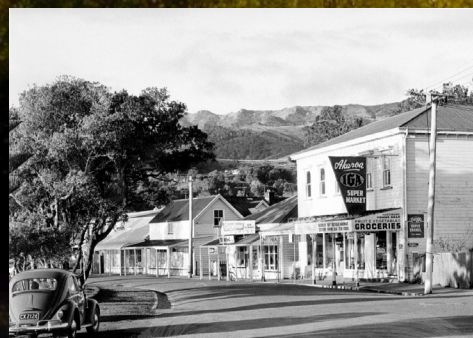


# AKAROA CIVIC TRUST

PO BOX 43, AKAROA 7542

NEWSLETTER  
NOVEMBER 2019







## FROM THE CHAIRMAN

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In our 50th anniversary year it is fitting that we come out with a bumper issue of our newsletter, enhanced with interesting and relevant material about the state of Akaroa today, whilst paying due tribute to the work of the Trust over the last half century.

I particularly commend the excellent piece edited by board member John Wilson entitled “Fifty years on”, and also draw your attention to the AGM we are holding on December 7th at the Gaiety Hall.

### An AGM with a difference - December 7th 4:30pm

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Departing from tradition, the Trust will host two eminent speakers who we feel privileged to have attracted for this occasion.

First up will be the distinguished historian, academic and anthropologist **Dame Anne Salmond**, who will speak on high priest and Tahitian navigator Tupaia who accompanied Captain Cook and Joseph Banks on the *Endeavour*. Tupaia was able to converse in his own language with the people of the Pacific as well as local Maori in New Zealand and he also assisted Cook by sharing his navigation and geographical knowledge of the Pacific. In the year of Tuia 250, commemorating Cook's landings in New Zealand as well as Polynesian navigation, this topic could not be more relevant.

Dame Anne will then be joined by **Dr Eruena Tarena**, distinguished social innovator and historian, with strong Ngai Tahu involvement, who will take part in an armchair chat with Dame Anne on subjects around voyaging and discovery.

The Akaroa Civic Trust is indeed fortunate to be able to host such an interesting event, and we are sure there will be a very solid turnout as a result.

### Cruise Ships - the ongoing debate

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Last year Deputy Mayor Andrew Turner came to Akaroa for the Civic Trust's AGM, and addressed a packed venue - the Akaroa Sailing Club - on this topic, which had become very divisive in the community. The full text of his speech is reproduced at the end of this Newsletter.

The Civic Trust's concerns then remain today - that the town is simply too small to accommodate the pressures of mass tourism as generated by large cruise ships (sometimes two on a given day and even three!) and that inadequate planning had been carried out to make the visitor experience a satisfactory one, and importantly something that visitors might like to repeat at a future date, perhaps on a FIT (free and independent tour) basis.

Whilst certain minor improvements in traffic planning have been implemented for this season, the unpalatable fact remains that 91 ships of varying sizes and passenger numbers will be coming to Akaroa, which will put enormous pressure on all infrastructure, and severely test the patience of local bach owners and others trying to travel over the hill on these days and enjoying their town once they are here. There is one day - Saturday 4th January 2020, right at the peak of the normal Akaroa holiday season - when two large ships carrying a combined total of 7,892 passengers and crew, will arrive and unload their passengers into an already crowded town. This sort of scheduling madness is not what was promised, and will make for very trying times indeed. The impact on the seabed should not be underestimated. Already recreational divers say they have effectively given up attempting to dive and fish in Akaroa's harbour waters as it takes 5 - 7 days after a ship has departed for the waters to clear sufficiently. With almost back-to-back visits December to February there is no chance for the waters to clear.



*Large ships with passengers often overwhelm the town.  
Photo: Victoria Andrews*

Exasperated residents of Wainui report horror stories of noise pollution, smoke from ship's engines which remain on all day polluting the atmosphere, and the decimation of beloved shellfish beds through the presence of the ships and their bow thrusters.

There is much work to be done in monitoring the impact of these cruise ships on the community, including the type of fuels the ships are burning (why is New Zealand behind the world in enforcing the use of lighter and more expensive but less polluting fuels?).

ECan has been a major disappointment in seemingly being unable to find any ways in the present legal framework to enforce its bylaws relating to disturbance of the seabed caused by the ships - as the limit of maximum five cubic metres is routinely exceeded, but no action is taken.

However through the actions of the Harbour Master there should be improvement on the use of the pontoons, wharf and oversight of tenders provided the Council supports his recommendations and policies.

Finally, the Christchurch City Council does acknowledge that there are still no effective means by which the Akaroa community can exercise influence over cruise ship visit planning and scheduling. The Cruise Action Group is comprised of ECan staff, council staff and Christchurch NZ - engaged in the promotion of tourism, with no representation of local voices. This is where the Ratepayers Association, founded last year by extremely dissatisfied locals, and the Akaroa Civic Trust in its traditional advocacy for heritage and conservation matters should be represented, so dear Mayor Lianne and Deputy Mayor Andrew please take note. We wish to be heard!

### Protecting Heritage - our core values

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The Trust continues to champion the cause of protecting the built heritage of Akaroa, which forms such a critical part of the town's major attraction to visitors. It is pleasing to note that Jeannie's Cottage (Yew Cottage, 40 Rue Jolie), owned by the council, and progressively deteriorating, has had a small reprieve in the form of some cosmetic repairs.

The council's long-term plan has a provision for complete restoration at a significant cost (over \$300,000) provided an approved heritage outcome can be assured.



40 Rue Jolie 1956, Photo: Donald McKay, Shuttleworth Collection, Akaroa



The Council finally made basic remedial repairs to 40 Rue Jolie in June 2019 after years of neglect. Photo: Victoria Andrews

Not so fortunate is Waeckerle's Cottage, next to the Grand Hotel, and of real significance in the Akaroa historic precinct, which is privately owned. So far the owner appears unwilling or unable to spend what is necessary to prevent it falling into the stream. Such action is often referred to as demolition by neglect. Family of the original builder would be keen to take it on and carry out a restoration, but there are several hurdles to clear first, not the least being financial.



