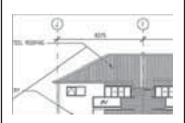
# St Albans Neighbourhood St Albans Neighbourhood

March 2008

## **Highlights**



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## **Public Meeting of the Caly Development**

On 21st Feb, the St Albans Community Centre facilitated a meeting between concerned citizens and representatives of the City Council, to help residents understand the Resource Consent process involved in the recent decision to grant a consent to the Caledonian Rd apartment complex, and to share ideas about how the community can respond to the decision. The meeting was chaired by Bill Demeter, Co-Chair of the St Albans Community Centre, and speakers included: Ann Crawford, a Holly Rd resident who organised the meeting; Peter Mitchell, General Manager Regulation and Democracy Services; John Gibson, Planning Administration Manager; and Hugh Nicolson, Principal Advisor Urban Design. No representative was present from developers Legacy Corporation. The occasion was well-attended by about fifty people, representing a cross section of the community...including the architect Peter Beaven; Labour MP Tim Barnett; Councillor Ngaire Button; Community Board members Pauline Cotter and Aaron Keown; Christchurch North ECan Councillor Jane Demeter and many others who have a stake in our community. After some background information had been given and the process explained—the meeting

was thrown open to questions from the floor, resulting in a lively but well-contained and respectful discussion, during which everyone was made to realise that there was nothing they could have done to change the outcome of the process, which was carried out within the law and the regulations governing L3 zoning, and which specifically do not allow the Council to make judgements about design and desirability. In short, neither the Council nor the developer can be held responsible for this unsightly project. However, the meeting was not all negative. The Community Centre made a commitment to continue to try to engage with the developers—who did come to Christchurch and visit the site with St Albans Residents' Association members—and who have not shut the door on the possibility of further discussions. The intention is to persuade them to consider further amendments to the plan to make it less of an eyesore. Once we have received suggestions, the developers will be asked to attend a discussion meeting. Secondly, there was evidently a strong determination to use the lessons learned from this unfortunate experience to be better equipped and more pro-active in trying to change city planning to better reflect the wants and desires of residents.

Watch this space!

Max Feutz



Three council planners responding to the Public under the expert facilitation of Bill Demeter.



Kia ora koutou katoa

What a wonderful summer we have been enjoying here in

Christchurch...including today's most welcome downpour. My garden was beginning to gasp. The challenge for us garden lovers is to get accustomed to developing our outdoor havens with appropriate plants that will tolerate Canterbury's dry weather conditions. Just as I consider dairy farming an unsustainable use of the dry Canterbury Plains, I also consider garden plantings in Christchurch that require daily watering to be short-sighted. Like it or not we need to learn to adapt to our ever-changing environment. After a rejuvenating four week break away from work over the festive season, I am now back with renewed energy.

Life at SARA is getting busy again, and I am delighted to announce the formal launch of our new logo. This fresh and friendly new design was created by Siau-Jiun Lim after much consultation with our working party. We are very pleased with the result which updates our excellent earlier version created by students of a previous SARA chair, Tony Guilliland. Jiun is a design student from China who volunteered her creative skills and time to this project. We are very impressed with her work

for us and the community spirit she has shown. The new logo includes a Maori translation of the St Albans Com-

munity Centre "Te Pokapū Hapori o Hato Ōpani" - and this is a gift from Ara Tai Rakena and Tosh Ruwhiu who both have local connections. So look out for our friendly new red symbol.

**Community Centre Information** 

We have also been busy at the Community Centre meeting with our new Community Board members and Council liaison staff as we set about forging a positive collaborative working relationship.

Community distress has resulted in a public meeting being scheduled next week to discuss the changed large-scale development at the Caly site on Caledonian Road. The ease with which this plan was reshaped and expanded is

the major cause of local residents' concern. SARA will participate in attempts to address such Resource Management Act (RMA) concerns.

