

HATAITAI HAPPENINGS

SUMMER 2023

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE HATAITAI BOWLING CLUB

by Sarah Scott

One hundred years ago, there was a full house at the Hataitai Bowling Club as it opened its winter season. It had eighty-four members and was the busiest bowling club in Wellington. It was built in 1910 when many bowling clubs and greens were established around Wellington.

There are some wonderful photographs, like this one showing the opening day of the Green in 1912, with a row of children in the foreground, all dressed in traditional Victorian clothing.



Group portrait taken at the opening of the Hataitai bowling green, Wellington. Smith, Sydney Charles, 1888-1972: Photographs of New Zealand. Ref: 1/2-045584-G. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington, New Zealand. /records/22685375]

By the 1950s, the Hataitai Bowling Club was so popular that there was a five-year waiting list for people to get in. There was purportedly a great, friendly atmosphere and everybody wore blazers and flannels – it was an occasion to look forward to on a Saturday.

With the strict alcohol laws of the 50s and 60s, people often couldn't have a drink when they wanted to, but popular lore has it that in the bowling clubs, they found a loophole that allowed them to keep beer in member's lockers! If you joined the club, you could have a beer anytime you liked and not surprisingly, bowling clubs became very popular.

Women weren't allowed to bowl (unless in a double) until the 1980s! In 1996, the men's and women's associations amalgamated to create Bowls New Zealand.

Inside the Hataitai Bowling Club, black and white photographs still line the back walls, making a rich tapestry of local history. There were some interesting personalities among the bowlers. One such bowler with a colourful life was Stan Dallas, who engineered the first New Zealand-made commercial record. His most well-known record was 'Blue Smoke,' a recording of singer Pixie Williams, then a 19-year-old vocalist with the

Karaitiana Quintet, which sold over 20,000 copies. His recording of the commentator Winston McCarthy's performance in the four rugby tests against the Springboks in 1956 is now a collector's item. He was called the 'unofficial mayor of Hataitai' because of his strong involvement in the local community, and as the owner of the Radio Doctor store in Moxham Ave, played confidante to many of the suburb's residents. A stalwart of the Hataitai Bowling Club, he held every elected club position, was a life member, and the Club's greenkeeper for many years.

Diana Cleary, married to bowling club president Jervis Cleary, was seminal in helping to build the Hataitai School Hall. Bowler Athol Arthur was also a prominent architect and highly decorated pilot in the Pacific during WWII.

