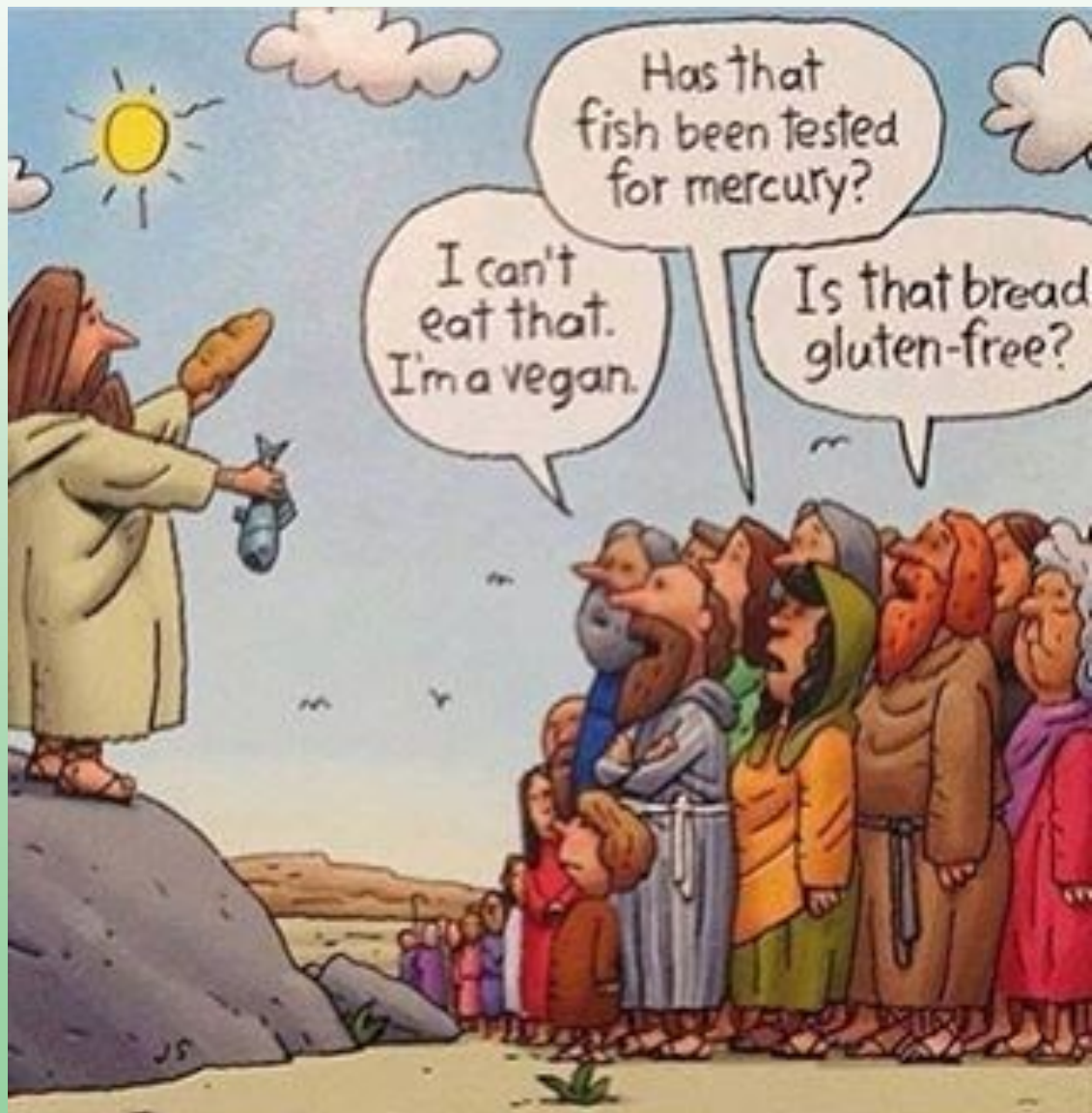


CHATTERS

A publication of Crossroads Clubhouse

XMAS 2016



Editor's Blab

As the publication of this current issue of *Chatters* has been delayed for two months for reasons beyond our control, this will be something of a nostalgic “Best of the Year” look at 2016.

