



# West Auckland Men's Rebus Club

<http://www.rebuswestauckland.nz/>  
Affiliated to Rebus New Zealand Incorporated  
<https://www.rebus.nz/>

## Newsletter

**SEPTEMBER 2021**

*The next meeting was to have been at 10 am Friday 10 September at the New Lynn Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Road, New Lynn*

**COVID-19 HAS PREVENTED THAT**

**Hopefully, the meeting on Friday 8 October will happen, even if we are still limited to no more than 50 attendees**

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### CLUB BUSINESS

#### **PRESIDENT'S REPORT (aka PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE)**

Big hello from me, not too much to report this time, but trust you are all going the best you can under level lockdown. This year has been a hard one for many people. We have lost members and also had meetings cancelled, our next one, on Friday 10 September 2021, will not be taking place as we will be at Level 4 or level 3 which does not allow for groups.

We must treat this Covid with respect; gosh looking at NSW as a guide, so sad.

Here in New Zealand we in the funeral industry have had a sad time, just no services at all. A friend passed away; he was cremated and that was all that could be done. The Government has just updated the rules allowing family members to go to a funeral home to view the deceased, but must have protective gear and not to touch the deceased. Very hard in some cultures. I have got 5 weddings on hold waiting for us to return to level one; unsure when this will be. A shame as spring has started so wedding season kicks in.

I have rang some members and will continue with more, but its just a courtesy call to make sure everyone is ok, as each member I treat as a valued member. And I have had calls from members to check on me, along with Trevor Pollard sharing some stories!!! So we are a great team and take time to look after each other.

Claudia has been doing school work online and has also been baking some cookies and cakes, so we are eating well. Also Claudia keeps in touch with her friends - many calls. Claudia had to go have Covid tests because she is at Green Bay High School, but both tests were negative. Her Dad (my son) also had

two tests because he was at McDonalds on the 17th and it was a place of interest. However, after tests and many phone calls from Healthline, he returns to work tomorrow (Thursday 6th), He is Executive Chef at a very upmarket large retirement village so one had to very careful.

My presentation on *The people of the Railway* will have to wait for a later meeting. Shame, I was excited about doing it. Bill Fairs did a wonderful presentation last time.

Must go for a short walk, so that's all from your President for now.

### **SECRETARY'S REPORT**

Vince Middeldorp

Bill Mutch welcomed 30 members to the meeting. This was three less than last month when there were 33 members.

Apologies were recorded for Joe Doogan, Tony Allan, Noel Rose, Ray Hancock, and Rodger Hallen.

The minutes of the previous meeting, held on 9 July, will be provided to Bill Mutch for confirmation and signing.

There were no matters arising. There were two items of correspondence. A thank-you letter sent to Amanda McCullough for the coffee morning at Waitakere Gardens and a reply from Amanda to this letter.

Justin Griffith said we were looking to break even for the year and to do that he asked members to pay generously for the morning tea provided by the slaves in the kitchen.

Trips organiser Ian Smith was away. However, we know from the July newsletter that the Gold Card trip to Orakei Village is on Friday 27 August and found out from John Mihaljevic's pocket diary that the coffee morning is at the Sugar Grill Cafe in The Point building at Te Atatu North, and is on Friday 20 August.

Trayton Wickens commented how outings such as the Waitakere Gardens Coffee morning and the Ryders movie and lunch, enabled members to sit and talk together for longer periods than happened at the morning tea break at the monthly meetings. Barry O'Rourke reported on the funeral of Raé Hildreth and his endeavours to contact Ray Hancock, Tony Allan, Maurice Vickers, and Trevor Pollard, some of which were successful. He said sitting next to Tom Lowndes at Waitakere Gardens had been a privilege and recalled the time when Tom was away on an overseas cruise and asked him to do the secretarial work.

Charles Nicholls JP told members about a woman who called and asked him to certify that the ashes in an urn were those of her deceased husband. He had no way of verifying the truth of what she was telling him and got round the problem by filling out a statutory declaration (something all JPs have available for when needed) which shifted the responsibility for the truth of the matter to the woman. She was sending the ashes overseas and the statutory declaration he filled out got the ashes through customs at both ends with the result that the woman was able to collect them overseas.

