

Council

**Wednesday, 30 March 2005
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN
THE CIVIC CENTRE, 6 WAIPAREIRA AVENUE, LINCOLN, WAITAKERE CITY,
ON WEDNESDAY, 30 MARCH 2005, COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM.**

PART B - REPORT OF THE MAYOR

DOES AUCKLAND NEED A SINGLE VOICE?

For the past two years I have represented the city on the Committee for Auckland, a strategic group set up with a goal and vision to get the very best out of the region and to encourage and foster the next generation of well informed, visionary leaders to make a contribution to the future of Auckland's success and to measure Auckland's progress against the economic target of other cities, not just in New Zealand but in the South Pacific.

Clearly if Auckland is to punch above its weight against its Australian counterpart a concerted effort is required, involving bringing in other partners and relationships including Central Government, regional authorities and local councils. We need to and if we don't we will lose business, investment and talented people. You only have to read Richard Florida's books *The Rise of the Creative Class* and *The Flight of the Creative Class* to see how simple this is. I am an absolute supporter of what Florida says and I am an absolute supporter of the vision and agenda of Competitive Auckland which gains its strength from a philosophy that says great cities attract the best and brightest in planning, thinking and strategy, something I think is missing in our region.

Great cities are served by not only large populations but by a thriving, united voice so. They are generous, futuristic and able to reinvent themselves every 20 or so years. Look at Wellington, Sydney and Melbourne. Auckland trails behind seemingly sluggish to accelerate progress on any real agreed development. We are tired and in many ways imbued by jealousy and lack of leadership. We need to immediately start thinking about a common voice and focus that will bring our future up to speed, not in 20 years but in two.

Auckland needs well articulated shared objectives to position it as one common voice and entity rather than a region of cities. I believe we now have a funding base to maintain Auckland and by that I mean the region as an international city with a range of options and economic clout to deal with Central Government and talk internationally as a world city.

So how would I suggest this happen? Firstly, never ever use the word super city. It reeks of crassness and election hype. It's also dated before it even gets any traction. This is not about a super city. It's about a common vision of sharing and accepting pragmatic solutions to long term problems. It's about welding local authorities together for the long term haul and changing the balance between Auckland and Wellington and local and Central Government. Within the next six months I believe we need to appoint, from the Auckland Mayors, a representative as our common voice.

M1-M2 The title is an easy one - Lord Mayor. The title of Lord Mayor generally goes with a united and large city base. Think of Ken Livingstone or Rudolph Giuliani, as attached at pages M1 to M2. I'm not advocating I would assume the title - anyone of us could do that job - but this person would be charged with the position and support including staff. Maybe it's on a rotation basis. But it's not really about the title, it's about the voice.



Now let's think about a Lord Mayor's Auckland office. Not in Auckland but in Wellington. Why not use the good offices of Chen and Palmer as our de facto embassy? Who would we be talking too? Well, Government, the Prime Minister and Cabinet. And who would we be influencing? All of the above. The Lord Mayor would speak on Auckland issues with a common voice. We think we do this because we meet affable and friendly politicians but in reality we don't because we forget Cabinet is made up of many other different voices, each lobbied by their constituents and their agendas and believe me, they have clout. And although our relationship with Government is strong the Bombay Hills syndrome exists in their mindset.

One of the real issues I and other Mayors have is that Judith Tizard, the first Minister for Auckland, has been poorly supported. I have written and spoken to Judith who is an exceptionally good politician but the role has not been understood or supported by an infrastructure which in any other country would have been a given. Her office is her own electoral office. She has no staff solely around Auckland issues and so I would think that when she leaves Parliament to deal with Auckland issues half her Parliamentary colleagues think she's wasting her time and when she leaves Auckland and goes to Wellington many would think she is unable to capture her Cabinet colleagues with issues of relevance. We therefore need to up our support around the Minister for Auckland and work closely with whoever that may be if indeed the position is continued as all of us hope it would be.

There are also other people of wisdom and political clout in Wellington that should be made aware of the Auckland issues - official, political and social. It is about mechanics but it's also about the skill of lobbying and the real agendas that are needed. When the former Mayor of Auckland John Banks and I suggested a former Prime Minister be our Auckland ambassador the debate lasted all of two minutes before being shot down. Using a former Prime Minister (and take your pick, there are a few around - Shipley, Bolger, Palmer et al) would mean having someone capable of interaction and advocacy in a world they understand and know intimately. But I think one of the Auckland Mayors could and should be given the title and role of Auckland advocacy - after all we rattled round trying to find a replacement for Basil Morrison when his time came to an end and in desperation, and recognising the fact Morrison was good at the job, we extended the tenure of his chairmanship of Local Government New Zealand by rearranging the deck chairs.

The job is a big one - to develop an agenda and overhaul the Government's process of Auckland and set the bigger, more objective, issues in their right context. The individual would need to rise above the intricacies of running his or her city. We spend so much time (read that as wasting time) on issues not relevant to the region's future. Auckland Regional Economic Development Strategy is now starting to produce good papers from good people. They are certainly aware of the bottlenecks and I should remind my colleagues that already Wellington political departments are starting to move to Auckland, to name a few - MED, MFAT, SSC, NZTE - but not treasury. One would have to ask why not.

