

MIRO



2013 Annual Report

Message from the Chair

For MIRO, the 2012/2013 year might best be characterised as one of consolidation rather than new initiative. It began with a flurry of activity and immense volunteer effort with our third North Island Robin translocation but soon settled down to business as usual. All of our main activities have now been in progress for several years and all are showing clear signs of success. This has brought MIRO to a point where it needs to start looking to the future and thinking about how it might consolidate the gains already made and what new projects it might undertake to enhance the biodiversity within the East Harbour Regional Park (EHRP). Coincidental to this, the Greater Wellington Regional Council (GWRC) is currently in the process of preparing ten-year plans, one for the Forest Block and another for the Lakes Block. Because of MIRO's partnership with GWRC we have been extensively consulted throughout the planning process.

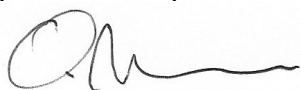
Both plans are close to completion and are likely to require a significant increase in GWRC and volunteer activity to meet the goals set for 2023. In the Forest Block there is likely to be a requirement to extend the Mainland Island, possibly to three times its current size. This is very desirable but will only be achievable with significant assistance from MIRO. In the Lakes Block, ambitious targets are likely to be set for increased planting throughout the area, moving away from our current fenced plots and into the wetlands and higher up the hills.

The MIRO Committee is in the early stages of considering another bird re-introduction. Top of the list at the moment is the Pateke, or Brown Teal. This would obviously be focussed around the lakes but these birds might also find suitable habitat in the Gollans Stream area of the Forest Block. The key to achieving the goals I have outlined is a strong and capable Committee. High-quality research, planning, co-ordination and communication is vital if we are to succeed. For this reason, we are always ready to welcome new people to the Committee, at any time, if they feel they might be able to make a tangible contribution.

Committee member Reg Cotter has informed us that he will no longer be able to offer us his services. Reg will be a great loss to MIRO. Over the past ten years he has been contributing his knowledge and experience at Committee meetings as well as being an active volunteer on the ground. He was a trapper for many years, was instrumental in initiating our robin re-introduction, and played a key part in setting up our 5 minute bird counts. On behalf the Committee and all of our volunteers I would like to thank Reg, and his wife Anne, for his contribution.

There are many others I should thank for their contribution to MIRO's success but it's not possible to mention them all. First and foremost I'd like to thank our volunteers and helpers who, as a group, form an impressive and effective workforce for the protection and restoration of EHRP. Also of vital importance are our partners from GW without whose support, professionalism and funds, the work we do would simply not be possible. Mark McAlpine, Gareth Cooper and Kim Broad regularly give up their evenings to attend MIRO meetings. Mark, the EHRP Ranger, also spends a lot of time with us in the field and facilitating our activities. This year Anna Burrows and Tim Park have given a lot of their time to consulting with MIRO about the ten-year plans they are developing.

Last but not least we are also grateful to our auditor, George Tuffin, and Spiral Web Design who provide and sponsor all our web services.



Doug Mercer, June 2013

MIRO Committee

The MIRO Committee met approximately at 6 week intervals throughout the year and continued to function in an effective and constructive manner. The members were Doug Mercer (Chair), Jill Bagnall (Treasurer), Parker Jones (Secretary), Gail Abel, Reg Cotter, George Gibbs, Jan Heine, Mike Rumble, Colin Ross and Owen Spearpoint. During the year Nick Pharazyn left the Committee due to other commitments and Keith Levy was co-opted as a member. Several Committee members other than the three office holders had assigned responsibilities and significant workloads. The broad mix of skills on the Committee enables good governance and has a direct impact on our ability to make sound decisions.