Trevor Pollard told of a recent trip he made from in his van. He was asked to go to Waitakere hospital and pick up the belongings of a woman who was 101 years old and take them to Peacehaven Rest Home in Kinross Street. When the woman's daughter took off to fetch her car which was in a distant car park, Trevor decided waiting outside in the cold with his charge was not the right thing to do, so he bundled the old lady into his van and set off for Peacehaven. Trevor was driving down Sel Peacock Drive when his phone rang. It was the daughter asking, "Where are you?" Trevor replied, "I'm on my way to Peacehaven with mum and will meet you there." An attendant at Peacehaven came out with a wheelchair and helped the 101-year-old lady into her new room. She was halfway through her dinner when the daughter made it to Peacehaven.

The next meeting date was set down for Friday 10 September 2021 at 10.00 am. Bill Mutch will speak instead of a guest speaker on the subject of people in the railways.

Bill Fairs spoke about his time as a saxophone player in rock-and-roll bands.

The meeting closed at 11.45 am.

### **CLUB EVENTS**

#### **SPEAKER**

August's Guest Speaker was also Club Speaker: our very own **Bill Fairs**, on *My Life in Music*. He has had a long and varied career as a saxophonist. I had hoped that he would demonstrate his musical prowess, but that was not to be. Perhaps another time.

Bill and his plastic saxophone (more on that later) and his collection of memorabilia.



Bill needed no introduction: we all knew him well. Although I had known of his musical side, I had not realized just how great a part of his life it has been.

He began by outlining the history of the saxophone (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saxophone>). Developed by a Belgian, Adolphe Sax, about 1840. It did not really come into its own until the twentieth century, as a prominent dance band instrument. With about 600 parts, it requires looking after. It is the reed in the mouth piece that does all the work. The reed has to be moist to work – saxophonists moisten it with their tongues. However, moisture tends to get all over the body of the instrument, which therefore needs constant cleaning. It is made of brass, which is gold lacquered. Sometimes it is silver plated, but gold is preferred, because it looks better.

In his second year at Mt Roskill Grammar School, Bill met Glen Hanford, who became his life-long friend. Glen was having music lessons, especially the clarinet, and invited Bill to join him. Bill's initial reaction was: *What's a clarinet?* However, Bill's musical interest had been aroused.

A teacher, Mr Howarth, wanted to start a military band, which led to Bill and the saxophone making a life-long connection. The school did have a dance band. Dancing was very important. Dancing lessons were provided, although the boys had to dance in their football socks, to protect the school's new parquet floor.

The boys were into Dixieland music ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dixie\\_\(song\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Dixie_(song))), which was very happy music and easy to listen to. Bill got in deeper and deeper, eventually discovering jazz, his musical love.

At the time, there was a radio programme on Monday nights, Mobilair, which Bill listened to avidly. Its theme tune, *My Funny Valentine* by Jerry Mulligan and Chet Baker, was Bill's favourite song.

On Fridays nights, Bill (still in school uniform) went to Beggs (<https://beggsmusic.co.nz/>). He would ask Shirley if they had the latest Ben Webster LP, or Colman Hawkins, or he would listen to the Big Bands like Duke Ellington and Count Basie, or Benny Goodman and Tommy Dorsey

Bill's friend and fellow musician, Jim Foley, opened a business in Vulcan Lane, The Loft (it was up three flights of stairs). It featured a new marketing concept: shelves of record covers to browse. One day Bill saw an American pressing of *Paris Concert*, an album by Jerry Mulligan ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris\\_Concert\\_\(Jerry\\_Mulligan\\_album\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Paris_Concert_(Jerry_Mulligan_album))). Ever the dutiful son, Bill asked his parents if he could buy it, using the money he had earned with his paper round. The said of course; it was his money. But when he went back the following Friday, it was not there. When he asked Shirley about it, he discovered that it had just been sold. However, the purchaser was still there, and Shirley introduced him to him. The buyer was Bob Paris, and it was the start of a very long friendship.

They decided to form a band. Bob was then playing the steel guitar. They formed a quartet. They performed on Friday and Saturday nights, at various venues, such as weddings and birthdays. They did well.



