



# West Auckland Men's Rebus Club Newsletter

**February 2026**

**Next meeting: 10:00 am Friday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, Friendship Hall, 3063 Great North Road, 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>	02102551937
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:stepdavid1955@gmail.com">stepdavid1955@gmail.com</a>	0211659461
Welfare Officer	Bill Mutch	<a href="mailto:celebrantwedding@gmail.com">celebrantwedding@gmail.com</a>	021316556



*It was wonderful to see Trevor Pollard looking so well at the 28 January coffee morning after his time in Waitakere Hospital. Linda Narayan smiles as Trevor heads off to his van for the trip home.*

## **MEETING REPORT**

### **Friday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2026**

**Chairman: Bill Mutch**

**Attendance: 20 members**

Members: Neil Castle, Stephen David, Vince Dennehy, Mensto De Roos, Bill Fairs, Maurice Forbes, Robert King, John McKeown, Vince Middeldorp, John Mihaljevic, Bill Mutch, Andrew Narayan, Paul Robertson, Noel Rose, Ian Smith, Mike Turnwald, Alan Verry, Laurie Vincent, Ken Webster, Garrick Yearsley.

#### **1. Welcome**

The meeting opened with a welcome to members. No visitors were present. The Chair noted that Wednesday had been Stephen David's 71st birthday, and members offered their congratulations.

#### **2. Apologies**

Apologies were received for: Lyndsay Parris, Charles Nicholls, Allan Williamson (recently discharged from hospital), and Trevor Pollard. The Chair reported that Trevor had been struggling with his health and was now in Waitakere Hospital.



*Members enjoy a relaxed chat at the January meeting while the morning tea is being set out in the kitchen.*

#### **3. Correspondence**

- **Mary Hibberd:**  
Two emails were sent requesting permission to access the hall to test the sound system. Members noted the need to be cautious about entering the hall without explicit approval.
- **Charles Nicholls:**  
Email received advising he wishes to give a talk in **March on Colonel Malone of Stratford**, who served at Gallipoli.

These were the only items of correspondence discussed.

#### **4. Treasurer's Report**

The Treasurer's Report was presented on screen.

- **Current surplus:** \$121
- **Previous surplus:** \$156
- The reduction was due to a **hall payment** of \$58 and **tea money received** of approximately \$23.

The Chair noted that the club aims to break even rather than generate profit. Charles Nicholls had suggested collecting subscriptions early, but the Chair would like subscriptions discussed at the AGM.

#### **5. Trips and Coffee Mornings**

Upcoming coffee morning details are:

- **Date:** Wednesday, 28 January
- **Venue:** Sierra Café

Alan Verry confirmed that the Railway Enthusiasts Society **Kaipara Harbour cruise** is going ahead next Tuesday, with around 25 having booked. Late additions are welcome.

Alan also shared his enthusiasm for European rail travel and recommended the **World's Most Scenic Railway Journeys** programme on Sky Open, which airs on Thursdays with repeats in the afternoon.

## 6. Speaker for Next Month

Noel Rose has arranged our February speaker, who will present on **“Dangers in the Garden.”**

## 7. Next Meeting

The next meeting will be held on **Friday, 13 February 2026.**

## 8. Morning Tea

Andrew Narayan and Mike Turnwald provided morning tea.

## CLAUDIA'S CORNER

**A horse** went into a pub  
The bar maid asked him  
Why the long face?

**Why did the golfer** wear two  
pairs of trousers?  
In case he got a hole in one.

**What happened** to the cowboy  
who wore paper trousers?  
He was done for rustling.

**Where do sheep** get hair cuts?  
At the Baa-bers.

**Diner:** What on earth is this food?

**Waiter:** Oh its bean soup>

**Diner:** I don't want to know what's it been  
what is it now!

**Patient:** Doctor, I keep thinking I  
am a mousetrap.

**Doctor:** well just snap out of it.

**Patient:** Doctor people keep ignoring me

**Doctor:** next please.

**Seventy-one percent** of dads are convinced it does  
not matter what  
words you sing to a pop song as long as  
you get the first and last lines right.

