

Dunstan News

Oct/Nov 2020

Volume 8 Number 3

Heritage Church on the Market

Clyde's historic Anglican Church, St Michael's and All Angels, is to be put on the market in November although the fight to keep it as a community asset is not over yet.

Efforts by the friends of St Michael's Charitable Trust committee failed to stop the Anglican Diocese in Dunedin from agreeing to sell the property in Matau St. Committee chairman David Ritchie says although the result is disappointing the trust is now looking at the next possible steps it can take to secure at least the part of the property containing the church.

There was pressure from the Dunstan Parish to sell the church and it twice ignored advice given by the Diocesan Council to enter into discussions with the charitable trust. The parish can claim the interest from the sale price which it wants to use for a replacement parish vicar and to buy a vicarage.

St Michael's, built in 1877 with funds raised in the community, was the subject of a church property commission whose four members, including two from the parish, were asked to look at options for the property. Its report to the Diocesan Council has not been made public.



St Michael's Church in Matau Street, Clyde

New Ideas Discussed by Theatre Group

The Covid-19 outbreak put paid to the show *The Pink Hammer* which the Clyde Theatre Group had planned to perform earlier this year, but its postponement has given members the chance to step back and examine their activities.

A recent brainstorming evening looked at what it was that fired up members about the theatre and the result was a list of projects, big and small, to tick off in the future.

"We want to take some workshops for our own personal development, to up-skill ourselves to benefit our community in future productions," committee member Fiona Walker-Roud says, "and we have some good ones in the pipeline."

Sprucing up the lighting for the hair and makeup area is another on the list, as is organising a few fun social evenings for members. Fiona says the group is looking forward to staging its delayed *The Pink Hammer* next March, but the time spent on exploring other theatre-related activities puts the group in a good place for the future.

Talking It over With Russell Garbutt Vincent Community Board Member

As I write, a soft rain is falling to give a bit of moisture to drying grounds – let's hope that all those veggies, traditionally planted over Labour weekend, flourish.

Recently we held the annual fund-raising dinner for Hospice Central Otago. I started this a couple of years ago and thanks to the incredible team at Pioneer Energy, the generous support of local individuals and businesses donating goods and the enthusiastic support of our community, about 80 people attended a dinner at The Packing Shed. It raised \$15,000 for the team of eight based in Cromwell who give such essential in-home support to those in our community nearing the end of their lives.



While Covid rages out of control elsewhere, it is great to see that New Zealanders are getting out in droves and keeping our economy ticking over. People I've spoken to report big rises in visitors and spending. However, the outlook for the horticulture industry is not looking so good in what seems to be quite complex problems of labour supply. I can't equate the Government's approval for foreign workers for fishing companies but not approving "importing" Pacific labour for the picking of our fruit. It seems there are serious problems about why New Zealanders are not able or willing to work in our orchards or vineyards. The industry needs to address these basic issues of high demand for labour for short periods.

Any issues, comments or suggestions - give me a call on 449 2254 or 020 4039 0424

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Preliminary Work on Clyde River Track

The Clyde River Park project will get underway after the design and estimates for the job have been evaluated and approved by the Central Otago District Council.

Capital Projects Programme manager Patrick Keenan says some people might have thought work had started when trees were removed recently, but that was to help evaluate a route for the track.

"Geotechnical investigations were carried out beside Miners Lane to ascertain the best site for the track beginning and a viewing platform," he says. "We are still at the design stage."

Work on the project is unlikely to start until later this year or at the beginning of 2021. An archaeological assessment will also be carried out when work starts because many of the early gold miners pitched their tents in the area.



Clyde Identity – Laurence van der Eb

His business, Clutha River Cruises, in the historic precinct is not hard to miss. Once a butcher's shop, it has an 1870s look but, in truth, it was built much later than that. Not that Laurence minds. He has filled it with relics from the gold fields which he has been collecting for 30 years after he became fascinated by the gold fields here and in Australia.

