Discovering a city’s heritage and heart
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To view videos of our featured migrants, download copies of LINKZ or find out more about how to make New Zealand your home, visit www.newzealandnow.govt.nz.
WELCOME TO NEW ZEALAND

Hi once again to our regular readers, and to all of our new subscribers and recent arrivals, welcome.

As the General Manager of Settlement, Protection and Attraction in Immigration New Zealand, my role is to ensure you have the right information to help you settle successfully and make a positive contribution to our country.

This quarterly magazine is one way we work to provide you with the information you may need. We value the skills and knowledge you bring and we want to ensure you can use your talents to help build New Zealand’s economy by contributing to our businesses and industries – or by investing in or starting your own.

We have a great country, here on the edge of the world. New Zealand is a fantastic place to live, with a temperate climate, magnificent landscapes and a distinctive culture. This is a place where you can be what you want to be.

Each issue of LINKZ features one or more of New Zealand’s regions. This issue features Auckland Tāmaki Makaurau.

We value your feedback about this magazine or about any other aspect of settling successfully in New Zealand. If you have comments, please do let us know by email: settlementinformation@mbie.govt.nz

Many thanks and best wishes for your future here.

Steve McGill
General Manager
Settlement, Protection and Attraction
Immigration New Zealand

Natural disasters – be prepared

New Zealand’s recent earthquakes show how important it is to be prepared. The Ministry of Civil Defence (www.civildefence.govt.nz) looks after how the country deals with large-scale emergencies, but detailed plans are developed locally by each area – because each region has its own unique potential dangers. Each region has a thorough plan and a local website. You will also find resources you can use to help you prepare. To find the local site for your region, visit: www.civildefence.govt.nz/find-your-civil-defence-group

Music in Auckland parks

If you live in or are visiting Auckland this summer, check out Auckland Council’s ‘Music in Parks’ and ‘Movies in Parks’. More than 50 free live concerts and outdoor movies are on in parks across the city from January to March. Music styles include classical, alt-country, electronic, reggae, jazz, funk and more – and family-friendly movies range from The Avengers to The Lego Movie. Find out more at: www.musicinparks.co.nz
Will you be safe in the water this summer?

Our beaches, lakes and rivers are beautiful, and on a sunny day they look safe and inviting – but they can be dangerous. Every year around 100 people die from drowning in New Zealand, and most of these deaths are preventable. Four out of five drownings are young men.

Before you swim anywhere this summer, stop and check: how deep is the water? What currents are there? Are there obstacles you could hit or get caught on? How cold is it? Is there a safe swimming area nearby? What will you do in an emergency?

Water Safety New Zealand works to help keep you safe around the water. For excellent information and resources, visit:

www.watersafety.org.nz

Light up your nights

The Auckland Lantern festival is an annual celebration of the city’s rich Chinese cultural heritage. From 9–12 February, there are many events each night in the Auckland Domain. You will need money for the food stalls but all the other entertainment is free! A great chance for the kids to enjoy a peaceful and magical setting.

Do you work in the food and beverage industry?

If you work or employ people in a cafe, restaurant, food hall or takeaway food shop, our new Hospitality Guides are for you. Check out the latest rules and advice to make sure your employer (or your business) is doing the right thing. You can read the new guides online, or order your own personal copy from:

settlementinformation@mbie.govt.nz
The tribal landscape of Tāmaki Makaurau

The Māori name for Auckland, Tāmaki Makaurau (Tāmaki of a hundred lovers), highlights how the resource-rich region’s multiple trade routes connected a complex tribal landscape.

Ancestral canoes and trade routes

Many of the ancestral canoes that settled Aotearoa landed in Auckland, including Matawahaorua, Aotea, Mataatua, Tainui, Te Arawa, Tākitimu, Tokomaru, Te Wākatūwhenua and Te Moekākara. Many of their descendants live there today.

Te Wai-o-Hua (The waters of Hua)

Māori knew Auckland’s harbours by several names. The Te Arawa tribe named the northern harbour Te Wai-te-matā (Obsidian Waters); Ngā Puhí call it Te Wai-o-te-mate (the Waters of Death). For Te Arawa the southern harbour is Mānuka (the Implanted Post); Tainui call it Te Mānukanuka-a-Hoturoa (the Troublesome Sandbanks/Waters of Hoturoa). More generally, the harbour is known as the Manukau (Settling Birds) because of the migratory birds that arrive there each summer.
Ngā iwi (the tribes) Northern Coast

The Ngāti Wai, Ngāti Manuhiri and Ngāti Rēhua tribes span the coastline from Cape Brett south through Auckland and out to Great Barrier Island.

The Marutūahu Confederation (East Auckland – Waiheke)

The Hauraki Gulf-Coromandel Peninsula Marutūahu tribal confederation, the descendants of the Waikato ancestors Marutūahu and Pāoa, traditionally dominated the eastern parts of Auckland, the Hūnua Ranges and Waiheke Island north to the Whangaparāoa Peninsula.

Ngāi Tai (East and South Auckland)

Ngāi Tai at Maraetai descend from the Tainui canoe and were once part of an extensive coastal trading network linking Auckland, the Coromandel and Bay of Plenty to Tōrere Bay, where the related Ngāi Tai tribe lives today.

Ngāi Whātua-o-Ōrākei (Central Auckland)

The Ngāi Whātua-o-Ōrākei tribe, formed from a widely dispersed group embracing the Kaipara Harbour and Waipoua Forest peoples, occupied central Auckland during the mid-eighteenth century under the chiefs Wahaakiaki and Tūperiri.

Te Kawerau-a-Maki (West Auckland)

Te Kawerau-a-Maki, one of the oldest tribes in Tāmaki, take their name from the ancestor Maki who migrated from the Tainui and Taranaki regions, taking much of the land between Tāmaki and the Kaipara Harbour.

Te Aki Tai and Te Wai-o-Hua (South Auckland)

Te Wai-o-Hua originates from several early tribes who combined under the chief Hua Kaiwaka in the late 1600s. The Te Aki Tai sub-tribe around Auckland Airport take their name from the ancestor Hautau, whose body was dashed (aki) upon rocks after he drowned off Pūponga Point on the Manukau Harbour. Te Ahiwaru is a related group.

Ngāti Tamaoho (South Auckland)

Ngāti Tamaoho is part of the Waikato-Tainui confederation of tribes around Hamilton. Their illustrious ancestors include Pāpaka and the chieftainess Mārama from the Tainui canoe. Their lands formerly included Drury, Papakura and the shores of the Manukau Harbour.

Ngāti Te Ata (South Auckland)

Ngāti Te Ata, sometimes known as Te Ruakaïwhare after the taniwha (guardian) protecting the Manukau Harbour, once occupied all the land around Waiuku, the Awhitū Peninsula, Huia and the Waitākere Ranges. The tribe is named after Te Ata-i-rehia, a granddaughter of Hua Kaiwaka.

History to today

The Auckland tribes lost most of their land through several unfair transactions after the arrival of Europeans. In the 1950s, the Ngāti Whātua’s last settlement at Ōkahu Bay was burned to the ground.

Today several legal settlements have addressed these injustices. On January 1, 2000, as part of the new millennium celebrations, Ngāti Whātua paddled their tribal canoe into Ōkahu Bay to a welcome from 50,000 Aucklanders. It was 50 years after they had been evicted from that same spot, and demonstrated that patience and time can heal all wounds.

The Auckland tribes now play an important part in the social, cultural, political and economic life of Auckland, our largest city, particularly through the Māori Statutory Board.
Welcome to Auckland

Wherever you are from, you can feel at home here in Auckland.

Auckland is New Zealand’s largest and most international city, with more than 180 ethnicities, including the largest Māori population in the world. Over 40 per cent of our almost 1.5 million residents were born outside New Zealand.

This diversity gives Auckland a unique cultural identity, with a constant cycle of events and festivals that celebrate the histories and cultures of the many races who call our city home, and which all take place in stunning locations throughout our city.

We are blessed with a pristine natural environment and work hard to preserve our native flora and fauna. Bordered as we are by three harbours, and with more than 1,600 kms of shoreline, we have enough beaches and parks for everyone. In just a few hours you can go from the solitude of a seaside cove accessible only by kayak or on foot, to world-renowned surf spots and unspoiled coastal forest.

