



Arborea



Winter 2014

Newsletter of The Tree Council
Taikina Rākau • est 1986

New Board Member Lili Ng



Since my neighbour chopped down half a beautiful pohutukawa which used to sit on the boundary of my backyard, I considered how I would respond to this ungracious act. The tree provided a home to native tui and bees, shade and protection from the elements. It provided my family with a connection to the earth and its elements, an essential part of the sanctuary that we called our home.

So I became a member of The Tree Council and

became proactive in learning about the vital importance of trees in our urban environment. The Tree Council is a community of people who value trees and who are prepared to speak up against those who would seek to yield chainsaws to replace the sound of birdsong. These chainsaws cause huge intangible losses when trees are felled. It is a waste, which is something we cannot afford in this overcrowded world.

I have joined The Tree Council's Board because their work is at the heart of values that define our democratic society. Through it, we teach our children by example that it is important to conserve, to use and follow a process and to stand up for what we believe in. Making a stand for trees is about our connectedness with each other and the earth.

I believe that each of us can contribute something to make our world that much better. A world with more trees in it constitutes immeasurable benefits. Being an activist means doing something. I am a wife, a mother, a professional and now an activist, part of a wider environmental community with firm principles and beliefs. There is something healing and restorative in being part of a community that is doing something. It is a reminder to cherish the natural world because we're part of it and we depend on it.

I look forward to being part of the Tree Council's efforts, to learn more about our trees and how best to conserve them in our community.

AGM

The Tree Council 2014 Annual General Meeting

When: Thursday 9 October 2014, 7pm followed by a Lecture by the Tree Council's chair, Sean Freeman.

Where: The Parnell Room at the Parnell Community Centre, 545 Parnell Road.

Put it in your diary NOW!

Election of board members

Have you considered standing for the Board? Now is your time!

This year the following people are standing for the Tree Council Board:

Chair – Sean Freeman

Treasurer – Sherylle Scott

Secretary – Mels Barton

Field Officer – Hueline Massey

Board members – Mandy McMullin, Cheryl Lawton, Lili Ng.

The Tree Council Board is very keen to seek further members to join them. Please contact Hueline on 09 425 9246 or at thetreecouncil@ihug.co.nz if you would like to be involved. It is certainly the way to learn about what is going on in the world of tree protection!





News in brief

Vote wisely for our trees!

The general election on 20 September 2014 is coming, so remember to ask your local candidates this question "Do you support general tree protection?" before you decide who to vote for. If you are a candidate you can email us your response to thetreecouncil@ihug.co.nz and we will publicise it to our members. The Labour Party has promised to repeal the changes made to the Resource Management Act that removed general tree protection in urban areas.



Tree Week is Coming! (6-12 October 2014)

Following the changes to the Resource Management Act over the past five years, and the lack of general tree protection in Auckland Council Unitary Plan with regard to urban trees, The Tree Council is keen to improve Auckland residents understanding of the role that trees play in our urban environment.

As a way of achieving a wider audience and better understanding of the role of trees in the urban environment we are promoting a special Tree Week to be held from 6 to 12 October 2014. Our activities will include:

Tree Week Guided Bus Tour of Auckland's Heritage Trees

An Auckland Heritage Festival event.

When: Saturday 11 October 2014

Cost: \$20 for members, \$25 for non-members and \$10 for kids.

Bus departs: 9.20am from UNITEC Entry 3 on NW side of Building 48.

This is a bus tour of some of Auckland's finest trees in their historic setting led by Dr Penny Clifflin, a Senior Lecturer in the Department of Landscape Architecture, at UNITEC Institute of Technology. The tour will commence at UNITEC at 9.30am visiting Western Springs, Western Park and Myers Park before a lunch stop (BYO) in Albert Park and then across the road to the University collection returning to UNITEC by 3pm. Numbers are limited so please reserve your place by emailing thetreecouncil@ihug.co.nz



Tree Week Lecture on 'The value of street trees'

When: Thursday 9 October 2014, following the Tree Council AGM which starts at 7pm