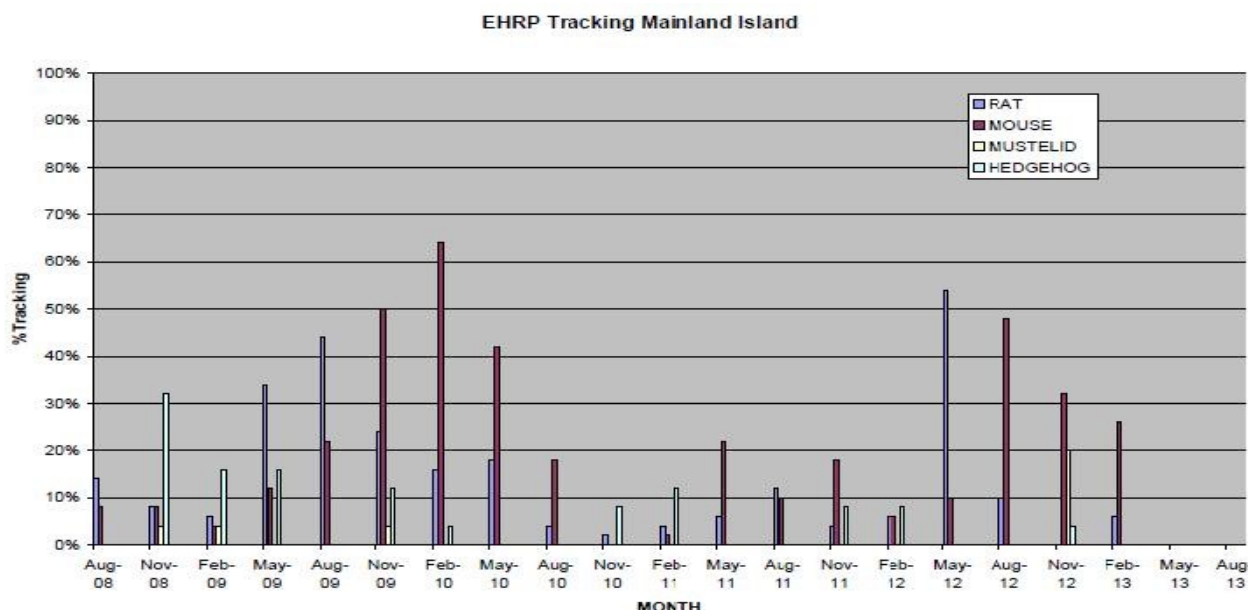
Membership

It is difficult to quantify MIRO membership numbers. We prefer to think of all our volunteers as members so, using this measurement, we have a fluid membership that possibly involved at least 100 individuals throughout the year. As an Incorporated Society, we also have to treat membership more formally on occasions, particularly regarding eligibility to vote for Committee members and other constitutional matters. For these purposes, membership is determined by the payment of an annual subscription (\$10 or \$15 per family) and numbers usually fluctuate between 20 and 30.

MIRO has one Corporate Member, Cuttriss Consulting. Corporate membership is important to us not just for the financial contribution but also for the pool of skilled volunteers it can provide.

Monitoring

The quarterly rodent monitoring and six-monthly mustelid monitoring teams continued their good work throughout the year. The predictable spike in rat numbers in May 2012 was soon under control, as shown in the graph below. The heavy reduction in rat numbers contributed to a heavy spike in mouse numbers.