Christian Jacob Waeckerle arrived on the Comte de Paris. He became mayor of Akaroa in 1878 and his cottage was built in 1876. It is one of the town's most important historic buildings. Photo: Victoria Andrews

### The prime function of the Trust - a squeaky wheel in the ear of the Christchurch City Council

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Later in this Newsletter there appears an item about a council proposal to replace ageing stone steps, a heritage feature of the town, at the foot of Stanley Park with a brand new set of stone steps in the modern idiom complete with handrails and stainless steel posts, to be followed by a crossing over Beach Road, complete with yellow tactile pavers at the exact point where emergency vehicles exit the fire station.

To our eyes this is a supremely unnecessary waste of hard-pressed council resources, and worst of all is totally inappropriate in the context of a historic precinct in a historic town. We struggle continually to remind council planning staff of the significance of Akaroa's special heritage status, their own policies and Heritage Strategy. Akaroa is forever getting treated like some other suburb of Christchurch, which we most definitely are NOT. It does appear that council staff will continue to come up with inappropriate schemes such as this, as they seem totally out of touch with the special needs of this town. We will continue to make noise and oppose unapologetically any such other schemes the council may come up with, and try to impose on us.

### A tribute to our Board of tireless volunteers

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Finally I would like to thank the entire board of the Civic Trust who have served selflessly with their time and expertise over the last year. In particular I would single out our hardworking, indefatigable secretary, Rosie Davidson, Victoria Andrews, who is tireless in her photographing of issues in the town needing highlighting and in countless submissions to the council and its community board, Lynda Wallace, whose encyclopaedic knowledge of things past and



present in Akaroa's history is absolutely unrivalled. We also pass on our thanks and very best wishes to our treasurer, Geoff Maxwell, who is currently battling a medical condition. As he is normally heavily involved in the production of this Newsletter he is especially missed at this time. All the very best Geoff! To other trustees David Epstein, Steve Carswell, Rodney Laredo, Meri Robinson, Marie Haley, Caroline Cooper-Dixon, Timmy Richardson and John Wilson, thank you so much for your varied and invaluable contributions to the furtherance of the Trust's aims.



*Akaroa Civic Trust Chairman Mike Norris together with wife Patsy and sister in law Liz promoting the Trust at the recent French Fest*

Two of our board will be retiring this year. **Jan Cook** has been a trustee for an amazing 22 years, and has been such an invaluable resource for the Trust to tap into. Her knowledge of the myriad aspects of planning laws has been honed over time and put to good use in campaigns by the Trust. She has also, with her husband David Brailsford, put an enormous effort into the Trust restoration work at French Farm, with many,

many hours of time given. I thank her most sincerely for her huge efforts for the Trust. We will miss you Jan!

**Steve Lowndes**, who has just retired as Chairman of ECan, is also stepping down from the board, after a period of outstanding service - for many years as the articulate and always calm chairman, and presenter of the re-enactment of the landings on that anniversary day of the *Comte de Paris*' arrival on our shores.

I will miss Steve's quiet and sage counsel, but I'm delighted to report that Steve has agreed to take up the offer to be the Patron of the Trust, filling the gap left by the death in 2019 of Margaret Chaney, who for many years filled that role with enthusiasm.

Mention should also be made of the unsung contribution of our Hon. Auditor Tony Coles, who each year uncomplainingly prepares our annual accounts, and, as he does for so many other peninsula organisations, on a pro bono basis. Thank you Tony!

I believe the Akaroa Civic Trust is in great heart, and in a reasonable financial state (with reserves largely intact in the last financial year). What we need to do is spread the word more widely, and get more and more members who want to maintain all the wonderful things that make Akaroa so special, and such a desirable place to visit and live in.

Preserving these assets in a time of changing and challenging agendas requires commitment and determination.

Let the Akaroa Civic Trust lead the way as it has done for the past 50 years!

**Michael Norris**  
**November 2019**



*Akaroa is positioned between a stunningly beautiful harbour and surrounding countryside. Photo: Victoria Andrews*





*French Bay House. Photo: Timmy Richardson*

## FIFTY YEARS ON

*The Akaroa Civic Trust has been working for half a century to protect the charm and character of Akaroa and its surroundings.*

### The birth of the Trust

In 1969 the Chairman of the Akaroa County Council, Peter de Latour, alarmed that development in Akaroa was harming the town's charm and character, voiced his fears that Akaroa was becoming 'brassy'. Two members of the five-year-old Christchurch Civic Trust, Peter Beaven and John Oakley, responding to Peter de Latour's concerns, offered to help protect the town.



*Peter Beaven on his bicycle. Photo: Ashley Riwai Mokena*

Two successful public meetings and well-attended walks around the town encouraged local people who shared Peter de Latour's concerns to set up the Akaroa Civic Trust, which this year celebrates its 50th anniversary.

The new trust offered to help the County Council draw up an 'environmental plan' to 'reverse the current disturbing trend towards cheapening Akaroa's appearance and avoid the town sharing the fate of so many messy seaside resorts grown out of haphazard, thoughtless development'. One of the new Trust's first successes was to thwart a plan to widen Akaroa's streets.

### The Design and Appearance Committee

Early in its life the Akaroa Civic Trust issued a brochure, 'Building in Akaroa', which argued design standards for new buildings were needed to protect the town's character. This suggestion prompted the County Council to set up a Design and Appearance Committee to provide advice on plans for new buildings in Akaroa. From the outset, members of the Civic Trust served on the committee, which still exists.

When the future of the committee was in doubt after the earthquakes the Civic Trust fought successfully to get it reinstated. The committee has allowed the community to have input on the appearance of new buildings in the historic parts of Akaroa. The Civic Trust members of the committee have been crucial to its effectiveness. They helped draw up the committee's first design guidelines in the 1970s and helped again when the guidelines were revised in 2001-02.



## Reinvigoration of the Trust

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In the 1990s the steam went out of the Akaroa Civic Trust. When it was at its lowest ebb, the remaining founding members sought support from younger people who were also determined to protect Akaroa from adverse changes. This reinvigoration of the trust coincided with the building of several multiple-unit blocks on the sites of demolished older buildings. These new blocks lacked the traditional front gardens of Akaroa dwellings and dwarfed nearby cottages.

The flash-point was a proposal to demolish an old shop, the Fire and Ice building. The 1997 threat to this building prompted people to ask why the Design and Appearance Advisory Committee was allowing obtrusive new developments? A short-lived Akaroa National Treasure Network took up the cause of protecting the historic character of the town, then handed the task on to the new, younger members of the Civic Trust.