Auckland is seen by many around the world as a welcoming and friendly city. There is a strong spirit of cooperation across our communities and the diversity of our population brings richness and vibrancy to our daily lives.

I want to take this opportunity to salute your courage and commitment in choosing Auckland as your new home. Thank you for bringing us your talent, skills, experience and international perspective, to build a better life for yourself and your family. In return, our city will offer you a quality of life unparalleled elsewhere in the world.

I look forward to working with you and wish you all the very best for your new life here in Auckland.

Phil Goff
Mayor of Auckland
Home to almost 1.5 million people, Auckland represents a third of New Zealand’s total population. Culturally diverse, with more than 180 ethnicities, it also has the largest urban Pacific population in the world. The city spans an area of 5000 sq km and offers beautiful harbours and beaches, many public parks and open spaces, combined with a vibrant cosmopolitan centre.

Aucklanders can choose between a sophisticated urban lifestyle, living in the suburbs or moving a short distance to the countryside to live on a lifestyle block surrounded by farmland and native bush.

Home to a range of entertainment venues, Auckland is a regular stop on any world tour – from major rock bands to internationally renowned theatre and art exhibitions. Auckland sports teams are also big players on the international scene, and spectators have a choice of world-class stadiums in which to enjoy their chosen sport.

The region is a food-lovers’ paradise, bustling with trendy cafés, ethnic eateries and award-winning restaurants. Being located between three harbours, Auckland specialises in fresh seafood and the region also boasts a range of vineyards and olive groves.

Auckland consistently ranks highly in international liveability surveys, ranking third in the 2015 Mercer Quality of Living survey for the third year in a row.
Auckland Council is the largest local government authority in Australasia, formed in 2010 by bringing together one regional authority and seven local councils into a single entity.

With the input of tens of thousands of Aucklanders, the Council produced the Auckland Unitary Plan and the Proposed Unitary Plan. The first is a spatial plan which forms the blueprint for the next 30 years of the region’s physical, social and economic development. The second is the regulatory toolkit to help realise the shared vision embodied in The Auckland Plan.

Auckland is the nation’s economic powerhouse, accounting for 35 per cent of New Zealand’s GDP and 33 per cent of New Zealand’s paid employment.

A comprehensive 10-year economic development strategy, adopted in 2012, focuses on Auckland becoming an internationally competitive, prosperous and sustainable economy.

Auckland aims to have a highly skilled, export-driven economy focusing on our internationally competitive sectors: food and beverage, life sciences (health and biotechnology), information and communications technology, international education, screen and digital, and tourism.

Bringing a business to Auckland is easy. A safe and low-risk business environment, New Zealand is ranked second out of 189 countries for ease of doing business and is number one for starting a business, protecting minority investors and getting credit, according to the 2014 World Bank Group’s survey. Our regulatory environment makes it very easy to start a company in Auckland and it can all be done online for little cost. The whole process takes less than two days.

For more information, see www.aucklandnz.com/business/starting-a-business-from-overseas.

Auckland Council’s economic growth agency has a Business Attraction and Investment team, which helps business migrants on every step of the journey, from matching their interest to the most appropriate opportunities and initial market entry to expansion strategies.

Auckland is also the most educated city in New Zealand, with 37 per cent of the population holding a bachelor’s degree or higher. There are more than 60,000 international students here at any one time, contributing to Auckland’s multicultural and multilingual diversity.
Auckland’s fast growth has created more congestion for commuters.

Just a three-hour flight from Australia, and closer to Asia and parts of Africa than Europe or the US, Auckland is the most connected city in New Zealand. Approximately eight million passengers pass through Auckland International Airport each year. It is served by more than 20 international airlines and in 2013 was voted the best airport in the Asia-Pacific region for the fifth consecutive year.

The Ports of Auckland are an important part of New Zealand’s international trade industry, giving Auckland sea links to 176 ports, spread across 69 countries worldwide.

Auckland is well connected by road to the rest of the country. New and ongoing investments in public transport, including an integrated ticketing system and new electric trains, are also making it quicker and more convenient to travel throughout the Auckland region.

Auckland is committed to becoming the most liveable city in the world, an inclusive city with a productive, high-value economy. It is a vibrant, dynamic city that offers a great quality of life and warm welcome to those who choose to make their home here.

**Population**

1.45 million

*Census 2013*

**Climate**

Average daily maximum temperature range

14.7°C–23.8°C

Average annual sunshine

2,066 hours

**Average house price**

$1,045,207

*October 2016*
DISCOVERING A CITY’S HERITAGE AND HEART

A desire to preserve the past drew American Rebecca Fogel to Auckland – and the chance to live an active urban life has kept her here.

Los Angeles-born Rebecca Fogel has the best of both worlds – she lives in New Zealand’s biggest and busiest city, with all it has to offer, yet she can still walk to work every day.

Auckland’s reputation as a city of cars is slowly changing and Rebecca says that’s due to improvements in public transport and a growing network of cycle lanes. “I think that’s going to make a huge difference in terms of getting people out of their cars and onto bikes and walking.”

Rebecca lives in the suburb of Eden Terrace in a small cottage she bought with partner Austin Fox in April 2016. “It’s super-walkable: we can walk to Ponsonby Road, walk to Kingsland, we’re right on the Northwestern Cycleway. It’s really close to the city but it is its own little neighbourhood,” she says.

Rebecca works at Auckland Council, leading the team responsible for ensuring Auckland’s historic buildings are preserved. It isn’t surprising she was drawn to living in an old house. “I really like the quirkiness of historic houses. Our house has a lot of charm – not all the walls are perfectly straight! – but it’s passed the test of time.”

Rebecca first came to New Zealand on holiday in 2010, happily exploring the mountains and hiking trails. Two years later, after finishing a study course in Croatia, she began looking for her next adventure.

With her background in urban history and historic preservation, Rebecca was well qualified for a job in Auckland Council’s heritage team. After a Skype interview and job offer, she landed here in January 2013. It was a pivotal time in the city’s history: Auckland’s first Unitary Plan, a blueprint for planning how the city will grow over the next 30 years, was being developed.

She was part of the team surveying a large part of Auckland to discover heritage buildings and neighbourhoods that might not have been properly recognised and protected. “It was a great way to get to know the city in a really short period of time,” Rebecca says.

Working at the Council helped advance her career: she was initially hired as a built heritage specialist, then was promoted to team leader this year. It hasn’t hurt her personal life either –
Austin works for the Council as an urban planner and they became friends after talking in the staff kitchen. Originally from England, Austin decided to explore the world and ended up in New Zealand in December 2011.

On weekends, they like to head out for breakfast at one of Auckland’s many cafés. “We’ve made it a bit of a mission to try as many as possible. Then depending on the weather, we might go for a hike up one of Auckland’s volcanic cones, to the beach, or just walk around town,” says Rebecca.

“There’s so much going on in the city, there are restaurants everywhere, lots of shops and it’s a really vibrant place. One thing I like about Auckland is that it is a city of neighbourhoods, and each neighbourhood has its own town centre.”

They only use their car to head out of the city on adventures, or when Rebecca plays softball, a popular American sport that’s been adopted here. “On the weekends I play for a competitive women’s team, and I also coach a kids’ team. That’s been a really great way to meet people,” she says. “People here spend a lot of time outdoors and with their families, and I think that’s really great.”

She misses the Mexican food that’s so common in California and was surprised to find shopping is more expensive here. “There are good clothes here, but there are more options, particularly more mid-range clothing, back in the States,” she says.

“Also, make sure you arrive at least a week or two before you start your job. It takes a lot longer than you’d think to get your bank accounts, phone, housing, car and all that stuff set up.”

Rebecca and Austin have two quite different opinions on Kiwi culture, she adds. “When I first arrived, I felt that British influence: people have cups of tea, the Queen’s on the currency, driving on the left side of the road, using the metric system. It’s funny because Austin thinks it feels very American compared to England: all the pop culture, TV shows and movies, fast food and a bit of that car culture.”

When she arrived, Rebecca had no plan other than to stay for two years and see how she liked it. “I think it does a take couple of years to give it a fair chance in a new place,” she says. Now, New Zealand feels like a second home.

“Five years ago if you told me I’d be living in New Zealand, I would have said that’s crazy. This experience has definitely taught me that you just never know where life is going to take you.”
Screen time

Skype makes interviewing potential migrant hires much easier – as long as employers keep their sense of perspective.

