

Council

**Wednesday, 30 June 2010
Commencing at 5.30 pm**

REPORT OF THE MAYOR

**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, 30 JUNE 2010,
COMMENCING AT 5.30 PM**

6 REPORT OF THE MAYOR

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Council resolve to:

Receive the Report of the Mayor.

Giving oldies a chance

I took the chance to visit a stunning exhibition during a recent trip to Melbourne. At the ticket booth I was asked if I was over 60. When I said I was, I received a free entry pass. It was great to be given that respect.

I have been asking for that same respect to be shown to our older residents when they use the pool at West Wave Aquatic Centre. These are people that have served this City well. Many of them get by on small fixed incomes. They should be allowed to keep themselves fit, active and productive without paying a fee.

The hours I suggest to give free passes to over-65s are between 6 and 9 am. That's when I see older people using the pool. After then and in the evenings it's crowded with body builders and champion swimmers. Older adults have been there and done that.

When the Senior Gold Card was announced in 2007, an accompanying booklet said West Wave pool would be free for retired people. It hasn't been the case. This move would go some way towards righting that wrong. It would be another sign that Waitakere is a City that cares for its older and more vulnerable residents. A City that truly puts people first. That is the legacy we need to pass on to the new Auckland Council. I will be putting this to the two main mayoral candidates as a new policy for Auckland.

All tapped out

It started with Madonna. In 1991 her new documentary *Truth or Dare* was released in cinemas. Controversial scenes were scattered through the account of the pop star's 1990 Blonde Ambition tour. But the one that stood out featured Madonna and an Evian water bottle.

That scene would be credited with single-handedly putting bottled water on the map. Water manufacturers seized on the marketing opportunities presented by a moment in the spotlight with the world's biggest star. Sales went up overnight. Before *Truth or Dare*, the average American drank 5.7 gallons of bottled water a year. By 1997 it had doubled. By 2006, Americans drank 27.6 gallons of bottled water every year - a billion bottles a week. The trend has caught on. In 2010, bottled water is one of the biggest marketing items in the world. Its powerful campaigns have captured even us in New Zealand.

Waitemata Harbour Clean-Up Trust CEO Hayden Smith and I are doing something about it in July. Together we are launching a range of reusable aluminium water bottles. They will be packing onto shop shelves in dazzling colours, with marketing pitching them as a sustainable alternative to plastic bottles. They're not cheap, but they will be more fashionable and appealing than the bottles carried around tracks by trampers. They are part of our effort to persuade New Zealand to abandon its addiction to plastic bottles.



It's a habit that is doing us harm. While I was in New York, I read the aptly named *Bottlemania* by Elizabeth Royte. The book is an eye opening investigation into the damage done by the bottled water industry and the vast array of tactics employed by the water manufacturers to make us buy their product. Its focus is the USA, where the water market is ruled by giant companies who sell the contents of deep underground wellsprings to the New York and Los Angeles social sets.

The phenomenal success of those companies has brought with it rapid expansion. There has been a proliferation of brands. Where once there was Evian and Pereira water, there are now thousands of companies offering the same product with the same promises. Each of them are producing multi-million dollar marketing campaigns. Every one selling plastic bottles to be discarded after one or two uses. Those bottles cost Americans \$13 billion a year. It is water they could easily and safely drink from the tap at 1/10,000 of the cost.

The reason why they don't has nothing to do with safety or convenience. Royte shows that these companies' promises of pristine water have been proved a myth. Among the measured and proven risks of bottled water are arsenic, gasoline additives, fertiliser runoff and 82 different pharmaceuticals. All the above has seeped through the aqueducts from which water companies collect their stock. The more we pull water out of our system, the more we risk pollution.

It has put the water supply on which the whole industry relies on the verge of collapse. The book charts the dire impact of exponential rise of 'bottlemania' on water stocks. Many of the aqueducts that provide so-called pristine water are now reaching a crisis point. Water companies are squeezing the last drops from the underground streams they have relied on for so long. Communities are being devastated by the depletion of their natural resources. The environmental effects of the water industry are beginning to be felt from the family home to the town hall.

