



## NEWSLETTER NO. 3, December 2011

Civic Trust Auckland

P O Box 74 049 Greenlane 1546

cta@civictrustauckland.org.nz

www.civictrustauckland.org.nz

*This is the third newsletter for the current calendar year and has been drafted by Munroe with additional input from Audrey.*

### AGM

We appreciated the support members showed by attending the AGM on 5 November. The business of the meeting included a series of slides accompanying Allan's president's report and was followed by Peter's enjoyable and informative presentation about his train station (photo next page).

If you didn't pay your subscription at the AGM or shortly beforehand, your sub is now due. Please refer to the last page of the newsletter.

*The winner of a copy of Coolangatta, offered to members for renewing their membership for two years, was Frances Gale.*

### The Auckland Plan

Submissions to the Auckland (Spatial) Plan and the associated City Centre Master Plan, Waterfront Plan and Economic Development Strategy closed on 31 October and totalled over 2,500.

CTA submitted on the spatial plan and Allan spoke to this at a hearing on 29 November. (Refer to the CTA website for our submission.) We will see what the final versions of the plans will say in February, their outcomes intending to make Auckland the world's most liveable city by 2040.

The next workstream is the Unitary Plan, for which submissions will be called in 2013. CTA will be working with other heritage groups for a good outcome for heritage in this plan.

### Board Members 2011-2012

Allan Matson (president)

Audrey van Ryn  
(vice-president & secretary)

Peter Macky (treasurer)

Margaret Barriball

Helen Geary

Munroe Graham

Jim Mason

Julian Mitchell

Gary Russell

Carol Sanders

### AGM - 5 November 2011



l-r Peter, Audrey & Allan - photo Munroe Graham

### Civic Trust Auckland Seminar

*Auckland Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan*

**Tuesday 17 January 7-9pm, Kinder House, 2 Ayr St, Parnell**

**See page 3 for more details**



photos Roy Clements



## Auckland Rail Loop

Mayor Len Brown has been a keen supporter of the proposed loop from Britomart to Mt Eden, which has been under discussion at various times from at least the 1920s. There was support for this important urban rail concept in the lead up to the election from the Greens and Labour.

The government on the other hand, in a strange 1950s time warp, has promised only to fund the so called "holiday highway" north from Puhoi to Wellsford.

Meantime in Los Angeles, the world epicentre of road-based planning 60 years ago (and from where Auckland's 1940s motorway design proposals were rubber stamped in the De Leuw Cather report), there are active measures to extend urban rail. Many other American cities have followed suit.

Auckland is almost unique in the developed world in being excessively car-centred in its urban transport, a situation which will become untenable in the medium to long term.

## Toxic Paradise

There have been a number of stories in the news during the year, including special coverage by the Herald, over the fact that most Auckland waterways are polluted, as are many beaches within the region. Headlines in the Herald have included: **Up the Creek** – referring to Puhinui

*Peter Macky's 19th century train station, the Kaiser Bahnhof, built for Kaiser Wilhelm II at Halbe near Berlin. Peter reports there has been good progress this year, with new windows at first floor, rebuilt towers and the exterior brickwork having been repointed (see inset).*



Stream as being possibly Auckland's dirtiest waterway; **Streams of filth mar a green and pleasant land** - referring to New Zealand's rural waterways - 90% of our low-land rivers are classed as polluted, along with nearly half of our lakes; and **Kaipara facing ecological crisis**.

NBR NZ Property investor headlined that commissioners at Environment Canterbury are set to approve, to the dismay of environmental groups, a 20% increase in nutrient loading for the Hurunui River, at the request of NZ Dairy.

This is symptomatic of a decades long trend of rural local authorities bending to big business advocates, just as their urban counterparts are more and more developer led.

Why is livestock permitted direct access to waterways? Why is dairy farm runoff not more rigorously controlled and why are there no treed or planted buffer zones between waterways and open grazing areas?

Is the new, predominantly urban oriented Auckland Council capable of addressing these important rural issues?

New Zealand in general and Auckland in particular can never obtain or retain "world-class" status when their greatest asset, the magnificent natural environment, is allowed to deteriorate.

## Clean-up Plan for van Damm's Lagoon

Civic Trust Auckland and Panmure Community Action Group member Roy Clements is reported as being at the forefront of attempts to clean up this sadly polluted lagoon near Triangle Road, to the west of Panmure Basin. It also suffers from flooding and rat infestation is destroying wildlife.

The news is not all bad, however, as some funding will be forthcoming from Auckland Transport under the nearby AMETI roading project, but not before 2014.



