

## IC Auckland Newsletter July 2014

Kia ora ano, and welcome to our third newsletter for 2014!



**This Carl Sandburgh quote, painted by Peter Tunney in 2005, is the inspiration for this newsletter. Winter is a great time for reflecting on what's working well and thinking about where there might be opportunities for change and action.**

Often in community-led development, one thing tends to lead to another and sharing your ideas and dreams with other people helps to lay the foundations for something to happen, maybe as soon as spring! That's how many of the projects – a skate park, a mural, a celebration and a purpose built 'community hub' featured in this edition began. All the stories we feature are written by those involved and there are links included for you to find out more directly from them. Scroll down to find out more ☺.

If you would like to share what locally-led change you and your community are up to, please let me know by email and we'll happily run an article or advertise your event: [Denise.Bijoux@inspiringcommunities.org.nz](mailto:Denise.Bijoux@inspiringcommunities.org.nz).

*Happy Winter!*  
*Denise.*

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## 1. Hope and action in Randwick Park.



**Last Wednesday night, while I was walking back through the Skate Park after visiting a neighbour, I stopped to chat with a few of the youth who were skating and joking around. They asked many questions about the amazing new developments that's happening with the Skate Park. As we stood surrounded by piles of dirt, bulldozer tracks, deep holes for drainage pipes and fenced areas they wanted to know when the new Skate Park was going to be finished.**

After chatting, laughing and joking, I looked up and saw in the near distance, a couple that were physically engaged in heavy petting. The youth turned and followed my eyes to see where I was looking, and they began to make comments to me, "*Ha, they been doing that for ages, they should hurry up and get a room.*" We all laughed and giggled together. However, five minutes later, one of the young people stood up on the ledge, turned towards the lovers and yelled at the top of her voice, "*Go get a room!*"

The rest of us just ignored what was said, but the young man who was engaged in the petting, untangled himself from his girlfriend and briskly walked towards us. The kids knew straightaway that he was angry and by his body language, they knew they were in trouble. The boys turned and ran, scattering themselves across the field. The young girls grabbed my hand, hiding behind me. The angry lover walked straight toward me, eyes glaring, voice muttering. I nervously stepped towards him to protect the girls behind me, while quickly praying that we would all be safe.

Feeling a little bit nervous, I looked at the young adult, meeting his eyes and said gently, "Bro, are you alright?" I just hoped I'd disguised my nervousness in a compassionate voice.

He looked at me, anger in his eyes, then he looked at the girls with hate deeply tattooed on his face, and he shouted "*F\_\_ 'n little sh\_ts.*"

This time, I delicately but firmly challenged him with, "Bro are you alright?"

He looked at me again, mumbled something, turned and left, strolling back to his girlfriend.

The girls let go of my hand and the boys ran back, intuitively asking with smiles on their faces, "*Dave, would you have smashed him if he had hit you?*"

"No," I replied, "*I would have just laughed.*" But inside I was scared. "*Argh...we would have had your back Dave, if he did.*" I laughed to myself, considering how far the boys had run away from me.

I hate violence. As I thought about the young guy that had approached us who looked about 18 yrs old, and having seen young people angry, I am well aware of how much damage they can do when not in control of their mind or emotions. Seriously, I felt that I needed to change my undies.

This incident reminds me again that this community is full of extremes – violent and compassionate, isolated and integrated, desperate and yet hopeful.

Half an hour after being at the Skate Park, I found myself sitting in a meeting with local adults discussing how we could start a new Trust to manage and look after the Developments in our Park. The development (\$5 million worth that includes new sports fields tennis and basketball courts, a redeveloped Skate Park, Volleyball Courts, BBQs for families and a new Community/Sports Building, plus a new Early Childcare Centre) is planned to be completed by the end of 2015. The local Randwick Park Residents' Association has worked hard with the Manurewa Board, over a 3 year period, to bring this development and partnership together.

This is a group of people that have a sense of pride and hope for the land we live on, and for our neighbourhood. These are good people; all have lived in Randwick for more than 20 years. They have seen our neighbourhood change from a farm paddock into houses and roads, but they have also seen the daily pain that is sometimes expressed in crime and violence, and they are saddened; They see the need for hope – the hope expressed in a taonga (Maori word for gift and/or treasure). These are local people prepared to take ownership and governance of local assets; creating a dream of a new neighbourhood and of new possibilities.

For this dream to occur, there will need to be a formal partnership with the Auckland Council and the Manurewa Local Board. This will mean many future meetings and discussions, and if this is possible, then it could cultivate more opportunities to utilise the social enterprise skills that are in this neighbourhood. Dreams are the potential of what could be, and they are only really limited by our mindset.