Probably one of our greatest threats is not our own shortcoming in thinking through issues but in Wellington itself. Wellington has risen as a power base both politically and culturally and believe me they are not sluggish in preserving the status quo. They paint us as too difficult to work with and they are not beyond showing us how well they can perform when we can't. You will note that they do most things better than us - buildings, festivals, community adoration etc. They also will do the V8s and clean up afterwards. And they are on the spot. They move through the corridors of power like warm butter. They have drinks and cocktail functions on the lobbying circuit. Whatever they want they get because they are there. Although politicians think they are everything the bureaucrats who underpin the political structure are also powerful - the Mandarins of the political machinery - and we don't know them. The ones we do know, those sent to the Mayoral Forums who shadow us and our city agendas, are the tip of the iceberg and simply carry the Auckland news back to Wellington. We in Auckland are not slow at recognising our strengths but we don't know how to turn these strengths into objective futures.



So how should the Auckland embassy in Wellington be staffed? By skilled Auckland diplomats, younger, smarter and fresher, that's how. They should be, as Richard Florida says, the very brightest you can muster. They should reflect New Zealand's most stylish and exciting city. They should be popular and they should be futuristic, with an ability to articulate a modern, 21st Century city united in common goals, common purposes. They should be able to talk about the infrastructure that will bring to Auckland the World Cup in 2012 and the Commonwealth Games in 2011. They should be able to articulate the completion of all of the Long Term Council Community Plan, the transport network, the double tracking to the west and south, the electrification, the second harbour crossing (the third - the Whau River?), tolling and the second Auckland Airport at Whenuapai.

Above all, the future of Auckland as a region in this 21st Century is one of enormous growth and of social issues that will need new transitional thinking in governance, policing and culture. It will take new thinking about funding and it will have its up and down side. And it will be, unless carefully nurtured, fragmented with horrific costs in social grief. These are some of the reasons why we need an overhaul of the overarching council structure and soon. A united political force needs to be resolved within the next five years but in the meantime a debate needs to be generated around a common voice and a common entity.

I have been so impressed with the Australian cities and their growth and achievement. Look at Brisbane and the extraordinary leadership displayed by Jim Soorley, and the mayors of Sydney and Melbourne. They have moved these cities forward at such a rapid rate seizing international agendas, conferences and investment not to mention international acclaim and respect.

A united political force which underscores primary industry, new sectors and the mindset of Aucklanders is to me of key importance. This is the next big agenda for me as a major player at the Mayoral Forum and for the forum itself, especially when we are dealing with issues like Police, the philharmonic, transport funding and the urgent completion of projects. But we need a mind focused on how to collectively capture the big one. In the past Mayors, cities and districts of course played their own hands. At a recent meeting of a group of Mayors good suggestions were met with one of the other mayors immediately talking about what they were doing or going to do in their individual areas. This was never more apparent when Waitakere, with an eye on the future, suggested a second airport, a suggestion met by a weight of opposition.

Auckland is viewed badly by the rest of the country. We are seen as a city of bludgers, snobs, self centred, latte drinking, chardonnay swilling geeks. The rest of New Zealand doesn't see us as adding value because we can't shear sheep and we can't peg a fence line. But this is nothing more than a perception. The reality is that Auckland is the engine room of the country and believe me, with all the best will in the world, people are not going to leave Auckland for the provinces. Auckland is where the future is at. Auckland is destined to be the only city of international interest, of international presence and as a place at the very centre of economic and investment worth. If we start now and run as fast as we can we just might overtake the perception with reality. I'm going to take the idea of a common voice to the next Mayoral Forum and hopefully it will be treated with a little bit more respect than the last suggestion. I'm not holding my breath but the concept needs to be taken out for an airing and who knows, it just might take off.

M3-M28 A very good example of what I am talking about is detailed in the following Committee of Auckland paper on The Case for an International Exhibition / Convention Centre in Auckland. Just have a look at the success of Australia in attracting international conferences and excellence and the corresponding figures on what is spent and subsequently gained, as attached at pages M3 to M28.



M29-M39 I am also attaching a paper by David Clendon and delivered to the Catalyst '99 conference at the University of West Sydney in July 1999 entitled A Tale of Four Cities - Could Bigger be Better? David's paper was commissioned by the Auckland Regional Council and driven by the Chair at the time, Phil Warren. It was presented to the Mayoral Forum with mixed reaction but I think it's a paper worth reconsidering, an intellectual debate and a conversation between stakeholders, Mayors and our communities, as attached at pages M29 to M39.

The issue of a common voice, common agenda is not going to go away and it cannot be lost because the cities of the region feel their culture will be less. Indeed, just the opposite I believe is true and the future could very well be a positive one for the region rather than a divisive and failing one.

