

CHATTERS

A publication of Crossroads Clubhouse

MARCH 2017



Editor's Blab



The way things are going Auckland (along with other regions) might have to change the unofficial start of summer from Labour Day-Guy Fawkes Day to Waitangi Day. Water temperatures at beaches around the country were measured in late January to be anything from two to three and a half degrees centigrade below normal for the time of year. This is fine for us non-sun worshippers and confirmed pale faces—Hope the rest of you have been able to make do with Vitamin D supplements.

Speaking of Waitangi Day, the celebrations at Hoani Waititi Marae organised by Waipareira iwi authority for urban Maori in West Auckland showcased a number of shining performances by young singers just emerging and about to make their mark.

The number of identifiably different ethnicities spoke of something broader than the bicultural society originally envisaged—to be expected on an urban marae and making for a more cosmopolitan experience. The Maori greeting was reserved for the p.m.'s arrival. A total of two police officers patrolled around the crowd of thousands and seemed to be enjoying the day as much as anyone else. Imagine getting paid for this? All in all, it's a sign of an enviably peaceful, easy feeling—which might be this country's greatest export if it can ever be bottled. —Gaz, editorial staff

Some of our pool of contributors:



The opinions expressed in *Chatters* are not necessarily those of Crossroads Clubhouse, Arahura Trust or Auckland District Health Board. We welcome your feedback and are happy to pass this on to the contributors.

Director's Report

The past few months have seen several events happen for Crossroads. We had the Arahura Founders Day on the 10th February at Long Bay. A few people



went for a swim, and a delicious lunch was had by all. It was a fantastic day out. By the time we go to publication, we would also have set up our stall and attended the Healthy Lifestyle Expo at Western Spring Gardens Hall on March 10th. We also had our latest catering which we did for CORT as part of our fundraising.

There have been a few changes to our staffing team over the past few months. Nadia has been away, and Anson joined

our team for a little while before leaving. For the past month, we have had Ross helping us out and he has been doing a fantastic job! We are currently advertising for another full time staff member to come on board which is quite exciting so come on down in the near future to meet him or her!

A team of us at Crossroads have signed up to the Auckland Walk Challenge which runs through the month of March. At the time of publication we are currently placed at 180th out of 1356 workplace teams across Auckland. This will be a part of our Heartbeat Challenge, which officially takes place 10:30am on Tuesday mornings, although we walk whenever and wherever we can. We are also working on our Health and Nutrition Policy on Wednesday afternoons to help improve our health and wellbeing.

February also saw a fantastic Twilight Dinner with Lasagna and bingo at Clubhouse. It was a night filled with laughter, and where Rachael was frequently the bingo champion (until the next time!)

We are looking forward to the next few months, so pop in and say hi—Vicki



Newsflash



Happenings at our Clubhouse and upcoming events

* Ross is a new staff member who started in February and is helping us out on a casual basis, but is finding plenty of work as he needs it in between other gigs. Welcome!



* At this end of the world we are rather starved of news of other Clubhouses around the world (apart from that coming out of Fountain House and the Harlem Clubhouse in New York City). Crossroads Clubhouse here in Grey Lynn, an inner suburb of Auckland, is one of only two in New Zealand, the other being at the far end of the country in Dunedin 1,000 kilometres away. So please let us know how you're getting along if you're reading this from other parts of the globe.

- * Our employment meetings are continuing to happen on Friday mornings at 11am
- * We had another round of catering for CORT on the 03rd March
- * Clubhouse set up a stall at the Health Lifestyles Expo held at Western Springs Garden Hall on the 10/03/17.

* HEALTH AND NUTRITION POLICY — It's time to formulate a new Health & Nutrition policy involving as many minds as possible coming together. Please come and add any thoughts you have around this to our meeting this Wednesday at 2:30pm. The more input we receive from you, the easier it will be to produce a great policy.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Saying hi to our recent arrivals, including:

JOSH & RICHARD — These young fellas, joining not long before



Xmas, have proven very willing helpers around our Club-house in keeping it clean and liveable. At the time of writing Josh had just started a course 3 days a week at MIT so Richard is coming in to Crossroads on his own for

those 3 days. Josh is due to gain a qualification in construction, and is guaranteed a job at the end of it. Not many people can say that these days—So, good luck, Josh, with doing your bit in helping to fill that 20,000 deficit of houses needed in Auckland alone!