Bob worked with Phil Warren ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phil\\_Warren\\_\(promoter\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phil_Warren_(promoter))), who at that time had a record store in Newmarket and was just starting as a booking agent.

Australian rock-n-roll dancer Milton Mitchell asked them to play for him at the Maori Community Centre. They did so, at 9 pm to 3 am on Fridays and Saturdays. Elvis Presley's *Jail House Rock* was then popular (see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpsUOOfb-vE> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PpsUOOfb-vE>). If you can't find a dance partner, use a chair: Bill told of one Maori boy who really this to heart, giving an outstanding performance.

Benny Levin (<https://www.audioculture.co.nz/people/benny-levin>), who had a band in Bayswater, was just getting into promotion. He was taking Howard Morrison ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howard\\_Morrison](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Howard_Morrison)) on a tour of New Zealand. He asked them if they would like to accompany the tour – of course they would! Bill was then not even 18, and had to ask for time off from his apprenticeship (as a cutter at Holeproof) so that he could go on the 18-week tour.

They first went to Christchurch, to rehearse. At the time (1956) there was a substantial American presence in Christchurch, as part of Operation Deep Freeze ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation\\_Deep\\_Freeze](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Deep_Freeze)). The band interacted with like-minded Americans.

This was when Bill first heard Max Merritt ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max\\_Merritt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Max_Merritt)), whose band included Willy Schneider, a Hungarian Jew who survived Auschwitz as a child. He and Bill became friends. Willy has spoken to us in the past.

After 10 days of rehearsals in Christchurch, the tour began. They stayed in bed and breakfasts: only Howard Morrison stayed in hotels. They were paid £16 per week, out of which they had to pay their own upkeep. Not much, but more than Bill's apprenticeship paid. Because of Howard Morrison, they were invited onto marae, where they were warmly greeted and had good times.

Bill heard Nino Tempo ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nino\\_Tempo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nino_Tempo)), who sang *Deep Purple*. Nino, who had performed in Las Vegas ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las\\_Vegas](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Las_Vegas)), sang and played the saxophone. It was not possible to categorize Nino's band, but Bill liked it.



This was, of course, before TV, but rock-n-roll was shown in cinemas, where Bill saw Nino playing *Tempo's Tempo*. Impressed, Bill copied Nino's act and did it on the Howard Morrison tour.

Towards the end of the tour, when they still had the north to do, the tour was cancelled because of lack of money. Two months later Harry Miller ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry\\_M.\\_Miller](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Harry_M._Miller)) took over Howard Morrison's tours and made a fortune.

Back in Auckland, Bill got a job at 'The Trades' – The Trades Hall in Hobson Street. It was 'The Jive Centre'; a rock-n-roll centre. Merv Thomas (<https://www.audioculture.co.nz/people/merv-thomas>) and his Dixieland band had been there previously. Bill's band was hired because that was their speciality.

The Trades featured dances, much attended by (mostly English) seamen. They sat in one corner; Pakeha and Maori in another. A guy called Brian was hired as a bouncer. He was told that things were generally quiet, but on his first night a fight broke out. This resulted in a pile of bodies, with Brian at the bottom. He was much concerned with the fate of his glasses. The band played on.

Things were quieter after that.

Just up the road from The Trades was a bar: Bar X. The members of the band enjoyed its hamburgers during their 10pm break.

Bob then decided to go to Australia, so Bill went back to his apprenticeship.

This was when The Keil Isles ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keil\\_Isles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keil_Isles)) were becoming popular. They got a job at the Trades Hall. Needing a saxophonist, they hired Bill, who was with them for several years.

A couple of Bill's friends had OEd in England, and Bill decided to follow in their footsteps. Arriving in London, Bill met with Charlie Gray, the drummer on the Howard Morrison tour, who was already in London. On his first night in London, Bill went to Ronnie Scott's Club ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronnie\\_Scott's\\_Jazz\\_Club](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ronnie_Scott's_Jazz_Club)), a well-known jazz venue.

Bill looked in *Melody Maker* magazine ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melody\\_Maker](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Melody_Maker)) for a job. He found someone looking for a saxophonist, contacted them and was invited to Phillips Recording Studio ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phillips'\\_Sound\\_Recording\\_Services](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phillips'_Sound_Recording_Services)); probably because Bill had toured with Cliff Richards and the Shadows, and had also worked with other groups.

