

3. HERITAGE WEEK 2001

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The purposes of this report are to examine the strategies and objectives of the 2001 Carter Group Heritage Week, and to determine to what extent they were met within the defined budget. A brief commentary on the organisation of the week and the activities held is also provided.

CONTEXT

The ninth annual Christchurch City Council Heritage Week was held from 12-19 October 2001.

Responsibility for co-ordinating the event was that of Paul Collins of Marketus Limited, reporting to Jenny May of the Senior Heritage Planner, City Solutions or her delegates.

The event is core funded by the Christchurch City Council with sponsorship from:

- The Carter Group of Companies (principal and naming right sponsor)
- The Community Trust
- The Christchurch Star

There were 130 different heritage related events listed in the official programme this year (vs 100 in 2000, 88 in 1999 and 72 in the 1998 programme).

With multiple sessions for some of the events, there were almost 200 opportunities for people to participate in Carter Group Heritage Week.

2001 is the 150th year of organised European settlement and as a number of organisations were celebrating their sesquicentenary it was envisaged that many activities would be based around this. Thus the week included a wide variety of activities that encompassed the diversity of heritage interests in our society.

With this in mind the theme for Carter Group Heritage Week 2001 was "Our Treasures – O Matou Taonga".

The week managed to encompass a wide range of events that reflected the broad sweep of our historical development from pre-European times, and drew attention to:

- Canterbury's 150th year of organised European settlement
- Maori and European settlement prior to 1850
- Buildings, objects and places of historical and social significance

STRATEGIES AND OBJECTIVES OF HERITAGE WEEK 2001

The following was agreed between the former Environmental Policy and Planning Unit staff and Marketus in 1998, and has remained as the benchmark for Heritage Week.

Primary Objective

That the Primary Objective for "Heritage Christchurch" is to increase public awareness of the value of Christchurch's built heritage, as a vital component of the unique identity of the City. (This objective has been widened to encompass our cultural landscape so that the programme also focuses on our social history, heritage places, archaeological sites and wahi tapu and wahi tapu sites).

The Role of Heritage Week

That the role of Heritage Week in increasing awareness of heritage, is to be an annual celebration of the value of Christchurch's Heritage buildings (and places) aimed at involving citizens in a series of social, cultural, and educational events, which focus on the City's built heritage (and encompasses the objective as noted above.) Advertising and publicity surrounding these events should generate awareness of the value of Christchurch's heritage, with both event participants and non-participants alike.

Specific Heritage Week Objectives

- The involvement of worthwhile* events and the number of people attracted to them.
* What is worthwhile is determined by: the heritage context of the chosen event venue; the heritage content of the event; the specific target audience and the promotional value to wider Christchurch. That is to say - buildings and places chosen as venues, event content, target audience and promotional emphasis and budget determine what is considered worthwhile.
- Generation of effective advertising and positive publicity.

COMMENTARY ON EVENTS ORGANISATION

Carter Group Heritage Week 2001 was again a mix of events initiated and funded by the Council, and those initiated and run by community groups, but co-ordinated and promoted by the Council within the context of the overall week's programme and its theme.

Heritage Week Official Opening - Friday 12 October 2001

Again the heritage venue of the Stone Chamber at the Canterbury Provincial Council Buildings was chosen for the occasion. This year the nearby newly-established "Our City" facility enabled us to readily relocate the audience to an appropriate heritage building and site for refreshments, but to showcase the first stage of the new adaptive reuse of this building.

There was sufficient attendance at the opening to fill all the seats on the ground level of the Chamber, but given the number of invited guests who had advised that they were coming, numbers were low. (Some 120 replied indicating they would attend but only 85 were present on the night – a shortfall of 35 which is considerable)

Our attempt at giving some interesting content to the event by inviting Dame Cheryl Sotheran, CEO and Te Taru White, Kaihautu of Te Papa Tongarewa, was thwarted by a security emergency at Christchurch Airport. This was a set of circumstances quite beyond any feasible contingency planning, However outstanding chairmanship by the Canterbury Museum Directory Anthony Wright and the versatility of our other guest speakers who rose to the occasion (Cr Crighton and Philip Carter) combined with the quality of the venue and the interest created by the "Our City" venue for the refreshments went some considerable way towards mitigating the impact of this disappointment for the audience.

Colonial Kids' Carnival at Ferrymead Heritage Park

This event was presented as a concept to the Ferrymead Heritage Park and the "Education Outside the Classroom" unit based there. The sponsorship money provided by the Community Trust was used to fund newspaper advertising in both the Press and the Star specifically for this event, and to cover the costs of the specialist educators working on the day plus entertainment and prizes.