Skype is an invaluable tool when interviewing overseas job candidates – but it’s wise for employers to be aware of certain quirks that spring from using the program.

Noel Reardon manages the heritage unit at Auckland Council and hired Rebecca Fogel after a successful Skype interview.

“In my experience you hire people for their technical responses to a question and also the feel you get for a person. That can be hard to get through Skype, but with some people that comes through regardless and it did with Rebecca; her passion and interest shone through,” he says.

“What you do get is an almost unrealistic expectation through Skype that they can deal with anything, and when they come to a new country, there’s a lot of things to sort out,” Noel adds. “But that’s part of getting a new employee anyway, and if you can get someone who’s got the experience and skills like Rebecca has, you’re willing to make that effort.”

The Council recruits through their website and professional magazines and usually waits approximately three months to get a new person on board. It offers training in New Zealand’s legal governance systems, guidance around accommodation and getting to know Auckland and sets up social events “to make them feel part of the team”.

Auckland’s current development boom means specialist heritage expertise is in demand, so Auckland Council looks overseas to get necessary expertise.

“What you do get is an almost unrealistic expectation through Skype that they can deal with anything, and when they come to a new country, there’s a lot of things to sort out.”

Noel says several of their new migrant employees come from the United States or England, “because they have a similar approach to heritage that we have in NZ”.

“I’ve been asked a number of times by senior politicians, ‘Why are you doing certain things in certain ways?’ I can always say, ‘Well, it’s international practice,’ and I can back that up by getting a staff member to say, ‘This is how we did it in California,’ or London or wherever, which in our particular area we’ve found invaluable.”

Noel Reardon, Auckland Council.
A BREATH OF FRESH AIR

Mobile application developer Hanson Huang has worked hard to give his family a cleaner, less busy life.

“I was so excited.” Hanson Huang still remembers the day the job offer arrived. “I knew it was going to be the turning point of my whole life.”

Hanson had been living in Nanjing, the capital of China’s Jiangsu province, for 11 years. He had a good life there. A satisfying, well-paid job – he is a software developer, specialising in mobile phone apps – and his own apartment, in a densely populated city where owning your own home is a mark of success. But in 2013, things began to look different to him.

“My daughter Michelle was born. And we looked at Nanjing, and I love the city, but you know, in terms of raising a child... I guess the thing is the air pollution. Actually not only in Nanjing. In many cities in China.” Also China’s huge population places pressures on children that New Zealanders cannot easily imagine. “The competition is very strong. When you have a family, I don’t think it’s a good place.”

For the next year, he and his wife Helen juggled their options and weighed alternatives. Then, at the end of 2014, the email arrived. An old colleague of Hanson’s was now working at a company called Fiserv, based in Auckland’s CBD. They needed someone for a senior development position. Hanson should apply, his old friend suggested: he had exactly the right skills and experience. “Kind of a dream come true.”

Fast-forward to April 23, 2015. “I got off the plane and my friend met me. I was carrying two big cases. I went outside and took a deep breath, and – the air...”

Hanson is a cautious, disciplined speaker; he learned English in school, as most people do in China, but before he came to New Zealand he had rarely spoken it. You can hear the concentration and care he puts into each sentence. His voice warms and becomes spontaneous when he talks about his daughter and also when he talks about
Auckland’s air. “I mean the air is really fresh! I can see very far away because the air is very clean. I remember thinking, the day I came to the city, actually there is much traffic, but still the air is very clean. I feel very easy just sitting in the bus stop here. I feel I can breathe.”

It had been a long year getting to that point. The research. “For people who are keen to move to New Zealand, I recommend the official website, Immigration New Zealand. Everything you need, right there. Don’t use other websites.” The job application process, which was intense and intensive. The visa paperwork. “I did it on my own, I never consulted any agent.” One discovery: don’t expect fast replies from New Zealand officials over the Christmas week. “Though I shouldn’t blame all the delays on the paperwork”. Breaking his life down into something that would fit in two suitcases took some time too.

And then, after he arrived, the very hardest part: living alone in a new country for a year while he set things up so Helen and Michelle could follow him. “That was quite tough. I felt quite lonely – I felt very lonely.
You know. Different country. Everything strange. I missed my family."

He found his feet. He bought a house in Torbay. "That took about four months, finding a place. I had to sell the apartment in Nanjing to pay for it, so all of that happened at once." And finally, in April, the day came when he could drive to the airport and meet Helen and little Michelle and drive them home. "And it’s really our home, it’s truly home, our new home. I was so excited. I cleaned everything. I even rented a Rug Doctor. And then my daughter came into the house, and she just crawls on the carpet, plays on the carpet, what’s the word? Rolls! She rolls and rolls."

The family likes Torbay. It’s very quiet, the beach is very close. "At weekends I take Michelle to the beach, she really enjoys the playground there, and we can go for a walk, it’s very relaxing."

The hard thing is still the language. "At first I would talk to people and they don’t understand me, and I didn’t understand them either. But now my Kiwi colleagues tell me my English has improved heaps. Though sometimes I still can’t figure out what they are talking about,
particularly with jokes. The thing I’m concerned with now, is when we borrow books from the library and my daughter asks, ‘Daddy, please read it’, and I find so many words that I don’t know. I have to say, ‘Hey now, I’ll go read it first and we can read it together.’ Picking up a language really takes some time.”

But this is the life he wants for himself and his family. “I have been here for a year and a half, and I will say moving to New Zealand is definitely a great decision for me. And yeah, for anyone thinking about it, New Zealand deserves your efforts, all your hard work. I love this place.”
Investing in people

The competition for technically skilled workers is intense.

“There’s a lot of people hiring in Auckland,” says Shawn Hamman, Director, Development – Mobile of Fiserv, a global financial services company with a strong presence in New Zealand. “That forces us to look outside national borders. Even if you take into account the graduates we take on as interns, it’s not enough.”

Fiserv advertises on international sites like Workhere and Stack Overflow. “Also websites like Seek, and obviously TradeMe. We send representatives overseas to the UK, the US and elsewhere.”

When a strong CV comes in, the standard HR screening process swings into gear. Eventually the CV will make its way to Shawn. “We then have the standard interview process, all done by Skype.” First the technical interview: two senior developers quiz the candidate to see that they know everything their CV says they know. “We’ll then have an HR interview to make sure that they’d be a good cultural fit, and specifically to make sure they had intentions to move to New Zealand before we contacted them. We’ve got a very robust interview process, because we find that making the wrong decision is more problematic than spending the time to get it right up front.”

Fiserv’s experience has been that convincing a candidate to move to New Zealand can backfire. People are less likely to experience buyer’s remorse if they chose New Zealand themselves before applying for a job.

“So after the HR interview, we do a manager interview, and I make sure I’m confident the person will fit into the team here. I do some technical quizzes, make sure that they understand what it’s going to take to live in Auckland. Obviously the cost of living in Auckland is substantially more than what it would be in rural China, for instance. Assuming all of that goes well, we do a final manager interview and then we make an offer.”

If at any point Shawn feels the candidate doesn’t really understand what they’re getting into, he asks them to research a little bit more. “Then we cover it in the following interview. I don’t think anybody is overly surprised, when they get here.”
MOVED BY CHANCE,
STAYED BY CHOICE

Auckland life has given Saeid Baroutian and Mojdeh Owlad a balance of family life and career opportunities.
Iran-born Saeid Baroutian and wife Mojdeh Owlad originally made their home in the small North Island city of Rotorua, so it was difficult at first to pack up and move to Auckland.

But the opportunities have made it worthwhile: Saeid has a permanent lecturing job at the University of Auckland and Mojdeh has set up New Zealand’s first Iranian institute.

“Rotorua is a piece of heaven,” says Mojdeh. “It was the first city we saw in New Zealand. It was peaceful, it was beautiful.”

Three months after Mojdeh and Saeid arrived in the country, their daughter Vianna was born. “I found very good friends, Kiwi and Iranian, we’re still in touch with most of them. It was the best place to live with a baby: lots of coffee groups, very interesting for me,” Mojdeh says.

“Sometimes Saeid could come home for lunch, and he’d get home very soon after work every evening. With Auckland’s traffic jams, we cannot be together so much now. But in Auckland there are more people, more things to do, more opportunities.”

Saeid is a chemical engineer and Mojdeh is a chemist; they met as students at Azad University, in the south of Iran. “She was studying applied chemistry,” says Saeid, “and I was studying chemical engineering. Then we got married and studied together again in Malaysia, for our PhDs.”