Recommendation: That Council endorses the Mayor's efforts to gain a common voice for Auckland.

PARRAMATTA

I recently returned to Parramatta more intent than ever to pick up extra information on this remarkable city and it didn't take long. Our Chief Executive and I spent a day looking at this turnaround location to bring back ideas on how to lift our game plan here in Waitakere. The Parramatta experience is one of turning vision into reality and attracting stakeholders into an area for job creation, employment and community wealth. In the next few months you'll be hearing me talk a lot about community wealth and I've started to do that by lifting the game plan around Henderson and Westgate. The Rodney District has brought together lifestyle blocks stretching from Kumeu to Helensville and this community feels close to Waitakere. The Westgate area, for shopping and lifestyle leisure, will keep this community involved and close. Hopefully with Whenuapai coming on stream in the next decade we will bring together a sub regional area that will complement Henderson as a natural growth zone.

This does not mean other areas are less. They will grow incrementally and in their own way. I am aware New Lynn may very well feel somewhat left out but believe me New Lynn has never been left out because of its closeness to Auckland City and its new social clusters which simply roll west - Kingsland, Mt Albert, New Lynn. All are on a westward trail of success with students, first home owners, cafes and restaurants. My agenda is a much more integrated concept moving into high tech, high interest and high investment. As the economic success of Waitakere grows I want to see our retail reflecting a better, more exciting range of stores and services. I am disappointed Henderson still lacks this. The energy of St Lukes with its style, convenience and choice attracts customers of all ages but West City does not have what is evident in St Lukes or Newmarket and North Shore for that matter. So what goes? It's time West City upped the anti and started to court the new success that exists in Titirangi, the Ranges, Swanson and Waitakere.

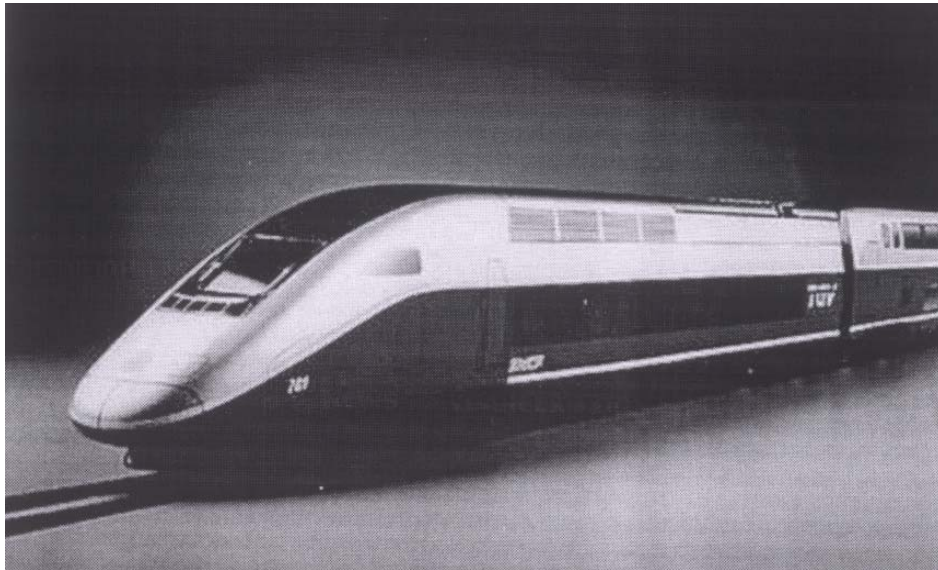
This is where the Parramatta experience is so important and insightful. In streets not unlike Henderson they have brought the cafes out onto the road and made them boutique. They have kept old and new customers and brought in new businesses. And they have given the streets new names to match their new look. Through the creation of weirs they are using the Parramatta River more - for walking, dining and the creation of a new outlook. I have dealt with weirs in a previous mayoral report and I will continue to talk it up. In April I will be on the water photographing and videoing the possible sites for holding the water on our streams and I look forward to reporting back to you the possibilities of a weir system that will revitalise and reinvigorate our wonderful environment that we have cleaned and replanted for communities of the future to embrace and enjoy.

I am aware environmental issues are of great importance and let me clearly articulate I am not unmindful eels must travel upstream and like the Parramatta forefathers the weirs will be stepped so fish unable to salmon leap can travel up and down stream to breed or whatever they have a mind to do.



The Parramatta experience will also result in a visit by the Parramatta Lord Mayor and a number of senior Councillors, probably in May, so they can share the Waitakere experience. As we are both in the throes of developing our town centres and a rail and transport connection, it just makes sense they spend a couple of days here. They are also interested in looking at our movie and boatbuilding industries. We have much to share and much to learn from each other and this mutual exchange of personal experience and elected member expertise is invaluable in moving towards a well planned and thought out future.

It was with interest I noticed the attached Sydney Morning Herald story about a train that will only take 11 minutes from downtown Sydney to Parramatta. Now that's certainly what we need in the west.



