

## Your Community Council - have a say!



**Aro residents are wanted to help shape some key policies for the Aro Valley Community Council (AVCC) – and even volunteer to be on the council.**

The AVCC has in principle approved new policies for how it deals with its finances, conflicts of interest, and employment. These cover issues including how it approves spending.

Wellington City Council staff member Jenny Rains, who attended the last AVCC meeting, said the city council was

reviewing its funding for all community centres, and having good policies mattered. “We need to be confident that the organisation is strong with really good policies and processes in place.”

The city council would look at those issues over the next few months, talk to the AVCC, and make a decision on funding in June this year, as it does on a regular basis.

The AVCC is now seeking feedback from the community on the policies. Anyone who wants to give feedback can get a copy of the policies from: [feedback.arovalley@gmail.com](mailto:feedback.arovalley@gmail.com).

A General Meeting, to finalise the policies is planned for the near future (date to be announced - watch for details).

New committee members can be voted for at the next AGM.

All residents of Aro Valley are free to attend the council’s monthly meetings and may be invited to speak and participate.

### Aro Valley Community Council Meetings

Anyone who lives in the Aro Valley, or has another strong connection with the area, is entitled to come to any AVCC meeting. All meetings are held on Tuesdays, at the Community Centre unless advised otherwise, and generally at 7.30pm. Please come along, participate and find out what’s going on.

#### 2013 Meeting dates:

March 19

April 16

May 21

June 18 (AGM)

## Concerns expressed over AVCC

*(This letter has been abridged)*

Dear fellow locals,

Our Community Council has little democratic participation, and the committee meetings are a shambles. At the last meeting there was drinking, swearing, angry words, some got up and left, the agenda was not completed, and no time for other business. This is poor leadership. It would be good if *Valley Voice* reported on this, but they don’t. We should have three General Meetings per year, but we only have the AGM. Bring back some robust, transparent, public debate! Apparently there will be a chance for the community to have a say at a General Meeting to be held soon. I have put forward two motions for that meeting, which I hope *Valley Voice* have reported herein. Let’s have some participatory

democracy in action!

*Martin Wilson (Aro Valley resident)*

### AVCC Co-chair Madeleine Rashbrooke responds:

Is the current Community Council committee ‘undemocratic’ as Martin asserts? We say emphatically that we are working hard in an entirely voluntary capacity to represent the community in a democratic and responsible way. Martin’s role as fair organiser is a paid position.

The committee was properly elected at the last AGM, we run open committee meetings where any member of the community can participate - and frequently do - and are working on bringing our policies and practices back into full alignment with the AVCC Constitution. As mentioned in the lead story, we will shortly be holding a General Meeting to confirm the updated policies

around finances, employment and managing conflict of interest.

Yes, the last committee meeting was a difficult experience which would have challenged even the most experienced group facilitator! Those drinking and swearing were not members of the committee. Obviously, better ground rules around codes of conduct need to be established, but we would argue that the ‘shambles’ that Martin refers to is evidence of our democratic approach which allowed many different voices to be heard.

We encourage all interested members of the community to come to the next committee meeting, General Meeting and Annual General Meeting and participate in the democratic processes that run the Aro Valley Community Council on your behalf.

*Madeleine Rashbrooke (AVCC Co-chair)*

# Aro Valley Fair - coming soon!



By fair organiser Martin Wilson

**Saturday 23 March (Sunday 24 if wet) will once again see Aro Park and our Community Centre come alive with the best little fair in the capital, offering local crafts, food, fun, thought and entertainment.**

A feature act this year will be Brazilian musicians Isabella Rovo with guitarists Nelson Latif, Bosco Oliviera and Victor Batista, performing Brazilian music with invited local musicians at 1pm.

If you are a local musician, please join the fun and bring your act along. We want to see (and hear) what you do!



Above: Alexandra McLeod at last year's Aro Valley Fair

Stalls will again present the political, the philosophical, the practical, and the crafty. Locals are invited to have a stall.

Watch for further details. This year's Fair will have some surprises! Check [www.arovalley.org.nz](http://www.arovalley.org.nz) or [www.capital-productions.co.nz](http://www.capital-productions.co.nz) for more information. Or contact phone: 3841998. We also want volunteers (see box).