### The historic area

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One of the first tasks tackled by the reinvigorated Civic Trust was getting the heart of Akaroa registered by the Historic Places Trust as an historic area. Individual registration of just some of the town's historic buildings was not protecting the town as a whole. Members of the Civic Trust researched the historic area and presented their findings to the Historic Places Trust, which concluded that Akaroa possessed 'a unique architectural and community environment' and was 'an exceptionally well-preserved example of a colonial New Zealand town'. The historic area was registered in 1999. Without the Civic Trust's effort the registration would not have happened.

### Planning and resource consents

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After the historic area had been registered it proved a demanding task to align the historic area with the historic preservation provisions in the local body planning schemes. The Civic Trust became concerned that the plans did not adequately protect the town's historic buildings. Work on the plans continued, with limited success, from 1997, when the Banks Peninsula District Plan was first 'notified', until the review of the City Plan following the earthquakes.

Despite these problems, after the historic area had been registered there was a marked shift towards more old buildings being restored and less obtrusive new building. The Civic Trust chalked up another success in the early 21st century when lower height limits on new buildings in the town centre helped curb the construction of more large apartment blocks.

The Civic Trust also lobbied the Banks Peninsula District Council and then the Christchurch City Council on specific matters like the use of the BP Meats site and the town's main wharf. The Trust has always been concerned about the areas surrounding the town as well as the town itself and in 2009-10 appealed successfully against resource consents granted for dwellings on headlands on each side of the harbour. The Trust argued that the locations of the proposed houses badly affected sensitive coastal landscapes.

Scrutinising plans and challenging resource consents has been a big 'ask' of Civic Trust members, some of whom developed expertise in complex planning and environmental issues. Their work helped bring community knowledge and concerns to bear on the deliberations of the City Council, Environment Canterbury and the Environment Court. Jan Cook was indefatigable in her work on these planning matters.

## Takapuneke

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In November 2001 a young representative of the Onuku Runanga, Melany Tainui, spoke to the annual general meeting of the Civic Trust about the Runanga's ongoing concern about the future of council-owned land at Takapuneke, the bay immediately south of Akaroa. Takapuneke was the scene, in 1830, of the Brig Elizabeth incident, which saw many Ngai Tahu ancestors slaughtered by North Island Maori. This was the first many members of the Trust learned about the significance of the site and about the long-standing concern of the people of Onuku that a rubbish dump and sewage treatment works had been located on tapu ground. The District Council had set aside part of the land at Takapuneke as a reserve but also drawn up plans to subdivide the rest of the land.

Members of the Board of the Civic Trust had already been working with the Runanga to stop the subdivision and get all of Takapuneke set aside as a reserve. After hearing Melany speak, the meeting voted unanimously that the Trust should continue to work with the Runanga to have all the land at Takapuneke reserved. The long campaign to achieve this came to a successful conclusion when, just before the Peninsula became part of the city, the District Council made the land that was to have been subdivided a reserve. The land was blessed in February 2010. Victoria Andrews, who worked closely with the Runanga, was the Board member most responsible for this major achievement.

### Specific historic buildings

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*The Council restored and earthquake strengthened the Akaroa Service Centre, 2018. Photo: Victoria Andrews*

Into the 21st century, the Trust continued to advocate for the preservation of old buildings. It took an interest in the futures of two 19th century cottages, 40 Rue Jolie and Waeckerle's cottage on Rue Lavaud. After the earthquakes the Trust helped ensure that the town's former post office was repaired.

This century the Civic Trust has made strenuous efforts, spent



considerable sums of money and devoted many hours of voluntary labour to ensure the survival of a building at French Farm which dates back to the French presence in Akaroa in the 1840s. The Trust has stabilised the building but how to secure its long-term future remains a major concern.

### The waterfront and cruise ships

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Several years ago, the Civic Trust took a strong position on the redevelopment of the waterfront and the controversial removal of some waterfront trees.

After the earthquakes the visits of cruise ships to Akaroa became a burning issue. The visits divided the community; some welcomed the business opportunities afforded by the cruise ship passengers; others deplored the swamping of a small, fragile town by thousands of visitors and their excursion buses. The Civic Trust developed a carefully thought-out position that contrasted the ill-effects of uncontrolled mass tourism with the benefits of welcoming smaller numbers of cruise ship passengers along with other visitors.



*Due to the narrowness of Rue Lavaud buses are often forced onto the footpath Photo: Victoria Andrews*

In reaching this position the Trust referred back to its founding years. The Trust was set up because local people in 1969 feared that unrestrained development was damaging the charm, historic character and amenity of the town. Those were exactly the concerns that prompted the Civic Trust to enter the cruise ship debate – that the town's character and charm needed protection from the onslaughts of mass, unrestrained tourism.

Throughout its life the Civic Trust has been accused of opposing all development. The organisation has sometimes been characterised as a group of meddling busy-bodies against any change. That has never been true. The Trust's position on cruise ship visits, which balanced development of the town's tourist industry with protection of the historic charm that appeals to visitors, demonstrated again the Trust's ability to find a middle course.

### Publications and education

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The Civic Trust has also worked to ensure people are aware of the significance the town's older buildings and of the need to protect its character. The Trust first published a brochure that guided visitors around the town many years ago. An enlarged historic area walk booklet was published in 2004.

The 2011 edition of the booklet described five separate walks.

In 2002 the Trust launched an on-line database on Akaroa's historic buildings and a website that provided information about the buildings. Both database and website were the work of Suky Thompson which was subsequently edited and revised by historian John Wilson and trustee Geoff Maxwell.

In 2007, the Akaroa Civic Trust joined with the Christchurch Civic Trust and Christchurch City Council to publish an illustrated book about the heritage buildings and sites of Christchurch, Lyttelton and Banks Peninsula - *City and Peninsula - the Historic Places of Christchurch and Banks Peninsula* was prepared for a meeting of the World Heritage Committee of UNESCO held in Christchurch. After the earthquakes the book became a unique record of demolished historic buildings.

The Civic Trust's Newsletter has been an important source of information about issues on which the Trust has worked through the years. The Trust has also secured stimulating speakers for its annual general meetings to promote awareness in the community of important matters affecting the town.

