

St Albans News

The Voice of our Neighbourhood

March 2009

Sustainable Transport



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It was a dark and rainy night, but a few keen community members turned up for the first of the Transition Town sustainable workshop series on Wednesday, 14th February, to hear Dr Simon Kingham and Steven Muir talk about sustainable transport.

Simon, who is an Associate Professor of Geography at Canterbury University did the boring part, he said...facts and figures about the way we travel at present and the lack of suitable alternatives for the nearly 30% of the population that does not have easy access to a motor vehicle—the young, the ill and the elderly, the poor and those who have disabilities. While there was some talk about buses and public transport, the majority of the talk focused on cycling strategies, and why so few use other forms of travel even when just going down to the dairy for milk, bread and the paper. As he said, people tend to be creatures of habit; they use whatever form of transport they last used, and it takes a change of view and real effort to do something else more sustainable and cheaper than leaping into the motor car once again.

For example, when a family car is disabled or not available many families do not know exactly where to catch the nearest bus to go to the supermarket or take the children to school; or have an idea how long it might take to cycle to their destination. The example of school walking buses as an alternative to the widely used school motor vehicle run was discussed. This involves children and parents and teachers walking a set route to the local school, getting to know the

neighbours on the way, and being climate change-friendly at the same time.

Congestion, an issue that transport planners obsess about in their waking hours, was not a huge problem according to Simon, in that it should encourage people to seek either alternative routes or times to go to work, to car pool or to travel by other forms of transport. However, the habit of using a vehicle and expecting to travel along main routes when everyone else is doing so, is leading us to greater congestion and more road building. Already some 25–30% of the Christchurch landscape is



Simon Kingham with family on his bike.

said to be devoted to the motor vehicle.

Steven Muir brought in his bike and some real world examples of using the bike and his homemade attached trailer to do the grocery and other shopping, transport a guitar and amp to church, take kids to school and even pick up friends from the airport. And it had the advantage of being both fuel efficient (no CO²) and mostly healthy. (Although be careful of

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Pool Site Working Party: The working party completed its report and concluded a multi-function community facility should be built on the site of the old Edgware pool site. The working party was not allowed to consider a pool by a CCC senior staff member. As the report was presented to Council, the accompanying CCC staff report recommended the site be sold on the open market. Thus, the pool site will be sold by the Council for private development.

The staff report recommended some \$3.5million to expand the present St Albans Community Centre location on Colombo Street. This proposed expansion barely passed the first draft of the LTCCP (Long Term Council Community Plan) and will be reviewed several more times. The probability of this funding happening is remote, but residents making submissions in large numbers could have a very positive impact. We will keep you posted regarding how and when you can make submissions.

We are very appreciative of the local people who volunteered their valuable time and energy recommending what would have been a much needed addition to St Albans. Emma Twaddell, Douceline Wardle, Casey Thomson and Joanne Radburnd did an outstanding job in the most difficult of situations. Thank you very much!

It is important to remember that an urgently needed expansion of the Community Centre facilities is an issue on its own merits and entirely separate from the wishes of

the local residents for a pool. The CCC selling the former pool site and addressing the expansion of the Community Centre does not make the need for a pool go away.

Youth Initiative: At our last Board Meeting we formed a task force to create and initiate a new and innovative programme aimed at our youth. Those on the task force are: Maggy Tai Rakena, Max Feutz, Kevin McDonald and Christoph Hensch.

As St Albans becomes more crowded due to L3 zoning, we are seeing more issues and opportunities to work with our young people with programmes other than sport. Creating programmes that include input from our youth at the inception and having them take an active leadership role will benefit everyone. From this issue onwards, youth will become regular contributors to the St Albans News with articles by youth for youth and also the entire community. We will keep you informed as to the progress of this task force.

Centre Fund Campaign: Our Centre served over 31,000 people in the last calendar year, and already this year it looks like we will serve over 34,500 city residents. We will be doing this but will have the same number of staff, our loyal volunteers, and far less money received from grants. The economic realities show us that revenue and grants will diminish even further at a time when costs are rising.

On a cost per person basis our Centre is one of the most efficient services in the entire city and essential to our community health and well-being. Therefore, we will be asking you for some much needed financial help. In April, we will launch an extensive Community Centre Contribution Campaign to assure we can provide our services in the future.

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

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cars and buses changing lanes and exhaust fumes!) A regular regime of biking will soon increase fitness levels just trying to catch up with the green lights on Madras or Barbadoes Streets!!

Another interesting fact was that NZers bought bikes in record numbers in 2007, but fewer are using them for regular commuting. The cult of the "weekend warrior" in Lycra on a fast road bike is alive and well in Christchurch, and recreational mountain biking also has many participants. But more could be done to promote cycling as a regular mode of daily transport by better promotion and more bike-friendly facilities.

In Christchurch, February was Bikewise Month, but only had two public events, and the City Council has just proposed over 30% cuts (\$111m) to its walking, cycling, public transport and roading strategies in the latest Long Term Council Community Plan. The Cycle Action Network and Spokes, the local cycling advocates, have

already presented a petition to the Council last November, asking for more action on cycling promotion and road safety but it seems to have fallen on deaf ears. People in St Albans should be able to travel more sustainably being close to the city centre by walking, biking or using the regular bus routes, and even those living further away could leave their cars and walk from St Albans. It just takes a little more effort and timing, but we could all travel more sustainably in future when oil and petrol prices start their inevitable rise.

Doug Craig

The St Albans News relies on your contributions. Please send us your articles, letters and notices. The deadline for the April issue is 19 March

Community Centre News

Transition Logo Competition!

Transition Initiative St Albans is holding a logo design competition to help get the message out there about moving the suburb forward towards a sustainable future. All entries will be displayed in a community exhibition at the St Albans Community Centre on Saturday, 9th May from 1 p.m.–4 p.m. when judging will take place. There will be a prize for the winning design, as well as a raffle prize for those who guess the winner! All entries must be in hard copy form at the Community Centre by 30th April. Remember, Transition Initiative St Albans is about local resilience, about enhancing what's special about St Albans, about sustainability and about creativity. So get out your Crayola sets and see what simple, effective design you can come up with to promote those ideas and values.

Matt Morris

Transition Initiative St Albans

Regular meetings are held twice monthly on the 2nd Thursday and the 4th Thursday. We are meeting from 4pm till 5pm and all are welcome to attend!

Residents' Association Meetings

Please note that Residents' Association meetings are 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 it to the agenda. Contact: 379 6305. The next meetings are scheduled for 26 March and 23 April.