Now, back to unpleasant realities.

I suppose the recent local elections confirm one obvious fact of politics: The best known candidate is likely to win. We Aucklanders are lucky we don't have to choose someone so famous they're apparently irresistible: say, a reality tv star who loves firing people, or from American Royalty (the Clinton line, vs Obamas vs Bushes; now the Trump pretenders). Once upon a time, *policies* — that seem to be a luxury these days — were touted to show a plan for the country (or province/county/city/borough), and were shouted from soap boxes on street corners, from rooftops across the land, and recorded by newspapers for all to see, absorb and regurgitate. So it meant something when politicians staked their reputation on them: maybe another outmoded notion.

This started with The Age of Reason and democracies based on The Social Contract (see Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Tom Paine, et al) that citizens extracted from ruling classes (see beheadings: Charles I, Louis XVI, Marie Antoinette). Now, picking “The lesser of two evils” less encumbered by fact-checking and boasting the loudest voice is the temptation. In the USA general elections, voting in progress today as I write this... STOP PRESS... the worse one, with *fewer* votes, has been declared president and world's most powerful person. This is a principle that no one seems able to get their head around. — Gaz

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

It has been an amazing few months since our last edition of *Chatters*, with a few staff changes. We have welcomed on board Tamara as a full-time staffer, in



James' position. Linus has also returned from his three-month holiday in Finland.

This month also saw the first of our mini garage sales, which despite weather issues saw us raise over \$200. Our focus has now moved to our Mega Garage Sale, where we hope to have as much success as the event did last year! It is going to be

a challenging time, but pulling together as a team will see us through! We are also beginning to plan for the Clubhouse Christmas do, with the end of the year fast approaching!

We continue to have our monthly smokefree consumer meetings, and although Break Free staff don't visit us anymore due to changes in funding, we are going to be putting people through the training to become Quit Card providers so we can continue our journey to be smoke-free. Our Heart Beat Challenge continues to run on Tuesday mornings, which at the moment is a walk around the block and extends every few weeks to make for a greater distance.

Nadia has been doing a fantastic job heading people being able to access Total Mobility cards, and has set dates for the rest of the year for people to come in and do their applications with Karon. Many members have already got and are using theirs, so feel free to get in touch if you haven't done so already. [smiley face]

Again, a huge thank you goes out to all, it has been a great few months and look forward to many more to come! — Vicki



Newsflash



Happenings at our Clubhouse and upcoming events

* A good time was had by all — Ngaiwi, Eru, Tamara, Vicki, Julian P, Gary, Claire, Rach, Kathy and the rest — at the end-of-September Twilight Dinner with karaoke and plenty of pizza to go round. Ngaiwi enjoyed himself as the warm-up act with twenty or so songs (that's his story) and then made himself the feature and star act too with others crowding him to do duets.



* The Mega Garage Sale this year will be happening Saturday, 26th November, beginning 9am and continuing into the afternoon. Many excellent and serviceable appliances, goods and nick-nacks will be on offer at irresistible prices. Thank you in advance to all those who have donated salable items. For those of you have missed the promos for the event, stay in touch.

* We are having our Xmas do, as usual, at the Pt Chevalier RSA. The date is set for 16th December, to kick off at around about 11am. The usual buffet will be accompanied by the usual karaoke, recitations, comedy sketches, and tomfoolery.

* Over the Xmas-New Year period, Crossroads Clubhouse will be closed only for the statutory holidays, as always. These are Xmas Day and the two following week days, New Year's Day and the two following week days.



(From page 7)

MORE NEW(ISH) MEMBERS :

Liz and her partner Reidar.

Left: Liz and her whanau, including her twin daughters, two sons and grand-mokopuna.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

Saying hi to our recent arrivals, including:

Anne: Referred by another mental health service to “have a look” at Crossroads, her first guided tour was last week. A writer, she likes the way we operate and can see herself becoming a member in the immediate future.

Richard & Daniel — More prospective members who are a little further along the road to final sign-up and orientation, they are fully involved in the getting-to-know-you stage of what can be a sequence of many steps.

Special Mention: Alex — the support worker for Daniel, who is helping him with the demanding orientation to join Clubhouse.

