

St Albans News

The Voice of our Neighbourhood

August 2008



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A vision of what could be!

The St Albans News is read by over 21 500 people



This has been a very busy time for the Centre and for St Albans. Highlights include:

Independent Task Force: In late June, the City Council voted to not extend time to raise funds for a new outdoor pool located on the site of the previous Edgeware Pool. No surprise here, as the City staff had signalled their intent to not grant the extension many months ago.

Ngaire Button, our ward City Councillor, presented an addendum that would set up an independent group comprised of community people to look at any and all options of how to use the site for the betterment of St. Albans: a member of the St. Albans Pavilion & Pool Group; the local school; the business community; the Community Board; the St. Albans Centre; and our local City Councillor shall be formed and then elect an independent chairperson not from any other of the just-mentioned groups.

Just how independent this group will be remains to be seen. City Staff seems determined to control the entire process from start to finish including an outcome consistent with their internal agenda. Time will tell (the report is due to the city councillors by January 2009.)

Let's hope the group works independently and takes their responsibility to heart as this is a great chance to get it right and recommend to the City instead of being told by the City.

Ngaire deserves a great deal of credit for her valuable recommendation.

Volunteers' Dinner: Our Centre is well known throughout Christchurch, and we provide a wide range of activities ranging from Tai Chi, Computer courses, under age six ballet, laughter, yoga, choir and a weekly

youth cafe. None of this is possible without volunteers and we are fortunate to have the very best. More than thirty folks take time on a regular basis to get things done and done with excellence. They get little recognition and no pay, but are the backbone of the Centre. Our dinner tries to humbly say – Thank You!

Orion Site In-Fill Housing: There has been a request for a plan change by local developers to begin the lengthy process of building high density apartments and local shops on this large (4.23 Hectares) site in the heart of St Albans.

The Centre will take a very active role by trying to convince the developers and the City to build something other than the same cheap and ugly boxes that have become the de facto standard of creativity and vision of the City planners and developers. Density is not the issue. The issue is trying to build something of quality that will stand the test of time. We want something that attracts and makes St Albans a likeable and living suburb.

Transition Initiative St Albans: Last week we hosted the first of many meetings we hope will prepare us for a life beyond oil and to become more resilient as a community. Margaret Jefferies from Project Lyttelton shared her experiences and in attendance were a local MP, two members of our Community Board and others who represent their communities. The participation was good and we will announce our next meeting in the St Albans News.

New printer: We were able to negotiate an attractive per copy contract with Fuji/Xerox that will enable us to print the St Albans News in-house. This will result in significant savings, print only what we actually need, and enable us to provide services to other non-profit groups. More importantly, the St. Albans News can remain an independent voice for the community and not use any monies needed to fund the Centre's other activities.

Bill Demeter - Co-Chair of the St Albans Residents' Association

2008 Heritage Awards

The Shirley/Papanui Community Board and Rehua Marae (Springfield Road) are pleased to offer the 2008 Heritage Awards scheme for your participation. The emphasis is within the boundaries of the Shirley/Papanui Ward, and is seen as a positive way to recognize efforts made in the preservation and conservation of our heritage. It is a recognition scheme, with a panel of expert judges to review all applications, and a ceremony at the Marae in early

October. Recipients are not tied into any City Plan requirements or heritage covenants. For further information, please contact Roger Cave, Community Engagement Advisor, Papanui Service Centre, Christchurch City Council, PO Box 5142, Papanui, Christchurch. Tel: 941 5407 or mobile 027 286 5309.



New at the Community Centre

Pool Site Taskforce

The St Albans Residents' Association was named as one of the participants of the Taskforce that was set up to make recommendations to the Council for the use of the former Edgeware pool site. Some members of the Taskforce met for a preliminary meeting on 17th July in an effort to get the process of the setting up of the group underway. It is the Residents' Association's role to represent the residents of St Albans, and to make sure your voice is heard. If you have any thoughts, ideas, recommendations or criticism regarding the future use of the site, please let us know. Contact Christoph on: 374 2465 or send an email to: christoph@stalbens.gen.nz

Transition Initiative St Albans

Build local resilience for a time beyond oil. The next meeting of the Transition Initiative St Albans is on Wednesday 6 August at 4pm at the Community Centre. Phone: 374 2465 for more information.

We need books for our Library

The St Albans Community Centre is looking for any type of book which is in good repair, to be used in our current library for our drop-in area. Phone: 379 6305 or drop them off at the Centre.

Residents' Association Meetings

Please note that Residents' Association meetings are now held every 4th Thursday of the month. All are welcome to attend. If you have an issue to present, please let us know in advance so that we can add into the agenda. Contact: 379 6305

Tenth Anniversary

On 18th October the Community Centre will celebrate it's tenth anniversary. Stay tuned!

St Albans Leisure Group

The group is now meeting fortnightly. New members are welcome, bring along your friend or neighbour. Phone Anne or Alison on: 379 6305 for more information.



St Albans
Community Centre

Te Pokapū Hapori o Hato Ōpani

Events Calendar

6 Aug, 4pm	Transition Initiative St Albans (374 2465)
17 Aug, 11am	Ratana Church Service, Rehua Marae (355 5606)
21 Aug, 6.30pm	Business Open House, Community Centre (374 2465)
26 Aug, 7.30pm	NZ-Japan Society (355 9903)
27 Aug, 2pm	St Albans Uniting Church Garden Club (389 6458)
28 Aug, 7pm	St Albans Residents' Association meeting (374 2465)
11 Sep, 7pm	SARA AGM 2008 (374 2465)

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Send your contributions and adverts to:
St Albans News, P.O. Box 21-102, Christchurch

Email: news@stalbens.gen.nz
Phone: 374 2465 or 379 6305, fax: 374 2467
Website: <http://www.stalbens.gen.nz>

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Maxine Feutz, Hilaire Campbell, Bill Demeter, Maggy Tai Rakena, Kirsty Bliss, Doug Craig, 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.