**St Albans
Community Centre**

Te Pokapū Hapori o Hato Ōpani



Events Calendar

4 Mar, 10.30pm	Why Volunteer? (366 2442)
7 Mar, 1pm	Visioning St Albans (374 2465)
10 Mar, 12pm	End of Voting for Shirley/ Papanui Community Board by-election
15 Mar, 11am	Ratana Church Service, Rehua Marae (355 5606)
18 Mar, 12.30pm	St Albans InterAgency meeting (374 2465)
24 Mar, 7.30pm	NZ- Japan Society (355 9903)
25 Mar, 2pm	St Albans Uniting Church Garden Club (366 0396) Len Rhodes - "Fuchsias"
26 Mar, 7pm	Resident's Association meeting (374 2465)
2 Apr, 7pm	Migrants Evening (374 2465)
7 Apr, 12pm	Christchurch Transition Forum (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>

The newsletter is produced by a dedicated group of community workers.

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Proofreading: Terry Connor
Design, layout, advertisement design: Maria Hayward
Printed at the St Albans Community Centre

With regular contributions from:
Maxine Feutz, Hilaire Campbell, Bill Demeter, Maggy Tai Rakena, 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.

Art & Cars Show

Our first annual art and car show saw a steady flow of people at the Centre, especially as the weather got better in the afternoon.



The artists on display exhibited a wide range of arts to suit almost everyone's tastes. There is a great deal of talent in St Albans and we are very fortunate to have such as vibrant and growing group such as the St Albans Art Society. If you would like to learn more or become involved, please give Reg Weld a call at: 355.5090 (evenings).

The Centre was also quite fortunate to have Anthony and Rob Dacre show four of their beautiful and rare cars. They exhibited a stately 1955 Bentley that appeared to be brand new, an XKE V-12 Jaguar, a 1969 Daimler, and a signal red Jaguar sedan. There was also a 1957 Wolseley, a 1965 Bambina 500 that was parked next to a brand new 2009 Bambina kindly provided to us by Euromarque-Fiat Motors.



Anthony & Rob Dacre



Thanks to everyone who provided art and cars, and a special thanks to Alison Elmes for co-ordinating the entire event. We hope to see even more people at the second annual ART N' CARS Show in February 2010.

Text by Bill Demeter

Photos by Bill Demeter & Christoph Hensch

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Brendon Burns

Member of Parliament
for Christchurch Central

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Me and No 192 Geraldine Street

After more than four years, the badly decayed tooth that was 192 Geraldine Street has finally been extracted and will no longer cause the neighbouring community any pain.

Nevertheless, the gap itself is still a sad sight, and the image of the ruins of a once proud home will take a long time to fade.

I had never noticed the house before the fire which destroyed it on Guy Fawkes night 2004, but it came to have a huge attraction for me, and despite being a middle aged woman, I was drawn back to it time and time again, like a kid to a haunted house.

Like many people, I'd heard persistent rumours that the old gentleman who owned it still lived there, and that was the reason for my first visit. I walked up the grassy driveway with feigned confident steps, but with my ears pricked, and an acute awareness that a rat or some other nasty might creep out of the decay and run up my leg.

It's funny how silence creates an air of mystery, and paranoia makes everyday objects look sinister. I stood at the back of the house completely still and listened carefully for a long five minutes, just taking it all in: the house itself with the bay window and turret intact; the old car wreck full to its ceiling with old papers and other junk; the sheds full of timber and sheets of corrugated iron that stretched to the back of the section; and the ground littered with overturned buckets, old paint tins and much more.

I looked for signs of habitation, but found it impossible to believe that someone could survive there. I was on a mission though, so I stayed where I was and called out 'hello' several times in the hope that someone might appear. They didn't. And the fact that nobody was there turned me suddenly from investigative journalist to trespasser, so I beat a hasty and guilty retreat, still imagining a shotgun trained on my back or a brick hitting me on the back of the head.

My subsequent visits were in late autumn and winter, and by now I was feeling concerned that there really could have been someone there looking back at me in equal

silence, but that now he could really be in need of help. However, once again I found nothing and slowly but surely I forgot about the place and stopped going back.

Meanwhile, the normal processes that brought things to a head and resulted in the big clean up were already underway, and followed the typical course.

When the City Council begins to receive a number of complaints about a property such as this, and a consistent pattern emerges, an inspection of the property is arranged, the evidence documented by photographs, and various agencies become involved in the report—in this case the Fire Service, a Health Officer and Building Inspector.

Then, hopefully, the owner is located, the situation explained and steps are taken by the owner to remedy the situation. It's fair to say that the Council gives plenty of leeway at this point, acknowledging that these things take time and money, and that there are often complicated personal circumstances involved. Sometimes it's not so easy, and then the process becomes very lengthy. The owner

of this property could not be located, so eventually notices informing him of his obligations were affixed in prominent places around the property. In the absence of a response, the matter was taken to court in December, and a judgment was made against him. The demolition was therefore at the ratepayers' expense, but an attempt will be made to recover the costs when the land is sold.

I can't help wondering whether the man who lived there knew what was going on or not, and whether he has seen that the old place has finally gone. I would still like to meet him and talk to him about happier times.

Meanwhile, I know it was an eyesore and I know it had to go, but I will miss my 'haunted house.'

Maxine Feutz



Burnt out house at 192 Geraldine Street



From Surplus to Recession

As a member of Parliament's Finance and Expenditure committee, I help

oversee the Government's economic management. Some people ask me how we went from surpluses to recession in one year flat. And what can we each do to minimise the recession's bite?

The turnaround seemed to come about abruptly but the signals were there. Former US president George W Bush cut taxes for the very rich, and invaded Iraq. A US surplus quickly became a torrent of borrowing, funded largely by China; a Third World nation propping up the global superpower! Former Federal Reserve chairman Alan Greenspan naively imagined US banks would lend the money prudently, when bank chief executives were being paid millions for delivering market share, not sound loan portfolios. The whole Wall St of cards began to collapse, changing life for us all.

Fortunately, New Zealand is acknowledged by the new National/ACT Government to be well-positioned to come through this recession. That's because Michael Cullen had the foresight to invest in infrastructure. Instead of giving in to incessant calls for tax cuts which he knew would boost inflation, he halved Government debt, funded new hospitals, schools, roads and superannuation savings. These placed us on a firmer basis and are now crucial to helping us through.

What does this world recession mean for us in Christchurch Central and in particular for you as a St Albans resident? It's important the recession not be used to cut basic services and public service jobs. While we

all want to see Government money spent well, last year's budget recognised it was the right point of the cycle to cut taxes and to stimulate the economy.

The surpluses are replaced by Government borrowing because businesses are contracting, so delivering less tax. Labour believes New Zealand needs a comprehensive plan rather than a "rolling maul;" the one extra state house suggested for Christchurch Central will not do much to help struggling builders. We should be employing them to insulate Christchurch homes.