Have a nice get-together-----Claudia.



Group photo disasters

## FEBRUARY 2026 PRESIDENT'S REPORT

**Bill Mutch**

A big welcome to the lovely summer weather, which makes getting to our meetings much easier.

We missed Trevor Pollard at our last meeting as he had a spell in hospital, so a big thank you to all the members who helped out in the kitchen with morning tea. I'm pleased to report that Trevor is out and about again.

I've also been in hospital recently after suffering a heart attack at 2:55 am. I've bounced back, but given my health history, I need to be mindful not to overdo things and take regular rest breaks.

If anyone would like a turn at being President, please contact me or Vince. It's a straightforward role—ensuring each member feels valued and that meetings run smoothly.

My granddaughter, Claudia, who sends us our newsletter jokes, has gone to Samoa for a week—her first time visiting the island.

Perhaps we should start gathering ideas for where to go for our mid-year lunch?

Just a reminder to always shop around for quotes. A friend recently passed away, and his family got three funeral quotes and saved \$4,180. My sister-in-law also got three quotes for her house insurance and saved \$700. Times are tough, so get the best deal possible.

See you at the meeting.

Cheers,  
Bill Mutch

## **LANDSLIDE LYNDON**

*By Vince Middeldorp*



*Vince Middeldorp delivering his talk, with an image of President Lyndon B. Johnson on the projector screen.*

After encountering a YouTube video claiming Lyndon B. Johnson was 'the most corrupt American president of all time,' I explored his fascinating and troubling rise to power—a journey marked with fraud, violence, and political manipulation on a scale that would shock even the most cynical observer of American politics.

### **The Road to the Senate**

Johnson began his political career in 1937 as one of twenty-one Texas representatives in the House. Frustrated by his limited influence, he set his sights on the Senate, where each state had only two representatives and real power resided. His first attempt in 1941 ended in defeat at the hands of Pappy O'Daniel, who won by 39,000 votes through what Johnson recognised as fraudulent means.

Rather than be discouraged, Johnson took notes. Seven years later, he would use the same playbook, but better.

### **Box 13: The Birth of "Landslide Lyndon"**

The 1948 Senate race against former Texas Governor Coke Stevenson would become legendary in the annals of American electoral fraud. Johnson cultivated relationships with powerful political bosses in the Rio

Grande Valley, particularly George Parr, known as the "Duke of Duval County." These bosses controlled not just how votes were cast, but how they were counted and, when necessary, fabricated.

The strategy was simple yet audacious: wait for all other precincts to report, calculate how many votes were needed, then manufacture them. In Duval County, Johnson received 40,000 votes to Stevenson's fewer than 40. In neighbouring Jim Wells County, officials conveniently "discovered" a misplaced ballot box containing 202 votes, all in alphabetical order, all in the same handwriting, with 200 for Johnson and just two for Stevenson.

Johnson won by 87 votes. From that day forward, he was known as "Landslide Lyndon." The irony was not lost on anyone.

In 1977, nearly thirty years later, election judge Luis Salas confessed that he had personally written the fraudulent ballots and then certified the election. The notorious Box 13 scandal had finally been confirmed, though justice would never be served.

### **The Price of Loyalty**

Why would George Parr risk everything to help Johnson steal an election? The answer lay in a presidential pardon. Parr had been convicted of tax fraud, and Johnson, as a House representative, leveraged his connection with Attorney General Tom C. Clark, also from Texas, to secure a pardon from President Truman. Parr's debt to Johnson was paid in the currency of democracy itself: manufactured votes.

### **Violence in the Shadows**

Johnson's alleged involvement in criminal activity extended beyond electoral fraud. In a particularly chilling episode, his sister Josefa and her boyfriend, golf professional John Douglas Kinser, attempted to blackmail Johnson, demanding money in exchange for their silence about his illegal dealings.



