

# MT COOK! MOBILISED

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No 6 - June 2010

Welcome to Mt Cook Mobilised. In this newsletter we urge you to become involved in your suburb, in any way. Join a group or help with community clean-ups or keeping everyone safe. We welcome your input or comment on any issue concerning Mt Cook. Many thanks again to the Southern Cross, 39 Abel Smith St, for sponsoring the printing. Peter Cooke

## THRIVING LOCAL COMMUNITY – T-SHIRTS TO PROVE IT!

For almost three years local residents have initiated a great variety of community activities in Mt Cook, all on a volunteer basis. Mount Cook Mobilised (MCM) began with a large public meeting at the now demolished YMCA in Tasman Street. Then we were discussing the implications for a supermarket at the site – and formed a network to keep locals informed. We communicated with the owners of the prospective New World supermarket (Foodstuffs). We are affiliated to the Newtown Residents Association.

MCM is now a thriving community organisation – with our own T-shirts to prove it. There are many ways you can meet other locals, find out what's going on, and get involved. New people are very, very welcome. Seven main activities are listed:

**Meetings: every six weeks** on a Sunday afternoon, at 4pm. Children are welcome, and meetings are packed with interesting items. Take the chance to get to know your local politicians. Lambton Ward Councillors, Iona Pannett and Ian McKinnon (Deputy Mayor) usually attend – as does Stephanie Cook. Our local MP, Grant Robertson, sometimes joins us. As well, we request presentations from Council and Government officials, with time for our input. These and other topics often feature in our newsletter:

- Supermarket plans on both the Tasman St and John St sites
- Memorial Park plans

- Establishing a children's playground in Mt Cook
- Basin Reserve traffic management
- Adelaide Road & Drummond Street development plans
- Traffic calming in Wallace Street and Bidwill Street
- Astroturf sports ground on Hutchison Rd (Hutchison Park?)
- Toxic waste in the Production Village site
- Civil Defence in our area

Please come and join us.

**Our e-Bulletin** provides brief and newsy e-mail notices, listing activities and local events (like the poetry readings at Ballroom Cafe) and follow-ups after meetings (forums, submissions). Sign up - its the key to being involved and informed.

**Submissions and consultations:** After meetings, we have followed up with submissions, or attended consultative meetings: most recently on the proposed liquor ban extending to Mt Cook and Newtown, streamlining Basin Reserve traffic, District Plan changes, and Massey building plans. With so much development happening in our suburb we feel we are able to have a significant say on how things will impact on us – *and by having a group of us involved the work is shared around.*

**Graffiti removal:** Have you noticed that much of the tagging and unsightly graffiti has been painted over in the last year? Several locals have been onto this with weekend efforts. Marker pen-ink just washes off. Paint



*Happiness at the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding on 9 May between Papawai Reserve Group and WCC. From left: Amber Bill (WCC Parks & Reserves, with son), Susan (the Papawai Reserve Group Coordinator), Cr Ian McKinnon (Deputy Mayor) and Environment Portfolio Leader Cr Celia Wade-Brown. The MoU provides a broad understanding of what each party is responsible for in caring for this special part of the Town Belt. The Papawai Reserve Group has been tending this area for the past two years. Take a walk between Salisbury Terrace and Papawai Terrace to see the plants and stream, noting the growth on the stream edge which provides refuge for the banded kokopu who live in the stream. A sign will be erected at the site soon. A big thank you to WCC for the grant for the sign.*

donated by Resene is also available - for anyone removing graffiti. *Start with your own patch.*

**Papawai Reserve:** Check out the path going between Papawai Terrace and Prince of Wales Park – this is being transformed from a wasteland into an attractive garden with a clean stream (with native fish in it!). Most of the work is done on the second Sunday of every month (10am to 12 noon) by a local volunteer group lead by Susan. We stop mid-morning for a snack, and children are welcome. MCM now has plans for

fruit trees and a community garden – so put on walking shoes and see what we're doing. *Better still come and join us on a Sunday morning.*

**Mini Cookies:** A monthly play group for parents and littlies - a chance to meet others in your community – meets once a month in people's homes. *For details, see the Mini Cookies advert on back page.*

**MCM newsletter:** this is produced by a sub-group of enthusiastic volunteers, and we aim for three issues a year. ►

## FACILITIES & GROUPS STOCKTAKE

Mt Cook Mobilised recently gave feedback to the Wellington City Council Facilities Review. The review covered libraries, swimming pools, community centres and recreation halls. This gave us the idea to do a stocktake of facilities, amenities and group activities in Mt Cook. If you are a member of a group that meets in Mt Cook, please could you let us know. We can put the information on the Mt Cook website, or include it in the newsletter, so that other like-minded people can contact you. You can email us on: [mtcookmobilised@gmail.com](mailto:mtcookmobilised@gmail.com).

