

Update No. 9 July 2009

Haere mai and welcome to the June/July newsletter. Aotearoa/New Zealand is buzzing with locally-based initiatives where people from all walks of life are creating the places they want together. *“We’re changing the way we do our business! It’s all about knowing our local communities, and working with them face to face to deal with the problems they experience, and create new possibilities together”*. Says Taupo District Council CE Rob Williams.

“We want to create a way of working as a whole community - agencies and us together - that creates hope and optimism” Georgie Thompson of Ruapotaka Marae in Glen Innes says as she talks about achieving the full potential of the government initiative Tamaki Transformation. Porirua City Council’s *Village Planning* harnesses the vision of each corner of the city. It brings together Council, Iwi, community organisations and residents, working to create tangible changes.

In the retirement village *Vision Waitakere Gardens*, residents work with each other to collect and recycle waste, run a worm farm, manage 90 individual garden plots and a communal plot, and operate water tanks. All this improves the environment, individual fitness and relationships. It uses the skills of village residents and saves up to \$10,000 a year.

Iwi, local government and local business are working together in Opotiki to turn their economy around through aquaculture and harbour development. *“This development is the most ambitious and promising investment for the region’s future. It carries the potential of jobs, training, community renewal and prosperity for the region”* - says the Mayor of Opotiki, John Forbes

In *Inspiring Communities* we are testing the idea that sustainable change comes from a combination of individual, relationship, cultural and systems changes. Examples of individual leadership and action, strengthening relationships and changing organisational culture all shine through the stories in this newsletter. The newsletter aims to share inspiring stories about communities.

Please visit our website if you would like to find out more - www.InspiringCommunities.org.nz

Mary-Jane Rivers

Highlights in this issue are:



- ✘ How a retirement village became an eco-village: Waitakere’s Project Twin Streams
- ✘ Living Streets: New approaches by Taupo District Council
- ✘ Porirua’s Village Planning approach
- ✘ Tamaki Transformation Programme meets John Key, and
 - ✓ Alfred Ngaro: Congratulations on Sir Peter Blake Leadership Award
- ✘ Opotiki - working together for economic and community development
- ✘ Reports from:”
 - ✓ Alternative Currencies workshop - Carterton
 - ✓ Community Centred Economies Conference – Brisbane
 - ✓ Community Governance Workshop - Wellington
- ✘ Resources/events
- ✘ Good News

Inspiring Communities is a nationwide group of communities committed to a new way of doing things. It is about communities that are inspiring, inspiring other communities. We support local communities to achieve their vision and goals by:

- ✘ Promoting the power of working collaboratively
- ✘ Supporting leadership and learning for community-led development
- ✘ Linking people, projects and places
- ✘ Developing and sharing resources, tools and new knowledge
- ✘ Being a catalyst for change in communities of place

We operate an *Exchange* that links communities with others who are involved in community-led initiatives, and can offer information, advice and support.

From a Hotel to a Home: Vision Waitakere Gardens Eco Village

From the outside, Vision Waitakere Gardens in Henderson looks like an ordinary high rise retirement village. But on the inside it's a hive of community-led activity.

Recently, I got to tag along with Waitakere City Council staff to hear about the changes that have been taking place over the last few years. Waitakere Gardens is currently home for 337 residents and they talk with much pride about the Eco Village they've been creating.



But it's taken some time and many conversations. One of the Village's resident leaders, Max Peers, tells how when Project Twin Streams Community Coordinator Wendy Claire first came to talk to villagers, her environmental ideas were pretty much rejected. After some initial reluctance, the successful community planting day was held on the stream bank backing onto the village – with families of residents joining in too, along with local Henderson Primary School. But it was after Wendy held a screening at the Village of Al Gore's film, "An Inconvenient Truth", that things really started to happen. A small group of residents immediately began planning what action Vision Waitakere Gardens could take to help save the planet.

Upon hearing that all the rubbish from the Village went straight into landfill, waste became the residents' first target.



Management was lobbied to get wheelie bins so rubbish could be separated. The group then researched options

for organic waste which led on to a successful grant application to purchase a worm farm. This was followed by water tanks, a bloke's shed, craft rooms and compost bins.

"When we wanted the Village to build new compost bins, management got quotes which totaled \$10,000. They said this was too expensive. So we designed and built them ourselves – management paid for the materials which worked out to be just \$600".

The residents' efforts with recycling and composting will be saving management \$8000-\$10,000 per year.

