

HUTT MINOH FRIENDSHIP HOUSE
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

1 September 2008

The Chairperson and Members
HMH FRIENDSHIP TRUST BOARD

HUTT MINOH FRIENDSHIP HOUSE
MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE UPDATE

Report No. THIRTEEN

RECOMMENDATION:

That the report be received.

1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this report is to inform the Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust Board of the work done by the Management Committee since 1 February 2008 when we last reported. The report serves to provide an update on activities undertaken and planned in terms of the objectives of the Trust.

2 COMMITTEE MEETINGS AND MEMBERSHIP

The Committee met four times between February 2008 and August 2008. Membership currently is Rosemary McLennan (chairperson), Graeme Gordon representing the Hutt Sister City Foundation, our ikebana tutor Brigitte Takenaka, Gary Cleaver (Urbanplus), David Hancock (Hutt City i-SITE Visitor Centre) and Yasuko Tsukamoto and Phil Pearson. Karen Barnett looks after bookings. David Hancock takes meeting minutes. The committee meets approximately every six weeks.

3 PROMOTION AND FACILITY USE

2008 has been a year of trying new things, receiving requests for services we have not provided before and also our new friendship club finding its feet.

In March we hosted a function to welcome a group from the Minoh Hutt Friendship Club, not the first time they have been welcomed at the house but the first time we were directly involved in the visit's organisation and the first time we have had our own friendship club to meet with them. Also invited were local families where the 20+ guests homestay plus trustees, the Mayor and councillors.

Later the same week on Sunday, March 16, in conjunction with the Global

Volunteer Network we hosted our second Teddy Bears of the World picnic with a good attendance of about 50 people (including around 25 children).

In April Barbara Ker-Mann held her first two-day weekend workshop on the Japanese art of chigirie at the house, followed by a second the following weekend. Each workshop catered for about five people.

In June and August groups of Brownies visited to house to learn more about the Japanese culture. Brigitte was also invited to visit the Hutt Valley Teen Parent School in Upper Hutt to talk about Japanese culture and raising children there. Some of the students are to visit Minoh House for a sushi lesson in the future.

In June the Sangatsukai Chorus Japanese women's singing group began holding its monthly practices at the house.

A group from the Lower Hutt-based Wellington Business School paid a lunch-time visit one day in July.

In August our friendship club held a meeting to discuss a possible visit to Minoh next year, currently proposed for April.

The same month a reception for a visiting group of young Japanese rugby players was held at the house.

Hanami will be held on Sunday, October 5, with special guests the taiko drum group travelling here from the International Pacific College in Palmerston North.

Other activities will include kendo, ikebana, green tea tasting and kamishibai storytelling. Barbara Ker-Mann and her chigirie students will be guest exhibitors.

Excluding classes and use by the Trust and Management Committee, there were seven paid meeting room bookings from February 2008 to August 2008, including the Hutt City Council and Hutt Mana Charitable Trust.

The upstairs accommodation continues to be leased by the Global Volunteer Network which provides the bulk of the trust's income.

Cultural classes:

Joe Okada's language classes continue with 12 students spread over Monday and Tuesday evenings.

Ikebana tutor Brigitte Takenaka is currently overseas until the beginning of October and classes are likely to resume on her return.

All classes will be advertised in January.

10th anniversary of opening of Minoh House

Our friendship club is organising a photo exhibition with Minoh at the NewDowse as part of our celebrations.

Hospitality

We have begun distributing a brochure to be circulated to local schools and tertiary institutions and aimed at Japanese parents visiting their children who are studying here. A Japanese language version has also been printed.

Contact with other Japanese cultural groups

Members of the management committee have liaised with and visited other groups including the Hutt Sister City Foundation and Wellington Sakai Association and Wellington branch of the Japan Association.

4 PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

The Committee's responsibility for maintenance of the building is restricted to minor items and these are addressed as identified. Major property issues are handed onto Gary Cleaver of Urbanplus who is on the management committee.

The house is scheduled for a full repaint in the 2008-09 city council financial year.

A new gate has been erected at the top of the driveway. We have paid one third of the price and the council's parks division paid the balance. The gate is closed in the evening and opened every morning by security guards and has been successful in addressing the problem of unwanted visitors in the carpark above the house at night.

5 SUMMARY

The day to day operations of the house are being conducted in accordance with Trust requirements.

The property continues to be well-maintained and users treat it with the respect and appreciation it deserves. The tenancy agreement with GVN is functioning to the benefit of all parties, and HMFH is operating well as the trust's core asset.

I would like to thank all those who serve on the committee, both volunteers and paid council employees.

Rosemary McLennan
CHAIRPERSON