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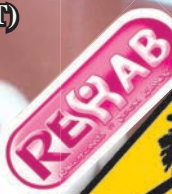
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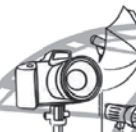
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20 year dream turning to custard - Mike Henry still getting special treatment?



Tiare Taporo, Mike Henry's dream a mirage of reality and a financial black hole.

Most dreams and talk are cheap but if unrealised they become expensive disasters of disappointment. Some potential shareholders claimed Mike Henry's prospectus published to entice investors in purchasing a ship (later named Tiare Taporo) was name dropping and fiscally seductive. One sceptic believing it was too good to be true forwarded the prospectus to an overseas Asset Management firm who suggested the contents bordered upon being romantic rather than being tangibly profitable, in other words a high risk venture unlikely to deliver the stated potential returns.

One is reminded of the familiar proverbs of boat ownership; *"A boat is a hole in the water you throw money into,"* and *"The two happiest days in a sailor's life are the day he buys a boat and the day he sells it."*

After sighting the vessel it provokes one to question how much due diligence was done.

Those who expressed investment interest were being assured in confidence by Mike Henry the Cook Islands Party government would ensure Pacific Schooners Limited (PSL) was competitive by receiving a substantial outer island shipping subsidy of \$1.5 million. With this

assurance, company director Garth Broadhead said 23 shareholders funded the project that had been conceptualised 20 years ago. Henry later said \$1.6 million was invested most by foreigners.

First registered in 2012 the company PSL was deregistered then was re-registered in June 2015 with Mike Henry having a minority shareholding of 12.5%. The majority owners are Canadian residents.

Henry's widely promoted investment prospectus was passed over by many because he has the reputation for extravagance with other people's money and limited business

success; the scandalous events related to the Tiare Taporo are a relief they didn't get sold on Mike Henry's dream fantasy.

One commented, "Mike's a well known sponger and convicted tax dodger, why the Prime Minister bends over backwards for him must be because his wife is Henry's niece."

Once sighted it was also a relief to potential contributors. The Tiare Taporo appearance hardly inspires investor confidence, the prospectus painted the rosy picture of a classy sea going vessel taking not only domestic passengers to the outer islands

continued next page

in comfort and at affordable fares but also high end adventure tourists paying \$450 a day in a luxury fitted out vessel with all the gastronomic indulgences while visiting exotic destinations like Manuae and Suwarrow.

Henry dreamed his new ship would make regular trips to and from Aitutaki along with the development of Island's harbour and Orongo market place at a cost of \$15 million.

For a dream that took 20 years to materialise and be driven by nautical experts the Tiare Taporo venture seems more about egos and not commercial sense. With Henry driving the project it has been one disaster after another.

While the price of the vessel may have been attractive it appears to have compromised the cost factor which has become a black hole swallowing up money unmercifully.

After three years of being in dock in Lunenburg Canada getting refitted it left on July 9 2015 and took four months to make the 30 day 7,500 mile trip arriving Rarotonga on November 12 2015, three months too late to fulfil the repatriation of outer island celebrants contract signed with government.

Questions were raised about the refit after the Tiare Taporo was delayed in Panama due to engine troubles then no sooner had it arrived in Rarotonga the Tiare Taporo is out of commission due to engine troubles. By the look of the vessel's condition and appearance it hardly exhibits any evidence of a refit.

Plagued by financial problems the engineer left the vessel in Panama over a pay dispute and after not being paid for the delivery of the Tiare Taporo to Rarotonga the Captain left over the failure of Mike Henry to honour the \$20,000 owing to him.

The PERC report sent to the Prime Minister Henry on 5 September 2015 failed to document the multiple conflicts of interests Mike Henry had in his capacity as the Chairman of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) who oversee the Ports Authority (PA). In one of Geoff Stoddard's recommendations the PERC report said: 4. That special treatment not

be afforded to Pacific Schooners Limited in future...

Despite this forceful recommendation, its business as usual with the CIP government, PSL is yet to pay the VAT on the Tiare Taporo which is expected to exceed \$15,000. Mike Henry has also managed to be exempted from paying his weekly berthing fee of \$300 a week until he receives his domestic shipping licence. If this is not special treatment then what is? PA CEO Bim Tou has been elusive in providing answers to this question saying Henry's licence is pending. Tou also did not respond to the question on Mike Henry owing a substantial amount for the rental of a storage facility he has had since he was the Chairman of the PA. Newly appointed Ports Authority Chairman Sam Crocombe said this issue has been raised by others and will be addressed at their January Board meeting.

While Crocombe acknowledged Henry was his boss, like everyone else CIIC chairman or not, Henry was obligated to follow the rules. Unlike his CEO Tou, Crocombe is clear on the matter, he said exemption of port fees for domestic licensed vessels is a social responsibility policy of government and if you don't have one you pay the Ports fees whatever they are.

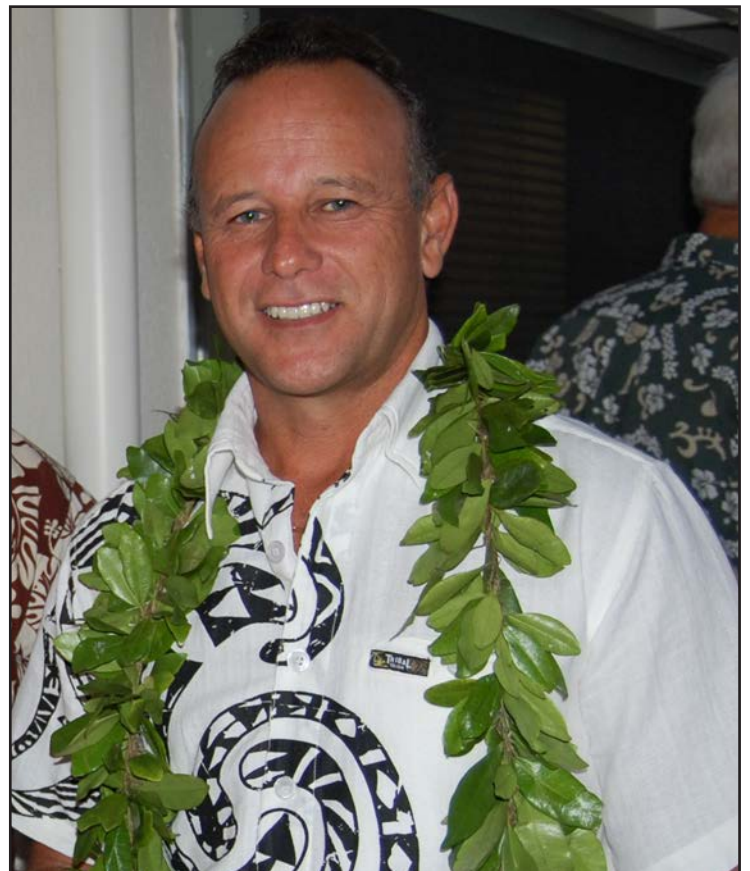
A spokesperson from Taio Shipping said they paid Port fees until their new boats had received their domestic shipping licence then were exempt.

While the CIP government mantra of having no secrets and nothing to hide is plausible in practise they have been anything but transparent, instead of lying and suffering from bouts of amnesia they may claw back some credits if they applied the good governance principle of exercising transparency in the measure of the perceptions of conflicts of interest.

By the end of 2015 the Cook Islands Party government had arrogantly and foolishly embroiled itself in energy sapping exchanges with hostile public protestors rather than chose the path of contrition by deeds.

Will 2016 be any different?

- George Pitt



Mike Henry – Dream merchant.



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PM's vision of wealth for all, a nightmare

By Charles Pitt

Prime Minister Puna was reported in the Wednesday 30 December issue of the daily paper as saying we could all be rich. He alluded to the wealth locked up in our two major natural resources, tuna fishing and sea bed minerals.

A grand vision certainly but the concept of wealth for all is a fanciful expectation government currently lacks the ability to deliver on. The reason being government is full of drones and clones constrained by legislative straitjackets and trained or brainwashed to apply "systems" and theories invented and perpetuated by other foreign clones as a means to control the wider masses, to ensure they

stay poor and do not imperil the wealth of the top one percent.

In short we have adopted foreign systems and concepts which are at odds with our society's customs, traditions and expectations. Government has legislated abuse of the elderly by making pensioners incomes subject to tax. A brainless idea when actual numbers and potential revenue are taken into account.

It is easy for governments to employ people to carry out set tasks as per Westminster style legislative requirements which means government ends up severely lacking in people with the courage to challenge outdated and no longer relevant theories and to think independently and

out of the box.

An example of outdated, irrelevant and backward thinking is our PM's reference to wealth per capita. This is a "national" measure of wealth foreign to Polynesian society, and not a personal measure. As such this national measure is irrelevant to a worker in a plantation who might be on \$6.25 an hour. It makes more sense to measure spending power and average disposal income per household.

The PM did not elaborate further to indicate what processes government would need to establish to ensure the monetary wealth he referred to, once unlocked, was going to flow down to the ordinary people at grassroots level. The "trickle down" theory does not work and we must avoid a situation like today where most of the wealth ends up in the pockets of a few business people or foreign owners based overseas or locally.

While the PM hinted at benefits flowing through higher pensions, improved social welfare, better education and health, there was no mention of any major tax relief, public shareholdings of SOEs or any form of dividend payout universally via for example, the newly established Sovereign Fund. Payment of a yearly dividend from the Fund, would ensure that a portion of the country's wealth actually gets into the bank accounts and pockets of those at grassroots level. This paper has previously suggested establishing a yearly dividend payment and setting the start age for such payments at 20yrs. There should also be a qualifying period to be met by Cook Islanders returning to live here.

On more than one occasion this paper has proposed that personal income tax be abolished and the revenue (around \$20 million) be sought instead from our natural resources. Abolishing income tax would give all wage earners an immediate pay rise with the exception of those earning below

the tax free threshold of \$11,000.

With revenue streams from seabed minerals still some 8-10 years away, we could in the interim look to optimizing returns from our other big revenue earner, tourism.

This paper has already proposed introducing 5-6 star tourism as this has not yet been exploited. Our departure tax is well below that of Fiji yet Fiji with a departure tax well over \$100 continues to outperform all other Pacific nations. We could easily lift our departure tax by another \$100 and this will bring in more than \$6 million. Other nations have a bed tax of around 4%. This could be looked at.

Tahiti has no income tax but has a high level of VAT to compensate. There is no need for us to increase our VAT. With increased take home pay, people will spend more, lifting the VAT return to government. In fact our VAT should be reduced to encourage spending especially on local produce.

The PM's announcement appears to be a desperate, thinly veiled, attempt to justify the continuance of purse seine fishing in the face of increasing opposition from conservationists. Government's grip on the four northern island seats looks tenuous as those islands do not favour purse seine fishing which is being blamed for dwindling fish stocks. While government can point to the northern group moving to 24 hour renewable energy, this was paid for by foreign aid money not income from fishing. Of course the northerners are grateful but you can eat fish not electricity.

This country needs to seek advice from people who are bold, innovative, unafraid, and who have real brain power and proven intelligence. Why not enlist the assistance of multi-billionaires like Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and other top people? Stop consulting people who boast University qualifications but who possess stunted intelligence, are unproven and lacking in real ability.

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Our Frontpage model



Our first frontpage model for the year 2016 is 18 year old Emma Tupekea, from Aitutaki. Emma has been on the island for about 5 months and is now living here in Rarotonga. She is a hard worker at Café Salsa and Bamboo Jacks. Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck. and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald

Festive season Police operation ends with lowest road fatalities in the past few years

The festive season operation for police commenced on Monday 21 December 2015 and ended on Monday morning 4 January 2016.

The Police Service was split into two teams. Team members comprised of non sworn and sworn staff.

Non sworn staff (civilians) maintained essential administrative services such as drivers license issuing, finance and administration.

Sworn staff, police officers were deployed from our command centre to do a lot of prevention and enforcement activities.

One of the biggest focus for our teams were to tackle the contributing causes to crashes which were carelessness, speed, and driving while under the influence of alcohol.

During the Christmas period only two crashes occurred on our roads in Rarotonga and none in the Outer Islands.

During the New Year period, no crashes occurred on our roads which were unprecedented.

Sadly, though some drivers continued to defy the safety message and the law by driving drunk and speeding. A few were arrested and charged. Most of these cases will be dealt with by the court when court sessions for the New Year starts again.

Some had their vehicles taken off them and were forbidden from driving.

It was however pleasing to see family groups and other groups being driven to and from nightclubs and around the island by sober drivers.

It was also pleasing to see people enjoy themselves and acting responsibly.

We dealt with a couple of assault cases, noisy parties, domestic disputes, a couple of burglaries and dishonesty cases but not much else.

Despite that our teams deployed to areas which our intelligence reports tell us were areas prone to crime and crashes to ensure these do not occur.

We used our speed radars and mobile patrols to target speedsters.

We also used our excess breath alcohol machines and sobriety tests to target drivers under the influence of alcohol.

These tools will continue to be used anywhere anytime by our teams. So expect to be stopped and tested anytime.

It was a relatively peaceful holiday period. The achievement was huge. It is the first time in a few years that we have achieved this outstanding result.

Full credit to the teams who worked and to those in our communities both locals and visitors who heard and complied with the safety message and our law.

Mention must also be made about the outstanding contribution made by our police volunteers in Puaikura and Takitumu. They gave up their times with their families and friends to work with us because of their desire to keep their communities safe.

Commissioners comment:

I am pleased that there were no major concerns during our Christmas, 50th Anniversary celebrations closure and New Year's celebrations.

I commend the men and women in the Cook Islands Police Service and our Police volunteers for their commitment, dedication and sheer determination to keep everyone safe.

I would also like to thank those people in the community who also did a lot of work to keep our communities safe.

It is this spirit of togetherness, cooperation and partnership that we will enhance going forward.



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Looney Tunes
Baby Wipes



Letter to the Editor

Alex Frame responds to Herald articles concerning his legal opinion to F.I.U

The Editor,
Cook Islands Herald,
Rarotonga,
COOK ISLANDS

6 January 2016

Dear Editor, kia orana
I hope you will extend to me the courtesy of a reply to the 'Opinion' piece by Mr George Pitt, and the letter of Mr John Scott appearing in your Cook Islands Herald edition of 16 December 2015. It has been my privilege to have served in advising on constitutional matters in the Cook Islands, when requested by the Law Officers (the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General), for a continuous period of nearly 35 years under every Prime Minister since Sir Tom Davis. Sir Geoffrey Henry was kind enough to refer to me as 'a long-term friend of the Cook Islands' in his foreword to The Laws of the Cook Islands in 1994 and in all those years I have endeavoured to give impartial legal advice to the government in office from time to time. They have not always liked the advice given, but they seem to have persisted on the basis that it was consistent and even-handed, whether to 'Demo' or 'CIP' administrations.

