

AVON HEATHCOTE ESTUARY IHUTAI TRUST
ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
APRIL – JUNE 2009

LES BATCHELER

Interview date: 3 and 5 June 2009

Oral History Interview File includes:

- Copy of agreement form – no restriction on use
- Interviewee information
- and photo

Additional material:

- Supplied photos:
Les and Dorothy, (1) and (2) landscape from home across estuary to city,
basking shark showing evidence of red gill disease

Document:

- Stages in the Construction of the Ocean Pipeline (2).doc

Abstract (provides time coded index to audio):

- Abstract Session 1 - 3 June 2009
- Abstract Session 2 - 5 June 2009
- Abstract Session 3 – 5 June 2009

All records also held at the Macmillan Brown Library University of Canterbury

Oral History Recording Agreement Form

Name of project: Oral Histories of Avon-Heathcote Estuary Ihutai

Full name of person interviewed: *CHADLER LESLIE BAZZINER*

Date(s) of interview: *3 and 5th June 2009*

Commissioning organisation: Environment Canterbury and Avon-Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Trust

Interviewer:

Copyright holder: Avon-Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Trust

1. Placement: I, the person interviewed, agree that the recording of my interview and accompanying material, prepared for archival and publishing purposes, will be held at the offices of the Avon-Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Trust, the MacMillan Brown Library and the Christchurch Central Library (i.e; every effort will be made to make the resulting interview material available to the central Christchurch City library. Reference only).
2. Access: I agree that the recording of my interview and accompanying material may be made available for research, at the above locations or at a location approved by the commissioning organisation, subject to any restrictions in Section 4.
3. Publication: I agree that the recording of my interview and accompanying material, may be quoted or shown in full or in part in published work, broadcast, electronic transfer (including internet), or used in public performances, subject to any restrictions in Section 4.
4. Restricted tapes and accompanying material:

I require that there be **no access to** (provide detail) _____ signature

I require that there be **no publication of** (provide detail) _____ signature

the following sections of my interview and accompanying material before the release date indicated **without my prior written permission.**

_____ Release date:

_____ Release date:

_____ Release date:

5. Privacy Act: I understand that this Agreement Form does not affect my rights under the Privacy Act 1993.

6. General comment: *I consent with the contents of the three tapes of the Oral History Interview and agree of their publication*

Person interviewed: *Chadler*

Date: *3 July 2009*

Interviewer: *M Bradley*

Date: *3 July 2009*

For commissioning organisation/person: *Environment Canterbury*

Date: *4/08/2009*

NOTE: This Agreement Form may be amended only by the person interviewed, or by the commissioning organisation with the authority of the person interviewed. Any amendment must be registered with the commissioning organisation.

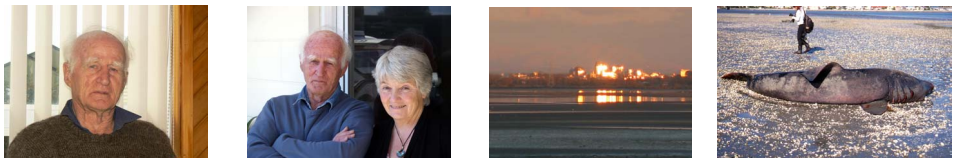

This Agreement Form is approved by the National Oral History Association of New Zealand.

Interviewee Information FormProject: **Avon Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Oral History Project**

Hours recorded: 2 hours 34 minutes

Dates recorded: 3 and 5 June 2009

Name	Charles Leslie Batcheler (Les)
Address	182c Rockinghorse Road, Southshore, Christchurch
Phone number	388-2012
Date / Place of birth	23 September 1933, Oamaru
Ethnic origin	European (Scottish ancestry)
Iwi / Hapu	
Marae / Village	
Father's name	Robert John Batcheler (Jack)
Father's DOB/ DOD	1913-1972
Father's occupation	Butcher's apprentice, bacon curer, rabbitier, freezing worker
Mother's maiden name	Isabella Frances (surname confidential information)
Mother's DOB/ DOD	Died August 1999, aged 84
Mother's occupation	Seamstress
Sisters (DOB, DOD)	Shirley Anne (31 March 1935-)
Brothers (DOB, DOD)	Robert (Bob) Francis (15 September 1932-) Ian Percival (14 April 1937-)
Education	Oamaru South School; Kurow District High School; Waitaki Boys High School, 1947?; Kings High School, Dunedin, 1948-1950 Otago University 1952; Victoria University, Wellington, B.Sc. 1953-55; Oxford University, England, MA (Forestry) 1956-58 Majored in Botany, Zoology, Forestry.
Employment	1951-1988 NZ Forestry Service/Forestry Research Institute at Wellington, Rangiora, Ilam 1988-1992 Self employed, Sales of computer equipment for education market
Community Work	Active both in the Southshore Residents' Association and the Christchurch Estuary Association (formerly Combined Estuary Association)
Politics	Preferred political view, ACT Party. Vote dependant on issues each election.

