

# ŌTAKI TODAY

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HANUERE/JANUARY 2025

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## Charlie beats the odds

By Ian Carson

### 'Need a drink of water.'

With those words, Charlie Simpson's family knew that he had taken a big step forward on his way to recovering from a horrific crash on Ōtaki Beach. They were the first words he uttered when he came out of a coma six days after the incident.

The family had been told about how the first words were a good indication of post-coma recovery. Grunts or gestures only were not so good, a word or two encouraging, and a sentence was positive. The near-full sentence was music to their ears.

"We knew he was coming back," mother Pru says. "It had been tough for everyone waiting to see how he was, especially after being told at the beginning that he was unlikely to survive at all."

That grim prognosis was from an assessment by paramedics of Charlie's injuries as he lay unconscious on the beach after a collision between the motorcycle he was riding and a ute. (Police have been investigating.) It was the scene not long after 8pm on November 6 that Charlie's sister, Maddie, was confronted with when she rushed to the beach after being told of the crash.

With a broken femur and thumb, and significant brain injuries, his condition was still bleak after being flown to Wellington Hospital by air ambulance. Only then, half a world away, did his parents, Pru and Marc, hear about the crash in a call they took in a New York hotel room. Pru had just fulfilled one of her dreams, to compete in the New York marathon.

They hoped against apparent hope for better news as they scrambled to return to New Zealand, which took three days. Charlie was to remain in the coma for another three days, before the encouraging first words he spoke.

He was transferred to an orthopaedic ward on day 13, then to the ABI (acute brain injury) unit at Kenepuru Hospital on day 22.

On day 62, January 8, he was home after two operations on his wrist and one on his femur, and having had a staphylococcus chest infection and an air bubble under his lungs.

When Ōtaki Today visited him at home, he was happy to talk about his future, but remembered nothing of the crash itself.

"No, there's nothing there," he says. "I



Charlie Simpson, centre, with the family's pet dogs and parents Marc and Pru, and back, from left, sisters Eva, Amity and Maddie.

Photo Ōtaki Today

remember going to work that day, but nothing else until I woke up in hospital. I'm told it's the mind pretending to hide what happened."

Remarkably articulate and upbeat, Charlie says he's now focused on his physical recovery first, rather than dwelling on any mental issues. He has already confounded the medical staff at Wellington and Kenepuru hospitals – beating the odds – and is pragmatic about the future.

That's despite having to give up any thoughts of past pursuits, including rugby and volunteering with Land Search and Rescue. He won't be able to drive for at least six months, drink alcohol for at least two years, nor be able to join the police or army, as he had hoped.

Right now he's getting help to become independent, then there will be a back-to-work

programme. A neurological assessment in a few months will determine how well he's doing.

Even after all he's been through, his concerns are for his family.

"Maddie had to cope with it all before Mum and Dad got home. I was just passed out – that was easy. All their lives have had to go on hold while I've been in hospital."

Charlie, who is 19, credits his recovery to the support he's received, his youth, and his fitness.

Pru says people need to be aware of the dangers of driving on the beach, and consider how severe the consequences can be when something goes wrong.

"It changes people's lives forever," she says.

■ See 'Rules aim at keeping people safe', page 6

*'Maddie had to cope with it all before Mum and Dad got home. I was just passed out – that was easy. All their lives have had to go on hold while I've been in hospital.'*

– Charlie Simpson

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## WHAT'S ON

## FESTIVAL OF POTS AND GARDEN ART 2025

Anam Cara Gardens, Rangiu Rd, Ōtaki. January 16-20, coinciding with Wellington Anniversary weekend.

**REIKORANGI COUNTRY FAIR** Reikorangi Community Hall, 1/5 Akatarawa Rd, Waikanae. 11am-2.30pm, Sunday January 26.

**AERO CLUB OPEN DAY** Kāpiti Districts Aero Club, from 11am, Sunday January 26. Aircraft displays, trial flights, Air Chathams DC3 flights, simulator, BBQ and more.

**ŌTAKI KIDS MARKET** Ōtaki Market, old SH1, opposite New World. Sunday, January 26, 10am-2pm. More than 50 young people running stalls, featuring handmade crafts, delicious treats, and innovative products.

**WHĀNAU FUN DAY** Haruātai pool and park, from noon Saturday, February 1. Pool entry free. Slippery slide, food trucks, bouncy castle, and plenty of other free activities.

**SAM DOYLE MEMORIAL GOLF** Annual fundraising tournament honouring Sam Doyle. Saturday, February 1 at Ōtaki Golf Club.

**WAITANGI KI TAUMANUKA** Waitangi Day, 10am-3pm Thursday, February 6, old Children's Health Camp, Ōtaki.

**COMMUNITY BOARDS** The Ōtaki Community Board next meets at 7pm, Tuesday, March 11, in the Gertrude Atmore Lounge (attached to the Memorial Hall). The Waikanae Community Board meets next on Tuesday, March 4, Reikorangi Hall, 5 Akatarawa Road. The public is welcome at meetings. Search "meetings and agendas" at [kapiticoast.govt.nz](http://kapiticoast.govt.nz) from two days before the meeting for the agenda, which is also at council libraries and service centres. To speak at a meeting, register by calling 04 296 4700 or 0800 486 486, or email [democracy.services@kapiticoast.govt.nz](mailto:democracy.services@kapiticoast.govt.nz)

**ŌTAKI KITE FESTIVAL** Ōtaki Beach, 10am-4pm Saturday-Sunday March 8-9.

**MĀORILAND FILM FESTIVAL** Main St, Ōtaki. March 26-30. See [maorilandfilm.co.nz](http://maorilandfilm.co.nz)

**ŌTAKI MUSEUM:** The exhibition "From pā and kāinga to baches and seaside villas" tells the stories of the people and changing character of Ōtaki Beach. Visitors can also play the old theatre pianola while at the museum. The Anne Thorpe Reading Room is open at the same times as the museum. Museum open 10am-2pm Thursday to Saturday, except public holidays. 49 Main St. 06 364-6886.

**TOI MATARAU GALLERY:** Maoriland Hub, Main St, Ōtaki. Open Monday to Saturday 11am-4pm. Toi Matarau is a summit for multidisciplinary arts where Māori and indigenous artists gather, collaborate, are inspired and supported. See [toi.maorilandfilm.co.nz](http://toi.maorilandfilm.co.nz)

**TOTE MODERN:** Ōtaki Pottery Club's gallery and workshop at Ōtaki-Māori Racing Club, Te Roto Rd. Open 10am-3pm Friday to Sunday.

**OLD COURTHOUSE GALLERY** 239 Main Highway, Ōtaki. Open Thurs-Sunday: 10am-4pm. Closed Public Holidays. 027 435 0408.

**OPEN HOME** Ōtaki Baptist Church hall, 4-8pm every Tuesday and Friday. A drop-in space for anyone to cook or share a meal, socialise and even take a shower. Everyone welcome, including volunteers.

**POETRY IN ŌTAKI** Ōtaki Library Supper Room, 3rd Friday of each month, 10.30-12pm. All welcome. Contact Philip 021 977 834.

**TOI MAHARA,** Mahara Place, Waikanae. The Kāpiti Coast's district gallery has reopened bigger and better than ever. See [toimahara.nz](http://toimahara.nz)

**COMMUNITY NETWORKING:** An opportunity for any agency providing a service to the people of Ōtaki to find out what each other is doing. First Tuesday of every month, 9.30am for an hour at the Gertrude Atmore Supper Room (by the library).

**ŌTAKI GARAGE SALE:** Third Saturday of the month, 9am-11.30am, Presbyterian Church, 249 Mill Rd. 06 364-6449. Rev Peter Jackson 021 207 9455, [owpresb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:owpresb@xtra.co.nz)

**ŌTAKI STROKE SUPPORT GROUP & WELLNESS CENTRE:** Meets for Sit and Be Fit classes, 10am Friday mornings at Senior Citizens' Hall, Rangitira Street. All welcome.

**ŌTAKI LIBRARY – ALL SESSIONS FREE:** JP service every Monday 10.30am-12.30pm; Age Concern every 2nd Thursday 10am-noon; Greypower 1st & 3rd Thursday 10.30am-1.30pm.

**CHOIRS** Let's Sing Ōtaki, Tuesdays 2-3pm, Hadfield Hall. Kāpiti Women's Choir, Mondays 1.30-3pm, Baptist Church, Te Moana Rd, Waikanae. New members welcome. Enquires to Ann-Marie Stapp 021 492 127.

To list an event, contact [debbi@idmedia.co.nz](mailto:debbi@idmedia.co.nz)

# Make or break time for coalition

**The new year promises to be "make or break" for the coalition government as it enters the period most likely to disclose whether it has the policies and approaches that can set the country up for success over the rest of the decade.**

Christopher Luxon, Winston Peters and Davis Seymour have a sufficient grasp of the Ardern-Robertson legacy to be able to positively address key issues arising in the social and economic sectors.

Failure to put in place practical change that will continue to drive interest rates down, address rising unemployment and cope with demands for lowering the current account deficit – projected at 4.7 percent of GDP this year – is certain to leave it vulnerable to significant loss of favour within its support base.

Successful action on these fronts will ease pressures on living standards and make it easier for the coalition to address a variety of social issues exacerbated by the economic downturn in time for presentation in an election year. Among these social issues are shortfalls in health services, adequate provision of age care facilities geared to need and a lifting of income levels through job creation, especially in rural areas.

To date the Luxon-Peters-Seymour triumvirate have been better known for a temperate approach to the nation's ills, perhaps best summarised by the country's indebtedness, currently costing almost \$9 billion a year and threatening to lift to more than \$10 billion before we reach 2030.

The reality of that size of yearly interest payment for NZ Inc is that it is the cost of operating three or four government departments each year.

What might successful action look like?

Among prospective moves discussed within

government circles is the establishment of a holding company for government investment in trading enterprises, for example electricity providers and Air NZ. This would be in line with the Singapore approach to building that country's wealth. Its Tamasek company holding government investments is worth billions of dollars and underpins, along with superannuation accumulation, the strength of the island nation economy.

KiwiBank is ripe for partial privatisation, especially if conducted in conjunction with the holding company initiative as outlined above. Occasional claims of this taxpayer-owned financial institution being an influential player in the banking sector are not to be taken seriously. Within the sector it is regarded as more of a distraction than a

significant contributor to financial activities.

While there is general acceptance that the public tends more toward acceptance of government ownership of what can be termed either "strategic" or "essential service" assets, the economy cannot support a devotion of funds to building up Kiwibank to a scale competitive with that of the Australian banks. Introduction of private capital might at least give it a good deal more influence than it can currently muster with limited financial backing.

Within the coalition Act is a constant questioner of why the government should own the buildings that many of its services utilise. Clear examples are the education and health sectors. Does a patient about to undergo life threatening surgery care whether the building in which he or she is to have the surgery is owned by the government or a private company, provided the health services being received are the best available?

Hospital and school construction is a big

drain on government capital expenditure. Construction developers say the difference between major project construction specifying by the public sector on the one hand and private enterprise on the other is chalk and cheese. Clear scoping of need and management of budget are areas in which private construction generally outstrips the public sector.

Over the past decade the building industry has sought better from major government procurement in these areas. It continues to be frustrated, not least by the wrangling over the new Dunedin Hospital. They recall that bidders walked away from a new Christchurch Hospital project in recent years because they considered documents associated with the first round of tenders unprofessional and unworkable.

But Act's views seem unlikely to win through, at least in this first term of the coalition administration. NZ First is risk averse in the public versus private ownership debate.

But the government is increasingly facing demands from the centre right for greater action to restore economic health. Talk-back host Heather due Plessis-Allan: "Slash unnecessary spending. Cut tens of thousands more public service jobs. If they do not get this right, we will sleepwalk our way into being another big Pacific Island where life is slow and expensive and which kids leave when they are old enough."

The possibilities outlined do not fit well with Labour, Green and TPM philosophy/ideology. Their tendency, in public at least, is to favour capital gains taxes to meet the government funding needs that the potential programmes outlined above are intended to address.

A political battle between proponents of these alternative approaches that set the course of economic management over the second half of the decade looks likely to be a feature of the 2025 political year.

