

# **Council**

**Wednesday, 25 February 2009  
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

## **REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

**This Mayoral Report for February 2009 is dedicated to two outstanding  
community workers of Waitakere: Mary Gilligan and Ken Finlay**

**SUPPLEMENT TO THE AGENDA FOR A MEETING OF THE COUNCIL TO BE HELD IN  
THE COUNCIL CHAMBER AT WAITAKERE CENTRAL, 6 HENDERSON VALLEY  
ROAD, HENDERSON, WAITAKERE, ON WEDNESDAY, 25 FEBRUARY 2009,  
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM**

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**6 REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

**RECOMMENDATION**

It is recommended that Council resolve to:

**Receive** the Report of the Mayor.

**Welcome to the Year of the Ox.**

This is a year, say the Chinese, of heavy labour. The Ox is a beast of burden - certainly not a goat or a rabbit. They also advise that marrying anyone born in the morning in the Year of the Ox means you're not going to get much housework done.

There isn't much fun in the Year of the Ox but I'm sure that's something you've figured out by now. It's a year of slog, of hard work, with not much joy.

That's certainly what we were told at the Epsom Showgrounds for this year's Chinese Festival. Our Prime Minister made an excellent speech, particularly thanking the Chinese community that had supported National's victory achievement.

*M1-M2*

We have started the year very positively, with the Prime Minister's speech received more than favourably at The Trusts Stadium by our A-list audience. In thanking the Prime Minister, I outlined our major projects. This speech provides my framework for the year attached at page M1 to M2.

This year will clearly be the sternest test for the vision that has pushed Waitakere along for the time I have been Mayor. It is also the year in which so many of the truly adventurous projects in this vision come into their own. As a sample:

- The completion of much of the Twin Streams comprehensive catchment management programme and all its other programmes;
- Continued construction of the New Lynn transit project, the largest project we have yet undertaken;
- Furthering our partnership arrangements with Infratil;
- The completion of arrangements between Waitakere and the New Zealand Retail Property Group; and
- The finalisation of plans for the Hobsonville Land Company.

Any one of these projects would dominate the headlines for years were they in any other region in New Zealand, such is their scale and the inventiveness of their policy outcomes.



There is also a temptation in this end-game moment to take off your shoes and mentally go to the beach. Instead, Waitakere is not slowing down. We have unresolved business in areas including:

- The Hobsonville marine precinct;
- The Henderson Valley Film Studios;
- The Waitakere Central development area;
- The Claypits area of New Lynn; and
- Retrofitting of houses.

This year will also see other events. We will publish an outstanding book on the history of the west. It will be a compilation of stories, marking the 20-year milestone for this City. The book will simply be called West.

The Air Force will give us a grand marching parade through Henderson.

The Croatian community will give the west a mighty feast and a Tarara Day at Birdwood Park. They will be celebrating their own 150-year stake in the country.

Next month the Samoan Head of State will visit us and watch a performance of Mau theatre at Corban Estate.

On the same day, Nga Puhi hold their massive tribal get-together at the Trusts Stadium.

The dynamic life of the west rumbles along every day - and Waitakere City Council has in the last 20 years provided the bones for this life to grow on.

### **Where next?**

Councils throughout New Zealand seem to be falling easily in step with this new administration. Rodney Hide was a surprising choice for Minister of Local Government, but he has demonstrated that he likes being in charge of change.

From a number of dialogues with the Minister I can see his grasp of Auckland and what it needs. We of course have variances of opinions on a number of issues, but they are approached like policy problems, not arguments.

This is all against a background of commentaries on how a new Auckland will emerge. The NZ Herald were first off the block - was it a calculated guess that they had the inside running, or had someone just interviewed their typewriter? The National Business Review have been making their own guesses for some time now.

As for the debate around Mayors and who will next preside, count me out. I'm not wasting my time or effort in that bun fight.

Over the New Year holiday period I started to put together more thoughts on how Waitakere would grow and thrive in difficult and different circumstances. What, I asked myself, is our legacy? What is our future? Are we facing a loss of the name? Or our identity? Believe me, we will not lose our identity, it's too ingrained historically and emotionally.



*M3-M12*

To me this is at the very heart of passing on to future generations what we and other councils have nurtured to a fuller or lesser degree for nearly 20 years in this City, and another 80 for Waitemata. In that context its useful to imagine what a successful Auckland would look like, and I enclose part of the submission to the Royal Commission written by Rod Oram attached at pages M1 to M2.

