

# **Council**

**Wednesday, 27 May 2009  
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

## **REPORT OF THE MAYOR**

**THIS REPORT IS DEDICATED TO THE MEMORY OF NAJIB CORBAN  
(1909-2009)**

**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, 27 MAY 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.

**Who will lay the wreaths?**

As I stood on the dais at the Dawn Service of ANZAC Day and looked out on the lighted crowds, as dawn was breaking, the ode had been read and the Last Post played, I wondered who will do this when the City doesn't exist? I am sure they will find someone, but in the last year, myself and the Deputy Mayor did more than lay wreaths and read oaths at ANZAC Day. The role of the Mayor, which is often difficult to define in local communities, does have a link with people far beyond the statute.

We answer calls to do many things, some small, but I believe that they do mean a lot to the people whether they be schoolchildren or at the hundreds of events where the Mayor represents something that matters in the community.

It's the same right throughout New Zealand and the western world, and it's been that way for hundreds of years whether they be elected at large or appointed by the Council. This City and the Office will cease to exist in 16 months time.

Mayors wherever they are say that this is the best job in the world. You can make a great deal of difference to people's lives and with the Council, you can make things happen. No politician says that in national government, because they can't. But Mayors and Councils can show leadership and deliver: libraries, swimming pools, stadiums - things that make communities work.

When I went through my 2008 diary it was clear what we will miss in the West from the mayor. No matter how super the super-mayor will be, he or she will find it hard to get to Massey High School for the prize giving, ever. I can't see that mayor up the Whau Creek as I did with Hayden Smith pulling shopping trolleys and twenty bags of rubbish from the mangroves. I don't know what will happen to the Sister Cities, and many will say trying to pull business from the rest of the world? Well it does. There certainly won't be any Mayoral Forum or a Local Government Group Zone 1, and here's a little list that will be missing in the years ahead:

- Having your name in the phonebook, so anyone can talk to you, and they do;
- Takes the call at home 3.00 am on a Saturday from the guy who has called Noise Control three times and the party next door is still raging - and he holds the phone out the window so I can hear it;
- Lays the wreaths at five different RSA's on ANZAC Day from 5.30 am to 4.30 pm, when I finally get home from Piha;
- Cuts ribbons - or hands the scissors over - at rest-homes, factories, building openings;



- Gets up in the morning at dawn to bless buildings, childcare centres, school classrooms, hoping that they will be safe forever. In a way I will miss that;
- Argues in the end fruitlessly about a new set of public toilets in a park because you knew the residents wanted sustainability features and not the usual concrete block;
- Opens a small bronze plaque for 12 people on Sunday morning for the late lamented and much missed Ian Henderson, at 9am on a Sunday, while it's raining like it's winter because it is;
- Writes six letters of support a week for funding applications for women's groups, for refuges, for apprenticeship training, for everything that keeps a community together but they just need that little bit extra money;
- Leads the protection of the Waitakere Ranges as if they were something that was globally unique rather than something to simply be subdivided and chopped up;
- Provides \$100 from the Mayoral Fund for the girl who wants to go to the National Roller Skating Championships;
- Reads the Western Leader letters to the editor and mutters;
- Works with numerous curmudgeonly penny-pinching old duffers better known as the Council (present company excluded of course); and
- Works to develop Chinatown only to see it sin-binned, takes it to another City and a developer, where it is instantly seized and turned a hot commercial property development.

There are certainly disappointments in this job, but also much success. The loss of a Mayor will be not so much personal to the individual, but it will take from the community and the people of the west an individual that can for a short space of time make a difference through encouragement, for a better community and in a small way for a better country.

### **Scared of Pigs Yet? You should be**

In Waikumete Cemetery there is a large grass swathe in the old section, twenty metres from the southern gate and the sexton's house. The train to Waikumete had its own small station to remove bodies onto carts, such was the number from Auckland City. Another trench was taking more bodies at Victoria Park, where the grandstand used to sit. This site in Waikumete Cemetery is a chilling reminder to the potential for an influenza epidemic to really take to New Zealand.

In Waikumete they kept filling up the trenches every day. A stone monument reminds us that this was the great flu epidemic. There have been other epidemics since, but only the recent swine flu is in the same category - transmitted person to person.