Bill now had to get from Notting Hill, where he was, to Croydon, where the studio was. Naively, he got on a bus and asked for a ticket to Croydon. The bus conductor gave him a funny look and a stream of tickets. After a 2½ hour tiki tour of London, Bill reached his destination. He should, of course, have gone by train!

The band, the Martin J 5, was having a photo shoot, having just made an album. With Bill, the band now had 6 members, but they did not want to change the name. The band performed locally, at dances and in pubs and the like. The band entered a national competition and won the Surrey section. In the finals, in the Hammersmith Odeon (<https://www.lbhf.gov.uk/hammersmith-odeon>), they won £1,000. On the strength of this win, they played in the first-ever Rock-n-Roll concert in the Albert Hall ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal\\_Albert\\_Hall](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Royal_Albert_Hall)), alongside the likes of Helen Shapiro, The Hollies and Kenny Ball and the Jazzmen. Bill was most impressed.

The band was asked to go professional by Tito Burns, who managed the likes of Dusty Springfield. Bill was disappointed when 2 of the band members said no, so it did not happen.

The band then went to Manchester, where it played at the Manchester Belle Vue (<https://www.manchestersfinest.com/articles/the-history-of-manchesters-playground-belle-vue/>), on a rotating stage before an audience of 20,000.

Bill had a great experience in England. He heard a lot. He learned a lot.

Bill decided that, with his share of the £1,000 prize money, he should look at going home. He had gone to England by sea, on an Italian cruise ship. It took 6 weeks of boredom. Bill described it as *the worst thing I've ever done*. He flew home, via Athens, Colombo and Australia. He was tired by the time he reached Australia, so rested there for a couple of days before completing his trip home.

When his mother met him on his return, Bill noticed, and commented on, her New Zealand accent.

He got back together with Bob Paris, who was always his best friend, and they started another band. They performed at the Crystal Palace (<https://teara.govt.nz/en/speech/39162/crystal-palace-auckland>), a popular venue because it was much-frequented by nurses. The male clientele were typical kiwis of the time: in short-sleeved shirts and with rolled-up *8 O'Clocks* (<https://natlib.govt.nz/records/22383036>) in their back pockets. But the dancing was great. There was a theatre up stairs, and every night at 8:15 the manager would come down to ask them to turn down the volume – they were too loud.

They also did many Christmas jobs all over the place, such as Mt Maunganui and Waihi, in 2-week seasons. He also did a stint with John Dailey, whose dance business in Onehunga ultimately proved unsuccessful.

This did lead to Bill joining the Keil Isles ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keil\\_Isles](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Keil_Isles) and <https://allmusic-wingsofdream.blogspot.com/2019/02/herma-keil-keil-isles-very-best-of.html>) as their saxophonist. They performed on Thursday nights in the Orange Hall (<https://www.sharedspace.co.nz/listings/detail/event-space/auckland/4503/the-orange.html>) and on Friday nights at The Oriental in Symonds Street.

Bill was also in a rehearsal band that played at The Musicians Club (<https://theaucklandmusiciansclub.weebly.com/>) with John Battersby, who needed a saxophone player to play at Trillos. For this he needed an alto saxophone ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alto\\_saxophone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Alto_saxophone)), which he did not then have. Bill therefore saw Frank Gibson at Lewis Eady (<https://www.lewiseady.co.nz/>) and bought a Selma Mark 6 ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selmer\\_Mark\\_VI](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selmer_Mark_VI)), the top saxophone on the market. Frank also gave Bill the plastic saxophone Bill brought to the meeting, a Grafton Saxophone ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grafton\\_saxophone](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Grafton_saxophone)). Frank had not been able to sell it, so he gave it to Bill to show to John Battersby. John was 'quite surprised'.

Bill loves jazz, but he was working so much playing at dances that he did not have the time for all the practice he needed, so he never made it as jazz player.

Bill joined a band playing Gugga Music (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guggenmusik>). A Swiss girl Bill worked with invited him to play with her Swiss Band. Bill, who was divorced by this time, was attracted – but he soon discovered that she had a boyfriend. Bill often played at marches, especially Farmers Parade. He took his two young children. They had great fun making and wearing paper mache masks (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Papier-mâché>).