Below: Crossroads Clubhouse's famous Kiwi Breakfast offered to new (and old) members every second Friday for \$2.50





LINUS: HI & GOODBYE!

Our very popular staff member from Finland is due to go off any day now on a return home. Well, not exactly: Though his last day at work is Friday, 2nd December, he wants to travel around areas he hasn't seen — especially in the South Island, though not particularly around Kaikoura. His recent extended (working) holiday back in Finland staying with family

has triggered a longing for the Old Country. It has to be said that the Auckland “spring” so far has made him nostalgic for the Finnish summer (and winter), though Auckland is a lot wetter in comparison as well as unusually chilly for this time of year — the beginning of December.

Linus will be leaving behind a lot of new friends here in Auckland, but friendship these days is only a Skype call or Facebook message away. He promises to pass on his email address.

While watching one of those fascinatingly informative Sky-TV documentaries that leads one to investigate a stream of other info, I learnt a secret about Linus's inner being. The doco was about a Japanese family starting in the 19th Century who over generations dug up most of a mountain looking for a mythical, mountainous cache of gold, and haven't stopped to this day. The theme kept returning to this *Ganaru*, a quality of endurance and persistence often against the odds that is held in high regard in Japanese culture and is passionately called on from within to inspire acts of heroism or the spirit to sustain oneself. *(continued on p.10)*

HOMELESS!

— by Kathy & Gazza

Homelessness is a condition of being homeless, that is, literally having “less” than a “home”, via ye Olde English from the original Anglo-Saxon, related to modern German: “heim”.

In modern, neoconservative or neoliberal economics as related to Auckland, having a home of one's own has become an unrealistic aspiration for about 99% of people (strange that figure keeps popping up). The average price of an Auckland home having recently passed one million NZ dollars, the standard deposit for such a purchase would be \$200,000 cash, unless a \$400,000 one is demanded. This is well beyond the means of persons in the social circle of Crossroads Clubhouse, Grey Lynn, the *Chatters* constituency.

The writers of this article are both of a generation that expected, back in the day, to end up with a home of one's own. One of us, who worked at the Housing Corporation (as it was then), can remember some old mortgages that required repayments at just \$10 per month. The current policy at that time, a generation ago, allowed family loans on *no* (nil, nada) deposit for a standard three-bedroom home

— that had recently rocketed from around \$20,000 up towards \$70,000. If owning wasn't your thing — though it was the thing for a big majority of Kiwis — rental accommodation was quite plentiful and affordable.

Kathy, who has never been without a 'permanent' home herself, believes it is a matter of simple human decency to feel for the plight of those with no home — and beyond that, to speak out for them. She believes there is a great myth lending itself to the stigma of homelessness: the prejudiced attitude that many of the homeless are drug addicts and alcoholics — when this is obviously untrue, especially today when *any* kind of home is so hard to come by, for almost everyone.

She sees heaps of homeless on the street locally, including a guy at Grey Lynn shops. She asked him how he was, and he replied, “You're the first one who's treated me like a human being!” Then he told her his story. She was moved to give him enough money to catch the bus to see his girlfriend in hospital.

This may happen to you one day, says Kathy — circumstances change. A big company makes people redundant, a rent or mortgage payment is missed... and sometimes it's just not safe to be at home, because of domestic abuse — Victims are often forced to take to the streets, a car, or other

Heartbeat Challenge



Rudy & Sam

Rudy & Sam

Back in June a few of us from Crossroads Clubhouse attended a Green Prescription workshop — every Tuesday, for eight weeks. The program consisted of learning about such common health issues as asthma, diabetes, healthy eating, what to look for on packaging, as well as learning and practising different exercises for upper and

lower body (high and low impact). It was great to be a part of.

At the end of the course we had a shared lunch and were presented with a Green Prescription card that

enables us to get cheaper entry into any YMCA.

Even though our course is finished we still carry on our Heartbeat Challenge, based on us taking a long walk in the fresh air around Grey Lynn every Tuesday.