The Trust has periodically organised education days and seminars to inform local body councillors and staff about the importance of Akaroa's historic buildings and their setting. It has co-operated with the Akaroa Museum to mount exhibitions which focus on the heritage of the town and the Peninsula.

### Membership and personalities

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Since the revitalisation of the organisation in the late 1990s the Trust's membership has held steady above 200. Continuity between the generation which founded the Trust and the generation which succeeded it was provided into the 21st century by successive patrons Lois Holderness, Lee Warren and Margaret Chaney. When Lois resigned from the Board in 2001 she had completed an unrivalled 31 years as a Board member.

The members of the Board of the Trust have included local residents and holiday home owners. Some board members have been holiday home owners who later retired to Akaroa. Gilbert Glausius, Steve Lowndes and Michael Norris have been the longest serving recent chairmen.

### Conclusion

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In 2014 the Christchurch City Council conferred a civic award on the Akaroa Civic Trust. The citation recorded that the Trust had been working for 45 years to raise public awareness of the historic character of Akaroa and that members of the Trust had put thousands of hours of voluntary service into various projects. The citation mentioned the work of the members of the Trust who had served on the Akaroa Design and Appearance Advisory Committee, the Trust's effective advocacy for the protection of historic buildings, the participation of Trust members in resource consent hearings and its impressive list of publications. The citation was a good summation of the Trust's remarkable achievements over 50 years.



# SPECTACULAR CARVED CABINET RETURNS TO BANKS PENINSULA

Akaroa Museum is excited to have recently acquired an outstanding piece of furniture, made by John Henry Menzies (1839-1919) in 1897 for his daughter Charlotte on her marriage to Edwin Stanford. Known as the Stanford Family Pātaka Cabinet it is a wonderful example of Menzies' work, laden with carving and incorporating a pātaka (Māori storehouse) form, unique in New Zealand furniture.

In a first for Akaroa Museum, the cabinet was co-purchased with the Christchurch Art Gallery Te Puna o Waiwhetū and will be shared between the two institutions. The Friends of Akaroa Museum contributed substantially to the purchase. A significant aspect of the collaboration is that it has allowed an important piece of heritage furniture to be repatriated from Australia.

John Henry Menzies, of Menzies Bay, Banks Peninsula, had become a proficient carver of Maori patterns by 1890. He accurately reproduced and copied these patterns and applied them to furniture and to elements of his houses, motivated by both an appreciation of their aesthetic qualities and a desire to preserve them.

The extent of Menzies' work, and its depth, is only now becoming realised. Very few examples of his carved furniture are held in public collections; the majority remains in family ownership. Although Menzies built and decorated two homesteads at Menzies Bay both were destroyed by fire. A third house, Rehutai, survives but is no longer lived in.

Those with an interest in Menzies' work can visit the beautiful St Luke's church at Little Akaloa. Completed in 1906 the

church is extensively decorated with Menzies' carving – botanical and Celtic motifs combined with a multitude of Māori patterns – it is a total delight.

**The Stanford Family Pātaka Cabinet will feature in J. H. Menzies; Design and Decoration, an exhibition which opens at Akaroa Museum on 7 December 2019 and runs through the summer until March 2020.**



*The Stanford Family Pātaka Cabinet, J. H. Menzies 1897*

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## BEACH ROAD SEAWALL REPAIR UPDATE

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The Civic Trust lodged a Long Term Plan submission in April 2015 about the need to repair and maintain Akaroa's seawalls. The Council is finally preparing to undertake urgent repair work and public consultation is underway. The Trust supports urgent action, provided heritage values are given due consideration, to avoid further deterioration to the town's only line of defence against storm protection and rising sea levels.

Akaroa's seawalls were constructed gradually over many decades and have been protecting streets, homes and businesses from sea inundation for more than 100 years. They have been poorly maintained and wear and tear has taken place in recent years. The Council-commissioned report by Tonkin & Taylor, from 2013, is explicit about this threat.

“The foreshore levels fronting the seawalls are expected to lower over time as sea level rises and the shoreline attempts to retreat. Therefore many seawalls may experience an increase of scour at the foot of the structure resulting in undermining and slumping. Therefore, unless significant reconstruction or replacement works are undertaken the existing sea walls are likely to fail as sea level rises providing limited protection from future shoreline retreat.”

Akaroa's first line of defence is the seawall. Beach Road is the ONLY access road through the Town, and is also a prominent dining and shopping area containing a number of historic buildings. The entire area is at risk if the seawalls are not properly maintained and repaired.

Have you visited our website?  
[www.akaroacivictrust.co.nz](http://www.akaroacivictrust.co.nz)

On it you will find a brief history of Akaroa  
and information on a large number of  
historic sites and buildings.



# FOOLS AND DREAMERS ON HINEWAI



*Fools and Dreamers: Hugh Wilson, photo courtesy Jason Hosking*

The Akaroa Civic Trust has always been concerned not just about the town of Akaroa but also about the superb landscapes surrounding the town. Members of the Trust have been among the many people who love Banks Peninsula who have watched with interest, and now with astonishment, at the transformation of the Hinewai Reserve, which occupies most of the valley from below The Cabstand almost to Otanerito Bay, and more besides. A fortunate meeting between Maurice White and Hugh Wilson at a Forest and Bird meeting in Christchurch in the late 1980s led to the Maurice White Native Forest Trust purchasing the first small area of what is now a reserve of more than 1,250 hectares. The purchase gave Hugh a chance to test the theory that gorse is the perfect nursery cover for the regeneration of the native forest that once covered almost all of Banks Peninsula. Called a ‘fool and a dreamer’ for believing nature would, given half a chance, restore native forest on the Peninsula’s hills when the reserve was first established, Hugh now has the satisfaction of seeing the theory proved.

The story of Hinewai, from 1987 to the present, has now been told in an acclaimed short film, called ‘Fools and Dreamers’. Made by Happen Films, the film was funded by a benefactor and is available ‘free to view’ on Youtube. It has already had around 850,000 ‘hits’. Hugh describes himself as a shy fern whose normal habitat is a damp, shady place, out of the sunlight. But he is glad that the publicity generated by the film has helped spread, nationwide and worldwide, the message about how native forest regeneration can be achieved.