Waste collection is now a real community project. From an initial 8 units, Peggy Lowndes and her collection team currently visit 67 units each week to gather food scraps and to see how people are doing. The worm farm, managed by Ken Thom and Sandy Matheson, produces much needed nutrients for the 90 garden plots which allow people to plant and crop the way they want to. There's also a communal garden led by ex-commercial vegetable grower and aircraft engineer, Les Dalkie, and the team. For a small donation, residents can take what vegetables they'd like from a communal table, with income re-invested back into buying more seeds for the garden.

Les commented that reticulating tank water to the vege plots has worked quite successfully, noting that having water on site also provides residents with security for civil defence purposes. Here rain water doesn't just feed the rain tanks but can also feed the people if there's an emergency!

Residents I spoke to said that as a result of lots of hard work, persistence and fun, Vision Waitakere Gardens has gone from being a hotel to a home. People talked about the talents that exist and the skill sets they've been able to call on – from authors, to poets, gardeners and engineers. It also extends beyond the environment, with residents participating in community leadership training at Sport Waitakere so they could teach exercise classes at the Village to fellow residents.

Max and his group want to see their Village as a role model for other businesses and retirement villages – encouraging them to do the same. They talk proudly of plans and their desire to keep building one project after another. In Max's words – *"we're now prepared to open up the village for schools and other groups to come and see what we've done here. We want to inspire others to be eco-wise...we want to be the BEST village in New Zealand."* Unsurprisingly, the Village received the 2008 BNZ Waitakere Innovative Business Award.

Megan Courtney

Download a podcast of a 15 July programme about Project Twin Streams from www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/afternoons/20090715

Living Streets - making neighbourhood connections: A new approach by Taupo District Council

An internal culture change at Taupo District Council has generated the environment for a neighbourhood based approach to working more effectively alongside community aspirations and leadership. The change process is strongly supported politically and managerially. It has attracted staff's active engagement and moved the organisation away from a rules based approach and towards values and aspirational targets, within a culture of trust. Rather than a focus on "did I follow the rules?", the new culture focuses more on "being the best we can". The key measurements within that culture become:

- What have I done? Did I help? Did I get the work done?
- If not, why not? And what action can I take on those issues?

Within this new culture, early preparations for Council long term planning included an invitation to Council staff and Managers to develop concepts together that they thought would really make a difference in Taupo. Around this time the Karen Aitken murder had created enormous community concern that such things could go on in Taupo, and there was an awareness of the need to find ways to generate more connectedness locally. As Anne McLeod (Deputy Chief Executive of Taupo District Council) stated *"We knew that we needed to pay attention to building social capital through community development"*.



The "Living Streets" programme came out of this process. It drew on approaches adopted for a while in some of Taupo's larger rural communities such as Mangakino. The idea behind it is for Council to 'work together' internally and with people in neighbourhoods, and see what can be changed positively. The core elements of the internal culture change by Council are brought 'outside' through this approach, and it is an example of Council striving to work with neighbourhoods and other partners within a consistent culture of trust.

One approach is Council supporting interested staff to establish a presence within identified communities. Through face to face relationships within the neighbourhood, they start learning about the key issues and problems local people are concerned about. They work with the local people, with other Council staff, and with other organisations where appropriate, to help “fix” the problems. And they support and nurture emerging local leadership.

Through another approach, a series of community based events were held at small neighbourhood reserves, with the goal of encouraging neighbours to meet each other, and to “have a chat”. In some instances this has been the catalyst for further local initiatives already. In others it has helped build Council relationships with people in local neighbourhoods, so that Council knows who to go to if issues or opportunities emerge.

Taupo’s Ten Year Plan has a strong neighbourhood focus. Entitled “*Our Neighbourhood, Our Future*”, the four strategic directions it identifies are:

- Working together
- Growth and economic development
- Strong, safe and healthy communities, and
- Sustainable environment



Rob Williams
CE Taupo District Council

(See www.taupodc.govt.nz for links to this, and much more!)

The concept that Taupo is the “home” to its residents is conveyed strongly by the CE Rob Williams. “*We’ve recently been doing some thinking about the town centre of Taupo. In a way, all the suburbs and neighbourhoods of Taupo are the bedrooms and living rooms of our community, and the town centre is our “lounge”- the place we all get together, greet our guests, and party.*”

Village Well (see www.villagewell.org/drupal/files/newsletters/Newsletter_May09.pdf) worked with Taupo folk to design and carry out conversations with local people to help shape the plans for spaces and meeting places they want in the CBD, to help rekindle their sense of civic heart and pride about Taupo’s town centre.

When asked about the key things that have changed because of the Council’s new “inside out” approach, Chief Executive Rob William’s answer was enthusiastic.



