



# HDC NEWS



## Editorial Comment

Mary Carmine

The term "silly season", I understand, was coined by news media to refer to the time when everyone was on holiday and nothing much happened. The papers were then filled with articles about trivia. We are getting to that point in the HDC News, so I am turning my attention inward, and have decided to tell you about us.

The HDC news has now been going for nearly two and a half years - fifty-two weeks of the year, although occasionally there is no space for articles as the advertisements take the whole page. We started in response to complaints that people were not informed about what Council was doing. We have had enormous positive feedback and a little negative.

Personally I do not mind criticism. It shows people are reading the page. Most of the criticism has hinged on the page containing political statements by the "anonymous" writer. The "political statements of opinion" complained about were simply factual reports of what had been said at Council meetings or committee meetings and were not necessarily the opinion of the writer. There has never been any secret about who writes the articles. All Councillors know and it has been mentioned at a number of Council meetings, which are open to the press and public. I try hard not to put political bias in the articles, and when I do, it is usually on instructions from Council and so is carrying the Council message. On the other hand, you may see a little of me coming through in articles about waste minimisation where I usually manage an anti disposable nappy dig.

### The Process

So, how does it all come together? I type most of the articles on my computer at home and, yes I get paid for it. The puzzle for today is for you to find out how much. (Hint: Try the Council's annual report.) Some staff members also occasionally write articles on topics of interest to them. The copy is then e-mailed to John McIver at Council's Paeroa office. He then circulates the material internally for staff to check for errors and to the General Manager who checks for political correctness and political bias. At times, he deletes and alters, even pulling out cartoons. A typical conversation between him and me on the subject would go like this;

Him: You can't say that.  
Me: Why not? It's the truth.  
Him: But you can't say it in the paper.  
Me: Wimp!

An editorial meeting is held once a week between John M, Terry (from the Hauraki Herald's Paeroa office), and myself. Here we decide which articles are urgent and which can be held over for another week and whether there is enough material or whether I have to go home and start writing again. It may be noted, that the articles are written more than a week before the paper comes out, although if something urgent comes up such as Waihi's hole in the ground, late changes can be made. Sometimes, if there are a lot of ads, articles may not be published until several weeks after they are written and by that time they may be old news.

The material is then e-mailed to the people at the Hauraki Herald who do the layout and e-mail it back to us. Unfortunately, this is where the

odd glitch enters the system. Computers do funny things when transferring material. One common problem is to change large headings into small ones. If the people doing the layout do not pick this up you get an article with a large heading, containing several paragraphs of completely unrelated items, each with its own small heading. There have also been times when items have not been deleted from the file when they have been printed and so go in the paper twice. We apologise for these errors.

### The Material

So where do I get the material from to fill the page week after week? Firstly, I go to almost all the committee meetings of Council and make notes where necessary. Some articles are lifted directly from minutes or agendas. Others are in response to questions and comments from the public where things are misunderstood. From time to time, Councillors at meetings suggest articles of information that should be written. One such, that caused some negative response, I found difficult to write as I did not agree with it myself but was carrying out the instructions of Council. Then there are the publications that come to Council from National sources such as the Land Transport Safety Authority, Local Government New Zealand, the Hillary Commission etc. which contain information which can be adapted into articles.

The reason I write the page, rather than staff members, is because it was thought that I would put the information in a language people would understand - free from jargon. I hope to achieve this most of the time but when you are working in an area for some time it is easy to think everyone understands the same "language" as you do. If I slip into jargon occasionally please complain and prompt me to get back to basics.

As I mentioned before, at this time of the year material is hard to find. In past years we have run some water conservation advertisements but there is always the problem of the lag between deciding what to put in and publication. The problem is that they all start with something like, "It's been a long dry summer." By the time they get in the paper, who knows what the weather will be like, and as yet, this season, they do not seem to have been appropriate. With the winter levels of the Waihou being so low last year we were sure there were going to be water shortages on the Plains this summer. At the time of writing we have had six days fine weather, and with this heat and a warm westerly,



It's been a long dry summer

maybe next week we will have to start prompting care in water use. Otherwise, I will be scratching again for something to write about. Never mind, there are two sayings to be aware of. The first: "No news is good news", and the second, the old Chinese curse: "May you live in interesting times". So let us hope that 2002 is a year where I am always scratching for news and we live in very uninteresting times.

## PUBLIC NOTICES



### LIQUOR BANS 2002

Notice is hereby given pursuant to Section 709A Local Government Act 1974 that the consumption of alcoholic liquor, the bringing of liquor or of empty liquor containers and the possessions of liquor or empty liquor containers in the public places identified below is hereby prohibited during the periods identified below.

#### LIQUOR BANS

##### Whiritoa

All Beach and Reserve areas.  
The roads - Fishermans Bend, Kon Tiki Road, Tuna Place and Moray Place.

