



BOOKLINE

September 2025

Newsletter of the
Friends of the Tauranga City Libraries Incorporated

Chairperson: Jill Best

Patron: Bill Holland

INTERIM NEWSLETTER FOR SEPTEMBER 2025

We realise it has been some time since we sent out a Newsletter, so this is an interim one to bring members up to date.

Can you believe it – 40 years have somehow slipped by since the first small group of enthusiastic people put their energy behind having a new library built for the city centre. Then a new library needed to be built for the increased population of Papamoa and on the heels of that the Greerton library need a complete rebuild and expansion. By advocating, lobbying and fundraising all these projects came into fruition. Later in March 2022 the then ageing city library was closed due to mould and water dripping onto the books (and staff).

But now, after more campaigning and pressure the Commissioners agreed that money was to be used to build a bigger and better new library on the same site. Believe it or not, it's now almost at the halfway stage with the rather unusual cladding almost finished and the contractors will soon be able to turn their attention to fitting out the inside.

The Friends are in regular contact with the library staff and we will be there to fundraise and/or give our support to anything that can enhance the interior of the library or community centre.

VISIT

To expand our knowledge of what other libraries are doing, last month a small group of the committee and members drove over to visit the committee of FOL of Hamilton. Rototuna Library was chosen as it is the newest – and what a delight it was. (See report from Jill below). Next month in October, we are off to visit the good people of FOL Rotorua while they run their monthly second-hand book sale. The money raised is used to provide extras for any of the Rotorua libraries.

VISIT cont.

It's interesting that Hamilton City has 7 libraries but is only slightly bigger in area compared to Tauranga and their population is not drastically more than ours. Makes you wonder why it has been such an uphill battle to build and maintain our 4 in Tauranga! And all round the country we are told to downplay the words 'books and reading' and instead emphasise 'community hubs'. Having said that, having library buildings where people, families and young ones can come together to learn and connect with others is so very important in this day and age.

VISIT TO HAMILTON

In August, instead of a regular monthly meeting with a speaker, Friends were invited to visit the Hamilton Friends of the Library, at Hamilton's newest library, Te Kete Aronui at Rototuna. Te Kete Aronui seemed to be about the same size as our Greerton Library, but with high ceilings and exposed beams, and special acoustics to prevent sound from travelling. It had the usual bookshelves, PCs, and children's spaces. The main differences in its services were several meeting rooms of different sizes, a well-equipped Maker Space and a café. The Maker Space included sewing machines, 3D printers, and colour printers. We sampled the café at lunch, but the menu was very limited. It might have been better not to try to offer toasted sandwiches below a sensitive smoke alarm!

The building is set within a carpark, skate park, and children's playground. There is an excellent video online (copy and paste this address):

<https://boon.co.nz/te-kete-aronui-rototuna-library-opens-to-the-community/>

Then we exchanged ideas with the Hamilton Friends' committee. They are much involved with the Hamilton Arts Festival as well as supporting the libraries. Ideas we came away with for discussion included:

- Provide resources in the libraries for dementia patients and autistics: short books, large piece jigsaws, stuffed cats, rocking horse. Apparently, the cats are very popular for cuddling. We could try to help such groups in the community who have unmet needs.
- Deliver books to individuals who cannot get to a library (we used to do this). FoL reimburses petrol.
- Make and provide book supports for customers who cannot easily hold a book. These are made of fabric and stuffing.
- Send out a good newsletter at least 4 times a year (we used to do this) to keep members engaged.

Please let the committee know if you would be interested in helping with any of these services.

Jill Best, FoL Chair

THIS SUMMER

Unfortunately, due to some council restructuring, The Friends will no longer be included in the Children's Summer Reading Program. Another example of technology reducing the opportunities for people to interact especially in this case where young and old were able to talk and share their love of books and reading.

BOOK GROUPS

The group run by Marian at Greerton is very well attended with enthusiastic recounting of books that have been read and enjoyed.

The other group held at the Papamoa Library is run by Jean and Betty and is well attended but has had struggles with the space available and at times it has been difficult to hear each other.

COMMITTEE

The committee has had to relocate to Copper Crest Retirement Village because the room at the rear of the Greerton library was needed for another programme.

AGM

Our AGM is this week 25th September at 10.30 am. This is a very important meeting as one more person is stepping down from the committee which means we would no longer have a quorum from October onwards. The president, Jill, will address this at the meeting, but basically, we need at least 2 people to fill the gaps. Although we will not be contributing to the SRP, there are other projects that we are keen to get on with, but we need those extra people to share the – fun!

CHRISTMAS

We will again have a Christmas party at Greerton with delicious food and beverages and a speaker. We will let you know more nearer the time.

HAPPY READING