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MEDIA RELEASE

Countdown to commemorations begins

The countdown has begun to Waipa District's 150 year Commemorations.

As a result of the New Zealand land wars that went through Waipa in the 1860s the district's key towns of Cambridge and Te Awamutu and its villages of Ohaupo, Pirongia and Kihikihi were all established, initially as military garrison towns.

The land wars concluded in 1864 and so plans are underway for a year of celebrations to commemorate the establishment of the district in 2014.

A Community Commemorations Committee comprising representatives of each of the communities has been formed to coordinate district-wide events and activities.

Chaired by Mayor Alan Livingston, the committee is launching its programme with a competition to design a special logo for the commemorations that will be used to brand all of the district events and activities during the 2014 year.

Waipa District Council Community Relationships Manager Wayne Green said the logo competition was seen as a great way to involve the community.

"We are only allowing entries from Waipa residents – so we keep the faith," he said.

"We know we have a mountain of local talent out there who could design something that will really mark the occasion. We'll be looking to use the logo on street banners, advertisements, flyers and at events throughout the 2014 commemoration year," he said.

Mayor Alan Livingston is adamant the community should decide how it would like to celebrate.

"While the council is helping coordinate activities this really belongs to the community to decide how it wants to commemorate its beginnings," he said.

"The committee has representatives from each of the towns and villages as a way of providing a communications channel from the communities to avoid event clashes, and that there's an even spread of events throughout the district, throughout the year.

"Some communities are already off and running with ideas and there is already a dozen activities that have been signalled."

The committee intends to launch the 150th Commemorations with a special event on Waitangi Weekend 2014 and will use the now famous Pirongia Races on Boxing Day 2014 to close off the year.

A dedicated website is being developed just for the anniversary year . It will go live early next year so residents can see the what is happening and when. Community groups, individuals or clubs are asked to share any plans or ideas with their local committee coordinator.

The Committee members are :

His Worship the Mayor Alan Livingston, Hazel Barnes (Kihikihi), Bruce Thomas (Pirongia/Ohaupo), Dianne Sharpe (Pirongia/Ohaupo), Sue Milner (Cambridge), Marcus Gower (Te Awamutu), Dean Taylor (Te Awamutu), John Bishop (Cambridge), Mike Petit (Schools), Annie Fullerton (Ohaupo) , Alan Hall (Pirongia), Robin Astridge (Pirongia), Peter Fraser (Kihikihi), Maree Kaati and Lynne Fenwick (i-sites), Jenny Charman (Nga Iwi Toopu O Waipa), Harold Maniapoto (Nga Iwi Toopu O Waipa), Anne Blyth (Museums), Benjamin Hemi (Events Coordinator Waipa District Council), Wayne Green (Community Relationships Manager Waipa District Council).

ENDS

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