What is a 'legal opinion'? It is an attempt to predict for the client how a Court is likely to interpret the law on a given set of facts, on the basis that in the end the law means what the Courts say it means. There is no guarantee of success, for a variety of reasons, but one hopes to be more often right than wrong. It is normally impossible for legal counsel publicly to discuss legal advice given to a client, unless the advice has been made public by the client, who alone has the right to waive or relax the legal privilege

under which it is protected. A few of the many legal opinions tendered over the years on Cook Islands matters have been released by the Law Officers for various reasons when it was quite properly judged to be in the public interest to do so. On the present occasion I find that my opinion of 29 October 2015 on the meaning of Article 70 of the Cook Islands Constitution has improperly and unlawfully found its way into the public domain, as has a clearly marked 'draft only' of 24 October in which I signalled my emerging conclusion that the interpretation placed by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) on the limits to expenditure unauthorised by Parliament in Article 70(3) was wrong. These are the documents which are the subject of the criticisms of Mr Pitt and Mr Scott and they are clearly now a matter of public knowledge. Nothing in a barrister's code of ethics



Dr Alex Frame

the acting Solicitor-General to do. Second, that I was somehow improperly influenced in the finalised conclusion of 29 October and buckled under pressure from the Government and its advisers to change the substance of the advice in favour of the Government. The first

not there is a legal requirement to observe it in contesting a state agency's view of the meaning of a constitutional provision, it is a sensible course to follow. When the central question on which I was asked by the acting Solicitor-General to advise was the interpretation placed on Article 70(3) by MFEM, it was entirely proper for me to seek to understand the basis for that interpretation. I did so under the instructions and in the hearing of the acting Solicitor-General, who had quite properly considered that my conclusion should be tested by exploring the arguments which had led MFEM to their interpretation. If a precedent be required, I can recall an occasion in 1999 when, again with the then Solicitor-General's consent, a draft opinion for the Queen's Representative on his Excellency's powers after an election was discussed in a joint meeting of the leaders of all political parties before finalisation so as to take account, so far as consistent with a principled analysis, of their competing views of the Constitution. As it happens, the exercise of the powers by his
continued next page

What is a 'legal opinion'? It is an attempt to predict for the client how a Court is likely to interpret the law on a given set of facts, on the basis that in the end the law means what the Courts say it means.

requires him to remain silent under attacks on his integrity in such circumstances.

What are the criticisms? First, that I should not have confronted the Head of MFEM with the emerging conclusion that his interpretation was wrong, as I was instructed by

criticism involves a complete misunderstanding of my role, and the second criticism is simply false and reprehensible.

As to the first criticism, there is a legal saying borrowed from Latin: 'audi alteram partem'. It means 'listen to the other side before you judge' and whether or

Excellency based on the opinion, which the Solicitor-General later authorised to be published, was not subsequently challenged by any party leader, so sparing the Cook Islands the uncertainty and expense of post-electoral litigation.

As to the second criticism, it will be clear to any fair-minded reader of the draft and the final opinion that the conclusion that the MFEM interpretation was wrong is firmly maintained in both documents. Mr Pitt's suggestion that there is a 'backflip' between the two documents is simply false. Also, on the facts submitted in Mr Bob Williams' letter to the acting Solicitor-General and incorporated in her instructions to me, there was no reason to suppose that the MFEM interpretation, expressed in writing in its Quarterly Financial Report for June 2015, however mistaken, was not genuinely held. That conclusion appears in identical words in paragraph 3.11 of both the redacted draft and the final opinion, a possibility which Mr Scott fairly recognises in his letter and which turns out to be exactly the case. That fact alone sends the 'backflip' theory out the window. On the contrary, the final opinion steadfastly continues to reject the MFEM interpretation, adds a further reason for doing so, and maintains the position that expenditure beyond the terms of Article 70(3) as properly interpreted was invalid and would require validating legislation by the Parliament. I was entitled to repeat in the final opinion the secondary point clearly made in the draft that MFEM's mistake as to the meaning of Article 70(3) was just that – a mistake – and that no facts had been put before me to cast it in any different light.

It should not be forgotten that my conclusion was that the entire Executive Council Minute of 5 May 2015 could be found by a Court to be a nullity, as if it had never happened, and might be incapable of being saved by the directory/mandatory

distinction. If that were the case, would the Queen's Representative and every Minister attending, the clerk who signed it off, and every official who later made, received, or handled payments relating to any of the 24 items in the Minute, even uncontroversial items, in accordance with what they genuinely believed to be lawful authority under the Constitution, be culpable because they failed to detect the incorrect interpretation of Article 70(3)? What principle does the confident Mr Scott propose to distinguish between them?

As to validation by Parliament, I do not understand Mr Scott's claim towards the end of his letter that validating legislation would require the special process for constitutional amendment under Article 41. As Mr Scott points out, Article 70(3A) of the Constitution expressly contemplates that unauthorised expenditure over and above that permitted under Article 70(3) in any previous year session be reported by the Auditor to Parliament in the last session before a general election is required to be held, and 'Parliament may by Act validate the whole or any part of that expenditure'. Such a validating Act would, therefore, not be 'inconsistent' with the Constitution, and would not require the special process for constitutional amendment under Article 41. The Constitution would therefore seem to contemplate that unauthorised expenditure might linger unvalidated by Parliament until that point in its life. A possible implication is that where the Audit Office has reported unauthorised expenditure at earlier points in Parliament's life, Parliament may validate it from time to time by ordinary legislation, but that remains unclear and only the High Court could resolve that question. This lack of clarity and certainty exemplifies the need, which I have been warning of since July 2014, for a careful review and reform of the law and practice concerning

the budget and appropriation process.

In summary, any suggestion that my opinion of 29 October 2015 was other than an independent view of the law on the facts submitted to me is completely false, and is utterly rejected. It is strange indeed that an opinion which identifies and articulates the 'flaw' (the word appears in paragraph 2.7 of both the draft and final opinion – no 'backflip' here either) in MFEM's interpretation of the power of government to spend beyond Parliament's authorisation should be accused of 'protecting' the government. I have done my job and Mr Bob Williams should get on with his.

Finally, Mr George Pitt speculates as to what I will do about his abusive and defamatory attacks. For the present I will only offer this adage from the Laws of Tetuna'e, recognised as a statement of ancient ma'ohi custom in Tahiti and which is in modern times stated by Mai

Ar'i of the Académie Tahitienne in the following way, for which I have suggested an English translation alongside:

Eiaha na te tari'a, na te mata ra e hi'o i te ohipa a te feia afa'i parau ino. la faaroo te tari'a e haapo aera te mata ona iho te pepe.

Do not listen, in the absence of observed evidence, to defamatory talk. He who listens to such, rather than checking, is like a child.

I should add that I have simultaneously sent this letter to the Cook Islands News, the Attorney-General and acting Solicitor-General, and also to the President of the Cook Islands Law Society of which I have been a member for many years.

*Kia orana ra,
Yours faithfully,
Alex Frame*

*Barrister of the High Court of
the Cook Islands*

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TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, MON 4 Jan 2016

Extending season's greetings

Kia orana. Well, we've made it to 2016 and Te Kave Kōrero extends its seasons greetings to all Cook Islanders, home and abroad, and wishes everyone a very prosperous new year.

As we slowly get back into our normal routines following the holiday break our thoughts are with families who have lost loved ones in the weeks prior to Christmas and New Year.

It is devastating for families to loose loved ones at that time of the year, just as we anticipate and look forward to spending quality time with families, friends and loved ones. Our thoughts and prayers are with those families.

It is good news however that there has been no serious motor vehicle accidents or deaths on our roads during these holidays. Let's give thanks and praise to our Almighty God for all the blessings we've received this festive season.

A new year always brings new challenges and 2016 is no exception. As we embark on a new journey this year and as we prepare ourselves to face, accept and take on those challenges, be it political, social, economic, spiritual or otherwise, the biggest challenge we face, so early in the piece, is the one within ourselves, that is, for us to be up-front and honest with each other.

For us as a small nation and as a people of the Cook Islands, we must wake up to the realities and confront those challenges as best and as much as we can.

We must be innovative, creative, assertive, positive and united in our endeavours to address or resolve those challenges and better ourselves as a nation and as a people.

And to take on those challenges we must also be up-front and honest with each other and with the way we communicate and deal with the many issues and challenges we face. We must be genuine in our concerns and in the way we approach and address those issues.

And at the same time we must respect each other's views and accept them in a way that truly portrays our culture, traditions and identity as a humble, caring and loving people of this our beautiful country.

Our people, young and old, communities, churches and voluntary organisations are all part and parcel of those challenges and of our nationhood. They are the backbone and foundation of our democracy.

We, as a people, must rise and take on those challenges so that we can make our country one of the safest, if not the safest place on the planet, and the best place to raise our children and grandchildren.

We must set aside our differences, our personal conflicts, our prejudices and let us collectively drive together to make our nation the best it can be for the benefit of future generations.

Let us be smart and be smarter than others. Let us show the world that this little nation of our's may be small, but it is 'Paradise on Earth'. Can we make such a claim? Is there a country in the Pacific, or in the world for that matter, that might dispute this? We think not.

Of all the challenges, there is one that is a certainty. It is politics and unfortunately it is our own Government. It is the biggest challenge, we as a people, shall face during 2016, just as it was and has been for the past fifty years of self-government.

Government sets the direction upon which the country is governed and operates. Its policies guide that direction. It determines the angle, speed and vision of that direction. In essence, what Government says, goes. And in most cases, Government's decision is final and irreversible. The greypower issue over the past two years is a classic example of this.

In 2015 Parliament sat for 10 days, eight in June and two in December. Is this acceptable in this day and age in the Cook Islands? Is this what our democracy is all about? Is this the best we have on offer in so far as Government and democracy in our country is concerned? Are we being taken for a ride? Do we accept this?

These are the questions we must ask and challenge ourselves because if we don't, then we are kidding ourselves and we're not being honest with each other.

Can we change anything given Government is in for the next three years and given the next General Election is in 2018?

Yes, we can. We may not be able to change Government but we can certainly influence Government to review and change its policies, direction and objectives. How can we do this? There are several options and these are just some of the practical ones we can exercise

without much effort required.

1. Contact Te Kave Kōrero and introduce the issues as subjects of talkback discussions.
2. Make an appointment and see the Prime Minister or a Minister in Cabinet.
3. Write letters to and meet with your local Member of Parliament expressing your disapproval or objection to Government's policies.
4. Complain or write to and meet with Heads of Ministries or Government departments.
5. Write letters to the editor of Cook Islands News and Cook Islands Herald.
6. Raise the issues and bring awareness to Cook Islanders on Facebook.
7. Discuss the issues with family members perhaps over dinner or with work colleagues at work or with friends and family members in our respective churches and community organisations.

These options give us the opportunities and the vehicles to raise awareness of the issues, concerns or challenges with Government and with each other.

At the end of the day, if we don't speak up, Government will not hear us and may not realise what our concerns or issues are. On the other hand of course Government may elect to ignore us totally.

However we must be fair to Government and we must give them an opportunity to be aware of our concerns and to address or rectify them accordingly. Surely the onus is on us all, including Government, to do the right thing and to do it with all honesty and integrity.

Let us be united and be one people as we define or refine our destiny as a humble, caring and loving people of this beautiful nation of our's.

Once again, Te Kave Kōrero wishes everyone a prosperous, positive and productive 2016, and looks forward to being on the airwaves again on Radio Cook Islands, to inform, educate and entertain us all.

Kia orāna e kia manuia.

Cook Islands Herald Issue 798

TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, THU 31 Dec 2015

50th Anniversary Finale

The 50th Finale Event held on New Year's Eve, Thursday 31st December 2015, was the occasion officially marking the end of our 50th Anniversary Celebrations of self-government.

Just as it was on Constitution Day on 4th of August, the Finale Event was appropriately held at the New Consitution Park on the reclaimed land on the foreshore opposite St Joseph's Catholic Cathedral in downtown Avarua.

Local artist and entertainer, Henry Taripo, kicked off the evening with a variety of tunes both in English and Māori.

Bishop Tutai Pere then formally opened the occasion with a word of prayer followed by a few chorals by his Apostolic Choir.

The Rugby 9s teams making up of the Arorangi Bears, Avatiu Eels and the Ngatangia Sea Eagles were then on stage performing their respective hakas and showcasing their talents as they prepare for the inaugural Rugby League 9s tournament on New Year's Day at the Avatiu sports grounds.

Newly discovered and talented teenager, Elizabeth Pita, her little sister Ngametua Pita and their father and Onu Studio owner, Tereapii Pita, were then singing old Cook Islands classic hits as well as some papa'a tunes, entertaining the crowd present at the event.

Tereapii Pita, singing and accompanied by his self-produced karaoke video clips of local and papa'a songs, on his laptop, virtually became the houseband as singers and entertainers took to the stage as the evening progressed.

Local artists included Andre Tapena, Mere Darling, Ridge Ponini, Tani Mussell, Rose Akava, Eddie Wichman, Boogie Tapukea, Sandra Tapukea, Mr Wahoo and others.

About 7.30pm Tourism Cook Islands 'Katu Kanga' promotional videos, supporting their 'Love a Little paradise' campaign, were screened becoming a drawcard for children in the audience.

At 8.00pm a New Year mass next door at the Catholic Cathedral commenced at which time the music and entertainment was toned down.

Following the conclusion of the mass at about 9.15pm the music was turned up again and the entertainment continued on.

At about 9.45pm Prime Minister Henry Puna made a speech to formally close the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of self-government.

And shortly after 10.00pm a beautiful and colourful display of fireworks officially brought the celebrations to an end. The fireworks was thoroughly enjoyed by families and children present at the event.

Following the fireworks the entertainment continued on but everything ended at 11.00pm.

The vendors who were selling food and drinks at the event went home very happy.

One vendor who did not want to be named said that he never expected his stall would run out of food and drinks so early.

"In fact everything was sold out before 10pm", the vendor said.

Te Kave Kōrero presenter and Treasurer of the Cook Islands Music Association, Tony Hakaoro, said that a steady flow of people through the vendors' stalls brought a lot of business for the stall holders.

"Although we did not have the same number of people as on 4th August, the stalls were nevertheless very busy because families and children were moving through from one vendor to another and buying their choice of food and drinks", says Hakaoro.

The 50th Finale Event was organised by the Ministry of Cultural Development, also known as the Tauranga Vānanga, in partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister, Tourism Cook Islands, BTIB, Ministry of Health, Cook Islands Police, Cook Islands Music Association and Red Cross.

Sponsorship of the event was made with the proud support of BCI, ANZ, BSP, Te Aponga Uira, Andersons and Fisher Pearls.

Tony Hakaoro, on behalf of the Cook Islands Music Association (CIMA), acknowledges Bluesky's support of CIMA's working committee.

Hakaoro also acknowledges CITC's support of CIMA.

Te Kave Kōrero would like to thank those responsible for staging the 50th Finale Event, as well as sponsors, and wishes everyone a prosperous New Year during 2016.

Kia manuia.



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Cook Islands Herald Issue 798

TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, TUE 5 JAN 2016

Looking back on 2015

As stated in Te Kave Kōrero article of yesterday, Monday 4th January 2016, "a new year always brings new challenges and 2016 is no exception".

Of course the challenges will come in many forms and shapes and with their own characteristics. Confronting or addressing them will be no easy task or undertaking. The twelve months ahead of us will certainly dictate the enormity of those challenges as well as the responses required of us to face and address them in the best way we can.

As we look forward to overcoming those challenges in the next 12 months of 2016, let us reflect on the challenges that we have met and disposed of successfully in 2015. Let us take a backward step and review how we managed to manoeuvre ourselves around those challenges. And let us also appreciate the efforts we put in, in addressing and meeting those challenges.

2015 was a special year in our nationhood. It was our 50th Anniversary Celebrations of self-government. We started the year and the celebrations with a magical and colourful display of fireworks at Muri Beach in Ngatangia.

Anne Crummer, one of the most successful Cook Islands singer and entertainer, and her dad, Willie Crummer, a well respected singer and entertainer too in the 1960s and 70s in Rarotonga, were invited as our special guest performers to entertain the crowd at Muri Beach.

Their showmanship, musical talents, songs and beautiful voices were magic. Their professionalism and presentation was top notch marking an excellent start to our 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

"Anne Crummer was awesome. Her dad, Willie Crummer, oh my gosh, was fantastic", says a local who was at Muri Beach that evening but declined to be named.

The challenge in organising the start of our 50th Anniversary Celebrations with entertainment from Anne Crummer and her dad was met successfully and was a job well done.

