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Hell on earth. See
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Tragic fire in Eltham.
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Still blowing in
the right direction.
Windfarming. Turn
to page 7.



Make sure you cast your
vote in the local body
elections. See page 3 and
centre pages..



Hawera Repertory's
Checkout Girls was a
load of laughs, but also
thought-provoking.
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Even King Charles
looks impressed by
the scouting honour
awarded to these two
family members. See
page 11.



Meet the new
NZCTU president.
Turn to page 9.

Mayor Phil Nixon seeks re-election to a job he loves

Phil Nixon, Mayor of South Taranaki since 2019, is keen to continue in his role for the next three years. "I've still got things that I want to see through." However, he adds, "But, if I'm doing my job right, it'll never be finished as there is always more to be done".

He continues, "I'm really keen to seeing the town revitalisation projects completed in Waverley, Patea, Eltham, Manaia and Opunake".

"This was one of our key social and economic development initiatives, to improve the vibrancy amenity and connectedness in those towns."

The Council's Long Term Investment Fund, Fluctuation Reserve was used to fund this project to a total of 10.5 million dollars. This allowed about \$2 million to enhance each of the towns and meant there was no direct impact on rates or debt to fund these projects.

Local volunteers were called for to form the co-design groups in each town. "These were local people (volunteers) who cared about their community and wanted something positive done in their towns."

Phil was also absolutely committed to seeing a combined community and sports facility built in Manaia. Combining two facilities into one has the advantage of bringing different activities to one location, creating more vibrancy, greater use and avoids duplication of resources – so it's a more cost effective use ratepayer funds.

The Manaia community have already waited far too long for this and I want to make it a priority.

When asked about highlights of his mayoralty Phil didn't hesitate. "The peak was the opening of Te



Mayor Phil Nixon pictured overlooking his farm near Hawera.

Ramanui o Ruaputahanga in December 2024." The complex includes a library, art gallery, iSite and café. "It is proving so successful. It is working well for the community and the staff love being there," Phil comments.

Another highlight was the opening of the 8.3km Te Ranganuku Road (off the Nukumarū Station Road), which extends down to Waiinu Beach. Alluding to the big flood of 2015, Phil explains that the residents won't be cut off if another major weather incident occurs in the future.

Not everything is plain

sailing at the Council table, however, such as rates, Phil admits. "Rates have been a real concern in the last couple of years because the increases have been too high. Up until then we have had very modest rate increases, some of the lowest in the country. But in the last couple of years we were hit with a huge increase in inflation, Local government inflation of around 20% hasn't helped, as well as a big increase in insurance premiums, contractor costs, bitumen etc."

The rates are currently set at a 5.46% increase for the 2025/2026 period. Phil was

gratified that the Council managed to reduce the figure after finding almost \$1 million of savings, but comments, "that when it comes to public money you cannot take your eye off the ball." He is, however, not sure about the legislative capping of rates increases, as has been suggested by some politicians, and explains why: "you have got to ensure that you are properly funding your core infrastructure because it will come back to bite in the future if you don't".

One important issue at present is the Local Water Done Well (LWDW)

initiative. "I'm pleased that after extensive public consultation yielding 726 submissions, most (92%) want the water provision kept in house."

Phil was originally supportive of joining a Regional Multi Council controlled organisation, with Stratford and New Plymouth for the delivery of water services. However, he changed his mind when he saw the strong support the community had for the council to continue delivering water services in house.

As to his style Phil says, "I've always been one who likes being busy. I work well under pressure and I like to get out and be part of the community."

Phil explains that he is a hands-on individual. "It is a real privilege to lead the district as mayor and work with other likeminded individuals around the Council table. We have a fantastic staff, who are dedicated to the community and are very hard working.

If you'd like to know more about Mayor Phil Nixon's local government plans for the future, please contact him on 0274 948 972 or tpjnixon136@gmail.com

Local Body elections

The Opunake & Coastal News is inviting all candidates within our area of circulation to submit a profile of themselves and why they are standing in about 200 words along with a photo of themselves. We are running these profiles in the paper up until the election as we receive them.

There will be no charge for the profiles but candidates are additionally invited to advertise to further raise their profile.

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While we welcome free speech, the views expressed in the Letters to the Editor do not necessarily reflect those of the Opunake & Coastal News. Please limit letters to 350 words as we sometimes struggle for space to fit them all in.

Keep up the good work

I’m so pleased to see that the Opunake coastal newspaper isn’t going anywhere like every other newspaper disappearing making it harder for us older generations to enjoy reading. Having to go online and mess around signing into the internet is a pain in the backside. Please don’t follow these woke folks and Gen Z crybabies to go online. We live in Hawera and really enjoy reading your paper in print and I sincerely hope that other newspaper companies learn from you.

Keep up the great work Opunake newspaper team.

Ty Rix

Council CEO salaries

As we approach local body elections this October, we’re once again hearing calls for good people to stand for Council. But here’s the reality: even the most motivated, community-minded councillor walks straight into a system where real power is largely out of reach. The levers of influence now sit firmly in the hands of highly paid staff—particularly CEOs—who councillors are no longer permitted to even speak to without talking to the CEO first.

This isn’t a conspiracy. It’s the result of deliberate legal changes that were introduced in the wake of past corruption

Hawera

scandals, especially those involving zoning and land use. The intention was to professionalise decision-making and protect it from political meddling. Fair enough. But the pendulum has now swung too far.

Ratepayers—who fund these organisations—are completely locked out of decisions about staffing structures, budget priorities, and salary bands. Council CEOs are public servants, but their pay packets increasingly mirror the corporate world. Our local CEO, for instance, is on a reported salary of \$350,000 per year—around \$6-7 thousand a week. That’s a serious sum in any town, let alone in small rural communities where that kind of money is far beyond the average household’s

imagination.

So, who sets these figures? We are told it’s the Remuneration Authority, but who are they exactly? What kind of transparency do they offer? On what basis are these salaries decided? The public is not consulted or even informed. Worse benchmarking against corporate salaries simply fuels a spiral of ever-higher executive pay, while the people who do the real work—the road workers, the librarians, the customer service reps—remain on far more modest incomes.

It’s not just about jealousy or envy. It’s about fairness. It’s about public service. It’s about a democratic deficit. The people footing the bill are completely removed

Continued on page 4.

ADELPHOS

Most people enjoy a good story, a good joke and a good laugh. Having a sense of humour is the key to all three. In a stress-filled modern world wit and laughter release more emotional and physical benefits than many of us realise. A funny story releases happy endorphin chemicals in the brain, boosts our mood and strengthens our immune system against diseases.

In the Western world enraged keyboard warriors and politicians are using mass media platforms (Twitter, Facebook, YouTube, Instagram...) to harm the personal lives and professional reputations of those they politically or morally disagree with. Sometimes I wonder if our world is losing its sense of

humour.

Different types of contemporary comic humour have been generally classified as “clean” or “dirty.” Some styles are dry, sarcastic, cheeky, funny or self-effacing—many comedians delight in parading their own personal faults and predicaments. In New Zealand, our home-grown Kiwi humour is sometimes used as an indirect way to address difficult subjects too sensitive to openly discuss. I love our Kiwi Pak’n Save Stick Man who seems to get away with corny puns other comedians would not.

In Christian art and literature Jesus is stereotypically portrayed as humourless, somber, sad and gloomy. However, when we read the

A sense of humour

Scriptures more carefully it tells a very different story. Elton Trueblood’s book *The Humour of Christ* (1964) unpacks thirty biblical examples of Jesus’ witty, dry, sarcastic and ironic sense of humour.

One example was when Jesus questioned the crowds about John the Baptist who lived in the desert, dressed in camel’s hair, wore a leather waist belt and ate insects, locusts and wild honey: “When you went out to John in the desert, what did you expect to see? A blade of grass bending in the wind?... A man dressed up in fancy clothes? People who dress up like that live in palaces!” (Matthew 11:7, Good News Bible). Here, Jesus was using His dry and ironic wit because John was obviously

a rugged and rough-living prophet. Listeners would have certainly had a good giggle.

Here’s an example of Jesus’ combining satire, sarcasm and hyperbole with the hypocritical religious leaders, who hated Him: “Why do you look at the speck in your brother’s eye, but pay no attention to the log in your own eye.” Luke 76:41). I imagine Jesus’ many followers were laughing inside at the red faces of these embarrassed and humourless religious hypocrites.

As a socially engaged person, Jesus would have attended traditional week-long marriage festivities where He and other invited guests delighted in telling amusing and entertaining stories. I recommend Elton Trueblood’s book *The Humour of Christ*. It’s an eye-opening and enlightening read.

Cheerfully yours,

Adelphos

P.S. “A happy heart is a good medicine and a joyful mind causes healing” (Proverbs 17:22 Amplified Bible).

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Local Body elections: More candidates put their hands up

In contrast to some parts of the country it seems Taranaki is showing a heightened interest in the upcoming local body elections. That is if the number of people putting themselves forward as candidates compared to three years ago is any indication.

Local Body elections have often come with a drab image. Less than half the eligible voters bother voting and there's often trouble getting enough people to fill the allotted slots, let alone hold an election.

Three years ago in the elections for the South Taranaki District Council there were contested elections for the mayoralty and the two Maori Wards, but none for the Taranaki Coastal, Eltham-Kaponga, Te Hawera and Patea Wards.

There weren't even enough nominations to fill the five allotted Te Hawera Ward seats so a by-election had to be called afterwards to find another councillor. This year the only candidates sure to be at the Council table after October 11 will be deputy mayor Rob Northcott and Cr Brian Rook who will be elected unopposed for the Patea Ward, and Cheryl Luke-Maraki who is the sole nominee for the Te Tai Tonga Maori ward.

South Taranaki District mayor Phil Nixon faces a challenge from a previous opponent, Clem Coxhead. Nixon has been mayor for two terms. Before then he served as deputy mayor under Ross Dunlop and took over from him in 2019

Continued centre pages 16, 17

EDITORIAL

Hell on earth

As the world watches, the appalling situation in Gaza worsens as a defenceless vulnerable population see their houses reduced to rubble, as many Palestinians slowly starve.

Now, the prime minister of Israel, wants to take military control of the whole of Gaza. As if things weren't miserable enough for the Palestinian people; the action will only lead to more bloodshed.

It's an absolutely tragic situation and Netanyahu's latest initiative can only remove any hope of the remaining Israeli hostages being returned alive, and the Israeli people protesting at his latest plan know this. A majority of the Israel people are also sickened by the entire situation and just want the war to end.

The fact that Israel has banned journalists from Gaza speaks volumes of the shame that is taking place.

At least Germany, the second largest supplier of arms to Israel after the United States, is thankfully no longer supplying arms to Israel.

The Prime Minister of Israel is out of control and needs to be removed.

Israel lost the public relations war a long time ago.

The revulsion over what's happening in Gaza is worldwide with analogies inevitably being drawn with what happened to the Jewish people in World War 2 when another madman/fanatic was in power. Meanwhile, as anti Israeli sentiments revives, images of a stricken population deprived of their homes and possessions is no longer a haunting image from the past, as appalling images are beamed around the world.

It would be great if New Zealand, which historically has stuck its neck out over various issues – and in doing so gained the world's attention and admiration – would be more vocal in their revulsion at the current situation and, registering their protest, joined other countries by recognising a Palestinian state.

But no, as other nations state they will recognise a Palestinian state and join in condemning the latest action by Israel's prime minister, New Zealand has announced a decision would be reached by the end of September.

In the words of Helen Clark, a former New Zealand prime minister who, as part of a group of elders, formed in 2007 by none other than Nelson Mandela, personally watched aid trucks turned away by Israeli authorities, the international community including New Zealand could be doing more.



Palestinians mourn their relative who was killed while trying to reach aid trucks entering northern Gaza Strip through the Zikim crossing with Israel, at Shifa Hospital in Gaza City.

“This is a catastrophic situation, and here we are in New Zealand somehow arguing some fine point about whether we should recognize a Palestinian state, we need to be adding our voice for this catastrophe to stop,” Helen Clark told RNZ. “This is not the New Zealand I've known,” she said.

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Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 2.

from the conversation. And if an elected councillor can't even question a department's decisions without being stonewalled, what exactly are they being elected to do? Let's be clear: this isn't a personal attack on individuals. Many Council CEOs and senior managers are good people, committed to their communities. But the system around them has drifted badly. Councils have become bureaucratic fortresses, increasingly unaccountable to the public

they supposedly serve. We don't need another oversight body or layer of compliance. We need sunlight, plain and simple. Transparency around pay. A return to genuine local control. And the political courage to say that public service should mean just that—service. Let's make this election about rebalancing the scales. Councils must work with their communities, not above them.

David Hancock
Eltham

Who is Egmont National Park for?

As visitor numbers greatly increase, what is DOC intending in Egmont National Park? I note the new DOC map, as well as erasing various 'settler' New Zealander heritage names, eg Fanthams peak in favour of Maori, can't even be bothered calling this a "National Park" anymore. Who owns and funds the work in this park? Is it still 'us' taxpayers?

Pouakai Hut nears opening and yes it has 'curb appeal.' Albeit the small feet trip hazard 'fence batten' walkway with gaps that are too big, makes an unenjoyable two hours getting there. Why does it have four stained glass windows and other unnecessary aesthetic features more in line with a hotel build, than a tramping hut? Clearly DOC is struggling to get other work and track maintenance done. What is being written off around the park to make this extravagance possible?

As the past feature of Round the Mountain tramping falls to bits. Lake Dive hut burnt down five years ago, where is the replacement? Last week yet another section, Oaonui Track, was tapped off due to a bridge(?) undermining from the last heavy rains. That is on top of the Stoney River section being closed off for 2-3 years. Why not resurrect the possible/old track from Kahui Hut via Puniho Hill/Little Pyramid/Skinner hill to Holly Hut? I also note that the Curtis Falls track along towards Maketawa hut has numerous areas of rotted out steps and the hut itself has rotten exterior timber work. This is a track between two main roads into the park and is used by tourist walkers. Why have various road end tracks like Auroa Rd into Lake Dive been let go? That could be a reasonable through- walk for weekend trampers.