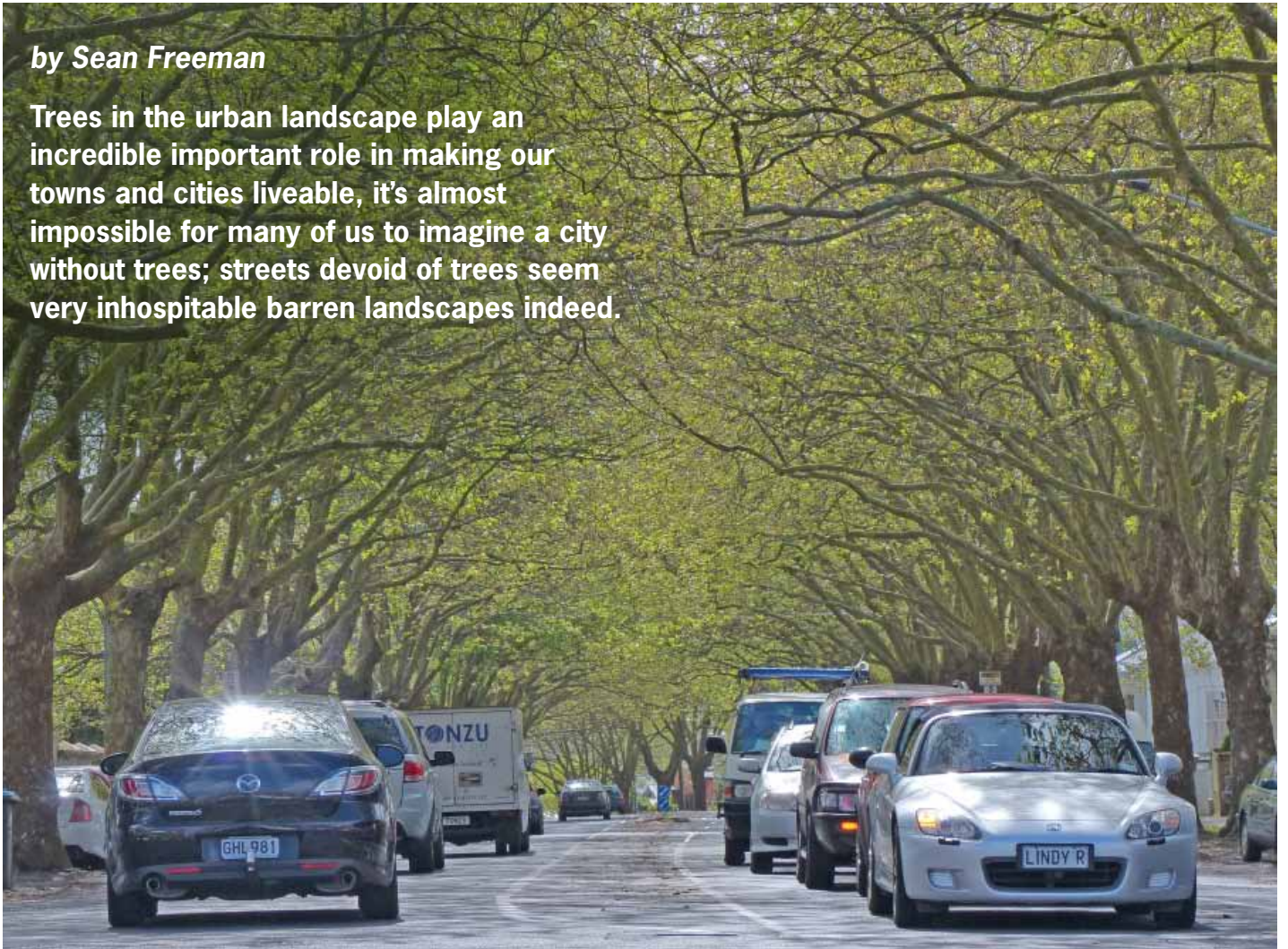
Where: The Parnell Room at the Parnell Community Centre, 545 Parnell Road.

Learn out why street trees are so important and the valuable benefits they provide to us all from The Tree Council's Chair Sean Freeman. All are welcome.

