



MEADOWS MATTERS

This bulletin is the newsletter of the Rotary of Greenmeadows, Napier, New Zealand



Bulletin 2024-25 No. 35
19th March 2025

*This week's meeting was held at the
Plant Hawkes Bay nursery
of Marie Taylor at 46 Omaranui Road*

Welcome

President Chris and a total of 30 Rotarians and guests gathered in the shade outside the main shed and enjoyed our predinner conversations followed by a short meeting.



Welfare

Welfare Officer Stuart reported that Wally Drayton was much the same and that Geoff Bibby had briefly been in hospital and was now okay, but the Jenny Bibby now had shingles! They're having a tough run those two.



Announcements

- Hawkes Bay Today paper will be doing a promo soon about joining clubs and GMR will feature.
- Gill Scarlet reported that progress on the Great Plate Debate was now occurring, and Napier Girls High School would be competing again.
- Alicia our Rotary Student is setting records for attendance, it was great to see Richard Howell & Stefan back again, amongst 3-4 partners as visitors.

Dinner

Was provided by Dave and Sue Roast from their mobile kitchen, an old, converted ambulance. The large servings of quiche and three salads were, as usual up to the high and enjoyable standard we've become used to, with members bring their poison of choice to wash it down.



For puddy were given a Mrs. Higgins chocolate biscuit that some noted was big enough to fill the school lunch quota for a week. Nuts may be a problem tho!.

Presentation

We all then congregated in Maries' shed as she explained the extent of the cyclone Gabrielle flooding that had reached to over 2 m high through the shed and had swept through the nursery acreage. We looked at the collection of photographs that she had of the willing volunteers who had helped her including RSE workers and companies such as Mammoth, who had been a sponsor of ours for the most recent Artex.



Officer Holders 2024-25

District Governor Nick Dangerfield
Dist. Gov. Elect Ken Smith
Community Leader Grant Spackman

President Christine McKenna
Secretary Ken Hunt
Treasurer Graeme Muir
PE & Club Admin Carol Charman
Membership & PI John Mackintosh
Service Projects Denise Brown
Youth Gill Scarlett
Foundation Ross Pinkham
ArtEx TBA

Meetings

Weekly: Taradale Town Hall
Wednesday 6.00pm
Fellowship 5.30pm
Firesides: 1st Wed
Directors: 2nd Wed

Coming Up:

Visits to Hamish Lacks boat shop.
District Conference in May.

Leave of Absence

Denise P & Bruce Martin - ongoing

Website/Club Contacts

Our Facebook site
<https://www.facebook.com/greenmeadowsrotary>

Our website
www.greenmeadowsrotary.co.nz

President Chris:
mckennachristine530@gmail.com

Secretary:
administrator@greenmeadowsrotary.co.nz

Apologies:
GR.apologies@gmail.com (**before 2pm Tue**)

It's now just over 2 years since the cyclone damage, but Marie noted that the occurrence of such flooding was not uncommon in this location. She had dug some test holes and found that the silt went down for 2 m at least before the soil profile changed- this was put down to the 1938 Esk Flood going through this area, before stop banks were ubiquitous. This is not uncommon for a lot of the Heretaunga Plains and is why we have such good growing land here. Flooding has always occurred & will both take away and give.

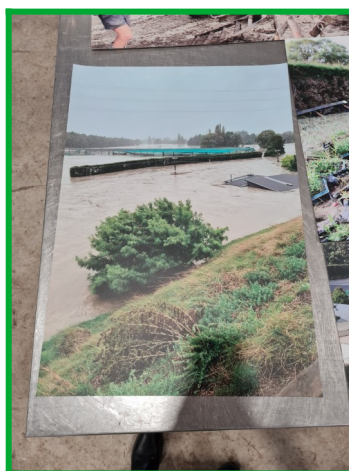
A number of Rotarians have known Marie through her various phases of life as an award-winning agricultural journalist; running a nursery at Turfrey Road that supplied many of the plants for the Dolbel Reserve planting project of Greenmeadows & Taradale Rotary Clubs; and QE2 rep for HB. In 2020, just as COVID was striking, Marie was able to buy this property from Villa Maria, who had been using it as a grape nursery- the real attraction was the 600 SM of green house that allowed her to cultivate her passion for native plants that are specifically suited to Hawkes Bay conditions.

Things went well for a couple of years, but life was a bit tough in that with the downturn in farming fortunes she did end up with many tree stocks unsold. Having previously lived on site she was fortunate not to be there when the cyclone struck but she soon turned up to a fairly sorrowful sight with many of her plants knocked over destroyed and really the only saving grace being that the large casuarina hedge upstream of her property had acted as a very good sieve that had kept all of the big heavy rubbish out of her nursery, but had allowed lighter rubbish to filter through with the prime example being that she had pools of apples nesting on top of 4 m high shade nets.

Like a lot of us she had good things washed away in the flood but not much contributed from those upstream of her- she did however end up with a pet deer which was eventually traced back to one of her neighbours.