It is far and away the greatest epidemic in the previous century, and I pray God nothing like that happens in this century.

Recently we have seen the appalling way in which pigs are treated in this country. I really wonder if anyone realises that it is precisely these kinds of conditions that enabled the swine flu to start, mutate, and cross over into humans in Mexico in the first place. We are an agricultural nation, and we still do not yet have a culture in which care for animals is paramount.

So let me join the dots: unless we clean up our animal welfare act, we will increase the risk of pandemic disease of such a scale that our entire economy and therefore the very future of our country will be put at risk.



From the spring of 1918, North Americans and Australians and New Zealanders were complaining about an unseasonable flu that was sweeping through the cities. It was the beginning of a pandemic that would kill 50 million people or more - certainly more than the Great War that was still raging.

If you are feeling complacent, don't be. The influenza epidemic had one go in the early months of 1917. It returned with a vengeance, as many cases of the Mexican n1n1 have been mild, mimicking the 1917 effect, but as New Scientist.com warns, it can come roaring back and then we are really for it. That is eerily familiar to the present day.

We are just a few islands in the Pacific. And we are not immune. In January 1875 a British warship, the HMS Dido, arrived in the Fiji islands. Among its passengers were a prominent Fijian Chief and his retinue, who had caught the measles in Australia. Although there had been advanced contact with Europeans since at least 1790, the Fijian population had never before been exposed to measles, and when the disease started moving through the islands the effects were terrifying. By February 1875 measles had spread through most of the Fijian chain, and for the next several months the disease ravaged the population. By June 1875 the disease had largely burnt itself out.

The population of Fiji in 1875 probably numbered about 135,000 people. In the six months of the measles epidemic probably 35,000 died, over one quarter of the population.

Unlike bird flu, and SARS, this had got the added factor of a virus that is virgin to the human race - in other words we have never been exposed to it - think of the Maori and the Fijians getting their first taste of Smallpox. Even in Mexico viruses don't cause a severe pandemic. I am greatly concerned if we in Waitakere are able to cope with this, and with the Super City looming, will we have the mechanics in place if it does., I am sure by now you've got my drift. I don't like to play prophet of doom, but I do read widely and we must keep a watchful eye on what is going on with the health of the nation. We are too small and too vulnerable.

We speak a lot of the war dead, and we should. But in our current geopolitical context it is far likelier that we will be besieged by a pandemic than a broad global war. Just in case we forget what a state is for, it is to protect the citizens of the nation from harm. I wish I had faith that, faced with such a challenge, New Zealand would be able to cope

Let's not forget that when Waitakere was infiltrated by the Painted Apple Moth, the response by the Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry was simply badly handled and provided little confidence to the public. It was a successful eradication, but done so at significant social cost and good will.

After the many attacks that health public servants have been subjected to, it was great to see them hard at work nightly on our television screens. It's also good to hear that Minister Nick Smith is finally out of managed care. I hope this serves as a lesson to the government that civil servants are there for a reason: to protect us all.

Last month I had lunch with Mike King. I had lost a bet with him over Winston Peters getting back into Parliament and I was paying the price. He told me he had just been on an expedition to a pig farm. I asked him why he had done that as he was the Pork Board. He told me he was absolutely devastated at what the animal activists had shown him. He was beside himself with anguish.



I reminded him he could give back the fee. He said he was doing more than that, he was going to television with the story. Well last Sunday we all saw that. It was gut-wrenching and appalling, and what we all think goes on with farming in close quarters of animals - chickens with their beaks cut off, the whole business of mass producing food - has a price. The pigs have had their revenge. If the pig farm shocked New Zealand, I would hate to think what they looked like in Mexico. Play with nature and it has its revenge.

I would keep a watchful eye on this one.

### **Waitakere is a Peace City**

It's time to give peace another chance.

I never thought I would ever see the President of the United States asking the world to reassess the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Unthinkable you might say, but then so was the fall of the Berlin Wall, and Nelson Mandela out of the slammer. In a way, Obama's speech in Budapest was the most surprising. Perhaps even more surprising than the Chinese giving up Communism. We live in interesting times, but this one is very important.

I was so impressed I wrote a letter to the President, on behalf of Waitakere as New Zealand's first Peace City, and also as President of the New Zealand Peace Foundation. I mentioned this at the Piha ANZAC Day service. To be honest I check the mail each day waiting for my letter from my new friend Barack.

