

NORTH SHORE GREY POWER

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WINTER ISSUE 2022



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GREY POWER
NORTH SHORE

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Alan McCulloch
Bill Atkinson

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:
Letters to the Editor are welcome on matters relevant to our senior community.

They must include the writer's name, address and phone number, and should not exceed 130 words. We may not always print all letters we receive and they may be edited for length and clarity. And courtesy is our watchword.

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President's Word

Great to back in touch with you all in these difficult times.

This magazine is the first step in what is the major shift in the way we communicate and operate as Grey Power on the Shore that we have talked about for two years catching up with the digital age that the world now functions in.

The COVID pandemic lockdowns have caused us stresses and delays that have been frustrating. But as we look at the current turbulent times, both here and overseas, we need to count our blessings and realise how fortunate most of us are, particularly living on the North Shore. Not in the horrors of the Ukraine, caught up in the protests at Parliament, or even up to our ears in water as our East Coast Kiwi families have been.

Our perceived difficulties are minor irritants, the pandemic is easing, and we are on our way.

More than ever there is a critical need for an effective senior voice, both nationally, in Auckland and in our special patch on the Shore.

As well as the core focus on seniors issues, Grey Power has always been involved with broader community affairs, and a major part of its activity is involvement with Auckland Council affairs and issues. We also work with the many Auckland Ministers and MPs. Our "modernisation" will make this much more relevant and effective.

Right now we are involved with Council on their annual planning process. Also on the direction of the two museums, Auckland Museum and MOTAT, on the need for a better presentation of the history of Auckland, the story of our lives. And very recently the possible loss of the Showgrounds and the Easter Show through the Cornwall Park Trust Board needing to lease the area commercially to cover costs of running Cornwall Park.

Another key focus is promoting the activities of other senior groups many of whom are struggling. One of our plans is to re-establish the Shore Senior Forum connecting senior groups which Age Concern and Grey Power established in the North Shore City days but which got lost in the transition to the Super City.

We will be working closely with Age Concern, with rented space in their Milford office, our email newsletter will be operating very soon, with an updated Facebook presence, and a new website.

The new Orange COVID regime has just been announced as I am writing this and it is wonderful to be able to be having our May 27th meeting the first in a year.

The magazine is a first up with a significant learning curve, and is probably a bit 'heavy' especially when compared with Des Stobb's earlier quirky newsletters. Comment and suggestions welcome for future editions.

Thank you so much for your support for Grey Power in these interesting times.

Bill Rayner | President

SUBSCRIPTION RENEWALS
for year to March 31st, 2023

Your annual subscription notices were sent out in the February newsletter. Thank you for those of you who have already paid, just on 1200.

As well as your sub payment we need to update our phone and email date base. Payments should preferably be paid online direct to the Grey Power bank account

Westpac A/c 03 0181 0167968 00
and include your membership number and name

Then email: **greypowerns@gmail.com**
to advise payment and include:

Name
Membership Number
Phone number
Email address

Also indicate quarterly newsletter preference with: "Digital" or "Printed"

Payment can be made over the counter at Westpac in Takapuna or other branches not that there are many left, or dropped into the Age Concern office at 177B Shakespeare Rd.

If you are unable to make payment online by yourself or with help from family or carers, phone Dave Moore on 444-8186 or Bill Rayner or Anne Martin on 445 3370 to sort out.

Email Follow Up for Sub
Payments Needed

Many of the subs paid directly to the bank account did not email the office with details of email, phone or newsletter preference. Some will not have email but the numbers suggest that some of you overlooked this – if you are guilty could you please send the details now as we need to get our email data base completed

NEW MEMBERS Go to the Grey Power Federation website: **www.greypower.co.nz**
Fill out the online form and this will automatically be sent to us. You will then receive and email or phone call from us to give you your sub payment options.

Quarterly Meeting

Friday, May 27th, 1 pm
Netball North Harbour

It is with considerable pleasure we are able to have our first meeting in twelve months – it will be under the relaxed April COVID Red conditions with masks necessary, and vaccine passes will not be needed. Hopefully we will move to Orange for the meeting.

Kevin Lamb
CEO, Age Concern
An outline of Age Concern services and activities

Annual General Meeting
Reports and Election of Officers

We invite you and your friends to stay and enjoy our refreshments.



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The Peggy & Friends Story

In the Depression of the 1930's, when radio was king, a National Radio campaign hosted by Aunt Molly, Aunt Daisy's colleague, encouraged listeners to begin knitting wool blankets for the poor and vulnerable, in the form of six inch squares. Thousands of these squares, known as "Peggy Squares" were sewn into blankets by volunteers and distributed to those people in need in those difficult times.

Jump forward seventy plus years later to the North Shore and Rodney where Auckland Community Development Co-ordinator, Lynn Dawson of Devonport, decided that with child poverty increasing in New Zealand, a copycat campaign would get community groups together to again knit Peggy Squares for children in their communities who would benefit from nice warm colourful Peggy Square blanket. Again the lounges of Kiwi homes, cafes, libraries, community houses and retirement villages became the hubs for the creation of beautiful hand crafted wool blankets.

During the winter months of 2012 – 2014 more than a thousand Peggy Purl blankets were distributed through such organisations as Womens Refuge, Grandparents Raising Grandchildren, Community Nursing, the Wilson Home, marae and the Helensville Birthing Unit. In 2015 with a Jetstar Flying Start grant, new groups were formed with knitters joining together to share their involvement and meet new friends to make ANZAC Poppies to commemorate the WW1 years and sold to raise funds for more wool for the blankets.

