

Community Hall & Wharf Buildings

The Rakino Community Hall is an icon for the island, greeting most of us as we arrive and bidding us adieu on departure. In recent years, it has suffered neglect at the hands of its owners, Auckland Council, due to lack of available funding, and it is very near the point where some key decisions have to be taken about its future, both in Auckland Council *and* on the island.

Whilst the community cannot make those decisions autonomously, we can certainly influence and inform them, and our general attitude could make a very real difference to the outcome.

This summary is therefore intended to fill in some gaps in what you may or may not know about the Hall and also to take the 'temperature' of community feeling and appetite for what we might practically do – and *we need your ideas!*

Background:

Good authority cites that the building materials for the Hall were shipped to Rakino from Motuihe in the 1960's and the building was assembled probably in the very late 60's or very early 70's by Jack Jeffs, a builder who bought into the island very early.

Parts of it have enjoyed refurbishment since, and it has also been repaired several times following storm damage.

The site of the existing structure actually straddles two pieces of land: Section 1, SO 63453 (South Pacific Road), and a smaller area of reclaimed land (SO 60013).

The latter is technically an 'illegal' reclamation – that is, reclamation work was carried out under Waiheke County Council (WCC)

jurisdiction but it was never properly registered as a reserve nor land title vested unequivocally to WCC, and this unhappy 'non-status' was duly passed on to Auckland Council in the amalgamation of civic authorities in 1990.

Since 1983, the part of South Pacific Road between Sanford Way and the wharf has itself been classified as a 'stopped road' for public use and therefore it may still be Council rather than AT land, although AT has readily undertaken maintenance and repair work in recent times.

As Colin McLaren recently summarised in *Rakino News*, we thus have a Hall that sits partially on 'non land' and at the end of a 'non road'!

This means that the first priority has to be for Auckland Council to get the land-title issue resolved and to vest the reclaimed land with the Council under one title. A land survey has been carried out already and the other necessary work is in hand, including appropriate consultations. This should be concluded this year.

We therefore have a window of opportunity to influence what happens next.

Hall Options

With its fabric steadily deteriorating, a number of options for the Hall, all of them expensive, are currently under consideration.

The Council has indicated that there is no available budget for the Hall and the building remains in competition with many similar community facilities across the region that apparently enjoy higher levels of patronage.

However, we know that many of us enjoy use of the Hall, the Library, Art Room and other facilities, and it's the *only* community resource that we have on Rakino, although we are all Auckland 1010 ratepayers.

If we lose it through inaction or apathy, then it will be practically impossible to replace with a comparable building.

We need a close and informed dialogue with the Council to explore all options for the future of the Hall, which include:

- **Demolish or simply do nothing and await the inevitable** – the Hall is uninsured, and once it is further damaged in a big storm, it would likely get demolished by the Council as an unsafe write off, the site cleared and – at best - a modest 'bus' type shelter for ferry passengers put in its place. This is the cheapest and most long-term solution to the problem for the owner, Auckland Council.
- **Improve the seawall** – this would only protect from waves, not king tides, storm surge or sea level rise. Works to the sea wall will not remove the need to renovate the Hall from its current condition, especially the pilings (see below).
- **Lift and relocate the Hall (in whole or in part)** – moving it back a few metres would offer *some* protection from waves, or it could be moved further afield if suitable land was available and the building was found to be sound to actually make the move intact. Land would have to be re-purposed under lease or private land acquired and all works done in line with building and earthquake regulations.
- **Elevate the Hall where it stands above the maximum storm surge water level** – this would entail the building being raised where it stands, pilings strengthened and replaced and joists/flooring renewed as required. Access steps and the ramp would also need to be modified to the new elevation, and the rear deck repaired and reinstated. This may be the cheapest renovation option overall, but a survey of the building will be needed first to verify the viability and potential cost of this proposal.

- **What else?**

We really do need to know what you think, so please email or write in with your thoughts and suggestions today, so that we can properly represent your wishes and ideas in the unfolding process.

We will then convene a community forum where ideas and proposals can be fermented. One thing we could do NOW is to commission our own survey of both building and site so we are better informed about genuine options and costs, and that may require the investment of some of your Association funds.

Your Committee believes, because this building has huge value to the island's long-term future, it must be preserved effectively *now* by preventing further sea-damage and rendering it sound and secure. It is a Council-owned asset and needs to be maintained because of its historical past, its present community uses and its requirement for the island's future.

It may take a substantial campaign to convince Council that ratepayers want this building preserved.

Do you agree?

Ferries

Auckland Transport (AT)/Belaire have agreed to provide an additional once-a-month winter service from Stanley Bay. This should assist those North Shore dwellers wishing to visit Rakino over a weekend, without the hassle of city parking. For June and July, this has been arranged for the first weekend of each month. Watch Belaire's website for subsequent services.

Defibrillator

Our Defibrillator unit has recently been reprogrammed to update its software. A new battery purchased for it by RRA. We have also bought two new electrode packs, as the old ones were well past their 'use by' date.

For those who do not know, the defibrillator lives in a white box on the side of the Phone Box.

When the box is opened, it automatically activates the fire siren to signal a medical emergency is in progress.

This was unfortunately well and truly proven over Queen's Birthday weekend when it was opened to reinstall our refreshed unit but the siren failed to switch off, so apologies to all whose peaceful afternoon was so rudely interrupted.