It's not just recession that's changed our lives. We also need to work through the impacts of climate change, peak oil and how to preserve our quality of life. I commend the work of Matt Morris, Christoph Hensch and others supporting the St Albans Community Centre and its Transition Initiative. I particularly commend Matt for his focus on growing food as a community initiative, including the planting of fruit trees on street verges. Now is the time to share ideas (from left field?). At a personal level, St Albans' families and households are reviewing budgets and reducing debt. A low income person I met while door knocking bought a Freeview box for around \$200, delivering multiple television channels with no monthly pay-tv payments. Biking around the electorate, I see more cyclists as people save petrol money, exercise and help the planet all in one. Communities like St Albans will rally and work together through these challenging times. Myself and my dedicated electorate office staff are there to assist you.

Brendon Burns, MP for Christchurch Central

Tips for Tough Times

Petrol is heading up again. In one month we have seen prices go from \$142.9 to \$171.9/litre. Our NZ economists are saying that it will only get worse over the next few years. The predictions say \$2.00/litre by Queen's Birthday and \$3.00/litre by next Queen's Birthday.

There are ways we can get more kilometres per litre and possibly save 10% of our total petrol costs. Here are some that will definitely save you money:

- Clean or replace your air filter. A clean breathing engine can make a difference. I had mine changed this month and was shocked at how dirty it was and seemed to have small bits of a tar-like substance. The mechanic said if I had a shop vac I should clean it every time I change the oil.

- My neighbour has a removable roof rack that he never takes off even though he only puts skis on the rack. This can cost you about 2% more consumption of petrol.
- How often do you check your car tyres? You should inflate your tyres 10% higher than the recommended pressure (e.g. if recommended pressure is 32psi then inflate to 35psi). Don't forget to do the same for your trailer. You will save around 5% of your fuel consumption.

Here is a question for Parliament. I read that virtually all countries allow a free left turn after stopping even with a red light. Many countries starting doing this after the 1983 petrol crisis and most reported a savings of 1.5% of their entire country consumption. Why are we not doing this?

Bill Demeter

Youthline — Changing Lives

Youthline is a community-based organisation supporting young people and others in the community. We provide telephone, text and email support, an information and referral service, and we are often the first point of entry for young people in New Zealand to access a wide range of youth development and support services.

Our service is confidential, non-threatening and non-judgemental, and is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

A recent survey of 1,000 high school students in Christchurch showed that along with advice about specific topics, young people are looking for support when they have no one else to talk to.

We are all too aware of the bad press that young people often get. Here at Youthline, we believe in the value and potential of young people, and our aim is to support them through whatever challenges they may face. Our focus is on the young person and the potential they have, acknowledging that people can grow and change. We work with the young person and all the skills and abilities they have to offer, believing they hold the key to their own success and future.

We value the impact parents and families have on the lives of young people and we receive many calls from these people when they are concerned for a young person.

We also support youth workers, schools, teachers, GPs, social workers and others working with young people through our information and referral service.

Most people think of telephone support when they think of Youthline, but we have acknowledged that a

commitment to being there for young people means being where they are at. Today's young people are at the cutting edge of technology and thus the text support service has emerged. This offers a youth friendly stepping stone for those seeking help and has proved extremely popular since the launch of our free text service in 2008. We now respond to an average of 4,000 texts per month nationally. Each person receives a personal reply from a trained Youthline text support worker.

Another popular service is the Urge/Whakamanawa website, a health information website designed to give young people access to information that is relevant, trustworthy and useful. Urge is run by Youthline and offers information relating to 'your body', 'your mind', 'drugs and alcohol', 'relationships', 'sex', 'beyond school', 'our society'.

A key part of what we do is provide a professional, thorough and well respected training programme for all our counsellors. Trained counsellors not only gain valuable skills for their work here at Youthline, but also skills they can transfer and use in their work, study, families and wider communities. Many counsellors also find that their time with us confirms their interest, and helps them to build a future career, in counselling, social work or psychology.

Tina Mackie

Youthline

Changing lives.

How can you, or a young person you know, get in contact with Youthline?

Telephone helpline: 0800 37 66 33

Free text: 234

Email: talk@youthline.co.nz

Website: <http://youthline.co.nz/>

Information website for young people: www.urge.co.nz

Or for information on training to be a counsellor, contact Tina or Desley at the Christchurch office on: 379 4795



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Shogo Miyagi

My own interest in graffiti and street art led me to St Albans resident Shogo Miyagi, a twenty-three year old student who produces intricate and intriguing graffiti-style pieces. The word “style” must be added, because in reality his art is difficult to categorize, being influenced by many things including the culture of his native Japan and NZ culture.

while ugly, is often a key part of an artist’s development and can lead to more expressive and developed media.

Aside from six months’ training in a specialist school, Shogo is self-taught, using marker pens on small canvases (purportedly because larger ones are too expensive) to create his art. He draws influences from NZ culture and landscape, and from the culture of Okinawa, a cluster

