



'The Family that changes'

Newsletter Issue No. 20

June 2020

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Compilers comments:

2020 has proved a momentous year for St Marks so far and it is fortunate that our new CEO, Paul Hanton, is well experienced in risk management.

The year began with the retirement of Peter Rijnhen in February and the handing over of the reins to Paul; two very moving ceremonies when glowing testimonials were delivered about both men. Paul had been a few weeks in the role when the level four Covid19 lockdown was imposed. Paul covers these events more fully in his report below.

Jim Hasseldine also covers a very significant episode in St Marks' development- the opening of Te Rito Arahi. Photos and a description of this facility below
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Message from the Chair: Jim Hasseldine



Life at St Marks has changed, as it has for all of us in this Covid Year. I cannot begin this message without acknowledging the way that Paul Hanton and his staff team have handled the disruption caused by Covid in New Zealand. They have kept St Marks operating through trying times and continued the programme for the residents for the duration of Lockdown; I have been very impressed by this. It has been a different

dynamic for our residents and their extended families and Whānau. You have all done very well! Thank you!

We are now at Level 1 and are pleased to announce a major new development for St Marks. It has been a dream of the Board for several years to be able to make available to our graduates an additional option when they complete their time at St Marks: To be able to have an offsite Community House that graduates can move into and live in a "Flating Style" environment with a resident house supervisor living on site. As a result of the goodwill of a local family, a house in Redwoodtown has been made available to us for this purpose. St Marks is leasing the property with the tenants being able to live there for up to 6 months. This will help them become grounded in a new healthy lifestyle and be surrounded by others who are doing the same; the house has its first residents.

The house is named 'Te Rito Arahi' which translates to 'Pathway for the Young Flaxshoot', a name chosen by the residents and staff to symbolise the start of new life. I think this is very suitable. The goal of St Marks has always been to change lives for the better and this is an additional way to make that change possible for our residents.

The Board at St Marks are continuing in their work to develop St Marks for the future and I look forward to sharing this journey with you.

Jim Hasseldine
Board Chairman

Comments from our whānau (residents on programme)

During Lock-down the residents sat and collectively committed their thoughts about St Marks to paper,

Whānau korero

We are excited to bring you some thoughts from our whānau, those that are resident here on their journeys of recovery and discovery.

Tēnā koutou from us.

We want you to know that everyone is welcome here, if you are willing to address what is internal, not just the addiction, but also your wellbeing. It doesn't matter who you are or what you have done, whatever your background, you are welcome. You rebuild yourself through the journey of others, you will learn how to live a balanced lifestyle; friendship, routine, in

this safe space you can find yourself, be yourself and love yourself.

The staff here are friendly, loving, supportive and understanding and provide a platform to learn, change, challenge and grow. This is where we find our place under the sun. The staff here are more than just staff, they have walked their own journey and are walking role models of change, they have walked the paths we are walking. Finally, simply, the more you put in, the more you get out.

Introducing our new CEO: Paul Hanton

Tēnā koutou katoa.

Ko Aerana te whakapaparanga mai, engari Ko Ingarangi te whenua tupu. Ko Waiharakeke te kāinga, engari nō Rānana au.

Ko Paul Hanton tōku ingoa

Greetings everyone,

I am from Irish heritage, although my immediate ancestors are from England. I live in Blenheim, however, am from London. My name is Paul Hanton.

My arrival

When Peter, a long-time friend and colleague told me of his plans to retire (this was mid last year), he suggested I apply for the role as manager of St Marks, knowing my love of the Therapeutic Community (TC) model. I came for a visit (from Hamilton) and after much discussion applied for and got the role. Peter and I had a really good, professional handover and I took over fully in February, shortly after came Covid-19, so it is fair to say I had a lot to work with for a few weeks, more of that in another article perhaps.

About me:

I have worked in the HIV, mental health, and substance misuse field since 1991, nearly 30 years. I have also had my own experiences of substance misuse and the criminal justice system. I have held roles at many varied levels such as, psychotherapist in a psychology department, needle exchange worker, young people's substance misuse service manager, funding and planning manager, clinical project lead, performance and quality manager, and TC manager in a prison. I have always been happiest developing a team to be the best they can to work with disadvantaged people, nearly always in NGO's.