On a different note, we have a City Councillor who has such serious frustration over increasing citywide graffiti that he has publically expressed a very concerning opinion about the death of a grafittist in Auckland. SARA however, got behind one more positive solution over summer. The Packe Street Park volunteers ran a wonderful, creative holiday programme for young people that resulted in enthusiastic enjoyment for all...and the unintended bonus of nil graffiti or vandalism in the park during that period. This example affirms my belief that engaging with, and valuing all people—young or old—is the way to cut down on anti-social behaviour. It will not solve all our problems, but it will certainly increase our sense of connection, caring and community. Research would show that less vandalism occurs when people feel some ownership/connection to the property. In conclusion, I reflect on our own little street community's excitement at the recent birth of a new baby (welcome Millie) and the

wonderful display of a "village ready to raise a child". Take care of each other!



Raggy

Maggie Tai Rakena, Co-Chair of the St Albans Residents' Association

## Community Resource Centre

1047 Colombo Street. Phone 379 6305 or 374 2465 Email: <u>office@stalbans.gen.nz</u> Office Hours 10 am – 3 pm Monday to Friday

Offers to the community:

- The Press available in lounge area
- · Fax facility
- Photopcopying @ 10 cents per A4
- Hall Hire Conditions apply \$10 per hour non-profit community rate \$15 per hour Commercial rate \$30 per hour for private functions

## What's happening at the St Albans Community Centre

Leisure group: Designed for residents 55 years plus to participate in a range of arts, cultural and recreation activities during the daytime. Low cost and great value.

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Phone Alison at the Centre – 379 6305

#### St Albans News March 2008 - Page 3

### Letters to the Editor

Greetings. I found the item concerning Hardie and Thomson, in the current issue, quite interesting but I'm afraid that I must take issue with you over the date indicated for the image of the Sherborne St./Edgeware Rd. intersection.

No way could it be 1935.

There is, what appears to be, a Morris Minor parked on the side of the road. To the best of my knowledge, they came out in, about, 1948. That date may be applicable to England and the release date, in New Zealand, could have been some time later than that, as well.

The tram service, on the tracks shown, closed on 26.07.1953 (New Zealand Railway and Tramway Atlas, Quail Map Co., Revised Edition, 1966). While there is no tram shown in the illustration, and therefore no way of telling if the services were still running at the time of the taking of the photograph, the fact that the overhead cabling is apparently, still in a reasonably good condition, and is still, in fact, extant, would tend to suggest that, if the trams had been removed by that date, it would have been within the reasonably recent past.

Then, as now, copper was too valuable, as a scrap metal, to leave "laying around".

Incidentally, in a recent issue of STANN, the old block of shops at the Westminster/Cranford Sts. intersection were discussed, with the suggestion that, perhaps, the structure ought to have a name. Why not "The Terminus" since that's where the end-of-the-line, for the trams, in fact, was. Thanks, and regards,

Ron Hann

There's nothing wrong with my memory - it's the recall that's the problem.

#### **Events Calendar**

26 Feb 7.30pm NZ-Japan Society meeting at

St Albans community Centre (355 9903)

28 Feb 6.30pm SARA Open Day (374 2465)

2 Mar 10am Garden Tour,

Friends of Edgeware (355 6512)

9 Mar 11am Mairehau Community Day,

Glenmoor Primary School

16 Mar 12 noon Ratana Chrch Service,

Rehua Marae (355 5606)

18 Mar 7.30pm St Albans Residents Association

(3742465)

25 Mar, 7.30pm NZ-Japan Society meeting at St Albans community Centre (355 9903)

27 Mar 6pm SARA Open Day (374 2465)

STANN relies on your contributions. Please send us your articles, letters and notices. The deadline for the April issue is March 15th. It's nice to be living back in St Albans after a few decades away, and to see St Albans News in the mailbox.

I think the last photo in the Hardie and Thomson insert may need redating. I'm guessing circa 1950, not 1935.

The Sherborne St sign and the Morris Minor lookalike give it away. My memory goes back to the late 50s when the corner shop was Winder's 4 Square. I think I remember the Europa sign. The tram lines were gone.

Memories of Edgeware!!

Mat time and warm milk at Sunbeam. Matinees at the Century. Special treat of double-scoop ice cream for fourpence at Judge's fruit shop. Barbered by chainsmoking Jack Weekes for 2s 3d. New shoes every few weeks for my ballooning feet at Stafford's. As I said, nice to be back.

Dave Palmer

Thank you to all the keen observers who noted the error in the caption of the photograph of the Sherbourne/Edgeware corner. The correct year of course would be 1953! [Ed.]

