

MT COOK! MOBILISED

Mt Cook Mobilised

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Welcome to Mt Cook Mobilised, your resident community group, as we enter our second decade!

Thank you to Inhabit of Adelaide Rd for their ongoing sponsorship. We invite your input (via the email above) on any Mt Cook issue - and to let us know of new ones. We urge all occupants to look out for your neighbours and care for your plot on the planet as if it were your own.

Peter Cooke



THE LAST LAST POST

On Sunday 11 November services at Pukeahu National War Memorial Park marked 100 years since Armistice Day and brought to a close the four-year centenary. At sunset at least a thousand people stood in silence as the tuis sang above the trees and the Carillon, the sun went down and a beautiful crescent moon rose.

For four years the *Last Post* has been played every day at 5pm at the Tomb of Unknown Warrior. As locals, it has given us the opportunity to reflect as we joined the people gathered or heard its sombre tone while walking past.

Many families took the opportunity to read the 'Ode of Remembrance' in memory of family or friends who died or served during that war. A local resident, Jonathan, felt part of the commemorations and he shared his experience:

It was my pleasure to participate in a recent Last Post ceremony to recite the Ode. My motivation was in memory of my grandfather, 2Lt Alex F Thomson (MM

m.i.d.) who survived the terrible experience of the First World War. He served first at Gallipoli and then later on the Western Front before being seriously injured. He recuperated in one of the hospitals for NZ soldiers in England before the war ended in 1918.

It was a great honour to be able to participate in the Last Post ceremony. I never knew my grandfather but I acknowledge the service he gave to our country 100 years ago.

The *Last Post* has very old military traditions. It started as the final signal after a battle, allowing the wounded to follow its call to safety. It became a final call to camp, and developed further to be played over the graves of fallen soldiers - a symbol of not only the end of the day but also the end of the earthly life. It is now used as a symbol of remembrance. Its melancholy haunting notes linger in the air and stay with us as we observe a silence to honour the dead.

Mt Cook residents engaged strongly with the centenary. Jonathan brought his grandfather to a Last Post.

After almost four years, Pukeahu National War Memorial Park has become part of Mt Cook community. And these daily *Last Post* ceremonies have been treasured as we remember those who died in wars fought so that we may live in peace.





NAIRN STREET COTTAGE

HISTORY IN MT COOK

The oldest surviving house in Wellington has recently been revamped by Museums Wellington to provide a new insight into the living conditions across three generations of the Wallis family. A Heritage Week tour opened the eyes of a couple of long time Mt Cook residents to a local treasure within our suburb.

The cottage at 68 Nairn Street was built around 1858, and now is maintained as a cottage museum where each room represents different eras with pieces from the Wallis family who lived in the house until the 1980s.

It is well worth a visit, and if you time your visit to the cottage for a guided tour a true insight can be gained, including learning about the original wallpaper from the 1850s.

The visitor centre includes a unique timeline display that depicts the Wallis family history alongside notable Wellington events, with various world events as a contrast.

Open on the weekends and with a small admission fee, for more info see:

www.museumswellington.org.nz/nairn-street-cottage/

Be a tourist in your own town!

WCC GRANT

Thanks to WCC for a grant from the Social & Recreation Fund. MCM greatly appreciates the Council's ongoing support for our community activities.

MT COOK'S GHOST HOTELS

Wellington region, which includes Kapiti Coast and Wairarapa, has 2,570 Airbnb listings. Wellington alone has 1,460. In the suburb of Mt Cook, there are currently 39 listings (see map below). They offer 73 to 93 beds nightly, a number roughly equivalent to a small hotel or big motel.

In addition to this, Mt Cook has three commercial motels:

Capital View Motor Inn Motel (Thompson St), Marksman Motor Inn (Sussex St) and Wallace Court Motel (Wallace St). Together, they can accommodate up to 122 visitors a night.

Another statistic tells us that Airbnb listings represent up to 25% of the commercial accommodation supply in Wellington. A quick comparison indicates that in Mt Cook the ratio is around 40%.

Great that Airbnb is doing so well, some would say. A report by Deloitte, *Economic effects of Airbnb in New Zealand* (Sydney, 2018), confirms what a cash cow it is, stating that Airbnb brings in over \$38 million of economic benefits yearly to the Wellington region, creating 366 jobs in the process.

Not so great say others. For example, Airbnb rentals accelerate gentrification by turning communities into places no longer lived in by residents, but solely by tourists or foreign investors. It also hollows out cities by driving up house prices, decreasing residential and particularly short-term rental stock, increasing their rent, meanwhile contributing to inconveniences associated with mass-tourism.

Clearly, a balance needs to be struck between embracing the financial benefits of Airbnb and rejecting its negative social impact. In response, some NZ cities are hiking rates charged to commercial Airbnb enterprises.

Question is: Who gets to say how many listings are enough for Mt Cook?



Below
A local
artist's take
on the new
bus stop.

SEATS PLEASE

The new Bus Stop #7914 on Wallace St by Bidwill St, right, is no longer a shelter from the weather, the electronic board is obscured and - worst of all - has lost its seats. The bum-rests do not work for most people - give us back our seats!





