

KOITIATA COMMUNITY COUNCIL

DECEMBER 1988

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since the last Report, the Community Hall extension has been completed. Thanks to the Dudding Trust, your Riding Member and the Rangitikei County Council, we received a Grant of \$1,350.00 for our material costs from the Dudding Trust, so with all labour supplied by the Community, it simply meant the whole job had been completed without any drain on our rate estimates, thanks to all.

Fire Team.

The Fire Team now has about 11 members. A new Fire Chief, Mr Peter Fraser and a new Deputy, Mr W. Wills were appointed, and are also the new Rural Fire Officers. We thank all you chaps for the time and effort spent at practices, and we all know that if called upon you will give a good account of yourselves, for our protection.

Civil Defence.

We now have a special C.B. Radio for Civil Defence emergencies. Should roads and telephone communications be out, we have contact with C.D. Marton and Wanganui. This is a good asset to our Community. The Civil Defence Officer for our area, Mr Max Benseman, came down for an evening Meeting in October, to instruct our Civil Defence Wardens in its use. He commented on a very good attendance.

Recreation Nights.

Bowls - and a great deal of fun. If you feel like attending and having an enjoyable evening, every Thursday 7.30 p.m. - come along. I am sure you will be made welcome.

Mowing Front Area.

Our special thanks must go to Mr Bill Wills for the time and effort he put into the mowing of this area, plus the Camping Ground. It certainly is a pleasure to see this area so tidy. Thanks also to those who have lent their trailers, and picked up and returned the mower to the Rangitikei County Council yard.

River Mouth and Beach Access.

This is becoming quite a concern to all, as the river continues its movement southwards. It certainly does not enhance the area. Access to the beach is difficult. We all hope it will block off, so it can be opened up out in front, otherwise we will become a river settlement instead of a Beach Settlement.

Bereavements Since Last Report.

Mr Rodney Newman. We offer our heartfelt sympathy to Nira and families from our Community. Rod was always willing to help his fellow man, and was a member of the Fire Team, Civil Defence and Car Pool.

Koitiata Community Council.

This will cease to exist from 31 March 1989 with the new Government Scheme of Regional Councils, so this will be my last Report as your Chairman. I feel it would be very appropriate to thank all present and past Chairmen, Councillors, Riding Members and the Rangitikei County Council and residents, for all that has been achieved. While we have been a Community Council, between all of us, we have a Community we can be proud of, and a Community spirit second to none.

The Festive Season is upon us. On behalf of all Councillors and myself, we wish you, all the residents and Batchholders, the Rangitikei Council and Staff, and our Riding Member, and all families, a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for all your wonderful cooperation at all times.

N. N. Abbott

Chairman

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PHOTO: COLIN ROWATT CR\_3694

Koiitiata's finest ... from left, David Coronel (seven years), Peter Smith (five years) chief officer Peter Bamford (seven years), Robin Hope (six years), Richard Corcoran (three years), Lou Corcoran (11 years), Bruce Atwell (six years), Tom Dooney (14 years), Kevin Murray (one year).

## Rural firefighters blow out 21 candles

By Colin Rowatt

Koiitiata's finest - the members of the Turakina seaside settlement's volunteer rural fire force - recently marked the unit's first major milestone, its 21st anniversary.

As with all celebrations involving firefighters the orders of the day included the presentation of medals and ribbons signifying varying levels of service. But the gathering also provided an opportunity to members past and present to reflect on the unit's history.

Originally established in November 1982, for the then sole purpose of fighting scrub fires that frequently threatened the village, the Koiitiata Volunteer Rural Fire Force has grown up to become a valuable and useful addition to fire-fighting services in the Rangitikei.

The unit has long since shed its "Dad's Army" image to become a committed, competent team called on to deal to foliage fires throughout the Rangitikei and sometimes even to

other neighbouring districts.

The unit's initial equipment was a portable pump and hose and a set of "beaters" donated by then New Zealand Forest Service. Over the years the equipment has been progressively upgraded to the point where it now features two well-equipped appliances including a late model four-wheel drive "smoke chaser" with a 500 litre water tank. That has given the unit much greater ability to tackle fires in difficult terrain.

During the past decade the unit has responded to up to 25 call-outs in a season, several of them major property-threatening blazes as far north as Taihape and as far south as Himatangi.

The Koiitiata VRFF has also provided valuable support to other volunteer fire brigades in the southern Rangitikei and regularly assists those brigades in dealing with foliage fires. The increased participation of the Koiitiata team has often meant those other fire fighters have been able to return to their employment sooner than would otherwise have been possible.