

# LETS Community News



Summer 2008

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Dear Readers,

Please check out the article about Transition Towns on the back page. Helen Dew will be talking about Transition Towns at the upcoming LETS Conference. We have the opportunity to get involved with Transition Towns and contribute to the Energy Descent Plan that could lead to mitigating Peak Oil and Climate Change.

I'd like to thank all those who contributed to the newsletter in the past year - particular thanks to HANDS articles on Green Dollars and reports from Golden Bay.

Maria Hayward  
CCDE 0038

## Lets Conference

Camp Elsdon  
18 Raiha Street  
Porirua  
Wellington  
11 - 13 April

### About the Conference

Hear about local economies development  
The future of LETS and Barter Systems in New Zealand

### Visiting Speakers

"Miguel" Yasuki Hirota  
Don Northcott  
Helen Dew

Local currency trading  
LETS NZ & CES  
Transition Towns

Accommodation consists of good dormitory units.  
Caravan and camping sites available

### Cost

Accommodation K\$40.00 G\$20  
Registration K\$10.00

### Bring

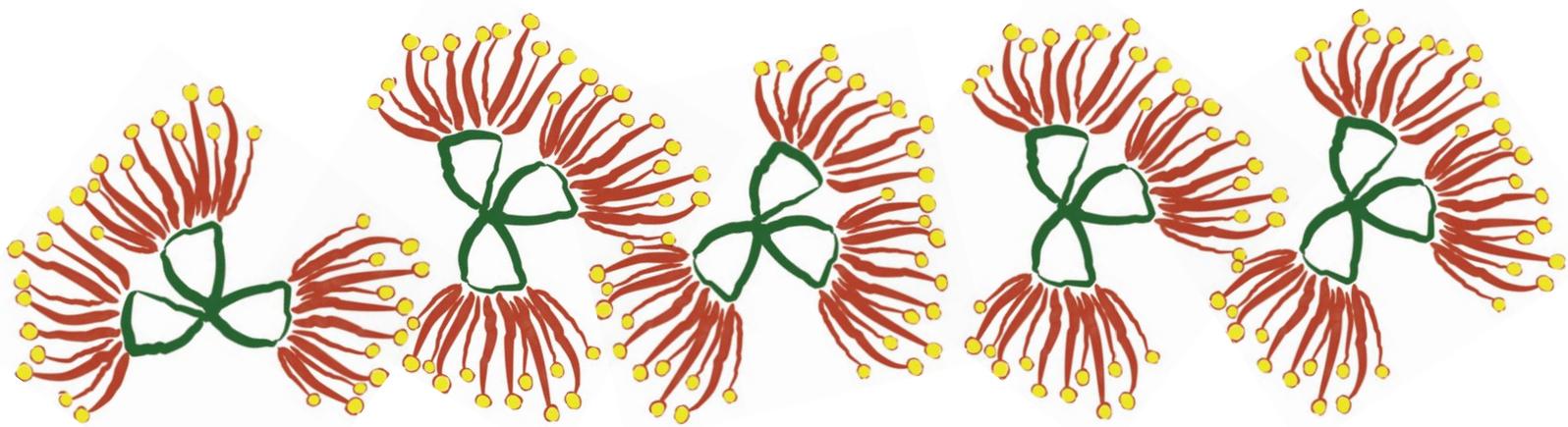
Sleeping bag or sheets and blankets, pillows, etc

### Registrations to:

LETS Conference Committee 2008  
c/o Jan Machin  
6 Beauchamp Street  
Tawa  
04 232 7715

### or contact

Brian Duxfield 06 755 1733  
Jan Machin 04 232 7715



# News from the Exchanges

## What has the LCNZ been doing this year?

### T.A.T.S. Timaru

03.10.07

To the LCNZ Committee,

The receipt of the LCNZ subscription was recently discussed at our monthly committee meeting.

As we have not heard who had been elected into each position and have not heard any reports from LCNZ in either the LETS Community News or in emails, it was decided that we inform you that "We have received your account, considered it, tabled it and let it lie".

May I also point out that the account says 'Annual Sub' but that this should state/record the period of the subscription.

Marion Veenings-Utiger  
Correspondence Secretary for TATS.

### Letter from Jim McCaughan

To date there has been no response to this message So it would seem that the LCNZ Committee is not operating and from what we hear on the grape vine has done nothing. It's time to consider winding up this Committee at the next Conference. The previous Committee also did nothing.

The TATS Committee have decided that this should be publicised in the LETS Community NEWS.

When the LCNZ Committee was originally set up it was to take over the previous Intertrading system which had fallen into considerable disrepute. For a number of years it managed the intertrading for the NZ Systems and this ceased following the advent of CES which made inter Group trading so much easier.

Although a reason for the continuance of LCNZ was sought and the suggestion to set up a NZ Exchange to operate in areas where no local exchange existed was eventually done, nothing else was achieved and there appeared to be little interest from most of the Committee at that time.

The following Committee had the task of publicising the NZ Exchange and this was not done. The current Committee seemed to have made little if any progress. The result is the the NZ Exchange has no members to date.

Jim McCaughan  
Treasurer Timaru Alternative Trading System Inc. (TATS)

### Note from Editor:

H.A.N.D.S. in Golden Bay have also had difficulties getting a coherent reply to their requests to negotiate their subs payment.

