

6. OUR CITY O-TAUTAHI UPDATE

Officer responsible Our City Director	Author Jenny May, DDI 941-7461
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The purpose of this report is to update the Committee on progress related to Our City O-Tautahi.

OVERVIEW

Our City O-Tautahi is now in its third month of operation. During this time the venue has had 4,654 visitors with a total of 5,846 including use of meeting rooms. Visitor feedback data has revealed positive reaction on all counts to the nature of the project and its exhibitions. The most popular exhibition is the ground floor display, *The Past – Inanahi*. This exhibition area contains the following displays:

- *Gifts to the City* – A display of items gifted to the Mayors and Council of the city to mark special occasions or visits to Christchurch.
- *50 Years On* – A look at how central Christchurch has changed over 50 years (exceedingly popular with all ages).
- *Christchurch Before 1850* – Highlights the history of the City prior to formal settlement by the Canterbury Association.
- *Reserve 10* – The history of this building and site – its many uses and stages of development.
- *Lost Christchurch* – A pictorial examination of buildings now demolished – without doubt, attracts the longest visitor stay time.

The only consistent criticism has been that Our City O-Tautahi is not open in the weekends. That it is not open is due to a deficiency in the operational budget which would allow employment of staff to open for the extra two days.

The first floor meeting rooms, the Library, Education Room and former Debating Chamber, are in daily use for meetings by both Council and external organisations. At this stage we have bookings through to 29 January 2003.

The most recent exhibition, 'The Garden City', has been exceedingly popular, with 2,215 visitors to the exhibition spaces in the six weeks this exhibition has been open.

Classes from Riccarton High School, as part of the 'Schools in Town' experience, worked out of the Education Room for the first four weeks we were open. The classes thoroughly enjoyed working from Our City O-Tautahi where they could use the information provided through the exhibition spaces for their projects, as well as, being in an ideal central city site for visiting organisations in the city. The students chose to return to Our City in the first week of November to present their projects to some 50 parents and staff. One class is returning to spend a further week at Our City commencing 18 November 2002. We have had visits from tertiary institutions including the Christchurch Polytechnic and University of Canterbury.

We have hosted Carter Group Heritage Week 2002, the Hagley/Ferrymead Community Board Heritage Awards and were the venue for a number of large functions which have included the Community Law Centre Anniversary celebrations, the Gandhi Seminar and the launch of *Local eye*. We were involved in the Art and Industry 2002 Biennale, exhibiting the models of Micheal Parakowhai's 'bunnies'. In the last week we have been the venue for a full day seminar by Creative New Zealand and the Keep Christchurch Beautiful Award presentations to Schools. We will host the Environmental Awards and Civic Peace Awards later this month.

We have undertaken three partnership events with Te Papa National Services with public lectures by American Museum consultant Elaine Gurian, Sir Neil Cosson, Chair of English Heritage and Dawn Casey, Director of the National Museum of Australia.

The Director has presented a number of talks about Our City O-Tautahi to Council teams, local service organisations including Rotary and Lions, U3A, and school groups.

CARTER GROUP HERITAGE WEEK

While core funding is provided by Council the principle (and naming rights) sponsor for Heritage Week, is the Carter Group of Companies. Sponsorship was also received this year from the Community Trust. A number of 'in kind' sponsorships were also received.

This year over 280 events from 90 different organizations were held. The majority were very well attended with just under 2,000 people attending the Riccarton House open day. Generally, event attendances were up on last year. All event organisers were contacted personally before, during and after Heritage Week, this process received excellent feedback. However as the final date for feedback forms does not close until the end of November, a fully documented report will be presented to the next Arts, Culture and Heritage Committee meeting in 2003.)

The opening event for Heritage Week was held at Our City O-Tautahi with an attendance of 150. Dame Anne Salmond, Chair of the New Zealand Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga Board presented the keynote speech. It was a capacity crowd and consideration of a larger venue in the future needs to be investigated for this calibre of speaker, or alternatively, a repeat presentation open for the public the next day.

What worked:

- Commemorative Booklet - excellent feedback - still getting requests for it.
- Posters - great feedback - strong images - high impact.
- Star wrap around worked from profile of front of paper and editorial and high circulation. Downside was the large programme meant the typeface was small and difficult to read.
- Gargoyle competition - high publicity, however only moderately supported, but attracted new sponsors keen to be involved in the future.
- Heritage Pursuits in collaboration with Warner's Hotel - all involved had a great time, trophy was a success, all teams have expressed an interest to be involved next year. This has the potential for local television.
- Event coordinators really appreciated the signage and competition flyers that were delivered to their events.
- *Pottering Around the Provincial Chambers* – based around the adventures of Harry Potter, this was the best children's event (in my opinion) Heritage Week has ever held.
- 10th Anniversary was well profiled.
- Many events attracted additional publicity, especially where event coordinators were proactive and supplied additional information and supported with their own advertising.
- Heritage Week database established.
- Good relationships built with key event managers.
- Event delivered within budget.

What could be improved on:

- Programme needs to be out earlier.
- Database needs to be built on and passed on to new coordinators.
- Feedback forms indicate more publicity required of individual events.
- Event proposals could go out earlier and perhaps include the marketing plan so expectations of the publicity that will be given to individual events, is clear and the responsibility of individual event organisers to leverage on the Heritage Week brand and publicity is identified.
- In the past five years the number of events and individual community event organisers involved, has more than doubled - the level of core funding has not altered and thus needs to be reconsidered if the event is to continue to its current high level. This matter will be addressed fully in the final report. The event's current success relies essentially on volunteer labour and community sponsorship.

Staff

Recommendation: That the Committee receive the information.

Deputy Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.