Born in London of Dutch parentage, Laurence visited Australia in 1983 and got the gold bug: "I did go gold seeking but found it quite hard so I decided to concentrate on the history but I didn't know anything about gold in New Zealand," he says.

That changed in 1991 when he met a kiwi girl and the pair settled in Christchurch. He arrived in Clyde in 1999 looking for a stone cottage from the gold mining era and now lives in Tyrell's Cottage, one of Clyde's heritage buildings.

He spent countless hours roaming Central Otago's hillsides exploring old gold mining areas and reading everything he could find about the gold mining days. He has been able to use that knowledge in his business, Clutha River Cruises.

"I live and breathe the history because I talk about it on the cruise and I stop to look at the relics all the way down the Clutha until the old gold mining huts disappear. (They were drowned by the rising water level caused by the construction of the Roxburgh dam.)

Laurence and partner Tina usually spend the winter months on the island of Ibiza where he has family and where the pair have a shop. But not this past winter! It is the first time in 50 years Laurence has missed summer there thanks to Covid-19. However, Clyde offers him something he has not found elsewhere.

"I think the most enriching thing is that the history here actually brings the whole area alive," he says. "I can feel the spirit of the pioneers here."

Clutha Rivers Cruises is operating daily and linen fashion garments, similar to those they sell in Ibiza, are sold in their Clyde shop.



Laurence van der Eb with one of his prize possessions – an authentic ore cart from the McLean family's gold mine in the Nevis Valley.

Surplus Bins Find New Uses.

The Clyde and District Lions Club reports that its fundraising wheelie bin project is progressing well with people coming up with all sorts of uses for the bins. The club was given 3000 surplus bins by the Queenstown Lakes District Council.

They can be used for storage, compost, wood, coal, garden waste, general rubbish and to hold stock feed. But there is also a number of novel ideas such as portable garden chairs and a portable storage for garden tools (The latter comes with a cutout plywood inset).

A standard bin is \$30, a hen feeder \$40 and a garden tool bin \$45. Contact Bill Batt (027 274 0557) and Kate (027 499 1665) if you want one.

Festival Proceeds Helps Trainee Chef

Promote Dunstan's food scholarship award has lifted a heavy load from its first recipient, Alysha Hanson of Alexandra. "I am over the moon: really happy," she says. "It will be a great help towards my fees."

Alysha is studying the level four cooking course at the Otago Polytechnic's Cromwell campus and will return next year for her diploma. She has been in kitchens learning on the job since she was 15 but decided she wanted to get ahead and learn more.

There is a link with Clyde: she was running the kitchen at Dunstan Hotel leaving just before it closed in 2019.

Polytechnic course chef Bill McDonald says she is a pleasure to work with and her colleagues on the course obviously think the same helping her every morning by setting up everything she needs for the day while she drops off her five-year-old daughter, Alyriss, at school.

At home, Alysha loves concocting curries, but she has her sight set on higher things.

"I am interested in high class food," she says, "and I would like to work in fine dining restaurants."

This year's award was for \$2000 and comes from profits raised at Promote Dunstan's annual Wine and Food Festival.



Winner of Promote Dunstan's first food scholarship, Alysha Hanson is presented with her cheque by Promote Dunstan's Karin Bowen

Valuable Feedback from Locals

Feedback from Clyde residents is currently being collated by the Central Otago District Council after its Spatial Plan drop-in at the Clyde Bowling Club in August.

The local response was one of the largest in the region with about 60 people turning up to make their views known on how and where growth should happen.

Community and Engagement Manager Paula Penno says options are being developed to address the issues of growth and change identified by Clyde residents. These will be presented to the community later this year and feedback on the options will form the basis of the council's spatial plan.



Chrissie Ramage (left) and Jenny Van Boxtel, both of Clyde, discuss the CODC Spatial Plan with Planning Manager, David Campbell.