On April 25th 2015, four months into our celebrations, we remembered and paid our respects to our forefathers and soldiers in the First World War who willingly made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives to serve the Queen and their respective countries.

It was ANZAC Day Centennial as we marked 100

years when Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed at Gallipoli in Turkey. History teaches us of the massive loss of lives that day. Over 8,700 Australian and more than 2,700 New Zealand soldiers lost their lives and paid the ultimate price at Gallipoli. One hundred years on, we remembered them.

According to Te Kave Kōrero presenter, Tony Hakaoro, there were more people at the 2015 ANZAC day dawn service than he could ever remember in previous years. He was moved having attended the dawn service himself.

"My maternal grandfather, the late Punoua Raki of Aitutaki, was one of those Cook Islanders who went to World War I to serve the Queen and our country. I'm very proud of him", says Hakaoro.

We pay our respects to our forefathers and those who have paid the ultimate price.

In July 2015, our mother church, the Cook Islands Christian Church, held its 31st General Assembly in Rarotonga hosted by the Arorangi CICC Church.

The Assembly was attended by well over 220 participants, including ministers and delegates, from 70 branches of the church within the Cook Islands, Australia and New Zealand.

The logistic challenges in accommodating and hosting them were met successfully with the assistance and cooperations of all six CICC branches in Rarotonga, namely Arorangi, Titikaveka, Ngatangii, Matavera, Avarua and Nikao.

All credits to the General Secretary, Nga Mataio, the Executive Council, and each and everyone involved in organising and managing the 31st CICC General Assembly held from the 12th to the 19th of July 2015. It was indeed another challenge met successfully in 2015.

Prior to the opening of the 31st General Assembly, the official opening of the Matavera Sunday school building, Gibeona, was held on Friday 10th July 2015. The new Sunday school building is multi-purposely designed and built to be able to host various functions like weddings, birthdays, hair cutting ceremonies as well as conferences. The two storey building can accommodate up to 200 people downstairs and a further 200 on the top floor.

Rev Oirua Rasmussen who was the Minister at Matavera CICC during 2015, now the Minister at Nikao CICC, and a builder himself, contributed to the construction of the new Sunday school

building with the help and assistance of some labourers, church members and volunteers.

In late July and early August was of course Te Maeva Nui 2015. It was the main celebrations of our 50th Anniversary of self-government. Cultural groups from the outer islands attended and celebrated with us here on Rarotonga. They came in the hundreds and with Cook Islanders also coming from Australia and New Zealand, the total population on Rarotonga during Te Maeva Nui increased by an estimated 5,000 people.

It was the celebration of all celebrations. It was fantastic for three reasons.

Firstly, for the first time ever in our history, the Te Maeva Nui was televised 'live' to the outer islands and watched by those who chose to stay home instead of coming to Rarotonga with the cultural groups.

Secondly, on Constitution Day, 4th of August, New Zealand Prime Minister, the Right Honourable John Key, announced an 11.7 million dollar aid to rebuild Tereora College. It was a pleasant surprise and a nice present, from the New Zealand Government to our Government, celebrating our 50th Anniversary of self-government, in free association with New Zealand. It was undoubtedly a warmly welcomed announcement and very much appreciated by our Government.

Then, there was also another pleasant announcement. This time, it was from the Chinese Government pledging an aid of 11 million dollars to rebuild Nikao School.

In December 2015, we also witnessed the opening of the refurbished Ngatangia CICC church and the official opening of the new Atiu Nui Maruarua III hostel in Maraerenga.

The challenges we faced in 2015, one might say, have been met quite successfully as described above. The challenges in the next 12 months of 2016 remain to be seen. As they come to us however, let us negotiate our way through or around them and address them as best as we can and as successful as we have done in 2015.

Surely in 2016 we are happy, ready and willing to take on those challenges. And as they say, 'bring it on'.

Kia manuia.

A year of decline and despair

By Norman George

The CIP Government's towering achievement for the year must still be the amount of air points scored by the P.M and his Ministers. Not far behind them are the most travelled CIP caucus members in the history of Parliament as well.

Democracy was crushed with just 10 sittings for the year. Budgets continue to be guillotined and select committees are not doing their jobs. For the exceptional few days Parliament is allowed to sit, the right to speak freely was heavily censored by the unelected Speaker. The morbid dominations of the Speaker, to interrupt oppositions members in the middle of their speeches, her sometimes mistake weighted opinions, judgments, pronouncements, interpretations and decisions, smother the daylight out of our Parliamentary system.

She talks too much for an unelected Speaker. She should be confined to chairing the meetings and making procedural directions. Her speeches are excessive, time wasting and an insult to the rights of M.P's who are elected to make all speeches. The tyranny of the unelected Speaker of Parliament must stop. Her speaking time should be reduced by 95%.

On the plus side, I congratulate the P.M. and his Government for a successful 50th self-government celebrations.

What about my soul mates in the opposition? There is a saying that fortune favors the brave. Unfortunately her majesties oppositions have failed to live up to expectations. It is neither brave, smart, resourceful or purpose programmed with action plans.

I need to quote Hamlet

here, "I must be cruel only to be kind." We are halfway through the Parliamentary term. The minority CIP government has survived flying on one wing! This weak, vulnerable government was there for the pushover. We paused, hesitated, consulted, held secret meetings, planned and planned until the cows came home. And they are still there!

With the CIP Government's shrinking support, the Democratic Party needs a wakeup call. We have to offer a better alternative for our people! Our team is shrouded in terrifying uncertainty. We have to review everything from the present leadership to the top Executive office bearers.

The Demo caucus as it stands, is incapable of providing the answers. I suggest that in the New Year a panel of senior Demo Party members be called to do a painstaking review. People like Sir Fredrick Goodwin, Laveta Short, Grover Harmon, Tupou Faireka, Marjorie Crocombe, Norman George, Tauei Solomona, Tui Short, Cassey Eggleton, Helen Tatuava, and Mama Nga Tupa should be invited to meet, brainstorm problems and come out with the answers. It must receive the support if the entire Party which must accept the outcome if it is to work.

There is a saying, "the strong man is silent because he does not know what to say and when he does open his mouth, he is found to be nothing more than a weakling."

Our decline economically is because we are too reliant on tax collection and imports. There are no economic packages or initiatives, no productivity plans, no exports, and no will to get out and work. We

have a lazy Prime Minister and a lazy, arrogant and inexperienced Minister of Finance, and the rest of the cabinet with the exception of the DPM are not recognized to be giants in the productivity field.

I decline to be silent on our economic decline. We are not targeting the right areas to concentrate on. The retiree market, where people who have retired wish to spend part of the year with us, is not even mentioned anymore. All taxations on retired people should be removed, then we will attract the retirees to our shores.

On the plus side, it is good to see Cook Islanders graduate with degrees and PhD's....All I can say is "not enough---we need more!"

My overall achievement evaluation for the year will have to go to the people of Enuamanu, for the opening of Te Patupaepae o Enuamanu, Atiunui Maruarua III, after a long struggle taking 7 years.

I have expressed my wife and I's Christmas greetings in last weeks column, I do not wish to bore.

Our final end of the year blessing to fellow Cook Islanders is this: radiate a loving relationship with one another and with our creator, all mighty God. Let's return to old values - love of family, honour and duty to serve our country. Let's be kind and nice to each other.

Share this line with me: "If music be the food of love, play on...give me excess of it...." Ka Kite!

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More Super Names In 2016

By Tavita

Nevermind the Olympics. 2016 is SANZAR's year. It may stand for

South Africa, New Zealand, and Australian rugby but I reckon it's pretty much the number one sports body in the world.

Why? Because it encourages meaningful and exciting names. They must be full of passion and push the boundaries of sport to ever more meaningful and exciting frontiers.

SANZAR and their naming sponsors have got it all right.

They're up to date, twenty first century, and everything's meaningful and exciting.

In fact, they're getting even more meaningful and exciting now.

WILD HORSES

In Australia, they've got "Brumbies", wild horses from the hinterland of Canberra, about to trample fluttery "Waratahs," the wilting flower of New South Wales.

Then there are "Rebels" from Melbourne,.... as rebellious as "Weary" Dunlop, the first old Victorian Wallaby, and a right old larrikin when it came to rugby union..

There's also a "Western Force"..... which makes visitors to Perth thoroughly regret their journey and the Queensland "Reds", named after Quade Cooper's bad temper.

In New Zealand, there's the "Auckland Blues" because of the mood the locals get into when the "Hurricanes" blow them out of sight.

And, as well as that, they also have the "Chiefs" who claim traditional dual rights to visit the "Highlanders" and hammer them down to the flat ground before attacking any "Crusaders" who attempt a minor conversion or two.

In South Africa, they pursue the ancient "Southern Kings" custom of waiting for raging high winds called "Stormers" and setting out in pursuit of huge great overweight "Bulls", chasing them like "Cheetahs," roaring like "Lions" and biting like "Sharks." See?

Extremely meaningful and very, very exciting.

But in 2016, SANZAR's going

even further.

They're off to the jungles of South America and the mountains of Japan

SPOTTED CATS

On February 26th they expand into Argentina for the first time and announce the arrival of "Los Jaguares."

The Jaguars are the largest cats in all the Americas. They weigh an average of round about twenty stone or so these days, with a compact body, a broad head and powerful jaws rather like a tighthead prop.

They have large and threatening black spots on their coats which become larger and more threatening when the referee blows them up for a scrum infringement.

As vicious carnivores, they prevent overgrazing and stop hungry opposing loose forwards by eating them.

These mighty Jaguars are also renowned gobblers of deer, peccary, crocodiles, snakes, monkeys, sloths, tapirs, turtles, eggs, frogs, fish and half backs.

They once confined their appetites to the lands from

Argentina in South America all the way up to the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

Now, however on the 26th February, they are moving even further afield and concentrating on Free State Stadium. Bloemfontain.

SOLAR DOGS

And as well as Jaguars, there's even more coming up..

There's the Japanese Superwolves.

These have been invited to show that Japan's defeat of South Africa was no fluke and that they are now ready to host a ferocious World Cup in 2019.

And why are they called the Sunwolves?

Obviously, they are a mighty force from the Land of the Rising Sun but as well as that and, contrary to popular belief, they are not extinct.

Ignore all the experts who stated that the Honshu wolf (Canis lupus hodophylax) had become disappeared in 1905 due to an epidemic of contagious diseases like rabies.

Forget the reported sightings by inhabitants of mountain

villages around the turn of the century of large numbers of dead and ailing wolves which apparently confirmed this.

And take no notice of reports that the Ezo wolf of the northernmost island of Hokkaido (Canis lupus hattai) died out in the Meiji period (1868-1912) when the owners of American-style horse and cattle ranches in the area poisoned them all with strychnine because they were a threat to the livestock.

They're all wrong.

All the wolves were in fact secretly hiding in the hills, practising rolling mauls and offloads.

And they will return after 90 years of training for the first time at the Prince Chichibu Memorial Stadium deep in the heart of Chichibuland against the Lions on February 26th.

A whole pack of them will arise from an airplane out of the sun and be a serious threat to all the livestock again.

Bulls? Lions? Cheetahs? Sharks?

All of them soon to be dead stock!

Last week's Tattsлото Results

Powerball Thu 24/Dec/15, Draw 1023

Winning Numbers

38 15 32 26 1 8

Powerball

19

TattsLotto Sat 26/Dec/15, Draw 3593

Winning Numbers

36 5 35 9 25 34

Supplementaries

42 29

Oz Lotto Tue 29/Dec/15, Draw 1141

Winning Numbers

4 35 9 43 28 37 16

Supplementaries

20 3

How to start the New Year 2016

Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

Because this is my last Article of Encouragement for 2015, I want you to look at areas where you need to improve in your life from 2015, to help build yourself up for the New Year 2016. The main scripture reading is Psalm 51v.10-13. The Psalmist is saying these words based on his life experiences. In v.10 he said "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." David is looking back and realized that the problem started in his mind. He entertained evil thoughts until he sinned before God. At one stage in the life of King David, he was walking on the top of his palace and he saw this beautiful lady having a shower and he made some enquiries and found out that this was the wife of one of his soldiers. So he planned to send the husband to war, at a time when he too was supposed to be at war, with the hope that the husband would be killed in battle, so that he would have the wife! His little scheme worked, but later discovered by God's servant the Prophet Nathan, and David realized the huge mistake he made, and repented before God. That was why David said in v.10 on the basis of his past mistake or sin "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

That was David, how about you! What were your weaknesses in 2015 that requires you to come before

God and say to Him "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." Only you know where you have failed God, what things in your life need to be dealt with, and to be left behind in 2015. As you start the New Year, call unto God through prayer to 'Create in you a new and clean heart and put in you a spirit that will guide you and to stop you from going astray.' God said in Ezekiel 36v.26-27 "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you, I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." A 'Clean Heart' with the 'Right Spirit' has one purpose and that is to do God's will, to do those things that pleases God! So, from the start of the New Year 2016 this should be your prayer, for God to "Create in you a clean heart, and put in you a renewed and steadfast spirit."

In v.11 it reads "Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." David is desperately pleading with God 'not to give up on him nor banish him from His presence.' Because David knew that God do take away His Holy Spirit from those who are disobedient to Him. I Samuel 16v.14 read "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him." During the New Year 2016,

this too should be your attitude, be like David and ask God through prayer not to give up on your failures and your weaknesses because you are only a human being. God said in Isaiah 41v.10 "Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." And Jesus said in Matthew 28v.20(b) "...I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

v.12 reads "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your generous Spirit." When you do something wrong, you feel bad about it. David felt bad about what he did. And he is saying 'God I know that I was wrong, please help me get back on the path of righteousness.'

Too often when we're down we stay down. But not David, he confessed the wrong he did and he gets on with life! David knew that 'Failure is not final!' This too should be our attitude during the New Year, get up and go on for the Lord! I John 1v.9 reads "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

v.13 reads "Then I will teach transgressors Your



ways, and sinners shall be converted to You." This is a personal commitment by David, pledging himself to be a witness for God unto others. Declaring what God has done for him in his life. And David believed that when people hear of his testimony, they too will turn to God. God through Jesus Christ saved us in order for us to be a witness for Him unto others. This should be our aim for 2016, to share to others what Jesus Christ has done in our lives, and believing that they too will turn to Jesus to be their Lord and Saviour!

May God richly bless you with His abundant blessings and guide you throughout 2016 and beyond. Happy New Year - te Atua te arua.

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New Year, New Beginnings

Welcome to the New Year!

By Teherenui Koteka

And here it begins guys, the start of a brand new year! With the New Year comes new beginnings and new opportunities. The opportunity to start something over, take on something new, the chance to leave behind all the negative experiences of the past year. Personally two thousand and fifteen was not my best year. It was filled with bumpy roads and a great deal of downward moments, anxious to forget about the disappointing moments of two thousand and fifteen I find myself eagerly awaiting the mysteries that will accompany the New Year.

This year, a leap year-29 days in February, will be a year where I will attempt to be the best I can be and once again attempt to accomplish my many New Year's resolutions. Of course the idea of finishing these nearly impossible tasks seem quite far fetched considering I still have goals from two thousand and twelve that are waiting to be accomplished. However that is what New Years are for!

The New Year is a magical time where everything and anything seems possible, a time where starting a new is a great idea and a period where you can reflect upon what you wish to achieve over the next three hundred and sixty-six days. For me the New Year is a time that is shrouded in mystery a time where the worries of the past are no longer applicable and the hopes for tomorrow reign supreme. This year I hope to become more organized, I realize that I need to prioritize my life and begin to seriously prepare for the world of higher education. Yet another great thing about the New Year, it is a time to reflect upon the mistakes of your past and hopefully gain some insight into remedying them.

