

# Stoddart Cottage Trust

## Annual Report: April 2017 – March 2018

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The year started with a flourish as Stoddart Cottage was formally blessed and re-opened after 12 months of earthquake repairs costing about \$400,000. The Trust is grateful to Christchurch City Council ratepayers, elected members, contractors and staff, in particular **Mr Richie Moyle**, who worked willingly with Trustees to fine-tune the work to meet our needs.



It was fitting that **Mr John Rimminton**, a former trustee of long standing and one of the original signatories on the 1998 Stoddart Cottage Trust Deed, ceremoniously cut the ribbon to begin this next stage in the history of Stoddart Cottage.

See video at <https://www.star.kiwi/2017/04/watch-stoddarts-cottage-buzzing-with-people-again/>

### 1. Trust Membership

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At our first meeting of the year we were very pleased to welcome **Ms Frances Husband** to the Trust. With a background in fine arts and employment links with the Canterbury Museum she brings highly-valued skills and a strong cultural heritage perspective to our decision-making.

Since then our membership has remained steady. Current Trustees are:

1	Ms Paula Smith	Community member	Chairperson
2	Mr Jim Nieman	Diamond Harbour Camera Club Inc. representative	
3	Ms Karen Colyer	Diamond Harbour Painting Group representative	Secretary
4	Mr John McLister	Appointed by Banks Peninsula Community Board	
5	Mr Colin McLeod	Diamond Harbour Community Association Inc. Representative	
6	Mr James Norcliffe	Diamond Harbour and Districts Historical Association Inc. Representative	
7	Mrs Debbie Boyd	Community member	Treasurer
8	Ms Frances Husband	Community member	
9		Diamond Harbour Writers Group Representative	
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The Trust Deed allows for up to ten members. Two vacancies remain unfilled. The Trust welcomes expressions of interest from anyone interested in playing an active role in the governance of Stoddart Cottage.

The trustee position for a person representing the Diamond Harbour Writers group has been vacant since the resignation of Mr Rimminton. It dates from the time before the earthquakes when the writers group met regularly at Stoddart Cottage. If there is no-one from that group interested in being a trustee then perhaps the Trust should consider discontinuing the allocated Writers Group Representative position.

It is my own view that consideration should be given to including a representative of the Stoddart Cottage Gallery Craft and Art Co-operative, if there is a Co-op member willing to attend another monthly meeting. As it happens two trustees are currently members of the Co-op as well, so close liaison occurs, but in the long run this may not be the case.

The Trust held ten formal meetings during the last year. Our meetings are usually held on the third Monday of the month at 7.30pm at the cottage.

I am immensely grateful to all the trustees for their contributions through the last year when there has been a great deal of work to be done. In particular we must acknowledge **Ms Karen Colyer** who kept accurate and complete records of business, and our new treasurer **Mrs Debbie Boyd** whose on-going dealings with Mr Sky Zeng at Westpac kept us entertained at meetings through last winter. The role of treasurer is not straight forward!

With sadness Trustees recently received notice of **Mr Jim Nieman**'s retirement from the Trust, effective from this meeting. Jim has been tireless in his practical support for the cottage and its activities and his input will be greatly missed. We will also miss his well-considered contributions to decision-making.

Unfortunately our Banks Peninsula Community Board appointed trustee has been unable to attend any meetings this year due to other commitments but our relationship with the community board has been maintained through various informal links.

## 2. Visitor Numbers

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A key strategic objective for the Trust is building up the number of people who visit Stoddart Cottage. Over the last year visitor numbers were high initially, as many local people came to see the re-opened cottage and the painting group's exhibition, but they then fell off over winter as usual. With spring, visitor numbers began to increase, and continued to climb steadily back up to initial levels. Factors contributing to the steady increase include the opening of the craft co-op in August 2017, the particular popularity of some exhibitions, and increased marketing and promotion.

