

St Albans News

The Voice of our Neighbourhood

September 2007

Highlights



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John Wardle
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Heather Mitchell Gladstone receives her Community Service Award from Community Board member Ngaire Button. (photo by Carl Mize)

Award for Music on Tenth Anniversary of Choir

Heather Mitchell Gladstone was nominated this year for a Community Service Award for her service to the Community in the area of Music.

The Shirley/Papanui Community Board were pleased to present Heather with the award, after enjoying her music at many different times and events over the years. One example is the increasingly popular Carols in Packe Street Park at Christmas time where Heather accompanies the Community Choir with her accordion and people come from far and wide to join in.

Heather began the St Albans Community Choir ten years ago, to make music accessible to all members of the community. As well as

conducting, Heather accompanies the choir on her accordion and organizes all the music, songs and practices.

Although the choir has grown significantly, more members are always welcome, as long as they are over the age of fourteen and have a desire to sing with other people. There is no audition to join.

Community Service Awards are one of the most positive and enjoyable events on the Community Board calendar, and the ceremony was even more lively this year as the Choir sang "Lord of the Dance" and "Those were the days". Heather is a graduate from the University of Canterbury School of Music, and has been performing and teaching music in New Zealand and overseas for many years. She can be contacted on: (03) 379 9188.

Chair Chat



Welcome to our new newspaper, the ...

St Albans News

You will quickly notice many changes that are intended not only to reflect our growing presence in St. Albans, but throughout Christchurch.

We have endeavoured to make the newspaper much more user-friendly, easier to read, and more modern in style. You can also quickly see - on the front page - the highlights and featured articles that are inside the newspaper.

With these changes we will have more information about your Community Centre, our neighbourhood, our history and local businesses.

We encourage any groups or individuals to contribute news and information you want to share with your community.

These changes did not take place overnight, and I want to thank Christoph and his team for all the development work. We didn't always agree and had some very healthy debates in trying to get it right. We are not finished and your candid feedback and comments are desired. Please send your email comments to news@stalbans.gen.nz or phone 374.2465

A comment on another subject –next month we are distributing a Special Voter Edition of the St. Albans News. In this edition you will get information on the various Councils and Boards, voter registration, important issues and information of every candidate running for office in our area (Shirley, Papanui and St. Albans).

This edition will be about 20,000 printed papers and a 5000+ electronic email edition. Please make sure you read it and encourage others to do the same. Remember, *Bad politicians get elected when good people dont vote.*

These are very exciting times here at the Centre, and we are excited to be working for our community and our neighbours.

Sincerely,

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

Events Calender

- 26 Aug CCD Market (366 1992)
- 27 Aug Beat the Budget Blues,
St Albans Baptist Church (355 6522)
- 28 Aug NZ-Japan Society meeting (379 6305)
- 29 Aug Golden Meal, St Albans Baptist Church (355 6522)
- 4 Sep Election Candidates evening:
Council and Mayor (374 2465)
- 6 Sep Friends of Edgeware meeting (980 5584)
- 11 Sep Linux User Group – Apache 2 webserver
- 12 Sep Candidates evening with
ECan and DHB candidates (374 2465)
- 16 Sep Ratana Church Service, Rehua Marae (355 5606)
- 16 Sep CCD Market and AGM (366 1992)
- 18 Sep St Albans Residents Association meeting (379 6305)
- 27 Sep St Albans Residents Association AGM
– Speaker Mark Prain (379 6305)
- 2 Oct Friends of Edgeware meeting (980 5584)
- 3 Oct Water Wisdom meeting
- 9 Oct Linux User Group – Blender 3D animation
- 16 Oct St Albans Residents Association meeting (379 6305)

St Albans Residents' Association Meetings

The next meeting is 18 September with the AGM being on 27 September, 7pm at the St Albans Community Centre.

Any member of the public is welcome to attend any of the Residents' Association meetings if they wish.

They are open to the public from 8 pm. Any member of the public is also welcome to add any items to the agenda as long as any documentary material is given before the Friday prior to the meeting. Documents may be dropped off at the Centre or you can phone 379 6305 between 10 am and 5 pm.

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

email: news@stalbans.gen.nz,
phone: 374 2465 or 379 6305, fax: 374 2467

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With contributions from:
Maxine Feutz, Richard Bradley, Hilaire Campbell, Bill Demeter,
Maggy Tai Rakena and Dafyd.