The true value of street trees

by Sean Freeman

Trees in the urban landscape play an incredible important role in making our towns and cities liveable, it's almost impossible for many of us to imagine a city without trees; streets devoid of trees seem very inhospitable barren landscapes indeed.



Franklin Road, Auckland.

In the last twenty years there has been a dramatic increase in our understanding of just how important urban trees are, and how many essential services these living assets provide to all of us all year round.

Although the costs, damage and nuisance values attributed to trees are widely known (especially after major weather events like that experienced in Auckland this June) the beneficial services they provide are less obvious and very often overlooked. This unbalanced perspective of trees is especially troubling given the changing urban landscape in Auckland which is inevitably going to leave less and less space for trees.

There has been very little scientific research done in New Zealand on these benefits from trees and consequently very little economic data to aid and inform the decision making process. However, there is ample researched evidence to be found in studies carried out in similar climatic zones in Australia, UK and the USA.

Although there is as yet no New Zealand baseline data to plug into the various models used elsewhere to calculate the economic value for many of the services our street trees

provide, there is no reason to believe that the Urban Forest of Auckland is worth any less than that of say Melbourne, Manchester or Manhattan.

There are software programs used in the USA and Australia which enable decision makers to calculate a dollar value for all these services, if and when the baseline data is collected here in NZ then these calculations could be made for the street trees of Auckland or any of our other towns and cities. The value returned to the City of Melbourne by its approximate 70,000 public trees is considered to be more than \$14 million per annum. A cost to benefit ratio of 1 to 6 in favour of urban trees.¹

Ultimately for me it is really important to demonstrate that trees have a monetary value well beyond the subjective assessment of their aesthetic worth, how closely they match some model of a perfect tree. We can (and should) measure the various ways our urban forest help mitigate the harmful effects of modern development. We should argue strongly for more trees in our urban environment, not as some afterthought but as an integral part of the long term planning process.

Street trees can provide the following services:

Reduce urban air temperatures by 5-15 degrees Studies in Australia and the US suggest that during summer a shaded neighbourhood from street trees can reduce energy bills for a household (cooling costs) between 15-35%.²

Reduce storm water flows during rainfall events Street trees can dramatically reduce the volume and intensity of storm water runoff absorbing up to 30% of most precipitation through their leaves, soaking another 30% back into the ground being held there by the root system. The interception and detention of rainwater during intense rain events is worth tens of thousands of dollars – about two thirds of flood risk is attributed to surface water flows. Huge engineering projects would be required to manage those flows without the trees.

Reduce the levels of airborne pollutants capturing them on leaves, branches and stems Air pollution has very obvious health implications for anyone living close to busy roads, causing irritation of the lungs and exacerbating any respiratory disorders. Screening by a single tree has been estimated to reduce particulate matter by 15-20% immediately behind the tree.³ In New York in 1994 the value of the city's trees in removing airborne pollutants was estimated at US\$10 million per annum. Street trees are perfectly placed to act as pollution filters, being right next to the source of much of our airborne pollutants.

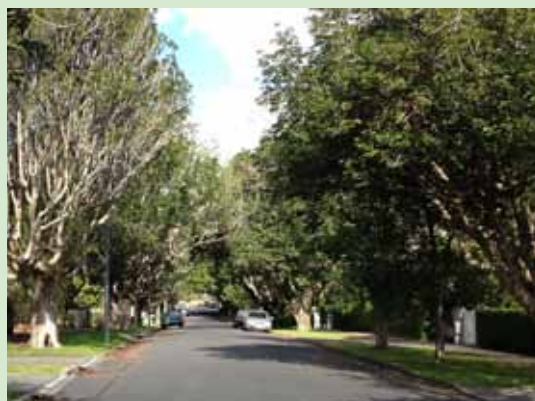
Reduce urban traffic speeds Studies in both the UK and USA have shown that drivers slow down while driving through tree lined streets in comparison to streets without trees noting differences in speed of 3-15mph. Street trees provide drivers with a defined edge and frame of reference enabling them to better assess their speed.

Improve income streams for businesses on treed streets Consumers in the USA were reported being willing to spend up to 12% more in central business districts with large established trees.⁴

Create more pleasant walking environments Streets with established tree canopies provide attractive shaded footpaths sheltered from high winds and sudden down pours.