Clean And Green?

Dr Jon Hickford “Who is looking out for the city environment,” The Press, 3 July 2008, is right to question how well we are managing our city waterways. Many city people are acutely aware of the embarrassment of contaminated Avon and Heathcote river systems and the diminished flows in the Avon, particularly during summer months. The \$26 million committed by the Christchurch City Council to cleaning up these waterways over ten years is dwarfed, however, by the escalating cost of what is happening in the rural sector. Dr Hickford seems to ignore the basic fact that water is a common good. Each citizen has a stake in all of our waters. Each citizen therefore has a right to express concern at the diminution of his or her resource—especially when this is happening outside of any community agreed strategy and plan.

New Zealand, and by inference, Canterbury, has three broad options in how it chooses to deal with our water issues. Firstly, the current path: which is committing many tens of millions of dollars and considerable effort to research, consultation and education, while many of the practices that are causing the degradation of our waterways continue unabated. Or, secondly, the pragmatic path of accepting degraded water bodies as an inevitable consequence of economic growth—and keep the foot planted hard down on the growth accelerator—while focusing on preserving the health and vitality of a few waterways, and write off the rest.

The third option is to commit seriously to having universally clean water, set such commitment in a National Policy Statement, and have any intractable exceptions accepted under legislation as being permanently degraded. Then we may go about optimizing our economic returns on the basis that our clean, green image must be protected.

Without clear leadership from central government, this third option simply won't happen. We would save a huge amount of expenditure of time and money by focusing on the second option, which would destroy our right for any claim to be ‘clean and green’ as a country. But at least it would be a more honest reflection of the reality. As it stands now, we are in grave danger of getting the worst of both worlds behind a highly public façade of earnest endeavour—pouring a lot of money down the drain, to little avail.

In deciding which option to go for, we need to take account of the value of our country's clean green image, estimated at around \$1 billion per annum, and with the potential to be enhanced. On economic

grounds alone, this value seems worth having, even before you consider the value of natural supplies of potable water for drinking and industrial use and the emotional and spiritual value of clean, vibrant waterways to many Cantabrians of all ages and ethnicities.

Option three seems the only sensible way to go, yet our Government continues to tap dance around the issue, refusing to come out with any clear directive that would threaten to hold accountable an unruly rural sector hell-bent on growth, and knowing full well that its efforts to mitigate its impacts on the environment are not doing what is required.

When co-leader of the Green Party, Russel Norman, recently suggested in the House that a moratorium is placed on future expansion of dairy farming while the issues are resolved, acting Prime Minister, Michael Cullen, made it clear that no such restraint would be placed on the rural sector. After nearly nine years in office, this Government has presided over one of the greatest avoidable tragedies in our country's history. All that our current approach is doing is providing a false assurance to the public that the authorities are on the case, when the reality is quite different. In short, it appears to have all the credentials of a massive public relations exercise designed to enable development of intensive farming to proceed unimpeded.

No, we do not ‘hold farmers in contempt.’ We are very aware of the efforts and concerns of many farmers around this issue. But Charlie Pedersen has done little to advance the solution to this problem, and has repeatedly asserted his sector's right to continue to grow and pollute. The “better balance” which Dr Hickford suggests can only come from a genuinely collaborative approach where rural and environmental leaders are locked away with a clear set of objectives, until such time as a common answer has emerged that ensures commitment of all parties to the one-best-way that will provide the reality of sustainable production. We know what is needed, but seem incapable of facing up to it. A moratorium on further expansion of intensive farming and a clear directive from Government aimed at protecting our clean, green image would ensure a level playing field, and one set of goalposts that we can all work towards.

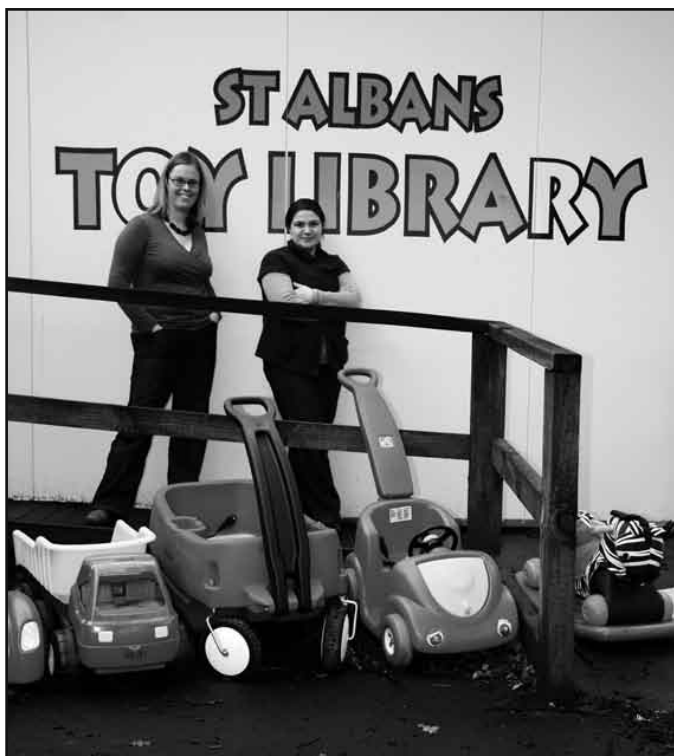
Murray Rodgers
Chairman

Water Rights Trust

www.waterrightstrust.org.nz

More And More Delving Into St Albans' 'Toy Box'

Tucked away in a quiet corner of St Albans School is one of this community's oldest non-profit organisations. A paradise for children and a savior for parents, the St Albans Toy Library is celebrating its twentieth birthday this year at a time when demand for its services is higher than ever,



Rachel Vavasour (left) and Jo Scott, co-presidents of the St Albans Toy Library, are scouting the community for a new home for more than 1,200 toys.

and when it's facing its biggest challenge yet.