FAREWELL SANDY

The departure of Sandy McCallum from the principal's position at Mt Cook School is met with reluctant goodwill.

Sandy has been a stalwart supporter of community-building in Mt Cook during her 19 years here (15 as principal) and the school is an icon of our suburb. With 260 pupils representing 35 ethnic groups (50% of whom do not have English as their first language), Sandy has provided strong leadership through integrating varied cultural views so that every student and family is valued for their contribution to the daily life of the school and the wider community.

Sandy is proud that she will leave the school in safe hands continuing to develop a culture where children/tamariki are respected, listened to and supported in their endeavours. Sandy holds fast to the belief that every child can love being at a school that encourages and develops their interests.

ERO (Education Review Office) reports have consistently rated the school highly for academic and extra-curricular achievements. ERO Reports say "Each child's unique character, strengths, culture and needs are recognised and valued." The "Children learn in a highly inclusive supportive school community, where shared values are strongly expressed in action. Individual achievement and wellbeing is given priority".

Teachers and pupils at the school speak warmly and enthusiastically of the school and the opportunities they have had to grow and thrive in their learning and practice under Sandy's mentoring.

Through the evolving thinking and practice around learning through play - the notion of playing with ideas, problems, solutions, trying something out then reflecting and modifying - the two days of play this term was a bold idea and generated plenty of productive discussion and learning. ERO agreed: "Staff respond to parent and student ideas, to develop partnerships for learning. Teachers build children's confidence and resilience."

Building the school hall and collaborating in the Pukeahu park/ Arras tunnel construction were major undertakings during Sandy's tenure and demonstrated how collective effort and co-operation benefit all parties. She certainly had the minister's ear.

Sandy has been staunch in the approach that what the school does must benefit the students and their whanau first and foremost. She has resisted the pressures of various educational theories over the years when some ideas did not fit with the school culture.

Some of the children's needs have been challenging. Sandy has navigated complicated bureaucratic processes, at times calling on the support of MPs and others to get things done. A current issue is a new staffroom that accommodates all the staff - this has been a battle for over five years and as a result of Sandy's persistence is likely to happen next year. However she regards the effort of many people would have been better directed to teaching and learning.

Sandy resigns her long teaching career at the end of this year. She has already been

PARK IT, MT COOK!

Urban development finally hits Mt Cook with three major projects about to start. Demolition for redevelopment of the Housing NZ complex in Rolleston/ Hargreaves Sts begins this summer, increasing the resident numbers by over 50% for no increase in parking spaces. Then by March/April 2019 major pipework is expected to tie up Wallace Street and some of the side roads, bringing big-time congestion to the arterial route for 12-15 months. Buses and trucks will continue to use Wallace St but north-bound cars will be routed along Wright St. Finally the big kahuna is scheduled to kick-off in late 2020, Wellington Water's vast reservoir in the Town Belt above Prince of Wales Park.

Mt Cook Mobilised has represented the suburb on the adverse effects of these developments and gained some

concessions. One effect which is difficult to quantify will be on parking. Following our lobbying Housing NZ has agreed to give preference to non-car-owning residents, highly appropriate for this inner-city location. The other projects will temporarily see many car-parks (mostly coupon parks) removed for the duration of the work on all streets mentioned. For those who don't have garages or carports, here are a few tips for how to get through.

One huge advantage of Mt Cook is its proximity to the CBD. It is possible to live car-free here, bussing, walking or wheeling to work. Try an e-scooter or e-bike: even an ordinary old 3-speed. A trundler gets your veggies home from the market with ease.

Living without a car is made easier with new approaches to car ownership. Communally-owned cars cut down cost and hassle: one could service 4-5 families. City-Hop type services allow car hireage by the hour. Then there is always ride-sharing or car-pooling. Try renting one of the under-used garages around. If you have more than one vehicle, downsize. Consider leaving your car in an outer suburb for the week and use it only at weekends. Whatever you do, rest assured that we have pressed for the best outcomes and expect the contractors to be as considerate as possible.

➤ elected to the Board of Pillars that supports children with a parent in prison. She will share her leadership skills to educate other women, improve her te reo, spend more time with her mokopuna and take some great walks.

We wish her well and are confident her talents and abilities will continue to inspire our next generation of leaders. The ERO said it best: "The school demonstrates strong progress toward achieving equity in educational outcomes..."

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community

Lucky with the weather, Mt Cook's Spring Fling went off very well on 4 November. GWRC Cr Ian McKinnon commended the Papawai Reserve Group for its 10 years of work but the kids games - as usual - were the highlight. Thanks to Gary and Kirstie, the bakers and everyone else who helped out.



MARY HUTCHINSON

Ehara taku toa i te toa takitahi, engari he toa takitini.
My strength is not mine alone, it comes from the group.



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On 5 October 2018 Mother Aubert was honoured by Wellington City Council with this plaque, placed outside the former Home of Compassion Creche which Mother Aubert fundraised to build in 1914. It was the first childcare crèche in Wellington (now the QEII Pukeahu Education Centre).

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