Religion	Agnostic
Lived at	Kurow; Oamaru; Dunedin 1948-1950; Wellington; Oxford (England), 1956-58; Whitemans Valley, Wellington 1959-1968. Christchurch since 1968: Papanui; Southshore, 1992-
Spouse/Partner (DOB,DOD)	1. Sheila Rosemary Pilditch 2. Dorothy Gardiner
Spouse/Partner Place of birth	2. Kirkcaldy, Fife,Scotland
Marriage date	1. 1958 2. 1984
Children (DOB)	Peter (1959); Alison (1961); Michael (1964) Dorothy's children: Susan (1964); Roy (1967); Pam (1970)
Health	Needs to manage various health concerns
Additional Material	<p>Stages in the Construction of the Ocean Pipeline (2).doc</p>   <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>Filename:</p> <p>(a) P1040001.TIF (Les Batcheler)</p> <p>(b) _A245978.tif (Les and Dorothy)</p> <p>(c) 100_0008.JPG (Across the estuary to the city from Les and Dorothy's house)</p> <p>(d) bask shk.jpg (Photo of dead basking shark caught in estuary. Showing evidence of red gill disease due to polluted water.)</p> <p>(e) IMG_0061.JPG (see (c) above)</p> <p>All files located in Les Batcheler folder</p> </div>
Technical report	Some level boosting required in reproduction to enhance so that both voices for listening similar.
Equipment used	Fostex FR-2LE Digital Memory Recorder, 2 lapel microphones, Compact flash, BWF files: 48 kHz, 24 bit
Summary	<p>Grew up in North Otago and studied at Otago, Victoria and Oxford Universities, graduating B.Sc and MA (Forestry). Had long career as scientist in the NZ Forest Service and Forest Research Institute, 1951-1988, including work on deer censuses and possum control.</p> <p>Active in both the Southshore Neighbourhood Committee and the Combined Estuary Association, he took a key role in the Association's successful challenge to Christchurch City Council's plan to continue discharging treated wastewater into the Avon-Heathcote Estuary.</p>

	<p>Jointly edited the Association's evidence to the Estuary Discharge Hearings as <i>In defence of the Avon-Heathcote Estuary</i>, 2002. Contributed to <i>Sand dunes to suburb ... the history, people and environment of Southshore</i>, 2006.</p> <p>Married with a blended family of 6 adult children, he and his wife live beside the Estuary at Southshore, Christchurch.</p>
Interviewer	Michelle Bradley
Abstracter	Barbara Moorhouse

Avon Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Oral History Project

Interview 4.

Les Batcheler: Session 1 of 3.



Interviewee: Charles Leslie Batcheler (Les)

Date: 3 June 2009

Duration: 65:52

Recorded at: Les and Dorothy's home, 182c Rockinghorse Road, Southshore, Christchurch

Interviewer: Michelle Bradley

Abstracter: Barbara Moorhouse

Recording equipment: Fostex FR-2LE Digital Memory Recorder, 2 lapel microphones, Compact flash, BWF files: 48 kHz, 24 bit

- 0.00.00 Recording identification and interview introduction.
- 0.00.45 Born 23 September 1933.
Explains named after uncle who died from effects of WW1 gas poisoning.
Explains French origin of the name BATCHELER.
- 0.02.40 Mother ISABELLA FRANCES CAWLEY (ELLA), born OAMARU 1914. Died 1999.
Father ROBERT JOHN BATCHELER (JACK), born SOUTHLAND 1913. Died 1972.
- 0.04.00 Father started work in 1920s Depression as butcher's assistant at WAITAKI HYDRO VILLAGE. Describes.
From about 1935 worked as BACON CURER in OAMARU for Jimmy FRASER until Fraser gave Jack's truck to ARMY during heavy vehicle call-up in 1938. Describes.
Worked at PUKEURI FREEZING WORKS until "grand slug-up" with co-worker. Describes.
Went RABBITING on WAITAKI RIVER, where children grew up in a caravan parents had built at Weston. Describes.
- 0.07.44 When living up WAITAKI, children boarded at WAITAKI BOYS and WAITAKI GIRLS HIGH SCHOOLS [in OAMARU]. Explains. Reference: KUROW.
IAN too young, taught by CORRESPONDENCE instead, regrets didn't go to good school. Explains.
- 0.08.52 When RABBIT CONTROL made illegal in 1948, parents moved caravan to TAHUNA PARK Motor Camp, DUNEDIN. Describes.
Mentions finished his schooling at KINGS HIGH SCHOOL, South Dunedin.
- 0.09.25 WAITAKI BOYS HIGH SCHOOL's high calibre. Describes. Reference: Rector FRANK MILNER.
- 0.10.30 Further explanation of truck being commandeered by ARMY in 1938.
Parents pulled caravan with Model A Ford. Explains.
- 0.11.05 Gives siblings names, ROBERT FRANK, SHIRLEY ANNE, IAN PERCIVAL, and dates of birth.

