

LUNCH £90,000 HOME SCHEME FOR AGED



Selwyn Oaks, a hospital for frail ambulant, is to be established at Papakura. Initially it will have 30 beds, for old folk from South Auckland who are past the stage when they can look after themselves in pensioner flats; it will be built in Youngs Road, practically on the border of Papakura and Manukau. It will, when completed, serve the whole South Auckland area between Manurewa and Meremere, including the Franklin County.

The Lions Club of Papakura is this week launching an appeal to raise £20,000 for the project. That amount will be swollen by a Government subsidy to £90,000. The club, in association with the Selwyn Foundation has already secured a site overlooking Papakura's future lake playground in the Pahurebure Inlet. The home will be inter-denominational.

Leading citizens of Papakura have been quietly organizing for two years in the preliminary stages of the project.

The first stage will provide 30 beds - some for single women and men and a few for married couples. The kitchen dining room, and lounge facilities will be large enough for another 30 beds without any alterations.

Provision will be made for a staff of six, with quarters

Above left: Left to right; Wyn Yardley, Ted Lees, Bill Watt (President Elect.) Jim Kelly, Sam Hunter, at the meeting held at the Blue Room last week.

Below: Left to right; Cliff Colquhoun, Stan McCauliffe, Leon Ducker, Barry Thrupp, President, Ted Lees (Past president).

for matron and sub-matron. Furnishings will cost £7000. A programme has been drawn up for an intensive funds appeal to get the necessary £20,000 to secure a Government subsidy of £72,000.

Arrangements are being made for a personal telephone appeal to everyone between Papakura and Mercer under the biggest scheme of its kind ever launched in South Auckland.

Sixteen thousand calls will be made over a four night period beginning on June 19. After promises have been received, follow-up letters will go out.

Donation boxes will be set up at shops in every town and there will be a headquarters' but established opposite Lees Brothers, on the Great South Road. A barometer there will record progressively the amount raised in both pounds and dollars.

This month Papakura, Manurewa and the whole of South Auckland are asked to think and speak the slogan "Selwyns Oaks" and act accordingly to make it a passport to happiness for old people in need of care and comfort. Each contributor can give according to his or her means.

**WATCH FOR RIBBON
SELWYN OAKS FEATURE
PUBLISHED
ON THURSDAY
MINISTER SAYS
DRIVING BEING INVESTIGATED**

The Minister said suggestions had been made that drivers licences should be issued to the teenage group only for working hours. However, the general manager of the Auckland Automobile Association said the greatest danger came from confident young drivers who had had a licence for two years.



Papakura still Top Borough for New house building

Papakura continues to be the whole Auckland Metropolitan area month after month with new house building far as boroughs are concerned. During March, the month for which statistics available, permits for houses of a total value of 499, were issued by Papakura. This is a far more than for the combined local body areas, including Manukau City on the North Shore.

Carp Petition to house

This week a petition signed by more than 20,000 people is being presented by CARP to Parliament. It is on behalf of all the South Island branches of the campaign, against rising prices.

A meeting will be held on June 11 in the Auckland Town Hall. This is a protest following on the price rise for sugar.

FRANKLING M.P. OPENS COWSHED

This wasn't a cock party. It was a cow party but champagne served to all. 50 people attended the opening of Mr. K. N. Cowshed.



Selwyn Oaks

Celebrating 50 years

19 December 2020

The 1960's

In the 1960s, the Lees name became synonymous with the Papakura site, now known as Selwyn Oaks.

Ted, in particular, was the driving force behind the village scheme and many of the community initiatives that followed as a result. A returned serviceman who fully embraced the Kiwi 'can do mentality', he was eager to contribute his energies to the building of a modern post-war New Zealand.

Concerned that society was not doing enough for its older people, Ted had a vision of a 'senior citizens village' in Papakura. Therefore, on 10 July 1962, he convened a meeting with local business and church representatives to discuss the possibility of establishing such a community. At this meeting, it was felt that the project should come under the auspices of a reputable aged care association. So, a deputation under Ted approached the founder of Selwyn Village – Anglican City Missioner and Selwyn Village Director, Canon Douglas Caswell – and the connection with Selwyn began.

It was on Canon Caswell's first visit to the proposed site that he looked around at the trees and said: *'You must call this place Selwyn Oaks'*.

Ted realised that he would require local support in order to raise the substantial funds needed to add to any Government subsidy. As the president of Papakura Lions Club, he urged them to adopt his village scheme as a project.

This they did and, working in partnership with Selwyn, provided the local impetus



Ted & Rowley Lees

Ted & Rowley Lees



Canon Caswell meets leaders of the Papakura Lions (Messrs Lees and Thrupp) on the Selwyn Oaks site.

F.D.
DISTRICT
SOCIETY INC.

Great Need For Selwyn Oaks

One of the most significant points of the Selwyn Oaks proposal is that it is a South Auckland venture.

The Papakura Lions Club must be congratulated for undertaking to put the idea into practice and it has taken almost four years of planning and dozens of committee meetings to bring the project to its present stage.

The selection of Papakura for the site is ideal, because of its central position and an area of more than two acres, which is behind Lees Industries, Ltd, on the Great South Road, with access from Young's Road.

There is great need for a home for the aged such as Selwyn Oaks—a need that is sorely felt throughout New Zealand and the Lions club is to be congratulated that its members have been prepared to spend so much time to promote the scheme.

Before the building, which will be started very soon, is ready for occupancy applications for residency will be called for. Grounds for application are simple. Aged citizens, who can no longer look after themselves, who need bathing, cooking for and who need daily medical care, will be eligible.

The home will be interdenominational and applications will be perused by a selection committee so that the need for assistance can be gauged.

The need in South Auckland for this type of hospital is obvious from investigations already made. The Selwyn Oaks proposal is the answer to many a prayer of a needy old citizen.

The present arrangements have the blessings of the civil, business and Church leaders of the whole area, which is sufficient guarantee the scheme will cope with the needs for which it is being promoted.

Last week the Gazette was the first to announce the news that a start had been made toward making Selwyn Oaks home for the aged a reality when preparation for the levelling of the grounds for the builders was begun. This week we include photographs of the work and give some background to the venture.