In some ways this is how I see the neighbourhood. In it there is much to celebrate, there is much that is glory, but at the same time there is a lot that is shameful. Perhaps we can only really understand a neighbourhood when we see the enchanting beauty standing side by side with the shame that is carried in poverty. It seems, that to see the extreme of the beauty, one must also experience the extreme of the poverty, as if the two are as one; paradoxes entwined, and in this in-between place, we find life, a community, neighbours and friends. We call this place home - Randwick Park, Manurewa.

**Dave Tims**

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**\*Note.** This article was written in 2013. As the picture shows, since then a new skate park has opened. It's a brilliant asset to the community and a great partnership story with Manurewa Local Board.

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## 2. Butterflies emerge from shadows in Eden Terrace



**Brightening up a gloomy tunnel and enormous grey wall in Central Auckland will hopefully give the Eden Terrace community a sense of pride and security.**

That's what local artist Kate Millington expects after she paints enormous butterflies on the 300-sqm wall and in the underpass beneath the Dominion flyover this summer.

For years, Kate avoided going through the tunnel. "It was only because of the community garden on Bright St that I started venturing through there again, coming home from work, to see the colours. For a pedestrian, particularly a woman walking on her own, the tunnel is poorly lit and at times frightening."

Kate's butterflies, formed from kowhai flowers and seed pods, reflect the kowhai trees growing across the road. The garden is home to dozens of swan plants and a sheltered oasis to monarch butterflies all year round.

Kate, who has a Master's in fine arts in print-making from Auckland's Elam Art School, has always been fascinated by butterflies. She envisages a feeling of community ownership, which will hopefully replace the ominous space that's often covered with graffiti and littered with broken bottles and rubbish. "If it looks better, people will use it more, and there's safety in numbers," adds Kate.

The design was chosen from a selection of four through a process of online voting. Flyers were distributed locally to encourage neighbours to take part. This process also sparked local interest in re-vegetating the small reserve above the tunnel with natives, including kowhai trees and native climbers, and upgrading the neglected steps on either side of the wall.

Organisers are now working closely with Auckland Council and Eden-Albert Local Board to ensure all goes to plan and are seeking sponsors for the project. A street party is also planned. To get involved please contact [thewallonthebrightside@gmail.co.nz](mailto:thewallonthebrightside@gmail.co.nz) or go to the Facebook page: TheWallontheBrightside <https://www.facebook.com/pages/The-Wall-on-the-Bright-side/212064165604743>

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### 3. Holi Day in Sandringham



**Sandringham celebrated its first 'Festival of Colours' or 'Holi' festival on Sunday the 23<sup>rd</sup> of March 2014. The event was managed by the Sandringham business owners with economic development funding from the Albert-Eden Local Board.**

Sandringham has seen a number of local enterprises start up over the past few year. These include a local Spice Tour and the monthly Farmers Market and this idea came about over a catch-up with the business owners who, among other things, were wanting to hold a cultural event representing the diversity in Sandringham. As Sandringham has a significant number of Indian business owners and community living in the local area, it was decided to trial out Holi as the first organised cultural event in the Sandringham business area.

In India, Holi not only signifies spring it also signifies new beginnings and friendships. It is a celebration in which people play with colour and water by chasing and throwing it at each other. In Sandringham, the festival was celebrated by a diverse range of locals and their families who had fun connecting with one another at the Sandringham Reserve.

The organisation and planning was managed by the Business Association Chair and a few migrant business owners who had the knowledge of the festival but hadn't played or participated in the festival themselves for a few years due to their busy businesses. Working together with community development team in Auckland Council and WaterCare, the event was a huge learning curve for the business owners and they rose to the challenge with great success.

This event has been unique as it's been one of the first initiatives managed by the local migrant businesses within the Sandringham Business Association and has been a great neighbourhood development activity. Shalini, a Sandringham resident, expressed her keenness in celebrating the event annually in Sandringham. She mentioned that the suburb mostly had young families who find it difficult to travel to south or west Auckland to celebrate the event. A local Holi event was something she and her friends had been waiting for and thoroughly enjoyed the time they had.

For more information on Holi, Contact Gaurang Ambani at Mumbai Chaat in Sandringham or Sunita Kashyap <[Sunita.Kashyap@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz](mailto:Sunita.Kashyap@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz)>. The next event planned with the business owners is the Diwali festival in October-November alongside the Sandringham Spring Festival.

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#### 4. Community hubs in Massey.



**In early 2007 Massey Matters began exploring the idea of establishing community hubs in schools. Massey Matters already had established long term relationships with key stakeholders and partners working in Massey and, by 2008, West Harbour School had been identified as the ideal location for a purpose built hub, particularly as there was a lack of bumping spaces since the community house had moved.**

While the benefits of having a local hub are well known in terms of better service provision and increased social connections, developing this idea has taken some doing. Commitment, the ability to be flexible and working out how to involve local people in creating the kind of hub they want and need have all been key ingredients in the mix.