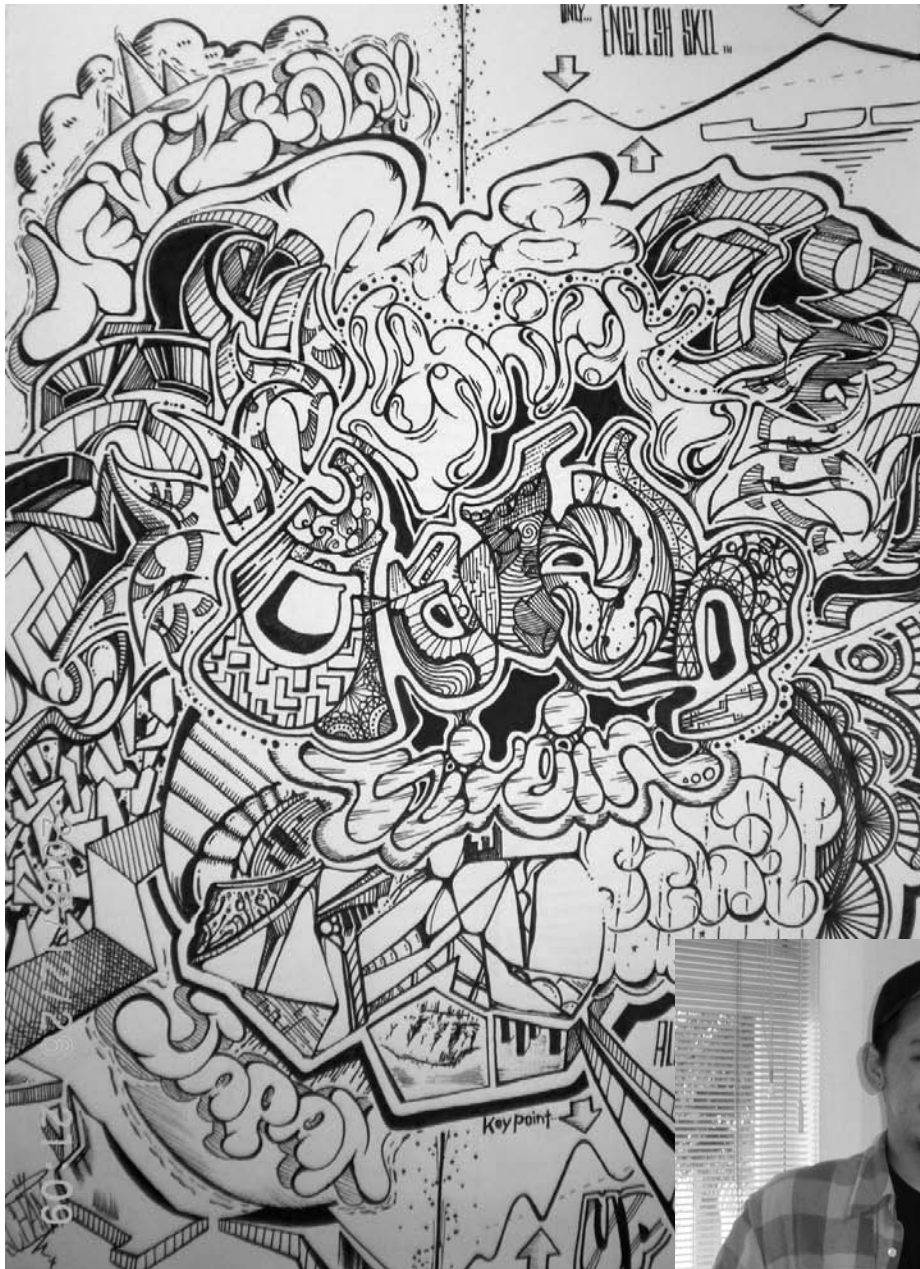
of southern islands separate from mainland Japan, where he comes from. Okinawa’s culture is vastly different from typical Japanese culture, and has its own language or dialects, called Ryukyuan. One of his favourite artists is also from this region—GAZE.

In the future, Shogo would like a career involving art and to keep doing what he does; however, he acknowledges the difficulties of this. More currently, this creative St Albanian will have his work displayed alongside four other artists at the Link Centre on Hereford Street for one month from 2nd March, so, if you’re in the city take a moment to check out his art.

Shogo can be contacted at: a3658chan@yahoo.co.jp

Daniela Petrosino

(Daniela, 18, is an aspiring young St Albans writer who is studying various arts subjects at UC: Latin, Gender Studies and Linguistics)



Above: Sample of Shogo’s Art

Right: Shogo Miyagi with the author Daniela Petrosino

Shogo didn’t study art at high school, but at eighteen his interest in street art led to him experimenting with the form, beginning with that old controversy: tagging. I asked him his opinion of tagging now. Somewhat shyly, he notes that tagging is of course, illegal but he did it briefly “out of curiosity.” This is a good example that tagging,



Use Your Life Experiences to Help Inform and Support People in Your Community

Have you ever thought about joining Citizens Advice to assist others? Over 2,500 volunteers nationwide take their turn each week on a roster answering questions on all sorts of topics and enjoy the experience. There are over 30,000 calls made to the three Christchurch Branches annually. These include queries about the law, consumer issues, workplace or family problems, financial matters etc. Much satisfaction is gained through sharing the knowledge a volunteer has to benefit a client who is having problems or wants a question answered.

The Christchurch Citizens Advice Bureau is running a Basic Training Course for volunteers commencing on Thursday 26th March in the Board Room at the Beckenham Service Centre, 66 Colombo Street, Beckenham. This Course will continue every Tuesday and Thursday mornings with the exception of the school holidays until Thursday, 3rd May. Course participants will find the topics covered interesting, with a range of speakers and course members will meet others who are community minded and are keen to make a worthwhile contribution to assist others.

Once trained, volunteers find that work is stimulating in an atmosphere of friendliness and companionship. They meet and help many different people and learn a great deal about their community. Their knowledge and self-confidence are increased as a result, and the information and the skills acquired are helpful in volunteers' personal lives.

On completion of the Course the Bureau Volunteer is required to undertake regular rostered duty and attend on-going training once a month. They are assigned a Mentor to guide them through the first six months of their 'on the job' training.

If you are considering joining this interesting and worthwhile community service, please phone: 0800 367 222 between 9.00 a.m.–5.00 p.m.

Help is as Close as the Phone

Information is available from the Citizens Advice Bureau for any question you may have—no question is too big or too small. There are three branches of Citizens Advice in Christchurch: City (Hereford Street); Bishopdale (above the library); and Hornby (beside the library). Well-trained volunteers have access to a large range of resources to enable them to answer any question, and they can also be contacted using the free line: 0800 FOR CAB. The advice provided is free, impartial and confidential.

ST ALBANS NEIGHBOURNET

The NeighbourNet provides a friendly & quiet environment for low-cost Internet access and computer use. The experienced volunteers on duty are able to assist with Internet or email problems.

For Internet use, we suggest a donation of \$2 per hour

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We are Open:

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Tuition

Do you struggle with today's technology?
Would you like to learn how to email, or
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Basic Computer Courses
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The courses are for 12 hours, spread over 3 weeks with 2 sessions per week.
Classes are limited to 6 students
The courses cost is \$36 to be paid before the courses starts.

For more details & to enrol, please phone

Tony Kearney

Hello

My name is Tony Kearney and I grew up in New Zealand, in Christchurch, in St Albans, in Albany Street, in fact at number 36. It was the only house I ever lived in, in New Zealand until I left to travel the world at the age of twenty-three in early 1980. Now you can't get much more local than that can you?

I grew up just around the corner from the St Albans Swimming Baths, the St Albans Tennis Club (where Mrs Miles taught you the forehand with the shake hands grip), the Century Cinema (where for 3d extra you could go upstairs on a Saturday morning, watch the dead cowboy's eyes move in B movies and throw Jaffas onto the kids below), the St Albans Library, (where in fact I think I may still have one of their books out on loan, but don't tell them!) and English Park (where I used to sneak in without paying over the fence behind St Albans School and did this to see Manchester United play the South Island in 1968 in pouring rain). Ah memories!

We were very lucky and fortunate to have such wonderful facilities so close, and yes, I think we did take them for granted. That is because they were always there and we always used them. We didn't know or appreciate that our pioneering forefathers of St Albans had a vision of the kind of St Albans they wanted their children and their children's children to grow up in. A safe, happy and healthy neighbourhood which despite the admission of rose tinted and nostalgia filled eyes, it truly was.