Since then thousands of blankets and other knitwear items have been created and distributed.

It is the perfect antidote to our 'throwaway' society with a great reward in creating something from scratch,

especially when it is for the benefit of the young and vulnerable. Groups of knitters are empowered and enriched by the challenge of knit, natter and create.

Knitting has many great health benefits, and residents of rest homes and hospital units are being encouraged to get involved.

Two things to do:

Get involved and meet for a cuppa and a chat knitting Peggy Squares for the vulnerable children in your community. Establish, or join, a group in your local community or retirement village. Resources packs are provided to get you started.

Also any wool and yarn no longer needed will be gratefully received by the groups getting established. With so many of us 'down-sizing', or thinking about it, there is no doubt a treasure trove of unused wool in the back of our collective cupboards. Dig it out now.

**For more information and a start point
contact Lynn Dawson
09 446 1269 | Lynn.bip@xtra.co.nz**



Where To Now? – Help Needed

Outlined in the President's Word was a brief outline of the new programme being put in place for Grey Power North Shore and additional assistance from our members is needed to make it all happen.

As well as our normal committee, we have an office with Age Concern in Milford, an expanded digital newsletter, Facebook and a website to maintain, a plan for a broader spread of meetings across the wider North Shore, and an more active community affairs involvement.

It is an evolving programme, and our immediate needs are for volunteer support for our Milford office, new committee members at our AGM, and some social media savvy helpers for our Facebook and website operation.

Milford Office – 177 Shakespeare Rd.

The new office with Age Concern is the operating base for Grey Power with a computer and phone installed. A major advantage of working with Age Concern is that there is the lively company of the Age Concern staff and not the isolation of working in a small office with one or two people. The office will provide an administrative centre primarily to maintain the membership database and provide a public contact point.

We will have a co-ordinator, currently committee member Gloria Howe, supported by a group of volunteer members on a roster to work in the office. The workload will be light with mornings only attendance. Basic computer experience will be needed, although other assistance will be needed from time to time.

Committee members Gloria Howe and Raewyn Niven are working on the database development and email tree phase at the moment and help is needed with this one-off exercise as well.

If you are willing to help please phone Gloria Howe 489-9571 or email greypowers@gmail.com

AGM – Committee Elections

Our normal annual meeting process is coming up on May 27th – with the retirement of Des Stobbs, a major multi-tasker, we have a number of key positions to fill on the committee, particularly the Treasurer role. We are also moving into a more active and dynamic role in the community and younger digitally savvy and community connected people are needed. It will be a very interesting time.

Nominations are called for:

President
Vice-President
Secretary
Treasurer
Committee Members

The Treasurer role is currently vacant. We also need a reviewer/auditor for our annual accounts.

Please contact President Bill Rayner for nomination forms or for expressions of interest/ further information. Phone: 445 3370
Email: brayner@xtra.co.nz

Social Media/Communications Assistance

We need members who can assist in the operation and material creation for our Facebook and website developments. These will be set up by professional IT people, but we need support groups for Facebook and the website operation, and also people interested in helping with the magazine and newsletter production and media publicity.

This is a critical element of our new activity and will be very interesting.

Please contact Bill Rayner Phone 445 3370 to discuss.

Grey Power North Shore is the fourth largest Association in New Zealand, and the largest in Auckland and has played a significant part in the local community activity and political environment both as a voice for seniors and on broader community issues.

We have a very strong connection with Auckland Council as well as with Auckland MP's.

This is a great opportunity to be part of this serious community advocacy work, and making a difference.

Your involvement and assistance is important – please step up and give us a hand.



New Zealand Super

– Historical Truths and Fallacies

As debate rages in the media as to the sustainability of NZ Super, it can be useful to look back at some facts and fallacies from our history of a universal superannuation entitlement.

1. As a past taxpayer, I have paid for my NZ Super and am entitled to it.

- **False.** While many of us may have started work understanding that part of our tax was set aside for our future NZ Super payments, this is not the reality anymore. On 1 April 1969 the Social Security Tax was absorbed into general Income tax, and the existing universal Superannuation Benefit was then funded entirely from general taxation. This situation continues today where the taxation from current workers enables the payment of NZ Super to retirees. On 1 April 1990 National Superannuation was renamed Guaranteed Retirement Income and there was a move to ring-fence this income by a special retirement tax, initially set at 7.5c in the dollar. This initiative was short-lived with National repealing this in June 1991.

2. Annual increases in NZ Super are not based on annual Cost of Living increases.

- **True.** Currently under the NZ Superannuation and Retirement Income Act 2001, the annual adjustment of NZS is set to ensure that the married rate (after tax) is not less than 66% or more than 72.5% of the average ordinary time weekly wage (after tax). Interestingly legislation used to stipulate that the range was to be between 65% and 72.5% of the average wage, but the government in April 2007, as a result of a Confidence and Supply Agreement with NZ First, moved the lower limit to 66%. Treasury in its latest consultation document (He Tirohanga Mokopuna 2021), as well as many commentators, are claiming that if the NZS was no longer linked to the average weekly wage, but be limited to COL adjustments, that the future “burden” of NZS would be significantly lowered. Grey Power is opposed to this blunt instrument which would

significantly disadvantage those who currently struggle to live in dignity with NZS as their sole, or dominant income – particularly seniors who are living alone and/or renting.

