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*getting good treatment?*

# COUNCIL DEBT

*the truth ... maybe*

# Lawrence Yule *Pitches Amalgamation*

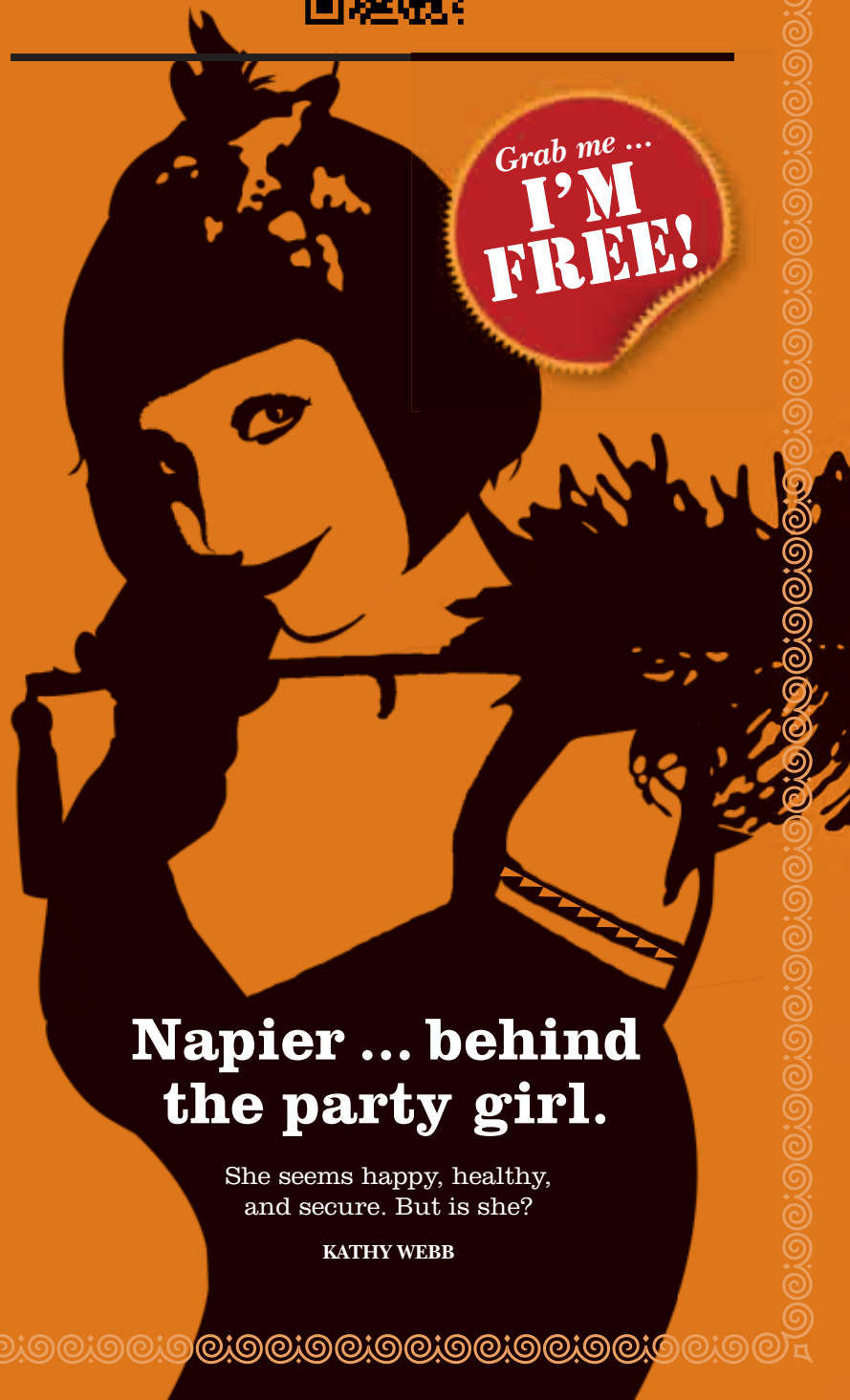
**PLUS:** *Bees, Boomers, Booze, Ronald McDonald & more!*

# BAY BUZZ

ISSUE No 02



SEPT/OCT  
2011  
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## Napier ... behind the party girl.

She seems happy, healthy, and secure. But is she?

KATHY WEBB

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# BAY BUZZ



SEPT/OCT 2011



From the Editor ~ TOM BELFORD

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Keith is a journeyman journo with nearly 40-years' experience across mainstream and trade media. He and his wife Paula Novak moved from the bush in Titirangi to the beach at Haumoana in 2009. He's won awards for writing about hi-tech, produces Musical Chairs programmes for Radio NZ and has had four books published, one on the internet in New Zealand and three on NZ history.



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Kathy has been a Hawke's Bay journalist for 25 years. She was the first female chief reporter at the former Hawke's Bay *Herald-Tribune*, and inaugural chief reporter at *Hawke's Bay Today*, moving later to the *Dominion Post* and now freelancing. Hastings has been home for 40 years. With children grown, husband Brendan and Kathy spend spare time trying to tame a wild block of land at Tangoio.

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I hope you'll find heaps to inform, entertain and provoke you in this edition of BayBuzz. In fact, if one or another of our articles and columns don't stir you up, we're failing in our mission. I can tell you, there are a few issues in this edition that get me riled up.

One is the state of our rivers in Hawke's Bay and the pace at which they're not being improved. As I report in my own article, over the next eighteen months, give or take, so many key water policy decisions are coming out of the Regional Council pipeline that environmentalists will drown in them.

Yes, these are definitely matters needing attending to; but their sheer number will outpace the ability of unpaid citizen watchdogs to protect the Bay's environmental values. Frankly, many of us don't expect the Regional Council to do so, unless it is watched and pressed every step of the way. And the policy decisions are just the precursor to real action.

Another aggravating issue is the head-in-the-sand attitude of the Napier and Regional Councils toward amalgamation. After all, they're not being pushed to endorse any plan. They're simply being asked to support a joint investigation of whether our region's governance is organised as effectively as it could be to address the challenges facing the people of Hawke's Bay.

HBRC Chair Fenton Wilson (no doubt busy protecting the Tuki) and

Mayor Arnott (busy polishing Napier's silver) declined to offer their views on amalgamation in these pages. What kind of leadership is that from the 'leaders' of these councils? As Lawrence Yule says in his article, "Are they scared, apathetic, or worst of all ... comfortable?"

Napier's elected leaders say effectively, "We're perfect, the rest of the Bay can go to hell!" But Kathy Webb's article reveals that it's not all milk and honey in Art Decoland.

If you read Douglas Lloyd Jenkins worrying about Boomers over-running the Bay, Paul Paynter lamenting New Zealand's alcohol binge, and David Trubridge warring with capitalism, you might find yourself looking for some comfort!

You can find some good news about health care in Napier, innovative education-to-work programmes right here in Hawke's Bay schools, successful online merchants selling from here in the Bay to the world, and some 'returnees' to the Bay who are thrilled to be back ... and making a difference.

There's more in the mag than I can tease you with here. But if you really need immediate relief from the vexing issues of the day, jump right to the last page, and get inside the head of Ronald McDonald (a late Boomer, born in 1963), as imagined by Brendan Webb in *Fallen Arches!*

Tom Belford

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# NAPIER



Napier promotes itself as the capital,  
heart and soul of Hawke's Bay,  
but is that the full story?

Kathy Webb talks to some of its citizens.

# Behind the façade of sunshine and style.



She's a glamorous gal, no doubt about it. Attractive, vibrant and always keen to party, she has a style and confidence her more conservative sister across the river would love to emulate.

She's not backward in self-promotion either. "Unique" is a word she loves to use. Her unique identity, unique character, unique ... well, everything.

Our gal clearly isn't unique in the true sense of the word, apart from the GPS co-ordinates that denote her place on the globe, but that's mere detail. We won't fuss her about it. We'll go along with her in spirit; take a look at what's going on in her life. In fact, it's no secret that when the visitors have departed she becomes a bit of a home girl – self-contained and fiercely independent; happy to shut the door and curl up with her own company.

We know her finances aren't as tight-fisted as she likes people to think (she owes \$52 million, not \$5 million), but she's not about to let that cramp her style, and she's made it quite clear that suitors in marriage, however convenient, will never be welcome.

On the surface, it seems our party girl is happy, healthy and secure in herself. But is she?

"I don't know whether we're unique, but people are proud to live in Napier and say they are connected to it," says mayor Barbara Arnott. "We know how to party and how to protest. When we lost the hospital, 30,000 marched in protest."

Arnott says Napier has grown on the foundations of culture, museums and science laid by its early European settlers. "Napier's got a unique built environment," she says. "We're not like a lot of provincial centres, which are only service centres. Napier has a mini-metropolitan feel."

Arnott's sense of Napier as an exceptionally special place is well known, so it surprised the socks off some when, on July 4, American Independence Day, she and her 12 councillors used the word 'unique' to include Hastings – or rather, Napier's autonomous co-existence with Hastings.

It turned out to be an aberration. »

**"We're not like a lot of provincial centres, which are only service centres. Napier has a mini metropolitan feel."**

BARBARA ARNOTT  
NAPIER MAYOR



**NAPIER ~ *The people are apathetic. They've got to get off their bums.***

» “Hawke’s Bay has a unique advantage (in New Zealand) with the twin vibrant cities of Napier and Hastings which both enjoy distinct and different identities,” they said in a unanimous statement.

“Variety and choice have been identified as significant economic strengths which should be exploited in our region, rather than ‘dumbed down’ to no real choice,” they said, before concluding: “the council unanimously agree that there seems to be little to gain and much to lose by introducing the question of amalgamation at this time.”

And that was that. Napier’s response to an independent poll showing 39% support and 13% neutrality among its residents for a political marriage of convenience with the Hastings District and Hawke’s Bay Regional councils.

There was to be no discussion between Napier City Council and its citizens, no public discussion among the elected mayor and councillors, and no discussion – public or private – with the proposer of amalgamation, Hastings mayor Lawrence Yule. The rejection slip – vaguely worded but betraying barely-concealed anger

(“dumbed down” ?!) – was flung in Yule’s direction from the barricaded turrets of Napier City Castle.

Yule will not give up. He has cash donations, Trojans within the walls of Napier, and the numbers to get the Local Government Commission involved. The conversation will begin, with or without NCC.

**Inside the castle**

But that aside, this incident was an example of the insularity that some critics accuse the NCC of. There are grumblings that Arnott and the council’s chief executive, Neil Taylor, run such a tight ship that no one else has much input into anything; that council meetings have become rubber-stamping exercises for deals and decisions already made behind closed doors.

Former city councillor David Bosley says that after three years as an elected representative at the council table he felt disempowered, disappointed and disillusioned. “Napier’s a great place to live,” he says. “But the council’s not people-friendly. Councillors don’t initiate

anything. By the time anything gets to the council it’s a fait accompli.” That happens because Napier residents allow it to, he says. “The people are apathetic. They’ve got to get off their bums.”

Current city councillor Maxine Boag says Arnott and Taylor are a strong team and good for the city. “Yes, they do run a tight ship. Look at Napier. It’s well run with good infrastructure.”

Boag is very happy with the way things are, although she does admit that not all councillors have a grasp of everything they are voting on, that not everything is debated at official meetings, and she sometimes feels a little powerless. “The council is a big machine. At first I felt like a cog. There are sub-committees and processes, checks and balances. I just remember that I’m there to serve.”

“We get a lot of information sent to us. There are a lot of things I haven’t got my head around. We tend to select areas of interest and focus on those. We are given a lot of freedom to pick and choose. I focus more into my ward. Other people have a much better grasp of the financials and some of those areas.”



Ahuriri: *Hawke’s Bay’s Monte Carlo.*



### What about the bigger picture?

“We do debate, although not everything. I don’t like to feel I’m rubberstamping. I ask a lot of questions and I do challenge things I don’t necessarily agree with, but I pick my battles.”

Boag’s ward of Maraenui – aka The Nui – is Napier’s underbelly, scoring highly in every measure of deprivation and dysfunction; home to gangs and a large proportion of the city’s crime. The suburb has been ignored and neglected by successive city councils, says Boag. She hopes that within the next year its shopping centre will get a morale-boosting facelift with some new lights, toilets and fencing. “They don’t need a whole lot of people to run their lives. They just need to know people are listening and care,” she says.

### Shaking the Parade

Farther across town, heavy trucks shake the foundations of Mon Logis Hotel up to 1200 times a day. Weighing up to 50 tonnes when laden with fertiliser, containers, tallow, wood chips, cement, petrol, apples, logs or other cargo destined for the Port of Napier, trucks and trailers bounce, crash and thunder their way along Marine Parade at any time of the day or night.

They travel through part of the CBD, splitting city from beach, and pass just metres from homes with big picture windows overlooking the Pacific Ocean. These homes are in a stretch of real estate that in many other cities would be a Millionaire’s Row with limited traffic and safe, easy access to a well-developed foreshore.

Gerard Aveross, the owner of Mon Logis and a member of the Marine Parade Environment Society, has been fighting for 10 years to get the council to ban heavy trucks from the parade. Fellow members Richard Barfoot and Anne Foreman say Marine Parade is not a state highway and should not be sacrificed to heavy trucks that could use the expressway and Ahuriri bypass to get to the port.

Barfoot says the society pleads for decisive action every year, but the council always says it cannot do anything until some other project is completed, and that other project always seems to depend on funds from central government.

According to Arnott, Napier’s CBD is “the commercial heart of the East Coast of the North Island”. Asked to elucidate,



Flashback  
What were they thinking?

she stated, “Napier has historically been the retail-commercial area of choice and we strive to keep it that way.”

Murray Douglas, chief executive of the Hawke’s Bay Chamber of Commerce, says it’s “ridiculous” to compare retail statistics between Napier and Hastings, because a petrol price rise or a big sale in a retail store can distort the figures.

“The big one is Hawke’s Bay,” he says.

### Upstart Ahuriri

However, retailers in the CBD are no different from those anywhere else in the country. Times are tough, and the CBD has new competition from trendy Ahuriri.

One of the oldest parts of the city, and rubbing shoulders with the Hawke’s Bay Regional Council-owned Port of Napier, Ahuriri is blessed with a picturesque marina and the best beaches in Napier. It is also becoming a hot spot for new retail and accommodation, entertainment and recreation.

On a freezing cold day in the July school holidays, the fast food restaurant right on the beach is packed with noisy families. The window in the dining area frames up a flat grey sea overhung with layers of grey clouds blending with a grey landscape. The only point of contrast is the white smoke billowing from Pan Pac’s pulp mill across the bay. As the first hard drops of rain fall, an elderly man with a Nordic walking pole in one hand and a portable radio in the other quickens his stride along the boardwalk.

Back over the hill in the CBD, it’s easy to find a park. Shoppers are sparse, and shop staff are chatting.

Meg Rodell, manager of Napier Inner City Marketing, says some are doing well, but many are struggling. Even the

July school holidays didn’t yield their usual sales pick-up. “Winter is generally quieter in Napier because we are a tourist destination. Things have tapered off since Easter, which is normal, but it has been particularly quiet during winter. There are a lot of people around, but they’re not spending. You don’t see people with bags and bags of purchases like we used to.”

### Tourism reigns

Arnott has tourists in her sights. “Tourism is a core business for this council. It’s really important to this city. We are increasingly reliant on it. We aren’t a manufacturing city. Our jobs are mostly in the service industry, so if we can make it more and more attractive for visitors, we will do that.”

Two of the city’s most-photographed ‘residents’ are Pania the Maori maiden, and the golden Spirit of Napier .

Pania, created with silicon bronze, was unveiled in 1954, shot at in 1982, and stolen from her plinth in 2005. She smiles serenely, beloved as ever. Down the road, the golden Spirit of Napier is in trouble. Only 40, but made of inferior gunmetal bronze, she’s contracted a bad case of bronze rot and has to be removed from her prominent perch to see a doctor. If her illness is terminal she’ll be replaced, for Art Deco is the stand-out tourist attraction in Napier, and she is its stylish symbol.

Art Deco, internationally fashionable in 1931 when Napier was destroyed in the earthquake, was the style of choice for rebuilding much of the inner city. Many buildings were subsequently butchered in the name of ‘modernisation’ before resident Robert McGregor looked



**SH Marine Parade?**

*What is it going to take to get heavy vehicles off Napier's waterfront?*



»

» around him one day and realised what a wonderful asset his city had. Architecture tours, dress-ups, nostalgic music, vintage cars, tea parties, dinners and dancing now draw in locals and thousands of visitors each year.

Nevertheless, Stuart McLaughlin, president of the Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce, is concerned about Napier's apparent dependence on tourism. Jobs in that industry tend to be low-paid and low-skilled, he says, and the number of tourists coming to Napier or wider Hawke's Bay is not going to pick up exponentially unless some mega money is invested.

"Tourism is an important component but it's not the main driver of economic development in Hawke's Bay. All the main tourism centres have a particular attraction that people want to go there for. Hawke's Bay has a lot, but it is not unique enough to make tourism a really huge thing without some significant investment in something to make people want to come."

Businessman and philanthropist Rodney Green is furious that Marineland was closed permanently after its last dolphin died. The council should have invited Sea World in Florida to become a minority partner in a massive redevelopment of the marine attraction, he says. There are a lot of ways it could have been done. "You don't need jumping dolphins."

He has another bone to pick with the council – leasehold land. NCC owns about 80 commercial leasehold sites, many prime waterfront, and approximately 50 residential sites – another windfall from the 1931 earthquake, which lifted large parts of Napier out of the sea.

Council policy is to retain the cash-generating commercial land, but Green and McLaughlin say it's time to rethink. Businesses are not going to invest money redeveloping dilapidated old buildings on leasehold land, with the risk of rent shocks every time their lease expires. McLaughlin says he knows of two big overseas investment opportunities lost to Napier because of this.

"It's [leasehold land] not a big issue for us," Arnott says. "It's important for the city to retain it."

**Infrastructure time bomb?**

There's also the issue of what's under the ground. Bosley says decades of under-spending on basic infrastructure have left Napier with a capital works time bomb. Some households are still getting their water through asbestos-lined water pipes (condemned in some studies as carcinogenic), while old landfills under Onekawa are laden with toxins and sinking. The subsidence ruined two large public swimming pools demolished in February, he says.

"Rubbish," says Neil Taylor. A large pool full of water sitting on pipes laid on estuarine sub-soils 40 years ago is bound to have problems. The council had heard stories about the pools being built above an old landfill, and investigated when the pool was removed. "We were looking for problems but we didn't find any." He doesn't know anything about subsidence on private properties.

As for asbestos pipes, like other cities around the world, Napier has many, but they present no known health problems. "Ingested asbestos is a fibre that passes through the body; inhaled asbestos is the dangerous form," Taylor says.

Arnott admits Onekawa does have



**Stormwater outfalls:** *Style on Marine Parade*

a landfill toxin problem. Wellington consultants Pattle Dellamore have analysed some of the landfill material, and "it is clear already from the consultants' advice that the old landfill should not be disturbed". Work is now being done to "determine the area of risk".

She rejects Bosley's claim of a capital works backlog. "Since 1988 we have had comprehensive asset plans for all our infrastructure. We have confidence that everything under the ground and under the roads is robust and well looked after. We don't have any areas needing huge money."

However, she does admit to a significant list of "planned works" to upgrade drainage in Taradale, Marewa-Pirimai, and the CBD. Staff comments on submissions to this year's annual plan say Taradale alone needs \$9 million worth of stormwater work, and that addressing the three problem areas "will require significant works and take some time to complete". First up will be the CBD. During the next three years, pipes will be installed to capture stormwater run-off from the hill.

