

LOCAL EVENTS

PUREBREAD MUSIC: The Purebread Ōtaki Summer Music Carnival is on in Memorial Park, Main Street, on the Saturday of Wellington Anniversary Weekend, January 22. It's free live entertainment, featuring Ōtaki's own Puke & Moana. Music starts at 10.30am, running until 4pm, and from 8pm at the Telegraph Hotel (see page 11).

HERITAGE WEEKEND: Ōtaki Museum is open during Wellington Anniversary Weekend (January 22-24) as part of an annual weekend showcasing the Kāpiti district's rich history. Museum visitors can win prizes. The current exhibition at Ōtaki Museum is *Ko Ōtaki te awa, ko Ōtaki te kainga* (Ōtaki is the river, Ōtaki is the home). See page 19.

HEALTH CAMP TOUR: The Friends of the Ōtaki Rotunda is offering a tour of the old Ōtaki Children's Health Camp on Saturday, January 22, at 2pm. Space is limited so bookings are essential. To book, contact anthonydreavernz@gmail.com. Visit otakirotonda.org.nz for more information.



RODGER FOX: The inimitable Rodger Fox is playing in the jazz spectacular *More Jazz meets The Beatles*. Special guest Erna Ferry. This is the Mulled Wine annual fundraiser. Saturday January 29, Paekākāriki Memorial Hall, doors open 6.30pm, music from 7pm. Tickets \$30, \$15 for under 16s, door sales \$35. Email sales from marygow@gmail.com. See mulledwineconcerts.com

ŌTAKI COMMUNITY BOARD: First meeting of the year 7pm Tuesday, February 8, in the Gertrude Atmore Lounge (attached to the Memorial Hall). The public is welcome. Public speaking time is allowed – arrive early and register with the secretary before the meeting.

ŌTAKI RIVER PARKRUN: A free, fun and friendly 5km walk, jog, run, volunteer or watch event every Saturday from 8am, north-east side of Ōtaki River. It's free, but please register before you come along first time. Bring a scannable copy of your barcode to register your time. Note vaccine pass required. Post parkrun coffee at River Cottage Café. See parkrun.co.nz

ŌTAKI WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CLUB CRAFT MARKET SH1, opposite New World, open 9am-2pm every Sunday during daylight saving. Contact Georgie 027 234-1090.

ŌTAKI GARAGE SALE Third Saturday of the month, 9am-11.30am, rain or shine, Presbyterian Church, 249 Mill Rd. 06 364-6449. Rev Peter Jackson 021 207 9455, owpresb@xtra.co.nz

ŌTAKI STROKE & WELLNESS GROUP: meets for "Sit & Be Fit" classes, 10am every Friday morning, at the Senior Citizen's Hall, Rangitira Street. All welcome.

ŌTAKI LIBRARY – ALL SESSIONS FREE: (Except public holidays)
JP service: A JP at the library every Monday 10.30am-12.30pm

Age Concern every 2nd Thursday 10am-noon
Greypower every 1st and 3rd Thursday from 10.30am-1.30pm.

WAIKANAĒ TOASTMASTERS: Meetings 2nd and 4th Thursday of every month, 7.30pm, Waikanae Arts and Crafts Rooms 27 Elizabeth St, Waikanae. Contact Neil at 0274 417 229.

To list an event, contact debbi@idmedia.co.nz

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

If you have something to say, write to us. Please include your full name, address and contact phone number. Only letters that include these details will be published, unless there is good reason to withhold a name. Maximum 200 words. Note your letter may be edited for grammar and accuracy. Not all letters received will be published and the publisher reserves the right to reject any letter. Write to *Ōtaki Today*, 13 Te Manuao Rd, Ōtaki or email ian@idmedia.co.nz

OPINION: Note that the views and opinions of our contributors are not necessarily those of *Ōtaki Today*.

Djokovic, DJ highlight murky accountability

What do a London disc-jockey and the world's top men's tennis player have in common?

Both have run afoul of Downunder Covid-19 health protection rules and in doing so highlighted differing cultures about political decision-making and accountability in New Zealand and Australia.

Reports of D J Dimension's breach of isolation test rules disclosed he has now made three visits to New Zealand under preferred treatment as an individual with unique talents. Questioning of his privileged position by comparison with the outrage voiced in Australia that Novak Djokovic had an exemption from vaccination requirements to play in the Australian tennis open tournament was muted.

The Ardern Government faced little public wrath. Opposition politician questioning was shrugged off on the basis that decisions relating to exemptions from Covid requirements are the domain of the Ministry of Health, by way of recommendation to the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment (MBIE).

Within Australia, tennis authorities cited two independent evaluations of Djokovic's application for special treatment, under conditions of anonymity, as a reason for acceptance of his entry into the tournament, leaving aside his value as a draw-card for spectator attendance.

But central government and state politicians were not immune from fierce public and media questioning, and border authorities refused him entry for not meeting Australian visa entry criteria, a decision that at press time was subject to successful legal appeal.

The New Zealand case provides a useful

example of how a government can keep itself clear of direct links to a potential scandal.

Instead of politicians holding direct responsibility for exemptions, they pass it to a ministry – a hands-off, politically prudent approach. The ground is further muddied when the actual decision to exempt, or not, is fronted in public by another ministry, in this case MBIE.

ACT party members are canvassing the prospect of an ombudsman's inquiry into

the handling of the disc-jockey's exemptions, especially as his inability to fulfil engagements was not in the latest case an obstacle to the event proceeding.

Who supported his application for exemptions? Were the views of any ministers or family members canvassed or considered?

The public might well want to know how a disc-jockey gets such

exemptions when families in quite desperate situations, or business representatives with significant national interest contracts at stake, are unable to get through the regulatory barriers.

The prudent approach providing scope for political leaders to deny responsibility for any direct involvement in decisions made by departments is administratively almost impeccable. However, politically it works to curb a potential furore only if neither the public at large nor opposition parties do not bring about the uproar that Djokovic encountered in Australia.

Australians tend to hold their ministers of the crown strongly to account for the operations of the departments for which they are responsible. A questionable decision by a department or ministry is likely to bring the minister into the frontline of responsibly.

The increasing tendency of ministers in New Zealand to foster views that actions or decisions made by departments are in some way independent of them will become less tenable should 2022 see more rigorous questioning of the Government by the opposition parties.

Accountability is likely to be at the forefront, with the political year promising to be dominated by debate on the economy (rising inflation and the scale of government borrowing); house prices (whether they continue to rise or fall); the Three Waters Reform model intended by the Government; law and order (gang activity); and foreign policy (the relationship between New Zealand and China/United States).

Given recent opinion polls showing National and ACT gaining electoral strength against Labour and the Greens, it might be worth recalling that in 1974 under the FPP system of government Labour entered its second year of office holding 56 of the 95 seats in Parliament. When the election was held the following year, its representation went down to 32.

Currently Labour has 65 seats and the Greens 10 in a 120-seat Parliament, matched against 33 for National, 10 for ACT and two for the Māori Party. The voter swing against Labour to National led by Rob Muldoon in 1975 was about 9 percent.

These figures suggest it is a huge stretch for the opposition parties to match Labour and its support party next year.

But 2022 will be the year that indicates the prospect of change at the top becoming a reality. Accountability of ministers will be a key measure in public assessments of performance.

■ Bruce has been an economics and business editor, and a political and foreign correspondent in Washington, London and Hong Kong.



BRUCE KOHN

CARTOON OF THE MONTH

By Jared Carson



ŌTAKI TODAY

Ngā Kōrero o Ōtaki

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Forks setback as another slip slides

By Ian Carson

A second landslip at Blue Bluff in Ōtaki Gorge has set back plans to reopen the road leading to the Ōtaki Forks campground and Tararua Forest Park.

The road has been closed to walkers and vehicles since September 2020, when heavy rain created a slow slip. Wild weather during the weekend of June 26 and 27 last year created new cracks in the road surface over the slip, and last month, between December 6-8, heavy rain brought down another large slip 100 metres further east that covered the road. The road was closed for seven months in 2016 in the same area after a slip.

Kāpiti Coast District Council says the latest activity has made it more difficult to reopen the road. It has engaged engineering consultants WSP to review the situation and help develop solutions. The council hopes to have more information in the next three months.

Meanwhile, the only permanent residents past the slip zone continue to live without vehicle access to the outside world, and limited foot access.

Retired couple David and Kathleen Campbell live on about 120 hectares of land just past Blue Bluff that was previously farmed by Charlie Arcus. They built a house on the land and have lived there since 2001. However, for nearly 18 months they've not been able to drive on the road and have had



SLIPPED: A KCDC photo showing the slips at Blue Bluff, the latest tumbling from the bank above and covering the road. At right are Ōtaki Gorge Road residents David and Kathleen Campbell near the slip site (photo supplied).

to use a buggy and pack to transport groceries and other items to their home.

During most of that time they've risked traversing the road on foot, but after the latest slip, the only safe route is along a difficult track that skirts the slip area. The Campbells have to walk across the track towards the old dam built by Charlie Arcus, up to the top of a the Cyrus Hills Forest, back



down the other side, along about 500m of the closed Ōtaki Gorge Road, then across a closed gate. They can then drive to the highway.

"It's an official DoC track, but it's avoided by a lot of people trying to get to the gorge because it's a difficult track," says David Campbell. "The authorities want people to use that way to get in."

The only other way of getting in is along the closed road, but the council warns it's dangerous.

On its website, the council says it's frustrating to have the road closed for such a long time, but there are significant safety issues. The slip has caused the road to slump and it could drop out into the river any time.

"We have to put the safety of people first. While the road remained unstable closure was our only option," the council says. "Rushing into reopening a road that is showing this kind of movement is not wise."

"Fixing any road requires solid information about the ground underneath, a suitable design, funding and a process to select contractors to do the work."

The council had been looking throughout last year at how it could reopen the road, and had conducted specialised geotechnical work. In the latter part of 2021 the road had stabilised enough to reopen part of it for a walking and cycling track. Then the December slip came down.

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CHRISTMAS TEAM: Helpers at the grotto in the college hall were, from left, Michael Brown, co-ordinator Kirsty Doyle, Rebecca Whitt of Professionals Property Management, Joseph Te Wiata, and Lynda Brown (Lynda and Michael are Rebecca's parents from Rentables).



LIT UP: Two of the local displays of Christmas lights were at the Te Wiata whānau's house in Rangatira Street (top) and (above) a spectacular garden display in Ludlam Way.

Wonderland wows

A Christmas wonderland for the kids at Ōtaki College in the week leading up to Christmas was deemed such a success that it's hoped it will become an annual event.

More than 350 people came through the doors. With a koha entry, \$650 was donated, which has been passed on to Ōtaki Foodbank.

The event was on the Monday to Thursday evenings just before Christmas Day. Most of the display was from the resources of Christmas light guru Joseph Te Wiata (who always has a great display at his house) and Rebecca Whitt of Professionals Property Management.

It was part of the Light Up Ōtaki initiative run by the Ōtaki Promotions Group (OPG) and

several OPG committee members volunteered their time for the event.

Co-ordinator Kirsty Doyle says it was a great success.

"We'd love to do it again next Christmas," she says. "We used only part of the college hall, so something like having Santa on the stage next time would be awesome."

The wonderland was the brainchild of Rebecca, who three years ago encouraged local businesses to enter a competition to light up their shop-fronts for Christmas.

It grew in 2020 to include local people whose houses had Christmas light displays. This year a map of lit-up houses attracted 1000 views on Facebook.

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Paula's 25 years of paper deliveries

By Ian Carson

Paula Johns delivers newspapers, pamphlets and flyers in rain, hail and shine – and even snow.

It's something she's used to – after all she's been doing it for 25 years.

Paula began the delivery job when she was still at Ōtaki College and aged only 16 in 1997. Since then, she's delivered an estimated two million items of printed material into Ōtaki letterboxes. And she loves it, no matter what the weather or anything else that might distract her.

Reading difficulties have made it impossible for Paula to find regular work, so the paper round and other hobbies have kept her busy since leaving school.

It began in 1997 when she delivered the *Weekly News*, the midweek edition of the *Levin Chronicle*. Then she took on delivery of the *Kāpiti Observer* Mondays and Thursdays, and more recently Ōtaki's own *Ōtaki Today* newspaper.

At weekends – usually on a Sunday – she would be busy with flyer deliveries.

"There used to be a lot of them in those early days," Paula says. "They were mostly the big stores like Briscoes, Rebel Sport, The Warehouse and 4 Square.



DELIVERY: Paula Johns delivers another newspaper in Cobb Place, part of her regular round on the Plateau in Ōtaki. Photo Ian Carson

Sometimes it would take all day just to fold them, even before I got out to deliver them."

Nowadays she's not so busy, with fewer editions of newspapers and fewer flyers, although she's happy to have the job of delivering *Ōtaki Today* as a new addition to her paper round.

Paula is a distribution company's

dream contractor. The weather and how she feels never deters her. Her mum, Kathy Johns, recalls her going out on her bike the last time it snowed in Ōtaki, in July 2011.

"She was still determined to get the job done," Kathy says.

Paula was for 20 years a volunteer with St John, assisting paramedics at sporting and other

events. She's also an avid knitter. She knits blankets, scarves, ponchos and jerseys to give away. Last year she delivered 10 of them to residents at Ocean View Residential Care.

She's happy to receive anyone's spare yarn.

■ If you have any yarn to spare, contact Paula at 06 364-5491

IN BRIEF

Median house price \$770,000

The median house price for Ōtaki hit \$770,000 last month, up \$250,000 on the start of 2021. The figure, calculated from council and real estate data by homes.co.nz, is up \$15,000 from November, a rise consistent with the previous three months. At the beginning of 2021, house prices were \$520,000, making the increase for the year just over 48 percent. In the past three months the median house price has risen 6.1 percent, and in six months it has gone up 16 percent.

