

\$180 a week depending on age for the skills project.

They are given \$50 for spending and the rest is banked. "We've got to teach them to budget," Ray says. "It's the first time they've had money in the bank".

Some of the younger ones have their own bank accounts while older members wages go into the trust with all debits and credits carefully noted.

Bookkeeping is done by Ray, secretary Whare Moke and Maori committee chairman Bill Maung who is also a trustee.

Everyone chips in \$5 a day for a cooked lunch. "That way everyone gets a good meal — and if they're not working it makes them feel guilty," Ray says, grinning.

He says private contract work for the trust is on the increase. "We've got expertise — a carver, two carpenters, an electrician. We're getting small contracts. The city council's providing some work and we're tendering against other people now."

He and Whare organise the contracts.

Money from these private jobs goes straight back into the trust to buy equipment, pay for overhead, the occasional holiday and even, recently, a \$100 donation to the Tongan Relief

Fund.

It also pays the fines though there has been a concerted effort to reduce these. "I tell the guys — "have a fight here, we don't charge," — Ray says. "It's better than going to court next day and paying a fine."

The trust's population is a floating one — usually around 12 or 15 strong but with people moving through all the time.

When youths from up country hit town, Ray says, they do not go to Maori Affairs. Instead they head straight for Kensington St.

As well as its status as a gang house "They know we've got it made", "they know there's food in this house," Ray says. "But you have to get up in the morning and go to work. It's not the pattern they've been used to. There's no need to rip anyone off."

It has taken a year to get this far. Now with a relatively stable environment, regular work and food, the trust is pushing for more emphasis on education and cultural skills.

It is trying to set up a marae, together with the Whanganui-a-Tara Maori committee.

The relationship between the trust and the committee — a small but lively group determined to represent the con-

cerns of the "grassroots" in its community — is a two way thing which has grown up over the last 12 months.

Ray and Whare are both on the committee and Whare is a delegate to the District Maori Council.

The participation in a group which is part of the overall New Zealand Maori Council structure has helped bring the gang out of isolation and back into contact with the community.

Both trust and committee members feel a marae is a major priority. They say it is urgently needed as a sort of "safe house" where anyone can go and feel secure enough to talk, listen and learn, and as a focus for activities.

A temporary site in Aro St is being investigated and several Maori elders have agreed to take on responsibilities of elders.

The Te Waka Emanaaki Trust has made great strides in the last year but it will never make vast profits.

Its aim is to install in those who pass through some knowledge of how to live and work and keep out of trouble in the city.

Some of the boys only stay two or three weeks Ray Harris says, but if they pick up some of the basics before moving on then that's fine.

(Acknowledgement Dominion)



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