Parramatta to city in 11 minutes: now that's a fast train, by Alexandra Smith, Transport Reporter

MILESTONES

Obituary - Harry Holborow

It is with sadness the council notes the passing of Henry (Harry) Holborow, one of the city's earliest butchers who died last month aged 98.

Harry worked with his late brother George and their father in the family butchery at Great North Road, Henderson. The family bought the business in 1925 and kept trading until retirement in 1977.

A well-known identity, Harry served with the Henderson Volunteer Fire Brigade and was a member of the townships' Rotary Club, the Henderson RSA, the Waitakere Masonic Lodge, the Henderson Bowling Club and a life member of the Waitemata Rugby Club.

When asked his secret to a long life Harry would respond "hard work and good beer" and everyone who saw him work could attest to the former. Harry's "good beer" was always well earned. His simple goodness endeared him to all who knew him and, a true gentleman, he will be sorely missed.



Obituary - Doreen Finlayson

When Doreen Finlayson died suddenly earlier this month she left numerous community groups bereft. Over the years Doreen has been actively involved with so many organisations it's impossible to name them all but some were Civil Defence, St John Ambulance, Henderson Riding for the Disabled and Kumeu Small Landowners' Association.

Doreen grew up in Mt Albert and served with the land army during World War 11. She married the late John Norman Finlayson in 1949 and moved to Glen Eden. The couple had four children and Doreen is survived by her children and five grandchildren.

AGM Waitakere Ranges' Protection Society

Last week I attended the annual meeting of this group of environmentalists who have for many years advocated for the protection of the wilderness and the heritage of the Waitakere Ranges. The group's biggest project is the publication of the book on the Waitakere Ranges, edited by Bruce and Trixie Harvey of Titirangi, and contributed to by a huge range of historians, academics and community writers. It will be a truly significant and magnificent work, I understand close to 600 pages, and I am sure all of us look forward to its publication later in the year.

The meeting's keynote speaker was the Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt who talked about why the Waitakere Ranges needed to be saved, the mechanics of how the proposed bill will be accepted by Parliament select committees and how the process works. Jonathan's vast knowledge and wisdom over 38 years was appreciated by the large audience that filled the Arataki auditorium. Jonathan mentioned he had proposed such a bill in 1972 but it failed to attract the attention of the local council at the time and he said that unfortunately he couldn't find a copy of that bill. He urged the Waitakere City Council to seriously consider the current bill and to give credit to all of those who had acknowledged such a bill was needed to save the foothills from suburbia.

Jonathan spoke at some length on the need not to lose the purpose of the bill while adjusting the paragraphs. He urged Councillors to work in consultation with the community, to hear the questions, and if they feel things are not quite right then, as he said, take them out. He clearly believes, as I do, the bill is worthy and there is a place for it in this community.

I took heart from Jonathan's wisdom and it seems to me many people say yes, I think a bill is necessary, but then go on to dispute lines or the nuances of some of its verbiage. The fact is most or all of the bill can be edited and changed and the select committee process is the time for that. It's the intent that's the important thing right now. And it is the intent that Jonathan, as an elder statesman of the House of Representatives and this city, urged the Council to consider and vote in favour of. The bill's intent is not to stymie democracy but simply to ensure there is land free of suburban sprawl.

Jonathan has always been an advocate for democracy and free speech. He has been one of the best Speakers of the House in living memory and he has always appreciated robust debate. He thinks the bill should have this debate and that each and every Councillor must consider all aspects before making up their minds and voting in May. He also said the sky did not fall in over the Civil Union Bill, health and safety legislation, the Employment Relations Act or the recent smoking restriction legislation. And it won't fall in over the Waitakere Ranges legislation.

John Edgar thanked Jonathan for his speech, and for being the society's patron, and presented him with a magnificent sculpture from his own workshop. I am attaching John's report which is worthy of note and covers a number of topics. I assure all Councillors they will benefit from reading it.



I would also like to acknowledge John's tireless work for the Waitakere community and for the preservation of the Waitakere Ranges, and the coastal settlements, for future generations.

THE WAITAKERE RANGES PROTECTION SOCIETY INC.

**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING,
Arataki Visitors Centre, Sunday, 20 March, 2005**

Annual Report of the Executive Committee

I am pleased to present the 31st Annual Report of the Executive Committee of The Waitakere Ranges Protection Society Incorporated.

The past year has been a very demanding one for the society. The executive has done well to progress our core business while under increasing pressure to attend public meetings and hearings, many related to the Waitakere Ranges Protection Project. At the last AGM in April 2004, we were about to go into consultation round two of the project. These meetings discussed community values and objectives, but legislation was not available and many people would not endorse a bill until they had read it. It was a time of some frustration.