Morning tea is served

Start Made On Selwyn Oaks

The first step toward the realisation of the Selwyn Oaks home for the aged was taken on Saturday when about 40 Papakura Lions Club members downed their coats and made a start on the preparation of levelling the grounds for the builders.

fences will be sorted and sold, the proceeds going to swell the funds for the project.

Working bees will continue each week to get the site ready for the builders. The club has everything well organised with a member responsible for each section of the job.

It is an ideal area overlooking Pahurehure Inlet, which is later to be developed into an aquatic playground. The Lions Club is well on the way to raising \$40,000 and the whole project with Government subsidy is estimated to cost \$200,000.

job means a removal of some trees but this does not include the old oak and native trees. It is proposed to make the wide entrance and the roadway a beauty spot. The site itself is well sheltered, will get the sun all day and is ideal for its objective.

It is proposed to make the hospital site into a parklike area and it will be available for the use of the residents. An old house on the site is being pulled down and much of the material, which is in excellent condition, together with that from sheds and

The Selwyn Oaks site is of about two acres and Saturday's efforts were concentrated with the aid of tractors, bulldozers and front end loaders, on making a roadway from Great South Rd, through the hospital site, a distance of about 150 yards.

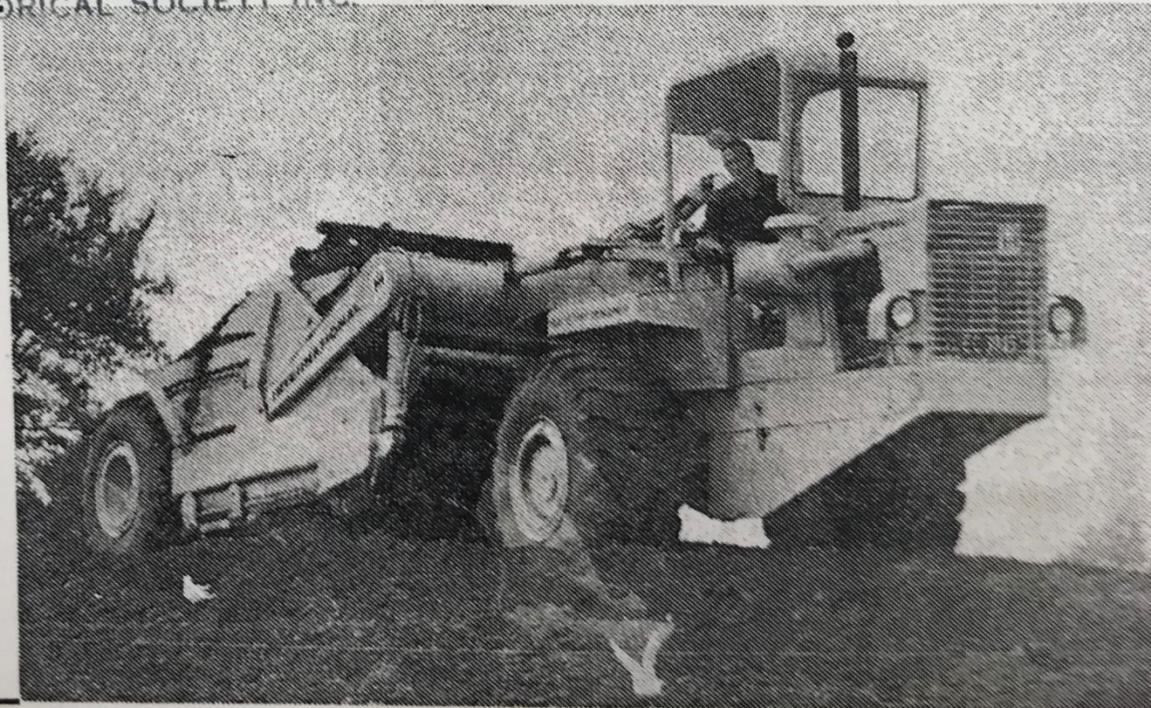
Actually, the workers have two projects in view. One is the clearing up of the hospital site which has a frontage to the Great South Rd and the other is to prepare the Selwyn Oaks site for the home for the aged. The road making

The Gazette, 25 March 1969

PAPAKURA AND DISTRICTS
HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC.

Levelling Of Site

The Selwyn Oaks project was advanced a further stage two Saturdays ago when Mr Alan Wooderson, a Papakura contractor, donated the free use of his earthmoving machine for levelling the site of the proposed building. Mr Don Julian gave his services to work the machine, and it is estimated that 1500 yards of topsoil was moved.



The Gazette, 20 May 1969

which led to the many successful fund-raising campaigns and community appeals which generated funding to finally allow the development to start. During this time, the appeal headquarters were located at the Lees Group premises, with publicity banners announcing 'Selwyn Oaks Appeal' and a barometer recording progress.

To give you an indication of people's fervour and commitment to the project: over the course of a fortnight, a total of 16,000 telephone calls were made, ensuring that the whole community knew about the fund-raising drive!

As well as raising money, the members of the Papakura Lions Club also provided materials and onsite labour.

Construction on the two and a half acre site started on 3 December 1969.

Thursday, June 5, 1969.

A PERSONAL MESSAGE TO YOU!
from the
LIONS CLUB of PAPAOKURA
WHO SEEK YOUR HELP TO PROVIDE A
HOME FOR THE AGED IN PAPAOKURA
TO CATER FOR THE SOUTH AUCKLAND AREA




SUPPORT SELWYN OAKS

THIS PAGE WAS DONATED BY

THIS IS HOW YOU CAN DONATE TOWARDS THIS WORTHY CAUSE
FILL IN THE CAPTION BELOW AND FORWARD IT WITH YOUR CHECK.
TO "SELWYN OAKS HOME FOR THE AGED APPEAL," P.O. BOX 145, PAPAOKURA.