#### St Albans News, March 2008 Vol.15, Number 2, Issue No. 158

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Send your contributions and adverts to:

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email: news@stalbans.gen.nz,

phone: 374 2465 or 379 6305, fax: 374 2467

website: http://www.stalbans.gen.nz

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With regular contributions from:

Maxine Feutz, Hilaire Campbell, Bill Demeter, Maggy

Tai Rakena, Dafyd and others.

The opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect those of the St Albans Residents' Association.

# Shaping Our Own Communities - the Caledonian Road Apartment Project

It is no longer news to most St Albans residents that a large project to build 98 apartments on the old Caledonian Hotel site has been granted Resource Consent, and the Community Centre has been fielding calls from concerned and confused residents who are looking for ways to respond.

So, what's the problem? What are we complaining about? Firstly, and most importantly, our distress as a community is about the lack of opportunity to be involved in the decision-making process. This means that we have no forum in which to discuss our practical and aesthetic concerns about the project. The biggest concern is the sheer scale of the development, and the impact it will have on the neighbours' lifestyles. Once fully-occupied, there will be a sudden large increase in population (of at least 240 persons) and in traffic (around 760 estimated vehicle movements per day.)

With four large apartment blocks, it in no way fits with the neighbouring properties in terms of height, bulk and appearance. It appears that no consideration has been given to providing a pleasing environment for the occupants, only to create the building in the cheapest way possible. No less important is the bad precedent it will set for other apartment blocks in the area. We, as residents, are strongly opposed to any development which will have the effect of degrading - rather than enhancing - our living environment.

Of course, with the site having been vacant for many years, its neighbours understood that it would be sold off, and that some sort of development would eventually take place and much discussion had already taken place about what might be an appropriate project to meet the needs of a developer but also fit in with the character of the neighbourhood. A gated community was mooted and rejected by the community, and eventually a proposal for a 56 apartment complex was put to the Council and received consent on 3 Feb 2006. So far, so good. The affected residents thought the plan was reasonably tasteful and would not impact too greatly on their lifestyle. Then an amended plan was submitted on 27 Nov 2006, seeking permission for 59 units and a cafe/restaurant. This would have required Limited Notification, and perhaps this is why it was subsequently withdrawn by the applicants, although in fact this project too would have received the support of the community.

Fast forward to Jan-Feb this year, and suddenly the residents found out that a new, and entirely different project for 98 apartments had been brought before the Council, and was about to be given consent without any Public Notification. There was a feeling of disbelief. How could a plan that was almost double the density of the original, and which would significantly alter the character of the neighbourhood forever, not need to be a Fully Notified Consent...or at the very least,

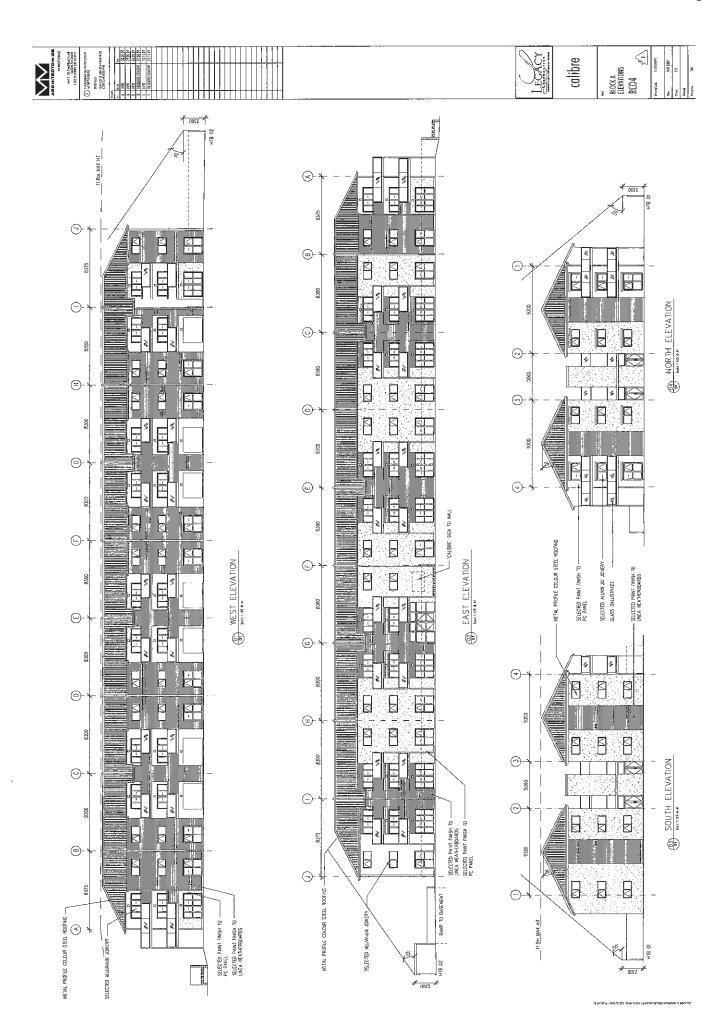
a Limited Notification? The site is located in a Living 3 zone and therein lies the biggest problem. This project is classed as a 'restricted discretionary activity' under the Resource Management Act (RMA), which in layman's terms means that the town planners can only consider whether the project complies with the land use rules set out for L3 zoning, and cannot use value judgments about the appearance of the building, its suitability for the environment, or its social impact on the community. They can only check that the land use requirements have been met, and if so, consent is granted without the need for wider consultation.