*Bond hearing for Malcolm Everett "Mac" Wallace. He was accused of murdering golf pro Douglas Kinser.*

Instead of paying, Johnson allegedly arranged for a hit man named Matt Wallace to handle the situation. Wallace shot Kinser multiple times with a .25 caliber pistol at a golf course. Witnesses took down the license plate of Wallace's station wagon, leading to his arrest within hours. He was tried, found guilty of murder with malice (a capital crime in Texas), and then, remarkably, given a suspended sentence. He walked out of the courtroom a free man, never serving a single day for the murder. Wallace was defended by John Cofer, Johnson's longtime personal attorney.

### **The Henry Marshall Mystery**

Another disturbing case involved Henry Marshall, an investigator looking into fraud schemes connected to Johnson associate Billie Sol Estes. Marshall was found dead in his pickup truck, shot five times with his own bolt-action rifle. The initial ruling: suicide by carbon monoxide poisoning.

When Marshall's body was exhumed a year later, pathologist Dr. Joseph Jachimczyk made the obvious conclusion: no one can shoot themselves five times with a bolt-action rifle, especially not through the heart and liver. The weapon was also too long as to be able to point it at yourself and still reach the trigger. The cause of death was changed to "unsolved murder."

In 1977, Billie Sol Estes, granted immunity from prosecution, testified that Johnson had ordered the killing and that Matt Wallace, the same man who killed Kinser, was the hitman.

### **The Media Empire**

Johnson left office worth an estimated \$100 million, despite entering politics with little money. Much of this wealth came from his wife Lady Bird's radio and television empire, though the line between her business interests and his political influence was non-existent.

Lady Bird purchased radio station KTBC (Texas Broadcasting Corporation) with money inherited from her father. Initially struggling with limited range and restricted to daytime broadcasting, the station's fortunes changed dramatically once Johnson began working his connections. The Federal Communications Commission conveniently changed the station's frequency, expanding its broadcast area from the city of Austin alone to Austin plus thirty surrounding counties. Later approvals increased the station's power from 1,000 to 5,000 watts, extending its total coverage to sixty-three counties.

When television arrived, KTBC received the only commercial television license in Austin and was granted a seven-year monopoly. Later, when cable television threatened their dominance, the FCC allowed KTBC to block certain programs from cable competitors.



*Lady Bird Johnson and KTBC Manager J C Kellam in front of "Red Rover," the station news vehicle.*

The business model was simple: those seeking political favours from Senator Johnson bought expensive advertising on his family's stations. It was influence peddling hidden in plain sight, a precursor to modern political fundraising schemes that blur the line between legitimate business and corruption.

### **Vietnam and Brown & Root**

As president, Johnson escalated American involvement in the Vietnam War, ultimately leading to the deaths of 58,000 American service members. Among the beneficiaries of this escalation was Brown and Root, a Texas construction firm that had been a long-time political sponsor of Johnson's campaigns.

Brown and Root received \$380 million in contracts to build military infrastructure in Vietnam, including air bases and hospitals. The company was acquired by Halliburton in 1962. Halliburton would secure \$39.5 billion in contracts during the Iraq War (2003 - 2011).

### **The End of an Era**

Johnson suffered a massive heart attack in 1955 and struggled to obtain life insurance. Don B. Reynolds, an insurance broker who later reported seeing a suitcase containing \$100,000 for Johnson related to the controversial TFX fighter jet contract, secured Johnson a \$200,000 life insurance policy.

By 1968, with the Vietnam War deeply unpopular, Johnson knew he could not win re-election. He chose not to run. Despite all the allegations, scandals, and suspicious deaths surrounding his rise to power, Lyndon Baines Johnson was never charged with any crime in a court of law.