The west will always be the west - they aren't going to change the geographic texture of the compass. Our art, our histories, our place, and our sense of style. You won't find that shared passion in North Shore or Rodney.

How big that re-think will be, is a calculated guess, but I think big. Will it be painful? Yes. And prolonged? Yes, and radical.

I spent a few hours with Dr. Andy Asquith, Department of Management and International Business, Massey University, Auckland. We talked about the nature of new cities like Waitakere, their growth patterns and what they required from leadership. We talked of an empowered mayor versus regional authorities with a Citywide Mayor elected as I have been for the last 17 years.

We also talked of the growing cult of the celebrity mayor, in performance and perception, and the expectations that can never be delivered. Dr Asquith's excellent article on directly elected mayors has a lot of common sense.

*M13-M43*

While you are in the reading mood, take time to read Managing Middle Earth - Dr Asquith's take on how CEO's run the ship through reforms, stage manage decisions and change, and both difficult and good Councils attached at pages M13 to M43.

What I found interesting was the role of Mayor in this situation: how the Mayor reacts to the CEO and what the Mayor thinks he or she is able to deliver, against what they can and do deliver. I liked his sharp and perceptive eye, they way that he was able to draw from the CEO's how they saw their role acting and reacting with Mayors - clearly with them and around them.

In his many interviews, several mayors likened themselves to mini-Prime Ministers. Clearly some of the CEO's that he interviewed had had experiences with lame duck mayors. But when mayors were good, the CEO's shone. The CEO and Mayor are certainly the yin and yang of local government, and when it works it can deliver outstanding and often astonishing progress. I thank Dr Asquith for allowing me to print his material.

I gave an exhausting interview with Dr Asquith on the role of the Mayor, detailing how cities operate. A city the size of Waitakere operates very well. Given its disadvantages of industrial base for job expansion, given the travelling times to other destinations, it's still a very liveable City.

But then we all know that. We understand the hard work to make our communities thrive and we understand the passionate and committed people who give enormous amounts of time to the task.

### **In Memoriam**

The two people that have left us in the past few months were of that calibre: Mary Gilligan and Ken Finlay. I enclose tributes to them both.



## Mary Gilligan

Miss Mary Gilligan was born in Methven, Canterbury on 25 July 1941. She is the only daughter of Walter and Winifred Gilligan, who had come from Belfast, Northern Ireland to marry and raise a family in New Zealand. Her brother Graham was born 2 years later in New Zealand and continues to live in Pareora, Canterbury, with his wife Kathryn and their son Scott.

The family settled in Ashburton, where her father Walter trained horses for Billy Lowe. After they married, Walter took on other work but continued to have a love of horses. In her younger years, Mary attended the local schools where she was deeply involved with singing and was a member of the choir for many years. At an early age, Mary became interested in art and spent a lot of her time drawing.

She left high school and went to board in Dunedin, where she became a teacher. From there she went on to teach throughout many schools in the Canterbury area. During this time Mary became pregnant and had a beautiful son whom she named Brin, who was adopted to a family in Christchurch. At the age of 28 years Mary left Ashburton and headed for the big city, Auckland, where she settled in Ponsonby and became the art teacher at Pasadena Intermediate. She made many life-long friends during her years here and it was one of the many happy times in her life.

At the age of 32 Mary had a bouncing 10 pound baby girl whom she named Janna Mary, a name she decided to give after reading a book while in hospital. Together they lived for the first five years of Janna's life in Beresford Street, Auckland City. Mary decided that this was not the place where she wanted to raise a family and the opportunity came for her to buy a house in Titirangi - at the time a very unknown area, wop wop land was what the townies used to call it. The house was in Whirihana Avenue - which was known to the locals as Knots Landing. Mary had many happy years here teaching at the local schools, Titirangi Primary and Glen Eden Intermediate. After living in Titirangi, Mary became interested in the history of West Auckland and became part of many groups such as Friends of Waikumete, The Chapel Trust and in later years a prominent member of the Waitakere Community Arts Council.

A few years later on 13 June 1984, Ngamatahi Winifred Gilligan was born. She was given the names of both of her grandmothers. Her father is of Tainui descent from the Waikato. At this time Mary also contacted her son, Tim Bean and formed a very close relationship with him and he continues to be an important part of the family. Tim is currently living in London with his wife Anne.