The success of Hinewai also contains a lesson about the future of tourism on Banks Peninsula. Almost no cruise ship passengers find their way to Hinewai, but the carpark on Long Bay Road at Hinewai is now almost always crowded to capacity on week-ends – something of an anomaly for Hugh, who avoids riding in private cars! Visitors attracted to the Peninsula by the opportunity to walk through regenerating native forest are likely to prove of more long-time benefit to Akaroa than the come-and-go cruise ship passengers.

## Akaroa Civic Trust BOARD MEMBERS

The following have indicated their willingness to continue on the board for 2019/20

<b>Victoria Andrews</b>	<b>David Epstein</b>
<b>Mike Norris</b>	<b>Steve Carswell</b>
<b>Rosie Davidson</b>	<b>Caroline Cooper-Dixon</b>
<b>Lynda Wallace</b>	<b>Tim Richardson</b>
<b>Rodney Laredo</b>	<b>Marie Haley</b>
<b>John Wilson</b>	<b>Meri Robinson</b>

The Akaroa Civic Trust is a society dedicated to the preservation of the beauty and history of Akaroa and its surrounding areas.

**New members are always welcome**

Please support the work of the Akaroa Civic Trust by becoming a member or by sending a donation to:

**The Treasurer, Akaroa Civic Trust**  
**P O Box 43, Akaroa 7542**

Individual membership: \$15 | Family: \$20



## A LEADING LIGHT AT THE GAIETY

Dale Thomas has recently announced her resignation as Chair of The Gaiety Trust after dedicating two decades of voluntary work to The Gaiety. Her fellow trustees and members of the Friends of The Gaiety have paid tribute to her commitment to making this listed heritage building a source of community pride.

Back in 1999/2000, Dale noticed that The Gaiety was slowly deteriorating and the building's central role in the community as a place for gathering, celebrating and partying was declining. With Fiona Farrell and Cyndi Muir, Dale set about raising awareness of the plight of the building, raising funds for its renovation and masterminding the work. More recently, Dale ensured that the community's interests remained at the forefront during The Gaiety's post-earthquake repairs and renovation, becoming the liaison person between the community and the Council.

Dale has chaired, and steered, The Gaiety Trust for many years. With fellow trustees and the Friends of the Gaiety, Dale has initiated, organised and hosted many memorable concerts, performances and events in the historic hall. The 'Swing into Spring' fundraiser for the Akaroa Health Centre in September was the most recent. Dale has now decided it is time to step back from the Trust, having achieved her goals and having had, in her own words, "immense fun" along the way.

Thank you Dale, for all you've done for The Gaiety and the community over the past 20 years.



*Right: Dale Thomas at the Gaiety Hall Odd Fellows night*

## Akaroa Civic Trust Annual General Meeting

**4:30pm Saturday 7 December 2019**  
**The Gaiety | 105 Rue Jolie, Akaroa**

### **CELEBRATING 50 YEARS**

**with guest speaker**

**Dame Anne Salmond**

Dame Anne, an eminent historian, writer and academic will discuss traditional Polynesian navigation and voyaging in association with Dr Eru Tarena, Executive Director of Tokona Te Raki in a presentation entitled **Star Waka: Tupaia's Endeavour Voyage**

All are welcome to attend





# AKAROA 50 YEARS AGO

*Fifty years ago, in 1969, a young architect named Peter Beaven came to Akaroa with his camera.*



*Beach Road/Church St corner, 1969, Akaroa Civic Trust Collection, Akaroa Museum*

*"The clutter of signs will ultimately take over and smother the delight and simplicity of the shops and verandahs." Peter Beaven*

He wanted to record Akaroa's streetscapes and buildings, to capture the unique character of the place. Peter's photographs became part of an Environmental Exhibition and featured in the Environmental Plan for the town. This was an initiative of the newly-formed Akaroa Civic Trust.

Peter's perceptive views, with accompanying pithy captions, show us how Akaroa looked fifty years ago – undeveloped, uncluttered and utterly charming. In Peter's words, there was "mystery and delight at every turn". He described Akaroa's setting as "The big hills above the little suitable cottages, intimacy and far distance, the town set in a wild landscape." He talked about the importance of scale and proportion, in buildings, trees and setting; about the "casual" approach to street lighting, where old was combined with newer; he noticed and appreciated the grass verges to the streets, the old and varied fences and gates to private properties and the "clutter" of commercial signage which he feared would "take over" if not controlled.

One of the Civic Trust's main objectives is to preserve the beauty and charm of Akaroa; Peter Beaven's photographs remind us that incremental changes, although barely noticeable at the time, lead in the longer term to significant change in streetscape and heritage character.

*Daly's Wharf, 1969, Akaroa Civic Trust Collection, Akaroa Museum*  
*"Perfect little wharf and shelter; needs no more rails, notices, nothing at all" Peter Beaven*





# PROPOSED BEACH ROAD CROSSING BUILD-OUT AND STANLEY PARK ENTRANCE UPGRADE

The Council recently held a short consultation about a proposed upgrade of the entrance to Stanley Park next to the Fire Station. The proposal includes a structure built out onto Beach Road exactly where cruise ship buses line up while waiting to pick up passengers. A pedestrian crossing near the Fire Station could also cause problems when fire trucks have to leave quickly in an emergency.

