



# West Auckland Men's Rebus Club Newsletter

**February 2025**

**Next meeting: 10:00 am Friday 14<sup>th</sup> February, Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Rd, New Lynn**

## COMMITTEE

President	Bill Mutch	<a href="mailto:president@rebuswestauckland.nz">president@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	817 4721
Vice-President	Noel Rose	<a href="mailto:noelrose1976@gmail.com">noelrose1976@gmail.com</a>	828 1305
Immediate Past President	Bill Fairs	<a href="mailto:bill.fairs@gmail.com">bill.fairs@gmail.com</a>	627 8297
Secretary	Vince Middeldorp	<a href="mailto:secretary@rebuswestauckland.nz">secretary@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	828 5250
Treasurer	Charles Nicholls	<a href="mailto:treasurer@rebuswestauckland.nz">treasurer@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	6293816
Outings	Ian Smith	<a href="mailto:ismith435@gmail.com">ismith435@gmail.com</a>	027 4549343
Newsletter	Vince Middeldorp	<a href="mailto:editor@rebuswestauckland.nz">editor@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	828 5250
Speakers	Noel Rose	<a href="mailto:noelrose1976@gmail.com">noelrose1976@gmail.com</a>	828 1305
Hospitality	Trevor Pollard		817 8822
Attendance	Stephen David	<a href="mailto:sj david55@gmail.com">sj david55@gmail.com</a>	021641717
Welfare Officer	Bill Mutch	<a href="mailto:celebrantwedding@gmail.com">celebrantwedding@gmail.com</a>	021316556
Photographer	John Mihaljevic	<a href="mailto:john@rebuswestauckland.nz">john@rebuswestauckland.nz</a>	098361504



*Charles Nicholls JP and Ian Smith in casual conversation at the January 2024 monthly meeting*

## **MEETING REPORT**

*January 2025*

**Chairman: Bill Mutch**

**Attendance: 18 members and 1 visitor**

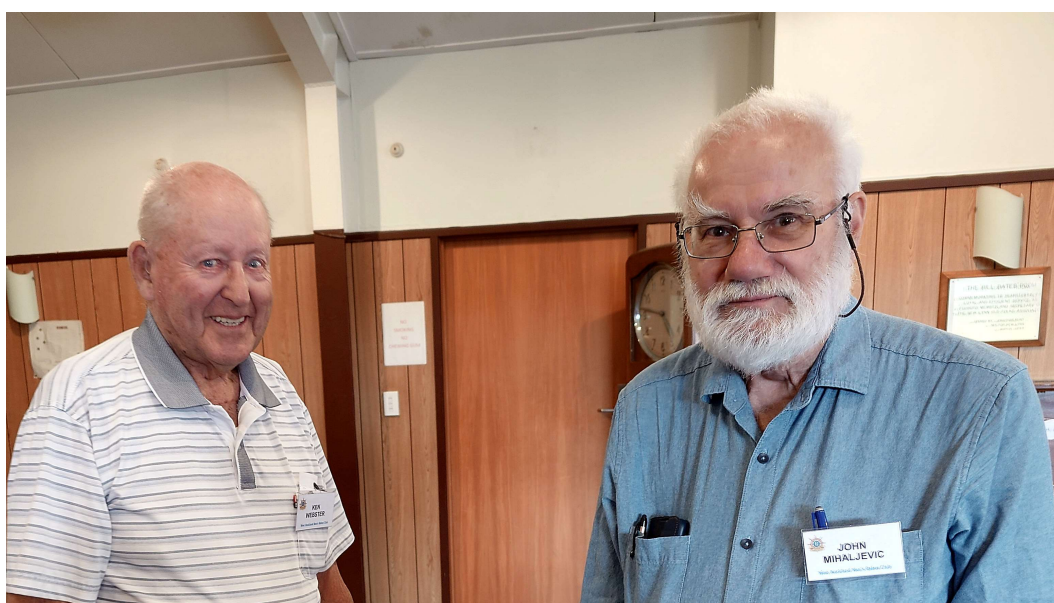
Members: Neil Castle, John Corban, Mensto De Roos, Maurice Forbes, Robert King, John McKeown, Vince Middeldorp, John Mihaljevic, Bill Mutch, Andrew Narayan, Charles Nicholls, Lyndsay Parris, Trevor Pollard, Ian Smith, Alan Verry, Ken Webster, Allan Williamson, Garrick Yearsley. Visitors: Justin Griffith.