Since then, the legislation has been drafted, it has been endorsed by the Auckland Regional Council, and Waitakere City Council and Rodney District Council have given themselves until May to conduct a third round of consultation on the draft legislation. While we are concerned with what this further delay could mean for the project we are working with the councils and the community to ensure that when the project comes back to a vote in May it will have the support of a majority of councillors. What is required in the next two months is that the councils hear yet again from affected landowners and residents who support the bill. Write a letter to the Mayor and the councillors and tell them you support the legislation. Write a letter to the papers, talk to your MP, and above all, be heard above the small but vociferous group of landowners who would do anything to scuttle this project and who wish to see all private land open to endless subdivision. It is just as Morgan Williams predicted four years ago: if the whole area is not given permanent protection, then it will come, in our lifetimes, to be suburbia. It is time to stand up, to be heard and to know that this project is so tantalisingly close, and yet so precariously balanced. This matter has been the major preoccupation of the executive over the past year, and we will continue to make it our priority for as long as is needed.

We were encouraged by the results of the Colmar-Brunton poll that we commissioned in May. Five hundred Aucklanders were asked how strongly they believed that all of the WR should be permanently protected from further subdivision and associated development by means of a local bill that would hold development provisions at the present level. Of the 250 people living in Waitakere City, 81 percent agreed with legislation, and of the other 250 people living in the greater Auckland area 87 percent agreed. Thanks to F&B Waitakere and EDS for their financial assistance with this poll. The three councils have each conducted independent surveys of their own in the past months, and the results have been similar to ours, with always a majority of people agreeing to permanent protection by legislation.

Our thirtieth birthday celebrations in 2004 culminated in full payment for the residential section at 71 Turanga Road, and the registering of a QE II covenant on the land. In November last year we took a delegation to the first council meeting of the Auckland Regional Council, and formally gifted the land to them to be included in the WR Regional Park. This was our thirtieth birthday present to the people of Auckland. Thanks to all the donors who gave so generously. Special thanks to Greg Presland who did all the conveyancing pro bono, and to WC who donated \$25,000 to the purchase price.



Donations to the Society continue to come in from many people. We could not achieve as much as we do without this financial support and it is much appreciated. In April it was especially pleasing to receive a donation from Society member and world-famous bird photographer Geoff Moon of \$2,161 from sales of photographs at his exhibition in the Corban Estate Arts Centre.

As we reported a year ago, there are still a few outstanding District Plan appeals to which the society is a party, and these are being resolved at present in the Environment Court. The most important of these appeals relate to the structure plan provisions in the eastern foothills. We are opposed to structure plans in principle, as they are ultimately just another way of providing for subdivision. In Birdwood and in Swanson, the SP process has caused huge division and animosity in the communities. This is a social cost that has not been accounted for by council. Whatever the outcome in Swanson, there are going to be ongoing problems arising from the poor management, the long and exhausting consultation process, and the subsequent sociological and psychological effects on the community. These alone should be reasons enough for not even beginning the SP process in new areas of the foothills, and we are encouraged by the residents association in the Henderson Valley who are strongly opposed to SPs and very supportive of legislation. We will continue to oppose SPs in principle and argue as we successfully did in Birdwood that prohibited activity status is required to stop non-complying applications being made ad infinitum.

We have had a substantial input into the long-anticipated WR Visitor Study that has now been drafted by Auckland Regional Council and Waitakere City Council. Our main cause for concern is the provisions for a trial study of mountain biking in the park. We have for years opposed vehicles in the park, and this trial is most alarming in the message it sends to off-road bikers about the ranges. In the past the rationale for permitting activities in the park has been more about providing recreational opportunities than conservation, and we have a real battle ahead to restrict the more extreme recreational activities like mountain biking and canyoning.

Commercial concessions for canyoning in the ranges continue to be of concern. Canyoning is an extreme form of adventure tourism where people pay to be guided off-track to slide and abseil down streambeds and waterfalls. There are currently two licensed operators in the Park, at Kitekite Falls, Piha and Cowan Steam, Pararaha. During the year we were able to withdraw our Environment Court proceedings after Auckland Regional Council agreed to pay the costs of a rare moss survey in the canyoning streams, and to pay half our costs in bringing the legal action. We will continue to put pressure on Auckland Regional Council to confine these activities to other parks where ecological values are not so high and we need to convince them that extreme recreation like this does not have a place in this park. To that end we are closely monitoring the present activities to ensure that the operators abide by their consent conditions.

We received a grant some time ago from Auckland Regional Council Environmental Initiative Fund to continue our bird counts which we began in 1997. Committee member Mike Nixon carried out a bird survey in the Lone Kauri Forest Restoration area in April. We are determined to obtain more funding to continue this work which gives us basic information on the state of the environment and the effects of pest eradication. The three pest control programs now operating in the ranges, Ark in the Park, La Trobe and Lone Kauri, are all showing that people with commitment and enthusiasm can really make a difference to the environment, and we remind you that volunteers for these three programs are always needed.



The Society keeps a watching brief on developments at the Te Henga quarry, the water quality issues at Lake Wainamu, and the weed eradication program in the Waitakere Valley wetlands. Thanks go to our representatives on these various committees. The ARC did a major fish cull from Lake Wainamu over summer with about 3000 exotic fish being removed from the lake, and the water quality improved immediately. We will ensure that this is an ongoing program.