While in Malaysia, the couple decided against returning to Iran. “We wanted a better place for our family, to raise children,” says Mojdeh. Her sister and brother were already living in Melbourne, so they researched Australia, and also New Zealand. Either, they decided, would make a good place to live. “Then Saeid got a job offer from the Crown Research Institute Scion, in Rotorua. We moved here by chance; but we stayed by choice.”

“We needed a peaceful country,” says Saeid, “and we love New Zealand’s climate, especially compared to where we came from.

In Iran summer is sometimes as hot as 40, 50 degrees centigrade; winter can get to minus 10, minus 15. And this is another great thing about New Zealand, public services like the health service. We received fantastic care from Rotorua Hospital when Vianna was born.”

After two years in Rotorua the family moved to Auckland so Saeid could continue his career in academia. “I worked for the University of Auckland for two years on temporary contracts, and after that I applied for a permanent position. Since February this year I’ve been a senior lecturer in the department of Chemical and Materials Engineering.”
Shifting wasn’t an easy process, he adds. “Auckland is a big city, we didn’t have any idea which area would be good to live; we wanted to live close to the city because of my job, and so we decided to move to Birkenhead. It’s beautiful, it’s a nice place.”

But with Vianna shortly due to start school, Mojdeh and Saeid agreed that it was important to live in the best school zone they could manage. So they bought a house in Meadowbank, close to St Thomas primary school.

When the family first moved to Auckland, Mojdeh made efforts to connect with the local Iranian community. Though there are reasonable numbers of Iranians in Auckland, she could find no organised community groups of the kind she was hoping for.

“I believe it’s very important to keep our culture and language, especially for Vianna. So I researched, and I met some Iranians who had been here a while, and asked their advice.” In the end, she decided to create the group she’d been hoping to find. She set up the Iroonz Institute, “the first Iranian institute in New Zealand in science, economics and culture”.

As well as organising cultural celebrations for kids around the Iranian new year and other holidays, and publishing the country’s only monthly magazine in Farsi (Iran’s national language), the institute runs regular Farsi classes for children and adults.

“I learned many, many things from this job. I have never done anything like it before... I had no idea how to set up language classes. But I really like to do something different, and that’s why sometimes I do take risks. One of my friends introduced me to another friend, a teacher for more than 20 years in New Zealand primary schools. She helped me find a place to hold classes, the same place we use now; she’s still our head teacher.”

The classes started with just eight students. Two years later, the number is approaching 40. Finding New Zealand-trained teachers was crucial, Mojdeh realises now.

“Our teachers use the educational methods that we’d use in New Zealand schools, but to teach Farsi. In Iran the educational system is totally different. The discipline when I was at school was very strict. Here kids are more free to do what they want.”
A global gold standard

To gain his current position at Auckland University, Saeid Baroutian really had to be one of the best in the world.

“There were 236 applicants in our global search,” says Professor Brent Young, the head of the University of Auckland’s Chemical and Materials Engineering Department. “So that took some time just to get to a shortlist. We’re looking to hire the best, really, we benchmark against the world, so we run an exhaustive process. We had four roles to fill, and Saeid was one of the candidates that stood out.”

The University of Auckland is New Zealand’s only university to be ranked in the top 100 worldwide. That ranking is part of what draws students to the department; to maintain it, new hires are expected to be outstanding researchers as well as great educators.

“We do discovery-led research, where the individual researcher follows their curiosity about something, so it’s about getting a quality applicant. I mean, we are a people business, research is a people business, teaching is definitely a people business. We’re a very collegial department and we become a bit of a de facto family in some ways.”

The selection process is robust. All candidates who make the long list are interviewed via Skype. “Then we typically narrow it down to a shortlist, maybe two or three per role, and then we actually get them here and interview them in person, have them give a lecture on their research, so it’s a comfortable topic that they’re familiar with, and they get to interact and meet staff and so on.”

Dr Young remembers going through this himself, as an expat Kiwi then working in Canada. “I mean it sounds gruelling, but I found it invigorating and great to be part of. You really get a sense of whether you want to be part of the place or not.”

“We’re really excited to have Saeid here. I guess Iran is quite different to New Zealand, and in fact Saeid came from Malaysia, so he’s made a couple of cultural shifts, and he’s proved adept at that. He’s proving to be an excellent addition to the team.”
A SEAMLESS TRANSITION

Máire Lenihan uses the word “lucky” a lot when describing her move to New Zealand – and how easy it’s been to feel at home here.
Ireland and New Zealand are often compared to each other. For civil engineer Máire Lenihan, the similar language, climate and culture made for an easy transition after she arrived here in April 2013.

Lenihan knew what to expect after backpacking around the country a decade ago. However, after leaving Ireland four years ago to seek new work opportunities, she first went to Sydney, Australia. “I spent a bit of time there travelling and looking for work, and it just wasn’t really me,” Máire says.

A former colleague from Ireland was working for Watercare in Auckland. He contacted Máire on LinkedIn, sent Máire’s CV to Watercare’s management, and after two days she had a Skype interview.

The job was a great opportunity: being a project manager in the wastewater transmission team, which delivers new infrastructure (physical systems) to process 400 million litres of wastewater every day for Auckland’s growing population.

Things quickly fell into place. Máire flew into Auckland on a working holiday visa. “I was really lucky to have my job secured, so that was a huge stress off my shoulders.”

As a skilled migrant, Máire applied for and received her resident’s visa within a few months. “It meant I was able to really settle.”

She’d already felt more at home here than in Australia. “The weather was a lot more agreeable to my Irish skin, and I felt a lot of similarities with New Zealanders,” she says.

“I was very lucky as well when I arrived, I found a really nice flat in Mt Eden, and met some really great people.”

Máire quickly fell in love with Auckland’s many volcanic cones, the urban beaches and Mt Eden’s leafy surroundings. “It’s a really great place to live, lots of good cafés and nice bars,” she explains.

“I was living quite close to Eden Park, so that was really exciting when there was rugby and cricket games. I walk up Mt Eden regularly and I look out at the view and it still takes my breath away, it’s just so stunning. I’m also quite lucky: in the desk I sit in at work, I have a view of Mt Eden.”

Máire, who is now the tendering manager (looking after how the business gets the services it needs to build new infrastructure) for Watercare’s infrastructure team, has also completed a postgraduate diploma in business administration here.

Ivan Moss, Director of MBA and Executive Education at the University of Auckland’s Business School, says Máire gained useful experience working with real clients during her diploma. “I know she’s taken those skills and employed them in her career,” he says.
Local study extends a person’s professional development and networks, he adds. It also helps immigrants understand the economy, and demonstrates their capability to local employers.

LinkedIn and Skype may have won Máire her dream job here, but other online services helped her settle in. Through AirBnB, she found a temporary flat when she first arrived. Friends in Ireland put her in touch with other Irish people in Auckland through Facebook. FaceTime and WhatsApp help her stay in touch with family back home.

At first she used public transport and walked everywhere, hiring a car when she wanted to go away for long weekends or Christmas. After a year and a half Máire bought a car, but it stays in the driveway most of the time.

“I like to avoid driving when I can, but that restricts where I live – I’m about to move house and I’m going to be paying London prices to live in Auckland. I have to pay more in rent because I want to live in these areas where I don’t necessarily need to have a car,” she says.

“If I do drive to work, the road rage (frustration with other drivers) comes in really quickly, because the driving here is problematic at times, with many people on the road. However, public transport is improving rapidly to cater for growth.”

Máire loves the casual nature of Kiwi barbecues, where you can bring along a few uninvited friends and no-one seems to mind.

“There’s no exclusivity and that’s made it really easy for me to make a lot of friends. You keep getting invited to things, through friends of friends with everyone bringing a plate (a Kiwi term referring to a plate of food) to contribute to the meal.”

Learning more about Māori culture has fascinated her. She’d visited Māori villages in Rotorua as a traveller, and through work has had to consult on projects with local iwi (tribes).

“It’s to ensure that cultural sensitivities are taken into consideration. Often we have a blessing at the beginning of a project; the local iwi will take part in those blessings, and it’s quite a spiritual experience,” she says.

“I do love the way when you go to a conference or a seminar here, there is always a welcome in Māori at the beginning. It’s really unique to New Zealand and really interesting.”
Innovation from diversity

Diversity brings many benefits to an organisation, and hiring migrants is an obvious part of Watercare’s recruitment strategy.