Why TC?

Simple really, for a long, long time, professionals have been seen as 'menders', 'experts' and the main driver of change in people; 'knowing best'. As a solution focused therapist, I learnt a long time ago that the tāngata whai ora self-direction is the most effective in terms of change outcome. The TC places the community itself at the heart of change, and whilst the staff have expertise, they are not the experts, the community heals itself with some guidance and support of staff who maintain the structure and process of the community. This is a really hard concept for many practitioners/clinicians to grasp; giving up a little expertise and watching the community find its own path is often quite difficult, as we also have to watch the mistakes happen. The joy however in seeing a community own its own healing at an individual and community level is unparalleled.

And outside of work?

I have a great and varied life outside of work, a wonderful relationship with my partner of over 20 years, two adult sons, badminton (playing, coaching, and volunteering), walking, listening to music and learning, especially around history in certain topic areas. I love really, really hot curry and collect vinyl records, oh, and love most things Batman!



Te Rito Arahi – our transition house

Another milestone in St Marks' search for continuous improvement was reached in early June when Te Rito Arahi opened and the first tenant signed his lease. The house was decorated, and the gardens tidied by St Marks residents under the supervision of Project Manager and former Manager Peter Rijnhen. It has a pleasant atmosphere, with new furniture, showing respect to future tenants.

Up to six people can be housed there for six months, catering for themselves, with the House Supervisor living upstairs. There are strict criteria including; paying their rent on time, remaining drug and alcohol free, attending recovery meetings, supporting each other, and actively seeking employment.



This is the sign that will hang on the wall and be seen by everyone who enters Te Rito Arahi. The wood is a piece which had to be cut out of the original St Marks Church. A neighbour of the house offered to carve the house's name and varnish it. What a wonderful example of community support!

John Buzan profile

John is St Marks' newest Board member, though was a former Chair of the Board.

I was born in Oamaru and soon after moved to Southland. I grew up on a 500-acre farm with 2000 ewes, which I came to dislike. I completed an engineering apprenticeship and quickly gained a design engineer position for a company producing automation plant. I progressed to holding senior management positions in paper manufacturing and facilities management companies, completing an MBA in the mid 1990's and retiring from full time work in 2018.

I have been married to my wife Christine for 43 years and have two adult children. As the St Marks Board Chairperson for 5 years, I used my business management skills to develop a more business-like focus to the services it provided. After a 5-year break, I am back again to assist with the new accommodation block project, as part of the ongoing improvement of the great service that St Marks provides to people in their time of need.



Top to bottom: L to R

Wahine bedroom with en suite

CEO Paul holds the newly carved sign

View from supervisors room

Stairs up to House supervisor's quarters

Lounge area leading to conservatory

The modern kitchen

A tane bedroom

Board member Bridget Orman, Paul and a gardening club volunteer discuss the garden make-over.

Tere

Tere joined St Marks whānau in June 2019 as part of the Housing First Team, which she helped start, and has been involved with the Residential Programme since December 2019.

She was motivated to join the team by her passion for recovery and her decision was reinforced by when Peter Rijnhen expressed confidence in her as a teacher and as a person who “role-modelled” change. Tere says she has “a big back story with addictions and had been around the recovery programme for 24 years”. She was 12 years clean but relapsed and then came to St Marks in 2010. She has remained abstinent since.

She trained over the years through Weltec and in Neuro Linguistic Programming and is currently re-studying through Otago in Applied Addiction Studies.

Tere has many interests including Māori Culture, Māori Language, Māori Weaponry, History, Teaching, Music, and she enjoys story telling.

She regards herself as “super privileged to work at St Marks. This is not a job, for me it is a hobby, that I simply get paid to do. I am extra lucky to be in a position to influence people toward change.” Tere says she is a walking, talking example that life can change and thinks she is lucky to be one member of a great team of people who care about people.



Tere

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BLLENHEIM

Or if you would prefer to pay by Automatic Payment or Internet Banking our bank details are: St Marks Society 12-3493-0018674-00

Please insert your name as the reference.

A receipt will be issued for all donations and will be emailed to you

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