(panoramic photos: George Sutton)

## Volunteers needed

The Aro Valley Fair, Saturday 23 March, needs YOU to assist! There are a variety of jobs needing doing, and your assistance will be greatly appreciated.

Committee member Gareth Rouch will be coordinating the volunteer efforts, with the first priority to ensure our safety on the pedestrian crossing adjacent to the park.

There are more specialised jobs as well, such as helping manage the stages. If you are a sound tech, or some other highly specialised service, you would be most welcome to help. It is, after all, our fair! If you can offer an hour or more to be rostered for an activity, please get in touch! Phone Gareth on: 803 3798.

## Local beer now on sale from Garage Project

**Residents can now come and buy locally brewed beer on tap from the Garage Project, following the successful opening of its cellar door.**

Locals enjoyed the 'soft launch' of the cellar door last month (see picture).

Eight different beers are now on tap at any one time, with more than available in bottles. Residents can bring in their own reusable bottles or use bottles provided on-site.

Some beers will be available on site before they are sold anywhere else in town, and buyers can try out different beers before they buy.

The beer is likely to be sold at around \$10 a litre, for a couple of hours each

evening – to allow people to come in after work – and during weekends, although fixed hours have not been set.

The Garage Project also hopes to run more beer-related events, following last year's extremely successful Wellington on a Plate dinner.

Another spin-off from the opening of the cellar door has been the much-awaited removal of the six foot high fence topped with barbed wire that divided the garage space from Aro Street.





# LETTERS

## We welcome your opinions

Please send us your letters, feedback, photos and stories from around the Aro Valley.

Email: [aro.voice@gmail.com](mailto:aro.voice@gmail.com)

## Council warns residents over tree removal

*Wellington City Council is warning residents not to cut down trees in public spaces, following the dispute over a sycamore cut down behind the community centre.*

*David Spencer, the council's arboriculture manager, is reminding residents (see letter below) that they should contact the council before doing anything with trees on public land.*

Dear Aro Valley,

Following your article about the removal of a tree by a member of the public near Aro Valley Park, I just wanted to remind your readers that we are here to help.

Residents with questions or concerns about Council-owned trees should contact us. One of our arborists will come out and inspect the tree and schedule in any necessary work. Work like this needs to be done safely and professionally.

It is also worth remembering that it is illegal to chop down trees in public spaces and people who do so may face a fine and potentially be prosecuted for criminal damage.

To get in touch with Wellington City Council, please phone 499 4444 or go to [Wellington.govt.nz](http://Wellington.govt.nz).

David Spencer, Arboriculture Manager, Wellington City Council



## Aro Valley news

Unconfirmed figures suggest last year's Christmas tree sale made a handsome profit, and will return around \$4,500 to each of the three organisations that took part: the Aro Valley Community Council (AVCC), the school and the preschool.

\*\*\*\*\*

The last school holiday programme was a roaring success. Supervisor Barry Thomas reports: "We had another successful school holiday programme, which included a great trip all the way out to the Dowse for their two exhibitions "Play" and "Arcade". We also had heaps of fun during the heat wave with a water slide set up several times in the park for the students to enjoy and cool down with. We had a great horizontal bungy too. We went to the Kilbirnie pool, and another day we did claymation and a kind of animated stills film making – all available on DVD. We did papier mache, and heaps of other craft things, and had a day using the council's 'Push play' trailer. The numbers were very good as well."

\*\*\*\*\*

Our warmest thanks to George Sutton who has retired from the AVCC committee, after serving as treasurer and briefly as *Valley Voice* editor.

\*\*\*\*\*

The Aro Valley has been offered a mural (pictured above) by artist Christie Wright. It used to be displayed on Tory Street while the New Zealand Transport Agency

were doing work there. The AVCC would like to hear from residents whether they would like to see the mural displayed, and some suggestions as to where, before it decides whether to accept the offer. It is painted on 1.2 x 2.3m plywood board.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Thank you Fei!

