



Restorative Practices Whanganui

Towards a Restorative City: Honoa ki a Rongo ki Whanganui

News from the Chair

September 2016

Greetings / Tena koutou,

This is the first 2016 newsletter, so is well and truly overdue! The year started very busily with numerous requests from various organisations to facilitate formal restorative meetings. In order to meet this need we contracted Restorative Justice facilitators and created guidelines for facilitating formal restorative workplace meetings.

The feedback received affirmed the positive outcomes of a restorative approach:

"A very good outcome for both individuals in a calm, quiet environment"

"This process gave us a better understanding of each other - thank you!"

"The team's relationship has improved since the meeting."

It's always exciting to hear what others are doing within the Restorative Justice/Practice area and our recent overseas trip gave us that opportunity. We came away feeling we cannot compare ourselves with any others as we are working in many jurisdictions, rather than one specific one, as most others are.

It was also noticeable that America, Canada and Australia, with their different political configurations (ie separate states), have the ability to influence policy more easily than we can in NZ, with our central government structure. However, we felt buoyed by the experience, enjoyed meeting old friends and making new ones, learning more ways to apply a restorative approach and are happy we are on the right track for Whanganui.

In this newsletter, you can read about the Halifax Conference and the rest of the trip and some other exciting events coming up.

Remember to vote in the coming local elections - we will be looking to those who have the community at heart and will continue to endorse the restorative approach so our city can flourish.

Nga mihi nui,
Jenny Saywood, Chair

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Judge Andrew Becroft

We congratulate our Patron, Judge Andrew Becroft, who has taken up the position of Children's Commissioner. We're delighted he has an opportunity to use his wisdom and experience in this new role.

We are also thrilled Judge Becroft is happy to continue to be our Patron for the Trust.

Photo sourced from: msd.govt.nz



Judge Andrew Becroft

International Restorative Conference - Halifax, Nova Scotia

“Choosing education over punishment. Choosing learning over revenge.”

These were the conference opening words by Amanda Demsey, Dalhousie Faculty of Dentistry Graduate. In 2014, Amanda and fellow female students requested a restorative approach to investigate their complaints of sexual harassment by fellow male students. A 70 page report documents the experience, challenges and learnings of the ensuing five month process and the International Restorative Conference was one of the many outcomes.



Opening Gathering Drums: Father and Son Drummers from the African Nova Scotian Community and the Mi'kmaw First Nation

Thanks to some funding from the Minister's Discretionary Fund, we were able to send a Whanganui contingent to the Conference and also attend an International Learning Community workshop afterward.

Hon. Chester Borrows MP, Chair of the Restorative City Advisory Group, Jenny Saywood and Karen Edlin, Trustees and Shelly Harkness, RP Facilitator/Co-ordinator attended.

Other New Zealanders who attended were Professor Chris Marshall and Assistant Hayley Farrar, Diana Unwin Chair of Restorative Justice-VUW; Paul Nixon, Chief Social Worker-MSD; and Moana Eruera, Principal Advisor Maori- CYF.

The other 400+ participants came from across Canada, America, England and Australia.

The two days were full of exploring the possibilities of restorative justice/practice in the following areas:

- Criminal Justice
- Education / Workplace Culture
- Race Reconciliation
- Feminist Justice / Sexual Harassment
- Campus Culture
- Professional Responsibility



Paul Nixon co-facilitating the International Learning Community workshop.

Some conference snippets:

- restorative practice is “radical” - it allows people to talk with each other!
- connection is the most important factor for human health
- a restorative approach provides a window into the soul of the human condition
- suspend typical professionalism and hand back to ‘clients’
- restorative practice recaptures the community to engage in conversation to change laws

We came away affirmed in our work in Whanganui and wholly supported by the global restorative justice/practice movement. *A more detailed report will be available on our website soon.*

“Difficult to break the mould when we only see the same mould. Needs one person to take the opportunity to be brave. [Restorative Justice] is a chance to do things differently”.