Stormwater outlet Panmure Basin - photo Munroe Graham

## City Bonus Points for Higher Density Site Development Not Policed

Brian Rudman of the Herald has highlighted the unsatisfactory situation where the extent of certain developments has been permitted in the past, subject to providing for public amenity of various kinds, such as allowing greater site building ratios, and subsequently that amenity has been replaced in favour of more commercially profitable uses.

For example, a crèche is being lost in the ANZ building on Albert/Swanson corner. Another crèche had been lost in the Fay Richwhite building on Queen/Wyndham some years ago at the late design stage.

Another more recent example is the story concerning the Queen's Head Tavern on the corner of Mayoral Drive and Queen Street, where the building owners now wish to demolish the NZHPT registered façade in a high density shopping mall reconfiguration. In that instance the original extent of development was permitted on the basis of retaining the Queen's Head façade.

These cases and others like them raise the question: are the conditions of consent being monitored and enforced, and, if not, why not?

## Getting our Rubbish Sorted

**Tuesday 17 January 7-9pm, Kinder House**

Aucklanders have a unique opportunity to have their say on a major resource management issue that affects us all, through submissions on the Council's Auckland Draft Waste Management and Minimisation Plan.

It's not really waste - it's resources that we are land filling by the thousands of tons each day. How can we move beyond a "wasteful" mindset and get our rubbish sorted?

Landfills are extremely expensive to build, impossible to find a new site for, ticking time bombs in the environment and represent the dead-ending of our resources.

The Plan aims to reduce waste by 30% per person by 2018 and also indicates that wasted materials can be turned into new products, jobs or resources through a network of resource recovery centres.

The speaker will be Diane Winder, whose presentation will include how to make submissions on the Plan, followed by an interactive discussion.

*Diane is a member of the Auckland Community Zero Waste Alliance and a trustee of the Sustainable North Trust. She is past National Vice-President of the United Nations Association of NZ, and delegate to the UN DPI/NGO Conference on Climate Change.*

## Drury Heritage

Munroe Graham has noted that on 1st May next year the 150th year anniversary will occur celebrating the first railway in the North Island and one of the earliest to be constructed in New Zealand. This was a timber built horse tramway, linking a coal mine east of Drury in the Hunua foothills with the port, which then operated from the eastern bank of the Ngakora Stream (now obliterated by the motorway).

The railway is important in heritage terms in being constructed so early during the colonial era and it served the first coalmine to be discovered near Auckland. Neither the railway nor the mine itself lasted long, but the tramway led directly to the construction of a rail link from Auckland to Drury and this in turn led to the construction of the North Island main trunk line.

It is hoped that a plaque can be made and unveiled in order to commemorate this important event.

## The High Cost of Building Safety Save money rather than Lives!

This appears to be the message from the Governor of the Reserve Bank, who has urged against "regulatory over-reaction" to the Canterbury earthquake, as reported in the Herald by Brian Fallow.

It is true that throughout New Zealand and particularly in Auckland, there are so many older buildings which come nowhere near current earthquake building standards, but they would be in danger of suffering major structural damage, even collapse, in the event of anything more than a fairly mild earthquake. As a consequence, it is apparent that the New Zealand economy would be virtually bankrupted if a significant earthquake occurred, for example, in Auckland. Fortunately the risk in Auckland appears relatively low, although a study of tortured landforms in various places and fault lines within the Hunuas confirms that the Auckland area is not without some risk.

Older building stock, particularly where it is of heritage quality, needs to be retained. True, immediate upgrading of all buildings within a short period of time is totally beyond the capacity of the economy and of most building owners. However, there are incentives in place to suggest that some action will be forthcoming. Such buildings are becoming harder and harder to lease and property values in those instances are accordingly dropping.

There is accordingly an incentive for the property owners to do something about it. The local authority will be affected by dropping rating values and lower rating income should also therefore provide some incentive to encourage structural upgrading. Taxation authorities should consider such upgrading in the same light as repairs and maintenance, rather than capital outlay. This would provide a further incentive to building owners. Finally, and particularly in the case of heritage buildings, there should be a fairly lenient period during which necessary upgrading should be undertaken and some financial assistance should come from either the local authority and/or government. Wellington has passed through this phase fairly well some decades ago. Auckland is largely sitting on its hands.

The safety of people surely must be paramount, yet there is overwhelming evidence of a need for retention of older buildings, where they represent an element of character within the urban environment. We cannot do nothing, as has been essentially the case virtually throughout New Zealand (but not Wellington) since the great Wellington earthquake of 1855. There must be a sensible middle way which can be made both affordable and timely for Auckland and smaller cities elsewhere. Discovering the size of the problem might be a good way to start.

