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How lucky I've been

HDC Citizen Awards 2014 - Lawrie Smith

Ask Paeroa local Lawrie Smith anything about Captain Cook and chances are he'll know the answer. Semi-retiring at 66, he became obsessed with Cook books (not the Edmond's kind), reading more than 30 of them from cover to cover over the next few years.

"It kind of gets you," he says, "We were taught a little bit (about Cook) in school, but I didn't realise how close to us he was."

One of seven boys and three girls growing up on a Hikutaia farm, Smith's family home was just down the road and across the Waihou River from the Netherton bank Cook landed on in 1769. Scouting for timber to build English warships, Cook spread the word about Hikutaia's abundant kauri forests and by the 1800s six more English ships had ventured into the area, taking home as many logs as they could carry.

Around 150 years later, 15-year-old Smith left the family farm to work in a bake house in Paeroa.

"There was no room for me on the farm. It (baking) was the hardest work ever, turning all the dough - we made truckloads of it; we used to bake 100 dozen pies a week easily," he says.

He had his finger in other pies too. Stock car racing at Western Springs filled most of his spare time, along with logging and helping his brothers back on the farm. Eventually he left the bake house to work for Shell Oil, which had a big operation in Paeroa at that time. A promotion saw him move to Auckland during the construction of the harbour bridge and from there he went on an OE to America and an all-expenses-paid six month stint in England. Back in Auckland and at a loose end one afternoon, he went to Pukekohe to watch Paeroa West play rugby.

"I saw my wife on the sideline," he grins.

The girl who'd caught his eye was a Paeroa school teacher. New to the area she told Lawrie she didn't plan to stay for long but as it turned out she never left. Lawrie moved back home and got a job at Linn Motors, the two were married, had two daughters and have stayed put since.

"You didn't have to shift out of town - there were plenty of opportunities locally, you just had to ask and look," he says.

His interest in history has grown with the grey hair on his head. Now secretary of Paeroa and District Historical Museum, he's the driving force behind a three year project to create an enduring memorial to Captain Cook's navigation of the area. An earlier memorial erected on the corner of State Highway 2 and Hauraki Road in 1969 had disappeared a few years earlier, suspected stolen for scrap metal.

Borrowing machinery from local contractors and doing everything, from fundraising to concrete laying and planting specimen trees, themselves, Lawrie and a small committee of volunteers completed the first stage of the project for a fraction of its estimated price tag. In June this year a three tonne steel anchor, donated by the Royal New Zealand Navy, was installed at the newly prepared site, on the corner of Hauraki and Captain Cook Road, overlooking the river. Within a kilometre of Cook's actual landing site, the memorial includes a picnic area and car park. Future plans include building a walking track to the actual site, and a jetty.

In the meantime, Lawrie's busy restoring another broken memorial, lest we forget. Erected on Primrose Hill in 1903 to commemorate Trooper George Bradford, the first New Zealand soldier to die in an overseas conflict (Boer War), the Bradford Memorial was a two metre high, three dish granite fountain. Sculptured in Italy it was smashed by vandals in Paeroa in the late 1950's.

Considered too expensive to fix, parts of it ended up in a Hikutaia garden; others Lawrie tracked down to a rambling Cambridge backyard. He hopes it will eventually go back on display in a safe place, such as the Library foyer.

In his Hauraki District Citizens Award nomination form, Lawrie was described as "The keeper of our local history." Someone who can always be



Mayor John Tregidga congratulates Lawrie Smith on his tireless efforts in preserving and restoring the commemorative historic sites in the community.

found volunteering his time to community events and organisations. He also regularly plays the trombone in a local jazz band, but he's not one to blow his own trumpet.

"I didn't really think about it till I was 60, how lucky I've been, what a great life I've had. Now I just want to give something back. Something that leaves a memory in Paeroa."

Quick Tips for Smart Water Use



Make mine a jug

For cool drinking water, fill a jug and keep it in the fridge. Running water to cool it down can waste 10 litres a minute.

Mind that drip

If the toilet leaks or a tap drips, fix it right away.



For more tips, click the smart water use logo on the Council website, and look for tips in this page over the coming weeks.

smartwateruse

HDC Service timetable for 1st to 5th January 2015

	Thursday 1 January	Friday 2 January	Saturday 3 January	Sunday 4 January	Monday 5 January
All Council Offices Paeroa, Waihi and Ngatea	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	8.00am to 4.30pm
Waihi and Paeroa Library	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	10.00am to 4.30pm
Ngatea Library	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed	8.00am to 4.30pm
Swimming Pools - Paeroa - Waihi - Ngatea	Closed	11.00am to 5.00pm (public swim)	11.00am to 5.00pm (public swim)	11.00am to 5.00pm (public swim)	6.00am to 9.00am (lane swimming) 9.00am to 5:30pm (public swim)
Paeroa Transfer Station	Closed	Closed	12.30pm to 5.30pm	12.30pm to 5.30pm	12.30pm to 5.30pm
Waihi Transfer Station	Closed	Closed	10.00am to 4.00pm	10.00am to 4.00pm	10.00am to 4.00pm
Kerbside Refuse and Recycling Collection	Refuse bags only Waihi Waikino	Refuse bags and recycling Karanghake Mackaytown Paeroa	Whiritoa - extra collection Bags & glass only		Whiritoa - normal collection Refuse & recycling

PUBLIC NOTICE

FREEDOM CAMPING BYLAW

Pursuant to Section 157 of the Local Government Act 2002, notice is hereby given that the following amendments were made to the Hauraki District Council Consolidated Bylaw and were adopted by the Hauraki District Council on 17 December 2014, and will come into effect on 2 January 2015:

- Schedule 11: Restricted Sites for Freedom Camping of Part 3 (Public Safety) was amended to remove two sites from the Schedule.

The Hauraki District Council Consolidated Bylaw can be viewed at the libraries and Council offices in Ngatea, Paeroa and Waihi or on Council's website www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz.

A copy can be obtained by calling 07 862 8609 or 0800 734 834 (from within the District).

L D Cavers
 Chief Executive
 Hauraki District Council