What's happening at the St Albans Community Centre:

Computer Course:

Struggling to use the computer?
Come to a course tailor made to suit your needs.
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Leisure Group:

Come along & join the fun with the St Albans Leisure Group – get to know our city & what it offers in entertainment & activities that are of low cost & high value.

Phone Alison at the Centre – 379 6305

St Albans Residents Association

AGM

All Welcome!

Guest Speaker: Mark Prain

"Sustainability, what does that really mean, and how will it affect Christchurch?"

27 September at 7pm

St Albans Community Centre

1047 Colombo St

Edgware

**Neighbourhood Week
2007 Fri 26 Oct – Sun 4 Nov**

Neighbourhood Week is about meeting your neighbours and getting to know them. It's about fostering a stronger and safer community.

Organise a BBQ or an event... get together for a celebration.

The Community Board provides small grants for great ideas!

Contact Sharon on 941 5403 or visit www.ccc.govt.nz for more information.



REGISTER TO VOTE

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St Albans Community Centre

Over the past three months people have been speaking to me about their concerns about Christchurch and the issues that worry them in our community. **I HAVE COMMITTED TO STAND FOR COUNCIL AGAIN.** The more I understand your concerns the better I can represent you.



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Authorised by
CR Graham Condon
5 Farnwood Place
Papatoetoe

'The St Albans Church of Christ'

This is a building that has a story to tell. Viona Brouwer purchased the 67 Warrington St house about eight years ago and converted it into a home and workplace with the help of her father...but it started life as the St Albans Church of Christ in the early 1920s. Reading a little of its history reminds us of what can be achieved with a 'can do' attitude and lots of perseverance.

When it was decided to find a permanent home for local members of the Church of Christ who had been holding Bible School activities in the Dover St Library building since 1904, the site was purchased in 1920 and fund-raising began. The project really got underway when a tent mission was held from September to October 1922, and twenty souls 'felt the call' and were duly baptized. Building work started and on 17th October 1923, the Church had its first official service.

By the time the first year was over, the congregation had grown to sixty-three and all kinds of activities were flourishing – a Bible School, the Women's Auxiliary and the Sisters Sewing Guild, which reportedly raised 84-10-8 (eighty-four pounds ten shillings and eight pence) as a result of their labours. It is easy to evoke the atmosphere of these meetings, and imagine the close feeling of community that they must have fostered. Easy

to imagine too, the mountains of scones, pikelets, cream sponges and lamingtons that fuelled all the working bees!

By 1937, arrangements were being made to extend the building, but it was not until 1949 that an extension was built to create a lounge area and kindergarten, because up until that time there had been strict timber and building regulations in force as the country underwent huge growth after WW2.



67 Warrington Street, built 1923

The property next to the church came up for sale in 1965 and was purchased for use as a youth hall. In reading about the church in its heyday, one theme that is constant was the emphasis on activities for young people. Somewhat sadly, the activities described hark back to a far simpler era, and it is hard to imagine some of our own children

responding to them. There was for many years a "Happy Hour", there were regular picnics, sports days, youth camps at Spencer Park, stamp collecting drives to raise money for missionary work and so on. And of course there was Sunday School for the younger children, which in those days was divided into three—the 'cradle roll', and separate classes for boys and girls. (In fact, Viona's present workroom is situated where the Sunday School used to be.)

Continued page 5

Community Resource Centre

1047 Colombo Street.
Phone 379 6305 or 374 2465
Email: office@stalbans.gen.nz
Office Hours 10 am – 3 pm

Monday to Friday

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All of this brings back strong memories for me and I'm sure for other members of my generation of experiences in our own local churches – of being ushered out of the main church into the sudden chill of the Sunday School rooms, of singing 'Jesus loves me, this I know', sitting at the feet of the teacher while she turned the pages of a picture book, and best of all, prize-giving at the end of the year. I remember too, looking forward to the talks by returning missionaries, not because of their interesting stories, but because we half hoped they would have an arm or a leg missing after an unfortunate encounter with a lion or tiger!

So what eventually happened to the Church of Christ? For many years it remained extremely successful, and acted as a kind of community centre for many groups. The Chinese Church held its services there on Sunday afternoons for a while, before finding its own premises, and many other groups used the building—but slowly and surely the congregation began to shrink, as people turned to other flavours of religious experience or simply drifted away. When the roll of regular attendees fell to just thirteen, it closed its doors for the last time.