Long-term plan for island

Your committee is drafting a questionnaire to gather members' thoughts on a long-term vision for the island. Watch this space!

Green Waste

We currently have Bokashi bin systems in place on the island and they are proving very popular – easy to use, no smelly rubbish hanging around and fewer trips to the bins.

Stocks of the bins are available for each household on the island at just \$20/pair (whether you are a member of RRA or not), a HUGE saving thanks to our WMIF grant from the Council, of which we have so far drawn down a little under half of the overall grant.

Just call or write to Rob Everall to get your pair of bins. RRA has also purchased a stock of the Zing bio-catalyst, available at \$10 for a 1 kg bag (versus \$12 at Plant Barn).

We are also progressing the licence to use the AT land on South Pacific Road to site our Storage facility, where we'd also plan to relocate some of the firefighting equipment to improve overall community access in an emergency.

Other Rakino waste facts:

In the period July 2015 – April 2016, Rakino generated approximately:

- 943 bins (226.5m³) of land fill refuse
- 820 bins (197m³) of cardboard (less dense but high volume)
- 412 bins (99m³) of recycling glass and plastic

So, Rakino has produced almost the same amount in volume of cardboard as it has refuse!!

One of the biggest issues is the cost of transport, and as the city moves towards a



'user pays' waste collection model, the focus will get ever sharper.

Anything we can do to reduce overall waste volumes will help us all, by either not bringing the packaging over to the island in the first place or by recycling it.

It makes a really good compost, apparently!!

For more details about how to reprocess the cardboard in the garden, see:

<http://www.gardeningknowhow.com/composting/ingredients/composting-cardboard.htm>

Water tanks

As part of the RRA Committees' on-going fire-fighting readiness, we ensure the Firelords are maintained in good working order on Rakino. These Firelords are basically a mobile water tank with a pump.

To supplement water supply in an emergency, the pump can be connected to a home water tank via a special outlet fitting on the tank. The Committee is asking that, if you are considering installing a new tank, you have one of these outlets fitted so firefighters can gain quick access to a good water supply.

The home that is burning could be yours! The water tank would need reasonable vehicle access.

If you are interested, please contact any member of the Committee via the website:

www.rra.nz

Post Office Boxes

We have been liaising with NZ Post to secure some 'proper' PO boxes for the secure delivery of post to full-time residents on Rakino and are awaiting an update at time of writing. Approval has been secured, apparently, but the wheels are turning slowly!

They'll be installed at the Community Hall as soon as they are made available.

Annual RRA Membership Subs
It's that time again! Subs of \$30 fall due 1st July for the 2016-17 year and an invoice is attached with this Newsletter.

Please assist by making prompt payment by direct credit or cheque.
Thank you.

Preferred Contact details

Has this Newsletter reached you at an email address that is not your primary choice? Please let **Rob Everall** know your preferred email address (rob@marinejobs.co.nz).

AT Roothing Survey

Auckland Transport visited the island recently to assess road conditions and road signage. They looked particularly at intersections, especially the top of Jane York Place.

We await the outcome of their planning.

West Bay signage

The path across DOC land from the end of Askew Ave down to West Bay is springing to life as planting takes effect. RRA is in the process of complementing this development with signage at the top and foot of the track.

Plea for vigilance

A plea has been made for ongoing vigilance for shore bound dogs from boats following the loss of poultry at West Bay to a 'canine marauder' who is suspected of coming ashore from a visiting boat.

If you spy people with dogs, do encourage them to have them on a lead.

Vehicles

Property owners will have received recently a letter from Auckland Transport as they endeavour to rid the island of car wrecks.

The Council will shortly remove unregistered and unwarranted vehicles left in the wharf area, Sandford Way or South Pacific Road at no cost to the owner.

Your committee is fully supportive of this action as it will make the wharf area and first hill a far better looking area and we are working with AT to find acceptable and appropriate means of maintaining vehicle standards on island.

July Tree imports!

A call will shortly be made for Volunteers to assist with the trans-shipment of young native trees from Waiheke to Rakino. Your help is needed to load and unload, then transport these newcomers to their intended planting areas, especially the Askew Ave to West Bay Track.

Codes for wharf buildings entry

Please make a note of the following codes to gain access to:

Hall CZ3579
Library Z9876

Remember this is a 'Council-owned facility' so please secure the property after leaving.

Recycling

An inorganic collection occurred over Queens Birthday weekend.

Anyone for a whole living room?!



Farewell

We say goodbye to the Boylans who leave the island after more than 40 years. Alan built their house on South Pacific Road and Lynn home-schooled their three children on the island.



Strobe Lights

Geoff and Mandy Burne of Ocean View Crescent have generously donated hand-held strobe lights to assist pinpointing the exact landing area for helicopters summoned in an emergency.

Thank you, you two! We'll work out the best place to house them for easy access (with the phone box being the prime candidate) and will advise in due course.

Questions about this Newsletter?

Please email: secretary@rra.nz

On behalf of the
Committee of RRA,

John Denton



Committee: John Denton (Chair), Rob Everall (Vice Chair), Laura Sutherland (Sec'y/Treas), Wayne Whittaker, Bert Vercruyssen

Environmental Officer: Mark Lockhart

Fire Officer: Hank Postmaa