It seems inadequate funding and/or mismanagement is at play. Bearing in mind

the failures of DOC and Iwi management in the Ureweras with 29 of 54 huts removed/burnt down, track maintenance not done and the predator control programmes now compromised. 'We' should be alert to similar problems arising here. With regards the ridiculous luxury hut build, how much of the cost was Iwi 'consultation,' spiritual or otherwise, vs on the ground work? 5% or 15% of the high cost 'hut'?

Max Thomas
Awatuna.

DOC have been approached for comment.

Learned helplessness

The children of Gaza no longer know there is a better world. The little they knew of one, lies buried under 100,000 tonnes of American high explosive and a thousand D9 bulldozer blades. Under a starvation blockade, courtesy of the global Anglo-Zionist elite.

Our priests, sadists and satyrs, chanting 'self defence,' 'god's will,' and 'October 7th' dance among the ruins. Oblivious to the stink of the rot of corpses. A stench only equalled by the stench of our learned helplessness in the face of this fascist horror show, pretending itself a democracy. Blaming Hamas for resisting tyranny. Calling global Palestinian activism 'anti-semitic terrorism,' while the real terrorists are the diablo IDF and settler gangs.

But ethnic cleansing is ethnic cleansing. And genocide is genocide. The 2 million starved Palestinians are pushed south by relentless military occupation into one gigantic concentrated camp, there to be held prisoner, vetted by AI and surveilled by cameras, guarded by mercenaries who are herding them into cattle pens. Those poor dying souls of Gaza. To throw them scraps of the barest food, shooting them for sport. Murdering them.

There's no getting around it. Zionist Israel - this Yinon and Eretz Israel genocidal pogrom - is not going to stop unless the international

community of free nations rises up and stops them, which, the UN Mission for the state of Palestine and the recently convened 'Hague Group' of nations have just called for. Action against Israel. An International protective force to be deployed to Palestine to stop the genocide. Odds on this happening of course, are zero to nil.

Roger Morris
Oeo.

Shameful

Stuff media for supporting John Minto and his pro-Palestine proxies trying to undermine our country's sovereignty as a Christian country. Samuel Marsden, along with cannonballs and muskets also introduced our nation to the King James Bible.

Like many I have embraced the teachings, along with our King Charles. These teachings in the Torah Adonia tell us that "whoever blesses Israel I will bless and that those who curse Israel I will curse." (Genesis 12:3, Numbers 24:9). God gave the land to the Jews over 3000 years ago, calling the land Israel.

The Hamastineans as they are now known are a mixture of the Arab tribes who have no, and never have had any legal claim to the land of Israel. Hamas and their radical Islamic associates' agenda is to divide the nations and instal Islamic rule globally. In that they are succeeding, with so many nations calling for the sanctioning of Israel.

This also is foretold in the scriptures (Zechariah 12). If our governing coalition parties call out and put Israel under sanctions they will immediately lose my and many others' vote. It is reported that 36% of our population identify as Christian or Zionist, and that's a lot of votes.

I, along with many others worship the God of Israel.

Bruce Salisbury
Manaiā.

The second Kiwi on Everest

'Everyone remembers or knows who was the first

Kiwi to climb Mt Everest in 1953, Sir Edmund Hillary who enlightened the media.

But how many know who was the second or third kiwis to ascend to the summit of Mt Everest?

A good quiz question that very few know, even in mountaineering circles. People say it must have been Rob Hall, Peter Hillary or perhaps Graeme Dingle. Wrong, wrong, wrong.

Our second Kiwi/New Zealander to step foot on the top of Mt Everest was little known Nick Banks, 26 years after Sir Edmund Hillary. Nick Banks' ascent was made on October 2, 1979, making him the 100th person to climb Mt Everest.

Lydia Bradey was the third Kiwi to climb Mt Everest in 1988.

As another question, who was the first of Maori descent to climb Mt Everest? Mark Whetu but no wāhine Maori yet.'

Watch this space: Holly Beckham aims to place the Tino Rangatiratanga flag on Mt Everest.

Ian McAlpine
New Plymouth

Farewell and thank you

I would like to say farewell, congratulations, and a big thank you to Tae Wan, our wonderful pharmacist who is moving to another job.

Tae Wan provided excellent care and service to my sister, Christine, before her death earlier this year. Once, he even delivered her prescription to her home when she was too unwell to collect it herself, and I was out of town. He saw this as no big deal, but it meant the world to her.

Tae Wan, you will be missed at the pharmacy, but I'm glad you and your family are staying here in Opunakē.

Katrina Smith
Opunake



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Locals join global call to stop seabed mining

It was a stunning winter’s day last month in Ōpunakē on Sunday 20 July when around 50 local ocean lovers from Taranaki & Whanganui gathered at Ōpunakē Beach to send a powerful message: “No seabed mining - Protect Our Moana.” Spelling it out in large lettering across the sand.

The event was part of a global day of action involving over 25 countries, 30 + events with hundreds gathering world-wide, including in Australia, France, USA, Senegal, Philippines, Cook Islands, Argentina, UK and more, all calling for an international ban and moratorium on seabed mining. The Ōpunakē gathering was with more low-key promotion this time round from previous events, though again brought together a diverse, committed community, all caring to make the message clear to protect and respect

our oceans, and stop seabed mining before it starts. There was much agreement, it has no place in our oceans. Not here, not anywhere.

“It was a really beautiful day with a relaxing atmosphere and wonderful crew who attended and participated in a proactive, creative and peaceful way. It was great to have the support for our local message to ripple far and wide through international networks. We had donations of a diversity of food, including a selection of quality local meats from Taranaki Prime, this helped us to feed everyone who attended. It was a great day!”

The idea for a “Global Paddle Out & Community Activation” emerged during the ‘Paddle Out for Our Oceans’ event in Ōpunakē on April 26th, where more than 300 gathered at the beach, 130+ paddled out and more than 500 attended the weekend of



Say No to Seabed Mining.

events, all aimed to grow awareness, connection and support for a community voice and understanding of the importance to protect our oceans from seabed mining. This included film screenings of ‘Deep Rising’ (with guest speakers) produced and narrated by Jason Momoa, that directly informed audiences on the Global deep sea mining issue.

This highly controversial deep-sea mining is different, though related, to the proposed shallow seabed

mining off the South Taranaki coast. The shallow seabed mining being proposed off our coast, would dredge the seabed in waters 19 - 42 metres deep, 22 -36 kilometres off Pātea, removing a depth of up to 11 metres of the seabed as they go. Deep-sea mining, on the other hand, would scrape the seafloor, in places 4 - 5 kilometres deep, to collect potato-sized metallic nodules, to extract the minerals. There is increasing evidence coming to light of the essential part

these nodules play in deep sea ecology, that has taken millions of years to form. The impact of removing them is not worth the risks.

Some areas particularly under high threat of this deep sea mining right now include the Cook Islands and an area in the Pacific called the ‘Clarion Clipper Zone’ between Hawai’i and Mexico. This area is larger than the width of the USA and is being proposed to become the largest mining site in the world - with corporate interests lining up at the prospect of harvesting these nodules.

Neither the shallow seabed nor deep sea mining have ever been done commercially. Both are experimental, and existing science, along with other evidence, community and cultural insight and relatedness emphasis there would be irreversible damage, significantly harming unique marine environments we still don’t fully understand. The risks and potential losses far outweigh any possible economic benefit, with harmful impacts that could last for many generations - and never fully recover.

Community engagement locally in Taranaki and up and down the West Coast has remained strong and growing across the past months in relation to the local shallow seabed mining, with strong turnouts for synched up Paddle Outs on World Oceans Day (June 8th) and the ongoing engagement at local councils and through iwi events. All of this further inspired and emboldened the Global Activation to go ahead.

The call for the Global Paddle Out on July 20th was led by Phil McCabe of the Deep Sea Conservation Coalition and former chair of KASM (Kiwis Against Seabed Mining) who was part of the April events in Ōpunakē as a guest speaker and friend of organisers from Protect Our Moana - Taranaki. This international action was timed as the International

Seabed Authority (ISA) met in Kingston, Jamaica to make decisions on the highly controversial deep sea mining in global waters up to 4 to 5 kilometres deep, considered “the common heritage of humankind”. Phil was in Jamaica for this and part of organising a Paddle Out there.

This was the 30th ISA Council and Assembly session and due to much more work needing to be completed, they did not adopt a binding Mining Code for deep-sea mining, meaning commercial mining through the ISA remains off the table - for now.

However, no moratorium or overarching environmental policy was approved either, raising concerns about the missed opportunity to strengthen ocean protection. 38 countries so far, including New Zealand (2022) have signed the Moratorium to stop deep seabed mining.

Meanwhile the Trump administration is trying to bypass the ISA and international law to fast track seabed mining. To stay up to date on the international movement to stop Deep Sea Mining visit <https://deep-sea-conservation.org>.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead.

Our unique marine environments need protection to remain healthy - supporting fisheries, regulating climate, producing oxygen, and sustaining biodiversity and local communities. With local and national elections coming up, engage and make sure to ask candidates and parties where they stand on seabed mining and ocean protection, and vote to safeguard our oceans and natural world for future generations.

Now is the time to stay informed, speak up, and take action.

Board turns down applications

A funding application from Protect Our Moana Taranaki was one of four district-wide applications turned down by the Taranaki Coastal Community Board when they met at Pihama on July 23.

Protect Our Moana Taranaki was applying for up to \$4025 from each community board for community wellbeing and environmental education. The other three South Taranaki boards had rejected the application, and Taranaki Coastal was the last to consider it. The Patea Community Board said rejecting the application didn’t mean they did not support what they were doing, but that it would be inappropriate for the board to fund it.

Board member Monica Willson said the group had not cited any alternative sources of funding other than the community boards, so it appeared that the boards were the intended funders.

“We’re the last resort not

the first resort for funding,” she said.

An application from Taranaki Kohanga Kiwi at Rotokare Sanctuary for a kiwi monitoring programme was rejected on similar grounds. The cost of the project was cited as \$3104 with \$776 sought from each of the community boards.

“People come to us as a first rather than a last resort,” said Cr Aaron Langton.

South Taranaki District Council group manager community services Rob Haveswood said groups making community-wide applications had to sell the benefits of the project to each board.

“The benefit to our rohe is not that obvious,” said board chair Andy Whitehead.

Active Birth Taranaki, a group of parents advocating for more natural birth education in Taranaki were asking for \$875 from each board.

Cushla Richardson from Active Birth Taranaki spoke to the board via zoom. She said their aim was to

promote a personalised one-on-one flow of information. They currently operate out of New Plymouth, Hawera and Stratford.

Andy Whitehead asked if there was any possibility of them coming to Opunake.

“We do think there is an opportunity there,” said Cushla. “We would like to think we can get support out there to rural communities, and coastal communities as well.”

In answer to a question she said there were six couples taking part in Hawera.

Again it was noted that the community boards were the only groups from which they were seeking funding.

Board member Liz Sinclair moved that the board decline the application. She said that one of the premises for deciding on funding was how their local communities would benefit.

“There are six couples in Hawera. That’s a lot of money to invest in six couples,” she said.

An application for funding from the Taranaki Garden

Festival Charitable Trust was also rejected. They had been successful in their applications to the other three community boards. Andy Whitehead said the garden festival brings a lot of value to the community and suggested the board fund the remaining \$3790 being asked for.

“No doubt this is a fantastic event for our region,” said Monica Willson. “My concern is that we could fund something a bit more localised to us.” She said the group could be better supported by specialist tourist agencies like Venture Taranaki.

The board voted funding for two local discretionary fund applications which had been deferred from the previous funding round. The board voted \$2000 for CoastalCare to get a passport photo machine and \$4000 to the Pungarehu Community Society to paint their community pool.

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Fatal house fire in Eltham

One person was found dead at the scene of a house fire at Eltham on Friday morning (August 8), a police spokesperson has said. The Derby Street house was “fully ablaze” when emergency services were called to the property just before 4.45am. Police, Hato Hone St John and the Eltham, Kaponga, Hawera and Stratford fire brigades attended.

The cause of the fire is being investigated. This is the third fatal fire in Taranaki in nine weeks. Jamie Elliott (45) was found dead alongside his dog after a fire in Waitara on June 6 and Nigel Philip Tyler (69) died in a fire in New Plymouth on July 23. After these two fires, Taranaki District Fire Commander David Utumapu said in a statement (Opunake and Coastal News July 31) that there are some key safety measures people can take to stay fire-safe in their homes. “Make sure you have working smoke alarms in all bedrooms, hallways and living areas - including caravans and sleep outs. “When you hear smoke alarms go off get out and stay out. Make sure your family has a three-step escape plan, which is at least two clear paths out of the house and a



An Eltham house was already ablaze when emergency services arrived at the scene.

safe meeting space,” he says. It is important to keep flammable materials, such as clothing or bedding, at least one metre from the heater or fire.

“As well as this check all electrical equipment is in good working order. “If you use an electric blanket check for hotspots by turning it on high for 15

minutes, then switching it off and running your hand over the blanket. Make sure to turn your blanket off before you go to sleep.”