Maxine Feutz




**Old problems.
New thinking!**

vote
Jane DEMETER
Regional Council (Ecan)
Christchurch North
Independent

DEMETER, Jane

- Christchurch and Canterbury are facing increasing pressures on our natural and physical resources.
- Safe water should be a right for everyone.
- Healthy water and soils are essential for our economy and the environment.
- Your voice should be heard at the council table.
- We need new thinking at ECan to solve old problems.



- Live in the Christchurch North ward.
- Independent candidate for ECan – working for you, not for a party.
- Science and business background. Post-graduate studies in Environmental Science.
- Understand the role of ECan Councillor.
- Spent 250+ hours of my time attending Ecan meetings in the last 18 months.
- Two ears and one mouth – I'll listen!

Authorised by Jane Demeter 117 Champion St, St Albans Phone 365 2399 www.JaneDemeter.org.nz

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St Albans is recognised for its heritage

St Albans was the big winner in the recent presentations of the 2007 Heritage Awards by the Rehua Marae and the Shirley/Papanui Community Board. Of the eleven awards given, six went to St Albans and five to Papanui. We would like to congratulate the following people:

- ◆ Amberlee Allison and Andrew Pengelly at 247 Edgeware Road (Good Caretaker)
- ◆ Joanne and Gareth Grigg at 59A Cleveland Street (Conservation and Restoration)
- ◆ Nicki and Kane Dewar at 26 Cleveland Street (Retention)
- ◆ Amanda Vale and Judd Stanton at 41 Gosset Street (Retention)
- ◆ Packe Street Community Gardens (Cultural and Spiritual)
- ◆ Noeleen and Michael Clarke at 48 Caledonian Road and 137 Springfield Road were the Supreme winners for their cottages built in 1878 and 1910. They are now used as boutique accommodation providing a viable and appropriate use for these outstanding examples of workers cottages.

The awards were presented at a ceremony on 27th July at the Rehua Marae by Terry Ryan and Myra Barry. The judging panel included Amanda Ohs, Heritage Planner, CCC; Jenny May, Heritage Management Services Ltd and Dr. Terry Ryan, Rehua Marae.



The award was made of a unique piece of heritage itself: a tile from the old roof of Christchurch's Cathedral

Christoph Hensch



48 Caledonian Road

Heritage - who is it for?

Just recently during a bitterly cold winter week, I have been taking part in some heritage appreciation activities. The Council and the NZ Historic Places Trust had organised a very full programme of heritage events and talks around the city. I went to a few, but it was probably the experience of looking anew at heritage buildings and sites that got me thinking about what heritage really means.

For anyone under 30, heritage probably doesn't mean a great deal, but as the years flow on, the past takes on a greater significance. Many buildings, landscapes, and sites play a valuable part in defining our individual and collective histories. People remember the holiday spots and venues that they used to go to, the schools they attended, the buildings they passed on the way to and from work... when these start to change or even possibly disappear it becomes as if part of one's memories also disappear...

The landscape also alters. The streams are trapped underground, the roads become wider, more crowded and less pedestrian-friendly, roadside trees grow or are chopped down, parks gain new equipment and playing fields, and the city itself expands into the countryside. Natural heritage often changes and disappears unless there are determined attempts by communities for environmental preservation and restoration.