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

## POLITICS

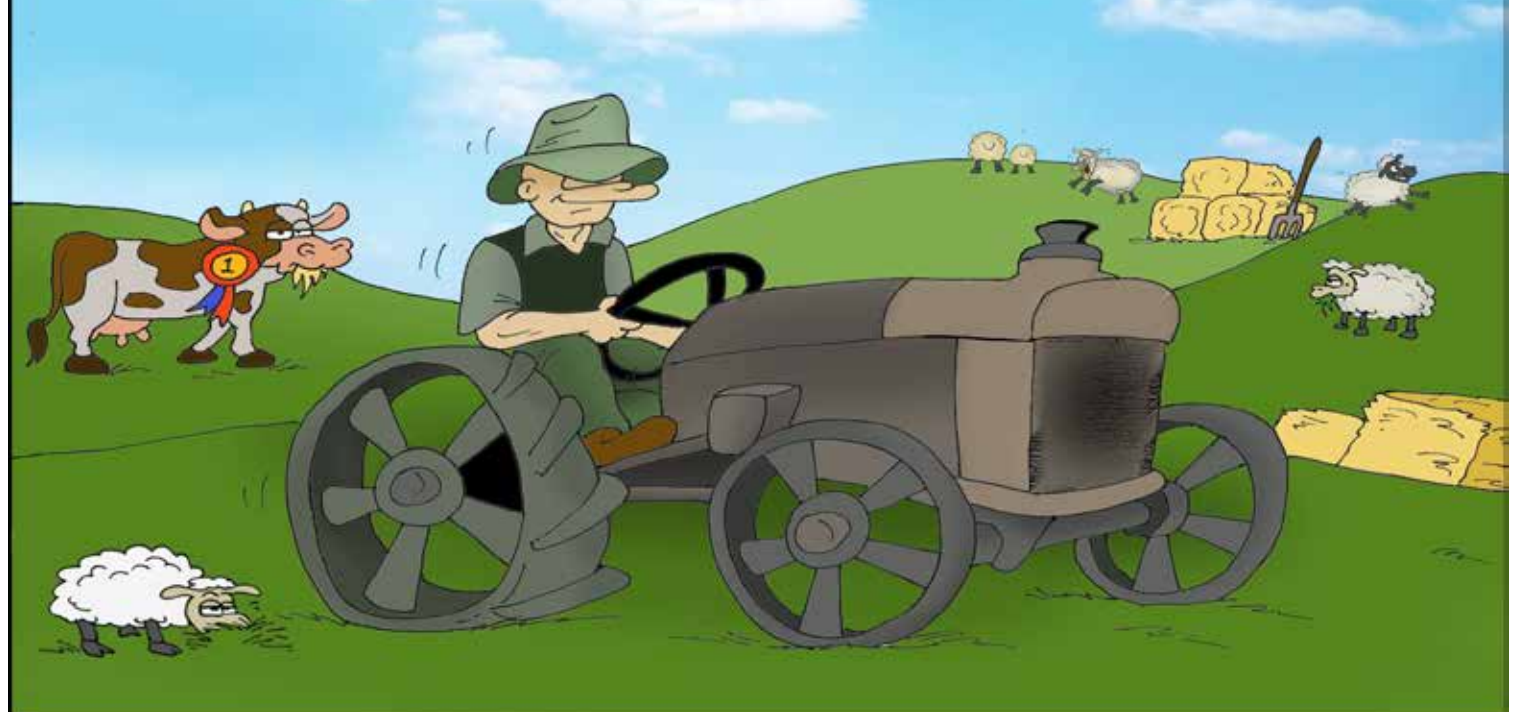


BRUCE KOHN

## CARTOON OF THE MONTH

By Jared Carson

... a slow road to the AP&amp;I show



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# Scholar Maddie off to UK

By Ian Carson

**Madeline (Maddie) Simpson is about to take the trip of a lifetime.**

The Ōtaki College head girl last year was announced as the 2024 Everiss Scholar at the end-of-year prizegiving in late October. The scholarship allows her to travel to Scotland and England for three weeks in February.

She's adding nine days to the schedule to visit family friends in Luxembourg and Germany before returning to New Zealand in early March.

Maddie says she's been focused on winning the Everiss scholarship since she began college, but it was only on prizegiving night that she knew she'd achieved her goal.

The scholarship is awarded to a senior student who has exceptional qualities in personality, leadership, sportsmanship, historical awareness and cultural awareness.

She knows she didn't get the scholarship without the help of others.

College principal Andy Fraser and his deputy, Hamish Wood, are credited with offering support and guidance – "They made sure I was OK and it didn't get too much" – but it's her parents, Marc and Pru, who Maddie gives the greatest credit for her success.

"They're always amazing," she says.



Maddie Simpson with the clutch of awards she won at the 2024 Ōtaki College prizegiving. Photo supplied

And another who was fittingly acknowledged in her prizegiving speech as head girl was brother Charlie. He had been in the student leadership team and was in the audience on prizegiving night. Just over a week later, Charlie was battling for his life in hospital (see page 1).

"They've always been very close," Pru says. "They're like twins."

A key part of Maddie's UK trip will be a visit to Robert Gordon's College in Aberdeen, home of the Ōtaki Scholar. There she will be giving presentations to the senior and junior schools, giving the Scottish students her perspective on life in New Zealand and at Ōtaki College, and offering some historical insights on the scholarship.

"I'm looking forward to going to

Robert Gordon's," Maddie says. "It looks like a really old school, so I'll be interested in seeing how it works compared to Ōtaki College."

Maddie, who's always been fascinated by geography and historic places around the world, will have a week in Aberdeen, then three days in Edinburgh, where she'll get a guided tour of Edinburgh Castle, and five days in England's capital where a tour of the Tower of London has been organised.

In September she will join the Air Force to train as a medic, so there are also plans for her to visit a Scottish Air Force base and a trauma unit in London. On prizegiving night she also received an XŌtaki Alumni Trust Defence Force scholarship.

Maddie was born in the English city of Chichester and came to New Zealand aged 4. She has returned to the UK only once, in 2018 for a family funeral.

Meantime, she's working at New World Ōtaki and looking forward to doing a second Outward Bound course in March, having received an Outward Bound leavers scholarship.

She did an Outward Bound course for younger people in April 2024.

"I was a bit sceptical about how good it might be, but it was a cool experience to see how people who were strangers managed to work together."

## IN BRIEF

### Ōtaki homes at \$620,000

The estimated median price for a home in Ōtaki in January is \$620,000, according to website homes.co.nz. The capital growth during the past 12 months is estimated to be 4.3 percent.

### Reservoir on target

Construction of the Ōtaki reservoir is expected to be completed in March, on target to be operational by May. The latest stage of construction was to instal 36 concrete wall panels to form the tank structure. The crew is now building the framing to support the reservoir's concrete roof, which needs to be poured in one go. It will involve two concrete pumps and about 50 concrete trucks. The work will be in late January or early February. Plants around the reservoir are growing strongly and are expected to provide biodiversity for birds and other fauna.

### Drone for Christmas?

Did you get a drone for Christmas? Drones are fun, but they're also considered aircraft by the Civil Aviation Authority (CAA), so there are important rules to follow. Make sure you know the rules, and any local council policies. Always check if you're in controlled airspace. In the Kāpiti region you can fly a drone at Otara Park at Otaihangā without needing council permission – the only place in the district that allows this.

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# New tumuaki at Wānanga

**Professor Meihana Durie as been appointed as the new tumuaki (chief executive) at Te Wānanga o Raukawa.**

Meihana takes over from Mereana Selby, effective from February. He is a distinguished graduate and former staff member of the Wānanga, and has been deeply involved in the institution's growth since 2000. He has held key roles such as pūkenga reo, pūkenga matua, and kaihautū, and was instrumental in the establishment of Ngā Purapura lifestyle centre in 2012. Meihana's contributions to the development of innovative academic programmes, including Poutuarongo Kawa Oranga and Pou pou Pakari Tinana, have had a lasting impact on Māori education at Te Wānanga o Raukawa.

Meihana has a wealth of academic and leadership experience. He holds a masters in te reo Māori from Te Wānanga o Raukawa is a doctor of philosophy (arts), and has a bachelor of education, from Massey University. He has served as deputy vice chancellor Māori at Massey University, where he led Māori student success, research and teaching initiatives, and ushered in Massey University's Te Tiriti-led era, also strengthening the university's mana whenua iwi relationships with Ngāti Whātua, Rangitāne and Te Ātiawa.

His previous roles have included as head of school Te Pūtahi a Toi, Health Research Council of New Zealand postdoctoral fellow, and Sir Peter Snell doctoral scholar in public health and exercise science.

He was appointed in 2023 as one of four pou tikanga for the Waitangi Tribunal Constitutional Inquiry and has assisted his iwi of Ngāti Kauwhata with the "Te Pene Raupatu" submission as part of the wider Porirua ki Manawatū District Inquiry.

Since 2016 he has been chair of Manukura, a Tahuriwakanui-led high performance secondary school, and has maintained close involvement with the Mana Tamariki Kōhanga Reo and Kura Kaupapa for more than 20 years.

Meihana has led several responses to political issues affecting Ngāti Kauwhata and Rangitāne, and was a panelist at the Hui aa Motu hosted by the Kingitanga at Tūrangawaewae Marae earlier this year. He is also a commentator on issues affecting Māori more broadly.

As tumuaki, Meihana is committed to continuing Te Wānanga o Raukawa's kaupapa Māori approach and enhancing its impact on Māori communities. Under his leadership, Te Wānanga o Raukawa will continue to foster the academic success and cultural integrity of Māori students while strengthening its connections to Iwi, hapū, and whānau throughout Aotearoa.



Professor Meihana Durie.

Photo supplied

## IN BRIEF

### MP seeks to align boundaries

Otaki MP Tim Costley has put forward a private members bill aimed at aligning government agencies' administrative boundaries with existing local authority areas. He says this change would make it simpler for people to access support from government services. "Currently, each government agency determines their own administrative boundaries, defining which towns and rural areas are serviced by which regional office," he says. "This has created an overlapping web of confusing boundaries that can be difficult to navigate, making access to public services harder than it needs to be. In Ōtaki, for example, the boundaries for Health NZ and our local ambulance service are different. Police, Corrections and the courts also have inconsistent boundaries. This just doesn't make sense, and leaves constituents struggling to navigate a boondoggle of bureaucracy to access help."

### Fire call-outs up 11pc

The 24 call-outs in December took the total for the Ōtaki Volunteer Fire Brigade in 2024 to 239. That figure was up 11 percent on the previous year. Of the December call-outs, eight were to attend to private fire alarms, but most were due to a faulty sprinkler system at one location. Five were for rubbish, grass or scrub fires; four to attend motor vehicle crashes; three were "good intent"; and two were property fires. There was one medical emergency and one "special service", to assist with a helicopter landing.

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# Marian retires from women's club

By Ian Carson

**At 90, Marian Gallagher's probably entitled to retirement from voluntary organisations.**

For nearly 43 years Marian had been an active committee member of the Ōtaki Women's Community Club, and most recently patron. She was a founding member of the Ōtaki Lioness Club. The women's club took over the activities of the Lioness Club when that group disbanded several years ago.

Although resigning from the women's club in December, Marian, has not entirely given up her voluntary work, still helping out where she can. She can no longer drive herself around, but she gets a taxi twice a week to the Birthright op shop, where she sorts and sells the donated goods. She's been helping there for the past eight years.

"I've got pretty good health so I can still do these things," she says. "I count myself really lucky at my age."

Her garden also gives her great pleasure and keeps her active. Most days she's out dead-heading flowers or pulling some errant weeds.

"The trick is to do a little bit every day so it doesn't get away on you."

The first president of the Lionesses was Marian's daughter, Gwen. She had been instrumental in establishing the club.

It was set up as a separate women's organisation to operate alongside the Lions Club, which was largely run by men. It was a way in which women could organise their own activities, and it acknowledged the work of women in the community.

Other key members in the early days were people such as Anne Thorpe, who put a huge amount of effort into many community organisations around Ōtaki. Olive Parkin, the wife of prominent Ōtaki accountant husband George,



Marian Gallagher in her garden at home.

Photo Ōtaki Today

who was president of the Lions Club – was another early committee member.

Like Marian with the Ōtaki Women's Community Club, Olive became president and later patron of the Lionesses.

The Women's Community Club has in recent years developed the Ōtaki Market into a much bigger one than the original Market set up by the club. It's allowed even more money to be distributed within the community, but Marian feels that the more commercial focus has resulted in a loss of the "fellowship" she used to enjoy.

"We would have dinners together and go to the movies," she says. "We put a lot of work in to help

the community, but we enjoyed it. We supported each other and had a lot of fun. I know all the effort was valued by the community. It felt so worthwhile."

Apart from the market, the projects the women's club initiated were establishment of the Citizens' Advice Bureau, and the sewing group at the Presbyterian Church. It organised the building of a wooden fort – which still stands – by the Army at the Children's Health Camp.

It helped families struggling with cancer and other major diseases – money raised at the market and from other activities helped wherever there was a need.



## Pat new patron

**After the retirement of Marian Gallagher, Pat Bloxham (above) has taken over as patron of the Ōtaki Women's Community Club.**

Pat is well known for her support of the Ōtaki Market and Ōtaki Kids Market, her local volunteer work and assistance to various charities and individuals. She says she wants to build a vibrant, inclusive club where everyone can "connect, celebrate and thrive together".

President Maureen Wallace says Pat has been an unwavering supporter of the club, dedicating countless hours not only to the club but also the community at large.

"Her commitment and passion have inspired us all, and we are honoured to have her in this role."

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# Rules aim at keeping people safe

Vehicles are not allowed on most beaches in Kāpiti, except in defined areas for launching boats.

Kāpiti Coast District Council environmental standards manager Richard Hopkins says public safety is top of mind for his staff as the holidays and warmer weather continue to attract people to the beaches.

“Our beaches are shared spaces,” he says. “We want everyone to enjoy them safely together. We’re not out to stop people having fun, but to educate them about how we can all play a part in promoting beach safety and environmental care.”

He says most people behave responsibly at the beach, but some need reminding about the rules and that there are consequences for breaking them, but also that there are benefits of creating a safe and enjoyable environment for everyone.

“This is especially important as the beaches get busier with more people and more varied activities – from sunbathing

and picnicking to swimming, fishing and dog walking.

“We also need to protect our dunes and the plants and animals, like threatened shorebirds, that live in them and make Kāpiti the special place that we all treasure.”

Richard says two-wheeled motor-bikes are not allowed on any Kāpiti beaches or dune areas at any time.

“Motorbikes are particularly disruptive and dangerous because of their speed, their agility on sand and rough ground, and unpredictability in areas where people are trying to enjoy other activities on the beach,” he says.

All other vehicles, including cars, vans and utes, are permitted only in very limited areas for launching boats. The speed limits are 20kmm/h on the beach, and 10kkm/h in accessways.

Vehicles with a valid mobility pass are allowed on the beach, but only in the areas designated for boat launching.

A mobility sticker give access to people who can’t walk onto the beach, but it doesn’t mean a free pass to drive up and

down the beaches at will.

Parking is allowed only in boat launching areas if you are launching or retrieving boats.

Vehicles may drive or park only in these areas:

- the shingle track beside the foreshore from the northern bank of the Ōtaki River mouth to opposite 100 Marine Parade, Ōtaki Beach
  - the foreshore between the official beach access point opposite 8 Marine Parade, Ōtaki Beach, to the northern limit of the district.
  - the foreshore from Olliver Grove, North Waikanae to the southern end of Rodney Avenue, Te Horo
- Areas that are strictly off limits to all vehicles include:
- Waitohu Reserve (which is outside the foreshore).
  - Waikanae Estuary Scientific Reserve.

■ More information about vehicles and other activities on our beaches is at [kapiticoast.govt.nz/beaches](http://kapiticoast.govt.nz/beaches).