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New report reveals reality of heart healthcare in New Zealand

A new report has exposed deep flaws in New Zealand's heart healthcare system, where access to life-saving treatment often depends on luck, postcode, and ethnicity rather than clinical need. Commissioned by The Heart of Aotearoa - Kia Manawanui Trust and prepared by the University of Otago, the ‘Heart disease in Aotearoa: morbidity, mortality, and service delivery’ report reveals a system plagued by chronic under-resourcing, critical workforce shortages, and deadly inequities. Trust Chief Executive Ms Letitia Harding says the report lays bare a system that is failing at every level. “Heart care in New Zealand isn't just stretched - it's on

the verge of collapse. “We are failing in all aspects, and it's costing New Zealanders their lives.” Key findings from the report include half of all heart attack patients aren't seen within internationally accepted timeframes. New Zealand has only a third of the cardiologists it should have. Māori and Pacific people are hospitalised or die from heart disease more than a decade earlier, on average, than other New Zealanders. Heart disease costs the country's health system and economy \$13.8 billion per year. The regions with the highest death rates - Tairāwhiti, Lakes, Whanganui, and Taranaki - have the fewest cardiac specialists. Heart disease accounts for 20% of all deaths in New Zealand. The five heart conditions responsible for the majority are: heart failure, atrial fibrillation

and flutter (AFF), acute myocardial infarction (AMI), subsequent myocardial infarction and cardiomyopathy. Trust Medical Director Dr Sarah Fairley, who is also a Wellington-based cardiologist, says the findings match what frontline clinicians see every day. “From inside the system, I can tell you that this report reflects what we see every day: a workforce stretched

beyond safe limits, patients slipping through the cracks, and no end in sight.” Ms Harding says this report should be a wake-up call for the Government. The Heart of Aotearoa - Kia Manawanui Trust is calling for an urgent government response, including immediate investment in public hospital cardiac care infrastructure - beds and equipment - and a national strategy to recruit and retain cardiology staff.

Ecolabels could help reduce carbon emissions

Ecolabels on restaurant menus could be a low-cost strategy to reduce the carbon emissions of restaurant food choices, according to international researchers. The team conducted a randomised clinical trial with 3147 US adults and found

that people who viewed restaurant menus displaying ecolabels on more environmentally sustainable foods selected items with similar overall healthiness and 9.2% lower carbon footprint.

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Winds are still favourable says energy developer

The prospect of seabed mining may have deterred some Offshore wind developers from setting up in the South Taranaki Bight but one developer looks forward to moving ahead.

“We are still very excited about the wind resource off South Taranaki,” says Giacomo (Giac) Caleffi of the Taranaki Offshore Partnership. “There’s a great opportunity in the South Taranaki Bight. That’s what’s persuaded us to push forward.”

Taranaki Offshore Partnership (TOP) is a joint venture between the New Zealand Super Fund and Copenhagen Infrastructure Partners. Copenhagen has set up projects in different parts of the world and is looking forward to setting up in an area 12 nautical miles offshore in an area that can be viewed from Hawera to Opunake.

Last year there were concerns that plans by Trans-Tasman Resources(TTR) to mine ironsands in the South Taranaki Bight could be incompatible with the development of offshore wind farms. TOP joined other offshore wind developers in saying that seabed mining would be inconsistent



Giacomo Caleffi.

with wind farms. Spanish developer Blue Float Energy which had also been looking to set up a windfarm off the South Taranaki coast said that while they could work alongside competitors like Copenhagen, ironsand mining would be

incompatible with what they wanted to do, so they were pulling out of New Zealand. There is nowhere in the world where offshore wind energy and seabed mining projects co-exist says Giac, a structural engineer who

has worked on offshore wind energy projects in the United Kingdom and Germany.

“Offshore wind has co-existed with other marine activities around the world, but we have concerns with the activities and

methodologies proposed by the seabed miners and how they co-exist with offshore energy projects. We understand how other investors may have been deterred.”

As well as Blue Float, Japanese wind energy developer Sumitomo announced that they would be putting a pause on their New Zealand plans.

However, along with Copenhagen, there are other developers like Belgian operator Parkwind still interested in setting up their own offshore wind energy projects off the Taranaki coast.

“In the last three and a half years we’ve been doing a lot of due diligence,” says Giac. “We’ve been doing a lot of thinking about the environment and been doing a lot of community engagement. Our commitment has always been to make sure that a lot of work has been done with the communities so that these processes are understood and endorsed by the South Taranaki community.”

They are working towards getting a feasibility licence to carry out feasibility studies in the area. They are hopeful of having everything

up and running in 2035.

“We are starting to pull together the story we have built over the last three and a half years to persuade the government that we need a permit,” says Giac. When exactly this would happen depends on a number of things including parliament working out the feasibility licence regime.

“If the bill is passed tomorrow everything is lined up nicely and 2035 is achievable.”

They are looking at doing geotechnical studies to analyse the seabed and understand the foundations they have to deal with. They have also been carrying out studies to know more about the local environment. In August last year they placed three underground microphones in different parts of the South Taranaki Bight to monitor the presence and movements of marine mammals. Giac says that they hope to have some results next year.

He is hoping they will be able to make the investment decision in 2030 when investors will decide whether or not to move ahead. All going well they would then look at procuring steel and starting construction.

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The sad reality of homelessness in Taranaki

The latest Homelessness Insights Report confirms what many of us here in Taranaki already knew, homelessness is on the rise. Under this government, more people are sleeping rough, in cars, or in unsafe temporary housing.

Across the country, the numbers are grim, but it's the regions like ours that have seen the steepest increases. Here in Taranaki, homelessness has

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GLEN BENNETT
LIST MP

skyrocketed by 250% in just six months. These aren't just statistics, these are our neighbours, our whānau, people with aspirations in

life. These are the people we walk past on Devon Street or see parked up overnight at the breakwater.

We know that homelessness isn't just about not having a roof over your head. There are many factors, high rents and a shortage of affordable housing, job loss, discrimination, mental health struggles, addictions, or a traumatic event that leaves someone in crisis.

Thankfully, Taranaki has incredible people and organisations stepping up. The Roderique Hope Emergency Housing Trust,

iwi providers, church groups and other community champions work tirelessly to keep people safe and supported. New Plymouth District Council has committed \$350,000 to help YMCA open a shelter, as well as backing the Ngāmotu Street Initiative. NPDC is also developing a Taranaki Homelessness Action Plan alongside community partners.

Stepping up and helping out is what we in Taranaki do best, we look out for each other, but it cannot fill the gap left by central

government cuts. Luxon's government has made it harder to access emergency housing and those decisions are a choice. When I was the local MP, we had a Kāinga Ora building plan, but this government paused or cancelled many of these houses.

Everyone deserves a safe, warm place to call home and we need a government prepared to make that a reality for every New Zealander.

Glen Bennett, MP

Navigating tariffs: a perspective

Success doesn't always have its rewards.

That is the perception some may have at the imposition by the USA of a 15% tariff on New Zealand exports, while some of our principal trading partners, such as Australia and the United Kingdom, get only a 10 per cent tariff.

The rationale for our higher tariff, we are told, is that, unlike Australia and the United Kingdom, we export more to the United States than we import. One way of looking at that, somewhat



BARBARA KURIGER MP
TARANAKI-KING COUNTRY

to our disadvantage, is that we, and I mean mainly our primary industries, are more successful at exporting and possibly have better products than those two countries and other countries that have secured lower tariffs.

And I think it's going to stay that way, and here's why: we produce a premium product;

in the case of red meats, wool and wine, probably among the best in the world. Yes, we may see a downturn at the lower end of the U.S. market, but at the higher end—the premium end—I think we will hold our own because those who appreciate quality will be, as they are now, prepared to pay for it.

Those people know that New Zealand produces some of the best food and wine in the world. Our farmers and vintners do us proud. And while they maintain their quality output, that will be our main hedge and protection from that higher tariff.

In a related vein, I was intrigued to learn about a new book titled "The Have

and Have Yachts" by Evan Osnos. The book discusses the growing discontent among America's affluent elite with the current socio-political climate, leading many to seek alternative places for living and investment. Notably, New Zealand is increasingly becoming their destination of choice, valued for its green landscapes and pristine environment.

In conclusion, while the tariff may present challenges, I am confident that New Zealand's exceptional reputation and quality products will enable us to navigate these obstacles successfully.

Barbara Kuriger, MP for Taranaki-King Country

On this month in history David Lange resigns as prime minister

On August 7, 1989 David Lange resigned as prime minister. Earlier, he had dismissed the Finance Minister Roger Douglas (later Sir) from Cabinet, but the caucus voted him back soon after. Lange narrowly

survived a vote of confidence in his leadership in June 1989. Geoffrey Palmer took over, but at the next election, the Labour Government were soundly beaten.

Before becoming an MP Lange was a lawyer. After

his first law degree (LL B) he obtained an LL M with first class honours.

Lange was elected to parliament in 1977 (Mangere) and by February 3 1983 was leader of Labour.

Continued on page 9

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On this month in history David Lange resigns as prime minister

continued from page 8

He was prime minister from 1984 until 1987. In 1984 Labour had a majority of 17, defeating Sir Robert

Muldoon's National Government when he called a snap election. The six years in office were characterised by asset sales, the introduction of GST and

the removal of farmers' subsidies. Although the Government won an increased majority in 1987, later on the term things were unsettled. On

a personal front Lange was engaged in an extramarital affair with one of his staff whom he later married, alcoholism, and serious fallings out with ministers

such as Douglas and Richard Prebble. Lange resigned as an MP in 1996. Suffering from diabetes and heart disease he died

in August 13, 2005 at Middlemore Hospital, Auckland.

Farmer confidence hits a high

Over the last few months the National-led Government has had plenty of good news for farmers. It was really positive to see the latest Federated Farmers Farmer Confidence Survey reflecting this. It showed that a net 33% of farmers are confident about the future, compared with a net -66% when the last Government left office in 2023. It is the highest level for farmer confidence for eight years.

The last Labour government's war on farmers eroded trust and stalled investment. Agriculture Minister Todd McClay believes this announcement shows the war has ended.

"This Government has worked hard to change the settings, but there's



CARL BATES MP
WHANGANUI

still more to do to ensure farmers can deliver growth for all New Zealanders," Mr McClay says.

Farmers are a resilient group, and those in South Taranaki are no exception. A second consecutive summer drought put significant pressure on pastures and feed supplies early this year. These pressures however

were balanced against strong farm-gate milk prices and a surge. The survey highlights major improvements across key indicators including:

- Profitability - at its highest level ever recorded, with two-thirds of farmers reporting they are making a profit.
- Productivity - with a net 23% of farmers forecasting increased production over the next 12 months.
- Mental health - pressures have eased significantly, with fewer farmers reporting stress compared to last year.

Federated Farmers President Wayne Langford noted some of the issues that have beset

farmers in recent years. "It's great to see our July survey showing many farmers are feeling a whole lot more positive, thanks to better returns, lower interest rates, and easing inflation. "We've also seen a Government that's been willing to work with farmers and scrap some of the most unworkable, impractical rules that were killing the rural economy," Mr Langford said.

The National-led Government unashamedly backs our farmers. Their hard work and commitment to producing some of the best food and fibre in the world has kept New Zealand afloat through difficult years.

As the Member of Parliament for Whanganui,

an electorate in the rural heartland of New Zealand, I am proud to go into bat for our farmers. When they are doing well, the entire

economy benefits. *Carl Bates MP for Whanganui (including South Taranaki and Stratford).*

Sandra Grey elected as new NZCTU president



Sandra Grey.

The New Zealand Council of Trade Unions Te Kauae Kaimahi has announced that its affiliate unions have elected Sandra Grey as the new NZCTU President. Grey is the National Secretary, and a former president, of the Tertiary Education Union - Te Hautū Kahurangi. She has a long history in the tertiary education sector and served as the spokesperson for the Campaign for MMP. "We are thrilled that Sandra has been elected as the

incoming president of the Council of Trade Unions and look forward to the experience and energy that she will bring to the role," said NZCTU Secretary Melissa Ansell-Bridges. "Following on from Richard Wagstaff's 10 years of dedicated service as president and lifelong commitment to the trade union movement, Sandra is well placed to continue to grow the movement and campaign for working people's rights.

"Sandra wants to build union power and ensure unions are seen and present in workplaces across the country. This work has never been more important," said Ansell-Bridges. "Life is too hard for working people and their families right now. Children are going hungry. People are living in their cars. Many workers have to take up multiple jobs just to make ends meet. And the actions of the National-led government are making it far worse," said Sandra Grey. "This is a challenging time to lead the union movement, but workers know the power of taking action together. They continue to demonstrate this in the inspiring protests over pay equity and the many strikes that have been taking place this year. "The workers of Aotearoa are just getting started. I'm ready to be there, shoulder to shoulder with them,

wherever they work, to take their power back," said Grey. Grey will take on the role from October 30 following the resignation of Richard Wagstaff at the NZCTU's biennial conference on October 29.

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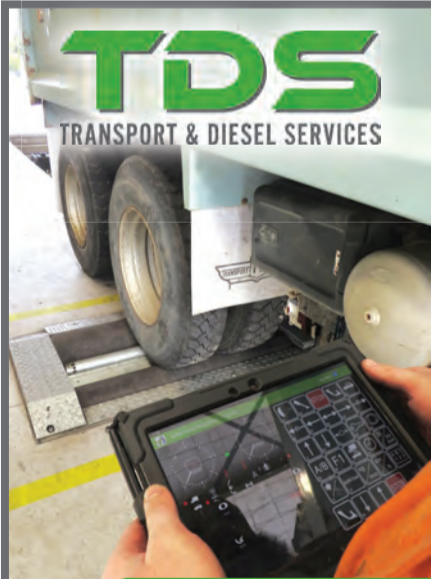
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Brain ageing – what the ‘Dunedin Study’ has just told us

In the southern reaches of Aotearoa New Zealand, tucked between student flats and stubborn sea breezes, a quiet, scientific study has been unfolding for over 50 years.

The Dunedin Multidisciplinary Health and Development Study, known more simply as the ‘Dunedin Study,’ has tracked the lives of 1,037 babies born in Dunedin in 1972–73. They’re now in their early 50s, and they’ve taught us more about health, lifestyle, and ageing than we’ve ever known before.

While the rest of the world chases Blue Zones and anti-ageing fads, the Dunedin Study has provided real answers, grounded in the lives of everyday New Zealanders - people with jobs, whānau, mortgages, and many of whom are still eating the odd meat pie.

