



**RANGER'S REPORT TO THE
PUKENUI/WESTERN HILLS FOREST
CHARITABLE TRUST
(November 2012)**



Northland Hospitality

Great news on the success of our funding application to the ASB Community Trust. Maybe that flight over the forest with their Trust representative did the trick! There can't be many applicants that can offer a bird's-eye view of their project.

On a more prosaic but necessary subject, Margaret and I met again to hopefully finalize our Health and Safety Management Plan, as requested by DOC. Once signed off, Max and I hope to organize a training meeting with our regular volunteers.

Further to which, the poison knock-down of possums and rats in the Ark/Park part of the forest has been a great success. Rats have now been reduced to less than 5% in the above area and a possum index to check kill success is due soon. A second poison blitz is due in early December. That will then be it until next September, when we will do it all over again. I have been out with the regular volunteers to keep the trap and bait-station lines clear of vegetation. Now that the goats have been removed, it is amazing how quickly the vegetation grows back.

Grant and I met with Tracey Moore, a Parks planner with the WDC, to discuss our Trust message in the proposed signage board at the new car-park at the Maddren entrance.

I also offered some text on the work of the Trust, etc. and Margaret forwarded our logo and sponsors to her. I would imagine, if not too late, that the ASB Community Trust will take pride of place!

Finally, persistence does pay off! Following our discussions on Denis's excellent idea that we put some sort of interpretation about the presence of American troops at Three Mile Bush Road, I have done some detective work trying to trace a booklet printed in 1992 by a Mr Jack Hinton. This booklet tells the story of the American presence and two copies were presented to the WDC. On requesting to see a copy, I was informed that they were both lost! The library in town could not help me and I have been to see the local RSA. While in Wellington over the last weekend, I visited the National Library and, to my great joy, they showed me a copy. Back home, a local second-hand bookshop did a search for me and found a copy in a bookshop in Takapuna for \$40.00, which I hope to buy and use for the story we hope to tell. When we have more of an idea what we want to say, I will then write a letter to the American Embassy to garner their interest.

Gerry Brackenbury
Ranger (Part-time)