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## CORAL CELEBRATES 10 YEARS

CORAL MCLEAN is celebrating 10 years in her Raumati Beach shop *I Love Labels*, a consignment boutique specialising in designer labels sourced from Europe and around the world.

These include Trelise Cooper, Kate Sylvester, D & G, Gucci, Moochi, Zambesi plus many others. *I Love Labels* appreciates fabulous style with luxury brands and is always looking for new clothing, shoes, bags and accessories to be beautifully presented in its boutique Raumati store. (They don’t take vintage or fast fashion.)

Coral says it was a business venture she saw value in from the get-go, and throughout the years it has been a mix of challenges. Getting staffing just right, and learning all forms of social media to be proficient in, has enabled her to run the business well. Merchandising methods, developing business contacts both in New Zealand and overseas, fitting out her shop regularly to keep it looking current and relevant to prospective customers and consignees, have been other challenges she has met.

Coral completed a Certificate in Small Business at Porirua Waananga in 2015, and has been on a constant learning curve since. Coral says running a business isn’t for everyone, and there are a lot of hidden challenges, but what you don’t know you can learn if it’s important to you.

Coral has a work background in a mix of retail, hospitality and media.

With husband Peter she has run two hotels – one in Picton, the other in Kaikōura – so they are no strangers to hard work and long hours. From 1983, Coral worked

in radio and television, in Wellington and Auckland, for more than 25 years. She has had an exceptional life meeting high-profile people, and has worked as a VIP driver to many overseas concert acts in Wellington (Joe Cocker, Bon Jovi, Rolling Stones, Suzi Q, Westlife, Kanye West), so considers she has had a very rewarding career.

Coral is now based in Paraparaumu, where she has lived for almost 25 years. Her Dad’s family are the Barretts of Ōtaki. Her Mum’s family are in Motueka, where Coral grew up, and where she now visits her elderly Mum every few months.

*I Love Labels* is all about recycling and re-using. Coral uses paper bags and minimises use of plastic. *I Love Labels* is open seven days.

• Go to [ilovelabels.nz](http://ilovelabels.nz) for information on how to become a consignee.





# Moy developers seek judicial review

**The developers of Moy Estate have confirmed that they have lodged an application for judicial review of a council decision that affected access to the estate.**

The application by Wakefield Group Holdings was lodged with the High Court on December 12.

It relates to a close 6-5 decision by Kāpiti councillors on November 28 to not change the status of a parcel of land at the end of Moy Place that would allow access to the development via existing residential streets. Residents of Sue Avenue and Moy Place opposed the change

of status, saying traffic to and from the estate should be on the old highway – not through their streets.

In a statement to *Ōtaki Today* dated January 7, Wakefield confirmed the judicial review had been lodged.

Director Simon Barber said resource consent was granted for the development by an expert consenting panel.

“The existing consent requires the land at the end of Moy Place to have its legal designation changed from a road reserve to a legal road,” Simon said. “This land is held by KCDC after being set aside for this exact purpose.

“Waka Kotahi, KCDC operations officers, and independent traffic experts all agree that Moy Place is the safest and most appropriate access point for the Moy Estate development.”

He said KCDC managers strongly advised councillors to make the change in legal designation.

“This was consistent with their own legal advice, the advice of their chief executive, the group manager infrastructure services, and seven traffic experts. Despite this, the councillors failed to make the legal designation change required.”

He said councillors failed to make the

only available decision and “as a last resort” Wakefield had issued proceedings seeking judicial review.

“We are, however, hopeful that this can be resolved without the intervention of the court. We understand the mayor has requested a further report from KCDC operational staff in order for councillors to reconsider their decision on 30 January 2025.

“Should the councillors continue to refuse to make the only available decision, we have faith in the judicial system to ensure that responsible development is not prevented by councillors refusing to follow the law.”



## Hunt for clues in museums

**Museum sleuths are being called on to solve some clues during Wellington Anniversary Weekend.**

The Discover Kāpiti Heritage Group has organised for 10 museums on the Kāpiti Coast to hide clues that need to be solved during the weekend.

“We need people to hunt for a clue in each of the museums to be in to win one of four epic prize packs,” says the group’s chair, Allan Carley.

By finding the answers to all 10 clues, participants will receive 10 entries into the draw to win one of the prize packs. Find some of the clues and get an entry into the draw for each correct answer.

You can start the Kāpiti Coast Heritage Clue Hunt at any of the 10 museums, where entry forms (containing the clues) will be available. The museums are the Ōtaki Heritage Museum, the Ōtaki Rotunda at the old health camp, The Kilns at Te Horo, Kāpiti Coast Museum in Waikanae, Toi Mahara Art Gallery

in Waikanae, Southward Car Museum in Otaihanga, Kāpiti Aviation Museum in Paraparaumu, Kapiti US Marines Trust in Paekākāriki, Wellington Tramway Museum at Queen Elizabeth Park and Paekākāriki Station Museum. Completed clue forms will go into entry boxes at the museums.

The total value of the four prize packs is nearly \$3000. Winners will be contacted by phone.

Participants are urged to check the opening and closing times of museums as they differ from place to place.

Allan says the free event is designed with families in mind, offering a fun and exciting activity, to showcase the history and heritage of the Kāpiti Coast and to promote some of the local businesses that have donated prizes. Kāpiti Coast District Council has provided support and sponsorship.

■ For more information and prize draw terms and conditions, visit [www.kapititheritage.org.nz](http://www.kapititheritage.org.nz).

## Tim Costley MP for Ōtaki

Our offices in Levin and Paraparaumu are up and running. Details below.

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### Paraparaumu Office

Corner of Te Roto Drive and Kapiti Road

Phone: 021 851 206

[kapiti@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:kapiti@parliament.govt.nz)

Opening Hours:

Mon: 12pm - 5pm

Tues: Closed

Wed: 10am - 3pm

Thurs: 10am - 3pm

Fri: 10am - 3pm



✉ [Tim.CostleyMP@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:Tim.CostleyMP@parliament.govt.nz)

*I look forward to meeting with you soon.*







## Your Kāpiti – where summer stays local

We might have had a windy and cold start to summer but it's not over yet!

There's no better time to get out and enjoy everything Kāpiti has to offer. With 40 kilometres of coastline, 500 hectares of parks and sports grounds, over 100 kilometres of recreational walkways, four libraries, three pools, two splashpads, and loads of events, there's plenty for you to visit, explore, and experience.

All we ask is that you follow the rules and keep safe while you're having fun. Remember to respect each other and our environment so we can all enjoy a staycation and the best holiday for all.

► For ways to explore and experience Kāpiti this summer check out [kapitiummer.nz](http://kapitiummer.nz)



### Experience our events

Activating our public places and open spaces and helping major events to deliver a thriving, vibrant and diverse economy is an enjoyable part of our mahi. From Council-run to Council-supported, there's a number of events to help you commemorate, be entertained, and achieve your athletic greatness this summer.

- 16-20 January – Festival of Pots and Garden Art, Ōtaki
- 6 February – Waitangi ki Taumanuka, Old Children's Health Camp, Ōtaki
- 22 February – Movies in the Park, Waikanae Park
- 23 February – Kāpiti Women's Triathlon, Paraparaumu Beach
- 8 March – XTERRA Wellington Triathlon Festival
- 8/9 March – Ōtaki Kite Festival
- 22 March – Kāpiti Classic
- March 26-30 – Māoriland Film Festival

► For more details on these events check out [kapitiummer.nz](http://kapitiummer.nz)



### Pool parties, sessions and lessons

With holiday regulars like SPLASH! running between 1-4.30pm each day at all our pools, and extra events for Waikanae and Ōtaki – our aquatic centres really come to life in summer.

On Saturday 25 January, we have two sessions planned for Waikanae Pool – our Inflatable Family Fun Day will run from 10am-3pm, before reopening again for the 8-14-year-olds and our SoundSplash Summer Dance Party from 4-7pm. This crowd favourite includes DJs, slide entry, dunk tanks, inflatables, and a photo booth for \$6.50. There'll also be food trucks on site.

Ōtaki Pool's free Whānau Fun Day on 1 February from 12-4pm will be followed the next day by a back-to-school water fight.

We also have school holiday intensive swimming lessons for children at our Ōtaki and Waikanae Pools. And don't forget our splashpads in Haruātai Park Ōtaki and Marine Garden Reserve in Raumati Beach.

► Check out [kapiticoastaquatics.co.nz](http://kapiticoastaquatics.co.nz) to see what's on at your local pool



### Our libraries have the holidays covered!

Our summer reading programme, Flight Path, encourages 5-13 year-olds to read at least 15 minutes a day with some great events to support this native bird knowledge adventure. Join us on 14 January at Haruātai Park Ōtaki, 21 January at Mazengarb Reserve, and 28 January at Ngā Manu Reserve.

There's also the Hell Reading Challenge, where you need to borrow and read seven books to clip your pizza wheel to earn a free 333 Hell pizza.

The kids can beat the boredom with our pop up storytime and play trailer events – 16 January at Waikanae Park, 23 January at the Tasman Road Playground, and 30 January at Kaitawa Reserve.

Or they might like our mini movie challenge, where they'll team up with others to create a two minute movie and attend their own film festival – 22 January at Campbell Park Paekākāriki, and 29 January Marine Gardens, Raumati.

► Find out more at [kapitiummer.nz](http://kapitiummer.nz)







## Carl's tractors at AP&I

Carl Lutz's tractors have been a feature of the Levin AP&I show for years.

It will be no different this year. The Ōtaki dairy farmer recently celebrated his 99th birthday, but it didn't deter him from ensuring his tractors would still be at the show.

Carl collected a huge range of tractors over the years. Many of them, including the one above Carl was driving at the 2021 show, are still in use on his farm, now run by his family. Six of the tractors are pictured at top. They are the complete range of 1000 series Ford tractors from 1965-75. They are notable for their workman-like mechanics – no fancy electronics. Many have been repainted and refurbished and will be part of the Horowhenua Vintage Machinery Club's display at the AP&I show in Levin on Wellington Anniversary Weekend.



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# HUATAU/Comment

**TE HORO OUTLOOK: MICHAEL MOORE**

## Investing in infrastructure

**I'm writing this month's column at 16,000 feet on-board Air Chathams as I return to Kāpiti following a time away in the city of sails (or sales), Tamaki Makaurau Auckland.**

Having a dependable local airline in Kāpiti is truly wonderful. The staff are super friendly and the service is second-to-none.

I have friends and former colleagues from my parliamentary days back in the 1990s, who are active in local government, serving on council and the community boards in Auckland.



While their representation is much larger, accompanied by bigger budgets, the

desire to improve their community and advocate for local issues is very much the same.

The new government wishes to remove "well-being" from council's core roles, which include purposeful infrastructure that creates happy, positive and meaningful communities. The PM and his minister said at our local government conference in Wellington recently that councils should be "doing the basics well" and the "nice-to-have" should not be something we need to focus on. No one would argue with doing the basics well, like roading and water pipes.

Our council has been heavily investing in building and upgrading infrastructure. The Ōtaki reservoir, Waikanae's water treatment plant, water and stormwater across the district, and the fire loop, are just some of the big projects that have been advanced over the past couple of years.

It's fair to say that with all the pressures and demands, our council sometimes can't respond as quickly as some would like, but planning for projects takes time and allocation of budgets. Big projects have to be advocated for in the Long-term Plan, which measures the importance and value against other competing infrastructures.

Later this year, we will see some works along the low parts of Te Horo Beach Road, which after big rainfalls are subject to substantial and dangerous surface flooding. The most serious part is the dip just past the Pukenamū corner, heading towards the beach. This area blocked access for three days after the Mangaone Stream overflowed in December 2021.

There is another section of concern along Beach Road between 69 and 99. This will need the stream to have slit and rock build-up removed by the regional council.

The year will see construction begin on Waikanae Library, Te Awa Whetū, on the site of the old library in Mahara Place. Next month, I'll provide more details about this exciting project.

Finally, I encourage locals and groups to apply for our community funds. Jump on the Waikanae Community Board's website, where you'll find information and application forms. We consider these at our regular board meetings.

I wish everyone a wonderful new year.

- Next meeting 7pm Tuesday, March 4, Reikorangi Hall, 5 Akatarawa Road.

■ Michael is chair of the Waikanae Community Board.

**PLAIN SPEAKING: IAN CARSON**

## A challenge as we venture into Horowhenua

**I like a challenge.**

Many years ago I was a cleaner in Sydney. I'd not long previously ditched a job as editor of *NZ News UK* in London. The cleaning job was, I hoped, temporary but necessary, having just had a new son arrive.

My boss was Jorge, a Latvian immigrant to Australia and known to be forthright in his comments. I told him I was returning to New Zealand, hoping to have more luck than in Australia returning to journalism.

"You won't have a show," he said. "Too many good journalists. Not enough jobs."

I take such negative comments quite personally, but they almost always motivate me, especially if I think they're wrong. It's an "I'll show you" sort of thing.

I got job offers from *The Dominion* and *The Evening Post*, taking the latter. I showed Jorge!

His negativity is similar to the doom and gloom that surrounds community newspapers. The prevailing sentiment – including in most areas of the media – seems to be that the newspaper business is in its death throes. I can't help but disagree.

Not only are we doing OK with *Ōtaki Today* (it's an income, not a cash cow), but we've stuck our head above the parapet and announced we're starting another newspaper, *The Horowhenua Star*.



Some people are like Jorge, saying it won't work – "too big a step". But having made the decision, it's now a matter of "showing them".

The *Star* and *Ōtaki Today* are a rarity – newspapers starting from scratch. Few other newspapers have emerged from nothing in the past 10 years. In fact the trend has been quite the opposite, with papers closing throughout the country, hence the idea that it's not a good business to be in.

But a good look at the mastheads that have disappeared shows some seemed to be doing alright. The decision to close was made by executives in the big cities, despite a few papers apparently having strong advertising support.

It looked like there was good revenue at

the *Horowhenua Chronicle* and the *Kāpiti News*, both of which NZME closed down in December. NZME's rationale can only be that these two papers were part of a larger group of papers that were collectively struggling.

