

## Mountain Bikers of Alexandra

### Presidents Report May 2024

Thank you to all of you for keeping the trails open and riding in such great condition, advocating for cycling in Alexandra, welcoming riders on the trails and showing Alexandra as a mountain biking destination. With 330 active members, we are running strong.

My first year as President started pretty smoothly, the club was well established and had financial stability. As a committee, we reviewed the purpose of the club with a community survey, which many of you completed, helping to guide the future direction of MOA. With 128 responses, 40% from non-members helping to give a broader review, you felt that main focuses of the club should be continued maintenance of tracks that we enjoy thanks to the Old Codgers and other trail fairies, more intermediate tracks, club events including dig days and increased representation and advocacy of all riders (ie. it's not all about Matangi). Thank you to all those who took the time to complete the survey, and Caitlin Feasey for the design, execution and analysis. There is information there we can refer to for the future of MOA.

Eddie Adams joined the committee and along with Marco Hubber and Ryker Thow helped to represent younger members. Local youth have been successful on the NZ and International stage with Eddie Adams winning the nationals U19 XC series and winning a round of the Australian National series and heading to Europe soon (see you on Sunday at the airport for some laps to help raise funds for Eddie), Ryker Thow winning SI Schools Enduro U15 champs, Cooper Millwood winning the U19 and heading to Europe this week to compete in enduro. It has also been great to see the girls performing very well, with some still having another 2 years to compete in their age categories, and their strong performances hint at great results to come.

Ben Robson once more convened another successful "Locals Laps" series over the summer with 50 riders giving it a go at Matangi on some nights. Thanks to those of you who supported Ben to encourage these kids to beat us oldies, I'm not so sure about that strategy! And once again, Brett, Helen and Todd Sanders made us welcome on Matangi. Ben managed to arrange prizes for all those who attended the final prize giving, a great effort and thanks to all the local sponsors. Without the local businesses who support MOA and the biking community, whether it is keeping our bikes and bodies in functional condition, supporting events or offering time and resources, we do appreciate your continued support and hope that you are supported in return. Even though Chris Galbraith helped to organise our first aid kits, she declined using one due to the wound not being impressive enough to warrant a plaster.

The major track developments this year have been the extensive reworking of Sphinx heading down to the gorge from Flat Top and the pump track in Alexandra. Craig Ross and Ants Longman have been working with CODC and local business to create a track that will be bigger and better than could have been achieved by CODC on their own. Thanks for your great efforts and we look forward to the completion of the track in the spring. The airport loop has also been had some A and B lines added to help improve the experience.

The sale of Matangi Station caused us all to draw breath, considering the unthinkable – our access to worldclass mountain biking terrain may end. The local meeting with over 200 attending and on-line viewing as well thanks to Andrew Howley, with unanimous support to pursue avenues to maintain access gave us the mandate we needed. A sub-committee has

been working on this and as yet there is no conclusion. Working with Brett and Helen Sanders we have created a public access easement proposal that would allow the farmer to farm between the trails, and biking, walking and horse access on trails. Jo Sherriff's map skills have identified around 120km of trails that are already used or could be used. Rob Wardle's experience with managing access on pastoral leases and tenure reviews and John Williamson's experience creating the current recreational permit on Matangi, pastoral leases and advocating for the Alexandra rural community have both been invaluable to direct us to the best contacts and communicating with those who make the decisions. Local communities rely on those who can help, and this project has certainly shown Alexandra in its truly supportive colours with many businesses and individuals lending their skills. Thanks specially to Isy Beardmore for your creative skills and Ollie Yeoman for chairing the public meeting and giving us another viewpoint. We are still working toward a positive outcome.

Thanks to the committee for turning up each month to represent those present here, they can buy you a beer later to show their appreciation!

If you have not yet seen the film "***Finding Balance – A Community Connected by Trails***" by Will Nelson then get along to the Big Bike Film Night to remember why we get out on our bikes. Amanda and I have both been welcomed by the mountain biking and cycling community of Alexandra. We live in a beautiful part of the world and it is great to see so many out there enjoying it.

Andrew Dowling