Since 1998, every Napier household has paid a levy of \$48 to pre-fund a new sewage treatment system. The council is now seeking consent to build a \$30 million bio-trickle filter plant at Awatoto. "Almost all the \$30m will be there," when called upon, Arnott says.

In three years, the new \$18 million museum and art gallery will be completed. Ratepayers will put up a third of the cash, central government another third, and the rest will come from the public. Arnott is still fundraising.

The hardest question to get a straight answer to is that concerning Napier's debt.

Public (mis)conception is that it is only \$4-5 million.

Arnott says Napier has \$4 million of



external debt, and “a low rate of internal debt that will rise in the next few years because of the museum and art gallery”. And the actual amount of internal debt? Mrs Arnott doesn’t have that figure at her fingertips.

The council’s annual plan for 2011/12 puts it at \$47.9 million, which gives a combined internal and external debt of \$52m. Put simply, internal borrowing means the council has borrowed from the grocery jar to put new tyres on the car, but eventually will have to replace the



Exodus: Will Napier’s CBD revive?

grocery money – maybe from the holiday jar (more internal borrowing), or perhaps a bank loan (external borrowing).

Murray Douglas says the crucial thing for Hawke’s Bay’s future – not just Napier’s or Hastings’ – is to attract more people. Economic health will flow from that.

Arnott expects Napier to grow by 8,200 people during the next 35 years. “That’s very slow growth. If Napier got 2% growth we’d be happy. We could definitely take more people, but that’s not the reality of New Zealand.” People choose to live in Napier wherever they work in Hawke’s Bay, she says. “We have the best weather in New Zealand, and despite the fact it’s on a transport limb, it’s becoming increasingly attractive in lifestyle terms.”

Speaking of lifestyle, what is Napier doing to prepare for a future of climate change and increasingly expensive energy?

**Arnott nominated:**

- We are prepared for high tides and floods with our stormwater systems.
- We have a pathway network throughout the city. In 10 years we will have 50 km of pathways for biking and walking so


everyone is within easy distance of an easy walkway.

- Another sewer line will go in from the CBD to Awatoto, so if one fails we have another.
- We are fast moving to digitisation of our CBD.

So Napier is starting to think about the future, although perhaps not yet focused on the wider horizon.

Some weeks ago, Napier-Wairoa’s elected MP, Chris Tremain, published an open letter in which he pleaded for discussion about some form of united regional strategy .

Tremain underscored that “total amalgamation is just one option”, and not one he is necessarily advocating. “All I ask is that we don’t bury our heads in the sand without having the debate. Personally I believe that there really is a bigger picture out there for our province just waiting to be grabbed,” he concluded.

Perhaps our gal read the letter. But is she persuaded? Will she keep the door locked, or will she pull back the drapes and take a look at the wider horizon her neighbours keep talking about? 

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# Napier vs Hastings

# 125

# YEARS

## of disagreement

Never one big happy family.



BY ~ MICHAEL FOWLER

**THE SOMETIMES STORMY RELATIONSHIP** between the Bay cities of Napier and Hastings can be traced back over 125 years.

In Napier, the older of the two cities, the main settlement of Europeans began in the early 1850s, whereas Hastings' beginnings can be traced to the 1870s, when Thomas Tanner's Riverslea Estate was subdivided for sale. Most of the buyers of the Hastings land were in fact Napier land speculators.

And while the Napier speculators were keen for their Hastings land values to increase, it appears they did not want Hastings to prosper at the expense of Napier.

For example, in 1888 when a woollen mill was proposed in Hastings, Napier people would not invest in the project and the required funds were not raised. A furious Thomas Tanner, the mill's promoter, lashed out, saying Napier people were "jealous of Hastings getting ahead of Napier". The *Hawke's Bay Herald* disagreed, responding "no, Hastings people were ten times more jealous of Napier". But the Herald did agree that Napier people would have invested if the woollen mill were situated in Napier.

Some of Hastings' residents and its surrounding rural landowners had made earlier attempts to prosper Hastings ahead of Napier. In 1879, a group tried to establish a company to build a railway

line to Clive Grange (now Haumoana/Te Awanga). This was to be the first stage in a plan to create a new breakwater harbour near Cape Kidnappers – taking business away from the port at Ahuriri, Napier. However, Napier people, who were aware of the ultimate goal, refused to invest, and the company was not formed.

One of the originators of the Kidnappers breakwater harbour scheme was rural landowner John Harding. He never gave up on the idea of a port at Cape Kidnappers and stated in 1885: "... Napierites might rely on it [a port at Napier], but Kidnappers will be the port, and Hastings the capital of this province ... and to spend more money at Napier for harbour works is just taxing the people for the benefit of a few Napier shopkeepers."

The breakwater harbour then became a priority for Napier people as they feared a rival port development. Ahuriri port could not take larger vessels, and it was expensive for shipping companies to use lighters to unload their cargo outside the port. A breakwater port would attract substantial business. While a preliminary Bluff breakwater harbour was completed in 1893, further development stalled as Hastings and rural interests defeated proposals for additional investment at ratepayers' polls. Hastings' business interests favoured more investment in the Ahuriri port, not wanting to pay rates on

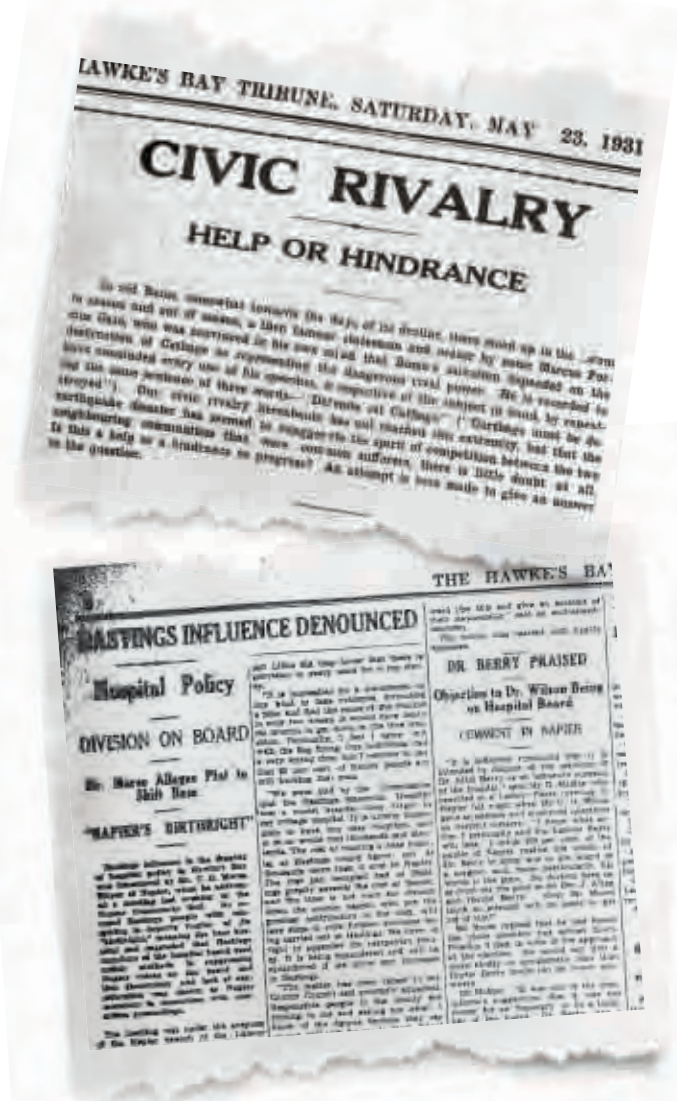
the more expensive breakwater harbour.

This issue was perhaps the most divisive between Hastings and Napier, raging for over 50 years. In the end, nature forced a decision when the 1931 Hawke's Bay earthquake lifted the sea floor and made Port Ahuriri unsuitable for further development.

As Hastings grew in size, so did its citizens' desire to have their own public hospital. Napier had a hospital on Scinde Island (now Napier Hill), which served Hastings as well. Napier, with a larger population, was entitled to have more members on the Hawke's Bay Health Board. Its representatives continually outvoted any attempts by the minority Hastings members to establish a cottage hospital in Hastings. Napier members of the Hawke's Bay Health Board became skilful at delaying or offering temporary solutions, such as an ambulance, which blocked development of a Hastings hospital. Resources were scarce for public health services, and the Napier members feared a hospital at Hastings would weaken Napier's health provision.

Hastings finally got a public hospital in 1928, but ended up with only a small maternity hospital, despite being promised an emergency ward as well.

All of these issues bubbled beneath the service until the 1931 Hawke's Bay earthquake not only unleashed the strain in the earth's crust, but also the



frustrations of Hastings people with Napier – especially over the hospital issue. (Hastings did get their full public hospital in the 1930s ... and we know where that story leads!) The actions of some Hastings people towards Napier after the earthquake in attempting to lure business, hospital and the Hawke's Bay County Council to their town made the situation much worse and did not go unnoticed around New Zealand.

These early sources of disagreement between Napier and Hastings continued into the 20th century, usually relating to arguments over where large infrastructure assets should be situated, with both towns believing their own claim to be superior. The proximity of the two towns, parochial attitudes, and the fact that two of everything could not be afforded meant conflict inevitably occurred.

**MICHAEL FOWLER** will be giving an updated talk on his research on the conflicts between Hastings and Napier at:

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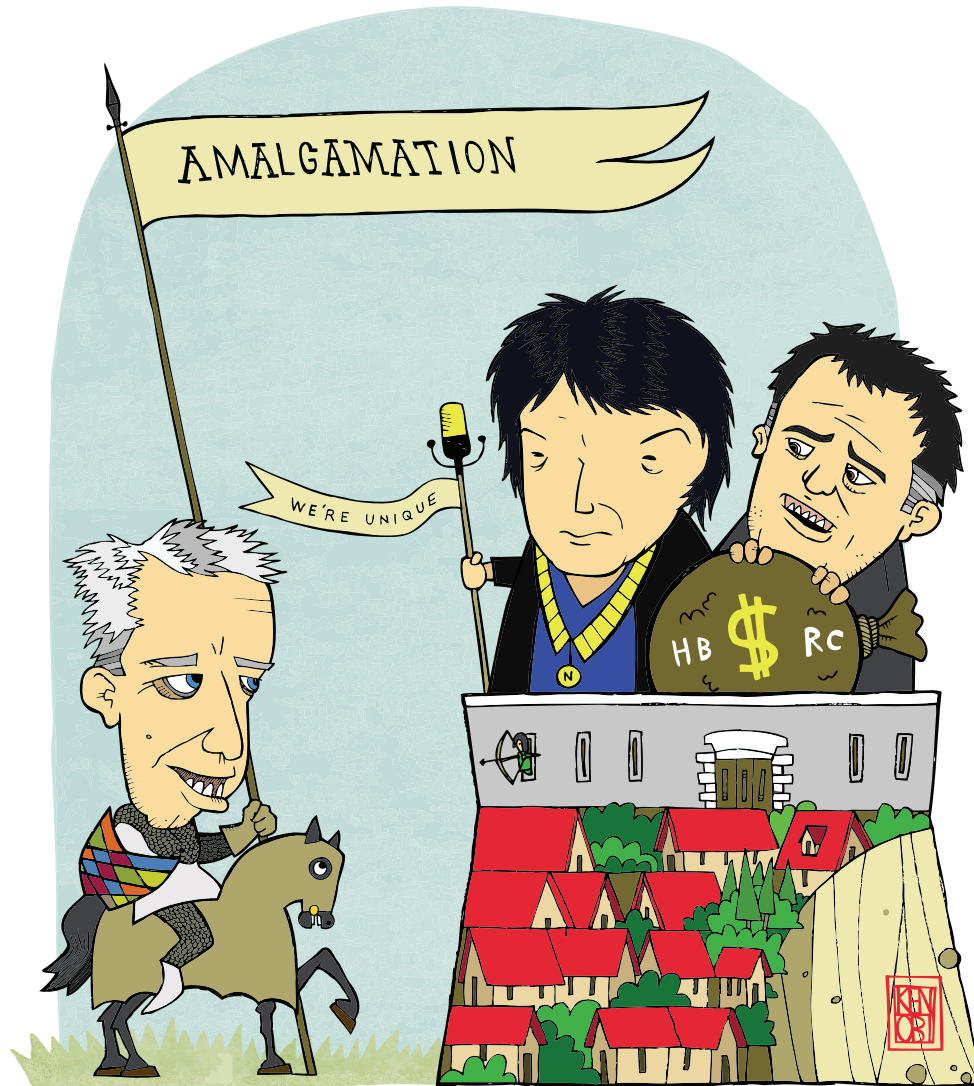
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# Hawke's Bay ... stuck in the past or looking to our future?

BY ~ MAYOR LAWRENCE YULE



**RECENTLY I'VE BEEN HEAVILY** involved in one of the most challenging issues of my career and the single biggest factor in our future success.

Regional reform, amalgamation, or whatever you call it, is an emotive issue. People are passionate and vocal in their views. However, we must put emotion to the side and consider what makes sense, identify the best path forward, and how can we build a quality future for our children. This debate is too important to be derailed by politics and parochialism.

As a politician, it would be far simpler to not debate the issue. I could take the easy option and accept the status quo. We could carry on as we have for time immemorial. However, doing so would deprive our grandchildren of opportunity, direction and hope. We

live in a rapidly changing world and to be successful we need to be smart and adaptable, while thinking and planning for the long term.

I love living in Hawke's Bay and am proud to call it home. Our region is blessed with so much and could easily be the best place in the world to live. However, looking at our region's performance, you can only draw one conclusion ... we are slipping behind. There are many major social and economic challenges ahead and we are failing to address these.

Our population growth is well below the national average. From 1996 to 2010 the New Zealand population grew by 18.6% compared to Hawke's Bay at 8.4%. On virtually every social indicator, we are in the bottom quartile, and in

many we have sadly slipped to last place.

If we use the analogy that Hawke's Bay is a sports team, then right now we're losing badly in pool play, we're not even in contention for the finals. If we're serious about being competitive on the global stage then we must change our game plan. Right now, I'd go as far as to say that we don't even have a game plan. Some might consider this a controversial stance for a politician, but look at the issues facing us and our lack of a long-term united plan is glaringly apparent. We're doing nothing to address unavoidable issues like climate change, sea level rise, our ageing population, demographic changes and our competitiveness in world markets.

Possibly the single biggest challenge facing us is the unabated decline



in our economic performance. Examples abound, from 300 jobs lost due to the closure of Ovation Meats in Central Hawke's Bay to reports of 1 in 10 families in Napier relying on food banks to survive. It comes down to our economic performance and employment for our people; it's something that affects each and every person in Hawke's Bay.

Many of my contemporaries would argue that these sorts of issues are far too big to be considered by us. Others might say, let's work together a bit more, share some services and provide a few efficiencies along the way. The problem is, this simply will not help us deal with the fundamental issues at hand.

There are five separate councils in the region. Through my role as President of Local Government NZ, I am privileged to work across the Local Government sector and I'm pleased to say that by national standards each of our councils is well-managed. However, they are each very different, whether by fate of history, economic circumstance or their mandated function.

Councils' roles are to provide infrastructure, planning, environmental governance and advocacy for their communities. The problem is, they do this largely isolated from each other without understanding the interconnectedness of our communities.

For those that doubt we are one economic region, just look at the traffic flow on the expressway each morning to see the number of Napier people who work in Hastings and vice versa. Our economies are tightly entwined. Without our component parts we are infinitely weaker.

So regardless of what politicians think or say, people live, work and play wherever they wish in Hawke's Bay. They're not bound by imaginary lines. We are already one place. We are already one region. We just need to start acting like it.

With this in mind I firmly believe we must have a good hard look at how we do things. This does not mean squashing past success, making everybody the same, or losing our distinct identities. It simply means objectively looking at options to make us 'match fit' for the long-term game.

Two years ago I proposed a structure that I felt would go a long way to addressing the big issues. It regionalised

many things to give us efficiencies, as well as a strategic regional perspective. It allowed for Napier, Hastings, Wairoa and Central Hawke's Bay to be strongly represented on issues important to those communities. It allowed for existing debt to remain with former authorities and only regional issues to be funded on a regional basis. It envisioned some cost savings. Most importantly, it would allow us to develop a long-term sustainable social and economic plan.

So, why the emotion? Why the posturing? Why will our region's leaders not face these issues head on? Why is it seemingly so difficult to get an independent report commissioned to look at this? Are they scared, apathetic, or worst of all ... comfortable?

Regardless of the reasons, these issues are important to me, to my children and their children in the future. This issue is not going away. Nor is my commitment. We can bury our heads in the sand and continue to fall behind, or we can look to our future with a plan, hope and optimism. To me the choice is obvious.

## Denying the debate

By Tom Belford

### YOU MIGHT BE WONDERING WHY

*BayBuzz* has presented only one voice in the amalgamation debate ... Mayor Lawrence Yule.

The fact is, we offered equal space to Mayor Barbara Arnott and to Regional Council Chair Fenton Wilson. Ample space, not a sound bite, to make and explain their points of view – unedited and uninterpreted – to a thoughtful audience. Our presumption was that, as council leaders, with experience-shaped insights into the workings of local government, they were the most appropriate voices to challenge Mayor Yule's thinking on the matter.

However, both leaders declined.

Replied Fenton Wilson: "Ask Lawrence why he won't support a referendum across the whole region and let the people answer the amalgamation question. We have studies for Africa on the subject already throughout the Bay and don't need any more. Let the people give us direction. In the meantime HBRC advocates shared services and regional economic development."

And in an earlier communication: "My view is like it or not there are five players in a regional Hawke's Bay amalgamation discussion around local Government structure. We Mayors and myself haven't had the opportunity to get together since the amalgamation discussion gained a slight recent momentum and I am reluctant to comment before such a meeting."

That's leadership, Fenton Wilson-style. Perhaps it's true that Chairman Wilson has no political mandate to speak for the Regional Council on the matter. His fellow regional councillors are closely divided on amalgamation. And he himself was elected with only 1,322 votes. All in all, not much of a mandate for a regional voice.

The same cannot be said of Mayor Arnott, who clearly commands a sizable voting constituency and enjoys unanimous opposition to amalgamation amongst her councillors. Surely, she would have a political mandate to serve as a thoughtful voice interpreting the issues to the public.

However, she replied: "I do believe that it is not helpful for Napier and Hastings to be encouraged to opposite corners of the boxing ring for amalgamation. I understand that Lawrence has an agenda that he is pursuing, but I don't. I would prefer not to damage the relationship between these two cities because I have worked hard with Lawrence for the last ten years to heal previous wounds ... Clearly Napier will expect me to represent the collective view at the appropriate time if a scheme is to be considered by all communities and I will be happy to do so."

Arnott and Wilson believe the amalgamation fire is narrowly confined; their strategy is to try to starve it of oxygen, hoping it will quietly burn out.

Their political assessment is wrong. There are simply too many civic leaders in Hawke's Bay — and that includes in Napier — who believe strongly that the Bay needs to better organise itself to face the challenges of the future. They will soon announce themselves. Mayor Yule is only one of them. And his polling indicates 53% of voters in Napier either favour amalgamation or are undecided in the issue. Plenty of voters in that community want to see the debate unfold.

Already the debate is moving beyond Mayor Arnott and Chairman Wilson directly to the people of Hawke's Bay.