Anne McLeod, Dep CE
Taupo District Council

“We’re changing the way we do our business! It’s all about knowing our local communities, and working with them face to face to deal with the problems they experience, and create new possibilities together.” The key question for us as staff and management has changed. Instead of rules and “meeting levels of service” being the drivers (and at times barriers), the key question we ask ourselves is *What can I do for my community?* This is new, and it won’t always go well! We have to accept that sometimes things will go wrong, and be supportive when that happens. We are trying to build a yes oriented culture both inside and outside the Council. Through this new way of working we are growing social and community leaders for Taupo’s neighbourhoods and organisations.”

Article prepared by Barbara MacLennan, based on an interview with Taupo District Council CE Rob Williams and Deputy CE Anne McLeod, and material supplied.

Porirua's Village Planning Programme

Porirua City has been deservedly hitting the headlines lately for its achievements. The IPANZ Prime Minister's Award for Public Sector Excellence for creating a safer city is one example. Their Village Planning Programme is another.

This newsletter gives a Cannons Creek taste of the new Village Planning approach in Porirua where the Council and communities are working with the strengths of Porirua's geography and people. The Village Planning Programme is a partnership between Porirua City Council and the city's diverse villages. *"It aims to harness each community's vision for its village and then, by working together, turn those dreams into plans and actions to ensure our villages are the best they can be."* said Moira Lawler the Council's Manager of Social and Economic Planning

The next newsletter will feature more in depth coverage of Porirua's innovative approach. For more details of the Programme visit: www.pcc.govt.nz Village Planning Programme.

Cannons Creek

In 2005 a community plan was developed by a working group of members of the Eastern Porirua Residents Association, Cannons Creek Opportunity Centre, Maraeroa Marae, and Housing New Zealand and Council staff. The process included a survey run by local residents, local events, workshops and a community feedback day. The resulting *"Map to the Future"* highlighted target areas including:

- Environment - graffiti and vandalism
- Youth services and activities – working with young people on the streets at night
- Shops and businesses - upgrading the physical condition of the Cannons Creek shops
- Amenities and facilities with a focus on parks and playgrounds, the pool, and local recreation and arts facilities.

Much has been achieved since then. In April this year there was a massive celebration to mark the completion of village planning in the Cannons Creek Campus. The celebration also marked the launch of a new Pacific Island Health Centre. The Deputy Prime Minister Bill English, cut the ribbon on the new health centre. Porirua Mayor Jenny Brash spoke of the village planning work undertaken in Cannons Creek, including specific results:

- An up-grading of the shopping area and lighting improvements. A set of public toilets have been removed at the community's request and several murals have been painted.
- Traffic calming work has been carried out in Bedford St and courtesy crossings installed on raised platforms, improved parking areas and pedestrian footpaths have been widened and enhanced with planted areas.
- Mentor Park (pictured above) has been completed refitted. This meant removing trees and planter boxes enclosing the space. New seating, grassed and concrete areas, a park mural and new shrubs and trees have been put in place. The park is now a popular meeting space.
- Housing New Zealand has opened a new community based office in the campus area.
- Local community organisations have upgraded their buildings and surrounds
- A joint youth services project has begun. It involves 7 local youth organisations with funding from Council and government.



Cannon's Creek Village development has become an opportunity for artists, local residents, community organisations, local businesses, the Council and government agencies to work together towards a common goal, achieving specific results and forging new relationships.

To learn more visit the Village Planning Programme's [Cannons Creek](#) page of the website or contact the village planning project leader Ian Barlow on ibarlow@pcc.govt.nz or (04) 237 1418.

Moira Lawler and Mary-Jane Rivers

Prime Minister visit supports Tamaki Transformation Programme

“We want to create a way of working as a whole community, agencies and us together that creates hope and optimism”

Georgie Thompson, Ruapotaka Marae, Tamaki talking about the potential of Tamaki Transformation

It was the kaumatua of Ruapotaka Marae who welcomed the Prime Minister and other Government Ministers to Tamaki on 2 July 2009. Ruapotaka Marae is seen by many in Glen Innes and Pt England as being the ‘heart and gateway’ to those communities of Tamaki. The presence and leadership of mana whenua - Ngati Whatua Orakei and Ngati Paoa - added their mana to the proceedings, and showed their concern for and commitment to the communities of Tamaki.



PM John Key and
Matua Jim Pene

So the Marae was a fitting place for those invited to discuss the recently launched \$52 million first phase of the Tamaki Transformation urban renewal programme with Prime Minister John Key during his visit to the area.

Tamaki Transformation is an exciting urban renewal project - an opportunity for the community to work together with local and central government, and interested others, to deliver new and refurbished housing; create local jobs and training opportunities; improve parks and reserves; make the streets safer; lift the health of the residents and provide better delivery of services to the people of Tamaki. For more information on why Tamaki is the focus see www.hnzc.co.nz

The Prime Minister’s visit to Tamaki highlighted the strong support of local people, local and central government and governmental agencies for the Programme.