Our Accounts Clerk, Fei Fu, has resigned to spend more time with her family. We'd like to thank her for all her hard work and wish her all the best for the future.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Accounts clerk wanted

We need a part time accounts clerk for the Aro Valley Community Centre. Duties include maintaining accurate and up-to-date financial records, monthly reporting to treasurer, wages, PAYE, GST returns, audit preparation, budget preparation, invoicing and payment of invoices. Skills required include experience in maintaining financial records to a standard suitable for reporting to funding agencies and the IRD, proficiency in Microsoft Excel, and ideally familiarity with the Xero financial management system. \$23/hour, 6hours/week. Please send a CV and a short cover letter to the AVCC employment committee on: [employment.arovalley@gmail.com](mailto:employment.arovalley@gmail.com) by Friday 15th March.

# Valley food supply set for shake-up

**A new addition to Kai o te Aro's gardening team is keen to get more residents and businesses involved in composting, as part of plans to transform the way we produce and buy our food.**

Kelvin Aris, who spent last year living on a permaculture farm in Turangi, is keen to "close the loop" in the Valley's green waste.

Having moved into a flat on Eponi Street, he is using some of Kai o te Aro's grant funding to explore ways to make it easier for local people and shops to compost – and then use that compost to grow amazing fresh food.

Aris has talked to local businesses about composting their green waste, and already has a couple of bags of wood shavings from Ron Barber's shop on Aro Street. Coffee grounds from Aro Café, spent hops from the Garage Project brewery, and fruit and veg scraps from the green grocer are all on the list as well.

Part of the idea is to strengthen the community by building a "web" of connections between businesses, residents and gardeners – using the food supply as a natural connector.

For residents, meanwhile, gardening and composting can be in the 'too hard' basket, but Aris – who is himself still getting to grips with it – says he wants to "demystify" the process. "I'm struggling myself to start a garden, because there are so many gaps in my knowledge. But it's actually not very complicated."

Aris has a large garden at the top of his flat, which can be accessed from Levina Avenue and which he wants to turn into another community garden.

One idea is to use it to grow garlic. "I'd like to do a couple of open workshop days in our top garden, working on mulching and so on, getting things ready, and then plant the seed crop that will be used next year for getting a local garlic supply."

Other things growing naturally can also be put to use, Aris says. Nasturtiums, which grow wild, have seeds

that can be pickled like capers, and wild fennel can be used in an Italian-style pasta, or to marinate fish.

Local food is good in so many ways, he adds. "The only way for us to feel confident in our food supply is for us to localise as much as possible. It's what has to happen, because the current food supply puts us at so much risk. It's expensive, you end up eating so many chemicals – and God knows where it comes from."



## Polo – but not like the Royals

*By Roman Jewell*

**In the last 5 years hardcourt bike polo has taken the world by storm, and the Aro Valley is no exception.**

The sport has actually been around for some time and originated in Ireland in 1891 as an alternative to horse polo. However, the modern hardcourt version, played on concrete rather than grass, was kick-started by a bunch of bored Seattle bike couriers in their down time.

Now, twice a week a bunch of happy-go-lucky girls and guys play polo on the Aro Valley's community basketball court. The Wellington Bike Polo group was formed about 18 months ago and has grown to more than 20 people, ranging in ages from late teens to mid-40s.

It's an unusual sport to watch but lots of fun to play – mostly because there are few accidents and the rules are simple to learn. Teams are made up of three players and the first team to score five goals wins.

### School Holiday Programme

**We run a School Holiday Programme at the community centre during each school holidays. Up to 25 children enjoy a range of art/craft activities and excursions. If you've got experience working with children and are interested in working on the next programme in the April break, please send a CV and a short cover letter to:**

**[employment.arovalley@gmail.com](mailto:employment.arovalley@gmail.com)**

**by Friday 15th March.**

The fledgling bike polo community in New Zealand is going from strength to strength, and next month Caroline Bay in Timaru will host the Australasian champs. Teams from Australia and New Zealand will battle it out for a spot at this year's world champs in the United States, and a few teams from the Aro Valley are making the trip south for the big event.

It's not all serious stuff, though, and the group prides itself on its more laidback approach to the game. In this corner of Wellington, polo is really about getting together with a bunch of friends, meeting new people and having fun on bikes for a couple of hours.