As I write this it was Pete Seeger's 90<sup>th</sup> birthday yesterday. I hope that all of us have an older person they know who can speak to us across generations about our better human and humane natures. We all need that hard advice, now.

Pete linked with Woodie Guthrie and a host of others who wanted to make the United States less divided and to see a world more able to live together. For being socialist they were hunted down like dogs. Pete Seeger's songs will remain a rallying cry for those who retain a crystal-clear vision in their hearts of what a peaceful world would look like.

I'm no balladeer, but in my own small way I have led Waitakere as a peace-city for 17 years, and garnered a decent international profile for doing so. Waitakere City itself, and Waitemata its predecessor before that, stood out early as a non-nuclear city, providing moral courage to New Zealand's Prime Minister David Lange in the 1980s as he bravely resisted diplomatic and military pressure from the United States and France. History is what makes where we are inevitable, and we need to see this historical moment for what it is. The long environmental crisis is not softened by the economic crisis: they are versions of the same thing. Saying "a crisis is a terrible thing to waste" is the most crass piece of political cynicism I've ever heard as homes and families are damaged in the long recession.

Good leaders can bring that antidote of hope. But New Zealand has just lost its main leader of international stature as Helen Clark has gone to the United Nations. People are now afraid, beset by media-amplified panics.

Our whole social and moral mood needs stabilising around something good. Even at our lowest, we are always ready as humanity to rise up to a powerful and compelling vision. We don't yet have one. But it is time to start putting the pegs into the ground and imagine a future blueprint of freedom.



One of those pegs in the ground must be establishing some sort of order in the world. Order in the sense of safety and security, starting with the abolition of nuclear weapons. The issue had gone from our minds since the collapse of the Soviet Union. But it only took North Korea's recent rocket-launch extravaganza to fix our eyes on an issue other than economic crisis.

In many respects we are in times comparable to those in western Europe before World War 2. But this time the leadership is different and it is the leadership that is making the difference. On his inaugural trip abroad President Obama challenged us about nuclear proliferation. In one speech he affirmed the United States as a party to the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, for "the peace and security of a world without nuclear weapons. " *He added:*

*"Some argue that the spread of these weapons cannot be stopped ... Such fatalism is a deadly adversary. For if we believe that the spread of nuclear weapons is inevitable, then in some way we are admitting that the use of nuclear weapons is inevitable."*

Fatalism provides the imagination of apocalypse, in short.

That Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty he speaks of is going to be reviewed next year, and its targets re-set. It's time to aim high. Because otherwise we will breed the fatalist imagination.

Those countries who have professed nuclear weapons: China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom and the United States - must all agree to get their gross stockpiles down to a maximum of one each, and those who are signatories - including New Zealand - must say to the others like Pakistan, Israel and India: this would not be a world worth living in.

I hope that we are all getting a little bit tired of being told when to panic. Because there's another step out of that, and that's to know what you value. That's called belief, and another, more demanding step; to accept that your collective work will overcome that anxiety.

That's called faith. I have faith in President Obama. I have faith in myself. We're due for a whole new generation of leaders who are prepared to say previously unspeakable things, and to work to bring them to pass.

The one thing that a new, expansive American president does do is allow that it allows the little locked and caged Pete Seeger emotion out of the box, where when things look at their complete blackest, we can still imagine our own Big Rock Candy Mountain. Somewhere beyond all this, free of nuclear weapons, free from anxiety and daily fear, lies the future.

### **Why changing Auckland matters**

This is the time to be clear about what the whole political order is for: it is to protect us from the chaos of the world, from forces too big for families or companies to ever deal with. The simultaneous collapse of the US and UK housing market, unheard-of shifts in financial power from west to east, continuing environmental degradation, and high oil price instability, all point to a few things for a mayor on the world's periphery.



**Firstly**, to rebuild Auckland as New Zealand's one major city from this, rates and taxes are going to have to show faster improvement, one city block at a time. Because that improves the equity in our houses. Local government must have the power to buy, improve and sell property in town centres because it's otherwise much harder to show return for our being taxed. For those who still have any wealth left, my house will be even more so my castle.