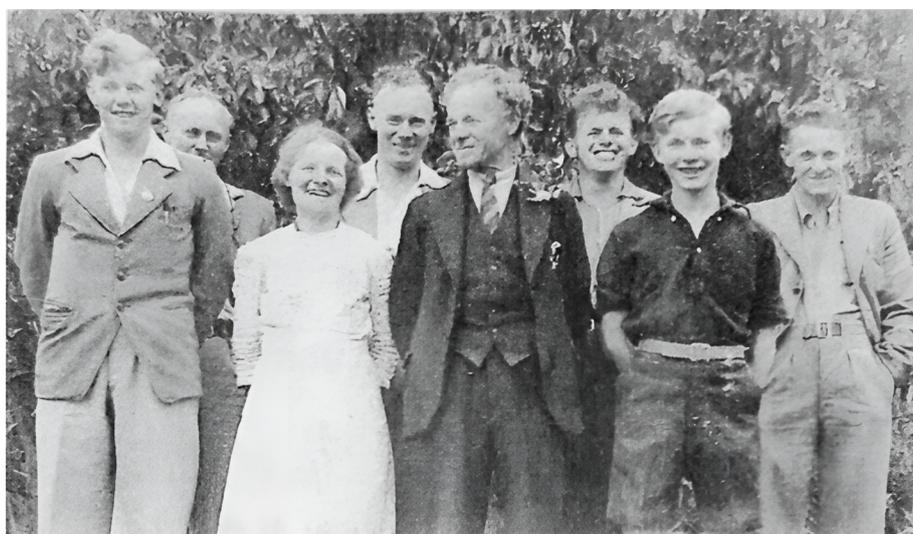
He retired to his beloved LBJ Ranch in the Texas Hill Country with Lady Bird (whose real name was Claudia). The couple lived out their days there, far from the corruption and violence that had paved their path to power.

### **A Legacy of Questions**

As we look back on his life from the vantage point of the twenty-first century, we must grapple with the reality that power in America has often been obtained and wielded through means that would shock the idealistic vision of democracy. The story of "Landslide Lyndon" is not just history; it is a warning that the price of democratic vigilance is eternal attention to how power is gained, maintained, and used.

## **THE LEGEND OF "APPLE JACK": A PIONEER OF HENDERSON**

*By Trevor Pollard*



*The Fuller family: Frederick and Emma with their six sons.*

Frederick Fuller arrived in Wellington in late 1910 with the skills of an engineering draughtsman but no prospects to match. The work simply wasn't there. So he pivoted—first to a cycle firm, then in 1911 to a sheep station in Gisborne, where he planned to establish himself before bringing his wife Emma from England.

She arrived aboard the ship *Arawa*, and in 1912 the young couple made their way to Henderson, a rough western district of Auckland where land was cheap and opportunity lay buried beneath ferns and tea-tree. They purchased seven and three-quarter acres from Mr. Duncan McLeod at seven pounds per acre—land pockmarked with holes left by gum diggers who had already extracted what they could.

In 1914, Frederick and Emma turned the first clod at 62 Te Atatu Road and began building their life.

### **A Life Measured in Hours**

The Fullers constructed a modest cottage and cleared the land, planting an orchard of apples, pears, and citrus trees. An aerial photograph taken by their neighbour, pilot Mr. Johnston, from his Tiger Moth in 1925 would show how the land had transformed—neat rows of fruit trees where chaos once reigned. But the orchard alone couldn't support a family of eight.

So Frederick worked. Eight hours daily at the Otahuhu Railway workshops. Two hours travelling by train. Four hours each evening in the orchard, packing fruit. Saturdays and Sundays, dawn to dusk among the trees. His sons would later marvel that he never took a sick day.

It was on those train journeys that Frederick earned his nickname. He would take orders for fruit from fellow workers and passengers, then deliver them each day, sacking bags slung over both shoulders. "Apple Jack," they called him, and the name stuck.

Emma worked just as relentlessly—tending gardens, bottling fruit, feeding six hungry boys, sewing all their clothes and fancy dress costumes. Both she and Frederick had quietly hoped for a daughter, but they loved their sons fiercely and raised them to be capable men.

The boys were assigned tasks: half an hour of work during the week, two hours on Saturdays. "Not too willingly," one son later admitted, though they came to appreciate their father's tireless example.

