



2010 Annual General Meeting

Tuesday 14 September 2010, 6.00pm
Holy Trinity Cathedral Visitors' Centre, 446 Parnell Road

Chair's Report by Rory MacDonald

I have been chairman of Parnell Inc for the last 2 years – a period of time that has gone quickly. My turn as chairperson happened to coincide with the worst international financial crisis in 70 years which commenced with the frightening events of November 2008. Of course New Zealand was already in recession by then and the emergence from that recession has been slow and painful.

Sometimes when I drive through Parnell it seems as though everything is normal and the district has escaped unharmed from the recession but the reality is that there has been a distinct downturn in the number of shoppers and people generally doing business in Parnell. In short, it has been tough times for most retailers, cafe owners, art galleries and other businesses. Tough times and a determination to survive, by many people I have spoken to, has gone hand in hand in the last two years.

Parnell Inc has been active in the last year. The weekly Friday emails from Debbie Harkness set out the plethora of activities of Parnell Inc covering a spectrum from security issues, graffiti removal, bus stop issues, after five functions and general promotion of Parnell in magazines, tourist publications and our extensive website.

Of particular note has been the reinforcement of the brand of Parnell Inc as the "Creative Quarter" and that has included Summer in The Park with the popular introduction of deck chairs, in Heard Park, the Late Night Art gallery strolls and the well publicised Waiters' Race held earlier this year. Last Sunday we celebrated the arrival of the Mountain Fountain sculpture in the grounds of Trinity Cathedral, which is a welcome presence in Parnell.

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We have held two Movers & Shakers Evenings in recent times with keynote speakers.

I am pleased to say we have operated within our budget throughout the year. I think we have been prudent in our expenditure and have sought to consider each item of expense carefully and in the context of likelihood of benefit to the Parnell business community.

I would like to thank the committee who have worked so hard to make Parnell Inc a success. Our meetings have been lively and full of energy.

Hinu Te Hau deserves special mention as she is soon to finish her role as the local representative of the Hobson Community Board. She has been a regular attendee at our meetings and the provider of much valuable advice and an important link for us with Auckland City Council. Thank you for your wonderful devotion and efforts Hinu.

I would also like to thank Debbie Harkness for her managerial talent and energy throughout the year plus the valuable assistance from Cynthia Crosse in her part time capacity. It is easy to underestimate the range of matters that are expected to be met in the management of the day to day affairs of Parnell Inc and I have found from experience that there are a multitude of such matters.

I need to make special mention of our campaign to have a railway station installed at Parnell and also to mention that we ran a campaign including a petition to oppose the proposal for bus parking at the site of the railway sheds next to the railway lines.

During the year we have sought to identify ways in which Parnell Inc can become effective as a Business Improvement District catering to a wider business community. It is early steps for us at this stage but I believe that we can head effectively in that direction. The key to our success will be to demonstrate that we can be relevant as an organisation to a wider business community.

I should mention the link which we have developed this year with Parnell Rotary and the pleasant relationship we have with that group through David McLeish.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to all the people who have assisted me in the time I have been chairperson. I have enjoyed the experience and I am confident that Parnell Inc will continue to provide valuable services for its members.