New members of any age and ability are always welcome. It's free to play and the group has spare bikes and polo mallets for new players. The group meets at 6pm on Tuesday and 3pm on Saturday at the community basketball court.

• For more information visit:  
**[wellingtonbikepolo.wordpress.com](http://wellingtonbikepolo.wordpress.com)**



## Kai o Te Aro

Kia ora koutou Aro Valley,

If you've visited the Secret Garden recently, you'd have noticed that it's looking fantastic (and if you haven't, shame on you!). We've been relaying the path, which is now complete, and have also begun working on a system to allow chickens to be let in from the property next door to peck and scratch in the open seating area. They'll be kept well away from the vege beds but in the perfect spot to fertilise the big fruit trees – yus!

However, there have been some other people gardening in the Secret Garden too, doing some amazing weeding and planting lots of lovely seedlings – but no one seems to know who is doing it! I think it's fantastic and would love to hear from whoever has been doing that work so I can say thanks.

Also a big thumbs up to Jamie and Nicola, who have been working hard to get the Orchard back into shape. We had our first apricot the other day! Charles guiltily confessed to scoffing the whole thing ... it was tiny ... but so, so sweet....

So things seem to be going great, but there's a couple of things we could use a little extra help with:

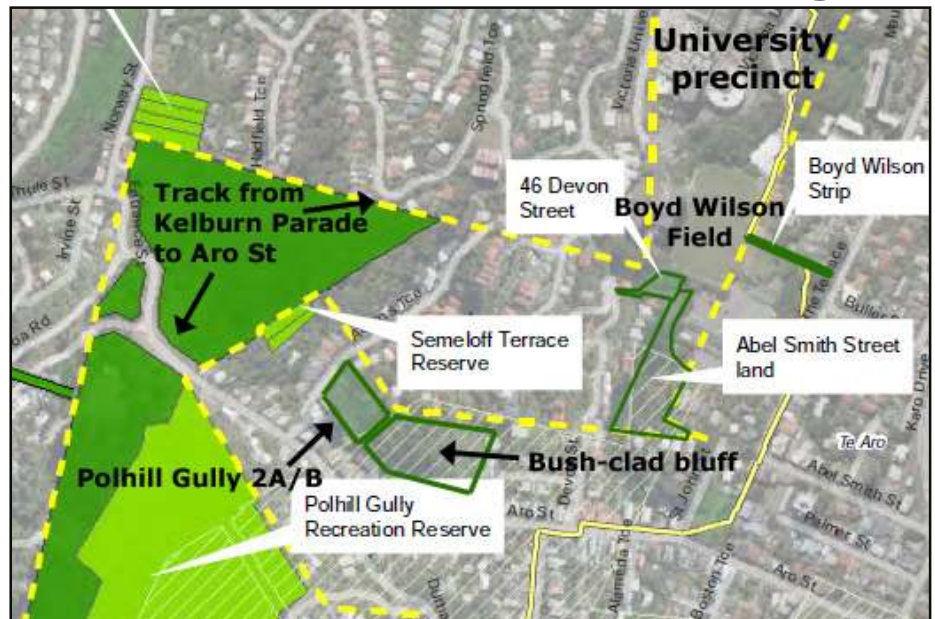
- We need to improve our seedling raising system. Would anyone be willing to raise seedlings at home on the behalf of Kai o te Aro? The group could provide the seed and collect them when they are ready, if you kept them warm and watered in between. If you're interested, please let us know by email or leave a note for Charles at the Community Centre.

- We want to jazz up our presence in the Valley Voice. Does anyone have any suggestions for how this could be done? Would anyone be willing to submit photos, poems, musings and stories that could be included in future 'garden notes' sections? Charles would love a helper to alternate writing these pieces with and would welcome any volunteers!

We have also resumed our monthly potluck planning meetings. These are really fun and a great way to connect with Kai o te Aro, if you've been meaning to for a long time. These will now regularly be held in the Yellow Room at 128 Abel Smith Street from 6.30pm on the 2nd Monday of the month. The next will be on Monday 11th March.