The basics: what we’ve learned

Over five decades, the Dunedin Study has confirmed what most of us probably already suspected (and what our mothers never stopped telling us): your lifestyle matters. A lot.

People who ate well, moved regularly, avoided

smoking, and got enough sleep, fared better in terms of physical health, mental wellbeing, and cognitive ability. No surprise there. But what’s groundbreaking is the precision with which these researchers have been able to show how early patterns shape long-term outcomes, even when the results aren’t visible to the naked eye.

Take diet, for instance. Poor childhood nutrition isn’t just about a few extra cavities or sluggish energy. It can be linked to long-term inflammation, metabolic issues, and faster biological ageing in midlife. Likewise, regular physical activity isn’t just so you can get your jeans done up, it’s key to stronger hearts, sharper minds, and greater independence as we age.

July 2025 Breakthrough: How old is your brain, really?

The latest findings, released last month in the American publication ‘Nature Aging’ introduced a new brain scan-based biomarker known as DunedinPACNI (short for “Pace of Aging Computed from Neuroimaging”-



Richard Hall.

catchy, right?). In plain language, it’s a tool that shows how fast your brain is ageing compared to the number of candles on your birthday cake.

Some participants, despite being 52, had brains showing the wear and tear of someone a full decade older. And what did these older brains have in common? Lifelong patterns of stress, a consistently poor diet, large amounts of inactivity, and regularly disrupted sleep.

On the plus side, healthier habits, established early and maintained consistently - were associated with younger brain profiles. It’s not about perfection. It’s about putting your brain on the slow cooker, and not the fry pan.

Can you reverse brain age? Actually, they say... yes.

If you’re feeling slightly

nervous about your own brain clock and lifestyle, don’t panic. A faster pace of ageing isn’t a sentence; it’s a warning light. And unlike your car’s ‘check engine’ signal, this one doesn’t require a mechanic, just a bit of effort.

Here’s what works to help you (and your kids), according to the Dunedin researchers and other global studies – and you probably know this, but are you practicing it - and if not – why not?:

1) Move and exercise more: Brisk walking, swimming,

or cycling just 3–5 times a week can grow new brain cells and improve memory. Just put one foot in front of the other. Bonus points if it’s uphill. If you want a real fitness challenge – check out and get booked on FMF at the Event Centre.

2) Eat and drink smart: A Mediterranean-style diet or similar (rich in fruit, veg, legumes, olive oil, and fish) is associated with slower brain ageing. Avoid ultra processed and eat less processed food, more plants, and hydrate with water and not erm - fizzy drinks or beer.

3) Sleep well: Aim for 7–8 hours a night (you require less as you get older). Deep sleep helps your brain detox and reset. That third episode of your binge-worthy series can probably wait until tomorrow.

4) Stress less: Chronic stress isn’t just tiring; it can physically shrink parts of the brain and it negatively affects every cell in the body. Engage in things like mindfulness, breathing exercises, Tai Chi, or why not book in for some Yoga at the Event Centre.

5) Challenge yourself: Learn a new language, take up the guitar, or try a new hobby. It’s not about being good at it, just keeping the gears turning.

6) Stay social: Loneliness is a known risk factor for dementia and poor mental health. So get mixing with your family and friends, pick up the phone, join a

club, get to church or the marae, or just say more than “yeah, good” when someone asks how you are. Btw, Everybody’s Theatre are looking for volunteers to help run our amazing cinema (you’ll find the application form on their website) – what a great way to assist the community, meet new friends and see some cool films.

7) If you are over 50 consider getting checked: Know your blood pressure, cholesterol, and blood sugar levels. Keep an eye on the dashboard before something starts ‘smoking.’

8) And as always: the recommendation is to quit the ciggies, and stay within the recommended alcohol intake... hic! (or better still for your health - avoid it altogether).

Why this research matters for all of us

What makes the Dunedin Study so valuable is its everyday realism. These aren’t elite athletes or bio-hacked billionaires - they’re Kiwis. Builders, nurses, teachers, engineers. And their experiences show that the most powerful health tools aren’t exotic or expensive. They’re simple, consistent, and available to us all.

Because growing older is inevitable - but growing older well? That’s a job we can all train for.

Richard Hall
Mind Support, Ōpunake.

Solastalgia might help explain negative effects

‘Solastalgia’ - a combination of the words ‘solace’ and ‘nostalgia’ - might help explain the negative effects of climate change on mental health, according to Swiss researchers. Solastalgia, was

first coined in 2003, and it refers to the lack of solace and feelings of pain or sickness caused by changes in a person’s immediate or surrounding environment. Using data from 19 studies, the researchers found that

solastalgia is significantly associated with mental health problems and may be the way that ecological crises are impacting the aggravation of mental health problems.

BMJ Mental Health

The next issue of the Opunake & Coastal News is on August 28



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Top Scouting awards won by Taranaki siblings

There was a special presentation at Government House, Wellington on Saturday July 5 when His Excellency, Dr Richard Davies presented the King Scout Award, to Jake and Melissa Berridge. The awards they received are the highest youth awards in Scouting that are on offer. Jake is a building apprentice and lives locally. However, Melissa, his fraternal twin, is studying at Waikato University for her degree in accounting. She recently received a prestigious scholarship to help with her tuition and living costs. Their proud parents Wayne and Michelle watched as their eighteen-year-old children received the honour.

“They have working towards this award for many years. I was very impressed,” commented Michelle.



Jake and Melissa Berridge with their King Scout awards, overlooked benignly by King Charles.

Both are continuing their involvement in Scouts/Cubs as leaders. Jake is a scout leader in the Pukekura Scout group and Melissa is a cub leader in the Waikato region. Although different in many ways both siblings are “go getters and quite determined,” shares Michelle. She adds, “I know the award means the world to them and they are so honoured and grateful to have received the award.”

“We are incredibly proud of Jake and Melissa. We are very lucky to have two teenagers who have taken advantage of every opportunity they have been given, even when hard work has been involved.

This involves not just their commitment to scouting, but

also their schooling. At Spotswood College Jake received the Prime Minister’s Vocational Excellence Award at the 2024 Senior Prizegiving. At the same awards, Melissa received the Marjan Van Paassen Memorial Award for enthusiasm about learning.

The family has had some hard times over the last two years with Wayne requiring treatment for throat cancer. Both Melissa and Jake did not let this stop their dreams and they were very resilient. As well as attending school and continuing their scouting commitment they also helped to keep the family farm running.”

La Nina signals strengthen

The chances of La Nina conditions emerging by the end of the year have increased, according to the Seasonal Outlook for August-October released by Earth Sciences New Zealand (formerly NIWA).

For Central North Island, Taranaki, Whanganui, Manawatu, Wellington, temperatures are most likely to be above average (50% chance). Rainfall totals are equally likely to be near normal (40% chance) or above normal (40% chance). Soil moisture levels and river flows are most likely to be near normal (40-45% chance).

ENSO-neutral (El Niño – Southern Oscillation) conditions remain present in the tropical Pacific but have been trending towards La Niña-like conditions in July 2025.

This trend was driven in part by shifts in the structure of oceanic heat content and subsurface temperature anomalies in the equatorial Pacific Ocean.

Experimental forecasts for the alternative Relative Oceanic Niño Index (RONI), which accounts for

the broader warming trend across the tropical Pacific, indicate La Niña conditions are more likely to dominate the forecast period, with a probability close to 60%.

For New Zealand, atmospheric circulation over the next three-month period is expected to be dominated by northeasterly to easterly air flow anomalies. The likelihood of tropical and subtropical systems influencing New Zealand remains elevated. This continues to be associated with an increased risk of heavy rainfall events, including those linked to atmospheric rivers, and flooding.

Seasonal air temperatures for the three-month period are expected to be above average for all regions of New Zealand except the east of the South Island. While cold snaps and frost are anticipated, they are expected to be less frequent than usual.


August – October rainfall totals are expected to be above normal for the north and east of the North Island. Near normal or below normal rainfall is forecast

for the west of the South Island. For all remaining regions of New Zealand, near normal or above normal rainfall totals are about equally likely. These anticipated rainfall patterns are driven by circulation anomalies that heighten the risk of heavy rainfall events in the north and east of the North Island. Conversely, a shift toward more persistent easterly flow anomalies is expected as the season progresses, increasing the likelihood of dry conditions in the southwest of the South Island.

During August – October 2025, soil moisture levels and river flows are expected to be near normal in the north and west of the North Island and near normal or below normal in the east of the North Island. Near normal or above normal soil moisture levels and river

flows are forecast for the South Island.

Sea surface temperatures (SSTs) around NZ remain above average, particularly off the west coasts of both the North and South Islands, where Marine Heatwave (MHW) conditions persist.



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The Opunake & District Business Association meets on the 2nd Monday of each month.

"We would like to extend an invite to anyone that has an interest in getting involved with the business community, meeting other business owners and learning what the ODBA does"

Hughsons & Associates Boardroom at the Opunake Business Centre, 23 Napier St, Opunake (opposite the Coastal Care Medical Centre)

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We ran out of chairs

The Opunake and Districts Business Association meeting was a full house on Monday night.

"There is reassuring new interest in keeping the ODBA as the hub of the business community," says Murray Forsdyke, the newly appointed Chair.

"With the primary

objective of the ODBA being to support its membership to prosper and Opunake to be a destination we refreshed our to-do list and added new initiatives with actions taken and tasks assigned.

Although we are still keen to fill a Secretary position on the managing committee, several members stepped

forward to take actions on items on the to do-list that are needing quick attention and I am very grateful they did.

There are passionate people that have practical proposals which are possible with combined help from others in the wider community that have already offered to help.

I am looking forward to getting on with it and chatting about them at our upcoming after-fives gatherings."

Murray will be writing a regular column on the Opunake and Districts Business Association in future entitled Mind Your Business.



The last Business Association meeting on August 11.

Further cuts fund new tech institute

Details of new changes to research funding under sweeping science sector reforms have been released. The briefing confirms that the set up of the NZ Institute for Advanced Technology will be paid for through reallocated science funding, including long-term reductions to specific public research funds such as the Marsden Fund and the Health Research Fund. These changes come on top of reprioritised research funding in the 2025 Budget being used to set up the three other Public Research Organisations, a new PM's Advisory Council, Invest NZ, and a new gene tech regulator. Professor Nicola Gaston, Director of the MacDiarmid Institute for Advanced Materials and Nanotechnology, comments: "Despite the jazz hands

in display around the announcement of the NZIAT (or Advanced Tech PRO), we knew it was not new money. The shock is not the reprioritisation from SSIF, Callaghan Innovation, or Endeavour grants for this — those mechanisms are reasonably well aligned with the purpose of the NZIAT, so not too big a deal on some level — aside from the longstanding critique that the system is already underfunded and the cost of the reforms themselves are absorbing research money etc. "But the bigger picture here is the capture of the science system by politicians and by bureaucrats. The movement of funds from the Investigator-led Marsden Fund, in addition to previously announced cuts to the scheme, is absolutely an attack on

fundamental research and on internationally-recognised research excellence. I am far from a critic of applied or mission-led research, and can see potential in the PRO reforms to create critical mass. But this is killing the goose that laid the golden egg and then boiling that egg in aqua regia.

"Impactful scientific research requires sustained scientific leadership, not politicians whose decisions about where and how to allocate funding seem to be driven primarily by the extent to which they get to take credit for the funding announcements." Dr James Hutchinson, CEO of KiwiNet, comments: "If we want more economic growth from our science system, now is the time to invest in R&D — not cut it. The evidence is clear internationally: countries that

lift R&D investment see faster productivity growth and stronger economies. "We also need to invest in the commercialisation system that turns research into real-world impact. Currently, less than 1% of public science, innovation and technology funding supports this critical capability — the people and programmes that connect discoveries with industry and investors, and create new companies. "To get the best return for taxpayers, we need a diverse 'garden' of research — from blue-skies to applied — coupled with stronger commercialisation pathways. That combination is what will grow the next generation of technologies, transform industries, and build a more prosperous future for Aotearoa."



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Checkout Girls a hoot

Hawera Repertory’s recent show Checkout Girls, written by Lousie Roche, has just finished its run and it was a lot of fun to experience. The comedy was a great way to celebrate Hawera Repertory’s eightieth year of operation. Staged at their Collins Street premises, the show was expertly directed by Samantha Turner, aided by stage manager Sandra Richards and the dedicated backstage crew.

The acting was excellent with each member of the cast well-suited to their roles. Malcolm (played by Anthony Bennett) was a definite standout, with his combat background in the Korean War, his no frills, say it exactly as it is (in a strong voice) persona, with an occasional venture on ‘too much information’, such as “I’ve had four marriages - and four divorces.” His kind heart and ‘action not words’ mode of operation finds him visiting house-bound Pam (played by Janine Horo) to persuade the agoraphobic lady (just one phobia of many) to come and hear

her painfully shy daughter Shelley (Bethany Gyde) sing in public.

Janine played her part with confidence, assurance and believability.

Bethany was delight to watch and her facial

gestures revealed her often uncomfortable feelings. Excellent acting. It was nice to hear her sing - lovely voice.

The dialogue between the two checkout girls was very funny, especially with

the contrasting personalities. Sharon (played by Kristy Logan) is brassy, cynical, doesn’t believe in love (only lust) and has flings with misunderstood (!) married men. Tammy (Played by Sharon Oliver) does believe

in love, is demonstrably extrovert, but when she finds Mr Right discovers he is gay. Brilliant effort from both actresses.

Prim and proper Sylvia (played by Michelle Glover) is somewhat moralistic, but has a distant past of which she is not proud. Excellent acting in a challenging role.

Finally, Pam’s deceased husband Mr Worley (Donald Campbell) makes a brief appearance as a ghost to show us some slick dance moves.

I really loved the sudden

flamboyant, energetic dances. Great to watch.

Although this show was very funny, there were quite a few issues dealt with. It was, in many ways, a thought-provoking play which always appeals to me.