# THE TRUTH ABOUT HAWKE'S BAY'S

# DEBT



*BayBuzz's* research underscores the need for an independent, professionally-conducted review of the financial positions of our local councils ... rendered in plain English. **BY ~ TOM BELFORD**

**EVERY OTHER DAY OR SO, ANOTHER** 'letter to the editor' decries Hastings 'outrageous' debt, comparing it to Napier's reassuringly meager \$4 or \$5 million debt. The letters are usually written by Napier residents fearful of amalgamation.

All share a fundamental error, which no Napier official has bothered to correct in the media – Napier's total public debt in 2011-12 is projected at \$52 million! Still less than half Hastings' debt, which is projected at \$120 million for the same period.

With all the 'debt-slinging' going on, *BayBuzz* decided to take a closer look at the figures presented by both Councils, with the Regional Council's debt rounding out the picture.

## First, the basics

Coming out of fiscal 2010-11, Hastings carried a total public debt of \$91.6 million – \$58.2 million in external debt (owed to banks) and \$33.4 million in internal debt (owed to itself, more on this in a moment).

Napier carried a total debt of \$38.5 million – \$4.0 million external and \$34.5 million internal.

The Regional Council total debt was \$15.8 million – \$15.5 external and \$250,000 internal.

The 'internal' debt component makes debt levels difficult to assess. This is money that councils borrow from themselves out of currently available cashflow to pay for immediate capital improvements they might be making. Two examples might clarify the practice, used by most councils.

Councils bill us prospectively for our rates, and the in-coming revenue outpaces the actual need to pay current operating expenses. So, some 'surplus'

cash accumulates. The council might invest that cash for some relatively low rate of return, or it might 'borrow' it to finance some other activity – let's say, building new public toilets – instead of borrowing those funds from an external bank at a higher interest rate.

When it comes time to pay for the operations that the rates revenue was originally raised to cover, those activities must of course still be funded. Either the council 'repays' the internal loan (by switching those toilets to an external bank loan) or other new revenues have arrived to cover the cost. Sort of a public finance 'shell game'.

A different example involves 'dedicated' revenues. Napier, for example, has charged its ratepayers \$48 per year since 1997 to fund eventual construction of a new sewage treatment plant, accumulating about \$20 million for that purpose. But plant construction won't commence next year. Where's the \$20 million?

It can be held in reserve and invested. Or, Napier can borrow internally against it. So the sewage plant money is used, hypothetically, to build a new stormwater pipeline, instead of externally borrowing for the pipeline. When it's time to pay for the sewage plant, that funding must now somehow be covered. Councils can have any number of dedicated reserves that build up this way.

Council loans can be used only to fund capital projects – that is, building or purchasing new physical assets for the community. They cannot be used to pay operating costs or for the renewal of existing assets. Capital projects are presumed to have inter-generational value; hence appropriately loan-funded over time.

Internal borrowings are virtually the same for Hastings and Napier. The two

councils take very similar approaches to maximising their use of 'spare' cash – 'total liquidity management' in finance lingo.

Both Napier's accounting manager Fiona Green and Hastings' finance chief, Tony Gray – both interviewed at length – assert that internal borrowing is not 'jam jar' financing – using funds dedicated to Project A to instead fund Project B. And then funding Project A with funds raised for Project C. To them, all available cash is fungible and available to be deployed where immediately needed. The ratepayer benefit, they say, is less need for higher-cost bank borrowing. Green notes that her Napier Council saves typically 1.5-2% on each dollar funded this way.

Ratepayers might differ in their 'tolerance' of the practice. It certainly blurs transparency and accountability to the typical ratepayer. What matters to the ratepayer is that all debt – internal and external – is an actual liability owed by the community.

## Too much debt?

Financial managers use various measures to reassure ratepayers that borrowing is limited to some 'prudent' level. For example, councils enact policies regarding ratio of outstanding debt to assets, or to rates revenue. 'Accepted practices' in the public finance sector – and an Auditor General to whom we can all appeal – probably prevent any really egregious borrowing practices.

To the typical ratepayer, probably more important is knowing what the loans are actually being used to buy.

Our chart lists the projects for which the Hastings and Regional Councils have borrowed money, internally or externally, and the amounts outstanding as of 30 June 2011. NCC was disinclined to

## Councils' Loan-funded Projects and Activities

Gross Debt as of 30 June 2011



HB Regional Council	\$'000
Sawfly remediation	3,240
Digital terrain monitoring	55
GIS purchase	76
Finance system	1,360
Technical equipment (monitoring bores)	90
Computer servers	100
NZ Cycleway projects	1,500
Regional sports park	1,500
Open Space purchases	1,500
Hawke's Bay Museum & Art Gallery	1,300
Waipawa Town Hall	500
Parks & wetlands grants	400
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$11,621</b>

Hastings District Council	\$'000
Building extension	2,040
Branch office – Heretaunga House	5,241
Parks	5,367
Swimming pools	77
Housing for the elderly	1,397
HB Opera House	5,129
Splash Planet	345
Visitor Information Centre	80
Civil defence	210
CCTV (video monitoring of public spaces)	112
Refuse transfer station	483
Landfill	1,509
Roading	15,724
Sewage	7,818
Wastewater treatment facilities	14,969
Stormwater	9,948
Water supply	9,432
Growth-related debt (developer re-paid)	10,882
Other community related activities	841
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$91,604</b>

Napier City Council	\$'000
City promotion	3,065
Planning & regulatory	150
Recreation	4,662
Roading	5,112
Social & cultural	3,081
Water & wastes	8,063
Various capital projects (no detail)	14,392
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$38,525</b>

provide more than general activity figures.

To its credit, the Regional Council publishes this detail routinely in its Annual Plan. Other councils should be this transparent.

After looking at specific borrowing purposes, ratepayers should be better able to satisfy themselves (or not) about the appropriateness of borrowing levels.

If one believes Hastings' debt is too high, which projects represent excessive borrowing – \$5 million for the Opera House, or \$1.4 million for housing for the elderly, or something else? For the Regional Council, is it \$1.5 million for the regional sports park, or \$2.9 million for loans to householders for clean heat improvements, or something else?

Apparently, Napier ratepayers don't deserve this level of detail and accountability. How can one evaluate \$3 million for 'City Promotion' against \$3 million for 'Social & Cultural'?

NCC staff provided some examples of specific project borrowing – for example, \$6.6 million for the Taradale stormwater pipeline, \$5 million for the new museum & art gallery, \$2.9 million for Taradale town centre redevelopment, and \$10 million for the proposed BTF sewage treatment plant. Such information should be routinely available to ratepayers.

Given the amalgamation 'debt-sliding', it's unfortunate that NCC does not provide the detail that might permit more informed comparisons between Napier and Hastings borrowings.

For example, is Hastings wantonly spending more for its new wastewater treatment plant than Napier? The answer is no ... both are spending \$32 million or so. But Napier's borrowing won't hit the books until next year. NCC insists that the Council has accumulated \$18 million in unencumbered cash (remember that sewage levy mentioned above?) to pay against its plant, and having spent around \$5 million already, will borrow \$10 million to complete the project.

Or take roading. Napier has borrowed \$5 million for its 363 kilometres of mainly urban streets. Hastings has borrowed \$16 million to build and upgrade 1,627 kilometres of roads, many of which deliver the bulk of the region's agricultural product to market. Does this reflect Hastings profligacy, or a core infrastructure investment that supports many Napier incomes?

### Looking forward

Councils' forward projections are even tougher to assess.

In Hastings, in the 2011-12 fiscal year, external debt is projected to rise \$20 million, while internal debt will increase by \$5 million, a net of \$25 million in new debt. In Napier, internal debt is projected to increase \$13 million, while external debt will remain the same.

There's no question that Hastings has significantly more borrowings than Napier. Hastings' external debt is projected to peak at around \$93 million. Regarding which Napier CEO Neil Taylor recently wrote: "I am not suggesting that Hastings debt is unsustainable because that is not the case." Napier's external debt will peak at around \$20 million.


Both of these figures can change significantly – reflecting new and discarded projects – when councils update their Ten Year Plans next year. For example, Napier, concerned that many of its precincts are underwater after major rainfalls, has previewed new stormwater projects estimated at \$10 million over 2012-2015.

Paying interest on debt costs Napier ratepayers more proportionately than Hastings ratepayers. In Napier, about 13-15% of rates goes to servicing debt, whereas this figure is about 9% for Hastings. Perhaps a surprise to Napier ratepayers.

All in all, there's plenty for partisans in the amalgamation debate to explain. For its part, Hastings has a significantly larger debt load to defend. Napier, on the other hand, needs to be more forthright in acknowledging its current and future debt position, reflecting needed stormwater and wastewater infrastructure improvements.

And it should not require hours of ferreting around for the typical ratepayer to get an accurate understanding of the situation. *BayBuzz's* research for this article underscores the need for an independent, professionally-conducted review of the financial positions of our local councils ... a review then presented to the public in plain English.

Is that too much for our ratepayers to expect? With all the accounting and financial brainpower available in Hawke's Bay, why doesn't some public-spirited group of experts step forward and offer to provide this public service?

The amalgamation discussion cannot proceed objectively without it. 



Tukituki  
*Looks clean, but is it?*

# WATER PRESSURE

Decisions to be made over the next 18 months will set the ground rules for freshwater protection and management in Hawke's Bay for decades to come.

BY ~ TOM BELFORD



**FACED WITH PRESSURE FROM ABOVE** and below, the Hawke's Bay Regional Council is starting anew to devise a strategy for protecting and managing the Bay's vital freshwater resources.

Not all of this pressure pushes in the same direction.

Some interests – chiefly farmers and those directly dependent on food production, processing and export – are intent on generating more economic value from the sector through more intensive farming. To them, the Bay's rivers and streams serve as a vital water supply, whose security must be enhanced, but also, historically, as a natural channel to carry away pollution from animals and over-use of fertilisers.

Other interests – chiefly conservationists, fishermen and other recreational users, environmentalists, and iwi – are concerned with protecting the quality of the Bay's rivers and streams, so as to protect freshwater ecological systems, recreational enjoyment, and cultural values.

The clash between these interests, with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council sitting between them, is played out today in every major catchment in Hawke's Bay. Decisions to be made over the next eighteen months will set the ground rules for freshwater and wetlands protection and management in Hawke's Bay for decades to come.

And even this sweeping set of issues represents only a part of the Bay's water management challenge, which also includes stormwater and wastewater management, provision of safe drinking water, improvement of on-site septic systems, and flood and erosion control.

#### **Pressure from above**

Management of New Zealand's fresh water has taken national significance. Water quality is recognised to be deteriorating; water supply is often over-allocated. Ineffective management by regional councils, including our own, has played its part. Henceforth, our Regional Council's management of Hawke's Bay's freshwater will need to satisfy more watchful and demanding eyes.

#### **The Land and Water Forum**

This national group of 58 stakeholder organisations conducted a painstaking and comprehensive review of NZ's fresh water management. Its September 2010 report, *A Fresh Start for Freshwater*, spelled out 53 recommendations for

improving the nation's water quality and management. Most observers consider it to represent 'best thinking' on the subject. Regional councils would be unwise to discount its urgency or direction.

#### **National Policy Statement (NPS) on Freshwater Management**

This policy took effect on 1 July 2011. The Government argues that it raises the bar for regional councils in their water protection role. For example, any existing over-allocation of water takes must be phased out, which would apply to the Bay's Tukituki, Ngaruroro and other waterways. According to an HBRC staff memo: "The NPS also strengthens the weight that needs to be afforded to 'avoiding' adverse effects on water resources, whereas the RMA provides for 'mitigating and remedying' effects. Hence there is a substantially greater onus upon applicants to demonstrate how adverse effects will be avoided ..."

However, many environmentalists contend that the NPS avoided the tougher recommendations of the Land & Water Forum, while giving regional councils too much time (2030) to fully implement even the weaker NPS provisions. The highly regarded Cawthron Institute recently issued a critical report on the NPS, concluding that its various weaknesses mean "the condition of New Zealand's lakes, rivers and wetlands is likely to decline for several more years and possibly much longer." Most importantly, actual standard setting still sits with each regional council, and it's still unclear whether they must regulate farm run-off (so-called 'diffuse discharges').

Fish & Game's regional manager Pete McIntosh comments: "The Cawthron report states the NPS 'will have no effect' on the main source of the problem – pollution from intensive agriculture – unless regional councils change their plans to require consents for diffuse pollution." A step HBRC might or might not take.

#### **Fresh Start for Fresh Water Fund**

In his Cabinet paper of 8 March 2011, Environment Minister Nick Smith acknowledged deteriorating water quality and noted: "Delay in clean up and the continuation of some practices will mean that some waterbodies will deteriorate further, creating a much more difficult problem to fix ... I expect there to

“... the condition of New Zealand's lakes, rivers and wetlands is likely to decline for several more years and possibly much longer.”

THE CRAWTHRON INSTITUTE  
REPORTING ON THE NPS

be an increase in the ad hoc requests for a Crown contribution to clean up contaminated waterways.”

The Government adopted Smith's proposal for a \$15 million contestable national fund (over two years) that would help facilitate the freshwater management improvements mandated by the new NPS and to ensure "increased investment in irrigation to boost economic productivity." The policy notes that any funding granted must be matched with specific measurable pollution reduction outcomes.

#### **Irrigation Acceleration Fund**

Smith's clean up fund is dwarfed, however, by Agricultural Minister David Carter's new irrigation promotion fund that would spend \$35 million over five years to help water storage and irrigation schemes become "investment ready", with \$400 million provisioned as future capital expenditure. This is the pot of gold our Regional Council is chasing.

However, Fish & Game's chief executive Bryce Johnson says: "The science shows our declining water quality is linked to intensive agriculture, and yet [Carter's] pro-irrigation package will potentially mean one million more cows, and reduced stream flows to deal with the increased pollution."

#### **Other initiatives**

Two other national initiatives bear importantly on our water management in Hawke's Bay. First is a new Government policy requiring water metering for all significant water takes. Consent holders throughout the Bay have been busily installing or upgrading metering equipment, which will significantly increase the reliability of water use measurement and permit more effective management, regulation and enforcement. Notes McIntosh: "You can't manage what you can't measure."





*AFFCO discharges meat processing effluent directly into the Wairoa River*

Also, ongoing Treaty settlements in the region, negotiated by the Crown, will result in altered governance, with a much stronger Māori voice in regional water policy making (via a Regional Planning Committee with equal participation by elected Counsellors and Māori-appointed representatives), and award financial resources that might be applied to water clean up and infrastructure.

#### Pressure from below

Water quality was first raised as a regional campaign issue two elections ago, in 2007. At the time, none of the incumbent Councillors felt there were any problems. But the Hawke's Bay Environmental Water Group, which focused initially on sewage discharge from CHB, persisted in raising concerns about Tūkituki water quality.

About 200 concerned citizens met with the Regional Council at a catalytic Havelock North meeting on the Tūkituki in March 2008. The intensity and pedigree of that audience appeared to get the Council's reluctant attention.

The Regional Council has moved (staff more quickly than Councillors) from a position of denial of any water problems, to quarreling over the extent of the problems, to commissioning more 'scientific' examination of the situation, to admission that serious problems indeed exist.

A recent consultant report on the effectiveness of HBRC's water quality regulation, as currently provided in the Regional Resource Management Plan, concludes:

"The issue with both the regulatory and non-regulatory interventions contained in the plan which I think is going to be critical, is whether these actions are doing

enough, quickly enough, to not only maintain the region's comparatively good water quality and ecology, but to improve the baseline water quality and prevent future deterioration occasioned by land use intensification.

"The data suggests ... that the plan is not as effective nor are the methods currently being applied, as they could be. Where substantial land use change has taken place in Hawke's Bay resulting in new areas of intensive farming, but particularly dairy farming, the scientific indicators used point to at least partial failure to adequately manage those situations."

Even now, not all Councillors share that concern (one based on the fact that he can see his toes in the water, another because he hasn't gotten sick when falling in).

Since the Tūkituki rebellion, public pressure has grown, driven by complaints about other rivers – video showing AFFCO polluting the Wairoa ... low flows in the Ngāruaroro ... growing recognition of over-allocation in the face of water take consent renewals ... concerns about the inter-play between river flows and aquifer levels.

Says Pete McIntosh: "So far, environmental concerns have been considered by the Regional Council, but whether these concerns are adequately addressed in Hawke's Bay water policy is yet to seen."

Draw your own conclusion, as we look at the 'state of play' in each four principal waterways in Hawke's Bay.

#### Wairoa River

Water quality in the Wairoa River is ruined today by the significant effluent

discharges from the AFFCO meat processing plant.

AFFCO is spending as little as it can, as slowly as it can, to meet effluent discharge conditions imposed by the HB Regional Council back in July 2009 – conditions it is miles away from complying with! At times water tests have revealed faecal coliform counts of 3600cfu/100ml, when the HB Regional Resource Management Plan sets the relevant level at 200cfu/100ml. Not surprisingly, the District Health Board sees this level of pollution as too high!

AFFCO has appealed the HBRC conditions and is engaged in a protracted mediation with the Regional Council ... a process now in suspended animation while AFFCO tries to 'diffuse' the waste products it is dumping into the Wairoa River. Given the high levels of waste the plant is discharging, one might be justifiably sceptical that 'diffusion' (spreading the waste in finer particles into the river – think of it as thin gruel versus thick) will be sufficient to protect human health or the ecology of the river.

Under an agreement negotiated with HBRC, AFFCO has until September 30 to establish that measures it is taking are capable of bringing it into compliance with the 2009 consent conditions. Failing to satisfy HBRC (and a 274 party submitter, environmentalist David Renouf), the matter would go to Environment Court by year's end.

Meantime the waste pours out, even though earlier this year AFFCO, now wholly-owned by the Talley's group, announced a group profit of \$36.56 million for the year ended 30 September 2010, while holding \$52 million in cash.

AFFCO has lamented that it might cost \$1-2 million to clean up its Wairoa plant. But in June AFFCO announced plans to build a new lamb processing facility at the plant, expected to be ready in September. It appears money is no problem for AFFCO, so long as it isn't wasted on protecting the environment.

The situation doesn't bode well for Wairoa's intention, as discussed at a recent 'Think Tank' on the community's future, to use the Wairoa River as a tourism focal point!

#### Taharua and Mohaka Rivers

The upper reaches of the Mohaka River are protected by one of New Zealand's few Water Conservation Orders. These orders are intended to protect the natural state of the country's most iconic waterways. The Regional



A Waipawa sewage oxidation pond discharges into the Tukituki River

Council is charged with enforcing the Order ... that is, protecting the river.

However, over the past decade dairy farming has come to the upper reaches, specifically in the catchment of the tributary Taharua River. Our Regional Council approved consents for this activity, permitting increased levels of fertiliser use, obviously increasing farm run-off.

More lately, HBRC sought penalties from one dairy farm for polluting the

river in violation of its existing consent and a fine was ordered. Fishermen, supported by Fish & Game, and iwi have complained steadily about declining water quality in the river, and view the limited fines as inconsequential in the face of dairy farm profits.

In 2009, facing intensified media pressure (including *BayBuzz* webcasting a Fish & Game video of the Mohaka pollution), HBRC set in motion a 'stakeholders' process to develop a

land and water management strategy for the Taharua/Mohaka part of the catchment.

A draft strategy, published recently for informal public comment, proposes that landowners make land use changes over a fifteen year period designed to lower nutrient discharges into the Taharua, such that a lowered overall discharge 'cap' for the region is achieved and lower nutrient levels are achieved at key points in the two rivers.