Best wishes, Mauri ora  
Kai o te Aro

# Rebuilding the Town Belt in the Aro Valley



A large number of Aro Valleyites presented oral submissions on the city council's Draft Town Belt Management Plan last month. Co-chair Madeleine Rashbrooke spoke on behalf of the AVCC, and committee members Julia Stace, Gareth Rouch, and Mattie Timmer were among those from the Valley who also made short presentations in support of their written submissions.

Thanks to everybody who made an online, written or oral submission – it was time well spent as the city councillors said that they were very impressed by the quantity and quality of the submissions that had come from the Aro Valley.

Presenters came away with the impression that our strong arguments in favour of maintaining the Devon Street Gully as green space, ideally as part of the Town Belt, may have persuaded councillors to reconsider the draft plan's omission of this area. The

councillors also seemed interested in the AVCC's suggestion that adding reserve land on Adams Terrace and protecting bush on the northern side of the valley would provide a link from Polhill Gully to the edge of the Terrace. A proposal to make a track through the bush between Aro Street and Kelburn Parade was also well received.



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# Flyover and supercity

*Paul Bruce, Greater Wellington Regional Councillor*

Greetings and best wishes for the New Year!

Current issues for me as a councillor include: public transport fares, the Wellington Bus Review, safe cycle ways, urban design for the Basin Reserve precinct, cessation of toxic methyl bromide use on our wharves, and the Natural Resource Management Plan. Basin Reserve Flyover – Following the decision to proceed with Memorial Park tunnel, my successful motion to

Greater Wellington Regional Council looked to ensure that decisions on roading alterations in the vicinity of the Basin Reserve took into account good urban design and the potential of public transport to reduce congestion. By the time you read this newsletter, Wellington City Council will also have ruled on a preferred option. I would like to know, what does the Basin Reserve mean to you? How do you think this area can be improved for the benefit of the whole city?

Governance – A “one” tier structure has a single rating authority with options for relatively weak community boards that have no statutory powers. The two tier system would have a single rating regional authority but include local boards with statutory powers replacing city and district councils. Local boards would have differentiated services and

funding outcomes with targeted rating mechanisms, and could also include community boards and local committees.

My main concern is that decisions are made close to affected communities. Last year, I facilitated the Wellington workshops run by Giovanni Allegretti, a leading expert on Participatory Budgeting. Those of you who attended the workshop will now be aware how this methodology enables towns and communities to determine their own priorities and level of funding in an efficient manner, and in the process increases participation. I would be delighted to come and speak to you about Participatory Budgeting and share my experience with the process in Porto Alegre, where it originated. I would also like to hear more on concerns that your association has on proposed governance structures. There will be several more rounds of consultation this year, possibly concluding with a referendum on a single or two tier governance structure for the region. The Local Government Commission will determine what system will be used for the 2016 election. Finally, I would be delighted to talk to you or your group on any issue at all. Very best wishes for 2013!



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Website: [arovalleypreschool.blogspot.co.nz](http://arovalleypreschool.blogspot.co.nz)