I would like to thank our course coordinator Rudy, who puts so much effort and enthusiasm into his work. — **Nadia**

AUCKLAND YESTERYEAR

(continued from p.11)

His mum cooked, and served in the dining room with dad. Glenn went to St Benedict's Primary School off Newton Road. It's now long gone though the Catholic church of the same name is still there as a reminder.

Along K Road, apart from its strip-tease joints for grown-ups, there was Martin's toy store, a famous mecca for kids across Auckland; and George Court's, the department store strategically placed on Pitt Street corner diagonally across from the Family and Naval pub (which is still there, recently tarted up with adult attractions).

Brother John Court's down on the corner of Queen and Victoria streets — just replaced for the umpteenth time on that site by the new Farmers store in 2016 — was the pinnacle of Auckland's "skyline" such as it was: at six storeys high, equal with the original Farmers store on Hobson Street & Wyndham.

The famous four-storey-high Santa Claus made his first appearance on the side of this Farmers building in time for Xmas 1960. The top floor of the



An artist's impression of Santa Claus, who might or might not have been based on a beneficent historical figure in northern Europe.

old Farmers holds very fond memories for many of the older generation still young at heart but infirm of limb. Littlelies played in a huge area on the top floor with pedal cars, while parents in the café alongside had melting moments, brandy snaps, lousies, eccles, battenburg and napoleon cakes.

Farmers, like many other Kiwi family firms that started up in the 19th Century or early 20th, provided the first old age pensions, sick benefits and other add-ons for employees' families that were a main source of well-being and survival as well as the Xmas spirit. — **Tainui Glenn & Gazza**

LINUS: HI & GOODBYE!

(continued from p.6)

From there it was only a short step on Wikipedia to the equivalent Finnish quality, *Sisu*. This was a revelation to me: the defining national characteristic they strive to live up to — how Finns see themselves. As well as the doggedness over the long haul that Japanese lay claim to as a nationality, Finns focus on long-term goals with conviction (maybe without the same passion) and an element of stress management thrown in to maintain an enviable level-headedness and stability.

It strikes me that these are the qualities that Linus has shown in his job — along with tolerance and unwavering patience. This is as true of Linus's blond, young compatriot, Frederick, who paid us a visit in October and considered working at Crossroads Clubhouse. Both had come from the Clubhouse at Aland Island, the Swedish-speaking Finnish island between Scandinavian capitals Stockholm and Helsinki. Both young guys show an equanimity and steady commitment to high

competence above and beyond the scattered “She’ll be right” attitude of everyday Kiwis — never mind the therapeutically “relaxed” attitude most of us in the mental health system must maintain for our own wellbeing and functionality.

When asked about the meaning of *Sisu* for him, Linus confirmed that it’s “a deep feeling inside of being Finnish, something that you call on in hard times.” As he said the word his chest puffed out and hands gripped into fists.

In New Zealand life, unlike the Japanese and Finnish ways-of-being — to name just two nationalities of many that have built-in internal motivators — it is often a mystery to others what resources we as individuals call on to get us through a day. For many years I had as a good friend someone born-and-bred in the NZ hinterland who called me his “best friend”. Yet, it has taken me many years to begin to fathom what moves him from one minute to the next because, though a devout Christian and good Kiwi bloke in any company, his chameleon-like integrity doesn’t seem based on anything solid or reliable.

So, I say, how refreshing it is to meet young people who *know deep down* what sustains purpose and keeps them on a steady course. — Gazza

AUCKLAND YESTERYEAR



Liverpool St & the Cook St Sallies

Long before there was a Clubhouse in New Zealand there was an Auckland c.b.d. — that looked something like the old set for Coronation Street (copyright Granada TV, 1960). Our member Glenn was “born and bred” in Liverpool Street, an almost verticle plunge of an enclave that comes off a steep street called City Road near the top of Queen Street, Mainstreet Auckland. Glenn, who has passed many moons in the Queen City, can remember some long-ago events in that neighbourhood, including the charity activities of the Salvation Army based down the hill from Liverpool Street.

Gazza too recalls just the bare details of the Sally Army sheltering his family in Salem House, a family emer-

gency house then in Cook Street, having been ejected by rellies during the harsh winter of 1961. The later famous priest and author Father Felix Donnelly (*Candles In the Wind*), was instrumental in getting the family admitted late one night for a short stay there (a week or two) before a state house was made available — It was like that in those days. Human rights were inviolable.

