

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Parnell Trust offers community-based programmes that cater for a wide range of interests and age groups reflecting the fast-changing needs of Auckland City's Hobson Ward community and also manages several other community services including early childhood education, venue hire, creative learning programmes for adults and children, after school and school holiday programmes and special innovative community events.

Parnell Community Trust is a registered not for profit Charitable Trust, established in 1982 as Knox Centre Trust as a local initiative of the Knox Presbyterian Church and the Parnell Community Committee. The Trust administered a succession of church and council buildings to operate a Community Centre providing facilities and services to meet the needs of residents and visitors to the area.

In 1995 the Trust changed its name to Parnell Community Trust and continued to support the local community. In 1996 the Parnell District School Community Hall opened after extensive community effort where the Trust now operates After School and School Holiday Programmes for children aged 5 to 14 years and administers community use of the facility outside normal school hours.

In 1996 Parnell Community Centre moved its offices to the Blind Foundation's Jubilee Building at 545 Parnell Road with four well-appointed meeting rooms and a hall from which the centre provides a bi-annual learning and leisure programme and venue hire opportunities to the community. This unique building has become increasingly popular with the business community as an ideal venue for "off site" meetings and other functions. In 1999 further space within the building was leased from Auckland City to extend venue hire opportunities and to provide much-needed additional office space.

In October 1997, the Trust opened the long-awaited Gladstone Park Early Childhood Centre at 27 Balfour Road in Parnell. Gladstone Park Early Childhood Centre is licensed to provide full time care and an extensive early childhood education programme for up to 39 babies and preschoolers in a superb, purpose-built facility.

In 1998 the Trust's Programmes for Children doubled in size when management was asked to take over the operation of an existing programme at Newmarket Primary School. Growth continued when in 2000 the Trust began managing the After School Programme at Epsom Normal Primary School and further, in February 2006 set up the operation of an After School Programme at Our Lady of the Sacred Heart School in Epsom at their request.

In 2002 the Trust established Heart of Art, a two-week festival celebrating local creative talent and coordinated a series of arts-related events and activities in the Parnell and Newmarket areas. Thousands of people attended some 60 different activities. After four successful years the Trust decided to focus on fewer activities spread throughout the year. Now the Arts Activities programme offers one or two events each month, of which one of the most popular is the Art Snake where art from local primary school children is exhibited in shop windows in Parnell and Newmarket.

The Trust's Board comprises 9 elected trustees and 2 associate trustees. The nine trustees are elected at the Annual General Meeting in September, each for a three-year term. The Board has a governance role, leaving the day to day operation of the businesses in the hands of a four-strong management team and 50 paid employees with support from volunteers, independent contractors and interns.

The core community business is financially supported by Auckland City Council in the form of space allocation plus an annual operating grant. Further support for the Trust is obtained by extensive fundraising through activities, philanthropic grants and sponsorship. The success of the Trust over the years has been dependant on the goodwill, enthusiasm and endorsement from the local community. Parnell Trust is located in the heart of Parnell, Newmarket and Grafton which allows the Trust's services and facilities to be enjoyed by people from surrounding suburbs, the Hobson Ward and the wider Auckland region. Approximately 160,000 people per annum benefit from the services and facilities provided by the Trust.

At a strategic review in November 2004, trustees and management identified a number of strategic goals and new initiatives to focus on in the coming years. Fulfilment of these goals will ensure the Trust continues to pursue its vision of providing quality services and facilities to the community, building relationships and partnerships with other organisations, including the business community, and initiating creative opportunities which engage all our customers and stakeholders.