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Average no. of visitors per day	60	34	20	28	39	41	37	47	38	48	42	57
No. of days open	4	8	9	10	8	8	10	9	15	12	13	14
Month	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar

While daily visitor numbers remain highly variable and are clearly very weather dependent, analysis of visitor numbers by day of the week are as follows:

Fridays	29 visitors on average
Saturdays	40 visitors on average
Sundays	45 visitors on average
Public Holidays, not at a weekend. (Four last year, although data was missing for Labour Day)	49 visitors on average

The Trust's income from donation boxes during the year totalled \$1,287, although this includes some merchandise income because prior to the opening of the Co-op cash payments for merchandise were placed into donation boxes

### 3. Month-long Exhibitions in the Main Gallery

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Exhibitions during 2017 -2018 included:

Month	Name of Exhibition	Artist	Commission Income for Trust
Apr 2017 (from 19 April)	Diamond Harbour Painting Group	Various artists	-
May 2017	Diamond Harbour Painting Group	Various artists	\$?
Jun 2017	Stoddart Cottage Trust Visual Resources	Stoddart Cottage Trust	-
Jul 2017	Mirror, Mirror	Frances Husband	\$?
Aug 2017	This Land	Hamish Anderson	\$?
Sep 2017	Paintings	Karen Colyer	-
Oct 2017	A Day Out in Diamond Harbour	Joint exhibition by Diamond Harbour and Districts Historical Association and Stoddart Cottage Trust for Heritage Week 2017.	-
Nov 2017	A Day Out in Diamond Harbour <sup>cont.</sup>	As above	-
Dec 2017	The Best of Local Craft and Art	Various artists and crafters	\$?
Jan 2018	Two Ways of Seeing	Jo Ewing and Paul Brocklebank	\$?
Feb 2018	All Creatures	Cynthia Muir	\$?
Mar 2018	Home from Home	Jane McCulla	\$?

The Trust's successful *A Day Out in Diamond Harbour* exhibition, which ran over two months, was organised jointly with Diamond Harbour and Districts Historical Association and funded with a Beca Heritage Week (12-28 October 2017) grant of \$550 from Christchurch City Council, which the Trust greatly appreciated.

An early comparison of visitor numbers made soon after the re-opening in June last year showed that when an exhibition was held average visitors numbers increased from 21 to 45 per day, an increase of 114%. It is probably even more by now. I don't think anyone is in any doubt about the value of monthly exhibitions in encouraging visitors to Stoddart Cottage, particularly repeat visitors.

The Trust's space rental income for monthly art exhibitions during the year was \$291. Commission income from the monthly exhibitions is mixed in with the income from commissions from craft co-op sales shown in the Trust's accounts.

Apart from a couple of months during the coming winter there is a full schedule of exhibitions booked for next year.

#### **4. Events and Venue Hire**

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In addition to the official re-opening event which was organised in partnership with the CCC Community Governance staff (special thanks to **Mrs Grace Le Heux**) there were a number of other events at Stoddart Cottage through the year. These included:

- *A Cottage Picnic* event for families during Heritage Week,
- A meeting with archaeologists from Underground Overground Archaeology some of whom had worked at the cottage during repairs,
- The Diamond Harbour and Districts Historical Association November meeting which was held at Stoddart Cottage with talks about the cottage from trustees Frances Husband and Paula Smith,
- Diamond Harbour Kidsfirst Kindergarten's end of year picnic in the garden, attended by children, their families, kindergarten staff and Santa Claus,
- On a very hot day in January the local spinning group held a half-day spinning session at the cottage, and
- A Lyttelton walking group held two small social events at the cottage.

In addition we hosted visiting groups from Margaret Stoddart Retirement Village and the Rolleston Probus Club.

Income from venue hire for the year was \$85.

Sales generally result if the Craft Co-op is open during events such as these, and sometimes the value of sales is significant.

#### **5. Volunteers and Rosters**

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At the beginning of the year our volunteer pool consisted of seven Trustees and some family members supplemented by a small number of Friends of Stoddart Cottage willing to be in attendance for half a day from time to time, notably **Mrs Ann Thornton** who made

herself available often at short notice.

