



Media release

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New patron champions heritage archive centre

Well known Te Kauaeranga | Thames resident, Geraldine Dunwoodie, has been appointed new Patron of the Hauraki-Coromandel heritage research centre and archive, The Treasury. The Treasury collects and preserves historical records of Te Tara o te Ika a Maui - the Coromandel Peninsula and Hauraki District. Their mission is to make these precious historical records accessible to as many people and audiences as possible throughout New Zealand and internationally, and share the local stories about the people, places and taonga.

The Treasury name and Geraldine are spoken synonymously by many who know the history and evolution of The Treasury. Geraldine and her late husband, Morrie, were the driving force behind the formation of The Treasury housed in the beautiful historic Carnegie Library on Te Kauaeranga | Thames' Queen Street and the bespoke temperature controlled \$1.1 million archive built alongside. "So many generous local people contributed financially or "in kind" to make the Archive build a reality. I still hold a warm place in my heart for these people" says Geraldine. However, Geraldine also became an adept Funding Application writer, raising many hundreds of thousands of dollars. A grant of \$360,000 from Lottery Environment and Heritage in 2013 meant the archive build could finally begin. The archive was officially opened in 2014.

"I feel honoured to have been asked to become a Patron of The Trust" says Geraldine. "But I also feel humble as neither myself nor Morrie could have done this alone – it was with the support of so many others who were involved in the planning and set up of the Research Centre and the massive undertaking of the Archive build. People from all walks of life gave hundreds of volunteer hours and financial support to make The Treasury what it is today".

"Geraldine agreeing to become a Patron is fitting as it recognises the gift Geraldine and Morrie have given to the communities in the Coromandel and Hauraki areas. It was a unanimous Board decision to approach Geraldine and we were thrilled when she accepted our invitation" says Tom Barker, Chair of The Coromandel Heritage Trust. "It was a huge project to undertake ensuring the safe keeping and preservation of the history and records of our area. I am sure many generations to come will be appreciative of what the Dunwoodies achieved" says Tom.

Geraldine sees her role as Patron as a multi-faceted one. "I am still passionate about The Treasury and that will never change" she says. "As Patron I see myself continuing to support The Trust in any way I can. I love talking to people about The Treasury, encouraging them to join as a member, asking them to consider donating their family or business records for preservation or volunteering their time at The Treasury. With technology now playing a

large part in making our records more accessible, there are many new and innovative volunteer roles available at The Treasury” she adds.

Facing significant financial challenges currently, it is Geraldine’s great hope that The Treasury will be successful in raising the funds required to keep the doors open and the archive ticking over through these very tough times. “Community resources like The Treasury are expensive to operate and I understand public funders are experiencing massive oversubscription of the funds they have available for not-for-profit organisations. I’ll be doing all I can to support the philanthropy campaign that will be rolled out shortly”.

Local Te Kauaeranga | Thames businessman, Greg Hampton, is also delighted with Geraldine’s appointment as a Patron. Greg is a former Board member and Chair of the Trust, but he was also involved with Morrie in planning permission for the Archive in his role at the Thames Coromandel District Council. “It’s wonderful news that Geraldine has accepted the Board invitation to act as Patron for The Coromandel Heritage Trust. For over 20 years she has played a pivotal role in the establishment and ongoing development of The Treasury as a first-class heritage archive and research centre. Along with her late husband Morrie and a tight group of community minded heritage enthusiasts, Geraldine has worked tirelessly to ensure that the region’s historic records and stories are collected, appropriately preserved, and remain accessible for the benefit of present and future generations. Geraldine’s continued support as Patron is great news for the Trust, and a worthy honour for her significant contributions over the years.”

In 2015 Geraldine was presented with the Queens Service Medal at Government House in Auckland for her role in bringing The Treasury and archive to fruition. Again, Geraldine was, at first, reluctant to accept this honour as she said there were many others who had contributed hugely to the project. It took much persuasion by many people at The Treasury for her to change her mind. Geraldine’s humbleness will, like her passion for The Treasury, never change.

As Geraldine is welcomed as Patron of The Treasury, the Trust Board takes this opportunity to thank and farewell past Patron, Sue Wright of Coromandel Town, whose resignation was received early this year, due to her declining health.

About The Treasury

The Treasury is a Research Centre and Archive on the Coromandel Peninsula. We collect, house, preserve and share records of the history of the people, organisations and businesses from our rohe/area - the entire Coromandel Peninsula and the Hauraki District area including Paeroa, Waikino, Waihi, the Hauraki Plains, Ohinemuri and Te Aroha. Visitors can also access our services by visiting our website www.thetreasury.org.nz.

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