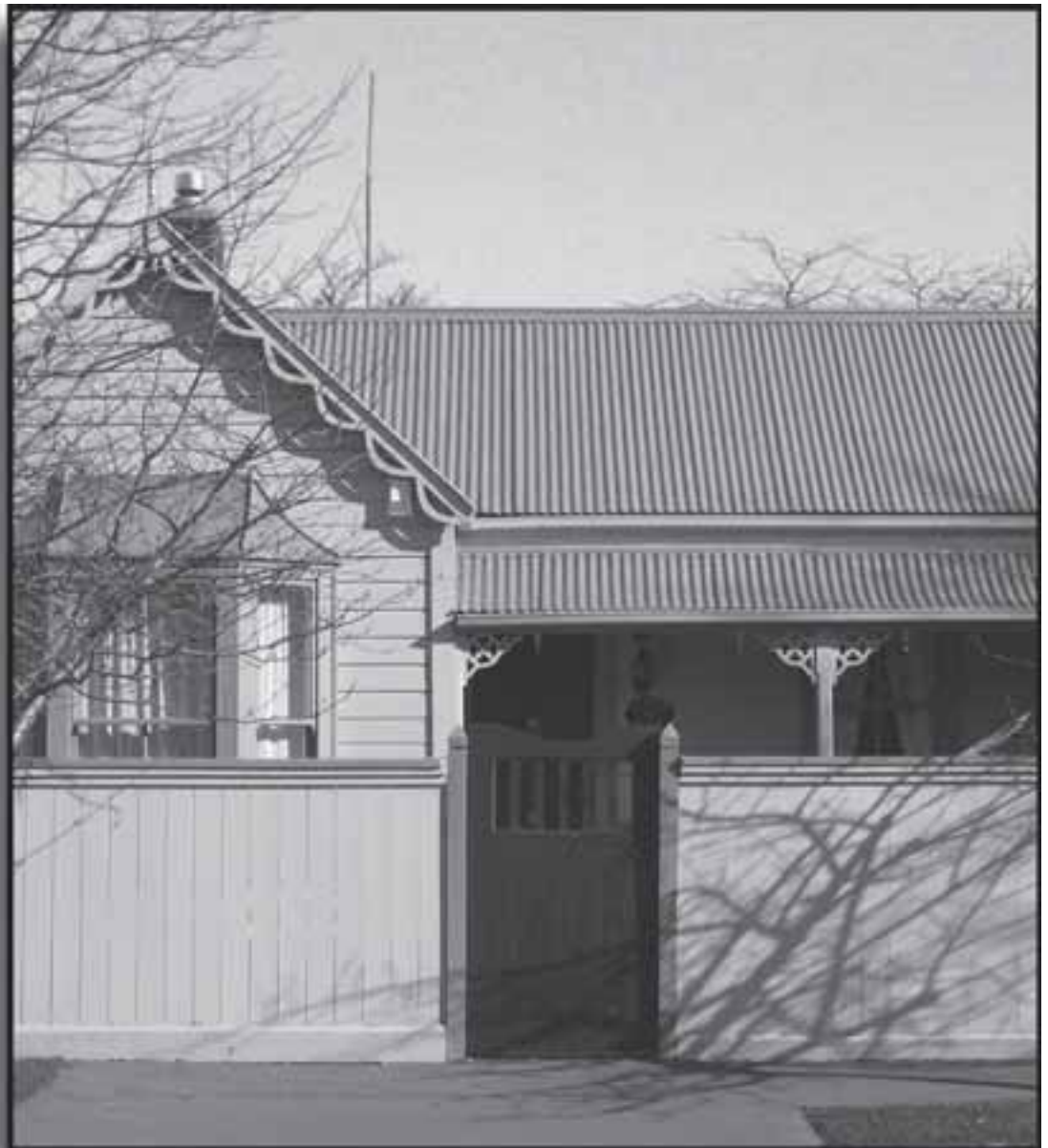
Public buildings such as council chambers, libraries, museums, schools all play a significant part in preserving heritage that they embody a culture as well as a history. Many of these organisations formally or informally promote heritage. One of the ways they advocate for

heritage is by the means of plans.

However, plans themselves—talking of future action and management—are somewhat sterile and lack the living vitality of existing heritage. It is difficult for many people to relate to a management plan, or to a candidate for local council that says heritage is important, when heritage is threatened almost everyday.

Is there some way of marrying the two aspects of heritage: the daily appreciation and use of our shared cultural and environmental heritage; and the future management and promotion of it? And that is where the heritage weeks and historic walks and talks come in—the events which bring alive the histories of places and people. Go out and enjoy some heritage now while you can.

Doug Craig



137 Springfield Road

Canterbury District Health Board

Sorry! One More Thing You Have to Think about before the Election!

There is no shortage of opinions on what ails the public health system, and a great deal of media space is devoted to the issue of how to fix it, with the District Health Boards (DHBs) usually in the firing line. The word DHB, at least if we are to believe what we see on TV's Shortland St, conjures up an unfortunate image of heartless corporate types clutching tightly to designer briefcases and the funding therein!

In order to check out the origins of this stereotype and become better informed, I recently trawled the Canterbury District Health Board website. (www.cdhb.govt.nz) 'Trawled' is the appropriate word, because what I found was an incredibly complex organization and a huge amount of detailed information. For those of you interested in examining health issues more closely, I must say it is a very well-organized and easily accessible site, with excellent site maps, profiles and diagrams.