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**REMEMBER ~ Rivers have never intentionally been sold by Māori.**

» Of course, the devil will be in the details. Will the overall ‘cap’ and the related site-specific nutrient standards be sufficiently low to restore the ecosystem (and what of they are not, as some conservationists argue)? Is the timetable too elongated? What land use practices will be required or regulated, if any, in order to ensure that the necessary reduction of pollution is achieved?

The pollution problems of the Tarahua/Mohaka have stemmed from four (now three) dairying operations. Some question, given porous soil types in that region, whether any dairying should be allowed, or whether, at a minimum, the farming intensification should be directly controlled (e.g. limits on animals per hectare, on amount of fertilizer applied per hectare, on diffuse discharges).

After considering views from the informal consultation, HBRC staff will formulate a formal plan change for adoption. This proposal will proceed

through the official public notification and plan change process, with notification expected by December 2011.

**Ngaruroro River**

The lower Ngaruroro River skirts the west and north sides of the Heretaunga Plains before emptying into Hawke’s Bay. It serves as a major source of replenishment for the Heretaunga aquifer in the vicinity of Roy’s Hill, which in turn supplies irrigation and drinking water for a significant portion of the Hastings district.

The problems of the Ngaruroro include ensuring reliable supply both for irrigation takes and for maintaining flow levels that will sustain the river ecology. Some also argue that increased pollutants in the river find their way into the Heretaunga aquifer.

Land uses are mixed in the areas adjoining the upper Ngaruroro – dairying, sheep and cattle, and cropping.

The HBRC has concluded that water

takes from the Ngaruroro are over-allocated. The current level of abstraction is damaging to the river ecosystem at existing minimum low flow standards.

HBRC sets standards and measures minimum flows at levels ‘available science’ indicates are needed to ensure the health of each river’s ecology. For the Ngaruroro, the minimum flow at Fernhill is now set at 2,400 litres/second. However, more up-to-date science as indicated the environmentally-safe flow should be raised to at least 3,400 litres/second.

Consequently, HBRC has announced a policy of clawing back the water as existing consents expire and must be renewed. Naturally, this proposal has generated vociferous opposition from irrigators, who have indicated they will appeal this policy.

To deal with the Ngaruroro’s supply deficit for the long term, the Regional Council is exploring the feasibility of building two dams upriver on two streams feeding into the river, and creating storage capacity for 32 million cubic metres of water. The objective would be to create a more secure and increased water supply for both existing and additional irrigation, as well as ensure the higher minimum flows required to protect the river ecosystem.

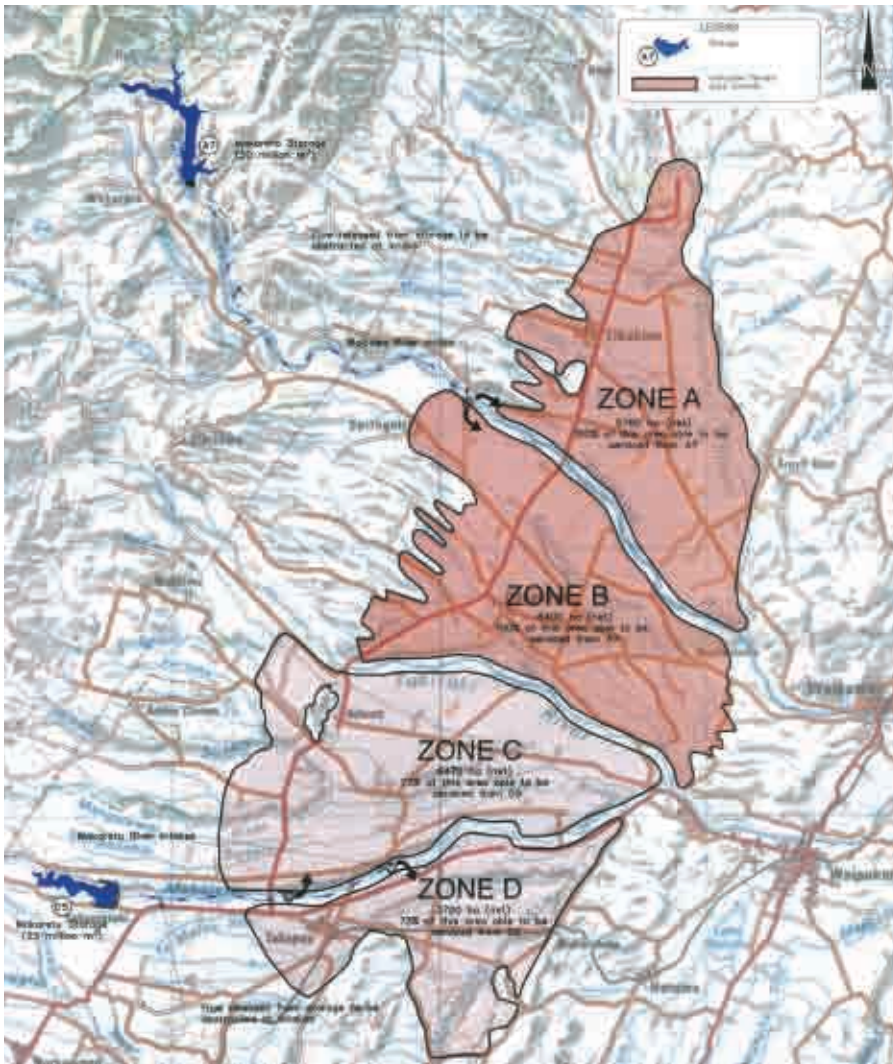
The study process and rationale for this proposal are the same in concept – and raise the same issues – as the water storage scheme proposed in Central Hawke’s Bay for the Ruataniwha Plains, but lags that study by 6-12 months. Since the issues are more developed for the CHB scheme, we will look at those in our discussion of the Tuketuki.

**Tuketuki River**

As noted earlier, the state of the Tuketuki River has been especially controversial, probably given its visibility to the urban centres of Hawke’s Bay and the presence of a high profile point of sewage discharge into the river – CHB’s oxidation ponds at Waipawa and Waipukurau.

CHB’s existing consent to discharge effluent into the Tuketuki requires that tougher standards for nutrient content in the river water must be met by late 2014.

The Regional Council has boasted of a plan it devised about two years ago that would put approximately 49% of CHB’s effluent onto HBRC-bought afforestation land and accelerate the clean-up process.



However, CHB has delayed and delayed submitting an actual application to do so. A recent CHB Council memo suggests the application will be submitted before the year is out.

When ultimately submitted, the plan will face hurdles in the consent process. CHB acknowledges it will not be treating its wastewater to a higher quality. Instead, the plan assumes some discharge onto land, some storage, but also continued effluent discharge into the river when the flow rates are three times the median flow (normally in winter), with HBRC claiming "science advice" says discharge at such times will have no adverse impact on the river ecology. That's a claim some environmentalists will contest; they want no discharge into the river.

Moreover, it is not clear that the land purchased and planted by HBRC can in fact absorb the effluent quantities that would be pumped onto it, without a significant amount of seepage back into the river. Presumably CHB and/or HBRC will table their "science advice" during consideration of the resource consent. Until the details are furnished, the verdict is out on this scheme.

In any event, so-called 'point discharge' into the Tukituki is only one part of the river's problem.

#### Tukituki water storage

Nutrients flow into the Tukituki from farms throughout the catchment (diffuse discharge), not only from the CHB sewage discharge. In addition, the Tukituki is also over-allocated in terms of water takes, which lowers river flows.

As a result of discharges and low flows, the downstream sections of the river suffer regular periods of noxious algae bloom and stench in the most highly desired recreational months.

As with the Ngaruroro, to maintain the higher river flows that newer science indicates are required, the HBRC would need to begin clawing back water takes from Tukituki consent holders. This is not a position the Councillors wish to be in.

The consents will expire in 2013, and so the Regional Council must prepare a strategy and Plan Change that provide a suitable regime for management of Tukituki water supply and quality. Māori water policy adviser Morry Black hopes to see "more judicious use of the seasonal irrigation restrictions that are built into the resource management plan but that are continually being ignored, and also more rigour given to the crop

water requirements and soil moisture assessment criteria." The Plan Change is expected to be notified in July 2012.

However, at the same time, the Regional Council has hatched another ostensibly win/win water storage scheme, ultimately affecting the entire Tukituki catchment, which extends to the ranges adjoining the Ruataniwha Plains.

After investigating some sixteen sites, the Regional Council proposes to build a single dam on the Makaroro River (see map on left). The dam would create storage capacity for 75 million cubic metres of water, providing more secure water for existing irrigation (6,000 hectares), enabling an additional 22,500 hectares to be irrigated, and in theory providing augmented water flow to maintain minimum river flows in dry months.

Arguably, a winning proposition for farmers and environmentalists. Plus, advancing the scheme wins the HB Regional Council a gold star with the current Government, which is avidly pushing irrigation.

#### Unanswered questions

However, the scheme must still address many issues during its present 'feasibility study' stage. For example...

Given the projected cost of \$100-200 million for the scheme, exactly what kinds of intensified farming will be undertaken that can generate the economic returns required to justify the investment? And is this too big or risky a financial and economic 'bet' for a single dam scheme?

Who will pay for the scheme?

What would be the environmental impacts of this intensified farming, and can they be mitigated? How would agreed-upon farming practices be monitored and enforced?

What amount of water must actually be stored to achieve the stated dual goals of the project – more irrigation and higher river flows? Will 'new' water simply be absorbed through the river beds into the Ruataniwha aquifer, already depleted by some 66 million cubic metres of water, as opposed to augmenting low flows in the lower reaches of the Tuki?

Given geotechnical challenges, can the dam be safely built at the location identified?

What are the environmental impacts of the dam on the catchment above it and on fish and eel migration and spawning?

Does the scheme adversely affect Māori



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» values and, if so, can these concerns be satisfactorily addressed? Says Morry Black: “I haven’t heard of a co-management option for the dam scenario yet. Maybe if Māori invest in the dam they can sort of buy part of their river back that they never sold in the first place. Rivers have never intentionally been sold by Māori.”

Could better management of existing water supply (including on-farm storage), combined with better on-farm nutrient management, satisfy the water security and environmental goals ... and at less cost?

Of course, within each of these broad questions lie many subsidiary ones ... and again, the devil will be in the details. The Regional Council has already invested \$2 million in its feasibility study, recently committing about \$800,000 to a series of reports that will explore environmental issues.

Senior HBRC staff say the official go/no decision for the project is expected around June 2012. That said, the scheme appears to be a *fait accompli*. As presented by the Regional Council to public meetings and in the media, the scheme will solve most of the Bay’s problems from economic stagnation to global warming-induced drought to downstream ecological stress. All these claims always hedged, of course, with ... “If the feasibility study confirms the case.”

As the last remaining site option, HBRC desperately needs the proposed Makaroro River location to work!

As Regional Council chief executive Andrew Newman said recently to *Hawke’s Bay Today*: “We are working on the assumption that we will be able to make it work.” Indeed, the Regional Council is already planning a ‘Waterco’ as a unit in its newly-approved investment company to manage the scheme, and has

already lodged an application with the Government’s Irrigation Acceleration Fund for scheme funding.

Perhaps these steps should simply be considered prudent advance planning, but they do not give comfort to environmentalists and others who believe the scheme has yet to satisfy key questions. Comments Pete McIntosh: “Currently the Tukituki is not a healthy river and potentially irrigating another 22,500 hectares on top of the 6,000 currently irrigated could cause major ecological damage to these nationally significant rivers. We could end up in a situation with worse water quality than we currently have.”

### Regional Water Strategy

HBRC hopes to reconcile many of its freshwater issues in a Hawke’s Bay Water Strategy, now being formulated behind closed doors by a ‘reference group’ of stakeholder organisations.

The strategy paper has been drafted and shared with the reference group, and should emerge from behind the curtain in September, hopefully for broader public consultation. Once adopted by the Regional Council, the strategy will offer guidance, but have no legal standing. Its prescriptions must be codified in a revised Regional Resource Management Plan, a process that will carry into 2013. *BayBuzz* awaits the grand unveiling ... you can expect our analysis in a future edition.

Clearly, numerous balls are in the air simultaneously with respect to Hawke’s Bay’s freshwater management strategy. A range of decision timelines are involved, easily stretching into the next year and beyond. All stakeholders – non-resourced environmentalists and Māori especially – will be severely burdened to participate meaningfully in all this decision-making,



which will determine the region’s water future for decades.

Māori adviser Morry Black follows water issues perhaps more closely than anyone in the Bay. *BayBuzz* asked him to react to just a few of the issues raised in a draft version of this article. He replied with five single-spaced pages of concerns and alarms, confirming those expressed in this article ... and more.

But asked how well-prepared and resourced Māori were to advocate their concerns, he replied: “In Hawke’s Bay there are not many Māori that have a full understanding of planning and water policy stuff. Many know what they would like to see happen, but it’s being able to express that vision through a suitable policy framework amenable to all, or maybe to most Māori. Māori are catchment-affiliated as well, so that would be one way to handle it.”

“Ngati Kahungunu is running a series of Wai (water) wananga to garner the views of our people so that we can clearly identify and express the key essentials that can then be included in the higher level regional policy statement. Then the specific hapu affiliated to each river will need to paddle their waka through the statutory landscape. The difficulty lies in getting the mandate, the consensus, the resources in terms of skill and capacity, the political will and the resources to take it to the limit.”

As for *BayBuzz*, we’ll continue to track and report progress (or not) on a catchment-by-catchment basis. Whether regarding the overall strategy or specific catchment plans, *BayBuzz*, will inquire into the toughness of any standards set, the sufficiency of carrots and sticks proposed to influence behaviour, and the timeframes for meaningful action. 🐝

You can follow the latest developments at [www.baybuzz.co.nz](http://www.baybuzz.co.nz)



Tukituki  
On a good day

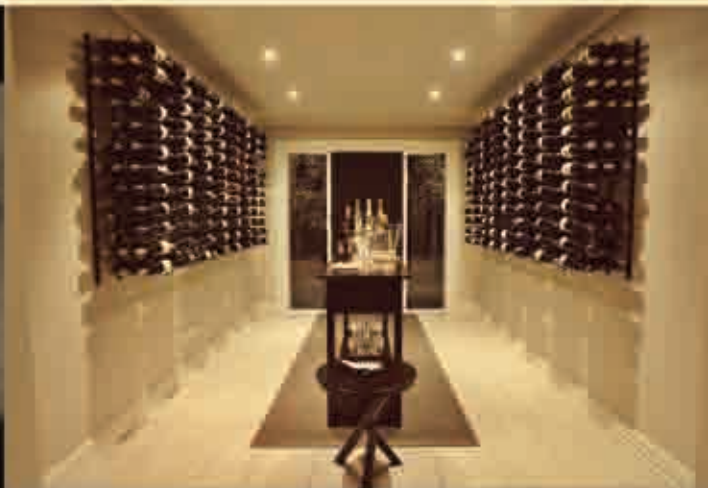




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# BOOMERS

## Living in paradise...

Does Hawke's Bay's growing reputation as a baby-boom paradise have the potential to limit the region's future appeal and eventually its economic performance? **BY ~ DOUGLAS LLOYD JENKINS**



**HAWKE'S BAY IS, FROM A BABY BOOMER** perspective, a rather desirable location. It is 'up-there' on the list of destinations sought out by those who, if not quite wanting to retire, are comfortable enough to start talking about taking it easy. They are drawn here by the idea of getting away from it all and of living somewhere a little gentler than say Auckland or Wellington.

Baby Boomers are therefore starting to flock, taking advantage of Hawke's Bay's reputation as something of a Boomer playground of interlinked farmers' markets and stunning scenery.

Although individually delightful, there is growing criticism of collective Boomer culture. They tend to be a self-centred lot, who having got most things free or cheap – education, healthcare, homes etc. – then went on to invent user-pays,

whereby everyone who came after them could pay for those same services.

Boomers, homeowners extraordinaire, ironically see no reason those generations that follow shouldn't rent. As they age they see no need to increase taxes to pay for those things they no longer need or never wanted in the first place. Watch this space, within a decade they'll up the retirement age in order that those who follow them can pay for the lifestyle to which they've become accustomed.

Baby Boomers, who are not prone to introspective self-analysis, will tell you that the next generation (Gen Y) are a pampered and demanding lot with more confidence than they have skills. However, new research undertaken by Leadership Management Australasia (LMA), suggests that Gen Y – communicative,

innovative and natural planners – are in reality, looking pretty good as workplace contributors and future economic performers. In short, these are the people you want for your business to succeed.

Somewhat worrying however, is the revelation "that large numbers in all generations (including Boomers) don't want to work with or report to, Boomers in the future." To throw in a few figures, LMA survey participants were asked which generation they would prefer to work with and to which generation they would prefer to report. "Only 4% of both Gen X and Gen Y nominated Boomers in the work question, with 14% and 8% respectively nominating Boomers in the report question."

Because of this, LMA describes the baby boomer as "an emerging challenge" and

“something that threatens to undermine stability of the workforce”. All this because Boomers will continue to occupy most leadership and senior management positions for at least a decade to come. The research continues “when they have a choice Gen Y and those who follow will gravitate to jobs and companies that don’t have significant baby-boom management.”

Extrapolate these findings out and we need to ask: will Gen Y (communicative, innovative, hard-working) want to establish bases in, or relocate to, cities, towns or regions that are heavily focused around the lifestyle needs of ageing Boomers? If Gen Y don’t want to work with Boomers, then they’re highly unlikely to want to play with them either. Does Hawke’s Bay’s growing reputation as a baby-boom paradise have the potential to limit the region’s future appeal and eventually its economic performance?

**Don’t become Tauranga**


These things happen. Tauranga once meant a pretty cool holiday destination and neighbouring surf beach – now it translates as coastal retirement mega-centre. A trip to Tauranga is now most likely to conjour-up a picture of fluffy-slippers in front of the pellet fire encountered on a trip to the grandparents. No one under 50 really envisages themselves living in Tauranga now or in the future.

Hawke’s Bay may similarly come to mean ‘the place baby boomers go to

vineyard concerts by rock musicians whom everyone else thought were dead’; but unless we learn to evolve it won’t necessarily be an ‘up-there’ place where either Gen Y or Gen X will want to live.

Because baby boomers see themselves as eternally hip and youthful, the only generation gap they acknowledge is between them and those we might legitimately call children or adolescents. The real gap however is between Boomers and Gen Y – aged between 30 and 45 – and little is being done to address this particular chasm, in part because Boomers like to think it doesn’t exist. On the other hand the diversity of Gen Y’s demands, broad ranging opinions and niche interests makes them difficult to cater for en masse.

If there is an answer, a strategy, a plan, it’s usually couched in terms of a single word – broadband. Sure broadband strategies help with the need that Gen Y has to be connected, but their desire to be where something of interest is happening, transcends the mere digital. Getting away from it all and taking it slow – is not the Gen Y way – they’re looking for the farmer’s market to come to them.

There is an argument of course that there comes a time in the development of any generation when one puts away the bungee-cord in favour of a glass of chardonnay and a little sunshine and this may too come to pass for Gen Y. In the meantime, it is important to remember that whilst Boomers flock, Gen Y roams ... and attracting their attention requires a whole different set of tools. 

“Hawke’s Bay ... the place baby boomers go to vineyard concerts by rock musicians whom everyone else thought were dead.”

DOUGLAS LLOYD JENKINS



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# My name is Hawke's Bay and I have a drinking problem

BY ~ PAUL PAYNTER



“So what have you got planned for the weekend?” my father enquired of the girl at the cafe. “I’m gonna get smashed” she announced with an air of keen anticipation.