CHARLES C — Another new member is Charles, who has proven to be very computer savvy as well as having an interest in our fish. Welcome Charles.

“ANSON” — Special mention should be made of a staff member who impressed as a friendly face in the short time he was here, three weeks or so. As he was leaving, Anson was heard to say, “I came, I saw, I conked-out.” As we go to press we are awaiting news of his ongoing career.

ROSS : *not his first name*

We welcome Ross (his middle name) back after a long absence. He worked for Arahura residential but left at the end of 1999 to go to music school in Nelson.

A year's course in serious guitar-playing fitted him to return to home town Kaiaua, in the Waikato near the Miranda Hot Springs—where he worked for the “music in schools” program for primary students. He visited schools on the Hauraki Plains: Parawai (Thames), Waitakaruru, Turua... and followed up with outdoor education, still based in Kaiaua with students coming to him from Takapuna, Te Kauwhata, Pukekohe, for training in mountain biking, high ropes, kayaking. Luckily, there were not many serious injuries involved.

Next came tour coach driving, taking groups around New Zealand. This was an old occupation that Ross went back to. He had previously driven tour groups in Russia, Scandinavia, and other parts of Europe including the former Yugoslavia—where business was halted abruptly because of the horrendously destructive civil war.

An inveterate traveller, after all this, Ross was with a company manufacturing

and installing solar hot-water systems, as well as performing online monitoring of these systems. He was based in Albany for this, and this time all the travelling was within New Zealand, as far afield as Bluff and Paihia.

After six years at this former gig (and another two years not working), Ross finds himself back here under the aegis of Arahura Trust as a temporary Clubhouse facilitator — and will see how it goes. He looks forward to meeting a whole new set of faces here — virtually a whole new generation of members — and is well on the way to doing so already. From the old days he brings training as a counsellor and experience with the esteemed Lifeline service.



TAMARA interviewed

by Sam and Rach



Hi Tamara! You've been here quite a while now, but we haven't been formally introduced. Can you please answer the following questions for the folks out in Chattersland?

Sure, I'd love to.

When a full time position became available, what made you choose to stay?

I thoroughly enjoyed my time at Clubhouse, so I jumped at the chance to stay.

What do you do in your spare time?

I enjoy reading in my spare moments.

Do you have any family?

Yes I have a beautiful family.

Do you have any pets?

Yes I have a cat, who wears a Santa Suit at Christmas.

What is your favourite food?

I love food entirely too much to pick one favourite, I'm always eating! But have a particular liking of sweets.

What is your favourite music?

I have a wide variety of music I like, I can happily listen to anything from Meatloaf, John Mellencamp and The Eagles to the latest releases on the radio.

What is your favourite holiday spot?

Matauri Bay.

What is your favourite T.V. show?

I have several, *Agatha Christie: Poirot*, *Game of Thrones* and *Vikings*.

SAM'S RECIPE

SLOPPY JOES!

INGREDIENTS:

- * Mince
(hamburger
meat) 400g
- * Tomato Sauce
to taste
- * BBQ Sauce to
taste
- * Baked Beans –
1 x Can
- * Kidney Beans
– 1 x Can
- * Sweet Chilli
Sauce – Option-
al, to taste
- * Buns x 4



PREPARATION: Mix goop as sloppily as possible for authenticity, and flick with care (use spatula) onto buns.

FEEDS 4 PEOPLE.

I chose this recipe because we haven't had proper Sloppy Joes since James was here, and I like it the way he did it — Cowboy style! I was taught this American recipe at Clubhouse by James S, a staff member who came from Wisconsin, USA. Sloppy Joes is one of my favorite meals. — Sam

TWILIGHT DINNER

It was a stylish congregation, at the February Twilight zone dinner, being a fun night for all. The evening started with some stimulating discussions, followed by humorous jokes and conversations.