Here then, is some of the basic information about what our DHB is and how it works. First, its structure: There are 21

DHBs in NZ, which were set up in 2001. Canterbury is the largest in terms of area. It services a population of 464,700, and is responsible for a staff of 8000. The District Health Boards can have up to 11 members, 7 elected by the public (Note to self—VOTE before 13th October!!) and up to 4 appointed by the Minister of Health.

Did you know these facts from 'a week in our life' ... again from the website?

48,000 people visit their GP
 \$1,960,000 worth of prescriptions are dispensed
 1,500 people attend the Emergency Department, of which 710 are admitted
 1,560 people are discharged from hospital, of which 1260 are admitted with acute problems
 280 have elective surgery
 There's a lot more.....

There are three advisory committees to the board:

1. The Community and Public Health Committee advises on priorities on health spending. This is combined with the Disability Support

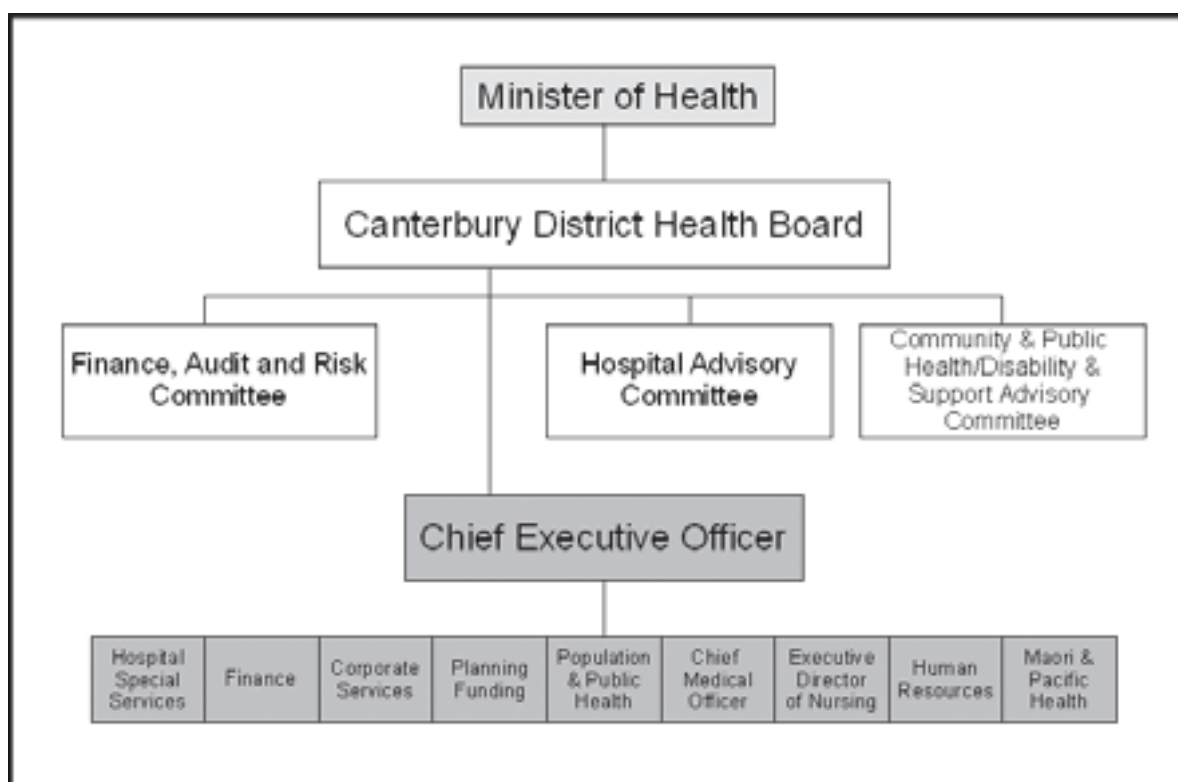
Advisory Committee, which promotes the inclusion and participation of the disabled in society, and seeks to maximize their independence.

2. The Hospitals' Advisory Committee monitors financial and operational performance of the 14 hospitals the Board owns, and assesses strategic issues.

3. The Finance, Audit and Risk Committee, is designed to ensure strong governance and oversight of the financial health of the CDHB. (Maybe these are the scary guys!)