With the opening of the Stoddart Cottage Gallery Craft Co-operative the volunteer pool has grown significantly, but so too has the number of volunteers required. The number of half-day shifts to be filled has increased from four to twelve in a typical week, not including public holidays. The increase is due partly to the decision to open on Fridays, and partly to the need to have two people on duty to safely oversee the sales area. This rapid growth in operations has been challenging at times but on the whole most trustees and co-operative members, excited by the success of the co-operative, have generally been keen to do what was required. There was a pressure point in March when public holidays associated with Easter added even more shifts, and it is possible some volunteers may have begun to feel too much was expected. Time will tell if this level of activity is sustainable in the long run.

There are a number of options for modifying the operation to address such concerns if they arise. For example, consideration may be given to closing down completely for two or three months over winter, but for this season our manager is recommending the cottage stays open throughout the winter to see how it goes.

The growth in shifts and volunteer numbers led to some rostering challenges for the cottage manager but delegation to a small committee has resulted in a system which is now running very smoothly, due largely to **Ms Ellen Graham's** effective use of the telephone.

This year a total of 1164 hours of voluntary time has been contributed through the roster. This does not include the considerable time spent by Co-op members painting and setting up the retail area, time spent attending meetings, or doing marketing tasks, not to mention keeping the Co-ops accounts in order which is a very demanding and time-consuming role. Both the Co-operative and the Trust are completely indebted to **Ms Carol King** for this work. Her thoroughness and patience are legendary and the importance of her work for the functioning of the whole operation should not be underestimated.

Stoddart Cottage Trustees have also recorded 726 hours of voluntary work for the Trust during the year. This includes administration, gardening, cleaning, throwing things out, setting up exhibitions, doing accounts, writing emails, marketing work, attending meetings, keeping minutes, among various other tasks. I believe the figure recorded is conservative and the actual volunteer time is likely to be much greater. *(Special thanks to Mr Martin van Beynen who helped out with a number of small but difficult jobs – Ed.)*

The combined Trust and Co-op recorded volunteer hours were 1686 which at \$20/hour has a value of \$33,720!

## 6. Stoddart Cottage as a Heritage Place

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The terms of our lease with Christchurch City Council specify the cottage is to be used "*for the housing and exhibition of historical artefacts and the development and promotion of the cottage as an historical site.*" It is clear our landlord expects the Trust to prioritise the heritage aspects of the cottage when making decisions. How have we given effect to this during the past year?

In September 2017 our long awaited interpretive booklets were finally printed. One sets out an illustrated time line of the history of the cottage and the other is about the painter Margaret Stoddart who was born there. They have been very well received and have proved to be useful in many ways. Copies are available at no charge to any visitor, but many people make a donation by way of payment. We have been advised that copies of the two booklets have been included in the permanent collection of the Canterbury Museum which holds many other items related to the history of the Stoddart family and Stoddart Cottage. The booklets were largely funded by a Discretionary Response Fund grant of \$3000 from the **Banks Peninsula Community Board**. We thank our contractor **Mr Wayne Eddington** who went the extra mile with layout and printing and gave us a good deal.

Regular additions are made to the large collection of digital images of Margaret Stoddart paintings and historical photographs which are displayed as a slide show on the TV screen at the cottage. Some visitors say that seeing the breadth of Margaret Stoddart's work is the highlight of their visit to the cottage. For this asset we must thank Trustee **Mr Colin McLeod** for all the work setting it up and adding to it from time to time.

In September several Trustees attended a talk where **Ms Maria Adamski**, Christchurch City Council's Asset Engineer (Parks - Buildings & Heritage), presented the *Stoddart Point Reserve Landscape History and Conservation Report* (Beaumont 2016). The report identifies three items of high significance at Stoddart Cottage. These are Richard's seat which sits on the verandah, and the original apple and peach trees in the garden. We need to be particularly vigilant about ensuring the protection of these items.

In August the Trust connected with **Mr Michael Brown**, Support Officer from the Canterbury Museum. Two trustees attended a regional museum planning event in January and opportunities were created to attend a museum conference. This link has been useful in identifying a need for more strategic planning by the Trust, particularly development of a clear accessions policy.