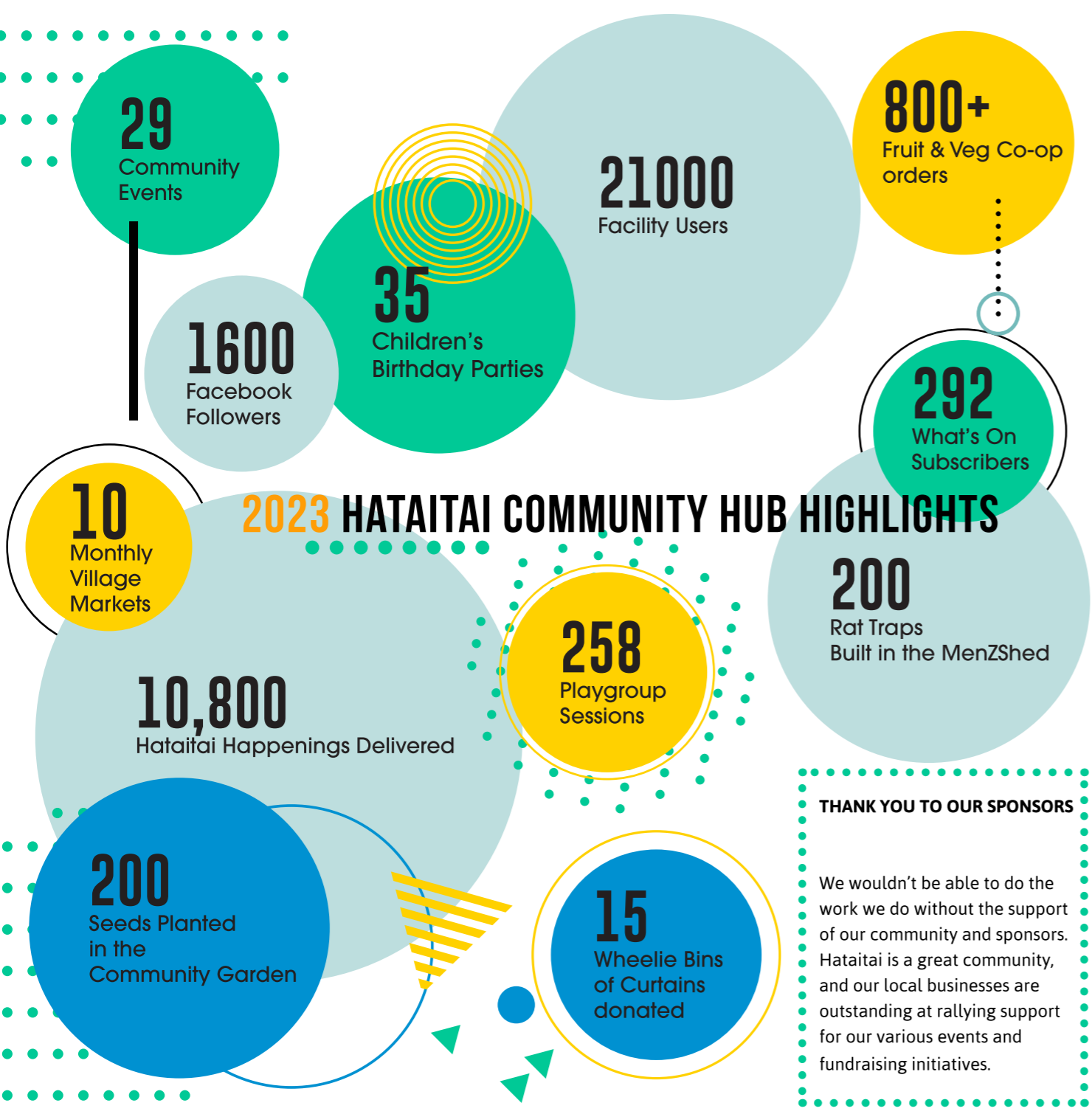
By the 1980s, there was a decline in members at the club due to the proliferation of other activities vying for locals' time on weekends, such as the introduction of Saturday shopping and an influx of bars and restaurants. The club was in danger of being taken over by developers with its prime land suitable for new townhouses. One of the options was to sell the building and land and give the money back to Bowls Wellington, but the bowlers wanted it to stay in and for the community. So, in 2012, it was gifted to the Hataitai community.

The bowling club is now safeguarded by the Hataitai Community Recreation Trust (HCRT), on behalf of the community. On the 11 November 2023, the HCRT hosted a Redevelopment Launch Party to kickstart the fundraising phase of the Redevelopment Project, as the bowling club has been deemed earthquake prone. The aim is for the building to be redeveloped by 2027.

Now the club is used for monthly markets, exercise classes and events and initiatives to support the community such as our annual Soup and Slice event for elderly community members.

There is still much interesting memorabilia from the Club's bowling heyday permanently stored at the Club, including cases full of bowling balls donated by original members and their families and the Queen's Coronation Cup that the club won in 1954.

The Hataitai Bowling Club has long been home to a host of interesting personalities as well as functioning, right from the outset, as a community hub – a place to meet and enjoy the company of other locals with shared interests. It has a rich history and continues to move into the future as a place of inclusion and connection for our community.



THANK YOU TO OUR SPONSORS

We wouldn't be able to do the work we do without the support of our community and sponsors. Hataitai is a great community, and our local businesses are outstanding at rallying support for our various events and fundraising initiatives.