The members of these committees are appointed—some are Board members and some are suitably-qualified members of the public.

The whole system is run by the Chief Executive and his Management Team. It is important to realize that Board members DO NOT manage the CDHB. To illustrate this point, the Board does not have a role in employment decisions, and by law cannot interfere in matters relating



to individual employees. For example, if something goes wrong in the Emergency Department at Christchurch Hospital, they can't jump straight in and fix it, much to the frustration of the public.

The role of the elected Board is one of much broader scope, which according to their mission statement is as follows: "To improve, promote and protect the health of people in the community and foster the well-being and independence of people with disabilities and reduce disparities."

This is to be achieved by two planning documents:

- a) The Annual Plan. This is a negotiated document between the Board and the Minister of Health, supported by a Statement of Intent and a Funding Agreement. It sets out the operational plan for the whole district for the year. Did you know that the annual funding is \$1 billion?!
- b) The Quality Strategic Plan 2007-2010. This is the biggie! It has and I quote "One vision, five goals, and 25 priorities." This is a quite complex discussion document for the future, but it's worth outlining the five goals which are:

To continuously improve

- the safety of patients
- systems and processes
- practices
- relationships and partnerships
- the health of consumers

This is the long-term planning document designed to deal with all the really big issues such as long waiting lists, the efficiency of the Emergency Department (ED), staffing levels and so on.

Are there opportunities for public involvement in the Canterbury District Health Board? The answer is definitely "YES."

First, you can read as much as possible about issues and candidates and vote before 13th October. Make your own views known through emails to candidates and letters to the editor.

Second, you can contribute your ideas to the CDHB Quality Strategic Plan, mentioned above. This is a 'living' document, which means that it's continually changing and growing. You can read it online or access a copy at Princess Margaret Hospital, and there is a Feedback Form available to use for your submission.

Third, you can attend monthly CDHB meetings as an observer. Most meetings are open to the public and are notified in the Public Notices column of all major newspapers, or from the Board website. Meetings for the rest of this year are on: 7th September; 12th October; 9th November; and 14th December, and normally start at 9 a.m. They are held at Princess Margaret Hospital, on Level 3 of H Block. For more information contact Liz Beaven on ph: 3644144 or liz.beaven@cdhb.govt.nz.

Finally, I want to go back to a word we seem to use a lot when talking about Local Government, and that is complexity. We often wonder why things that are seriously wrong can't be fixed immediately, but if we consider the sheer size of the organization, it is hardly surprising.

Nevertheless, most people agree that our health system is in dire straights. My own view is that it's a long, long way from flashy PowerPoint presentations to urgently needed changes on the ground. Mission statements, visions, and endless reporting and presentation of the facts are all very well but when I vote, I'll be considering who will be committed to goals that are practical, achievable in the near future and endorsed by those working at the coal face.

Maxine Feutz



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AUTHORISED BY YVONNE PALMER, 124 Harewood Rd, Christchurch.

two ticks for super chicks

Shirley Papanui Community Board

Gabrielle Stewart ✓

Pauline Cotter ✓

2021

authorised by G Stewart & P Cotter
1/573 Maitland St, Chch.

VOTE TRACEY DORREEN

CHRISTCHURCH 2021
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Authorised by Tracey Dorreen, 34 Hammersley Avenue, Christchurch 8013.

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Cr. Norm Withers

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Authorised by Norm Withers, 16 Kimberley St, Christchurch 8051

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Darel HALL – Council Candidate

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One third happy with Council

Only a third of us are happy with how the Council interacts with us according to the Council's report on itself. This is because Councillors don't front up to the people. In recent weeks we have seen council staff as the chief defenders of rates rises, Hills Road bus boarders and now the demolition of the Stewart Fountain.

Edgeware Pool

What struck me when the Edgeware Pool debacle unfolded was the absence of the Councillors. It's not good enough for Councillors to vote for a community facility to be destroyed and then change their mind when elections roll around.

It's not good enough that Councillors expect the community to 100% fund a new facility they voted to take away from us. I and your Shirley – Papanui team can do better than that. This may mean secure land tenure, it may mean a contribution to match donated funds, but you know we'll genuinely try and we will front up to the community.

Hills Road

The Council is spending a six figure sum on the Hills Road bus boarders in a failed experiment on top of the earlier failed experiment. Once again Council staff are defending this Council decision and the responsible Councillors are absent from the debate.

