

Anne-Marie Coury's monthly report

Report covering the period 1st – 28th February 2019

Auckland Council workshops, meetings and briefings

7 th Feb	PLB Workshop
13 th Feb	PLB Community Forum in Lynfield
14 th Feb	PLB Workshop
20 th Feb	PLB Community Cluster
21 st Feb	PLB Business Meeting
25 th Feb	attended Regional Cluster Local Boards meeting in Takapuna
28 th Feb	PLB Workshop

Other Meetings

On the 18th February, I attended the celebration of the appointment of Jessica Phaung to the new role the NZ Police have created to cover the ethnic communities needs in Auckland. Jessica's title is Ethnic Responsiveness Manager for Tamaki Makaurau. It was a majestic occasion with the Chinese Lion Dance being performed alongside, presentations to senior Police managers, Jessica has worked under and even a presentation by the District Commander, Karen Malthus, to her husband for his diligence in maintaining their home, relieving Jessica of many duties, so she can devote herself, to her work amongst the ethnic communities of Auckland. A fitting celebration at the time of Chinese New Year!. All three District Commanders are women and were present in support of Jessica's promotion.



Jessica Phaung celebrating with other women community leaders across Auckland, like Nanette Nathoo QSM, from Mahatma Gandhi Centre on the left, Iris Cheng, and myself, along with two other Asian women all of whom attend Jessica's regular Community Safety Forums at the Fickling Centre. The banner behind us, carried the logos of many community groups, and signatures from all those attending on the day. Several Board members were present including our Chair, Harry Doig.



On 26th February, I participated in the art workshop session for Nga Herenga Waka led by Tamati Patuwai from Mad Ave, with members of Auckland Greypower, from a variety of cultural backgrounds aged from 68 to 98 years of age. The links each of these seniors had with the carvers, and the stories they told illustrated by their drawings were enriching for all. The next phase of the Nga Herenga Waka is being awaited with some anticipation and excitement. The ways in which groups are participating in this project and the depth of the sharing has been exceptional; definitely a strong community building exercise. The pou whakairo will be a symbolic piece of public art shared with the community as part of the Arts Festival.

On 27th February, I attended the regional meeting of Auckland Grey Power, involving the eight Association representatives across the region. This time we were meeting on Waiheke, electing a new director for the region and focusing on remits to be supported to take to the Federation's AGM in May. It is important for me to understand how seniors' needs are being tackled in other parts of the region, and what changes in policies are emerging from debates and experiences that other seniors are having across the region.

Other issues/challenges

Illegal dumping has died down somewhat over the past three months, but in Roskill, there have been two glaring examples lately, one beside State Highway 20 behind Mt Roskill Grammar School, sizeable dump of furniture, paper and rubbish. The other was two old pieces of furniture in front of the stone sculptures at the entrance to Fearon Park in Keystone Street.

There has been an increase in community groups working together, sharing some aspects of projects together, so collaboration becomes the new norm. Experiences, like shared grief over the deaths of Hashem Slaimankhel, and Rima Fernando Sikei, have been the catalysts to stimulate more coming together in solidarity. The community spirit is alive and well in Puketapāpa.

Disclosures

My on-going focus when I am advocating on behalf of seniors in community forums, representing Auckland Grey Power members, is reflecting the evidence base that has been used to develop current Grey Power policies. I make sure to clarify I am not representing the Board. I am usually wearing my official status badge as President of Auckland Greypower on such occasions.

This month I was invited to comment on how the housing crisis is impacting on seniors by Herald reporter, Simon Collins. I also subsequently was interviewed for television 6 pm news by Newshub. the next day. The points I made were unaffordability of rents for those renting, living only on NZ Super, forced to rent in the private sector because of the dire shortage of one and two bedroom social housing units. The interview explored the many ways seniors have ended up in shoddy housing situations, even couch surfing; through loss of finances in the financial company collapses, through marriage break-ups in their 50's with little chance of saving and borrowing again to purchase in the Auckland market, and through leaky homes.

It is important to note that the aims and objectives of Grey Power are to advocate across all political parties, and elected representatives, when seeking to improve welfare and wellbeing outcomes for seniors. Therefore, I remain non-aligned to any particular political party.

As a member of the Auckland Art Gallery, I enjoy using my guest pass to invite community members into the gallery to view exhibitions, they may otherwise be unable to access.

I volunteer at the Puketapāpa Community Driving School, as a mentor to older women migrants requiring their drivers licence to allow them to legally drive members of the families to school and home.

My membership of the Auckland Women's Centre, over a number of years has been to support community development strategies for women.

Recommendation/s

- a) That the report be received.

Signatories

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