A DECADE OF DEDICATION: HATAITAI COMMUNITY'S EXCITING FUNDRAISING JOURNEY BEGINS

by Sonia Rafter

In the heart of the Hataitai community, a momentous celebration took place on 11 November 2023, marking not only a decade of unwavering dedication but also the exciting next stage of our redevelopment journey: fundraising. The Hataitai Community Recreation Trust, the custodian of the former Bowling Club, has embarked on a new adventure to transform this historic site into a vibrant place for the community.



The Hataitai Bowling Club reimagined. Render by Sam Kebbell, Architect.

Ten years ago, the Hataitai Bowling Club was generously gifted to the community, a gesture that ignited the spark of possibility and a place for people to gather. What a gift! For the past decade, a committed group of volunteers have worked to maintain and reimagine this cherished piece of local history. Because of their passion and determination, a Wellington City Council grant was secured to set up a strategic partnership with Funding HQ. Together we have developed a comprehensive fundraising plan and now have a clear roadmap of what the Bowling Club can become for Hataitai and its surrounding suburbs.

hosted a party where we discussed the history of the club and the future plans for it. The event was a vibrant reflection of our community's spirit and unity and featured live music and games on the green. This event wouldn't have been as successful without the support of local cafe Coolsville, contributing delectable catering and the Waitoa Social Club generously supplying their tasty beers. We were also delighted to continue our long partnership with Tommy's Real Estate, who helped us promote our cause.



Architectural drawings showing the three main spaces

place will become a hive for gathering, recreation, learning, creating and connecting.



Redevelopment Launch Party

"This club has been part of the Hataitai Community for over a hundred years, and we want to ensure that it is still servicing the community for a hundred more." *Craig Harbour, President of the Hataitai Bowling Club and Trustee of The Hataitai Community Recreation Trust.*

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has been a part of this journey so far including the community, volunteers, and partners for ensuring we reached this milestone.

The redeveloped bowling club will continue to be a place where all our regular classes, markets and events still occur but in a more vibrant fit for purpose space. A space that enables us to attract and support a much more diverse range of activities, with a focus on arts and culture. Featuring 3 main spaces, a commercial kitchen and the retention of our sprawling lawn, this

As we embark on this fundraising journey, we carry with us the spirit of a decade's worth of dedication and the bright hope for a more vibrant, inclusive, and connected Hataitai. To find out more about our redevelopment plans and how you can be a part of this journey, we encourage you to visit our website, or reach out and meet us. We would love to share our vision with you and explore the many ways in which you can contribute to retaining and refreshing this amazing gift for future generations.

Hataitai Community Recreation Trust
 Website: www.hataitai.org.nz
 Contact: Sonia Rafter at 0272 123 062 or sonia@hataitai.org.nz.

To launch our fundraising project, we

CHRISTMAS ON THE GREEN



16 DECEMBER 10AM - 2PM

Come to our annual Free Community Christmas event alongside our December market. Bring your whole whānau, shop for Christmas, and have festive fun. Activities include carnival games, raffles, lolly scramble, music, sausage sizzle and a visit from a Christmas Elf!!



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Art in the Heart of Hataitai!

By Holly Connor-Kebbell

Exhibit Gallery in the Hataitai Village is owned by two friends, Allen Maher and Lucy Jackson. Neither thought they were going to be gallery owners but saw the space and knew it should be a gallery. Their focus is contemporary and abstract art, with light installations and small sculptures, too. Most are very vibrant and colourful. Lucy and Allen have filled a gap, wanting to offer more variety and start a gallery that is more accessible and friendly for everyone to look at the beautiful work. Allen and Lucy find artists from all over



Owners of Exhibit, Allen Maher and Lucy Jackson



New Zealand with a new art exhibit up each month.

They chose Hataitai because they loved the space and the community, and it's not too far from town. Both live locally and have backgrounds in the Arts. The Hataitai Community has welcomed the gallery, being enthusiastic and supportive of the new addition to the Village. It has recently been the gallery's first birthday, and the owners are so grateful for all the support Hataitai has given them. They're looking forward to many more years to come. The gallery is open on weekends between 9:30am and 2pm. So next time you're passing, have a look!