3. There was a time when NZS was calculated as 80% of the before tax Average weekly wage.

- **True.** In August 1978 National Superannuation for a married couple was increased from 70% to 80% of the average ordinary time weekly wage! A year later it was reduced to become 80% of the after-tax average weekly wage! In 1990 when National Superannuation was renamed Guaranteed Retirement Income, the calculation was reduced to be between 65 and 72.5% of the net average wage. In April 1999 the rate paid fell to only 62.7% of the average wage. The calculation of the base for NZS for married couples has fluctuated over the years but has been consistent since 2007 at 66% of the net average weekly wage.

4. NZS is an entitlement, not a benefit.

- **False.** I can hear the howls of indignation and anticipate some interesting feedback on this one. I acknowledge that it is not simple. The NZ Superannuation & Retirement Income Act 2001 states very clearly that “Every person is **entitled** to receive New Zealand superannuation who attains the age of 65 years”, provided they also meet the current residency requirements. However later in the legislation it clearly uses the words “entitlement” and “benefit” interchangeably. In Section 31 “**Entitlement to be paid New Zealand superannuation in specified Pacific country**” it includes the following “A person **entitled** to receive New Zealand superannuation is entitled to be paid the **benefit** in a specified Pacific country at....” The 2 words are used interchangeably and consequently on the WINZ website (<https://www.workandincome.govt.nz/products/benefit-rates/benefit-rates-july-2021.html>) both NZ Super and Veteran’s Pensions are included in the list of “Benefits”. So, perhaps the correct statement is that “NZS is an entitlement that is paid as a benefit to those who qualify.”

If you have questions about NZS that you would like answered please don’t hesitate to contact me.

David Marshall

Chair Superannuation and Taxation
National Advisory Group.

Grey Power Flashback 2019



North Shore/Warkworth team at Devonport returning from a Grey Power meeting on Waiheke Island – a few rude comments about the potential of fruit flies taking over from Auckland Council.

Meeting with Minister of Social Development Hon. Carmel Sepuloni for briefing on National Superannuation and Benefits Increase from April 1st.



GP North Shore President Bill Rayner and Secretary Anne Martin with GP Auckland colleagues Lingappa Kalburgi and Nanette Nathoo, and GP Federation Board Member David Marshall.

**Deep thought of today:
When you clean out a
vacuum cleaner.
You become a vacuum cleaner.**

Senior Focus Planetfm 104.6

The radio voice of the
Auckland Senior Community

Sundays 5.25 pm

Tune to Senior Focus for policies and events that are relevant to our senior community presented by Anne marie Coury, former Grey Power Auckland Chair now on the Shore. An advocate for Seniors wellbeing with a background in public sector policy, health, and education.

Great interviews
and programmes.



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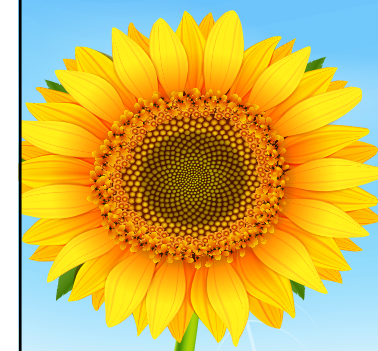
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Cost Increase Outlook for Seniors Grim

We are all very aware of the increasing prices for our basic living costs with supermarket and fuel prices going up, and overall inflation predicted to be over 7% for the upcoming year. The uncertainties of the ongoing COVID pandemic impact and the Russia-Ukraine can only add to the problem.

Auckland Council rates for 2022/23 are currently being established with an anticipated average rate rise for residential properties being of 6.02 per cent, but the Council predicts that 53% of properties will be below that.

The rates are based on the new property valuations at June 2021, the previous valuation being in 2017. The overall increase in average property values across the city was 34%. However this increase was not evenly spread so some areas of the city will have higher increases than others. In Mangere-Otahuhu the average increase would be 13.3%, \$346 more, and in Henderson-Massey the average increase will be 12.9% or \$321 a year more.

The average income of this area was \$35,200, well short of the more affluent areas like Devonport at \$45,800. Average rates for Devonport-Takapuna are expected to increase by 4.6% to \$4,268.

Areas with the smallest average increases included Hibiscus and Bays, and Upper Harbour, increasing by 0.2% to \$3,082, and 1.6% to \$3,243 respectively. Kaipatiki faces an increase of 4.9% to \$2,954.

Watercare are increasing basic water prices by 7% taking the average household water bill to \$1,224, with infrastructure growth charges by 8%, and the fixed wastewater charges by 7% as well.

Watercare are in the second year of a 10 year programme to raise household water bills by 111% , from an average of \$1,069 to \$2,263 by 2031.

There are also additional charges for the rubbish collection now moving onto a fixed charge instead of paying for what is put out for collection, and a new food scraps collection.

Apart from ‘normal’ inflationary increases, the removal of the Government low use power plans introduced twenty years ago from July 1 will see at least 40% of Kiwi households facing a jump in their power bills. Those whose power use is very low will be hardest hit. Power companies can now double the daily fixed charge rate of 30 cents per day to 60 cents, which is an increase of \$110 over the next year.

And the pain won’t end there. For those consumers currently on low fixed charge rates, prices will continue to rise each year over the next four years. A consumer currently paying 30 cents a day \$110 a year) for lines charges can expect to be paying \$1.80 a day (around \$660 a year) in 2026.