Superannuitants do the expression of fish-faced disbelief better than any other segment of society. Their worn teeth and saggy jowls seem to suit a jaw line that has yielded to the forces of gravity. So my father stood. In his more than 65 years of affable conversation, this was a new experience. It was the sort of moment that might provide the first indications of Alzheimer’s.

The conversation ended there, as a reply eluded him entirely.

Hello, my name is Hawke’s Bay and I have a drinking problem. The symptoms are everywhere.

*The Dominion Post* (23/7/11) reports ‘drunken mayhem’ at the races. The local District Licensing Agency heard opposition to Hawke’s Bay Racing’s liquor license on the basis that they have allowed alcohol-fueled ‘debauchery’. The staggering thing is that this was the first time there had been formal objections to their license. On the rare occasion I have attended the races, I’ve seen much the

same as the objectors – legless drunks in all their leering, slurring vulgarity. If you have visited the local bars and restaurants at the end of raceday, you’ll know what I mean.

Similar scenes can be witnessed if you have the misfortune to be out in the wee hours in Havelock North. Hordes of drunken revellers spew out of bars around closing time, quenching their desire for fish’n’chips and fisticuffs that cannot be satisfied within.

Most disturbing is that young women now seem to have a ‘go for coma’ approach to drinking. Drunken men are boorish. Drunken women are ... I don’t think there is a word for it. No one seems to have needed one until recently.

The Law Commission recently released a report entitled *Alcohol in our Lives*, which makes a number of recommendations. Much public discussion has ensued, with two keen accusations – there are too many liquor outlets and alcohol is too cheap.

Typically we seem to blame everything but the people involved. Do you really think that alcohol problems will be solved by drinkers having to travel one extra kilometre to a liquor outlet? Similarly, alcohol is not ‘ultra-cheap’ in

New Zealand as campaigners would have you think.

## Our cultural roots with alcohol

The roots of our relationship with alcohol stem from European roots. Throughout Europe alcohol is generally much cheaper than it is here. Across southern Europe wine dominates and is often cheaper than water to buy. Similarly, bottled beer in the northern countries can be bought for \$2/litre, while in NZ a similar product is \$5/litre. The dense populations in Europe mean the distance to a liquor outlet is also much less than in NZ. Despite this, outside the UK, you will not see the scenes of public drunkenness we confront in NZ.

The exception to the ‘cheap and available’ situation across most of Europe can be found in Scandinavia. There, alcohol taxes are sky high ... set at these levels to curb Nordic alcohol excesses that date back to Viking times.

The public reaction to these Scandinavian measures should serve as a warning to ‘tax and license prohibitionists’ in NZ. Innumerable households in Sweden and Norway have set up home stills where they distil



and consume hard liquor in staggering quantities. As it is with all prohibitionist wowsers, the dissenting public just find another way.

The root of alcohol problems lies in a country's culture. It's not about prices or places, but about people.

The law needs to send a message that public drunkenness is unacceptable and the moral majority need to back them up. Until 1981 public drunkenness was an offence; in 1980 there were almost 8,000 prosecutions. The problem with the law then was that it required a jury trial, ridiculous for such a minor matter.

Today some argue that drunkenness can be prosecuted as 'disorderly behaviour'. True, but this puts offenders into the already clogged criminal justice system. Conviction also results in a criminal record, which hurts your employment prospects and makes international travel problematic.

As a result, police generally take a 'de-tox and release' approach to drunks. The law, by word and action, give the message that drunkenness is OK – we'll even have people to look after you if you fall asleep in the gutter. This permissive nonsense has to stop. If the police have to remove drunks from a venue or scrape them up off the streets, there need to be consequences. The Hospitality Association sensibly suggests whacking offenders with an 'instant fine' the likes of what you get for speeding. It's time for a much needed law change.

It's also time to demand some accountability from our licensing

authorities, our bars and Hawke's Bay Racing. Most of all we need to address the excesses of our friends and families. It's not OK to drink yourselves into a stupor, and those of us who are offended by such things need to stop grimacing in silence.

#### Köbánya-Kispest

The thing we have in common with Nordic binge drinking culture is that it is underpinned by a life of privilege. This drinking is mainly self indulgent, recreational debauchery.

But in parts of NZ you can find the equivalent of the Slavic drinking culture, based on poverty and personal misery. It is a desperately bleak affair borne of despair and a bleak Russian winter. This drinking culture exists in all the countries occupied by the USSR post-WWII. I've had the misfortune to see it up close.

My incurable immigrant frugality drives me to cheap public transport to and from airports around the world. On one freezing winter morning, this necessitated three trains and a bus – last change, Köbánya-Kispest. "It's a dangerous place" I had heard, but my Kiwi naïveté didn't comprehend. "The building itself is ridden with rust and dirt from the shoes of countless passengers and the bowels of countless bums and drunks," wrote one author.

That morning I found as much. My 5:30 a.m. arrival was ill-advised. The stench of cheap alcohol and vomit greeted me as I dragged my bag up the stairs at the end of the platform. These odorous fluids were not spilt so much as exhaled from the lungs and stomachs of the station residents.

The long exit corridor was lined with the sordid bodies of the homeless. They lay sleeping or dead, I couldn't tell, amongst the fetid rags and newspapers of their bedding.

There were eyes in that darkness. I couldn't see them, but I knew they were there. I knew they were watching and contemplating the contents of my wallet. Towards the end the light improved and I saw the only face not covering in darkness or facing the wall. My eyes dwelt on it a moment, looking for signs of life through his matted grey hair and beard. There were none. His wet trouser front and pool of dampness confirmed he'd pissed himself. Dead men piss themselves. Drunks do too. Here is the final resting place of destructive drinking.

I don't want to ruin your fun. Have a

**"In ten years' time one of your more indulgent mates will have a string of failed relationships, a history of violence, or they will have died in the crumpled wreck of a car."**

PAUL PAYNTER



drink or two; I don't mind.

But for those 20-somethings out there, know this: In ten years' time one of your more indulgent mates will have a string of failed relationships, a history of violence, or they will have died in the crumpled wreck of a car. And homeless drunks will still make their beds on the freezing concrete floors of Köbánya-Kispest.

Go easy on the grog. 🐝

## Homeopathy

### Angela Hair

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HAWKE'S BAY'S

# ONLINE MERCHANTS

SELL TO THE WORLD

A thriving underground of virtual retailers  
gains momentum right under our noses.

BY ~ KEITH NEWMAN



**BRICKS AND MORTAR SHOP OWNERS**

who resist and even resent the winds of change that favour the growing digital economy – and the critical mass of shoppers for whom clicks come first – may be contributing to their own demise.

A new report from PriceWaterhouseCoopers and Frost & Sullivan predicts almost half of New Zealanders will shop online in 2011, spending an average of around \$1400 each, although a third of those sales will go to offshore retailers.

Frost & Sullivan claim local and offshore shopping via websites is expected to grow 12% a year from \$2.68 billion in 2011 to \$4.22 billion by 2015.

The PwC survey revealed 82% of shoppers would increase or maintain their current online spending over the next year, and that more than a third used mobile devices such as tablets and smartphones to make their purchases.

PwC says digital channels are changing the way Kiwis shop, with lower prices, convenience and broader product ranges swelling the ranks of online consumers.

The company challenged retailers to embrace the shift in business models in order to compete on the global stage.

And the Nielsen Market Intelligence June survey found around 40.5% of New Zealand Internet users are already making online purchases; enough to stir even the staunchest old school stalwarts to consider what life might be like online.

Meanwhile, the last New Zealand Institute of Economic Research (NZIER) quarterly survey on business opinion, reports that Hawke's Bay business profitability continued its three year downward spiral while revenues improved only marginally on the despairing results of past quarters.

As costs, including rents, continue to increase and the average person's spending power is reducing, along with the foot traffic in our central business districts (CBDs), it's clear existing business models need a serious shake up.

A number of e-commerce champions including Chamber of Commerce CEO Murray Douglas and Rod Drury of Xero and Pacific Fibre, continue to encourage Bay businesses to innovate with new technology and faster broadband, to improve profitability.

The software to create, manage and maintain an e-commerce presence has matured while a growing arsenal of online marketing and social media tools make the case for broadening business

reach even more compelling.

There's a cost effective solution for most players from sole traders to serious exporters; whether it's basic email orders and PayPal payments or full e-commerce suites that link back to accounting and order fulfillment.

Some Hawke's Bay retailers have a well established web presence and continue to refine their online efforts to improve profitability and market share.

## Value for vinters



[advintage.co.nz](http://advintage.co.nz)

**LAST CHRISTMAS, HAVELOCK NORTH-** based Advintage – one of the country's most successful online wine operations – commissioned a complete website and systems rebuild at a cost of around \$150,000. Owner John Macpherson reckons that was money well spent.

The simpler front-end and automation of back-end processes means his small team can handle large numbers of orders quicker and more efficiently. "It's future-proofed our business for the next three to four years."

Macpherson is an old hand in the online game, having complemented his wine outlet with electronic sales for 12-years. Today 85-90% of sales are made online, with the bulk sold outside of Hawke's Bay.

Bulk buying arrangements with wineries across the country mean he can deliver the best price on around 500 wines, although he says it's getting harder to sell full priced product on the internet, which is fast becoming associated with discount deals.

Great care is taken to ensure the website has the latest information with 'image, description and accolades' of all wines in stock at any time. "Last month we got a great deal on a pinot noir and sold 1320 cases in four days in a market that is saturated with wine deals."

Macpherson sees Advintage in a trusted

**“What customers are looking for is simplicity, a fast seamless experience where they can get in, find the information they want, buy something and get out with as few clicks as possible.”**

**JOHN MACPHERSON**  
ADVINTAGE OWNER



advisor role, servicing some customers who have purchased exclusively from his site for a decade. "They rely on us to be the gatekeeper for value and quality."

Meanwhile web marketing has also undergone a significant change. "A lot of web sites went through a phase a few years ago where people were wowed by the technology and tried to make everything animated and graphical and fun."

That's now passé. "What customers are looking for is simplicity, a fast seamless experience where they can get in, find the information they want, buy something and get out with as few clicks as possible."



## Big picture approach



myworld.co.nz

» **THAT STEP-BY-STEP SIMPLICITY IS** part of the appeal for Napier-based myworld.co.nz where customers can upload their favourite images and have them printed on canvas.

Most people want wedding or family photos, although professional photographers and artists also use the service to reproduce work for clients. Customers log in to the website, select the canvas size, upload their images and the end product is delivered within days.

"At the end of the day, it doesn't really matter where you are, that's the beauty of being online," says production manager Cuyler Anderson. "We couldn't run this kind of business from a shop front; there isn't enough foot traffic or enough business manufacturing for local outlets. We needed to be nationwide."

A couple of professional printers operate five large format Canon printing machines and 10 staff stretch canvasses and service orders from around the country.

## Havelock to the UK



lioninthesun.co.nz

**IN MANY WAYS THE CHALLENGES** facing online businesses are similar to those of street retailers – having the right product at the right price, displaying it

well, knowing your market and keeping customers loyal.

From a laptop at her kitchen table in Havelock North, Cris Sanders – often with dog at her feet – runs lioninthesun.com, one of the more successful niche swimsuit and sunwear brands in the UK.

The decade old business is entirely online, so it wasn't a big deal for her to return to New Zealand with her Canadian husband five years ago. She now maintains the website, designs her clothing range and manages the overall business locally.

Around 90% of her business is done in the UK and Europe where the company pioneered sun protective gear. "The slightly more sporty Kiwi look, mixed with a little bit of English pretty, goes down well over there," says Sanders.

She knows she can't compete with the bigger companies for "the sexy 20-year old" market, but there is a "practical and modest" range for parents. Part of the appeal is the fact the swimwear, sun hats, rash shirts, board shorts, lycra leggings and UV jackets are all 50+ sun protective.

Many customers have stayed loyal since the beginning. "They began buying for their two year-olds who are now 12 — I recognise the names when they come back." One recent week there were orders from 17 different countries.

Sanders wholesales to about 50 shops in the UK and direct markets to a mailing list of around 10,000 individuals. "Many still write to me and say what they'd like to see in next year's range."

She says the risk with an online-only presence is that it can be impersonal and sterile. "You have to talk to your customers and get their feedback. Personal contact is important."

Her UK manager phones around and they both respond to email queries, sorting out any problems as soon as they arise. "Good customer relations turn into good word of mouth business."

Sanders spends around ten hours a day on the business; publishing a hard copy catalogue, running online and email campaigns and making daily web updates. She is planning to expand her New Zealand presence once "the recession blows over".

In the UK she's just hired a rep to visit all the smaller villages and shops. "The more people know about us the more they'll come back and order online."

## Growing online



landscapedesign.co.nz

### FOR SEASONED LANDSCAPER

Tim Durrant, creating a successful nationwide online business was not without pain. "It was very slow at first and felt like a seagull with lead wings."

The biggest challenge was educating a target market that had not taken the web seriously. It wasn't until landscapedesign.co.nz had been in business for over five years that it really started to fly.

After working in landscape design and construction in London and Europe, Durrant returned to Hawke's Bay to ply his trade but soon became frustrated trying to source paving slabs, garden seats, fences, larger trees or even different types of timber for landscaping projects.

That's when the idea took root to bring suppliers, landscapers, designers and outdoor living specialists together on landscapedesign.co.nz and sister site findaplant.co.nz which deals with plants and shrubs.

Today Durrant, who operates from a small office in Emerson St, Napier, has around 3000 businesses in his directory, 280 subscribers and an average of 25,000 casual visitors to his sites each month.

"When we started, it was as if we were a couple of years ahead of our time. There was a lot of cold calling to nurseries and you were often speaking about this abstract online marketing thing to someone who was outside potting up. It was really tough."

Word of mouth recommendations from customers who found the goods and services and information helpful changed all of that.

Durrant and his team attended the Nursery and Garden Industry Association conference in Taupo in June and found a strong emphasis on getting online. "This was the first time everyone was speaking our language."

## Marketing meditation



[ecoyogastore.co.nz](http://ecoyogastore.co.nz)

**INGRID EDWARDS HAD NO IDEA** what she was in for when she created a home-based online business to change her life direction and be more available for her two young children.

The graphic artist and yoga teacher seized on her opportunity through the frustration of trying to source good quality, ecologically sound, yoga gear on either side of the Tasman.

Edwards wanted an ecological alternative to foam and plastic offerings. “Yoga people are into composting and recycling and buying clothes made of natural fibres – they think that way – and it seemed a sensible choice that they’d be more open to eco gear.”

She researched product and the logistics of delivery; photographed the product range; had her logo and web site designed; then found an on-line platform with a monthly rental to run everything from customer database to shopping cart.

Nudged along by an establishment grant through New Zealand Trade and Enterprise, [ecoyogastore.co.nz](http://ecoyogastore.co.nz) was born in 2008. Edwards’ yoga mats and bolster cushions are all made of 100% natural rubber, the meditation cushions are organic cotton made in India, and the

blocks are made from natural cork.

Edwards knew she was onto a winning formula but remained at her graphic design business for another year – working on the store from 9pm until 1am – before giving up her day job.

New Zealand wasn’t big enough to sustain the business, so three months after quitting as a graphic designer she secured a distribution contract with a Sydney fulfillment firm and the Australian site was launched.

However, appearing on page three of a Google search just wasn’t going to cut it, so she began using Google Adwords and engaged a site optimisation company to attract more traffic.

“If people are looking to buy a yoga mat I have to be in the top search results 24 hours a day, otherwise there’s too much competition,” says Edwards. It paid off, shifting her from 21 sales ‘conversions’ in January, to 39 the month after optimisation. She hopes that’ll double this year.

Although it was 18 months before Edwards drew a wage, her ability to purchase merchandise out of cash flow rather than borrowing happened quicker than she thought. “After all the hard work, it’s starting to turn around.” And she doesn’t plan to let up anytime soon. “I need to get into another market in the next year or two; possibly Europe, the UK or the US, which will open me up to 20 million people doing yoga. Before that though, I need to develop my own products and brand.”

### Logistics and partnerships

**A NUMBER OF ONLINE BUSINESSES** interviewed by *BayBuzz* had experienced difficulties with product suppliers and the warehousing and order fulfilment side of their enterprises.

They’d gone through several partners

until they developed trusted relationships with those who could deliver what was required on time and within budget.

Ingrid Edwards at [ecoyogastore.co.nz](http://ecoyogastore.co.nz) wishes she’d taken more time networking with experts to get a better deal on shipping goods between countries. The New Zealand operation employs one person wrapping and distributing 12-15 hours a week, while the Australian site, which now comprises two thirds of her business, almost runs itself.

“It’s a piece of cake. I do a stock take every night and send them an Excel spreadsheet in the morning and they handle everything else,” says Edwards.

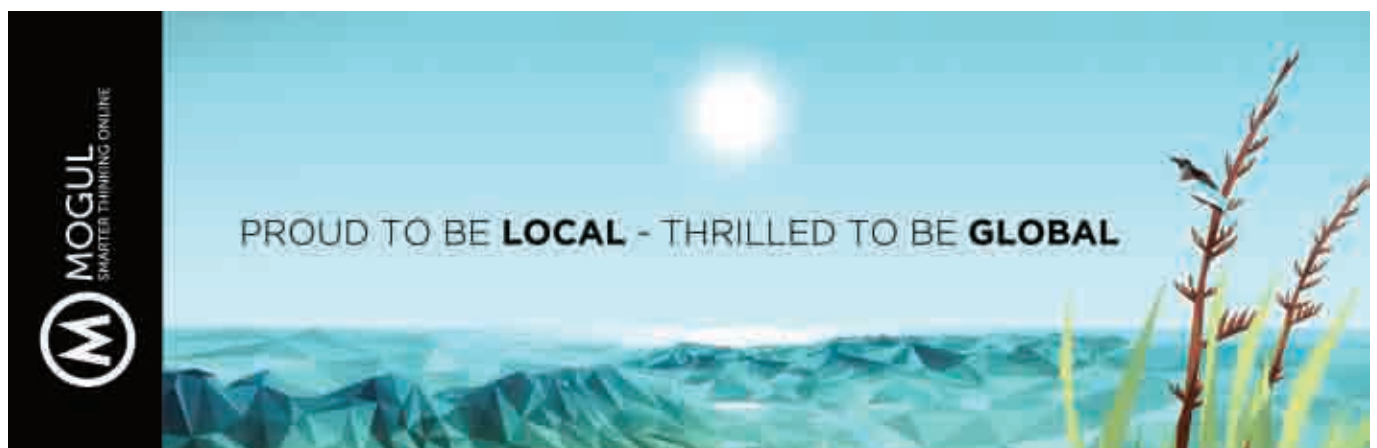
With a greater understanding of the importance of right partnerships she’s aware she can now place her products anywhere in the world from her small outlet in Ahuriri. “It really is a global market.”

Cris Sanders of [lioninthesun.com](http://lioninthesun.com) says companies like hers often struggle to achieve good reliable logistics, and she keeps a close eye on those who turn her designs into completed product in China, where the relationship is difficult and prices keep rising.

With the hits on [landscapedesign.co.nz](http://landscapedesign.co.nz) continuing to grow, editor and managing director Tim Durrant insists “content is king” and the main driver of traffic. There are daily site updates, regular blogs, a presence on Facebook and tweets with the taglines of each new article.

That body of content, including regular articles and updates about garden design, product information and case studies, has now reached a critical mass. If visitors and clients don’t find what they’re looking for, Durrant and his team are on the case pretty quickly. “You can’t sit on your hands. The internet

*Continued on Page 34 >>*



Tim Durrant: [landscapedesign.co.nz](http://landscapedesign.co.nz)



» and online environment changes on a dime. Facebook could be dead in two years. Google Plus might take it over. Anything can happen,” says Durrant.