The New Year naturally feels like a great time to start something new a time where you can measure progress over the year; so to begin progressing forward we need to learn from the mistakes of our past. Remembering little things like this is what gets results in the long run. Try not to look back at the past year with regret and instead bear in mind that without mistakes we would never know how to progress onto better things. Most importantly do not let the mistakes of the past year hold you back, do not let them hinder you from taking risks because the bottom line is, a life without risks is boring and uneventful.

One more piece of advice guys, as you take a new step into a new year, walk in with your head held high and your mind open to new possibilities, the only advice needed to begin your new year with a bang! Happy New Year everyone! May it be safe, fun and prosperous.

By Norma Ngatamariki

Hello everyone! Can you believe that an entire year has passed? 2016 is now upon us, so it is the time for the "New Year, New Me" status updates on Facebook, the weight loss regimes as well as setting those goals. For a lot of people, it's a time for new beginnings where you can always make the effort to change for the better. A fresh start awaits us all and I really can't wait to see what 2016 has in store for me (hopefully, it's nothing bad).

I wish I could say that I had a hassle-free Christmas, but then I'd be lying. The Ngatamariki household didn't go to The Islander for Christmas brunch, so we decided to have our little gathering at our humble abode. I got my 'bake-on' this year and it felt really good to be getting back on that grind. I made a whole heap of decadent chocolate cakes with a butt-load of frosting and decorations. I even made a cake for us, but nobody touched it. I reckon that my cake looked so good; nobody wanted to ruin its perfection by eating it. Spending all my money on those baking ingredients was worth it, in the end. Whatever little weight I did lose this year (and I don't think it was a whole lot, to be honest) I gained back tenfold with our Christmas feast. I drank a few with my folks, which was relaxing after a long night of frantic baking.

Boxing Day arrived. Mum was real keen to make it down to Mareko's Annual Boxing Day Sale, where everything went for half-price. It's times like these when I wish I was back in New Zealand, if only to buy everything in sight. But Mum and I still got a good bargain, where I bought a beautiful purple \$192 tivaevae quilt. It was originally \$384, so of course it was a good bargain. I saw this one Mama take three quilts! (#Loaded). I didn't have that much money after such an intense Christmas shopping session, but we still managed to get the 'Five pareus for \$100' deal. I imagine that Mareko's made quite a few bucks that day.

New Years was another chilled and relaxing event for me. We cooked ourselves yet another small feast which was demolished in the next two days. I'm glad I got the whole week off from work, because I needed that time to recover. I had a quiet New Years, so I didn't go out during New Years Eve (but that doesn't mean I didn't go out afterwards) but nonetheless, I still had fun. It's actually the first time in three years that I've spent New Years with my family. I think I've seen enough fireworks to forego one New Years Eve.

Let's embrace all that 2016 has to offer: the challenges, the ambitions, the good and the bad. Personally, I'm looking forward to a great year.

EAT LESS
MOVE MORE
HEART FOUNDATION

New Hope Church
Parekura Conference Centre
Inspirational messages to uplift and empower you
Sunday at 10.30am

Elvis our unpopular 78 vote Prime Minister is coming under the hammer for boasting we are going to become the richest nation in the world per capita and rightfully so. In the anticipation of great wealth why are we continuing to be globetrotting beggars? Since when has the benchmark of wealth been money? We would be richer in life if we learnt to live within our means, but then how does that make any sense to our lazy travel addicted version of Elvis? For once our space cadet PM should try talking sense and reality; most of us spend our lives on the ground not in the clouds with the fairies.



With the likely hood of another by election in Aitutaki's Vaipae/Tautu electorate one thing is for sure it won't be returning to CIP hands. After Elvis made repeat promises to the voters to return Moaner to the seat and he'll be straight back into Cabinet and in the referendum on Sunday flights, a simple majority would put that issue to an end have come to nothing. Lying to the people of Vaitau has back lash consequences for the CIP. Their loss will put their government in serious jeopardy. At 12 all it's either back to the polls in April or a jumper to change the government.



One chook has pointed out how selective and inconsistent the Brown Minita of the cash is he said he wasn't going to make any comment on the woeful PERC investigation in the selfie complaint about his best friend the dream peddler Mickie Enerie's Schoonergate scandal till it was completed but couldn't demonstrate the same restraint when he was quick off the mark



with comments concerning FIU's independent investigation into Schoonergate and Frame's legal opinion. Is Makie a wagging tail or is he the dog?



The big buzz in the banking world of gossip is that over three days during the Christmas shopping boom, Trev Clarke's CITC conglomerate banked \$4.2 million, bank clients said CITC staff came in the bank carrying suitcases presumably full of cash.



How come when this crooked CIP government is caught knowingly doing something unlawful it's called a mistake by their legal advisors but for anyone else it's a crime? When neneva Neves was caught out giving a secret four month advance of \$200,000 to a nonexistent identity with no work history that was called an oversight on the part of Mike Henry. Smells like a load of hen droppings to everyone else.



Word just in that former Fin Sec Richard Neves has set up a Consultancy called, wait for it, "Richard Neves Consultancy!" (How original) That was quick! But why? Is it because some outfit has

engaged him already? Cook Islands government?



Oh dear chooks! The vessel SS Daily is steaming around rudderless in never ending circles on a voyage of the damned as the crew struggle to set a course away from the reef. Captain's log for Tuesday 5 January 2016 shows the crew has only just learnt that the fishing boat at the centre of a corruption enquiry was sunk off Aitutaki at the end of November 2015, more than a month ago! The super Liner, SS Herald already alerted followers of maritime events days after the sinking and even had a photo!



Did you catch the NZ High Comm's Yuletide message on the goggle -box? It was the last one of the pre-Christmas airings from the higher ups. What we got was a run down of all the goodies and lollies the Kiwi Santa brought us during the year, ending with "Merry Christmas." Not one word of the manger, the baby Jesus, the shepherds, God or Angels or what the time is all about. Yes we got some new toys during the year but no announcement carrying the same impact as the one the Magi delivered to Herod.



Local muso is singing an out of

tune, self composed ditty about our Khaki clad brigade. Arriving in town for the fireworks, local muso parks his chariot where he thinks it will be iron clad safe-in the front yard of Khaki HQ. After seeing many dollars going up in smoke, he returns to mount his steed and gallop home but it seems all that smoke has resulted in his chariot going AWOL. How can that be? Right outside and under the very nostrils of the Khaki lot? Is nothing safe anywhere?



So PM Henri Foonah thinks we could all be rich. Well of course we can. But his way is not the path to the golden fleece. Any royalties from sea bed minerals are still some 8-10 years away and if the greenies scare off the fishing fleets, we may as well go back to using sea shells for currency. The quickest way to wealth is to grab a billion dollars off some poor sucker of an overseas donor, divie that up among all of us then default on the loan.



Finance guru Brown Marks said on a TVNZ interview regarding the 1.5% spending cap under the Constitution, "If we got the arithmetic wrong, we can go to parliament to fix it." Yes the Constitution does allow for such corrections to be made but the point is, those in Finance are supposed to be able to do simple arithmetic and should get the sums right in the first place! To have to correct errors at this level is an embarrassment.

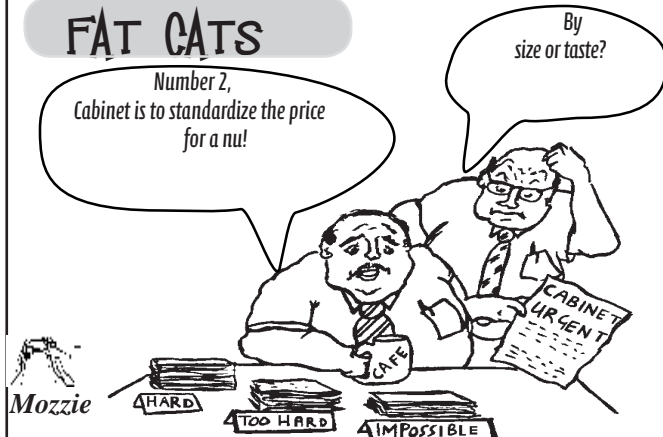


Where does the "buck" stop chooks? Certainly not with anyone in authority if all the recent excuses are to go by. The buck does not even stop on the Minister's desk! It falls off and into the rubbish bin or "file 13" as it is commonly known in the public service.

FAT CATS

Number 2,
Cabinet is to standardize the price
for a nu!

By
size or taste?

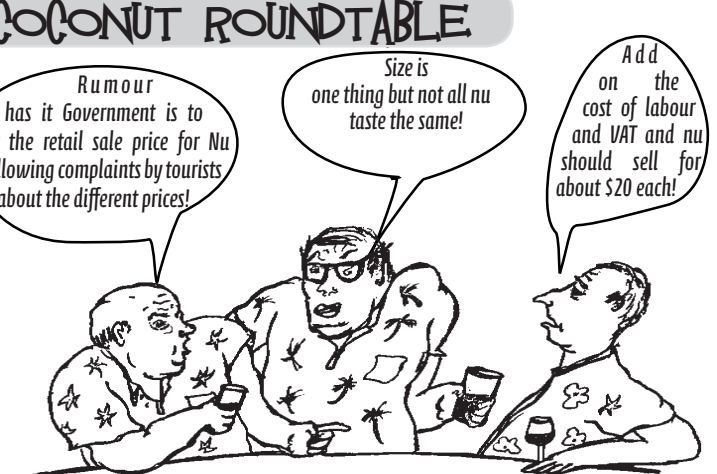


COCONUT ROUNDTABLE

Rumour
has it Government is to
set the retail sale price for Nu
following complaints by tourists
about the different prices!

Size is
one thing but not all nu
taste the same!

Add
on the
cost of labour
and VAT and nu
should sell for
about \$20 each!



Cook Island Delegation return from COP21 Forum



By Norma Ngatamariki

Director of Climate Change Cook Islands, Ana Tiraa, has recently returned from Paris after attending the COP21 Sustainable Innovation Forum, which went on for duration of three weeks. Tiraa says that much was achieved from talks within the Forum. 190 official parties were in attendance and actively participated in discussions. "We have worked closely with our neighbouring countries and other Small Island States

because our situations are quite familiar," she says. "The talks which took place has had much impact on as a small delegation." Tiraa also comments on a number of side events which the Cook Island delegation also took part in, such as bilateral and negotiations.

A number of topics were discussed in detail, with regards to establishing a legally binding agreement which would roughly meet the needs of the majority of Small Island Developing

States (SIDS). Representatives were asked to contribute their opinions concerning the following topics:

1. Embedding of the 1.5 degree target in the purpose of the agreement;
2. Recognition of the special circumstances of SIDS;
3. Recognition of the need to scale up climate finance;
4. 5-year cycles for the review of emissions reduction commitments;
5. A legally binding agreement;
6. Separate and distinct

recognition of loss and damage.

Tiraa says that she is quite pleased with the outcomes of this Forum, as they have addressed the needs of SIDS according to their needs in terms of reducing the impact of Climate Change. The last Forum, which was held in Copenhagen in 2008, has failed to reach an agreement. "But now, we are more willing to work collectively with other countries, in order to combat climate change."



TENDER



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

**Request for Proposal for Evaluation Services
– Air NZ Underwrite**

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) seeks suitable companies, groups or individuals to submit a tender for the provision of evaluation services concerning the underwriting of direct air services between Sydney and Rarotonga, and Los Angeles and Rarotonga. This evaluation will contain two components, and interested parties are invited to submit proposals for one or both components. The first component is a Financial and Contract Review of the existing contract (requiring technical aviation industry analysis), while the second component will be an Economic, Social and Environmental Review of the underwrite agreement and the associated costs and benefits to the Cook Islands.

For further information in regards to the Request for Proposal for Evaluation Services – Air New Zealand Underwrite, including the tender documents please visit:

<http://procurement.gov.ck/current-tenders>

Or the MFEM website:

<http://www.mfem.gov.ck>

Or contact: Mr Tristan Metcalfe

Email: <mailto:tristan.metcalfe@cookislands.gov.ck>

Phone: +682 29511 ext 8314

Tenders Close: 3pm Friday 22 January 2016

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- Demi Chef (Rarotonga)
- F&B Operations Manager (Aitutaki)
- Maître D' (Rarotonga)
- Landscaping Manager (Aitutaki)
- Qualified Builder (Rarotonga)
- Guest Services Supervisor (Rarotonga)
- Spa Therapist (Rarotonga)
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TENDERS



**COOK ISLANDS MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)**

Review of the Cook Islands Mathematics Curriculum Document

Expressions of Interest are being sought from qualified and experienced professionalstowork with the Ministry of Education to facilitate the review of the current Mathematics Curriculum to ensure it meets the intentions and requirements of the new Cook Islands Curriculum Framework 2015, the goals of the Cook Islands Education Master Plan (CIEMP) and social sector goals of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP).

Terms of Reference for this work is available from theMinistry of Education or atwww.education.gov.ck.

Expressions of Interestwith relevant documentation should be received by the Ministryno later than Friday 8th January 2016, addressed to:

Director - Human Resources Management

CI Ministry of Education

PO Box 97

Rarotonga

Cook Islands

Ph (682) 29357, Fax (682) 28357 or email: vacancy@education.gov.ck



ATIU WATER UPGRADE PROJECT (PHASE 1)

Tender OPM/REDD-03/2015

Supply and Delivery of Water Pipes and Fittings

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is seeking tender submissions from reputable manufacturers/suppliers for the supply and delivery CIF of PE water pipes and fittings for the Atiu Water Upgrade Project (Phase 1).

The full tender document is available on the website www.procurement.gov.ck. Those who download the tender document from the website must register their interest with the REDD's office in writing (email sufficient).

All enquiries must be directed to the Project Engineer Ngateina Rani, Renewable Energy Development Division (REDD), OPM, Telephone +682 25494 Ext 7024, Mobile +682 54433 or Email ngateina.rani@cookislands.gov.ck.

This tender closes at 1.00pm on Monday 11 January 2016 (local time). All tender submissions must be deposited in the tender box located at the REDD's office, OPM, Avarua, Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Electronic tender submissions will not be accepted.

20 year dream turning to custard - Mike Henry still getting special treatment?



Tiare Taporo, Mike Henry's dream a mirage of reality and a financial black hole.

Most dreams and talk are cheap but if unrealised they become expensive disasters of disappointment. Some potential shareholders claimed Mike Henry's prospectus published to entice investors in purchasing a ship (later named Tiare Taporo) was name dropping and fiscally seductive. One sceptic believing it was too good to be true forwarded the prospectus to an overseas Asset Management firm who suggested the contents bordered upon being romantic rather than being tangibly profitable, in other words a high risk venture unlikely to deliver the stated potential returns.

One is reminded of the familiar proverbs of boat ownership; *"A boat is a hole in the water you throw money into,"* and *"The two happiest days in a sailor's life are the day he buys a boat and the day he sells it."*

After sighting the vessel it provokes one to question how much due diligence was done.

Those who expressed investment interest were being assured in confidence by Mike Henry the Cook Islands Party government would ensure Pacific Schooners Limited (PSL) was competitive by receiving a substantial outer island shipping subsidy of \$1.5 million. With this

assurance, company director Garth Broadhead said 23 shareholders funded the project that had been conceptualised 20 years ago. Henry later said \$1.6 million was invested most by foreigners.

First registered in 2012 the company PSL was deregistered then was re-registered in June 2015 with Mike Henry having a minority shareholding of 12.5%. The majority owners are Canadian residents.

Henry's widely promoted investment prospectus was passed over by many because he has the reputation for extravagance with other people's money and limited business

success; the scandalous events related to the Tiare Taporo are a relief they didn't get sold on Mike Henry's dream fantasy.

One commented, "Mike's a well known sponger and convicted tax dodger, why the Prime Minister bends over backwards for him must be because his wife is Henry's niece."