Children were encouraged to come along in colonial costume to win spot prizes and to participate in a range of Victorian and Edwardian games and pastimes. There was also entertainment throughout the day with a Circus, Punch and Judy puppet show, Maori Cultural Group and the Great Ferrymead Mud Fling (children were invited to help restore the walls of the Cob Cottage)

There were approximately 2,000 in attendance, which was about double the normal patronage and The Ferrymead Heritage Park were pleased with their involvement.

Community Groups' Events

The Heritage Week database, developed over many years, of all groups who have organised Heritage Week events, have expressed an interest in organising an event, or should consider doing so. The Events Organisers who co-ordinated all events contacted all people on this database. They were invited to return event proposal forms for events that would hopefully fit within the chosen theme.

Once event proposals had been received there was a process of some refinement and encouragement to arrive at the final mix of events and the copy details necessary for publication in the official programme.

This year there was good acceptance, and there were a number of new groups keen to participate with appropriate events. We had some existing events drop out as well, and thus we had some added variety and innovation.

Again it was a challenge to complete the program on time, but the existing design shell for the tabloid layout and the excellent cooperation of the Star art and production departments meant that this went smoothly.

The sheer number of events continues as a problem in that this amount of detail is progressively forcing up the physical size of the printed programme, and has implications for printing costs and distribution. Similarly, there is evidence of too much clutter during the week, such that the choice is now almost too daunting for people wanting to participate.

This year we opted not to enclose the program within the Star newspaper, but used their distribution network to have it dropped as a solus item into the City's letterboxes. This was a much more satisfactory arrangement, and helped to achieve our primary objective of creating awareness effectively.

Community Groups' Event Evaluation Results

A questionnaire using the standard Council Events evaluation format was sent to all event organisers, requesting feedback about their event after the Week concluded.

Approximately only a quarter of event organisers responded, unfortunately not enough to give us a good idea of the total number of people attending events (about 5,000 in total for the sample, which suggests a 10,000 to 20,000 range overall).

However, the sample is representative enough to give some idea of how the event organisers saw the relative success of their events, and the quality of the support afforded them by the Council and event co-ordinator.

The overall mean rating of their events by event organisers was "Good".

The overall mean rating of the Council newspaper advertising campaign was "Good".

The overall mean rating of the Council 8 page Tabloid program was "Excellent".

The overall mean rating of the Council poster was "Excellent".

Overall, the Council's marketing and promotion of the event was rated as "Good".

CONCLUSIONS

The week is essentially an exercise in publicity to promote heritage awareness through education and advocacy, and as such expenditure is a delicate balance between investing too much time and effort in creating events, as opposed to steering others in the right direction and promoting their efforts. The former is very labour and funds intensive and thus success for Heritage Week relies on the extensive involvement of a diverse number of community groups to supply the effort.

Sufficient funds should be left for the primary objective of creating awareness of Heritage Week through advertising, thus highlighting heritage issues. In addition, sufficient time should be left to liaise effectively and influence community groups.

The key to getting that involvement in events lies in contacting these community groups very early in the piece, to enable them to work through their lengthy committee processes to commit to involvement and then planning.

A desirable lead-time was not possible again this year. The planning for Heritage Week should simply roll over from one year to the next, but this is an approach made difficult by the tendering process required for the event management resource. Fortunately the event is so well established now that there was sufficient momentum for many groups to carry on some planning independently, and the core of the vision and enthusiasm for the project is held within the Heritage Team, City Solutions, thus helping to sustain it. This process does create some problems with control of the direction and content of events, and the number of them is growing to be somewhat unwieldy. However, this has to be balanced against the primary objective of creating awareness for Heritage which is not compromised by this. While it is vital to have community involvement, there is a need for a certain amount of central planning of events, if the direction and theme of the week in any given year is to be realised.

It is evident that there are certain important "Stakeholders" in the future and fortunes of Heritage Week, apart of course from the Heritage Team, City Solutions, and the naming rights sponsor. This year the church of Saint Michael and All Angels was an important collaborator.

As well as a large number of smaller community groups, there are key players such as the Historic Places Trust Pouhere Taonga, the Ferrymead Historic Park, the Arts Centre of Christchurch and the Lyttelton Information Centre. These organisations are important contributors to the success of the week. To a lesser degree so are the School of Fine Arts and History Department at the University of Canterbury, the Robert McDougall Art Gallery, Department of Conservation, the Institute of Architects and the Canterbury Museum, although it has to be said again that the Museum could perhaps be encouraged to be more involved. Certainly the week would benefit from some more formal arrangements for participation being negotiated with these institutions.

The appointment of a new Director at Ferrymead Historic Park has brought about a major change in attitude and participation in Heritage Week by this organisation.

Heritage Week continues to achieve its primary objective of increasing public awareness of the value of Christchurch's built heritage, as a vital component of the unique identity of the City. It does this within the parameters of a very modest budget, and the week is now well established as an expected element in the calendar of City events.

Chairman's

Recommendation: That the information be received.