

## Welcoming Communities pilot gathers momentum

Invercargill City Council is being called on to do its bit for the Welcoming Communities project being piloted in Southland.

**VENTURE** Southland's Welcoming Communities Advisor, Sue Morrison-Bailey, is co-ordinating the project in Southland, which is one of five pilot areas throughout New Zealand. The aim is to welcome newcomers to the city, whether they are migrants, refugees or people moving here from other parts of New Zealand.



Southland's three territorial authorities are seen as being key leaders of the project because the pilot should align with everything councils do, she said.

In presenting to a meeting of council staff and advisory group representatives this week, Ms Morrison-Bailey said the idea of Welcoming Communities began in Nashville, USA, in 2008 following a decade of severe population decline.

"The local Mayor recognised that to nurture and grow the city he had to start at the grass roots, so he spent money and set up an office to invest in leadership and business. He recognised that no new leaders were coming through and some

people were suffering burnout. He invested in training and upskilling locals, and in community development and planning. In ten years the population grew by over 200,000."

Nashville recognised the importance of migrants and focused on attracting refugees and migrants. They went from a population of 11,000 migrants to 40,000 migrants, 10,000 of whom were Kurds from Afghanistan.

Since then, Welcoming Communities projects have been successfully undertaken in Australia and Germany. In New Zealand the initiative is being run by Immigration New Zealand, in partnership with the Office of Ethnic Communities, Department of Internal Affairs and the Human Rights Commission.

Of the five pilot areas, Southland is the largest and was chosen because of its geography, three councils covering a mix of rural and urban people and the unique structure of Venture Southland. The work Southland has already done to identify its needs caused by an ageing population and the target of attracting 10,000 people by 2025 also contributed to it being selected for the pilot.

As it is part of an international movement there are key elements for the New Zealand Welcoming Communities standards, which include:

- Inclusive leadership
- Connected and inclusive communities

- Civic engagement and participation
- Welcoming communications
- Welcoming public spaces
- Equitable access
- Economic Development, business and employment
- Culture and identity

The Southland pilot is currently developing its Welcoming Plan and has identified five key areas. These are:

1. Centralise welcoming information/welcoming portal
2. Improve access to Maori culture;
3. Build stronger communities
4. Increase appreciation of other cultures
5. Celebrate what it is to be a Southlander



Council and Venture staff in key areas such as Community Development and Communications will be asked to contribute their skills to advancing these key areas in coming months.

## From Engineering Services Group Cadet to Manager – Amanda bids farewell



BY AMANDA SMITH

**THIRTEEN** years ago Council restarted its Engineering Cadet Programme, following the development of the new New Zealand Diploma in Engineering (Civil).

I was lucky enough to be one of the first people employed on this new programme and from that day I haven't looked back. Since my cadetship I have been a Project Technician, a Project Manager, a Team Leader and I leave ICC as the Acting Engineering Services Group

Manager. I have had the opportunity to be involved in so many different projects over this time. They have ranged from repairs to the underside of the Stead Street Bridge, designing the new water supply main to Bluff and the Kennington Foulsewer Network, working nightshift to manage pipe renewal contracts in the CBD, building models of the city's water and foulsewer models, being the engineer for the city's maintenance contracts and

helping to plan the future renewals of the city's pipe networks.

ICC has given me technical training, a vast array of engineering experience, leadership opportunities and some amazing memories. I have so enjoyed my time spent at Council, where the chance that we have to often make an immediate positive impact on people's day-to-day lives is unlike many other environments and is the reason why I do this job!



## Acting ESG Manager named

**ICC'S** Aquatic Services Manager Peter Thompson is Acting Manager of the Engineering Services Group following the resignation of Amanda Smith.

Works and Services Director Cameron McIntosh said that Mr Thompson had agreed to serve as manager of both Pools and ESG while a permanent replacement was sought.

