disruption.

COVID-19

After seven weeks at the orange setting (3 Dec 2021-23 Jan 2022) all New Zealand moved to the red setting from 24 January, moving rapidly through phases 1-3. Community cases increased from just 25 on 25 January to 22,152 on 2 March. Most cases are now the highly transmissible but reputedly less severe Omicron variant.

In this period community Gore active cases rose from zero to 45, with many close contact residents self-isolating and being tested.

So inevitably, the library service continues to be affected as we do our best to keep everyone safe and the libraries open. Since 15 February staff have been working in teams, so if one team is affected by COVID the other team will be able to keep the library open. There are morning and afternoon teams, and the library surfaces are cleaned between each shift. Staff work from home on the alternate shift.

Gore Library opening hours are currently 9.30am-12.30pm and 2.30-5.30pm. The later time of the afternoon hours is so that working people can still access the library after 5.00pm. We have received positive feedback from the community, predominantly expressions of relief that the library will remain open. Although advertised in all the usual places, some people were initially caught unawares by the changed hours. People who find the hours difficult are encouraged to make use of the Call and Collect (or deliver) service and our online books and resources.

We have been able to retain normal opening hours at Maitua Library and Service Centre to date, with a short lunchtime closure.

As at other Council facilities library visitors are not required to show a vaccine pass, but are expected to sign in, wear a mask, and practice social distancing and good hygiene. While we have warm summer temperatures the libraries are ventilated with open windows and doors.

Children's Christmas activities and StoryWalk®

Prior to Christmas children were given Take & Make packs to take home and make a craft with the curated contents.

The popular StoryWalk® stories this period were *Grandma's Kiwi Christmas* in the lead up to Christmas, and *The Travel Bug*, which aligned with the Summer Reading Challenge theme.

Summer reading

The libraries offered summer reading challenges for children, teens and adults, and a glorious social-distanced Storytime in the Park.



Given general COVID hesitancy and the fact that children should be accompanied by an adult when they visit the libraries, we offered an alternative to library visits with the online reading challenge *Beanstack* – an easy digital way to get excited about reading.

Overall, 247 readers engaged in the challenges - 194 children, 16 teens and 37 adults, most using the paper challenges provided in the libraries, with a smaller number giving *Beanstack* a go. And 1,755 books were read by children alone. This was measured by a wall feature 'Road trip' and progress marked by children as they 'visited' stops on the way to the crib, equating to the total numbers of books they read.



Wrapped up in reading

From 14-25 February, as a Love Your Library promotion, readers of all ages were invited to borrow a wrapped book as a surprise read, and 260 wrapped books were borrowed. Temptation was added to the *Wrapped up in Reading* displays with humorous quotes sprinkled around the shelves.



In-library sessions

Gore Library's children's activity room and the Matura Library meeting room have been used for library staff and community tutors to provide one-on-one Device Advice and adult tutoring, as well as study space as needed.

Justice of the Peace

After restarting in November, the JP sessions have again been suspended while we are under the COVID red setting.

6. REPORT FROM PARKS AND RECREATION MANAGER (*Keith McRobie*)

General operations

The operations staff have been busy working on routine maintenance operations through the summer and early autumn. With the extended dry period we have been able to complete a whole raft of minor jobs that would normally be done in winter. These jobs have included large scale stump grinding, turf renovations and garden revamps.

The annual bedding displays have been vibrant and we have received many positive comments about the Public Gardens and the Main Street. The hanging baskets have been a bit problematic with issues over the drip irrigation and plant cultivars used.

Staffing wise we have had a full complement of staff through the period and so far only had minimal downtime with the Covid outbreak. A number of staff have completed the upgraded traffic management training, which now includes a compulsory practical assessment of road closures (stop/go) on 50km and 70km roads

Projects

Pukarau Cemetery

Council staff have continued helping the Pukarau Cemetery Support Trust work through its project list. New signage has been installed at both entrances, grass cells have been installed at the main entrance, rotary hoeing has been carried out adjacent to the shelter and chipper mulch been supplied to the new gardens. Staff have assisted with the information panel design and supplying an updated and accurate map. It is expected that all upgrade works will be finished by the end of April.

Minor tree contracts

Significant progress has been made with remedial tree work with the assistance of three arboricultural contracting companies. Charlton Park and Gore Cemeteries have both had a significant amount of dead and overcrowded tree material removed. We still have one minor contract on the corner of Willis and George St, to be completed in April. The work was originally let to Tree Tech but the company pulled out of the Southland market in December so will now be carried out by Delta Tree Services from Dunedin. Delta Tree Services has also carried out tree risk assessments on a number of trees in the Gore Town Belt and isolated single trees where we have had requests for tree removal.

Playground upgrades

The Pukarau playground was fully commissioned in December with remedial works completed by the supplier. Work was meant to have been completed upgrading all the districts flying fox units but will now occur in April. The contractor we are using is the only one qualified to do this sort of work in the country and he has been delayed by covid issues.

Work is currently underway installing new electric BBQs and shelters at Hamilton and Tulloch Parks. This work was delayed by BBQ supply issues ex Australia and with the

original units being damaged in shipment. In the coming month we will top up the chip softfall in a number of parks to ensure we maintain the required softfall depth under all equipment. Additionally, a new basketball half court, backboard and hoop is to be built at the front of the Sword Street playground and a new BB backboard and hoop installed at Tulloch Park to replace the existing structure.

Dolamore Park

Staff have tidied up the main entrance gardens removing several trees to enable clear and safe carriage through that area. The terrace gardens below the education centre have been cleaned out and revamped with new Rhododendrons planted. Track formation work by the Hokonui MTB Club, has continued around the lower Lake linking to back to the Whiskey Creek Track.

Camper numbers have been consistent through the summer months and we are working on an online payments system with the IT team, to make it easier to manage going forward.

Gore Main Street trees

The work to replace the three trees that were removed was delayed to avoid angering the under pressure retail community. The work is now scheduled to take place overnight towards the end of March and will include replacing sections of an old cast watermain that runs next to the tree pits. We will be using the latest Strata-cell technology in our tree pit design which should allow for much better street tree root development. The surface treatment around each tree should be similar to the existing trees except we are using tree grates, tree frame protectors and the surrounding surface will be either asphalt or stone Crete rather than paved.

Tuturau Reserve

The roadside area has had a major tidy up with dead tree, shrubs and rubbish removed. This has helped with site lines entering and exiting the site. The shingle loop road has been upgraded and the access track widened and metalled. Some excess furniture has been installed from the Streets Alive project. We have upgraded the mowing specification of the lawn area and it will now be cut on a fortnightly cycle. Native plants and tri-guard plant protectors have been ordered for the reserve and will be installed in April.

Community interaction

Interaction with groups, clubs, and organisations over recent months

- Active Southland, consultation, and meeting attended
- Sport NZ, East Gore neighbourhood play systems working group, consultation and meetings attended
- A & P Joint Management Committee meeting attended, replacement caretaker employed and transitioned into role
- Southland Equestrian Park Trust, consultations and meeting attended
- Southland Rhododendron Group, consultation and meeting attended
- Gore Garden Club, consultation only, as no meetings or show due to Covid restrictions

- Pukerau Cemetery Support Group – consultation
- Hokonui Rununga, consultation and meeting attended
- Various sports club interaction
- Discussions and liaison with various sub-contractors and suppliers.

Collegial interaction

- RA - Otago Southland Branch, consultation and attended meeting via Teams.