We used to go round to the pool often three times a day in the summer holidays, and it was there I learnt to swim as my father threw us into the pool and said, "Swim!"

(Lessons were far more rudimentary in those days!). It was from the diving board I perfected my honeypot technique, and sometimes on Thursday nights I could be seen coming last in a number of events at the swimming meets there.

It was also at St Albans that I met my first girlfriend, although alas I have to report that she never even knew that she was my girlfriend, which I suppose is not that hard to understand as I never even got up the courage to say hello to her! The relationship lasted a while, but she two-timed me one day by speaking to someone else before I spoke to her...so that was that!

St Albans pool was much more than a pool. It was a social

network opportunity for all the community. St Albans at that time was a village and had all the traits you would long for in a village today. A friendly place where people knew each other and no children were driven to the pool to learn to swim; you either walked or rode round on your bike which Hobday's at the corner of Edgeware Road and Colombo Street would fix for you if need be.

Yeah, yeah I know this all sounds romantic, but it was actually like that. But before I indulge myself too much let's just remember that this idyll was created by a lot of blood, sweat and no doubt tears from earlier generations so that we could bear the fruits of their endeavours. The community spirit in establishing these brilliant facilities was massive.



Tony Kearney, a St Albanite, now living in Ireland

And now they are all mostly gone.

Why? Well mostly due to the great modern god that we seem to worship today—economics. It doesn't make economic sense to have these facilities today because people are more mobile, the overheads are high, the running and maintenance costs are great etc. etc.

Yadda, yadda, yadda! The same issues applied to the people who built these facilities, lest we forget, for they were mostly built when times were actually tougher. But they had a vision of the kind of St Albans they wanted their children to have, and they decided to be governed by the vision and not by economics. And the vision enabled

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them to find a way to make the economics work.

Today, we are so governed by economics that it works the other way around—economics persuade us to dismantle a vision. How sad and what a disservice to those who built the vision they had about our future. We needn't feel guilty about this, for that is a luxury that does nobody any good, but we should feel ashamed that we let go of the vision so easily.

Again the economists and accountants will point to the bottom line and argue that we cannot afford to have such a facility in our area. My counter to that is that in reality we cannot afford not to have such facilities. For the net benefit of such facilities has to take into account the costs of not having such facilities—youth crime from boredom, petrol costs to drive to other facilities kilometres away and so on.

It deeply saddened me to hear that the pool had been bulldozed without proper consultation, as if to try to knock the will to fight for the pool's continuance by those who wish to see it remain. How anti-community can you get?

My point is not that we have a dictum that there must be a pool in St Albans, but that before we decide yea or nay that we be governed by economics and economists where the future is concerned, we first gather to share our vision of what kind of future and what kind of St Albans we want for ourselves and our children.

Of course it is probably impossible to achieve what we would like, but in St Albans we are lucky for we have a

template for achieving the impossible in the past. And if you don't believe me then let me tell you some stories of the St Albans Swimming Pool, the St Albans Tennis Club, the Century Cinema, St Albans Library and English Park.

Before we accept the inevitable retrenchment that so-called progress forces upon us, let us have a sensible and adult (and child!) conversation about what kind of future we want for St Albans. We might just find that we all share the same vision and if so then the impossible just might be possible again.

Let's not be for or against each other in this, but for the best future possible and then see what can be done by all pulling in the same direction. And if so I believe it is in our St Albans genes to not save the old pool, but build an even better one.

Otherwise my longstanding record for twelve backward somersaults underwater without a breath may never be broken. I still have some of the water up my nose to prove it!

And yes I would donate to help this happen.

Best wishes

Tony Kearney

(Tony now lives in Ireland on a farm, having practised law in London for nearly twenty-five years. He works as a mediator, consultant and facilitator and has just published his first book entitled Who Owns the Future? Available at: www.whoownsthefuture.com).

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Meet Brian Nieuwenhuize. Born in NZ, he is mostly Dutch, but he has his great great grandmother's Spanish eyes. Broad of hip and shoulder, Brian is a big man who sits a sheep's head comfortably in the palm of his hand. His shop beside Surefreeze Appliances is painted all over orange, an unintended reference to the reigning house of the Netherlands. Brian's pride and joy is sausages. "Russian and Hungarian and Portuguese, hotdogs from Chicago. I'm a smallgoods man, a wüurst maker." He got it from his father and all the way back to the first time a cattle beast fell in the sea and was accidentally cured and tasted better than one done on a fire.

Word of mouth is how he operates. Suppliers come from big blocks up Marshland Road, customers ex Holland. Not many locals—it is a low decile area so they go to the Mad Butcher.

Brian (nicknamed Sam) uses nice meat. Venison,

wallaby, hare, rabbit. He smokes with rimu and oak sawdust from Ambrose Heal Furniture in Edgeware. He adds 10% fat, less than most—it's good for you and good for flavour; spices, salt and pepper mainly...did you know white peppercorns are sweeter and they are just black ones without the skin?

Bulls make the best salami, but duck is nice and mild. Chorizo is Spanish for sausage. Salt is saltier in New Zealand. And you can tell a lot from looking at a carcass. An older cow has yellow not white fat says Brian. If it has given birth, the hip cavity is bigger, the muscle longer. It should have bloom and it should cut clean as butter. Use a good knife, German or Swiss steel, and draw it towards you, don't hack like they do in supermarkets.

In the end though, Brian says it's not about the meat, but how you treat it. A good butcher always makes a nice piece better, but a bad one makes it worse.

Hilaire Campbell

Hilaire Campbell — Artist, Writer, Raconteur and just plain Extraordinaire

I looked forward to the task of writing about Hilaire, a regular contributor to St Albans News, so much that I put it off all through the Christmas and New Year break and just savoured the idea of it. When I finally called to ask if she had time to see me and what she was doing that day, she replied quite simply, “Everything.” She sounded out of breath, so I asked if she was working in the garden. She said, “Yes.” A short time later when I arrived at her house, and to make conversation, I asked what she’d been up to in the garden, and again she replied, “Everything.” I’m mentioning this because it illustrates something very fundamental to Hilaire’s personality I think, which is that she’s interested in Everything, and more importantly, she seems to be doing Everything at once. Gradually, I also became aware that Hilaire will tell you everything, but in her own good time and in her own way. Naturally, her life story did not come out in chronological order, but in vividly described vignettes of little episodes that stand out in her memory.