Once sighted it was also a relief to potential contributors. The Tiare Taporo appearance hardly inspires investor confidence, the prospectus painted the rosy picture of a classy sea going vessel taking not only domestic passengers to the outer islands

continued next page

in comfort and at affordable fares but also high end adventure tourists paying \$450 a day in a luxury fitted out vessel with all the gastronomic indulgences while visiting exotic destinations like Manuae and Suwarrow.

Henry dreamed his new ship would make regular trips to and from Aitutaki along with the development of Island's harbour and Orongo market place at a cost of \$15 million.

For a dream that took 20 years to materialise and be driven by nautical experts the Tiare Taporo venture seems more about egos and not commercial sense. With Henry driving the project it has been one disaster after another.

While the price of the vessel may have been attractive it appears to have compromised the cost factor which has become a black hole swallowing up money unmercifully.

After three years of being in dock in Lunenburg Canada getting refitted it left on July 9 2015 and took four months to make the 30 day 7,500 mile trip arriving Rarotonga on November 12 2015, three months too late to fulfil the repatriation of outer island celebrants contract signed with government.

Questions were raised about the refit after the Tiare Taporo was delayed in Panama due to engine troubles then no sooner had it arrived in Rarotonga the Tiare Taporo is out of commission due to engine troubles. By the look of the vessel's condition and appearance it hardly exhibits any evidence of a refit.

Plagued by financial problems the engineer left the vessel in Panama over a pay dispute and after not being paid for the delivery of the Tiare Taporo to Rarotonga the Captain left over the failure of Mike Henry to honour the \$20,000 owing to him.

The PERC report sent to the Prime Minister Henry on 5 September 2015 failed to document the multiple conflicts of interests Mike Henry had in his capacity as the Chairman of the Cook Islands Investment Corporation (CIIC) who oversee the Ports Authority (PA). In one of Geoff Stoddard's recommendations the PERC report said: 4. That special treatment not

be afforded to Pacific Schooners Limited in future...

Despite this forceful recommendation, its business as usual with the CIP government, PSL is yet to pay the VAT on the Tiare Taporo which is expected to exceed \$15,000. Mike Henry has also managed to be exempted from paying his weekly berthing fee of \$300 a week until he receives his domestic shipping licence. If this is not special treatment then what is? PA CEO Bim Tou has been elusive in providing answers to this question saying Henry's licence is pending. Tou also did not respond to the question on Mike Henry owing a substantial amount for the rental of a storage facility he has had since he was the Chairman of the PA. Newly appointed Ports Authority Chairman Sam Crocombe said this issue has been raised by others and will be addressed at their January Board meeting.

While Crocombe acknowledged Henry was his boss, like everyone else CIIC chairman or not, Henry was obligated to follow the rules. Unlike his CEO Tou, Crocombe is clear on the matter, he said exemption of port fees for domestic licensed vessels is a social responsibility policy of government and if you don't have one you pay the Ports fees whatever they are.

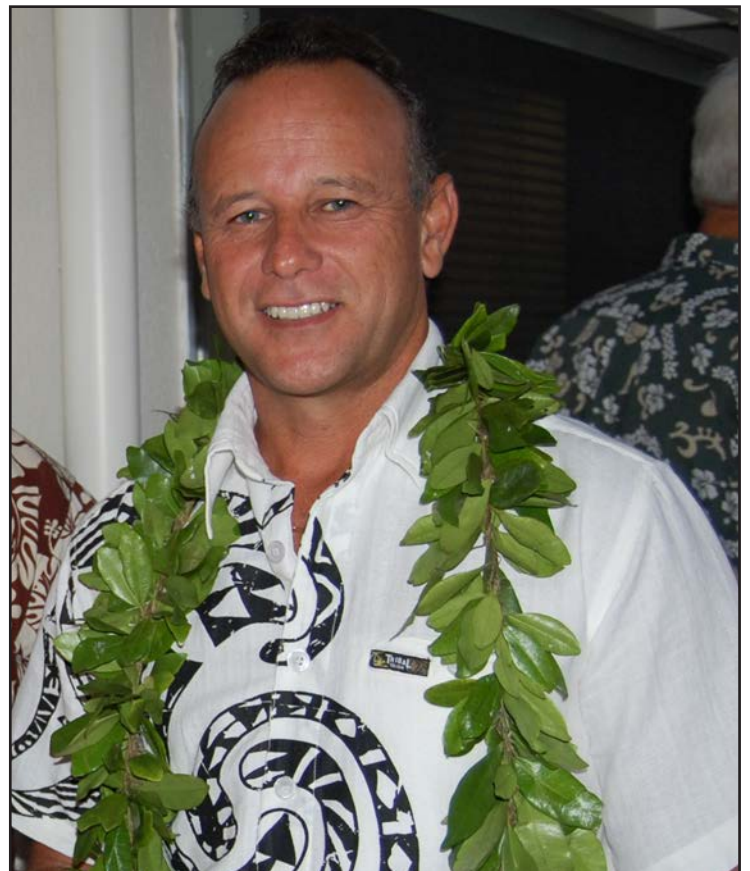
A spokesperson from Taio Shipping said they paid Port fees until their new boats had received their domestic shipping licence then were exempt.

While the CIP government mantra of having no secrets and nothing to hide is plausible in practise they have been anything but transparent, instead of lying and suffering from bouts of amnesia they may claw back some credits if they applied the good governance principle of exercising transparency in the measure of the perceptions of conflicts of interest.

By the end of 2015 the Cook Islands Party government had arrogantly and foolishly embroiled itself in energy sapping exchanges with hostile public protestors rather than chose the path of contrition by deeds.

Will 2016 be any different?

- George Pitt



Mike Henry – Dream merchant.



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When a cyclone alert is sounded you should ensure your mobile phone batteries are fully charged.

Turn off and unplug electrical appliances and TV or DVD aerial cables.

During a cyclone listen to a battery-operated radio for weather updates and don't venture outside until you know it's safe to do so. Use a torch to find your way around.

PM's vision of wealth for all, a nightmare

By Charles Pitt

Prime Minister Puna was reported in the Wednesday 30 December issue of the daily paper as saying we could all be rich. He alluded to the wealth locked up in our two major natural resources, tuna fishing and sea bed minerals.

A grand vision certainly but the concept of wealth for all is a fanciful expectation government currently lacks the ability to deliver on. The reason being government is full of drones and clones constrained by legislative straitjackets and trained or brainwashed to apply "systems" and theories invented and perpetuated by other foreign clones as a means to control the wider masses, to ensure they

stay poor and do not imperil the wealth of the top one percent.

In short we have adopted foreign systems and concepts which are at odds with our society's customs, traditions and expectations. Government has legislated abuse of the elderly by making pensioners incomes subject to tax. A brainless idea when actual numbers and potential revenue are taken into account.

It is easy for governments to employ people to carry out set tasks as per Westminster style legislative requirements which means government ends up severely lacking in people with the courage to challenge outdated and no longer relevant theories and to think independently and

out of the box.

An example of outdated, irrelevant and backward thinking is our PM's reference to wealth per capita. This is a "national" measure of wealth foreign to Polynesian society, and not a personal measure. As such this national measure is irrelevant to a worker in a plantation who might be on \$6.25 an hour. It makes more sense to measure spending power and average disposal income per household.

The PM did not elaborate further to indicate what processes government would need to establish to ensure the monetary wealth he referred to, once unlocked, was going to flow down to the ordinary people at grassroots level. The "trickle down" theory does not work and we must avoid a situation like today where most of the wealth ends up in the pockets of a few business people or foreign owners based overseas or locally.

While the PM hinted at benefits flowing through higher pensions, improved social welfare, better education and health, there was no mention of any major tax relief, public shareholdings of SOEs or any form of dividend payout universally via for example, the newly established Sovereign Fund. Payment of a yearly dividend from the Fund, would ensure that a portion of the country's wealth actually gets into the bank accounts and pockets of those at grassroots level. This paper has previously suggested establishing a yearly dividend payment and setting the start age for such payments at 20yrs. There should also be a qualifying period to be met by Cook Islanders returning to live here.

On more than one occasion this paper has proposed that personal income tax be abolished and the revenue (around \$20 million) be sought instead from our natural resources. Abolishing income tax would give all wage earners an immediate pay rise with the exception of those earning below

the tax free threshold of \$11,000.

With revenue streams from seabed minerals still some 8-10 years away, we could in the interim look to optimizing returns from our other big revenue earner, tourism.

This paper has already proposed introducing 5-6 star tourism as this has not yet been exploited. Our departure tax is well below that of Fiji yet Fiji with a departure tax well over \$100 continues to outperform all other Pacific nations. We could easily lift our departure tax by another \$100 and this will bring in more than \$6 million. Other nations have a bed tax of around 4%. This could be looked at.

Tahiti has no income tax but has a high level of VAT to compensate. There is no need for us to increase our VAT. With increased take home pay, people will spend more, lifting the VAT return to government. In fact our VAT should be reduced to encourage spending especially on local produce.

The PM's announcement appears to be a desperate, thinly veiled, attempt to justify the continuance of purse seine fishing in the face of increasing opposition from conservationists. Government's grip on the four northern island seats looks tenuous as those islands do not favour purse seine fishing which is being blamed for dwindling fish stocks. While government can point to the northern group moving to 24 hour renewable energy, this was paid for by foreign aid money not income from fishing. Of course the northerners are grateful but you can eat fish not electricity.

This country needs to seek advice from people who are bold, innovative, unafraid, and who have real brain power and proven intelligence. Why not enlist the assistance of multi-billionaires like Bill Gates, Warren Buffet and other top people? Stop consulting people who boast University qualifications but who possess stunted intelligence, are unproven and lacking in real ability.

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New Year Sale

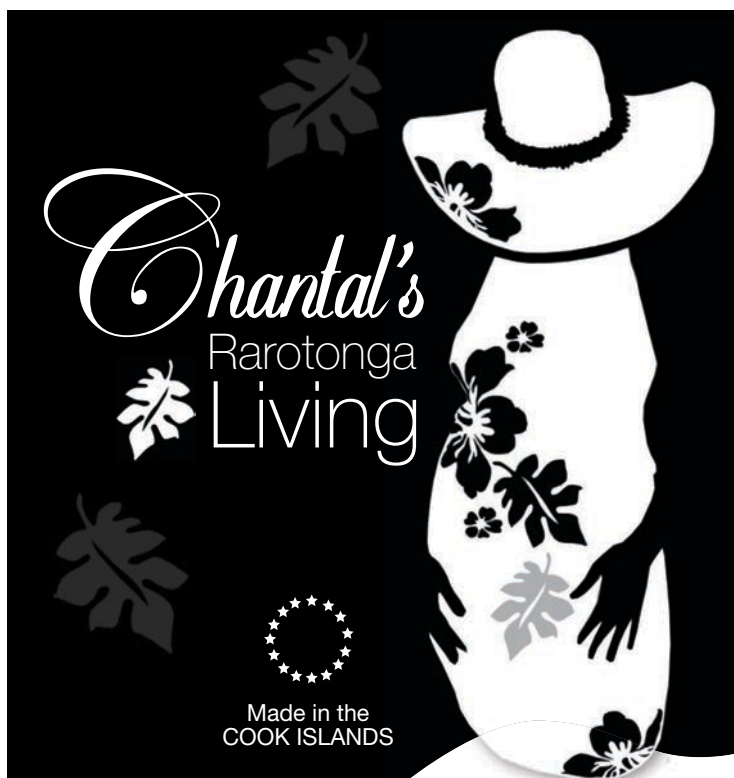
Hurry, deals end 18 January 2016

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Our Frontpage model



Our first frontpage model for the year 2016 is 18 year old Emma Tupekea, from Aitutaki. Emma has been on the island for about 5 months and is now living here in Rarotonga. She is a hard worker at Café Salsa and Bamboo Jacks. Check out our website www.ciherald.co.ck and facebook page: www.facebook.com/ciherald

Festive season Police operation ends with lowest road fatalities in the past few years

The festive season operation for police commenced on Monday 21 December 2015 and ended on Monday morning 4 January 2016.

The Police Service was split into two teams. Team members comprised of non sworn and sworn staff.

Non sworn staff (civilians) maintained essential administrative services such as drivers license issuing, finance and administration.

Sworn staff, police officers were deployed from our command centre to do a lot of prevention and enforcement activities.

One of the biggest focus for our teams were to tackle the contributing causes to crashes which were carelessness, speed, and driving while under the influence of alcohol.

During the Christmas period only two crashes occurred on our roads in Rarotonga and none in the Outer Islands.

During the New Year period, no crashes occurred on our roads which were unprecedented.

Sadly, though some drivers continued to defy the safety message and the law by driving drunk and speeding. A few were arrested and charged. Most of these cases will be dealt with by the court when court sessions for the New Year starts again.

Some had their vehicles taken off them and were forbidden from driving.

It was however pleasing to see family groups and other groups being driven to and from nightclubs and around the island by sober drivers.

It was also pleasing to see people enjoy themselves and acting responsibly.

We dealt with a couple of assault cases, noisy parties, domestic disputes, a couple of burglaries and dishonesty cases but not much else.

Despite that our teams deployed to areas which our intelligence reports tell us were areas prone to crime and crashes to ensure these do not occur.

We used our speed radars and mobile patrols to target speedsters.

We also used our excess breath alcohol machines and sobriety tests to target drivers under the influence of alcohol.

These tools will continue to be used anywhere anytime by our teams. So expect to be stopped and tested anytime.

It was a relatively peaceful holiday period. The achievement was huge. It is the first time in a few years that we have achieved this outstanding result.

Full credit to the teams who worked and to those in our communities both locals and visitors who heard and complied with the safety message and our law.

Mention must also be made about the outstanding contribution made by our police volunteers in Puaikura and Takitumu. They gave up their times with their families and friends to work with us because of their desire to keep their communities safe.

Commissioners comment:

I am pleased that there were no major concerns during our Christmas, 50th Anniversary celebrations closure and New Year's celebrations.

I commend the men and women in the Cook Islands Police Service and our Police volunteers for their commitment, dedication and sheer determination to keep everyone safe.

I would also like to thank those people in the community who also did a lot of work to keep our communities safe.

It is this spirit of togetherness, cooperation and partnership that we will enhance going forward.



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Letter to the Editor

Alex Frame responds to Herald articles concerning his legal opinion to F.I.U

The Editor,
Cook Islands Herald,
Rarotonga,
COOK ISLANDS

6 January 2016

Dear Editor, kia orana
I hope you will extend to me the courtesy of a reply to the 'Opinion' piece by Mr George Pitt, and the letter of Mr John Scott appearing in your Cook Islands Herald edition of 16 December 2015. It has been my privilege to have served in advising on constitutional matters in the Cook Islands, when requested by the Law Officers (the Attorney-General and Solicitor-General), for a continuous period of nearly 35 years under every Prime Minister since Sir Tom Davis. Sir Geoffrey Henry was kind enough to refer to me as 'a long-term friend of the Cook Islands' in his foreword to The Laws of the Cook Islands in 1994 and in all those years I have endeavoured to give impartial legal advice to the government in office from time to time. They have not always liked the advice given, but they seem to have persisted on the basis that it was consistent and even-handed, whether to 'Demo' or 'CIP' administrations.