“The Tamaki Transformation Programme, as a tremendously ambitious 20-year initiative, is about thinking and working differently. By acting boldly and working together in new ways we are determined to get better results for the people of Tamaki,” says Pat Snedden, Tamaki Transformation Board Chair and Chair of Housing NZ.

“We recognise the knowledge local people have about their area, the commitment they have to building on their strengths, and their community’s aspirations. By working with them, we intend to see these aspirations translated into tangible results through the Programme.”

According to Te Waipuna Puawai Mercy Oasis Manager and Tamaki Inclusive Engagement Strategy (TIES) coordinator, Puamiria Maaka, there is community willingness to work with the Programme stakeholders to achieve these outcomes. “The community is seeking to engage as an active partner working with government and others at all levels of the programme (governance, steering group, work streams etc.)”.

Bob Wakefield, who has been working actively in Tamaki for many years through Sharat ministries, was formerly chair of Glen Innes Business Association and is now a member of the TIES team, pointed out the potential contribution of community members to Tamaki

Foundation for Working Together

The basis for working together started during the 2008 planning stage before Tamaki Transformation was given the green light. Several approaches to engagement on a more equal footing include:

- Tamaki community members were appointed as community commentators on the Governance structure
- Community-based people with sector knowledge, eg in education, housing and economic development, became part of the sector planning groups
- This group formed the basis of the TIES Team

Currently:

- TIES team people are members of appointment panels for Programme positions
- TIES team members are peer reviewing the Community Engagement Strategy for the Programme

Transformation: “There’s generations of knowledge and wisdom in our community waiting to be tapped to make this Programme a success, and help make the difference. It was so refreshing to find that our Prime Minister has a good grasp of community led development and believes that community driven, from the bottom up, is the way forward for future development. Our visit with the Prime Minister has left me with an enthusiastic confidence that the TIES Team has a strategic role in community led engagement with the Tamaki Transformation Programme”.



PM John Key and Bob Wakefield

About the Tamaki Transformation Programme

The first phase of implementing Tamaki Transformation began in May this year. This phase will see the modernisation of more than 80 homes, and the development of new housing sites by 2011. “However”, says Mr Snedden, “while better housing will improve the lives of many in the community, it is only one component of the Programme. Other Programme outcomes, complementary to better housing conditions, include improved health, education, employment, training and education opportunities”.



Lil Palmer and Tess Liew

“We believe now is the time for action and we want to work meaningfully with government stakeholders, through the Programme, so that together we make real changes on the ground,” says Ms Maaka.

Key stakeholders involved are: The Tamaki Community; Housing New Zealand Corporation; Ministry of Social Development; Auckland City Council; Auckland Regional Council; Auckland

District Health Board; Ministry of Health; Ministry of Education; NZ Police; Te Puni Kokiri; and Ministry of Pacific Island Affairs.

There is also a connection with *Inspiring Communities*. *Inspiring Communities* shares the same principles of:

- building on the strengths and assets within a community
- creative answers are more likely to come through people from multiple sectors working together, and
- the importance of systems change leading to durable solutions.

Tamaki Transformation staff comment:
By working together, across government with the community and the private sector, strengths and investments can be leveraged to change results in nine key areas:

- Skills employment and economic development
- Housing
- Safety and security
- Environment and stability
- Education
- Health
- Identity and culture
- Social services
- Operations excellence.

Tamaki-based, Alfred Ngaro of *Inspiring Communities* has actively worked with community organisations and government agencies to ‘broker’ opportunities with Tamaki Transformation. *Inspiring Communities* has also supported the recording of TIES development, augmenting significant voluntary contribution from within and outside the community. We are both exploring ways of developing this relationship further.

Puamiria Maaka reflected Tamaki interest when she invited the Prime Minister to listen out for the active engagement of community people and perspectives. She said: “We look forward to seeing you again next year for you to see and hear about the progress being made”.

Mary-Jane Rivers with generous contributions and photos from the TIES Team and Tamaki Transformation Programme Team.

Congratulations to Alfred Ngaro

We are thrilled that Alfred Ngaro has been awarded a **Sir Peter Blake Emerging Leader**



Award for his contribution to Tamaki, Auckland over 19 years, and his involvement in the new Tamaki Transformation Programme. *"Alfred proves that true leadership is bringing together diverse elements. He identifies and promotes common ground, working with strengths rather than focusing on weaknesses, and finding the point of lift-off for working together to address complex social issues."*

We see the award as recognising Alfred's work and the strong fit with *Inspiring Communities'* emphasis on the importance of thriving communities as a basis for New Zealand's durable and sustainable development.