- 0.11.50 Mother was SEAMSTRESS for BULLEIDS fashion and clothing shop, OAMARU. Describes.
She helped father with RABBITING and preparing skins. Describes.
- 0.13.18 Dad roughneck but good man, worked well with mother, marriage succeeded. Describes.
Father's huge strength and powerful physique. Describes.
Once lifted a 450lb pig carcass onto a truck. Describes.
- 0.15.48 Regrets not enough money for him to learn violin and piano. Reflects.
- 0.16.32 TAHUNA PARK MOTOR CAMP, DUNEDIN, where lived for 3 years from 1948, was a place for the homeless in post war [housing shortage]. Describes.
- 0.17.15 Did well at KINGS HIGH SCHOOL, was in First Fifteen and First Eleven. Describes. Reference: Rugby, Cricket, Athletics, Running.
Outlines location of TAHUNA in DUNEDIN.
Describes visits to Otago Peninsula dairy farm where his friend IAN ROBERTSON lived.
- 0.19.46 Left school at 16 and attracted to NZ FOREST SERVICE by "magic" recruiting poster at Vocational Guidance office. Describes WALL POSTER.
- 0.21.58 Successful interview in Wellington for one of 18 Technical Trainee positions. Reference: 1951 Waterfront Strike. [Creaking noise of chair]
Technical trainees were trained to be forest rangers. Explains.
NZ FOREST SERVICE needed replacements for men lost in WW2 and for planting programme to replace knocked down native bush. Explains.
- 0.23.45 Spent one year as trainee at BALMORAL and ASHLEY FORESTS. Outlines.
Vacation work on NATIONAL FOREST SURVEY of remaining indigenous forest. Reference: MANGARAKAU INLET in NORTH-WEST NELSON. Outlines.
Explains work of measuring and recording acre lots of vegetation.
- 0.25.02 A year's study at OTAGO UNIVERSITY, Dunedin, but made a "pig's ear" of the experience and missed BOTANY. Describes.
Service shifted him to VICTORIA UNIVERSITY, Wellington where he completed B.Sc. Outlines.
Passion was zoology, began to enjoy botany. Reflects.
Recalls charismatic Zoology professor, PROF. RICHARDSON.
- 0.28.45 Went without permission on several months' field trip with American biologist THANE RINEY, measuring [effect of deer on] growth rates of trees. Describes. Reference: DEER; HARPER RIVER; COBB [RIVER].
Blasted by authorities on return in April 1956 because had missed a posting to Canberra Forestry School. Describes. Reference: ALICK LINDSAY POOLE.
- 0.31.36 Arrangements made to send him to St Johns College, OXFORD UNIVERSITY. Describes.
Worked at WAIPA SAWMILL before leaving in September 1956 for FORESTRY SCHOOL at OXFORD. Outlines.
Finished degree July 1958 and instructed by POOLE to learn about DEER in GERMANY. Explains.
- 0.33.25 Went to HANNOVERSCH MUNDEN, near Cassel. Outlines.
Mentions now married to SHEILA.
Describes horror of war damaged towns and infrastructure. Reference: AACHEN; COLOGNE CATHEDRAL; CASSEL; RUHR DAMS.
After 2 months [studying aging of RED] DEER in GERMANY, returned to Britain.