Improve both our mental and physical well being Patients in hospitals who have view of nature from their beds recover faster than those without,⁵ experiences of nearby nature reduce the stress response (including driving and commuting).⁶

Increase the property value of adjacent residential buildings Residential property values can be enhanced by up to 20% by the presence of trees. One study in the US indicated that more than 80% of real estate agents believe that mature trees have a strong or moderate impact on the saleability of homes.⁶



Street Trees in Auckland

From top: Pohutakawa on Tamaki Drive; Balfour Street in Parnell; The shared zone in Fort Street, CBD; Puriri, where keruru are often seen, in Coronation Rd, Epsom.

Endnotes

1. Moore, G.M. (2009). People, trees, landscapes and climate change, in Sykes, H. (Ed). *Climate change on for young and old*, Melbourne, Australia: Future Leaders. pp.132-149.
2. Fisher, P. (2009). Why we need the urban forest. *Urban Magazine*, July.
3. Mitchell, R. & Maher, B.A. (2009). Evaluation and application of biomagnetic monitoring of traffic derived particulate pollution. *Atmospheric Environment*, 43, 2095-2103.

4. Wolf, K.L. (2009). *Trees mean business: City trees and the retail streetscape*. PhD Thesis, University of Washington.
5. Ulrich, R.S. (1984). View through a window may influence recovery from surgery. *Science Journal*, 224: 420-421.
6. *Beyond blue to green: The benefits of contact with nature for mental health and wellbeing*. Geelong, Australia: Deakin University.
7. Arbor National Mortgage & American Forests

Our Featured Species *by Robert Vennell*

Pohutukawa – *Metrosideros excelsa*



Culture and History

Today, New Zealand's trees are widely admired and readily adopted as symbols of our identity and culture. But for many of the early European settlers first setting foot on New Zealand, the forest was viewed in a hostile, fearful manner. Exchanging manicured fields and rolling pastures for a land covered in dense, rugged, unfamiliar forest; it is not surprising that many were intimidated.

One tree, however, quickly managed to charm itself into early settler society; the Pohutukawa. It's showy blooms of crimson flowers coincided with Christmas preparations each year and soon became firmly entrenched in Christmas tradition. Branches of 'Antipodean Holly' were used to decorate churches and houses and its status as 'The New Zealand Christmas Tree' has been celebrated ever since.

Long before this however, the tree attracted the fascination of Maori and has continually served as a source of cultural inspiration in legends and religious tradition. Stories tell of a young warrior named Tawhaki who attempted a perilous journey to locate the heavens and request their help in avenging the death of his father. His cause was lost and he fell to earth, his spilt blood now seen among the red blossoms of the Pohutukawa.

One tree in particular holds great significance for Maori. Located in Cape Reinga, the tree clings onto a rocky outcrop extending out into the ocean and is supposedly around 800 years old. In Maori mythology, the site marks the place where spirits of the dead leave New Zealand on their journey to the ancestral homeland of Hawaiki-a-Nui. The spirits descend down the roots of the tree underneath the sea and into the underworld (Reinga) to begin the voyage.

While it's hardy pioneering nature has often endeared itself to those in the upper part of the north island, it is these very characteristics that cause it to be a source of frustration and anguish in other parts of the country and overseas. On the west coast of the south island the Department of Conservation lists Pohutukawa as a medium priority weed due to its invasive nature and ability to displace other natives. In California, widespread planting of the trees in suburban lawns and gardens has caused extensive infrastructure damage as root systems destroyed sewer lines and pavements.

Uses

The nectar from the flowers was collected by Maori and used in the treatment of sore throats. The honey made from this nectar is pale and sweet and honey produced from the pollen is white with a distinctive flavour. It has apparently caught the fascination of Queen Elizabeth II, who it is said orders a batch of Pohutukawa honey from Rangitoto Island every year.

Both Maori and Europeans used a decoction from the inner bark in the treatment of dysentery. Modern chemical analyses have validated this application – the bark being shown to contain ellagic acid which is used in treatments for diarrhoea and dysentery. The tree produces a dense, swirly grained, dark-red timber that was highly prized in construction. Maori used the wood in a variety of different ways – as paddles, gardening tools, hammers, clubs and weapons. It was important timber tree for European colonists as well and was used extensively by ship builders for its natural bends and immunity to sea worms.