## 7. Our Collection

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Two valuable additions were made to our collection during the year. We are indebted to **Mrs Mary Stapylton-Smith** for the gift of the black iron bedstead with brass knobs which we are told came originally from the Purau Homestead. We were also glad to receive the very old child's wooden rocking chair from **Ms Jan Coles**. Although not directly linked with

the cottage or the Stoddart family both items look completely at home in the History Room.

It is the long term aim of the Trust to eventually be in a position to purchase one or two original Margaret Stoddart paintings for display at the cottage, particularly paintings of the local Diamond Harbour area. Such paintings come up for sale at auction from time to time and generally change hands for less than \$10,000. Any funds accumulating from the sale of merchandise or commissions from exhibitions and the Craft Co-op are intended to be used for this purpose. However issues relating to security and our ability to prevent deterioration of the artworks will need to be resolved first.

## **8. Stoddart Cottage Gallery Craft Co-operative**

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The inaugural meeting of the Stoddart Cottage Gallery Craft and Art Co-operative was held on the 9 May 2017. Membership has grown from 12 craftspeople to 29 by the end of the year.

Co-op members made a fantastic effort to freshen up the Ante Room and the Back Bedroom. Christchurch City Council staff were supportive, and the **Diamond Harbour Community Association** generously underwrote the shop-fitting with a \$3000 grant (more than was needed, in the end \$1133 was given back).

After the flurry of painting, furniture purchasing, organisation of banking systems and *Payclip* and volunteer training, the craft outlet was ready for a soft opening in August which was followed a month or two later by the grand ribbon-cutting opening on 3 November 2017.

The Co-op had a very successful "*Best of Local Craft and Art*" exhibition in the Main Gallery through December, leading up to Christmas.

The Craft Co-op effectively sublease space in the cottage from the Trust in exchange for 10% commission from every sale. A total of about \$1342 of commission has come to the Trust this year from sales by the Co-op, an average of about \$112 a month, however this figure includes commission from the sale of artists work from the monthly art exhibitions in the main gallery.

The Trust is able to take advantage of the Co-op's *Payclip* system for cashless sales of art from the monthly exhibitions and sales of our own merchandise, all of which go through the Co-op's books. Other benefits to the Trust include the provision of an extra attraction for visitors contributing significantly to increased visitor numbers, and a big increase in the number of volunteers available to be in attendance at the cottage and which has enabled the cottage to be open to the public on Fridays as well as weekends.

The Trust is very grateful for the partnership with the Co-op and appreciates the talents and commitment of all the Co-op members in making the whole thing work so well.



## 9. Cottage Manager

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With a generous \$8000 Strengthening Communities Grant from the Banks Peninsula Community Board the Stoddart Cottage Trust was able to enter into a contract with **Ms Charlotte McCoy** to manage the cottage and its volunteers for a year from 20 November 2017. This has relieved Trustees of many of the day to day tasks associated with the running of cottage operations. Thank goodness.

The Trust is very appreciative of Ms McCoy's professionalism and adaptability and particularly values her ability to maintain goodwill by gently managing relationships when tricky issues arise.

## 10. Marketing and Promotion

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A crisp new black-on-white PVC *Gallery Open* banner which attaches to the picket fence in front of the cottage purchased by the Craft Co-op is highly visible from the road and very effective.

The Stoddart Cottage Gallery Facebook page

<https://www.facebook.com/StoddartCottage/?ref=bookmarks> which is used to promote both the Craft Co-op and upcoming monthly exhibitions, now has 179 followers. Targeted Facebook posts featuring specific artworks on community Facebook pages around the harbour proved to be particularly effective during one exhibition.

Production of a two-sided DLE brochure printed in January was an important marketing milestone for both the Co-op and the Trust who paid half each.

A small committee of the Craft Co-op meets monthly to action marketing initiatives including distribution of the DLE, posters, promotional events and radio advertising (this last initiated by **Mrs Heather Watson**). While these efforts are aimed primarily at increasing sales from the Co-op, they also help to boost visitor numbers and income for the Trust.