Te Horo principal leaves

Michelle Tate has resigned as principal of Te Horo School. In last year's term 4 newsletter, a low-key announcement said she had left to pursue other education sector opportunities. Michelle had been principal for the past three years. A limited statutory manager, Kevin Palmer, was appointed by the Ministry of Education in June last year "to work in partnership with the board, the principal, the school's teaching and support staff, parents and the wider school community to identify areas for change and improvement across all areas of the school". He continues to work with the school.

Flood meeting February 2

A community meeting has been called to discuss the flooding last month that closed Te Horo Beach Road for two days. The meeting is at the Bus Stop Cafe, 7pm on Wednesday, February 2. KCDC and the Great Wellington Regional Council representatives are expected to attend.

Happy New Year Ōtaki



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Gutted shed stirs garden memories

By Ian Carson

A large timber and corrugated iron shed in Rāhui Road near the race course, burnt down on November 4, was a link to the days when market gardens proliferated in Ōtaki.

Its demise stirred memories among locals who knew the Eales family that had gardens on the land around the shed.

Frank and Jean Eales were well known in Ōtaki market gardening circles. They grew a variety of fruit and vegetables at Rāhui Road, mostly the iconic Ōtaki tomatoes. The shed was used for storing equipment and as a pack-house. Frank erected the shed and lived in it for a time while he built the family's two-storey house, which still stands on the property.

Claudine Thompson, as one of the Adams family living nearby on Rāhui Road, recalls working in the gardens – along with others such as Paula Jones and Mavis Ludlam – at weekends picking strawberries.

"We used to have smoko in the shed," she says. "It would always be a cup of tea and wine biscuits. We would get enough to go to the pictures on Saturday afternoon, 9-pence upstairs and 6-pence downstairs."

The Eales couple bought the land in 1942 from Irish gardener George Chittick, who lived near where Waitohu School was to be built in Te Manuao Road. He came to Ōtaki in 1923 and owned several blocks of land in the Plateau area.

Frank and Jean developed one of Ōtaki's largest commercial garden operations. They had not only the Rāhui Road property, but also bought nearly five hectares (12 acres) of land in August 1950 for £3500 on Waerenga Road



GUTTED: Ōtaki firefighters battle the blaze that destroyed the Eales shed in Rāhui Road on November 4. Photo Graeme Rankin

from the recently widowed Emily Buxton. Emily was the widow of New Zealand's pre-eminent landscape gardener of the time, Alfred Buxton. Alfred and his brother-in-law, Jim Kirkwood, had operated a huge flower operation on the land, part of which became Maire Street in 1953.

In 1957, the Ealeses bought a section on the corner of the main highway and Addington Road, part of the new Addington Estate. Two years later they built Ye Olde Pumpkin as a fruit and vegetable store and dairy, which Jean ran. In more recent times, it operated as the Koru Ice cream shop, which closed last year.

At the western end of Addington Road, Frank leased land from Eric Jensen on the peat soils

and grew a new variety of rhubarb, which was considered superior quality and became the local gardeners' rhubarb of choice.

The Eales children, Valerie and Robert, carried on the gardening and entrepreneurial tradition.

As a teenager, Valerie established one of the first roadside vegetable stalls in Ōtaki. She began by setting up a trailer south of the Ōtaki River bridge, selling produce mainly from the Eales gardens. Later she rented a small area on the highway opposite the entrance to Ōtaki Gorge Road, where she built a stall.

Fruit and vegetable stores proliferated in Ōtaki from the 1960s until the early 1990s,

particularly along the highway south of the river.

Gardening began with pre-European Māori, who recognised the quality of the land, as did the Chinese gardeners who came in the early part of the 20th century.

The industry was spurred in the late 1930s by the Labour Government's move to build new State houses that pushed commercial gardeners off land at Taita in Lower Hutt. Many Italians were among them.

After the Second World War, there was also an influx of war veterans helped onto the land with State Advances loans. Among them were a group of growers who bought land on the Addington Estate and established stalls on the "golden mile" around where the last of them survives today – Penrays.

They included not only Penny and Ray Bertelsen (hence the Penray name), but also Howie and Christina Townrow, Gordon and Rosemary Black, Alma and Bob Bartosh, and Norman and Euan Joe.

Others had small stalls with honesty boxes outside their garden gate throughout the town. My own parents had a small stall in Te Manuao Road, and built a store at the top of County Road on the highway in the 1970s that's now the home of Coastwide Plumbing.

The Ealeses were not to miss out.

Robert started a business selling from a tent in a vacant lot near the BP service station at the Railway (now the offices of First National and Web2Print). He later teamed up with brother-in-law Arthur Bills to build on the same site the Ōtaki Vegetable Market – known as the OVM – to establish a permanent store.

The shed fire in November is being investigated after arson was suspected.

• Sources: Carl Lutz, Ōtaki Historical Journal



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MNZM for commitment to Kiribati community

DR ROSE NAMOORI-SINCLAIR
Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit (MNZM) for services to the Kiribati community

By Ian Carson

Dr Rose Namoori-Sinclair is the pride of her tiny Pacific nation, with a PhD covering the impact of policy on Pacific women’s health and the experiences of Kiribati migrants, and now receiving an MNZN in the New Year Honours.

Rose was born in Kiribati, a small group of islands and atolls in the middle of the Pacific Ocean. It’s home to more than 110,000 people. Its low land profile makes it one of the world’s most endangered nations from the ravages of rising sea levels.

Rose completed a degree in economics and geography at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji, and worked for three years at the Kiribati Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. She later got a scholarship to complete a masters degree in economics at the University of New England in Australia, returning again to work for the Development Bank of Kiribati and Ministry of Natural Resources and Development.

She always had a goal of working in a role that helped Pacific communities, so she was pleased to later land a job with the secretariat of The Pacific Community, an international development agency based in New Caledonia.

Rose came to New Zealand in 2001 under a skilled migrant scheme with her husband and two children after working for three years in New Caledonia. Not content with her masters, she completed her PhD at Victoria University of Wellington.

She has had many policy and business analyst roles with government departments



AWARD: Rose Namoori-Sinclair, awarded an MNZM for her work with the people of Kiribati. Photo supplied

and agencies in New Zealand. They have included the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Education, the old Labour Department and Statistics New Zealand. The jobs have not necessarily been related to the Pacific or her home nation.

It’s her commitment to Kiribati and supporting the Kiribati community – mostly in a voluntary capacity – that led to her New Year honour.

“We have a strong Kiribati community here,” she says. “We get together for events like our independence day, and we have an active church with our own Kiribati priest.

“With the skills I have through my work, I’m able to help our community with funding, implementing the programmes according to the funds and ensuring everything is accountable.”

Her research background has involved her as facilitator of the working group that established a conceptual framework for enhancing I-Kiribati well-being in 2015, a document titled *Boutokaan te mweeraoi*.

She helped translate communications from the Ministry of Social Development into Kiribati and with editing the document. She was subsequently the team leader in writing the *Maneaba Strategic Action Plan* to implement the *Boutokaan te mweeraoi* framework.

Rose helped establish and chaired the Kiribati Federation Aotearoa (KFA) from 2018 to 2020. As chair, she ensured that KFA engaged with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples on issues including the Kiribati language in the Pacific Language Week Series.

She helped write a training manual based on Kiribati heritage and cultural values to address violence towards both women and men in the Kiribati community. She obtained funding for training and four courses were held in various regions throughout New Zealand.

Rose chaired the Kiribati Wellington Club in 2003 and 2004. She identified a lack of traditional dancing experience locally and with community agreement sourced an experienced dancing master from Kiribati to provide lessons.

She was an organiser for the 25th anniversary celebration of Kiribati independence held in Wellington in 2004.

Since coming to New Zealand when their son was 4 and daughter 1, Rose and her Fijian husband have been moving in and out of Kiribati for study and work, but they have been keen to ensure the children speak the language and understand the Kiribati culture.

In 2014 Rose and her husband relocated from Porirua to a property on Ōtaki Gorge Road. The location is ideal as most of Rose’s current part-time work is from home, where she can enjoy a rural lifestyle and commute into Wellington when she needs to. She was meant to travel to Kiribati to do some work for the United Nations when Covid-19 struck, so the trip never happened, but she was able to do it remotely.

What it did mean – as with many other Wellington government workers – was that she had to work from home. And like most others, she’s discovered a new lifestyle.

Most of her work is now in research with the Ministry for Pacific Peoples and the University of Otago, and representing the Kiribati Government on matters relating to the Kiribati workers currently employed for the Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme.

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Lifetime in Māori education recognised

DR KATHLEEN (KATHIE) IRWIN

Member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to Māori education

By Ian Carson

Her whakapapa would suggest Dr Kathie Irwin was destined to spend her working life in education.

That has certainly been the case, but she was almost diverted by her talents as a young singer, whose tutor suggested she go to London to further her career. Instead, she took her parents' advice and went to teacher training college in Palmerston North, at the end of which she could reconsider. Teaching won out, and the passion for enquiry and debate at Hastings Girls' High School led her down a path that expanded from teaching, to lecturing and ground-breaking research into Māori education.

Kathie (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Rakaipaaka) was born in the East Coast town of Waipiro Bay.

Both her parents – Kath and Keith Cameron – were teachers (and Kathie's siblings also became teachers). Mother Kath had a Māori mother and Orkney Islands father; father Keith had Scottish and Irish parents. The strong will of Kathie's grandmother, Horiana Te Kauru Laughton, was a big influence on Kathie.

Horiana was brought up at Nuhaka in northern Hawke's Bay with the Mormon Church, but newly arrived Presbyterians offered opportunities for a few young Māori Presbyterian girls at their schools. At the age of 15, in 1914, Horiana told her parents she was converting and going to school at Turakina, near Whanganui. It wasn't received well by the whānau, but she went anyway. She became dux of Turakina Māori Girls' School and went on to be a mission teacher.

"Interestingly, 100 years later, my daughter,



HONOURED: Kathie Irwin MNZM at her Ōtaki Beach home.

Photo Ian Carson



INFLUENTIAL: Kathie's maternal grandparents, Rev John Laughton and Horiana Te Kauru Laughton in the grounds of Te Maungarongo Presbyterian Marae, Ohope.

named Horiana after her great-grandmother, graduated with a law degree from Harvard University in Massachusetts. How cool is that?"

Both Kathie's parents worked in the Native

School system, initially moving from school to school doing their "country service". As a couple they could both work as teachers and they had independent incomes. At the time, if a woman married in the State school system, she had to leave her teaching job.

"I remember Mum telling me she once wanted a new lounge suite, so she went to a department store and asked to pay it off," Kathie says. "The salesman wanted my Dad's signature. That annoyed her. Mum told him right there that she was paying for it herself."

By the time Kathie was 5, Keith was principal of Raureka School in Hastings with Kath a senior teacher. They later took similar roles at nearby Mahora School.

Kathie and her two siblings grew up under the influence of her Māori whānau, and felt a keen

sense of injustice, relating it in passionate school oratory competitions that was often scoffed at.

"After one speech, one of the teachers said: 'You don't really believe all that crap, do you?' I was astounded."

Having completed three years of training as a teacher herself, Kathie completed an honours degree in education, meantime also becoming an internationally qualified netball umpire.

She did two years of teaching at Monrad Intermediate School in Palmerston North, and by the age of 23 became a junior lecturer at Massey University. She was later a full professor, lecturing and conducting research in Māori education at Victoria University, Christchurch College of Education, Te Kōhanga Reo National Trust, and Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi.

She founded and led He Pārekereke: Institute for Research and Development in Māori Education in 1991, and received the Ngārimu Victoria Cross and the 28th Māori Battalion post-graduate scholarship for her PhD research.

She was the first Māori recipient of the Hodge Fellowship in 1994 and inaugural recipient of Te Whare Wānanga o Awanuiārangi post-doctoral professorial research fellowship. She is deputy chair of the Joint Research Committee Mana Wāhine Kaupapa inquiry.

Her work is currently with the Retirement Commission, reviewing the implications of retirement on Māori from a Treaty perspective.

Kathie lived in Ōtaki in the 1980s when her children, Horiana and Cliff, were born. She settled permanently here in 2019. The Retirement Commission advises on retirement income and financial capability, so Kathie has followed Cliff into the sector – he has worked at one of the major banks for more than a decade.

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Award for Waikawa's John Hewitson

Waikawa Beach resident John Hewitson has been recognised for his work in the beach community with a Civic Honours Award from Horowhenua District Council.

John has been chair of the Waikawa Beach Ratepayers Association for nearly 20 years. He officially retired from that role at the association's AGM late last year, but has stayed on until a replacement can be found.

During his time, John has helped the WBRA to become a strong advocate for the beach community, communicating effectively through enviably articulate newsletters to members and other interested parties.

In the award citation, the Horowhenua council said John served his community quietly, with dedication, goodwill and without hesitation.

"He cares deeply about the community and the people within it," the citation said.

John came to Waikawa Beach in 1999 and was soon elected as chair of the local ratepayers association. As chair, he has run the regular committee meetings and AGMs. He attends various meetings relevant to the community, such as the Manakau District Community Association AGMs, Waka Kotahi Ō2NL expressway meetings. He also represents the interests of Waikawa Beach residents at Horowhenua District Council consultations.

"John readily responds to community members who approach him and spends time and effort to ensure that the appropriate people or organisations address these concerns or issues," the citation said. "He always lends a hand where there's a need."

Beyond the Waikawa Beach community, John has helped out extensively at the Levin Uniting



CIVIC AWARD: John Hewitson at Waikawa Beach. John received a Horowhenua District Council civic award for his work in the beach community. *Photo Ian Carson*

Church, sorting out their electrical problems, installing Christmas lights every year and serving free Sunday night dinners.

Before moving to Waikawa Beach, John worked for 37 years with the Railways as an electrician and inspector. He then had a year working on a project at the Haywards sub-station, and eight years as a safety and civil defence officer with Victoria University.

He began his apprenticeship at the Addington workshops in Christchurch, where he grew up. He then worked variously at Woolston, Ōtira, Christchurch and Wellington.