### **1. Welcome and Introduction:**

The meeting was called to order, and a visitor, Justin Griffith, was welcomed. Justin was previously a member of the club and has returned for a temporary stay until April/May.

### **2. Apologies:**

Bill Fairs (roadworks outside his house); Ray Barrett (flu); Noel Rose (precautionary absence due to wife's COVID diagnosis).



*Club speaker Ken Webster and John Mihaljevic at morning tea in January*

### **3. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting (December 2024):**

No significant matters to discuss.

### **4. Correspondence:**

Smarty Grants: Accountability form submitted for lapel microphone funding. The Trusts: Invitation to attend a grant night. Henderson Falls Friendship Club: Invitation to join a March 3rd cruise on the Waitemata Harbour and up the Riverhead Estuary. Cost: \$50 per person. Interest shown by five members.

### **5. Treasurer's Report:**

- Financial summary for the past 12 months was presented.
- Club remains financially solvent, with contributions from donations, member fees, and morning tea.
- Bus Travel Grant: \$500 received, with funds allocated accordingly.
- Membership remains viable with approximately 30 members.

### **6. Trips and Social Activities:**

- Coffee Mornings: Details available in the January 2025 newsletter.

- Christmas Lunch Review: Included a detour through Birkenhead Forest Walkway. Mention was made of walkway's anti-slip surface causing dizziness.
- Upcoming Club Trips: March 3rd Cruise (See Correspondence section)

### 7. External Trips & Activities:

- Gold Card Trip: Organized by the Railway Enthusiast Society on February 18th.
- Historic Steam Tug Charter: Proposed for February 23rd to farewell the Queen Anne cruise ship.

### 8. Other Business:

Importance of attending grant meetings to build visibility and relationships.

### *Claudia's Corner*

I had a nice time skiing in South Korea but great to be home again.

**What's worse than a giraffe with a sore throat?**

An elephant with a nose bleed.

**Patient:** Doctor my hair is falling out can you give me something to keep it in?

**Doctor:** I can give you a box.

**Son:** Dad, why have you not spoken to Mum all week?

**Dad:** Well son I don't like to interrupt her!

**What do you get if you cross the Atlantic with the Titanic?**

About halfway!

**What do you get by crossing a Kangaroo with a sheep?**

A woolly jumper.

Cheers Claudia.



## **PRESIDENT'S PRATTLE**

### **President's Report February 2025**

**Bill Mutch & Deepseek AI**

Welcome to Our February Meeting

I hope this message finds you all in the best of health.

I'd like to start by sharing an update on Andrew Geddes, who is showing slight improvement but still requires 24/7 care. Our thoughts are with him during this time.

A few years ago, Trevor and Fay Pollard invited me to their home to discuss their wishes for when they passed away. This conversation, which took about 90 minutes, proved to be incredibly valuable. When Fay



sadly passed away, Trevor contacted me, and I immediately reached out to Souly Funerals to set everything in motion according to Fay's wishes.

The Funeral Director met us at Trevor's house, and within an hour, all arrangements were completed. Thanks to the pre-planning, the process was so much easier. Fay had passed away at Waitakere Hospital, and the Funeral Director handled her transfer and cremation with care and professionalism.

The family then organized a memorial service at the RSA in Titirangi. Because of the pre-planning, Trevor saved over \$5,000 in funeral costs. Around 160 people attended the service, and it was heart-warming to see so many Rebus Club members there.

The memorial was a touching tribute to Fay, and it was particularly moving to hear family members share their memories. Doug's presentation stood out as especially heartfelt and memorable.