## A Toast to Heritage

If you missed our event in the Auckland Heritage Festival in September you can still do the self-guided walk any time you like. The brochure and a brief write-up about the event are on the CTA website in the Events section. If you would like a hard copy of the brochure, email the secretary on [cta@civictrustauckland.org.nz](mailto:cta@civictrustauckland.org.nz)



## In Memoriam

We were sad to note the deaths in the latter part of this year of several people associated with the Trust.

**Sheila Weight**, who served in the RAF in WWII and was a One Tree Hill Councillor and a JP, died in July. She was involved with a great number of community groups and organised CTA's extensive members' programme.



Sheila Weight - photo Roy Clements

**Graham Stevens** also died in July, aged 68. Graham was of invaluable assistance to the Trust as our honorary solicitor, especially following the Trust's years in recess, as regards matters of our constitution.

**Elise Lello**, one of the Trust's life members, died in November. She and her husband Jack were part of the group responsible for bringing the Trust out of recess.

## Auckland Conversations

Auckland Council continues to run its interesting series of presentations by international experts on a wide variety of subjects, including urban design, heritage and the environment. A number of our members attend these informative sessions. Some past Conversations are available on the Council website. Some key points from recent Conversations are below.

### Creating a City for People - Jan Gehl

- We lost our head and thought that city planning was to make the cars happy
- Auckland needs to reduce the amount of space for cars
- Building more roads doesn't get rid of congestion
- Improve urban quality and people will come, and that's good for the economy
- Improve places for cycling and cyclists will come
- Good public space and good public transport are good brothers and sisters
- Architecture is about the interaction between form and life
- There is a need to survey and document how the city is used by people
- Cities can adopt a walking policy: to do everything to make people want to walk
- The human side of planning needs to become a major focus

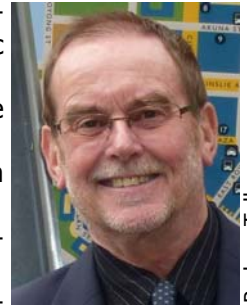


Jan Gehl - Photo - Gene Driskell

### Striding Out in Auckland - Rodney Tolley

- Everybody walks - every journey has a walking component
- There is much more to walking than walking: there is meeting, sitting, playing, etc
- When a street is filled with walkers the environment automatically becomes more benign: it is safer for everybody, cars slow down, crime is less likely
- You can't have liveability without walkability
- Walkability, in the minds of real estate agents, is a commodity that can be sold
- Car parking is of less significance to local retail activity than is often thought
- A high proportion of all retail experience comes from local residents and workers

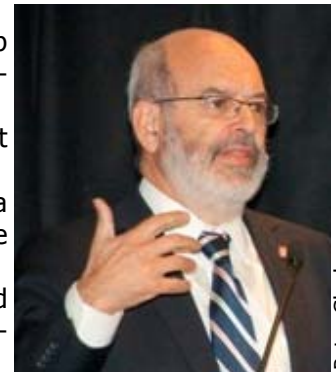
- A good walking environment is a good economic environment
- The slower we travel, the more we spend
- You can't have tourism without walking
- You can't have health without walking
- You can't have public transport without walking



Rodney Tolley

### Innovation Through Science - Peter Gluckman

- Economic prosperity, social development and environmental protection are intimately intertwined
- NZ has poorly invested in science and undervalued intellectuals
- NZ badly needs a world-class school of industrial design
- We need to bring the creative arts and sciences together
- We need more science graduates
- We need to change the way we teach science in schools
- Businesses and universities need to talk more together
- Local government must take a role in encouraging and supporting scientific innovation
- The Auckland Plan needs a specific strategy to support innovation in science
- The Wynyard Quarter could become a technology precinct
- Auckland must announce itself as a knowledge-based city
- We need to keep knowledge-based companies in NZ
- We need to attract more multi-nationals
- There needs to be a change of image of the scientist in the media
- Science in Auckland needs as much attention as transport



Peter Gluckman

## 2 Walk and Cycle 2012 Conference

The inaugural National Walking and Cycling Conference will be held 22 - 24 February in Hastings, at the Hawke's Bay Opera House.

The combined conference will replace the cycling and walking conferences, which have been held individually and biennially in the past. and will allow representatives from both sectors to tackle shared barriers and challenges.

Bikes will be available for delegates to ride to and from the conference, in order to give them first-hand experience of cycleways and other initiatives in Hastings.