Being a newspaper enthusiast, I hated seeing the two mastheads that served Horowhenua and Kāpiti go west. The idea of two adjoining districts having no district-wide media coverage appalled me. How else were readers going to get their news; or the council and community groups promote their events, road closures or AGMs; how were real estate agents and car dealers going to advertise their open homes and vehicles?

I had several conversations with people who saw the potential for our company, ID Media, small as it is, to step in. Wife and business partner Debbi also saw the potential.

So we've jumped in, saving jobs for former *Chronicle* staff and letterbox distributors, and providing a new newspaper for Horowhenua. Will we show them? Let's see.

- MP Tim Costley returns with his regular column next month.

■ Ian is editor of *Ōtaki Today*.

**CAM'S CORNER: CAM BUTLER**

## Let's make 2025 a great year for Ōtaki

**Tēnā koutou whānau o Ōtaki,**

Welcome to 2025. Let's make this a great year! I hope everyone has had a chance to take a break over Christmas and New Year. If you were one of the people who worked through, we appreciate that you kept things running.

**Road works are back . . .**

During January you will see the works for the wastewater, fire main and bridge restart. The wastewater work on Aotaki Street and Mill Road are going to be the most disruptive.

One has to look at the long-term benefits of these disruptive works; you can't argue with making sure everything goes away when you flush the toilet or the water supply works properly if your property is on fire.

**Old SH1 revocation works**

Waka Kotahi is moving ahead with the works to turn old State Highway 1 back into a local road. These works will be starting this year. You might have already



noticed the work at Te Horo, which is part of the revocation works. We are going to see some disruption, particularly as the works proceed through the shopping section of the old highway at Ōtaki.

The contractor is working to minimise disruption to shops, pedestrians and road users. The plan to widen the footpaths, which would have led to the whole road being dug up and lowered, has been left out of the project. However, the thinking of removing the median strip and putting cycle lanes in has not gone down well with retailers.

The Ōtaki Community Board is

working with the Ōtaki-Te Horo Business Association and KCDC to work through that knotty item.

**Moy Estate development**

No news at this stage.

**Offensive graffiti**

We have had a couple of complaints about the graffiti on the roof and fence of a Waerenga Road property opposite New World – you know the one. I have checked this with council staff and as it is on private property it is not something KCDC would deal with. However, you can report it to the police if you find it offensive.

**Next meeting**

The Ōtaki Community Board has its next meeting in March, so a while away, but please reach out to us on Facebook, email or phone.

Keep being Sunny, Ōtaki.

- Like *Ōtaki Community Board* on Facebook

■ Cam is chair of the Ōtaki Community Board

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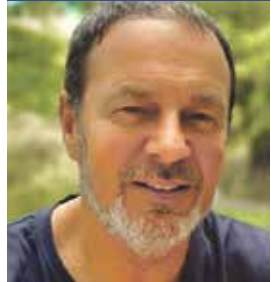
# Hope for sunshine after the black clouds of 2024

## Was 2024 a horror year?

Many have their own stories but the ones that resonate with me are about the families and older people struggling to make ends meet financially.

My dad knew a thing or two about tough times, having endured at least two arctic convoys during the Second World War. What could be tougher, for a man in his early 20s, than fearing savage cold and more than a high chance of death at any moment.

### JUST A THOUGHT



FRASER CARSON

My father, in later life, would read everything he could find on the incomparable polar explorer Ernest Shackleton, likely as a way of acknowledging extreme hardship and real endurance. In fact, he often recited a saying “worse things happen at sea” whenever someone commented on a minor calamity from everyday life.

Still, everyone’s experiences are theirs alone and comparisons can be pointless. A family living in emergency accommodation in Rotorua can rightly feel hard-done-by, but is on the pig’s back compared to, say, a Palestinian family living in Gaza.

The real issue for us humans, is how we retain some sense of hope when things seem so overwhelming as to be hopeless.

Hope inevitably springs from optimism that things will turn around, but is tough for people who can’t even see a proverbial horizon.



Image by Pixabay.com

But without optimism, there’s no hope and no future. Maybe that’s the crux of the malaise much of humanity now faces.

For those who feel they’ve missed out and are marginalised to the point where there’s nothing more to lose, the absence of hope can sometimes morph into a blanket rejection of the status quo and attraction to anything brash and different, such as populist right-wing politicians.

On the other hand, and for many others like me, it’s tempting to be dismayed, because the answer is not a rejection of everything humanity has created, such as science, democracy and the humanities. Rather it’s an understanding that, as humans, hope springs from the positive side of humanity – knowledge, invention, working together, honest communications and manaakitanga.

So, with this in mind, I think there is hope 2025 can be a positive turning point.

For example, bad governments – the leaderless variety and ones that divide people,

rather than unite – will ultimately fail, simply because people will begin to demand answers to the obvious and massive challenges that are not being addressed. Here I’m thinking especially about things like the environment and the future of work, where technology threatens to take more from low socio-economic groups, while giving more to very few.

But let’s take the challenge the Covid-19 pandemic brought to us all. It wrought havoc across the globe, claiming millions of lives and upending economies, social structures and everyday life. It has now also exposed threats from future pandemics, some that might be even more catastrophic.

Despite these challenges the pandemic highlighted the resilience and adaptability of humanity. Communities came together to support one another, and new ways of working and living emerged.

Furthermore, the rapid development and distribution of vaccines were a testament

*... bad governments – the leaderless variety and ones that divide people, rather than unite – will ultimately fail, simply because people will begin to demand answers to the obvious and massive challenges that are not being addressed.*

to the power of scientific collaboration and innovation. There’s been a distinct acceleration of advancements in healthcare technology, especially where vaccine development also holds promise for addressing other diseases, such as cancer and influenza.

The pandemic also spurred innovation in other sectors, including remote work technologies, e-commerce, and digital communication platforms. These advancements have the potential to improve productivity, reduce carbon footprints and enhance global connectivity.

As we look ahead to 2025, the lessons learned from the pandemic can serve as a foundation for building a more resilient, equitable, sustainable and compassionate society.

Of course the problem with optimism is that it seems wishful and delusional, in the face of apparent hopelessness. But, amid the challenges of any difficult times, it’s essential to recognise the power of hope and the potential for positive change. Hope is not a passive sentiment, but a catalyst for action and resilience. It is the belief that, despite the difficulties we face, we have the capacity to create a better future.

■ Fraser is founder of the community development websites [flightdec.com](http://flightdec.com), [knowthis.nz](http://knowthis.nz) and [inhub.org.nz](http://inhub.org.nz)

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# MAHI TOI/Arts

## Explore 12 of Kāpiti's most beautiful gardens

The Waikanae Lions' Garden Trail is on again, offering an annual glimpse at some of the district's most stunning gardens.

The trail is over the weekend of January 25-26, with tours from 10am-5pm each day.

It's an opportunity to enjoy a relaxing summer's day out exploring 12 beautiful gardens on the Kāpiti Coast. The 2025 line-up features a selection of gardens that demonstrate considered landscape design within smaller spaces, alongside several large gardens that will take time to explore properly.

Visit the largest kauri tree south of Taupō at garden #12. Garden #9 surprises at every turn with a meandering path that reveals thoughtful plantings and hidden gems, offering a delightful journey. And, back by popular demand is last year's show-stopper, the watery wonderland of Garden #5.

As a special bonus addition to the trail this year, tickets also get entry on the day to Ngā Manu Nature Reserve. A natural 14-hectare reserve, it preserves one of the largest remnants of coastal lowland swamp forest on the Kāpiti Coast. Learn first-hand about their restoration journey to preserve indigenous flora, including New Zealand's native mistletoe.

This year's trail is sure to delight garden lovers of all ages and provide plenty of ideas and inspiration to take home.

As a Waikanae Lions' community fundraiser, proceeds go towards supporting Life Flight Trust, Loss and Grief Centre Kāpiti, and Predator Free Waikanae.

Tickets are \$30 per person for a weekend pass, with children under 15 years free when accompanied by an adult.

Gold sponsor David Reid Homes Kāpiti is also opening its Waikanae showhome and garden (designed by Ben Hoyle) as part of the trail. It's also this year's location for the Lions ticket booth (from 10am-2pm during the weekend).

■ Tickets can be bought online or from *Harrisons Gardenworld, Peka Peka and Feilding; Palmers Garden Centres, Plimmerton and Miramar; New Zealand Sotheby's International Realty, Raumati; Twigland Gardeners World, Johnsonville; Westbury Pharmacy, Waikanae; Lions Ticket Booth, David Reid Homes showhome, 102 Ngarara Road, Waikanae. No ticket refunds. Updates on Facebook or email waikanaelions@lionsclubs.org.nz*



Rat trappers and Waikanae Lions members Alf Clear, left, and Kevin Sheppard.

Photo supplied

## Getting rid of predators

Predator Free Waikanae focuses on eliminating stoats, rats and mice, protecting native birds and restoring local biodiversity.

The grassroots initiative is a collaboration between the Waikanae Lions Club, Menz Shed Kāpiti, and community volunteers who regularly monitor and maintain traps.

It began when Alf Clear spotted a stoat on the Kāpiti expressway cycleway and wanted a couple of traps. Recognising a bigger opportunity, Kevin Sheppard had a "light bulb moment", leading to the formation of Predator Free Waikanae. This effort aligns with the national Predator Free New Zealand 2050 goal.

The community's response has resulted in the first 100 box rat-traps claimed in just two hours. With additional support and koha/donations, more rat-traps have been ordered.

■ Anyone keen to get involved can join the Waikanae Rat Pack by emailing Kevin at predatorfreewaikanae@gmail.com.

WAIKANAЕ LIONS

# Garden Trail

25-26 JAN 2025

A Waikanae Lions Project supporting Life Flight Trust, Loss & Grief Centre Kāpiti and Predator Free Waikanae

**Tickets:** [eventfinda.co.nz](http://eventfinda.co.nz)

/WaikanaeLionsGardenTrail

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## Summer under the bougainvillea

Join Wellington's popular Americana Country Music band, Harvest Moon, for an unforgettable afternoon at The Winemaker's Daughter in February.

Nestled in a charming outdoor area adorned with a stunning old pink bougainvillea, this boutique venue sets the perfect backdrop for a summer gathering. Enjoy a three-course buffet lunch, while soaking in the band's rich vocal harmonies.

Harvest Moon is a Wellington-based band that comprises multi-talented and well-known musicians Rob Reid, Garrett Evans Dave Allen, Wayne Mills Phil Hope, and Robert Antonio.

Their signature style is synonymous with a diverse collection of American music broadly within the country genre, and features covers

from such great songwriters and artists as Vince Gill, Buddy Miller, Neil Young, the Beatles, Marshall Tucker, Norah Jones, Dwight Yoakam, and Mandolin Orange.

Their music is timeless and features a dazzling array of country genre instruments including, pedal steel, mandolin, guitars, banjo, accordion, dobro to name a few. Harvest Moon is on the rise! From soulful ballads to foot-tapping tunes, Harvest Moon brings the essence of Americana to life.

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The Pretty Boys: from left, Freddy Sayer and Pierre Lange-Gerrard. Photo supplied

## Pretty Boys at Stationhouse

The Pretty Boys are the special guests performing at the Station House Social Club on February 13.

Freddy Sayer and Pierre Lange-Gerrard, The Pretty Boys, have been playing music together since meeting at primary school (after Pierre arrived from France at age 7).

Both boys were in the school band programme and various drama productions throughout their primary school days. In 2017, when the boys were both 10, they were invited by chef Ruth Pretty to busk and raise money for a drama school trip at her once famous Te Horo Friday Frolics. They were a regular act entertaining guests at Ruth's Christmas feasts until she retired and closed up shop last year.

The Pretty Boys have played to raise money

for all sorts of things at Ruth's, including another school trip, and \$3000 for the After School Music Programme in Ōtaki.

Ruth's support inspired the name of their act – The Pretty Boys.

Freddy and Pierre are also part of four-piece Ōtaki College band Powercut. It won the Manawātū regional final at the Smokefree Rockquest competition in 2023.

Both boys play various instruments, with Freddy primarily on keys and ukelele, and Pierre playing guitar. In 2025 Pierre will continue at Ōtaki College in Year 13 and Freddy is off to the NZ School of Music at Victoria University.

■ Stationhouse Social Club at Ōtaki Golf Club, \$50 for a 2-course meal and entertainment. For tickets, email [gregandanje@xtra.co.nz](mailto:gregandanje@xtra.co.nz)



Sisters in Country, from left, Jodi Vaughan and Aly Cook, with fiddler Marian Burns. Photo supplied

## Sisters in Country at Ōtaki RSA

Sisters in Country Jodi Vaughan and Aly Cook, along with guest Marian Burns, are bringing their soulful brand of country music to the Ōtaki RSA on Saturday, January 25.

Jodi is the iconic star of the 1980s TV show *That's Country*, a 2024 Benny Award winner and Hands of Fame recipient at the 2024 Gold Guitars. Aly is an award-winning songwriter, and an Aria and NZ charting recording artist. Marian joins the duo as an extraordinary fiddle player.

They promise to take their audience on a nostalgic journey through classic country tunes and original songs.

Ōtaki is one of the stops on a nationwide tour. Sisters in Country's album hit No 1 on the official New Zealand album charts in 2024, and it now features on the Air New Zealand inflight programme. They have enjoyed plenty of airplay and chart success on radio in Australia with multiply No 1 hits.

Their show offers the magic of live country music, full of rich female harmonies and some hot fiddle playing.

■ The Ōtaki RSA performance begins at 7.30pm. Book on Eventfinda, or buy tickets at the RSA. Special CD and ticketing packages are also available at [tasmanrecords.com/sisters-in-country-tickets-and-cd-deal](http://tasmanrecords.com/sisters-in-country-tickets-and-cd-deal)

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NEW COLUMN

# Treasuring the moments – to me, that is rongoā

By Joanne Hakaraia

**G**rowing up, I didn't hear the word rongoā. It was unfamiliar to me.

I didn't know what it was, but reflecting on it now, I realise that rongoā was being practised in many settings, often discreetly and seldom discussed openly.