Architects and Trees

At the August 2013 Block Lectures architect David Mitchell delivered a talk titled 'The House and the City'.

David enjoys the idea of intensification of the city environs which he feels leads to a more lively living environment. David had much to tell about architecture and its advantages and its limitations in the city housing situation but there were two parts of the lecture that I thought pertinent to the work that The Tree Council advocates for whenever it can.

On the subject of Heritage preservation David states that it seems "the very sameness of a street of bungalows or villas is apparently a virtue. So Mt Eden should be villaville for ever and Mt Albert should be perpetually bungaloidal. Ironically the most valued suburbs in the city – Epsom, Remuera and the eastern seaside suburbs have the greatest architectural variety. It is the trees which unify Epsom and Remuera".

We of The Tree Council would agree with that last statement and do our best to keep them there.

Further on in his lecture under the heading 'Connections' David mentions many connector routes through buildings such as well known St Kelvin's Arcade between Karangahape Road and the beautiful Myers Park and the city centre to Albert Park via the Auckland Art Gallery revamped forecourt. Both these routes encourage pedestrians to use the Parks as walkways. Why?? I do not need to answer that one!

However, when talking about "Walking the newly restored Quay Street axis down to the new Silo Park, the lure of the Tank Farm future and a good deal of well executed landscape architecture, mostly well away from the waters edge. One vital ingredient is missing in general – trees,

especially big deciduous trees, like the Planes of Ponsonby. Even grass. The shade of trees is essential in public spaces, especially in summer. Regrettably, Titoki and Nikau may be good for nationalist conscience, but they don't make much of a street.

Nothing shades the public space in front of any apartments in the Viaduct basin. Trees would interrupt the private views of apartment owners. Waitemata Plaza? Effectively it has never been used. Residents resist use – they don't want noise. There are no trees from Princes Wharf to the end of North Wharf, save a few shrubs in tubs. If a line of big lamp standards could be planted down the inner edge of North Wharf – as it has, why not a line of trees? What is simply outrageous is the use of Te Wero Island and the peninsular leading to it for car parking. Perimeter service access to boats should be allowed, but the finest site in the area needs real trees. If it had grass too we might even see an occasional family down there."

How encouraging to see and hear one of New Zealand's top architects lamenting the lack of trees within our new built environments. We just need to work hard and convince more of his professional colleagues to appreciate the role that trees play in our urban environment.

by Hueleine Massey



Two projects by Mitchell & Stout Architects showing the importance of trees in the design – School of Music, The University of Auckland and the Landscape School, UNITEC.

Consent and scheduling submissions update

149 Jeffs Road, Flat Bush

Armada Holdings are applying for resource consent for the subdivision of a site at 149 Jeffs Road, Flatbush. The subdivision would create four lots on a site that contains a scheduled stand of native bush. The proposal includes the removal of a mature Podocarpus totara (Totara) (Photograph below) and establishing building platforms near the dripline of the scheduled bush. Through Plan Change 20 the site has been afforded heritage protection status under Schedule B of the Auckland Council District Plan (Manukau Section) as a significant stand of mature native bush with a high profile.

The site is located on the peri-urban fringe of Flat Bush, surrounded by predominantly new medium density housing with little mature vegetation. Nearby to the west is a new school and to the east the Flat Bush Countryside Transition zone. The site contains a stand of mature native bush with a canopy that includes Taraire, Totara, Puriri and Kahikatea. This bush is a remnant of the mixed conifer-broadleaf forest that once naturally vegetated the Hunua Ecological District and the species are representative of the forest type.

The Tree Council feel strongly about the way in which this developer (Armada Holdings) has shown very little respect for the protection of this heritage status significant stand of mature native bush with a high profile through this resource consent and through the development of Stage One by:

- Removing six protected Golden Elms without resource consent.
- Illegal trimming of Scheduled Totara trees that their dripline lay within building platforms before trimming.
- Earthworks within the drip lines of protected



specimen trees identified under Schedule 6B without resource consent.