In 2006, Mayors from San Francisco to New York were given a comprehensive summary of the environmental effects of bottled water. They were told that the phenomenon was a waste of taxpayer's money and a threat to the environment. Enraged, their councils cancelled their cities bottled water contracts. Celebrities got on board. Even the cause of the mess, Madonna, started backing an array of water charities selling domestic tap and African water supplies. But by then the demand for bottled water was on a roll. Water companies had become too entrenched and their pockets too deep to let go of their lucrative market.

It's a story that has played out here in New Zealand. We started to drink bottled water in the late 1970s. It was slow to catch on, as it was in America. But we soon fell for the marketing campaigns of water manufacturers. Now our advertising is besieged by water brands and our landscape is littered with the thousands of plastic bottles discarded each week.

I regret to have been a part of that story. I've seen first hand how it ends. In my advertising days I worked for Lemon and Paeroa. Back then the L&P soft drink was bottled in the same Waiwera plant as New Zealand's first mineral water. That business lasted 100 years. Then the water ran out. It's a scenario we are facing all around New Zealand. Our water supplies are dropping and sourcing water is now becoming a problem. This summer we may again face drought.

Despite that, gyms still receive sponsorship dollars to urge sweating weight loss fanatics to drink more bottled water. They convince people against all medical advice that they need to drink at least a bottle worth day to be healthy. Lunchboxes, hand bags and packs are all laden down with bottled water. No-one seems to go out for even a small walk without a plastic bottle, even though their route is probably dotted with excellent clean streams.



The Waitemata Harbour Clean-Up Trust collects thousands of those bottles every week on its boat, The Phil Warren. They are floating in the rocks of Rangitoto Island and the breakwaters of the harbour. That's why Hayden and I are launching these aluminium bottles. It's about creating a future where plastic isn't being hauled from our harbours by the tonne – where water is managed sustainably, water infrastructure is prioritised and people think about what they are drinking.

We're optimistic that with the support of our retailers we can start turning the tide in favour of a reusable alternative to plastic bottles. It's something we're already seeing happening Bags Not campaign. Our art bags are still selling well at the Warehouse. They are making a noticeable difference in our corner of the world. We just want to make that same difference. After all, we treat our water to such a high standard, that it's time we started drinking it.

Clearly we're up against it. Just look at the competition. Water companies have multi-billion dollar empires built around massive global marketing campaigns. To them, water is a commodity.

To us, it is a resource to be respected. To be administered wisely. To preserve for our grandchildren. Clean water and a sustainable environment goes to the heart of who we are in New Zealand. It's part of our identity. And that's something people can believe in more than corporate slogans and marketing campaigns.

Gongs for our greats

Some of our great Westies have been honoured in the latest round of Queen's Birthday Honours.

Graeme Douglas was made a Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit. It is a fitting honour for a man who is not just one of our most successful businessmen but a legendary community leader.

Mr Douglas started his working life in charge of a small pharmacy in Te Atatu. His breakthrough in business came when the 'Kofsin' cough syrup he invented became widely popular in 1967. That gave Mr Douglas all the momentum he needed to launch the phenomenally successful Douglas Pharmaceuticals. After more than 40 years, the company is worth about \$100 million and employs more than 450 staff.

I have enjoyed a long friendship with Mr Douglas since becoming Mayor. His company has helped Waitakere develop a growing economy and a sustainable environment. But his generosity has stretched beyond the business world. It was a great moment when I secured his agreement to sponsor Douglas Track and Field. That facility has been a huge boost to many Waitakere sports men and women. Mr Douglas is also a supporter of many charitable causes including West Auckland Hospice, the Heart Foundation, Medical Air Abroad and the Liggins Institute.

It is a great pleasure to see this honour given to someone so deserving. Graeme Douglas has been a great friend for 18 years. He is not only absolutely committed to the West, but simply a great New Zealander.