If I am elected to Council, staff will be respected advisors but I will advocate positions and defend my decisions.

Darel HALL – background

I am used to changing public policy and I want to do that for our community. As the University of Canterbury Students' Association President in 1998 – 1999 I led a vigorous campaign that made the cost of tertiary education a top election issue and resulted in a much fairer loan system.



In the last five years, particularly as Executive Director of the Industry Training Federation, I have led the charge to bring back apprenticeships.

My governance and advisory board experience includes the University Council, Canterbury Student Broadcasting, President University Sport New Zealand, UBS Canterbury Ltd, Tertiary Teaching Excellence Awards Advisory Panel, United Kingdom Sector Skills Development Agency's International Panel, and Ako Aotearoa – the National Centre for Tertiary Teaching Excellence governance board.

Your Shirley – Papanui team is Pauline Cotter, John Marshall, Gabrielle Stewart, Tracey Doreen, and Matt Morris.

Authorised by David Close, 8 Seafield Place, Christchurch 8062





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A Charming Villa in St Albans

Dulux has been kind to this charming villa (possibly painted Creamy Dream with just a splash of Vermouth). BUT WHERE IS IT? One only, very tasty prize, heart ticks not guaranteed, from St Albans News HQ (the Community Centre!)...first in, first served!

Clues for super sleuths as follows:

1. Reading Agatha Christie and owning 3rd edition Collins dictionary, see p.498 will not be a handicap.
2. The street name starts with F(that most dubious of letters).
3. It is also “the site of a castle and was the residence of Scottish kings between the 11th and 14th centuries.”(dic.)
4. It’s within the Hills Rd/Innes Rd boundary back to Edgeware.

5. Up behind it is a new place with a flash window—an atrium perhaps—on the top floor.

6. There is a stylised tulip motif on the stained glass windows (one of them facing the other way).

7. Elaborate gable fretwork with wires snaking everywhere, and pruned roses in the garden. Outside, there is a drum belonging to Eastern bins which could disappear at any time.

8. A gloved and neatly-coiffed woman doing something illicit with her secateurs. She is only there to mislead you. I have never set eyes on the owner but hope he or she is flattered if there is an accidental likeness (anyone should be proud to claim that hair).

Cheers, and good luck.

Hilaire Campbell



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Community fundraising for new pool at Edgware

Community fundraising is underway for the new pool at Edgware. The local community is keen to rebuild a facility on the currently dormant site, for the use and benefit of the whole community.

Some of the current Councillors are supportive of doing this, as long as the community can raise the funds! Rosemary Soryl, who is organizing some grassroots community fundraising, hopes that the Council will see what efforts the community has gone through to ensure the site at Edgware is kept for the benefit of all.

So, to show your support, get involved – make a dona-

tion, help out, make the project happen!

Check out the website www.stalbans-pavilionandpool.org.nz.

The next fundraising activities are: a large garage sale, Saturday 1st Sept, St Matthews, Cranford St (next to English Park); and a crop planting, Sunday 2nd Sept, in the Edgware Pool carpark.

Donation box street appeal is also coming up.

For more information, please contact Rosemary on 3563166 or at

yorosoryl@paradise.net.nz Let's do it!

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Dr. Geoff Mehrtens B.V.Sc

St Albans Tennis Club
 Summer season starts 8 September
 Senior tennis from 2 pm every Saturday
 Children's registration 8 + 15 September 1-2 pm
New members are welcome
 Social tennis to suit everyone
 New senior members get 4 free lessons
 School holiday programme 24 September to 5 October
 For more information contact John Laffey 351-2992 or
 Brian Wyatt 365-3848 or visit us at our Dover St courts
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St Albans News Classifieds

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Accountant: Working from home in St Albans area. Self employed accounts, rental properties, GST and tax returns etc. Excellent references available. Phone Susan Ayton on 980-7334 or email taxayton@paradise.net.nz

Babysitting. \$12 per hour. Phone 356 1353

Bricklayer available for bbq's, fences, planters, blockwork, etc. phone Jeremy 942-7195

Celebrant available for your marriage, civil union, or other ceremony. Ruth Gardner, phone 03 365-6943, www.ruth.org.nz

Electrical: Bright Sparks Electrical Ltd. Registered tradesmen. Call Peter at 027-572-8864 or 382-5824 (after hours)

Hairdresser - fully qualified for haircuts, perms, & sets in your own home. Phone Theresa 352-8208 or 027-221-8616

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

Housecleaning - regular or casual \$13 per hour. Phone 356 1353

Painting & Decorating - Qualified Tradesman, 20 years experience. Internal/external plastering. Free quotes. Locally based. Ph Mark on 355-7670 or 0274 343 300

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

St Albans Osteopathy - best for back and neck pain. Philip Bayliss has 21 years experience. ACC registered. After-hours emergencies. 43 Thames Street, 356 1353.