*Andrew Narayan, Bill Mutch and Maurice Forbes were three of our members who went to Fay's service*

On a personal note, my granddaughter Claudia was sad she couldn't attend. She had often accompanied me on visits to Trevor and Fay, and Fay would often enlist Claudia's help in the kitchen. I'll miss my chats with Fay when I phone Trevor. Fay's decline was faster than I had ever expected, but I find solace in knowing she is now free from pain.

Fay's passing reinforced the importance of pre-planning. If anyone needs assistance with this, I'm always here to help.

This type of funeral service has now become normal, and I encourage everyone to consider it. It not only eases the burden on loved ones but also ensures your wishes are honoured.

On a different note, our group has been running for 40 years—should we consider doing something special before winter? I'll ask Vince to elaborate on this during the meeting.

It was wonderful to see two of our members step up and deliver presentations at our last meeting. I think we should aim to have member presentations at about three of our twelve meetings each year. This would not only save us \$150 annually, but also allow us to tap into the wealth of knowledge within our group.

As for my talk on the Queen Street Riots, I'm happy to keep it in reserve. In the meantime, I encourage everyone to think about what they could contribute.

Cheers,  
Bill Mutch

## ***SNAKE GULLY TO SUCCESS: MY EARLY LIFE STORY***

### ***CLUB SPEAKER KEN WEBSTER***

*Whisper AI & ChatGPT AI*



*Ken Webster, who has been a member of West Auckland Men's Rebus from 1988 through to 2025*

Well, I'll take you back to when the Second World War ended. It had an immense effect on my life. I was 14 at the time and still in high school, in the fifth form of my school certificate year.

Let me rewind a bit to give you the full picture. My father had a degree in horticulture, and when the Americans joined the war, he was sort of headhunted to supervise a vegetable farm. The government had taken over five farms on the Te Awamutu road out of Hamilton for this purpose.

As soon as the war ended, that vegetable farm ceased to exist because the Americans went home, and we had to vacate the house we were living in. We had moved from a state house in Cambridge to one of the farmers' houses on the land where the vegetables were being grown.

When we had to leave there, no state house was available in Hamilton, and we ended up in a transit camp, which was a horrible place. It was by the Fairfield Bridge, and we called it Snake Gully. It consisted of old army huts, three rooms in a line, a whole stack of them. There were about 40 or 50 families living in this area.

To get to our bedroom at the back, my sister, who was five years older than me, and I had to walk through our parents' bedroom. She actually got married while we lived in that place. It was quite a high time for her.

Anyway, to cut the story short, my mum came to me and said, "Look dear, you know things have been pretty bad. Your father didn't get a job quickly, and we're very low on funds, so we can't afford to let you stay at school any longer." They had arranged an apprenticeship for me at the local chemist down in Frankton Junction. Nothing was discussed with me; I was just told. I started there on Monday morning.

I went for what seemed like an interview, but it wasn't really. The boss, in a very offhand manner, said, "Come on, boy. Your first job is to sweep the shop, sweep the footpath, and clean a few bottles." It was all really boring, but plainly necessary. I was rather lucky in the long run because the boss was what you might call lazy. If there was any free time, he took it. The staff had to do all the work.

Within six months, I had learned to dispense everything. I could run the shop, cash up at night, do his banking, and take it to the bank as well.

Pharmacy in those days was quite different. Very little came pre-packaged from pharmaceutical companies. The majority of what we did, we mixed ourselves. He also taught me some bad habits. For example, if a mixture required 30% of a certain ingredient, you would estimate by putting your finger about a third of the

way down the bottle and pouring it in. People think all pharmacists were incredibly ethical and accurate, but that was not always the case.

Making ointments was even worse. You would just dab a bit of this and that, measure out the active ingredient, and stir it all together. We couldn't make tablets, but we made pills using a steel plate with hollows. After making a mixture, you would roll it backwards and forwards, allowing the right amount into the pill holes.

We also made capsules by mixing various ingredients, filling a half capsule, and putting them together. Each one had to be weighed to ensure they had the correct amount. Far from being funny, it was a demanding process, but I learned a great deal.