OR YOU MAY MAKE YOUR DONATION IN PERSON AT THE APPEAL HEADQUARTERS, GREAT SOUTH ROAD, PAPAOKURA (Opposite LEIS HOUSE) OR IN YOUR LOCAL TOWN AS ADVERTISED.
REMEMBER - Your Donation is Tax Deductible up to £25

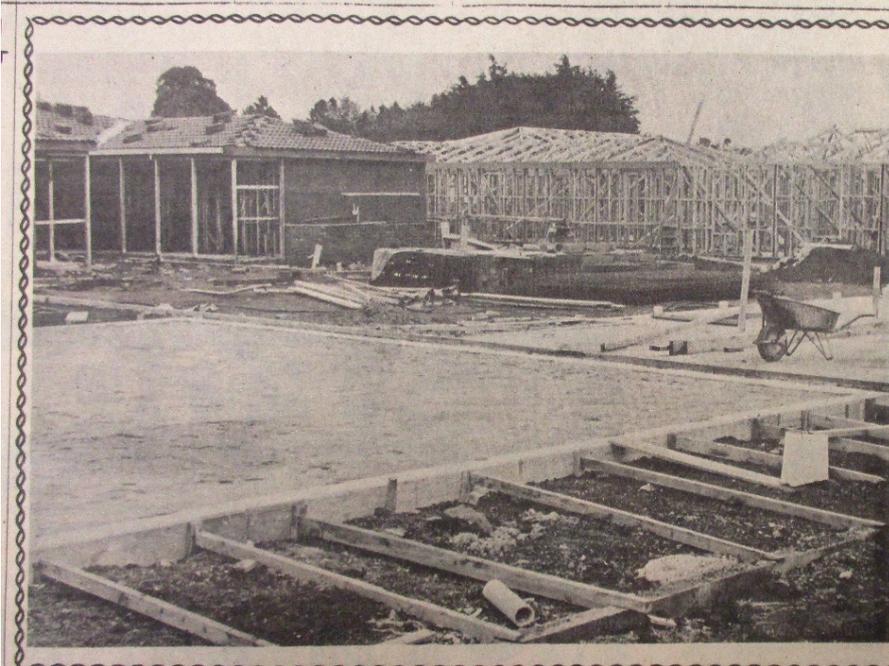
TO SELWYN OAKS APPEAL COMMITTEE.

I wish to donate the sum of £..... to the
SELWYN OAKS HOME FOR THE AGED APPEAL.

I WISH I DO NOT WISH MY NAME TO BE PUBLISHED AS A DONOR IN THIS APPEAL

Signature _____
Address _____
Telephone No. _____

ECOMONY MEATS
GREENS TRAVEL
DUNN MOTORS
MERY SMITH
GREG NICHOLAS
JIM DOWNS



GOVERNOR GENERAL TO VISIT PAPAOKURA

The Governor General, Sir Arthur Porritt, will make his first official visit to the Papakura Borough on Sunday, April 12.

Sir Arthur will lay the foundation stone of the Selwyn Oaks home for the aged at 3 p.m.

One of the organising committee members of the home's sponsors, Papakura Lions Club Mr T.B. Thrupp, said that about 7000 invitations were sent but if there were others he had missed they could contact him at Papakura 89-723 or at Manurewa 64-808.

He said that there would be ample parking in the Auckland Hospital Board land alongside Selwyn Oaks.

The building is expected to be completed by November of this year and the Papakura Lions Club is still seeking about \$12,000 for furnishings and ground development.

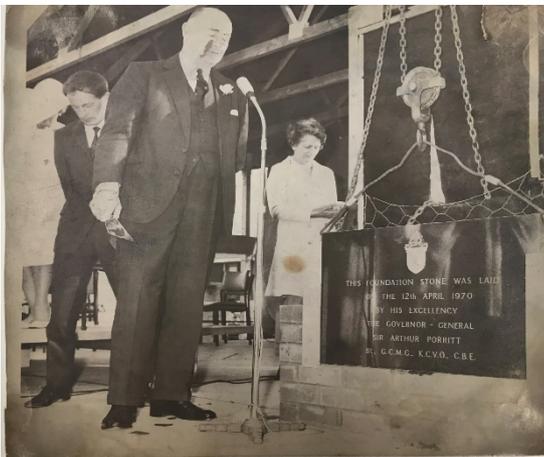
AT LEFT: Progress at Selwyn Oaks.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Sir, - It is with great pleasure I read in this morning's New Zealand Herald (Wed-

The 1970's

Governor-General Sir Arthur Porritt laid the foundation stone on 12 April 1970 along with a time capsule. Some 1,000 – 1,200 people attended this event.



Governor-General Sir Arthur Porritt

The first 11 residents moved in the same year, on 19 December 1970.

The 22,000sq foot buildings consisted of four blocks housing 42 residents, each block with its own lounge. In addition there was a reception are, main public lounge, a TV lounge, dining room as well as physiotherapy and occupational therapy facilities.



Catherine Milne – First resident of Selwyn Oaks

Mrs Corbin, wife of Canon S B R Corbin, was the first warden.

Surrounding parishes supported the venture with a number of fundraising activities including the Parish Ball at Clevedon on 29 August 1970, raising \$400.

Selwyn Oaks was dedicated in 12 September 1971 by Bishop Eric Gowing, assisted by the Vicar of Papakura the Rev H J Simmons.



This shot was taken when Selwyn Oaks was first under construction,



This is an after shot taken from approximately the same place as Harry Smith's photo. This picture shows the completed main offices, reception area, dining room and lounge.



This is the well furnished, lighted lounge blended in with the dining room at Selwyn Oaks. Television is situated in one corner.



Miss McGregor (left) spends most of her time going for walks, shopping and crocheting. Selwyn Oaks to her is a real "home away from home". Mrs Hosking had nowhere else to go, she suffers from arthritis and does not go out much. She spends most of her time knitting, reading and receiving visitors.

Auckland Star April 8 1970.