Kevin Reade

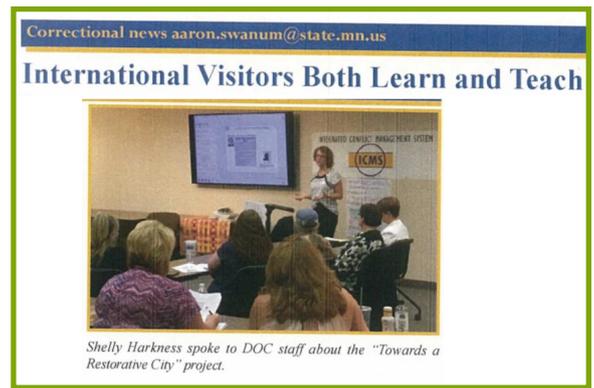
Captain -HRM Fire Service and President-Halifax Assoc of Black Firefighters, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

Minnesota Department of Corrections

Following the Halifax Conference, Trustee Karen Edlin and Facilitator/Coordinator Shelly Harkness, visited the Minnesota Department of Corrections (DoC) to learn more about their Integrated Conflict Management System (ICMS) and share the “Whanganui: Towards a Restorative City” vision.

ICMS is an internationally recognised term and refers to the department wide infrastructure, policy alignment, assessment and evaluation activities, trainings and “conflict response initiative” services.

In 2001 the Minnesota DoC recognised the negative impact of unresolved staff conflict on each other and facility operations and set about addressing it. The current ICMS evolved out of a focus of understanding and modelling restorative ideals in staff interactions. It allows for a safe environment to drill down to the source cause of the conflict, allowing greater discussion of accountability and personal ownership of conflict issues to eventually repair the harm.



Susan Stacey

Susan Stacey, ICMS Department Coordinator, advises that even after 15 years there is still room for growth. More importantly, there have been noteworthy changes in areas related to staff experiences with workplace conflicts, awareness of options for addressing them, experiences with workplace conflict resolutions and supervisors managing conflict. One of their correctional facilities reported a 54% decrease in the number of staff investigations compared to the same time the previous year.

Shelly and Karen were inspired by the passion DoC staff showed for the ICMS and have brought back key learnings for application here.

“Relate-Resolve-Restore” NZ Conference - November

Victoria University, Restorative Practices International, Restorative Practices Aotearoa and the Resolution Institute are holding a Conflict Resolution Conference on 14th and 15th November in Wellington.



This unique, multi-disciplinary conference will explore the broad spectrum of alternative conflict resolution processes, looking at both the latest developments within each discipline and the potential for cross-fertilisation and collaboration between approaches.

A number of international and national experts in the field of dispute resolution and restorative justice/practice are presenting.

For further details and/or to register go to: <https://confer.eventsair.com/QuickEventWebsitePortal/crc-2016/crc>

Restorative Practice Learning Opportunities

“Restorative Practice Foundation” (pilot) Course

Our newly developed “Restorative Practice Foundation” course was delivered as a pilot in July/ August. The course is designed for individuals who would like a foundational understanding of and gain informal tools of restorative practice, but do not want to facilitate a formal restorative meeting.



Pilot Course Participants

The 14 participants enjoyed learning the restorative language and informal tools of a restorative approach and also provided valuable feedback to further develop the course. In addition, they enjoyed forming new relationships with each other!

“It was truly a privilege to be a part of our sessions.”

“One of the best courses I have ever been on. I would recommend to everyone.”

For more information and/or to register your interest for the next course - *contact below.*

Introductory “Formal Restorative Practice Facilitation” Workshop in March, 2017

We’re pleased to organise another workshop with Margaret Thorsborne on Monday 13th and Tuesday 14th March, 2017.

This two day introductory facilitation workshop provides participants with a deeper understanding of conflict and the formal restorative practice tools to facilitate transforming conflict in a positive way.



Margaret Thorsborne

Registrations of interest are now open - *contact below.*



Restorative Practices Whanganui

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