Well done, on a great performance. Well done to everyone who worked to make this comedy so enjoyable. Make sure you get tickets for Hawera Repertory’s Barbara Leydon Junior Drama Festival (9-11 September) and the One Act Plays (25-29 November).

Rolland McKellar



From left, Sharon (Kristy Logan) and Tammy (Sharon Oliver) contemplate a pile of groceries and life in general.

Cockatoo dance moves probably put yours to shame

Australian researchers say cockatoos have an impressive 30 different dance moves, including headbanging, sidestepping and body rolls. The team analysed 45 social media videos of various species of cockatoo dancing, and identified the 30 moves, 17 of which weren’t previously known. They also found some individual cockatoos have unique dance moves, which often involve combining several movements in new ways. They then studied

six birds from three species at the Wagga Wagga Zoo, playing them music, a podcast, or silence to see how they’d react. All the birds danced, even when there was no music to dance to. The scientists say the findings show that at least 10 of the 21 known cockatoo species enjoy a boogie and suggest that playing music to captive birds could help keep them healthy and happy.

PLOS One



Okato artist Graham Kirk’s latest painting entitled Batman in Taranaki.

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built relationships. We’ve become part of the fabric of Taranaki—quietly supporting the stories, events, and milestones that matter most to our community.

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may fly, it’s the people—our team, our clients, our community—who make it all worthwhile.

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Mixed reviews for Crown Minerals legislation

The passing of the Crown Minerals Amendment Act which reverses the ban on new petroleum permits has been welcomed by Energy Resources Aotearoa and the New Zealand Minerals Council but slammed by Greenpeace.

Energy Resources Aotearoa Chief Executive John Carnegie says the legislation goes some way towards rebuilding the confidence to invest in New Zealand’s petroleum sector, which is essential for backing up the country’s renewable electricity system, especially during periods of low hydro inflows and peak winter demand.

“This Bill reverses policy that has done real damage to New Zealand’s long-term energy security, our economic resilience, and our reputation as a place to invest.

“But this legislation is even worse: Luxon is proposing to overturn existing law that makes oil companies automatically responsible for the costs of decommissioning oil and gas fields.”

“Under existing law, even if an existing operator onells an end-of-life oil and gas field to a shell company, which then goes bankrupt when faced with the costs of decommissioning, the original operator is still responsible for the cost.

“Luxon is changing the legislation so that the Minister of Resources and the Minister of Finance

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In case you didn't know

A little bit of local knowledge from Ian McAlpine is the giant kōkopu (*Galaxias argenteus*) which is found in the Ahukawakawa Swamp on the mountain and is a threatened species of ray-finned fish in the genus *Galaxias*, found only in New Zealand. These fish live in the swamp above Te-Rere-o-Tahurangi/Bells Falls, reaching up to 58 cm long and 2.7 kg. Also known to many as whitebait, they share the waters up there with fresh-water crayfish/Kōura.



Freshwater crayfish.

RIGHT:
Kokopu.



Health experts urge inquiry into tobacco industry influence

Health Coalition Aotearoa (HCA) is calling for a public inquiry and urging the Government to rethink its support for heated tobacco products (HTPs), following fresh revelations the Government extended a 50% tax cut on the products for two more years.

Following on the heels of revelations about tobacco industry lobbying of politicians, Health Coalition Aotearoa is calling for a public inquiry into tobacco industry influence. HCA is also calling for the Prime Minister to reassign the tobacco and vaping portfolio away from NZ First. The heated tobacco products tax break was introduced last year-against the advice of government officials. They pointed out tobacco giant Philip Morris (who have a monopoly on heated tobacco products in Aotearoa New Zealand) would be the main beneficiary. “There’s no evidence heated tobacco products help people stop smoking, or that they’re significantly less harmful than cigarettes,” says Dr Jude Ball, Health Coalition

Aotearoa spokesperson and University of Otago researcher. “Yet the Government, despite committing to a one-year trial, have extended the tax cut by two more years. This decision is favourable to the tobacco industry but not beneficial to public health. “This latest decision adds to a worrying trend of Government policy decisions that align with tobacco company interests. The Government’s approach to evaluating if heated tobacco p+roducts help people quit smoking is unclear. It is highly unusual for a Government to run a trial like this which, by cutting a tax on HTPs, helps the sole seller of heated tobacco products (Philip Morris) to increase their product sales. Especially if there is no evidence that product helps people to quit cigarettes. “Tobacco giant Phillip Morris are the sole beneficiaries of this tax cut. It’s a poor use of taxpayer dollars at a time when our health system is already stretched,” says Dr Ball. Health Coalition Aotearoa

calls on the Government to launch a public inquiry into tobacco industry influence on Government policy and strip NZ First of the tobacco and vaping portfolio.



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Local Body elections:

Continued from page 3

defeating Coxhead and Hawera businessman Craig Baylis. This year there will also be a vote on whether Maori wards should continue. Voting papers start being delivered from September 9 and voting closes on midday October 11. There had been concerns that there might not again be enough candidates for the five Te Hawera Ward seats, but a late rush of

nominations has meant there are now seven people vying for Council seats. Cr Andy Beccard, the longest serving member of the Council is seeking another term. So are Crs Diana Reid, Te Aroha Hohaia and Racquel Pittams-Cleaver. Among the other candidates, Garth Weir is a former South Taranaki District councillor, and Hawera Community Board member Heather Brokenshire is also standing for the Council. The other candidate is Ngawai

Hernandez-Walden. Cr Celine Filbee is standing for the Te Hawera Community Board. In the Taranaki Coastal Ward Crs Bryan Roach and Aaron Langton are joined by Coastal Rugby Club chair Janet Fleming in vying for two positions. There is a four-way tussle for two positions in the Eltham-Kaponga Ward, with Crs Mark Bellringer and Steffy McKay as well as Community Board chair Karen Cave and Tim Taylor.

In the Te Kūrae Maori Ward there will be a repeat of three years ago with Cr Leanne Horo again facing off against Caroline Waiwiri. There is also keen competition for all four community boards in the South Taranaki District. This is in contrast to the district's northern neighbour New Plymouth where there will be no election needed for the Puketapu-Bell Block Community Board, and there will have to be by-elections to fill up places

on the Clifton and Kaitake boards. Whatever happens there will be a different look to the Taranaki Coastal Community Board with two of its four members, Sharlee Mareikura, the deputy chair, and Liz Sinclair not seeking re-election. Along with board chair Andy Whitehead and board member Monica Willson, other candidates are Mary Moore, Lynelle Kuriger, Lola Katene, Caroline Waiwiri, Kirsty Meynell and Murray Dysart.

There are seven nominations for four positions on the Eltham-Kaponga Community Board. Board chair Karen Cave and board members Lindsay Maindonald and Alan Hawkes are joined by Stan Barnett, Anaru Jacobson, Glennys Price and Dave Stewart. The board's deputy chair Sonya Douds is not seeking re-election. There are also seven nominations for four seats on the Hawera Community Board, with sitting members

Bryan Roach



Standing for STDC Taranaki Coastal Ward.

Hi. I'm Bryan Roach standing for re-election for STDC for a fifth term. I live and work on a dairy farm in Ōpunake. Councillors have to look at all the options, think outside the box, maybe come up with your own options, review the budget or throw the budget out. Look at all the parties being affected, consider the impact on rates before making your decision. Infrastructure is one of my strong backgrounds. I'm keen to get council water supplies up to 100% compliant with the latest government regulations 100% of the time. Our wastewater is not

always compliant and needs investment. Our stormwater is under pressure with the change in the weather patterns. There is more flooding and erosion that council has to deal with. Roading has the biggest cost and the biggest problems, especially in storm events with cost in the millions. Our bridge programme is falling behind again with the cost of inflation. We need to fix this. To my fellow farmers after an ugly drought, a beautiful winter, exceptional spring grass growth, just remember to make plenty of silage to get through the summer. It could be a dry one. Vote for Bryan Roach.

Mary Moore



Standing for Taranaki Coastal Community Board.

"Tena koe I moved to New Zealand from Canada 16 years ago and have made my home in sunny Manaia for the past 10 years. Before I retired, I worked as a Senior Business Analyst for the Government of Canada. I loved my job. I'm standing for a position as a member of the Taranaki Coastal Community Board. These boards are given the job of granting money to various projects in the community from a Discretionary Fund. A board member also makes recommendations for Council to consider and make decisions on. It's about time that Manaia had someone at Council speaking up for Manaia. To be great, a community needs bread and roses – not only the things we need, but also the things that give us a better life. Manaia has had very few opportunities to socialize, to grow a sense of belonging, to have fun. The kids especially have missed out on the many benefits to be gained from play. We have a lot of catching up to do. With your support, I will represent the views of residents and ensure that community interests

LOCAL ELECTIONS 2025 - MEET THE CANDIDATES

are considered in Council decisions to the best of my ability. Nga mihi nui" Mary

Lindsay Maindonald



Standing for Eltham-Kaponga Community Board.

Hello Eltham Kaponga and Districts. I'm Lindsay Maindonald standing for a third term for the community board. Anita is my wife, and Elizabeth our high school daughter keeps us on our toes at home. Our older children now have their own families and careers. Eltham has been home for 28 years. My interests are trampng, mountaineering, search/rescue, skiing (when there's snow) and classic cars. I'm an artist, singer, songwriter/musician. I was a Foundation member of the Fringe Garden Festival. I have a strong Christian faith and values. I'm Padre for Eltham RSA and involved in the district's Anzac Services. I've been in church leadership areas for 50 plus years and am also a Funeral Celebrant serving your communities. I believe in honesty, integrity, fairness. I'm not afraid to speak up on issues and not easily swayed by the Majority Rules concept. I advocated to save Eltham's Municipal Building and strongly advocated to save Kaponga's Library. I've spoken at length on Eltham/Kaponga's parks, roading, parking and town upgrades. I continue to press for Kaponga as the Taranaki Crossing nears completion. I believe it could change the face of

Kaponga, as thousands of tourists use it. Already it is being touted as a rival to the Tongariro Crossing. I've worked helping business people, homeowners and residents on many issues this last term. I'd like to ask for your vote for the new term. If re-elected I will continue to serve you people of Eltham/Kaponga ward to the best of my ability. Authorised by Lindsay Maindonald, Eltham

Andy Beccard



Standing for STDC Te Hawera Ward.

My name is Andy Beccard I am experienced in leadership with a strong local voice. I have proudly served as a district councillor for the past seven terms and am seeking re-election to continue representing our community with integrity and common sense. I have consistently advocated for strong local decision-making on local issues. I remain firmly opposed to regional amalgamation and

amalgamation of our waters. I chair the Environment and Hearings and District Plan Committees, helping to make the district more enabling for our people. I am a member of the Audit and Risk Committee and have played a significant role in shaping our Long-Term Investment Fund, which continues to provide lasting benefits to our district. A council needs experienced and new councillors to ensure robust decision-making. My proven track record of leadership, financial oversight, and dedication to local priorities makes me well placed to continue serving effectively. Vote for Andy Beccard experience and common sense for our district.

Mike Davey



Standing for TRC North Taranaki Constituency

It has been a privilege to represent North Taranaki as your representative on the Regional Council. Previously Regional

BRYAN ROACH

standing for

Taranaki Coastal Ward

South Taranaki District Council

100% committed

100% common sense approach

- Dairy Farmer • Trustee
- Company Director

Please take the time to vote!

Authorised by Bryan Roach, 296 Opua Road, Opunake

VOTE

YES

TO

MAORI WARDS

More candidates put their hands up

Nikki Watson, Heather Brokenshire and Raymond Buckland joined by Tobi Hipp, Jamie-Anne Manutai, Rachel Werder and Ngawai Hernandez-Walden.

At the Patea Community Board there are five nominations for four places. Further afield there are also mayoral contests in Stratford and New Plymouth districts. Stratford mayor Neil Volzke who is one of the longest serving mayors in the country is being challenged by Stratford

district councillor, tractor salesman and former police officer Jono Erwood. New Plymouth district mayor Neil Holdom announced shortly before nominations closed that he would not be seeking another term. Nine candidates have put their names forward to succeed him. They are deputy mayor David Bublitz, Sam Bennett, Max Brough, Graham Chard, Sarah Lucas, Greg MacKay, Peter Marra, Bill Simpson and John Woodward.

This year there have been 82 nominations received for New Plymouth District Council positions from mayor to community board positions. This compares to 77 three years ago. There are 20 people standing for 11 places on the Taranaki Regional Council. At this stage the only one sure to be at the Council table after October 11 is Bonita Bigham who has been returned unopposed for the Maori Constituency. Among the nine candidates

for five places in the New Plymouth Constituency are former New Plymouth MP Jonathan Young and Spotswood College principal Nicola Ngarewa. Taranaki Federated Farmers president Leedom Gibbs is one of five people vying for two North Taranaki Constituency seats. Sitting councillor Mike Davey has been at the Council table since 2007 and is seeking another term. Other candidates are Lee Kennedy and environmental

advocates Tama Blackburn and Chris Wilkes. There are three candidates for the South Taranaki Constituency. Sitting members Neil Walker and Donna Cram are both seeking re-election. Neil is the Council deputy chair and was awarded the ONZM in the Kings Birthday Honours list. Donna is a previous New Zealand Dairy Woman of the Year. Also standing is climate activist Urs Signer who contested the South Taranaki Constituency in the

2022 local body election. In the Stratford Constituency, Alan Jamieson who unseated Matthew McDonald at the 2022 local body election is facing a challenge from Brendan Attrill, this year's national Ballance Farm Environmental Awards winner.

Manager of Ravensdown Fertiliser, and now a director of the company, Chair of T.E.T trust, trustee of Taranaki Health Trust, retired director Taranaki Hospital Board.

I see my role as "caretaker" of our regional asserts, and proud of our farmers for achieving the riparian and fencing programme for our region ...89% of our waterways fenced and over 78% planted, this programme is internationally recognised and received the Green Ribbon award from the Ministry of Environment , Taranaki is the envy of other councils as they are just starting"Here's the Kicker" a big thank you to our farmers as this riparian programme was paid for by farmers ..No handouts.