Providing water and wastewater services to a rapidly growing city of 1.4 million people is quite a challenge. That’s one of the reasons why Watercare is keen to keep its workforce diverse.

“New Zealand is a country of migrants, and as a result we have a lot of diversity in our workforce naturally,” says Adrienne Miller, Watercare’s general manager of corporate services. The organisation also makes a conscious effort to encourage employees of different ages and cultures.

“There’s a richness and diversity of thought that’s an advantage for us as a business. People who come to us from overseas bring with them a wealth of relevant experience and industry knowledge,” she says.

Over the next 10 years, Adrienne says Watercare will invest $4.9 billion in new infrastructure. “Many of our planned projects will require staff with highly specialised skills and experience. Obviously, we will not restrict our recruitment search to New Zealand. We’re competing for the best talent in a global market.”

To source such talent, Watercare has formed relationships with organisations here and overseas. “We have a well-established relationship with a technical institute in France, through which we allow their engineering students to carry out Master’s research here. A number of them have returned to Watercare after graduating and have risen to senior positions,” says Adrienne.

“Watercare supports new migrant employees with a comprehensive induction programme…”

Watercare supports new migrant employees with a comprehensive induction programme, helping them build all-important professional and community connections. They sometimes help with relocation costs and offer family-friendly working hours – important as a migrant and their family adjust to their new life.

Adrienne advises other employers to keep an open mind about how they might source the skills they need to grow.

“Will that immigrant choice introduce fresh, innovative thinking? We’re all looking to be innovative in the way we approach issues, and bringing people from offshore is one reason to think about that.”

Adrienne Miller, Watercare Services.
Barbara Venville-Gibbons and Alan Chow are determined to educate new New Zealanders about water safety.
Staying safe around water

WaterSafe Auckland is educating new New Zealanders about how to have fun and stay safe in and around our freshwater and marine environments. LINKZ talks to Barbara Venville-Gibbons and Alan Chow.

If Barbara Venville-Gibbons needs to remind herself why her organisation exists, she just steps outside WaterSafe Auckland’s door to where a forest of masts rises over the shining water of Auckland’s Westhaven Marina.

This is part of Auckland’s 3,100 kilometre coastline, an environment that includes everything from rocky, surf-lashed headlands to mangrove estuaries and inner-harbour beaches.

With golden summers and mild winters, the City of Sails and its surrounding region are a paradise for recreational water users – but paradise comes at a price.

In 2015 there were 16 drownings in the Auckland region, says Barbara: that’s an increase on 14 the year before, but lower than the five-year average of 24 per year from 2010 to 2014.

This works out to be about 0.8 drownings per 100,000 people, well below the national drowning rate of around two per 100,000.

“But any drowning is one drowning too many,” she says.

Barbara has worked with water and water safety throughout her career, first as a dive instructor, then as a staff member of the New Zealand Underwater Association, and since 2006 as the Regional Promotions Manager at WaterSafe Auckland.

In that time there have been many changes in the world of water safety, she says.

One is the ease with which people access a range of recreational water-based craft and activities. Things like sit-on-top plastic fishing kayaks, stand-up paddleboards, low-cost plastic surfboards and the affordable above-ground portable swimming pools available from retailers like Kmart are changing the water-safety environment.

Another is migration.

In 2006, the year Barbara joined WaterSafe, 37 per cent of Auckland’s population were born overseas and 234,279 Aucklanders identified as Asian. In 2013, the percentage of those born overseas had risen to 39.1 per cent and the number of Aucklanders identifying as Asian had reached 307,233.

Alan Chow, WaterSafe’s latest recruit, is one of them. He and his family came to New Zealand when he was four and, while he is at his happiest in, on and around water, he understands how deeply unfamiliar New Zealand’s water environment can be to newcomers.

Many migrants come from landlocked countries, he says, or from regions that are far from the sea or have little in the way of swimmable waters.

Even in his birthplace of Hong Kong, which he visits from time to time to keep up family connections, it is much less common to be involved in water-based recreation. And although Hong Kong does have swimming beaches, there is nothing equivalent to the surf and rips of Auckland’s West Coast.

“When it comes to Asian migrants, you often have people who haven’t been brought up around water or haven’t had much experience of the dangers you come across in natural settings,” he says.

At the same time, many Asian migrants find themselves attracted by the bounty of seafood in their new home.
“We love seafood; we love catching fish and sometimes that narrow focus leads to people being unaware of their surroundings and water safety. People overestimate their abilities and underestimate the risks. They go out in small boats without using lifejackets or head to the beach without knowing what rips are or how to recognise one.”

Rock fishing – a particularly risky hobby – and crab fishing are popular among Asian New Zealanders. In 2006, following a spate of rock fishing fatalities on Auckland’s West Coast, the then Auckland Regional Council (now Auckland Council), Surf Life Saving Northern Region and WaterSafe Auckland banded together to form the West Coast Rock Fishing Safety Project.

It focused on working with the Asian community – research had shown that nearly half of fishers were Asian and nearly half of these had only recently gained residence.

The project employed a number of strategies, including multilingual rock-fishing safety advisers, aquatic risk signage and resources in a range of languages. A decade on, rockfishing drowning fatalities have declined to less than one per year and many more fishers wear lifejackets. In 2006, 4 per cent of fishers regularly wore lifejackets; in 2015, 40 per cent did so.

WaterSafe Auckland continues to work hard to reach out to new New Zealanders.

In 2014, in partnership with ACC and Water Safety New Zealand, WaterSafe Auckland released a New Settler Water Safety DVD and handbook using the most widely spoken languages in the Asian community: English, Mandarin, Cantonese and Korean. The DVD covers water safety at the pool, at the beach, in and around boats and when rock fishing.

This DVD led to a follow-up, this one targeting the Pasifika community – a group that also sees a large number of drownings. Different cultures learn in different ways. The There Will Be Another Day DVD tells the real-life survival stories of three Pasifika people, showing how easily and quickly things can go wrong and what they learned from their experiences.

Alan Chow was employed in April 2015 as an Aquatic Educator to work with refugee and new migrant communities, international students and swim schools. He fits the job well: a water sport enthusiast since his school days, he speaks fluent Cantonese and passable Mandarin. “Though my parents wouldn’t say that,” he jokes.

Alan works with local communities, delivering programmes, presentations and workshops designed to meet their specific needs. He engages with ethnic media, such as the Chinese-language television channel WTV, and he works alongside a host of partners, including Coastguard Northern Region, Surf Lifesaving New Zealand, the...
It is important, he says, that people take the time to assess the risks and their own levels of competency to be able to enjoy activities safely in open water. Beyond having the ability to swim, competency includes water safety skills, such as floating or being able to enter the water safely, water safety knowledge and environmental risk analysis.

There is a real sense of accomplishment when you see people putting what they have been taught into practice, he says, or when emails arrive to say how useful a seminar has been. Someone may have taken up a new water activity – or they may have even saved someone from drowning.

A knowledge of water safety can prove useful when you least expect it, says Barbara.

“On average, nearly a third of New Zealand drownings are ‘immersion incidents’, where people had no intention of entering the water. Someone fell off a wharf or off the side of a boat, or someone tried to rescue someone else,” she explains.

“We think all New Zealanders have an important role to play in keeping themselves and others safer in, on and around water.”

To find out more about WaterSafe Auckland and the programmes it offers, visit www.watersafe.org.nz.
Shivangi Pradhan vividly remembers what it was like arriving in New Zealand in 1998 to join her husband. In India she had been a successful interior designer working in an architectural design company, with a family house and family to help care for her young daughter.

In Auckland, she found herself living in a small apartment in Mt Albert. Her husband used the family car to commute. She knew no one. At her daughter’s kindergarten she drew pictures for the children, worrying that they wouldn’t understand her accent.

One of her first interactions with a stranger was when a woman on a bus asked her if Indians rode elephants. ‘What can they think of us?’ she thought.

But bit-by-bit she found her feet. She began reading to the children – 1998 was a good year in retrospect, she says. The following year, she got volunteer work as a budget advisor, then found paid part-time work as a budgeting services administrator and met a range of other new New Zealanders. She enrolled to study at Unitec. For the next few years, life was busy.

Joining her local library helped Shivangi Pradhan connect to her community.