In this case, there were some aspects of the planned development that did not comply with the City Plan. When this happens, the developer can present an argument, backed up by relevant reports, that the non-compliance is 'minor' or is mitigated in some way, and the Council town planner responsible for the application can still give it the go-ahead. The Caledonian Rd project fails to meet ten of the standards required. To give a few examples: sixteen of the units won't receive the stipulated hours of sunshine during the winter, but the developers have placed a communal garden in the centre of the complex, and also state that the units will be marketed to young urban professionals who will be at work, and therefore will not require any sunshine. Many don't have the required service area in which to hang washing, store bicycles and so on, but the developers agreed to put dryers in those apartments, so problem solved. There are fewer parking spaces than required, but since the Caledonian Rd frontage is very long and under-utilised at present, visitors' cars can park there.

In all ten cases of non-compliance, the town planner in his report stated that "the effect of the non-compliance is considered to be no more than minor," so, in other words, he was able to use his discretion in favour of the developer. Given that there is a "significant level of public interest" in the outcome of this hearing, as acknowledged in the report, the community is left wondering 'why couldn't this discretion have been used in favour of the public?' Had the Council decided to be stricter over compliance, a more positive outcome would have resulted.

It would appear that savvy developers can all too readily get an easy ride from Council - while the public wants to be involved, and actively seeks to have a say in the way change takes place in our community, but finds itself effectively shut out of the planning process, because the law is an ass and common sense doesn't seem to prevail at city hall. I guess that there is a huge difference in perspective. The developer, by definition, wants to develop. He swoops in, makes his money and leaves. The community on the other hand, has a vested interest in preserving and enhancing our social fabric. Of course we feel alarmed when we can see a future slum being built in our patch.

**St Albans News** 



## **Short-term Economics**

A wise person once said there are three kinds of people. Those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who say, 'What the Hell happened?'

We Kiwis reside in the last category when it comes to demanding excellence and quality in many aspects of design. For example, let's talk about the design of our homes and businesses. Survey after survey clearly indicates we are price-driven and more importantly, price-driven only at the time of purchase. Where else in the world does the word "cheap" have a positive connotation?

I recently talked to the owner of a lawn mower store. He carried an expensive line of lawn mowers which offered a sixty month warranty and free annual blade sharpening and tune-up that included a free oil change, air filter and blade balancing. He stopped carrying this product line even though this mower proved to be the best value and provided the lowest overall cost at the end of sixty months. People would not buy it because it was "so expensive". Yes, the initial cost was more expensive, but after sixty months it was less expensive. In so many areas of our lives we seem unable to get past the current price of an item to look at the longer term value it offers.