There are more than two hundred toy libraries in New Zealand, based from Kerikeri to Invercargill reaching more than twenty-three thousand children. With more than a thousand toys and around one hundred and forty members, the St Albans Toy Library is one of the largest.

Browse through the library and you will find everything from DVDs and puzzles to traditional toys like dollhouses and weighty trucks and more modern contraptions which light up, sing and provide hours of confusion and entertainment for children of all ages. There is also a huge array of large outside toys—slides, pedal cars, water troughs and even roller coasters.

Rachel Vavasour, co-president of the committee which runs the library, says the large toys are some of the library's most popular items.

"Some of these retail in excess of \$400...our members get to borrow them for just a couple of dollars a fortnight. And, when the kids are sick of them, they bring them back and take something else home--we're about continual entertainment," says Rachel.

Demand for the Toy Library is currently high.

"We are amazed at how popular we have become in recent months—inquiries are coming in all the time. We have also just amended our constitution so we can have up to two hundred members to meet this demand," says Jo Scott, the library's other co-president.

"While we haven't surveyed our new members, they are telling us that the Toy Library is a good option for the budget conscious in these tight economic times. I also think there is a growing awareness of the need to be environmentally-friendly, and Toy Libraries are a great sustainable way to get playthings for your children."

Jo Scott says the Toy Library is about to go through one of its biggest challenges.

"The School has given us notice that it's expanding its bilingual unit and will need our site next year, so they will need our buildings. That's exciting for them and a great opportunity for us," says Jo.

"We are currently canvassing St Albans to look for another site, and are in talks with several community groups. We have options and time on our side so at this stage we are confident we will find another site, which will lend itself to an even better Toy Library. But if anyone has ideas or is willing to help, please get in touch—the more the merrier!" concludes Rachel.

The St Albans Toy Library is open from 9.30 a.m. till 11.30 a.m. on Wednesdays, and from 9.00 a.m. till 12.00 p.m. on Saturdays.

For more information or to contact the committee which runs the Toy Library contact: stalbanstoylibrary@yahoo.com

Jo Scott

WORD WHIZZ bindi glass

How many three or more letter words can you make out of these letters? There is at least one seven-letter word. No proper names, please.

E M F N A I R

40 words - good; 50 words - excellent; 60 and over - you are on fire!

Free Bokashi Composting Workshop

Do you know that organic matter buried into landfills creates huge problems including methane which is a greenhouse gas? We should of course prevent organic matter going to the landfill in the first place. One way to do this is by using a Bokashi bucket to process your food waste.

What is the Bokashi bucket and how does it work?

The Bokashi kit comes with a double bucket with a tight-fitting lid, a bag of Bokashi—a mixture of bran and sawdust inoculated by Effective Micro-organisms (EM)—and the instructions. The use of the bucket is very simple. Every time you put a two to three centimetre layer of food scraps into the bucket, sprinkle a handful of Bokashi on the top and press down. The Bokashi will actually ferment the food like pickles and the scraps will not decompose while in the bucket. Because of that, the content of the bucket does not smell and does not attract flies. Any type of food can go into the bucket including meat, fish and cooked food, but excluding liquids and paper. When the bucket is full it needs to sit for at least twenty-four hours to allow all the food to ferment. Once this is done, you simply dig a hole or a trench into your garden and in a few weeks' time you will have a nutrient-rich compost available to the plants. What could be simpler?

Ask people using the system and they will tell you amazing stories about the changes they have noticed since they started using Bokashi in their gardens.

What do you do with your food waste at the moment?

If you put your food waste into the rubbish or through a waste-disposal unit, then the coming workshop is for you. If you put your kitchen waste through a compost but the result is not very satisfactory, the workshop is also for you. If you already use a Bokashi bucket but are not sure it is working, you can still come along and might learn a few more things. If you are using a worm farm to process your kitchen waste, you might want to use a Bokashi

bucket for the things worms don't like such as citrus and onion peels.

Anyone who just wants to learn how to turn kitchen waste into a very good fertiliser is welcome to attend this workshop.

I have been an organic gardener for nearly thirty years now, and have tried many different ways of making compost, but I can tell you that the day the Bokashi bucket entered into my kitchen, my life changed.

I loved it straight away because you can put nearly everything in it, it is safe, there are no odours or flies, there is very little work involved and the results in the garden have been fantastic.

Why not attend the workshop and find out for yourself?

Bring your family and friends and come along on Saturday September 27th 2008 from 1pm until 2pm at Packe Street Park/Community Garden.