**Secondly**, this Government simply cannot afford to make a mistake about Auckland. We are all one miss-step from Iceland and Ireland. Recent stumbles by finance companies, and by giants Fisher and Paykel and Fonterra have truly worried us, but they would be mere accidents compared to unrevelling Auckland. Finesse not brute force is required from our leadership.

**Third**, this new massive government in Auckland is going to have to attract the best and the brightest, and that means paying them to continue to live here at the ends of the earth. Transformation in Albany or Botany Downs occurs not because of the market's invisible hand or corporate power's naked fist, but from the open handshake of political and bureaucratic deals done. We have to vote for a vision and a pay that makes it worthwhile for these players to stay in the punishing game of Auckland Monopoly.

**Fourth**, the new leadership needs a vision stating precisely what success will look like in the end. I stood undefeated for 18 years on an explicitly values manifesto, and people built passion and identity and belief around that. As central government tides rose and fell, Waitakere's compact city took 20 years to create and will endure for 100 years. You can already see the difference on any Auckland map. People really do respond to an actual plan, with a vision.

One of my messages to the government at this time is: look at Fiji. Anyone can start a revolution and topple a democratically elected government. But unless you have a compelling plan and a very strong delivery mechanism to deliver it, simple political entropy will pull the whole thing into chaos. Like so many reforms before it, this scale of reform has never been tried successfully anywhere in the world. Prime Minister, the whole world of mayors and cities is watching, not just New Zealand.

At base the very function of politics is to protect us all from the unravelling chaos approaching us. If we do not use this moment as an opportunity to reconnect ourselves to the very idea of government, of collective action organised for good, then simple national weakness and chaos will result.

The promise of a unified metropolitan and national structure stands before us within these multiple crises. This really is New Zealand's moment to rally behind a common values-based vision so that we are as collectively strong as possible. The alternative of leadership failure is unimaginably catastrophic.

A couple of words for those in Waitakere fighting the good fight.

This is our vision.

Richard the Third, in Shakespeare's version, said that *"now is the winter of our discontent."* True enough right now, but timing is everything. You can hold your breath, because believe it we are on a huge roll.



The ambition of Waitakere as a state of mind for governing and managing a City has not gone away - in this time of transition we have projects and developments that are astonishing scale and long in time.

Waitakere City, its volunteers and the thousands who watch us internationally and across New Zealand, are now changing the whole of this quarter of Auckland, one city block at a time. You may not see it yet, but this City has built in more momentum than any other I know of in New Zealand.

You can be pessimistic if you look at the data about the earth, the state of the economy, and the audacity of current politics. But if you meet the people you are working with to restore this earth and the lives of those who are suffering, and you aren't optimistic, you haven't got a pulse. We really are good at this.

Twenty years ago they told us that an eco-city was absurd. But on any aerial map of Auckland you can see the difference we have made in Waitakere: our quarter of it is stable and compact, the rest of them have spread out all over the place. That took twenty years. That is the faith of evidence.

So don't be put off by people who know what is not possible. Continue to do what needs to be done, and check to see if it was impossible only after you are done. There is a rabbinical teaching that if the world is ending and the Messiah arrives, first plant a tree, and then see if the story is true. For that story, forget the tree - we're replanting the earth.

Each one of you will keep a vision of what local initiative can achieve. Human beings endure, but what really sets them apart is their willingness to restore, redress, rebuild, recover and re-imagine. That means you.

We should definitely buckle in and expect to hear the voices that shout bad advice about slowing down. But just remind yourself of that day you finally knew what you had to do, and began. Plant the accelerator now: the earth, the City and your lives will feel that change now more than ever.

### **Milestones**

Najib Corban died a few months short of his 100<sup>th</sup> birthday - a delightful man of great humour and hard work. Blind, he could prune rows feeling his way through the vines. His long life was recalled with humour and sadness by his children, the most well known being Brian Corban, and his grandchildren, at a very full church; St Michael's in Henderson. Brian Corban beautifully summed up his father's life in a fine eulogy. I would like to acknowledge the life of Najib, and his friendship to me in my time as Mayor of this City. The eulogy read by Brian Corban is testament to his fine and loving life of the land, the vines, and this country.

### **Proposed Croatian Church for Te Atatu**

I was pleased to attend a magnificent evening on behalf of the City at St Patrick's Cathedral on 16 May where the Croatian community came out in force to welcome the concept of a Croatian Catholic Church at the Croatian Cultural Society premises on McLeod Road Te Atatu.



