



HDC NEWS



Thanks Mac!



Left to right: Group Manager Engineering Services, Adrian de Laborde, Ian McLeod and Hauraki District Chief Executive Langley Cavers.

Few understand the importance of land drainage in this district better than Ian McLeod (Mac) who retired from his role as Council's Drainage Manager after 50 years of flood fighting last month. Starting out as an engineering cadet at the Hauraki Catchment Board (a job his dad told him might last as long as five years!) Mac worked for HCB for 22 years then went to the Waikato Regional Council for 10 years, before accepting a role as Drainage Manager for Hauraki District Council, where he's been for the last 18 years.

Mac's career spanned both the response to the Paeroa floods of 1981, and the building of two of the biggest river and catchment schemes in New Zealand, the mighty Waihou River Scheme (the 'Rolls Royce' of flood protection schemes in New Zealand) and the Piako River Scheme.

Mac was fond of saying his "best work was hidden underground" but he'll be remembered by many in the district for going above and beyond.

In his farewell speech Council Chief Executive Langley Cavers said there is a long list of achievements at HDC Mac could look back on and that his ability to build strong relationships within the Region was a big factor in his success.

"At any one time you had in excess of 35 elected members to report to and take direction from and I don't recall any negative feedback from any elected member over the last 18 years."

What is land drainage?

Land drainage and flood protection schemes began with the pioneers on the Hauraki Plains, and evolved into comprehensive catchment management schemes such as the Piako and Waihou River Schemes, which have shaped our communities and allowed agriculture to prosper in areas highly affected by flooding.

Drains from here to Wellington and then some...

While Waikato Regional Council is responsible for the majority of the elaborate river flood protection schemes in Hauraki (including the Piako and Waihou River schemes), Hauraki District Council works closely with the Regional Council and also owns and maintains some of the pumps and most of the drains in the Plains area.

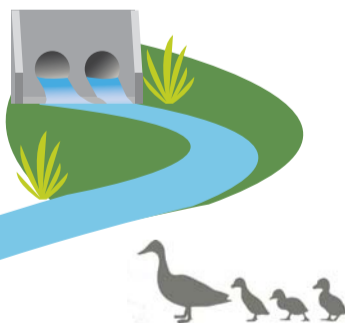
Overall we own and maintain

646 kms of drains (it's 550kms from Paeroa to Wellington)

92 floodgates and control gates

49 kms of stopbanks

4 pump stations



How does it all work?

As the majority of the Hauraki Plains used to be swampland, drains are needed to drain the excess water from the land.

Stopbanks are also used to prevent water from the sea and rivers flooding the land. Floodgates are used to manage the flow between the drains, and the rivers and the sea. At low tide, sensors automatically open these gates to allow water from the drains to flow out to sea. At high tide the gates automatically close to prevent water flowing in.

In times of high rainfall and swollen river levels, pumps are used to clear excess water more quickly and prevent the drains from overflowing on to the land.

Under the Pump

During April our pumps were working 46 times harder than usual, doing 15, 835 hours between them (that's a lot of days in lieu!). To put this in perspective, pump hours for the year to date are sitting at 40,898, which is 218% of the average annual total of 18,760 hours.

Together we are stronger

A grand plan to work together to ensure all parts of the Waikato Region are as successful as they can be, has come together this month.

The Waikato Plan has been put together over the last few years by Waikato councils, iwi/Māori, communities, businesses, and central government agencies. Its implementation will be overseen by a leadership group, which includes Hauraki District Deputy Mayor Toby Adams as Hauraki District representative.

He says the plan is all about pooling resources and working collectively to provide the best outcomes possible for everyone in the greater Waikato area "For us to grow *in* the region, we need to grow *as* a region."

Key actions in the plan include:

- Identifying what infrastructure is most urgently needed to make our communities successful and how this can be paid for
- Identifying what government services are needed in our communities, and where.
- Working closely with NZ Transport Agency on State Highway projects and investigating public transport options
- Improving freight logistics
- Supporting the implementation of a region-wide walking and cycling network
- Developing partnerships that enable iwi/Māori aspirations to be achieved
- Addressing water issues related to population growth, rural intensification and industrial growth
- Supporting the Waikato Means Business economic development strategy

The full Waikato Plan and the summary document can be viewed at <http://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/waikato-plan>



The Resilient Farmer

He's been through tough times on the land, struggled with depression, and is sharing his inspirational story in the hope it might help others.

Former South Island Farmer of the Year, Queen's Medal recipient, and motivational speaker Doug Avery is touring NZ with his wife Wendy to promote their new book "The Resilient Farmer."

An inspirational story written about his challenges with life on the land, dealing with droughts and earthquakes, his struggles with depression and developing his "go-to toolbox" towards recovery and the importance of relationships and living a happier life.

Doug will be sharing his inspirational stories at Morrinsville College on Thursday 31 August at 7pm. Tickets available at Paper Plus Morrinsville or at the door - \$20 per person.



"It's about having life go badly wrong but finding solutions that work"
Doug Avery

Local woman lives to tell tale

She was expected to die, or at best be left with severe brain damage, but local woman Robyn Napier defied the odds following an accident that left her in a coma for eight weeks in 1968, and many years later she's telling the tale.

Robyn is launching her new book at the Paeroa Library 11am Friday 18 August, and will also be talking about her experiences and how love, faith, determination and self-belief helped her achieve the seemingly impossible.

Money raised will be donated to Make a Wish Foundation, Brain Injury Society and Cancer Society.