One of the other jobs I had to do was collecting films for developing and printing. So, once a day in the afternoon, I had to get on my bike and ride over to Hamilton. There was a chap by the name of Morrie Boswell who ran a photographic shop and did the developing and printing.

I must admit that I tried to get my own back a little bit on my boss. I used to time my trip for when the school was coming out, so I could chat with all the girls leaving my school on the way back. It took quite some time.

I must tell you a humorous incident that happened. We had a doctor in Frankton at that time who was quite supercilious. He often made mistakes in writing his prescriptions; dosages were not his strong point. One day, we hatched a plot when he ordered ten times the normal dose. He wrote to take ten milligrams instead of one milligram of a particular product. So, we rang him up, and in his usual dismissive manner, he said, "I've written the prescription, you just do your job," and hung up the phone.

Two minutes later, the phone rang. "Dr. Mondalton here. You have to amend that to one milligram." I replied, "I'm sorry, doctor. When I rang you before and you said it was alright, she was waiting in the shop, and I handed it to her. She's gone now." This, of course, caused absolute panic. We still had the prescription, but we let him sweat for half an hour before ringing him back. When we finally called him, he said, "We managed to catch her, but please doctor, listen to what we say in the future." And he did.

One morning, while sweeping the footpath, I looked down and found a tip-up purse with 45 pounds in it. Considering my wages were only 25 shillings, this was an absolute fortune. I went inside, rang up the police, and reported it. The policeman came and took it away. Three months later, he returned and said nobody had claimed the purse, so it was mine. My boss had the temerity to say, "He was working for me at the time he found it, so it's mine." The policeman responded, "No sir, the person who found it deserves it," and handed me his card, saying, "If you have any trouble with him, just ring me." So, I ended up with this huge sum of money.

As I mentioned, my wage was 25 shillings a week for the first year, which went up to 30 shillings a week for the second year. The apprenticeship board had been reviewing the remuneration of all apprentices and decided we were due for a wage rise. They made it retrospective, and I received 92 pounds and 30 shillings extra in one cheque. I went out and bought a brand-new motorbike.

When I started my apprenticeship, there was another apprentice who had just completed his apprenticeship and was kept on to help me learn. After about a month, he explained that Mr. Smiley, the chemist, bought two flagons of sherry every week, ostensibly to make tinctures because it was free of duty and cheap. He said, "I started decanting 30 mils off the top of every bottle. Mr. Smiley expects the bottles to be at that height, so when I leave, you've got to continue doing it."

Most people wouldn't have any idea how difficult it was to be an apprentice in pharmacy in those days. You had to work a 40-hour week, attend night classes three nights a week, and do all your study in the remaining free time. You went to Wellington's pharmacy college for three weeks each year. I took the train down there and was lucky to have friends to stay with. Other apprentices had to pay for accommodation, and on the wages they earned, it was really difficult to cope.

So, it was no sinecure getting through pharmacy back then.

Once I completed my apprenticeship, finding jobs in pharmacies was no problem at all. I went from one pharmacy to another, where I met the meanest man I've ever known. He had a gas burner behind the counter



in the shop. If someone wanted their purchase wrapped, he would fold it neatly, get some wax, put it down to the little gas flame, and seal the package with it.

Out in the pharmacy, we had Bunsen burners that we used to heat chemicals when making medicines. If we wanted to light the Bunsen burner, we had to get a dead match, come up to the shop, light it on the gas flame, and then light the Bunsen burner. All the envelopes of mail that came into the shop had to be carefully sliced right around, turned inside out so that the white sides were visible, and piled by the phone to make notes, so we didn't have to use new paper.

At home, I paid 10 shillings a week to my mother, out of my 50 shillings a week wage. When I bought my first motor car, petrol was one shilling and three pence per gallon, which is about four and a half litres.

One day, we had the Dangerous Process Inspector come to the shop for an inspection. He was checking through everything and said, "I can't understand this, you've got a 16-ounce bottle of tincture of opium, more than it says in your book." My boss replied, "Well, if you don't like it, you can drink it."

A lot of chemists were good at diagnosing and helping out. Today, the role of a chemist has evolved even more. Chemists now offer medical knowledge and advice on treating various conditions. Things have certainly changed an awful lot.