Households with gas connections who therefore don’t use as much electricity are being double hard hit as their gas bills are expected to jump by an average of \$55 a year over the next four years.

It is more important than ever to shop around for electricity and gas plans. Consumer are currently updating their Powerswitch website

www.powerswitch.org.nz

a free and independent electricity and gas price comparison tool which makes the job easy.



Australia Have a Government Home Equity Scheme - NZ Should Follow Suit.

National Superannuation provides a basic income which in the current inflationary times is hardly adequate and many seniors struggle to make ends meet. Those faced with renting accommodation are in real difficulty. The recent very low return on bank term deposits have significantly reduced the spending power of many of us.

Grey Power in Auckland have regular meetings with Auckland Ministers and MPs for discussion on local issues and to share ideas.

One idea put forward was to have a \$10,000 a year Government loan scheme for superannuants to top up the National Superannuation, secured against their home, this extra funding providing a degree of comfort, at a modest interest rate.

Reverse mortgages are available from some banks for seniors owning their own homes but are not suitable for everyone. Current interest rates for Heartland are 6.45%.

It turns out that the Australian Government has a very similar scheme for their retirees, the Home Equity Access Scheme, formerly known as the Pension Loan Scheme provided by their Department of Human Resources. This allows them to borrow up to 150% of the maximum Age Pension paid fortnightly with a maximum per year of \$36,122 for a single person and \$54,452 for couples. The maximum loan is 20% of their house value at age 65 rising by an additional 1% a year as they grow older.

The current interest rate is 3.95%

Australia does have quite a different pension system and higher income levels, but with the astronomical value of our houses, and the financial stresses facing many seniors, a similar scheme provided by the Ministry of Social Development should be put in place

The releasing of some of their property value, at a modest interest rate, to provide a more comfortable primary living standard would be of great benefit and a sense of security in these difficult times for many of our senior community.

At a very recent meeting with the Hon Carmel Sepuloni, Minister for Social Development, she was made aware of the Australian scheme and was very interested. Details have been passed on to her office. We will continue to work with her to hopefully reach a successful conclusion.

Ancestral Mathematics

In order to be born you needed:

- 2 parents | 4 grandparents
- 8 great-grandparents
- 16 second great-grandparents
- 32 third great-grand-parents
- 64 fourth great-grandparents
- 128 fifth great-grandparents
- 264 sixth great-grandparents
- 512 seventh great-grandparents
- 1,024 eighth great-grandparents
- 2,048 ninth great-grandparents

For you to be here today from 12 previous generations you needed a total of 4,094 ancestors over the last 300 or so years.

Think for a moment – How many struggles? How many battles? How many tragedies? How much sadness? How much happiness? How many love stories? How many expressions of hope for the future? – did your our ancestors have to undergo for you to be here today? And that is only to 1600, the tail end of the eternal process. Lots of good luck as well to have made it. Especially lucky to be living on the Shore instead of Somalia, so count your blessings in these difficult times.



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stateofgracefunerals.co.nz

Community Comment

Trish Deans **Devonport-Takapuna Local Board**

In my small personal budget world, as a superannuant, I can't overspend. It's simple, I budget for the essentials and add a margin for extras. It seems that Auckland's Council Controlled Organisations can't fathom these basic concepts of responsible management as they proceed to warn of budget blowouts. And, as a result, it becomes reasonable to ask is the tail wagging the dog?

AT's bosses tell us our transport system is near collapse and somehow, it's not their fault. Covid has driven down passenger numbers, so income is down. This, combined with high inflation and rising costs means AT is on the brink of disaster and these factors are to blame. I have difficulty accepting AT didn't have the foresight to remove non-essential projects during such a national emergency.

Yes, we all hope for Auckland to have a public transport service that will allow residents to become regular passengers. AT has the largest CCO budget to enable them to reach this goal. But I'm appalled at the wasteful use of funds on extravagant schemes of dubious value, where the initial concept is unsound and the costs outweigh the benefits.

Last week AT boldly announced a master parking plan for Auckland. It would have known then that they were strapped for cash and might not have the capacity to deliver these changes. In this environment Auckland's Councillors accepted the new plans. The public voiced its response in the only way it can and told their stories of the consequences on their local businesses. A local butcher described his distress as he predicted the closure of his shop, and in response was sharply told by AT his customers could park down the side streets. AT showed little concern or empathy for this individual's future or for the other affected businesses.

Over the past year AT and Eke Panuku have carried out many projects. But the cost of these projects have not been revealed or evaluated, and no questions asked of their public benefit. It is, after all, the public purse that has been spent. As residents we only hear about the actual cost of projects through a media request for information or from a dedicated local who tracked down information through the Official Information process. Local Boards are never told the costs of such projects or the breakdown of the stages of a project. AT and Eke Panuku can hold hand on heart and tell you they have dutifully undergone the Auckland Council

"Have Your Say" consultation process. It's just that the number of participants is often low and the questions are often a diversion rather than seeking a frank response.

The following projects have either been unsuccessful or widely criticised by residents; Development work for the now defunct harbour bridge cycleway cost millions, \$14m per km for the cycleway connecting Pt Chev and Westmere is exorbitant and needs to be evaluated, as is a \$6.5m Mt Albert town centre development that is described by locals as a failure to deliver what the community wanted.