Pest Control

Rodents

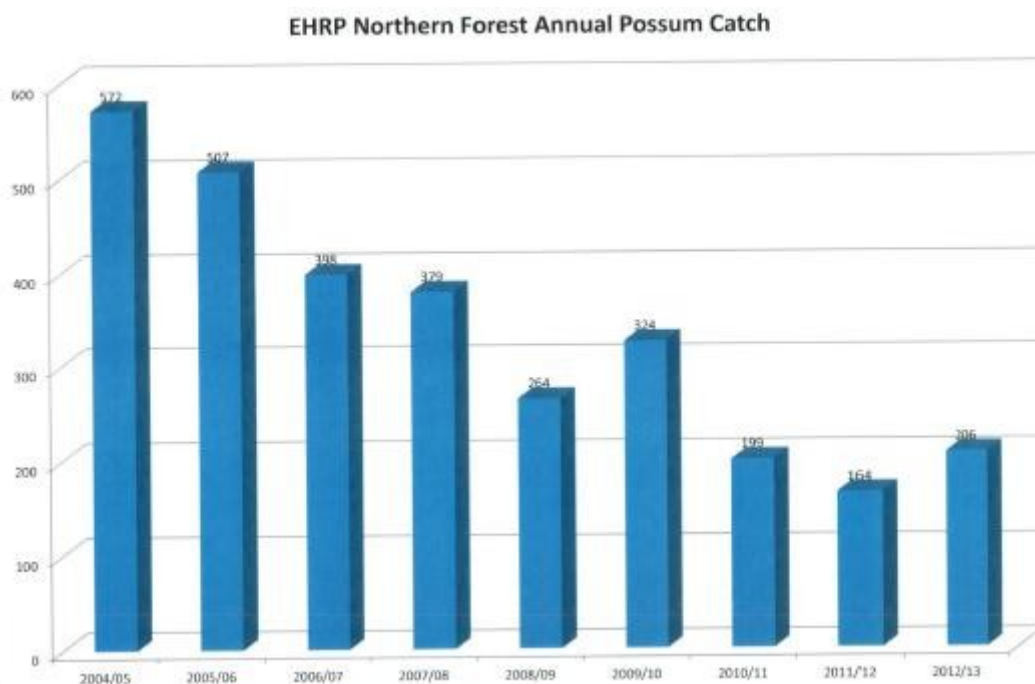
In last year's report I noted that the early indications of another beech mast year and the resultant increase in fruit supply would cause an explosion of rat numbers in autumn 2012. This occurred as expected but our preventive efforts seemed to have paid off as numbers dropped rapidly soon afterwards, back to sustainable levels.

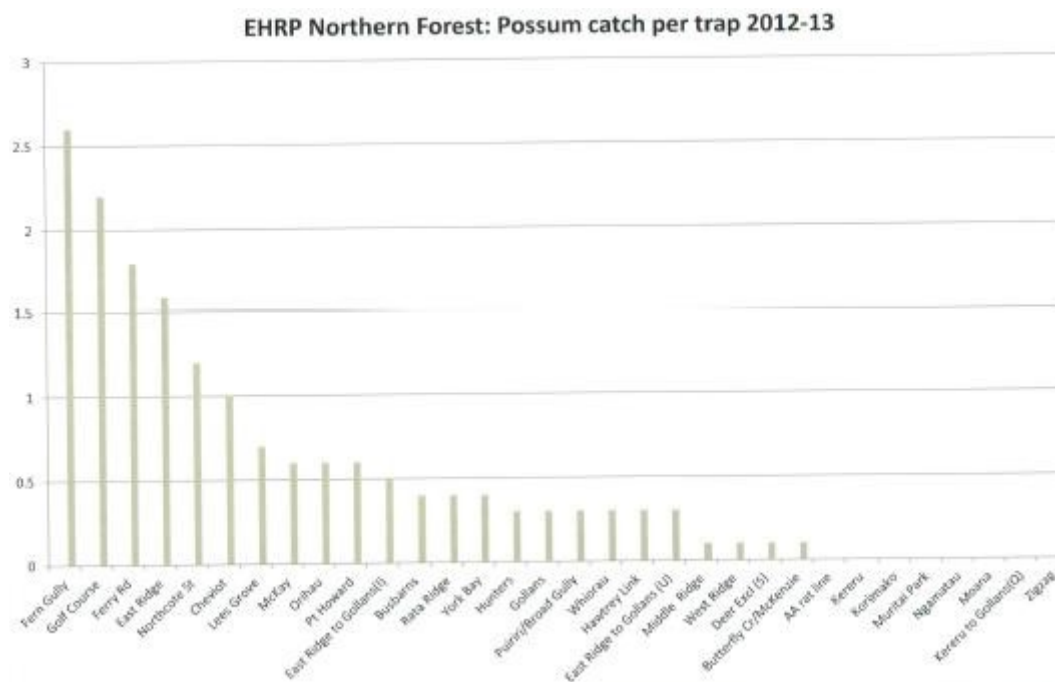
Mustelids

Despite increased trapping, mustelids are still a problem in EHRP and we are looking at significantly increasing our control efforts. The Committee has approved the purchase of 39 new stainless steel stoat traps.