Alfred is a former pastor of a multi-cultural church and manager of the Tamaki Community Development Trust. He is highly respected in Tamaki as someone who has delivered creative and meaningful results and developed trusting relationships with hundreds of people. An example of this is a programme he developed last year which celebrated and supported effective fathering among the staff of The Warehouse.

Alfred chairs the Auckland District Health Board Pacific Health Committee. Locally, he is a member of the Tamaki College Board of Trustees and retains strong connections back to the Cook Islands through his work with families via an indigenous approach to parenting called Tupu'anga o te kopu tangata kuki airani.

More information: www.sirpeterblaketrust.org/leadership/awards/2009_awards

Opotiki Building on Strengths – contributing to national development

There is mix of vision, grit, pride and determination in Opotiki. From small-scale activities to large scale economic development. Opotiki is working together to build on its strengths. I was in Opotiki in January this year and the local supermarket checkout operator was singing the praises of *Fun Unplugged*, a summer activities programme. It was local marketing at its best. Opotiki's population swells from the usual 9,000 or so to around 60,000 in summer. If you want family-oriented adventurous holiday activities then *Fun Unplugged* provides opportunities. Local and visitor kids can 'unplug' themselves from computer games and have wonderful horse treks, river-rafting or messily slide down the amazing Mega Mud Slide which is over 80 metres of full speed fun and mud. See www.fununplugged.co.nz for a neat film clip. *Fun Unplugged does more than that.* The idea, planning and operation (and marketing) for *Fun Unplugged*, is a whole community affair with Council, businesses, community organisations and volunteers working together. The money earned through the programme is donated to a local voluntary organisation. Every step taken strengthens connections and builds the community.



Working together is a growing strength of Opotiki. On 20 June Opotiki ran its own bi-ennial Opotiki Community Contribution Awards. Led by the Council, the event has business, community, funder and Iwi involvement. This year Opotiki reached out to involve Sir Ron Carter of the Sir Peter Blake Trust and Pio Terei, to help celebrate a series of community awards including: - the best community project, youth achiever, a business achiever, youth volunteer of the year and overall volunteer of the year.

Aquaculture and Harbour Development

This same approach of working together is a feature of a locally-led, strongly regionally supported and nationally valuable aquaculture and harbour development. The late 1980s and 1990s saw the demise of major Opotiki industries and the withdrawal of many local and government services. While there are many strengths – particularly community and environmental - high unemployment and deprivation levels have also been a more recent feature of Opotiki. Local Opotiki leaders, including Whakatohea Iwi, have decided to tackle this situation through aquaculture, developing their harbour and seeking to process marine catches in Opotiki. This is complex and challenging.

The proposed harbour development represents Opotiki's most ambitious and promising investment for the region's future. It carries the potential of jobs, training, community renewal and prosperity for the region.

Opotiki Mayor: John Forbes

Up until the 1950s, Opotiki's harbour was a vital part of the region's transport infrastructure. As the region's roading infrastructure developed use of the port diminished, a situation which was also affected by the gradual shallowing of the harbour entrance.

After years of concerted work Eastern Seafarms Ltd has a resource consent to develop a 3,800 hectare marine farm. Local Iwi, Whakatohea, is the majority shareholder in Eastern Seafarms. Their aspiration is to help develop a world class aquaculture industry which will rekindle the local and regional economy and community.



The Opotiki Harbour Development project aims to restore access for larger freight vessels under most weather and tide conditions and allow the town to become the service and processing base for a future marine farming industry under development 8km off the Opotiki Coast. Consent for improving the harbour has

been lodged. A hearing for the consent was held in early July. www.opotikiharbour.co.nz

There is still a great deal of work to do, including updating the business case for the harbour development. But there is strong support for these initiatives within the Bay of Plenty's economic development strategy called 'Bay of Connections'. The aquaculture and harbour developments were also a priority recommendation from the Bay of Plenty Regional Jobs Summit in April 2009, see story: Bay of Plenty ready to prosper www.scoop.co.nz/stories

For more detailed information about the developments see www.opotikiharbour.co.nz. Opotiki developments also featured in a workshop jointly run by the Institute of Public Administration (IPANZ) and *Inspiring Communities* in March this year. See IPANZ website www.ipanz.org.nz and www.communityoutcomes.govt.nz with a write up: - Communities at the Centre - bringing Canadian and Opotiki experience to Wellington.