I can't ignore the costs associated with Eke Panuku's projects to improve streetscapes. In Takapuna's Huron and Northcroft Streets, blue or orange spots are painted on the tar-seal and three giant concrete flowerpots sit centrally with potted palms to act as a wind barrier. The palms died. Eke Panuku shouldn't be in the business of street design, costing hundreds of thousands, or attempting to install wind breaks which don't work. This exercise was repeated in Henderson with the same disastrous outcome? In most cases residents are left baffled, scratching their heads and fuming as they watch the public money wasted in schemes they see as frivolous. It shouldn't be like this. Ratepayers are being fed the news of increasing cost in drips and drabs. Watercare announced its rise of 7% for households this week, sandwiched between the other messages of the next rates increase. It seems there is a belief that if you release the increasing costs of Council rates and CCO demands for more money in a drip-like manner then the residents will accept the crushing news.

It is reasonable to ask is the tail wagging the dog?

Trish Deans is a current member of the Devonport Takapuna Local Board, ex Chair of Devonport Heritage, a leading Auckland heritage advocate, and retired senior secondary school teacher.



Looking For a Late In Life OE ? Become a Grandparent in the US.

A quirky note from my son Peter in America – The town of Greensburg, Indiana is offering "Grandparents on Demand" in a bid to attract new residents to their town

Greensburg, Indiana, is located 60 miles from Cincinnati where Peter and his family live. With a population of 12,000 as well as grandparents the town is offering a \$5,000 cash incentive to lure in new residents.

Mayor Tammi Wenning is on a mission to sell Greensburg as the perfect place to live: a small town with a busy and quaint down town

square. Other incentives include a year's membership of the YMCA, gift cards for the seasonal farmers market, and tickets to shows at the local playhouse.

She thought 'What if somebody comes here and has a child, and they don't have a grandma? We are not going to let a kid go without a grandma or grandpa.'

Her programme is called Grandparents on Demand and the town will help match new residents with volunteers who could help with child care, and attend the Grandparents Day at school.

It is not clear whether grandparents moving to Greensburg would also get \$5,000 plus the other goodies but if the incentives work they might be short of grandmas. If you are looking for a change who knows.

Maybe the change would be a bit much as Indiana is as flat as a pancake and the nearest beach is 600 miles away. Great for mobility scooters.

Bill Rayner

Grey Power's Colourful Postage Stamps

Many of our members are delighted with the colourful old fashioned stamps we use on our newsletters, and ask where they come from.

Sadly stamp collecting is a dying hobby and it is possible to purchase stamp dealers surplus stocks of commemorative stamps intended for collectors at a substantial discount to the face values. The stamps are still valid for normal postage and we have made a significant saving with the current high letter postage rates by using the stamps.

Like many Kiwis in simpler times, I collected stamps as a youngster, and continued with the hobby for many years. The sad downside to our gain was highlighted by a call from a member asking what to do with her husband's extensive collection.

The hard truth is that collecting is now a niche specialist hobby, and these collections now have little value except for the rarer and special stamps. I recently attended an Auckland Philatelic Society auction to look at selling off part of my collection. It was a real shock to find out how very low the offers were.

Interestingly a box of 50 Telecom phone cards used before mobile phones became universal and a collecting fad some years ago are now worthless, the whole box selling for \$1.

A sneaky tip: NZ post don't frank the envelopes with the stamps on – you could soak them off and use them again !! Nah, not a good idea.



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and
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Parliament Needs More Senior SuperGold MPs

Last month I mentioned the loss of our broader heritage and community character because of the rapidly changing times our senior community faces, particularly in Auckland.

Seniors are being shut out of the public and political dialogue, benignly but effectively.

Because of the “dehumanisation” of the digital age and the dominance of the Internet and social media with its open access, immediacy, and information overload, our politicians, both national and local, are now detached from the community.

The 2020 Auckland Council Have Your Say consultation process for their Annual Budget received only 4,765 submissions from Auckland’s 1.6 million people.

The election cycle is upon us with local body elections in October and the Parliamentary election is next year with candidate selection processes getting into gear.

Celebrating “Diversity” is the flavour of the month, particularly in Parliament. The only “diverse” community missing out is the senior age group with I believe only two SuperGold MPs, Speaker Trevor Mallard, and Ian McKelvie, National MP for Rangatikei.

That represents 1.2% of Parliament, and the Speaker does not vote.

By contrast the Maori ‘caucus’ has 23 MPs, 19% of Parliament, the ‘Ethnic’ community. I estimate as 19 MP’s, including 8 Pasifika, 16%, the Rainbow community 12, 10%, and 59 women MP’s, 49%.

The very recent Age Friendly Tamaki Makaurau Action Plan included the following population growth statistics for Auckland.

	Total	Over 65	%
2018	1,572,000	189,000	12.0
2023 (+ 5 years)	1,859,000	252,000	13.6
2033 (+ 15 years)	2,112,000	353,000	16.7
2043 (+ 25 years)	2,320,000	432,800	18.6

Assuming the same over 65 percentages are similar nationally, there should be 16 SuperGold MPs in the current Parliament rising to 22 in 20 years time. Taking the voting age being 18 into account, an additional 3 MPs should be added if the voting population was the base.

With the high percentage of the electorate being seniors who tend to vote, and the modern focus on

“diversity” and “inclusion” it is curious that the political parties are not more pro-active in ensuring senior representation on their Party lists in particular.