Frederick also found time to serve two terms on the Henderson School Board. For twenty-five years, there was always a Fuller boy at the school.

### **A Renaissance Man in Gumboots**

Beyond the orchard and the railway workshops, Frederick cultivated other passions. He maintained a substantial butterfly collection. He participated in the local musical society, with Emma fashioning his costume for a production of Pocahontas from sacking and feathers.

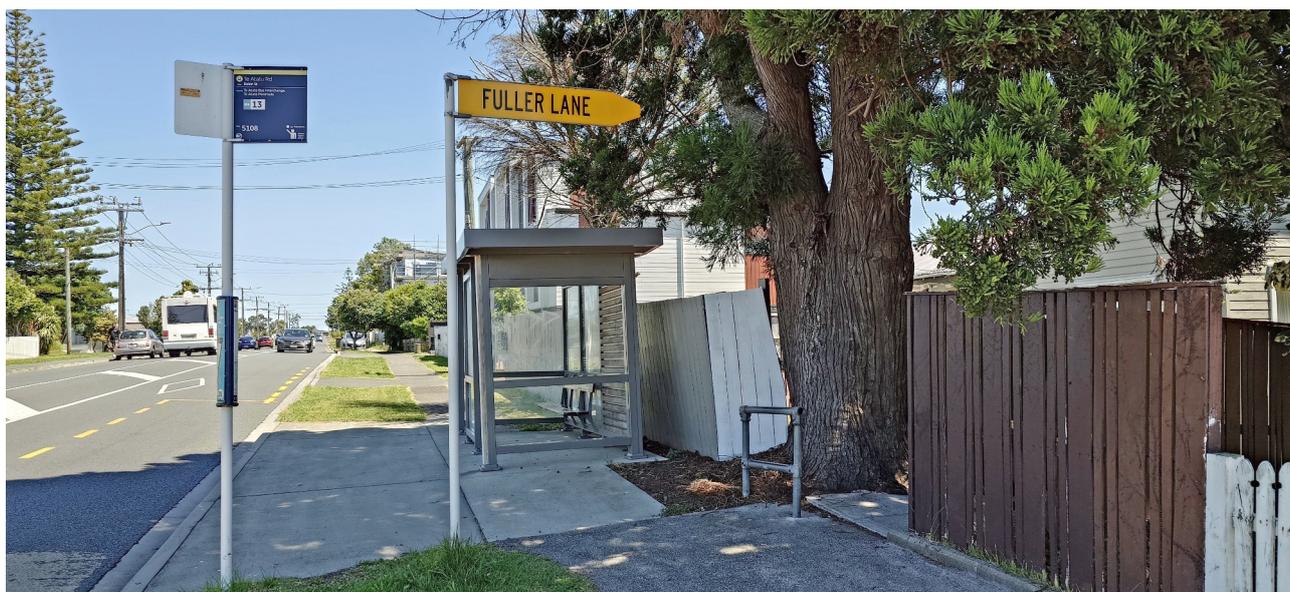
In 1929, Frederick won a Model T Ford truck in a raffle at the railway workshops—his first and only vehicle. The truck became another tool in his endless industry.

### **The Legacy**

The Fuller sons each found their own paths. Frederick Junior worked for Thorn Radio. Charles became an accomplished engineer, served in the Solomon Islands during World War II, and played in dance bands alongside notable musicians. George trained in horticulture in England and eventually received an MBE for his forty years of service at Pukekura Park in New Plymouth, where he specialised in orchids. Lionel pursued model aircraft, science, electronics, and art.

The family sold the property in 1952, but their mark on Henderson remained. In 2009, a section of Hiseman Lane was renamed Fullers Lane in recognition of how the family had helped shape the area—pioneers who broke in the land and proved what determination could grow from seven and three-quarter acres of broken ground.

Frederick Fuller died in 1960, seventy-five years old. He had been many things: an engineer, an orchardist, a collector, a performer, a school board member. But to those who rode the trains with him, who waited for their orders of fresh fruit delivered in sacking bags by a man who never stopped working, he would always be Apple Jack—Henderson's tireless orchardist who quite literally carried the fruits of his labour on his shoulders.