I recall how my dad would use rongoā to treat his rugby injuries. My mum would gather the leaves and create a spit poultice, applying it to his wounds, then bandaging it and leaving it on overnight. By morning, the wound would be clean, and a new poultice would be placed to seal it. I remember the rongoā being brought into the room, and it felt very tapu.

I didn't know what tapu was back then, but it had a certain tone to it and as a kid, you knew to be silent. I asked what the plant was. My dad simply told me to "keep quiet" and ushered me out of the room. I stayed silent and observed from a distance.

I reflect on those memories while working with rongoā. I try to recall which plants were utilised, how they were applied, and for what purposes.

My great-great grandmother, Mere Ruia Hakaraia, along with her sister Heneti, were kairongoā (plant medicine women). I often consider the plants they must have gathered in Ōtaki and on Kāpiti Island. I look at the primary plants that thrive in the region and imagine what they would have used them for.

People also share their own recollections of rongoā with me, recounting how their parents utilised plants to heal ailments. The sharing is so special and healing for them as they talk about loved ones. I truly treasure those moments; to me, that is rongoā.



Maintaining that kōrero through its practical application is my way of ensuring its preservation. It keeps the thread of light alive.

This first column for Ōtaki Today is an opportunity to introduce myself, as a writer focused on rongoā.

My mother, Rosalie Hakaraia (née Hohipuha), was a real estate salesperson in Ōtaki for many years, starting her career



in the 1970s at a small office where P2 Health is now. My father, Joseph Hakaraia, was a fabric cutter and worked alongside many of his whānau in the old Roydons building.

Every month, I will explore and write about a rongoā that can be found in Ōtaki. My column is for educational purposes – not to be treated as medical advice.

■ Joanne is kaitohu (director) of The Rongoā Mauri Studio and is ACC registered for Rongoā Māori Services. See [rongoamauri.com](http://rongoamauri.com)

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Please address letters to Ōtaki Today, 13 Te Manuao Road, Ōtaki, or email [ian@idmedia.co.nz](mailto:ian@idmedia.co.nz)

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



# MAHI MĀRA/Gardening

## Basil is a queen – take care of the basics



Pinch out the tips of basil.



**B**asil is a queen! Her tolerance for anything other than perfect is low and if you dish it out she'll let you know with fungus-y foliage, black streaks, pale leaves, tough leaves, poor growth or by rushing off to seed.

All of these are easily prevented by taking care of the basics.

Lets start with warmth. For strong growth, basil needs it, so I grow it in the greenhouse. If you don't have a greenhouse and live somewhere cool, pots are a great way to bring extra warmth. Basil does well in them. Otherwise find a toasty micro climate.

Moist, well nourished, well-drained soil is where it's at, so plant your basil in your best soil. If heavy clay is your lot, either plant in pots or aerate the soil first then spread a generous dose of your lovely homemade compost plus a handful of vermicastings. Use this same recipe for dry, sandy soils.

Let the soil dry out a tad between waterings, and water the soil, not the foliage. Barely moist is best for Queen B. Poorly drained or over watered soil is public enemy number one = pale leaves, black streaks, poor growth and/or fungus-y to boot.

If you've a dry environment, then basil will be happy as planted among salads, calendula, phacelia, buckwheat, nasturtium, beetroot, dwarf beans – there's no end to basil's good mates, but not so if you've a damp, cold or low light

LEFT: Seedlings on a heatpad.  
BELOW: Summer basil going to seed.



### When you have too much basil!

Sweet and fragrant basil complements tomato-based dishes, including pizza, pasta and marinara sauce. Basil cuts through tomato's acidity and enhances its natural sweetness. Basil and parmesan cheese are often used together in pasta dishes and salads.

These leafy herbs aren't ideal for air drying due to their high moisture content. You lock in that wonderful flavour and beautiful green color by freezing the basil plants and storing them in freezer bags.

Don't store fresh basil in the fridge. Since basil is a tropical herb, it loves warm and humid environments and does not tolerate the cold.  
1. Wash and dry the basil leaves. Discard the stems. Spread them out on a baking sheet and flash freeze them. Transfer the frozen basil to freezer bags. Use as needed.

2. Make pesto. You'll need 1½ cups basil, ½ cup flat leaf parsley leaves and stalks, ½ clove garlic, ¼ cup toasted pine nuts, ¼ cup grated parmesan, ⅓ cup extra virgin olive oil, 1-2 tbsps lemon juice, salt and black pepper. Combine basil, parsley leaves and stalks, garlic, toasted pine nuts and grated parmesan in a food processor. With the motor running, slowly add extra virgin olive oil, then season to taste with lemon juice, salt and black pepper.

Homemade pesto is so versatile in the kitchen. Spread it on meat or a pizza base, stir it through pasta, add it to a sandwich with cream cheese, dollop it onto soups, or serve it as a dip on a charcuterie board.

3. Puree fresh basil leaves in olive oil with a pinch of salt for a bright green sauce to garnish summer dishes with.

garden. In this case give lots of space for good airflow and sun.

For a bushy, vigorous basil, pinch the new tips out once the seedling is 12-15cm tall. And when the plants have about eight to 10 leaves, start regularly harvesting the biggest leaves, either by nipping them off individually or snipping stem and leaves. Both these practices inspire new growth and keep your plants steadily productive (as long as all the other conditions are met)! Like all greens, the leaves are at their sweetest and juiciest in the morning.

Monthly liquid feeds make a difference. Use comfrey or seaweed or whatever herbal brew you have. A light sprinkle of grass clippings now and then as a mulch is another simple, effective booster. Although any homemade mulch is fab, helping to keep soil moisture steady and moderate changeable temperatures that can send annual herbs off to seed.

Once flowers start to appear, basil is still perfectly edible but the leaves are past their sweet prime. Pinching out the flowers won't change this – let them flower for the bees then collect the seed from plants with great flavour and good vigour.

Rather than trying to keep one plant going the entire growing season, keep fresh plants coming on steadily summer through autumn: fresh, young foliage is where it's at. I sow monthly, from October until March. In toasty soil (21C) with no weeds about, you can direct sow. Germination is fast when its warm. The first little round leaves will unfurl in about a week.

■ *Kath 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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# PAKIHI/Business

## Reflect on what worked last year, and what didn't

**As the new year begins, business owners often reflect on what worked last year – and what didn't? And most importantly, where do you want your business to go in 2025?**

Reflection and planning aren't just annual rituals – they're critical tools for driving growth and staying competitive. By understanding where you've been and clearly defining where you want to go, you can create a roadmap that ensures 2025 is a year of progress, success and fulfillment.

Here are some steps to set the stage for a successful 2025 – and the specific benefits you'll enjoy when you do succeed.

### Step 1: Reflect on 2024

Reflection is a powerful exercise that often reveals insights you might otherwise miss. Before you get caught up in resolutions or goal-setting, take a moment to assess the year gone by. Ask yourself these key questions:

- What went well? Celebrate your wins – big and small. Recognising your successes not only boosts morale but also helps you replicate effective strategies in the future.
- What didn't go as planned? Challenges and setbacks are part of every business journey. Understanding what didn't work allows you to refine your processes and avoid repeating mistakes,

setting you up for smoother operations next year.

- What surprised you? Reflecting on unexpected events helps you anticipate similar scenarios in the future, making your business more resilient to change.
- Did you achieve your goals? Evaluating your performance against key metrics provides clarity on where to focus your efforts next year, ensuring steady progress toward long-term objectives.

When you take the time to reflect, you gain a clearer understanding of your business, which boosts confidence and informs better decision-making.

### Step 2: Chart a vision for 2025

Once you've reflected, it's time to look forward. Start with the big picture:

- What's possible for your business in 2025? Dreaming big allows you to identify growth opportunities and set ambitious yet

### YOUR BUSINESS



CHRIS WHELAN

attainable goals. A clear vision gives your team a shared purpose, which increases engagement and productivity.

- What's the one thing that will make the biggest difference? Focusing on a key priority ensures that your efforts deliver maximum impact, whether it's increasing profitability, expanding your market, or enhancing customer experience.
- What's your first 90-day plan? A strong start builds momentum and sets a positive tone for the year, helping you hit milestones early and stay on track.

By planning intentionally, you set yourself up for a year of measurable progress and sustained growth.

### Step 3: Commit to small, consistent improvements

You don't need to overhaul everything at once to see meaningful change. Imagine the impact of making just one improvement each week for the next 48 weeks. These small, consistent actions will accumulate into significant results – greater efficiency, higher profits, and a more cohesive team.

When you focus on incremental growth, you create a culture of continuous improvement, which keeps your business agile and competitive.

### Step 4: Use the break strategically

While the holiday season is a time to rest and recharge, it can also be an opportunity to refocus:

- Step back and gain perspective. Taking a break from day-to-day operations allows you to see the bigger picture, which helps you refine your long-term goals and align your strategies.
- Learn and grow. Reading, attending workshops, or exploring new ideas equips you with fresh insights and skills that can transform your business.
- Engage your team. Sharing your reflections and vision fosters alignment and buy-in, ensuring everyone is motivated and ready to hit the ground running in 2025.
- Prepare for Q1. Mapping out your first-quarter priorities ensures a productive start to the year, reducing stress and setting the stage for success. Strategic use of the holiday break not only recharges your energy but also provides clarity and direction, giving you a competitive edge when the new year begins.

### The bottom line

If you take the time to reflect on 2024, plan intentionally for 2025, and commit to consistent improvements, you'll reap significant benefits: clearer goals, better strategies, a more motivated team, and measurable growth. These actions create a solid foundation for long-term success, helping you achieve more with less stress.

What will this year hold for your business? That's up to you. But with a clear vision, intentional action, and a commitment to growth, the possibilities are limitless.

■ If you're looking to improve your business's performance, contact us at the Centre of Business Excellence ([chris@wcbe.co.nz](mailto:chris@wcbe.co.nz) or 022 2332 669). Let's work together to unlock your business's full potential. To speak to Chris, book a Discovery Call at <https://calendly.com/chris-sns/complimentary-clarity-planning-session>

## Dealing with unforeseen hardship

**Christmas and the summer months are an expensive time of year – buying presents, keeping kids entertained, going away over the holidays.**

The budget can be stretched or exceeded very quickly. What can you do if you are experiencing "unforeseen hardship" and really struggling financially?

The *New Zealand Herald* recently reported that the number of New Zealanders currently behind on their mortgage payments had increased 10 percent compared to the same time last year. Consumer arrears (credit cards, personal loans, etc) are also up from the same time last year. Combined, about 461,000 people are behind on payments.

Cases of financial hardship have also increased 20 percent compared to the same time last year, with the majority of people who have withdrawn their KiwiSavers on hardship grounds reporting that this is because of mortgage payment difficulties.

The Credit Contracts and Consumer Finance Act 2003 (CCCFA) governs all credit contracts and consumer credit contracts. This includes mortgages, personal loans, credit cards, hire purchase agreements, and Buy Now Pay Later services such as Afterpay – when these are for personal, domestic, or household purposes (not for a business).

The act's broadest purpose is to protect consumers, and it requires lenders to adhere to certain responsibilities. One of these responsibilities is to consider changes to consumer credit contracts if the borrower is experiencing unforeseen hardship.

Unforeseen hardship is defined in the CCCFA as someone being reasonably unable to meet their obligations because of illness, injury,

### MATTERS OF LAW



BROOKE MCGOWAN

loss of employment, end of a relationship or other reasonable cause. The person must also reasonably expect that if the contract were changed, they would then be able to meet their obligations.

When making a hardship application, you can ask to either:

- extend the contract term by reducing the amount of each payment – for example, making interest-only payments on a mortgage
- postpone payments for a certain time period – a "payments holiday"
- some combination of the above two options.

Every financial institution, lender, and bank has its own specific process and requirements for hardship applications. If you think you're experiencing unforeseen hardship and might need to make an application on grounds of unforeseen hardship, you should contact the lender and find out what that process is and what exactly is required.

It could also be worth getting some independent financial advice on your exact situation. One option is the organisation MoneyTalks, which provides a free and confidential financial mentoring service, funded by the Ministry of Social Development.

Be sure to remember that there's no inherent shame in experiencing financial hardship. Many, many other people have been there or are in a similar situation. It's important to get on top of things before they get really bad and start to adversely affect your health, your family's health, your relationships, or anything else in your life.

■ Brooke works mostly in the Levin office of Wakefields Lawyers, and occasionally at Ōtaki and Foxton.

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**BUSINESS PROFILE**

*This series of profiles on local business people is supported by Land Matters and Pritchard Civil*



Mal Bird, left, with Starfish factory manager Son Tien (Tony), and Starfish owner Wayne Pidduck.

Photo Ōtaki Today

# Mal and mates reel in the goods for foodbank

**Construction project manager Mal Bird is proof that business and compassion can be powerful companions.**

Mal has used his business and Rotary Club contacts to set up Fish For Good, a non-profit organisation that donates fish – and other high-protein goods – to charities and individuals throughout Kāpiti. One of the happy recipients is the Ōtaki foodbank.

The donations are made possible through business sponsorships Mal has nurtured – money from sponsors pays for the food. On one occasion recently, Mal contacted the Pritchards in Ōtaki, who own Pritchard Civil and Land Matters.

Always keen to support local initiatives, Sam

and John (JP) Pritchard suggested the Ōtaki foodbank could do with a helping hand. The result is that the foodbank now receives 20-30 kilograms of frozen fish every month.

Fish For Good started in April last year when Mal was organising the national spearfishing competition off the Kāpiti coast. He thought the large amount of fish caught could be sold, with the money going to a good cause.

However, the weather made it difficult to organise sales to the public. Meantime the Paraparamu foodbank contacted Mal and asked for some fish because it had only enough funds to offer black beans in food parcels as protein.

“We got a sponsor to pay for the filleting, which allowed us to donate 750 meals of fish,”

Mal says. “Then I had a chat to Wayne Pidduck at [fishmonger] Starfish, who said he would donate a tonne of fish to get the project up and running, if I would go out and get sponsors. Wayne’s a massive man of generosity.”

So Mal set about approaching businesses, with many now donating \$100 a month. He has also established a strong relationship with Pak N Save after buying 1000 cans of spaghetti and baked beans for charities.