This will be brought to their attention.

Our generation, in the curious layering of the generations, is the “Silent Generation” born between 1925 and 1945, blending with the top end of the Baby Boomers, 1945 -1964.

The Baby Boomers are are being blamed for all the troubles of the times by the Millenials, Generation Y, the 1981 – 1996 generation. We have Generation Zero and the Greens calling for the voting age to be dropped to 16.

The lack of voice for the senior community is particularly serious in the current political and community environment where a protest of some sort and associated media exposure seems necessary to get publicity and action from our politicians.

It is not only the value of the experience, wisdom and connection with the community that a senior cohort could bring to Parliament, it would recognise the current Government focus on the Maori way of doing things.

Maori along with the Asian and Pasifika communities have an inherent respect and revered place in their social systems for their kaumatua and kuia, their senior members. The authority of the “aunties” in the whanau is absolute and legendary. In those communities very little is done without the input and consideration of the elders.

Also the local body voting system needs an over haul – there was a time when the old adage “He who pays the piper, calls the tune.” had some relevance, but no longer in the Super City environment. Residential ratepayers are increasingly bearing the cost of the major infrastructure costs of the future, putting pressure on senior home owners with limited incomes which needs to be alleviated.

Grey Power is proposing in the current planning process for a freezing of rates at 65 for senior ratepayers, a concession common overseas, and a significant improvement in the rates rebate scheme.

The situation needs to change – maybe we do need to crank up our mobility scooters and wheelchairs, brandish our walking sticks, and crash the barriers on the Harbour Bridge.

Let’s try more senior MP’s first.

Bill Rayner | President Grey Power North Shore

The Retirement Villages Association (RVA) has recently completed a national programme of meetings with retirement village residents to share its *Blueprint for the Future*.

The blueprint, which was launched last year, includes providing residents with a stronger voice, strengthening the complaints process and working with the Te Ara Ahunga Ora – Retirement Commission (formerly the Commission for Financial Capability) to monitor re-licensing times so best practice standards can be developed.



The forums in Tauranga, Wellington, Christchurch and Auckland were chaired by former Seniors Minister and MP the Hon Tracey Martin, who has recently stepped down as an independent member of the RVA’s Executive Committee.

RVA Executive Director John Collins said the meetings were extremely positive and excellent progress was being made with the industry collaborative approach aimed at addressing residents’ concerns and issues. “We understand that a review of any legislation as proposed by the Retirement Commission is appropriate at some time but we have always felt that more pressing issues currently exist for government,” said Mr Collins.

“The growth of our sector, the fact more than 100 Kiwis are choosing to move into a retirement village every week and the overwhelming satisfaction levels among residents clearly demonstrates we have struck the right balance between robust regulatory oversight and effective self-governance.

“However, we accept there is always room for improvement and refinement around certain practices as our sector and our offering evolves. The blueprint sets out the tangible and definitive steps we will be taking to achieve that goal.”

The Blueprint for Change addresses weekly fees (fixed or a predictable increase, ceasing when a unit is vacated), commits to making sure operators re-licence vacant units as quickly as possible, pledges to ensure the terms around transfers to care are transparent, and addresses and perceived or real “unfair” clauses in Occupation Right Agreements (ORAs).

Mr Collins and RVA president Graham Wilkinson attended all forums to give presentations and answer questions.

A frequent question was around the role of Statutory Supervisors – who monitor the financial position of a village and the security of residents’ interests.

“There appears to be a lack of clear understanding over the legislative role of the Supervisor and the RVA will explore how we can improve awareness and understanding of this,” said Mr Collins.

Other points included the use of ‘re-licensing gains’, transparency around the business income and outgoings and greater ability to negotiate terms of ORAs. Mr Collins and Mr Wilkinson addressed all points, providing details wherever possible on where residents could access the information they required. “We agree there is a role for continuously educating operators and residents about the re-licensing process and to encourage best practice including dealing with potential drawn-out re-licensing times,” said Mr Collins.

Ms Martin said the RVA has committed to exploring what more could be done to support a more streamlined transfer to care both inside the sector and where they could with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Social Development. “The retirement villages sector agrees that the move to care should be transparent. The RVA is identifying where improvements can be made, and will work with operators and regulators to ensure the process around the move is as transparent as possible.

“It was also acknowledged by both the RVA and residents at the meeting that there could be some more clarity on wording in the ORAs around “intentions” to provide care facilities.”

Ms Martin said that following each forum she enjoyed informal discussions with residents. “There were very few who were not happy with their village and none who wished to leave their village. “At the Auckland forum, a member of the residents spontaneously asked all those residents who felt that their village had kept them safe during Covid to raise their hands. Almost the entire room raised their hands. Residents attending again and again verbalised how happy they were in their villages.”

The RVA recently commissioned research into retirement village residents’ degree of vulnerability. “The research covered almost 1,700 residents across 105 member villages. It showed that there was a very small minority of residents who might be considered vulnerable,” said Ms Martin. “Nevertheless, the RVA is launching a trial with Fairway Resolution across 11 Auckland villages with a confidential service to allow residents to discuss any problems no matter how small, with a skilled person.”

Due to other commitments, Ms Martin is stepping down from her RVA role with former MP and former Senior Citizens Minister Hon Jo Goodhew taking on the position.

editorial supplied by The Retirement Villages Assn.