The church will be dedicated to Our Lady (Kraljica Hrvata) a symbol of, and beacon to, Croatians and their old and long tradition of the Catholic faith. The fundraising committee is now getting themselves together. The site is large enough to hold a church and they have the first design, which has now been published in the Western Leader.

## **NAJIB ASSID CORBAN**

**9/7/1909 - 29/4/2009**

(Eulogy delivered by his son, Brian Corban, at the Funeral Service at St Michael and All Angels Anglican Church, Great North Road, Henderson on Wednesday 6 May 2009)

*“The fever of life is over,  
And there lying peacefully and cold,  
Is a body that was so active,  
Death’s truth, in reality told.”*

(1<sup>st</sup> verse from Dad’s poem “The Reality of Death”

So wrote Dad in 1982 on the occasion of the passing of his much loved brother Wadier Assid Corban.

And in the course of my words to you all today, I will refer to Dad’s poems because in a sense, in understanding and appreciating his life, his own words are better than mine.

But first, may I welcome you all here today, family, extended family, extended/extended family, Mayor of Waitakere City Bob Harvey, Councillors, community leaders, business colleagues, friends, members of the St Michael’s congregation, indeed, each and every one of you.

I speak on behalf of my sisters, Jenell, Alma, Maxine and Catherine as well as myself and our family generally in not only welcoming you to this service of celebration for Dad’s life but also to thank each and every one of you for taking the time out of busy lives to join us in both honouring him and his life and contribution and in farewelling him from this earthly realm.

At its heart I think Dad’s long life of almost 100 years is really a story of the indomnity of the human spirit, the power of unconditional love, compassion and the ability to forgive and the strength to go on derived from a deep sense of spirituality founded both in his Christian beliefs and the ancient Eastern spiritual traditions of his ancestral homeland, the Lebanon.

On these occasions it is easy to get lost in detail and the emotional sense of loss, so this morning I asked my wife Lindsay, who knew Dad very well and loved him dearly, to tell me about his essential being. She said 4 things:

*“Firstly, he was a good man and a Godly man  
Second, he was a good family man  
Third, he was a man of the land and nature  
Fourth, that despite his sight disability, and eventual blindness, he as extraordinary in his lack of complaint about it, that he simply got on with life and made a powerful contribution and did his very best in all things.”*



But, before I go further, let me go back in time briefly to relate a little of his background.

Dad's father Assid Abraham Corban left Lebanon in 1891 and arrived in New Zealand as a non-English speaking migrant in 1892.

By 1898 he had earned enough money to bring his wife Najibie Assid Corban and their two children, Khaliel and Wadier, to New Zealand.

Reunited at last Assid and Najibie rapidly brought into this world another 8 children, 4 more sons (Annis the First, who died aged 6 months from meningitis), Corban, Annis (the second) and Najib (Dad), as well as 4 daughters, Zealandia, Zareefy, Annisee and Helena.

In 1902 Assid Abraham Corban bought a property across the road from this Church and established a new business called "A. A. Corban - vine grower, winemaker and orchadist", which in time grew into simply "Corban Wines".

Dad was born in 1909 into a remarkable extended family commune based upon the land. Like so many of his generation, he only had limited opportunity for education, leaving Henderson Primary School at age 12 with is "Proficiency Certificate" to work full-time in the family vineyards with his father, mother, brothers and sisters.

So began a 62 year working life in Corban Wines, which culminated in Dad becoming Vineyards Manager and Director on the Board of Corban Wines Ltd, which became the leading New Zealand winemaker for 50 years from the 1920's to the 1970's. Dad also served as a Director on the Board or A. A. Corban & Sons Ltd which ran the city based vine and spirits business and acted as the national distributor for Corban Wines.

What is extraordinary about all this is that Dad's eyesight began failing in his early teen years and progress idly declined over his life until his 70's he was totally blind.

Unable to read from age 15 or to drive a vehicle on the roads, it did not stop Dad from participating fully in life and business. Wiry and lean, he became a physically strong man with powerful endurance and perseverance which could far out distance his work colleagues. Indeed, some of the vineyard staff dreaded being put to work next to him because they struggled to keep up with him and last the days work.