Possums

Possum numbers rose slightly this year from 164 to 206. At this stage we don't know the reason for the increase. It is possibly related to climatic conditions but could also just be a statistical fluctuation now that we have got possum numbers down to a baseline level. We will need to wait for GWRC to perform the next RTC (Rate of Trap Catch) monitor to obtain further information. Our problem areas are still on the northern and the eastern boundaries but there are a few pockets within the park itself. We are constantly reviewing our network to make it as effective as possible.





Deer

Additional efforts have been made over the past year to reduce deer numbers in the park but it is proving difficult, if not impossible, to reduce numbers much below current levels. One of the main problems is that the deer appear to have become cleverer and now prefer to frequent the sunny western slopes, above the houses, where safety concerns prevent them from being shot. MIRO is still working on it, though, and gave \$2000 to GWRC to fund an additional cull at the end of this year's roar.

Parangarahu Lakes

We have now completed planting all six plots as envisaged in Geoff Park's original Planting Plan. Around 1500 plants were planted this year, mostly in the new Plot 6, with some infilling of earlier plots. Growth in Plot 2 was such that no extra trees were required this year and only 2 Northern Rata were added. 500 trees were trialled in an area without fencing on the edge of Kohangatera. Non-palatable trees have done well but roving stock and hares have taken a toll on the palatable species. Fencing along the boundaries with private landowners is now a significant concern for us and GWRC is working to resolve the matter. Some of the earliest plots planted are now starting to show impressive growth and are close to the point where no further planting is required. A wide range of species has been established.

Local iwi are now beginning to become more involved in conservation efforts at the lakes and we expect to work co-operatively with them over the coming years. For example, a major consideration for both them and MIRO is to ensure adequate fish passages are provided to enable native fish and eels to enter and exit from the sea as required for spawning purposes. GWRC's draft ten-year plan for the Lakes Block outlines a significant programme of planting in various wetland areas and also the trialling of beech plots near the top of the hills.



Committee member Jan Heine dwarfed by trees planted by MIRO in Plot 3



GWRC Ranger Mark McAlpine rewards MIRO volunteers with his homemade chocolate cake

Nursery

The MIRO nursery at GNS continued its good work, thanks largely to a small core of dedicated volunteers. A special thank you is due to Gail Abel and her crew at the nursery as they continue to keep us well supplied with a huge variety of healthy, eco-sourced plants. MIRO is always looking for additional people who can help us in this essential area.

This year 500 surplus plants produced by the Nursery were given to other restoration groups including Friends of Baring Head, for their first planting, Friends of Waiwhetu Stream, and Pauatahanui.

We are very grateful for the continued support of GNS, who host our nursery on their land, and the Hutt Mana Energy Trust, who continue to fund the soil and compost we require.



Robins

With three translocations completed and 106 North Island robins released into EHRP, MIRO's robin reintroduction programme has now entered an interesting phase. Over the coming months we should begin to get a clearer picture of the extent to which our efforts have succeeded. In August last year thirty volunteers combed the park on the same day looking for robins. Fifteen were identified which was an encouraging result given the extent of the park. The exercise is likely to be repeated at the same time this year and the comparison will be interesting.