Apart from Dave Robbie's request that I put in an announcement about the overdue subs a few months ago, I have also heard nothing from the L.C.N.Z. Committee since the Conference in April.

### Wairarapa Green Dollars

Good things take time...

by Sarah Wyn Pettis

I first heard about Green Dollars ten years ago while living in Berkeley, California. The city of Berkeley, nestled in the hills across the bay from San Francisco, has a well-earned reputation as the premier anti-establishment hotbed in the United States, so it was hardly surprising to learn that some of the population were engaging in this alternative form of trade - it was merely one of countless ways in which Berkeleyites challenged and mocked the dominant paradigm.

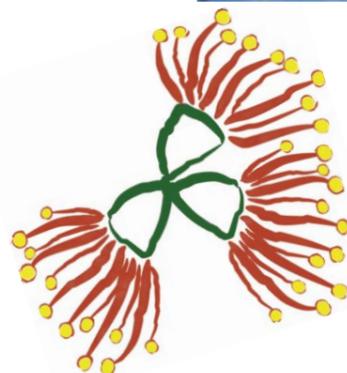
I never joined in the Berkeley scheme, and I must confess that I haven't even thought much about Green Dollars since then. Just over a year ago my partner, baby daughter and I moved to Wairarapa from Palmerston North and I became re-acquainted with Green Dollars. I'm working as a full-time Mom and, like many Moms, I'm also working part-time for the community. Because neither of these jobs is paid, and because mothering hours are erratic and unpredictable, I'm virtually excluded from participating in any meaningful way in the paid economy.

In practical terms, Green Dollar trading appeals to me because it allows me to contribute my skills, services and goods to the community on my terms and in my time. In return, it empowers me by providing a means for me to purchase or exchange goods and services on my own merit or credit.

More importantly, I support the concept of Green Dollar trading on philosophical grounds. I'm a strong advocate of community-based initiatives (as opposed to top-down directives or centralised governing). I believe that in countries like New Zealand we have the ability to produce or manufacture almost everything that we need to survive and to live well, and I embrace a vision of communities that look after and provide for their own, with plenty left over for "outsiders". I have long been disillusioned by the international money market that feeds on the unsustainable and irrational dogma of never ending growth. It is impossible to sustain infinite growth in a world of finite resources, and I find it difficult and disheartening to support a system that enriches the privileged at the expense of the poor. Green Dollar trading offers one small but meaningful alternative to these larger systems that we have come to know as normal. In many ways I have traveled a long distance from Berkeley, but it is exciting to have re-discovered Green Dollars in Wairarapa.



Sarah at the Carterton Market selling her free range eggs and native seedlings



# The Transition Town Model

(Sourced from the Transition Towns, New Zealand website)

The first Transition Town was established in Kinsale Ireland in 2005. Rob Hopkins, the co-founder of Transition Towns, moved to Totnes, and established, along with Ben Brangwyn, Transition Towns UK.

That was in October last year. The list of official towns in England alone now stands at 21. The list of towns who have expressed interest in this model is huge and growing.

## What is a Transition Town — or village or city or island ?

The following statement is taken verbatim from the UK Transition Town wiki:

“A Transition Initiative is a community that is unleashing its own latent collective genius to look Peak Oil and Climate Change squarely in the eye and to discover and implement ways to address this BIG question:

“For all those aspects of life that this community needs in order to sustain itself and thrive, how do we significantly increase resilience (to mitigate the effects of Peak Oil) and drastically reduce carbon emissions (to mitigate the effects of Climate Change)?

“The resulting coordinated range of projects across all these areas of life leads to a collectively designed energy descent pathway.

“The community also recognises two crucial points:

- that we used immense amounts of creativity, ingenuity and adaptability on the way up the energy upslope, and that there's no reason for us not to do the same on the downslope
- if we collectively plan and act early enough there's every likelihood that we can create a way of living that's significantly more connected, more vibrant and more in touch with our environment than the oil-addicted treadmill that we find ourselves on today.”

## What's happening in New Zealand/Aotearoa?

There are a substantial number of towns in New Zealand, who have been active in various forms of peak oil and climate change education, and localisation initiatives. Many of these towns have contacted the UK founders of Transition Towns to express that they are interested in this model. It seems likely that in the near future many of these towns will formalise their adoption of this excellent Transition Towns model.

Conversations are underway with organisers in the UK, to find out how to best facilitate communities in New Zealand embracing this TT model – the main issue being training for the core team who step forward to assume the initial leadership role. In preparation for this you might like to view the criteria for becoming a Transition Town – they make great reading.

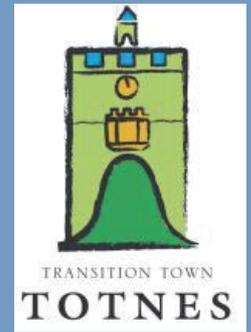
## For information go to:

**email:** [james.samuel@transitiontowns.org.nz](mailto:james.samuel@transitiontowns.org.nz)

**websites:**

<http://www.transitiontowns.org.nz/>

<http://transitionculture.org/>



**Top: Totnes Town Logo  
Centre: Kinsale Town  
Logo  
Above: James Samuel,  
who you can contact for  
more information about  
Transition Towns in New  
Zealand**

Are you interested in downloading this newsletter from the internet? Are you curious to see some other newsletters from other groups internationally? The CES website offers a small selection of LETS newsletters from NZ, Australia and South Africa at: <http://www.ces.org.za/cen/index.htm>.