Denis Willmott Hansen was awarded the Queen's Service Medal for services to Maori and the community. He is member of Te Taumata Runanga, a dedicated servant to Hoani Waititi Marae and a long time friend of Waitakere.



John Hugh Williams was made an Additional Knight Companion of the New Zealand Order of Merit for his long history of service as a judge. He was made a Queen's Counsel in 1988, a High Court Justice in 1997 and is sitting President of the New Zealand Electoral Commission.

Beverley Anne Revell was given the Queen's Service Medal for services to the community. She is a former electorate secretary of Brian Neeson and John Key and a long standing supporter of Waitakere Hospice. It is a fitting honour for a dear friend of the City.

My congratulations and thanks to those who have received a commendation. It is a much deserved recognition of the contribution you have made to Waitakere and New Zealand.

A tribute to Lucy Cranwell

The life and legacy of one of the legendary women of the West is being celebrated at Auckland Museum in a new exhibition '*Lucy Cranwell: Walk on the Wild Side*'. Cranwell was one of New Zealand's first female scientists and a Henderson resident. She is renowned the world over as a pioneering botanist who combined formidable intellect with incredible passion for plants and the environment.

Cranwell was born in Henderson in 1907 and graduated from Auckland University with a Master of Arts in Botany in 1929. Just weeks later, she was offered the job as curator of botany at Auckland Museum. There she inspired a generation of children with her love of botany and the bush, organising native flower shows, writing newspaper articles and leading field trips to remote and wild locations. Her enthusiasm was revered by her male colleagues as she slogged through forests, slept on frost-covered hills and extracted ancient pollen from marshlands.

That work ethic led her to groundbreaking discoveries about New Zealand plants. Cranwell received acclaim for reconstructing the ancient botanical landscapes of the Southern Hemisphere. She found great joy in discovering, collecting and studying rare botanical specimens, once carrying 61 kilograms of the rare "vegetable sheep" daisy down the windy slopes of Canterbury's Mt Torlesse in 1931. In all, she contributed about 4000 plant species to the museum's herbarium.

Perhaps her greatest contribution to New Zealand's botanical landscape came when she learned fossil pollen analysis from Professor Lennart von Post of Stockholm in 1935. Cranwell returned to New Zealand with a new passion for the discipline. Her pursuit of the practice opened up a whole new field of botany for our scientists.

When World War 2 broke out, Cranwell wrote the book '*Food is Where You Find It: A Guide to Emergency Foods of the Western Pacific*' for New Zealand's military personnel. It detailed, with illustrations, foods that downed pilots could eat.

Marrying an American serviceman moved Cranwell's career to the United States of America. There she worked at Harvard University before becoming research associate in palynology at the University of Arizona. Her work there won international acclaim.

Through it all she retained her connection to the West. The Cranwell House is now occupied by Man Alive and several fruit trees planted by her family more than 100 years ago are still bearing fruit in Henderson. She deserves to be honoured as a legend of the West and one of the great minds of Auckland.



Goodbye Betty

Piha has lost a greatly loved matriarch with the death of Betty Hanson.

Betty was a local legend and one of the original community leaders of Waitakere. She devoted much of her life to serving the public as a long-time member and chairman of the Waitakere Community Board and a leader in the Piha Residents and Ratepayers Committee. If a road needed upgrading, a tank needed fixing or a selfless act needed to be recognised, Betty was often there advocating for action.

Her service was borne out of a passion for people. It started with her family. Betty married Bill Hanson in 1940. They had seven children together - John, Peter, Robert, David, Andrew, Mark and Elizabeth. That close group was broken when Betty lost John in 2002 and four years later in 2006, her beloved companion Bill.

Through it all she continued to tirelessly serve and support Piha. Betty never let troubles or crisis diminish her commitment to her community, friends and family. Her selfless devotion made her loved and respected by all in the town. They will miss her, as will I.