What is a 'legal opinion'? It is an attempt to predict for the client how a Court is likely to interpret the law on a given set of facts, on the basis that in the end the law means what the Courts say it means. There is no guarantee of success, for a variety of reasons, but one hopes to be more often right than wrong. It is normally impossible for legal counsel publicly to discuss legal advice given to a client, unless the advice has been made public by the client, who alone has the right to waive or relax the legal privilege

under which it is protected. A few of the many legal opinions tendered over the years on Cook Islands matters have been released by the Law Officers for various reasons when it was quite properly judged to be in the public interest to do so. On the present occasion I find that my opinion of 29 October 2015 on the meaning of Article 70 of the Cook Islands Constitution has improperly and unlawfully found its way into the public domain, as has a clearly marked 'draft only' of 24 October in which I signalled my emerging conclusion that the interpretation placed by the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) on the limits to expenditure unauthorised by Parliament in Article 70(3) was wrong. These are the documents which are the subject of the criticisms of Mr Pitt and Mr Scott and they are clearly now a matter of public knowledge. Nothing in a barrister's code of ethics



Dr Alex Frame

the acting Solicitor-General to do. Second, that I was somehow improperly influenced in the finalised conclusion of 29 October and buckled under pressure from the Government and its advisers to change the substance of the advice in favour of the Government. The first

not there is a legal requirement to observe it in contesting a state agency's view of the meaning of a constitutional provision, it is a sensible course to follow. When the central question on which I was asked by the acting Solicitor-General to advise was the interpretation placed on Article 70(3) by MFEM, it was entirely proper for me to seek to understand the basis for that interpretation. I did so under the instructions and in the hearing of the acting Solicitor-General, who had quite properly considered that my conclusion should be tested by exploring the arguments which had led MFEM to their interpretation. If a precedent be required, I can recall an occasion in 1999 when, again with the then Solicitor-General's consent, a draft opinion for the Queen's Representative on his Excellency's powers after an election was discussed in a joint meeting of the leaders of all political parties before finalisation so as to take account, so far as consistent with a principled analysis, of their competing views of the Constitution. As it happens, the exercise of the powers by his
continued next page

What is a 'legal opinion'? It is an attempt to predict for the client how a Court is likely to interpret the law on a given set of facts, on the basis that in the end the law means what the Courts say it means.

requires him to remain silent under attacks on his integrity in such circumstances.

What are the criticisms? First, that I should not have confronted the Head of MFEM with the emerging conclusion that his interpretation was wrong, as I was instructed by

criticism involves a complete misunderstanding of my role, and the second criticism is simply false and reprehensible.

As to the first criticism, there is a legal saying borrowed from Latin: 'audi alteram partem'. It means 'listen to the other side before you judge' and whether or

Excellency based on the opinion, which the Solicitor-General later authorised to be published, was not subsequently challenged by any party leader, so sparing the Cook Islands the uncertainty and expense of post-electoral litigation.

As to the second criticism, it will be clear to any fair-minded reader of the draft and the final opinion that the conclusion that the MFEM interpretation was wrong is firmly maintained in both documents. Mr Pitt's suggestion that there is a 'backflip' between the two documents is simply false. Also, on the facts submitted in Mr Bob Williams' letter to the acting Solicitor-General and incorporated in her instructions to me, there was no reason to suppose that the MFEM interpretation, expressed in writing in its Quarterly Financial Report for June 2015, however mistaken, was not genuinely held. That conclusion appears in identical words in paragraph 3.11 of both the redacted draft and the final opinion, a possibility which Mr Scott fairly recognises in his letter and which turns out to be exactly the case. That fact alone sends the 'backflip' theory out the window. On the contrary, the final opinion steadfastly continues to reject the MFEM interpretation, adds a further reason for doing so, and maintains the position that expenditure beyond the terms of Article 70(3) as properly interpreted was invalid and would require validating legislation by the Parliament. I was entitled to repeat in the final opinion the secondary point clearly made in the draft that MFEM's mistake as to the meaning of Article 70(3) was just that – a mistake – and that no facts had been put before me to cast it in any different light.

It should not be forgotten that my conclusion was that the entire Executive Council Minute of 5 May 2015 could be found by a Court to be a nullity, as if it had never happened, and might be incapable of being saved by the directory/mandatory

distinction. If that were the case, would the Queen's Representative and every Minister attending, the clerk who signed it off, and every official who later made, received, or handled payments relating to any of the 24 items in the Minute, even uncontroversial items, in accordance with what they genuinely believed to be lawful authority under the Constitution, be culpable because they failed to detect the incorrect interpretation of Article 70(3)? What principle does the confident Mr Scott propose to distinguish between them?

As to validation by Parliament, I do not understand Mr Scott's claim towards the end of his letter that validating legislation would require the special process for constitutional amendment under Article 41. As Mr Scott points out, Article 70(3A) of the Constitution expressly contemplates that unauthorised expenditure over and above that permitted under Article 70(3) in any previous year session be reported by the Auditor to Parliament in the last session before a general election is required to be held, and 'Parliament may by Act validate the whole or any part of that expenditure'. Such a validating Act would, therefore, not be 'inconsistent' with the Constitution, and would not require the special process for constitutional amendment under Article 41. The Constitution would therefore seem to contemplate that unauthorised expenditure might linger unvalidated by Parliament until that point in its life. A possible implication is that where the Audit Office has reported unauthorised expenditure at earlier points in Parliament's life, Parliament may validate it from time to time by ordinary legislation, but that remains unclear and only the High Court could resolve that question. This lack of clarity and certainty exemplifies the need, which I have been warning of since July 2014, for a careful review and reform of the law and practice concerning

the budget and appropriation process.

In summary, any suggestion that my opinion of 29 October 2015 was other than an independent view of the law on the facts submitted to me is completely false, and is utterly rejected. It is strange indeed that an opinion which identifies and articulates the 'flaw' (the word appears in paragraph 2.7 of both the draft and final opinion – no 'backflip' here either) in MFEM's interpretation of the power of government to spend beyond Parliament's authorisation should be accused of 'protecting' the government. I have done my job and Mr Bob Williams should get on with his.

Finally, Mr George Pitt speculates as to what I will do about his abusive and defamatory attacks. For the present I will only offer this adage from the Laws of Tetuna'e, recognised as a statement of ancient ma'ohi custom in Tahiti and which is in modern times stated by Mai

Ar'i of the Académie Tahitienne in the following way, for which I have suggested an English translation alongside:

Eiaha na te tari'a, na te mata ra e hi'o i te ohipa a te feia afa'i parau ino. la faaroo te tari'a e haapo aera te mata ona iho te pepe.

Do not listen, in the absence of observed evidence, to defamatory talk. He who listens to such, rather than checking, is like a child.

I should add that I have simultaneously sent this letter to the Cook Islands News, the Attorney-General and acting Solicitor-General, and also to the President of the Cook Islands Law Society of which I have been a member for many years.

*Kia orana ra,
Yours faithfully,
Alex Frame*

*Barrister of the High Court of
the Cook Islands*

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TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, MON 4 Jan 2016

Extending season's greetings

Kia orana. Well, we've made it to 2016 and Te Kave Kōrero extends its seasons greetings to all Cook Islanders, home and abroad, and wishes everyone a very prosperous new year.

As we slowly get back into our normal routines following the holiday break our thoughts are with families who have lost loved ones in the weeks prior to Christmas and New Year.

It is devastating for families to loose loved ones at that time of the year, just as we anticipate and look forward to spending quality time with families, friends and loved ones. Our thoughts and prayers are with those families.

It is good news however that there has been no serious motor vehicle accidents or deaths on our roads during these holidays. Let's give thanks and praise to our Almighty God for all the blessings we've received this festive season.

A new year always brings new challenges and 2016 is no exception. As we embark on a new journey this year and as we prepare ourselves to face, accept and take on those challenges, be it political, social, economic, spiritual or otherwise, the biggest challenge we face, so early in the piece, is the one within ourselves, that is, for us to be up-front and honest with each other.

For us as a small nation and as a people of the Cook Islands, we must wake up to the realities and confront those challenges as best and as much as we can.

We must be innovative, creative, assertive, positive and united in our endeavours to address or resolve those challenges and better ourselves as a nation and as a people.

And to take on those challenges we must also be up-front and honest with each other and with the way we communicate and deal with the many issues and challenges we face. We must be genuine in our concerns and in the way we approach and address those issues.

And at the same time we must respect each other's views and accept them in a way that truly portrays our culture, traditions and identity as a humble, caring and loving people of this our beautiful country.

Our people, young and old, communities, churches and voluntary organisations are all part and parcel of those challenges and of our nationhood. They are the backbone and foundation of our democracy.

We, as a people, must rise and take on those challenges so that we can make our country one of the safest, if not the safest place on the planet, and the best place to raise our children and grandchildren.

We must set aside our differences, our personal conflicts, our prejudices and let us collectively drive together to make our nation the best it can be for the benefit of future generations.

Let us be smart and be smarter than others. Let us show the world that this little nation of our's may be small, but it is 'Paradise on Earth'. Can we make such a claim? Is there a country in the Pacific, or in the world for that matter, that might dispute this? We think not.

Of all the challenges, there is one that is a certainty. It is politics and unfortunately it is our own Government. It is the biggest challenge, we as a people, shall face during 2016, just as it was and has been for the past fifty years of self-government.

Government sets the direction upon which the country is governed and operates. Its policies guide that direction. It determines the angle, speed and vision of that direction. In essence, what Government says, goes. And in most cases, Government's decision is final and irreversible. The greypower issue over the past two years is a classic example of this.

In 2015 Parliament sat for 10 days, eight in June and two in December. Is this acceptable in this day and age in the Cook Islands? Is this what our democracy is all about? Is this the best we have on offer in so far as Government and democracy in our country is concerned? Are we being taken for a ride? Do we accept this?

These are the questions we must ask and challenge ourselves because if we don't, then we are kidding ourselves and we're not being honest with each other.

Can we change anything given Government is in for the next three years and given the next General Election is in 2018?

Yes, we can. We may not be able to change Government but we can certainly influence Government to review and change its policies, direction and objectives. How can we do this? There are several options and these are just some of the practical ones we can exercise

without much effort required.

1. Contact Te Kave Kōrero and introduce the issues as subjects of talkback discussions.
2. Make an appointment and see the Prime Minister or a Minister in Cabinet.
3. Write letters to and meet with your local Member of Parliament expressing your disapproval or objection to Government's policies.
4. Complain or write to and meet with Heads of Ministries or Government departments.
5. Write letters to the editor of Cook Islands News and Cook Islands Herald.
6. Raise the issues and bring awareness to Cook Islanders on Facebook.
7. Discuss the issues with family members perhaps over dinner or with work colleagues at work or with friends and family members in our respective churches and community organisations.

These options give us the opportunities and the vehicles to raise awareness of the issues, concerns or challenges with Government and with each other.

At the end of the day, if we don't speak up, Government will not hear us and may not realise what our concerns or issues are. On the other hand of course Government may elect to ignore us totally.

However we must be fair to Government and we must give them an opportunity to be aware of our concerns and to address or rectify them accordingly. Surely the onus is on us all, including Government, to do the right thing and to do it with all honesty and integrity.

Let us be united and be one people as we define or refine our destiny as a humble, caring and loving people of this beautiful nation of our's.

Once again, Te Kave Kōrero wishes everyone a prosperous, positive and productive 2016, and looks forward to being on the airwaves again on Radio Cook Islands, to inform, educate and entertain us all.

Kia orāna e kia manuia.

Cook Islands Herald Issue 798

TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, THU 31 Dec 2015

50th Anniversary Finale

The 50th Finale Event held on New Year's Eve, Thursday 31st December 2015, was the occasion officially marking the end of our 50th Anniversary Celebrations of self-government.

Just as it was on Constitution Day on 4th of August, the Finale Event was appropriately held at the New Consitution Park on the reclaimed land on the foreshore opposite St Joseph's Catholic Cathedral in downtown Avarua.

Local artist and entertainer, Henry Taripo, kicked off the evening with a variety of tunes both in English and Māori.

Bishop Tutai Pere then formally opened the occasion with a word of prayer followed by a few chorals by his Apostolic Choir.

The Rugby 9s teams making up of the Arorangi Bears, Avatiu Eels and the Ngatangia Sea Eagles were then on stage performing their respective hakas and showcasing their talents as they prepare for the inaugural Rugby League 9s tournament on New Year's Day at the Avatiu sports grounds.

Newly discovered and talented teenager, Elizabeth Pita, her little sister Ngametua Pita and their father and Onu Studio owner, Tereapii Pita, were then singing old Cook Islands classic hits as well as some papa'a tunes, entertaining the crowd present at the event.

Tereapii Pita, singing and accompanied by his self-produced karaoke video clips of local and papa'a songs, on his laptop, virtually became the houseband as singers and entertainers took to the stage as the evening progressed.

Local artists included Andre Tapena, Mere Darling, Ridge Ponini, Tani Mussell, Rose Akava, Eddie Wichman, Boogie Tapukea, Sandra Tapukea, Mr Wahoo and others.

About 7.30pm Tourism Cook Islands 'Katu Kanga' promotional videos, supporting their 'Love a Little paradise' campaign, were screened becoming a drawcard for children in the audience.

At 8.00pm a New Year mass next door at the Catholic Cathedral commenced at which time the music and entertainment was toned down.

Following the conclusion of the mass at about 9.15pm the music was turned up again and the entertainment continued on.

At about 9.45pm Prime Minister Henry Puna made a speech to formally close the 50th Anniversary Celebrations of self-government.

And shortly after 10.00pm a beautiful and colourful display of fireworks officially brought the celebrations to an end. The fireworks was thoroughly enjoyed by families and children present at the event.

Following the fireworks the entertainment continued on but everything ended at 11.00pm.

The vendors who were selling food and drinks at the event went home very happy.

One vendor who did not want to be named said that he never expected his stall would run out of food and drinks so early.

"In fact everything was sold out before 10pm", the vendor said.

Te Kave Kōrero presenter and Treasurer of the Cook Islands Music Association, Tony Hakaoro, said that a steady flow of people through the vendors' stalls brought a lot of business for the stall holders.

"Although we did not have the same number of people as on 4th August, the stalls were nevertheless very busy because families and children were moving through from one vendor to another and buying their choice of food and drinks", says Hakaoro.

The 50th Finale Event was organised by the Ministry of Cultural Development, also known as the Tauranga Vānanga, in partnership with the Office of the Prime Minister, Tourism Cook Islands, BTIB, Ministry of Health, Cook Islands Police, Cook Islands Music Association and Red Cross.

Sponsorship of the event was made with the proud support of BCI, ANZ, BSP, Te Aponga Uira, Andersons and Fisher Pearls.

Tony Hakaoro, on behalf of the Cook Islands Music Association (CIMA), acknowledges Bluesky's support of CIMA's working committee.

Hakaoro also acknowledges CITC's support of CIMA.

Te Kave Kōrero would like to thank those responsible for staging the 50th Finale Event, as well as sponsors, and wishes everyone a prosperous New Year during 2016.

Kia manuia.

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Cook Islands Herald Issue 798

TE KAVE KORERO

Host: Tony Hakaoro, TUE 5 JAN 2016

Looking back on 2015

As stated in Te Kave Kōrero article of yesterday, Monday 4th January 2016, "a new year always brings new challenges and 2016 is no exception".

Of course the challenges will come in many forms and shapes and with their own characteristics. Confronting or addressing them will be no easy task or undertaking. The twelve months ahead of us will certainly dictate the enormity of those challenges as well as the responses required of us to face and address them in the best way we can.

As we look forward to overcoming those challenges in the next 12 months of 2016, let us reflect on the challenges that we have met and disposed of successfully in 2015. Let us take a backward step and review how we managed to manoeuvre ourselves around those challenges. And let us also appreciate the efforts we put in, in addressing and meeting those challenges.

2015 was a special year in our nationhood. It was our 50th Anniversary Celebrations of self-government. We started the year and the celebrations with a magical and colourful display of fireworks at Muri Beach in Ngatangia.

Anne Crummer, one of the most successful Cook Islands singer and entertainer, and her dad, Willie Crummer, a well respected singer and entertainer too in the 1960s and 70s in Rarotonga, were invited as our special guest performers to entertain the crowd at Muri Beach.