A \$260,000 home for 42

South
suburban
roundup

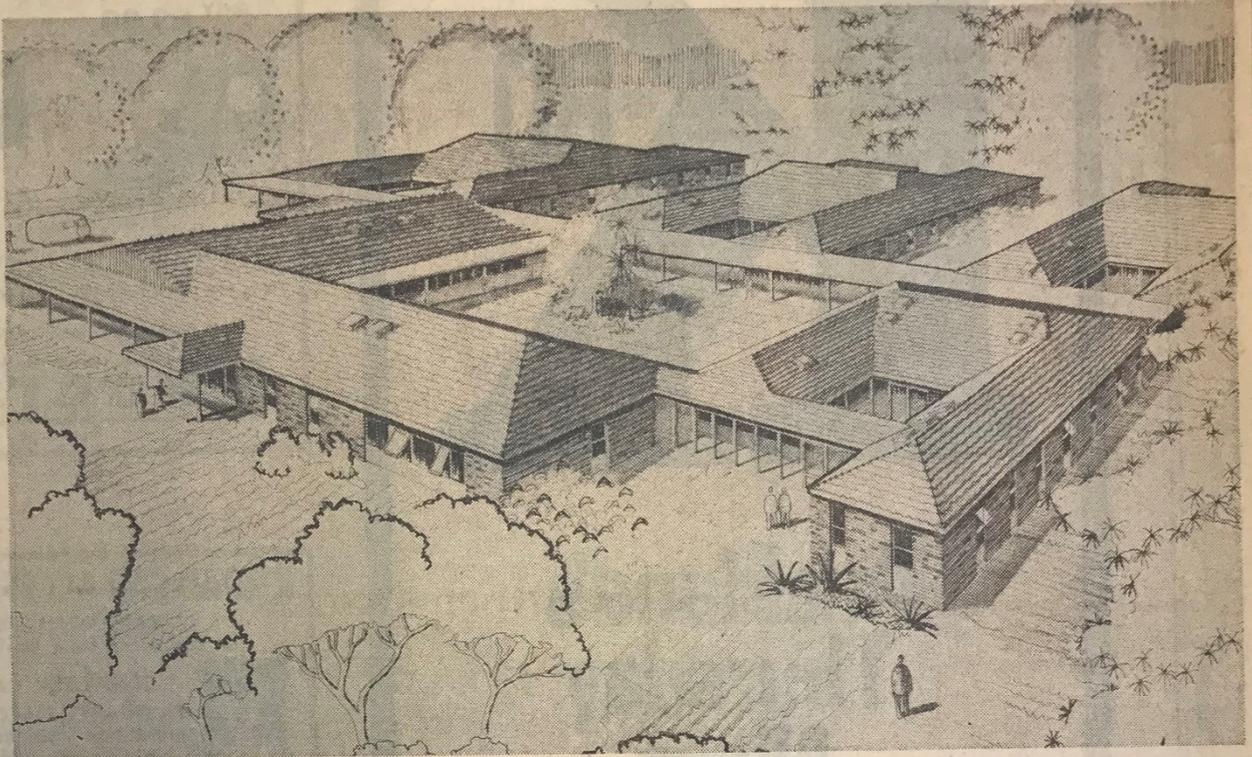
By this time next year, 42 South Auckland senior citizens should be living in this \$260,000 home being built at Papakura by the Selwyn Foundation.

called Selwyn Oaks and the Great South Road on Papakura's northern bound- the building is a foun- tion scheme, although the Papakura Lions have also en great assistance. The architects are Rigby Alan, Auckland.

Excavation work began the 2 1/4 acre site last ember. Next Sunday at 10 a.m., the Governor-Gen- eral, Sir Arthur Porritt, will lay the foundation stone.

By November the first stage of Selwyn Oaks should be completed, ready to receive residents early in 1971.

A Government subsidy of \$2,000 has been granted for Selwyn Oaks, the Papakura Lions have \$32,000 and are aiming at \$40,000, but the foundation itself must find the outstanding \$28,000. It is seeking public support for the scheme although no social appeal has been launched.



HIGH PRAISE GIVEN PAPA KURA LIONS

The director of the Selwyn Foundation, Canon Douglas Caswell, has described the Papakura Lions Club effort for Selwyn Oaks as "herculean" and not only because of the amount of money they raised.

"Equally helpful," said Canon Caswell, "is the amount of free labour provided by the Lions. They have saved a good deal by obtaining the promise of materials from interested firms and have saved money

by doing a great deal of the site work themselves." The 22,000 sq. ft. brick veneer building will take the form of four accommodation blocks, two of these accommodating 12 and the other 2,

10 and 8 people respectively. There will also be a reception area, main public lounge, individual accommodation block lounges opening on to enclosed city areas, a TV lounge, dining-room and

physiotherapy and occupational therapy areas.

"But every resident will have his or her own bedsitting room which will include a washbasin and toilet," said Mr Caswell.

Shower facilities will be shared.

Hope to expand

"We hope," he said, "as the years go by, it will be possible to expand."

"With the area we have got, we do not have room to expand much overall, but we are looking for opportunities to acquire additional land so we can make Selwyn Oaks a miniature Selwyn Village. "The difficulty is to get suitable sites reasonably near to Papakura," he said.

Already several persons have made definite applications for residence at Selwyn Oaks. It is expected the waiting list and demand will increase as the home nears completion.

Those in the South Auckland area on the waiting list for Selwyn Village will be eligible for Selwyn Oaks.

An admissions committee of predominantly local people will be set up later to choose residents.

Applicants must fill in a form, giving state of health, finance and similar details.

"But need determines admission," said Canon Caswell. "Need in a fairly broad sense, not just money — the

need for care, companionship and decent housing."

Staff must also be chosen. There must be a warden and deputy-warden, but beyond this it has not been decided how many staff will be employed.

Canon Caswell said the building plan "has been prepared after considering all the features that should be provided in a home for the elderly."

On one level

For this reason, the home is on one level, without stairs, and has interconnected walkways.

The Mayor of Papakura, Mr A. J. Campbell described the proposed home as "a great social asset for our area."

"It is a credit to all who have shared in its planning and fund raising," he said.

"The home is on a very beautiful site, close to the shopping centre, but not too close to the hurly-burly."

"Although the local Lions Club has been the main driving force behind it, many other organizations and people have generously pitched in," said Canon Campbell.

"And these old folk still have a part to play in our community. They enrich the area, and I do not think we will have any trouble keeping the home full."