Over the next three days we will be attending a hearing at Auckland Regional Council on the consent applications by WSL to operate the five dams in the ranges. Douglas Allan will make submissions for the Society and committee member and water scientist Mels Barton and native fish biologist Clinton McCullough will give evidence. At present there are no water releases from the dams except when they are full and overflowing, which means that the main stream below the dams is usually dry down to the first tributary. We are arguing that compensation flows from the dams are required to ensure that native flora and fauna have a range of habitats available. This is a project that has been going on for two years and we want to thank Mels for her expertise and the time that she has given to this project, and also Clinton, who is currently working at University of Western Australia and has generously given his time for the hearing.

New committee member Ann Poulsen has initiated the Society's Oral History project and together with Robyn Mason from Waitakere Libraries we have begun a library of tape-recorded interviews with Society members about the conservation history of the ranges. The first recording is of our Patron, Professor Dick Bellamy. Funding to date has come from WC Wellbeing fund, and we are currently applying for further funding to continue recording and archiving this material. We are also considering lodging early society records with Waitakere Libraries where they can be professionally archived.

The Waitakere Ranges book grows closer by the day. Designer Paul Nicolai is working hard to bring the book to print this year. It is looking wonderful with the huge amount of text and images in a sparse and elegant design. We appreciate that it is overdue, but good things take time, and considering that it is over 20 years since this book was initiated, we feel another few months to get it perfect will be time well spent. Thanks to the editors Bruce and Trixie Harvey this book is going to be the definitive work on the WR for some time to come and will be a great advocate for the ranges and for the work of the society.

Thanks to our editor Kath Dewar, our quarterly newsletter continues to add to our advocacy and communication. Contributions from members are always much appreciated. Our website continues to be developed by Mike Nixon. Internet presence is an essential tool for the society as we can ensure that it has the latest information, and we recommend you visit the website regularly.

The society continues to have a presence at local festivals. This is an opportunity for us to meet people, to explain our work and to promote our message. Having the society well-represented at festivals such as the recent EcoShow is only made possible by the enthusiasm of committee members, especially our event organiser Anna Fomison. Society members need to support Anna and her team by volunteering to help out for an hour or two at these events. In August the society was a sponsor of the EDS Coastal Conference where I presented a paper on the place the coast has in our arts and culture.



Throughout the year the society relies on professional consultants to prepare submissions and evidence for us on a range of matters. We especially need to mention two people who always find time to give the society the very best advice. To our legal counsel Douglas Allan and resource management consultant Gary Taylor the Society owes a great debt for their extremely generous pro bono contributions to our work. There are also many other people who have worked for the society, and we acknowledge them all by saying that without each individual's contribution we would not be achieving the way we do.

We would like to thank people for the support that Paul Robinson and myself received when we stood as candidates in Waitakere Ward last October. The Save Our Ranges ticket did very well, and while neither of us got elected we keep the protection of the ranges prominent and it was heartening to hear all seven candidates say they supported permanent protection of the ranges. We made many new friends and with only a few weeks to get organised we ran a very effective campaign. Thanks to Ted Scott's photographs, our beautiful billboards designed by Julia Moore attracted much attention, and incited at least one person to nightly acts of vandalism with a can of fluorescent paint. Obviously neither they nor their friends could spell, and this vandalism alone gained us votes as it became obvious who the real fascists were.

Congratulations to three foundation members of the society on being awarded New Zealand honours this year. Our Patron the Rt. Hon. Jonathan Hunt was made a Member of the Order of New Zealand, our country's highest honour. We also congratulate Patron Professor Dick Bellamy in being made a Companion of the Order of New Zealand, and Gary Taylor for being awarded the Queen's Service Order. The society is proud of these three great New Zealanders, and is honoured by their long association with us and by their huge contribution to protecting the Waitakere Ranges. Please join with us in congratulating them.

I want to acknowledge the dedication of your executive committee. This is certainly the best committee that we have recently. The expertise on a wide range of subjects is formidable, and the high level of debate at our monthly meetings is stimulating. The committee requires a huge commitment from each person and there are at times when we are under considerable stress, but the shared vision, the professionalism and the friendships that have developed have carried the day on so many occasions. Jenny Taylor has maintained our membership database and we are grateful for her administration skills. During the year we co-opted Greg Presland and Denise Yates on to the committee and their contribution was immediately valuable.

I would like to ask the outgoing committee to stand up. These people are your elected executive who have given the society so much over the past year. It has been a pleasure and an honour to work with you all and I would like this meeting to join with me in showing our appreciation for your efforts on our behalf. I would also like to thank Leslie Haines, Melissa Marler and Linda Godfrey who will be standing down this from the committee this year.

Very special thanks go to Sandra Jones who as treasurer has really brought a new level of professionalism to the Society with her meticulous care of our finances. At a time when there has been more money than ever in the accounts due to the grants for the book, such care is much needed and appreciated. The audit of the society's books this year by our honorary auditor Martin Bailey of McGregor Bailey Limited is gratefully acknowledged.