On retirement in 1999, he and wife Mariette originally signed up for a section at Te Horo Beach, but the sale fell through. A former

Railways friend, however, knew of a property at Waikawa Beach, which the couple bought. John completed the build of their house from the shell.

"He did me a favour," John says of his friend.

John went to a meeting of the Waikawa Beach Ratepayers Association and someone put his name forward as chair. He's been doing the job ever since.

The biggest challenge for the association has been vehicle access to the beach, complicated by the only track being on private land. Access is often limited when bad weather changes the river course, taking away part of the track.

"The land owners have been very good," John says. "What we need is for the council to create a track on their land that is more permanent."



Omeo inventor in running for innovation award

Omeo Technology's Kevin Halsall is an Innovator of the Year finalist in the 2022 Kiwibank New Zealander of the Year awards.

In 2019, Omeo launched a revolutionary new personal mobility vehicle. It has its base in Ōtaki.

Kevin's love for the outdoors led to the development of the vehicle. The engineer and designer wanted to find a way to share a mutual passion for archery, having in mind his wheelchair-using friend, Marcus Thompson. Kevin developed a prototype able to go off-road that allows its users freedom and independence.

Able to be operated in narrow spaces and on uneven terrain, it's changing the thinking on mobility by movement through balance. It's intuitively driven and hands-free, using the body's weight and movement to steer and accelerate.

The award winners will be announced at a dinner in Auckland on March 31.

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Puke & Moana headline Purebread event

- Purebread Ōtaki Summer Music Carnival
- Memorial Park (next to Civic Theatre)
- Saturday January 22, 10.30am-4pm
- Wet weather venue: Ōtaki Yard
- Free

The Purebread Ōtaki Summer Music Carnival – A Wellington Anniversary Weekend Celebration – is set to offer free live entertainment as part of the Purebread Kāpiti summer music events.

The event is scheduled for the Saturday of Wellington Anniversary Weekend, January 22, and will be at Memorial Park in Main Street.

Lovers of Ōtaki’s home-grown music will be familiar with local musician Puke Wara, who grew up in Ōtaki and played with the iconic Ōtaki band Summer Breeze in the 1970s and 80s.

Nowadays entertaining throughout the country as Puke & Moana (teamed up with singer Moana Pember), the duo are the final performers for the afternoon, taking the stage at 2.30pm.

With Puke’s guitar skills honed by playing Santana, Hendrix and other rock icons, and Moana’s stunning classically trained voice, the duo is offering a combination of genres. It’s mostly easy listening, including soul, blues, and country rock.



ON STAGE: Brand New Secondhand will be performing during the Purebread Ōtaki Summer Music Carnival at Wellington Anniversary Weekend. *Photo supplied*

Described as a modern glamour duet, the well-known combination have performed at other Purebread festivals and are in demand everywhere. They’re invited back due to popular demand for what Purebread organiser Chris Craddock says is their wonderful slant on covers.

“Not to be missed, it’s a treat to have these exceptional musicians perform,” he says. “They’re worth staying to the end of the day.”

Music starts for the day at 10.30am with DJ Just Press Play, who will continue throughout the day between live acts, and conclude the day performing through to 4pm.

Kāpiti-based Latin American jazz ensemble Brasso opens with live music at 11am. Their musical set includes some originals and popular covers with a jazzy twist.

Brasso features the founder of Purebread, Rob Glensor, on vocals and drums. Also with Brasso is David

Langley, who arranges all the band’s music – he will be performing on his trumpet and flugel horn, and sing several numbers. Talented female vocal soloist Teneka Jennings will also perform several numbers with the band.

Fernando FeNa, a Latin American jazz band, will be performing from 12.30pm. The Kāpiti Coast band is packed with highly talented musicians and features Fernando Figueroa. Of Chilean decent, he brings an exciting

South American exuberance to the stage.

Brand New Secondhand, a modern reggae vibe band, will be performing from 1.30pm. Derived from Porirua, these talented musicians are on stage for the second time at a Purebread event, bringing a new musical sound with an old soul feel.

Chris Craddock says the event offers an opportunity for locals to come along to Memorial Park to enjoy a day of free performances by national and local artists.

“What better way to spend a Wellington Anniversary Weekend afternoon . . . listening to a selection of outstanding music performed by the district’s best musicians,” he says. “Bring yourself and the family, a picnic basket and a blanket, come early, and enjoy five hours of live rock, blues, soul, R&B and jazz.”

There’s also free children’s entertainment with a bouncy castle and a community coin sausage sizzle.

After the day’s event, music will move to The Telegraph Hotel, with a further five hours of live music, starting at 8pm. While at press time the opening act was yet to be confirmed, Puke & Moana were scheduled at 9pm, followed by Brand New Secondhand and from 11pm to close Fernando FeNa will entertain.

The weekend event is sponsored by the One Foundation and Purebread.

Happy New Year

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HUATAU/Comment

GURU'S VIEW: K GURUNATHAN

Our urban trees under threat as Ōtaki housing pressure mounts

The pressure of urban development on Ōtaki has increased with new residential buildings expanding and gobbling up older landscapes.

There's a fresh wave of people arriving as new ratepayers to stake a claim on the local social and cultural landscape.

Local intelligentsia have rightfully raised the need for Ōtaki to respond to this challenge by seeking to celebrate Ōtaki's historical identity while welcoming the new arrivals and the changes they bring.

While this accommodative formula is easy to state, the substance of this position is not easy to pin down. One obvious step is the empowerment of mana whenua to maintain, secure and expand their own historical footprint on this land, so the market forces propelling Ōtaki's development, especially higher housing costs, does not push them out of their own place of identity. The self empowerment of mana whenua is strong and, despite challenges, is increasingly able to command the resources it needs.



The Treaty and the power it manifests through acts of Parliament give mana whenua opportunities to secure resources and shape the future of Ōtaki. Apart from this fundamental strength, what else do our Ōtaki communities need to do to secure the 'Ōtaki identity' to stem the tide of a potential unmanaged development?

Can I suggest that those who speak of and promote the concept of an Ōtaki identity chart out what the foundations of this are and look at how these can be maintained and developed.

One of the joys of living in Ōtaki is the number of mature trees in the urban environment. These are not only the indigenous trees, that stand like sentinels in our neighbourhoods to remind us of

the huge native forests that once covered the landscape, but also the mature exotic trees introduced by settlers. I enjoy the spring blossoming of the kowhai as well as the huge magnolia trees that seem to dominate urban gardens.

This combination of trees gives Ōtaki a particular character and seasonal flavour, something we take for granted at our peril – the pressure of development can easily see the loss of these trees.

It's a threat increased by the Government's new Enabling Housing RMA Amendment Bill that will see three, three-storey houses built anywhere without resource consent, and with developers able to increase above this through resource consent applications.

These increased densities will witness competition for space between the value of existing trees and the developer's right to maximise profits. Some would argue the developer has the advantage of the moral argument that in a housing crisis, particularly affecting the poor, the value of urban trees has a lower priority than the need to increase affordable housing.

Given the development pressure on Ōtaki, this tension could see the demise of our urban trees and with it a part of what gives Ōtaki its unique ambience and environmental identity.

There are tree protections in our District Plan. There was a time when council had an over-the-top approach to this protection. We remember the 2014 attempted prosecution of elderly Ōtaki residents Peter and Diana Standen charged with "mordying naturally occurring indigenous vegetation". They had pruned the rotten branches of native trees on their property. They, and their immediate neighbours and fellow pruners, faced a potential term of two-years jail or a maximum of \$300,000 fine.

The Environment Court dumped the council's case, calling it a trivial offence. But not before the then Environment Minister Amy Adams created an example of KCDC by defending the Standens.

The case was grist to the amendment her Government was making to the RMA to biff out the blanket protection of tree species.

In 2015 council initiated a variation to its urban trees policy and rules in its Proposed District Plan. This meant only 1300 trees will be protected across 400 properties compared to more than 10,600 in the proposed plan and 14,000 in the then Operative District Plan. The 2015 variation is now in the current Operative District Plan. It has four schedules for the protection of indigenous trees and a list of more than 100 trees defined as notable trees consisting of exotics and natives.

Seventeen of them are in Ōtaki. These have been initially identified by private landowners for council listing. I'm certain Ōtaki has a larger number of potential notable trees that could be given protection. These unlisted trees and the liberal District Plan tree protection clauses, combined with development pressure, could see some of our prominent trees disappear. Ōtaki needs increased community awareness or we face a protracted death by a thousand cuts.

■ *Guru is Kāpiti Coast Mayor*

PLAIN SPEAKING: IAN CARSON

Not much good in house prices

So the median house price for Ōtaki according to homes.co.nz is now \$770,000.

We probably winced, though some might have been delighted, when prices reached \$520,000 at the beginning of last year. Within 12 they've shot up \$250,000.

Some home-owners might be wringing their hands with glee as they contemplate their capital gain, or leverage a holiday against the mortgage. Others won't be so happy.

The Reserve Bank has been worried for some time that young home-owners especially might stretch their resources to pay the mortgage and then get caught with higher interest rates. Those are largely still to come in the year ahead. The result can be mortgagee sales, young people in huge debt without an asset and a crash in the housing market.

Pensioners in their own home can also suffer. Having bought a house decades ago for \$20-30,000 and comfortably paying the rates, they now find themselves with a million-dollar house and the rates to go with it. If they rely on superannuation, there aren't many good options – get support from whānau, go for a dubious reverse mortgage, sell up and try to find somewhere smaller (but with probably similar rates), or go into a retirement home.

But the ones I feel particularly sorry for are the long-term renters. Many in Ōtaki have rented a property most of their lives. Just like the State houses, you could expect to stay as long as you wanted. Not so any more.

High house prices are leading to higher rents, often bigger than a mortgage. They're also pushing investors to sell for the capital gain, meaning fewer available rentals. Some long-time Ōtaki families have had to move well away from their home town to find somewhere affordable.

We live in world where market forces rule – perhaps that's not a good philosophy any more.

■ *Ian is editor of Ōtaki Today*

LOCAL LENS: JAMES COOTES

Plenty of challenges for the year ahead

Happy New Year to you all and wow, what a start to the year, with day after day of sunshine on the coast.

I'm making the most of it getting out on the water with the family before we get back into the busyness of life.

This year's looking to be no less eventful than the last and has lots of important matters to be considered. At the start of the year, we'll be working through our Annual Plan process. Being year two of our Long-Term Plan we're unlikely to see any significant changes, but with the recent flooding significantly affecting residents at Te Horo Beach I'll be raising with council any possible mitigation action to be included. We've also got a public meeting planned in early February, where Greater Wellington Regional Council and Kāpiti Coast District Council will discuss what work has been done and what could be done.

Towards the end of last year, to everyone's disappointment, Local Government Minister



Nanaia Mahuta announced the Government would be pressing ahead with the Three Waters Reform and removing councils' right to opt out, having previously said councils would always have an option to be in or out. I put a motion to council that we write to the minister requesting a meeting to discuss the matter (which we have done).

We await a response.

It's vitally important that the Government listens and works more collaboratively with councils and their communities to achieve the outcomes they desire; outcomes we support, too.

I also expect the much anticipated youth

space for Ōtaki rangatahi will be established this year as staff continue to work with stakeholders on the what, why and where. This was in response to feedback both from the Long-Term Plan and within the community and will create a safe space for our youth to hang out.

Late this year we hope to see the opening of the Peka Peka to Ōtaki expressway. It will be a relief to road users stuck in long traffic queues and residents who at times feel prisoners in their own homes/community. The expressway opening, coupled with the long awaited Transmission Gully, will be a significant game-changer for Kāpiti in many ways.

Last but not least, we'll also have our local body elections in October. With rapid growth, a climate crisis, and changes to local government like we've never seen before, it's vital we have high quality candidates committed to the job. So, if it sounds like you, please get in touch as I'd happily chat with you about what the roles entail.

Until then enjoy the summer!

■ *James is Ōtaki Ward Councillor*

ŌTAKI OUTLOOK: CHRIS PAPPS

A new year, but negative forces still at work

At the end of my last column in December I said: "Let's be positive and optimistic".

With the sun shining and the temperature in the mid to high 20s, that's a lot easier than mid-December when much of the district, including Ōtaki, was affected by flooding to a greater or lesser degree.

However, the negative forces are still at work.

Covid-19 is now into its third year and – even with the traffic light system, Delta, Omicron and the removal of boundaries – the 1pm press conferences are less frequent. I believe we're learning to live with Covid. Since the first case in New Zealand there have been just over 14,500 recorded cases and 51 people have died with Covid, not all necessarily from it.

Putting that into perspective, in the same period, more than 9000 New Zealanders have died of bowel cancer.



Radio and TV have lead stories on daily Covid case numbers, but there are other topics and causes of death that are rightly of more current concern.

The Christmas road toll of 17 with "basic mistakes" being cited as the main cause, and the toll of deaths by drowning this summer heading for a new record (see page 24), should make us reflect on our priorities.

Last year, it seems to me, was negative in a whole range of ways. Covid caused a sort of division of New Zealand. It's a standing joke

about those "north of the Bombay Hills" being in another country. All of a sudden those to the north found themselves isolated in more ways than one and the rest of us looked on.

The Vaccine Mandate has started a kind of vaccination apartheid. Families are split between the vaxed and the unvaxed. Businesses are closing either because their owners can't or won't be vaccinated or their staff won't and they can't operate. People are losing their jobs and their opportunities to be part of their community.

Further negativity came with the attack on local democracy – the attempt to remove community boards.

The local government elections are this October. Beware council candidates promising to reduce the rates. Look for those with positive ideas who want to work for positive change, not make unrealistic promises.

■ *Chris is chair of the Ōtaki Community Board*

Could Trump threaten the world again?

Through all of 2020 the 'leader of the free world' hinted loudly that the US presidential elections of that year would be rigged.