"Pete is a skilled manager with a good knowledge of Council and the community. He also has experience as an Asset Manager with Southland District Council, which involved community services and roading. We are fortunate to have him to call upon to provide management guidance through this transition period," Mr McIntosh said.

## Kaka breeding programme a success



**THE** ICC Parks Department over the past decade has been doing its part to help grow New Zealand's native kaka population.

According to Parks Assets Planner Cassandra Scobie records show that Queen's Park Aviary has now bred 11 kaka for release into the wild since 2007.

"This successful breeding programme has helped build up the wild population in Dunedin and Tasman areas.

"The city has been involved in many breeding programmes over the years - not only the kaka, but also the Antipodes Island parakeet, Campbell Island teal, Enderby Island rabbit and the Auckland Island pig," Ms Scobie said.

## Estuary shelters win architecture award

**THE** Invercargill Estuary Walkway project has received another award – this time for the design of the shelter huts.

Invercargill architects Beattie McDowall designed the three huts, which were constructed by Parks' Department carpenters as part of the combined Rotary Estuary Walkway Project.

The shelters' design won the Small Project Architecture category in the 2018 New Zealand Architecture Awards Southern section.

The citation read:

"The heft of sizeable macrocarpa beams and boards – could a smaller building be made with larger timber? – belies the gentle repose of these shelters. These stations on a walkway acknowledge local geography, ensuring that you always have your back to the wind and your eyes on a view. The shelters are a triumph of prefabrication, minimalism and materiality."



## Families inquire about WWI soldiers



**RENEWED** interest in Southland’s and New Zealand’s fallen soldiers has seen increased numbers of inquiries to Council’s Records Department from the families of WWI soldiers.

Records Department Archivist Wendy McArthur has been using information from the Southland War Memorials and Honour boards project when replying to the families.

Local historian Ann Robbie had already spent many years on a solo project of searching out war memorials and honour boards in Southland when, with the help of Bobbi Brown at Venture Southland, heritage funding was obtained and Ann began her project of documenting our memorials.

In 2013 the Kia Mate Toa website was set up by historian Dr Aaron Fox, Venture Southland and SIT digital media students. This ongoing project is believed to be the first on-line database of memorials to be produced.

Each memorial is recorded with GPS and photos are uploaded onto the website. Some honour boards had been abandoned, or stored in less than ideal conditions, but are being carefully restored with the assistance of the Southland Woodworkers Guild.

Ann estimates around 90% of Southland’s memorials and boards have now been located. The Invercargill Borough Council, like many employers, had an honours board made listing the names of Council employees who served and those who died in World War I. It is situated on the wall to the left in the main entrance to the Civic Theatre.

The following words are inscribed on the Civic Theatre plaque: “These laid the world away, poured out the red sweet wine of youth, gave up the years to be of work and joy and that unhoped serene that men call age.”

Forty-seven Council employees served in WWI and eight of them died, in France, Gallipoli, Belgium and Egypt.

Check out Flashback Friday this week on the ICC Facebook page – it will feature David Frew, a tram conductor, whose name is on the honours board.

## Calling all former Youth Council members

**The Invercargill Youth Council wants to contact former members to help celebrate its achievements over the past 20 years.**

**COUNCIL** Community Development Manager Mary Napper said that in 1998 a group of young people produced a video showing the City Councillors what was good – and not so good – about life for them in Invercargill.

“We still have the video and it’s a hoot to watch ... the fashions and music, the smoking and much more,” Ms Napper said.

“Since then the Youth Council has been instrumental in the development of a smokefree area within the CBD and the introduction of the Bus Smart card. The Youth Council also holds annual leadership programmes,” she said.

“We want to contact former members and invite them to celebrate the achievements of the Youth Council. We are also keen to learn how being members of the Youth Council has impacted on their lives.

“The Youth Council intends to present to the full Council about its successes over the last 20 years – and members are still making decisions about how the celebrations will unfold,” Ms Napper said.

For more information email youth.council@icc.govt.nz or text 021 391 674.