## ***JOURNEYS THROUGH TIME AND WORK***

### ***CLUB SPEAKER GARRICK YEARSLEY***

#### ***Whisper AI & ChatGPT AI***



*Garrick Yearsley speaking about a bygone era and the jobs he had*

### ***Reflections on Work, Books, and Unexpected Encounters***

Looking back on my early years, I often reminisce about the jobs I had in my youth, the people I met, and the small but meaningful moments that shaped my journey.

When I was in secondary school, I briefly considered becoming a chemist. I was drawn to chemistry, fascinated by the way elements interacted and transformed. However, Latin was a requirement for the subject, and since I wasn't in the Latin stream, I had to let go of that ambition.

Another thing I've always found satisfying is getting rid of books. Not in a careless way, but in the sense of passing them on to someone who might find them valuable. The other day, I met a man who had been diagnosed with asbestos-related cancer—a grim prognosis. He gave me three books, one of which was a large tome on clockmaking, entirely in German. I wondered who on earth would want such a book, but I took it to the Precision Watch Company, now on Ward Street, formerly on Delta Avenue. There, a young boy

working in the shop eagerly took it off my hands. It felt good to know the book had found a home where it would be appreciated.

Thinking back to my student days, holiday jobs were just a given. We all worked during the breaks—no free handouts from parents! One of my earliest jobs was delivering *The Herald*. Waking up in the early morning darkness, especially during winter, I'd pick up my bundle of 83 newspapers and head out to Lucerne Road in Remuera.

At the end of Lucerne Road stood a house belonging to Sir Keith Park. Though I never met him, I did meet his wife, Dolly, when I went to collect payment for the newspaper at the end of the year. She was a small, petite lady, and I remember seeing a little Spitfire model in the window of their home. Later, I learned that Sir Keith Park was a commander of an elite group in the Battle of Britain. He even has a statue in Thames, his birthplace. I visited it recently near the War Memorial—unlike most statues that stand on plinths, his is life-sized and positioned directly on the pavement, making him seem more like a real person.

I also recall an unusual encounter while hitch-hiking. A man picked us up and immediately asked, "What borstal are you boys from?" We laughed and got in. There was a Māori lady in the back, and after a while, she casually mentioned, "That's Keith Elliott, VC." At the time, I wasn't familiar with him, but after some research, I discovered he had received the Victoria Cross for bravery in the Western Desert during World War II. By the time we met him, he had become Reverend Keith Elliott—quite a character, to say the least.

During my time working for the council, I also came across veterans from the HMNZS *Leander*, a ship involved in the Battle of the River Plate. Two men, Jack Harvey and another whose name escapes me, had served on board during the battle. Their stories added to the tapestry of encounters that have stayed with me over the years.

Looking back, these experiences—whether delivering newspapers, meeting war heroes, or simply giving away an old book—have left lasting impressions. They remind me of how seemingly small moments can carry rich histories and unexpected connections, shaping the way we see the world.

### ***Echoes of the Trenches: Mr. Davenport's War Stories***

Way back when I was about six years old, I had a neighbour, Mr. Davenport, an Englishman who had survived the trenches of the First World War. His stories have stayed with me all these years. He must have been a sniper or something, lying on sandbags in the dead of night, waiting for dawn to break. He knew the Germans were going to come over. He fired a shot, rolled back into the trenches, and then bullets came whizzing back at him.

He survived the war, though he was wounded. He still had his British tin helmet, which he never handed in—he smuggled it home under his coat. It had tiny holes in it from shrapnel.

I remember him describing two aircraft he had seen during the war. One went up, the other went straight into the ground. It was all first-hand oral history. When I asked him what happened the next day, he simply replied, "You get the same thing." He was quite cheerful about it. I suppose you would be, if you survived the First World War.

### ***Grit and Graft: Holiday Jobs, the Waterfront, and Military Training***

Moving on to holiday jobs, I worked in the wool stores down-town, where bales of wool had to be carted around. It was a regular job, and all I needed was a bale hook. Other schoolmates found work at the freezing works, and later I went there too. My job involved cleaning up hides—stripping the wool off. The smell was awful, but it was a good job.