All his life, Dad "pulled his weight" and never finished work until the job was done, values that he often espoused to his children and grand children.

Dad's work on the land, close to nature inspired him to begin composing poetry until 1982 he had so many poems that I arranged to have them printed in a small book entitled "Footprints in the Sand - The poems of Najib Corban" that achievement gave him a lot of pleasure and satisfaction.

My friend Dick Scott in the short preface to the book wrote that "Najib Corban verses were mostly composed and memorised while toiling in the field. A skylark's song inspired him to compose his first poem in 1975 (Selason tide). The south wind of his poem "biting wind" was no imagined presence - it lashed rain at his vineyard oil skins only too realistically.



All these verses spring from such direct experience. "They express Najib Corban's commitment to his family and his religion and reflect his close contact with nature. They have been collected to give an indication to new generations, something of the spirit of an era now gone forever"

Dad's poems offer, sometimes profound, sometimes moving and sometimes amusing insight:

For example after Rothmans took over Corban Wines in the late 1970's a visiting besuited Rothmans executive from Head Office in Queen Street met Dad at the Homestead across the road from the Church. After a hard days work in the vineyards in his rough working cloths Dad was hailed with the words: And how are all you peasants today?

Dad was civil in his response but later wrote a poem called "Work" which goes like this:

*"Proud to be a peasant  
Living on the land  
Working close to Nature  
With God, hand in hand*

*Many find contentment  
Working with the soil  
Find it better for their health  
Doing honest toil*

*Other choose to wander  
Search in vain for gold  
Would be better if they worked  
God's bounty to behold"*

Married to Ruby Sarah Corban for 62 years until she passed away in February 2000, Dad obviously learned to tolerate her idiosyncrasies as she did his: but he diplomatically had a "dig" in his poem entitled "My Wife"

*"When I was young  
I had a date  
With a girl  
Who was always late  
Now we are married  
It is time to state  
It's remained a habit  
So I've met my fate!  
Plenty of excuses  
She will always find  
I feel it's truly  
A state of mind  
No use advancing  
The Clock  
Because I feel  
She's as firm as a rock  
Despite this failing  
I can still relate  
We have love for each other  
She is my life's mate"*



There are many more poems, too many to relate here, indeed Dad only stopped composing poems about 3 years ago.

But my favourite is the one called "Dedication to my Father - The Tree". Dad composed it in memory of his father, Assid Abraham Corban on the occasion of the Corban Family Celebrations in 1977, when the whole extended family celebrated firstly 75 years of achievement in building Corban Wines and secondly 85 years since Assid Abraham arrived in New Zealand.

It is my favourite poem because it tells a lot about why Dad was the sort of person he was and why he was such a lovely father to my sisters and me. It goes like this:

Dedication to My Father: The Tree

Written for a speech at A.A Corban's anniversary, 23<sup>rd</sup> May, 1977

Great Tree your loving branches spread,  
You provide protection for my head,  
Protect me from the blazing sun,  
A place to rest when day is done.

In wind and rain your outstretch bough,  
Withstand the strain, I don't know how,  
You must be blessed, you graceful form  
Is build to stand the raging storm.

You grow upright towards the sky,  
A pleasant site to human eye,  
Your branches spread with shades of green.  
Add beauty to our landscape scene.

You stand serene in spacious field,  
For man a beast a weather-shield,  
For birds in flight a branch to rest.  
A homely place to build a nest.

Don't cude me down, my limbs do spare,  
For if you do your land be bare,  
Just thing again of wind and rain  
Preserve me form the axe of pain.

I knew a man so close to me,  
Who gave me shelter like that tree,  
To all his love to us did bring,  
A place of comfort, 'neath his wing.

In his life, despite his disability, Dad contributed to so much of importance to so many things beyond business. Amongst the most important to him, beyond his family, were the Independent Order of Odd Fellows Lodge, where he seemed to hold the office of Chaplain forever and this church of St. Michaels and All Angels where he held office as Vicar's Warden for something like 30 years.



He played a critical role in getting the Church build, which was acknowledged by the then Vicar, the Reverend Grevis Goetz, who sent me a lovely letter of condolence last week in which he said:

“Please accept my condolences on the loss of a fine, determined man who bore the loss of his sight with patience and grace.