- 0.37.38 Met SHEILA [PILDITCH] while student, married in July 1958 and travelled to New Zealand on ship RANGITIKI. Outlines.
Chairman of Passengers' Committee, with privileges such as dining at Captain's table. Describes. Reference: Deck tennis.
Mentions first child PETER conceived on the voyage, born December 1959.
- 0.39.28 Housing difficult to find on return, lived briefly PORIRUA and UPPER HUTT, and 2 years at WHITEMANS VALLEY. Describes.
- 0.40.38 Worked to make extra money, packing veterinary drench powder and metallic gold flake into packets, in addition to DEER RESEARCH work in inland Nelson. Describes. Reference: LAKE ROTOITI.
- 0.43.05 SHEILA adapted well to New Zealand life. Children were: PETER born 1959, ALISON born 1961, MICHAEL born 1964. Outlines.
- 0.43.36 Mentions hands off management style of boss, JACK HOLLOWAY.
Worked on how to estimate deer numbers, up TRAVERS RIVER, Nelson, 1962-66. Describes. Reference: CHRIS CHRISTIE; COLIN CLARKE.
Learning how to estimate numbers vital for DEER CONTROL. Explains.
Reference: THANE RINEY's methodology.
- 0.46.47 In 1967 found main damage to landscape was from CLIMATE CHANGE rather than deer, although this rubbished by JACK HOLLOWAY. Describes.
Stopping of DEER CONTROL was the important result from finding that erosion not due to animals. Explains.
Also worked on bionomics of ALPINE GRASSHOPPER populations. Reference: WAIRAU SURVEY. Outlines.
Jack Holloway's later acceptance of climate change. Outlines.
- 0.50.00 Worked on finding control methods for those areas where DEER still a problem. Explains.
Experimented with 1080 POISON which killed deer, but also sheep, so did further work on TOXICOLOGY of 1080. Describes.
His neighbour DOROTHY, a technician, joined him on 1080 toxicology problem. Describes.
- 0.52.30 Regards DEER as beautiful and valuable if you have control. Outlines.
CHRIS CHALLIES' measuring work in SOUTH WESTLAND showed helicopter operations achieved 80% reduction in 2 years. Describes.
Reduction recognised by Director General PRIESTLEY THOMPSON: "For the first time we have got control and we have shown we have got control." Outlines.
Les and DOROTHY married in 1982.
- 0.55.03 Outlines work on POSSUM CONTROL, much tougher opponent than deer. Reference: BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS.
- 0.55.42 FOREST SERVICE a good outfit to work for, but finished up in 1988. Outlines
Analyses government economic policies from 1972 onwards to explain PUBLIC SERVICE CUTS of late eighties. Details.
Was made redundant because of age, but ready to go, went into selling computers and accessory equipment. Describes. Reference: ANDY PEARCE.
- 1.00.14 DOROTHY's children: Susan, Roy, Pamela. Outlines.

- 1.00.36 Shifted south in 1968 when JACK HOLLOWAY consolidated his division at RANGIORA. Outlines. Reference: Wahine storm.
Mentions commuted from CHRISTCHURCH for about 15 years.
About 1978 or 1980 FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE was brought in from Rangiora to consolidate with new FORESTRY SCHOOL at CANTERBURY UNIVERSITY. Describes.
Mentions original Forestry School at Canterbury which closed in 1930s Depression.
- 1.02.55 Forestry now an amalgam of agriculture and forestry. FOREST RESEARCH INSTITUTE now at LANDCARE at LINCOLN, fragmented. Explains.
- 1.03.21 Concerned about the loathing for EXOTICS, and Helen Clark's refusal to allow indigenous BEECH LOGGING. Reflects.
Survival of INDIGENOUS FORESTRY would be based on beech rather than slower growing podocarps. Outlines.
HELEN CLARK swayed by Auckland voting public of GREENIES, who knew nothing about forestry, but were against indigenous logging. Explains.
- 1.05.07 His wish would be to manage and replant INDIGENOUS FORESTS, both beech and podocarp. Reflects.
- 1.05.52 End of session one.

Avon Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Oral History Project

Interview 4.

Les Batcheler: Session 2 of 3.



Interviewee: Charles Leslie Batcheler (Les)

Date: 5 June 2009

Duration: 54:35

Recorded at: Les and Dorothy's home, 182c Rockinghorse Road, Southshore, Christchurch

Interviewer: Michelle Bradley

Abstracter: Barbara Moorhouse

Recording equipment: Fostex FR-2LE Digital Memory Recorder, 2 lapel microphones, Compact flash, BWF files: 48 kHz, 24 bit