# REGULAR HALL USERS

Day	Time	Activity & Cost	Contact
Monday	7.15 – 8.15am	Tai Chi Class (Koha)	Yi Ching Mao 384 3588
	6.00 – 8.00pm	Capoeira (\$10 casual /\$40 - 8 classes)	Bobby Semau 027 6961708 bobbysemau@gmail.com
	8.30 – 9.30pm	Private booking	
Tuesday	9.30 – 11.30am	English Language Class Beginner Level \$3	Teacher Wendy Vink Contact Linda 3848499
	12.00 – 1.00pm	Sit and Be Fit (\$3 per class)	Kathy McConville Linda 384 8499
	5.30 – 6.30pm	Nia Classes	Alison Henderson 04 476 4618 021 881 849 alison@zensation.co.nz
	7.30 – 9.00pm	Private booking	
Wednesday	7.15 – 8.15am	Tai Chi Class (Koha)	Yi Ching Mao 384 3588
	9.30 – 11.30am	English Language Class Elementary Level \$3	Teacher Wendy Vink Contact Linda 3848499
	5.00 – 6.30pm	Private booking	
	6.30 – 8.00pm	Starjam (Term time only)	Saran Goldie Anderson Regional Programmes Co-ordinator 04 589 6386 • 021 782 866 www.starjam.org
Thursday	9.30 – 11.30am	English Language Class Higher Level \$3	Teacher Wendy Vink Contact Linda 3848499
	6.00 – 7.00pm	Samba Hillary Mitchell & Fabiola Stevenson	Hillary.Reid@vuw.ac.nz 0212308732 fabiola.stevenson@gmail.com 0274726964
	7.30 – 9.00pm	Yoshukai Karate (\$10 a week – pay what you can afford. Includes 2 <sup>nd</sup> weekly class Northland Community Centre)	Colin Berry 027 2495342 04 4759985
Friday	7.15 – 8.15am	Tai Chi Class (Koha)	Yi Ching Mao 384 3588
	7.30 – 9.00pm	Salsa (with Rocio)	Rocio Pizarro Vargas 021 237 5214
Saturday	9.30 – 11.00am	Chalkle - various classes	http://www.chalkle.com
	11.00 – 12.00pm	ZUMBA Fitness (\$15/\$10 with ID)	Rafael Ferrer 382-8232 www.cubanfusion.co.nz
	1.00 – 3.00pm (last Saturday of the month)	Capoeira (30 March 2013)	Bobby Semau 027 6961708 bobbysemau@gmail.com
	3.00pm	Wellington bike polo - in the basketball court	wellingtonbikepolo.wordpress.com
Sunday	9.30 – 2.30pm	Forward in Faith	Shadreck Mamhute smamhute@yahoo.com shadreck.mamhute@kiwirail.co.nz 021 244 6045
	5.00 – 7.30pm	Chalkle - various classes	http://www.chalkle.com
	7.30 – 9.30pm	Private booking	



## VALLEY VOICE

ALL CONTRIBUTIONS AND  
FEEDBACK TO:

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Valley Voice is published on behalf  
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Opinions expressed in this newsletter  
are those of the writers and not of  
the Aro Valley Community Council  
(AVCC) unless adopted at a general  
meeting.

AVCC co-chairs 2012-13:

Bridget Stocker

Madeleine Rashbrooke

Secretary: Barry Thomas

Treasurer: Mattie Timmer

Committee members:

Jane O'Loughlin, Julia Brooke-  
White, Clarry Inwood, Jay  
Buzenberg, Gareth Rouch

Aro Valley Community Centre  
Coordinator:

Linda Beatson

Community@arovalley.org.nz

(04) 384-8499

## ARO VALLEY FAIR

The Aro Valley Fair will be on Saturday  
March 23. This is always a highlight  
of the year, so come along for  
stalls, entertainment and fun for all.  
Postponement day is Sunday March 24.  
The AVCC is looking for volunteers to  
staff the pedestrian crossing and do other  
tasks. Please contact AVCC member Gareth  
Rouch on: 803 3798.





# Bernie Grice

2 July 1932 - 21 February 2013



Bernie Grice (photo: Pam Ormsby)

Teacher, actor, poet, activist, lover of bird and bush...and clutter... forever recycling, creating something out of nothing, seeing new possibilities where another might have seen only rubbish....

Bernie moved into Aston Towers in 2000, after living many years

in Thorndon. He was a regular visitor to the Community Centre until his move to Sprott House in December 2007, where he lived out his remaining years.

Bernie was fifth in a family of 13 children and grew up in the Waikato, the son of a sharemilker, attending Morrinsville High.

Bernie was an early political opponent of New Zealand sporting relations with South Africa's apartheid regime and was a founding member of the

Citizens All Black Tour Association (CABTA) in 1959, formed when the New Zealand Rugby Football Union declared Maori players ineligible for selection on South Africa's request.

In 1992, Bernie was invited to South Africa by the African National Congress to help monitor the first post-apartheid elections as an international observer.

He leaves behind daughter Huia, son Tane, and old mate and Aro Valley resident, Pam Ormsby.



Left: Bernie with friend and neighbour, the late Rick Gordon, who were often seen feeding the pigeons in Aro Park. (photo: Pam Whittington)

**SUNDAY ROAST**

**\$18 WITH A HAVANA COFFEE**

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