Port Taranaki owned by the Regional Council, is an important asset to our province, our exporters / importers, the only West Coast port, it not an asset we should sell.

Thank you for your support ...I'll ask the hard questions. *Mike Davey*

just, fair and regenerative future.

"The council urgently needs progressive and environmental voices at the decision-making table committed to Te Tiriti o Waitangi and I am excited to see a number of candidates in the various wards around the mounnga standing up for the environment and grassroots communities. It is time that we shake up the Taranaki Regional Council with radical ideas and solid actions for a better future for the next generation. I am more than ready to step up and be part of a team that takes this region forward.

"In order to stop catastrophic climate change, we need to urgently bring down our emissions. With over 50% of Aotearoa's emissions coming from the agricultural industry, it is vital that we radically change our farming practices from intensive to extensive, from entropic to syntropic, from degenerative to regenerative. As a market gardener and horticulture teacher in coastal South Taranaki, I know from first-hand farming experience that we have the tools and knowledge to change the way we do things and start to sequester carbon, diversify production, reforest many parts of the region and ensure that the social, environmental and economic spheres start to align again."

Kerry Vosseler



Standing for NPDC Kaitake-Ngamotu Ward.

I'm Kerry Vosseler, a third-generation business owner who built and ran Chaos Café for 20 years

with hard work, integrity and financial savvy. As a ratepayer myself, I know the sting of rising rates and the frustration of seeing our money spent on frivolous projects while core needs are sidelined.

I'm running for NPDC to fight for you, the ratepayers. My priorities are clear:

Let's rein in excesses in spending. Refocus priorities, maintaining community facilities over flashy, wasteful projects, and restore trust in Council.

With my proven track record of balancing the books and serving our community, I'll fight for your hard-earned money, serving ratepayers before political interests

Vote Kerry Vosseler to put Ratepayers first

Your voice for real change
YouTube : Kerry Vosseler for NPDC 2025

Sarah Sutherland



Standing for NPDC District-Wide Ward.

I understand infrastructure and am an engineer with over 30 years' experience at major engineering firms in Taranaki, throughout New Zealand and internationally.

I have a track record of identifying project savings by examining the evidence including looking at energy efficient solutions that decrease operating costs while improving our environment. I have worked on water and waste water infrastructure projects from small regional towns to large municipalities, electricity networks. I have experience in the energy sector including wind, solar, gas and oil. I have developed resilience

strategies to protect the national grid's assets from extreme weather, earthquake, fire, volcanic and other potentially catastrophic events including the effects of climate change.

However New Plymouth District is more than pipes and roads. I want a place where we continue to

find joy whether it is the surf, the mountain, the pools, the community sportsfields, the

glorious parks, the gorgeous walkway, Len Lye or the wonderful events that come here.

I have a passion for our place, and the experience that it takes to serve as your councillor.

Tina Koch



Standing for NPDC District-Wide Ward.

I'm Tina Koch, a wife, mother of six, and a small business owner. I am standing for New Plymouth District Council because I care deeply about our community and believe in building a future where everyone feels heard, respected, and included. As someone actively involved in local initiatives, I want to campaign for small local businesses, sustainability initiatives, and more support for grassroots community projects. I've seen first-hand how inclusive spaces can bring people together and strengthen our social fabric.

My decision to run comes from a desire to ensure that council decisions reflect the voices and needs of the entire community, not just a select few. I'm committed to promoting transparency,

equity, and genuine community consultation. I believe local government plays a crucial role in shaping how we live, work, and connect, and I want to be a part of making those decisions with care and stronger accountability.

New Plymouth is a vibrant, diverse place, full of potential. If elected, I will work hard to make sure that potential is nurtured and that all voices, especially those

often underrepresented, have a seat at the table.

Please don't hesitate to contact me. 0220629048
tinakochnp@gmail.com

Bryan Vickery is seeking re-election for the NPDC



Reining in rates is a priority. Clearly some capital projects such as the extension of the Coastal Walkway must be paused, but not scuttled. However, it's important we don't throw out the baby with the bath water. We still need to invest in our roads and water infrastructure.

During my first term on council I have been pragmatic and positive. I have pivoted on several issues to better represent ratepayers. I withdrew my support for the cycling separators, and the Tūparikino Active Hub in 2023 when costs escalated. But supported it a year later after it was redesigned at a lower cost. I work well with all councillors, and have proudly supported Councillor Max Brough's efforts to reduce council waste and his calls for greater transparency.

In the recent Local Water Done Well debate, I voted against a NPDC Water Services CCO, arguing instead for an In-house Business Unit model, as it would cost less.

I am best known for supporting dozens of not for profit groups through my free media platform, including doing lots of free emceeing and interviewing to promote community initiatives. I have also worked alongside retailers and key stakeholders to try and mitigate the rough sleeping problem in the CBD.

Authorised by Bryan Vickery, 27 Northgate, Strandon, NP



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WITT here to stay say Taranaki leaders

Taranaki leaders are stepping forward with a clear message: WITT will continue to play a central role in the future of education for Taranaki.

“Let us be clear, WITT is not closing. It remains the largest tertiary education provider in Taranaki and a cornerstone of our region’s future. The region stands behind WITT and our collective energy is now focused on supporting its next chapter,” says Chair of the Taranaki Mayoral Forum, Stratford Mayor Neil Volzke.

As the Government reviews the viability of institutes following the disestablishment of Te Pūkenga, regional leaders have come together to build the foundations for a better, fit for purpose tertiary model for the region.

“We acknowledge that the Government embarked on this process to set up a more viable and future-fit vocational education system for Aotearoa. Now that we understand our place in that process, we are not waiting for government to bring a solution. We’re creating the table for those solutions to be discussed and inviting government to join us there,” Volzke adds.

WITT continues to deliver for the region’s people, from school leavers to adult learners, in critical disciplines such as trades, nursing, engineering, and business. Despite immense disruption over recent years, including COVID-19’s impact on international education and significant national reforms, WITT has remained a highly valued foundation for regional learning and development.

“We know it must be financially viable, and we believe that it can be. However this is not just about a balance sheet, it’s about our workforce, our economy and our young people” says Volzke.

As the region continues to evolve through energy transition, a growing food and fibre industry, and shifts in the digital, and health sectors, leaders see this as an opportunity to shape what education needs to look like to support new skills for a future-focused Taranaki.

“WITT, like many tertiary providers across the country, is having to make tough decisions to change courses that are currently not financially or operationally viable. While this is understandably unsettling, it also presents an opportunity to reset and refocus,” says Volzke.

Sheree Long, Director of Workforce Development, Energy Resources Aotearoa, believes that vocational education is not optional, it’s essential.

“In regions like Taranaki, where our energy systems are adapting and evolving, and building future-focused capability, we need providers like WITT delivering skills that match real workforce demand.”

“As the education landscape shifts, this is an opportunity to ensure vocational training is aligned with where the jobs are going. Industry is ready to step in and partner to enable that future,” Long adds.

A voluntary education leadership group - formed after the dissolution of the government’s Regional Skills Leadership Groups is actively leading this work.

This group, led by local government and iwi, with representatives from the region’s economic development agency, business sector leaders, education providers and social services, is not starting from scratch. It is building on years of strategic vision, readiness, and coordination



Taranaki leaders stand by their education provider.

in the region.

Kelvin Wright, Chief Executive, Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki says, “Tertiary education reform was identified as a key regional priority in the recently refreshed Tapuae Roa Action Plan, the region’s economic development strategy, reflecting foresight that the system was shifting, and a localised response is needed.”

“That vision is now being put into action, as regional leaders coordinate efforts to position WITT for long-term sustainability and impact,” Wright adds.

The group will also actively engage with The Tertiary Education Commission, the Ministry of Education, and the Minister for Vocational Education to proactively present a plan and build together a strong education model that is regionally grounded, responsive, and delivers for learners and industry.

The group is also calling on regional industry leaders, employers, funders, and civic partners to step in now to actively support WITT’s transition, explore secondment opportunities, champion international education, and back the long-term vision.

“This is not something WITT can or should do alone,” says Stacey Hitchcock, GM Investment, Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki.

“We’re calling on regional employers, funders, and industry leaders to step forward and help shape the next phase. WITT is our largest tertiary education provider, if we want it to reflect our future workforce and regional needs, we must help co-create that. The leadership group will be actively engaging with these stakeholders in the coming weeks, and we encourage them to be ready to contribute, collaborate, and lead alongside us,” Hitchcock adds.

Autism symptoms may be milder in young girls

Autism International scientists say autism symptoms tend to be milder in young girls than they are in boys, which may explain why the condition has been thought of as less common among girls. They looked at data on 3,106 children with an older sibling with autism, and 1,444 without. The age of the children ranged from 20 to 40 months. They found girls showed milder autistic traits than boys, although this gap was smaller among boys and girls with a confirmed autism diagnosis. Girls had fewer difficulties than boys in terms of eye contact and social impairment, they say, which could lead to cases of autism being missed as the existing diagnostic criteria for autism do not take these differences into account.

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Maunga with misty snow.

Venture Taranaki Calls for Big Thinkers to PowerUp in 2025

Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki, the region’s economic development agency, is calling on early-stage founders, startups, and ambitious thinkers to apply for the 2025 PowerUp Business Ready programme, a free, eight-week business capability workshop series designed to help Taranaki entrepreneurs validate their ideas, build confidence, and develop a viable plan to launch or grow.

The 2025 intake begins on Tuesday, 16 September, with applications now open and closing on Sunday, 31 August. Places are strictly limited and subject to a panel-based selection process.

Over the course of eight weeks, participants will engage in interactive, practical workshops that cover core business fundamentals, including customer validation, value proposition development, market strategy, financial planning, and pitching. Each



participant also receives a one-on-one session with a business advisor to review progress, refine their business model, and define their next steps.

“PowerUp Business Ready is an established programme with proven

results” says Jenn Patterson, GM Economic Development at Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki. “It’s designed for people who are ready to act, whether they’re at the concept stage or looking to grow innovation within an existing business.”

The programme has already helped accelerate the growth of numerous Taranaki ventures. One of last year’s participants, Kris Sebro, CEO of Lastmyle, says, “PowerUp enables the business to capture the key elements for the appropriate

structure and provides a great foundation for any company, new or existing, to set them up for success.” says, “PowerUp enables the business to capture the key elements for the appropriate structure and provides a great foundation for any company, new or existing, to set them up for success.”

Sebro, whose business is creating energy solutions to meet the needs of the future energy system in Aotearoa, praised PowerUp for helping Lastmyle strategically align along the electricity value chain.

“A key challenge for us was product-market fit and optimising our value proposition. PowerUp helped us clarify this by challenging us to understand our customers’ motivations and refine our approach to market.”

“Plans rarely proceed as indicated, and the ability to pivot is critical. Listening to

your customers will guide you to create a better, fit-for-purpose product.”

PowerUp Business Ready is one of several initiatives within the broader PowerUp platform, a suite of programmes designed to support every stage of the entrepreneurial journey. Other initiatives include the PowerUp Accelerator and Scale Up Grants, as well as expert-led masterclasses, structured workshops, and inspiring storytelling from local Taranaki founders through the PowerUp Podcast.

“The startup ecosystem in Taranaki is building real momentum” says Jenn Patterson. “PowerUp Business Ready is the longest-running and most successful business incubator programme in the region. We’re proud to back the next generation of bold thinkers and early-stage businesses.”

Kaponga WI



The winning team from left are Nan Stokes, Sharyn Hurley, Jo Ellis, Caroline Mundt and Joy Eliason.

Kaponga WI had their meeting on August 11 at Nan Stokes’ home in New Plymouth. Nan was our host for the day.

President Dene welcomed those who attended and thanked Nan for opening her home for us. We recited our Aspirations and then got on with the meeting. Nan read out the thought for the month which was “ The dictionary is the only place where success comes before work. “

The roll call for the day was - Your recommendation of a book you have just read. While some of our members have said they don’t read books, the rest of the members that do read have a favourite author and have read many series of books.

Discussions were held in regards to our up and coming 94th birthday in

October and our Christmas get together where our partners are included.

The silver dish stays with last month’s recipient as she was absent today. Carolyn Nicholas won the raffle.

Competition results were: Table decoration. 1. Jo Ellis. 2. Diane West. 3. Carolyn Nicholas. Three savoury biscuits. 1.Nan Stokes. 2. Jo Ellis. 3. Dianne West.

When the meeting concluded we had another delicious shared lunch and lots of catching up was had along with laughter.

Nan, being the hostess had arranged our afternoon entertainment of a Quiz of all sorts with the help from her daughter.

Lots of fun was had and the two teams were set for the challenge. Another successful day was had.

Jo Ellis.


“Make mow time, me time”



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Bryan Vickery supporting Ōkato

Celebrating community is what drives me. More than a year ago the Kaitake Ngāmotu Community Board voted for me to be their NPDC Councillor, to replace Cr Anneka Carlson Matthews who had stepped down after she had her baby. I have enjoyed working with board chair Graham Chard, and board members Teresa Goodin, Paul Lobb and Renee Hohaia.

My professional background is radio journalism and regional TV presenting. For many years I was a Newstalk ZB reporter, with a particular interest in the New Plymouth District Council. Before that I was



Bryan Vickery.

Classic and George, their expert driver, Glenys Putt, and handlers (horse whisperers) Jasmin Kemsley and Jade Pearce-Young, and those seated in the carriage, Lesley Dowding, Nicci Richards, Meg Cardiff, Aaron Bosch and Gail

Paul’s Church, the list is endless. They make a place special, and I tip my hat to them.

I am thinking of people like Jessie-Anne Clements, she’s with Ōkato Lions. The Lions Club are unsung heroes. Jessie-Anne wants to spruce up the town notice board, to make it more presentable and weather proof. We are working on how Lions and Council can better work together to enhance the townscape.