TUITION

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

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

FOR SALE

Antique Oak Wardrobe, free standing full length mirror draw \$500
ONO ph 03 313 9459, 027 4325 0478

WANTED

Choral director, now back in Christchurch seeks small group of singers who would welcome some help. 25+ years experience. Phone Liz on 355-3937 or leave a message

Part time sales and data entry person. Hours negotiable. Should have good telephone manner. Contact Andrew or Linda at Edgware Mowers 366 3924

Playing the Guitar - Blues, Jazz, Bossa - When I was half as old as I am now I was quite good at it. I am looking for other musicians to pick up again. Stafan, Phone 942 1314

Wanted to Hire - Garage or storage area readily accessible from the road. Preferred location within 1/2 km radius of top of Colombo Street. Phone Tony 930 1323 or 021 117 2790

Working from home ?

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email stann@stalbens.gen.nz or 'phone 379 6305

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The St Albans Community Market

at English Park, Cranford Street

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up to 40 stalls selling plants, fruit & vegetables, cakes, crafts, collectables, household goods & much more
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St Albans Neighbourhood News ten years ago

In memory of John Wardle 5 February 1950 - 8 September 1997



John Wardle - looking after St Albans



<above> Planting of John's memorial tree in 1997

<left> The tree today; Grown well and strong, just like St Albans.



The flag flew at half mast at Edgeware on Thursday 11th September 1997 as St Albans people said their last goodbyes to John Wardle.

In his short life, John did much more for St Albans than anyone I know. I cannot add more to this eloquent tribute published in the September 1997 issue of this newspaper:

“When John died on the 8th September, we lost a friend, a mentor, a colleague and a special and trusted voice over the phone. Douceline and Emma have lost a loving husband and a devoted Dad.

For St Albans, John was an inspirational man who was the driving force behind a number of initiatives that have reached thousands of people who would hardly know where they had come from. STANN was one of these initiatives. When we first discussed the idea of a local community newspaper, in 1993, we had a

group of 5 people, and between us had the resources - in particular, a printer and a typesetter - to start something. But it was John who steered the direction of the STANN philosophy - the ‘Promoting good community with accessible, honest, nonprofit, communication’. John taught us that by maintaining open lines of communication, we could strengthen the community. That changes for the better, started from the home and in the suburb.

John was born with the genetic condition of severe haemophilia and he was not expected to survive childhood. Joint damage caused chronic arthritis resulting in long term pain, and John spent much of his life confined to a wheelchair. In 1984 John found out he was HIV positive, the result of a transfusion.

While many see severe physical disabilities and isolation as insurmountable barriers, John simply responded to the situation by moving the community he loved to serve into his living room.

John's sense of community and common sense approach to community development was inspirational. His ability to develop practical projects which made a real difference at the grassroots, is legendary.

John, Douceline and Emma's home became like a community development cottage. It was a place where like-minded people could come and talk and dream and a place from which a stream of practical projects sprang. Among them was PLEBS, a community based barter and trade system which created work and opportunity for those who had none. Then came Community Services Trust, a means of stretching scarce community funding by decreasing costs. STANN came next, to be followed by the NeighbourNet and Neighbourboard. John also served the community as President of the Canterbury Arthritis Society.

Where many others of us would begin and end a conversation with the same idle talk about what's wrong and what ‘they’ should do about it, John's catch phrase was ‘let's do it’.

John we remember you as a friend, an inspiration, a mentor and a man who enriched the lives of all who were privileged to meet you.

Your wisdom, philosophy, wit and gentleness will be a guiding light for our future.

Close friends and relatives say goodbye to John Wardle as his ashes were buried in Abberley Park.

Councillor Garry Moore organised a Chinese Ginkgo to be planted in Abberley Park, in memory of all the good work John had done for St Albans.”

Dafyd