The 1980's

Later, in 1988, more adjoining land was acquired – that had previously been owned by Ted's elder brother, Rowley – which enabled the entrance to lead from Youngs Road, rather than off the busy Great South Road.

Rowley had lived in the 'Homestead' building at the entrance, and this was also added later on, becoming an integral part of the facilities and the venue for the first of Selwyn's community day centres.

In 1989 the board considered a three phased development, initially building 15 independent villas, a community centre, a day centre and a chapel. This was completed along with a 16th villa added. The second phase was for five more villas, a frail care centre for 24, kitchen and dining modifications, a shop, hairdressing salon, medical clinic and staff rooms. As time went on the plans were modified with the third phase not proceeding.



Homestead at Selwyn Oaks village

The 1990's

On 21 September 1990 Chapel of St Martin in the Oaks arrived, gifted after the closing of the former Raventhorpe Psychiatric Hospital at Bombay.

This Chapel was much loved by all, with many happy times and farewells of friends long passed.

Further expansion occurred in the 1990's with day care being provided in the Homestead, and the frail centre becoming a 22 bed hospital. The hospital, rest home, dining, lounge administration and staff room all under the one roof, with the extensions opening celebrated on 1 October 1992 opened by Sir Edmund Hillary and the Rev Peter Coughlan.



Opening the extension, Selwyn Oaks, 1 October 1992: Sir Edmund Hillary and the Rev Peter Coughlan

NEWS

A moving day for an old church

Selwyn Oaks begins expansion work

Over \$5,000,000 will be spent on renovating and extending the Papakura Selwyn Oaks Retirement Home.

At present the home, which was opened in 1970 provides accommodation for 43 residents.

A frail care room will be added on to the existing building to cater for those too frail to care for

themselves, says Selwyn foundation director the Reverend Peter Coughlan.

A community centre for recreational work and arts and crafts will be built and a day centre for elderly people in the community to drop in and have a meal.

The kitchen will be upgraded and a new din-

ing area developed.

Provision will be made for a small shop, hairdressing salon and medical centre on site. Visiting doctors and other paramedics such as podiatrists and physiotherapists will attend the centre, says Reverend Coughlan.

And 20 individual liv-

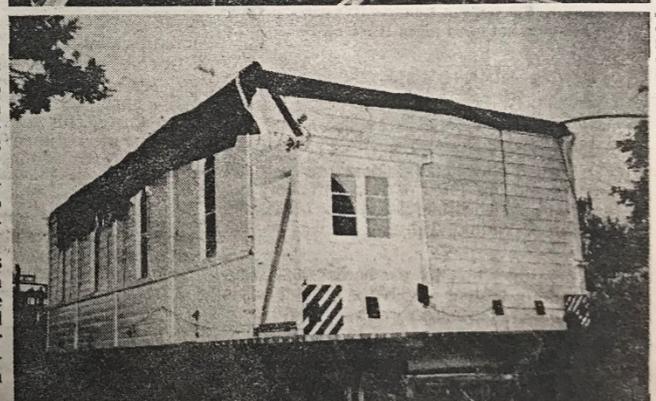
ing units are planned which people will be able to buy.

The Anglican Selwyn Foundation which owns Selwyn Oaks bought adjoining land from both the Auckland Area Health Board and local businessman Ted Lees for the proposed development.

Last week the Papakura Lions shifted a 100-year-old Catholic church from Raventhorpe Hospital on to the site for church services.

The foundation will carry out the development with funding and money from their reserves. However they do not want to use too much from their reserves because the interest keeps the foundation going. They want to raise between \$3,500,000 to \$4,000,000 from the community.

The development is being built to provide a complex to meet all the needs of south Auckland people, says Mr Coughlan. It will service an area from Howick to Thames.



PAPAKURA AND HISTORICAL SOCIETY INC. 10 AVERILL ST., PAPA KURA

The 2000's

Selwyn Oaks vision comes to fruition

The opening of the first stage of the Selwyn Oaks Retirement Village in 1970 was welcomed with great enthusiasm by Papakura district residents.

The complex, which initially included accommodation for 43 residents, provided secure accommodation for the elderly in their own community. It also made visiting easier for family and friends, many of whom were elderly themselves.

The Oaks was developed as a joint venture between the Papakura Lions and an Anglican trust, the Selwyn Foundation. In 1965, the Papakura Lions Club first sent a deputation to the Selwyn Foundation pursuing a "Selwyn Village for South Auckland" based on the earlier success of Selwyn Village at Point Chevalier in Auckland and also at Whangarei.

The enthusiasm of the Lions Club members won local support when they embarked on a major fund-raising mission. The two acre site was acquired in 1966 with Selwyn Oaks opened four years later by the Governor

General, Sir Arthur Porritt.

The large brick building which included four accommodation blocks all on one level was one of the first old people's homes equipped with single bed-sitting rooms, each with individual ensuites.

Although residents of Selwyn Oaks represent all religious denominations, the Papakura Lions also ensured they have a beautiful place to worship. In 1990 when the remaining 68 patients at the Ravelthorpe Psychiatric Hospital at Bombay were moved to Kingseat as the hospital was closed down, their lovely chapel was gifted to the Oaks. Lions Club members helped with the removal and restoration of the kauri building, which was built in 1896 as the Ramarama parish of St Brigid's Catholic Church. Set in the attractive and spacious grounds of Selwyn Oaks, the old church, which is again filled with the sounds of prayer and worship, has a new life as an ecumenical chapel for residents and visitors.

During the first 22 years when Selwyn

Oaks residents became ill or incapacitated, they unfortunately had to be sent to Middlemore Hospital or another Selwyn Village where frail care was available. The board of the Selwyn Foundation, concerned that residents had to leave their own district, decided to extend the home with a Frail Care Wing.

The opportunity was taken to further develop Selwyn Oaks with the purchase of adjacent blocks of land in 1989 and the following year.

This became a reality in October 1992 when Sir Edmund Hillary officially opened the new wing that would care for 22 elderly people. Fifteen "own-you-own units" were also opened on the same occasion along with a community centre for recreational activities and arts and crafts, and a community day centre for other local elderly people to use as a day centre was built.