Council 2023 Annual Budget Local Board Submission Points

A submission of 15 specific items was made to The Devonport-Takapuna and Kaipatiki Boards

Key ones are:

Strong Active Support for the Preservation of Shore Heritage and Special Character Areas.

Grey Power strongly opposes the intensification measures imposed by the Resource management (Enabling Housing Supply) Amendment Bill 2021 and the earlier NPS-UD, and the seriously detrimental impact it will have on the North Shore heritage, community character and environment.

In its submission to the Select Committee Grey Power called for recognition of the special heritage, environmental and geographic situation limitations of Auckland’s North Shore, and asked for a special exemption from the intensification requirements.

The special situation of the North Shore was recognised as such by the old Auckland Regional Authority who gave Devonport an exemption from the intensification planning around transport hubs at that time.

Grey Power calls for a similar exemption for the Devonport/Takapuna area by Council and Government from the current intensification impositions.

Grey Power fully supports Devonport Heritage and community campaign for the full retention of the Special Character Areas.

Development and Expansion of Senior Housing in the Council Courts in The Local Board Area.

Current Council policy when senior Courts are being re-developed is to sell off part of the site to finance the building of the same number of units existing on the site. Grey Power core policy is that the full site should be utilised and additional units added in a re-development

SuperGold Parking Concession For Seniors

SuperGold parking concessions of free parking for designated times need to be introduced in the Takapuna Car park and in other community centres. Seniors need some parking in the Takapuna Centre for access to community facilities and the shopping centre.

Restoration of Historic Cemetery at Mt Victoria/ Takarunga

September this year is the 150th anniversary of the death of the Nga Puhi rangatira Patuone and his

burial in the Mt Victoria in 1872. An extremely urgent requirement of the Local Board/Auckland Council is to begin restoration and improved maintenance to the poor current state of the cemetery in recognition of this special event.

Retention of Proceeds of Panuku Land Sales in Local Board Areas.

The Council/Panuku policy of community asset sales to finance the overall Council budget deficit is leading to millions of dollars being taken out of North Shore communities for the cost of major projects with minimal benefit to North Shore communities. The Local Board is asked to develop an equitable policy on the retention of part of the proceeds for North Shore community and infrastructure projects

Survey of Activity State of Senior Community Organisations

Many senior community, social and sports groups are under pressure with the changes in the city and the digital environment, some closing down and other struggling at a time when the senior ensure that the community facilities for the senior community continue in a sound position.

Free Parking at North Shore Hospital Provided by Auckland Transport From Wider AT Parking Charge Revenues

The cost of parking at the North Shore Hospital is a long standing issue that impacts on the senior community. Auckland Transport is now deriving significant parking from the Takapuna Car Park building, and street meters including those introduced in the hospital precincts. The Board is requested to negotiate an arrangement with Auckland Transport and the WDHb where the parking at the North Shore Hospital is free, or heavily subsidised, for the senior community in particular and for the wider general public.

Tamaki Makaurau Tauawhi Kaumatua – Age Friendly City Action Plan

Auckland Council has adopted the Action Plan and has just been advised it has been approved as a WHO Global Age Friendly City Network member. North Shore people played a significant role, particularly Dr Judy Blakey, as did Grey Power in obtaining this result. At this stage Council funding is minimal, and we look to the Board for getting the full impact of the Action Plan up and running, and becoming a cornerstone of Council policy formation.

It is appreciated that this is not the usual submission, and aspirational but outlines succinctly some of the issues that are important to the senior community on the Shore.

Final Day to File 2021 Rates Rebate Application is June 30 2022

Please note that applications for the Council rates Rebates for the year ended June 30, 2022. The rebate scheme is administered by the Dept of Internal Affairs as is available to occupiers of residential Properties, and most retirement village residents are eligible to apply.

The scheme is “means tested” with a scale of rebates linked to income and rates paid. The base maximum rebate is \$665 reducing as income increases to being zero at \$47,000.

With an income of \$32,000 and a rates bill of \$2,250 the rebate is the maximum of \$665, an income of \$36,000 and a rates level of \$2,750, the maximum is again \$665. The rebate reduces progressively as the income goes up. At a rates level of \$4,000, the rebate starts reducing at an income \$40,000.

The rates figure includes water rates

Bit hard to see without the chart on the rebate form but is clear that many members would be in the higher rates level and a medium income where the rebate would be several hundred dollars.

It would be worth checking – the application forms are available from Council and libraries, and on the Government website: www.govt.nz/rates-rebates.

Curiously the rebate fund is significantly underclaimed. Grey Power had a joint campaign with Auckland Council in Len Brown’s day which backfired as applications dropped as the campaign created the perception it was just for seniors not any low income ratepayers.

Council Election Time Next Meeting August 19

Our next meeting on Friday August 19th is at the crucial point of the Council elections on Saturday October 8th, The postal voting begins on Sept 19th which is a pivot point for the campaigns as initial voting is usual high.

Our August meeting will be meeting of the major mayoral candidates as last time with Phil Goff, John Tamihere, and Craig Lord. Old timers will recall it was an exciting time !!

With our new more flexible digital communications set up we will look closely at the possibility of having other meetings for Councillors. It is a difficult situation as there are already ten Mayoral candidates, and we cover two Council Wards, and four Local Boards.

It will be possible now for us to have specific election issues such as SuperGold parking we can effectively “campaign” and lobby the candidates.

The management of this process will be part of our new expanded Grey Power structure yet to be specifically determined. But watch this space.