Mary-Jane Rivers

Barbara MacLennan is the Bay of Plenty contact for *Inspiring Communities*. She can be reached through Barbara.MacLennan@inspiringcommunities.org.nz

Complementary Currencies Workshop comes to Carterton

Over 40 people from the lower North Island braved snowy roads to attend the Carterton Community Currencies workshop "Trading Tools for Tough Times", held on June 17.



Presenters answer questions about community currencies
Photo: Phillip Barker

The workshop, held by Living Economies Educational Trust, attracted locals from Carterton and Masterton, and others from as far afield as Wellington, Kapiti Coast, Hastings, Levin, Otaki, Porirua, Tawa and Hutt Valley. The programme looked at how the conventional money system worked, and how complementary currencies could work alongside it to help build local trading networks.

Currencies designed for regional and local use helped to create empowerment and resilience in communities, said Living Economies spokeswoman Helen Dew. "I

think that the high turnout from people working in community organisations, shows that there is real interest in these types of systems as practical tools to harness the rich resources and skills in our communities."

"In these times of significant funding cuts to community, the tightening of credit from banks and job losses, people are looking for creative ways to help weather this economic storm. Complementary currencies help people to get their needs met from within their community, which is often more environmentally desirable, creates opportunities and builds strong relationships".

Matt Crawshaw of Wesley Community Action Good Cents project, participated in the workshop. He connected his work with Porirua families in debt, saying "In Good Cents we are exploring the importance of relationships and community connectedness in avoiding the debt spiral and for low income families to achieve hopeful financial futures. It was very encouraging to spend time with a group of people focused on re-imagining wealth and value systems not requiring credit at the centre."

Presenters from around New Zealand talked about three complementary currency systems and how they worked.

Project Lyttelton's Margaret Jefferies and Anneleise Hall talked about Lyttelton's Time Bank. Time Banks are a means of exchanging skills in a community and everyone's time is equal. Lyttelton's Time Bank has been so successful it has attracted interest from around New Zealand and Australia.

Bryan Innes from Coromandel has developed a scheme where people pool savings to enable interest-free purchase finance. The pilot scheme has enabled a family to build a house.

Auckland Peter Luiten presented a model for a community currency enabling people to purchase local goods and services with debit cards as well as paper means.

The workshop was a good example of cross sector partnerships, supported by Wairarapa Local Exchange and Trading System, Transition Towns Wairarapa and Sustainable Wairarapa Inc.

Enquiries Anneleise Hall: anneleise@gmail.com or phone: 021 138 9669
For more information on Living Economies visit our website www.le.org.nz

Following the success of "Trading Tools for Tough Times", Living Economies will be running two workshops at the end of August in Wellington. The first workshop will look at the principles of Time Banking and the Genuine Wealth System. It will also include an overview of Local Exchange and Trading Systems (Green Dollars). The second will be interactive and go into more depth for participants to explore which system may be appropriate for their community and how it could work. Dates, programme and venue to be confirmed before the end of July.

Building Community Centred Economies: Dialogue for Action

*International Association of Community Development and Community Development
Queensland Conference, Brisbane Australia, June 2009*

Mary-Jane Rivers and I attended this conference on behalf of *Inspiring Communities*. We both really valued the chance to learn from and share with community development practitioners from around the globe and felt that *Inspiring Communities* has a natural home in this forum.

We were fortunate to be offered a chance to present in a session attended by about 50 people. We provided a potted history and overview of *Inspiring Communities* and the Exchange and used aspects of the Great Start, Taita story to bring this alive. There was a lot of interest in our work and people were heard to quote us on and off over the next few days.

During the breaks we had the opportunity to develop links with the International Community Development Association through its executive members who were present at the conference. At their request we are continuing to explore with them about how we might forge stronger connections with NZ and particularly with *Inspiring Communities*.

Mary-Jane and I are summarising the plenary sessions and some of the workshops we attended. These notes will be available in the learning section of the website. They include ideas on: social enterprise; community leadership; asset building in community; local living economies; community cooperatives; using technology and particularly group sourcing to support social innovation; and how the current situation may provide an opportunity for building sustainable livelihoods.



photo Meena Kadri

The conference was framed as being about Courageous Dialogue, about really listening to different perspectives. Fundamentalism was defined as thinking that says my truth is the whole truth, while genuine truth, it was suggested, grows and develops through questions and dialogue. This of course, mirrors much of our thinking in *Inspiring Communities*, about there being a grain of truth in every perspective and about developing the key skills of being aware of your own perspective, truly listening to another's, and being able to translate across perspectives.

Two of the stand outs at the conference were the plenary sessions.

