

## **BAY OF PLENTY TIMES 2011**

### **Otumoetai club's facelift finally unveiled**



Mayor Stuart Crosby was joined by children to cut the ribbon at the opening of Otumoetai Sports and Recreation Club's new headquarters. Photo / Mark Mckeown.

The Otumoetai Sports and Recreation Club officially opened its new headquarters to the public yesterday after years of planning.

Fergusson Park's humble old clubrooms are almost unrecognizable thanks to \$674,000 of fund-raising, including a \$180,000 Tauranga City Council contribution, that has seen the completion of major extensions and re-roofing.

The Otumoetai Sports and Recreation Club administer the clubrooms on behalf of its users, which include Otumoetai Football Club, Albion Cricket Club, Wind Addiction Kite Boarders BOP, Matua Guides, Matua Scouts and the Tauranga Astronomical Society.

As well as doubling the size of the lounge hall, the new complex also has new changing rooms, toilets, inside and outside storage spaces, a new kitchen and bar area, and an astronomical observatory.

Club chairman Richard Kluit said the revamp had been his vision since 1998 but the project really got some momentum after a community meeting in 2006.

Tauranga City Council granted resource consent in mid-2009, and the building phase of the project took over a year to complete.

Mr Kluit said while the building has an insurance value more than \$1 million the whole complex was "a priceless gem".

"It's all for the kids really, as the large majority of users are children and their parents and families," he said.

A dedicated team of volunteers had helped paint the hall and build the deck.

The project was officially opened by Mayor Stuart Crosby who was joined by Mr Kluit and a group of children from the clubs to cut the ribbon.

"There has been an amazing amount of community collaboration by a mix of professionals and clubs to create a tremendous facility which is clearly the way of the future," Mr Crosby said.

Matua Scouts leader Julia Banks said moving to the new facility had been a long-awaited event.

The clubroom expansion was designed by Matt Biddle from Residential Design and built by father and son team of Len and Luke Bothwell.

Clive Tilby, whose family used to own the Fergusson Park land, said it was great to see all the young people using the facility.

Project building coordinator Grant Frost, from Beca, paid tribute to Mr Kluit, who he said put in a huge effort.

"Richard has lived and breathed this project for the past three years," he said