After a while the hunger pains set in and we were treated to a very nice lasagna that was made on site. Once we attended to the needs of our stomach, we settled into a humorous game of bingo. Jokingly, the women folk beat the male humans 4 to 1, with Rachael winning all but one game. It was a fun night for all, and value for money. Upon my next visit to earth I will try harder for the male humans but I need more earthling help, so I hope to see you all at the next twilight zone dinner. - Kevin



ARAHURA FOUNDERS' DAY



Awesome day and lots of food. — Claire

Another fantastic Founders Day at Long Bay. Great to be outdoors with everyone. Enjoyed/shared great food and some music. Always a lot of fun — David B

Good to see the general manager has excellent motivating skills and lots of patience and can swing a bat as well as play pool. — James



Lots to eat and games to play including baseball, softball, cricket, and booting the rugby ball. Had a great time. — Indy

It was like a family gathering and a great way to get everyone together. — Merv



The food and drinks were really nice. Some people went swimming, not me though. A really good day, 20-30 people there. — Steven

My first ever Founders day. Was a great day, I really enjoyed it and can't wait for next years! — Vicki



SOCIAL RECREATION!

For the January social recreation trip we took a trip up to Orewa beach for the day. One van took the scenic route, allowing for some viewing of the countryside, although there was then less time to spend in Orewa.

When we got to Orewa, we had filled rolls, fruit and muesli bars for an early lunch before people started going their own way to do their own thing. It was quite windy and it started to rain, so a group of us went and had a look around some shops, especially the second hand book shops.

Once the weather began to settle down again, we headed back to the beach and watched the wind

surfers. The temperature started dropping again so some of us opted to go for a sight seeing adventure around the Orewa hills, we got some great snaps of the scenery, which have sadly gone AWOL.

After our little tiki tour, we headed back to the beach to meet up with the others.

“I enjoyed the day, even though the weather was over cast” -
Claire

The only surviving photo!



By Claire & Tam

IN MEMORIAM:
LJUBICA BULOG

“LUBI” (20 Jan 1951-14 Feb 2017)

Anyone coming to Crossroads Clubhouse a few years ago could not have missed a devoted couple, Dave & Lubi, who had been married just on 40 years when Lubi passed recently. Thursday was their special day, when they would normally help in the kitchen; if not, any one of half a dozen jobs others were reluctant to do. Their commitment to unfailing service came from Christian dedication, having belonged to the church CCF of West Auckland for the past eleven years.

From Yugoslav origins (like Dave), Lubi was born in the northern gumfields near Kaitaia. Her endearing

ability to adapt was seen at age five when she attended school — and was understandably shocked when she couldn't make herself understood to the other kids: She could only speak in Croatian, the only language her parents spoke.

A recurring theme among the two dozen or so church members who got up to share their memories about Lubi was her utter dedication to her Lord. When Dave first met her Lubi's only protestation against getting married was that she already had a boyfriend: Jesus. At age 20, on first seeing Jesus appear as an elderly man with long white hair, she was pleasantly surprised: “Thank God you don't look like those horrible paintings they do of you!” she told him. The point was made with great good humour by her many friends present that Lubi chose Valentine's Day to return to her first boyfriend.

It was harder for Lubi & Dave to get to Crossroads after they moved further out west to Henderson a few years ago—Their last visit was not long before Xmas, but their spirit lives on.



Ljubica Bulog and husband Dave celebrating their 32nd Anniversary at Crossroads Clubhouse, the 1st of March 2009.

AUNT JEMIMA'S SUMMERTIME

I noticed that around Xmas time, what with Daylight Savings, it wasn't getting dark in Auckland until after 9pm each evening—as normal. But now, coming into March, the light is very dim by 8.15pm, especially with the dull summer we are having, and the evenings and mornings are quite cool, even chilly. You'd think the least we could ask for is a halfway decent summer. Who should we complain to about the weather?

This is all part of the variation we have around the seasons every year—and often all four seasons within each day in Auckland like the Split Enz song says! Anyway, you've heard of the El Nino and La Nina weather patterns we have in the Pacific, and these contrasting oceanic and atmospheric conditions affect the moderation (and severity) of each season — depending on which one is prevailing, the little boy (*nino*) or little girl (*nina*). Also, don't forget to be prepared for the sudden hour's shift in the light coming in early April when we shift back to normal time—Nightfall will arrive not long after 6pm, which leaves many people, including me, in shock.