Nicole Bührs

NZ Nature Farming Society

Environmental Educator

**Saturday 27th September
1pm–2pm at Packe Street Park/
Community Garden**

(If weather is wet, the workshop will be postponed until Sat 4th October – same time)

ANAGRAM ANSWER

to the previous issue

Akee, akees, anker, ankers, asker, earn, earns, ears, ease, ekes, eras, erase, erne, ernes, erns, esker, keas, keen, keens, kens, kern, kerns, knar, knars, knee, knees, naker, nakers, nares, near, nears, rake, rakes, rank, ranks, rase, reek, reeks, sake, saker, sane, saner, sank, sark, sear, seek, seen, seer, sera, sere, skean, skene, snake, snare, snark, sneak, SNEAKER, sneer.

(Reference: www.websters-online-dictionary.org)

Practical solutions for soaring petrol costs ...

Party Vote Green !



Jan McLauchlan

Green Party Candidate for
Christchurch Central
P: 365 1995

E: jan.mclauchlan@greens.org.nz

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Legal Protection of Archaeological Sites

An archaeological site is defined by the Historic Places Act 1993, as any place where there are material remains of human activity dating prior to 1900. In addition to what is commonly thought of as archaeology, such as sub-surface material like historic rubbish pits, this definition may also apply to standing buildings, structures like bridges and lime kilns or the tailings from early mining. Sites that meet this definition are afforded automatic statutory protection under the Act, subject to a consent process for destruction, damage or modification.

Although much has been destroyed by later development, archaeological remains may be present in any of the areas of Christchurch previously occupied by Maori, or settled by early colonial immigrants. Recently, archaeological investigation has been carried out on the remains of a cordial bottling factory and shoemaker's shop on Halkett Street; the house of John Carl, the former owner of the Empire Hotel on Papanui Road; and various pub sites, including the Royal George on Fitzgerald Avenue; and Nancy's Hotel in Riccarton. In mid-July of this year, the façade of the Masonic



Lodge (1869) was unexpectedly revealed during development on Manchester Street. Once work is completed, reports on these investigations will be freely available from the NZ Historic Places Trust.

If there is a chance a site may be damaged during development or earthworks, you should contact the NZ Historic Places Trust to be advised of the most suitable course of action. If archaeological remains like bottles, glass, china, bones or shell are uncovered during earthworks, work that would affect the site must halt and the Trust must be contacted for advice on how to proceed. Unfortunately due to a lack of public awareness and understanding, this consent process is often disregarded, resulting in loss and destruction of important archaeological sites.

For further information on archaeological sites, or about archaeological investigations being carried out throughout the country, see the NZ Historic Places Trust website at: http://www.historic.org.nz/heritage/archsites_investigations.html

Zoe Roland

Caring for Injured Birds

Hi, I'm Jackie, I care for injured/orphaned wild birds in my own home as a volunteer. Some vets assist if birds need further treatment.

I work in DOC for some of the more 'special' birds needing releasing such as penguins, native pigeons and falcons.

I've attended Avian First Aid and rehabilitation workshops. Birds are usually brought to me but I can, if necessary, pick up.

I answer public queries over the phone and give talks to community groups.

My contact numbers are 384 1488 or cell 027 216 4636.

Jackie Stevens



This is a long-tailed cuckoo being examined by a CCC Ranger and ornithologist prior to its release.

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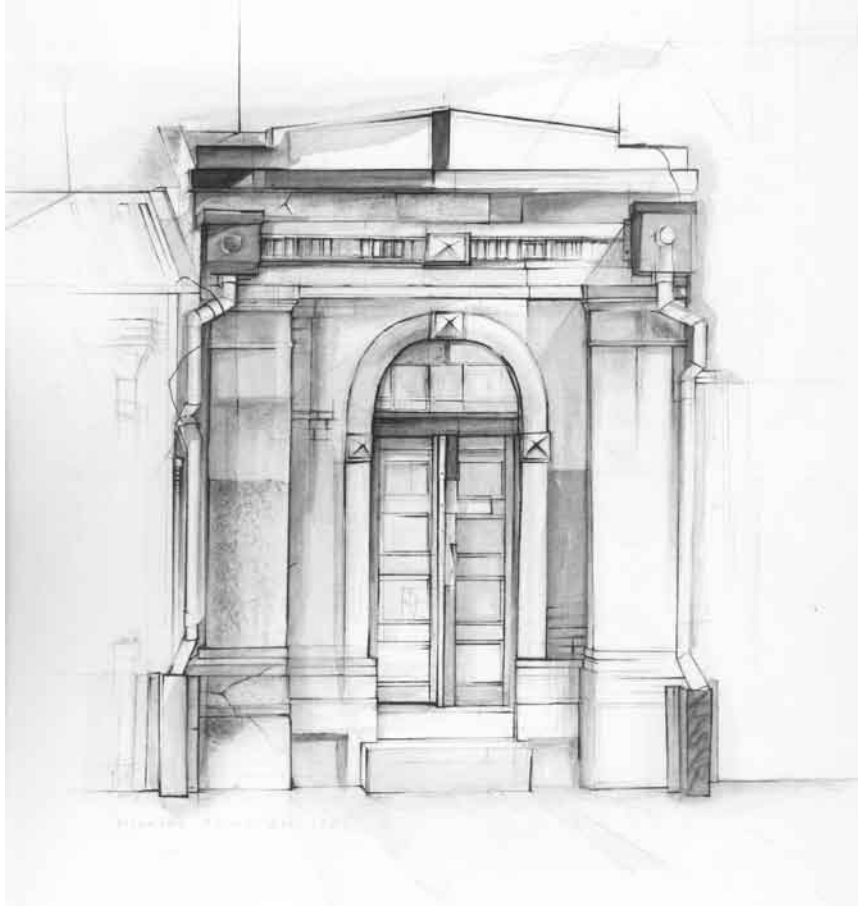
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A bit about my paintings