Another job I had was with the New Zealand Electricity Department, building transmission towers. We lived in a camp near Pokeno. At the time, I was at university studying surveying, and a few of us applied for jobs. No one asked too many questions, and we were hired. We didn't have to climb to the very top of the towers—our work was bolting together at the first level.

The foundation was a massive triangle in a deep pit, and once the work was done, the hole was filled in with dirt to hold the structure in place. One of the perks of working there was that I managed to get a heavy truck



licence. The NZED put us through a truck driving course, and before long, I was transporting steel from Otahuhu to our worksite.

The trucks were big beasts—six-cylinder petrol engines from the Second World War. They were unbearably hot, and I had to drive with the door open just to let in some breeze. Otherwise, I would've cooked inside. The bosses didn't ask too many questions at first, but after a while, they started suspecting that we might be university students. They asked if we were planning to stay, to which we vaguely replied, "Well, we might not." It was only a temporary job for us, which was a bit of a disappointment to them, I imagine.

The best job I ever had was when I was at secondary school and worked as a 'seagull' on the waterfront. Each day, I'd head down and hope to get a job. If successful, I'd be there from about half-past eight in the morning until tea time, and if needed, work right through to nine at night. That's just how the ships operated. I'd go home, sleep, and then come back the next day to do it all again. It was tough but rewarding work.

I'm not sure if we were in the union, but the union was a big deal then. As seagulls, we got the scrap work—extra shifts when extra hands were needed. The best part was that about six weeks after a ship left, there might be a bonus. If there was, we'd get an additional third of our original pay.

The union guys had it figured out—there'd be six workers, four on and two off at any time. The off-duty pair would have tea while the others laboured. Some tasks were easy, others were brutal. Banana boxes were heavy, around 70 pounds. Some holds were filled with pig iron, which had to be lifted out with a crane. There were also sacks of wheat that had to be tied up and hauled away. The most dangerous job was handling steel beams. The hook would come down, we'd attach it, and then watch as the steel swung dangerously across the hold. We learned on the job, often from the older, more experienced men.

I was conscripted into the army through the ballot system, known as Compulsory Military Training. Ballots based on dates of birth were conducted to decide who would undertake military service. I kept putting it off as a student and later when I was between jobs, I decided to just get it over with and went into the army.

The only real highlight of the experience was one annual camp where they held a live firing display down at Waiouru. They trucked us all up to the edge of the Desert Road, where we had a clear view of the plains with Mount Ruapehu in the background. The artillery fired, and we watched the shells explode in the distance. Then the Air Force Skyhawks came in, firing rockets that erupted into fire and smoke. The armed forces were spending a million dollars on this display, and they wanted us to watch every bit of it. It was quite a spectacle.

The most fascinating part was the strange sense of distance. Sitting on the edge of the Desert Road, looking out towards Ruapehu, it felt as though the guys firing the artillery were just a kilometre away. I remember thinking, "Is this safe?" But in reality, they were miles off. The open plains and clear air made it difficult to gauge distance.

Shortly after I completed my military training, the government cancelled National Service. And that was the end of that.

### ***Early Days of Entertainment***

Thinking back to those early days, I remember the cinemas. Auckland's first purpose-built cinema was in Mercury Lane. The head usher there was the father of a guy I knew. One day, when I showed up as a kid—maybe eight or nine years old—he let me in for free, calling it a "complimentary." I had no idea what that meant at the time, but it was a nice surprise. He was dressed in a tuxedo. The movie playing was *Limelight*, starring Charlie Chaplin. It wasn't exactly a comedy. Chaplin played an ageing vaudeville performer at the end of his career.

The film did have one truly memorable scene—Chaplin performing a comedy sketch alongside Buster Keaton. They played musicians, trying to tune their instruments, but the strings kept snapping. By the end of the scene, they were pulling a bird's nest of tangled wire out of the piano. That got a good laugh from the audience.

