



Newsletter

MAY 2010

MT VERNON PARK COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

On Saturday 6 March, the Port Hills Park Trust unveiled a commemorative plaque at the reception area of Mt Vernon Park. The occasion was one to reflect and celebrate 25 years of the ownership of Mt Vernon Park as a recreational amenity for the citizens of Christchurch.

The speakers at the function included Oscar Alpers (chairman of the Port Hills Park Trust Board), John Brandts -Geisen (former chairman of the Civic Trust 1985 -1987), Mayor Parker and Murette Taylor, who gave the main address. Murette, a former Heathcote County councillor who was involved with an early initiative to to acquire Mt Vernon Park from the Bowenvale Farming Co, spoke of how, in 1983, she had her attention drawn to Mt Vernon on the Port Hills as a potential reserve by John Christensen, the then Heathcote County Council engineer.

She spoke of how the move to acquire Mt Vernon began at a small meeting held on 13 December 1983 at the Huntsbury Community Centre, when it was decided that Bruce Alexander and a sub - committee should approach the Civic Trust and ask it to consider purchasing the Mt Vernon block of land.

In April 1984 the Christchurch Civic Trust signed an agreement to purchase the 236 ha Mt Vernon block for \$380,000 and immediately launched a campaign to raise funds.

Murette paid tribute to the many people who gave their support to the appeal for funds between 1984 and 1987 that enabled the Civic Trust to purchase Mt Vernon Park and eventually pass it into the care of the Port Hills Park Trust Board.

In her concluding remarks Murette said, *"we are so lucky to be able to say as we look up to the hills that we had a part in protecting this heritage to pass on to our future citizens"*.

The inscription on the commemorative plaque reads:

'This park exists because of the courage shown by the Christchurch Civic Trust in supporting the vision of a small group of people to preserve these hills for public enjoyment.'

The Trust purchased 236 ha in 1983 and the "appeal of the Decade for the Park" began in 1984. Its success was made possible by significant financial contributions from Canterbury Savings Bank and the support of the Heathcote County Council, Canterbury United Council and the generosity of businesses, clubs, schools and individuals. All those people and organisations who contributed towards the purchase of the park are remembered with gratitude'.



Murette Taylor unveiling the commemorative plaque

Where is Mt Vernon Park?

Mt Vernon Park is located on the Port Hills and can be accessed off The Crescent at the end of Hillsborough Tce.



HOSPITAL LAND EXCHANGE PROPOSAL

As many Civic Trust members will know, Christchurch Hospital has initiated a 25 – 50 year redevelopment plan.

In order that the first two stages of this can be facilitated, it has been suggested that an exchange of land occur between the Canterbury District Health Board (CDHB) and Christchurch City Council (CCC).

What is proposed is that a 6.550 m area of Hagley Park (marked A on the above aerial view), currently a carpark owned by CCC, be exchanged with an area of land of similar size located between the Hospital's current Riverside block and the Avon River (B). If the land exchange being considered by CCC and the CDHB is to proceed, two local acts of parliament will need to be amended.

The CCC first declared its intention to consider the land exchange proposal at a meeting held on 26 November 2009, but this approval was reserved subject to costs and the outcome of a consultation process.

On 10 December CCC decided to canvass the views of users and coordinate a public hearing to be held jointly with the CDHB in order to receive any submissions against the proposal.

This joint hearing will involve a panel of 10 made up of 5 City councillors and 5 representatives from the CDHB.

The proposed exchange of land can only come into effect if the act which controls and protects the land of Hagley Park, the CCC (Reserves) Empowering Act 1971, is amended.

It will also require an amendment of the Hospital Act (1887), which controls and protects Hospital Board land.

The Hospital act is also governed by the Ngai Tahu Settlement Act (1998), which provides for rights of first refusal to be granted to Ngai Tahu in the event land is disposed of.

The area of Hospital land being considered for exchange was initially set aside in 1887, to be held in trust for the purpose of *'pleasure gardens and recreation grounds for the use of inmates of Christchurch Hospital'*.

The CCC land, which is part of Hagley Park, was formerly leased to the CDHB and used for several decades for the recreation benefit of hospital staff, prior to becoming a carpark. It has 26 trees growing on it, including some substantial oaks. If the land swap proceeds, all of these with the exception of one, which is to be relocated, will be removed.

If amendments to the respective acts are enacted, it will effectively mean that CDHB land will become reserve and part of Hagley Park, and CCC land in Hagley Park will be made available to the CDHB for its future plans. But before such an exchange can occur, a Bill will have to be promoted and once drafted will need to be publicly notified. However, it could be some time before any such draft Bill is accepted by the Clerk of House of Representatives. If it succeeds, the Bill will then be introduced to the House; the whole process involved could take upwards of 18 months.