They're quiet, but see the notice on the door — the little yellow man with the tear in his eye is a warning. They're in your backyard and my backyard. Monumental blocks of fancy concrete, tacked with old trellis. Gothic beasts and beauties doing double time as holding tanks for weeds. Or baby ferns. Flooded with lights, they send people about their proper business after dark. You could say they have street value. They are a convenience and a resting place, but offer no shelter because their recesses are very shallow. With double doors and windows, they look like houses, faces even — see their great pedimented brows — but until recently, nobody lived in them, nobody loved them, nobody wanted them. Not in my backyard, cried everyman. He got up a posse to paint them over; he scoured them, he spat on them. But he also recorded affairs of the heart — it is reassuring for passing traffic in Gasson Street that Wayne and Michelle are “4 eva”.

Orion's modern concrete boxes, like Wayne and Michelle, have youth on their side, but the rest are fading fast.

I honour them all: the big mothers, wrapped in corsets of iron — the architectural equivalent of Botox — as well as their galvanized offspring. Sitting on or off the street line, in spaces I think of as uninhabited. Or unclaimed. Wasteland perhaps. But who would want to trespass?

Who loiters here?

This story is, obviously, about the buildings themselves. And about the way people behave around them. It hints at other things, and I hope it raises some questions, but I have written it to give the flavour of my paintings.

Hilaire Campbell



Who are we? The people who run the St Albans Community Centre

RAYMOND BARTOLOME

Raymond Bartolome is one of the volunteers in the Community Centre's NeighbourNet computer room. A volunteer since November 2006, he helps out at the Centre once a week teaching locals how to use the Internet, Email and other computer programs. Originally from the Philippines, Raymond immigrated to New Zealand just under two years ago. His work with computers extends outside of the Centre, having worked in IT for the past five years. He decided to participate in volunteer work at the Centre in order to gain some useful work experience after moving to a new country. In his spare time, Raymond enjoys playing basketball, swimming, watching movies and listening to music.

ARMANDO SALANGUIT

Armando Salanguit contributes to the Community Centre as a volunteer in the NeighbourNet computer room. Since February 2007, he has helped out in the computer room answering any computer queries and assisting those less experienced with computers. From August of last year, Armando has been an on call worker at the Centre. He is currently employed as a full-time customer support engineer at an IT company. Armando moved from the Philippines to New Zealand in September 2006. His hobbies include playing table tennis and basketball, and also watching movies. Armando says that it has been a good experience volunteering in the computer room as it gives him the opportunity to use his expertise with computers to help others in the community in his own small way.

Kirsty Bliss

Excerpts from a Dog's Diary...

8:00 a.m. Dog food! My favourite thing!
 9:30 a.m. A car ride! My favourite thing!
 9:40 a.m. A walk in the park! My favourite thing!
 10:30 a.m. Got rubbed and petted! My favourite thing!
 12:00 p.m. Lunch and my ears scratched by the boss!
 My favourite thing!
 1:00 p.m. Played in the yard! My favourite thing!
 3:00 p.m. Wagged my tail! My favourite thing!
 5:00 p.m. Milk bones! My favourite thing!
 7:00 p.m. Got to play ball! My favourite thing!
 8:00 p.m. Wow! Watched TV with the boss!
 My favourite thing!
 11:00 p.m. Sleeping on the bed! My favourite thing!
 My boss is so good to me!

Excerpts from a Cat's Diary...

Day 983 of my captivity. My captors continue to taunt me with bizarre little dangling objects. They dine lavishly on fresh meat, while I am fed hash or some sort of dry nuggets. I am forced to go to the toilet in a box.

Although I make my contempt for the rations perfectly clear, I nevertheless must eat something in order to keep up my strength. The only thing that keeps me going is my dream of escape.

In an attempt to disgust them, I once again vomit on the carpet.

Today I decapitated a mouse and dropped its headless body at their feet. I had hoped this would strike fear into their hearts, since it clearly demonstrates what I am capable of. However, they merely made condescending comments about what a 'good little hunter' I am - Bastards!

There was some sort of assembly of their accomplices tonight. I was placed in solitary confinement for the duration of the event. However, I could hear the noises and smell the food. I overheard that my confinement was due to the power of 'allergies.' I must learn what this means and how to use it to my advantage.

Tonight I was almost successful in an attempt to assassinate one of my tormentors by weaving around his feet as he was walking. I must try this again tomorrow - but at the top of the stairs.

I am convinced that the other prisoners here are flunkies and snitches. The dog receives special privileges. He is regularly released - and seems to be more than willing to return. He is always happy. He is obviously retarded.

The bird has got to be an informant. I observe him communicating with the guards regularly. I am certain that he reports my every move. My captors have arranged protective custody for him in an elevated cell, so he is safe - for now. I shall not give up hope.

Contributed by Bill Demeter



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This is one White Elephant you should take note of...