The insurance companies were good to deal with and covered the building and structures damage but there was no cover for the \$1.2M worth of plants that she lost. Recovery was possible on about 50% of them but some of those died, so it was a situation where she had to get NIWE loans from NZG, but they do need to be paid back. Marie could have given up easily, but as Ken Hunt noted earlier, she is a dedicated and persistent individual when it comes to native plants.

Outside she showed us some of the plants that she's working to recover; one of them having an absolutely unrecordable Latin name! I noted it was a member of the 'forget me not' family, which had been found at 900 m elevation in limestone country at Te Waka off SH5 with only 2 known



WORDS & IMAGES THIS WEEK

Words this week came from the pen of Steve Gillum and photos came from Steve and Brian Hall.

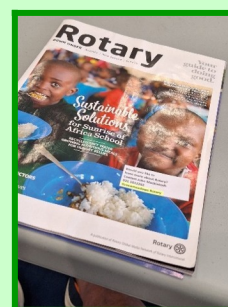
The Food this week



Thoughts for the week

Would be the vote of thanks to Marie for her presentation.
And also to recognise this amazing effort to recover from the Cyclone and continue the work in recovering rare and endangered plants.

RDU mags - Give these to Ross



Bring spare copies to Rotary



examples in the world. They've been propagated with skill, care and patience and she is now distributing them throughout HB.

Marie has a real passion for finding rare & threatened plants and makes a point of growing only regionally specific plants. As an example, she mentioned that she would be offered the opportunity to provide plants for a major project in Wellington, but their requirement, and hers is that she will source the seeds from the Wellington region so that when they are planted out, they will survive. Eco Sourcing is the term that applies to this activity

The nursery business; it's a very competitive business with over 70 native plant nurseries in New Zealand. A lot of them pop up with feel good motives such as providing employment for the disadvantaged- which makes for fairly stiff competition especially if they're fully funded to say the first three years. Marie's answer to this has been to mechanise as much of her work as possible so that her eight full time employees have the backbreaking work eliminated as much as possible. We viewed the plant which included robot sorters, which fortunately were stored away from the flood and the specialized handlers that take the heavy work out of the shifting of root trays.



It was really enjoyable walking underneath the various densities of shading cloth at 4 to 6 m high above and seeing the wide range of plants available for the HB community.

Marie is well recognized within her field, such that she had just finished filming with 7 Sharp and the program was to be on Thursday 20th March.[available online at <https://www.tvnz.co.nz/shows/seven-sharp/episodes/s2025-e32> at 11:00 minutes - editor]

I was particularly interested in the work that she had done with a Pomelia(?) variety, where 12 had been found on Te Mata Peak in 2003 and were effectively becoming extinct (if that's what plants do) but through her efforts that population is now safe. A similar story has occurred with the plants at Te Waka, where with care and grafting there are now 700 plants vs. the original 2 found.

Your first time scribe thoroughly enjoyed himself as did his green fingered wife; he just needs to take less notes and be given a good editing.

PS- some editing done using CoPilot AI; interesting experience. [Steve may share it with us sometime - editor]

MISCELLANEOUS MEADOWS MATTERS

A RANDOM RHYME

**The Editor has gone away to play
And Bob has stepped up to help today
I will continue to write something to read
And hope you learned about plants and seed
So, you should continue to watch this space
Even if it is just a place to say "Grace!"**

(By Pat the Poet)



Roster of Duties

	March 26th	April 3rd	April 9th
Programme: Guest Speaker	Hearing Therapist	Firesides	ACC – Custom Care Nursing
Host and Thoughts Top Table introduce Speaker Vote of Thanks Cashier Three Minute Speaker Sergeant	Gill Scarlet Curly Carpenter Bob Brady Judy McKelvie - Kevin McCormack	Frank Heuser - Bryan Matthews Peter Manson Steve Gillum	Bill Hawkins Mark Dickerson Helen Tattersall Judy McKelvie - Graeme Ryan
Stewards <i>One per table and the named Members to clean up at the end.</i>	Brian Anstis Edwin Brown	John Mackintosh Mike Owen	John Waldin Les Mockford

UNABLE TO PERFORM DUTY or an ABSENCE COMING UP

If you cannot perform a rostered duty, YOU must arrange a substitute and advise the President of this.

If you are going to miss a meeting, email the apologies link and if you have a long-term absence planned, write to the Secretary seeking "Leave of Absence."

Exchange student success



While we are currently hosting an exchange Student it is also good to hear about the achievements of previous Students we have hosted.

Brian Hall has shared this photo and story of Agostina Testa who was an Exchange Student hosted by our Club back in 2000. We have kept in touch, and even went to Argentina for her wedding in 2014. Agostina and her Husband Edgardo have been back to New Zealand 3 times, and are working towards citizenship. To improve her chance of residency, she has just been capped in Rotorua with a Master of Business Administration with Merit. The Merit being a real credit given English is her second language. The course took 18 months and cost her \$32,000.00.

Agostina worked 20 hours a week for the Iwi Incorporation whilst studying, and secured a full time 5 month contract working for a Government Department. Interestingly, she works with 4 other Accountants, all from different countries, no Kiwis.

It was a real delight to act as defacto Parents at her capping ceremony.

Well done Agostina and thank you Brian for sharing this experience