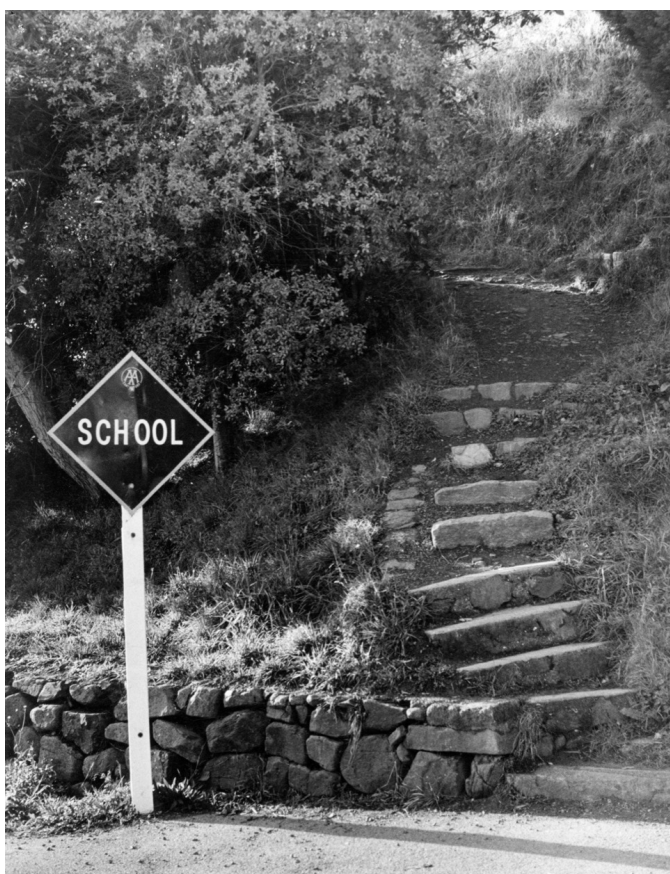
The original, historic entrance to Stanley Park entrance is described as 'an old set of steps which are in poor condition'. The proposal has not been presented to the Akaroa Design and Appearance Advisory Committee nor has it been assessed for heritage impact by the Council's heritage team or Heritage New Zealand. There is no mention of the need to maintain the heritage values of the streetscape.

If the existing entrance to Stanley Park is demolished, the Council will be destroying a heritage feature which is part of the historic fabric of the town. The Civic Trust is concerned that the Council has not properly considered the Akaroa Design Guidelines, District Plan policies and objectives and the its own Heritage Strategy.

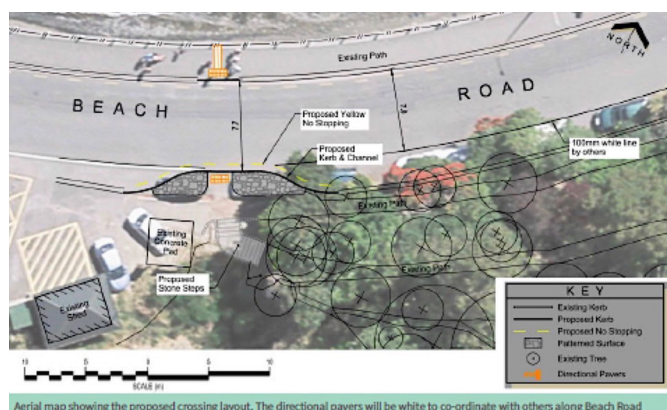
As the Council develops its Destination Strategy for Banks Peninsula the Civic Trust is concerned that proper consideration may not be given to the historic character of the town. New street signs, curbing upgrades, yellow tactile pavers and other pedestrian improvements will have a cumulative, harmful effect on the heritage character of Akaroa. As Judge Jackson stated many years ago in an Environment Court decision, the end result will be a slow death by a thousand small cuts.



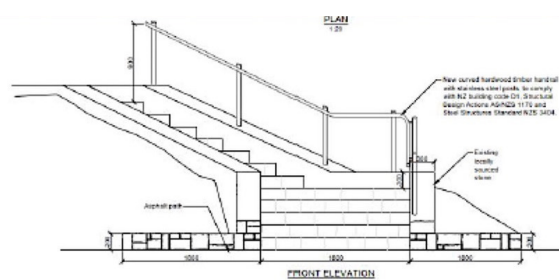
*Stanley Park entrance with new signage and weeds, November 2019*  
Photo: Victoria Andrews



*Stanley Park Entrance, Beach Road, 1969, Akaroa Civic Trust Collection, Akaroa Museum. Photo: Peter Beaven*



Aerial map showing the proposed crossing layout. The directional pavers will be white to co-ordinate with others along Beach Road



Design for the new steps to be constructed at Stanley Park entrance

*CCC Proposed upgrade to the historic Stanley Park entrance, November 2019*



# FRENCH FARM UPDATE

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In the early 1840s, when French naval vessels were stationed at Akaroa, a farm was established by navy personnel in a sheltered bay across the harbour from the town. Astonishingly, around 175 years later, one of the buildings erected on the farm still stands – but only just.

A decade ago the building was in a parlous state. A former chairman of the Trust, Steve Lowndes, declared it would be shameful if the building was lost ‘on our watch’. Over the past decade Civic Trust members have put an enormous amount of time and effort into making sure the building survives. The owners of the building have fortunately been sympathetic and allowed the Trust to work on it. The Trust has dug deep into its own pocket for materials and professional services. Had the Civic Trust not stepped in, the South Island might already have lost one of its oldest and most significant buildings. It is quite as important as the Matanaka farm buildings in Otago (owned by Heritage New Zealand) and the Deans’ Cottage in Christchurch (owned by the Christchurch City Council). It is as important historically as the mission buildings in Northland which Heritage New Zealand owns and has spent huge sums on.

It would be intolerable if the French Farm building were lost but it still needs expensive work. The task is too big and

important for a volunteer organisation like the Civic Trust to continue to carry the burden. The Trust is now considering suggesting to the City Council and Heritage New Zealand that the building be taken in hand by a public body.

The City Council and/or Heritage New Zealand would need to negotiate purchase of the building and a small parcel of land with the owner. An offer to buy the building will have to come from a body that clearly has the resources to pay a reasonable price. Hopefully, the owner will see this as a solution to the ongoing headaches the building is going to cause him and the Civic Trust if the Trust is left to do the best it can to try to preserve the building on limited resources.

The Government recently came up with around \$4 million to buy the former Kate Sheppard house in Christchurch. The French Farm building is just as important as the Kate Sheppard house. Early settlement might have less glamour than women’s suffrage, but that is no reason for the Council or Government to refuse to take the building in hand.

The immediate problem with the building is a suspect roof and the Trust may yet have to do temporary work on the building before it comes into public hands. One way or another, the Trust remains determined that the building will survive and be properly restored.



*The historically important building at French Farm. Photo: Malcolm Duff*



# ANDREW TURNER'S SPEECH

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Last year the 49th AGM of the Civic Trust was addressed by Deputy Mayor Andrew Turner on the subject of cruise ships and mass tourism. A large audience created a lively atmosphere and spirited debate. The full text of Andrew's address follows.

Good afternoon.

It is a pleasure to have been asked to speak at this AGM of the Akaroa Civic Trust. I am very aware of, and I have much respect for, the important work that this group does, and have been a regular attendee at previous AGM's where the guest speakers have been consistently excellent.