While the Edgeware Road tragedy has faded from national media agendas, Christchurch individuals and organisations remain committed to work together powerfully to advance positive change. The recent Youth Conference, attended by over one hundred and fifty people, has just published a report with the aim of giving a voice from young people's perspective. Plenty has been debated through traditional channels, mostly relating to tighter control of youth, but little credence has been given to what young people themselves think are the issues surrounding the tragedy. The Youth Conference set out to give that voice to young people, and the report makes interesting and thought-provoking reading. It's a PDF download on the homepage of the White Elephant Trust's website: www.we.org.nz

Anthony Rohan set up the White Elephant Trust (WE) in 2005, with the goal of providing a safe environment bursting with positive attitude, where young people can develop, learn and create without perceived 'control by authority'. Non-religious, drug and alcohol-free, and committed to developing young people of all backgrounds to their true potential. He was one of the co-organisers of the Youth Conference, and I met with him to see what has come from the Conference.

Where authority and the mainstream media have suggested greater control as a 'solution' for the tragedy, the report offers a different and insightful view into pathways for change. The report gives youth a voice in a format, language and high level of detail that adults are used to. He (Anthony) has a sense that since the tragedy the commu-

nity has closed ranks, meaning less opportunity for disparate 'youth' and 'adults' to open a dialogue that builds rather than breaks down trust between generations. He recognises that young people must gain the respect of both peers and elders and that it is not a given. Unfortunately the local community tends to stereotype societal groups by the negative actions of a small minority, and there is

a realisation that individuals must go beyond the norm to begin reinforcing positive role models, with proactive attitude and real tangible results that the wider community can see and respect those involved for wanting to be involved.

White Elephant is still yet a young organisation, supported by limited grant aid which allows them to lease premises on Bedford Row, in central Christchurch. It is run by youth, for youth and has an ambitious programme of events, workshops, parties and support networks. What strikes me as unique is that WE would exist in some form even with no outside funding, as it relies on the goodwill and vision of trustees and participants to achieve stated goals. A high degree of self-sufficiency allows the Trust to follow its own

path and direction in meeting the needs of its community of participants. Further funding and donations would enable WE to develop further into realms such as: buying their own sound system for events; developing a youth taxi service; developing the feasibility for a youth venue; building on the early success of the WE radio station; building a production studio. Anthony is aware that as soon as a charity starts acquiring tangible assets, a whole new level of bureaucratic measures become necessary to account for and 'own' those assets. Which is perhaps



Ray White

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where the wider community comes in, offering support and investing in its own young people in whatever way it can? It is a travesty that the very resources provided out of local taxes (such as community halls) are difficult if not impossible for WE to hire for events because 'young people' are not seen as responsible or trustworthy. Society must see that inclusiveness means letting future generations gain respect by doing good, otherwise a generation will head underground and seek out more dangerous venues, such as street parties that occasionally get tragically out of hand.

Anthony recognises the importance of an holistic approach to building communities, by involving parents and schools in the work that White Elephant is progressing. Teachers are critical for young people to be role models and motivators, where it appears in some cases parents choose a very hands-off approach to listening and communicating with their offspring. Young people relish the opportunity to learn and develop in a positive environment, and in general this burden falls on schools. Yet, the powerful opportunity to develop young people and channel their enthusiasms and curiosity for life comes from combining learning in a school environment with knowledge creation from family and friends. The White Elephant Trust aims to provide a safe, non-judgemental and positive environment for learning whatever a young person chooses to develop as a personal project. Anthony is interested in music promotion, so one example is for young people to be able to get involved in learning how to DJ and be involved in running the WE radio station. Six hundred young people attended their 1st Birthday Party celebration, doubly impressive as all WE events are alcohol and drug free.

It is a truism that authority tends to have a desire for order and control, and yet young people tend to have a far more fluid and transient view, preferring subcultures and trends to the accepted norms of the society in which they live. Wanting to be distinctive and respected, yet included and liked as part of a peer social group or groups is one of the many challenges young people face. Many an adult has despaired of the apparent 'lack of respect for elders' and the addiction to the mobile phone culture. Modern

methods of social networking including online sites (such as Bebo and Facebook) tend to leave adults flummoxed and unknowledgeable about new social media trends – perhaps the intended result, as anything 'establishment' comes labelled as critically uncool. Young people seek a place to socialise where they are not shunned by the simple economics and licensed nature of pubs, clubs and cafés. The White Elephant Trust provides just that place in central Christchurch, being open every day after school: 4 p.m.-7 p.m. and at weekends: 11 a.m.-4 p.m.. It's free and gives young people the opportunity to develop whatever goals they may have in a supportive environment.

Liberal driver licensing laws give young people responsibilities, and life and death judgements to make years before they are considered 'grown-up' enough to either vote or buy alcohol. Instead of lamenting the slow disintegration of community spirit, should we not give our full support to a venture that aims to equip young people with the knowledge and skills that enables them to learn about how to make sound judgements early in life? Instead of demanding quick solutions to intractable problems from Council or Government, why not devolve responsibility for society's ills to those who can 'be the change' – ourselves and our offspring?

It's just a thought, and one that the White Elephant Trust should be lauded for promoting.

David Binstead



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'Hotchpotch... A Motley Assortment of Things'

Continuing our occasional look at St Albans' craftsmen and women, this month we are outside No 67 Warrington St, on the corner of Warrington and Flockton Streets. Located in the former Church of Christ, which we wrote about in our September issue, Hotchpotch is hard to miss, with an eye-catching fence of mauve panels featuring stark black trees on them, leading to a wrought iron gate, a short path to a little porch and then straight into the workroom of upholsterer Viona Brouwer.

From the outside you can see something of her work, but there's a slight air of mystery, so let's take a look inside...

