

Revitalisation of City Centre

One of the major long-term interests of the Civic Trust, revitalisation of the central city, has clearly come into focus at the City Council. Certainly there are many other important issues faced by the City Council, such as waste disposal and treatment and disposal of sewage, but in order to finance these and other projects Christchurch must encourage stronger financial growth in the city. To do this the city needs to be an attractive place in which to live and work. In the modern world the tyranny of distance from our major markets is no longer the great impediment it once was. This has resulted in the growth of high-tech industries in Christchurch exporting to the world.

Risks from a new building boom

The joint efforts of the City Council, businesses and heritage and environmental groups have resulted in a genuine overall improvement in the inner city. One of the indicators of this is the increasing amount of investment there by investors throughout New Zealand. This may well result in another rash of high rise buildings that could result in the loss of character

through demolition of character buildings, construction of new buildings of unsympathetic design, increased shading and wind tunnelling.

Previous city planning has become ineffective since the introduction of the Resource Management Act. Town Planning is dead – so developers can largely shape the city to their needs, not the citizens needs. Christchurch can be cold enough at any time without making our streets and public open spaces more windy and shady than they are already. Not a good recipe for increasing the popularity of the central business district!

While the new city Bus Exchange is rather a tight-fit for the buses, there is no doubt that it has greatly contributed in making bus patronage increase significantly. Clearly, the lesson to be taken from this is that making public transport services more customer focussed – i.e. finding out what the public wants and then delivering it to them – produces positive results.

It will be interesting to hear what Sir Miles Warren has to say on these matters at our upcoming Annual General Meeting.

*All members and friends of the Civic Trust are
cordially invited to attend our*

Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 9 July 2002

**To be held in the The Hurst Seager Room
Christchurch Arts Centre,
corner of Hereford St & Rolleston Ave
at 6.00 p.m.**

This will be followed by an address by

**Sir Miles Warren
“Inner City Re-vitalisation”**

Light refreshments will be served from 5.30pm

Civic Trust Maintains Its Interest in our Saved Heritage

While it is now many years since the Trust fought the battle to save the old University buildings, which have now become one of the “must visit” sites for visitors to Christchurch, our interest in them has continued to the present day. We are represented on the Arts Centre Board these days by Ian Clark. We are pleased that progress continues to be made on restoring and strengthening the buildings. It is a wonderful community asset with plenty of interest for the public and business opportunities for its tenants and stallholders.

Ian Clark reports that the most significant recent event for the Arts Centre has been the completion of negotiations for the purchase of the Old Girls’ High School property in Cranmer Square. It was finally sold by the Government to the Ngai Tahu for \$500,000, who then on-sold it to the Arts Centre for \$600,000.

The Arts Centre Board is now considering how this property will be used. This is of especial interest to the Civic Trust as the site was originally given to us by the Government to maintain and administer for community purposes.

Apart from the acquisition of the Old Girl’s High School, one of the other significant events at the Arts Centre, was the opening, in November 2001, of the Rutherford’s Den visitor centre. This showcases Lord Earnest Rutherford as a great New Zealander, with particular emphasis on his Canterbury College days.

Other matters of importance for the Arts Centre are the continuing work to fire protect the whole site. Of the 18 buildings, only three have yet to be done. So good progress has been made.

The employment of a full-time stone mason is another milestone event. Already his craftsmanship can be seen around the site. Also, the programme of passive washing of the limestone has continued to good effect.

Last year a competition was held for a design for a covering over the weekend market area. Unfortunately, the cost of the winning entry was more that the Trust could meet, so some alternatives will be examined.

Work has started on the conservation plan for the Old Girls’ High School site and one is being prepared for the Great Hall stained glass window.

The City is fortunate to have retained these heritage buildings through the early efforts of the Civic Trust and also the dedicated and enthusiastic work of the many people engaged in their conservation and administration. The City Council also has made a valuable contribution.

Heritage Trust Report

Ian Clark also represents the Civic Trust on the Christchurch Heritage Trust who have successfully saved the old Lyttelton Times building in Cathedral Square and the old Christchurch Star building, immediately behind it in Gloucester Street.

After prolonged and difficult negotiations the properties were bought from the previous owners who were intent on demolishing both, plus the neighbouring Warner’s Hotel – which is also now being restored by a new owner.

It is pleasing to report that the building in Cathedral Square – now a Back Packers’ Hostel, is proving to be a thriving business returning a significant rental to the Heritage Trust. Part of the ground floor has been subleased to the Tandoori Palace restaurant, while of the five shops on Gloucester Street, three are currently let.

The whole exercise has been a great success and shows that heritage buildings can be saved from destruction and new economic uses found. It just requires dedication, some nerve and at times a sympathetic banker.

Let us hope others rise to the challenge to preserve the Fleming and McKellar homes on Park Terrace – the old Wesley Lodge retirement home.

Where are the civic benefactors of earlier times?

Ian Clark

Nurses' Memorial Chapel Trust Report

As the Christchurch Civic Trust Representative, I report the following items of interest: –

The Christchurch City Council have done an outstanding job in maintaining the beautiful garden around the chapel.

Volunteers have created a peaceful atmosphere inside, respected by the many who visit to pray or attend weddings, or simply to remember that September 12, 2001 marked one hundred years since nurses were registered in New Zealand.