That led to Pak N Save donating 6500 eggs. At Christmas time, they joined forces to give away 1000 bags of groceries to pensioners outside Pak N Save. The bags included some of the best fish around, including orange roughly from Starfish. The hand-out took only two hours.

Always wanting to build on what is proving hugely successful – and beneficial for many vulnerable people in the community – Mal is looking at several more associated projects.

As if he hasn’t got enough to organise already, Mal is planning a mini 10-hole golf course at Mazengard Park. He hopes to have it operating this year.

“If that all works out, after three years we should have about a million dollars we will have given to the community. It’s a way of being able to have regular funds available to donate.”

Asked about how he fits work around his voluntary activities, Mal says he’s still working on that, but he’s driven by the philosophy that “if you’re kind, good things happen”.



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# HĪTŌRIA/History

## Bandoliers with a B in their bonnet

**D**uring the three days of Wellington Anniversary Weekend of January 18-20, the Discover Kāpiti Heritage Group is hosting a clue hunt.

A clue is being left at 10 Kāpiti museums located in Ōtaki, Te Horo, Waikanae, Otaihanga, Paraparaumu, Raumati and Paekākāriki. The answer to each clue can be found on site –

**DAVID LEDSON**



solving just one clue, or all 10, is the participant's choice. Correct answers go into the draw for one of four prize packs.

To encourage people – especially families – to participate, this invitation wraps its words around a story that will hopefully convey the joy associated

with discovery, and the sense of adventure that can transform a simple task into a thrilling adventure. These are feelings that people have said they associate with the Clue Hunt.

In search of a clue with which to start the story, I found in the museum's collection store a 6cm-high silver "B", with a disc attached to its central point. I was able to easily determine

that it was a badge worn on the caps of Ōtaki's first girls' marching team.

Marching, as a competitive sport for girls and women, was invented in New Zealand. It became popular from the late 1920s, and was especially encouraged during the 1930s Depression and the Second World War, for fitness and morale reasons.

The Ōtaki team was established in 1947. In pursuit of creativity, it changed from The Ōtaki Band Marching Team to a more inspirational name, the Bandoliers. (The team might have been unaware that the name is a feminine



The Bandoliers, followed by the junior team the Tuis, in Main Street, Ōtaki, in 1948. The feathers in the caps were soon to be replaced by the silver "B".  
Photo Ōtaki Heritage

derivative of a French word for highwayman or bandit, but it did measure up well against the Sargettes, Glennettes, Weldonettes, Kilties and Brockettes!)

I was intrigued by the central disc in the badge, eventually realising it was a stylised representation of a lyre; a stringed musical instrument with two arms and a crossbar, and strings running from a tailpiece on the bottom of the instrument to the crossbar.

There is a remarkably close similarity between its design (at right) and that of the logo of the Steinway & Sons Piano Company, based



on "S & S". This company was established in New York in 1853, and is still one of the world's leading piano makers. It has connections to many famous artists, including John Lennon, who finished composing his popular song *Imagine* on a Steinway upright piano.

The Bandoliers disbanded in 1954 and over the seven years of their existence many people were involved in and with the team, including the team's first instructor.

Captain Harry Norman Fearnley was 70 when he reluctantly took on the job. He had served with the British Army in the First World War, including as a sergeant with the Royal Fusiliers and as a captain (acting major) in the Tanks Corps, which was formed in July 1917.

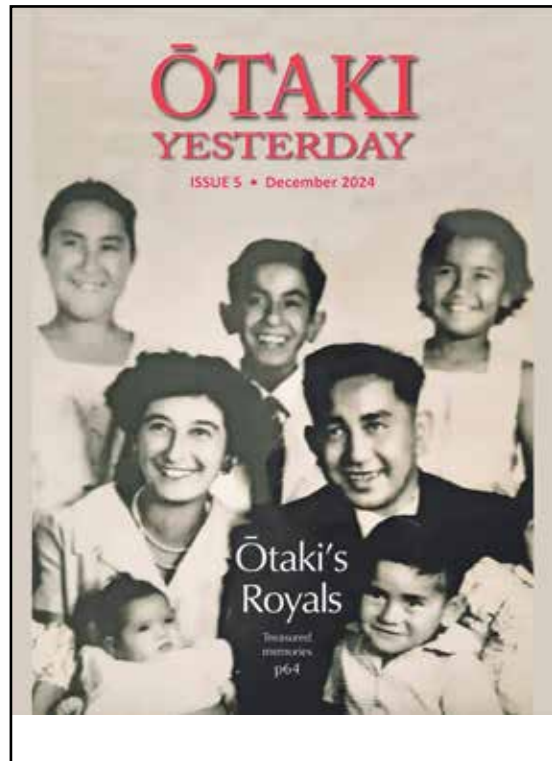
He was aged about 37 when the war started. After it was over the Ōtaki Mail in 1943 (in the

middle of the Second World War) recorded of a speech he made: "When the last war was over he said "Thank God" and came to New Zealand to try and forget all about it." However, duty called him once more in the Second World War. He served as the officer commanding the Ōtaki Battalion Home Guard until late 1943.

In 1952, his health, which had clearly been deteriorating for some years, forced him to end his duties with the Bandoliers.

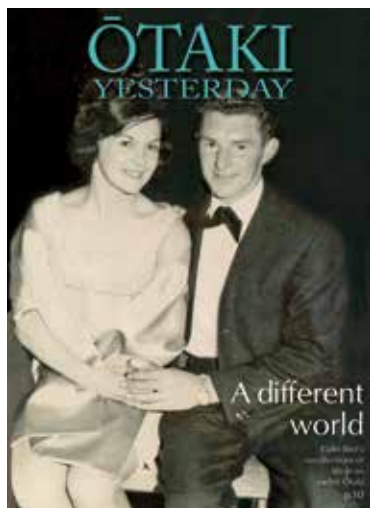
Having reached the word limit the editor allows me, these stories and the adventure enabled by the clue of the badge, also come to an end. Just remember, though, if you want to have an inquisitorial adventure during Wellington Anniversary Weekend, pursue the clues in the Clue Hunt.

■ For details see [otakiheritage.org.nz/news](http://otakiheritage.org.nz/news)



The 2024 issue of *Ōtaki Yesterday*, featuring more stories about the people and places of old Ōtaki, is another historical publication produced by Ōtaki's ID Media. To buy a copy as a special gift, or just for yourself, contact Debbi [debbi@idmedia.co.nz](mailto:debbi@idmedia.co.nz) or text **027 285 4720**.

Copies (including previous issues as below) \$25 each.





# OLD SCHOOL PHOTOS: ŌTAKI SCHOOL 1966

Compiled by Debbi Carson



## ŌTAKI SCHOOL 1966 STD 4

**Back row from left:** Wayne Williams, Henare Waaka, unknown, unknown, Terama (Patrick) Winterburn, unknown.  
**Row 3:** Unknown, Robert Henderson, David Wilton, unknown, Mike Maunga, unknown, Puke Te Ao, Graeme Peter, unknown.  
**Row 2:** Unknown, Paul Hawea, unknown, unknown, Terry Hart, unknown, unknown, unknown, Stephen Mathie.  
**Front row:** Carol Edwards, unknown, Louise Connor, Sheila Salmon, unknown, Vicki Cowie, Margaret Marchant, unknown. Teacher Mr Stevens.

Names courtesy of Debbi Carson



## ŌTAKI COLLEGE 1986 FORM 4RB

We published the above photo last month without knowing any of the names. Natalia Gwiazdzinski was able to help – thank you, Natalia.

**Back row from left:** Peter Moore, Hendrix Maru, Craig Richardson, Ollie Ruahine, Greg Auckram, Gary Hoberg, Paul Christensen, Mark Royal and David Green.

**Middle row:** Anton Peach, Brendon King, Ross Thomas, Kiri Parata, Natalia Gwiazdzinski, Tania Ropata, Dion Julian, Robert Bevan, Warren Allen.

**Front row:** Debra Lithgow, Julie Harper, Melanie Hawea, Selina Thompson, teacher Ray Baker, Wendy McGhie, Lilene Davies, Sharon Larsen and Linda Hakaraia.

## GOT 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, including names and other information if you can. Contact [debbi@idmedia.co.nz](mailto:debbi@idmedia.co.nz) with additions or corrections to captions.

KĀPITI COAST HERITAGE

# CLUE HUNT



18-20 JANUARY 2025

WELLINGTON ANNIVERSARY WEEKEND, 10AM - 2PM

4 EPIC PRIZE PACKS TO BE WON!\*

Pick up your clue hunt entry form at the first museum you visit.

10 MUSEUMS | 10 CLUES  
 FIND AN ANSWER TO EACH  
 CLUE AT EACH MUSEUM

Each correct clue answer gets one entry into the prize draw. Find the answers to all 10 clues to get 10 chances to win.

\*Please visit [www.kapitiheritage.org.nz](http://www.kapitiheritage.org.nz) for prize draw terms & conditions.



## FREE EVENT

PARTICIPATING MUSEUMS:

- ŌTAKI HERITAGE MUSEUM
- FRIENDS OF THE ŌTAKI ROTUNDA
- THE KILNS AT TE HORO
- KĀPITI COAST MUSEUM
- TOI MAHARA ART GALLERY
- SOUTHWARD CAR MUSEUM
- KĀPITI AVIATION MUSEUM
- KĀPITI US MARINES TRUST
- WELLINGTON TRAMWAY MUSEUM
- PAEKĀKĀRIKI STATION MUSEUM

[www.kapitiheritage.org.nz](http://www.kapitiheritage.org.nz)

Find us on [discoverkapitiheritagegroup](https://www.facebook.com/discoverkapitiheritagegroup)

## EPIC PRIZE PACKS

### PRIZE PACK 1

TOTAL VALUE \$890

- Coastlands Aquatic Centre - Annual Family Pass
- New World Paraparaumu - \$100 VOUCHER
- Relish Café - \$100 VOUCHER
- Orinoco - \$50 VOUCHER
- Kāpiti Chocolate Factory - BOX OF ASSORTED TREATS

### PRIZE PACK 2

TOTAL VALUE \$757

- El Rancho - 2 NIGHT FAMILY WEEKEND ESCAPE
- New World Ōtaki - \$100 VOUCHER
- Watson's Garden Ltd - \$100 VOUCHER
- Nga Manu Nature Reserve - KIWI NIGHT ENCOUNTER
- Tuk Tuk Thai Waimea - \$50 VOUCHER
- Southward Car Museum - FAMILY PASS

### PRIZE PACK 3

TOTAL VALUE \$670

- Woodman Automotive - \$250 VOUCHER
- Wellington Tramways - \$120 VOUCHER
- Waikanae Unichem Pharmacy - \$100 VOUCHER
- Woolworths Waikanae - \$100 VOUCHER
- Tuk Tuk Thai Waimea - \$50 VOUCHER
- NZ Native Oils - \$50 VOUCHER

### PRIZE PACK 4

TOTAL VALUE \$625

- Kāpiti Aero Club - 30 MINUTE FLIGHT AROUND KĀPITI
- Denise Walker Dance Academy - TERM OF DANCE LESSONS
- McAndrews Menswear - \$100 VOUCHER
- New World Waikanae - \$100 VOUCHER
- BE U - \$50 VOUCHER
- Harrison's Garden World - \$50 VOUCHER





Green Queen Jocelyn Walker



Red Queen Carla Lutz



Blue Queen Debbie Taratoa



Gold Queen Kaye Arcus

# Queen Carnivals raised funds

Queen Carnivals were fundraising extravaganzas, popular in New Zealand and Australia throughout the first half of the 1900s.

An article in the 2024 issue of *Ōtaki Yesterday* said public participation and motivation was boosted by dividing a town or district into teams that competed against each other to raise the most money. The prize was the mock coronation of a team's queen candidate at a lavish ceremony, usually in the town hall.

From 1915 onwards, queen carnivals were the rage as patriotic fundraisers. Wartime charity queen carnivals were a form of public drama that referenced tradition, patriotism and loyalty to empire, but also allowed for merriment, ridiculing of authority and challenges to social norms.

The pavilion at Ōtaki Beach was built with funds raised from a queen carnival in 1936. It opened on November 26, 1938.

The opening was part of a king carnival that began at the railway station. It was led by a troupe of horses and included the Ōtaki Brass Band. They marched through town and along Tasman Road to the pavilion.

In 1927 the Catholic Queen Carnival raised more than £1100 for the church. The "Māori Queen", Josephine Tereturu, was crowned Carnival Queen for raising the most funds.

In 1970, a queen carnival was organised to raise funds for Ōtaki's first public swimming pool, at Haruātai Park. Previously, the uncovered pool at Ōtaki College was open to the public during the summer months. A queen carnival "Swimalong" was organised by the Ōtaki Swimming Baths Promotion Committee, specially formed to coordinate fundraising activities. It was chaired by local pharmacist Russell Heney.

At the core of the carnival were the carnival queens, who were supported by individuals and Ōtaki service organisations such as Jaycees and Rotary. In June 1970, four were selected by public vote at a ceremony in the Memorial Hall. Such was the enthusiasm for the carnival that 300 people attended.

The four queens chosen by public vote were (photos above) Kaye Arcus, Carla Lutz, Debbie Taratoa, and Jocelyn Walker.

By the end of the six-week series of events, the queen carnival committees had raised \$2000 more than their original target for the new swimming pool. It was hailed as one of the most successful fundraising ventures ever attempted in the district.

Read more in the latest *Ōtaki Yesterday* (details page 18).



## Op shop mystery

The gorgeous picture above was picked up at Ōtaki's Arohanui Hospice shop by op shopper Jo Wypych. It's destined for her son's private war museum, but she would love to be able to name the young soldier depicted. She would especially like to know if he was an Ōtaki local. Jo posted it on Facebook and comments were that he was a sergeant in the First World War. Do you know who he was? The photo is in a beautiful wooden frame, not shown here.