In terms of commitment and flexibility, Massey Matters and the Principal of West Harbour School, Vicki Hitchcock, started planning with Jenny Tanner, from the then Waitakere City Council, to advocate and help support the funding of a family liaison worker. Building on this, they have worked together to grow this by learning from and teaching with both those from within the community and from further away. For example, local families as well as Victory Village in Nelson, Great Start in Taita and a community-led development approach have all informed the process in different ways.

Just as important has been local on-the-ground experience as decommissioned dental clinics became available. Based on experience at West Harbour School, Massey Matters began conversations in 2012 with Colwill and Royal Road schools around using the clinics to provide services and opportunities for local to connect and learn. The commitment of senior management and Principals as well as the wider local communities has been key. All of this, in turn, has informed the progress of the purpose built hub at West Harbour School.

Through all of this practice, taking a neighbourhood-led approach emerged as critical and in early February 2014 twelve local women indicated their interest in being involved in the development process. Many had already been attending or running sessions in the Royal Road dental Hub and were keen to learn more so a course was devised. The course was eight weeks long with a graduation celebration on the ninth week at PINS Westgate.

The idea of the course was an innovation that arose out of the collective experience over previous years. Led by Sam Farquhar, Community Broker for Massey Matters, and based at West Harbour School, the course consisted of learning more about the communities of Massey and West Harbour and developing skills in asset mapping, facilitating as well as growing self-esteem and confidence, identifying local issues and co-creating local solutions. The climax was to recognise a skill or knowledge in themselves and to share that in a community session delivered by them! Each of the women have found new strengths throughout the course and Now a small group of the women are responsible for the running of the west Harbour dental hub twice a week, with four others going into employment.

The innovation here has been in keeping the dream alive over many years and nurturing it in the ways that best fit the energy in the local community. There have been massive gains and changes on personal and collective levels as part of the journey and, soon, West Harbour School will have a purpose built community 'super hub' on the school grounds! This has been planned for through the Henderson Massey Local Board and is being developed in a three way partnership – Council, Board of Trustees and West Harbour community (currently represented through Massey Matters) to compliment current hubs and provide more space for activities and organisations to work and connect out of.

What happens next will be significantly influenced by those involved, so if you are keen to be involved, want to meet our new hub leaders or are interested in stopping by to learn more, come and join us for a cuppa and a chat: Royal Road Hub at Royal Road School is open Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-11am and West Harbour Hub at West harbour school is open

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.am-11.30 and Colwill 8.30-3pm Monday to Friday and Lincoln heights Monday, Wednesday and Friday 9-11am.

Contact Sam for more info at [sam.farguhar@masseymatters.org.nz](mailto:sam.farguhar@masseymatters.org.nz) or 02182631

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## Opportunities coming up soon!

### **New Awards: The Billies – entries close Monday 11 August.**

There is no shortage of great research and learning being done by Tangata Whenua, community and voluntary organisation throughout Aotearoa. But rarely do we stop to acknowledge this.

To rectify this, The Billies Award will recognise organisations doing their own great research or learning. It's new award named in honour of community hero Billie Foreman (1921-2012).

Along with well-deserved kudos, the winning entry will receive a \$2000 prize!

Entering The Billies is simple: upload a short story, preferably by video, about some learning, improvement or a research project your organisation has undertaken in the last three years. We want to hear how you've taken a 'strengths-based' approach.

A virtual award ceremony will be held in September: everyone working in communities is invited to celebrate the short-listed entries.

Share how you learn from strengths: [www.communityresearch.org.nz/the-billies](http://www.communityresearch.org.nz/the-billies)

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### **Jim Diers coming back in October**

Since his first visit in 2012, Jim has worked with over 5000 people in 23 Kiwi communities to share his experience of leading and supporting locally-led change efforts. And in Auckland alone, Jim has worked with over 2000 people in 24 communities, groups and organisations!

Jim inspires and motivates using practical examples and stories of locally-led action from around the world. His mantras of 'don't do for communities what they can do for themselves', 'why have a meeting when you can have a party,' and 'create bumping spaces to encourage connections between local people,' are now world famous throughout Aotearoa.

Jim and the Inspiring Communities team can help share and build skills and ideas that will help local people get the ball rolling with what they want to happen in their neighbourhood. If you want to find out how Jim can work with you and your community, please email Denise: [Denise.Bijoux@inspiringcommunities.org.nz](mailto:Denise.Bijoux@inspiringcommunities.org.nz).

### **Resilience, Change and the Third Sector: 12<sup>th</sup> Biennial Australian and New Zealand Third Sector Research Conference, 18-20 November 2014, Otautahi / Christchurch, Aotearoa, New Zealand.**

**Margaret Wheatley** is to be a key note speaker at this conference! And late papers are still being accepted... See more at <http://www.anztsr.org.au/conferences.html>

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(ENDS)