

Report 01.237

10 April 2001

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Report to Wellington Regional Council
from Stuart Macaskill, Chairman

Chairman's Report

1. Rotary Group Study Exchange Visit

On 2 & 3 April, the Wellington Regional Council hosted a Rotary Group Study Exchange team who were visiting the southern half of the North Island. The group of four women plus a tour leader were all from the Lakes District in the United Kingdom. All the team have extensive backgrounds in catchment/forestry/recreation/conservation management.

Their two days were co-ordinated by Ross Jackson of the Landcare Division. Following an initial introductory session, by WRC, WCC and DoC Parks Managers, they were taken on a tour of the greater Wellington area which included visits to Regional Parks and Council lands.

This provided a good opportunity for discussions on mutual areas of interest which proved to be very interesting and beneficial to those involved. On 4 and 5 April, while still in Wellington for other engagements, all the team came and had further discussions with various Council staff on specialist areas of interest including:

- Biodiversity
- Recreation on Council lands
- Catchment management

When the group paid its last visit, they presented me with a plaque from the Carlisle City Council in Cumbria. It was the only one presented in New Zealand and one of a maximum of 10 presented each year by the City Council.

My thanks go to all the staff involved and particularly to Ross Jackson for his outstanding organisational effort.

2. **Andrew Annakin**

As Councillors are aware Andrew Annakin is leaving the Council to join the Department of Labour in the position of General Manager, Employment Relations Service.

I will be very sorry to see Andrew leave us. He has made a very valuable contribution since he joined the Council in 1992, initially as Human Resources Manager, and since 1995 as Divisional Manager Landcare.

Councillors will wish to join me in formally congratulating Andrew and expressing our sincerest appreciation for the very valuable contribution he has made.

3. **Local Government New Zealand Conference**

As previously advertised *Local Government New Zealand* has decided to hold a Conference this year and has accepted an earlier bid from Zone 4 Councils to host the Conference.

The Conference theme is to be “Elective Surgery – Changing the Face of Local Government”.

An outline of the programme was set out in an attachment to my report to the Council meeting on 8 March.

We will be involved in a number of ways:

- (1) It is proposed that this Council host a seminar on Tuesday, 17 July on the topic “Unblocking the Arteries” which will deal with transport issues. We are advised this is likely to be one of the more popular seminars and a programme is being developed.
- (2) As previously advised normal practice is for Regional Councils to get together on the weekend preceding the Conference for a tour of some appropriate activities within the host region. Generally, this needs to be of interest to the wider roles of Regional Councils. Preliminary thinking is for a tour through the Hutt Valley to the Wairarapa with an overnight stay in Masterton and returning to Wellington on Sunday, 15 April. We would probably travel to the Wairarapa by train and return by bus.
- (3) The Regional Sector Group meeting on Wednesday, 18 July will not doubt involve this Council also.
- (4) The Zone 4 Councils have been asked to jointly host a pre-dinner cocktail function on the Monday night.
- (5) The financial and other support sought at this stage is:
 - Pro rata contribution of \$2,800 to the pre-dinner function and sponsorship of name badges
 - Support with staff involvement ‘on the day’
 - Hosting of the transport seminar based at the Michael Fowler Centre. We are advised that the cost of this is \$10,000 and for this WRC receives branding rights and the opportunity to speak to participants. Other seminars are being supported by other Councils.

Recommendation

That the Report be received.

STUART MACASKILL
Chairman