Any ideas, please email [debby@idmedia.co.nz](mailto:debby@idmedia.co.nz)

**MĀORILAND FILM FESTIVAL**  
NATIVE PEOPLES - GLOBAL FILMS

**ŌTAKI**  
26-30 MARCH  
2025

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Book at [www.ticket.co.nz](http://www.ticket.co.nz) or 0509 Ticket  
Or visit the Māoriland Hub 68 Main Street, Ōtaki

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FILMMAKER TALKS

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PROGRAM LIVE FEBRUARY 2025

@MAORILANDFILM

**Festival of Pots & Garden Art 2025**

January 16 - 20th 10am - 4pm\*  
\*with a late night on Friday until 8pm





[www.otakipotteryclub.org](http://www.otakipotteryclub.org)

**Anam Cara Gardens 150 Rangioru Rd Otaki**

## Join Nadia Lim for special GrowthClub event

Advertisement

CELEBRITY CHEF and entrepreneur Nadia Lim is making a presentation at a very special GrowthClub event on the 14th of February in Whanganui.

You are invited to the Wellington Centre of Business Excellence event, with a fee of just \$99 +GST. Book your seats ASAP as tickets are limited, by emailing [info@wcbe.co.nz](mailto:info@wcbe.co.nz).

If you plan to bring your teams/partner please let us know in your email. We are expecting a significant response, because we know the value this GrowthClub is bringing. Yes, it is a Full Day. Yes, you WILL get huge value from investing the time ON your business. Yes, you WILL be stretched and Yes, you WILL have some FUN as well!

**Friday 14th February 2025**  
**Wanganui Room at the Whanganui Racecourse**  
**19A Purnell Street, Whanganui**

- 9:30am: Morning Tea (plus a meet & greet with Nadia Lim), for a 10am start.
- 10-10:30am – Welcome, Introductions & Wins
- 10:30am-noon – Nadia Lim Presentation and Questions  
*Nadia is a celebrity chef, entrepreneur, bestselling author, media and television personality, farmer and a mum to three boys! Nadia and her husband, Carlos, run the historic Royalburn Station in Arrowtown. Their vision is to lead the way in regenerative and ethical farming by creating more sustainable and circular solutions.*

- Noon-1:00pm Lunch
  - 1:00-1:20pm Isabella Jansen "Keep Showing Up!"  
Isabella is a business coach with the Trusted Advisor Network, NZ's largest business coaching company.
  - 1:30-2:00pm Mel & Jared Kenyon "Business with Heart!"  
Jared and Mel own and run Lee Builders. They have a special gift for growing business
  - 2:00 - 2:30pm Ed Nicol & Andrew McKnight "The Property Academy" update via Zoom
  - 2:45 - 3:15pm Mary Cameron & Bryce Robb "How to buy a business with no money down"
  - 3:15 - 4:00pm - Mark Daniels "Why write a plan" and write your plan now!
- For more email [info@wcbe.co.nz](mailto:info@wcbe.co.nz)



# HAUORA/Health

## Methanol, or a mass psychogenic illness?

**On the evening of Saturday, December 14, 2024, seven guests at the Warwick Hotel in Fiji fell ill with “nausea, vomiting, and neurological symptoms” shortly after drinking pina coladas at the bar.**

According to media reports, they were admitted to hospital in a “critical condition” with suspected methanol poisoning.

Just weeks before, six tourists died from methanol poisoning after drinking shots at a Laos backpackers’ hostel.

However, the Fijian Warwick Hotel guests fell ill almost immediately after consuming their drinks, whereas the symptoms of methanol poisoning are typically delayed many hours. And both hospital toxicology reports and testing of the alcohol and the other pina colada ingredients served at the bar, found no evidence of methanol, or illicit substances.

After excluding chemical toxins and infection as possible causes, there is another possibility that needs to be considered, and that is mass psychogenic illness (MPI) – a disorder with many alternate names that include mass sociogenic illness, and (with pejorative implications and historical baggage) epidemic hysteria, and mass hysteria.

Mass psychogenic illness is the sudden and rapid spread of illness symptoms through a group of people who believe they have been

made ill by some organic cause, though no organic cause can be found. In keeping with modern-day fears and anxieties, often people perceive they have been poisoned by some environmental toxin, and there is normally an environmental trigger, like a strange smell, or a rumour of exposure to a poison.

Following the media coverage of the Laos methanol poisonings, and subsequent travel advisories, it is understandable that tourists would be alert to methanol poisoning, and

### HEALTH SCIENCE



DR STEVE HUMPHRIES

consequently susceptible to believing their drinks might be contaminated.

The Fiji “suspected poisonings” also had other characteristic features of mass psychogenic illness: it occurred in an isolated distinct group of people (other people drinking the popular pina coladas at the bar on the same night were fine), and the transient symptoms were ultimately relatively benign with rapid recovery (all patients were discharged from hospital

within days).

Mass psychogenic illness symptoms are wide ranging and include headache, dizziness, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea, watery eyes, impaired vision, rash, sore throat, chest pain, convulsions and loss of consciousness.

The illness is not faking or malingering. The symptoms are real; the headaches are real, the nausea is real, and, of course, the vomiting is real. Can perceptions and beliefs really invoke



such dramatic outcomes? Well, if performance anxiety “stage fright” can make people vomit, imagine what the conviction that you have been exposed to a deadly toxin, and are about to die, might be able to do.

The media can be reluctant to cover mass psychogenic illnesses for a number of reasons. Firstly, by the time organic causes have been eliminated, and mass psychogenic illness becomes a plausible explanation, the headline story might have already passed. Journalists might also be hesitant to delve into all the psychological complexities of mass psychogenic illness, including contentious debates over its definition, mechanisms, and classification.

Most importantly, psychogenic mass illness is defined by exclusion – the inability to find an organic cause – so there can always be the nagging doubt that with a more thorough investigation, and more testing, perhaps some elusive organic cause could be discovered.

Journalists are reluctant to claim people are suffering from a psychological (functional)

disorder while there remains any possibility they were “simply” poisoned. After all, people don’t like to think, or be told, they might in some way have thought themselves into being ill.

Ultimately, determining whether people are suffering from mass psychogenic illness is based on the balance of probabilities; while trying to avoid the harmful mistake of missing an organic cause, or wrongly thinking that there is one. Appropriate treatment requires accurate diagnosis. Mass psychogenic illness is a social phenomenon, and, with the internet and social media, it can now spread more easily and has the potential to become more common. For example, in 2021 neurologists began seeing people with unusual involuntary vocalisations and movements (tics) that were suggestive of Tourette’s syndrome, but which were distinctly different.

Ultimately, it was determined that these tics were related to people watching viral videos of popular influencers, and other people, portraying Tourette-like behaviour on social media. These anxiety and stress related “TikTok tics” were real, and the suffering was real – social media can invoke real illness.

Functional disorders, which have no discernible organic cause, are a reminder that the causes of ill health can be a complex mix of biological, psychological, and social factors.

■ 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.

**8-9 March  
2025**

Organised by  
**Ōtaki Promotions Group**

With support from  
**Kāpiti Coast District Council**  
Mā Hui Whakamuri, Ka Tiro Whakamua

**MAURI ORA CLINIC**  
51 MAIN STREET, ŌTAKI  
OPENING HOURS

**RATONGA WHAKAWHĀNAU**  
MONDAY- FRIDAY 9AM - 3PM

---

**BLOOD PRESSURE CLINIC**  
MONDAY 10:00AM - 12:00PM

---

**VACCINATION CLINIC**  
TUESDAY 1:30PM - 4:30PM  
THURSDAY 1:30PM - 4:30PM  
CHILDHOOD IMMUNISATION FRIDAY 9.30AM - 1.30PM  
ANY VACCINE

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**TAMARIKI ORA**  
WEDNESDAY 9AM-3PM  
BY APPOINTMENT

TE PUNA ORANGA O ŌTAKI



## Te Tiriti book in every high school

Every high school in New Zealand will receive a copy of *Understanding Te Tiriti*, a book explaining the Treaty of Waitangi, thanks to a generous donation by an anonymous Auckland Pākehā couple. More than 600 copies will go to help students learn about New Zealand's founding document. The book aims to provide a clear and factual guide to the Treaty and its significance. The couple was inspired after hearing the book's author, Roimata Smail, speak in 2024. The first school to receive copies, said students were finding the book valuable. One student observed the differences between the Māori and English versions, and how these affect understanding of sovereignty and land rights.



## HERE'S A RIDDLE OR FOUR FOR YOU?

1. What has one head, one foot and four legs?
  2. Did you hear the joke about the roof?
  3. How many letters are in The Alphabet?
  4. How can you spell cold with two letters?
- See answers below.

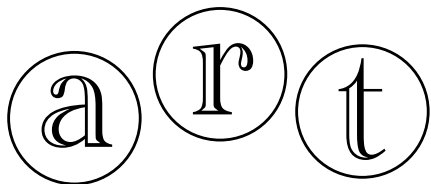
## Fart tax for Danish farmers

Starting in 2030, Denmark will become the first country to tax farmers for their animals' burps and farts. These emissions, especially from cows, pigs, and sheep, release methane, a gas that contributes to global warming. Farmers will pay around \$60 for every tonne of methane their animals produce under this new 'flatulence tax'. This decision, was made after long discussions between politicians, farmers, unions, and environmental groups. Denmark hopes the tax will help reduce pollution from farming, which is a major source of the country's greenhouse gas emissions.



## Goldie sells for \$3.75m

A painting of Māori elder Wharekauri Tahuna, by NZ artist Charles Frederick Goldie has sold for a record-breaking \$3.75 million. The portrait, titled *Thoughts of a Tohunga*, has become the most valuable Māori portrait and the first New Zealand painting to surpass \$3 million. Goldie painted the work in 1938, just nine years before his death. Wharekauri Tahuna, a Ngāti Manawa priest, was one of the last tattooed men of his generation. It was first displayed in Paris in 1939, showcasing Tahuna's intricate facial moko and a large greenstone tiki. Experts consider the painting one of Goldie's masterpieces, highlighting his unmatched skill in portraying Māori elders.



## SEASHELL WIND CHIME holiday project

For January's **SUMMER** project you have to go to the **beach** to collect as many **shells** as you can to make this gorgeous shell wind chime. You might need an **OLDIE OR TWO** to help along the way! Find a piece of **DRIFTWOOD** to hang your chimes from. You'll also need **STRING, SCISSORS, MASKING TAPE AND A POWER DRILL** - this is where the olds come in handy! First, you want to make sure **your shells are clean**. Give them a good wash. When they are dry, lay the shells in the order you want them to hang, with larger shells at the bottom. Next, **DRILL HOLES** in the top all the shells you are using. Put masking tape over the spot you are drilling first helps. Also, **WEAR A MASK**.



Thread your string through the top shell, leaving a length to tie to your driftwood. Make a knot or three to hold the shell in place. Continue threading the shells on, repeating the knots until completed. Attach the strings to your driftwood, and hang somewhere where the wind can blow through them. Enjoy your chimes.

## Looking for an activity over the last weeks of your summer holidays?

Check out KCDC library teams' free events.

- FLIGHT PATH | A SUMMER READING CHALLENGE ADVENTURE**
- January 21, 10.30am-12noon Mazengarb Reserve, Paraparaumu
  - January 28, 10.30am-12noon Ngā Manu Nature Reserve

- POP-UP STORYTIME AND WAKA KORI PLAY TRAILER**
- January 21, 10.30am-12noon Mazengarb Reserve, Paraparaumu
  - January 23, 10.30-11.30am Tasman Road Reserve, Ōtaki
  - January 28, 10.30am-12noon Ngā Manu Nature Reserve

- MINI MOVIE CHALLENGE**
- January 22, 10.30am-12noon Campbell Park, Paekākāriki
  - January 29, 10.30am-12noon Marine Gardens, Raumati
- find out more at [kapitiummer.nz](http://kapitiummer.nz)



**RIDDLE ANSWERS**

1. A Bed  
2. Never mind, it's over your head!  
3. There are 11 letters in The Alphabet.  
4. IC (icy)

## WORDMAKER

Can you make 41 words from

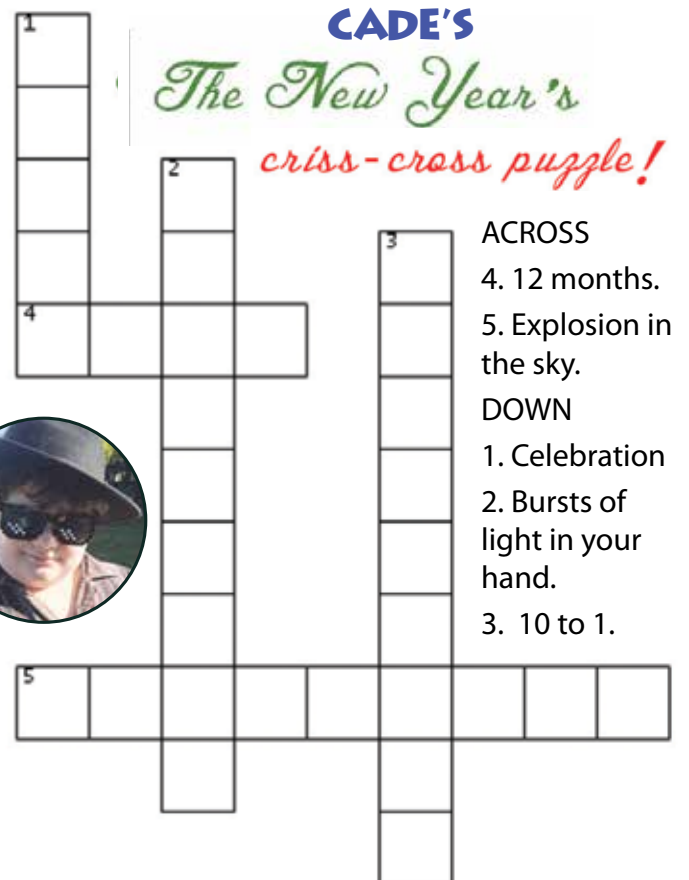


Have you been swimming this summer? Our beach is so good to swim at!



## CADE'S

*The New Year's* criss-cross puzzle!