Auckland Libraries: a gateway to a new life

Then, Waitakere City Council offered her a six-month contract writing what would become the highly successful 76-page *Waitakere New Settlers’ Guide*. The guide, published in 2004, begins with the top 10 things all migrants should do; number eight, sitting between getting a driver’s licence and finding a GP, is joining the local library.

Shivangi drew on her own experience: on her second day in New Zealand her husband walked with her down to the local library to become a member. The library was an essential part of making New Zealand her home.

Today, Shivangi is Libraries Adviser: Multicultural Services for Auckland Libraries, an institution serving the most populated and culturally diverse region in New Zealand. Indeed, with 40 per cent of Aucklanders born overseas and more than 200 ethnic groups, Auckland qualifies as ‘superdiverse’, a description it shares with cities like Sydney, Melbourne, Vancouver, London and New York.

At the time of the 2013 Census, around 51,000 Aucklanders spoke Samoan, 57,000 spoke Chinese languages such as Cantonese or Mandarin, and 47,000 spoke Hindi.

Many of these people will speak English, but tellingly the Census also reports that across New Zealand more than 87,000 people did not include English among the languages in which they were able to conduct a conversation about everyday things.

The library system needs to serve everyone, says Shivangi.

“The moment you see your own languages in the community collections, that’s when you start to have that sense of connection, of feeling that there is a place for you here.”

Auckland Libraries goes out of its way to address people in their first languages. While it is unrealistic to translate everything into the 200-plus languages spoken in Auckland, the library provides critical information in a number of key languages.

When using the self-check system to borrow books, customers can choose from a range of languages, and when overdue notices are delivered, by automated phone message or email, again a choice of languages is available.

This helps prevent misunderstandings, explains Shivangi.

“For people who have come from countries where the relationship with government is difficult, their reaction to a message left in a foreign language on their answerphone is often one of fear: ‘I must have done something!’”

Every year the Libraries’ Collections Unit analyses the shifting demographics of Auckland’s population, asking whether the right language collections are held in the right branches and how well they are being used.

“If it looks like a language collection is getting less use than we would expect, we ask the community whether we have the right books,” says Shivangi.

Auckland Libraries also have extensive online community languages offerings: PressReader gives same-day access to more than 2,000 newspapers and more than 500 magazines from around the world, and Dragonsource provides thousands of full-text magazines and journals published in mainland China.

Dragonsource is particularly well used, says Shivangi.

But libraries now represent much more than books, magazines and digital offerings: they are multipurpose community venues and are often a part of larger community facilities.
Tōia, the new recreation precinct in Otahuhu, fits the model. “There’s a library, an aquatic centre, a playground and a gym. A whole lot of things are going on there,” says Auckland Libraries’ Ali Ikram.

Auckland Libraries’ events calendar includes everything from Chinese computer classes to Hawaiian dance performances, Pasifika poetry readings to Mandarin storytime sessions for children.

Shivangi mentions Onehunga Library’s Anju Chinese Club, which runs a programme of special-interest speakers addressing communally chosen topics of interest, such as banking or the health system.

“It is an opportunity for the club members to share their culture and get to know the community. The library is almost like a living book.”

Many cultural events that are now widely celebrated in New Zealand, such as Diwali and the Lunar New Year, were originally championed by libraries.

“Libraries are for everyone,” says Shivangi.

To find out more about Auckland Libraries, visit www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz.

Photo: Auckland Council.
Auckland Libraries’ services

If you live in Auckland, you are entitled to free membership of Auckland Libraries. There are 55 libraries in Auckland. Each one has free computers, internet and Wi-Fi access.

The libraries also offer:

- regular children’s story times, including bilingual or multilingual story times at some libraries, in languages such as Chinese, Korean, Hindi, Japanese, Russian and Tamil. The libraries are also happy to provide story time space to community groups who wish to deliver story times in their own language
- adult learning opportunities, such as CV writing help, and homework help for teenagers. A “Book a librarian” service offers a free one-on-one session with a librarian
- Language Line, a free telephone interpreter service, available at every library
- a Chinese-language Auckland Libraries Facebook page
- basic computer classes in English and Mandarin
- an English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) collection, including books and audio CD sets
- conversation classes for anyone who wants to improve their English
- book clubs for adults and teens, including some in languages other than English. These include Chinese, Korean and Tamil
- PressReader, a service offering free online access to 4,000 newspapers from 100 countries in 60 languages
- Dragonsource, a service giving free online access to 2,200 Chinese-language magazines
- the Zinio eMagazine site, which allows you to download many international magazines for free. They include Chinese-, Japanese-, French-, Spanish- and Italian-language magazines
- the Community Languages Collection of books for adults and children in 27 languages. The collection contains more than 100,000 items (including DVDs and CDs), with more than 80,000 items for adults and more than 15,000 items for children and teenagers. You can ask to pick up any item from this collection at your local library. This is a free service.

You can use Auckland Libraries to research your family history or to attend genealogy workshops. Auckland Libraries also gathers migrant stories and the histories of social networks, organisations and cultural events.

Photos: Auckland Council.
Every Friday morning, anywhere between eight and 16 newcomers gather in the Albany Community House on Auckland’s North Shore for the Cosy Coffee Chat, followed by Peter’s Ukulele Group, a sing- and play-along session for learners.

“Music is good when you are learning another language, it reaches a different part of the brain, and it helps with pronunciation,” explains Laure Romanetti, the Albany Newcomers Network Coordinator.

To find out about the New Zealand Newcomers Network, visit: www.newcomers.co.nz
What to do in an earthquake

Most injuries in an earthquake are caused by falling objects or debris, such as furniture, wall hangings, glass and building materials, rather than collapsing buildings. The vast majority of buildings will remain standing during a large earthquake, allowing people to exit safely.

**Practise Drop, Cover and Hold**

If you are indoors, move no more than a few steps, then Drop, Cover and Hold. Stay indoors until the shaking stops and it is safe to exit.

If you are outdoors, move away from buildings, trees and power lines, then Drop, Cover and Hold until the shaking stops.

**Safe places are:**
- under a strong table or desk
- in a clear space outdoors.

**Unsafe places are:**
- near windows or free-standing furniture
- next to the exterior walls of a building, due to falling debris.

**After an earthquake:**
- check yourself for injuries and help others if you can
- watch out for fallen power lines or broken gas lines and stay out of damaged areas
- be mindful that aftershocks can cause further damage.

International experts agree that you will reduce your chance of injury if you:

**DROP** down onto your hands and knees. This position protects you from falling and allows you to move if necessary.

**COVER** under a sturdy table or desk. If there is no shelter nearby, cover your head and neck with your arms and hands.

**HOLD** on to your shelter (or to your head and neck) until the shaking stops.

If you use a wheelchair, or are otherwise unable to Drop, Cover and Hold, brace yourself as best you can and try to find a way to protect your head and neck.

To find out more, visit: [www.getprepared.org.nz](http://www.getprepared.org.nz)
Greatest hits

Working with new New Zealanders has taken Auckland Table Tennis Association from strength to strength. LINKZ talks to Chief Executive Shane Warbrooke.

It’s 10 o’clock on a warm Wednesday morning in February and the Auckland Table Tennis Stadium is already more than half full. All around is the tchock, tchock of plastic balls, the scuffle of feet on polished wooden floors and the exclamations that accompany shots triumphantly delivered or narrowly missed.

The New Zealand Chinese Table Tennis Association has a day club, which runs on Mondays, Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays, explains Shane Warbrooke, and this is the club in action.

Some of the players are retired, he says, some are working flexible hours and some are working remotely for employers who operate in different time zones.

And while most are Chinese, there are a number of New Zealand-born players here as well.

The New Zealand Chinese Table Tennis Association and the Auckland Table Tennis Association (ATTA), of which Shane is the Chief Executive, share committee members and anyone can call by to play and socialise.

Later on in the day, once the nine-to-five day ends and school is out, the mix of players will change. Late at night and in the early hours of the morning, the workers who run Auckland’s bars, restaurants and hotels will arrive to relax after the stresses of the working day.

On the weekends, the complete range of players will turn up: juniors, seniors and veterans.

The ATTA keeps getting better and better, says Jim Coad, who has come in for a game, and who, at age 92, has served on the ATTA committee for more than 30 years.
“It’s a very sociable game. People are very friendly. If they can have a game with you, they will. Not every ball has to be a winner. You just play to your strengths.”