I had great admiration for him and during my time as Vicar of Henderson frequently valued his advice and encouragement and at times his helpful criticism.

I have always felt that the Church of St Michael and All Angels is very much a memorial to him his drive and sense of purpose and faith.

He will be much missed by a large family, by the many people in the business community and the widespread winemaking community to whom he was and inspiration and pioneer.

Please accept my sympathy and extend it any my affection to the Corban Family as a whole

Yours sincerely

Grevis Goetz”

In summary, Dad was an excellent father: hardworking, intelligent, loving, compassionate, understanding, generous, fair-minded, wise, caring, supportive and giving. He was to my mind a true Christian and it doesn't matter how old a father is when he dies, there is always a sense of great loss when a good parent passes on. Our family will feel this loss keenly, while the same accepting it and celebrating a life well lived, because his departure leaves a vacant seat at the head of the table and marks the end of an era and the beginning of another.

However, I see something of him in each of us his children, his grandchildren and his great-grand children and we all thank the Lord for his being.

In his simple poem “Footprints in the Sand” Dad said:

*“As we tread along life's way  
Some footprints sink in deep  
Whilst other simply fade away  
As tides and time do sweep”*

Dad's footprints did indeed “sink in deep” because they represent the power of human love and divine spirituality, both of which are so much more powerful than the apparent personal power and materiality of this earthly world.

We farewell Dad, Najib Assid Corban in faith and love and in doing so, on behalf of our family, I wish to thank the many, many people who were so good to Dad.

The people of St Michael's church who would guide him to the communion rail, the Vicar and clergy over the years who ministered to him, the members of the Mens Fellowship Group who transported him and included him, and all the congregation who entranced him.



The People of Star of Henderson Odd Fellows Lodge as well as the Friendship Kebekah Womens Lodge, who made sure Dad got a lift to the Lodge meeting until the last 5 years and always included him and honoured him with their friendship and fellowship.

Neighbours from 39 Swanson Road, Henderson, who kept a loving eye on Dad as he lived alone after Mum died in 2000, until 3 years ago. Especially Marion Collier and June O'Malley old friends and neighbours from Mum and Dad's days in Henderson Valley over the last 50 years, as well as other neighbours.

My Brother in law \_\_\_\_\_ and his family, Matron Elizabeth Hunter and all the staff of Carnavon Private Hospital in Lincoln Road, where Dad lived for the last 3 years of his life.

All others over the years who worked with Dad in the vineyards and helped him especially my late cousin Joseph Corban, the late Emma Paul from the Ngapuhi tribe in the North, Vineyard foreman and her assistant Huia and all the Maori members of staff who treated Dad with great respect as one of their own.

And finally the great extended Corban Family, especially my sisters, nieces and nephews, my wife Lindsay whom Dad treated as another daughter and Dad's sole surviving sibling and Sister Aunty Helena and her family, the Ataya Family.

We all now that peace because we know we can release dad in peace after a long fulfilling life lived in his faith.

In closing let me return to where I began with the poem. Dad wrote about the death of his brother Wadier. I now confess I only read you the first verse - the best was yet to come and I shall now read it to you as a message of hope:

#### The Reality of Death

The fever of life is over  
An there lying peacefully and cold,  
Is the body that was so active,  
Death's truth in reality is told.

As I solemnly stood by the open grave  
I thought of our Lord Jesus, who did to save,  
He overcame death by His resurrection true  
Gospel of hope for me and you.

We have in life our cross to bear  
Remember Lord Jesus carried His full share,  
Nailed to the Cross until death, suffered pain,  
Sacrificed for our sins, our redemption to gain.

We all in due time for this life will fall,  
By the scythe of the reaper, when he chooses to call.  
There's no escape no matter how we try,  
For all that is born is doomed to die.



Believe in the Lord; Jesus promised the way  
Of everlasting life, be faithful and pray,  
More truth about life and death is told,  
In the Holy Scriptures and Bible of old.

Go forward with faith, sooth your saddened hear,  
God watches over us right from the start.  
Jesus is there to show the way -  
He can lighten our burdens, as we face each day.

In the course of my life I have seen many great things and met many great people. But  
in the end, how shall we define greatness?

For me, I know what true greatness is because beyond anything else I have seen in  
this world, I saw it in my father.

Thank you