Their showmanship, musical talents, songs and beautiful voices were magic. Their professionalism and presentation was top notch marking an excellent start to our 50th Anniversary Celebrations.

"Anne Crummer was awesome. Her dad, Willie Crummer, oh my gosh, was fantastic", says a local who was at Muri Beach that evening but declined to be named.

The challenge in organising the start of our 50th Anniversary Celebrations with entertainment from Anne Crummer and her dad was met successfully and was a job well done.

On April 25th 2015, four months into our celebrations, we remembered and paid our respects to our forefathers and soldiers in the First World War who willingly made the ultimate sacrifice, giving their lives to serve the Queen and their respective countries.

It was ANZAC Day Centennial as we marked 100

years when Australian and New Zealand Army Corps landed at Gallipoli in Turkey. History teaches us of the massive loss of lives that day. Over 8,700 Australian and more than 2,700 New Zealand soldiers lost their lives and paid the ultimate price at Gallipoli. One hundred years on, we remembered them.

According to Te Kave Kōrero presenter, Tony Hakaoro, there were more people at the 2015 ANZAC day dawn service than he could ever remember in previous years. He was moved having attended the dawn service himself.

"My maternal grandfather, the late Punoua Raki of Aitutaki, was one of those Cook Islanders who went to World War I to serve the Queen and our country. I'm very proud of him", says Hakaoro.

We pay our respects to our forefathers and those who have paid the ultimate price.

In July 2015, our mother church, the Cook Islands Christian Church, held its 31st General Assembly in Rarotonga hosted by the Arorangi CICC Church.

The Assembly was attended by well over 220 participants, including ministers and delegates, from 70 branches of the church within the Cook Islands, Australia and New Zealand.

The logistic challenges in accommodating and hosting them were met successfully with the assistance and cooperations of all six CICC branches in Rarotonga, namely Arorangi, Titikaveka, Ngatangii, Matavera, Avarua and Nikao.

All credits to the General Secretary, Nga Mataio, the Executive Council, and each and everyone involved in organising and managing the 31st CICC General Assembly held from the 12th to the 19th of July 2015. It was indeed another challenge met successfully in 2015.

Prior to the opening of the 31st General Assembly, the official opening of the Matavera Sunday school building, Gibeona, was held on Friday 10th July 2015. The new Sunday school building is multi-purposely designed and built to be able to host various functions like weddings, birthdays, hair cutting ceremonies as well as conferences. The two storey building can accommodate up to 200 people downstairs and a further 200 on the top floor.

Rev Oirua Rasmussen who was the Minister at Matavera CICC during 2015, now the Minister at Nikao CICC, and a builder himself, contributed to the construction of the new Sunday school

building with the help and assistance of some labourers, church members and volunteers.

In late July and early August was of course Te Maeva Nui 2015. It was the main celebrations of our 50th Anniversary of self-government. Cultural groups from the outer islands attended and celebrated with us here on Rarotonga. They came in the hundreds and with Cook Islanders also coming from Australia and New Zealand, the total population on Rarotonga during Te Maeva Nui increased by an estimated 5,000 people.

It was the celebration of all celebrations. It was fantastic for three reasons.

Firstly, for the first time ever in our history, the Te Maeva Nui was televised 'live' to the outer islands and watched by those who chose to stay home instead of coming to Rarotonga with the cultural groups.

Secondly, on Constitution Day, 4th of August, New Zealand Prime Minister, the Right Honourable John Key, announced an 11.7 million dollar aid to rebuild Tereora College. It was a pleasant surprise and a nice present, from the New Zealand Government to our Government, celebrating our 50th Anniversary of self-government, in free association with New Zealand. It was undoubtedly a warmly welcomed announcement and very much appreciated by our Government.

Then, there was also another pleasant announcement. This time, it was from the Chinese Government pledging an aid of 11 million dollars to rebuild Nikao School.

In December 2015, we also witnessed the opening of the refurbished Ngatangia CICC church and the official opening of the new Atiu Nui Maruarua III hostel in Maraerenga.

The challenges we faced in 2015, one might say, have been met quite successfully as described above. The challenges in the next 12 months of 2016 remain to be seen. As they come to us however, let us negotiate our way through or around them and address them as best as we can and as successful as we have done in 2015.

Surely in 2016 we are happy, ready and willing to take on those challenges. And as they say, 'bring it on'.

Kia manuia.

A year of decline and despair

By Norman George

The CIP Government's towering achievement for the year must still be the amount of air points scored by the P.M and his Ministers. Not far behind them are the most travelled CIP caucus members in the history of Parliament as well.

Democracy was crushed with just 10 sittings for the year. Budgets continue to be guillotined and select committees are not doing their jobs. For the exceptional few days Parliament is allowed to sit, the right to speak freely was heavily censored by the unelected Speaker. The morbid dominations of the Speaker, to interrupt oppositions members in the middle of their speeches, her sometimes mistake weighted opinions, judgments, pronouncements, interpretations and decisions, smother the daylight out of our Parliamentary system.

She talks too much for an unelected Speaker. She should be confined to chairing the meetings and making procedural directions. Her speeches are excessive, time wasting and an insult to the rights of M.P's who are elected to make all speeches. The tyranny of the unelected Speaker of Parliament must stop. Her speaking time should be reduced by 95%.

On the plus side, I congratulate the P.M. and his Government for a successful 50th self-government celebrations.

What about my soul mates in the opposition? There is a saying that fortune favors the brave. Unfortunately her majesties oppositions have failed to live up to expectations. It is neither brave, smart, resourceful or purpose programmed with action plans.

I need to quote Hamlet

here, "I must be cruel only to be kind." We are halfway through the Parliamentary term. The minority CIP government has survived flying on one wing! This weak, vulnerable government was there for the pushover. We paused, hesitated, consulted, held secret meetings, planned and planned until the cows came home. And they are still there!

With the CIP Government's shrinking support, the Democratic Party needs a wakeup call. We have to offer a better alternative for our people! Our team is shrouded in terrifying uncertainty. We have to review everything from the present leadership to the top Executive office bearers.

The Demo caucus as it stands, is incapable of providing the answers. I suggest that in the New Year a panel of senior Demo Party members be called to do a painstaking review. People like Sir Fredrick Goodwin, Laveta Short, Grover Harmon, Tupou Faireka, Marjorie Crocombe, Norman George, Tauei Solomona, Tui Short, Cassey Eggleton, Helen Tatuava, and Mama Nga Tupa should be invited to meet, brainstorm problems and come out with the answers. It must receive the support if the entire Party which must accept the outcome if it is to work.

There is a saying, "the strong man is silent because he does not know what to say and when he does open his mouth, he is found to be nothing more than a weakling."

Our decline economically is because we are too reliant on tax collection and imports. There are no economic packages or initiatives, no productivity plans, no exports, and no will to get out and work. We

have a lazy Prime Minister and a lazy, arrogant and inexperienced Minister of Finance, and the rest of the cabinet with the exception of the DPM are not recognized to be giants in the productivity field.

I decline to be silent on our economic decline. We are not targeting the right areas to concentrate on. The retiree market, where people who have retired wish to spend part of the year with us, is not even mentioned anymore. All taxations on retired people should be removed, then we will attract the retirees to our shores.

On the plus side, it is good to see Cook Islanders graduate with degrees and PhD's....All I can say is "not enough---we need more!"

My overall achievement evaluation for the year will have to go to the people of Enuamanu, for the opening of Te Patupaepae o Enuamanu, Atiunui Maruarua III, after a long struggle taking 7 years.

I have expressed my wife and I's Christmas greetings in last weeks column, I do not wish to bore.

Our final end of the year blessing to fellow Cook Islanders is this: radiate a loving relationship with one another and with our creator, all mighty God. Let's return to old values - love of family, honour and duty to serve our country. Let's be kind and nice to each other.

Share this line with me: "If music be the food of love, play on...give me excess of it...." Ka Kite!

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More Super Names In 2016

By Tavita

Nevermind the Olympics. 2016 is SANZAR's year. It may stand for

South Africa, New Zealand, and Australian rugby but I reckon it's pretty much the number one sports body in the world.

Why? Because it encourages meaningful and exciting names. They must be full of passion and push the boundaries of sport to ever more meaningful and exciting frontiers.

SANZAR and their naming sponsors have got it all right.

They're up to date, twenty first century, and everything's meaningful and exciting.

In fact, they're getting even more meaningful and exciting now.

WILD HORSES

In Australia, they've got "Brumbies", wild horses from the hinterland of Canberra, about to trample fluttery "Waratahs," the wilting flower of New South Wales.

Then there are "Rebels" from Melbourne,.... as rebellious as "Weary" Dunlop, the first old Victorian Wallaby, and a right old larrikin when it came to rugby union..

There's also a "Western Force"..... which makes visitors to Perth thoroughly regret their journey and the Queensland "Reds", named after Quade Cooper's bad temper.

In New Zealand, there's the "Auckland Blues" because of the mood the locals get into when the "Hurricanes" blow them out of sight.

And, as well as that, they also have the "Chiefs" who claim traditional dual rights to visit the "Highlanders" and hammer them down to the flat ground before attacking any "Crusaders" who attempt a minor conversion or two.

In South Africa, they pursue the ancient "Southern Kings" custom of waiting for raging high winds called "Stormers" and setting out in pursuit of huge great overweight "Bulls", chasing them like "Cheetahs," roaring like "Lions" and biting like "Sharks." See?

Extremely meaningful and very, very exciting.

But in 2016, SANZAR's going

even further.

They're off to the jungles of South America and the mountains of Japan

SPOTTED CATS

On February 26th they expand into Argentina for the first time and announce the arrival of "Los Jaguares."

The Jaguars are the largest cats in all the Americas. They weigh an average of round about twenty stone or so these days, with a compact body, a broad head and powerful jaws rather like a tighthead prop.

They have large and threatening black spots on their coats which become larger and more threatening when the referee blows them up for a scrum infringement.

As vicious carnivores, they prevent overgrazing and stop hungry opposing loose forwards by eating them.

These mighty Jaguars are also renowned gobblers of deer, peccary, crocodiles, snakes, monkeys, sloths, tapirs, turtles, eggs, frogs, fish and half backs.

They once confined their appetites to the lands from

Argentina in South America all the way up to the Grand Canyon in Arizona.

Now, however on the 26th February, they are moving even further afield and concentrating on Free State Stadium. Bloemfontain.

SOLAR DOGS

And as well as Jaguars, there's even more coming up..

There's the Japanese Superwolves.

These have been invited to show that Japan's defeat of South Africa was no fluke and that they are now ready to host a ferocious World Cup in 2019.

And why are they called the Sunwolves?

Obviously, they are a mighty force from the Land of the Rising Sun but as well as that and, contrary to popular belief, they are not extinct.

Ignore all the experts who stated that the Honshu wolf (Canis lupus hodophylax) had become disappeared in 1905 due to an epidemic of contagious diseases like rabies.

Forget the reported sightings by inhabitants of mountain

villages around the turn of the century of large numbers of dead and ailing wolves which apparently confirmed this.

And take no notice of reports that the Ezo wolf of the northernmost island of Hokkaido (Canis lupus hattai) died out in the Meiji period (1868-1912) when the owners of American-style horse and cattle ranches in the area poisoned them all with strychnine because they were a threat to the livestock.

They're all wrong.

All the wolves were in fact secretly hiding in the hills, practising rolling mauls and offloads.

And they will return after 90 years of training for the first time at the Prince Chichibu Memorial Stadium deep in the heart of Chichibuland against the Lions on February 26th.

A whole pack of them will arise from an airplane out of the sun and be a serious threat to all the livestock again.

Bulls? Lions? Cheetahs? Sharks?

All of them soon to be dead stock!

Last week's Tattsлото Results

Powerball Thu 24/Dec/15, Draw 1023

Winning Numbers

38 15 32 26 1 8

Powerball

19

TattsLotto Sat 26/Dec/15, Draw 3593

Winning Numbers

36 5 35 9 25 34

Supplementaries

42 29

Oz Lotto Tue 29/Dec/15, Draw 1141

Winning Numbers

4 35 9 43 28 37 16

Supplementaries

20 3

How to start the New Year 2016

Encouragement Column

With Senior Pastor John Tangi

By Senior Pastor John Tangi

Because this is my last Article of Encouragement for 2015, I want you to look at areas where you need to improve in your life from 2015, to help build yourself up for the New Year 2016. The main scripture reading is Psalm 51v.10-13. The Psalmist is saying these words based on his life experiences. In v.10 he said "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." David is looking back and realized that the problem started in his mind. He entertained evil thoughts until he sinned before God. At one stage in the life of King David, he was walking on the top of his palace and he saw this beautiful lady having a shower and he made some enquiries and found out that this was the wife of one of his soldiers. So he planned to send the husband to war, at a time when he too was supposed to be at war, with the hope that the husband would be killed in battle, so that he would have the wife! His little scheme worked, but later discovered by God's servant the Prophet Nathan, and David realized the huge mistake he made, and repented before God. That was why David said in v.10 on the basis of his past mistake or sin "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me."

That was David, how about you! What were your weaknesses in 2015 that requires you to come before

God and say to Him "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me." Only you know where you have failed God, what things in your life need to be dealt with, and to be left behind in 2015. As you start the New Year, call unto God through prayer to 'Create in you a new and clean heart and put in you a spirit that will guide you and to stop you from going astray.' God said in Ezekiel 36v.26-27 "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you, I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh. I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them." A 'Clean Heart' with the 'Right Spirit' has one purpose and that is to do God's will, to do those things that pleases God! So, from the start of the New Year 2016 this should be your prayer, for God to "Create in you a clean heart, and put in you a renewed and steadfast spirit."

In v.11 it reads "Do not cast me away from your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." David is desperately pleading with God 'not to give up on him nor banish him from His presence.' Because David knew that God do take away His Holy Spirit from those who are disobedient to Him. I Samuel 16v.14 read "But the Spirit of the Lord departed from Saul, and a distressing spirit from the Lord troubled him." During the New Year 2016,

this too should be your attitude, be like David and ask God through prayer not to give up on your failures and your weaknesses because you are only a human being. God said in Isaiah 41v.10 "Fear not, for I am with you, be not dismayed, for I am your God, I will strengthen you, yes, I will help you, I will uphold you with My righteous right hand." And Jesus said in Matthew 28v.20(b) "...I am with you always, even to the end of the age."

v.12 reads "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, and uphold me with Your generous Spirit." When you do something wrong, you feel bad about it. David felt bad about what he did. And he is saying 'God I know that I was wrong, please help me get back on the path of righteousness.'

Too often when we're down we stay down. But not David, he confessed the wrong he did and he gets on with life! David knew that 'Failure is not final!' This too should be our attitude during the New Year, get up and go on for the Lord! I John 1v.9 reads "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

v.13 reads "Then I will teach transgressors Your



ways, and sinners shall be converted to You." This is a personal commitment by David, pledging himself to be a witness for God unto others. Declaring what God has done for him in his life. And David believed that when people hear of his testimony, they too will turn to God. God through Jesus Christ saved us in order for us to be a witness for Him unto others. This should be our aim for 2016, to share to others what Jesus Christ has done in our lives, and believing that they too will turn to Jesus to be their Lord and Saviour!

May God richly bless you with His abundant blessings and guide you throughout 2016 and beyond. Happy New Year - te Atua te arua.

VACANCY

Cook Islands Jobs

The Cook Island's premier Jobs Website
www.cookislandsjobs.com

This week's top vacancies from Cook Islands Jobs

Disaster Management Coordinator, Red Cross, Rarotonga
For these roles and more, please visit www.cookislandsjobs.com

New Year, New Beginnings

Welcome to the New Year!