The Stoddart Cottage Blog <https://diamondharbour.info/stoddart-cottage/> on the Diamond Harbour Community website is updated as required. Thanks to **Mr Ron Dubin** for support with this.

The Trust updated and corrected information about Stoddart Cottage on the Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga website where Stoddart Cottage is listed as heritage item number 3088, <http://www.heritage.org.nz/the-list/details/3088> .

## 11. Friends of Stoddart Cottage

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Between 50 and 60 local supporters pay an annual subscription to be *Friends of Stoddart Cottage*. The Trust is very grateful to be able to depend on this source of income for basic upkeep and heritage activities. Thanks again to Mr McLeod who prepared and sent two

newsletters during the year to keep the Friends up to date with activities at the cottage. Copies of the interpretive booklets were sent to the Friends of Stoddart Cottage.

## 12. Merchandise

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The Trust derives some income from the sale of merchandise at the Cottage. In addition to greeting cards we have been lucky to have been given copies of the definitive local history book *Adderley to Bradley* to sell, all the proceeds from which go to the Trust. The Trust is very grateful to the publisher **Friends of Diamond Harbour Library** for this generous gift.

A new line of greeting cards and a bookmark featuring paintings by Margaret Stoddart have been printed by Stoddart Cottage Trust and went on sale during March. The Trust acknowledges **Mr Ken Hall** of the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetu for permission to reproduce the images.

Occasionally plants are donated for sale at Stoddart Cottage. Bags of red *Nerine* bulbs sold particularly well in March when the red nerines were in flower in the cottage garden. For these living contributions we thank **Mrs Robin Manger**.

The Trust's income from merchandise last year was \$214, although this may not all of it as some merchandise cash was placed in donation boxes prior to the opening of the Co-op.

## 13. Maintenance and Garden

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From time to time it is good to remind ourselves of the Trusts primary purpose "*to administer, maintain and develop the property known as Stoddart Cottage and the surrounding garden, and to provide other support and assistance consistent with this charitable purpose.*" (Trust Deed 1998).

Very little maintenance is needed at the cottage since the repairs were completed a year ago. The only incident was a blocked toilet in the spring of last year. **Ms Lisa Barwood** at Christchurch City Council has been good to work with on matters relating to the building.

The Trust is very grateful to **Mr Brian Reeve**, a qualified electrician, who donated his time to install new lighting tracks and power points in the Ante Room and Back Bedroom in time for the Craft Co-op opening. New picture rails were also put up in the Ante Room to better display paintings and framed photographs for sale.

During this year the Trust acquired new heaters and a computer for the treasurer, courtesy of Christchurch City Council. Repairs were made to our sandwich boards. A combination lock-box has proved to be a good investment saving much mucking around with keys.

Lawns are regularly mowed by Christchurch City Council contractors and garden beds are maintained by Recreational Services staff supplemented by volunteer effort from Trustees and Mrs Manger who also supplied a very effective codlin moth trap for the heritage apple

tree last spring.

#### 14. Looking Forward

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Work for the Stoddart Cottage Trust in the year ahead includes:

- regularising our status as a charitable trust,
- an autumn garage sale on Saturday 12 May,
- formalising an agreement between the Trust and the Co-op,
- developing an accessions and de-accessions policy,
- making a formal catalogue of our collection,
- developing a simple health and safety plan for the cottage,
- Preparing the paperwork for the renewal of our lease which expires on 31 March 2019.

Two projects on the long term horizon include engaging a historian to research the history of the garden at Stoddart Cottage to inform garden development, and making the cottage safe enough to bring some original Margaret Stoddart paintings home to Diamond Harbour.

In the meantime it is steady-as-she-goes for Stoddart Cottage Gallery art exhibitions and craft co-op, and the day to day activity at the Stoddart Cottage. In just one year we have created a magnificent machine together and it is now running smoothly.

My heartfelt thanks to EVERYONE involved.

Paula Smith  
Chairman  
Stoddart Cottage Trust  
Diamond Harbour  
20 April 2018