The major redevelopment took the residential capacity of the complex up to 80, thus evolving Selwyn Oaks into a complete village, the fulfilment of the original dream.

- by Selwyn Oaks Retirement Village



Our Town, Papakura, 30 September 2002

The 2010's

In 2013 the Foundation developed a \$50 million investment programme to revitalise our existing village sites.

Part of the plan was to further improve the services and facilities that Selwyn Oaks offers - to the benefit of its residents. The programme of development included the replacement of the residential care building from 1970, with new care facilities and resident community facilities while extending our capacity to provide independent living accommodation.

To achieve this, the beloved Chapel of St Martin in the Oaks was relocated to the Bay of Islands Parish in 2012 to make room for the revitalisation development.

In 2015, we held a series of customer focus groups and asked residents, family members and staff what suggestions they had for the new building, so our village community could input into the process and contribute ideas on what they would like to see in terms of the community leisure and social amenities

The first phase of development focused on our residential care services commenced in early 2016. On the 3 May 2016 the ground breaking ceremony was held, supported by a number of the Lees family and Lions Club members.



Ground Breaking Ceremony, 3 May 2016, The Lees family

Construction continued on the three-storey centre, providing four households of 12 for both rest home and hospital-level care, designed to complement the 'participatory' model of care and on the 5 December 2017 a blessing was held in readiness for staff and residents to make the move.

Finally the day came! On the 14 February 2018, with regimental precision, laughter and some anxiety, our staff and residents moved from the original Selwyn Oaks home to the fabulous new Lees Centre.

Then on 14 February 2018, and with much fanfare came the Opening Ceremony of the Lees Centre, named in memory of the late Ted and Rowley Lees who were such influential figures in the development and early growth of the village.

We were joined by residents and staff of Selwyn Oaks, Board and Executive members of The Selwyn Foundation, Life Member Sally Naulls and senior members of the Lees family including guests of honour – Mr Ted Lees and Mrs Jan Wilcock, eldest children of Rowley and Ted respectively, and Mrs Marjorie Foulkes, Ted and Rowley's sister and one of our village residents.

We welcomed the president of the Lions Club of Papakura, Mr Paul Halverson. Of course the Papakura Lions for whom we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude for their magnificent fundraising efforts in the late 1960s and beyond.



Blessing of the Lees Centre, 5 December 2017



Residents move from old care home to new Lees Centre, 14 February 2018



The new Lees Centre, 2018



From left: Edward (Ted) Lees Jnr, Janice Wilcock, Majorie Foulkes, Bishop Ross Bay, Dr Kay Hawk (Chair of The Selwyn Foundation Board)

The Right Reverend Ross Bay, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland officiated and with family members cut the ribbon and unveiled the plaque, declaring the Centre officially open.

With so much history our celebrations didn't stop there.

Next was the closing ceremony of the old care home, before it was demolished, held on 16 March 2018. This was a heartfelt low key farewell attended by many of the old faithful's from the Lions Club, staff and residents alike. The surprise of the day was the removal of the foundation stone and the reveal of the time capsule, contents of which were displayed for all to enjoy.

Then finally on 29 May 2018, came the dedication and naming of the chapel, named Te Karaiti te Taro o Te Ora' Christ the Living Bread. To a full house, The Right Reverend Ross Bay, Bishop of the Anglican Diocese of Auckland lead us in a moving service.



Opening of the time capsule, 16 March 2018
Closing Ceremony for old care home



29 May 2018
Dedication and naming of
the Chapel

Devotion to

Ted Lees was a pioneer of New Zealand industry. At 90 years of age, he's still going strong, as is Lees Marine, the company he founded.

As the father of three daughters, Ted Lees jokes that he often felt outnumbered on the domestic front. "The only other male in the family was Roger the dog," he says, "and what did they do? They had him neutered."

"They" are his wife Shirley whom he married in 1950 and their three daughters: Jan Wilcock, Christine Fletcher, former mayor of Auckland, and Sue who, with her husband Dave Cockrell, runs Lees Group.

Business-wise, Daniel Edward Lees has dominated a masculine environment, heading Lees Industries, one of New Zealand's biggest manufacturers and distributors of heavy machinery and marine engines.

He turns 90 on March 2, having kicked into gear at Clevedon, near Auckland. As a

kid, he tagged along as his elder brother Rowley overhauled engines for fishing boats. It was an unofficial apprenticeship and in 1939, when Ted over-stated his age to join the army, he was soon involved in heavy machinery for transport. He later qualified as a diesel engineer and motor mechanic.

He was selected for army school and trained in Australia as a member of the First NZ Special Forces, precursor to the SAS. Ted vividly remembers his first diesel love, the *Dominion Monarch*, the largest vessel on the water which delivered 4000 troops, including him, to the frontline in North Africa. On passage, Ted got jobs in the engine room for him and his team of 60. He never ceased to be awed by the huge engine's performance.

Ted saw active service in North Africa and Italy, surviving injury when his recovery jeep hit a landmine after Monte Cassino. Back in New Zealand, he and his brothers worked for

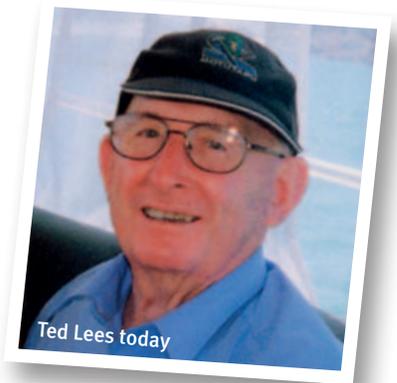
the family company, Lees Broth.

Post-war New Zealand needed land cleared, but heavy machinery was rare, except for tractors. "I quickly decided that to sell a big tractor, you had to put something on it to make it doubly useful," he says.

Bill Hamilton in Christchurch had the same idea and was developing the front-end loader, so Ted went to meet him. It was the start of a life-long friendship.

"When I said, 'I'm going to sell these front-end loaders,' everyone said, 'You're mad.' All these bits and pieces arrived, and I put these things together."

