

MAYOR'S COLUMN



Mayor Craig Rowley

With the weeks closing in on Christmas, we have arrived at the final Newsline of 2020. I'd like to take this opportunity to thank you all for following this publication throughout the year and wish you all a happy, safe and enjoyable festive season ahead.

This time of year often reflects the spirit of giving, and I'm delighted to see so many of our community getting in behind Operation Christmas Child and supporting what is an incredible cause. These donations and the wider generosity surrounding the initiative will prove to be a great help for those families doing it tough, and will be sure to put smiles on

faces of all ages come Christmas Day.

Looking ahead to early next year, nominations are now open for the 2020 Waimate Civic Awards - a special opportunity to acknowledge and pay homage to the outstanding volunteer efforts showcased throughout the district, on this occasion, particularly those who stood tall during COVID-19. To find out more information and to access a nomination form, visit waimatedc.govt.nz.

Until then, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

TED D'AUVERGNE SCULPTURE OFFICIALLY UNVEILED

It was third time lucky for the official unveiling of the Ted d'Auvergne Sculpture, as more than 400 people gathered to commemorate the historic milestone last month (7 November).

The life-size sculpture, which appears on a railway platform outside the Waihao Forks Hotel, has been a talking point with locals and visitors alike, with official proceedings successfully taking place after two COVID-19 delays since June.

Following the unveiling of the sculpture, Waimate District Mayor Craig Rowley, who also chairs the Ted d'Auvergne Sculpture Project Fundraising Committee, addressed the crowd, with many of Ted's descendants and special dignitaries looking on.

Distinguished speakers included Ted d'Auvergne's family representative Alice Brice, Chief of Defence Intelligence Brigadier Hugh McAslan, Lieutenant Colonel Tim Tuatini, RSA National President BJ Clark, Canterbury RSA District President Stan Hansen, Waitaki MP Jacqui Dean. In his address, Mayor Rowley thanked everyone who had been involved in supporting the project and pointed out the sculpture will likely feature in many tourist and visitor photo albums and on social media for years to come.

"It will certainly be a talking point in this community, and I'm sure many people will come out and share a beer with Ted," Mayor Rowley said.

"I think Ted would have perhaps been quite amused to know that he has been immortalised on a railway seat outside his local . . . the very place where he had left from all those years ago.

"Ted's story has enabled us to personally depict a memorial to tens of thousands of soldiers who left their farms, their families and communities and never returned home to carry on the family farm, or their family name." As the ceremony drew to a close, guests stood for a moving performance of The Last Post by Harvey Wood and a gun salute, before winding down the occasion with some fine country hospitality and refreshments.



Waihao Downs School in full voice



Parade leads the way



Mayor Rowley addresses the crowd.

EMPLOYMENT COORDINATOR APPOINTED

In a move to increase employment opportunities throughout the district, the Waimate District Council has recently appointed a full-time Employment Coordinator to work with those looking for employment.

In collaboration with the Mayors Taskforce for Jobs (MTFJ) and Ministry of Social Development (MSD), the Community Recovery initiative continues to flourish in regions throughout Aotearoa, with Council recently receiving \$250,000 to establish the programme within the Waimate District.

Tasked with facilitating the initiative is Lisa Dobson, with Lisa officially starting her position last week. As part of her role, Lisa will work closely alongside local business owners to assist with recruitment, training and guidance.

Commenting on her recent appointment, Lisa says she is ready to hit the ground running, and is already champing at the bit to get underway.

"This is such a great opportunity to make a big difference to the growth of the district and looking ahead, it's about getting to know the community and them getting to know me . . . and we'll take it from there.

"I'm looking forward to working with potential employers and equally helping to support those looking for work, and bringing the two pieces together. The opportunities on both sides are there and in this role, I'll certainly be doing everything I can to help identify that potential."

Waimate District Mayor Craig Rowley says the programme will be well received throughout the district and is thrilled to welcome Lisa on board.

"This is a great plus for our district and will help to connect employers looking for staff, and vice versa, jobseekers looking for employment," Mayor Rowley said.

Further programme/registration information will be publicised in the coming weeks.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Waimate District residents are being encouraged to get in to the giving spirit and support Operation Christmas Child.

The annual initiative, now in its fourth year, is spearheaded by Mayoress Lynette Stringer, who has helped to coordinate hundreds of gifts to families doing it tough every year during the festive season.

Those that want to support the cause can place a small, unwrapped gift under the tree in the Council foyer on Queen Street. Gifts, which can typically range from a cuddly toy, books, items of clothing through to games and other items, will be gratefully accepted – catering for both girls and boys up to 15-years-old.

All gifts must be placed by 1pm on Friday 11 December.