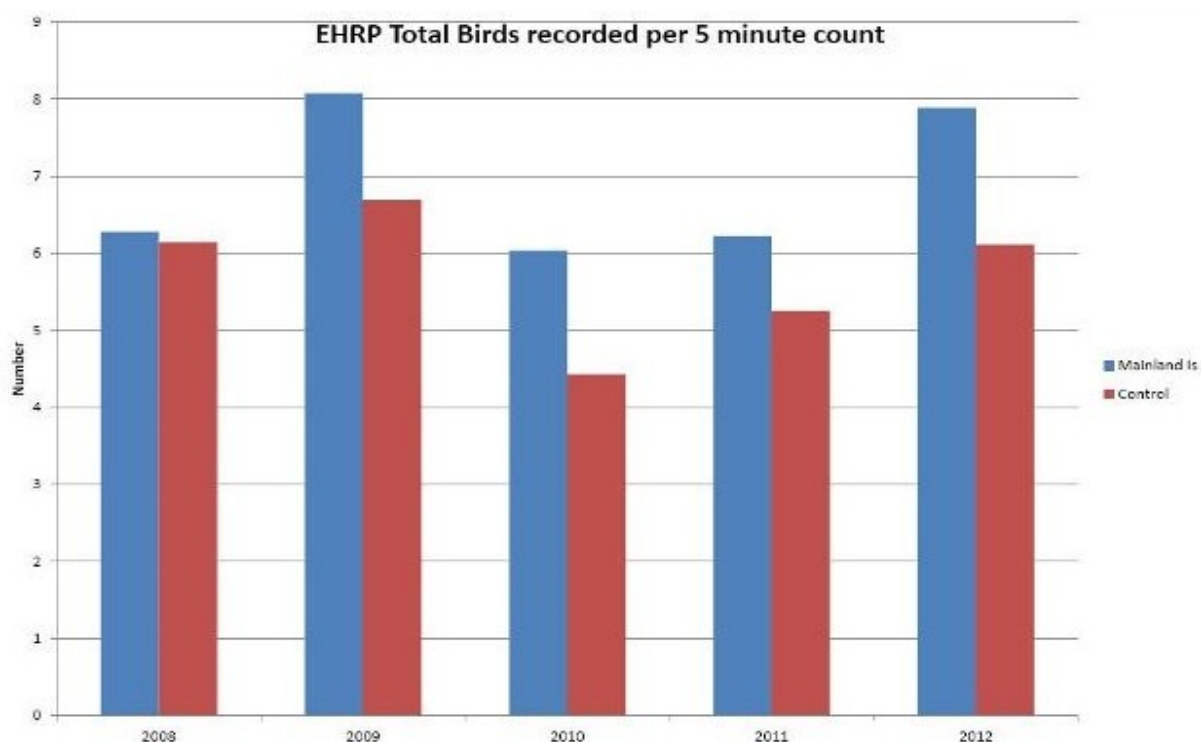
Throughout the year robin sightings have been reported and it is particularly encouraging that some of these were unbanded birds, indicating that they are the offspring of introduced birds. The two biggest problems we face are predation and dispersal. We have tackled predation by increasing the number of stoat traps and targeting feral cats within the Mainland Island area. Robins are territorial birds and it is likely that their movements are restricted in their normal habitats by encounters with other birds. In our case, with such a low population, it is likely that many birds will disperse widely as they will not encounter other territories to prevent them. This will inevitably lead them into areas with unsatisfactory predator numbers. At this stage we do not know the extent to which dispersal will impact on our programme. Increasing the size of the Mainland Island in future years will go a long way towards tackling both problems.

Bird Monitoring

MIRO uses 5 minute bird counts to monitor birds in the Forest Block. These are conducted in October each year at 40 stations, 20 within the Mainland Island and 20 outside it, in comparable territory/vegetation. Four counts are made at each station by four different counters giving a robust 10-plus hours of data each year.

The counts confirm a wide diversity of species present. Up to 32 species are regularly recorded. Predominant species are Silvereye, Grey Warbler, Tui, Blackbird, and Bellbird. But other species recorded include a large number of regionally rare species – Tomtit, Rifleman, Whitehead, Wood pigeon, Kingfisher, Falcon, Red-crowned Kakariki, Shining and Longtailed cuckoo. Kakariki have been featuring in counts since 2011 and it is thought that they may now be breeding in the park having self-introduced from Matiu/Somes Island. North island robin have featured in four out of the five bird counts carried out since their first reintroduction.