Of course, that would only be the case if he had lost. After all, there's not much point in complaining after the event if he'd won but, sure enough, it could come in handy if he ended up the loser.

By a margin totalling more than the population of New Zealand and Botswana combined, Biden the challenger won the election, thanks in part to a handful of states that sufficiently swung the electoral college tally.



FRASER CARSON

Right on cue, Trump and his acolytes claimed a rigged election and pulled every stunt possible, including dozens of court challenges, direct coercion of election officials and an incitement to a violent riot on the Capitol as the final confirmation was happening. These manoeuvres, never seen before in US history, were not merely consistent with a deranged plan to claim the election, even though he obviously lost, but were clearly fuelled by a fragile ego that can never admit defeat. In fact, the overarching ego driver was likely more the reason than any cunning strategy.

Before we go any further, let's be clear about the four years of Trump's presidency. It happened after the 2016 election, not because he won the majority of votes – he received fewer votes



Photo: Pixabay

than his rival. No, it was aided by a weird voting system that automatically favours more sparsely populated rural areas and, therefore, conservative Republicans. On top of that, it had more than a little help from the Russian secrecy machine that bombarded the digital airwaves with falsehoods against Clinton and in favour of Trump. A federal investigation, after the fact, confirmed what had happened and didn't clear Trump of collusion with the Russians, whilst avoiding laying the blame directly at his feet due to a lack of hard evidence.

But what is more frightening is the millions of American voters who actually believed the manufactured rubbish and were prepared to stake their futures on this one-man crusade for a return to the dark ages.

An understanding of what happened, and is continuing to happen, is complex but here's a simple explanation.

Trump is a deeply insecure individual with an

ego that is inflated by myths that he manufactures about himself – witness the criminal investigation of his business tax and loan arrangements by New York and Manhattan District Attorneys. Trump didn't expect to win the 2016 election so came into the White House with no real plan or people to carry out his non-plan.

Proof of that is the unprecedented turnover of White House staff and the fact that little of consequence was achieved, apart from a few kilometres of border wall – to keep 'bad people' from entering via the southern border – and huge tax cuts for the already mega rich.

Otherwise, he retreated the US from the Paris Accords (climate agreements), waged war with long-standing western allies and cozied up to every despot crazy enough to inflict agony on their own populations, e.g. North Korea, Turkey and Russia.

In short, a fragile adolescent ego was running the show and it was only due to incompetence and

inconsistent support that things didn't spiral into something much worse.

So, more than a year after the last presidential election and two years into a life-changing pandemic, the world is looking for salvation and ways to harness everything we can to address a collapsing environment, rampant global health issues and poverty that is getting rapidly worse.

Putin is threatening to invade the Ukraine with thousands of troops, tanks and artillery pieces, Kim Jong-un is test firing hypersonic missiles and Syrian President Bashar al-Assad is still waging war on his own people. If Trump was still in the White House, he'd be spending more billions on a useless border wall and be licensing oil and gas companies to further rape and pillage the wilderness.

So, did the world dodge a bullet with Trump's defeat in 2020. Yes, but the 'rigged election' story has taken hold in Republican circles to such extent that it's now being used at state and local levels to suppress voters and distort democracy. That does not auger well for this year's Senate and Congress elections or for the next presidential elections in 2024 where Trump is tipped to run again.

Next time, the election may actually be rigged, and Trump will be returned to the White House to fuel all manner of global conflicts, unshackle environmental damage and turn a blind-eye to pandemics. And this time, he might actually achieve considerably more, such as permanently destroy American democracy.

A Biden Democrat led US is no guarantee of constructive global progress against the many issues confronting us all, but another Trump presidency will be more than a stain on the world, it may be the biggest threat to life as we know it.

■ Fraser is a former member of the XŌtaki College Alumni Trust and is founding partner of Flightdec.com



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Cost: Fees Free

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Still good reasons for family trusts

There is a common misconception that family trusts are things of the past. An increasing number of people have been winding up their trusts, believing them to be pointless.

Changes such as the Trust Act 2019 have further accentuated this decline in trusts, with more onerous demands on trustees to share information with beneficiaries.

However, there are still many reasons to create and retain a family trust. Here are three of the most pertinent reasons for creating a family trust.

High-risk occupation

One reason you might want to set up a family trust is to protect the assets you have for your family members. If you are in a high-risk occupation or venture, you might be able to protect your assets by transferring them into a family trust. Should your business fail, creditors will find it difficult to come after any assets, which have been transferred into your family trust.

This also means that you won't have all your eggs in one basket. If the business fails, your personal assets might be at risk, but your trust assets will be separate.

Assets intact

A good reason to transfer your assets into a trust is to ensure that your business or assets are transferred intact to your children or grandchildren. If you gift an asset to your children in your will, it is possible that it will need to be sold and distributed. However, if you transfer the asset to a trust, you can limit the likelihood that it is sold and keep it intact for the use and enjoyment of your children.

Estate administration

Finally, family trusts are useful in that they help with estate administration. If all your assets are held in your trust, then on your death there is no reason to make an application for



probate, and therefore no reason to have executors attend to the administration of your estate.

This is because the surviving trustees of your trust would continue to manage your trust assets in accordance with your memorandum of wishes.

Risks

Trusts are subject to various legal requirements and there are several instances in law that allow property in a trust to be "clawed back". These can defeat the purpose for which the trust was set up in the first place.

For instance, a court may set aside a transfer to a trust where the transfer was made with the sole intention of defeating the rights of creditors or the rights of spouses/partners under the Property (Relationships) Act 1976.

Transferring assets into trust might also affect your eligibility for the residential care subsidy.

However, these risks can be mitigated if you loan your trust these assets, rather than gifting them. Your trustees can then gradually forgive the debt over time.

Overall, there are still many good reasons to either create a family trust or maintain your existing trust. While the cost and time that goes into administering a trust can seem excessive, trusts might be the best way to make sure your assets are protected and distributed in accordance with your wishes.

■ Francesca is a general practice solicitor based at the Ōtaki office of Wakefields Lawyers

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Make winning a habit and go from good to great

Joyce Meyer, the Christian author and speaker, makes the point that we need a backbone, not a wishbone.

That sounds just about right, especially in the volatile, uncertain and often challenging world of the Covid pandemic. When times get tough, we get tested and winners invariably are the most resilient.

Having a backbone is much more a series of daily decisions than a single, "silver bullet". Every day we have choices and every day winners make the decision to keep pressing on towards the dreams and goals they've set.

Winners value the process of winning. Losers over-value the outcome and don't spend enough time on the process. While dreams are massively important and not to be dismissed as the "magnets" that draw us forward, we can't afford to get so caught up in the outcomes that we forget that success comes from consistent, considered and continuous focus on the process.

Too often we strive for a mythical perfection, when in fact getting really good at each step will make all the difference.

The process of winning has two key areas: preparation and separation. Preparation for the things that you need to do and get done, and separation from the things you need to stop.

Preparation removes pressure. So often we see highly naturally talented people reach a plateau and either stagnate or fall back. Their innate ability carried them and often meant they really could wing it.

So much so, in fact, that they failed to prepare.

There's a saying in business marketing about four Ps – Product, Price, Place and Promotion. Well, in preparing for winning there's another

one – proper planning prevents poor performance – the 5 Ps, if you like.

Do you want to move from being good – at running your business, at being a parent or helping at your local community organisation – to being great?

Prepare and be exceptional. Use this formula to make winning a habit: Natural Talent + Preparation = Unforgettable.

Gifts will only take you so far and your resources will follow your resolve.

Those who say "I wish" and those who say "I will" are worlds apart.

To prepare and process correctly, we need to separate from what is good to do what is best. In building winning into a habit, our enemy isn't bad. Our enemy is "good"!

We can't respond to every need. We need to focus on doing the best, not on doing all the many things that seem good. There are a lot of good things we'll need to say no to in 2022 in order to focus on the best things.

If that seems overwhelming – maybe you are already doing lots of things and putting in most of your energy – then remember this: We don't need to bring high performance to everything we do, but we must bring it to the two or three things we do BEST.

Focus on the things we want to be excellent at, daily. If you can achieve high performance once, you can certainly repeat it another two times.

Rome wasn't built in a day. Don't try to win



the championship in one day either. Value the process of winning, rather than becoming discouraged by not having won the gold medal immediately.

Invest where the returns are greatest, because a "spray and pray" approach won't deliver your dreams and goals.

Two quotes sum up things really well: legendary US basketball coach John Wooden said, "the game is won before the game is begun" and John D Rockefeller made the point that we should not be afraid to give up the good for the great.

So, as we head into the year, look for at least

one thing where you can grow, every day. Persistence pays!

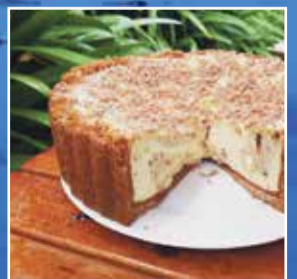
The secret is the habit, not the winning. Make the process a habit and winning will follow.

■ If you want to grow your business and achieve your dreams, give me a call (0222 332 669) or email me (chris@centrefbusinessexcellence.com) to see what in my 25 years of business experience can help you. To become part of the Centre of Business Excellence community and benefit from regular insights, go to [centrefbusinessexcellence](https://www.facebook.com/centrefbusinessexcellence) on Facebook and be sure to 'Like' the page. Sign up for my newsletter at [centrefbusinessexcellence.com](https://www.centrefbusinessexcellence.com)



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HAUORA/Health

Speaking out with misinformation

New Zealand Doctors Speaking Out with Science (NZDSOS) is a small contrarian group of doctors critical of the Pfizer vaccine.

On their website they have posted a substantial report, *Magnetism? Say What?*, which they have sent to government authorities and politicians, claiming the Pfizer vaccine might secretly contain graphene oxide, a substance they say Pfizer has not disclosed, and that this might lead to vaccinated people becoming magnetic.

They believe the evidence and their findings are “alarming” and that the Ministry of Health should urgently investigate this issue since it poses an “urgent clinical threat”. They also believe the magnetic effects meet the legal definition of assault, and that affected people should lay complaints with the police.

Pfizer lists all ingredients in its vaccine and has categorically stated its vaccine does not contain graphene oxide. Contrary to comments on social media, they cannot legally hide ingredients as “trade secrets”, and they are not immune to prosecution – fraudulently hiding an ingredient would leave them exposed to criminal liability (which would be just one accredited lab test away).

That the Pfizer vaccine secretly contains graphene oxide, and that this can cause people to become magnetic, are extraordinary claims. Let’s look at the NZDSOS evidence and their sources of information.

They cite ex-Pfizer employee Karen Kingston, who claims Pfizer includes graphene oxide in its vaccine. Karen was interviewed on the *Stew Peters Show* as a whistle-blower who had “indisputable documentation” that the Pfizer vaccine contained graphene oxide. Stew Peters regularly promotes Covid anti-vaccine messages and has been banned from YouTube for his Covid disinformation.

Karen Kingston was not a scientist involved in the development of the Pfizer vaccine; she had been a sales rep for Pfizer in the late 90s and had left the company 10 years before it developed the Covid vaccine. But based on an internet search of



the lipids Pfizer used in its vaccine (ALC-0159 and ALC-0315) she concluded that the Chinese company Sinopeg incorporated graphene oxide in those lipids and supplied them to Pfizer.

A subsequent investigation by Reuters established that Sinopeg did not incorporate graphene oxide in those lipids (the company just talked about graphene oxide in one of its website newsletters) and, in any case, Sinopeg is not the lipid supply company to Pfizer.

Oddly, the only NZDSOS reference for Karen Kingston is to a secondary source, the website of naturopath Ariyana Love, who advises her readers to see the Stew Peters interview. Ariyana regularly appears on the *Stew Peters Show*, where she rambles about transgenic hydra being in the Covid vaccines, how graphene oxide enables “self-replicating vaccines” for the totalitarian control of transgenic humans, and that vaccinated people should not produce offspring as they will not be human.

But not to worry, on her website Ariyana sells pine needle tea for graphene oxide detoxification!

NZDSOS refers to “Spanish scientists” who have reported graphene oxide in the Pfizer vaccine, with some vials containing “as much as 99% graphene oxide”. However, and again oddly, the only reference they give for this is to the website of Sara Middleton, a staff writer at an American health supplement company. Sara’s anti-vaccine blogs include claiming that there is no proof the Covid virus exists. Her company has been formally warned by the Federal Trade Commission for publishing Covid misinformation.

While Sara refers only to a “team of Spanish researchers”, those researchers are, in fact, Ricardo Delgado Martín and Pablo Campra PhD. Ricardo is the founder of the blog *The Fifth Column (La Quinta Columna)* that disseminates Covid misinformation, including that graphene oxide and 5G interact to cause Covid symptoms. Ricardo is a long way down the rabbit hole.

Ricardo requested the Pablo Campra study, in which Pablo claims to have detected, by microscopic examination, large amounts of graphene oxide in the Pfizer vaccine. But this was an unofficial interim report (a PDF) by a single author that was not peer reviewed.

The origin of the samples analysed are unknown, there is a complete lack of traceability, and quality control protocols were not reported. Independent experts say the microscopy images could be anything. Pablo’s own university denounced the study and stated: “This university neither endorses nor shares” the study’s conclusions.

NZDSOS refer to an anonymous report by The Scientist Club, who also provide microscopy images of foreign bodies they claim might be evidence of graphene oxide in the Pfizer vaccine. Why do the authors hide their identity? Because they are Antonietta Gatti and husband Stefano Montanari (as revealed by the meta data on their PDF reports), co-authors of a discredited anti-vax book that makes false claims that vaccines cause autism and other serious conditions.

Prior to the Covid pandemic they had been banned from using the electron microscopes at their former university because their images of “contaminants” in vaccines had no scientific validity. In short, their microscopy images were anti-vaccine fear mongering, not science.