[www.2walkandcycle.org.nz](http://www.2walkandcycle.org.nz)

## Christchurch Civic Trust

The CCT is looking for support for their online petition to stop the ongoing destruction of heritage buildings in their city in the wake of the earthquakes. A link to their [petition](#) is on their website: <http://www.christchurchcivictrust.org.nz> in the Current Issues section.

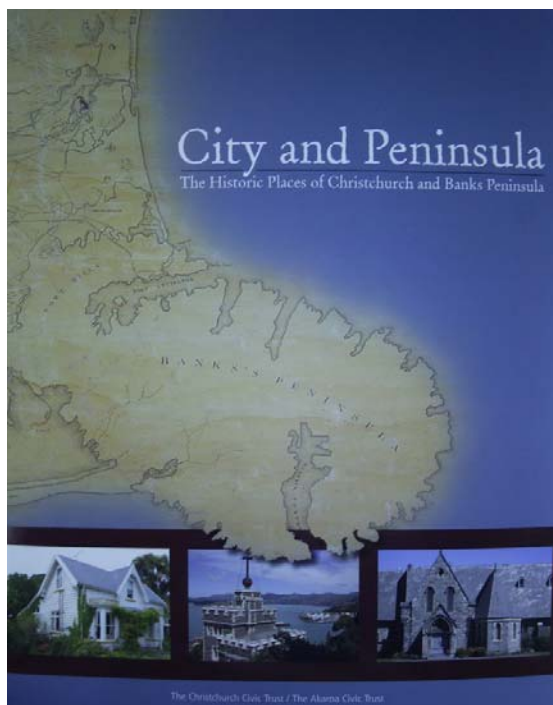
The CCT is raising funds for their Trust and the Akaroa Civic Trust by selling reprints of *City and Peninsula*, first published in 2007 to coincide with the UNESCO World Heritage Conference held that year in Christchurch. The book is only available from the CCT. It is the most up-to-date record of many heritage buildings pre-earthquake.

Online payments can be made to the CCT bank account 03-1351-0519933-03 - including your name as a reference, then email [secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz](mailto:secretary@christchurchcivictrust.org.nz) with your address for postage.. Or post a cheque to Christchurch Civic Trust, P O Box 1927, Christchurch 8140. *\$50 + \$10 postage and packaging*

From the foreword:

*When the Christchurch and Akaroa Civic Trusts co-operated in 2007 to publish the first edition of this book their goals were to show off the region's rich heritage to visitors from overseas and to encourage local people to make more vigorous efforts to protect that heritage.*

*We little dreamt that four years later we would be publishing a second edition of the book with an entirely different purpose –as a record of heritage that has been almost entirely lost.*

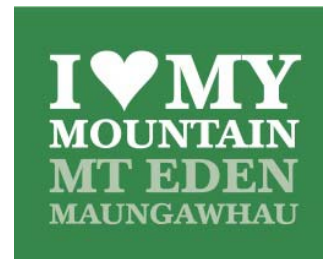


## More Greens in Government

We look forward to environmental issues coming more to the fore with the increase of Green Party MPs following the elections, in particular in relation to the built environment.

There are now 14 Green MPs in parliament, six of them being new MPS. The Greens percentage of the party vote was 11.1%, this after 12 years in parliament.

## Friends of Maungawhau



Love Your Mountain Day on Sunday 4 December suffered one of the first of the very wet days of this summer and so there were very few people braving the soggy maunga.

There was still a good number for the tours of Government House garden - 60 on one tour - and those who came to see the displays in the kiosk - including one by CTA - enjoyed the variety of musical performances throughout the day.

Love Your Mountain Day is an annual event in early December and this was the fifth time it was held. Watch out for it next year.

*See page 8 for a book about another maunga that Friends of Maungawhau are promoting.*

Maungawhau on December 4 - photo - April Glenday



## Help Save the Matakana Estuary

This beautiful sheltered estuary within the Hauraki Gulf Marine Park is under threat from the construction of a marina.

Sandspit SOS Inc is continuing its efforts to save the estuary from the proposed development by the Sandspit Yacht Club Marina Society.

If the marina were consented, all future generations of wading birds would lose the only high-tide roosting bank in the Matakana Estuary and residents and visitors to Sandspit would no longer be able to enjoy this lovely sight. The birds affected include godwits, pied stilts, banded rails, the NZ dotterel and variable oystercatcher.

More info: [sandspitseden@hotmail.com](mailto:sandspitseden@hotmail.com)  
[www.sandspit.org](http://www.sandspit.org)



Godwits

## Mining on Conservation Land

*Media release 15 Dec from ECO - eco.org.nz*

A group of environmental organisations that last year successfully defended national parks from mining is asking the government to keep its promise to give NZers a say about a new plan to mine conservation land on the Denniston Plateau.