Those of us who knew Betty remember a quiet leader - a lady in the true sense of the word. She was dignified, calm, yet powerful, able to command a room without raising her voice or her temper. I saw her for the last time as she watched the ANZAC Day parade marching towards Lion Rock. By then she was frail, but as impressive and commanding a presence as ever – still holding court in Piha.

Now Betty has gone to join John and Bill. She leaves behind 15 grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Waitakere will remember her for a long legacy of empathetic and tireless service. It has left a mark on so many of us in the West.

A memorial service to celebrate her remarkable life will be held at St Mary's in Parnell on August 6.

Piha Café gets an A

I'm pleased to see Piha Café has been issued an A Grade in its latest Food Hygiene Certificate.

Its great to see the cafe have moved quickly to regain its reputation for excellent standards. I've enjoyed having great coffee and delicious food available so close to our most iconic West Coast beach.

Waitakere at the World Cup

Many of you would have been cheering wildly at the TV screen at 2am on a Tuesday morning as Shane Smeltz put the All Whites 1-0 up on Italy in the Football World Cup. It was the ultimate moment in a story that began 20 years ago in the West.

Shane got his start in football as a member of the Oratia Smurfs. He excelled for the young team, showing the first signs of a remarkable instinct for finding the back of the net. It was there that the first seeds were sown of a football talent that would take him all the way to the biggest stage in world sport.

Now we have seen that talent realised in spectacular fashion. Well done Shane for representing Waitakere at the Football World Cup. Congratulations to you to every other All White on doing New Zealand proud.



Thanks Hui

For the last 18 years our offices have been cleaned by a remarkable man. Hui Tolitule puts up our flags every morning then faithfully clean up the offices, floors, toilets, windows and foyers on the lower floors of the Civic Centre. What a great job he does. I don't know if he ever sleeps. It's not often you find someone as dedicated, hard working and humble.

A deep respect for Waitakere and its principles motivate him to keep serving. As we come to the end of this Council, he has expressed his appreciation for the work we have done in the West in a beautiful poem. I have attached it below:

Where it all began

Waitakere City Council
Is a multi structural back bone
Of Waitakere City
A beautiful city renowned for its breath taking natural landscape
From the luxurious untouched Waitakere Ranges
To the roaring, unforgiving waves of Piha
It is the envy of those who come from afar to see
Definitely,
Mother Nature's creativity at its best

Waitakere City Council's wing span of services features:
Creating a sustainable, healthy, eco-friendly environment
Rattling used cans, plastic and paper
Clattering glass and flattened cardboards
Collected, recycled and reused, just as new
Beneficial tiger worms sucking food scraps
Relieving landless landfill tip at ease
Showing the rest
What the West can do
Eco's the word
The name of the game

Categorise elected members
Council staff and community at large
Formulating a long term council
And community plan
Toward's Waitakere's unforeseen future
A well documented layout for our guidance

Parks, event centres, maintenance
And construction
Supporting local businesses
Creating jobs in our own backyard
Keeping Westies at bay
Withholding the spirit of precious family time
And the list sails on and on

Initial former mayor
Council Assid Corban, OBE, JP
And the current sitting mayor
Bob Harvey, QSO, JP
Both at the helm



Different era
Different stage
Leading by example
Steering the boat
And flying the flag of Waitakere City
Locally and internationally
In calm and rough seas
Splendid and gusty wind
Frigid and scorching heat
Resisting such obstacles for a job well done

Former and current
Councillors and community board members
Council staff at various ranks
A highly dedicated crew
Performing and sailing well constructed boats
Despite the unpredictable el nino weather patterns

Waitakere salute you all
For being proud stanching sailors
Since the launching to its current existing berth
You have left a trail of numerous feat
Keeping Waitakere on course
And will be remembered for a generation to come
“Long live the memories of Waitakere City Council”

PS: Could the last sailors on board
Please turn out the lights

Kia Monuina

Hui Tolitule
1st May, 2010