In this way, I learned about her early childhood in Waipiata, and the freedom that a farm life permitted. She described a train trip to visit her grandpa; the day her father rocked the seat violently when they were at the top of the ferris wheel; the fact that she was the only Labour girl in a staunchly National boarding college during her high school years at St Hilda’s in Dunedin, and the frustration she experienced in art classes when she failed to please her teacher. On one such occasion, she had done a brilliant pencil drawing, but after receiving praise for it was then told to paint it. Hilaire was so disappointed that her teacher didn’t consider it a finished work of art in its own right that she impulsively threw it out the first floor window.

Her subsequent years at university did not point her in the direction of art either, since she majored in Russian and English, and in fact when she graduated, she joined a shearing gang and travelled the country. She laughs heartily at the recollection of an afternoon streak with two of the shearers down the main street of Tapanui, an exploit

which had the cops on their tail and the local radio station playing “Get your Knickers in the Air” as soon as they got wind of it. What else does one do when the shearing’s been rained out and the pub’s a bore?

A chance encounter later led to her joining the probation service in the mid ‘70s, but that was just one of many pathways she has followed, led by her many interests and insatiable curiosity. She has done a stint at Halswell Residential School for Boys, was a guide at the McDougal Art Gallery, and still does about six hours a week as a life model. For the last three or four years, she has also worked a lot with her friend and landscape designer Ruth McCracken, planning, illustrating designs and maintaining the gardens they create, taking an obvious pleasure in the hard physical labour involved.

However, above all else, Hilaire is an artist and lives in the world of her imagination. She sketches, she paints, she writes, she reads on Womenspeak on Plains FM, she knocks on doors to find out the stories behind them. If you are familiar with Hilaire’s articles and her charming, thought-provoking sketches, you will know how observant she is, and that she has an eye for the little details most of us would miss. You would have noticed her passion for nature and history, and her ability to see beauty and connection to human values in our urban landscape. In the way

she lives her life there seems to be very little separation between self and art. If you have met her, no matter how briefly, you will have noticed her directness, her ability to go straight to the heart of a matter, maybe sometimes shocking you along the way. Her unerring honesty is in every word she says, and is evident in her work. She also combines practicality with a love of the unconventional. I know this because she told me what goes into her porridge pot! If you want to know, you’ll have to ask her yourself. I’m not going to tell you. I promised I wouldn’t. But in that porridge pot is all the evidence one needs that Hilaire Campbell is indeed extraordinary.

Max Feutz



Hilaire is a regular contributor to our newsletter

Letters to the Editor

To the Editor

With reference to the article by Abbie Gilles in the Community News 18 Jan 2009 'Major concern over St Alban's crossing', I quote, "Traffic systems leader, Barry Cook said, "the city Council would continue to work closely with the Community Board regarding the area... If a problem is identified that physical works can resolve, then this will be put into the Council's process for implementation."

The problem has been identified and I believe a short term solution of a pedestrian island on the Edgeware Road crossing would help alleviate the problem and free up traffic on one side of the road at times. There is one round the corner in Colombo Street which has far less foot traffic.

There has been an accident on the Edgeware Road crossing recently – on Saturday 10th of January about 10.30am, where the victim suffered neck and knee injuries when she was thrown onto the bonnet of the driver's car which hit her and has to wear a neck brace.

Is the council waiting for someone to lose their life before they will act?

I believe confusion regarding pedestrian crossings has arisen because during last year, the previous government passed a law which is impossible to adequately 'police' – 'that all traffic must stop if there is anyone on the crossing

and wait until each person has reached the safety of the footpath.' I have observed that many drivers seem unaware of this law.

For long term, I have a vision for the block bounded by Edgeware, Colombo and Sherbourne Streets to be a planned shopping centre with Supervalu and Mitre 10 shifted to within those streets as well as the Medical Centre. Supervalu would be able to expand with more car parking available and incorporate a storeroom to enable them to buy larger quantities of non-perishable items at time and therefore enable them to be more competitively priced. There are a number of old houses on Colombo and Sherbourne Streets which may come on the market at any time. If a strategy was put in place to beat developers, perhaps Hardie and Thomson Ltd (their main building is rather run down) might relocate to where Supervalu and Mitre 10 now are.

The present shops on Edgeware Road could be opened up to provide a one-way traffic route and a footpath to the stores behind rather than completely rebuilding the whole... If this idea could become a reality, foot traffic on Edgeware Road would be vastly reduced.

It may be that the traffic into/from the Mall opposite Supervalu needs to be restricted to a narrowed 'entrance only' lane and all exit via the Colombo Street entrance/exit for the present.

Myra Price

Why can't I sleep?

There are several factors which contribute to lack of sleep - for many women the cause is a hormonal imbalance resulting in a lack of melatonin production. Women tend to wake around 1am, 3am or 5am (if not all three) and then have difficulty going back to sleep.

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even get to our 'deep sleep' which means we don't produce enough melatonin to sleep through until morning.

If you wake in the middle of the night and look at a clock radio, that is enough light to tell your brain that daytime is coming, and it starts to reduce melatonin production. When the body clock (circadian

rhythms) are disrupted night after night, poor sleep becomes a habit which will continue until something changes.

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Letters to the Editor

To the Editor

I have been reading with interest the series of articles on the history of the St Albans Swimming Club. In the first of these Valerie recorded that the Club was formed in 1923. Recently, using the "Papers Past" website, I have come across a report that in October 1893, at the Annual General Meeting of the NZ Amateur Swimming Association, "...elected to membership...St Albans...". Perhaps this attempt failed to develop and the Club folded to be reformed in 1923 as Valerie has found.

Regards

Brian Spear

To the Editor

I have just finished reading the February issue of the St Albans News and quite frankly, I'm sick and tired of reading the same old agro about the same old issues

- The Caledonian Site
- The Pool
- The City Council

Now there is a new issue, the apparently "unsafe" zebra crossing at the Edgeware Village. What a load of rubbish. I have lived in Edgeware Road for 15 years, have walked 100's of kms around this area and have used the crossing 100's of times. I have never witnessed any accident or near fatality to date. Be thankful that there is still an "old fashioned" crossing where motorists are obliged to stop for pedestrians. As for the "Caledonian Issue" and the "considerable publicity regarding it as a possible murder site", one could probably say the same for any dilapidated building site in the city – I live two doors from one such site, its appalling condition the responsibility of the owner, not the City Council who can do very little I was told only last week. Let's face it, a considerable area of St Albans looks like Bosnia, and has done for years, it's not just the Caledonian site. As for the Pool, try taking down the tatty, out of date sign for starters. Good on Bill for doing a survey on the City Council; to prove what? I live around the corner from you Bill, you didn't knock on my door or put

a flyer in my mailbox, yet you choose to canvas Fendalton and Shirley? Don't we live in St Albans? I agree that St Albans does need action, but perhaps a little less agro and a better working relationship with the City Council might go towards making St Albans a better community to live in.