*Fuller Lane is situated in the vicinity of the former Fuller family orchard, which was located at 62 Te Atatū Road.*

## JANUARY COFFEE MORNING – A GREAT START TO 2026!

By Vince Middeldorp



Coffee morning at Sierra Café with Mike Turnwald on the left; Annette Gough (Waitakere Rebus) and Maurice Forbes at the counter; Ian Smith (blue shirt), John Mihaljevic and Trevor Pollard seated; and a very resplendent-looking Noel Rose standing.

Our first coffee morning of the year took place on Wednesday, **28 January 2026**, at **Sierra Café** on Lincoln Road, and what a wonderful way it was to kick off the new year!

Ian Smith was delighted to count **23 people** in attendance – a terrific turnout that showed just how much everyone values these relaxed get-togethers. Fifteen of those present were from our own West Auckland Men's Rebus Club, with the rest joining us from the Waitakere Combined Rebus Club. It was great to catch up with familiar faces from both groups.

It was wonderful to see **Raymond Barrett** and his wife Suzanne, at the coffee morning. After selling their long-time home in Maioro Street, New Windsor, and navigating a major downsizing and decluttering exercise, they have now settled happily into **Pinesong Retirement Village** in Green Bay. Raymond reports that they love it there and he wishes he had made the move years earlier – perhaps around age 72! With Raymond now joining **Ken Webster** and **Allan Williamson**, we have three club members enjoying life at Pinesong.

It was also lovely to see **Eric and Janelle Davison** at our end of the table. Although Eric (now in his nineties) is looking a little more frail these days, his mind remains as sharp as ever. Eric has been confined to a wheelchair for some years, yet remarkably, still drives his own car. Conversation turned to his earlier working life as a car mechanic at Coster Motors on Dominion Road. Back then, some Post Office vehicle work was outsourced to private garages, bringing Eric into contact with foremen from the old Public Service Garage. He explained how those foremen were deliberately rotated between locations (Newmarket, Stanley Street, St Lukes and others) to minimise any opportunity for “rorts”.

Perhaps because it had been unusually long since our last coffee morning – held on **Wednesday 3 December 2025** at **Friends and Whau Café** on Mt Eden – not only was the attendance better than could be expected, but members were in no hurry to leave. The coffee morning began at 10:00 am, and by 11:50 am, the Sierra Café management was looking a little concerned as they needed to prepare for their lunchtime influx of regular customers.

We were politely asked to "consolidate the tables"—which I suppose means push them closer together than they already were. Most of us realised we had been at the café long enough to overstay our welcome and decided it was time to leave.

It was one of those mornings where everyone had plenty to talk about. You glance down to the other end of the table and think, "I wonder what they're chatting about down there?" However, you can't be in two places at once. And there's always next time.

### **TRIP TO DOMAIN WINTERGARDENS**



Our next bus trip is to the Wintergardens on **Wednesday, 25 February**. The bus will depart from **St John Hall on Edmonton Road at 10:00 am**. We'll enjoy lunch or coffee at the Wintergarden Pavilion & Garden Café before heading back. The bus is expected to return at approximately 2:45 pm. Entry to the Wintergardens is free. **Bus fare is \$10**, payable to **Waitakere Combined Rebus Club: 12 3232 0318628 00**.

### **NEXT COFFEE MORNING**



There will be **no regular coffee morning this month**. Instead, we'll meet on **Wednesday, 25 February**, at the **Wintergarden Pavilion & Garden Café**, right beside the Wintergardens in the Auckland Domain.

Members on the Wintergardens trip will head to the café at about lunchtime. Anyone not on the trip is welcome to **drive directly to the café** and meet the group there.

### **SUPPORTERS**



We hold our meetings at 10:00 am on the second Friday of each month at New Lynn Friendship Hall, located at 3063 Great North Road. The date for our February meeting is **Friday, March 13th**.