This is, as Shane puts it, people communicating across countries and cultures using the common language of sport.

In 2003, before the formation of the New Zealand Chinese Table Tennis Association and the launch of its casual pay-for-play day club, the ATTA’s membership had been falling and it had a limited number of Asian players.

Since then, says Shane, by reaching out to new New Zealanders the ATTA has gone from strength to strength. It now has more than 3000 registered players, many of them school students, and around 230 key-holders, who have access to the building whenever they want. Shane estimates that about 85 per cent of the people who are key-holders are Asian New Zealanders whose origins lie in such geographical regions as China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Korea and, in smaller numbers, India.

The ATTA’s coaches come from mainland China, Hong Kong and Korea – and its development officer from the non-Asian table-tennis powerhouse of Germany.

The coaches bring their contacts with them. Some of the ATTA’s junior players have trained in Shanghai, and overseas teams often visit, the most recent from Xi’an in China.

And, as the ATTA has reached into the New Zealand Asian community, valued sponsors have given their support.

Why are people from China and South Asia such fans of table tennis? The answers lie in culture and history.

In the case of China, during the 1930s civil war one reporter was surprised to find how popular table tennis was among the soldiers of the Red Army, and in the 1950s Chairman Mao Zedong declared the game to be the national sport.

In China – and some other Asian nations – the best table tennis players have the status of All Blacks.

As a sport, table tennis has many advantages. It can be played by people of any age or body type, it requires little in the way of expensive equipment and injuries are rare.

What problems has Shane encountered as the cultural make-up of the Association has changed?

Very few. The key, he says, has been the personal relationships within the Association and the mix of languages and cultures represented on the management committee.

When a notice needs to be translated into Mandarin or Korean (a Korean Table Tennis Association meets on Saturday nights), or discussions take place in multiple languages, there are always people who are happy to help.

Shane enjoys the mix of people. “It is always interesting; there is always something different going on. It is easy to work together when you share a common passion.”

To find out more about the Auckland Table Tennis Association, visit www.tabletennis.net.nz
Actively bridging the sporting divide

ActivAsian, a programme run by Harbour Sport on Auckland’s North Shore, is working to make sport and recreation a part of more New Zealander’s lives.
Different countries have varying customs when it comes to playing sport, says Sport Capability Project Manager Jenny Lim of Harbour Sport.

She discovered this personally when, as a teenager, she and her family moved from Malaysia to Auckland’s North Shore.

In Malaysia sport was about kick-around games of football at the local park, or turning up at the local badminton hall with some friends to rent a court.

In New Zealand there were trials to see which players would qualify for which teams, and regular practices and scheduled matches. There were clubs and membership subscriptions. There were winter and summer sports seasons.

“In Malaysia we have wet and dry seasons, not summer and winter."

It was all very different.

“I can completely understand why Asian migrants don't play sports here,” she says.

There are other reasons why sport isn’t popular too, she says.

Often people move to New Zealand to help their children succeed at school or university, and any time left over after study is usually spent on 'useful' skills, such as learning the piano.

Then there is the risk of injury. While many Kiwi parents accept that bumps and bruises are part of growing up, not everyone sees things this way.

Perhaps because of reasons like these, surveys have shown that Asian New Zealanders are less physically active than the general population.

This is unfortunate.

Educators point out that sport and exercise are good for building concentration, memory and social skills. Active students feel better, show more confidence, make friends more easily and are better behaved.

We also know taking part in recreation and sport is a great way for newcomers to meet people and become part of the community.

Early in the 2000s, many North Shore locals could see that their community was changing. By the time of the 2006 census, around one in five of the local population were Asian New Zealanders. They attended the same schools and universities, shopped at the same shops. What they did not seem to be doing – with some notable exceptions – was taking part in mainstream sports.

So in 2009, Harbour Sport launched their ActivAsian programme as a way of bringing benefits of recreation and sport to everyone.

Jenny Lim, a new Auckland Bachelor of Science graduate, took up the management of ActivAsian a month after its launch. She is well qualified: her major was in sport and exercise science and she is fluent in English and Mandarin.

Today, ActivAsian works closely with the North Shore’s Chinese, Korean and Filipino communities.

The ActivAsian programme has helped local sports bodies work out how to go about attracting more New Zealand Asians as members. It has also helped link up Asian communities with regional sports bodies. One result is that the Northern Football Federation is now helping to run football leagues for the Chinese and Korean communities.

To find out more about ActivAsian, visit the Harbour Sport website: www.harboursport.co.nz
Outdoor leadership courses & ActivAsian Volunteers

The two-day outdoor leadership courses offered by ActivAsian have been highly successful.

Walking out in the natural environment has a wide appeal, says Jenny. It costs little or nothing, does not need expensive equipment, and it links to the reason many people move to New Zealand – the outdoor lifestyle.

“We found a lot of advocates within the Chinese community, who were saying, ‘You moved from China to a place with green space with all these walkways and here you are stuck in a building. You should enjoy what it has to offer.’”

Among the Korean community, where nature walks are an established institution, the leadership training had instant appeal. “They didn’t need convincing.”

ActivAsian offered places for 30 people, “and we had about 70 people sign up”, says Jenny.

After a slow start, cycling courses are also proving popular.

“Last year I ran a course for around 30 parents from a Kristin Chinese parents’ group who meet just down the road. We ran it here in the car park, which is a very safe, very controlled environment, and we taught them grade two, which gives them the skills to ride in traffic.”

Some of the parents are now asking for regular sessions for their kids.

One of ActivAsian’s most successful initiatives came about almost by accident. In 2012, Harbour Sport decided to run a youth-focused Chinese Sport forum and, as had been the case before, faced the problem of finding interpreters.

“I thought, I am not an interpreter, but I can speak other languages,” says Jenny. “There must be more people like me out there. So I put a call out to all these Chinese student groups and asked if anyone wanted to volunteer.”

About 15 students answered the call. “We got them all together, gave them a briefing, and they went off and did a great job. They were amazing. I thought, ‘Man, we are letting them go and we probably won’t see them again. If only we could have something where we could share these volunteers with other sporting events and help them with interpreting if they need it.’”

At the end of each year, successful ActivAsian Volunteers are awarded Certificates of Appreciation.

An ActivAsian outdoor leadership course in progress.

At the end of each year, successful ActivAsian Volunteers are awarded Certificates of Appreciation.
ActivAsian Volunteers was born.

As we speak, Jenny has just returned from Takapuna Grammar School where she delivered a presentation about ActivAsian Volunteers to international students. “We usually get about six or seven students showing up, but yesterday they came streaming in. We had about 40 kids.”

Normally the programme has about 40 volunteers; this year it has reached 100.

This is good news. This year the annual Shore-to-Shore run is coinciding with a Weet-Bix Kids TRYathlon and ActivAsian will be able to supply volunteers for both.

For the students, volunteering has many benefits. It brings new experiences, establishes friendships and looks good on a CV.

“If you come to all our workshops and volunteer for three or more events during the year, you can put me down as a reference,” says Jenny.

“I will have seen you at least four times and I will have heard about how you work.”

Jenny has taken a number of reference calls.

“We also communicate with the schools to say, ‘So-and-so has signed up for the programme.’ It shows that they have initiative and it gives them a good name.”

It’s also good fun. “At the end of last year, we all rode bikes to a local mini-golf course and played mini-golf.”

Do the volunteers end up playing sport themselves? Not necessarily, says Jenny.

“We always tell the kids they don’t have to be sporty to be involved in sport; they can be involved in an international triathlon competition without knowing how to ride a bike. They can be involved in marshalling and writing race numbers and things like that; it’s really cool and they really enjoy it most of the time.”

On the other hand, some do end up participating. One group of volunteers from a local high school has formed a social football team. “They call themselves the Algebrothers, because they are all good at maths.”

“So something that was a bit of an accident in terms of how it started has turned out to be one of the coolest things we do,” says Jenny.

To find out about sport and recreation opportunities near you, contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau:

www.cab.org.nz/acabnearyou
0800 367 222

Or visit the Sport New Zealand website:

www.sportnz.org.nz/get-into-sport
These modern replicas of the voyaging canoes have completed many of the same cross-ocean journeys.
Ngā waka o neherā
– the canoes of the ancestors

By Prof. Rawiri Taonui

You may notice the Māori of Aotearoa (New Zealand) come from different tribes. The origins of these tribes trace back to the canoes, or waka, that first brought them here.