Ela Bhatt, Founder of SEWA (Self Employed Women's Association: www.sewa.org) in India, spoke with enormous humility and passion about her lifetime's work supporting self reliance amongst the poor, self employed women workers in her country. She also offered up an alternative way of thinking about the economy, the Gentle Economy as she called it, which requires us to consider how we embed capital into community to ensure both survival and self sufficiency. She stressed the importance of opening spaces in order that the poor can find solutions that they own and are meaningful for them, and that they are given the time to do this. There was significant synergy between her work in India and ours in Aotearoa NZ and the notes from her speech are well worth a read. See <http://www.theelders.org/elders/> and <http://www.sewa.org/>

Michael Shuman, Research Director for the US Based Business Alliance for Local Living Economies and both an economist and lawyer, entitled his key note address "BALLE-nomics: The Local Living Economy Solution to Poverty". He drew on recent worldwide research to make the case for networks of locally owned businesses selling primarily to local markets being the key to a prosperous community. He presented compelling evidence that showed local businesses to be more reliable generators of income, wealth, jobs, taxes, charitable contributions, social equity and political participation.

As someone who struggled with Economics 101 at university and admit to having never really got my head around it I found his presentation riveting. He acknowledged the four crises we currently face: the oil crisis, the climate crisis, the financial crisis and the poverty crisis and outlined how the obvious solution to each of these is localisation. He also noted trends in the global economy, such as towards purchasing services rather than goods, and how such trends are favouring local owned, self reliant and socially responsible businesses.

One of his key points was about understanding how much leakage there is currently from most local economies (how little of the money spent actually goes back into the local community, often as little as 10%) and the importance of plugging these leaks. He also stressed that most communities are too dependent on philanthropic support and government grants and there is a real need to become more entrepreneurial. Some of his ideas around this included: local debit cards, meta businesses, local gift cards, local stock exchanges and local investment. There is more information about each of these in the summary on the website or visit www.smallmart.org or www.livingeconomies.org.



Jenny Blagdon

Community Governance Workshop

A richly informative workshop on community-based planning and community governance was held on Thursday 16 July, in Wellington by the *Social and Civic Policy Institute*. Key issues included the roles, forms of organisation, membership, functions and relationships of locally-based community associations with local and central government. It was a great opportunity, enjoyed by all participating, to hear from active citizens involved in residents associations and marae committees share their stories of working within their communities for positive change and contributing to a new, community oriented, policy framework. Presentations will be posted on by the *Social and Civic Policy Institute website*: www.SCPI.org.nz. The plan is that this workshop will be the first of many.

Coming events

Auckland Community-Led Development Network Forum



Please mark the morning of Friday August 28th in your diaries now!

A forum on Leadership - in its many different forms.

Leadership is a key ingredient in communities that thrive:

- ✘ What does it look like?
- ✘ How can we strengthen it?
- ✘ What do we actually mean by leadership?

Sounds like the basis for some great shared, creative conversations

For more information contact : Megan.Courtney@inspiringcommunities.org.nz

Dynamic Community Learning Awards

Entries due on Monday, 3 August

The Awards recognise excellence, innovation, 'giving things a go' and the excitement that comes from Adult and Community Education (ACE). More specifically we are looking for activities that:

- ✘ Create a specific community learning benefit (ie for more than individual learners)
- ✘ Foster community-based learning activities
- ✘ Draw on and 'grow' community, culturally-based knowledge
- ✘ Help to promote active citizenship, strengthen the whanau/family, strengthen the neighbourhood or community
- ✘ Spring from partnerships between ACE providers and community organisations.

Please contact Patrick McCombs on awards@delta.net.nz for an entry form

Partnering for Results Workshop

Thursday, 30th of July, 9am-5pm (including lunch)

The Terrace Conference Centre, St. John House, 114 The Terrace, Wellington.

This workshop is designed for those about to begin, those actively involved in, and those managing partnerships across public, private, community and voluntary sectors. This is a rare opportunity to apply partnering tools and mindsets to your examples and learn from others as well as from international experience.

Fee: \$350 per person plus GST. If you enrol and attend with one or more colleagues from your partner organisation the fee is reduced to \$275 per person plus GST. To enrol, please email your details to angela@thoughtpartners.co.nz or phone: 0800 THOUGHT (0800 846 8448) Website: www.thoughtpartners.co.nz

Innovating from Within: The Art of Hosting & Harvesting Conversations that Matter

27 - 30 August 2009, Quality Hotel, Wellington

This is a participative training experience for all those who want to learn how to work with groups, committees, teams and communities in more interactive, engaging and effective ways. Registration and payment deadline is 31 July 2009. We are hoping to have sponsorship available for individuals and groups from the not-for-profit sector and the youth community.