It was a time when residential homes were still side by side with businesses in some parts of the central city area, including a row of villas in K Road towards Symonds Street. The famous old, tall landmark, Partington’s Mill, later torn down, was hemmed in between Liverpool and Symonds Street where an upmarket hotel is now. Local Chinese corner shops were the beginning of what has become Auckland’s Chinatown uptown. One was a vege shop where Glenn was given 2/6 (25c) for delivering a bundle of newspapers. The Windmill Dairy on K-Rd was his local, handy for buying gob-stoppers lasting all day (two for a penny).

Glenn’s dad ran a boarding house in Liverpool Street from 1935 to 1959. American military men — army, navy and marines known as “GIs” — began arriving in June 1942 and formed as many friendships with the Auckland locals as enmities. (*continued on p.9*)

REED's Epic Movie Review

Harry Potter & the Sorcerer's Stone

(from J. K. Rowling's book)



To anyone who found Radcliffe appealing, will not be disappointed by *Harry Potter & the Sorcerer's Stone*. Because the feeling of team morale conjured makes for a good "feel

This was a fresh movie, and unusually for a kids' film, was generally not overacted. Ralph Fiennes as villain Valdemort was impressive. But one of the more eccentric characters I liked was Valdemort's buddy — who seemed to have an inner circle of friends, *not*. He was driven by an unwavering conviction about his entitlement to a promise from Valdemort to share power.

Daniel Radcliffe as young teenager Harry Potter (who later matured off-screen at a radical rate) was pretty good — but not as good as Valdemort's buddy, who didn't overact. In my opinion, Radcliffe didn't spend any time cultivating his character and seemed to zoom past everything, seemed too "jumpy". Daniel Radcliffe was a mature actor already, but placed in an unbelievable (unrealistic) role.

good" experience in fantasy movies.

The actress acting Hermione (Emma Watson) overacted to rotten effect. The character hadn't "left the nest", and tried to be kosher/ politically correct. She didn't have a religion, and was circumspect.

Rupert Grint (as Ron Weasley) will always be remembered for his charismatic, childlike presence on the screen, coming across as a dweeb no matter what the role.

These actors will always be recalled for their *Harry Potter* roles not only because the movie is so iconic but because they held their own against older stars with much more experience. — Reed

[Editor's note: Also starring, from an older generation: Richard Harris, Maggie Smith, Robbie Coltrane, Richard Griffiths, Julie Walters, John Hurt, Leslie Phillips, John Cleese, Alan Rickman, Zoe Wanamaker]

"Rolling to the Bowling"

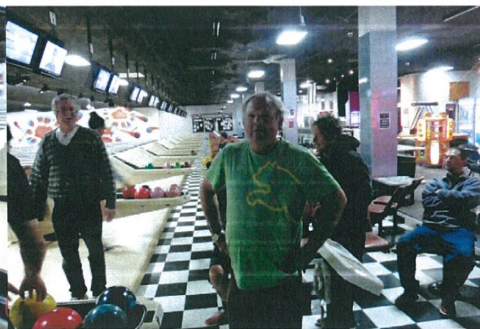
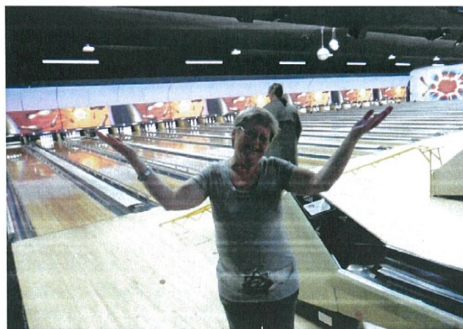
on Wednesday 19th October