- Developing without retaining walls on the boundary to the scheduled protected area-see.
- incomplete installation of silt fences to the scheduled protected area.
- no silt protection to stormwater drains.
- visible mud trails on surrounding roads.

The hearing was held on 15 May. 36 submissions were received opposing the application. The commissioner's decision was that the Totara remains and only two building sites be allowed, however, the Applicant is appealing this decision to The Environment Court.

Chrysalis Daycare-Rosebank Road, Avondale-update

As you can see from the picture below construction has begun on the daycare centre embracing our two renowned scheduled Oak and Pohutukawa that most of you will be very familiar with at 1 Jomac Place, Avondale. Sean Freeman, our chair and Sherylle Scott, a Tree Council community tree advisor meet with Darius and Nikeeta Singh recently to discuss the development of the playground under the trees. Initial concept plans were viewed and The Tree Council asked to be kept informed as the playground progressed to working drawings so as the fragile area under these special trees is cared for and respected.

Sherylle Scott said 'The most amazing thing when I drove up Rosebank Road was to still be able to view these two magnificent trees.' We are sure you will agree as the



construction shown in this photograph is the finished height of the building.

The Singhs agreed to incorporate a memorial for Sigrid Shayer in the playground.



The Back Page

Membership renewal reminder

Membership subscriptions are now due. Your 2014/2015 yearly membership is now due. Many of you have paid but there are still some outstanding. We have made it easy for you here to renew. Just cut out the renewal form from this newsletter and post it to us. We also welcome new members!

Name:

Address:

City: Postcode:

Tel (h):

Mobile:

Email:

Can you access attachments? (eg PDFs) ☐ No ☐ Yes

Area(s) of interest:

Expertise: (that may be able to be utilised by The Tree Council)

I wish to help with the work of The Tree Council ☐ Yes

Membership Status

☐ New member ☐ Membership renewal

Membership Category

<input type="checkbox"/> Individual Members / Incorporated Societies / Charitable Trusts	\$ 20.00
<input type="checkbox"/> Students / Beneficiaries	\$ 15.00
<input type="checkbox"/> I wish to make a donation to assist with The Tree Council's work	<input type="text"/>
TOTAL	<input type="text"/>

Payment Details

Please make cheques payable to The Tree Council.

For Direct Credit payment Bank Account:

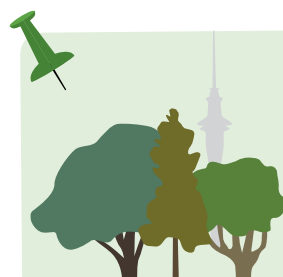
Branch – ANZ Cnr Queen & Victoria Sts

Account No. – 11 5462 0230022 11

Post this form with your membership fee to:

The Tree Council
c/- Treasurer
PO Box 28272, Remuera, Auckland

Receipts are sent out with the next mail-out following receipt of payment.



Our People

Chair

Sean Freeman – 021 0837 1202

Treasurer, Membership Secretary and Acting Field Officer

Sherylle Scott – 09 523 1647

Secretary

Mels Barton – 021 213 7779

Members

Hueline Massey – 021 150 3385

Pip Mules – 09 624 3732

Mandy McMullin – 027 364 2877

Cheryl Lawton

Lili Ng

Community Tree Advisors:

Auckland Sherylle Scott – 09 523 1647

North Shore Roland O'Driscoll – 09 410 5456

Erica Gilchrist – 09 445 3302

Waitakere Sean Freeman – 021 0837 1202

Mels Barton – 021 213 7779

Rodney Hueline Massey – 09 425 9246

Stephen Rose – 09 412 5668

Dates for your diary

27 September to 12 October

Auckland's Council's Heritage Festival.

6 to 12 October

Auckland Tree Week.

Thursday 9 October

The Tree Council's 2014 AGM, 7pm,
The Parnell Room at the Parnell Community
Centre, 545 Parnell Road.

Saturday 11 October

Tree Week Guided Bus Tour of Auckland's
Heritage Trees

Bus departs: 9.20am from UNITEC

Saturday 29 November

Grey Lynn Festival at Grey Lynn Park.