The 2precious2mine coalition wants Conservation Minister Kate Wilkinson to allow public submissions for a 160-hectare open-cast coal mine on the wild, unique Denniston Plateau on the West Coast.

"Last year 50,000 people marched up Queen Street to stop mining on conservation land," Greenpeace spokesperson Steve Abel said. "We feel just as strongly now, and we'd like a say about the plan to mine Denniston. The government is taking the public for fools by renegeing on its mining promises."

When the government last year reversed its decision to open national parks to mining, it promised that the public would get the right to comment on access agreements for all future significant mine proposals on public land, including conservation land. The proposed mine at Denniston would be the largest open-cast coal mine on public conservation land, and eventually would lead to a 50 per cent increase in New Zealand's coal production. On the first working day after the election, Ms Wilkinson told conservation organisation Forest & Bird that the government will break its promise and will not give New Zealanders a say about the Denniston coal mine.

"Forest & Bird has been protecting our native plants and animals since 1923, and we believe Denniston's special plants and animals within the area are too important to be wiped out by an open-cast coal mine," Forest & Bird Top of the South Field Officer Debs Martin said. "Will New Zealanders need to march again to protect them?"

Coromandel Watchdog members are concerned that the government is signalling a bigger push for mining. "New Zealanders have shown great support for our public conservation land all around the country. We won't allow politicians to forget this," Coromandel Watchdog Secretary Clive Monds said. "The government in 2010 stopped mining on high-value conservation land but now seems to be telling the mining industry to proceed anyway."

Environment and Conservation Organisations of NZ (ECO) co-chair Cath Wallace cannot believe that the Denniston mine could be regarded as not significant. "Refusal to publicly notify the application is a gross breach of the government's commitment. We urge public notification and hearings."

Send an [e-card](#) to John Key asking him to protect the Denniston Plateau  
[forestandbird.org.nz](http://forestandbird.org.nz)



CTA members on the anti-mining march  
photo - Roy Clements

## Subscriptions

To renew your sub, either post a cheque to: Civic Trust Auckland, PO Box 74049 Greenlane, Auckland 1543 or transfer to the Trust's account: 389010 0336852 00. Include your name in the reference field.

Membership categories are:  
Individual (\$30) / Family (\$45) / Student/Senior (\$15)

If you have been forwarded this newsletter and would like to join Civic Trust Auckland, please supply the following information:

Name:

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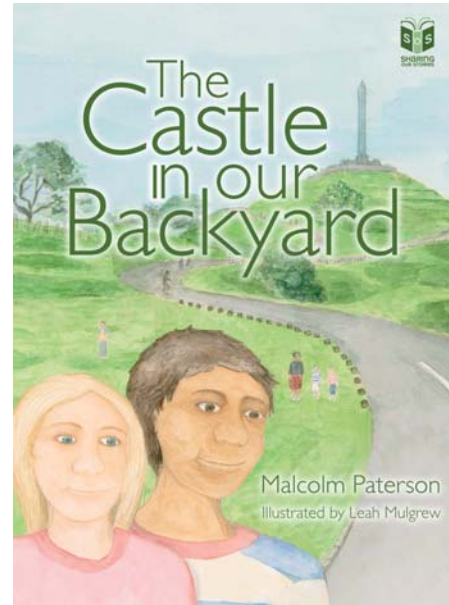
Email:

Phone:

Interests:

Qualifications:

## The Castle in our Backyard



Friends of Maungawhau are selling *The Castle in Our Backyard*, a picture book about discovering Maungakiekie, written by Malcolm Paterson. The storyline and illustrations engage the reader's imagination and bring history to life.

Explore Maungakiekie with Tui and Jennifer as they travel back into its history - meeting the Goddess of Fire, Māori tribes, Chinese gardeners, Sir John Logan Campbell and the tourists of today.

The book is suitable for 8-12 year-olds and available in English or Te Reo for \$20. For further details, please contact [info@maungawhau.co.nz](mailto:info@maungawhau.co.nz)

*Christmas greetings to all our members and supporters and their families.*

## Carols at Kinder House

All CTA members and friends are invited to carol singing at Kinder House on Tuesday 20 and Wednesday 21 December from 7pm. CTA board member Margaret Barriball and friends (see photo) will be leading the singing and on Tuesday Mara Kelland will be playing the harp.

There will be light Christmas refreshments and a raffle for a large Christmas cracker.