Māori learn and identify with their ancestors’ waka and will tell you this in the first line of their introduction (or pepeha) that is still used in many situations. For example, “Ko Horouta te waka” – Horouta is my waka.

Origins
Studies trace the origins of the Māori to the Lapita people who appeared east of Papua New Guinea some 3,000 years ago, and then in the next 500 years quickly settled from west to east across the Pacific, earning a well-deserved reputation as supreme navigators. Around 1,000 years later, their descendants had settled east Polynesia including eventually reaching New Zealand – recent evidence suggests they also went all the way to South America.

Oral traditions and modern myth
The Māori canoe traditions help fill in this history – but they mix symbolic and historical elements that are not easily unwoven. The name of an ancestor might actually be the name of a dynasty rather than an individual in another place; that of a canoe could be a mountain; some people arrive on waka and others by supernatural means, such as on whales. Many early European writers sometimes over-simplified these oral traditions, creating the popular myth that one fleet of just seven canoes settled New Zealand.

The tribes and their waka
About 200 waka names are remembered. All tribes descend from multiple canoes because of different relationships across the country. Each typically emphasises one or more of the waka that landed in their area. Māhuhu-ki-te-rangi is the main canoe for Ngāti Whātua, Tainui the principal canoe for the Waikato and Te Arawa for Lake Rotorua and Lake Taupō.

Some tribes have multiple principal waka. Matawhaorua, Ngātokimatawhaorua and Mataatua are the key canoes for Ngāpuhi. Te Wakahuruhurumanu, the Nukutere, Horouta and Tākitimu are important canoes on the East Coast. Several canoes landed in some regions. There are more than 30 canoes mentioned in traditions from Taranaki, of which the most celebrated are the Tokomaru, Aotea and Kurahaupō.

Tribes in different areas might share a canoe lineage. The Mataatua above is also the main canoe for Ngāti Awa in the Bay of Plenty. Kurahaupō is the canoe for Ngāti Kurī at the top of the North Island, tribes in Taranaki and also Rangitāne in Hawke’s Bay. Ngāti Kahungunu and the East Coast tribes share Tākitimu.

Whatever the combination, the ancestral canoe or waka is regarded as a central aspect of tribal and individual identity.
Special greetings

By Prof. Rawiri Taonui

Greetings

Practising special greetings is a fun way to learn basic Māori language. A common phrase “ngā mihi” has several meanings – “greetings”, “best wishes” and “congratulations”. When coupled with other words like “ngā mihi mahana” or “ngā mihi aroha”, the meaning changes to “warm greetings” and “loving wishes”.

Summer holidays

“Ki pai ō rā whakatā” (May your days of rest be good) and “Hari hararei” (Happy holidays) are often said to convey holiday wishes.

New Year

“Ngā mihi mo te tau hou” (Greetings for the New Year) is a salutation Māori continue well past the holiday season as they reacquaint with friends and associates.

Births

Welcome to your new baby girl.
Nau mai, e hine, ki te ao tūroa.
Welcome to your new baby boy.
Nau mai, e tama, ki te ao tūroa.

Love

With all my love.
Me te aroha nui.
Love you heaps / My love for you knows no bounds.
Ka nui taku aroha mōu / Ka nui taku aroha ki a koe.
Love ya heaps (less formal).
Taku aroha nui mōu / Taku aroha nui ki a koe.
My love for you will never wane.
E kore e mimiti te aroha mōu.
Words can’t express how much I love you.
E kore e ea i te kupu taku aroha mōu.

Mother’s Day

Love and best wishes for Mother’s Day.
Ngā mihi me te aroha nui mō te Rā o te Whaea.
Happy Mother’s Day, love from (name).
Ngā mihi rā me te aroha nui mō te Rā o te Whaea, nā (ingoa).
To Mother with love, from (name).
Ki a Māmā me te aroha nui, nā (ingoa).

Kia pai tō mahi ki te ako i te reo Māori (Good luck learning te reo Māori).

For other information on Māori language, see www.korero.co.nz
Settlement services

Immigration New Zealand funds the following specialist settlement services to support the information needs of new migrants.

CAB Language Connect – 
free help in your language
Citizens Advice Bureau (CAB) is an independent community organisation providing free, confidential information, advice, support and advocacy. CAB Language Connect is funded by Immigration New Zealand to provide the CAB service to newcomers in more than 20 languages.
To use Language Connect, call 0800 78 88 77 and ask, or go to www.cab.org.nz and search for “Language Connect”.

Chinese New Settlers Services Trust – 
workshops about living in New Zealand for Chinese and Korean newcomers
The Chinese New Settlers Services Trust provides a series of workshops across Auckland that help Chinese and Korean newcomers learn more about settling in New Zealand. For more information, phone 09 570 1188 or go to www.chineseservice.org.nz and follow the links on the home page.

Immigration New Zealand funds three Chambers of Commerce for settlement services that match newcomers with the skills employers are seeking. These services assist newcomers with careers guidance, CV reviewing and interview performance and improve their access to employment opportunities that match their skills and experience.

In Wellington and Canterbury…

Skilled Newcomers Programme – Wellington
For information about this programme, phone the Programmes Coordinator on 04 470 9940, email james.sauaga@wecc.org.nz, or go to www.wecc.org.nz/skillednewcomers

Connecting Canterbury Employers and Newcomers’ Skills Programme – Christchurch
For information about this programme, phone 03 353 4161, email juder@cecc.org.nz or go to www.cecc.org.nz.

In Auckland and nationwide…

Are you looking for employment?
www.newkiwis.co.nz is a free job site for skilled returning Kiwis and new migrants who are seeking employment.
Benefits:
• Access a network of around 20,000 NZ employers
• Employers advertise vacancies and can search for you
• Access to an information centre with relevant information for newcomers
• Understand the NZ job market with specialist online training courses.
Local information for new migrants

Immigration New Zealand provides a free local information service for new migrants about living and working in New Zealand.

This service can be accessed at the Citizens Advice Bureau in 30 locations around the country.

Want to phone? Call \textbf{0800 FOR CAB} (0800 367 222) for further information
NORTH ISLAND

CAB Whangarei
Municipal Building,
71 Bank Street, Whangarei
Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

CAB New Lynn
New Lynn Library Building,
3 Memorial Drive, Auckland
Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm,
Saturday 10am – 1pm

CAB Northcote
Northcote Library Buildings,
5 Ernie Mays Street,
Northcote, Auckland
Monday–Friday 9.15am–3.30pm

CAB Eden Albert
82 St Lukes Road (by Public Library)
Mt Albert, Auckland
Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm

CAB Manurewa
Library Complex,
7J Hill Road, Manurewa, Auckland
Monday–Friday 9am – 4pm,
Saturday 9am– 11am

CAB Auckland Central
1st floor, Auckland Central City Library,
44-46 Lorne Street, Auckland
Monday 11am–3pm,
Tuesday–Thursday 9.30am – 4.30pm,
Friday 11am – 3pm,
Saturday (IP only) 10am – 12pm

CAB Pakuranga-East Manukau
Library Building, Aylesbury Street,
Pakuranga, Auckland
Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm,
Saturday 9.30 – 11.30am

CAB Browns Bay
2 Glen Road, Browns Bay,
Auckland
Monday–Friday 9am – 4.30pm

CAB Hamilton
55 Victoria Street, Hamilton
Monday–Friday 8.45am – 5pm

CAB New Plymouth
Community House,
32 Leach Street, New Plymouth
Monday–Friday 9.30am – 3.30pm

www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/local
When you are new, it’s good to have a guide

The newcomer’s guide has key facts to help you settle successfully in New Zealand. Read it online or order your own free copy at www.newzealandnow.govt.nz/resources

Get the right visa advice!

Only some people can give you visa advice.

If someone tells you the wrong thing, it could affect your visa and your ability to work in New Zealand.

Only licensed immigration advisers or people like lawyers can provide immigration advice.


You can also get free advice from Community Law Centres and the Citizen’s Advice Bureau (CAB).

Immigration New Zealand does not accept applications from people who are not licensed or exempt and recommends people use an agent who is licensed and listed on the IAA website.

If you have any concerns about an immigration adviser, contact the IAA.

Get the right visa advice!

www.newzealandnow.govt.nz

www.facebook.com/NewtoNewZealand