- 0.00.00 Recording identification and interview introduction.
- 0.01.49 Defines boundary between SOUTH BRIGHTON and SOUTHSORE as CASPIAN STREET.
- 0.02.07 Connection with Estuary began with SAILING, after arrived in Christchurch in 1968. Outlines. Reference: Dinghy; Moth; Paper Tiger catamaran. Describes the experience of competitive sailing, which he began when nearly 60.
- 0.04.07 Learnt from older sailors that SEA LETTUCE increasing and deduced this caused by increase in AMMONIA. Explains. Reference: MOUNT PLEASANT YACHT CLUB.
Estuary fishers told him of declining FISH numbers and he found from international literature that ammonia lethal to fish. Explains. Reference: WALLY CLARK.
Realised significance of ammonia as critical problem for the Estuary. Outlines.
- 0.06.30 Discusses various names of ESTUARY ASSOCIATION. Reference: COMBINED ESTUARY ASSOCIATION; CHRISTCHURCH ESTUARY ASSOCIATION.
- 0.07.34 In late 1990s ENVIRONMENT CANTERBURY asked for ESTUARY ASSOCIATION volunteers to sample Estuary water, so became involved. Describes.
[Environment Canterbury's] statutory and environmental health reasons for WATER SAMPLING. Explains. Reference: AMMONIA; METALS; BACTERIA; classification for RECREATIONAL USE.
Mentions sampling was done during SWIMMING season, November-February.
- 0.09.20 Outlines the SAMPLING PROCESS.
Analysed results on his computer and found AMMONIA concentration has reduced in Estuary since 1999. Outlines.
- 0.10.20 [CHRISTCHURCH] CITY COUNCIL's interest was in legal compliance for DISCHARGE from their SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANT rather than in the Estuary itself. Explains.
Began talking with them and thinks [Estuary Association's] Submissions became respected. Outlines.

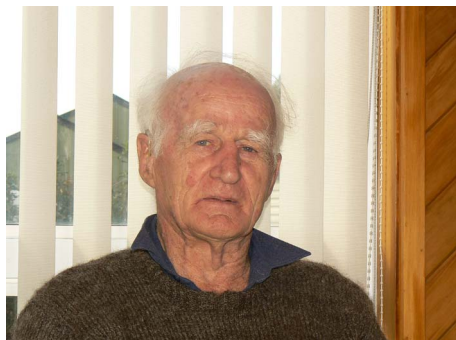
- 0.11.08 1996 CITY COUNCIL started process to renew their right to discharge effluent into the estuary before its 2001 expiry. Explains. Reference: RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT 1991.
Attended all the [2001] Hearings. Describes.
Commissioners' names and expertise. Outlines. Reference: ED WYLIE; JIM BRADLEY; [ROIMATA KIRIKIRI; A.J. GILMOUR].
Commissioners decided that [ESTUARY ASSOCIATION] had won the day. Outlines.
- 0.14.00 Names of those who gave evidence [at the Hearings]: [KEVIN] O'CONNOR; [WALLY] CLARK; BERNIE HANSEN; ALEX DRYSDALE; CHRISSIE WILLIAMS; VIVIENNE BURROWS; [IAN WOOD, named at 0.17.03]
Explains that *In defence of the Avon-Heathcote Estuary* (2002) is a summary from the hearings, put together by himself and Kevin O'Connor.
- 0.15.02 RUTH DYSON's invitation to use her Party Rooms for a public meeting. Describes.
He chaired meeting as Chair of ESTUARY ASSOCIATION, attended by many prominent people. Describes.
- 0.17.15 Effect of the AMMONIA CONCENTRATIONS exacerbated by management decision to discharge on the EBB TIDE. Explains. Reference: Professor GEORGE KNOX; [ALLAN KILNER].
- 0.19.30 Fisherman PETER NEAL's experience of disappearance of FISH and SHRIMP from 1974. Describes.
Evidence of high concentration of AMMONIA on ebb tide was instrumental in proving case against it. Outlines.
- 0.21.48 Now have good statistical evidence that AMMONIA trending down. Outlines
Explains the method he figured out to analyse the content from minute quantities of water.
- 0.23.29 Co-operative relationship with MIKE BOURKE, Manager of SEWAGE PLANT. Describes.
CHRIS BATHURST's part in realising effluent a good source of BIOFUEL. Outlines.
CITY COUNCIL had digested AMMONIA from BROMLEY PLANT for some years to power Burwood and Christchurch Hospitals. Describes.
- 0.26.06 [In 2002] Hearing Commissioners gave CITY COUNCIL 5 years to organise alternative form of discharge. Explains.
Considered options of steel sided DRAIN, MICROTUNNELLING and PIPELINE to OCEAN Describes.
- 0.27.55 When on WASTEWATER WORKING PARTY his preference was for OCEAN OUTFALL. Describes. Reference: AGRICULTURAL [LAND DISPOSAL] [Wastewater Working Party established 1996; reported 2000]
NGAI TAHU representatives acknowledged [Ocean outfall] inevitable. Outlines. Reference: RAKIIHIA TAU; ELIZABETH CUNNINGHAM.
- 0.30.16 Since the PIPELINE decision, the project has proceeded well for the people of SOUTH BRIGHTON and SOUTHSHORE. Reference: AUDIT GROUP.
- 0.31.15 [Future of the CHRISTCHURCH ESTUARY ASSOCIATION]
[AVON-HEATHCOTE ESTUARY IHUTAI] TRUST has advantage of funding from CITY COUNCIL, but Estuary Association never funded. Explains.
Estuary not big enough for 2 organisations, so thinks Estuary Association should melt away. Reflects.
Mentions some in Estuary Association want to keep going.
Mentions current chair is MURRAY SIM. Les was chairman from about 1998-2003.

