



A way you really can live on forever

A quiet revolution is taking place in the Rotorua and Taupo District communities and indeed, throughout the Central North Island - generous people transforming local communities.

It's happening all over New Zealand; inspired, generous people are giving directly to their local communities by building a fund which will be transformational to their local area.

It's the powerful concept of community foundations.

While the community foundation concept is not new by world standards, it is relatively recent in Aotearoa New Zealand. And our New Zealand community foundations are really coming of age with 17 now established throughout the country, and more in the planning stages.

Locally, the Geyser Community Foundation was first launched to the public in Rotorua in 2008, and began operating in Taupo in 2012. Today the Foundation is managing more than \$8 million – all donated by generous people in our local communities. In this financial year alone, Geyser will distribute gifts worth well in excess of \$300,000 to individuals, local charities and community organisations.

But wait, there is so much more. Geyser already has a staggering \$15 million coming in anticipated gifts in local people's Wills.

It's incredible really to think the impact a fund of that size will have on our local communities in the years to come. It's wonderful to think that local people care enough to see that they can be a part of transformational local change and growth.

The idea behind a community foundation is deceptively simple. Local people give to a fund, either through direct donations or through a gift in their Will. The capital is never spent, it is invested, and the income from the investment gets channeled back into the local community.

There are two big differences between giving to your local community foundation, and giving direct to a local charity - the capital is not spent, it is invested and the giving from the gift continues on forever.

Even more powerful is the fact that the generous donor can nominate to which cause the proceeds from their fund goes – be it the local scout group, school, charity or food bank – anywhere they choose.

It's a strategic way to give that lasts and has an impact forever, rather than a straight charitable donation which, while important, most often has a short-term impact for the charity.

Generosity is for everyone, not just for the wealthy. Everyone can enjoy the immensely rewarding opportunity to transform the future of their local community by giving through their local community foundation.

What are community foundations?

The community foundation movement started in the USA and Canada around the middle of the 20th century and has rapidly spread across the western world. All of them start small and they all start with a spark.

In Vancouver 75 years ago Miss Alice McKay sought the advice of W.J. Van Dusen, a partner in MacMillan-Bloedel, on what to do with the \$1,000 she had saved from her secretarial job. She wanted to invest her savings in a way that was both creative and significant for the people of British Columbia. Van Dusen added \$1,000 to Miss McKay's savings and challenged nine other donors to match his gift. Then, with that initial endowment of \$11,000, he created Vancouver Foundation.

This modest fund of capital has today grown to more than \$1 billion and Vancouver Foundation, among the largest community foundations in North America, works with generous people, charitable organisations and the people of British Columbia in a wide variety of ways. Over time it has grown to become a vitally important feature of the social and cultural landscape of British Columbia.

Time shows us that, when properly organised and carefully run, a community foundation can make a significant contribution to the quality of life in its town, city or region. It can be a very powerful local force for good.

Here in New Zealand our community foundations are emerging from their fledgling beginnings. The Tindall Foundation have been instrumental in assisting New Zealand community foundations off the ground. Currently there are 17 community foundations throughout New Zealand. It's a growing movement with more in the planning stages.

See more about New Zealand's 17 community foundations at www.nzcommunityfoundations.org.nz

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