Mt Cook Mobilised meets in various locations, but does not have a permanent home. Mini Cookies are also looking for a new home. If you can suggest a meeting place, please get in touch.

We are hoping the new supermarkets will have community noticeboards – that's a start – and possibly a community meeting space. The old Home of Compassion creche on Buckle Street (the yellow brick crenellated building north of the Basin), was identified as a possible community hub on the first Memorial Park plans. Watch this space.

As part of our feedback to the Facilities Review, we suggested

▶ Additional volunteers enjoy the exercise and help deliver 3,000 copies to Mt Cook residents and businesses – *delivering newsletters is a great way to start getting involved.*

We have a wonderfully diverse and interesting community in Mt Cook – and this is a brief outline of the various ways you can be involved – so, as well as reading this newsletter please sign up to the e-bulletin and give your local community a go!! We can assure you that it is fun, easy and always interesting. For more information e-mail us on [mtcookmobilised@gmail.com](mailto:mtcookmobilised@gmail.com)

that Mt Cook needs a paid part-time coordinator to foster community groups in Mt Cook. Other suburbs have Council-paid coordinators, so why should the lack of a community centre building be the barrier to more community participation in Mt Cook? We believe there are large sections of our community who are not catered for (school-age children, elderly people).

Here is a list of the facilities, amenities, meeting spaces and groups in Mt Cook that we know of – so far:

**Parks and Sport** – Prince of Wales Park (2 fields), Tasman St Tennis Courts, Massey's BPM Gym and Recreation Centre, the new astroturf off Hutchison Road (*below, being opened on 24 July*).



**Meeting Spaces** – these may be available by arrangement – Lutheran Church, Seventh Day Adventist Church, Mt Cook Café, Massey (various spaces), The Southern Cross, Thistle Hall, Arlington Community Hall.

**Childcare Centres** - Newtown Kindergarten, Mt Cook Preschool, PolyHigh Childcare Centre, Capital Kids Co-Operative Childcare Centre, Te Kainganui Child Care Centre, WCCCA Early Child Care Centre.

**Groups that we know of so far** - Karate Club, Mini Cookies, Mini Minstrels, Mt Cook Civil Defence, Arlington Resilience Group, Scottish Harriers. As well, Arlington Community Centre groups include a Preschool Play Group, the Monday Club, Plunket Clinics, Hindi classes, the Chinese Choir, Yoga, and English classes for Chinese migrants.

Please help us add to this list!

## LONGER SESSION TIMES A SUCCESS

Newtown Kindergarten in Hospital Road has lengthened its session times to better suit local families. It found this to be a boon for both teachers and children.

Four-year-olds now attend from 8:30am to 2:30pm on Mondays, Tuesdays and Thursdays. Session times for younger children are 8:30am to 12:40pm on Wednesdays and Fridays. Some children attend mornings only but for all five days of the week.

Longer sessions give the children more time to spend on their favourite activities, rather than hurrying from activity to activity. As a result the children are more relaxed. Ratios have also improved to one teacher to ten children, allowing more individual contact time for each child.

Another recent improvement has been the installation of a specialist acoustic ceiling in the main room. This has dramatically cut noise levels, especially on wet days when everyone is inside. The new acoustic ceiling has far exceeded expectations. The children are noticeably calmer and better behaved. They no longer have to raise their voices and compete with each other to be heard, and the teachers no longer suffer noise-induced fatigue.

If you'd like to find out more about Newtown Kindergarten phone 389 8245 or email [newtown@wn-kindergarten.org.nz](mailto:newtown@wn-kindergarten.org.nz)



## BELL ROAD RESERVE

Wellington is a mosaic of little patches of bush tucked away. Within Mt Cook there are many endeavours to restore this bush.