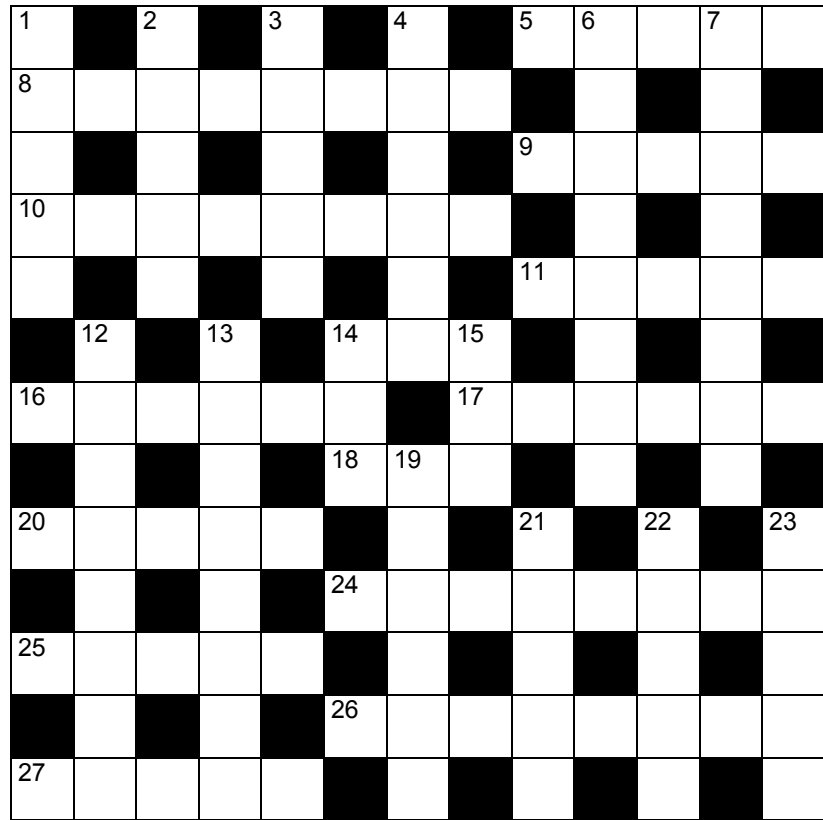


- ACROSS**
- 4. 12 months.
  - 5. Explosion in the sky.
- DOWN**
- 1. Celebration
  - 2. Bursts of light in your hand.
  - 3. 10 to 1.





THE CROSSWORD #NZNZ1933B (answers below)



ACROSS

- 5. Sugary (5)
- 8. Auckland road in a song by The Mutton Birds (8)
- 9. Dangerous (5)
- 10. Suburb, location of Wellington International Airport (8)
- 11. Pace (5)
- 14. An amusing type (colloq) (3)
- 16. NZ national museum (2,4)
- 17. Tell (6)
- 18. Bloke (3)
- 20. Lisa Carrington's medal-winning form of transport (5)
- 24. Hindrance or disadvantage (8)
- 25. Cycle (5)
- 26. Rooftop window (8)
- 27. Vegetable based dish (5)

DOWN

- 1. Cherish (5)
- 2. Correct something (5)
- 3. Pry (5)
- 4. River in Hawke's Bay which features several steep gorges (6)
- 6. Delete a bad debt (5,3)
- 7. NZ rugby ground (4,4)
- 12. Tree known as NZ honeysuckle (8)
- 13. NZ's home of Tolkien tourism (8)
- 14. A horse's mother (3)
- 15. Alcoholic spirit that has surged in popularity and yielded many new distilleries in NZ (3)
- 19. NZ's highest mountain (6)
- 21. Rise and fall of the ocean (5)

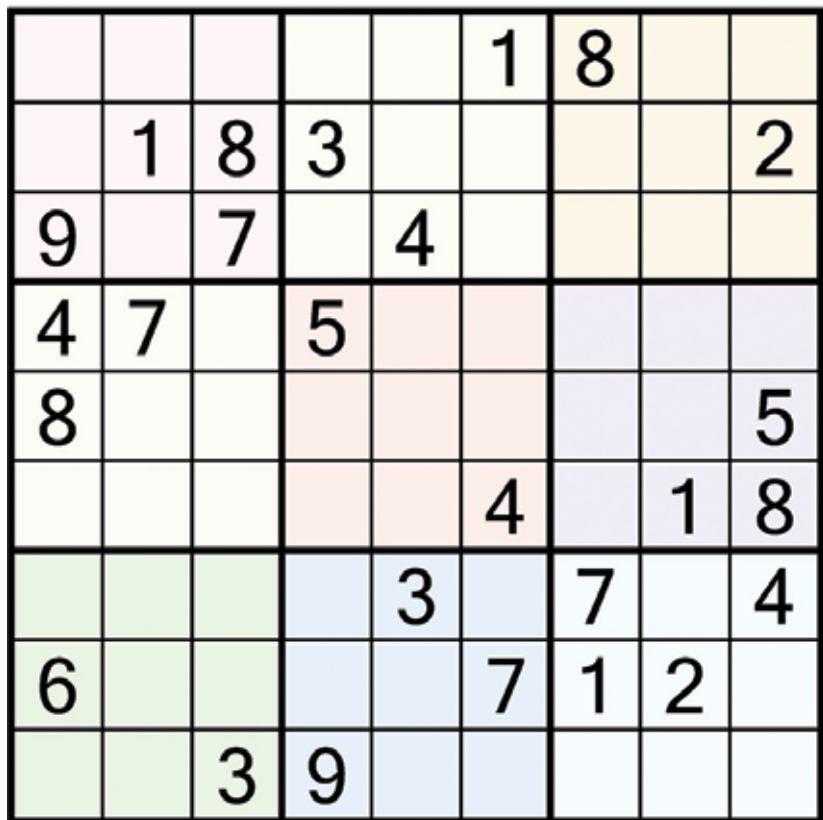


WHAT'S HAPPENED IN JANUARY QUIZ? Answers below.

1. What was the US Supreme Court ruling on the Roe v Wade case on January 22, 1973?
2. In astrology, what is the 11th sign of the zodiac, considered as governing the period from about January 20 to about February 18?
3. What is the birth flower in January?
4. How did the name January originate?
5. The British founded the first penal colony in which country in January 1788, to alleviate overcrowded English jails?
6. Which Roman emperor added the 31st day to the month, making it the entire month of January that we currently celebrate?
7. Name some famous figures who were born in January.
8. What is the month of January called in Māori?
9. The name of the full moon occurring in January is called what?
10. On January 2, 1938, what first flight occurred between Auckland and San Francisco?

SUDOKU PUZZLES thepuzzlecompany.co.nz

EASY #76E 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 at right..



JANUARY QUIZ ANSWERS: 1. US Supreme Court declared a nationwide constitutional right to abortion. (The decision was overturned in 2022.) 2. Aquarius. 3. The dianthus caryophyllus, also known as the carnation. 4. The Roman deity Janus, who is typically portrayed as having two heads. He looks back on the previous year with one head and ahead towards the New Year with the other. 5. Australia. 6. Julius Caesar. 7. Joan of Arc: January 6, Circa 1412. David Bowie:

January 8, 1947. Elvis Presley: January 8, 1935. Simone de Beauvoir: January 9, 1908. Martin Luther King Jr.: January 15, 1929. Muhammad Ali: January 17, 1942. Virginia Woolf: January 25, 1882. 8. Hanuere. 9. The Wolf Moon. 10. The first official New Zealand airmail to the United States left Auckland for San Francisco on Pan American's *Samoan Clipper*.

CROSSWORD #NZ1933B ACROSS: 5. Sweet, 8. Dominion, 9. Dicey, 10. Rongotai, 11. Tempo, 14. Dag, 16. Te Papa, 17. Inform, 18. Man, 20. Kayak, 24. Drawback, 25. Pedal, 26. Skylight, 27. Salad. DOWN: 1. Adore, 2. Amend, 3. Snoop, 4. Mohaka, 6. Write off, 7. Eden Park, 12. Rewarewa, 13. Matamata, 14. Dam, 15. Gin, 19. Aoraki, 21. Swell, 22. Badge, 23. Skite.

SWIMMING: WORD MAKER ANSWERS from page 24: 6-letter words: 1. miming 2. minims 3. wising 5-letter words: 4. minim 5. swing 6. wings 7. minis. 4-letter words: 8. wim9. swig 10. wigs 11. wing 12. iwis 13. migs 14. wins 15. mini 16. nims 17. gins 18. sign 19. sing 20. nisi. 3-letter words: 21. mim 22. wig 23. mig 24. win 25. wis 26. ism 27. mis 28. nim 29. sim 30. gin 31. gis 32. sig 33. ins 34. sin. 2-letter words: 35. mm 36. mi 37. gi 38. in 39. is 40. si 41.



Ōtaki River entrance tides January 15-February 12

<https://www.metservice.com/marine/regions/kapiti-wellington/tides/locations/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 15 JAN-	05:40	11:56	18:05	-	-
THU 16 JAN	00:16	06:20	12:35	18:46	-
FRI 17 JAN	00:55	06:58	13:12	19:24	-
SAT 18 JAN	01:31	07:34	13:48	20:02	-
SUN 19 JAN	02:07	08:10	14:24	20:39	-
MON 20 JAN	02:44	08:48	15:04	21:19	-
TUE 21 JAN	03:25	09:30	15:47	22:02	-
WED 22 JAN	04:12	10:19	16:37	22:52	-
THU 23 JAN	05:08	11:20	17:36	23:52	-
FRI 24 JAN	06:17	12:32	18:42	-	-
SAT 25 JAN	-	01:02	07:32	13:45	19:50
SUN 26 JAN	-	02:12	08:37	14:46	20:52
MON 27 JAN	-	03:09	09:29	15:36	21:46
TUE 28 JAN	-	03:57	10:13	16:21	22:32
WED 29 JAN-	-	04:40	10:54	17:03	23:15
THU 30 JAN	-	05:21	11:33	17:45	23:57
FRI 31 JAN	-	06:01	12:13	18:26	-
SAT 1 FEB	00:38	06:42	12:54	19:08	-
SUN 2 FEB	01:20	07:24	13:36	19:52	-
MON 3 FEB	02:03	08:08	14:21	20:38	-
TUE 4 FEB	02:49	08:56	15:10	21:27	-
WED 5 FEB	03:40	09:50	16:05	22:22	-
THU 6 FEB	04:40	10:54	17:08	23:26	-
FRI 7 FEB	05:54	12:10	18:21	-	-
SAT 8 FEB	-	00:43	07:18	13:30	19:42
SUN 9 FEB	-	02:02	08:34	14:41	20:55
MON 10 FEB	-	03:09	09:33	15:38	21:53
TUE 11 FEB	-	04:01	10:20	16:25	22:40
WED 12 FEB	-	04:45	11:01	17:07	23:20

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**MISSING CAT**

Charles, our very friendly, 7-year-old, red Burmese cat is missing from his home in School Road, Te Horo. If you have seen him, please call **027 269 3092**. He is microchipped.

SUDOKU SOLUTION #76E

3	6	4	2	9	1	8	5	7
5	1	8	3	7	6	9	4	2
9	2	7	8	4	5	6	3	1
4	7	1	5	8	3	2	6	9
8	3	6	1	2	9	4	7	5
2	9	5	7	6	4	3	1	8
1	5	2	6	3	8	7	9	4
6	8	9	4	5	7	1	2	3
7	4	3	9	1	2	5	8	6



# TAKĀRO/Sport

## Ōtaki hosts two big harness days

The excitement of harness racing is coming to Ōtaki with two big days of racing hosted by the Kāpiti Coast Harness Racing Club.

They are on Sunday and Monday of Wellington Anniversary Weekend, January 19 and 20, at the Ōtaki-Māori Racing Club.

It begins on the Sunday with a family fun day. It's free entry and there will be plenty of children's entertainment, including bouncy castles, face painting, a horseshoe toss, swing ball, sack races, tug of war and every kid's favourite – a lolly scramble. There will be food trucks on course and the Kidz Kartz from Taranaki will be offering rides as well as racing on the day.

Gates open at 11am, with the first race starting at noon. Eight harness races are scheduled, with two feature races: The Grant Plumbing Wellington Cup (for pacers) and a new trotting cup, The Kāpiti Coast HRC Trotting Cup. Both have a stake of \$20,000.

Day two is a twilight meeting starting at 3pm and is also free entry. There will again be two feature races – the Ōtaki Cup for pacers and a new Bebbington Trotting Cup. The Bebbington cup is in honour of Jack Bebbington, who was the

Kāpiti club's first president, serving from 1936 to 1954.

Among several Central Districts trainers vying for the spoils is Ōtaki trainer Wendy Devenport, who will have two starters in Uncle Drew and The Elite Athlete. Bulls club member and trainer Doug Gale is expected to have a large team on both days.

Kāpiti harness club secretary Catherine Brennan says the event is the first time since 2020 that the club has had a full standalone harness racing meeting. Its last was in February of that year, just before Covid struck.

Racing on the grass at Ōtaki, renowned as one of the most picturesque racecourses in New Zealand, creates plenty of excitement. Race-goers are urged to come early, bring a picnic basket (no BYO alcohol), and enjoy a day in the sun on the expansive grassed areas.

**RIGHT: Ōtaki trainer Wendy Devenport with harness racer The Elite Athlete, AKA Luke. Wendy has two horses at the anniversary weekend meeting.**

*Photo supplied*



## Swim safely this summer

**On a hot day there's nothing better than heading to the beach to take a refreshing dip.**

However, Kāpiti Coast District Council is asking people to steer clear of boat launching areas. With vehicles, trailers, tractors and boats all operating in the area, the safety risk is high. There are plenty of other spots where you can relax and enjoy the coastline.

Other things to remember:

- swim between the surf patrol flags
- check for hazards such as strong currents, tidal rips, or steep drop-offs
- know your limits, and never swim alone
- always keep small children within arm's length
- check [lawa.org.nz](http://lawa.org.nz) for the latest water quality and toxic algae alerts
- don't swim in streams or at stream- and river-mouths during hot summer months
- keep out of any water that's murky or smells unpleasant
- avoid swimming near stormwater outlets on the beaches, or other possible sources of contamination.

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