I especially want to thank Kath Dewar, our Vice President, who always takes the initiative and who generously gives the society her valuable time and considerable expertise on so many issues. She has given me great support throughout the year by sharing the work load that would otherwise get quite daunting.

We offer our condolences to the family of Graeme Ashdown of Piha who died last July. Graeme was member of the society for 15 years.

Finally we want to thank all the members and friends who have supported us over the past year. We can assure you that the coming year will be even busier and more exciting. We hope that when we meet for our AGM in a year's time the Waitakere Ranges Heritage Area Bill has progressed to the House of Representatives. We are so close to achieving this great vision, and yet there is still so much that needs to be done to ensure that the ranges are truly saved. Please do not relax your vigilance. We need your support more than ever and I cannot see the society becoming redundant for many years.

*John Edgar
President
Waitakere Ranges Protection Society*

Rescue at Bethells

It is with great pleasure I invited Ricky Curtin and Doug King to attend this March meeting of Council to receive a citation for their extreme act of bravery in saving three lives in the surf at Bethells Beach on 9 February. And it was equally pleasurable to be able to invite the three people whose lives he saved - Haley McDonald, April Xu Holland and Aaron Khan.

Ricky and Doug are life guards at the WestWave Aquatic Centre and their training and experience certainly came in more than useful when they were at Bethells and saw the three swimmers get into trouble. Without any thought for their own safety Ricky and Doug went to the rescue, literally, ensuring a safe and happy end to the tale. The three swimmers who got into trouble undoubtedly owe Ricky and Doug their lives and we as a Council, and a city, owe them a huge debt of gratitude, hence our bravery citation presentation tonight. Our sincerest thanks Ricky and Doug.

Key to the City # 1

About 100 former Crown Lynn employees and their partners got together at the New Lynn Community Centre to honour a giant in New Zealand business and one of the last of the great business entrepreneurs Sir Tom Clark. It was my honour to bestow upon Sir Tom the Key to the City, an accolade that, as a treasure of the west and of New Zealand, Sir Tom truly deserved.

Sir Tom Clark and Crown Lynn put New Lynn and Waitakere on the map. The Clark family dates back to the founding of the first brick and tile kilns on the Waitemata. In 1854 Rice Owen Clark and his wife Louisa bought 55 hectares of land on the Hobsonville foreshore. From the clay he fired drainpipes for sale to local farmers.

Thomas Edwin Clark 11 was born to Thomas and Margaret in 1916. He went to King's College until at 14, in the middle of the Depression, he was sent to work to learn all aspects of the brick and tile trade. Learn them he did! Tom later convinced the board there was value in experimenting with ceramics and with a grant of \$5000 the Specials Department was born.

With the war Tom's experimental and creative nature came to the fore as did the need for 'luxury' items such as crockery. One of the first crockery contracts for the Specials Department was for New Zealand Rail - mugs, today a real collectors' item.



In 1948 the Specials Department became a separate company - Crown Lynn - and the rest, as they say, is history.

But there's more to Sir Tom than crockery. A keen sailor, Tom commissioned and raced two boats - Infidel and Buccaneer. When he retired from active racing he became a major force behind the scenes. He was the driving force behind Ceramco's sponsorship of Ceramco New Zealand and went on to become a great friend and mentor of Sir Peter Blake and a trustee of Team New Zealand.

Sir Tom featured in my latest book *Westies: Up Front and Out There*. He changed the face of New Zealand's ceramics and sail racing industries and not only was it an honour to give him the Key to the City; it was honour just to be in the same room as him.





Key to the City # 2

It was an equally memorable moment when I presented former Speaker of the House and local MP Jonathan Hunt with the Key to the City at his leaving function in Wellington. Jonathan has dedicated his life to politics and the west and I think he was truly appreciative of the city's key honour. I am sure council will join with me in thanking Jonathan for his invaluable contribution and wish him all the best for his new appointment as High Commissioner in London.



Metro Rubbish Collector

He may not have been presented with the Key to the City (yet) however inorganic rubbish collector Lee Brown is certainly doing his best for Waitakere. And the 62 year old could quite possibly be this city's strongest man - apparently he tosses washing machines around as though he was passing a ball. Lee, an employee of Onyx, the contracting company that manages the city's kerbside waste collections, features in the latest edition of Metro and is to be acknowledged for his hard work over all his working life. His spirit and dedication should be applauded.

I have asked Lee and his family to join us at the next Council meeting for the appropriate acknowledgement. I just simply do not know how this team of extraordinary people who look at these enormous piles of inorganic dumped refuse can cope. I think many of us would look at them and have a nervous breakdown. Some of these piles have been delivered by trucks in the middle of the night from other areas and dumped. That despair would make the bravest man weep. Yet two or three hours later the grass berm is as pristine as it was before the advertisements for the collection.

Great Progress

I am delighted to report the Waitemata Harbour Clean Up Trust is making great progress.