The Twilight Dinner group went out to the Pins Lincoln bowling alley on the third Wednesday night of October. We drove in two vans and a car, and when we arrived and met then we put on our special shoes and picked up our weighted balls. It was a standard game of ten-pins, we used the rails and had ten throws each with a chance at a third roll at the end of the tenth. We broke up into two teams. Team One had in it Rachel, David, Sam, James and Kathy, and Team Two had Clair, Chris, Paul, Geoff and Alan. It might appear to be a simple thing to knock down the ten pins, but even after two rolls there was often a last stubborn pin standing. Nadia and David resolved what the complex score board was showing, and Sam bought a round of soft drinks. It is important to roll the balls underarm style rather than throw them at the alley, and also take care to



keep one's feet off the alley boards when letting go. The balls have different weights, and the players can choose which weight is ideal for them. Geoff was ahead at the top of the score until the ninth round, when David came ahead by a margin. At the end of the game the order of scores were, from bottom to the top, 83, 84, 87, 88, 89, 91, 95, 98, 112, and 123. We had a little coffee and then sorted out to the closest pizza takeaways and took the pizza to Swanson Park next to the Trusts Arena and the playing fields. It was a fun outing, and I liked the Pins Lincoln choice of music. Thanks go out to the organizers and players for being such sports.

Written by David Grierson



AUNT JEMIMA'S XMAS ADVICE

How do I sign up for a Total Mobility card, which will get me approx. a half-fare discount on public buses and from some taxi companies also?

The latest scheduled sign-up (arranged for six of our members) was due December 1st but was cancelled that morning for reasons beyond our control. Apologies to those who have missed out (temporarily). Ask our staff member Nadia and she might be able to arrange another pre-Xmas time to meet for sign-up at Crossroads. You're entitled to these discounts, and getting in touch is the first step to getting approved.

I am having trouble dealing with the ongoing changes in staff at Crossroads Clubhouse. Each time I get to know a staff member well, and come to rely on them, I go into a kind of mourning

when they leave.

Try to think of staff members as people with their own lives outside of Clubhouse. This often involves supporting their own family with their wage, even if it means moving on to another job. With any luck, you will be able to keep contact between the two of you, even if it's just via Facebook. Of course, it means getting used to new staff members — just as they have to get used to us and our endearing little ways.

I can't figure out how to change the time on the electric clock in my car in tune with Daylight Savings.

Don't worry, there are plenty of other clocks to use and by the time you notice it will be time to change back anyway. This is all part of realising there are priorities in life and if we let such trivia bother us we could easily miss out on the big, important stuff that might actually be enjoyable or change our lives.

TANTALISING TITBITS

THIS ISSUE:

MEATLOAF

(serves 4, or use half to make meatballs for another meal)

Ingredients:

Mince 675g (use chicken, lamb, pork or beef)



Onion — 1 finely chopped or minced
Parsley—1 tbsp., chopped
Breadcrumbs—100g, fresh, white
Egg—1, lightly beaten
Tomato Sauce (or other) — 2-3 tbsp.
Salt & Pepper

Preparation: Lightly grease a loaf tin.
Mix ingredients thoroughly, pack firmly into
tin and cover with greased aluminium foil.

Bake at 180 C or 350 F for 60 to 75 minutes (or until the loaf begins to shrink away
from the side of the tin).

WITH

Sweet & Sour Sauce

Mix a quarter cup brown sugar (firmly packed) and a tbsp. cornflour together well,
then stir in a quarter cup of white vinegar, two tsp soy sauce, and the juice from a
225g tin of pineapple pieces or tin of crushed pineapple. Bring to the boil, stirring
constantly. Turn off the heat as soon as it becomes thick and clear. Now you can
either drop the meatballs into the sauce or pour it over them. This sauce is also
good with sausages.

Yoga with Geoff

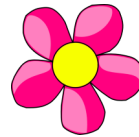


ADVERTISEMENT

Every Wednesday afternoon at 1.30pm commences the members' hour-long session of yoga-made-easy with Geoff S, who is a Clubhouse member and a yoga adherent of many years' standing. Now he is a respected yoga tutor also. He's very



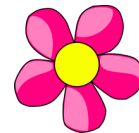
conscientious in his work, usually administering a thorough, deep and penetrating massage to his pupils afterwards, guaranteed to get the kinks out. On other occasions you can look forward to a relaxing 20-minute warm-down session, accompanied by a tape of relaxation and mood instructions music.



Attendees among members have included Chris R and Gazza as regulars, plus Nadia, David G, and Reidar.