Anecdotal reports of birds in and around the park also provide a valuable supplement to the quantitative data from the 5 minute counts. Residents and park visitors have reported sightings of Tomtits and Rifleman low on the western sea-faces and adjoining the urban area for the first time in several decades. Small flocks of whiteheads, rather than just individual birds, have been sighted and urban residents adjoining the park have commented on increasing bird numbers in local gardens especially of Tui, Bellbird and Wood pigeon.



GIS in Conservation (GiC)

Over the past few months MIRO has been working with GiC, outlining the requirements we might have for making smart use of geospatial information systems. GiC is a trust that works with a range of conservation organisations, government and community, to provide them with free or cost-effective systems to enhance their work through the use of GIS software. It is early days but there are a number of opportunities for MIRO. GIS can be used to keep accurate records of where our pest traps and lines are located and to record the catches associated with each trap. Similarly it can record what MIRO has planted and where and other aspects of our planting programme. Longer term we would like to see it linked to mobile applications that will allow volunteers and the public to easily and instantly record sightings of interest in the EHRP area.

Explore Butterfly Creek Walk

Every year MIRO conducts a guided walk for the general public in the Forest Block. GWRC organise the event and MIRO provides the guides and interpretation throughout the walk. This year we trialled a completely new route, choosing terrain that was more accessible for people of all fitness levels. The group of up to thirty people walked to the Butterfly Creek picnic area and then an easy distance up the banks of the Gollans Stream. Feedback from the walk was complimentary and we will likely repeat the same walk next year.



MIRO guides point out an unbanded robin near Gollans Stream

MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.

Statement of Financial Position

As at 31 March 2013

	2013	2012
	\$	\$
CURRENT ASSETS		
ANZ Bank	13,442	13,840
Less unexpended grants	<u>565</u>	<u>8,611</u>
Net Assets	<u>12,877</u>	<u>5,229</u>
 MEMBERS' FUNDS		
Balance, 1 April	5,229	9,490
Surplus (Loss) for year	<u>7,648</u>	4,261
BALANCE 31 MARCH	<u>12,877</u>	<u>5,229</u>

**Notes to the Financial Statements
For the Year Ended 31 March 2013**

INCORPORATION

Mainland Island Restoration Incorporated (MIRO) was constituted by a resolution dated 5 June 2009 and was incorporated under the Incorporated Societies Act 1908 on 18 June 2009.

MIRO was previously part of East Harbour Environmental Association.

The purposes of MIRO are to provide benefit to the community through the restoration of the natural ecosystems of East Harbour Regional Park in Wellington.

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTING POLICIES

Reporting Entity

The financial statements are prepared in accordance with generally accepted accounting practices and the Incorporated Societies Act 1908.

Measurement Base

The measurement base adopted is that of historical cost.

Goods and Services Tax

These accounts have been prepared on a GST inclusive basis.

MAINLAND ISLAND RESTORATION OPERATION (MIRO) INC.**Statement of Financial Performance**