The Scientist Club report is only a white paper without peer review. Like the other microscopy images appearing on the internet, there is a lack of sample traceability, and scant description of methodology. Independent experts say the images look like contaminants and artifacts introduced during sample processing.

Finally, NZDSOS refer to a press conference at the Pathological Institute in Reutlingen, Germany. Journalists can’t find the institute. The “press conference” was a presentation given by two retired pathologists and a retired electrical engineer to a small group of people. As a “press conference” it by-passes any peer review. Microscopy images of foreign bodies in vaccines were interpreted as possibly being graphene oxide, or metal, or microchips! Independent experts think the images are likely to be dirt and other contaminants introduced during sample preparation, with one researcher describing the presentation as “irresponsible bullshit”.

The video recording of the presentation has been removed from YouTube for violating community guidelines for Covid misinformation. The German Society for Pathology “distances itself sharply from the video”, and states that the data presented is “not scientifically founded”.

Looking at the NZDSOS evidence for graphene oxide in the Pfizer vaccine, there is not one peer-reviewed article or supporting statement from a university. There is no credible scientific evidence for graphene oxide in the Pfizer vaccine.

NZDSOS are not “speaking out with science”, they are speaking out with misinformation they have found doing “research” on social media.

In my next article I will look at the extraordinary NZDSOS claim that the Pfizer vaccine can magnetise people, and their survey of magnetised people in New Zealand.

■ Health scientist Dr Steve Humphries is a director at Hebe Botanicals in Ōtaki. He was previously a lecturer at Massey University and director of the Health Science Programme.



DR STEVE HUMPHRIES



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mentalhealth.org.nz

It’s OK to seek help. Never hesitate if you’re worried about you or someone else.

If someone has attempted suicide or you’re worried about their immediate safety:

- call your local mental health crisis assessment team 0800 745 477 or take them to the emergency department of your nearest hospital
- if they are in immediate physical danger to themselves or others, call 111
- stay with them until support arrives
- remove any obvious means of suicide

they might use (eg ropes, pills, guns, car keys, knives)

- stay calm, take deep breaths
- let them know you care
- keep them talking – listen and ask questions without judging
- make sure you’re safe.

For more information, talk to your local doctor, medical centre, hauora, community mental health team, school counsellor or counselling service. If you don’t get the help you need, keep trying.

Services for support & information:

- Lifeline 0800 543 354
- Samaritans 0800 726 666 – confidential support if lonely or in emotional distress
- Depression Helpline 0800 111 757 or text 4202 – talk to a counsellor about how you’re feeling or to ask questions
- Healthline 0800 611 116 – advice from trained registered nurses
- www.depression.org.nz
- Local counselling: Bill Logan, Te Horo Beach. 027 243 1098. bl.co.nz

For children and young people

- Youthline 0800 376 633, free text 234, email talk@youthline.co.nz or webchat at youthline.co.nz (webchat avail 7-11pm) – for young people, whānau and friends.
- What’s Up 0800 942 8787 (0800 WHATSUP) or webchat at www.whatsup.co.nz from 5-10pm for ages 5-18.
- Kidsline 0800 543 754 (0800 KIDSLINE) – up to 18 years.

MAHI MĀRA/Gardening

Break the pest cycle and enjoy summer's bounty

As summer's heat settles in, pest populations build in the food garden. There are two approaches to pests: the instant – to reduce populations ergo take the pressure off plants – and the long term.

Today I'm looking at the instant, as a tide-you-over while you build your long-term, low-pest and disease garden via strong soil and a diverse range of companion plants that encourage plenty of predatory insects.

Choosing varieties that suit your conditions, and over time learning the best timings for planting and sowing, are just as important.

Ditching artificial fertilisers and pesticides is a potent way to reduce pests. Ironically the most heavily sprayed gardens are the most pest-laden. Too much fresh manure (including liquid manure teas), not enough air in clay soil, and under or over-watering are three other pest-inducing favourites.

Here are four immediate ways to keep pest numbers down.

1. A daily harvest

Get out every morning and remove the newly ripe. What a difference!

Plucking a newly ripe berry with a tiny hole is a small victory. Left another day that tiny hole becomes several and now you've invited in a whole new guild of pest. Perhaps begun by a shield bug, it's been taken over by fruit flies – equals raspberries full of worms.

A daily harvest removes the pest's dinner – slowing down those munching, sucking critters – and brings you yours . . . food in its prime.

Remove the not so great: It's tempting to ignore the not so good, but it's important to pick them all. Leaving the over-ripe, holey, mouldy ones creates food and nesting sites for pests. If disease is present, they harbour that as well. Picking them off is another way to break the cycle. I harvest with two bowls – one for the chooks and one for me.

2. Digital control

As you go about your daily harvest, another simple pest control method asserts itself – catch shield bugs, cabbage white caterpillars and aphids between your digits! Don't underestimate the value of this simple measure.

If you're in your garden most days, you don't need to nail every single pest, just squash those you see. Get the others tomorrow or the next day. Elimination won't happen, and it doesn't need to. Easing the numbers makes a big enough difference.

THE EDIBLE GARDEN



KATH IRVINE



Above, a healthy colony of aphids, and below, a not-so-good raspberry worth harvesting to keep pests at bay. At left, a perennial border helps build strong soil and year-round nectar and pollen for beneficial insects.



3. Crop covers

Drape 0.6mm insect mesh over hoops or stakes for spray-free, hands-off pest control of once harvested crops such as spuds (psyllids), brassicas (cabbage butterfly) and carrots (carrot fly).

4. Neem

The Neem I recommend is Naturally Neem. It's gentle on your beneficial insect populations, unlike touch-it-and-die killers such as pyrethrum, rhubarb or garlic.

To work, Neem must be ingested by the pest, so it's about spraying the foliage rather than the pest itself.

- Spray every week to keep up with new eggs hatching. When the pest ebbs, stop spraying until pests return.
- Spray in the evening or in the morning when bees aren't about.

Tough customers: Passion vine hoppers, bronze beetles and shield bugs require dedication. Spray every three days. If populations are strong use Neem granules as well.

■ *Kath Irvine has been growing vegetables to feed her family for 21 years. Spray-free, natural, low-input food gardens are her thing. Kath offers organic gardening advice through her articles, books, workshops, and garden consultations.*



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ŌTAKI TODAY

HĪTŌRIA/History

Lighthouses and life on the farm for Jean Lutz

Jean Cooper, who was to marry into the well-known Lutz family of Ōtaki, was born in 1924, the second of two girls.

Her sister Joyce became a popular mayor in Whangarei. When Jean was still a toddler her father applied to the Marine Department to join the lighthouse service. This required several months of training, including a trial posting to Pencarrow Lighthouse – a test for Jean’s mother as well as it was important that both could cope with the isolation.

The family passed the test with flying



DI BUCHAN

Otaki Museum

colours and Jean in later years vividly recalled a happy and adventurous childhood growing up in several lighthouses starting at Pencarrow – the first lighthouse in New Zealand¹.

In 1928, when Jean was four years old, the family

was transferred to Farewell Spit where her playground extended to long stretches of white sand, lupins and the huge banks of shells where thousands of birds of many species came for the nesting season. This was followed by a posting to Stephens Island where she learned about lizards, then Cape Palliser where she learned to catch crayfish in pots and how to ride a horse. Once a month the girls took turns to ride the eight miles to White Rock to collect the mail.

Cape Palliser was more accessible and therefore visits from the outside world were more frequent than in the past, including fishing or shooting parties and artists. The two girls were home-schooled by their mother, who made sure they submitted their assignments to the Correspondence School on time regardless of the endless distractions of life in the outdoors.

When she was old enough for secondary school, Jean’s father’s ill health forced him to take up a job at the Customs Department in Wellington. The stark contrast of city living with her life to date must have been a shock at first, but there were also pleasures, including hot and cold water on tap, an inside bath, and ice-cream that she had so longed for as a child.

Jean’s first job was in a “gown salon” in Wellington, but in 1941 women were being conscripted into the manpower service to take on the work previously done by the men who had left for the Second World War. Jean saw a newspaper article about the need for women to help on the land.

With permission from her parents (she was just 17), she applied and for the next four years was employed as a land girl on Waiwera station near Waipukurau.

Her tasks included milking the two cows, feeding the calves, cutting the lawns, chopping wood for the fire to heat the water, helping with lambing, and in the yards at shearing time. Jean has written about her experiences as a land girl in the *Ōtaki Historical Journal* (1993).

She returned to Wellington in 1945 aged 21 and, after reporting to the manpower office, was directed to Ōtaki to be a housekeeper for Charles and Gertrude Atmore – the local mayor and doctor respectively. When she was younger she had harboured aspirations to be a nurse, but a knee injury from playing hockey ruled that out.

At the Atmores she experienced a small part of life in the medical world. In addition to housework and making the meals, she took phone messages from patients and helped in the surgery



Meals were prepared not only for the family but also for the farm workers. During haymaking Jean would still be preparing supper for the workers at 10pm. She knitted and sewed all the children’s clothes (including making daughter Marlene’s wedding dress), managed a huge vegetable garden and an extensive flower garden, and attended to almost all the medical needs of the household based on the knowledge she had gained at the Atmore’s.

as required – holding children while they got their injections or had stitches put in, rewarding their bravery with the contents of a lolly jar.

Through the surgery she met many people in the town and on her days off went visiting around the town on her bike. When manpower restrictions were lifted she could have gone anywhere she liked, but as it does, Ōtaki had claimed her heart and she decided to stay². By that stage she had met a dashing young farmer



ABOVE: Carl and Jean Lutz, about 1950, the year they were married.

LEFT: Jean Lutz with children Erwin, Carla and Marlene in Wellington, about 1955.

camps at Bridge Lodge. She was also a regular exhibitor of baking and sewing items at the annual API shows in Levin. In 2000 she received a Member of Honour certificate from the WDFP for her contributions to rural life.

Jean was an enthusiastic supporter of the playcentre in Ōtaki, at which all her children attended. At that time the playcentre was in what is now the Rotary Hall. She was also a member of the Floral Art Club.

When she found her bike was not enabling her to be as mobile as she needed, she taught herself to drive.

Jean died in 2003 at the age of 78, but her legacy lives on. Through her childhood experiences she held a life-time love of the outdoors and the natural environment and these values have been passed on to her children – Carla, Marlene, Erwin and Max.

To a large extent, Denton’s Bush, preserved and lovingly tended by the Lutz family, is a testament to her memory.

■ The author thanks Carla, Marlene, Erwin and Max Lutz for their contributions to this article.



Jean Lutz, on the occasion of her 70th birthday in 1995.

¹ *Ōtaki Historical Journal*, 1988

² *Ōtaki Historical Journal*, 1995

OLD SCHOOL PHOTOS

Compiled by Debbi Carson



ŌTAKI SCHOOL, ROOM 2, 1945

BACK ROW from left: Brian Bills, Lochie Fox, Lesley Main, Roydon Benseman, Des Smith, unknown, Peter McBeth, Roy Collis, Barry Jensen, Chemung Young Dong (David Young). ROW 3: Unknown, unknown, unknown, May Johnson, Alice Ropata, May Fielding, Maureen Harvey, May Fox, Rae Fox, Ella Raika, Beverley Arcus. ROW 2: Netta Cook, Shirley Smith, Maria Davis, unknown, unknown, unknown, Anne Gimblett, Joan Southgate, Aileen Cole, Sally Southcumbie, Isabel Carkeek, Rena Harvey, Elaine McKinley. FRONT ROW: Colin Bird, Neville Snowden, Henry Good, John Webster, Brian Hancock, Len Bevan, David Fox, George Eaton.

Photo courtesy of Peter McBeth

LAST MONTH'S PHOTO



Ōtaki School 1964, Form 1: Back row from left: unknown, Kevin Rauhihi, Steven Foster, Michael Williamson, John Gilbert, Joey Chong, Graeme D'Arth, Brian Horn, Robert Judd? Row 3: Noel Leighton, Alex Chung, unknown, Browyn Black, Lynda Mathie, Ann Sinkinson, Michael Gordon, Michael Karipa, John Marshall. Row 2: Jill Campbell, Elizabeth Hart, Carla Lutz, Judy Gow, Leonie Adamson, Marilyn Ashley, Carol Johns, Beryl Giddens, Pauline Lipscombe, Kathleen Kena, Janice Cole. Front row: Helen Jorey, unknown, Sheryl Kendrick, Christine Tucker, Kathryn Jenkins, Bronwyn Evans, Anne Waterson, Lynette Henderson, Lyn Dawson, Carol Peter. Sitting on grass: Warren MacGregor, Ian Cooksley. Photo Janice Street

GOT SOME OLD PHOTOS?

If you have old school photos – or any photos of old Ōtaki – please get in touch. We're building our archive so we can keep publishing snapshots of life when the town and district were younger. Email us individual photos, or give us a call about how we can get them. Include as many names and other information as you can. Contact debbi@jdmedia.co.nz especially if you have additions or corrections to school photo captions.



Exhibitions explore district's vibrant history

Ōtaki Museum is one of nine Kāpiti museums showcasing the district's vibrant history with exhibitions and other activities during Wellington Anniversary Weekend, January 22-24.

The museum is part of the Discover Kāpiti Heritage Group promoting the historical attributes of the district.

"This is an ideal chance for people to visit our local museums, learn about our amazing past and be in the draw for some great prizes," says Discover Kāpiti Heritage Group chair Allan Carley.

Museum visitors can win prizes such as a 30-minute flight over Kāpiti with the Kāpiti Aero Club, and family passes to Southward Car Museum and Wellington Tramway Museum at Paekākāriki.

At Ōtaki Museum, the current exhibition is *Ko Ōtaki te awa, ko Ōtaki te kainga* (Ōtaki is the river, Ōtaki is the home). Visitors can also browse documents and photos from the museum collection in the Anne Thorpe Reading Room. Apart from Wellington Anniversary Weekend, the museum is open Fridays and Saturdays, 10am to 2pm.