Ted made his first sale to a truck operator trying to clear a new, hard-clay road at Papakura with five men, picks, shovels and some Bedford trucks. "I said, 'Alf, I could bring a machine around with just a driver and he could load it by

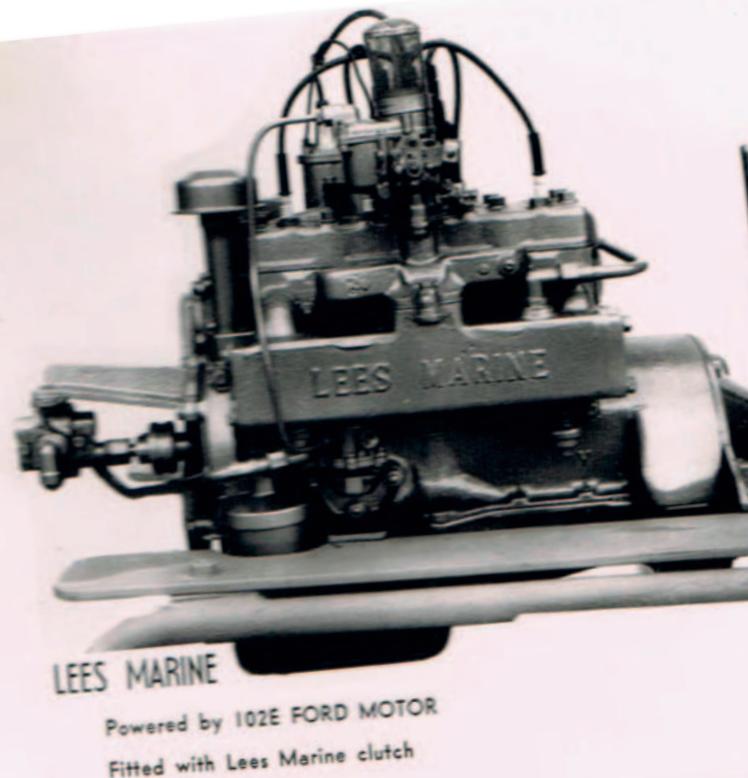
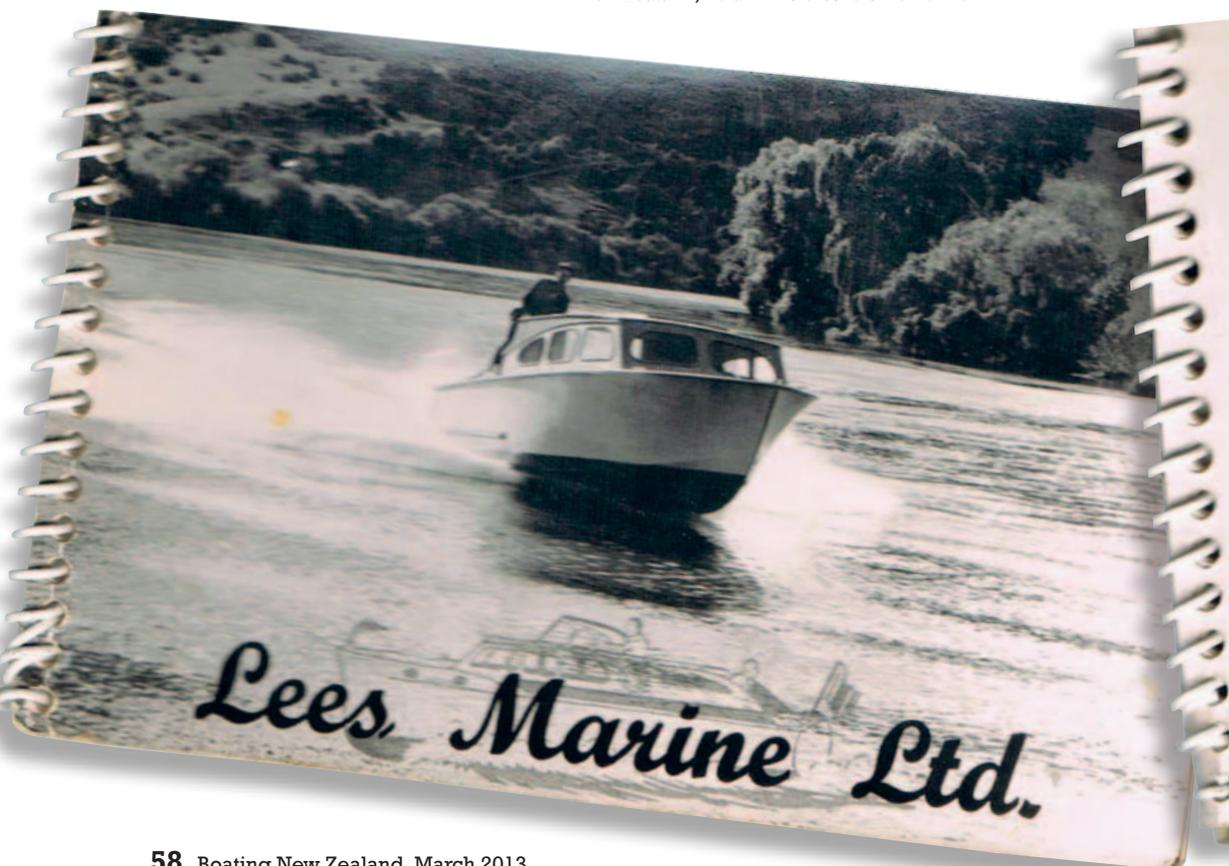


himself within three minutes." Word of the front-end loader spread. "For 12 years I couldn't get enough of them."

"We developed so many other things like that, inventing new fork trucks up to 40-ton."

But Bill Hamilton was also experimenting on his man-made lake. "First of all it was only a pump and if you restrict the end of a hose, that's what gave it the jet," Ted says. "This was long before they came on the market."