Bill concluded his talk by thanking Roger Laloli for showing him the ropes as a public speaker and President of the Club. Bill said that when he joined the Club (2014), he never expected that he would ever stand in front of everyone and speak.

Our Club has a long and distinguished history of able and interesting speakers: Bill certainly belongs to that tradition, and proved himself an able student of Roger's. The only thing that disappointed me was that Bill did not demonstrate his undoubted musical prowess. Another time, perhaps. Thank you, Bill.

We used to distinguish between **Club** Speakers (members who gave a short talk about themselves, so that their fellow club members could get to know them better) and **Guest** Speakers (invited outsiders who gave longer talks on some topic of interest to them, and to us). We no longer seem to have old-style Club Speakers – that requires a steady supply of new members! Instead, we often have club members giving longer, guest speaker type talks. Such was the case at the August meeting, with Bill Fairs telling us about his musical career. The speaker at our next meeting (whenever that will be) will also be one of our own: Bill Mutch on *The Railway People*. Perhaps it is time to drop the distinction between Club and Guest Speakers and just have Speakers, regardless of whether or not they are club members or how long they talk and on what subject.

### **OTHER CLUB ACTIVITIES**

There were no other Club activities this month, because of you-know-what. The Outings and Coffee Mornings we had planned have had to be deferred. We didn't even have a Quiz at the August meeting. Hopefully, the current outbreak of COVID-19 will soon be quashed, allowing us to resume normal activities. We will keep you posted. Until that happy day, take care.

### **MEMBER'S CONTRIBUTION**

#### **CLAUDIA'S CORNER**

Claudia liked a request in a Christchurch paper:

*Wanted to Buy*

*A guillotine suitable for kindergarten.*

*Granddad, I've sold our vacuum cleaner.*

*Why?*

*It was just collecting dust.*

As well as their professional reports, our two Welfare Officers (Almoners) continued to amuse us.

#### **TRAYTON'S TALE**

A married couple went to hospital to have their baby delivered. Upon their arrival the doctor said that he had invented a machine that would transfer a portion of the mother's labour pains to the baby's father. He asked if they were willing to try it out. They were both very much in favour of it.

The doctor set the pain transfer to 10% for starters, explaining that even 10% was probably more pain than the father had ever experienced before. However, as the labour progressed, the husband felt fine and asked the doctor to go ahead and put it up a notch. The doctor then adjusted the machine to 20% pain transfer. The husband was still feeling fine. The doctor checked the husband's blood pressure and was amazed as to how well he was doing.

At this point they decided to go for 50%. The husband continued to feel quite well. Since the pain transfer was obviously helping the wife considerably, and the husband encouraged the doctor to transfer all the pain to him.

The wife delivered a healthy baby with virtually no pain. She and her husband were ecstatic.

When they got home, the mail man was dead on the porch.

I can match this with a story in similar vein. A man was on his death bed, surrounded by his family – his wife and three sons. Two strapping lads and a runt. With his dying strength, the man points to the runt and asks his wife: *Is he really mine?* *Yes dear* replies his wife, *He's really yours*. Satisfied, the man expires.

The new widow turns to the runt and says: *Thank God he didn't ask about your brothers!*

#### **BARRY'S TALE**

Not to be outdone by his fellow Welfare Officer, Barry told of the Reformed Alcoholic.

An old man with a red nose went into a hardware store and asked for a bottle of meths. The shop assistant demurred: *You'll only drink it*. The old man protested: *I'm starting my own painting and decorating business*. The shop assistant responded: *I don't believe you. I know who you are – you're the old drunk who sits on the bench in the park*. The old man admitted: *I used to be, but I've turned my life around, but you won't let me forget – I'll always be the old drunk, no matter how hard I work. That's what hurts so much*.

Overcome with guilt, the shop assistant says: *OK, here's your bottle of meths*.

The Old Drunk: *You haven't got a cold one, have you?*

Barry showed a sporting interest with some examples of Hadley's Humour:

- South African batsman Barry Richards has just hit one of Basil D'Oliveira's balls clean out of the grounds



- West Indian batsman Alvin Kallicharran just had a slash outside the off stump
- West Indies fast bowler Michael Holding to England's Peter Woolley: *Welcome to Lords, where the bowler is holding and the batsman is willy.*
- Summing up, that was a nice tight maiden.

