

Whakatane District

Grey Power Association Inc.

Welcome to our First News of 2017

Mailing Address: PO Box 830, Whakatane, 3158
Website: <http://greypowerwhakatane.org.nz>
Email Address: whakatanegreypower@gmail.co

2017 General Meetings:

As we're sure you are all aware, 2017 is election year, so this year we plan to have guest speakers from each of the major political parties at the majority of our meetings.

Our next will be held on 21st April at 1.30 pm in the Liberty Centre auditorium, 65 Wairaka Road, Whakatane, 3120. Our guest speaker for this meeting will be the Hon Anne Tolley, MP for East Coast.

We have secured a further two guest speakers to date, both leaders of their respective political parties, and are currently liaising with others, details of these meetings will be listed on our website under the "Events" menu as and when we have finalised dates and venues. For those members who do not have access to the internet, details will of course be announced in our newsletters.

Supporting Grey Power

1. Do you like the idea of being a government watchdog, raising the alarm if proposed laws are against the interests of all New Zealanders?
2. Do you want be part of a Political Lobby Group, that the government actually listens and pays attention to?
3. Do you want to make your views on impending legislation heard?

Then join an association which is effective; Grey Power, along with Business Round Table and Federated Farmers, are associations which the government listens to and that actively lobby Politicians to get things done in the Beehive. Being a member of Grey Power enables your voice to be heard.

Editors Excuses from the Secretary's Settee

On November 24, last year, a small but dedicated band of Grey Power Whakatane members enjoyed an end of year lunch at Cobb & Co. The food looked delicious (Especially the seafood chowder & Shrimp Cocktails-my favourites). Alas, all I could do was to watch everyone else tuck in whilst I nibbled a slice of Cobb Loaf. Those of you who have had an inflamed gall bladder, or gall stones, will know exactly why I couldn't eat anything!

The next ten days or so are sharply defined in some areas and a blur for the rest of the time. This was because the following day, on November 25, I was admitted to Whakatane hospital where vampires descended and drained my arm of blood. Then I had Xrays, and Ultrasound, not to mention Cardiographs and ECG's before the specialist decided to try and get my temperature under control before operating. So, there was I, propped up in bed in a most glamorous hospital gown, with a portable fan perched on the bedside locker and blowing directly onto my face; the intra-venous drip wasn't much fun either!

After a couple of days, the powers that be decided that an emergency operation was called for, and accordingly slotted me in after the planned operations for the day, so at 6.00 pm I was duly taken down. The next thing I remember was a steady stream of doctors and nurses coming to see the largest Gall Stone that most of them had ever seen – 4.5 x 2.3 cm, almost the same size as a normal Gall Bladder, but then I never do things by halves!

We are so fortunate in Whakatane to have such amazing world class doctors & nurses, they do a fantastic job, as do all the support staff. I cannot praise them highly enough.

All the information above is presented as the reason why our newsletter is a few weeks late this year. This has been caused not just by my personal convalescence, but also the necessity to get the politicians to commit to a date to speak to Whakatane Grey Power, we have Anne Tolley booked in for April 21, Labour hopefully in May, with both New Zealand First and the Maori Party in early and late June respectively.

We also need to fit in an AGM in May, so you can see that meetings for the next few months will be somewhat chaotic in terms of which day of the week the politicians can commit to, plus organising suitable venues, so they will not be held on the last Tuesday of every other month as per our normal practice. But hey! We are a political Lobby Group, whom the Beehive actually listens to, along with the Business Round Table and Federated Farmers, so I am positive that Whakatane members can be flexible and turn out en-masse to hear why we should vote for their respective parties.

Ka Kite Ono, see you there
Susan Anderson
Secretary

Mental Asylum

A visitor was touring a mental asylum with its director, when at one point curiosity got the better of him.

"Director, how do you decide whether a patient should be institutionalized?" he asked.

Well," said the director, "we fill up a bathtub, and then we offer a teaspoon, a teacup and a bucket to the patient and ask him or her to empty the bathtub."

"Oh, I see," replied the visitor. "I suppose a normal person would use the bucket because it's bigger than the spoon or the teacup."

"No," said the director. "A normal person would pull the plug out of the drain."

"Perhaps you'd like a bed by the window, sir?"

Exercise!



The Urine Sample

Recently, an old guy became ill and ended up in hospital. One of the nurses just drove him crazy; every time she came in she talked to him as though he was a small child. She would say in an extremely patronising tone of voice "And how are we doing this morning?" or "are we ready for a bath? or "are we hungry?"

He really had had enough of this nurse. One day at breakfast, he took the apple juice off of the tray and put it in his bedside cabinet. Later he was given a sample bottle to fill for testing. So, you have probably guessed what he did with that juice!

That same nurse came in a while later, picked up the sample bottle, looked and said "My, my, we do seem a little cloudy today. At this, the old guy grabbed the bottle out of her hand, popped off the top and gulped it down, saying, "Well I'll run it through again, maybe I can filter it better this time round!