In Ōtaki, the Friends of the Ōtaki Rotunda is offering a tour of the old Children's Health Camp on the Saturday (January 22) at 2pm. Space is limited so bookings are essential.

* To book for the Children's Health Camp tour, contact anthonydreavernz@gmail.com. Visit otakirotonda.org.nz for more information.

Huia's call copied in archive recording

By Sarah Johnston, Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision

One of the most often requested items in the collections of Ngā Taonga Sound & Vision is a re-creation of the call of the extinct huia.

It was recorded in the late 1940s by Hēnare Hāmana, who had been involved in expeditions to find the rare bird as a young man about the turn of the 19th century.

The last authenticated sighting of a huia is generally believed to have been in 1907 in the Tararua Range. Sound recording technology was in its infancy when the huia died out, so there are no recordings of the actual bird call itself. Hēnare's re-creation of the call is the closest thing we have.

A digitisation of a 1990s radio series by naturalist Matthew Lark has shed more light on the origins of this recording. In this episode on the huia, Matthew interviewed Robert Batley, who is heard also on the earlier recording. He explained how he and Hēnare drove from the central North Island to the Columbus Recording Studios in Wakefield Street, Wellington, in 1948 (or 1949) and there recorded the huia calls on a 78rpm disc.

An enquiry from New Zealand Geographic sent us hunting for more details about this item.

We don't hold the original recording in our collection, but rather a taped copy probably made in the 1960s. On listening to it, you can tell by the sound of surface crackle that it is a copy of a recording that had been made originally on an acetate or lacquer disc. This pointed to an original recording date probably before the mid-1950s, when tape recording technology took over from discs.

We didn't know when or where it was originally recorded, so through the magic of the internet, the online records of several museums and libraries, phone calls and emails, staff began to unravel the tangled tale of the provenance of the many copies in circulation, until we wound our way back to the 1940s.

We learned the recording was made by two men from Moawhango, near Taihape – Robert Batley and Hēnare Hāmana.

As a young man, Hēnare had been part of an



HUIA: A painting of male and female Huia, by Esme Enid Harris, 1913-1993.

Ref: PA11-046-11. Alexander Turnbull Library, Wellington

expedition to try to find any remaining huia in the Ruahine Ranges. He and several other men who were good at imitating the bird's call went along, as the call was one way that huia had traditionally been lured.

These expeditions were sadly unsuccessful and by the 1940s the bird was considered extinct. What happened after this is unclear – certainly it seems several copies of the disc were made.

In a letter to *The Listener* in 1976, Robert Batley wrote that one was given to the Wildlife Service (a forerunner to the Department of Conservation), but that many years later he re-acquired this disc from them.

By the mid-1950s, tape recording technology was in use in New Zealand and taped copies of the recording appear to have been circulated quite widely among bird call enthusiasts, and it is one of these that Ngā Taonga holds.

Journalist Kate Evans even found a copy in a natural history library in the United States.

Kate was keen to see if an original disc still existed and contacted the Batley family. She learned the original disc that Robert Batley re-acquired from the Wildlife Service had been deposited with Whanganui Museum after his death in 2004.

The sad tale of the huia holds a great deal of fascination for many people – both Māori and Pākehā, here in Aotearoa and also overseas.

It's worth noting also the strong Ōtaki connection with the bird – one of the hapū of the local Ngāti Raukawa is Ngāti Huia.

In the case of the huia, these might be ornithologists, academics interested in aspects of extinction, or artists and musicians inspired by the melancholy idea of being able to hear the call of the bird that has long been silenced.

We also have a radio documentary from the 1960s, *The Huia*, produced by broadcaster Alwyn Owen, later of Radio New Zealand's *Spectrum* fame. In it he talks to various people about the last days of the huia and how it came to die out.

The programme begins with a haunting poroporoaki, or traditional Māori farewell, by broadcaster Reverend Kingi Ihaka (Te Aupouri).

We now have a much richer understanding of the origins of this important recording, and we have been able to fully identify Robert Batley and Hēnare Hāmana. Robert's name had disappeared altogether from many institutions' notes about the huia recording, and Hēnare's name had gone through several spelling variations over the years.

It's thanks to the skill and foresight of these two men that we can still hear an echo of this lovely, long-lost bird that continues to inspire people. It's good to be able to correctly attribute the recording to them once again.

You can listen to the call of the huia here – www.ngataonga.org.nz/blog/huia

■ Ngā Taonga looks after a huge number of recordings that capture New Zealand life. They can be explored online at ngataonga.org.nz. Sign up for the Ngā Taonga newsletter using the Sign Up button at the top of the page.



MINECRAFT RECORD

A new record has been set for Minecraft after one trillion views of their YouTube video. This means the block-building game is the most watched video game ever on YouTube. Minecraft has been bought more than 200 million times and after 10 years is still one of the most played video games in the world. It has 35,000 active creator channels based in 150 countries. Originally released in 2009, Minecraft has always been popular. Players can build whatever they like in the blocky landscape, and talented modellers have flooded YouTube to show off their most impressive creations. To celebrate the trillion milestone, YouTube has released an animated video

featuring moments from the history of Minecraft. It also changed the YouTube logo on the homepage for 24 hours.

NZ SCRABBLE CHAMP



New Zealand player Alastair Richards (left) has won the WESPA world Scrabble championship. Alastair beat Australia's David Eldar in the final, four games to three. The final was a struggle between the two best players in the competition. "The lead see-sawed throughout," said Howard Warner, president of the NZ Association of Scrabble Players. Alastair was born in Australia, but works in Auckland as a doctor. The championship was held online for the first time because of travel restrictions. Going into the tournament, Alastair was ranked number 11 in the world and his final opponent Eldar was second. New Zealand has a long history in the competition. Former New Zealand player Nigel Richards won

the world Scrabble championship six times. He is not related to Alastair.

BURT'S TIKTOK FAME



Burt, a Canterbury sheep, has shot to fame on TikTok. His owner, Naomi Abraham, started posting videos of him during lockdown last year. Burt lives on a farm in Port Levy on the Banks Peninsula. He has regular video

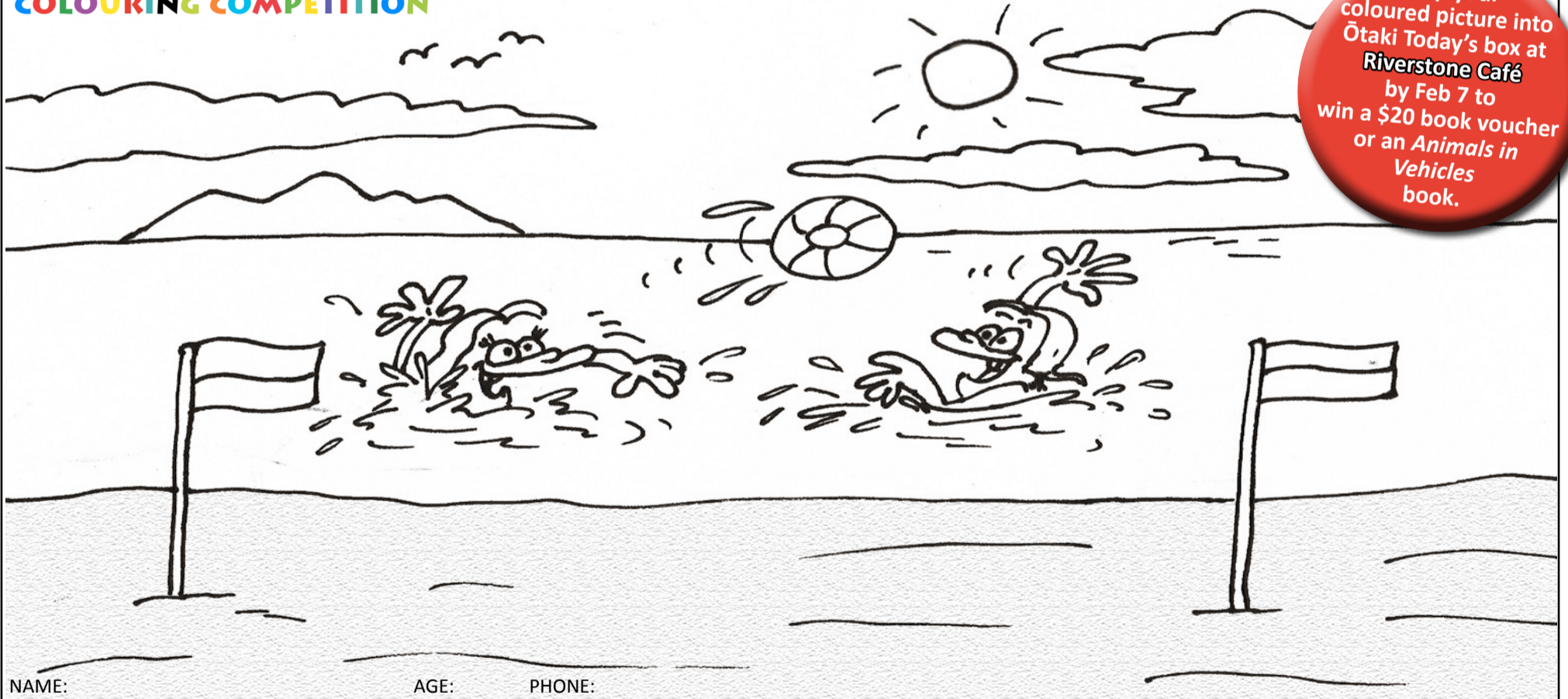
posts on the social media platform, with one of them amassing more than seven million views. Burt's TikTok profile includes videos of him frolicking through the house, sleeping on the couch in front of the fire, and getting into the neighbour's rose garden. Naomi said she hoped some of his future work on social media would help promote the wool industry. To visit Burt's page go to: https://www.tiktok.com/@burt_chop



SPOT THE DOTTY ZEBRA

Have you ever seen a spotty zebra? Zebras with unusual colour patterns are rare, but not unheard of. This foal, found in Kenya's Maasai Mara National Reserve, has a unique brown coat with white polka dots. The colouration is due to a rare genetic condition called pseudomelanism. Skin and hair colour in mammals comes from a pigment protein, melanin, which is produced by specialised cells called melanocytes. In humans, melanin acts as a natural sunscreen, darkening the skin to help protect it from harmful UV rays. A zebra's skin is uniformly black under its striped coat. Zebras like this one have all of their melanocytes in place, but the melanin produced does not result in stripes, for unexplained reasons.

COLOURING COMPETITION



Drop your coloured picture into Otaki Today's box at Riverstone Café by Feb 7 to win a \$20 book voucher or an *Animals in Vehicles* book.

NAME: _____ AGE: _____ PHONE: _____

RAUMATI WORD MAKER

Raumati (summer) is here. How many words can you find? The full list is on page 23. Look up the meanings of the words you don't know in the dictionary.



Did you know the number of words that can be made out of the word RAUMATI is **78**

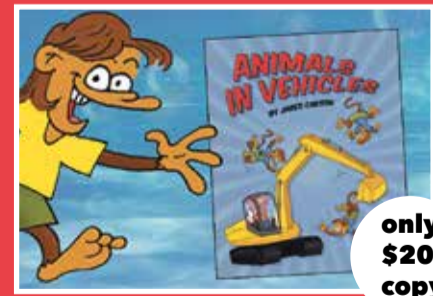
KYUSS'S NEW YEAR'S WORD SEARCH



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- Countdown
- Fireworks
- Marshmallows
- New Years
- Celebrations
- Family
- Happiness
- Midnight
- Resolutions

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 B H L W M O Q D P E R I D P S
 Q H A D W A T A Q F B U M I H
 Y B B E B N F E S A I H Z N M
 Z K R T U Q X N R K X R V E A
 B I W O J Q D U A Z H G E S L
 F G C G H T Y X E M Y X I S L
 M I D N I G H T Y I L D A U O
 V B C M Q A H I W L N E X B W
 H T N Y W B H S E I U K B I S
 Q L A V P E R M N E S E W D B
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Look UP, look DOWN, ACROSS, DIAGONALLY and BACK! Put a line through each word as you find it.



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Stall keeps locals supplied with fresh produce

The produce stall outside the Memorial Hall has become an institution in the 13 years it has been operating.

It began in 2009 when a group of people conceived and started the Seasonal Surplus Stall with some simple goals:

1. to be a leader in sustainable food growing in the Ōtaki district
2. to facilitate seed, seedling and produce swapping in Ōtaki
3. to be complementary – a hub for swapping skills, equipment and garden resources.

The concept is simple – it's a village stall for locals.

That it is still operating into 2022 is a mark of its success and a tribute to the volunteers and townspeople. The goals have stayed the same and over the years the group has adapted and grown, creating a lively social spot on a Thursday morning.

"It's a great sharing spot for those who grow, those who don't and those who think they would like to have a new kind of vegetable on the table," says one of the group, Katy Horwood. "It's good to know that your Thursday vegetables and fruit were probably still in the ground or on the tree that morning."

Run completely by volunteers, it offers



SURPLUS: Pam Jones, Katy Horwood and Beverley Irving help Hemi Te Hone choose some fresh produce at the first of the year's seasonal surplus stalls in the park next to the Memorial Hall.

Photo Ian Carson

a variety of fruits and herbs, vegetables, seedlings and often flowers. While organisers never know from week to week what's coming in, it's always fresh.

Most of the goods are donated by people who want to share whatever they have when their garden is full. Often there's a bit of recipe sharing, too.

The produce is on-sold to the public, with all the funds distributed locally.

The recipients have varied over the years as needs have changed, but they're all Ōtaki-based.

Any produce that's left over also goes to locals through other groups – nothing is wasted.

The stall is open every Thursday during summer, selling from 11am. If you have produce to donate, bring it along from 10.45am.