If a land exchange is successful, apart from the loss of trees, the other major casualty will be the distinctive Hagley Nurses Hostel, built in the Spanish Mission style. The hostel, which has stood on Riccarton Ave since 1931, is a Group 3 heritage building in the Christchurch City Plan.

Its demolition is deemed to be necessary, according to the CDHB, to enable Phases 1 & 2 of its redevelopment plan to succeed.

If the Hagley Nurses Hostel is to be sacrificed in this scheme, what then of the Nurses Chapel?

The Civic Trust has been advised by the CDHB that this is not in any way likely to be threatened by their current plans and they are keen that ownership of the chapel and site pass to CCC.

Civic Trust members need to be aware that if they want to make a submission on the land exchange proposal, this has to be made before the closing date of **4 May 2010**.

New Members

The Civic Trust welcomes the following new members: Peter Tuffley, Chris Marshall, Lesley and Mark Wyles, John and Ruth Dunne, Eric and Beverly Wright, Barbara and Finlay Mackenzie, Valerie and Ian Campbell, Peter Oliver, Bruce Harding, Smith Developments Ltd, Murray and Philippa Gordon, Rosalie Sterrit, M Draper, Caroline Read, Moya Rigby, and Graeme Ford.

Winter Lecture Series

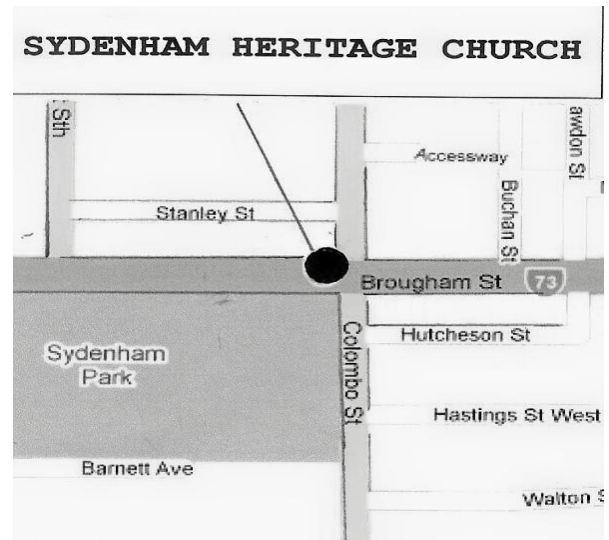
A new series of lunchtime public lectures will begin in June. It should be noted that this series will be held in the third week of each month.

Speakers and topics are yet to have been confirmed, but when they have, these will be communicated to members well in advance.

Lecture I in the series will be on 19 June 12.30 - 1.30pm at the Fendalton Service Centre, cnr of Jeffrey's and Clyde Rds.

Annual General Meeting Speaker

The guest speaker at the Civic Trust AGM will be Dr Ian Lochhead, associate professor in art history at the University of Canterbury, who will talk about the renowned colonial architect, B.W. Mountfort. [1825 - 1898] and Gothic Revival architecture in Canterbury.



Annual General Meeting Venue

The venue for the AGM this year will be the Sydenham Heritage Church, which is located on the corner of Colombo and Brougham Sts, Sydenham, opposite Sydenham Park.

Members are advised that some parking is available at the rear of the church or on Brougham or Stanley Streets.

CIVIC TRUST AWARDS 2010

Members are invited to nominate recent, outstanding heritage and environmental projects to be considered for an award later this year by the Civic Trust.

Nominations close on 31 July 2010
Please address your nominations to:

Civic Trust Awards 2010,
P.O.Box 1927 Christchurch 8140.

THE CHRISTCHURCH CIVIC TRUST EVENTS CALENDAR

May	04	Trust Board Meeting
May	06	Annual General Meeting
June	01	Trust Board Meeting
	18	Winter Lecture series – Lecture I
July	06	Trust Board Meeting
	16	Winter Lecture series – Lecture II

The Trust Board

Chairman: Tim Hogan

Secretary: Lindsay Carswell **Treasurer:** Bruce Alexander

Cory Bedford, Ian Clark, Anne Dingwall, Ronald Fussell, Joanna Mackenzie,
Neil Roberts, Marette Taylor, David Thornley, Prue Wignall

Contacts: The Secretary 389 4819

The Chairman 366 3322

The Christchurch Civic Trust P.O.Box 1927 Christchurch 8041

Members and intending members are invited to attend the

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

On Thursday, 6 May at 5.30 pm

At

Sydenham Heritage Church,

Cnr Colombo and Brougham Sts, Sydenham.



Guest speaker: Dr Ian Lochhead.

who will talk on
B.W.Mountfort

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