The nurse fainted..... the old guy simply smiled.

Old & Wise

***To be Old & Wise,
You must first have
to be,
Young & Stupid***

Important Notice - Membership

A reminder that all subscriptions will be due for renewal on April 1, 2017, regardless of what month your previous subscription was paid in 2016. If you are taking advantage of the Grey Power Energy scheme, please be aware that failure to renew your membership will mean you will no longer be eligible for the discounted scheme.

Memberships can be renewed using our website:

<http://greypowerwhakatane.org.nz/whakatane/>

and clicking on the "Join Us" menu, the on-line form also includes details for paying via Internet Banking. For those members who do not have access to the internet, please mail your completed Membership Subscription form, as per the last page of this newsletter, along with your payment to:

Whakatane District Grey Power Association Inc.
PO Box 830
Whakatane
3158

We strongly advise against sending cash in the mail, whilst we have not had direct experience with funds going astray, it is far safer to pay by cheque, or over the counter at a local bank; full details of our account and number are listed on the aforementioned form.

Tax, Benefits & Finance Hub

If you have any questions about tax rates, Inland Revenue numbers, NZ Super or Kiwisaver, you can find information by going to a new tax, benefits and finance hub, simply click on the link below.

You can also find out about managing your money in retirement, what benefits and allowances you're entitled to, getting a rates rebate, how to postpone or defer paying rates, and even borrowing against the value of your home.

The govt.nz website can also help you find out about work rights, education, health, passports, visas and consumer complaints.

Its aim is to improve your on-line experience when dealing with Government Services and provide information that's easy to find and use.

Website: <https://www.govt.nz/browse/tax-benefits-and-finance/>

AirBnB Experience

During the summer break, four of your intrepid Grey Power Whakatane committee members dipped their toes into hitherto uncharted waters (terra incognita) of hosting AirBnB guests!

For those of you who have not heard of AirBnB; it started in San Francisco, USA, when all accommodation in the city was taken during a particularly busy period of trade conventions and conferences. A couple living in an apartment in the central city decided to rent out an airbed on their lounge floor to a stranded traveler. Hence the name, Air Bed n B. It has since become extremely popular with travelers of all ages; because you stay in people's homes and meet ordinary, everyday people; not just hotel/motel staff. (Plus, it's also considerably cheaper!)

Since beginning this enterprise we have hosted people from Norway, Germany, Spain, the UK, USA and of course from New Zealand too. It has been a great opportunity to show visitors our favourite places in the Eastern Bay of Plenty, and thus send out the message of the great activities etc. available in and around Whakatane. It has certainly confirmed our belief that Whakatane is the best place to live in New Zealand, if not the world, (Especially the USA at the moment!).

We have discovered that we have an absolutely amazing i-site in Whakatane, no question is too mundane or obscure for the staff there, they provide answers, brochures and will 'phone around New Zealand to find information concerning unanswered questions.

If you would like to be an AirBnB host, and don't mind sharing your kitchen, bathroom and home in general, then we would thoroughly recommend you look into it further. You will not make a fortune, but you will enjoy the variety of people you will meet, plus you'll find yourself becoming even more passionate about our wonderful Whakatane. (*Whantastic Whakatane!!*).

Post Script:

From our guests; we have learned of a couple of sites that may be of interest:

<https://www.bookme.co.nz/bookings/tauranga/home>

This site allows you to book cut-price tickets to local attractions, White Island as an example.

<https://www.workaway.info/hostlist-NZ.html?region=bay-of-plenty>

This is a site where people can offer free board and/or lodging to guests who can work around the place, one lady had her deck repaired and extended, doors repaired etc, for the price of a few materials and a few day's board and/or lodging.

Susan Anderson
Secretary

General Jottings

How many of you were aware that there have been changes to the driving tests for those over 80? At this age, you will now be required to pass a cognitive assessment test, given by an occupational therapist, plus take a driving test with a driving instructor. The whole exercise has now become very expensive and time consuming.

Grey Power Federation is currently lobbying Government on why they have decided on this change with the detrimental effect that it has, together with the exorbitant costs. I would also like to know what specialist qualifications an occupational therapist has to administer and interpret such a test. In one instance, an OT failed an 80+ candidate; however, further tests undertaken by a registered psychologist found that there was nothing wrong. All this cost the client an additional \$750.00, in addition to the over the top charge of nominally \$350.00 they had paid to the OT, plus the costs for actual driving test. How many of us can afford that horrendous amount every five years to keep our autonomy? One wonders whether the government is trying to reduce the age of death to keep numbers of older seniors low.

Tom O'Connor (Grey Power Federation President) wants all Grey Power members to know that they can send questions directly to him, or any board member; the reasoning behind this being that Grey Power Federation wants to know what is important to the general membership.

At last year's AGM, Whakatane had two remits passed. One to do with increased access to laboratory facilities and the other addressing the overuse of antibiotics. Both have now been taken up with the Minister of Health.