Rolling Year to Date figures show the trust has collected 148,390 litres of litter while spending 1,391.5 hours on the water doing so. The total number of volunteer hours used was 5,345.5 and the total amount of litter collected by volunteers during the RYTD period was 62,425 litres. Since inception the trust has collected 300,396 litres of litter over 3,225 on-the-water hours.

Congratulations to the contractor Hayden Smith who I have asked to come to the next Council meeting to be acknowledged by us all for his brilliant and innovative idea of a harbour and stream clean up initiative that is clearly working successfully.



Auditoriums

I recently attended the opening of Kelston Boys' new Jubilee Auditorium and Administration Block. Officially opened by the Rt Hon Jonathan Hunt the complex is nothing short of sensational. The auditorium design is quite special (as the brochure says) and gives the school a multi-functional facility appropriate for a school of its standing. I am pleased to say Waitakere City Council has contributed financially towards the facility along with the Ministry of Education, Portage Licensing Trust and the ASB Charitable Trust. The school however still faces a significant financial deficit on the project and would gratefully accept any support it can find. I am also pleased to report that next month I will open Glen Eden Intermediate's new auditorium.



Welcome to Simon - New Trusts Stadium Chief Executive Officer

I have asked Simon Wickham to join us and be introduced to us by Councillor Dallow, the stadium chairman. Simon has joined the Stadium from Yachting New Zealand where he was Chief Executive for almost five years. Before that, Simon worked at the Hillary Commission as a manager in the junior sport team. Simon is very passionate about the new Trusts Stadium and is keen to see it fully occupied by both community and 'out-of-city' users. Simon is very conscious of the support Waitakere City Council and the wider community has put into the stadium and is adamant the facility will be a huge success.

Cassio Taniguchi Visit

It was with pleasure I hosted former Curitiba Mayor Cassio Taniguchi in Waitakere last month. We arranged a very successful welcome at the Arataki Visitors' Centre and I took Cassio for a quick tiki tour of our wonderful rainforest. Cassio emailed me on his return to Brazil and I wanted to share his comments with you.



“Kia ora. After spending more than a month travelling through your wonderful country and Australia - where I gave four lectures - here I am back in Curitiba remembering our meeting in Waitakere and the lovely reception given by you and the Maori people. The images will remain in my mind and heart and I will never forget. My special regards to you, your Councillors and your staff. We loved the trip to see the big old tree and the beach with the volcanic sands. Terrific! I am very committed to maintaining contact with Waitakere and to exchange information and perspectives with you on the sustainability in cities and new approaches concerning this challenging theme. Soon I will begin the rough draft of a book about the experiences in sustainable urban planning in my city.”

I too intend to maintain contact with Cassio and Curitiba for the good of Waitakere City.

Mayors for Jobs Alternate

I have appointed Councillor Ewen Gilmour as my alternate on Mayors for Jobs. Sometimes my heavy schedule means I simply can't get to meetings and I am pleased Councillor Gilmour has agreed to help me in this regard. While Mayors for Jobs isn't solely about young people, young people are a main focus and as you know Councillor Gilmour is heavily involved in youth affairs in Waitakere. I am sure Councillor Gilmour will do a great job. I would also like to take this opportunity to thank all Councillors who step in for me. I appreciate it.

The Lottery vs Annual Plan

I had to laugh when I read about Councillors in a small German town banking on a lottery win to keep them from going bust but maybe it's the way to go. Blumberg near the Swiss border (population 10,660) has one of the largest debts in Germany at \$4,445 a head. Local politicians have formed a lottery syndicate, playing twice a week with their own money, on the understanding that any wins go into the community treasure chest. Councillor Birgit Friederich admits a big win “cannot be factored into the community finances but a few million euros would bring welcome relief”. As I say, maybe it's the way to go. Any Councillors interested in setting up a syndicate should get in touch with me soonest.

Annual Plan

Speaking of the Annual Plan I believe the initial process has gone well. This year large portions of our capital budget will again be going into the construction of facilities such as the new library in Henderson however we have also kept our eye on the ball by providing a high level of basic services ratepayers want and expect. More than 70 percent of the budget is going into these areas - roads, parks, stormwater, rubbish, sewage etc. I, as I am sure my elected colleagues do, now look forward to hearing from the community through the submissions' process.

Congratulations

Finally I would like to congratulate Helena Ataya on celebrating her 94th birthday on February 28. Helena is the only surviving daughter of Assid Abraham and Najibie Corban, the founder of the Henderson wine firm A.A. Corban & Sons, established in 1902 at Mt Lebanon Vineyards, now the Corban Estate Arts Centre. One of Henderson's oldest residents, Helena has lived all of her life on Great North Rd and just two years ago, at 92, visited her parents' home village in Shweir, Mt Lebanon. Still very active, Helena is a valuable living historical resource for those interested in the early days of Henderson.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the Report of the Mayor be received.
2. That Council endorses the Mayor's efforts to gain a common voice for Auckland.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP
MAYOR OF WAITAKERE CITY