### Overnight specials

**AFTER FOUR YEARS ONLINE**, myworld.co.nz, the prints on canvas supplier, knows you can't expect current success to drive future sales.

That requires continual online marketing – working Facebook, emailing the client list with new offerings and remaining open to new opportunities such as web sites marketing one-day specials.

Recently myworld.co.nz made a discount offering on GrabOne which delivered a nice surprise, “a couple of thousand hits” — mostly from Auckland. It plans to keep a watchful eye on such services, although operations manager Cuyler Anderson wonders how long the one-day sale trend can last.

Advintage's John Macpherson is unfazed by the new phenomenon. “They sell product we're not interested in. We're proud of what we sell. A lot of these deal-a-day sites are where bad wine goes to die.”

He's also sceptical of claims people can get rich overnight using Facebook and Twitter. Social networking only drives about one percent of his business, although he admits it's valuable for promoting brand awareness.

For Advintage, email marketing “still kills it” for driving sales. “We're not selling fax machines. Our emails are full of personality; we want our customers to have fun with our products and that means you have to be even better online than you are face to face.”

### CBD loyalty challenge

**FOR EVERY SUCCESSFUL ONLINE** retailer there are ghost towns forming out on the wild west electronic frontier where digital tumbleweeds roll down desolate streets.

On closing their decade-old Napier CBD fashion store 3SIXTY, sisters Sophie Hansen and Amy Nilsson had grand online plans for Tuckbox, their funky clothing label for 4-12 years olds.

After selling two successful ranges, they faced some hard decisions. “We put a lot of work into it but it needs a lot of attention and can be like a fulltime job in itself — we just didn't have the hours in the day,” says Sophie Hansen.

Besides, the girls had taken on challenging and enjoyable jobs at Mediaworks, Sophie as a sales consultant and Amy as a breakfast announcer on More FM. Consequently the Tuckbox e-tail experiment began looking more like a hobby. It's now “indefinitely on pause”.

And there was a conflict of interest. Sophie and Amy are the third generation of of rag traders in the McAra family who believe physical shops help create the vibe in towns and cities.

“We understand online is part of today's technology but I would hate to see main street strip shopping disappear,” says Hansen. “I like the experience of going into a shop and being looked after by people, it's a social thing. If we're all doing it on our computer there'll be no-one on streets.”

The Advintage wine outlet in Havelock North now brings in less than 15 percent of total sales, so why doesn't owner John Macpherson go all the way and swap the bricks for the clicks?

“If we ran this business out of a low cost warehouse at the back of my property we'd certainly make more money,” he says, yet remains committed because he gets a buzz out of the industry and enjoys the mix of online and face to face.

Still, Macpherson warns that landlords could be in for a rough time if their traditional rent model doesn't change. “Over the next 5-10 years retailers won't want to pay high premium rent for low volume sales.”

On the other hand, e-commerce has its own challenges. People are tired of being spammed, scammed and junkmailed, so it's not getting any easier to build a database of potential online customers and too many mediocre email marketers are ruining it for the good operators.

“They're not engaging or making compelling offers, and unless retailers can offer a more interesting experience online they'll just be clouding up the space,” says Macpherson.

The recent MYOB Business Monitor report on New Zealand's e-commerce

economy, claims less than a third of businesses have websites, despite evidence this could significantly improve sales.

The year long report to April 2011 said 66% of customers researched online before making a purchase, and while 42% of businesses identified the internet as a critical marketing and promotion channel many had not acted on this.

Overall only 32% of New Zealand businesses had websites; for Hawke's Bay it was 24%, compared to Auckland's 42%. Bay businesses were on par with Waikato and Taranaki and ahead of only Northland and Marlborough (21%).

The report chided businesses for failing to participate in the global digital economy, saying they were holding the country back.

Business Hawke's Bay, the new arms-length spin-off from the Hawke's Bay Chamber of Commerce, has made e-commerce one of its foundational activities and is creating a local e-commerce hub. The goal is to train and help promote businesses who use the ‘transformation’ technologies behind ultra-fast broadband to “extend their markets in smart ways”.

Either way, the face of shopping is changing. Customers are no longer naïve; they're informed and literally street smart. Increasingly they'll go to TradeMe or compare prices online for a bargain, and if they succeed that's one less window shopper.

If traditional retailing doesn't start using the tools of the digital age, CBDs will continue to evolve through bulk purchase, chain store, mall and superstore formulas, while the niche shops that bring colour, character and quirkiness migrate to the virtual shopping strip. 🦋



Cris Sanders: [lioninthesun.com](http://lioninthesun.com)



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# THEY'RE BACK!

A familiar story told in Hawke's Bay is of the prodigal son or daughter. *BayBuzz* is heartened to see many Hawke's Bay ex-pats returning to the fold with rich experiences and enhanced skills. We ask the 'returnees' where did they go, what did they do and what prompted their return.



## The Auckland commute was never fun

**HAMISH WHITE**

*Director, TANK Marketing & Design*



**ARGUABLY, \$10 TEXTING, THE BANE** of every parent of a teenager, was conceived in Hawke's Bay by 'born and bred' Hamish White ... during his tenure at Telecom.

I say "conceived in" Hawke's Bay because starting in 2003 – as a five-day-a-week commuter between Napier and Auckland – Hamish began a three-year stint in consumer marketing at Telecom, where his feats included introducing \$10 text. A demanding lifestyle fueled by the commitment of Hamish and his wife Amanda (also a Bay native) to raise their family in Hawke's Bay.

Nowadays Hamish runs his Napier agency, Tank Marketing and Design, with a much shorter commute. Clients include Airnet, Firenzo, ENZA, Frucor and Pacific Fibre.

Hamish's career has travelled from Hawke's Bay to Wellington to Sydney and back to Napier.

After graduating from Colenso in 1989, Hamish worked locally a couple of years for ANZ Bank, which then sponsored his

education at Victoria, where he received a Bachelor of Commerce.

He spent ten years in Wellington, first marketing banking services – early EFTPOS, credit cards, ATMs and pioneering the ANZ/Qantas rewards program – and then switching to Telecom and its mobile battle with Vodafone.

In 2002 he and Amanda, despairing of Wellington weather, headed to Sydney, where Hamish continued to work in telecommunications.

However, the pull of Hawke's Bay was too strong, and in September 2003 Hamish and family moved back to Napier, with no immediate job prospects.

Telecom's radar found him quickly, setting in motion what became his weekly commute to Auckland. "It was never fun, even for the first week," says Hamish. But he did it for three years. "That's how determined we were to make Hawke's Bay work."

The job was "testosterone-charged". Telecom was getting "slaughtered" by Vodafone in the youth market. Hamish's team's 'killer' answer... unlimited \$10 texting! He progressed to national manager of consumer marketing for Telecom, responsible for \$1.2 billion in revenue and directing a \$30-plus million advertising budget.

But he had returned to Hawke's Bay with the idea of launching a "wee boutique marketing agency". Finally in 2006 he cut the Auckland cord and founded Tank, where he's proved that a HB-based agency can successfully compete for national clients – 70% of Tank's clients are based outside Hawke's Bay. Now he works about one week per month 'on the road'.

Hamish comments that from a career perspective, "It's easy to leave Hawke's Bay, but getting back is very, very hard. You have to get your head around earning significantly less money ... but then you don't need as much money." He came back in his mid-thirties, fully appreciating

that he still had to build a career and support a family. For Hamish, the price of re-settling in the Bay was the three-year commute.

The magnet was the original Bay roots he and his wife shared, and their firsthand knowledge of the region's attraction. "The more time I spent away, the more I appreciated what Hawke's Bay had to offer."

Now he's exactly where he wants to be, earning a livelihood in a region where less than 'big city' income in fact goes much further in delivering a perfectly appealing lifestyle. 🐝 *Tom Belford*

## Get Smart girl calling clients from the Bay

**SOPHIE SOWMAN**

*Managing Director/Founder, 99 Corporation*



**ON LEAVING HASTINGS, SOPHIE** Sowman headed to Otago University where she sold Christmas puddings to local businesses while studying for a Bachelor of Commerce in Marketing and Management.

After graduating she sold the lucrative little business and began her OE, working around Australia and eventually the UK

where she honed her skills in marketing, sales and business support.

In Edinburgh she worked at lead generation for an outbound calling firm owned by a former Woodford House old girl, then joined a firm brokering telco deals for business clients.

It was family, the lower cost of buying a home, and the prospect of putting her new business skills into practice that brought Sophie back to Hawke's Bay after two and a half years in the UK.

Her first job as an advertising account manager was like an R&D exercise, enabling her to get a feel for the local market and build a network of business contacts.

She then formed 99 Corporation, to fill an obvious market niche, offering lead generation, direct marketing and sales support services to clients.

The name was inspired by Get Smart's Agent 99; Maxwell Smart's tireless sidekick, who always got the job done but only ever referred to by her number. "We're always answering the phone or making calls on behalf of our clients, not representing ourselves."

Sophie no longer spends seven hours a day on the phone. Her company merged with an inbound provider last July; there's now a team of 30 answering and making calls for over 100 mostly non-Hawke's Bay clients.

All staff are Kiwis, familiar with local place names and locations, a counter to the embarrassment some firms have experienced when outsourcing call centres offshore.

Since returning home five years ago Sophie has found the local business community very supportive. "It was encouraging to find a good group actively helping develop businesses and a few nurturers keen to see young people do well."

Sophie and her husband are out and about most weekends, attending business or charity events, concerts or attractions at the wineries. "In winter everyone heads off skiing and most weekends it's the rugby club with my husband after the game."

Sophie, now 30, has noticed an increase in the number of friends in her age group coming back to Hawke's Bay. A lot of out-of-town friends come for their weddings and many living in Auckland talk about moving to the Bay at some stage.

Big attractions are the climate, affordable housing, the "nice lifestyle" and the fact it's only an hour to fly to

Wellington or Auckland and two hours to drive to Lake Taupo for skiing.

In the past decade the region has clearly raised its profile, but it needs to do better if it's to attract more younger, skilled people, particularly those looking for higher paid incomes without having to start their own business.

It's a big plus that a number of influential business people have located here, but Sophie believes more head offices should be encouraging local business development. *✦ Keith Newman*

## Rugby roots bring business mentor back

**CHRIS O'REILLY**  
*Business Consultant*



**IT WAS A JOB AS THE MARKETING** director with the Hastings District Council at age twenty-one (fresh out of university) that first brought Chris O'Reilly to Hawke's Bay. He made good friends, played for the Magpies and fell in love with the place, especially the climate.

At the age of twenty-four he left to pursue a career in Auckland and returned several decades later with his wife and three boys after a career in senior management at the Ascot Hospital and Citibank, then as CEO of KFC New Zealand.

What triggered O'Reilly's return to Hawke's Bay in 2006 was the realisation that his three little boys hardly knew their father; such was his commitment to his work. His wife, Janet Luke, shared his enthusiasm for Hawke's Bay having been educated at Woodford House and was delighted to be returning.

Making the transition to self-employment can be a daunting prospect,

especially after the lucrative salary they had been enjoying, but Chris had decided to become a fully participating family man and to go freelance using his confidence, skills and experience (and the mistakes) for the benefit of other business operators.

Working from home he launched himself as Chris O'Reilly Consultancy Limited, whilst Janet, a landscape architect, took the opportunity to convert their north-facing Havelock North property to innovative food production by applying the principles of permaculture, and, during the process, developing her own set of marketable skills.

Chris' business-mentoring services focus on building and facilitating relationships between businesses with complementary objectives. In struggling economic times innovation is what helps businesses to survive; but isolation and familiarity can make one blinkered to opportunities. His view is that no one can be an expert in everything, but by networking and sharing knowledge and expertise, everyone can benefit. This requires flexibility, trust and confidence.

Chris now holds directorships in a sizeable number of businesses including the Kahungunu Asset Holding Company, Tremains, Tracta (advertising agency), Emerson Transport, Need-a-Nerd, '99' and Eastek, plus others around New Zealand. He mostly communicates with his clients through video-conferencing and other technologies, but feels that nothing beats face-to-face meetings. He's recently added his business skills to the board of the Hawke's Bay Opera House.

On his return to the Bay, Chris was surprised at the parochial attitude in a number of business people he met, a certain reluctance to move between Napier and Hastings – the sort of thing commonly seen in local body and health politics.

In the course of his work he meets many ex-pats who have moved to the Bay for the lifestyle and has seen a number leave again after a couple of years, not having been able to settle. Could it be that local people desperate to return home 'oversell' the Hawke's Bay lifestyle to their spouses leading to disappointed expectations? As it is often the spouses who feel isolated and struggle with the lack of family and networks or to find work, Chris suggests that neighbours, employers and associates of new residents need to provide social support to the newly arrived family. *✦ Kay Bazzard*



# Capitalism

environmentalism  
climate change  
global warming  
sustainability  
truth  
future humanity  
carbon emissions  
food, clothing, shelter  
fractional reserve lending  
corporate greed  
debt  
wealth  
denial  
rampant consumerism  
profit  
free trade

## At war with the brat kids BY ~ DAVID TRUBRIDGE

A LECTURE AND AN INTERVIEW SET the two opposing camps against each other.

The lecture I attended was the keynote address at this year's Dwell on Design show in Los Angeles by William MacDonagh, co-author of the seminal book *Cradle to Cradle*. This vitally important book elevated MacDonagh to almost guru status in the sustainable design world, so I eagerly looked forward to hearing how he has developed his thinking more recently.

The audience loved him and gave him a standing ovation, but I remained seated on the edge feeling confused and disappointed. His account of the unfolding of his *Cradle to Cradle* philosophy was laced with beautiful anecdotes and illustrative stories. He told everyone the things they wanted to hear about the better world we desire and believe we are building. He suggested we can solve this crisis by being sensible, doing the obvious things like installing turf roofs on factories and redesigning drink bottles without toxins (why do we

even need drink bottles?).

But there was nothing new. And worse, he adroitly slipped round the giant elephant in the room no-one wanted to acknowledge: capitalism and the giant corporates pursuing profit, who have their own quite different agenda.

### Elephant in the room

That elephant was uncomfortably exposed in the interview, which was with Naomi Klein in *The Nation* magazine. I had been deeply moved by her very important book – *Shock Doctrine; the Rise of Disaster Capitalism* – and see her as one of the most acute, accurate and honest observers of the world we live in. She pointed to a recent Harris poll in the USA which revealed that the numbers of those who believe we are causing climate change has dropped in the last two years from 71% to 50%. Similar countries such as Britain and Australia, and probably New Zealand, are the same. This is despite more and more scary warnings from scientists about how much worse it is getting, and despite the glaring evidence

all around us of increasingly volatile weather patterns that are producing record numbers of extremes.

So why are people in denial? The answer lies in politics: those who are in denial are now almost entirely on the right. Even though the split used to be fairly bipartisan, it has now polarised into left and right. So it is no longer about truth, it is about ideology, about what you want to believe. To substantiate their denial they create preposterous conspiracy theories about climate change being a fabricated socialist plot to steal their wealth and standard of living.

If you think about it, the reason is obvious: everything that environmentalism stands for is opposed to their beliefs. Free trade is an environmental disaster, shipping cheap consumer goods back and forth across oceans and forcing the dumping of subsidised produce onto third world countries which destroys local farming and manufacturing. As we have seen at Copenhagen, no serious advances will be made against carbon emissions without



strict global treaties that are enforced by a global body. But such outside interference is anathema to most of the USA, which won't even sign the the UN declaration on the rights of the child! And as increasingly drastic effects of climate change are experienced in poor, third world countries, there will have to be big compensation payouts. But wealth redistribution is only on the right's agenda if it is upward, not downward.

Free trade, the right to exploit and accumulate profit are all the basic tenets of capitalism. Corporations are driven only by short-term profit. This is just about greed, but unbelievably it is enshrined in law. These corporations are the brat kids I wrote about previously who are hand-in-glove with weak, compliant governments who have no incentive or ability to stand up to their bullying. The corporations make all the profit, but when disaster happens (like the banking crisis, or the BP disaster) the tax-payer or the third world pays. What kind of deal is that? The governments are not governing for us but for their mates in the corporations. And even if any government wanted to stand up to them, what chance would it have when half the population are on the side of the status quo anyway?!

### What about the environmentalists?

The environmental movement has been at great pains to keep the issue apolitical, presumably from fear of alienating supporters on the right. But that has patently failed. Like MacDonagh, they are blind to the corporate elephant. Until they face up to this uncomfortable fact we will get nowhere.

The International Energy Authority recently announced that global carbon emissions are back on the increase. Countries like Britain can say theirs have dropped only because they have exported manufacturing and so don't count those emissions as theirs! In other words, all the well-meaning efforts of MacDonagh and other light greens, are getting nowhere.

It appears to be business as usual, but actually, as Klein points out, it is worse. We have extracted all the easy fuel, and now we are going after the hard stuff, the deep off-shore wells, the tar sands, gas fracking and the Arctic – “drill baby drill”. So look forward to more serious environmental disasters. And guess who will pay for them?

Ironically, the right's conspiracy theories are actually correct. This

is political. This is a direct head-on confrontation between environmentalism and capitalism. Everything each stands for is bitterly opposed by the other. I do sincerely believe that humans have the capability for us all to live a reasonably balanced and just life. We have the know-how to give everyone on this planet enough food, shelter and well-being.

But it will not happen under capitalism. The business moguls and super-rich are extremely powerful and will fight every inch of the way to retain their right to exploit and accumulate more wealth. It is war between the brat kids and the environment/future/humanity... Do we come down to their level and take them on, or do we remain pure and ineffectual? I wish I knew. 🐝

## Battling capitalism

By Tom Belford

David Trubridge advocates war on capitalism, declaring environmentalism and capitalism to face a “direct head-to-head confrontation”. He's run out of patience with “light greens”, who he sees as “getting nowhere”.

I'm not as dark green as David. Call me medium green.

Without question, whatever is going to happen to improve living standards for those billions of people on this planet who today subsist far worse off than the poorest (or greenest) New Zealander must be environmentally sound ... better still, environmentally enhancing.

The aspirations (in fact, demands) of those billions will be met – one way or the other – or the globe will face social disintegration far more rapid and violent than any ecological disaster, and as destructive.

How do those unmet needs get addressed, while those with already excessive environmental footprints begin to re-tool their lifestyles? Both need to be done, but clearly, some composting here and some low-flow shower heads there, while conscience-easing to the ‘haves’, aren't going to solve the problem of the ‘have nots’.

So the corporate model will roll on, using market pricing and profit incentives, to produce some stuff people desperately need, and other stuff people just want. That model can produce things

efficiently; however, the true costs of the resources consumed are almost never reflected in the prices we pay ... as they should be.

We scarcely think twice about increasing GST to curb consumption (indiscriminately affecting our poorest), whereas the mere thought of injecting the true carbon cost of production into prices via a carbon tax is considered wildly radical. The same is true of incorporating the total lifecycle costs of products into their prices (e.g. the cost of disposing of old tyres, batteries, plastic, etc).

Proposals like these drive so-called fiscal conservatives and pro-growth politicians crazy. I would join David's war with such ‘capitalists’. Indeed, I wish more ‘light greens’ would politicise and join the battle, and not contentedly grow worms and recycle.

But I wouldn't denounce all capitalists. As best I can tell, David sells his products in the free market and takes a profit on each. I call that capitalist, and not dishonourable.

I also consider it honourable when businesspeople make sincere commitments to drive energy consumption, excessive packaging, disposal costs and the like out of their products. Is that as beneficial as not creating at all yet another brand of toothpaste, another version of Barbie doll, or another All Blacks tee shirt? No. But it's beneficial.