There are three effective lobby groups in New Zealand that the government invites to meetings on various issues, these groups are: Grey Power, Federated Farmers and Business Round Table. We ARE effective, but as with the other two, most of what we achieve is behind the scenes and not in the public view.

At last year's Whakatane District Grey Power Association Inc. AGM, (2016), it was decided, by the membership, that a koha should be given in appreciation of the great afternoon teas provided by a committee member, who would prefer to remain anonymous, (Although we all know who you are and the fantastic job You do). This koha was to be donated to Hospice Whakatane. Unfortunately, in the past nine months, this has raised a very disappointing \$31.70, which is a very meagre amount indeed.

Superannuation

As said previously, I am positive that you are all aware that this is election year. As you also all know, no Political Party (Whatever its colour – deepest red through shades of pink to deepest blue) can resist diving into the depths of New Zealand Super. They all want to change it somehow. None of them seem to have heard of the old saying: If it's not broke, don't fix it.

Diane Maxwell, the Retirement Commissioner, says that currently Super costs 2% of GDP and that this is due to increase to 4% by 2040. Diane make the point that if the age to receive Super is to rise, then Politicians should take the long view and do it in small increments over the next twenty years. This seems sensible. Other suggestions are not so sensible, merely outrageous; reduce the amount of Super depending on the recipient's savings, a giant step backwards to the infamous surtax levies of thirty years ago.

Those who charge us with being greedy oldies do not know the level of tax we had to pay to build the infrastructure that has helped make New Zealand the relatively wealthy country we are today, nor the mortgage rates we had to pay. I paid 27% to buy the section on which we built our modest kit set home. The mortgage for the actual house was a much more reasonable 18%.

If the equivalent of a surcharge is adopted, it will be the future generations of retirees who will suffer. All those with Kiwisaver for instance, would have their superannuation allowances reduced under such a scheme.

As a Lobby Group, we need to make our concerns known, so if the superannuation debate seems to be gaining traction, then we may need to do something to gain media attention. The committee have a few ideas in mind should this become a necessity.

Susan Anderson
Secretary

Election Year General Meetings

As we will be having guest speakers from the major Political Parties for a minimum of four of our meetings, and also given that such speakers tend to draw in larger audiences, we will be making these meetings open to the public, an admission fee will be charged to anyone who cannot provide a current Whakatane Grey Power membership card, so please ensure you have your membership cards available.

We will be advertising these meetings on 1XX radio, Radio Live and in the local press. All meetings will also be listed on our website, details as advised in this Newsletter.

Officers and Committee:

President:	Betty Hudson	07 308 5210	027 235 0459	betty.keepa@xtra.co.nz
Secretary:	Susan Anderson		021 116 9115	susananderson46@gmail.com
Treasurer:	Brian Newton	07 307 7410	022 095 2862	whakatanegreypower@gmail.com
Committee:	Kate Ross	Maud McKinnon		Johan Groemeveld
	Rob Ross	Marie Rigden		John Patterson

This Newsletter is also posted on our website under the "Newsletters" Menu

Disclaimer:

Opinions expressed in this news issue are those of the contributors. All information is given in good faith and is believed to be accurate and reliable at the time of issue; however, Whakatane District Grey Power Association Inc. does not accept any liability for its contents.



Newsletter Prepared & Edited by Brian Newton & Susan Anderson

Membership Subscription Form

Mr / Mrs / Ms * (Please Circle One)

Given Name: _____ Family Name: _____

Address: _____

Email: _____ 'Phone: _____

Membership No: (If Renewal) _____ Mobile: _____

Annual Membership \$15.00 Single
\$25.00 Double

Renewal / New ** (Please Circle One)
Valid to March 31, 2017

Any donation to help with the cost of paper, postage and stationery would be greatly appreciated.

Subscription \$..... Birth date - **(Only if under 50)**

Donation \$..... **To: Whakatane Grey Power**
P.O. Box 830

Total Remitted \$..... Whakatane 3158

If you post to our P.O. Box, it will assist us immensely if you could please include a stamped addressed envelope for mailing your Membership Card (s) and if paying by cash (Please note that we do not advise sending cash through the mail), your receipt. New members and membership renewals can also be undertaken via our website, simply click on the "Join Us" button and select from the sub menu accordingly.

Internet Banking

Payment can be made direct to our bank account via Internet Banking, our preferred method of payment; details of our account together with the required details are as listed below; if you are a new member and paying via this method, and not using our website, please also send us an email to whakataneGREYPOWER@gmail.com advising your details as listed above, including identifying how the amount paid is made up; i.e. if you are including a donation, please state the two amounts.

Account Name: Whakatane District Grey Power Association Inc.

Account Number: 38 9003 0986339 02

Details to Appear on Our Statement:

Particulars	Code ***	Reference
Initials & Given Name	Renew / New	Membership Number ****

*** (Please Circle One)

**** (New Members Leave This Field Blank)

***** Do you wish to receive material from Grey Power Federation? YES / NO ***** (Please Circle One)