How's this for a crazy idea? What if home designers and builders developed a standard package of sustainable and viable features...including solar panels for water heating; rain water capture; double glazing of windows; proximity switches that turn out lights after you leave a room; and water heaters at point of use etc? These features would be standard in design packages and the consumer could still opt out if they didn't want them. For example, the consumer who didn't want double glazed windows would pay say \$1500 more for single pane windows. If all the viable features were declined, perhaps the purchaser would pay \$7500 more.

Consider the economies of scale. The price of double glazed windows might fall by 40% due to increased production and competition. The price of solar panels could easily fall by 60%. There are other economic considerations. The reduction of electricity could delay or even stop the need for another \$300 million hydro scheme. Yes, we know who pays for the hydro schemes—the rate payer.

I've been involved in a citizens group called WaterWisdom that was created to provide information about water issues. We speak to many groups on a monthly basis and virtually all questions we are asked relate to cost. "How much will this cost me? What will happen to my rates? Why doesn't the Government pay for it?"

We have, I'm sad to say, finally arrived at accepting Economic Totalitarism. That means all decisions at any level of government or by individuals always starts with the question of "Is it good for the economy?" Or, "How much will it cost me?"

What if we increase our production of lamb products by 15% even though the life expectancy of people would drop by three years? I have no doubt we would jump at the opportunity to increase lamb production. Who gives a damn about the people or their health?

We have surrendered to the notion that economic gain means more than the quality or value of life. This is Economic Totalitarism at its best. I personally would pay 20% more for lamb if I knew my fellow citizens might live heathier lives and might be around for another year or two.

I think we have totally lost the plot, what do you think? Send me an email at:

bill@waterwisdom.org.nz Bill Demeter

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### **Transition Communities**

We have arrived at a point where it is clear that we have ahead of us two somewhat daunting obstacles to overcome. One is commonly referred to as 'Peak Oil'; the other 'Climate Change'. Of the two, Peak Oil is probably the most predictable in terms of effects and timing. But while Climate Change is with us now, and gathering momentum, exactly how this will evolve, and over what periods of time, are uncertain.

There is also a third set of problems which are less frequently referred to. These involve in particular the permanent loss of biodiversity, and the extraction of renewable resources at rates

which exceed their ability to renew themselves. This applies, for example, to rainforests; land suitable for agriculture; water; and food from the oceans. In effect, all of these can be regarded, along with oil and gas, as non-renewable resources, because sooner or later they will all be exhausted.

As with any problem we can respond in various ways. There is fatalism—something around the corner, like

science or technology, will come to our rescue. There is a denial that there is a problem. And there is positive action--let's get stuck in and deal with it.

Sustainable Otautahi Christchurch (SOC) takes the latter view, and goes further. We believe that if we set about responding in the right ways, not only can society successfully address the effects of this changing world, but it can be done in ways that enrich us and add greatly to our enjoyment of life. A general term for this response is 'transition'—moving from where we are now to where we wish to be in the future.

The transition movement is arising spontaneously all around the world, and while it assumes many forms, a common aim is to make the transition from fossil fuel dependency to a state of energy independence. This leads to local towns and cities becoming increasingly self-reliant, self-sufficient, and socially equitable.



SOC has established a group called 'Transition Communities' which aims to stimulate the formation of localised, participatory, 'transition' initiatives within and around Christchurch. We will do this by offering (amongst many other things) information, practical experience, and connections with others who are heading down the same path, both here in New Zealand and overseas.

SOC is planning to hold a series of topical DVD screenings, public presentations and workshops, and a bus tour of existing initiatives will take place on March 15th. On 10 April, two inter-

national speakers, Miguel Hirota (Japan) an Don Northcott (South Africa) will visit Christchurch and talk about their experiences with complementary community currencies and local economics initiatives. In addition the SOC Transition Communities team would welcome the opportunity to meet with individuals and groups within and around Christchurch to discuss our purpose and objectives.

For more information contact the SOC secretary at: dave.evans@

alliedtelesis.co.nz or view the SOC website at: http://www.sustainablechristchurch.org.nz and at: http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/

What about the future of St Albans? Anyone who is interested n exploring a 'transition' for St Albans and form a local group, please get in touch with Christoph Hensch at the Community Centre (374 2465) or email: 'christoph@stalbans.gen.nz

Roger Buck

#### **Quote of the Month**

"It is by the goodness of God that in our country we have those three unspeakably precious things: Freedom of speech, freedom of conscience and the prudence never to practice either them"

Mark Twain







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## **Lovely Locals**

Not only buildings have fine proportions



This is Gerald O'Flaherty, who has kindly agreed to pose for St Albans News.