My extra responsibilities on Council include working with the Friends of Pukekura Park, Heritage Taranaki and the Taranaki Media



Lesley Dowding, Meg Cardiff, Gail Church, Aaron Bosch and Nicci Richards.

Matariki at Hempton Hall, the Ōkato Cemetery in the lead up to Anzac Day; and to my chagrin, footage of when I got lost by the Pyramid Stream, and was forced to

sleep rough overnight. In closing I want to acknowledge Nicci Richards. I first met Nicci when I emceed the Taranaki Emergency Services Ball to

raise money for the Taranaki Retreat. I love her vision for Ōkato and I am looking forward to supporting her upcoming fundraising ball at the Hempton Hall.



ABOVE: Coastal Clydesdales, Classic and George, their expert driver, Glenys Putt (obscured), and handlers (horse whisperers at front) Jasmin Kemsley and Jade Pearce-Young. Also, at the back, from left, is Aaron Bosch, Lesley Dowding, Meg Cardiff, Gail Church and Nicci Richards.

RIGHT: Those seated in the carriage are, from left, Lesley Dowding, Aaron Bosch, Meg Cardiff, Glenys Putt, Gail Church and Nicci Richards.

a high school English and History teacher. I am best known for my not-for-profit popular media platform, Bryan Vickery Media Taranaki Facebook page which has 7300 followers. I do positive videos that celebrate community, and I love filming nature, especially Taranaki Maunga. The stunning photos of the two Coastal Clydesdales,

Church are all community stalwarts. It’s people like them that makes Ōkato a unique and vibrant town. It’s selfless people like them that work with the likes of NZ Volunteer Firefighters, Lions, the Wednesday Market stallholders at Hempton Hall, Ōkato & District Historical Society, Age Concern, reading groups, exercise groups, St

Archives. My edited videos of milestone events in Ōkato, such as the 2025 Anzac Day march and service, and the past three Cape Egmont Half Marathons (which I emceed), have been archived with the Taranaki Media Archives for posterity. Other videos include, the 2024 St Paul’s Community Christmas Carols, the Ōkato Historical Society promotion, Songs of



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TRC conduct review report released

A raft of recommendations have been made to help the incoming Taranaki Regional Council improve its decision-making processes and rebuild trust with iwi and the wider community.

Council Chief Executive Steve Ruru has released his report following a review into the elected Council's December 2024 decision not to lodge a submission on the Principles of the Treaty of Waitangi Bill (the Bill) and not to have a debate on the matter.

The Council Conduct Review Report concluded that decision-making process had been inconsistent with Council standing orders, established meeting protocols and the broader principles of good governance, transparency and natural justice.

It found evidence of pre-



Council Chief Executive Steve Ruru

meeting discussion and agreement among most of the councillors to oppose making a submission against the Bill and to curtail debate, which contributed to a perception of predetermination and bias.

The handling of a related deputation by Dinnie Moeahu also fell short of the expected standard of engagement and caused offence.

The report states the consequences of the December meeting were severe, as it damaged the Council's reputation, resulted in a loss of trust and confidence in the elected Council from iwi partners and strained internal relationships.

Mr Ruru says the review looked at what happened before, during and after the meeting as well as the surrounding circumstances and processes.

Important lessons have been learned and the report includes several key recommendations that the Council will consider at its 5 August meeting.

Firstly, it endorses the

decision the Council made in February to apologise to Mr Moeahu, the Taranaki community and councillors who were denied the opportunity to speak.

It recommends training and professional development for councillors on Te Tiriti o Waitangi and its application to the Council's work, mātauranga Māori and tikanga of iwi in Taranaki. It also recommends structured training around standing orders and meeting procedures, to ensure these are clear and consistently applied.

The tight time frame for submitting on the Bill meant it could not go before the Policy and Planning Committee first as it usually would. The report acknowledges the draft submission should have instead been emailed to Committee members for

comment – even though that may not have changed the outcome. It also recommends the Council makes greater use of additional meetings outside the set meeting cycle where necessary.

Transparency and public input were also areas for improvement with a recommendation that all Council and committee meetings be held in venues where they can be livestreamed and recorded. Mr Ruru also suggested he reports to the new Council on options for allowing greater public input at meetings.

Mr Ruru says his focus is now firmly on the future and the start of a new triennium after October's election is an opportunity for a fresh start.

"I have recommended practical steps for the incoming Council to consider as well as learning opportunities for councillors.

I have also looked at where Council officers and I can provide more support and advice to elected members.

"When councillors meet after the election, they have the opportunity to implement better procedures, increase their understanding of Treaty and iwi issues and start the mahi to repair relationships and regain the full confidence of our community."

Council chair Craig Williamson welcomed the recommendations in the report.

"It has been a challenging period for everyone and as a Council we have taken time to reflect on what happened and how we can be better moving forward.

"This review has identified constructive ways we can do that, and I am confident the Council will be stronger as a result.

Manaia WI



Manaia WI Members with Chris Linders Senior Advisor Officer for the Fire Service

The August meeting was held in the Waimate Hotel. President Phyllis welcomed members to the meeting. Two members had attended the North Taranaki Regional day in New Plymouth and reported on a fun day where they had played ten pin bowling which was the first for them both, and enjoyed lunch at Cobb & Co. The motto was praise loudly, criticise softly. The roll call was a recipe which brought forward a lot of ideas.

We enjoyed lunch and

then went for a visit to the Manaia Fire Station. Our speaker was Chris Linders who is Senior Advisor community readiness and recovery officer for the Fire Service. He gave a very interesting talk on fire safety in the home, what to do in the case of fire etc. He showed and talked about the different types of fire alarms. The main theme being in case of fire get out quickly.

Competition results. Shrub. 1. Jennie McNaught. 2. Neda Howes. 3. Phyllis

Malcolm. Bloom. 1. Neda Howes. 2. Bev Hawkes. 3. June Hartwell. Homemade apron. 1. Neda Howes. 2. Janice Walsh. 3. Patty Symes. Antiques. As there were such a wide variety of entries ranging from clocks, vases and needlework it was decided to award one point to each entry.

Our next meeting is to be held at Nelda's home where we will have a workshop on planting hanging baskets.

Meg Kelly.



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DairyNZ new Science and Innovation Officer

Following an extensive national and international search, DairyNZ has announced the appointment of Dr David Burger as its new Chief Science and Innovation Officer.

“David has been with DairyNZ for over a decade and knows well how we can step up our delivery for farmers. I know he’s keen to turn strategy into action,” Chief Executive Campbell Parker says.

The role replaces the



Dr. David Burger

former GM Research & Science and the new title reflects the accelerating pace of change for dairy farmers and the emerging technology and farm systems solutions needed to support them.

David will cover a broad range of responsibilities including DairyNZ’s science

programme, economics and farm system modelling, research farms and NZ Animal Evaluation.

Dr Burger is a water quality scientist with more than 20 years of national and international experience and is passionate about ensuring New Zealand dairy farmers

can continue to adapt their farm systems to be as sustainable and profitable as possible, well into the future.

During his 12 years at DairyNZ he has led strategy, investment and operational governance across diverse portfolios bringing science, policy, and extension together.

“He is also an incredible advocate of the critical role science plays in the work DairyNZ does on behalf of farmers,” Campbell says.

“We’re excited about the expertise, experience and leadership David brings to this role, and we’re confident his work will help strengthen the science that underpins our sector’s sustainability and success,” Campbell says.

Dr Burger was GM Farm Solutions & Policy, and a plan is in progress for his replacement. He remains based in Hamilton and takes up the new role from 1 September 2025.

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New seasonal work visas a boost for agriculture



Harvesting Kiwifruit.

Two new forms of seasonal work visas will give farmers and growers better access and certainty for securing skilled staff in specialised roles, Federated Farmers says.

“Once again this Government has listened carefully to what industries need to keep productivity ticking over, and responded with practical and balanced policy settings,” Feds immigration and employment spokesperson Karl Dean says.

“Federated Farmers and allied sector representatives have been working with Minister Erica Stanford and her officials on this and we’re pleased with the outcome.”

Sheep scanners, shearers, rural contracting mobile plant operators and others in specialist roles often move between the southern and northern hemispheres chasing work in the busy seasons.

“It will really give employers a lot more certainty to know those specialised workers who prove themselves can return here for subsequent seasons for three years under the new Global Workforce Seasonal Visa.”

Likewise, the new Peak Seasonal Visa (PSV) gives farmers, rural contractors and the meat processing industry more confidence they can secure staff when seasonal workloads ramp up, Dean says.

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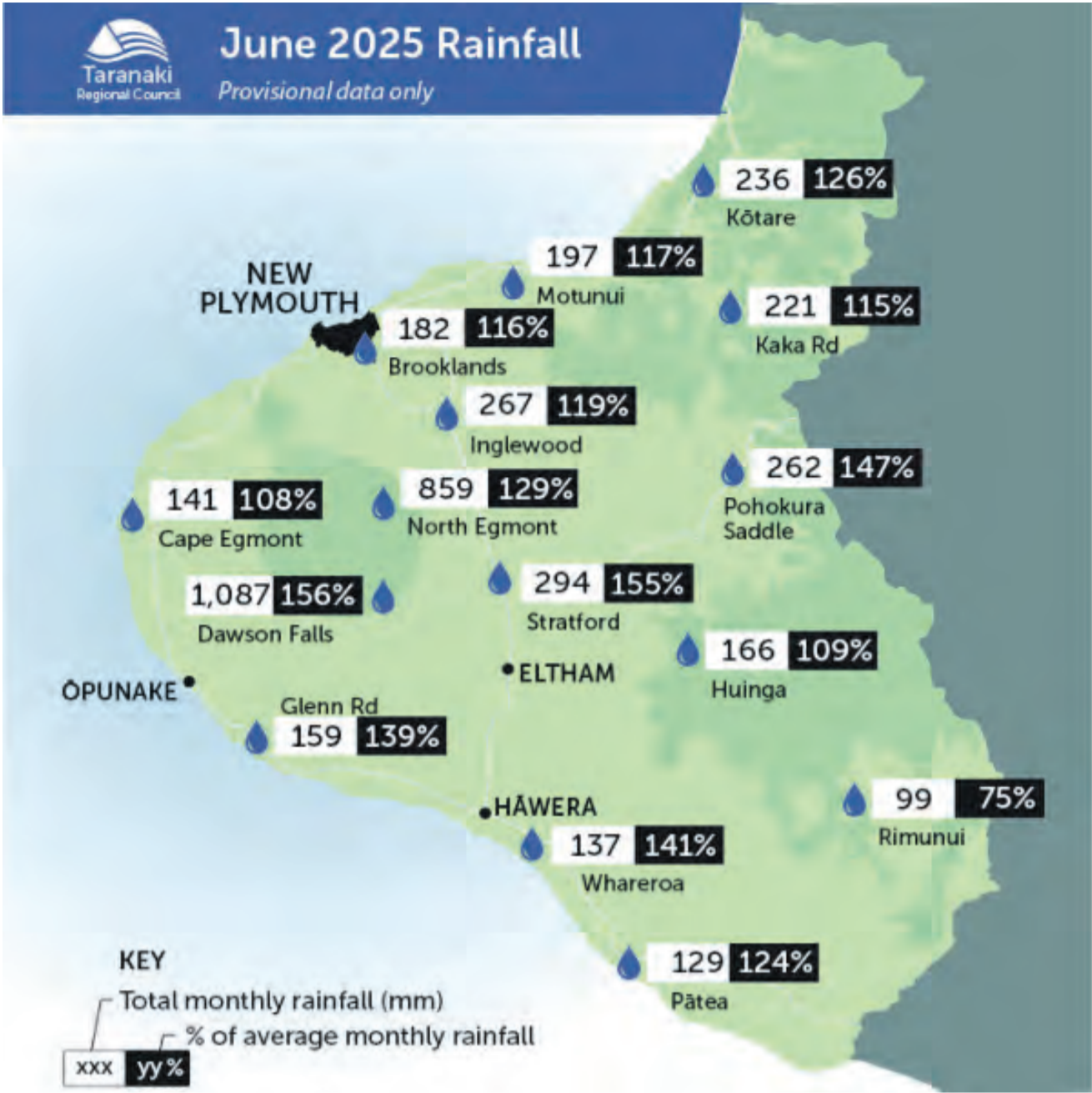
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June was wetter than usual



Rainfall averaged nearly 200mm in June.

After drought conditions affected much of Taranaki earlier in the year rainfall during June was higher than normal according to Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) figures.

Rainfall averaged nearly 200mm in June, or 20%

more than usual, with 55% more than normal recorded at the TRC gauge at Pātea at Stratford.

Not all parts of the region saw above average rainfall, with 25% less than usual at Waitōtara at Rimunui Station. This gauge also

has the lowest year-to-date rainfall with 38% less rainfall than normal and Pātea at Stratford has had the highest year-to-date rainfall with 11% more normal rainfall. On average, there has been 15% less rain

than normal across all our gauges.

On Taranaki Maunga, the rain gauge at Dawson Falls recorded more than a metre of rain in June (1087mm), which is 56% above normal.

Mean river flows for June were 5.4% greater than typical values, low flows were 59.5% greater, and high flows 51.3% greater than typical values while mean river (non-mountain) water temperatures were 11.1°C, an average of 0.4°C warmer than long-term values for the month.

The average air temperature for the region (excluding Te Maunga sites) was 11.1°C, which is 0.3°C warmer than long-term June averages. The maximum air temperature recorded in June was 19.41°C at Weraweraonga at 749 Mangawhio Rd on 26 June.

The maximum wind gust recorded in June was 102.96km/hr at Uruti at Kaka Rd on 4 June while average wind speeds were 13.9km/hr, with average gust strength of 44.6km/hr, these were 0.7km/hr stronger, and 3.1km/hr gustier than the long-term average.

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Hockey NZ announces new CEO

Hockey New Zealand (Hockey NZ) has announced the appointment of Michelle Hollands as Hockey NZ's new Chief Executive Officer (CEO).