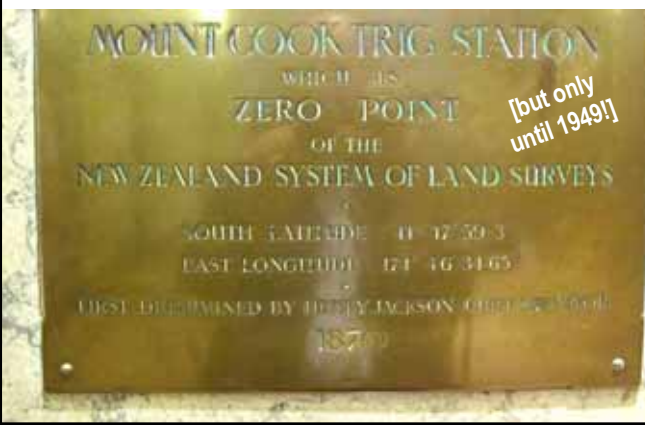
Matu Booth moved to Rolleston Street four years ago and, with permission from WCC, started work on Town Belt bush patches around Prince of Wales Park and the Bell Road Reserve. He says "I came face to face with some of the most impressive cabbage trees I'd come across in Wellington. They looked to be at least 80 years old but almost all of them were blanketed with equally impressive ivy. The immediate effect of killing the ivy was to allow light into the understory. The council offered me great support through Brian Thomas (Park Ranger) and Justin McCarthy (Pest Management) and it was agreed to prioritize the poisoning of established sycamores. The reserve has its fair share of weed issues. The WCC nursery has gifted plants to the reserve over the last two winters and there will be more this winter."

Help out with weeding or planting on the first Sunday of the month from 10am–12 noon.

[Matu1@paradise.net.nz](mailto:Matu1@paradise.net.nz) or phone 973 9780

## CENTRE OF THE KNOWN WORLD

A compass on the floor in the foyer of the 1936 Dominion Museum building (now Massey Wellington) marks the position of the...



## BIDWILL STREET TRAFFIC CHAOS

We reported in our last newsletter that MCM had written to the City Council about the volume and speed of traffic using Bidwill Street daily. Residents of Bidwill Street and MCM representatives subsequently met council staff in April to explain the problem. Council staff were sympathetic to these concerns. Over 3,500 cars use Bidwill Street every day and the street is clearly not designed for this volume of traffic.

Council staff attended the most recent meeting of MCM to report back about what might be possible. A change to a one-way street is not considered either feasible or desirable, given its impact on traffic flows elsewhere in the suburb and Te Aro. Council staff have however agreed to examine changes to other street systems that impact on Bidwill St, such as the Aro-Willis-Webb-Victoria Street intersections, possibly allowing Aro and Willis St traffic to turn east into Webb St.

Other 'traffic calming' ideas will also be considered. These may include trees and berms along the street. However as these would reduce the on-street parking (already an issue for residents), the views of residents will be sought first.

MCM is also aware that the volume of traffic flowing down Bidwill Street presents a danger for pedestrians crossing Wallace Street. On 1 June a child was critically injured after being struck by a car turning right (south) into Wallace Street. MCM has expressed its concern to Council traffic engineers about this latest problem. It is not the first time that pedestrians have been put at risk by cars taking that corner during the pedestrian phase. WCC has undertaken to carry out a safety audit of this intersection in conjunction with reviewing the Police findings from the accident.

We invite feedback from Bidwill Street residents and others interested in finding some solutions to these issues.



**IAN MCKINNON**

Winter arriving is surely appropriate for a positive column. Often we politicians use these columns to persuade readers of our pet complaints. Wellington is not perfect – but let's not overlook the positives.

Here's an important one: the **volunteers and volunteer groups** – you are sure to belong to one. Wellington wouldn't be the city it is without its volunteers, and I thank you all:

In Mt Cook: The Papawai Reserve Group monthly weeding, planting, and generally enhancing the area – *all for the community*. And there are others: those monitoring developments in Mt Cook - the new supermarket in Tasman St; the Memorial Park roading; the Creative Arts building at Massey; the Bidwill St traffic issues – *again: all for the community*.

Volunteer groups are throughout Wellington, including Residents' Associations such as Mt Cook Mobilised which co-ordinates local thinking on a range of issues, and that is helpful to my role, as is its regular email postings compiled by MCM.

Council asks the public to respond on a number of issues and that feedback is valuable but so too is the work of the many volunteers. How Auckland could have headed off Wellington in a recent international 'best city to live in' poll, I can't understand. Our volunteers alone contribute greatly to our quality of life.

Do consider joining a group... and do feel welcome to contact me if I can assist you in any way: [ian.mckinnon@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:ian.mckinnon@wcc.govt.nz).