Gerald is a respectable older gentleman who lives in a small well kept flat in Geraldine Street. You can see him any day after dawn, tacking up and down the street on two sticks which have nice inlay work on the handles. He is usually visiting or going to the bus stop, which he says is no fun after the rain because the sodden seat soaks his trousers.

But Gerald comes from strong stock. Hard working parents, a big family. One of his brothers, Paddy, whose photo is on the sideboard, was a miner on the West Coast for many years.

Gerald is the glue which holds his street together.

He trims hedges for Sally, an air hostess with a broken ankle.

He mows lawns and feeds cats for Joy and Bob and a thousand others; he wrestles old Vera's newspaper from the bushes.

He is sorry to see Eileen go. She was two blocks down, and has just died aged 96 or so. "She was a great baker," says Gerald. "Her date loaf was really something." So are you Gerald. Thanks from us all.

P.S. A message for Andrew Couper (famous for his letters to St Albans News). "When you see Gerald's picture please don't disappoint him. He is expecting a real 'ragging.""

Hilaire Campbell





## The Only Way To Go



Is There Anything You Need a Car for, if you own a Bicycle and a Bicycle Trailer? Very little, according to Steven Muir, long time inner Christchurch city resident, and he would like to see more people give cycling a try and has been working for some years on various projects to promote the use of cycles within Christchurch. Steven moved to his current house eleven years ago and shares it with his wife Carolyn and four young children.

They enjoy inner city living because of the great resources close at hand for the whole family such as: the library; place of work; swimming pools; and close proximity to the Avon River where Steven enjoys the occasional paddle in his kayak. (And yes, he uses his bike with a specially designed trailer to tow his kayak to the river or out to the beach!)

After experimenting with many bike trailer designs, he now manufactures a low cost kitset bike trailer which he sells (phone Steven on: 365-8238, or look on: http://www.cyclingchurch.

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#### **St Albans Veterinary Practice**

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Dr. Geoff Mehrtens B.V.Sc

org.nz for details). He has several trailers that he hires out for a month for free to encourage people to try them out, and has run several workshops to help people build their own trailers, including one in 2006 at Te Whare Roimata, and one in 2007 in conjunction with the city's 'Season of Cycling' festival.

He was the organiser of the Supermarket Challenge held in 2006 and 2007, where three pairs of bikes and cars (each with two children on board) competed to collect a week's worth of groceries from various supermarkets around the city. The bikes had child seats and one of Steven's trailers attached for carrying the groceries.

The verdict: in almost all ways the bikes did better than the cars. Traffic congestion on Riccarton and Papanui Roads increased the car's journey by half an hour compared to the bikes. The only time a bike came second was when a toilet stop was required for one of the children on a bike, which delayed their return to the finish line, finishing a couple of minutes behind the car. The bike riders had a further environmental advantage over the cars in that they were able to pack their groceries directly into their trailer bins thus no need for plastic bags, and they all enjoyed the journey more.

The next supermarket challenge is due in 2009, but there are a number of local cycling events throughout February, March and April in Christchurch—details of which can be found on the following websites: http://www.seasonofcycling.co.nz and: http://www.bikewise.co.nz



## **A Community Needs a Voice**

The sense of community in St Albans is special. Everywhere I go, people are giving their time and energy to good causes. Like the couple I met at a farewell function at Caledonian Hall who have been teaching kids Scottish dancing for more than fifty years. Or the members of the small Bengali community who recently used the St Albans Community Centre for a saint's festival. Several are highly IT literate. They later came to see me, asking what they could do to help in our community. I suggested recycling older computers into low income homes and assisting with SeniorNet, which is helping those over fifty-five get on the Internet. Last week I attended the St Albans Forum, a regular gathering of those involved in social work. Whether in paid work or volunteering, these people go the extra mile in helping keep our community's social fabric together. As it happens, this was the day our Prime Minister Helen Clark announced nearly a half billion dollar expansion of funding to the voluntary sector. Community-based organisations make a vital contribution to our society, helping vulnerable families, children, and young people get on top of their problems and get ahead in life. I applaud the extra support going to organisations like Women's Refuge, Barnardos and the Salvation Army, especially as it will be multi-year funding, reducing the bureaucratic requirements on smaller organisations. There is never enough funding to support those doing such good work.