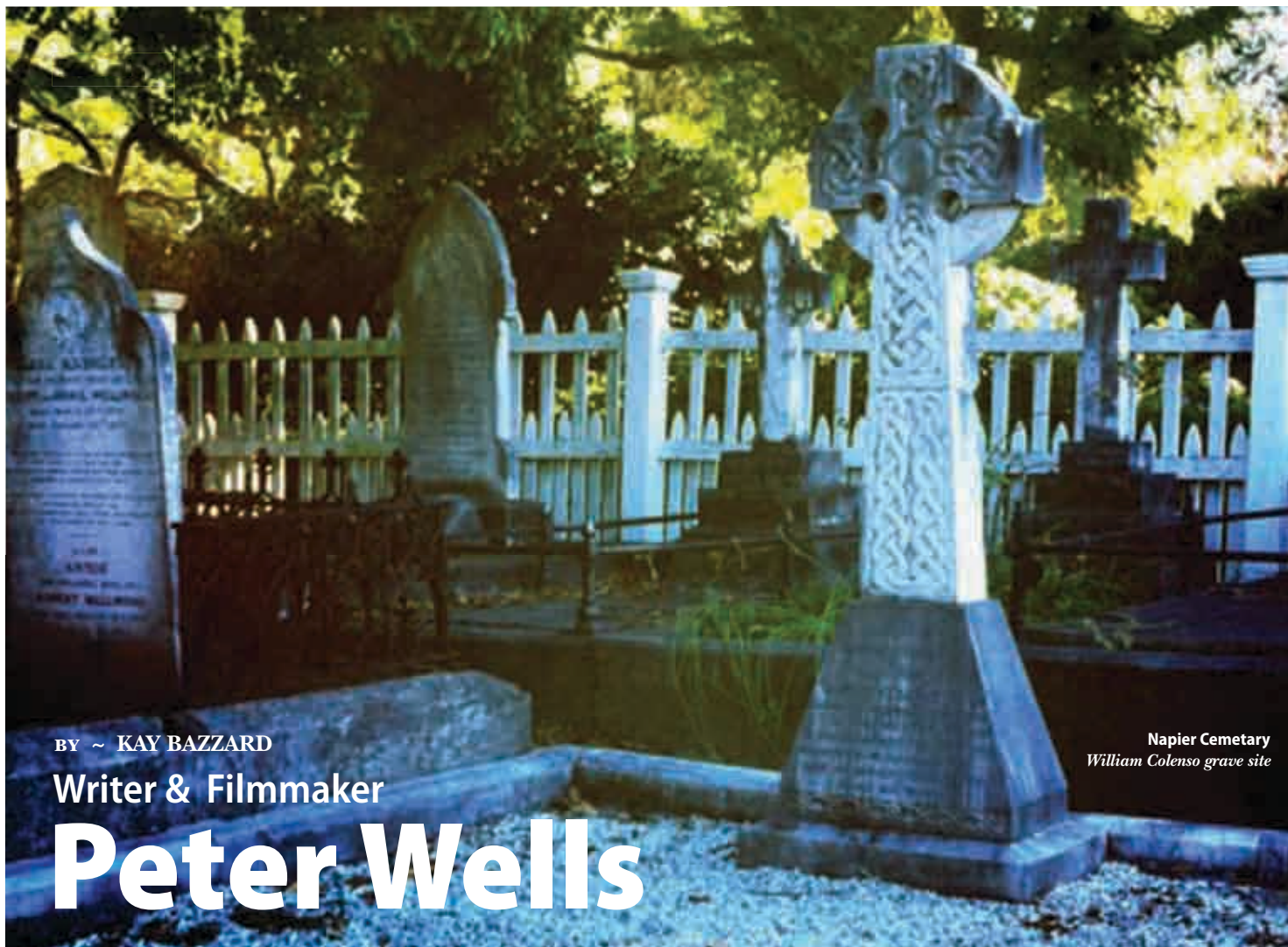
Just as it's beneficial when entrepreneurs launch businesses whose express purposes are to create ‘green’ benefits. I hope the guy or gal who quadruples the storage capacity of a solar battery while halving its cost gets super-rich; and if she buys a yacht to celebrate, I'll live with that.

So, for example, I applaud the recent launch of Pure Advantage by a group of New Zealand's most successful business leaders. They believe New Zealand should seize the opportunity to be a global leader in green growth. The Green Party and Greenpeace support Pure Advantage. Sure, there's cause for watchfulness, even cynicism, about corporate ‘greens’ and potential greenwashing. Let's be vigilant, but also acknowledge the benefits hat emerge.

Some won't give an inch, considering ‘green growth’ an oxymoron (like ‘sustainable growth’). But given the deprivation of billions, ‘no growth’ is not an option.

So if not ‘green growth’ ... what? 🐝





BY ~ KAY BAZZARD

Writer & Filmmaker

# Peter Wells

Napier Cemetary  
William Colenso grave site

**DURING THE MONTHS OF DECEMBER** 1871 and January 1872, Kereopa Te Rau was brought to Napier, put on trial for the murder of the Reverend Volkner and hanged. These were the frightening times of the New Zealand Land Wars, when rumours were rife and settlers felt very insecure.

Peter Wells, the New Zealand writer and filmmaker who lives in Napier, is interested in looking at all the angles of this story, including the memories of those close to Kereopa Te Rau. He plans to do so in his non-fiction book titled *Sparrow on a Rooftop*.

For this project, Wells is the 2011 recipient of the Creative New Zealand Michael King Writers' Fellowship. Worth \$100,000, this is one of New Zealand's largest writing fellowships and supports established writers to work on a major project over two or more years. On August 22nd he received the award from the Prime Minister at Premier House.

Wells is in great company. Previous recipients of the Creative New Zealand Michael King Writers' Fellowship are Owen Marshall, Vincent O'Sullivan, CK Stead, Rachel Barrowman, Neville Peat, Dame Fiona Kidman, Philip Simpson and Kate De Goldi.

In 2009 he won a non-fiction writing award that allowed him to work on a

book involving William Colenso (1811-1899), which Wells is currently finalising. Entitled *The Hungry Heart*, the historical novel will be launched as part of the 200-year celebration of Colenso's birth, taking place in November at the Napier War Memorial on the Parade.

William Colenso was a missionary and explorer who arrived in New Zealand in 1834 to work for the Church Missionary Society. He was an avid botanist, detailing and transmitting previously unrecorded New Zealand flora to his great friend, Joseph Hooker of Kew Gardens in London. Colenso fell from grace when it was discovered that he had sired a son (Wiremu) by Ripeka, the Māori maid of his wife, Elizabeth Fairburn Colenso.



Peter Wells

## Child actor

Peter Wells was born and raised in Auckland and, as a child, Peter was a film fan. He thinks that New Zealand's isolation gave the movies a heightened impact: "It was foreign travel, before we had even got on a plane." He began acting as a nine-year-old, and it was on the stage that he first grew to appreciate the interaction of a fantasy world with everyday life.

In the early '70s Wells studied history at the University of Auckland – at that point "there was nothing like film studies" – though by that time he was spending much of his time at the cinema. He then took off for five years overseas, where he began to write short fiction.

By the early '80s, while working as a proofreader at the *NZ Herald*, Wells would finish his night shift, then watch a film crew shooting a short film on Queen Street. As he later wrote in the book, *Film in Aotearoa New Zealand* ... "it was a fantastically empowering experience. The whole mystery of film, at that moment, collapsed as if someone had pulled a curtain away, rudely." Wells realised he could make films too.

His 1993 feature film *Desperate Remedies* is a magnificently costumed drama starring Jennifer Ward-Lealand, a flamboyant yarn of vice and scandal



PETER WELLS ~ *My work shows a commitment to change in New Zealand.*

which captured the chaos and hypocrisy of Victorian Auckland. This film was nominated for the Cannes film festival.

The documentary *Georgie Girl* reveals the life and times of trans-sexual Georgina Beyer, giving voice to her modest and honest exploration of what it is to be differently-gendered; her life as a dancer, actor and sex worker; who managed with great courage to become a local, and then national politician, the first openly trans-sexual person in the world to do so.

### Napier roots

As a gay man, much of Peter Wells' work explores homosexual themes. History seems to be the place Wells most likes to be. Imaginatively peopling the colonial towns and settlements of New Zealand, suggesting the secrets and anxieties of the lonely single men of the colony, his stories give a visual reality through his films and narratives.

He moved to Napier in 2005, but his imaginative connection with Napier began as a child when he spent holidays with his grandparents who lived on Napier Hill.

Napier features as the location of Peter Wells' historical novel *Iridescence* (2003). In a recent interview he says, "Napier has always been an imaginative landscape in my life, and so I was fascinated with trying to enter the world of 19th century Napier from an outsider's viewpoint, like that of Samuel's (the novel's main character) – one who's such a misfit." He continues, "The entire novel is about someone learning to live in the landscape, psychological as well as actual." This book was nominated for the Montana

Book Awards and a finalist for the 2005 Tasmania Pacific Fiction Prize.

In much of his historical work, Wells interprets the experiences and emotions of the mostly British settlers trying to make their way in a raw and foreign land, half a world away from everything they knew and that had meaning for them.

Many readers will be familiar with *Somebody's Darling – Stories from the Napier Cemetery*, the Hawke's Bay Museum and Art Gallery exhibition and book which was jointly curated by the Museum's archivist, Gail Pope, and lovingly photographed and written by Peter Wells.

These are local stories of our settler ancestors which are poignantly told by Wells. He says, "Most migrants realistically would never get back to their homeland. They would die on what was essentially foreign soil." From the exhibition, guided walks through the cemetery ensued, with the stories of the families being told along the way.

Asked what he feels is his major contribution, he replies, "Ideas whose time has come" and cites his 1986 documentary, *Napier: The Newest City on the Globe*, which explores the city's unique Art Deco character – and effectively kick-started Napier as an Art Deco destination.

"My work shows a commitment to change in New Zealand society, be it through documentaries archiving at-risk architecture (Napier's Art Deco or Auckland's Civic Theatre); producing one of the earliest pieces of fiction in which a gay author published under his own name; or writing and co-directing dramas

"Napier has always been an imaginative landscape in my life, and so I was fascinated with trying to enter the world of 19th century Napier from an outsider's viewpoint..."

PETER WELLS  
HISTORIAN

like *A Death in the Family*, which was produced at the height of the HIV/AIDS crisis and looked at the ways stigma works in families and society."

In 1998, along with Stephanie Johnson, Wells founded the Auckland Writers and Readers Festival which has gone on to become New Zealand's leading book festival. He became a Member of the Order of New Zealand for services to film and literature. 



Kay Bazzard

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# The forgotten half

BY ~ CLAIRE HAGUE



Trade Skills students with beach buggies they've made from scratch

**I'VE BEEN DOING SOME READING** while travelling recently – and annoying the heck out of the unfortunate people randomly seated next to me by Air New Zealand. Affirmative exclamations, air punches, and seat wriggling have been the order of the day on those plane trips. And as my family will tell you, I'm better known for being overly controlled than effusive.

But I can't help it. I've been in the education profession wearing some hat or other for 25 years and for the first time I'm starting to see how we can actually achieve some national momentum around that old cliché – that the purpose of education is to change the world.

My new zeal is inspired by reports from three totally different organisations: *The Forgotten Half* by UK think tank Demos; *Pathways to Prosperity* by the Harvard Graduate School of Education in the USA; and *More Ladders, Fewer Snakes* by our own privately funded economic think tank, the New Zealand Institute.

All three reports focus on the potential to dramatically transform our struggling economies and societies by refocusing our education system on the 'forgotten half' of young people who are not heading for university education and who are not well-served by current education systems across the world.

The result of that service gap is evident in a number of areas that affect us all.

The New Zealand Institute report lays out the disturbing statistics concisely and clearly and it's well worth the read. In a nutshell, although our top 15-year-olds hold their own with the rest of the OECD in mathematics, science and reading, our 'long tail' of underachievers leads to dismal statistics across a range of other indicators – youth unemployment, health issues, teenage pregnancies, suicide, and adult literacy and numeracy difficulties.

But the key issue that emerges – and it's where we can really make a difference that will transform all the stats – is that too few students are remaining 'engaged', or actively learning, at school.

New Zealand can't hang on to its 16-18 year-olds in the school system, and a frightening number just drop out of sight. Those of us who have tried to coax our children to stay at school as long as possible, in spite of the fact they are obviously not enjoying it and not achieving, will know the angst and worry behind this issue. The reports I've been reading put this down to one main problem – too many young people can't see a clear, transparent connection between their programme of study and tangible opportunities in the labour market.

I've tested this theory at home with my long-suffering husband who's a mathematics teacher at a local secondary school. The discussion goes something like this.



Claire Hague

Me: "What have you been teaching today?"

Him: "Had a great lesson with my Year 12s on algebra – went really well."

Me (innocently): "That's good! Do you know what jobs will use algebra the way you're teaching it?"

Him (ominous silence): "What do you mean?"

Me (gathering steam): "So how do you know what you're teaching is relevant to the workplace? I mean, without wanting to be critical, you've been a teacher all your life – so how do you know whether what you're teaching is relevant to any workplace at all?"

Him: (now thoroughly peeved): "Well that's not my job! I'm working my backside off trying to get my kids through NCEA Level 1, 2, and then 3 – when have I got time to undertake study tours of local industry?"

The rest I'll leave to your imagination – divorce is often imminent!



But in that last comment lies the rub for New Zealand students currently, and I take my full share of responsibility for this ... hindsight is a wonderful thing.

**Making school relevant**

As a secondary school principal I contributed to a system that focused almost exclusively on preparing our students to gain university entrance via intensive NCEA assessment in a relatively limited range of academic subjects. Yet in fact, the most recent figures I've seen indicate only 29% of New Zealand students go on to university. Even if it were 50% as it is in the UK, it's the forgotten half that are now earning some well-deserved attention, and there's some exciting stuff going on in this space.

At a recent symposium run by New Zealand's 'guru' of secondary/tertiary transitions, Dr Stuart Middleton, Hawke's Bay's pilot initiatives to re-engage young people at risk of dropping out of school gained considerable attention. The results of these initiatives have surprised and delighted everyone involved.

For example, Wairoa College – partnering with EIT, the Agriculture ITO and some very supportive local farmers – set up an agricultural academy in 2009 to re-engage in education Year 12 students who were at risk of “dropping out” of school. Their programme consisted of two days of tertiary study, two days out on local farms gaining work experience, and one day in ‘mainstream’ school studies.

At the end of that first year's pilot (and the results have been consistent ever since) 21 of the participating 24 students



Land Skills student works in EIT glasshouses with hort tutor

remained in the programme (and therefore at school) and the vast majority gained NCEA Level 1 or 2 along with a National Certificate in Agriculture Level 2. Sixteen students returned to school for Year 13.

Subsequent pilots with Hastings Girls' High School and Tamatea High School, utilising similar models and based on Hospitality and Trades respectively, have yielded the same very exciting results. And remember these are young people formerly “at risk” of dropping out of the school system.

To see these students proudly serving their culinary creations to their teachers and whanau at Scholars' restaurant; or having a ball racing around Manfield on the mini-motorbikes they had constructed; or welcoming the local crèche kids into the playhouses they had built for them as part of their carpentry programme – this was learning that had significant educational, social and vocational benefits that we had probably initially underestimated.

And it was learning with a clear purpose and a connection to the future world of work.

I'd like to be very clear here. Schools do a great job with more than half of the country's students. My husband does a wonderful job as a mathematics teacher for those same students. Many schools and teachers are already embarking on alternative programmes for 'the forgotten half', but these programmes are currently on the fringes, rather than central to, our education system.

Regional partnerships such as the

ones I have described here, made up of visionary school principals, EIT, local and central government leaders, and industry leaders and employers have the potential to be scaled up in order to create opportunities for the forgotten half of Hawke's Bay's young people to re-engage in education, training, work, and society.

Let's join the New Zealand Institute in urging our government to do that. Because these are precisely the young people who desperately want and need to be connected and making a valuable contribution to our region. Let's give them the skills, the guidance and above all the status of being in a system that is valued every bit as much as university education. We need all our young people engaged and active, not just half. 🐝

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# Are Napier's health care needs met?



BY ~ ELIZABETH SISSON

**THE CLOSING OF NAPIER'S HOSPITAL** in 1998 and relocation of hospital services to Hastings was one of the most contentious events in Napier's history. Over strong objections from Napier residents, the hospital on the hill closed.

The plan was to provide a broad range of 'sub-acute' services through a new health centre in Napier.

Think of a hospital and its services: patients in beds, victims of nasty accidents, heart attacks, strokes, CAT scans, etc. Then subtract the people who use the ED as a clinic, and you have acute care. Sub-acute care is anything less. Primary health care is what you get from your GP.

The central hospital would provide intensive medical treatment, surgeries, inpatient care and expensive high-level diagnostic equipment.

Are the healthcare needs of all Napier's residents being met, as promised, by the combination of the Napier Health Centre, a broad network of general medical services and the Hawke's Bay Regional Hospital?

## Health Centre rises to the occasion

"When the Napier Health Centre was developed, possibly 100% of people in Napier thought the mix of a centre here and a hospital in Hastings would not meet their needs, but now the centre meets the needs of 90% of the people who present there," said Barbara Arnott, Napier's mayor and a member of both the Napier Health Services Advocacy Forum and the District Health Board (DHB).

Last year approximately more than 33,000 people went to the Napier Health Centre for health care ... not far off the estimated 36,000 people who went for services to the Hawke's Bay Regional Hospital in Hastings.

A 2010 review, or 'stocktake', of the Centre's services runs to considerable length, listing everything from 24-hour emergency and general practitioner (GP) services through physiotherapy (which has its own pool), dental care at the centre and in the community, a maternity unit (yes, they deliver babies), outpatient and specialist clinics, district nurses, social work, regional public health protection

and screening, immunisations, mental health and addiction treatment, and minor surgical procedures.

The Centre has a laboratory and a radiology (X-ray) facility and performs blood tests and electrocardiograms. It is ACC accredited. It even has a café and a bus stop with free bus rides between the Centre and the hospital.

The DHB contracts with the Centre's City Medical service for delivery of a 24/7 Level 2 emergency service. This requires the Centre to provide 24-hour availability of accident and medical services. The City Medical unit has 38 general practitioners who provide acute surgical, medical and orthopaedic management. People who come to the Centre but require inpatient services are transferred to the Hastings hospital, by ambulance if necessary.

Should disaster strike the city, such as a major earthquake, the Centre will become an emergency medical unit providing triage, initial assessment, management and referral or discharge for casualties.

Napier Health Centre recently renewed its lease of the Wellesley Road facility for another ten years. A service expansion and renovation project is underway, with \$700,000 of structural improvements to be funded by the landlord, Vital Healthcare Properties, Auckland.

## Centre improvements

"The desire is to grow the number of services we can provide and improve integration with primary care services," said Andrew Lesperance, general manager of planning and performance with the DHB.

The first project is nearing completion, with about half a million dollars spent on state-of-the-art digital radiology equipment from the US. The new facility opened 1 August 2011. In 2010, radiology performed 10,047 procedures, with a larger number anticipated this year due to the new equipment.

New periodic clinics staffed by medical specialists are also targeted. Among them are a pain clinic, which has begun with a specialist coming from Wellington, and a nurse specialist urology clinic. A local GP with a special interest in orthopaedics

staffs a clinic at the Centre once a week.