To list your group, or update contact details, email debbi@idmedia.co.nz

COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

- AMICUS CLUB OF ŌTAKI 364 6464
- COBBLERS SOUP LUNCH GROUP: Thursdays 11am-1.30pm Gertrude Atmore Lounge. Free soup (koha appreciated).
- FOREST & BIRD PROTECTION SOCIETY Joan Leckie 368 1277
- FRIENDS OF THE ŌTAKI RIVER Trevor Wylie 364 8918
- FRIENDS OF THE ŌTAKI ROTUNDA Di Buchan 027 683 0213
- GENEALOGY SOCIETY Len Nicholls 364 7638
- KĀPITI COAST GREY POWER June Simpson 021 109 2583
- KĀPITI HOROWHENUA VEGANS: Alastair 364 3392 Eric 367 2512
- KEEP ŌTAKI BEAUTIFUL Margaret Bayston/Lloyd Chapman
- LIONS CLUB OF ŌTAKI Don Howden 022 437 1275
- MORRIS CAR CLUB Chris Torr 323 7753
- ŌTAKI ARTHRITIS SUPPORT GROUP info@arthritis.org.nz
- ŌTAKI BRIDGE CLUB Tim Horner 364-5240
- ŌTAKI CHRISTIAN WOMEN awomensoccasion@gmail.com
- ŌTAKI COMMUNITY PATROL Martin McGrath otaki@cpnz.org.nz
- ŌTAKI & DISTRICT SENIOR CITIZENS Vaevae 027 447 7864
- ŌTAKI FLORAL ART & GARDEN CLUB Macha Miller 364 6605
- ŌTAKI FOODBANK 43 Main St, Lucy Tahere 364 0051
- ŌTAKI HERITAGE BANK MUSEUM TRUST 364 6886
- ŌTAKI HISTORICAL SOCIETY Sarah Maclean 364 2497
- ŌTAKI MENZSHED 022 406 9439 OtakiMenzShed@outlook.com
- ŌTAKI PLAYERS SOCIETY Roger Thorpe 364 8848 or 021 259 2683
- ŌTAKI POTTERY CLUB Rod Graham 027 445 7545
- ŌTAKI PROMOTIONS GROUP Cam Butler 021 703095
- ŌTAKI AND DISTRICT RSA, 9 Raukawa St 364 6221
- ŌTAKI SPINNERS & KNITTERS' GROUP, Barbara Austin 364 8381
- ŌTAKI STROKE SUPPORT GROUP Marian Jones 364-5028
- ŌTAKI WOMEN'S NETWORK GROUP Michelle McGrath otakiwomensnetwork@gmail.com
- ŌTAKI WOMEN'S COMMUNITY CLUB/SUNDAY MARKETS Kerrie Fox 027 340 0305
- ŌTAKI WOMEN'S INSTITUTE Rema Clark remaclark@xtra.co.nz
- RESOURCE RECOVERY CENTRE Jamie 027 444 9995/Drew 021 288 7021
- ROTARY CLUB OF ŌTAKI Michael Fagg 021 294 3039
- ROTARY HALL HIRE Pete Heald 027 536 5616
- TIMEBANK Suzanne Fahey 021 1275 074
- TOASTMASTERS OF WAIKANAE Graham 04 905 6236
- TRANSITION TOWN ŌTAKI Jamie Bull 364 0550
- WAITOHU STREAM CARE GROUP Lynda Angus 020 459 6321

CHILDREN

- ŌTAKI TOY LIBRARY 027 621 8855 Saturday 10.30am-noon Memorial Hall, Main St.
- KIDZOWN OSCAR 0800 543 9696
- LITTLE GIGGLERS PLAYGROUP Baptist Church Hall, Te Manuao Rd. 10am-12noon Friday each fortnight. Denise 027 276 0983
- MAINLY MUSIC Hadfield Hall, Te Rauparaha St. 021 189 6510
- ŌTAKI KINDERGARTEN 68a Waerenga Rd. 364 8553
- ŌTAKI MONTESSORI PRESCHOOL Haruātai Park, Roselle 364 7500
- ŌTAKI PLAYCENTRE Mill Rd. 364 5787. Mon, Tue, Thu 9.30am-noon
- ŌTAKI PLAYGROUP otakiplaygroup@hotmail.com
- ŌTAKI SCOUTS, CUBS AND KEAS Brent Bythell 364 8949
- ŌTAKI TITANS SWIMMING CLUB Carla Lingnau 021 235 9096
- PLUNKET MANAKAU PLAYGROUP Honi Taipua St, T & Th 9.30am-noon
- SKIDS ŌTAKI out of school care, St Peter Chanel School. Sonia 027 739 1986
- TE KŌHANGA REO O TE KĀKANO O TE KURA Te Rauparaha St, 06 364 5599
- TE KŌHANGA REO O RAUKAWA 5 Convent Rd, 06 364 5364

SPORTS CLUBS

- EASY-CISE/WALKING GROUP (BODY & SOUL) Joseph 364 6191
- EQUESTRIAN HORSE CLUB 364 6181: Horse Trekking club Debbie 364 6571; Ōtaki Pony Club Paul Pettengell 364 5781
- GAZBOS GOLDEN OLDIES Doug Garrity 364 5886
- HAWAIKINUI TUA RUA KI ŌTAKI (waka ama) DeNeen Baker-Underhill 027 404 4697
- ŌTAKI ATHLETIC CLUB Kerry Bevan 027 405 6635
- ŌTAKI BOATING CLUB Trevor Hosking 021 642 766
- ŌTAKI BOWLING CLUB Paul Selby 927 9015
- ŌTAKI CANOE CLUB Jane Bertelsen 364 5302
- ŌTAKI DANCE GROUP Barbara Francis 364 7383
- ŌTAKI GOLF CLUB 364 8260
- ŌTAKI GYMNASTICS CLUB Nancy 027 778 6902
- ŌTAKI INDOOR BOWLING Jane Selby-Paterson 927 9015
- ŌTAKI MASTERS SWIMMING CLUB Sonia Coom 04 292 7676
- ŌTAKI PETANQUE CLUB Val Clarke 364 5213
- ŌTAKI RAILWAY BOWLING CLUB Maureen Beaver 364 0640
- ŌTAKI SPORTS CLUB: TENNIS, SQUASH & SOCCER Hannah 027 327 1179
- ŌTAKI SURF LIFE SAVING CLUB Kirsty Doyle 021 102 0058
- RĀHUI FOOTBALL AND SPORTS CLUB Slade Sturmeay 021 191 4780. Rahui Netball Kylie Gardner 0275 490 985. Junior Rugby Megan Qaranivalu 022 165 7649
- TAE KWON DO Jim Babbington 027 530 0443
- TAI CHI Gillian Sutherland 04 904 8190
- WHITI TE RA LEAGUE CLUB Kelly Anne Ngatai 027 256 7391
- WILD GOOSE QIGONG, CHEN STYLE TAIJIQUAN (TAI CHI) & CHUN YUEN (SHAOLIN) QUAN. Sifu Cynthia Shaw 021 613 081

CHURCHES

Rangiātea 33 Te Rauparaha St. 06 364-6838. Sunday Eucharist 9am. Church viewing during school terms Monday to Friday 9.30am-1.30pm.



St Mary's Pukekarakā 4 Convent Rd. Fr Alan Robert, 06 364-8543 or 021 0822 8926. Sunday mass: 10am. Miha Māori mass, first Sunday. For other masses see otakiandlevincatholicparish.nz

Ōtaki Anglican Rev Simon and Rev Jessica Falconer. 06 364-7099. All Saints Church, 47 Te Rauparaha St. Every Sunday at Hadfield Hall, 10am. **Christmas Eve: 10.30pm Hadfield Hall. Christmas Day: 10am Hadfield Hall.** For Hadfield Hall bookings, email office@otakianglican.nz

Ōtaki Baptist cnr State Highway 1 and Te Manuao Rd. 06 364-8540 or 027 672 7865. Sunday service at 10am. otakibaptist.weebly.com

The Hub 157 Tasman Rd, Ōtaki. Leader Richard Brons. 06 364-6911. Sunday service and Big Wednesday services at 10.15am. www.actschurches.com/church-directory/horowhenua/hub-church/

Ōtaki Presbyterian 249 Mill Rd, Ōtaki. Rev Peter Jackson. 06 364-8759 or 021 207 9455. Sunday service at 11am. See otakiwaikanaechurch.nz

MEDICAL

Ōtaki Medical Centre 2 Aotaki St, Ōtaki 06 364 8555 Monday-Friday: 8.45am-5pm.

EMERGENCIES: 111

AFTER HOURS: Team Medical, Paraparaumu: 04 297 3000 Coastlands Shopping Mall. 8am-10pm every day.

Palmerston North Hospital emergencies, 50 Ruahine St, Palmerston North • 06 356 9169

Healthline for free 24-hour health advice 0800 611 116

St John Health Shuttle 0800 589 630

P-pull walk-in Drug advice and support, Birthright Centre, every 2nd Thursday 6-8pm.

COMMUNITY

ŌTAKI POLICE 06 364-7366, corner Iti and Matene Sts

CITIZEN'S ADVICE BUREAU 06 364-8664, 0800 367 222. 65a Main Street. otaki@cab.org.nz

AROHAUI HOSPICE SHOP 11 Main St. 06 929-6603

BIRTHRIGHT ŌTAKI OPPORTUNITY SHOP 23 Matene St, Ōtaki. 06 364-5524

COBWEBS OPPORTUNITY SHOP TRUST 60 Main St.

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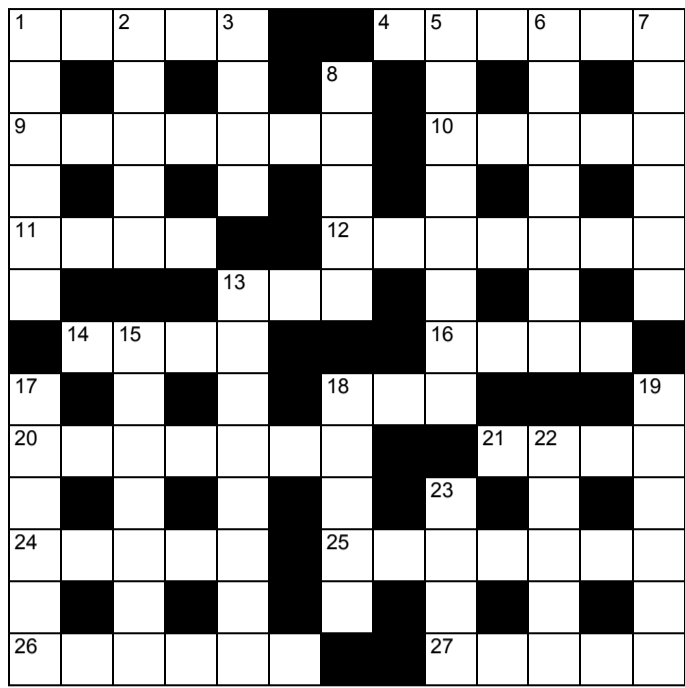
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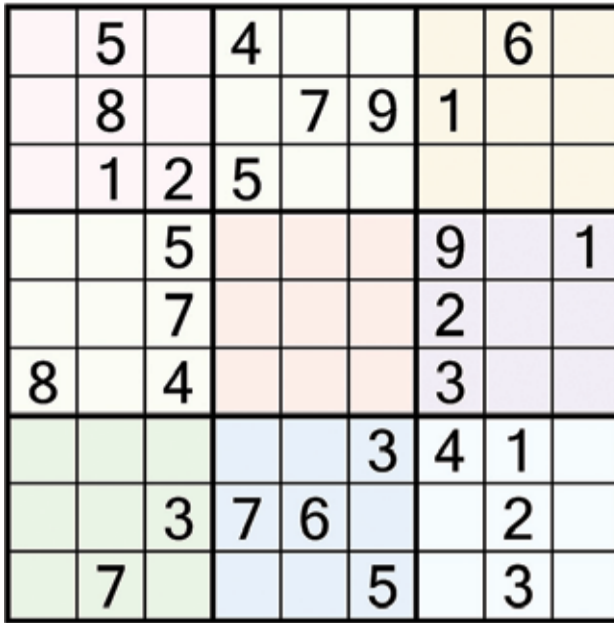
CROSSWORD #1835E Crossword solution right



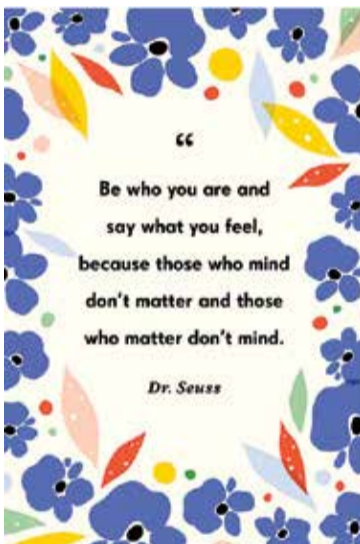
- ACROSS**
1. New Zealander awarded the Victoria Cross twice in Second World War (5)
 4. Crowd (6)
 9. Prime Minister 1975-84 (7)
 10. In the US it's a diaper (5)
 11. Appear (4)
 12. One of the Cook Strait ferries (7)
 13. Government department (abbr) (3)
 14. By mouth (4)
 16. Too (4)
 18. 2010 NZ hit film (3)
 20. Novice (7)
 21. Notion (4)
 24. Seven (Māori) (5)
 25. Major river of the Mackenzie Basin (7)
 26. Approve, endorse (6)
- DOWN**
1. To the greatest degree (6)
 2. Surname of NZ F1 driver and an author (5)
 3. Satellite of Earth (4)
 5. Breed of farm dog (8)
 6. Subjugate (7)
 7. Rotorua attraction (6)
 8. Popular New Zealand biscuit (5)
 13. Author of *Once Were Warriors* (4,4)
 15. Pragmatist (7)
 17. Bloom (6)
 18. Species of kiwi (5)
 19. Native spider (6)
 22. TV genre (5)
 23. Famous NZ musical family (4)

SUDOKU PUZZLES www.thepuzzlecompany.co.nz

HARD #30 Use logic and process of elimination to fill in the blank cells using the numbers 1 through 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Puzzle solution below.