Barry suggested that, in future, he should speak first, so that Trayton would not always steal his thunder. Perhaps they could take it in turns to lead.

### **HERB SIMMONDS ON MINOR SPORTS** **Vince Middeldorp**

Just after morning tea all ears turned to Herb Simmons when he spoke about how minor sports tended to be overlooked.



Herb Simmonds said that his father, Captain Herb Simmonds, represented New Zealand in rifle shooting in Italy in 1919, then Australian and then again in Italy (Herb didn't give the years for those trips). In 1924 Captain Herb Simmonds won the New Zealand Rifle Champion Belt also known as the Ballinger Belt representing Wanganui (<https://teara.govt.nz/en/1966/national-rifle-association/page-7>).

The National Rifle Association have a trophy they call the Simmonds Cup <https://www.nranz.com/history-of-trophy-winners/simmonds-cup>. It was first competed for in 1928 when it was won by C H McKeich from the Dunedin Rifle Club. In 2021 the trophy was won by Ms Charlotte Flanagan from the Malvern Rifle Club (Malvern is a rural area in Selwyn District, Central Canterbury).

If you look at the Simmonds Cup inscription on the National Rifle Association of New Zealand website, you find it started out as the Kynoch Cup and was first won by a Sub-Lieut Kirk. The year in which he won it is unreadable on the website photo however not so the second winner: Serg Major White won it in 1896.

Helen Morgan the Secretary of the National Rifle Association of New Zealand thinks this historic trophy might be been won by Captain Herb Simmonds and then donated to the Association on the basis that in future it was to be known as the Simmonds Cup. We will ask Herb Simmonds when we next see him what he knows about the history of the Simmonds Cup.

### **MAURICE VICKERS AND GUILLAIN-BARRÉ SYNDROME** **Vince Middeldorp**

Concerns are currently being raised in the medical establishment about the possibility of Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS) ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guillain-Barré\\_syndrome](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guillain-Barré_syndrome)) reoccurrence after mRNA Covid-19 vaccine. The conclusion appears to be that there is a risk, but it is really, really low.

One of our own members, Maurice Vickers, had a terrible experience with Guillain-Barré Syndrome in 1990 and spoke about it at the September 2004 monthly meeting of New Lynn Men's Probus Club.

In February, Maurice got fluey at work and ended up in hospital for treatment. A specialist wandering through the hospital during the weekend in his gardening clothes knew the cause. Maurice was told: *I know what you've got, it will get a lot worse but it won't kill you and you will get better, eventually.*

Maurice said he perspired a great deal, would be soaked in 15 minutes and the feeling went from his legs. He went from 15 stone to 11 stone in three weeks. For months he was helpless and totally paralysed. He could only croak in a whisper. Two teams of physios worked on him daily, moving his fingers and limbs.

One day he caused a great commotion when he moved a finger and two days later he did it again. Very gradually Maurice improved and progressed to the stage where he could learn to walk again. With daily physio sessions, he was able to return to his desk in August for two hours a day. By September, he was back to working full time.

Only one or two people per 100,000 in a year get Guillain-Barré Syndrome. The only ongoing issue Maurice has from having had GBS is experiencing numb feet from time to time. Others are not so lucky and require ongoing support after leaving hospital.

### COMPUTER HUMOUR

Wanting to pad out an otherwise sparse Newsletter, I delved into my library for suitable filler material. Top of the pile was *The Contemporary Joke Book* by Red Williams. Given that, in these lockdown times, we are likely to be spending even more time than usual with our digital companions, I decided to raid his chapter on computers,

#### TOP 5 REASONS WHY COMPUTERS MUST BE MALE

1. They are heavily dependent on external tools and equipment.
2. They periodically cut you off right when you think you've established a network connection.
3. They'll usually do what you ask them to do, but they won't do more than they have to and they won't think of it on their own.
4. They're typically obsolete within five years and need to be traded in for a new model. Some users, however, feel they've already invested so much in the damn machine that they're compelled to remain with an underpowered system.
5. They get hot when you turn them on, and that's the only time you have their attention.