When you walk in, there's a broad counter almost right across the front of the room where Viona can cut her cloth or show customers different fabrics, and on this bench there's often a cat. For some reason I am always a little disappointed if it isn't there! And in the middle of the large room Viona sits at her sewing machine, surrounded by bolts of fabric and drifts of off-cuts, working on contracts for various stores or on her own 'recycling' of furniture which she sells in her adjoining shop.

The shop has been open for a few years now, but has recently undergone some changes. Some walls have been removed to make a much larger, lighter and more practical space, and the shop can accommodate a much larger range of stock. You can still find an interesting selection of Viona's faithfully restored retro sofas and armchairs mainly from the '60s and '70s, but now there is also a range of French provincial style hand-painted furniture produced by Davina Cutler, who helps run the shop. The pieces are 'distressed' to create the popular 'shabby chic' look. Readers may already be familiar with her work from when it was displayed at La Boutique, another of our charming little St Albans' stores. Davina stresses that no two pieces are alike, and that she is also happy to create the look on customers' own pieces.

In addition to furniture, Hotchpotch sells various housewares and ornaments, as well as a small range of clothing, both new and second-hand. Viona is passionate about the environment, and this is reflected in some of the other things she sells, in particular hemp products and alternative health care items such as an intriguing herbal medicine called Ganoderma, or Lingzhi as it is known in Chinese, which is a special type of mushroom. There are lotions and oils, organic soaps, and true to the shop's name, all kinds of unexpected surprises. On my last visit, I even spotted some disposable toilet seat covers! This is the



Photo by David Binstead

kind of place that rewards you with something new every time you go there, so drop what you're doing and get down there before someone else walks off with 'your' bargain.

Maxine Feutz

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Transition Initiative St Albans

Thursday evening, 17 July, saw a diverse group of about twenty people file into the hall of the St Albans Community Centre. Among them were a Member of Parliament and two Community Board members. We were all there because of our awareness of the big changes that lie ahead of us—the end of the availability of plentiful cheap oil and the unpredictable consequences of climate change. Yet, it wasn't the gloom and doom that is predicted by some, but rather the positive vision of the possible that attracted the crowd. A new initiative was about to be born: how to build our local resilience and how to prepare St Albans for a life beyond oil!

Our guest, Margaret Jefferies from Project Lyttelton, started the evening by giving us an introduction to her and her organisation's work over the last few years. By keeping their eyes and ears open and talking and listening to the people of their own town, Project Lyttelton has achieved some amazing successes over the last few years.

The current wave of successes started with simply walking; the creation of a walking map of Lyttelton. With an holistic approach to community building and the insight that everything interlinks, soon other projects came to fruition: the Farmers Market; street festivals; a community garden; the timebank; and a regular newspaper. Guided by a vision statement that emphasizes the creation of a living future, soon more projects started to take shape, like a car-share co-op and Energy Matters, which is about generating energy locally.

Soon, Margaret guided the discussion to 'where to from here' in St Albans. How do we start? The advice received: 'Look at what you've got, find your treasures and acknowledge them.' Our group came up with a wide variety of things to do, among them the planting of fruit trees on public roads, the preservation of the last remaining farmland in the area, and turning St Albans waterways into public walking ways. Not all local resources

are recognisable as such right away. Other proposals included the creation of a waste-free street, and then to expand the concept street by street until the whole suburb will be waste-free. There are also cultural approaches to a sustainable suburb, such as holding local street parties and minstrels on the public buses that cross St Albans.

The evening ended with a shared meal; a hot, organic and homemade pumpkin soup and hot buns.

Now this was only the beginning! The next Transition Initiative St Albans meeting is scheduled for: Wednesday, 6 August at 4 p.m.

Christoph Hensch

Community Centre

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A History of the St Albans Swimming Club and the Edgeware Pool 1923-2008. Part 5

Canon W.S. Bean took the first plunge to open the St Albans Bath on 12th February 1934, and the New Zealand Swimming Championships followed soon after on 17th, 19th, and 21st February.

The Christchurch Times reported on 19th February, "Beautiful weather prevailed for the opening of the New Zealand Swimming Championships at the St Albans Bath on Saturday afternoon. All the seating accommodation was taken and many people were forced to stand the public appreciated the opportunity to see New Zealand's leading performers in action the large crowd witnessed a thrilling afternoon's racing."

With the Bath completed and the Championships behind them, the bath committee settled down to "routine" management. At their first meeting following the opening, a congratulatory letter was received from the St Albans Burgesses Association on the completion of the bath; a caretaker's advertisement was arranged with remuneration not to exceed 30 shillings per week. Entry charges were set at threepence for adults and one penny for those under eighteen years, and a letter from Christchurch Girls' High requesting the use of the bath for their annual swimming sports. But perhaps it was not as "routine" as they would have liked, as there were far more pressing matters to attend to.

There was a liability on the bath; therefore guarantors were urgently needed in order for the Bank to advance the sum of £200. It was decided to organise a carnival to assist with funds in the meantime, as there were bills to be paid. Regarding an unpaid electricity bill, the M.E.D. was "agreeable to allow reasonable latitude in connection with the payment of the account for the electrical installation at the bath."

A solicitor's letter was presented from the owner of the adjoining property to the right of way, asking for the removal of the bath sign. It was decided to move the sign without further ado.

Leakage at the north end of the bath was reported, and the trouble being the breakage of the pipe leading into the council yard from the well.

It was also reported that a portion of the ladies' dressing shed needed to be partitioned off to act as the caretaker's office. It was said that judging by the recent attendances, the dressing sheds were found to be insufficient and that would be addressed next season. Duckboards were also needed to assist with access to the bath from the dressing sheds. The first two weeks attendances were: 1038 children, and 446 adults.