Over the next 20 years, the girls continued to live in Waitakere where they attended all the local schools and have continued to stay in West Auckland - which is definitely called home.

Mary continued to research the local area and became particularly interested in the history of Waikumete Cemetery and its surrounds. Mary also continued to paint and many of her friends have pieces of art throughout their homes. When Janna started to work for the local marae, Hoani Waititi, Mary very quickly decided she wanted to become the first Irish woman to be a member of the marae and made her 'mark'. She considered herself a 'kuia' and became involved in many areas such as the Te Whanau Awhina Restorative Justice programme and Mary was often seen in the kitchen bossing and directing people and generally being important. Mary was the main influence behind the Te Whanau Toi buildings that are situated at the marae. These buildings house the Art Council and a relationship has developed between the two that will continue for many years.



Mary has spent many happy, wonderful years surrounded by her family and friends, whom she has considered the most important part of her life. She will be missed by many, but she will never, ever be forgotten.

### **Ken Finlay**

These notes were provided to me by Ken's family.

I would like to recall a few of those times with you, and I know you too will recall of many other times and things you remember, not spoken of, because, Ken did so much in his 80 years, tirelessly helping and working for others in need and guidance, making himself always available in times of crisis.

Ken was born in Christchurch, an only child to Alice and Ernest Finlay, but because of family circumstances was raised by Charlie and Joan Guy, who guided him through childhood.

Times, were very hard, with the Depression and one thing in his early days which never changed, through having a job, to kill, pluck and clean chickens. He never ate anything with chicken in it! He attended West Spraydon Primary School, and his secondary education was at Nelson College, where he boarded privately.

During school holidays, Ken got jobs at Kirkpatrick's Jam Factory. Leaving school at the age of 15, Ken went to work on a farm at Sandy Bay, which included having a tobacco farm on it.

Returning to Christchurch, Ken got himself a job on the trams as a Clippy, then later as a Tram Driver. He dearly wanted to be back in the country, taking a cadetship in farming and mustering. Upon arriving at his new job he was told to pick out 5 horses and 9 dogs, and they would be his to look after and work with.

It was while there Ken got toothache, and going down to the local pub, told the barmaid of his dilemma, and she mixed him up a very stiff alcoholic brew which knocked him out for 3 days. The toothache never came back.

Again returning to Christchurch, Ken changed his job to being a mechanic in the automotive industry. He transferred to Auckland as a Hosiery Mechanic at Holeproof, then to being an Auto Electrician. Around that time his hobby was boatbuilding, building himself a catamaran and dinghy, which was good for going to get mussels in.

Moving on he became a refrigeration engineer. Still up to last June he was repairing Davies Pumps for Water Coolers, spending hours in the shed at the back of his house. He met Margaret Martin who already had a lovely daughter Lyn. Ken and Margaret married and how thrilled Ken was to have a daughter. Sharing a good marriage together, sadly Margaret passed away at an early age after 2 years of illness.

Marrying Patricia Campbell, they shared a marriage of 27 years as soul mates, and again she passed away, leaving Ken on his own again. Meeting Jeanette Dixon, they married, sharing his final 4 years together. During that time, Jeanette also had an illness, which she overcame, but Ken was there for her.



How much Ken loved his grandchildren, and watching the great grandchildren gave him so much joy and pleasure. The cards, photos, drawings made for him over the years, did mean so much, and did bring tears to his eyes, and were, his treasures. He read them the newspaper and the Readers Digest, and spooky stories, like "*Where the Horses Never Went*".

He played the keyboard, guitar, and taught himself to play the harmonica, and singing he so enjoyed. He met up with at the Country and Western Club, Rusty Greaves, Gray Bartlett and many more well known singers.

Viewing the news on television, and during the programme "Who Wants To Be A Millionaire" trying to beat Jeanette to the answers, Ken was so knowledgeable, with a clever brain, able to talk about most things and anywhere. Most things except sport, where he was not quite as good! "One is never too old to learn" were Ken's words.

Ken was not a gardener, and if he had had his way, all the ground would be dug up and laid in concrete. But he fed the birds, every day - he had a great passion for flying birds.

He would call on Anne, for cups of tea, and a natter, reliving the past. How he liked to be out and about, on the move, doing. Travelling to Scotland with Patricia was great, also the holidays in Australia.