#### TOP 5 REASONS WHY COMPUTERS MUST BE FEMALE

1. No one but their creator understands their internal logic.
2. Even your smallest mistakes are immediately committed to memory for future reference.
3. The native language used to communicate with other computers is incomprehensible to everyone else.
4. The message *Bad command or file name* is about as informative as *If you don't know why I'm mad at you. Then I'm certainly not going to tell you.*
5. As soon as you make a commitment to one, you find yourself spending half your pay cheque on accessories for it.

Does this mean that computers are hermaphrodites? Perhaps not:

#### WHY E-MAIL IS LIKE A PENIS

1. Some folks have it, some don't.
2. Those who have it would be devastated if it were ever cut off.
3. Those who have it think those who don't are somehow inferior.
4. Those who don't have it may agree that it's neat, but think it's not worth the fuss that those who have it make about it.
5. Many of those who don't have it would like to try it (e-mail envy).
6. It can be up or down. It's more fun when it's up, but this makes it hard to get any real work done.
7. In the past, its only purpose was to transmit information vital to the survival of the species. Some people still think that's the only thing it should be used for, but most folks today use it for fun most of the time.
8. If you don't apply the appropriate measures, it can spread viruses.
9. If you use it too much, you'll find it becomes more and more difficult to think coherently.
10. We attach an importance to it that is far greater than its actual size and influence warrant.
11. If you're not careful what you do with it, it can get you in a whole lot of trouble.

#### YOU KNOW YOU'VE BEEN ON THE COMPUTER TOO LONG WHEN...

1. When asked about a bus schedule, you wonder if it is 16 or 32 bits.
2. When you are counting objects, you go *0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,A,B,C,D...*
3. You dream in 256 palettes of 256 colours.
4. Your wife says *If you don't turn off that damn machine and come to bed, then I'm going to divorce you!* And you chastise her for omitting the *else* clause.
5. You try to sleep, and think: *sleep(8\*3600; /\*sleep for 8 hours /*
6. You are reading a book and look for the scroll bar to get to the next page.
7. You get in the elevator and double-click the button for the floor you want.
8. Not only do you check your e-mail more often than your paper mail, but you remember your network address faster than your postal one.
9. You look for an icon to double-click to open your bedroom window.
10. You look for a trash can icon for throwing garbage.

If you don't understand some or any of the above, don't worry. Be grateful – you have not yet succumbed to the siren-call of the computer. There is hope for you yet.

Given August's speaker, I had hoped to get something from the **Musical Mayhem** section, preferably something involving saxophones. Unfortunately, there was only one such item, and I'm not sure it's appropriate. Here goes nothing:

What do a saxophone and a baseball have in common?  
People cheer when you hit them with a bat.

Sorry Bill – but some people have a warped sense of humour. So I will end with something about computers, albeit from the **Transport** section.

After the first take-off of the fully automatic aeroplane, the passengers heard the soothing, reassuring voice of the pilot: *Ladies and gentlemen, this is your automatic pilot. In my modern and carefully tested system an error is absolutely impossible, absolutely impossible, absolutely impossible...*

Perhaps the passengers would have been better off here:

At a recent computer software engineering course in the US, the participants were given an awkward question to answer: *If you had just boarded and airliner and discovered that your team of programmers had been responsible for the flight control software, how many of you would disembark immediately?*

Among the ensuring forest of raised hands only one man sat motionless. When asked what he would do, he replied that he would be quite content to stay on board. With his team's software, he reasoned, the plane was unlikely to even taxi as far as the runway, let alone take off.

Admittedly, these stories are somewhat dated (the book was published in 2000), they do not inspire confidence. Perhaps COVID-19 is doing us a favour by curtailing travel.

## OTHER

### ONLINE BANKING

With cheques now a thing of the past, and bank branches, and even ATMs, being few and far between, Internet Banking has become, if not welcome, certainly unavoidable. Specifically, you can now pay your Rebus subscription directly into our bank account: 38 9022 0402722 00. The precise details of how to make a payment will depend on just how your bank's web page is configured.