That being so, I think it is appalling that the Eureka Trust, which is funded from pub and club pokies, is funding the horse racing industry so much and our schools so little. Last year, Eureka Trust did distribute nearly \$6m but the biggest beneficiaries were racing and trotting clubs, to the tune of up to \$70,000 each. Meanwhile, two schools I have visited in the electorate in the last week and a community organisation, have been declined a few hundred dollars funding for such things as a grant towards an adventure playground. Another pub charity CEO has observed that Eureka Trust is not breaking the rules. Clearly then, the rules need changing. I will take that up as your MP.

Another issue with relevance to St Albans is the drastic changes to the redevelopment of the former Caledonian Hotel site into a retirement complex. Nearby residents in Holly



Road supported a proposal to build a 52 unit development, complete with café and underground car park. This month, out of nowhere, they have been presented with a 98 unit development of distinctly different character, with no café as initially proposed.

Again, this just may be legal, but allowing a near redoubling of the number of units without reference back to the community is, in my view, a breach of natural justice. You can see parallel issues here with the Hawkesbury Avenue retirement village encroachment on a Special Amenity area. Similarly, we have too little chance as a community for real input into liquor licensing decisions by a community. It seems to me that a community, especially one with such spirit as St Albans, deserves real input into major developments in its neighbourhood. Otherwise our community can lose the very things that hold it together.

Brendon Burns Labour candidate Christchurch Central 377 2340 0274 305501 bb@brendonburns.co.nz





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Phantom Pain Relief The pains in an amputated leg were recently substantially reduced by a new, complementary health, energy healing technique which, within two months after the treatment, had halved the drug dosage required. We would like to see if it can help other people as well. If you are an interested amputee, please contact Richard Harman at 352 6246, or r.harman@xnet.co.nz

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**English Tuition**: Foreign students of all levels. Individuals or groups. \$15/hr. Phone Peter 377 8197 or email petercmd@yahoo.com

**English Tutor**: Students, all levels. \$15 per hour. Phone John on 027 6865 232

Yoga: St Albans Community Resource Centre. Tuesdays 10-11.30am. Friendly, relaxing class, well suited to mature figures. Phone Pauline on 980 8760

Classifieds, 25 cents per word Call 379 6305

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## The St Albans Community Market

Every Saturday 9am - 2pm

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## Ray White\_

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### St Albans Neighbourhood News ten years ago March 1998

Greetings. Once again looking through the St Albans News of a decade ago, I am struck by the number of things happening in our little patch. The main one I suppose was the lead-up to the 125th anniversary of the founding of St Albans School. But that will be a subject for next month's article. Newton Dodge - then City Councillor was mentioned and how all 7 of the Dodge's went to the school and for 19 years there were up to four Dodge's attending the school at the same time. I went to school with Newton, and we played on our bikes at his home in Madras Street. The house no longer exists and the land is part of that wasteland owned by Orion. When is something going to be done about that eyesore? Going into retirement was Craig Allan, the shoe repairer. Craig supplied shoes to all of us kids and then repaired them as they wore down. He had been in the business on the Westminster Cranford corner for 50 years, and even today is remembered for his big smile, cheerful manner and the quality of his work. A gala day was held on Sunday 22 February 1998 at the Packe Street Park. It



was an exciting day with all sorts of events including a special tour of St Albans historic sites in a double-decker bus. Seventy people clambered on board for this trip which ended at St Albans School for lunch and continuation of the festivities. Many participants wished to have more gala days. Hmmmm... The Shirley Plaza opened for business on the corner of Warrington St and Hills Rd in February 1998. And on the back page of the March 1998 Newsletter was an article about the just-ended Neighbourhood Week. The article is worth a read, but to do that, you will have to go to the Community Centre in Colombo Street. Well, that's my lot for another month so, take good care of each other and I will be back here in the next St Albans News.









Craig Allan





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