- 0.33.10 Involved with formation of AVON-HEATHCOTE ESTUARY IHUTAI TRUST because saw need for broad base association to argue the public case. Outlines. Public management model not good for problem-solving. Explains. Reference: AMMONIA.
Needed a new organisation, with access to funds and to expertise to carry out studies. Outlines.
Mentions ISLAY MARSDEN's work with STUDENT RESEARCHERS has produced good information about the Estuary.
- 0.36.09 Formation of the TRUST came from dissatisfaction with the status quo. Describes intervening at a CITY COUNCIL committee meeting to put several points so that councillors knew something had to change.
A case of collaboration rather than competition. Explains.
Mentions DENIS O'ROURKE as one who "got stung", but came round in the finish.
- 0.37.50 Formation took about 5 years of meetings and headbashing. Outlines. Reference: MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING.
A Subcommittee [AVON-HEATHCOTE ESTUARY IHUTAI WORKING GROUP] decided that a Trust was the format to give legal protection and access to council funding. Explains. Reference: CHRISSIE WILLIAMS; ALEX DRYSDALE.
Recalls City Councillor quoting an ESTUARY ASSOCIATION catch phrase: Solution to pollution is dilution.
Mentions Alex DRYSDALE as first and current chairman.
- 0.41.40 TRUST's funding by CITY COUNCIL both its strength and weakness. Explains. Disappointed that people take public money for public service. Reflects.
- 0.43.09 INTEGRATED ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT approach useful if acted on, but good management existed before the phrase coined. Outlines. Reference: FOREST SERVICE.
Mentions a number of LEGISLATIVE ACTS which affect the Estuary.
- 0.45.36 Current review of the RESOURCE MANAGEMENT ACT mostly about getting more pylons across farms to service AUCKLAND with electricity. Explains.
- 0.46.40 The Trust's MANAGEMENT PLAN not a bad model for a volunteer body. Outlines.
- 0.47.25 Decision to go ahead with PIPELINE is highpoint of his involvement with Estuary. Outlines.
Describes Christchurch's EFFLUENT DISPOSAL from 1880s until 1962 upgrade of BROMLEY SEWAGE TREATMENT WORKS. Reference: NIGHTCARTS; AVON RIVER; LINWOOD PADDOCKS; SEA LETTUCE.
Recalls his anger, about 1999, when City Council's lawyer ANTHONY HEARN, declared that BROMLEY's 1962? Resource Consent should persist in perpetuity.
- 0.52.19 Wants to continue WATER QUALITY SAMPLING for 2 more years to make a full 10 years. Outlines.
- 0.53.10 Imagines his great grand children visiting the Estuary in 2020 will be SWIMMING and SAILING. Reflects.
Gives reasons for getting it cleaned up, now.
- 0.54.33 End of session two.

Avon Heathcote Estuary Ihutai Oral History Project

Interview 4.

Les Batcheler: Session 3 of 3.