I don't particularly like sunbathing but I do like a swim at the beach. Because of the huge hole in the ozone layer right over Auckland I almost always feel the sun biting my skin straight away and I'll start actually burning within seven minutes. Any advice?

For most people the usual solution is to pile on the sun block over every exposed part of your body. Obviously, the higher the sunblock rating of a lotion the better. Quite often you may be able to find one rated 30+ at a cut price — which makes it affordable. This should be effective if sprayed on every two hours. Failing that, it's okay to wear clothes into the water for full cover from the sun — as long as you don't actually try to swim in them and go out of your depth. (Anyone who's ever watched *Piha Rescue* knows that water-logged clothing weighs down even the best swimmers, presenting a potentially lethal danger of drowning very fast.) Too few people take notice of these irksome but necessary sun-safety precautions. It's pretty scary that New Zealand's skin cancer rate is far higher than Australia's, mainly because of the better awareness over there. I've never had skin cancer but was fortunate that my G.P detected a basal condition which, left untreated, might have led to cancer eventually. The "cure", even for this, was invasive skin-graft surgery which left me with unsightly scars for all to see. Don't let it happen to you.

A Page from my Diary

It was the year 2001, and my third-time long for a five-week stretch in New York City. I was thirty years old. It was mid-year, in the American summer.

I had set myself up initially well, with a friendly reunion with Aaron Bell in her apartment. But oh! The difficulties of being a smoker: Aaron and I skulled back the vodka together with ease, but cigarettes in this swish apartment were not allowed on even the balcony or anywhere near the foyer.

Of course, being drunk, I could not help myself from lighting up, and Ms. Bell and her body corporate evicted me, their guest. New York being what it is, which is a big noisy human zoo in a jungle of concrete and steel, I managed to move into an alleyway two blocks away.

I had networked this booking, it wasn't just by random chance that this alley could accommodate me. The desperate disciplined five-thousand at Fountain House had arranged it for me. 'Proper accommodation for the mentally ill,' they said it was.

My fellow street beggars were all Kiwis and Occers. My bed was a cardboard box and my blanket was newspapers. We began talking of the good times back home, like when birthday presents came into the house from family, or the end-of-year Christmas get-togethers.

Considering that all I had to eat was oatmeal cookies, and my only coffee was from Fountain House at regular set hours, I said to the Maori co-res in the alley, "We can't expect a present here, can we?"

Gary, for that was his name, replied that we could, in fact, expect a present; on Independence Day and the 25th of December every year. Gary had been doing this for two years, so he knew.

I asked him who the benefactor was, and where whomever it is got their gifts from?

"Isaac," Gary said, "He's black, so you can rely on him. He comes past this way every Saturday morning and has a look in. Apparently he gets our presents from a rat."

"A rat!?" I asked. "What does he give?"

"Lovely things," said Gary, "Like hats and shoes, and electric torches. Sometimes even canned pre-cooked mushrooms. We can check around at night, and keep the snow and sun off our feet and heads because of him; and last Christmas Day I ate all the mushrooms I could handle. The cleaner had to do an extra shift at the park after that."

"Well, I'd like to meet the rat," I said.

He reacted in fright and shoved his hands into his pockets. ""You can't. That is Great Rat and he has a counsel. He dwells in the upper sewer system and only cops can speak to him."

I thought about this for five minutes. "I don't understand," I said with a raised eyebrow.

"Well that's New York for you," he replied, "The Senate saw good in all reality when they made this society."

After this discussion, we walked the twelve blocks back to Fountain House for coffee and a smoke.

Gary had a few words with the staff and she and I booked a ticket for a flight to return me to sleepy New Zealand. The staff member said that it was nice to meet me again, but that I was obviously not ready for America or any crucible.

Two years later I heard from a contact that Aaron Bell had died. I wasn't upset and didn't enquire as to the cause of her death. I guess that there is a standard rule, that is 'each to his own'.

A fictional story by **D J Grierson**, Auckland, 12th Dec. 2016

A Unique Approach

Like all our work, this was produced in house by members and staff – our approach to recovery: working side by side.

We'd love to show you our Clubhouse.
Please call any time to arrange a tour.



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For more info:
www.crossroadsclubhouse.org.nz
For info on the Clubhouse model
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