Ken had many contributions, giving time to others, although generally this effort has gone unrecognised. His tireless work for others. He has shown to all of us the quality of a very sincere man. He was always in attendance at the Courts for a Justice of the Peace swearing in, beside his colleagues, again there to help and encourage them with their duties.

Many cultures and groups have been helped by Ken, especially when they have arrived here in a strange country.

It would take hours to tell of all he has done for others, but I would like to mention some. With his mate the late Ken Russell, each Christmas, they would go to the needy around him, with toys for the children, food for the family, many not knowing who they were, with Ken dressed as Santa, or Ken in a rabbit suit.

A true gentleman, with a fantastic sense of humour, who made many laugh, with his cheeky grin and sayings, those many jokes and stories, he would tell, so entertaining, but most of all, was, a wise and strong man, so, very willing, caring, generous, loving and kind to his family and fellowmen.

On June the 4<sup>th</sup> last year, Ken became unwell, and since then there was a rapid decline in health. Peacefully, Ken left the ones he loved so much and who loved him with all their hearts. Also many who respected Ken will miss him so.

Go now my dear, to the loved ones gone before. What a reunion up there, you will be sharing together. Rest forever in eternal peace. Ken is moving into a new realm.



### **In memoriam - Murray Becroft**

I would also like to acknowledge the sudden passing of Murray Becroft who lived virtually his whole life in the West. Murray was a stalwart of the Henderson community-born and growing up out here, marrying, running the Henderson Service Station with his brother Russell and eventually becoming a grower and orchardist on the family property, just off Simpson Rd.

Several years ago we acknowledged he and his family by naming the small lane that runs off Simpson Rd to the orchard after Murray.

Over the years he was heavily involved in various growers groups and held a number of prominent positions on horticulture industry boards and so on.

He was also heavily involved at a community level as a member of school boards, Titirangi light Opera and he served a term as president of the West Auckland Probus Club.

A real "do-it-yourself" type, there was not a piece of machinery Murray couldn't fix himself or on many occasions build from scratch. So it was fitting that Murray was laid to rest in a casket made by the loving hands of his children.

Murray was farewelled by his close-knit and many, many friends at one of the largest funerals seen in Henderson for some years. He was 79.

### **More success for Glidepath**

Just in case we are tempted to think that it is all doom and gloom, Glidepath continues to go from strength to strength, as reported in the following:

#### **Auckland company wins US baggage contract 11:00AM Monday Feb 09, 2009**

Auckland-based company Glidepath has won a contract to design, manufacture and install a new integrated baggage handling and security screening system at Nashville International Airport in Tennessee.

The \$60 million security project, due for completion in 2010, came as the privately owned company was on the "cusp of great things" in the United States, managing director and founder Ken Stevens said today.

*"We've just doubled the size of our Texas manufacturing plant and are sitting on a very healthy order book including the design, build and installation of a new integrated baggage handling system at Reno-Tahoe International Airport plus a number of other smaller projects."*

Stevens, who is also chairman of Export New Zealand, pointed out that infrastructure projects and airport security were front of mind with the new Obama administration in the United States.

Glidepath had completed more than 500 airport baggage handling systems in 61 countries, with its work ranging from initial feasibility studies through to design, manufacture, installation, operations and maintenance.



The company was pushing ahead with plans to internationalise its business and was expanding and strengthening its market presence in Australia, China, India, South Africa and the Middle East as well as Mexico and South America.

### **Huntington Beach Centenary**

Finally, it was with pleasure that in late January I met with Keith Bohr, the new Mayor of Huntington Beach. They celebrate their centenary this year. There have been many events that our cities have participated in together over the years. It remains important that we keep these international connections alive and strong. The goals of their centenary are simply to:

- Honour the City's past and leave a legacy for future generations;
- Celebrate and commemorate the history and culture of Huntington Beach;
- Create opportunities for service, educational, civic, faith-based, business and tourist organisations to participate and celebrate the Centennial;
- Develop enriching programs and activities that will educate residents about the City's history; and
- Design and support Centennial events that will provide educational outreach to residents and those outside of the community.

As we approach 20 years old, I hope that we too celebrate our impending anniversary with a sense of style and place.

RA Harvey, QSO, JP  
**MAYOR OF WAITAKERE**