**E Cook
Edgeware**

To the Editor

Re: the article on page 5 February 2009 Issue of the St Albans News.

The council traffic engineer should try crossing any of the streets on Edgeware Road on a Saturday morning. I looked both ways, saw no traffic and thought it was safe to cross on 10 January 2009, between 10 & 11 am. All I felt was a sharp pain down my right side. I didn't know anything after that. All I remember was waking up in an ambulance and saying "What happened?". "You were hit by a car" was the reply. I thought it was safe to cross a pedestrian crossing with no traffic coming. The lady, so I am told, didn't see me. In my opinion the crossing is too close to the end of Colombo Street and the corner and drivers do not have enough time to react, even if they see someone suddenly step out onto the crossing. It takes with speed, several metres for the reaction to brake and then more distance is travelled by the vehicle to stop. The greater the speed travelled, the greater the distance to stop fully. By then it is too late with this crossing being so close to Colombo Street corner - there is no time to stop. A child would not survive the impact. I see children crossing all the time – just running over the crossing.

D Smith

WORD WHIZZ ANSWER - 5

ACCOUNT, act, acton, ant, aunt, auto, can, cant
canto, cat, coat, coca, con, cot, count, cut
not, nut, oat, out, taco, tan, tau, ton
toucan, tuan, tun, tuna, unto.

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

The St Albans News relies on your contributions. Please send us your articles, letters and notices. The deadline for the April issue is 19 March

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Inner City Living - Create a garden of style and sophistication

Your deck, balcony or courtyard must be planned to suit your personality, lifestyle and the space available.

The choice of trees and shrubs for such an area is vital, and yes, size does matter. Some trees and shrubs are more suited to Hagley Park than inner city living. How often do we see an inappropriate tree planted in the wrong place with limbs lopped off to appease neighbours, give more space, or to let in more light and sunshine?

Plants chosen need to complement the surroundings and grow gently into position without the need for serious pruning.

Keep it simple...too much variation crammed into a small space creates a muddled busy scene. Select a style and stay with it.

For a contemporary smaller garden consider a grouping of stately topiary type Cordyline 'Green Goddess' the smaller of the Cordylines growing to only 2.5 metres, this architectural stunner has unusual leaves that are stiff compact and upright; as is Cordyline 'Albertii', the standout variegated form, magnificent as a specimen; or the Cordyline indivisa in striking colours of orange, green, cream and brown.

If your property has a borrowed view over parks, rivers or hills and the need for total privacy is not an issue, then consider low structured plantings. There are many trees and shrubs for just such an area. Terracotta troughs planted with evergreen flowering shrubs come with the bonus of a perfume such as Viburnum tinus or davidii, Choisya ternata, Elaeagnus and Skimmia.

All of these soft plantings with delicate white flowers can be grown successfully and beautifully in tubs or troughs where restricted growth is tolerated; to ensure plants are happy in troughs and tubs, line with willow root (usually available from the Council) to protect the root system from extremes in weather conditions.

The luxurious range of Pseudopanax e.g. Pseudopanax lessonii 'Cyril Watson' with rich green thick leaves is a small tree growing to only 6 metres, as is the Pseudopanax

laetus with large lush leaves and beautiful purple reddish seed capsules. For a similar foliage check out Pseudowintera colorata; a distinct and unusual multicoloured leaf with a pleasant perfume again growing only to 6 metres.

Most inner city dwellers have a view to the neighbours. If all we see is next door's kitchen window, or the back of an ugly garage, then we need to plan accordingly. It's not such a big deal to camouflage neighbours' properties with soft evergreens, even quality perfumed vines trained along a boundary; a few classics I use frequently are Trachelospermum jasminoides (Chinese star jasmine), an evergreen with soft white heavily perfumed flowers, or red flowering Chaenomeles 'Alarm', the flowering japonica.

There are three pretty pyracantha; all evergreens but with a nasty little thorn so plant these for bright winter colour. These plants trained with wire along a bare wall are simply stunning.

Colours and leaf texture are very important in a small space; gentle soft pale colourings such as blues, pinks, greens, and whites give the eye an impression of receding, as do plantings with larger textured leaves. Bright hot colours such as vibrant oranges, reds and deep greens and blues creep forward. If we want the illusion of a larger space we should plant the rich dark colours in the outer areas and the pastels to the fore.

For shady walls Camellia sasanqua 'Narumigata', Pyracantha rogersiana, Rogersiana 'Flava' and Pyracantha 'Watereri' with bulk or continuous under planting of Myosotidium hortensia (Chatham Island Forget-Me-Not) has stunning glossy evergreen leaves and glorious large flower head of soft blues and creamy whites.

Spot plantings of Hosta, particularly the distinctive undulated Hosta var. univittata give an added foliage bonus from spring well into autumn then die off for the winter. The soft signs of spring are the little buds appearing early September, which is a fine time to divide these plants.

An evergreen hosta-like plant is Ligularia, the

continued on page 17

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continued from page 16

'spotted leopard' variety stands out with bold splashes of variegation.

Warmer north facing walls look stunning with espaliered evergreen softly perfumed Trachelospermum and New Zealand's native Clematis paniculata. This process is so easy, simply screw in toggle bolts with 5cm protruding from the wall, tie a strong twine top and bottom to resemble a pattern of your choice and the vine will grow up the twine and form a dense well-manicured feature.

Varied textured plants are ideal for very small balconies and courtyards; the Olive, Camellia sasanqua and even lemon trees trained against fences or cold hard block boundaries; plant in threes to give continuity and depth for a small space.

Deciduous fruit trees such as apple, pear, grape or flowering quince add a sense of interest as well as producing organic fruit; these can also be espaliered to grow along a terraced wall. Espaliered fruit trees bare a fuller crop than standard fruit trees.

A small courtyard garden we recently created in Strowan is working well with a very happy client—plantings included:

- Mondo—planted in bulk into built-up mounded ground under Prunus Lusitancia (evergreen and

softly perfumed standards)

- Euonymus—as an edging, a glossy well-covered shrub with a tiny white flower, is a faster growing alternative to buxus hedging and requires very little pruning
- Ligustrum—an unusual slightly twisted glossy leaved smaller shrub planted in bulk
- Standard bays—every two metres to give balance and continuity
- Star jasmine Trachelospermum—planted in built-in seating/plant borders to grow along the wall
- Crassula muscosa monstrosa (very unusual and attractive succulent)—in large dramatic tubs at entranceways
- Hebe eliptica (with a pretty white flower)—as an edging border
- Liriope muscari—again, as an under planting
- Festucas coxii blue native—on a exposed outer street corner to blow in the breeze
- Acaena purpurea—dripping down over harsh edges and corners of plaster work.