- RAUMATI WORD MAKER ANSWERS from page 20:**
- 7-letter word: 1. timarau.
6-letter words: 2. atrium 3. trauma 4. amrita 5. tamarī 5-letter words: 6. amrit 7. maria 8. matai 9. atria 10. raita 11. riata 12. tiara 4-letter words: 13. arum 14. maut 15. mura 16. muti 17. rimu 18. amia 19. amir 20. atma 21. maar 22. mair 23. mara 24. mart 25. rami 26. rima 27. tram 28. trim 29. aura 30. airt 31. aria 32. raia 33. rata 34. tara. 3-letter words: 35. amu 36. imu 37. mut 38. rum 39. tum 40. aim 41. ama 42. ami 43. arm 44. maa 45. mai 46. mar 47. mat 48. mir 49. ram 50. rim 51. tam 52. rut 53. tau 54. tui 55. tur 56. uta 57. air 58. ait 59. art 60. rai 61. rat 62. ria 63. tai 64. tar 65. tra. 2-letter words: 66. mu 67. um 68. am 69. ma 70. mi 71. ut 72. aa 73. ai 74. ar 75. at 76. it 77. ta 78. ti.



JANUARY TRIVIA QUIZ

1. Which astrological sign is between January 21 and February 20?
2. On the January 17 in which year did Captain Robert Falcon Scott reach the South Pole?
3. What is the month of January in German?
4. What is the month of January in Māori?
5. What is January's birthstone? (Hint: the name comes from the 14th century English word meaning "dark red")
6. How do you say Happy New Year in Māori?
7. What was January named after?
8. In the Northern Hemisphere, what is the month of January known for?
9. What board game was invented in 1955?
10. Which regions have their anniversary day in January 2022?
11. The Euro currency was introduced on January 1 of what year?
12. Italian Dr Maria Montessori opened her first school and daycare centre on January 6 of what year?
13. What rock singer and actor was born on January 8, 1935? He was dubbed the "King of Rock and Roll", and regarded as one of the most significant cultural icons of the 20th century.
14. January 11, 1922, was significant for treating what illness?
15. Martina Navratilova won her 100th tennis tournament on January 14 of which year?

JANUARY TRIVIA ANSWERS

1. Aquarius. 2. 1912. 3. januar (the 'y' drops off).
4. Hanuere or Kohitātea. 5. Garnet. 6. Hari tau hou.
7. January was named for the Roman god Janus, who represented new beginnings. The original Roman calendar only had 10 months. January and February were not included, but were added later. 8. It is the coldest month of the year in most regions. 9. Scrabble. 10. Wellington, Nelson and Auckland. 11. 1999. 12. 1907. 13. Elvis Presley. 14. First use of insulin to treat diabetes in a human patient. 15. 1985.

Ōtaki River entrance tides
January 12 – February 18, 2022

metservice.com/marine-surf/tides/otaki-river-entrance

Please note:
The actual timing of high and low tide might differ from that provided here. Times are extrapolated from the nearest primary port for this location, so please take care.

		HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
WED 12 JAN	-	00:15	06:19	12:40	18:44	
THU 13 JAN	-	01:27	07:25	13:52	19:48	
FRI 14 JAN	-	02:25	08:26	14:48	20:46	
SAT 15 JAN	-	03:12	09:19	15:34	21:36	
SUN 16 JAN	-	03:53	10:04	16:15	22:18	
MON 17 JAN	-	04:31	10:42	16:52	22:57	
TUE 18 JAN	-	05:07	11:17	17:29	23:33	
WED 19 JAN	-	05:43	11:52	18:06	-	
THU 20 JAN	00:09	06:19	12:28	18:43	-	
FRI 21 JAN	00:47	06:55	13:05	19:21	-	
SAT 22 JAN	01:27	07:33	13:46	20:01	-	
SUN 23 JAN	02:09	08:14	14:29	20:45	-	
MON 24 JAN	02:56	08:58	15:18	21:35	-	
TUE 25 JAN	03:47	09:51	16:11	22:36	-	
WED 26 JAN	04:45	10:58	17:12	23:52	-	
THU 27 JAN	05:49	12:24	18:19	-	-	
FRI 28 JAN	-	01:15	06:59	13:48	19:30	
SAT 29 JAN	-	02:26	08:10	14:56	20:40	
SUN 30 JAN	-	03:26	09:14	15:53	21:42	
MON 31 JAN	-	04:17	10:11	16:43	22:36	
TUE 01 FEB	-	05:02	11:01	17:27	23:25	
WED 02 FEB	-	05:42	11:46	18:07	-	
THU 03 FEB	00:09	-	-	-	-	

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MISSING TABBY WITH FLUFFY TAIL

TE HORO BEACH
Bonnie was last seen January 1 at home in Brendan Drive. Please contact Kimre with any information on 027 827 4552

ŌTAKI TODAY NEWS STANDS

Ōtaki Today has news stands at RiverStone Café, Ōtaki New World, Ōtaki Library, Café SixtySix, and Ōtaki Beach dairy.

Out of town, there's a news stand at Manakau Market, The Sponge Kitchen in Levin, and Olive Grove Café, Waikanae.

Local man's death investigated

Several investigations are continuing into the death of Ōtaki man Peter Tuhi.

Peter, 65, died in hospital on December 22. Police say he hit his head during an arrest in the car park of the Cosmopolitan Club in Levin the day before. He was taken to Wellington Hospital and was put in an induced coma, but died the next day.

Police said Peter was being arrested about 3pm on the Tuesday (December 21).

"Initial information indicates that during the arrest process both the officer and the man fell to the ground, with the man hitting his head," police said in a statement later that day.

"The police officer attending called for medical assistance and the man was transported to hospital."

Several investigations into the circumstances around what happened have been launched, and the Independent Police Conduct Authority has been notified.

Peter was well known in Ōtaki as a hard working fencer and tree-feller. Friends say he never turned down voluntary work that needed to be done for marae or other organisations.

He did wood-chopping as a hobby and was for several years a referee for the Horowhenua-Kāpiti Rugby Referees Association.

Tributes flowed on social media, including from the Telegraph Hotel. Publican Duane Watt said Peter was a regular and would be missed by other locals.

"He was a great friend of us all here at The Tele," Duane said.

"He was involved with so many things – pool, rugby, league, refereeing, wood chopping. He was at most functions – anything to do with the Waikato, Shannon, Manakau or Ōtaki. He was always generous with helping someone who was short, offering food for a function or helping someone out of their depth."

Peter became an integral part of the famed Ōtaki band Summer Breeze as a roadie in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He appeared with the old band members on the 2021 cover of *Ōtaki Yesterday*.



Peter Tuhi, well known as a hard-working man.

Photo Ian Carson

He had been following the band at its gigs and offered to pack up the gear one night, then the next. The band asked him if he would be their roadie, which he happily accepted.

Peter picked up their gear, transported it to the gig, set up the sound gear and drums. Although he never played the guitar, he tuned them ready to play. All the band had to do was roll up and start performing. They soon realised his value.

"At the end of the gig he insisted we sit down and relax while he broke down the gear and loaded up for the next gig," guitarist Wayne Webster recalled. "He made life so much easier for us and we certainly appreciated everything he did."

After his death, Peter returned to Ōtaki for two days for people to pay their respects, then went on Boxing Day to his marae, Whakamārama, in Te Awamutu, for a service on December 27.

IN BRIEF

Businesses compliant

WorkSafe says it has investigated two food and drink services in Ōtaki to check on compliance with Covid regulations (neither of which were named in an article in *Ōtaki Today* last month). WorkSafe told *Ōtaki Today* they did not wish to name the businesses, and they were deemed to be compliant.

Number of brigade call-outs leaps

The Ōtaki Volunteer Fire Brigade had 237 call-outs in 2021, up 15 percent on the number in 2020. Fire chief Ian King says last year was the busiest for some time. The number of call-outs in December was 24. Five were to attend to private fire alarms; and four each were for rubbish, grass and scrub fires, property fires, and "special services". The brigade attended three motor vehicle crashes, had two call-outs for medical emergencies and two to help other brigades.

Symposium confirmed

The Whakaaro Whakairo Sculptural Symposium has been confirmed for the week of January 28 to February 7. Up to 12 artists will be sculpting at various Ōtaki venues, including at sponsor The Telegraph Hotel. Following the theme "mai i te kāuru ki te moana" (from the source to the sea) the artists will also work at several sites along the Ōtaki River, including at the Riverslea Retreat and at the river mouth. Artists at this year's symposium include wood-carver Lawrence Makoare, who became famous as an actor on *Zena: Warrior Princess* and *Lord of the Rings*.

Black Eyed Susie at Stationhouse gig



Black Eyed Susie is playing at the Stationhouse Social Club's February event on February 3.

Hosted by The Salty Hearts, it's at the Ōtaki Golf Club from 6.30-9pm (\$45 including 2-course meal and live music).

Black Eyed Susie is a band born and raised on the Kāpiti Coast, featuring the violin and guitar duo

of Susan Colien-Reid (left) and Ramon Oza. Susan has supported artists including The Blind Boys of Alabama and Ramon is the funky blues guitarist with the husky voice who has played since he was 14, including with The Drifters.

Susan and Ramon have worked together for many years and have played festivals, gigs and venues all

over the North Island. Together they have written and recorded songs with a strong Celtic/blues/funk sound. Their performances include original songs, Fleetwood Mac, Beatles, Fisherman's Blues, and a Raggle Taggle Gypsy - O.

The Stationhouse Social Club is run by local band The Salty Hearts. ■ Tickets email: gregandanje@xtra.co.nz

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RUNARUNA/Leisure

Busy summer for lifeguards

Take extra care says surf club

Local surf lifesavers don't want anyone on Ōtaki Beach to become one of this summer's horror drowning statistics.

Figures from Water Safety New Zealand as of Monday (January 10) showed that 33 people throughout the country have drowned since December 1. A total of 15 died in the official summer holiday period (4pm Christmas Eve to 6am January 5), three times more than the previous five-year average and the worst in 40 years.

Ōtaki Surf Life Saving Club chair Graeme Lundie says Ōtaki Beach can be dangerous and people should take care, especially to swim between the flags.

"We've got a lot of rips and holes that can form at Ōtaki, particularly after a storm," he says. "To the casual observer, the flags might seem to be in the same place all the time, but they're always being moved depending on holes or rip currents."

"We'll even move them on the day if we need to."

His advice for people heading to the beach is to not only swim between the flags, but to know your limits and keep your children close at all times.

"A big thing for us is to train our lifeguards to prevent an action before it happens. This might be, for example, seeing someone taking a floatie out into the blue yonder and getting them back before it turns into a dangerous situation."

New Year's Day was busy for the local lifeguards. It was rough in the water and three swimmers needed to be rescued. One who was in distress after taking in water required ambulance attention.

"It was a day when I think people under-estimated the conditions,"



ON PATROL: Surf lifesavers on patrol at Ōtaki Beach. They say people should always swim in the safe area between the flags, which can move daily.

Photos Ian Carson

Graeme says. "If you continually have waves crashing over you and you're swallowing water it's amazing how quickly you can become fatigued."

Fortunately for Ōtaki, the local surf club is well resourced. It has been able to send volunteers to help in the search for two people who drowned recently in the Manawatū River, and has assisted lifeguards who have been short-staffed at Himatangi.

"We've got a strong club with good steady numbers. There are a lot of young lifeguards coming through."

"And we've got a strong base of support from people like Nape McFedries, Neale Ames and the Housiaux family who seem to have been there forever."

Clubs such as that at Ōtaki have meantime been praised for their efforts.

Water Safety chief executive Daniel Gerrard says the summer drowning toll would have been much higher without them.

"We take our hat off to clubs like

Ōtaki," Daniel told *Ōtaki Today*. "If not for them we would have been recording much greater numbers than we have seen."

"It's been a really bad summer and we appreciate what the surf lifesaving clubs have been doing."

Water Safety is urging people to take extra care as the summer heat continues to attract families to the beaches, rivers and other waterways. Lives lost have been in every age range, water activity and ethnicity. A common theme has been people underestimating the conditions and overestimating their ability.

"This is a national tragedy," Daniel says. "Every preventable death is devastating to a family/whānau and the community."

He says it's been an exceptionally busy time for frontline rescue personnel, such as the surf lifesavers and Coastguard NZ, which indicates the toll could have been much worse.

"We are fortunate to have such dedicated volunteers helping keep

"We take our hat off to clubs like Ōtaki. If not for them we would have been recording much greater numbers [of fatalities] than we have seen."

Water Safety NZ chief executive Daniel Gerrard

Kiwis and visitors safe in, on or around the water."

Throughout the country, many of the drownings were in rivers, and half of them were people aged 25-34.

All but one of the 2021/2022 holiday period drowning fatalities occurred in the North Island, similar to previous years.

The nearby Manawatū-Whanganui region had four drowning deaths, all in the Manawatū River.

"While our waterways are our playgrounds, they can be incredibly unforgiving, and everyone needs to take some personal responsibility for their safety and the safety of dependants," Daniel says.

With still several weeks of the summer season left, Water Safety is appealing to everyone to make wise decisions around water.

"We know Kiwis will continue to enjoy our beautiful waterways as the warm weather continues," Daniel says. "We all need to take responsibility and think about water safety."

Key safety messages include:

- always take a buddy
- swim between the flags at patrolled beaches
- adults must actively supervise children around water at all times
- watch out for rips at beaches
- always wear a lifejacket on boats and while fishing from rocks or net fishing.

Boaties and paddlers also need to take two waterproof forms of communication with them whenever they head out on the water.

"Remember the water safety code: Be prepared, watch out for yourself and each other, be aware of the dangers and know your limits."



Chris Mark, Maureen Mackie, Denis & Kathryn Mark, Darrell Manville, Jody Collier, Bob Hiscox

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