I have agreed to speak on a range of subjects which are a matter of obvious community concern and which are increasingly live issues.

I am going to spend some time discussing Akaroa cruise ships, visitor numbers, community outcomes, pressures and sustainability, and how we can better achieve the right balance. Many of the issues I will be talking about this afternoon are not unique to Akaroa. These are not just Akaroa issues - they are NZ issues.

Visitor numbers to New Zealand have increased hugely in recent years. The front page of your current newsletter has the words "Akaroa is a lovely place to visit, but for how much longer" - the same could be said of New Zealand. In terms of cruise, the number of cruise ship port calls in New Zealand, the number of visits, the number of ships, and the number of passengers on each ship, continues to grow.

New Zealand is a popular destination for cruise. Akaroa is also extremely popular and has been increasingly included on cruise itineraries. Akaroa is actually a microcosm of what is really a national challenge.

The other area where the number and type of visitors to Akaroa has been problematic has been the so-called freedom campers - and Akaroa, along with other small towns which are popular with visitors in New Zealand, is nationally acknowledged to have its fair share of problems - to be a potential freedom camping "hot spot".

The Freedom Camping Act of 2011 is not an easy piece of legislation to work with. It creates a presumption that freedom camping is allowed anywhere that it is not prevented or controlled by a bylaw. This means that prior to the passing of the freedom camping bylaw by our Council, freedom camping was allowed throughout Akaroa, throughout Banks Peninsula and throughout the City. One of the first things I did when I was elected to Council in 2013 was to move and pass a notice of motion that Council create a freedom camping bylaw. The problem with the creation of a bylaw under the local government act is that it can only be used to control a problem which exists, and has got to be the most reasonable and practical way of doing so. This passing of this bylaw allowed for freedom camping to be controlled, at least to some extent. The fact that each of the now three iterations of this bylaw has been passed with increasingly stringent restrictions shows that we have used that to deal with problems as they have been shown to exist.

I am pleased that the City Council has been able to use the bylaw to now restrict freedom camping in Akaroa to all but a small area at the entrance to the town, I am pleased that we will be actively monitoring and enforcing 24 hours a day, and that we will be issuing infringement notices to those who are breaching the rules, and I hope that we have solved the problem of freedom camping, at least for Akaroa, in the long term.

Both freedom camping and cruise also give rise to a wider debate.

Should we be restricting the number of visitors or finding some way to cap the number of visitors to the number that can reasonably be accommodated within the infrastructure we have, or should we be upgrading and adding infrastructure to cope with an ever increasing number of visitors so that we are providing a better quality of welcome to anyone who wants to come?

There is a question of finding the balance between the two, because of course, despite government initiatives such as the tourism infrastructure fund, the regional growth fund, the use of the visitor levy - the capital cost of infrastructure improvements, and possibly more importantly the ongoing operational costs, are largely borne by the local community of ratepayers, or the national community of taxpayers.

This is one of the reasons I have been reluctant to simply build more toilet blocks to cope with increasing numbers of freedom campers or cruise ship visitors - ratepayers would largely fund these, and I'm not sure that providing more and more infrastructure for more and more visitors is what we should be doing.

So now let me turn to the issue of cruise. We say that Akaroa stepped up to take the cruise vessels booked in 2011 after the February earthquake left Lyttelton unable to take cruise ships due to damage to the Port. Akaroa did take those vessels, and in doing so kept Christchurch, Canterbury, and to some extent the South Island, on cruise itineraries. And Akaroa has done a great job of doing so, and should be thanked for this.

I also realise that there are some, maybe many, who say that Akaroa has had the cruise ships and their passengers imposed on it without any consultation with the community - this is something which has happened to Akaroa rather than with Akaroa, and that it is simply unacceptable.

So yes - Akaroa has stepped up, whether everyone likes it or not. Groups like ADP and people like the cruise ambassadors have done a great job of making passengers as welcome as possible in Akaroa. The quality of welcome is important, because in an ideal situation if Akaroa is to get real benefit from these cruise ship visits, surely we want some of the passengers to choose to come back as free independent travellers in future - to stay in our accommodation businesses and to dine in our restaurants and drink in our bars and coffee shops - in turn keeping these businesses alive and available to the locals. But not everyone would afford the same quality of welcome to the cruise visitors.

There have been interviews, newspaper articles, deputations to the community board, discussions at various meetings and in social media that demonstrate that the welcome is not so warm. That is because - for some at least - the social licence to operate is fast diminishing.

If we take a scale of opinion in Akaroa there would be some businesses for example right at one end of the scale who love the cruise ship visits - maybe whose existence as a viable business even depends on them - who would love as many passengers as possible to be in the town as often as possible.

At the other end of the scale there are others who would be happy never to see a cruise ship in our harbour again. Again this a question of finding the balance. I would suggest that it is not the number of ships, but the distribution of the visits and the number of passengers which are the numbers we should be looking at, and the economic benefit to the town.





We should, in my view, also be looking at the type of ship, and the demographic of the passenger. Because surely a smaller number of smaller ships, with a smaller number of higher value passengers on board, passengers who are interested in food and drink, culture and heritage, amenity and environment, are the kind of passengers who are best suited to Akaroa and that Akaroa is best suited to. The opportunity to get this right comes with the completion of the Lyttelton cruise berth in October 2020.

On the most recent update on that project I have had, the project remains on target to be ready for the 2020 season. Having spent around \$60m on NZ's first bespoke cruise berth, of course we want that to be used. We want it to be used well, and we want it to be used by the kind of ships it was designed for - big ones.

My expectation, and this is based on good grounds, is that the larger vessels will prefer Lyttelton over Akaroa once the cruise berth is operational. It is often said that the passengers will still want to come to Akaroa because they love it. That may be the case. But the cruise lines are a commercial business - a huge commercial business - and they will go where they can make the most money. The sale of shore excursions on board ship is where the cruise lines make a large proportion of their profit. And that will be much more viable in Lyttelton than it is in Akaroa. We know that the passengers love Akaroa. We also know that those who do take excursions don't love their journey to and from Akaroa on SH75. This issue, along with getting the berthage fees right and in balance with what we want to achieve, will drive behaviours which, after October 2020, will see the right balance achieved. We need to get this right from both sides - to allow for a level of visitation which the community can be comfortable with, and also one which sustains the Akaroa economy, an economy which provides choice for residents in terms of hospitality and retail businesses which are to some extent supported by visitors which in turn support their prosperity or even viability, and an economy which provides local work, often for our young people.