One Wednesday we were also treated to a demonstration of Tai Chi and Tibetan Dance by Julian McCusker-Dixon, who was taught by a Chinese master.

We could end this item in the usual way, by way of introduction of new activities: clamouring for more recruits to along. But the group seems to have settled down as an elite of devotees who are quite comfortable in a small back room for now, shut away from the hubbub of the material world and its worldly distractions of the lower plane.



come
cabal
now,

TRIPS TO THAMES / NORTH HEAD (DEVONPORT)

It was so exciting, the day I woke up — Saturday morning: Thames, where one can get away from the busy lifestyle of Auckland, seeing the beautiful beaches and bird life, smell the clean air, see the farmers' markets. My good buddy Paul and many others walked the streets of Thames with me, looking at old books. Many members bought the beautiful foods

of the bakeries — pies, cakes, milkshakes, all divine eating; coffees. Everybody I could see was really enjoying themselves and finally at 12.30pm we all had a bite to eat

— hampers lovingly put together by members and staff. I can't wait till the next time going to Thames, my favourite place.

North Head was a popular choice, and the day dawned overcast but fine except for a small shower after noon. We climbed North Head to get a perfect view of the rest of the North Shore — the lovely sandy beaches. And from a height we had a perfect view of Auckland. Auckland is a beautiful city scenery-wise, and we are so lucky to live in this city of hills, trees... At 1.30pm we all walked around historical Devonport admiring small but lovely shops. Some bought lotto tickets, and others food. All agreed that it was a wonderful day. — **Mervyn**





POINT OF VIEW



An occasional column posing differing points of view on serious and not-so-serious topics and asking searching questions.

* About the middle of this year there was a breakthrough when onset of a case of mental illness was traced to a personal injury that triggered it, enabling a claim for ACC. While this points to a more liberal understanding of mental illness, not many people will be able to pinpoint a single incident as precipitator.

* A young man who is acknowledged to have worsened his mental illness by illicit drug-taking, then murders a woman he has never met, and is judged not guilty in court by reason of insanity. Yet, we do not judge people automatically not-guilty of crimes committed after drinking heavily, when they also might have greatly reduced control over themselves. Does a dually-affected person have some measure of responsibility for his condition and actions? Or not at all? As long as such cases are judged totally free of responsibility, are peaceful, better-functioning people under the mental health system likely to be granted any responsibility as free individuals? Or will they, under the current judicial system, continue to be deprived of some freedoms “just in case”? It’s a deep, complex issue that is likely to raise more questions than answers.

* What are *sanity* and *insanity*? We laypersons are told these are legal terms used in law only and define whether an individual is responsible for his or her actions at the time a crime was committed. Of course, administering the law is different from obtaining justice — and a satisfactory outcome in court that suits the legal profession does not by any means automatically engender a sense of justice for all parties concerned (or even most); far from it in many cases. It could be argued that there will never be true justice because the victim can’t come back to resume his or her former life, or any life at all. What we are left with is grasping at straws insufficient to ease the pain of survivors and to appease the general public. This can be very hard when the notion of punishment has not only gone out of fashion but is out of the reckoning almost entirely.

Fare Well James!

That young fella from Wisconsin, James Seidel, who joined the staff of Crossroads Clubhouse a year or two ago and made such a favourable impression, had to leave in a rush for personal reasons. We are expecting to hear from him some time in the not too distant future and hope all the best for him in the meantime. James was not able to renew his work visa to extend his stay in New Zealand — his favourite country — and this was just one of several upsets that descended on him almost all at once as these



*A Sloppy Joe, Wisconsin style—
basically spaghetti sauce and all the
additional veges you have at hand: one
of many things James Seidel will be
remembered for.*

things tend to go (including the death of his beloved grandfather back home in Milwaukee).

James will be missed for his energetic stick-to-it-iveness. Not to sound too sentimental about food, but James was especially effective in the kitchen purveying American cuisine. His social work qualifications were also appreciated, and army training (but without the stern discipline) came in handy for organising kitchen hands. While here he found soccer buddies in Linus and former staff members Nadine and Stephen.

Let's hope James finds his way back to NZ, where he'll always be assured a warm greeting at Clubhouse and from other friends.

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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