Other cinemas around town included the Tudor Cinema in Remuera and the Rialto Cinema in Newmarket. There was also the American Milk Bar in Newmarket, which had a unique atmosphere.

Down Queen Street, you could always hear the trains coming into the wharves, to unload their cargo. If you were there at five o'clock in the evening, you'd hear the cry of the newspaper boys selling the Star: "Star out!" Different editions would come out at different times—one at 4:30 pm, another at 6:00 pm. They'd update the stories between print runs.

### ***The Voices of Radio***

Radio was a big part of daily life back then. I still remember the great radio announcers: Phil Shone, Jack Maybury, and of course, Aunt Daisy with her famous morning greeting; "Good morning, good morning everyone!" Merv Smith was another well-known voice, especially on the 1ZB morning show. He was a real train enthusiast. Pete Sinclair was associated with music, and he was always introducing the latest hits.

I still remember the first time I heard Elvis on the radio. Every now and then, a new song of his would come on, and you could just tell—this guy was something special.

And then there were the BBC programs that were so popular: My Word, Tony Hancock, Round the Horn, and of course, The Goon Show. Another favourite was Night-beat, which always opened with that dramatic narration: "There are five million stories in the city, and this is one of them."

### ***Transport and the City's Rhythm***

The trams were everywhere in those days. I remember seeing them all lined up and stuck on the hill in Remuera. When the oak trees shed their leaves, the wet leaves made the tram tracks so slippery that they lost all traction.

Early in the mornings, before the sun was even up, you could hear the deep rumble of aero engines starting up down at Mechanics Bay. Those were the Sunderland Flying Boats, and their engines would send a powerful hum rolling up over Orakei and into Remuera. You could also hear the distant whistle of the Limited Express train running along the railway line at night.

### ***My Career as a Council Surveyor: Changes, Growth, and Amalgamation***

I had taken on a mortgage, so I decided I ought to do a steady job. I eventually became a surveyor with the Waitemata council. All councils then had surveyor sections, surveying equipment, and all the rest of it. That eventually went by the wayside, and now councils contract out these services.

We worked on subdivisions. There was a lot of council land owned by Waitakere County Council, stretching from Edmonton Road through to School Road and then right around to Lincoln Road. Some of the land was designated for industrial lots, while other areas were set aside for residential development.

When I joined, the council premises were in Greys Avenue. I was there for about six months before the offices moved. Back then, it was called the Waitemata County Council, which covered a vast area extending all the way up to Whangaparaoa. Being such a large county, there was a significant amount of surveying work required.

I stayed with the council throughout the years, witnessing the changes in leadership. Various mayors came and went during my tenure, including Ian McHardy, Tony Covic, Tim Shadbolt, Assid Corban, and Bob Harvey. Eventually, all the city councils were amalgamated under the name of Auckland City, and Len Brown became the mayor.

## ***JANUARY COFFEE MORNING RECAP***

### ***Vince Middeldorp & Deepseek AI***

Our coffee morning on Wednesday, 22nd January, at The Aldermen in Henderson had a smaller turnout than usual, with 7 members from Waitakere Combined Rebus and 9 from West Auckland Men's Rebus. While the numbers were puzzlingly low, those who attended had a pleasant morning together.

A special highlight was seeing Trevor Pollard, who joined us just three days after the passing of his beloved wife, Fay, at Waitakere Hospital. It was heartening to have Trevor with us during such a difficult time. He was accompanied by his son Doug, who had flown back to New Zealand from the USA upon hearing the news of his mother's passing. Our thoughts and condolences remain with Trevor and his family.

During our chat, Trevor recounted an intriguing story about his recent driver's licence renewal. After his regular doctor declined to approve the medical for his renewal, Trevor's friend Bobby Bland stepped in and arranged an appointment with his own doctor in Avondale. This doctor assured Trevor, 'You'll be safer on the road than most drivers out there.' Trevor noted that the doctor focused on his peripheral vision and omitted the cognitive test, which often poses a challenge for many older drivers.

Despite the smaller crowd, it was a morning filled with warmth, support, and interesting stories. Let's hope for a bigger turnout next time!