By Teherenui Koteka

And here it begins guys, the start of a brand new year! With the New Year comes new beginnings and new opportunities. The opportunity to start something over, take on something new, the chance to leave behind all the negative experiences of the past year. Personally two thousand and fifteen was not my best year. It was filled with bumpy roads and a great deal of downward moments, anxious to forget about the disappointing moments of two thousand and fifteen I find myself eagerly awaiting the mysteries that will accompany the New Year.

This year, a leap year-29 days in February, will be a year where I will attempt to be the best I can be and once again attempt to accomplish my many New Year's resolutions. Of course the idea of finishing these nearly impossible tasks seem quite far fetched considering I still have goals from two thousand and twelve that are waiting to be accomplished. However that is what New Years are for!

The New Year is a magical time where everything and anything seems possible, a time where starting a new is a great idea and a period where you can reflect upon what you wish to achieve over the next three hundred and sixty-six days. For me the New Year is a time that is shrouded in mystery a time where the worries of the past are no longer applicable and the hopes for tomorrow reign supreme. This year I hope to become more organized, I realize that I need to prioritize my life and begin to seriously prepare for the world of higher education. Yet another great thing about the New Year, it is a time to reflect upon the mistakes of your past and hopefully gain some insight into remedying them.

The New Year naturally feels like a great time to start something new a time where you can measure progress over the year; so to begin progressing forward we need to learn from the mistakes of our past. Remembering little things like this is what gets results in the long run. Try not to look back at the past year with regret and instead bear in mind that without mistakes we would never know how to progress onto better things. Most importantly do not let the mistakes of the past year hold you back, do not let them hinder you from taking risks because the bottom line is, a life without risks is boring and uneventful.

One more piece of advice guys, as you take a new step into a new year, walk in with your head held high and your mind open to new possibilities, the only advice needed to begin your new year with a bang! Happy New Year everyone! May it be safe, fun and prosperous.

By Norma Ngatamariki

Hello everyone! Can you believe that an entire year has passed? 2016 is now upon us, so it is the time for the "New Year, New Me" status updates on Facebook, the weight loss regimes as well as setting those goals. For a lot of people, it's a time for new beginnings where you can always make the effort to change for the better. A fresh start awaits us all and I really can't wait to see what 2016 has in store for me (hopefully, it's nothing bad).

I wish I could say that I had a hassle-free Christmas, but then I'd be lying. The Ngatamariki household didn't go to The Islander for Christmas brunch, so we decided to have our little gathering at our humble abode. I got my 'bake-on' this year and it felt really good to be getting back on that grind. I made a whole heap of decadent chocolate cakes with a butt-load of frosting and decorations. I even made a cake for us, but nobody touched it. I reckon that my cake looked so good; nobody wanted to ruin its perfection by eating it. Spending all my money on those baking ingredients was worth it, in the end. Whatever little weight I did lose this year (and I don't think it was a whole lot, to be honest) I gained back tenfold with our Christmas feast. I drank a few with my folks, which was relaxing after a long night of frantic baking.

Boxing Day arrived. Mum was real keen to make it down to Mareko's Annual Boxing Day Sale, where everything went for half-price. It's times like these when I wish I was back in New Zealand, if only to buy everything in sight. But Mum and I still got a good bargain, where I bought a beautiful purple \$192 tivaevae quilt. It was originally \$384, so of course it was a good bargain. I saw this one Mama take three quilts! (#Loaded). I didn't have that much money after such an intense Christmas shopping session, but we still managed to get the 'Five pareus for \$100' deal. I imagine that Mareko's made quite a few bucks that day.

New Years was another chilled and relaxing event for me. We cooked ourselves yet another small feast which was demolished in the next two days. I'm glad I got the whole week off from work, because I needed that time to recover. I had a quiet New Years, so I didn't go out during New Years Eve (but that doesn't mean I didn't go out afterwards) but nonetheless, I still had fun. It's actually the first time in three years that I've spent New Years with my family. I think I've seen enough fireworks to forego one New Years Eve.

Let's embrace all that 2016 has to offer: the challenges, the ambitions, the good and the bad. Personally, I'm looking forward to a great year.

EAT LESS
MOVE MORE
HEART FOUNDATION

New Hope Church
Parekura Conference Centre
Inspirational messages to uplift and empower you
Sunday at 10.30am

Elvis our unpopular 78 vote Prime Minister is coming under the hammer for boasting we are going to become the richest nation in the world per capita and rightfully so. In the anticipation of great wealth why are we continuing to be globetrotting beggars? Since when has the benchmark of wealth been money? We would be richer in life if we learnt to live within our means, but then how does that make any sense to our lazy travel addicted version of Elvis? For once our space cadet PM should try talking sense and reality; most of us spend our lives on the ground not in the clouds with the fairies.



With the likely hood of another by election in Aitutaki's Vaipae/Tautu electorate one thing is for sure it won't be returning to CIP hands. After Elvis made repeat promises to the voters to return Moaner to the seat and he'll be straight back into Cabinet and in the referendum on Sunday flights, a simple majority would put that issue to an end have come to nothing. Lying to the people of Vaitau has back lash consequences for the CIP. Their loss will put their government in serious jeopardy. At 12 all it's either back to the polls in April or a jumper to change the government.



One chook has pointed out how selective and inconsistent the Brown Minita of the cash is he said he wasn't going to make any comment on the woeful PERC investigation in the selfie complaint about his best friend the dream peddler Mickie Enerie's Schoonergate scandal till it was completed but couldn't demonstrate the same restraint when he was quick off the mark



with comments concerning FIU's independent investigation into Schoonergate and Frame's legal opinion. Is Makie a wagging tail or is he the dog?



The big buzz in the banking world of gossip is that over three days during the Christmas shopping boom, Trev Clarke's CITC conglomerate banked \$4.2 million, bank clients said CITC staff came in the bank carrying suitcases presumably full of cash.



How come when this crooked CIP government is caught knowingly doing something unlawful it's called a mistake by their legal advisors but for anyone else it's a crime? When neneva Neves was caught out giving a secret four month advance of \$200,000 to a nonexistent identity with no work history that was called an oversight on the part of Mike Henry. Smells like a load of hen droppings to everyone else.



Word just in that former Fin Sec Richard Neves has set up a Consultancy called, wait for it, "Richard Neves Consultancy!" (How original) That was quick! But why? Is it because some outfit has

engaged him already? Cook Islands government?



Oh dear chooks! The vessel SS Daily is steaming around rudderless in never ending circles on a voyage of the damned as the crew struggle to set a course away from the reef. Captain's log for Tuesday 5 January 2016 shows the crew has only just learnt that the fishing boat at the centre of a corruption enquiry was sunk off Aitutaki at the end of November 2015, more than a month ago! The super Liner, SS Herald already alerted followers of maritime events days after the sinking and even had a photo!



Did you catch the NZ High Comm's Yuletide message on the goggle -box? It was the last one of the pre-Christmas airings from the higher ups. What we got was a run down of all the goodies and lollies the Kiwi Santa brought us during the year, ending with "Merry Christmas." Not one word of the manger, the baby Jesus, the shepherds, God or Angels or what the time is all about. Yes we got some new toys during the year but no announcement carrying the same impact as the one the Magi delivered to Herod.



Local muso is singing an out of

tune, self composed ditty about our Khaki clad brigade. Arriving in town for the fireworks, local muso parks his chariot where he thinks it will be iron clad safe-in the front yard of Khaki HQ. After seeing many dollars going up in smoke, he returns to mount his steed and gallop home but it seems all that smoke has resulted in his chariot going AWOL. How can that be? Right outside and under the very nostrils of the Khaki lot? Is nothing safe anywhere?



So PM Henri Foonah thinks we could all be rich. Well of course we can. But his way is not the path to the golden fleece. Any royalties from sea bed minerals are still some 8-10 years away and if the greenies scare off the fishing fleets, we may as well go back to using sea shells for currency. The quickest way to wealth is to grab a billion dollars off some poor sucker of an overseas donor, divie that up among all of us then default on the loan.



Finance guru Brown Marks said on a TVNZ interview regarding the 1.5% spending cap under the Constitution, "If we got the arithmetic wrong, we can go to parliament to fix it." Yes the Constitution does allow for such corrections to be made but the point is, those in Finance are supposed to be able to do simple arithmetic and should get the sums right in the first place! To have to correct errors at this level is an embarrassment.

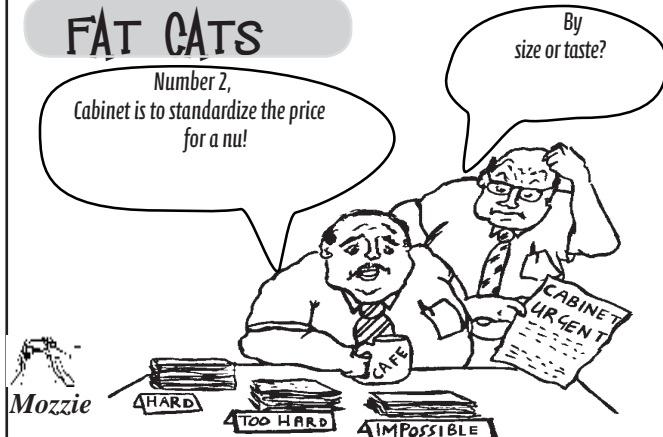


Where does the "buck" stop chooks? Certainly not with anyone in authority if all the recent excuses are to go by. The buck does not even stop on the Minister's desk! It falls off and into the rubbish bin or "file 13" as it is commonly known in the public service.

FAT CATS

Number 2,
Cabinet is to standardize the price
for a nu!

By
size or taste?

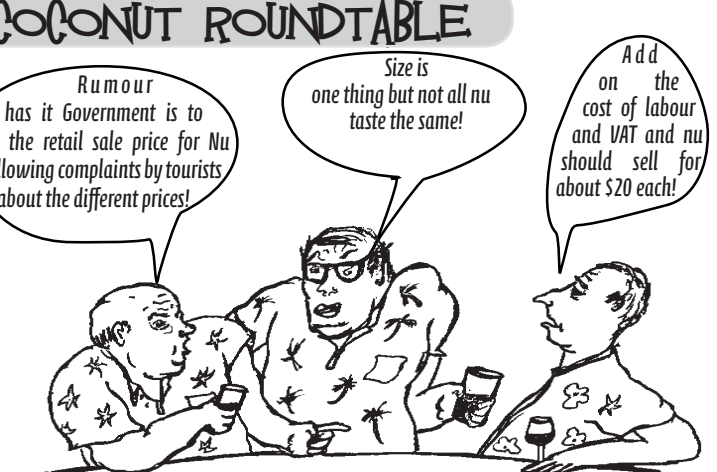


COCONUT ROUNDTABLE

Rumour
has it Government is to
set the retail sale price for Nu
following complaints by tourists
about the different prices!

Size is
one thing but not all nu
taste the same!

Add
on the
cost of labour
and VAT and nu
should sell for
about \$20 each!



Cook Island Delegation return from COP21 Forum



By Norma Ngatamariki

Director of Climate Change Cook Islands, Ana Tiraa, has recently returned from Paris after attending the COP21 Sustainable Innovation Forum, which went on for duration of three weeks. Tiraa says that much was achieved from talks within the Forum. 190 official parties were in attendance and actively participated in discussions. "We have worked closely with our neighbouring countries and other Small Island States

because our situations are quite familiar," she says. "The talks which took place has had much impact on as a small delegation." Tiraa also comments on a number of side events which the Cook Island delegation also took part in, such as bilateral and negotiations.

A number of topics were discussed in detail, with regards to establishing a legally binding agreement which would roughly meet the needs of the majority of Small Island Developing

States (SIDS). Representatives were asked to contribute their opinions concerning the following topics:

1. Embedding of the 1.5 degree target in the purpose of the agreement;
2. Recognition of the special circumstances of SIDS;
3. Recognition of the need to scale up climate finance;
4. 5-year cycles for the review of emissions reduction commitments;
5. A legally binding agreement;
6. Separate and distinct

recognition of loss and damage.

Tiraa says that she is quite pleased with the outcomes of this Forum, as they have addressed the needs of SIDS according to their needs in terms of reducing the impact of Climate Change. The last Forum, which was held in Copenhagen in 2008, has failed to reach an agreement. "But now, we are more willing to work collectively with other countries, in order to combat climate change."



TENDER



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE
AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS**

**Request for Proposal for Evaluation Services
– Air NZ Underwrite**

The Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) seeks suitable companies, groups or individuals to submit a tender for the provision of evaluation services concerning the underwriting of direct air services between Sydney and Rarotonga, and Los Angeles and Rarotonga. This evaluation will contain two components, and interested parties are invited to submit proposals for one or both components. The first component is a Financial and Contract Review of the existing contract (requiring technical aviation industry analysis), while the second component will be an Economic, Social and Environmental Review of the underwrite agreement and the associated costs and benefits to the Cook Islands.

For further information in regards to the Request for Proposal for Evaluation Services – Air New Zealand Underwrite, including the tender documents please visit:

<http://procurement.gov.ck/current-tenders>

Or the MFEM website:

<http://www.mfem.gov.ck>

Or contact: Mr Tristan Metcalfe

Email: <mailto:tristan.metcalfe@cookislands.gov.ck>

Phone: +682 29511 ext 8314

Tenders Close: 3pm Friday 22 January 2016

VACANCIES



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— HOTEL GROUP —

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- Executive Sous Chef (Aitutaki)
- Sous Chef (Rarotonga)
- Chefs de Partie (Rarotonga & Aitutaki)
- Demi Chef (Rarotonga)
- F&B Operations Manager (Aitutaki)
- Maître D' (Rarotonga)
- Landscaping Manager (Aitutaki)
- Qualified Builder (Rarotonga)
- Guest Services Supervisor (Rarotonga)
- Spa Therapist (Rarotonga)
- Wait & Bar Staff
- Housekeeping Staff

We are always on the lookout for talented individuals interested in a career in the tourism industry. If you want to be part of a high performing team then feel free to visit one of our resorts in person to complete an employment application form.

To apply : email – work@pacificresort.com

TENDERS



**COOK ISLANDS MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE (TA)**

Review of the Cook Islands Mathematics Curriculum Document

Expressions of Interest are being sought from qualified and experienced professionalstowork with the Ministry of Education to facilitate the review of the current Mathematics Curriculum to ensure it meets the intentions and requirements of the new Cook Islands Curriculum Framework 2015, the goals of the Cook Islands Education Master Plan (CIEMP) and social sector goals of the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP).

Terms of Reference for this work is available from theMinistry of Education or atwww.education.gov.ck.

Expressions of Interestwith relevant documentation should be received by the Ministryno later than Friday 8th January 2016, addressed to:

Director - Human Resources Management

CI Ministry of Education

PO Box 97

Rarotonga

Cook Islands

Ph (682) 29357, Fax (682) 28357 or email: vacancy@education.gov.ck



ATIU WATER UPGRADE PROJECT (PHASE 1)

Tender OPM/REDD-03/2015

Supply and Delivery of Water Pipes and Fittings

The Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) is seeking tender submissions from reputable manufacturers/suppliers for the supply and delivery CIF of PE water pipes and fittings for the Atiu Water Upgrade Project (Phase 1).

The full tender document is available on the website www.procurement.gov.ck. Those who download the tender document from the website must register their interest with the REDD's office in writing (email sufficient).

All enquiries must be directed to the Project Engineer Ngateina Rani, Renewable Energy Development Division (REDD), OPM, Telephone +682 25494 Ext 7024, Mobile +682 54433 or Email ngateina.rani@cookislands.gov.ck.

This tender closes at 1.00pm on Monday 11 January 2016 (local time). All tender submissions must be deposited in the tender box located at the REDD's office, OPM, Avarua, Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Electronic tender submissions will not be accepted.