For the year ended 31 March 2013

INCOME	2013	2013	2012	2012
GRANTS	\$	\$	\$	\$
Pub Charity			3,208	
Ron Greenwood Env. Trust			312	
Lion Foundation			4,480	
Hutt Mana Charitable Trust			1,122	
GW Regional Council	3,720		<u>4,000</u>	
LAST YEAR'S UNEXPENDED GRANT	<u>8,611</u>			
TOTAL GRANTS	12,331		13,122	
LESS UNEXPENDED GRANTS	<u>565</u>	11,766	<u>8,611</u>	4,511
GW REGIONAL COUNCIL				
Sale of trees (through Honda Tree Fund)	4,475			
AGM	<u>215</u>		273	
TOTAL GW REGIONAL COUNCIL		4,690		273
SUBSCRIPTIONS		475		510
DONATIONS		720		765
INTEREST		125		65
TOTAL INCOME		17,776		6,124
EXPENDITURE				
GRANTS				
Pub Charity - remainder of grant returned		298		
NURSERY				
Operating Expenses		1,409		1,282
LAKES BLOCK				166
ROBIN TRANSFER 2011				7,334
ROBIN TRANSFER 2012				511
ROBIN TRANSFER 2013		6,948		
MISCELLANEOUS				
AGM	778		574	
Men's Shed	147			
Grey Power Stall	25			
Sundry	123		244	
BBQ			274	
High Viz Vests	230			
P.O. Box	<u>170</u>			
TOTAL MISCELLANEOUS		1,473		1,092
TOTAL EXPENDITURE		10,128		10,385
NET INCOME (LOSS)		7,648		(4,261)

AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF

Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO) Inc.

I have audited the financial statements attached. The statements provide information about the past financial performance of Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO) Inc. for the year ended 31 March 2013 and its financial position for the year ended on that date.

Auditor's Responsibilities

I am responsible for expressing an independent opinion on the financial statements presented by MIRO and reporting my opinion to you.

Basis of Opinion

I have conducted my audit in accordance with generally accepted auditing standards in New Zealand. I planned and performed the audit so as to obtain all the information and explanations which I considered necessary in order to provide me with sufficient evidence to give reasonable assurance that the statements are free from material misstatements, whether caused by fraud or error. In forming my opinion I also evaluated the overall adequacy of the presentation of information in the statements.

Qualified Opinion

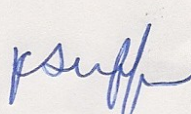
This audit report is qualified since I am not able to verify all income.

In my opinion

The financial statements:

- Comply with generally accepted accounting practice
- Give a true and fair view of the financial position of Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO) as at 31 March 201~~2~~³ and the results of its operations for the year ended on that date.

My audit was completed on 19 May 2013 and my qualified opinion is expressed as at that date.


George Tuffin
Chartered Accountant
Eastbourne

Minutes of the AGM of the Mainland Island Restoration Operation (MIRO)

6:00pm Friday 6th July 2012
East Harbour Women's Club Rooms, Eastbourne

Present: Doug Mercer, Jill Bagnall, Gail Abel, Graeme Claridge, Parker Jones, Owen Spearpoint, Nick Pharazyn, Kim Broad, Alison Davis, Mark McAlpine and about 30 others.

Apologies: Fran Wilde, Alex and Jane Kettles, Karen Ardin, Colin Ross, Jan Heine, Mike and Gail Rumble, Reg Cotter, Phillippa Crisp, Nicky MacArthur

Minutes of last year's meeting

Accepted (Parker Jones, Gail Abel)

Annual Report

Doug Mercer gave a brief outline of the Annual Report and Financials.

Accepted (Jill Bagnall, Parker Jones)

Election of Committee

All nominations for the Committee for 2012/2013 were elected by unanimous approval. The new committee is:

Gail Abel

Jill Bagnall (Treasurer)

Jan Heine

Parker Jones (Secretary)

Doug Mercer (Chair)

Colin Ross

Owen Spearpoint

Accepted (Vivian Pohl/Barbara Destcroix)

Life Member

The Chair announced the retirement of Graeme Claridge from the Committee and that Graeme had been appointed a Life Member of MIRO by unanimous approval of the Committee.

Thank you to Gareth Cooper

The Chair said words of thanks for the excellent work Gareth Cooper has done in the park and the successful relationship he formed with MIRO while he was the EHRP ranger.

Greater Wellington

Alison Davis introduced the new GW park ranger Mark McAlpine and emphasised the importance of the EHRP and thanked MIRO for its continuing support.

The meeting closed at 6:40pm and was followed by a presentation from Liz Parlato on Robin Translocations.