The new memorial stained glass windows, designed by Stephen Balenger-Taylor to commemorate all army nurses, will be completed for ANZAC day 2003.

The Nurses' Memorial Chapel Trust is requesting, through the City Council and the Canterbury District Health Board, that the land around the Nurses' Chapel be given Reserve status. It is also considered that the Nurses' Hostel must be retained as part of Christchurch's cultural and historic heritage, complementing the Chapel.

Building for the redevelopment of the Women's Hospital will start towards the end of 2002. The Nurses' Memorial Chapel Trust will closely monitor this development..

Visitors are invited to view the new video of the Chapel. The Chapel is included in the New Zealand Historic Places Trust on-line register : –

www.historic.org.nz/register.html.

Jennifer Barrer

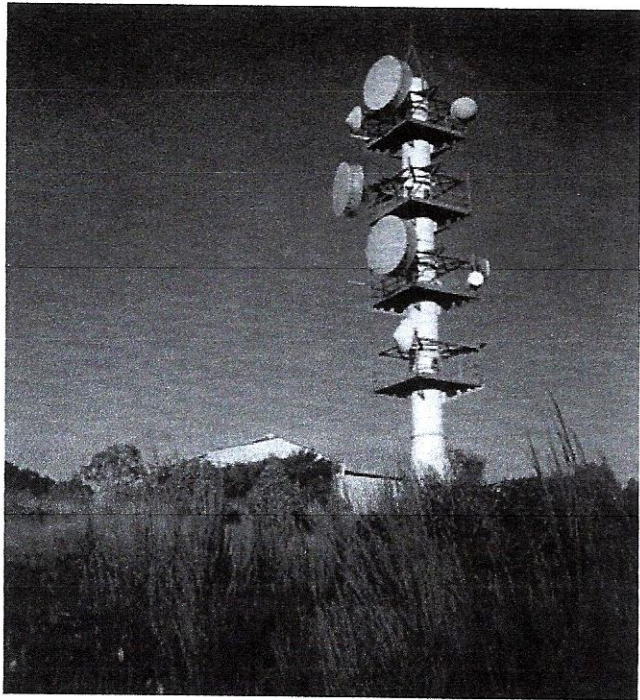
Electromagnetic Radiation – Hazardous to your health?

The universality of electromagnetic radiation health problems for human populations is backed by numerous scientific authorities who have found neural DNA and immune system effects from microwaves and magnetic fields.

Systematically, since 1985, councils and governments have failed to listen to the point where we are now immersed in an electronic soup. Ordinary people are not being listened to – for political and commercial reasons their interests are put aside – a perversion of democracy.

My enquiries have shown that within 17 households in an area 300 metres from Telecom's Cashmere Microwave Tower (see photo), there have been the following health problems: –

- Two brain tumours
- Three inner ear disturbances.
- Three cancers
- Three blood disorders.
- Three coinciding skin abnormalities.
- Three cardioid irregularities.



The Cashmere Microwave Tower within 100 metres of residence.

People in close proximity to electromagnetic radiation are an endangered group. A great many studies exist which attest to the truth of this. The future health of a great many people is involved

Jennifer Barrer.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Board Members to retire.

Marette Taylor, Civic Trust representative on the Port Hills Park Trust Board, is not standing for re-election at the AGM. At our December meeting, Marette was presented with a certificate in recognition of her outstanding achievement. Firstly, for initiating plans for securing Bowenvale Reserve Land and Mt Vernon Park. Second, for representing the Civic Trust on the Port Hills Park Trust Board since its inception.

Adrienne Boniface, who joined the Board of the Civic Trust when Dr Helen Hervey's Environmental Vanguard Organisation (EnVO) became incorporated into the Civic Trust, is also to retire. Adrienne has been a most reliable and supportive member of the Trust Board.

Prue Wignall, our worthy, hard-working Treasurer over recent years, is not seeking re-election.

Jennifer Barrer, a more recent Board member, is also not seeking re-election. Jennifer has represented the Civic Trust on the Nurses' Memorial Chapel Trust.

It is unfortunate that so many valuable, hard-working women members are to retire at one time. In all cases the retirements have been tendered and received with regret. The Board thanks all of them and will formally do so at the Annual General Meeting.

Board Members 2001 – 2002

Bruce Alexander

Joe Ashworth

Jennifer Barrer *Nurse's Chapel*

Norman Barrett

Adrienne Boniface

Graeme Breach

Lindsay Carswell, *Secretary*, 389 4819

Ian Clark, *Deputy Chairman*, 351 9928

Arts Centre, Heritage Trust 351 5528 FAX

Anne Dingwall, *Friends of Hagley Park*

Peter Dyhrberg, *Chairman*, 366 3372 (Work)
366 3994 (Home)

Ron Fussell, *Deputy Chair*, 3642908 (Work)
358 2772 (Home)

Val Heinz, *Sydenham Heritage Trust*

Joanna Mackenzie

Marette Taylor

David Thornley, *Heritage Trust Advisory*

Prue Wignall, *Treasurer*, 355 9775 (Work)
355 0554 (Home)
355 0551 (FAX)

THE CHRISTCHURCH CIVIC TRUST INC.

P.O. Box 1927, Christchurch, New Zealand

The views expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the Christchurch Civic Trust Inc.