I don't want to be here in 2-3 years time having a conversation which is very different - one which is about concern about Akaroa business being difficult, on a knife-edge, even with some businesses closing because of a lack of visitors. Back to where the ships will choose to go - Some vessels already go to Lyttelton - around 20 this season and increasing - and berth in the inner harbour. That will continue to happen. The large vessels, which can only use the new designated berth, will inevitably choose Lyttelton. Some will only be able to use Lyttelton - these are ships currently not visiting the South Island or possibly even NZ as we cannot accommodate them here.

There will not be the opportunity for a double large cruise ship day in Lyttelton - the cruise berth will only be able to accommodate one of these large ships. It is on these days that Akaroa will continue to see a large ship from time to time, but we do not expect that there will be any more double cruise ship days in Akaroa. Some ships chose to call at Akaroa pre earthquake - by choice rather than by necessity. These ships will continue to do so. There may be some itineraries with both Lyttelton and Akaroa on them - Lyttelton for Christchurch and Canterbury, and Akaroa for Akaroa and Banks Peninsula.

Finding the balance between getting the value from the Lyttelton investment, getting the right number and type of ship and number and type of passenger into Lyttelton and into Akaroa, the economic effect and the social effect, and acknowledging there needs to be a wider social licence to operate, will all be important.

So 2020 is our opportunity to define and influence what the new normal looks like. I realise that is another whole summer season away, however we need to start working on it now - and in fact work has already started with LPC, the cruise line and Christchurch NZ and Cruise New Zealand, to ensure that things are planned well in advance and that they play out as intended and expected, and that we do get the balance right.

We need to take a destination management approach - and this applies to both Akaroa and to Lyttelton - rather than a destination marketing approach. And Christchurch NZ, as a new organisation, are planning to do just that - and do it collaboratively - in a way that has not previously been done. In the meantime, and we see it today

with around 8000 passengers on board the two ships that are in the Harbour today, it is the double cruise ship days that continue to cause particular frustration.

Well canvassed has been the inability of Ecan to control the ship visits other than from a maritime safety viewpoint, and the inability of the City Council to control the ship visits other than through restricting use of the wharf for health and safety reasons. But what has not so fully been explored is working with the cruise lines to ensure that we try to avoid double cruise ship days - which we know don't work well for the passengers, for the cruise lines, for the businesses, or for Akaroa in general, that cruise itineraries are planned to avoid double bookings, and so that the industry sees Akaroa at its best, and so that Akaroa gets the best benefit, and least impact, from the passengers.

It is only through engaging with the industry that we will be able to achieve this - and that is exactly what ChristchurchNZ is doing. Because itineraries are locked in it might be hard to promise change this season, but next season there is a real possibility of better itinerary management, of more ships going to Lyttelton, and of better outcomes for Akaroa.

ChristchurchNZ is a new agency, with a new leadership team and a new strategy, and this is a new approach. It is an approach which I expect Akaroa will welcome. It is also an approach which I know some in Akaroa will say cannot happen soon enough. This is about working with the cruise industry and the tourism sector - in this case particularly around development of tourism policy - to ensure that outcomes are sustainable and support not only good economic outcomes for the city and region. But also good social outcomes for communities like Akaroa. That we find the balance that we restore what I refer to as the social licence to operate.

We know that on a day like today, of the 8000 passengers, typically one third will stay on board ship, one third will go on a pre-booked excursion, and one third will come ashore independently of any pre booked tour. What we don't know is the economic impact. Christchurch NZ will be doing some work on that over the first couple of months of the new calendar year, so that we can correctly quantify the economic benefit to Akaroa, Lyttelton, City, and Region and so that we can use robust information to guide these next steps. Market view data will be collected to understand what is being spent on a cruise ship day, vs a non cruise ship day. We need to get that certainty, and it will take a month or two to gather the data so that this is robust. Pre earthquake, when cruise was predominantly visiting Lyttelton, my experience as a commercial building and business owner in Lyttelton was that we wanted to see more business from the cruise ships when they were in port whereas largely we were frustrated by passengers being bussed into town.

Lyttelton will want to make sure it gets a decent number of passengers staying in the town - and that will require a destination marketing approach.

Akaroa will want to make sure it doesn't get too many passengers and that the quality of welcome is good - and that will require a destination management approach.

I have heard the concerns of Akaroa on a number of aspects of this "finding the balance" debate, and has been a pleasure to talk about and discuss this further here today.





## IN MEMORIAM 2019

*Akaroa has been fortunate to have had the support of many talented and committed individuals over the years. Sadly some are no longer with us.*

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*Takapuneke Historic Reserve. Photo: Victoria Andrews*

It is timely to acknowledge the passing this year of **Peter de Latour**, former Chairman of the Akaroa County Council and member of the Civic Trust, **Margaret Chaney**, long serving Civic Trust board member and patron, **George Waitai Tikao**, former chairman of Onuku Runanga, **John Perenara Tainui**, former board member of the Civic Trust and member of Onuku Runanga, **Patricia Glausiuss**, widow of former

Civic Trust chairman Gilbert Glausiuss, and **Maurice White**, founder of the Maurice White Native Forest Trust.

The various contributions made to the region by these people can be seen in the retention of numerous historic buildings and cottage gardens in the town and in the preservation of Akaroa's beautiful harbour setting and of the countryside surrounding the town.



*Gilbert and Trish Glausiuss, Akaroa 2016. Photo: Angus Davis*



*Pere Tainui, Karaweko, Onuku Marae. Photo: Angus Davis 2017*

It is timely to acknowledge the contribution of private property owners who work to maintain their cottages and gardens. Their effort forms an integral part of the town's lovely streetscape in conjunction with commercial buildings and Council owned public facilities. It is important that Akaroa remains a pleasant place for residents as well as attracting domestic and international visitors to Banks Peninsula. Over the years it has been a pleasure and honour to form a working relationship with members of Onuku Marae who are always gracious hosts to the local community as well as visitors on Waitangi Day commemorations.