When CWF Hamilton released the



diesel

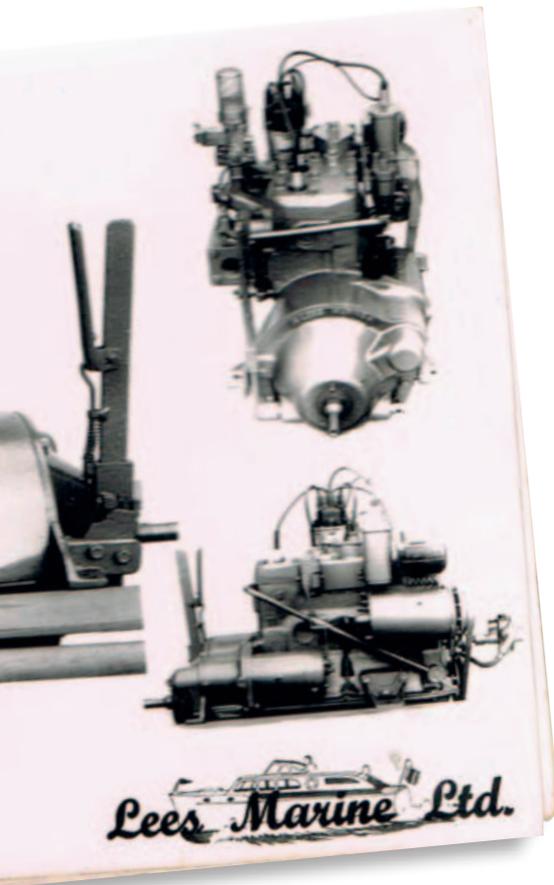
Words **Rebecca Hayter**

Hamilton Jet and was unable to meet demand, Ted suggested a joint venture. "I made half of them up here. We sold hundreds of jets. We had every boatbuilder in Auckland wanting to do his own design but the monohedron design that Bill had done – that was the best design.

"Ford never marinised its own engines – and no one internationally was doing it either – so Lees marinised [Ford] Prefects, [Ford] Zephyr and Holden, locally building parts to create engines to power Hamilton jets." It also sold Hamilton hydraulics under Delta, the D-E-L in Delta being Ted's initials.

Most boats were petrol-powered, but if farmers liked the Ford diesel engines in their tractors they started wanting them in their boats, and Ted was able to meet that demand.

"I looked at this engine: I reckon my gearbox would fit that. My brother Rowley



LEFT: An early Lees Marine engine based on a marinised four-cylinder Ford Prefect 102E petrol motor and the front page of a 1950s Lees Marine brochure
 ABOVE, clockwise from top: *Delray* with twin turbo-charged Lees Marine 250hp diesel engines prior to its launch. *Delray* became a successful gamefishing launch in the hands of John Going; Ted inside an early test boat; Ted's parents, family and friends boating on the Clevedon River; Ted (middle) serving on the Auckland Harbour Board; Testing early boats and motors; Ted's parents on a picnic in 1950

442

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said, 'I reckon I could make a heat exchanger for that,' so we got the water pumps and other parts and put them together.

"We'd buy the bare block and then we had to make over 50 percent of parts locally: housings, water pumps, heat exchangers. We got so proficient in making heat exchangers that it became a separate business." Getting the parts was virtually impossible, due to restrictions on imports but fortunately Ford had surplus engines.

"We went to Wellington straight after the war to get an import licence but there was all sorts of funny business," Ted says.

"The only way to get an import licence was to export, because you got a bonus licence for the amount and a replacement licence so it was the only way to get going." He targeted Tasmania, because it had a keen fishing fleet and returned with an order for 50 engines on his first foray. "So then we could import more and then sell more."

The Lees Marine Engine sold in Australia, New Guinea, Singapore, Fiji and Samoa. "All of a sudden we got a huge market in Taiwan which was building boats like Grand Banks and sending them to the USA. We sold thousands."

Ted left the family business and set up Lees Industries in 1960. By the early



Ted being inducted into the New Zealand Business Hall of Fame in 2009 with PM John Key

1970s it was the largest manufacturer of heavy machinery in Australasia, employing more than 700 people. Many of those who served their apprenticeships with Lees went on to play influential roles in New Zealand industry. The company's product line included marine engines, forklifts, straddle carriers, agricultural, defence and airport handling equipment. Other Lees companies represented finance, dairy farming and travel.

As a founding member of the Hauraki

Maritime Parks Board, Ted was involved with many acquisitions of gulf island parks in the 1970s. He remains proud of his role in the restoration of the Mansion House at Kawau Island to reflect its origins under Sir George Grey.

Then came May, 1979: "We were top of the class supplying all the boat builders here and internationally and employed a lot of people. Suddenly one morning, after being so good to [Prime Minister] Muldoon, he slammed a 20 percent sales tax on the marine industry. So if I sold an engine we had to pay sales tax, even on the nails in the packing box, but anyone could import their own or buy the basic engine, no tax, then go and buy a gearbox, no tax. It started a black market."

Lees survived on its export business and when import tariffs were lifted it began representing Fiat Iveco, which had bought Ford; Mitsubishi Motors and Doosan Infracore.

In 1980 Ted sold Lees Group to NZ Forest Products in a profitable and friendly takeover. But in 1986, Ted says, Elders Finance, a company banned by the Australian government, did a buy-out of NZ Forest Products and began stripping the company and its subsidiaries. Unable to

stand it, Ted, aged 67, bought back Lees Marine in 1990 and cranked it up again.

In 2000, Ted received the Knight of Civil Merit from Spain for 25 years honorary service as Spanish Consul to NZ and in 2009 was inducted into the New Zealand Business Hall of Fame for services to engineering. He also served two terms on the Ports of Auckland during times of rapid growth.

Ted remains active as chairman of Lees Group. Through his 30-year representation of FPT (Fiat Iveco) he has maintained his war-time love affair with Italy and is excited by FPT's technological advances and recent major boat speed records. Last year, he braved the Korean winter to survey Doosan's latest marine engines in Seoul.

To this day, it is forbidden for any member of the Lees family to drive a petrol-powered car.

TED'S 6 TIPS FOR SUCCESS IN THE NZ MARINE INDUSTRY

- Apprenticeships
- Lead from the front
- Be enthusiastic
- Provide real value in any transaction
- Surround yourself with people you trust
- Include partners/wives in the business relationship; it builds bonds

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