Interviewee: Charles Leslie Batcheler (Les)

Date: 5 June 2009

Duration: 33:59

Recorded at: 182c Rockinghorse Road, Southshore, Christchurch

Interviewer: Michelle Bradley

Abstracter: Barbara Moorhouse

Recording equipment: Fostex FR-2LE Digital Memory Recorder, 2 lapel microphones, Compact flash, BWF files: 48 kHz, 24 bit

- 0.00.00 Recording identification and interview introduction.
- 0.01.05 Reasons for moving from PAPANUI to SOUTHSORE in retirement in 1992. Explains. Mentions DOROTHY still working, long commute to LINCOLN.
- 0.03.40 Spent his time writing, reading and walking. Outlines. Was still doing COMPUTER MODELLING on density functions, trying to solve the theory of PROBABILITY DISTRIBUTION. Details. Reference: SAMPLE PLOTS.
- 0.06.15 Describes view of land, sea, mountains from his home near end of ROCKINGHORSE ROAD. Connection with area has mellowed. Reflects.
- 0.07.30 Early involvement with SOUTHSORE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION when presented their case in Resource Consent case over height of the SAND DUNES. Describes. Reference: TSUNAMI; DEVELOPERS.
- 0.08.30 Chaired SOUTHSORE RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION from about 1998 to about 2004. Outlines. His determination to PROTECT the LANDSCAPE and BIOLOGY, rest of Christchurch didn't give toss about Southshore or Estuary. Reflects. 1992 STORM when seawater on ROCKINGHORSE ROAD alerted people for need for protection. Outlines. Buildings intruding on the shoreline. Describes. Reference: Sir TIPENE O'REGAN. Need to tread lightly on vulnerable landscape. Reflects.
- 0.11.57 Was more abuse of the SPIT 40 years back. Outlines. Reference: MOTORBIKE RACING. Recalls meeting elderly man who thought Spit should be knocked flat; if developed for HOUSING, could pay for sewage PIPELINE. Describes. Foresees demand for increased BUILDING DENSITY on Spit with rising population. Reflects. Reflects on slowly RISING SEA LEVELS and other risks such as EARTHQUAKE. Reference: TSUNAMI.

- 0.15.16 More on JACK HOLLOWAY's response on CLIMATE CHANGE [discussed in Session One 0.46.47]
Climate change is happening, as he saw in the 1960s Outlines.
Recalls Jack's opposition to his evidence of change.
Jack's change of mind on his 1973 valedictory trip to the OLIVINE RANGE, when he saw how the landscape had changed since last there in 1930s. Describes.
Reference: LANDS AND SURVEY.
- 0.18.26 Do most of their SHOPPING in NEW BRIGHTON from sense of community loyalty, normally by car, sometimes bus. Outlines.
- 0.19.25 Local landscape has been very stable since his arrival in 1992. Outlines.
PIPELINE proposal has saved metropolitan argument between sewage treatment engineers wanting to dispose of waste and people wanting to protect Estuary.
Reflects.
- 0.20.57 Main recreation is WALKING after coronary episodes stopped SQUASH.
Outlines.
Series of CORONARY operations. Outlines.
- 0.22.25 SOUTHSHORE HISTORY GROUP's book *Sand dunes to suburb* initiated by DON ROWLANDS. Describes.
Les wrote on prehistory MAORI and connecting past actions to today's landscape. Explains. Reference: WAIMAKARIRI; MOA.
- 0.24.30 Mentions DISCHARGING EFFLUENT as most ill founded thing done to Estuary.
Has no other wishes for Estuary's care once water quality improved.
- 0.25.15 Resolving the EFFLUENT DISCHARGE issue really made his day. Reflects.
Shattering moment when DENIS O'ROURKE announced [City Council] decision to build a PIPELINE. Describes.
Celebration afterwards with [KEVIN] O'CONNOR. Outlines.
- 0.28.22 Critical of people digging up PIPI and TUATUA with garden forks. Describes.
Concerned about ASIAN IMMIGRANTS taking more than the legal SHELLFISH take. Describes. Reference: MAORI.
- 0.30.44 SUNRISE and SUNSET are magic [times] for living near the Estuary.
Describes the SPIT on a clear day with pure lucent blue sky.
Describes photograph taken off their balcony with "magic view" of city high-rise buildings illuminated by sunrise.
- 0.33.10 Would like to make final mention of PETER NEAL's experience with WILDLIFE, ORNITHOLOGY, SHELLFISH. Outlines.
- 033.43 Concluding remarks.
- 0.33.59 End of interview.

Stages in the Process towards the Ocean Pipeline

1. Consent for continuing discharge of treated sewage effluent to the estuary was about to run out and the Resource Management Act required CCC to reapply for a further consent period.

Expired 2000. Mid 1990's City Council began to explore options, including: continued discharge to Estuary; Pipeline to Ocean; land based discharge.