**IONA PANNETT**

It was great to attend the signing of the Memorandum of Understanding between the Council and Mt Cook residents in May around the Papawai Reserve and to see some progress on making Bidwill Street safer. Longer-term plans to look at the safety of all the roads around Mt Cook will be most welcome. Making all streets safer for residents, particularly vulnerable ones including children and older people, remains a priority for me.

Council will sign off on the Annual Plan (our budget) at the end of June. Over \$10m has been put into Adelaide Road and a significant amount into community facilities. I know that Mt Cook is keen to have its own space and to do some community development work. This presents an exciting opportunity and I look forward to working with the community to make this happen. A proposal to use the historic crèche site by the Basin is a great idea and I hope to see this idea explored further.

We continue to wait to hear about plans for the Basin Reserve and whether a flyover will be built as the Government considers the future of the Memorial Park. I continue to be strongly opposed to the idea of a flyover given the special sporting and heritage status of the Basin site and the very adverse affect of building more roads will have on the inner city and surrounding suburbs. More information can be found at [www.savethebasin.org.nz](http://www.savethebasin.org.nz).

**Cr Iona Pannett**

**384-3382/021-227-8509 or**

**[iona.pannett@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:iona.pannett@wcc.govt.nz)**



**STEPHANIE COOK**

Recently a young man brought a petition to council to plant more edible greenery around the city. Mt Cook Mobilised has looked at the idea for Drummond St, but with not a lot of success. We need to work on council officers a bit more and engage in local community partnerships to make this really work. The more I think about it the more it seems an utterly delightful idea. Imagine fruit trees, berry bushes and other edible plants throughout the city. We already have the olive trees in Mt Victoria and the growth in community gardens shows that there is real interest in being able to source local produce. I'm sure there must be local ecosystems around Wellington that could cope with a real diversity of produce. There are ornamental vegetables, miniature vegetables... the possibilities are endless. Edible plantings in all our public spaces! What about that wonderful old standard that you never see these days, gooseberries! Just imagine being able to wander around the city collecting an abundance of fresh local produce, or simply picking an apple on the way to town. I'm sure we could be a New Zealand first, maybe even a world first! With Wellington having such a challenging topography, individual gardens can often be limited in what they can produce. This idea would give everyone the chance to have a much wider variety of produce than most could individually grow. Edible Wellington – Wow!

**Cr Stephanie Cook**

**[stephanie.cook@wcc.govt.nz](mailto:stephanie.cook@wcc.govt.nz)**

# CLEANED UP - BUT WHERE'S OUR TRENCH?



The Government has committed \$10 million in its 2010 Budget for development of the Memorial Park precinct in Buckle St. The park will be completed in 2014 and will be the centerpiece of New Zealand's commemorations of the centenary of the First World War. Wellington City Council is contributing \$2 million to the overall cost of the project.

Interim clean-up work and landscaping of the site will be done this year, but only from Taranaki to Tory St (see plan above).

We had hoped for a budget announcement about trenching Buckle St, which runs through the site. This is still being considered

by the New Zealand Transport Agency in conjunction with the planned transport improvements around the Basin Reserve, which is now integral with the park project. MCM understands that the trenched roadway might have to continue a short distance west of Taranaki Street.

MCM still believes Buckle Street should be trenched and the park laid out on top of it. This is an expensive option, but is the only way to avoid a compromise (and therefore second-rate) design. In the meantime the Minister of Arts, Culture & Heritage has promised that Buckle Street will not be moved closer to Mt Cook School.

**MT COOK!**  
**MOBILISED** ☆  
 community



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member  
 NZ piano tuner  
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We're a short walk away

9 Riddiford Street, Newtown. Upstairs

**Hey mums and dads...**



**We've got you covered.**

**Tuesday:** Free Massages

**Thursday:** Free Manicures - new!

**Saturday / Sunday:** Free kids activities and face painting.



Fluffies are free, and we have staff on all these shifts dedicated to helping out with the young ones.

**SOUTHERNCROSS**  
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www.thecross.co.nz / 39 Abel Smith St / 04.384.9085

## "Mini Cookies"

Meet other preschooler parents & kids in your neighbourhood

Just turn up at 10am for coffee, cookies and a chat.

- Monday 26<sup>th</sup> July
- Friday 20<sup>th</sup> August
- Monday 20<sup>th</sup> September



To find out where we are meeting this month, please phone Kirsty 021 292 2751 or email [kirsty.gary@paradise.net.nz](mailto:kirsty.gary@paradise.net.nz)

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