##### Dates and Times

#### ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND 2001

During the Anniversary weekend public holiday period being Friday 26th January 2001 to Tuesday 30th January 2001 inclusive, and the hours of 4.00pm to 4.00am daily.

#### WAITANGI (NZ) DAY 2002

During the Waitangi (NZ) day public holiday period being Tuesday 5th February 2002 to Thursday 7th February 2002 inclusive, and the hours of 4.00pm to 4.00am daily.

**PENALTIES:** ANY PERSON WHO COM- MITS AN OFFENCE AGAINST THE PROHIBI- TION MAY BE CONVICTED AND FINED UP TO \$500.00.

**POWERS OF POLICE:** ANY CONSTABLE MAY ARREST ANY PERSON ACTING OF ABOUT TO ACT CONTRARY TO THE PROVI- SIONS OF THIS PROHIBITION.

ANY CONSTABLE MAY SEARCH ANY PARCEL, PACKAGE, BAG, CASE OR OTHER CONTAINER IN POSSESSION OF ANY PERSON INTENDING OR ABOUT TO ENTER ANY PLACE DESCRIBED IN THIS PROHIBITION.

L.D. Cavers  
General Manager

## Dump Truck

A proposal to set up one of the old mine dump trucks as a tourist attraction and icon of the present day mining has moved a step closer with the recommendation to Council to grant \$10,500 towards the project from the Power New Zealand interest. The preferred site is the Waihi Gold western viewing platform area. Sponsorship to the value of \$20,500 has been obtained to set up the life-sized replica.

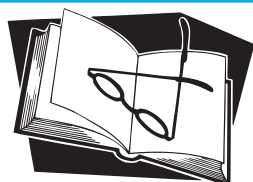
## Care on the roads

With a horrific holiday period road toll it is easy to lose sight of the fact that, over the whole year, the road toll is decreasing. The land transport safety authority puts this down to the rein- troduction of specialist highway patrols coupled with aggressive advertising. The extra patrol cars have been accredited with an overall drop in the average open road speed from 101.4km/h to 100.2km/h in the past year. In the 2000 survey 15% of drivers travelled faster than 111km/h. In the 2001 survey only 10% travelled faster than 111km/h. It appears that you are less likely to exceed the speed limit when there is an increased risk of getting caught. Speeds in urban areas have not had a corresponding drop and 15% of vehicles surveyed in the 50k zones were travelling at over 61km/h. Up to October 2001 42 pedestrians had died on New Zealand roads most of them in urban areas. So in order to make a significant dent in the road toll this area has to be improved as well.

Alcohol and driving too fast for the conditions remain the two biggest causes of open road fatal crashes. Research shows that disqualified and unlicensed drivers are much more likely to be at fault in a crash than licensed drivers. Disqualified drivers in crashes are also more than five times as likely to be affected by alcohol than drivers with a full license. Since May 1999, when the law changed, more than 32,600 vehicles driven by unlicensed and disqualified drivers have been impounded at the roadside.

## Elected Members' Diary

Meetings begin next week



## Road Closures

There are times that roads have to be closed temporarily for community events such as market days, parades, the motor- bike races and the like. On such occasions it is up to the organisers of the events to apply to Council for a temporary road closure. The process is not a simple one as all other road users have to be consulted. For this reason it is essential that your application is put in well in advance of the event. There are time frames for advertising the proposed closure and allowing for objections to be lodged. If you get your appli- cation in to Council two to three months ahead of the event this gives plenty of time for objections and the proposal to go to the appropriate ward committee and be confirmed by Council.

If approved, there will be a series of conditions included. These are basically to protect the public asset (the road) and the rest of the travelling public who may wish to use the road and may not want to be involved in the event you are organ- ising. The conditions may involve the cleaning of the road and gutters after the event, public liability insurance, the placing of the barriers and detour signs and their removal after the event. Remember, you are effectively hiring the road for a short peri- od and must leave it in the condition you found it, as with any other item of property you hire. Council represents all resi- dents and ratepayers and has a duty of ensuring the safety and convenience of those people who are not involved in the event as well as those who are.

A letter of thanks was received recently from the organisers of an event in Paeroa congratulating Council on its handling of the road closure associated with the event. Council staff try hard to be helpful on such occasions but must receive coop- eration from event organisers for road closures to run smooth- ly. As with many things the key is early forward planning.



### WHIRITOA PUBLIC MEETING

The Annual Public Meeting for the residents of Whiritoa will be held at 10:30am on Monday 28 January 2002 in the Emergency Management Centre Beach Road.

This meeting provides the opportunity for resi- dents to discuss matters of mutual interest with Council's Waihi Ward elected members.

L.D. Cavers  
General Manager



Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is given that the following special meeting will be held for the purposes of Council considera- tion of the recovery options of the area affected by the Barry Road incident.

#### SPECIAL MEETING OF COUNCIL

Thursday 17 January 2002, 10.00 am  
Council Chambers, William Street Paeroa

L D Cavers  
GENERAL MANAGER