### **JOIN US FOR OUR NEXT COFFEE MORNING**



*A well attended club coffee morning at Gloria Jean's in July 2024*

Mark your calendars for our next coffee morning on **Wednesday, 26th February, at 10:00 am**. We'll be meeting at Gloria Jean's Cafe, a familiar and favourite spot for many of our members.

For those who may need a reminder, Gloria Jean's is located at **The Boundary Shopping Centre** in Henderson home to major retailers Chemist Warehouse, Kmart, and Briscoes.

We look forward to seeing you there for a relaxing morning of coffee and conversation.

### **BUS TRIP TO MIRANDA SHOREBIRD SANCTUARY**

Ian Smith has organised a bus trip to the Miranda Shorebird Sanctuary on **Wednesday, 2nd April**. The bus will depart from **St John Hall at 9:15 am** and **return by 3:00 pm**. Please note that the final price for the trip is still being confirmed and will be announced soon.

This is a wonderful opportunity to witness the incredible diversity of shorebirds at Pūkoro on the Firth of Thames. The tidal flats are home to thousands of birds, including Arctic migrants like the Godwit, as well as native species such as the Wrybill and the South Island Pied Oystercatcher, which migrate within New Zealand.



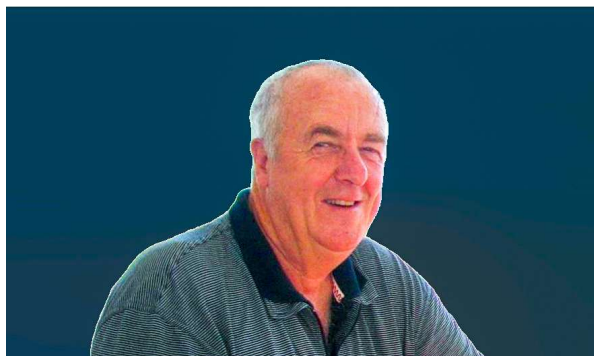
*Pūkoro Miranda Shorebird Centre*



## **GARTH DUTTON TO VISIT AT MARCH MEETING**

### ***Vince Middeldorp & Deepseek AI***

My mobile phone rang on Friday while I was driving up to Whenuapai. When I arrived at my destination, I returned the call to the number that had appeared on my screen. It was Garth Dutton, the chair of Rebus New Zealand. In December 2023, I had the pleasure of talking with Garth when I took Neil Castle to the Hibiscus Coast Rebus Club to speak about the restoration of Dacre Cottage.



*Garth Dutton Chair of Rebus NZ Incorporated*

Garth mentioned he has visited most of the Rebus clubs in Auckland but has yet to visit ours. With May marking the 40th anniversary of the West Auckland Rebus Club, he expressed his desire to visit us and present the Certificate of Attainment. I warmly welcomed his offer and assured him we would be delighted to have him join us.

Our March meeting is on Friday, 14th March. While our meetings typically run on a tight schedule, we will ensure Garth can share updates on what's happening at Rebus New Zealand Incorporated. It promises to be a special occasion, and we look forward to celebrating this milestone with him.

## **UPDATE ON THE RED BOAT HARBOUR CRUISE TO RIVERHEAD**

Noel Townsley from the Henderson Falls Friendship Club has informed us that priority for the upcoming Red Boat Harbour Cruise to Riverhead must be given to his own members. He is nearing the maximum capacity for the trip, which is scheduled for Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> March. Final numbers will need to be confirmed with the boat operator the week before departure.

Noel suggests that **we continue to accept bookings** and place those who are unsure of their availability on a waiting list. It's likely that some participants may withdraw, allowing us to offer their spots to those on the waiting list. Please note that individuals on the waiting list will only need to pay once their place on the trip is confirmed.

For full details about the cruise, including itinerary and pricing, please visit our website [rebuswestauckland.nz](http://rebuswestauckland.nz)

## **SUPPORTERS**



Our meetings are held at 10:00 am on the 2nd Friday of each month at New Lynn Friendship Hall, located at 3063 Great North Road. The date for our March meeting is Friday, 14th March.