You will also have to set your account up with your bank first. Just go to the relevant page on your bank's web site and follow the instructions there. This process, and making payments, is not difficult, but can be daunting at first. When I signed-up for online banking, and also when I made my first online payment, I did it while on the phone to my bank's Help Line. The nice lady on the Help Line talked me through each process. With her help, it was all a lot easier than I had feared. I now regularly make online payments without any problem, and I also check my account on line whenever I want, both from the comfort and safety of my home.

An alternative to Internet Banking that you might prefer is Telephone Banking. I have never used it myself, so cannot comment on it from personal experience, although my sister has been using it for years, quite happily and successfully. Again, ring your bank's Help Line and take it from there. I do know (from my sister) that ASB has a separate phone number for Seniors, which is much better (less waiting) than that for younger customers.

## SERVICES

### JUSTICE OF THE PEACE

**Charles Nicholls** is a JP, and has offered fellow members his services as such, as per:

I am available to assist members with any documents that need a JP to sign. Our services are free. I can be contacted on this email [cdnich300@gmail.com](mailto:cdnich300@gmail.com) or on my landline 09 6293816 or as a last resort on my cell phone 02102551937.

If members cannot get to my house, I will visit people in their homes or meet them at one of our meetings.

Services are free. If members want a JP and for some reason I am not available they can access the following website <http://justiceofthepeace.org.nz/>.

While all JPs can act, I recommend that clients go to one that has the word accredited by his/her name as that means she/he has kept up with recent training.

It is unlikely that Charles is the only member with knowledge/skills that might be useful to other members. If you can contribute in any such way, please write a short notice and send it to me, to include in the Newsletter, and to Vince, to put on the website.

### SENIORNET WEST AUCKLAND

Members of a digital bent might be interested in the services offered by SeniorNet West Auckland (<http://www.seniornet-west-auckland.org.nz/>): two Help Sessions and a Meeting each month. The Help Sessions are on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the month, 10-11 am, at its Learning Centre, upstairs in the Henderson RSA (66 Railside Avenue, Henderson). There is a \$5 fee. The Monthly Meeting, with a speaker, is on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, 10 am – noon, in the Kelston Community Centre (in the same room where West Auckland Rebus used to meet). A \$2 donation will give you morning tea and 3 chances of a small prize.

With COVID-19 once again in abeyance, normal services have been resumed. The next meeting will be on 17 November. The November Help Sessions will be on the 10<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>. The final Help Session of 2020 will be on 8 December. The first of 2021 will be on 26 January.

### COMPUTER SERVICING

Grant Stevens, operating as Eden Computers ([www.edencomputers.co.nz](http://www.edencomputers.co.nz)). I have not needed his services much, but I have found him very helpful when I did, as have others I know, Noel Rose for one. So Grant is the man to go to if your computer needs care and attention. Grant's contact details are on his website, above. If you cannot access him via his website, you can ring him at 09 638 8188 or 0274 939 017.

## OTHER MATTERS

You can download the Rebus Federation Constitution at <https://www.rebus.nz/documents>, where it is listed under *Rules of Rebus NZ*. It was originally intended to append it to this Newsletter, but 13 pages is too long – I am not that desperate for content.

### SUPERSENIORS

If you are not already in the habit of doing so, you should consult the SuperSeniors site (<http://www.superseniors.msd.govt.nz/>), where you can find much useful and interesting information, as well as sign-up to their eNewsletter.



## *SUPPORTERS*

West Auckland Mens Rebus gratefully acknowledges the support and assistance of:



The Federation is always there for us, with help, advice and encouragement.



We are all grateful for their support.

***The next meeting will be on Friday 8 October 2021***  
*(usual time, usual place)*

**If anyone has any views, opinions, information, requests or questions they want to share with members, please do not hesitate to send them to me, so that I can include them in the Newsletter. Remember, it is YOUR Newsletter: feel free to contribute to it as you will. I do not want to have to write it all myself – I'm too lazy for that!**

If you have any queries or problems with distribution, please raise them with Secretary Vince Middeldorp ([vincemiddeldorp@gmail.com](mailto:vincemiddeldorp@gmail.com) or 828 5250). Vince is responsible for distribution, I for content. Any contributions are most welcome ([JohnMihaljevicNZ@gmail.com](mailto:JohnMihaljevicNZ@gmail.com)).

John Mihaljevic (Newsletter Editor)