2. The Waste Water Working Party was convened 1997 with about 15 members and met at intervals over a period of about 2 years. Their Brief was to discuss Issues and Options. Many options were considered. Construction of an ocean pipeline came out as a favoured option, but unanimous agreement was not reached. Made recommendation for Ocean Pipeline in 2000.
3. December 2000 City Council decided not to adopt Waste Water Working Party recommendations. CCC applied for consent to discharge for a further 35 years. Submissions were called for and about 4,500 submissions were received. (The Christchurch Press reported that more than over two thousand submissions had been made). The Majority opposing the continued discharge.
4. Around this time the Christ church Estuary Association (CEA), along with Environment Canterbury (Regional Council), started sampling the estuary as part of the summer sampling of swimming beaches programme, with volunteers taking the samples. Les started gathering the data on not only bug counts in the water but also ammonia levels. Also, one day during each 4 months summer season, in addition to the regular samples taken one hour after high tide, additional samples were taken throughout the tide cycle.
5. CEA published a book, "In defence of the Avon-Heathcote estuary", copies of which were distributed to each City Councillor and most libraries.

Published 2002; edited by Les Batcheler and Kevin O'Connor, 138 leaves. Title: Collected and revised submissions presented by members and associates of the Christchurch Estuary Association as evidence to the Commission appointed by the Canterbury Regional Council to consider applications by the Christchurch City Council to continue for a further 15 years the discharge of effluent from the Wastewater Treatment to the Avon-Heathcote Estuary.

6. Hearings (September – December 2001) to consider the submissions were held with four commissioners appointed by ECan. Three weeks of hearings initially, followed by a recess, then a further week. CEA was the main opponent along with many others.
7. May 2002 Commissioners found against the City Council's application to discharge for 35 years. They allowed for 5 years discharge in order to enable CCC to make alternative unspecified arrangements. The pipeline was not suggested as it was outside the brief, but most people considered that was the most practical solution.
8. CCC did not accept the decision and took the matter to the Environment court – the Environment court ruled against the council.
9. The council still did not accept this so called for three "Overseas Experts" to give their opinion. Key interested parties like Les and Kevin were allowed to attend this meeting but had no speaking rights. The three experts agreed that the ocean pipeline was the way to go.
10. At a meeting of the City Council on 13 September 2002, Dennis O'Rourke, the main Councillor opposing the pipeline, made a statement that "with all the evidence taken into account the council had decided to build a pipeline to discharge the effluent directly to the ocean instead of through the Estuary".

11. A series of meetings were set up at Mt Pleasant Community centre attended by City Council engineers, representatives from ECan, CEA and other stakeholders, representatives from local residents associations and water sports clubs etc. to reach agreement on conditions of discharge in the interim and a timeline for the various stages for the pipeline ie. Best case, expected and worst case scenarios.
12. Before details of the pipeline contract could be finalised, computer simulation models were prepared using data gathered from wave height monitors and current direction studies. Then CCC called for submission from experts and the public, regarding their opinion on the length of the pipeline, whether it should be 2 km or 3 km out beyond the mean high water level. From these hearings it was decided that although 2km seemed to be enough according to the computer modelling, that 3 km was preferred, to allow a margin to ensure there would be no need to extend it further at a later date if it was found that effluent was washing back on the swimming beaches. Other aspects of construction regarding the method of laying the pipe across the estuary to minimise environmental damage were debated, and minimisation of inconvenience to nearby residents was taken into account. (c. 2003 – 4, city council decision for 3km length July 2004, Resource Consent December 2004 (?))
13. Contracts for construction of the pipeline and pump station were signed (September 2006) and a Discharge Audit Group was set up representatives from interested communities, monitoring the quality of discharge into the estuary and ensuring that CCC were following all conditions stipulated by the Commissioners.
<http://www.ccc.govt.nz/WasterWater/TreatmenPlant/DischargeConsentMonitoring.asp>
14. Publication of an Ocean Outfall newsletter was initiated to inform the general public of plans and progress.
15. Pipeline Construction started. May 2007 tunnelling machine began work on the Estuary section. November 2007 ocean section reported “forging ahead.” Initially it progressed very well, however during the construction of the ocean section, many difficulties were encountered. Weld cracking in the early stages requiring repair and re-laying of the first section. Injury to a worker resulting in loss of a leg and crushing of the other. Two workers were drowned when a boat capsized on return to Lyttleton. (October 2008) On another occasion nine people fell into the sea when their boat capsized however they were all rescued. The construction process had serious delays due to stormy weather.
16. The pipeline is expected to be commissioned by November 2009

Notes provided by Les and Dorothy Batcheler June 2009
Some additional dates and detail provided by Barbara Moorhouse
from generally available information sources
Edited by Michelle Bradley