Napier residents and medical practitioners identified the need for these clinics in a series of meetings last year. "We had many focus groups last October and November," said Wietske Cloo, project manager for Napier Health Services and manager of public health nursing and smokefree programmes. Young people, consumers, a multidisciplinary team, Māori and nurses took part in the various groups.

With the clinics "we're looking at providing better care for people with long-term or chronic conditions," Cloo said.

What are the costs of the new programmes? With some exceptions, "we think we can do it with existing resources," Cloo said. This will be a mix of funds 'redirected' from other services to cover travel costs and professional charges, and the deployment of existing personnel. Lesperance cited the example of the rheumatology clinic: a rheumatologist and a nurse from the Hastings hospital come to Napier to staff the clinic. The only additional cost is their mileage. However, the new pain clinic is hiring staff and is funded by the DHB.

The Centre itself will be reconfigured. Walking into the Centre's vast lobby and glassed reception area, you would not know that the treatment rooms include a warren of cramped, neon-lit, windowless boxes. Even the brightest décor could not mitigate the impact of a depressing diagnosis, but it would be nice for all the members of even a small family to be seated comfortably while it's being delivered. The remodelled rooms also will provide better working conditions for specialists.

But the horse before the cart: "We're first determining what we can bring in before we reconfigure the rooms," Lesperance said.

"We want to remove any disincentives for specialists to work in Napier," said Kevin Atkinson, chair of the HBDHB. "We want the Centre's clinics to be as good as those in Hastings. This review (of the Centre's services) is to ensure we're providing services to Napier the best way

we can. We can't duplicate expensive equipment, but we want the services to be as close as possible."

#### Community health delivery

"Most general procedures can be done in the community and, when we get to that stage, it will be a happy thing. The more work you can do in the community and the more services people can access in their neighbourhood, the better,"

Barbara Arnott said.

The community health-care network is sizeable and comprises physicians in private practice, public health nurses, freestanding laboratories and clinics, health centres, and facilities with a focus on Māori and Pacific Islanders.

Many of the services have signed on with the Hawke's Bay Primary Health Organisation (PHO). The organisation's website describes it as "a not-for-profit, charitable organisation that brings together health professionals and the community to coordinate and deliver health services for the population of Napier, Hastings and Central Hawkes Bay." Central government funds the PHO to subsidise a range of health services,

focusing on four goals: population health, reducing health inequalities, workforce development and service sustainability.

In Napier, 62,528 people were enrolled in the PHO through their GPs last year. This compares favourably with the government's estimated population of the Napier urban area: 58,600 people in 2010. Of those enrolled, 10,434 people identified themselves as Māori and 1,228 as Pacific Islanders. Even allowing for residents of other areas, it would seem the preponderance of Napier area residents are getting health care.

Special attention came to focus on primary health services to Māori in Napier with the settlement in 2008 of a Waitangi Tribunal claim. Local Māori lodged the claim, Wai692, when the hospital closed. The settlement provided a building in Maraenui for what has become a well-used surgery and some \$300,000 for health services. According to Des Ratima, who is on the DHB's Māori Relationship Board, the funds sit in a dedicated trust while plans for their use are being developed. Related to the settlement are contracts for oral health, traditional Māori medicine and Whanau Ora or family wellness, all of

them popular, Ratima said.

Nevertheless, access to service, waiting for service, travelling to the hospital for service and the time required, and the need for more follow-up care are still issues raised by Napier residents. Part of this results from a general shortage of GPs in New Zealand. Part is inherent in the need to balance availability of services with available funding. Some bad experiences are intrinsic to this very human endeavour.

If you're not at death's door, you might have to wait for care. Compared to the general availability of health care in, say, the US and South Africa, New Zealand is doing very well. Your best bet is to check in with your GP for whatever ails you and take it from there. 🐝

*Editor: For a description of Napier Health Centre services go to the 'Patients & Visitors' section of the DHB website ([www.hawkesbay.health.nz](http://www.hawkesbay.health.nz)), or just look up Napier Health Centre on the Internet. A marketing programme to inform local residents about the variety and availability of the Napier centre's services also is planned.*

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# The buzz of bees

BY ~ JANET LUCK

“I would love to see a network of educated and supported hobby beekeepers keeping healthy bees in a more sustainable, legal and small scale way.”

**FOR MY FIRST COLUMN FOR BAYBUZZ** it only seems fitting to write about NZ beekeeping.

Can you remember a time when bees weren't in the news? Where have they gone? What's happened and what has caused this alarming decline in the bee population worldwide?

The beekeeping industry is incredibly important to New Zealand. \$5.1 billion of NZ's economy is attributable to pollination by honeybees, domestic honey sales and export sales, beeswax and exported honeybees.

If you are a honeybee in New Zealand, there is roughly a 99% chance that you live in a commercial operation. This means you are managed like a commodity for pollination and honey production.

- ❖ You live in a hive usually made of synthetic materials including plastic and toxic paint.
- ❖ You are forced to live in a square-shaped frame rather than a natural curved shape like bees build in the wild.

- ❖ Your Queen is 'caged' in the lower section of the hive.
- ❖ Your Queen is squashed and killed each year and replaced, often with an artificially inseminated Queen. This artificially bred Queen can lack vitality and often the colony is thrown into chaos in an effort to accept her.
- ❖ The frames you are forced to live in can contain contaminated wax, or plastic. This is where you are expected to live, work and raise your babies.
- ❖ Pre-formed foundation wax is placed in the hives, forcing you to build comb to the beekeeper's requirements rather than your own.
- ❖ Each year your colony is prevented from swarming, thus preventing your species from multiplying and helping to increase its genetic diversity.
- ❖ The majority of your honey is stolen each season and you are fed white sugar to sustain you until the flowers

start blooming again in late Spring.

- ❖ Toxic chemical treatments are often added to your home to treat many diseases that have been introduced from poor beekeeping practices.
- ❖ Your colony is trucked around the region and forced to pollinate crops. With some crops, such as Kiwifruit, your hive is placed in the middle of a mono crop, so you are forced to feed off this crop even though it is not nutritious for you.
- ❖ The drones (males) in your hive are often culled, as they provide nothing to the commercial beekeeper.



Top bar hive



Beekeeping can fit in your backyard

Reading this, does it make you feel that the honeybee is no better off than the battery hen or the pig in the sow stall?

The 'Langstroth hive' (the stacked boxes) we are all familiar with have been designed for maximum ease of use by the commercial beekeeper for high production and fast extraction of honey, but with little thought on how the bee would prefer to live.

Clearly there is an important role for commercial beekeepers until the natural order is restored and there are enough bees to do the job naturally. I believe there needs to be encouragement for more people, particularly backyard beekeepers, to keep bees in a more sustainable and natural way.

Around the world there has been a huge resurgence in amateur beekeeping, particularly in urban areas. Research shows that honeybees do better in an urban environment as they have more year-round access to nectar and pollen than their rural sisters. Beehives are now kept on apartment balconies, back gardens, and rooftops in the major cities of the world.

Along with the growth in hobby beekeepers there is a growing movement for sustainable beekeeping. This alternative approach emphasises small scale, low cost and low technology, using locally adapted bee populations and simple equipment. These alternative methods of keeping bees result in a lower honey harvest, but a stronger and healthier bee population. New Zealand needs healthy bees to pollinate our crops.

A sustainable beekeeper allows bees



to emulate how they have lived for tens of thousands of years, before humans started to meddle with them. One method of sustainable beekeeping is using a Top Bar Hive. This is how I keep my bees in my urban backyard in Havelock North.

#### A Top Bar Hive allows :

- ✦ Bees to build their own natural comb to their own particular dimensions.
- ✦ The Queen is allowed to move throughout the colony.
- ✦ Honey is left for the bees, with only superfluous being removed.
- ✦ Drones are allowed to develop to spread the colonies genetic makeup.
- ✦ Queens remain for as long as the colony needs them.
- ✦ Disturbance of the colony is kept to a minimum.

Similar to organic farming, sustainable beekeeping uses practices that respect the needs of the bees and the surrounding environment. It is about working with the bees rather than against them. As with many things in the primary production sector, our attitude about honeybees desperately needs to be re-calibrated. We need to stop treating bees as production units and return to working with them.

I would love to see a network of educated and supported hobby

beekeepers keeping healthy bees in a more sustainable, legal and small scale way. I believe such beekeepers will play a pivotal role in helping to reverse the decline in honeybees, and creating and maintaining vigorous, naturally-bred healthy local bee populations.

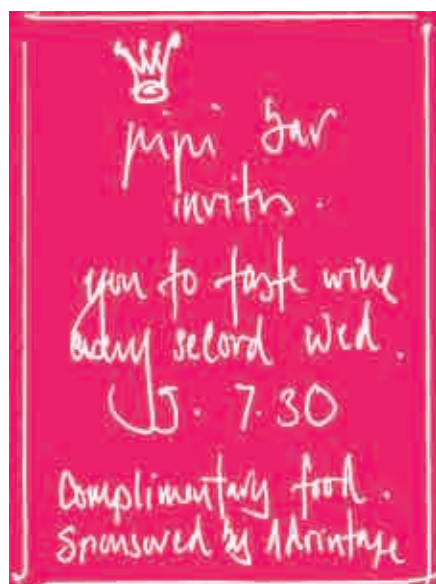
If you are interested in learning more about natural ways of keeping bees, please visit:

[www.saveourbees.org.nz](http://www.saveourbees.org.nz)  
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# Hastings hosts entertainment extravaganza

BY ~ ANI TYLEE



**VISIT HASTINGS IN SEPTEMBER** and there'll be no doubt you're in a vibrant Pacific city.

The Hawke's Bay Opera House precinct will hum with the National Waiata Music Awards on September 7 and 8. The Awards seek to develop, encourage and honour outstanding traditional and contemporary musical composers and performers each year.

Both days begin with the Māori Music Expo, featuring kapa haka groups, and workshops and forums showcasing some of the most experienced performers in entertainment and music.

The Te Koanga Fashion Show takes centre stage on the first night and the Music Awards on the second. This year's performers include Moana Maniapoto, Anika Moa, Young Sid, Ardijah, Frankie Stevens and last year's stand-out winner Maisey Rika, to name a few.

And on September 15 Ngati Kahungunu launch the Takitimu Festival with a 3,000-strong Powhiri at the Regional Sports Park, Hastings, to welcome guests from other New Zealand

tribes and over 500 Pacific performers here to take part in the Festival. This will be some welcome!

Participants, who are all linked to the Takitimu canoe, will continue festivities at the Hawke's Bay Opera House.

Roger Coleman, Opera House manager, could be called the master of understatement when he says the event will be "a nice injection into the end of winter". His mind will probably be less on the weather and more on ensuring his venue can deliver 12 hours of entertainment simultaneously on 5 stages, for four days!

There are huge demands on staffing and technical equipment, but it is what the Opera House was designed to cope with, and he, along with Festival Executive Director Tama Huata, are confident it can.

Throughout the Festival a 100 metre marquee, housing multiple outdoor entertainment spaces, a Pacific food market and children's entertainment, will close Hastings Street outside the Opera House.

In addition to music, culture and food, the programme features the Indigenous Peoples' Business Conference and a Pacific Fashion Show Expo.

Visitor numbers are estimated to be 5-6,000 people, including Pacific visitors from Tahiti, Fiji, Samoa and Tonga.

The very busy Tama Huata, who is also Executive Director of the Waiata Music Awards, encourages Hawke's Bay locals and their visitors to enjoy both these dynamic cultural events. Details at:

[www.ticketdirect.co.nz](http://www.ticketdirect.co.nz)

## Spring Fling

Load up the kids, grannies and the dogs and head to Central Hawke's Bay for The Festival at Pukeora Estate, just south of Waipukurau, Sept 8-11. It's a celebration of art, live music, food and wine in one venue. As a bonus, drive a bit further south to pick daffodils from Taniwha Station - \$2.50 for ten as a Plunket fundraiser.

[www.thefestival.org.nz](http://www.thefestival.org.nz)

## Best of Ani's Calendar

Date	Venue	Event	Type
Sept 1 - Sept 30	Taniwha Station, Waipukurau	Taniwha Daffodils and Sculpture	Plunket Fundraiser
Sept 7 - 8	HB Opera House	Waiata Māori Music Awards	Cultural Festival
Sept 21 - Oct 9	Cinema Gold, Havelock North	NZ International Film Festival	Film Festival
Sept 3	HB Opera House	Latitude 37	Chamber Music
Sept 8	Napier Municipal Theatre	The Gruffalo	Children's Musical
Sept 8 - Sept 11	Pukeora Estate	CHB Festival	Community Festival
Sept 8	The Cabana	Eminence from Brazil	Hard Metal
Sept 14 - 18	HB Opera House	Takitimu Festival	Cultural Festival
Sept 14 - Oct 9	Black Barn Gallery	Simon Kaan	Painting Exhibition
Sept 17	Hastings City	Hastings Blossom Parade	Parade
Sept 24	HB Opera House	Le Jeu n'Ulrich	Music/Dinner/Rugby
Sept 25	Chapelwick Coastal Estate	Porangahau Spring Fair	Arts, Produce, Music
Until Oct 2	Hastings City Gallery	Game On	Art Show
Oct 7 - 14	Playhouse Theatre, Hastings	"That Saturday"	Play
Until Oct 24	Hastings City Gallery	Uncommon Ground - works by John Lawrence	Exhibition


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BY BRENDAN WEBB ~ *Ciabatta loaves would be no match for the seductive smell of French fries.*

# Fallen Arches

**RONALD McDONALD TRUDGED SLOWLY** along the side of the road. There were no footpaths along this stretch of roadway. Just long-grass verges and open drains. He was perspiring in the hot sun, drops of sweat turning his greasepaint into rivulets of yellow and red.

His big red boots clumped loudly on the tarseal as he plodded past a roadside stall advertising fresh vegetables. He glared at the cucumbers, apples, tomatoes and crisp cauliflowers piled in large wooden bins. The owners would be vegetarians who grew organic vegetables in highly composted paddocks.

They'd probably never tasted a juicy chicken burger in their lives.

In the distance he could see the hills behind the village of Havelock North. He wondered which was the fabled Tomato Peak he'd heard about. They even name their damn hills after fresh food, he muttered to himself.

The sun beat mercilessly down on him. His fizzy red wig made his bald head itchy. As he started to scratch it the wig fell to the ground, lying there like a matted clump of road kill. An approaching black Lexus 4WD wagon swerved, two youngsters in the back pointing at his bald sweat-soaked scalp, their eyes wide and mouths gaping. He swore and jammed the wig back on.

A bridge was just up ahead. An elderly woman sitting on a bench on the bank of the stream looked up and waved. He ignored her. Under his contract he was obliged to be cheerful only to children between the ages of 4 and 12, between 10am and 6pm weekdays and 8am to 5pm at weekends.

Across the bridge was a roundabout and on the far side an old rundown house on the corner. He checked his map. That was where the long-awaited Havelock North

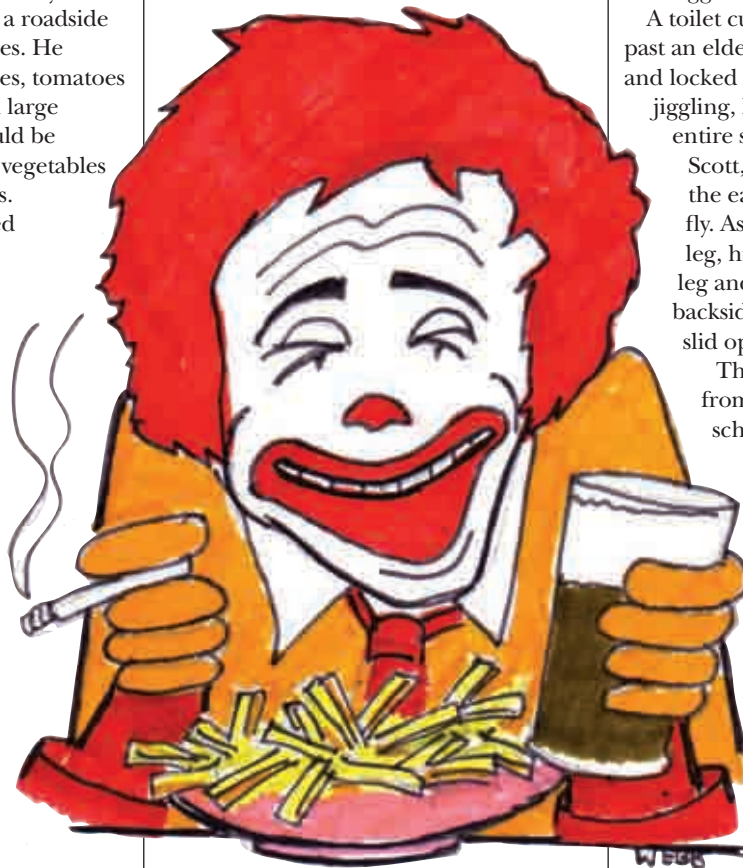
McDonald's outlet would go.

The site was perfect, he thought.

Those stuck-up hill dwellers in their BMWs and Audis would have to run the gauntlet past the golden arches that would soon frame the entrance to their precious village. Their bags of fresh fruit and vegetables, locally produced virgin olive oil, camembert cheese and thick ciabatta loaves would be no match for the seductive smell of French fries, beef burgers and chicken McNuggets.

Their kids would ensure they never made it past the drive-in entrance.

Ronald kept on walking. He was weary and desperately needed to pee. The toilet



cubicles behind the Information Centre were all occupied. He sat down near a statue of a blacksmith and looked across the street. There was a bakery and several coffee shops. The tables outside were occupied by women wearing expensive black skirts and knee-length boots. They all seemed to have blonde hair. Several were smoking. Ronald instinctively felt for the cigarettes and lighter in his clown suit but hesitated. He had been warned before by McDonald bosses after someone saw him smoking outside a bar in Hamilton.

He was also feeling hungry. The pie

shop over the street had won awards for its pies. Pastry poofs, thought Ronald. Kids wanted burgers now, the bigger the better. Then he noticed some strange pods lying on the large roundabout in the centre of the village. He guessed they held the mummified remains of the village's most famous forbears.

His bladder ached and his stomach rumbled. Havelock North, the home of pee, pie and pod, he mused. But not for long. Once those golden arches went up, he would become the village's Pied Piper, drawing those skinny cricket and hockey playing pupils from their private-school playing fields into a calorie-fest of fries, McNuggets and litres of Coke.

A toilet cubicle became free. He pushed past an elderly man on a walking frame and locked himself inside. Desperately jiggling, Ronald had to strip off his entire suit because silly old Willard Scott, who designed his image in the early 1960s, had not included a fly. As he balanced on one striped leg, his big boot got trapped in one leg and he toppled backward, his backside hitting a button. The door slid open.

There was a scream of horror from a group of uniformed young schoolgirls standing outside.

As he turned to face them, his suit around his knees, coffee-drinkers froze. So did Ronald's trademark big red grin.

It took a wad of free Happy Meal vouchers to get the community constable to let him go with a warning.

As he trudged out of the village, Ronald was more concerned with his fallen arches than his golden arches. Maybe it was time to retire, he thought. Nearly fifty years

as the Hamburger Harlequin was enough for anyone and he was fed up being blamed for child obesity, diabetes and sweatshop wages. Havelock North looked a nice place to retire. He could live in the retirement home down by the stream, across the roundabout from the golden arches.

He spotted a stone-clad Irish pub up ahead. He pulled out his fags, lit one and began puffing on it greedily. Time for a pint of Guinness and a big plate of hot chips, he thought. Now that was his idea of a happy combo. 🍷



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