Opening hours on a recent hot Sunday were also under scrutiny, following record crowds and the custodian's inability to cover the hours required, therefore it was decided one or two committee members should be pres-

ent to assist. There was certainly plenty to keep the committee occupied.

In March, the ups and downs continued. Firstly, a snap of cold weather affected the gate takings to only 20 shillings for the week; however, it is interesting to note the pool was still open in April and was reporting excellent gate takings. When the committee met they were relieved to hear that six guarantors had been found enabling the bank to advance the £200. With finance assured, it was proposed to set up a Board of Control with representatives from the Swimming Centre, The St Albans Playground Committee, and the St Albans Burgesses Association.



After Council approval, the following were duly elected as the first Board:

Swimming Centre Reps: Mr S. Anderson 56 Roch-

ester St Linwood; Mr J. Fyfe 83 Morris St Avonside.

Burgessess Assoc. Reps: Mr W. Thomson 1062 Colombo St; Mr F. Prouting 37 Kinloch St.

Playground Reps: Mr G. Grover 108 Forfar St; Mr A. Wilson 115 Francis Ave.

Council Reps. J. Barnett; M. Lyons; J. Matheson.

Also: Mr P. Randle 99 Bishop St; Mr L. Armand 17 Reeves Rd Opawa; Mr J. Falkinder 34 Forfar St.

The first meeting of the new committee known as the St Albans Public Bath Board of Control was held in September 1934. Mr F.J. Prouting was elected as the Chairman. A letter was sent to the Council thanking them for "its interest and practical assistance in enabling the project to be brought to a successful completion." Their first job was to advertise and procure the services of a new caretaker. It was decided on a retainer of £20 plus 20% of all revenue. The custodian agreed to act in an honorary capacity during the winter months. The matter of new concrete paths from the dressing sheds to the bath was addressed, with the secretary offering free labour if materials (free shingle and cement) were forthcoming!

The first alliance with the St Albans Swim Club emerged with a letter requesting "the right to use the bath during the 34-35 season." A new era in swimming was about to commence.

Next month: Part 6 St Albans Swim Club 1940s.

Sourced from the minutes of the bath committee.

Valerie Somerville.

St Albans News Classifieds

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The St Albans News relies on your contributions. Please send us your articles, letters and notices. The deadline for the September issue is 21 August.

Castles in the Air

Once upon a time there was a nice developer who found a the perfect site for a new type of settlement. He called it a “new urbanist” development that would have a mixture of residential terrace homes, apartment buildings, retail and service space and some public amenities. He saw it as a vibrant space with the residents and local public mixing together and using the shared amenities.

On one side, that was often underwater during winter, he put an ornamental pond that was surrounded by trees with meandering paths and places to sit and picnic. This park was shielded from the nearby busy arterial by a partial stone fence and native plantings with the St Albans tree — the kowhai — prominent.

On the northern side where some developments were taking place over the road, he continued its neighbourhood feel by erecting a series of block and timber townhouses with tall sloping roofs that became the established style for this stretch of road. These, being of good quality sold very well, even though the local “new housing” market was flat.

On the arterial road side, he erected a series of courtyards surrounded by two- to three-storey units and linked on the inner side by a winding path and drive. Most of the residents’ cars were parked separately in garages to one side of the courtyards. The oval courtyards were able to preserve some of the existing trees already on site amid more planting and seating so they became quiet oases away from the busy roadways.

In the middle of the site he erected his castles — four interlinked towers with a plaza in between. On one side of the plaza was a coffee bar that looked out to the tennis courts run by the St Albans Tennis Club. Underneath the courts, and partly underground, was a twenty-five metre lap pool for tower block residents and guests. There was also an adjacent gymnasium run by the community with a half-court basketball hoop on its terrace.

Running through the site from north to south there was a pedestrian way so that people coming in could walk through, admire the buildings and attached gardens, and

greet one another on the way to the coffee bar or gymnasium. There was also a small food court across from the gymnasium where one could pick up basics such as the milk, bread and papers, or perhaps some organic produce from the local community garden. Just over the way from the food court was a retail space grouped around a courtyard with a medical centre, a pharmacy, hairdressers and a bakery. Some spaces were available for offices as well. The whole of the inner retail courtyard was covered by a trellis that could be shaded when the summer sun became too hot due to global warming.

The developer could also see that not everyone could afford to live in his towers, so he sold some land to the Housing Corporation and they built some affordable housing on the eastern side. They were smaller than the town or courtyard houses but tastefully done. These people too, enjoyed the amenities of the development — the gardens, the paths and the shops.

Cars were allowed to access the development, but kept to the periphery or garaged in a large underground car park. Most people caught buses from the adjacent street or walked into town. Bicycles were just as common as cars for short journeys.

The developer — when he had finished — rubbed his hands, for he had caused to come into being a new and wonderful place, one that was built for quality of life and a sustainable future in mind. He thought long and hard about giving it a name, but in the end settled for naming it after a star... Orion.

Doug Craig

Quote of the Month

“The reasonable man adapts himself to the conditions that surround him...
The unreasonable one adapts conditions to himself.
All progress depends on the unreasonable man.”

*George Bernard Shaw
Irish dramatist & socialist (1856 - 1950)*

Correction

The Antarctica Haiku that were published in the June issue of St Albans News were written by students of a Young Writer’s Workshop tutored by Jason Clemens and Dr Glyn Strange from the Christchurch School for Young Writers – and not by Judy Calder, as noted in the article.

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