



Mainstreet Whanganui lobbies on behalf of retailers, provides promotional activities, events, central city maintenance, gardens and ongoing beautification projects.

December 2019

Outside The Square

*Report from the outgoing Design and Heritage Committee
Chairperson John Anderson*



Another year has gone by. We are on the eve of the year 2020 and here we are just beyond the edge of Mainstreet's defined area of concern.

Firstly I would like to pay tribute to the late Ed Boyd, a thoughtful and reliable member of Mainstreet and its Design/Heritage Committee. I would also like to extend our sympathies to Bryce Smith

and Sue Cooke for their loss by fire of No.1 Victoria Avenue, a heritage building of significance in the history of Whanganui and strategic positioning in the layout of the town.

Many of you will have been aware that I have been 'out of action' since sustaining an injury in Samoa in June this year. Being unable to do much else has given me time to think and I would like to briefly share with you a part of my viewpoint regarding Design and Heritage for the town centre area that comes under the auspices of Mainstreet Whanganui's mandate. Rather than focussing on individual projects or guidelines that have their effect within the Mainstreet boundaries my offering is a fragmentary glimpse into the context where these things take place. Context can be interpreted both in terms of space and time but for the purposes of this presentation I have limited the discussion to the spatial aspect.

So the defined Mainstreet area is part of the grid pattern layout of Whanganui's central streets. Generally these streets are named after places in England or Pakeha men of stature at the time they were created. Two exceptions are Victoria Avenue and Maria Place that cross each other at the centre of the area in question. These streets are named after women. The main street after Queen Victoria and the secondary street after Maria King, the sister of Samuel King, the first postmaster in Whanganui. Curiously enough the two streets are named after a Queen and a King.

The grid itself is something we take for granted but does contribute to the character of our town in a very fundamental way. Those who have travelled will appreciate street grids differ

in size, proportion and orientation and each has its own set of unique characteristics. Whanganui's street grid is no exception and connects the town centre with its surrounding area. It is contained by the River, Pukenuamu [Queen's Park], Cooks Gardens and the base of St John's Hill. The symmetry of the Victoria Avenue/Maria Place intersection is no accident and further reinforces the relationship between the centre and its boundaries.

In particular the arm of Maria Place heading north-east provides a direct visual link with the Sarjeant Gallery, Veteran Steps and the Lion Statue. Effectively it connects the commercial centre of town with the cultural centre of town which is embodied by the Memorial Hall Forecourt, that is in turn edged by the Whanganui Regional Museum and the Whanganui War Memorial Hall. These buildings and monuments store and symbolise the town's collective memory of who we are and where we have come from. Among other things they represent the Military and Iwi sacrifices made to establish the place we call Whanganui. Although we interpret these symbols and events of the past differently these days nevertheless our acceptance of what has happened in the past gives us a better understanding of the present and how best to capitalise on the current situation for the future.

You may say does all this really matter. I think it does. It is the sort of thing that tangibly binds us together to help create a sense of community and meaning to our individual lives. I would like to see a greater recognition of the context of our activities within the parameters of Mainstreet's patch and the demonstration of how these activities and projects fit in the overall scheme of things. [ref.1990 Heritage Study, 2016 Town Centre Regeneration Strategy].

In closing I would like to mention some of the highlights of the last twelve months:-

- Installation of bollard-mounted interpretive panels courtesy Nick Gibbons.
- Facade face-lift at Pharmacy 145 courtesy Bryce and Judith Esquilant.

Mainstreet Whanganui Inc

36 Ridgway Street, PO Box 373, Whanganui

Telephone: 06 348 0157

Mobile: 021 223 9254

Email: kelly@mainstreetwhanganui.co.nz

Website: www.mainstreetwhanganui.co.nz

Facebook: www.facebook.com/mainstreetwhanganui

- 'Whanganui Walls' inspirational event and artefact project courtesy District Council.
- Roundabout proposal [Vic Ave/Guyton St] presented to Council although not adopted.
- Tree lighting project [ongoing]
- Block 4 Public Toilet
- Finally it is most encouraging to be witnessing an almost unprecedented interest in stories of Heritage, Architecture and Design thanks to the likes of the Museum, Art Gallery, Heritage Trust etc.

John Anderson



Mainstreet Whanganui
CHRISTMAS PARADE
Sat 14th Dec, 2pm

Sue's Repair & Alteration Services
 Suite 4, Victoria Court, 92 Victoria Avenue
 Continue to trade at the same address under the same name as they have for the last 30 years.

Comings and Goings

Welcome
Victoria's Design Flowers at Maria Place.
Minz at 137a Victoria Avenue.

Farewell
 Wishing **Jeanette** and **Owen Holdaway** from **Wanganui Home Sewing Centre** 165 Victoria Avenue a very happy retirement.
 Also:
 Wishing **Judith** and **Bryce Esquilant** from **145 on Victoria** a very happy retirement. Welcome to new owner Evan Lee.



LATE NIGHT SHOPPING
Thurs 19th December
5pm-8pm



IN CELEBRATION OF THE TEN YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF THE MAINSTREET WHANGANUI CABOODLE:
THE DECADE DINNER
 3 course meal from 3 restaurants
 LA QUATTRO | MOMIJI | STELLAR
 \$65
 18.1.20 | 6.30pm
 Momiji Courtyard 26 Victoria Ave
 TICKETS | Available from EVENTFINDA

Mainstreet Whanganui Caboodle



Whanganui's largest street festival: Bringing Vintage to the City
Saturday 18th January 2020