60s Up Takapuna Devonport “Be a friend – bring a friend”

Meetings: St Joseph’s Church Hall, Tahoroto Rd, Takapuna
Car entry: 10 Dominion St Takapuna

60s Up offer a range of activities for seniors

- Walking groups, easy exercises, Tai Chi
- Monthly meetings 3rd Thursdays of month with entertainment – start 10.30am.
- Monthly bus trips

For friendship and interesting and healthy activities could be your cup of tea. Give Treasurer Pam Walton a call – 489 4508

Bays Club Browns Bay Veterans Membership

A very attractive social opportunity for our Gold Card members is the Veterans Membership of the Bays Club on the beachfront on Anzac Rd, Browns Bay.

Gold Card holders can join for \$35 per annum.

The Club has a magnificent site overlooking the Hauraki Gulf and offers a full range of club activities, great entertainment, Quiz Nights, Bingo,

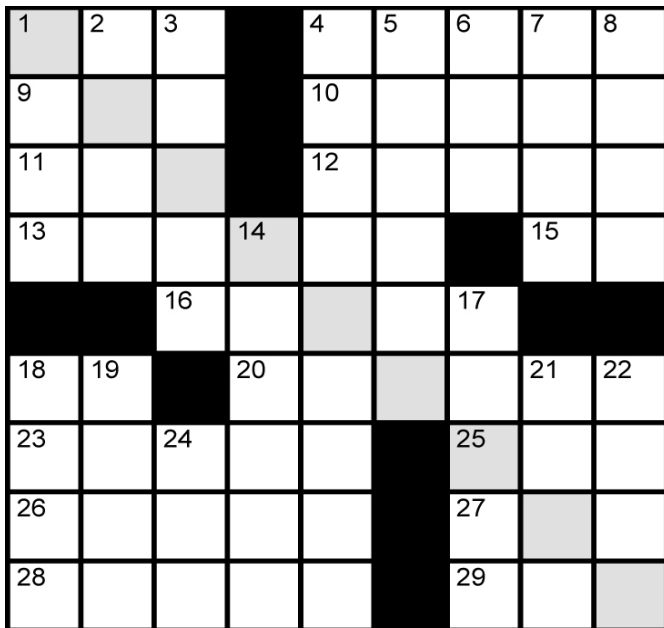
Karaoke.

The major attraction for seniors is the restaurant, particularly for casual meetings and lunch, especially our lady members who make up a major part of the lunchtime crowd. Special price days for seniors as well.

Website is www.baysclub.co.nz, phone 478-8171

Check it out, you will like it.

Investors Delight



Across

1. Netflix rental
4. More artful
9. "Rocky ____"
10. Minor

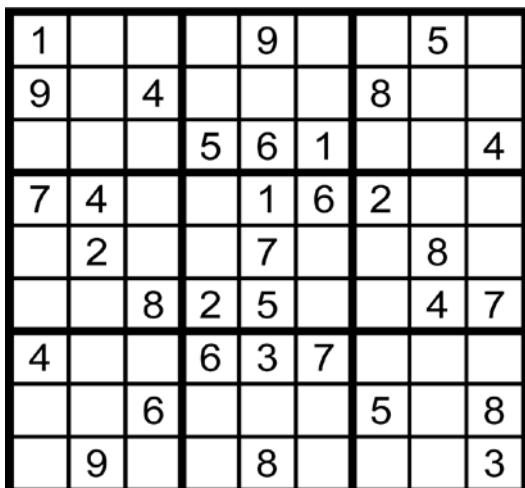
11. Gun, as an engine

12. It's debatable
13. Mark and Shania
15. Exists
16. Bumps

BAHN MI
BARBECUE
BLT
CLUB
CORNED BEEF
CRISP
CUBAN
DELI
DENVER
EGG SALAD
ELVIS
FINGER

FISH
GATSBY
GYRO
HERO
HOAGIE
HOT DOG
ITALIAN
MARMITE
MELT
PANINI
PIMENTO
CHEESE

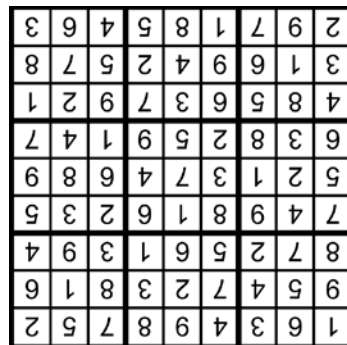
PO BOY
POCKET
RACHEL
REUBEN
SAUSAGE
SLIDER
SOUVLAKI
SUB
TAVERN
TEA
WRAP



18. Atop
20. Imagined
23. Arm bones
25. "____ what?"
26. Backgammon piece
27. Old name for Tokyo
28. ____ and aahed
29. ____ publica

Down

1. Gossip
2. Penthouse feature
3. Couch
4. Like clothes in a washer
5. Rent payer
6. "____ alive!"
7. Needle case
8. Bakery selections
14. First-aid item
17. More rational
18. Approximately
19. Alliance acronym
21. Fashion
22. Deuces
24. Play-____



The title is a clue to the word in the shaded diagonal.

SANDWICHES



How to solve sudoku puzzles. No math is required to solve a sudoku. You only need logic and patience. Simply make sure that each 3x3 square region has only one instance of the numbers 1-9. Similarly, each number can only appear once in a column or row in the larger grid. *The difficulty on this puzzle is easy.*