With careful planning our smaller, easy care gardens and courtyards will give pleasure for years to come.

Keryn Morten,

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- Walking accounts for 20% of all household travel trips?
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- The poor are exposed to worse air quality but own fewer cars?
- Air pollution from motor vehicles accounts for about 400 extra deaths per year?



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Community Notices

Dancing Drum— singing and dancing club

Dancing Drum is an after school dancing and singing group for children between the ages of 5–12 years.

The group got off to a great start last term and is running again this term.

Our club is set up to support children with special needs, but all are very welcome. Siblings are also welcome to come along and join in the fun.

The group is run by Ann Glass, Polly Thomas and Kim Halliday, who all have expertise in special education and music. The children enjoy listening to, and participating in, action songs and learning some jump jam dances. The group size varies between 5–10 children usually. The programme is structured and visuals can be used to support our routines.

Where: St Albans Community Centre, 1047 Colombo Street

When: 3.45 p.m. to 4.45 p.m. every Thursday (during school term time)

Cost: Gold coin donation

For further information contact Helen McDonnell: 365 7944 or Polly Thomas: 328 9408

Come along and join in the fun 😊

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Electrician: registered tradesman. Accredited Heat Pump installer. Domestic & Commercial Local rates. Call John: 021 232 1173

Flatmate wanted. St Albans/ inner city – mature to share with 3 others, furn/unfurn \$120/\$100 + \$30. Exp. Broadband, dishwasher, warm comf. char. home with small garden. Ph 379 4184 or 027 228 7000

Furkids Doggy Daycare: dogs get stressed and lonely by themselves. Socialisation also improves behavior. Ph 372 9253 for more info.

Hairdresser: long lasting shiny haircolour, organic based, ammonia free. good for you, good for the environment! Great haircuts. Tracette, 80 Derby St, ph 3796368

Housecleaning job in St Albans wanted by honest efficient and reliable lady on a weekly basis. \$25 per townhouse/flat. Excellent references available. Phone Nicola 386 1118

Ironing: available at \$20 per hour. In your home or can collect in St Albans/Merivale area. Ph. Janis 355 9034

Onlinepersonaltrainer.co.nz Get fit and healthy using resources under the supervision of an award winning team of fitness professionals. Inexpensive, No gimmicks, no fads, - results guaranteed!

Osteopathy: Highly effective for back & neck Pain. Philip Bayliss, 43 Thames St. Ph 356 1353

Painting & Decorating: Qualified Tradesman 20 years experience. Internal external plastering. Free quotes. Locally placed. Ph Mark on 355 7670 or 0274343300

Painting & Paperhanging: Airless spraying. New work & Renovations – quality workmanship. Qualified Tradesman – established over 40 Years, Ph 355 2948 or 027 432 98710 Ask for John

Protect your Kids Online: Hear my Protect Your Kids Online presentation in your home. Includes offer to download and install world class parental control software. I will show you how to install it and use it. Free disk with presentation and links to additional information Phone Dean 960 3558 or dean@dcc.net.nz

Roofing: New Roofs, Repairs, Maintenance, Parapet Flashing, Free Advice. Ph. Clinton 366 6019 or 027 220 1982

Saturday Morning Fitness Class: No co-ordination needed, all abilities welcome, Friendly group. Only \$10, to Book your place call 021 224 2866 or email: tarsh@balanceforlife.co.nz

Tiling Services: St Albans Local available now, quality work and very competitive rates. No job too big or too small, call John for a free quote On 021 1440844 or 942 0646

TUITION

Clarinet, sax & piano: experienced local teacher. Phone Nicola on 385 6399

Computer Tuition: One on one. Windows and more. Low rates. Phone David 356-1280 or email: davidmackenzie@clear.net.nz

English Tuition: Foreign students of all levels. Individuals or groups. \$15/hr. Phone Peter 377 8197

Fairies and Angels from 2 years. Music, ballet, fantasy, fun. Thursdays & Saturdays. \$65 Term. Enrolments phone 021 120 6540 or 379 6305

FRENCH Students of all levels: prepare for exams or holidays. Practice conversation or follow a programme with a native French speaker. Ph Pascal 382 8471

Self Defence Classes. Learn practical self defence & gain health & flexibility. St Albans Church, Berwick St, Tues & Thurs 4.20 – 7.30, Ph 0800 581 481

Voice Tuition: Saturday lessons available now, stand – alone lessons or 5 week block. Phone Andrew 377 9721

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

Saraswati Puja in St Albans

On Saturday, 31st Jan 2009, the St Albans Community Centre was awash with swirling colourful dance and beautiful song.

The Indian Bengali Community held their 'Saraswati Puja'. This is the festival at which they venerate 'Saraswati', the Hindu Goddess of knowledge and the arts. The hall was decorated with flowers and art; the performers were dressed in rich exotic colours. Melodious rhythmic sitar music charged the atmosphere as we were culturally transported to the Bengali province of India.

Special guests Lianne Dalziel (MP) and Pauline Cotter (Community Board) spoke of the benefits to our community from the Indian community. Nicky Wagner



(MP) told a most amusing story of a trip to India.

Special food was prepared to break the fast of the devotees. It was rich spicy and delicious. Festival organizer Amitrajit Sarkar (Amit) said the food was not the regular Indian restaurant food.

Amit spoke about the contribution to world art and culture from famous sons and daughters of Bengal. The celebration was uplifting and colourful from a warm friendly Bengal community. St Albans

residents should watch out next year for the opportunity to learn and exchange with this ancient Indian culture... come along you'll be welcome.

Kevin McDonald

Get Stuff

An interesting new store has opened at 973 Colombo Street in the building formerly occupied by U Fit In, a specialist lingerie shop. Wittily called Get Stuff, it's another of those wonderful little places where you can find all sorts of pieces from lots of different eras. Highlights?



Too many to count, but check out the teak ice bucket, the disco ball, the vinyl pouffes, (one in bright orange and the other in teal) the copper wall art (three large disks that would look wonderful hung together), the Art Nouveau clock sold with two urns in the same style, and a very amusing set of anti-Nazi propaganda cards.

Owner Fiona Davidson runs the shop herself between the hours of 10 a.m. and 2.30 p.m. Monday to Friday; and from 10 a.m. to 12 on Saturday. If you can't come at those times, and spy something that you 'urgently' need, call her on: 021 464348.

Max Feutz



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**SHOP
LOCALLY**

Quote of the Month

Grandparents:

"Nothing is harder on a grandparent than having to watch a grandchild being disciplined."

"Grandparents are the people who come to your home, spoil the children, and then go home."

"A grandmother is a babysitter that watches the kids instead of television."