Gathering for New Zealand

4 - 6 September, Tauhara Centre, Taupo

This is a fusion of some of the most potent group processes around - Appreciative Inquiry, Open Space Technology, World Café and Circle work. If you've already decided to attend the Art of Hosting training this is an opportunity for you to see this way of working immediately applied.

Enquiries: phone Natasha on (04)387-9066 or email natasha@emmersongroup.co.nz

To register: email Jaqueline on jaqueline.benndorf@paradise.net.nz

Turning Point

14 and 15th September 2009, Westpac Trust Stadium. WELLINGTON

A Two Day interactive symposium to learn how to achieve greater effectiveness in the Social Services led by **Dr Barry Duncan**.

We are at a turning point. New Research highlights how we can spark creative & effective change by building a culture of feedback from clients. .

At this symposium you will:

- Learn about research findings that reveal the largest and most significant common factor contributing to positive therapeutic outcomes is also the most ignored factor.
- Learn about why the "HOW" aspects are more critical than the "WHAT" aspects in facilitating leaps in effectiveness
- Receive practical training in how to use these tools
- Participate in cross-sector forums to test and anchor the new knowledge

Cost - \$375 (incl GST) total for 2 days - includes symposium materials and lunch. Further information: - registration forms, feedback on previous seminars and Dr Duncan's biography is available at Wesley Community Action: www.wesleyca.org.nz



Strengths-based practice with at-risk children and families

Interventions to nurture hidden resilience across cultures and contexts

A two day workshop for professionals led by Dr Michael Ungar

12 - 13 October 2009

At Sorrento in the Park, One Tree Hill Domain, Royal Oak, Auckland

Cost \$350, early bird registration \$300 if registering before 31 July

This workshop will count toward the social workers registration board's continuing professional development requirements

Michael Ungar is a Research Professor & Professor of Social Work at Dalhousie University in Halifax, Canada and the Director of the Resilience Research Centre. Michael will show how this model of practice helps professionals discover pathways to the resilience people use to survive and thrive.

For more information contact: Maree Findlay (09) 524 9175, fax (09) 524 9131, email maree.findlay@barnardos.org.nz or post to PO Box 99 829, Newmarket, Auckland 1149. Please make cheques payable to Barnardos New Zealand

A Place to Stay: A film about Salisbury Garden Court in Wellington

This is a compelling documentary about the unique design and unusual social history of Salisbury Garden Court, a group of 16 houses clustered in matching pairs around a tennis court near the top of Tinakori Hill in Wadestown, Wellington. Through the story of this particular place the film explores the interaction of urban design and community.

Built in 1929-30, the houses show the influence of 'Garden City' design ideas; of interest again a century later among contemporary New Urbanists. During the Great Depression and War years the earliest tenants made full use of the tennis court as a central activity area. In the 1950s, the Court briefly became a miniature 'Polish village', as at one point 13 of the 16 houses were occupied by Poles, many of whom had arrived in New Zealand in 1944 as child refugees. By the 1970s, a 'hippy commune' was flourishing at the Court. Today, pot-luck dinners, working bees and communal ownership of the chooks help maintain connections between residents.

This 36 minute film uses minimal narration. The story is mostly told through interviews with past and current residents, historical and family photographs and newsreel footage.

For further information and copies of the film (only \$20) contact marie.russell@otago.ac.nz

Good News Stories

Collaboration Creates a Safer Community - Wins Top Public Sector Excellence Award

IPANZ Gen-i Public Sector Excellence Awards 2009 winners announced

A New Zealand Police and Porirua City Council project to make Porirua a safer community has received the top award at this year's IPANZ Gen-i Public Sector Excellence Awards. The 'Safer Porirua' project won the category for excellence in working together for better services, as well as the supreme award, called the Prime Minister's Award.

The 'Safer Porirua' project is a collaboration between the New Zealand Police, Porirua City Council and community agencies to achieve World Health Organisation accreditation for Porirua as an International Safe Community. Porirua was awarded this status in 2008. There is evidence of improvements in safety outcomes since the initiative began in 2005 - an improved perception of safety, the lowest crime rates in the Wellington region and a reduced rate of road injuries.

This newsletter has been produced by Helen Wilson and Mary-Jane Rivers. Thanks to contributors Jenny Blagdon, Justine Banfield, Megan Courtney, Matt Crawshaw, Anneleise Hall, Moira Lawler, Tess Liew, Living Economies, Anne Mcleod, Barbara MacLennan, Puamiria Maaka, Alfred Ngaro, Bob Wakefield, Judith Webster and Rob Williams, The next newsletter will be August 2009. **Website:** www.InspiringCommunities.org.nz **Email:** exchange@InspiringCommunities.org.nz *Inspiring Communities* is supported by The Tindall Foundation and The Todd Foundation