Michelle will bring a unique blend of strategic insight, commercial leadership, and deep-rooted passion for hockey to the role. A former Black Stick (nee Turner) with 99 international caps, she has represented New Zealand at the Olympic Games, Commonwealth Games, and World Cup – which has given her a real understanding of the high-performance environment as well as a lifelong commitment to the game.

She has a degree in Physical Education, post graduate diplomas in Management/Sport Management, and a Master of Business Administration.

Over the past two decades, Michelle has been a business owner as well as holding executive leadership roles across sporting,



Michelle Hollands, Hockey NZ's new Chief Executive Officer

commercial, and regional development sectors. Her experience includes leading

transformational strategies at organisations such as Sport Waikato and Te

Waka, Waikato's regional economic development agency. As a business owner, she has demonstrated strong commercial acumen and business development skills.

Through her Freshminds consultancy, Michelle has also worked with leading national sporting organisations – including NZ Rugby, Rowing NZ, Basketball NZ and Hockey NZ—to design high-performance strategies, guide system-wide improvements and strengthen community engagement.

Michelle also brings extensive governance experience, with board roles across national and international sporting bodies including Oceania Hockey Federation, Badminton New Zealand and Northern

Districts Cricket.

As CEO, Michelle's primary focus will be to lead the delivery of Hockey NZ's strategic goals—driving success on the world stage through a robust high-performance system; strengthening the grassroots base through a high-functioning connected network; growing participation and fandom across communities; and developing a strong, sustainable financial base.

Hockey NZ Chair Sharon Williamson says: "We are thrilled to welcome Michelle to the role. She brings a special mix of leadership capability, business experience, and deep knowledge of the hockey landscape—along with a genuine passion for the people and communities

who make up our hockey whānau. We're confident Michelle is the right person to lead hockey into its next chapter."

Michelle adds: "It's an honour to return to the sport that has shaped so much of who I am, and I'm excited by the opportunity to lead Hockey New Zealand into the future. I look forward to working with the board, staff, and the wider hockey community to build on the strong foundations already in place, and to grow a sport that connects, inspires, and thrives at every level."

Michelle joins Hockey NZ on Wednesday 8 October. Acting CEO Ken Maplesden will continue to lead the organisation until then as well as working with Michelle on a managed transition after she starts.

Sandfords Manaia Golf results

27 July. 1. The Cool Boys. 2. Sod. 3. Power Puff.
August 3. Gross Round. 1. Harry Gopperth 57. 2. Liam Lynskey and Romyn Tupuse.
Pee Wees. 1. Lucy Gopperth. 2. Edie Lynskey. Girls. 1. Sophie Gopperth and Olivia Lynskey.

Ngati Ruanui Stratford Mountain House has a new manager

Jeff Ferguson is the new manager of the Ngati Ruanui Mountain House, Pembroke Road, Stratford 4352 and brings a wealth of experience to his new role, coupled with a friendly, welcoming personality. It's early days as he started work as recently as July 8. He comments, "It's all really good and I have a very good team working with me."

He was born in Napier and spent his formative years in the Hawkes Bay.

The positive feedback from visitors to the iconic lodge is gratifying. "People are enjoying the experience," Jeff comments. "It's a special place for visitors to enjoy mountain hospitality and view the mountain."

The mountain has so much for visitors to experience, such as the 100 metre Maunganui suspension

bridge, and the Goblin Forest, as well as the aesthetic flutter of a variety of native birds.

Inside is the award-winning licensed restaurant and charismatic mountain bar. All diets are catered for and there is a special children's menu on offer.

Jeff is keen to encourage more one-off events such as functions, weddings and conferences.

After a pleasantly weary day boutique accommodation awaits the fortunate guests, with Wifi and spa baths.

Jeff's varied experience includes the media, working for NZME with one of their publications the Rotorua Daily Post, as Accounts Manager. Later, he worked in the Hawkes Bay for radio and print.

Most recently, he was

manager of the Panmure Historic Hotel on behalf for the Mount Wellington Licensing Trust in Auckland.

Jeff greatly appreciates his new job which he describes as a special place and loves looking up at the mountain. As a keen photographer, no doubt, he'll be capturing some stunning scenic pictures.

Jeff is gratified that the previous manager Peter and Alie Mischefski did such a great job and "I intend to build on the platform they have laid. The lodge scores an impressive 9.1 on Booking.com

A re-brand of the existing website is a reflection of this intention. Jeff also intends a positive team rebuild to meet all visitors needs.

The Lodge is closed on Mondays and Tuesdays. Jeff looks forward to treating



The new manager of the Ngati Ruanui Stratford Mountain House Jeff Ferguson.

his guests to a wide variety of great, healthy food, and excellent hospitality in

scenic splendour. You are welcome to phone the Lodge on 06 765 6100.

For further information try the website mountainhouse@ruanui.co.nz

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New hut opened on the Pouākai Ranges

A karakia rang out across the Pouākai Range as representatives from Ngā Mahanga a Tāiri hapū blessed the new Pouākai Hut.

The 34-bunk hut was formally opened on August 4 as part of a small ceremony which also marked the official completion of an eight-month build project, which has been several years in the planning.

The new Pouākai Hut is part of the Taranaki Crossing project, a partnership involving DOC, Kānoa - Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa), Ngā Iwi o Taranaki and hapū which has also seen several of tracks across Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki upgraded.

The Taranaki Crossing is funded by the Provincial Growth Fund (\$16.4 million), which is administered by Kānoa. Additional funding to support the project has been provided by DOC (\$5.2 million).

The unique hut design is a result of collaboration between representatives from Ngā Mahanga a Tāiri and architects familiar with alpine hut design and construction.

Richard Buttimore, of Ngā Mahanga a Tāiri, says: “Hapū representatives have valued the collaborative partnership with DOC on the design and build of the new Pouākai Hut.

“It has reflected the agreed values for this kaupapa, respecting Pouākai the tupuna, the environment and the whenua - ensuring our ongoing manaaki for the day and overnight visitors who will use this beautiful new hut.

“To see the hut develop from initial ideas and plans, to now be completed and ready to welcome visitors represents a shared vision brought to reality.”

Tinaka Mearns, DOC’s Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki Regional Director, says the new Pouākai Hut represents a major milestone in the Taranaki Crossing project.

“We’re so pleased to have completed this part of the project, as it’s the most popular hut in Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki,” Tinaka says.

“The previous Pouākai Hut was at the end of its life, and the new structure is more than double the size of its



Image of the hut credit Matt Quérée/DOC).

predecessor – so it’s a big improvement for visitors.”

Tinaka says the construction of the hut presented some challenging

logistics – including the need to fly materials and tradespeople to the site.

“I’m proud of the efficiency and smart thinking the project team has shown to finish the

build – constructing a hut on the side of a mountain, where there’s no road, is not an easy feat.

“The construction team has done a terrific job: their skill and dedication to the build

has been superb, including living on-site for extended periods.”

The hut is expected to be back on the DOC booking system and available to visitors on 12 August.



LEFT:

The interior of the new hut.



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Church Services - Manaia, Kaponga, Opunake, Pungarehu, Okata, Oakura

Opunake Co-operating Parish

Havelock Street, Opunake - St Pauls - 9.30am every Sunday
Rahotu - Wesley - 11am first Sunday of the month

Okato Co-operating Parish

Okato – St. Paul’s – Sunday Service every 1st and 3rd
Sundays of each month, 10.00am
Oakura – St. James – Sunday Service every 2nd and 4th
Sundays of each month, 10.00am
Mid-week open church – Okato – St. Paul’s –
Pew for You, every 3rd Wednesday of each month,
4.30pm-6.00pm

Opunake Catholic Church

St Martins, Pungarehu: Temporarily closed - no Masses
Our Lady Star of the Sea, Opunake: 10am every Sunday

Other areas

Sacred Heart, Manaia - Temporarily closed - No Masses
St Joseph's, Hawera - Every Sat at 5pm; Every Sun at 9am
St Patrick's, Patea - 4th Sunday of month; 11.00am
St Francis de Sales, Waverley - 2nd Sunday of month;
11.00am

St Patricks Catholic Church, Kaponga

Sunday Mass 8.45am.
Thursday Mass 10.00am (subject to change).

St Patricks Catholic Church, Okato

Saturday Vigil 6.00pm - weekly

The Wave

Pentecostal Church 64 Domett St, Opunake
Sunday Services 10.30am
Women's Group 10am Tuesday
Men's Group 7pm Wednesday
Come along or contact
Belinda Philp
027 935 6191

St. Barnabas Anglican Church

141 Tasman St, Opunake
Sunday Services 10am
Communion 2nd, 3rd & 4th Sunday
Prayer & Praise 1st Sunday
Every 5th Sunday all 4 churches gather for
a Combined Service

Okato Community Church

Meets 10.30am Sunday at Hempton Hall.
Everyone welcome

St John's Community Church. Kaponga

Cnr West and Egmont Streets.
Sunday Services 10.30am followed by morning tea

Manaia Union Fellowship

Terou St. Manaia.
Meet 10am every 3rd Sunday of the month with communion

Friend & Fellowship Group

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A tale of two Burtons



FROM THE PRODUCER OF THE BRUTALIST
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TOBY JONES HARRY LAWTEY LESLEY MANVILLE

MR. BURTON

SOME ARE BORN GREAT. SOME ARE INSPIRED TO BE GREAT.

IN CINEMAS 14 AUGUST



Richard Burton.

was one of Richard’s teachers at the school in Port Talbot which he attended. Philip was the one who noticed the acting talent of the awkward son of a Welsh miner and showed him the road that led to stardom.

Toby Jones has the necessary gravitas and presence as the teacher frustrated by his protégé’s mood swings but

It’s easy to assume that a film titled Mr Burton is about Richard, that flawed Welsh acting genius, icon of stage and screen who was twice married to Elizabeth Taylor. He is indeed one of the central characters in this movie showing at

Everybodys Theatre at 7pm on August 17, although for much of the movie he still carries the name he was born with, Richard Jenkins. How he got to be Richard Burton is revealed during the movie.

There is another Mr Burton in this movie. Philip Burton

never losing sight of what he could become. Harry Lawtey as the young Richard manages the transition from the reluctant awkward student to the beginnings of the flawed acting genius that the world came to know.

The story is set during the 1940s. World War II is underway and “Mr Burton’s” male students know that in a few years they face the prospect of going into the armed forces.

Richard’s mother had died he was only two. He lives with his sister and brother-in-law, and his drunken dissolute father. His brother-in-law gets Richard a job in the local haberdashery, but “Mr Burton” believes he belongs back at school, and from there things start moving.

Steffan Rhodri as the drunken father puts on an entertaining turn, and Aimee-Ffion Edwards as his sister, Aneurin Barnard as the brother-in-law and Lesley Manville as Philip (and later Richard’s) benign housekeeper round out the cast.

Also playing a bit part is Shakespeare’s Henry V. At the start of the movie we learn in one of Mr Burton’s classes that Henry’s great victory over the French at Agincourt was actually a combined English-Welsh effort. Henry V makes another appearance at the movie’s end, this time played by young Richard Burton. There is of course a parallel between the two. Henry needed to turn his back on his past to become king while Richard Burton had to move on from his own past.

Well worth a look.

Bryan Kirk.



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OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS

Everybody’s Theatre: A Community Gem



Cozy viewing at Everybodys Theatre.

Everybody’s Theatre stands as a shining example of what a community can achieve when it comes together around a shared resource. Its history is rich, its present vibrant, and its future promising. More than just a cinema, Everybody’s Theatre is a living monument to the power of community to unite, inspire, and uplift.

Everybody’s Theatre’s AGM is coming up on Sunday 14th September at 10am. We welcome

from out of the blue

‘from out of the blue studio gallery’ has a new Artist in Residence until 8th September. Helen Harvey from Auckland has installed her Solo Exhibition Whakakotahi/Coalescence and while it is available for everyone to visit and enjoy she is continuing on with her exploratory art making.

Helen is minding the gallery when it is open to the public so please do drop in and welcome her to our district. Concerned with plastics and the end life of art works, Helen is currently researching using all natural materials for her art practice. This includes going back in time to find the recipes used before the invention of plastic by the old masters and by other cultural

groups. The artworks Helen creates with these natural materials are inspired by coastal locations, including Ōpunake and by textile works she has previously



Helen Harvey
- Solo Exhibition Whakakotahi/Coalescence

created. Helen can take you on her journey of discovery with photos and works showing her inspiration. A special talk will be given by Helen on Sunday August 31st at 2pm where she will show and tell about her plant and earth based materials and why she has chosen to go on this path in her art making journey.

This is a free event for all.

new members to join our committee, or volunteers to help with the regular screenings.

Due to reduced volunteers and the colder months, we have put Thursday night screenings on hold for the time being. We hope to restart these in the warmer months.

Our monthly Boutique night has changed to toasted sandwiches with beer or cider options available to purchase. The toasties are excellent value at \$5 each.

Check out our website for up-to-date information on what is coming up. www.everybodystheatre.co.nz

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Fantastic Four 1hr 40mins M Fri 15 Aug 7PM Sat 23 Aug 7PM Fri 29 Aug 7PM	The Gruffalo Movie followed by The Snail and the Whale 1hr 10mins G Sat 16 Aug 1PM
Jane Austen Wrecked My Life 1hr 38mins M Sat 16 Aug 7PM Sun 24 Aug 1PM	Mr Burton 2hr 4mins M Sun 17 Aug 1PM Sun 24 Aug 7PM
The Life of Chuck 1hr 50mins M Sun 17 Aug 7PM	Freakier Friday 1hr 51mins PG Fri 22 Aug 7PM
Pip and Posy and Friends 55mins G Sat 23 Aug 1PM	

Fantastic Four
Violence | 1hr 40mins |
Rated: M
Fri 15 Aug 7PM

The Gruffalo Movie followed by The Snail and the Whale
1hr 10mins | Rated: G
Sat 16 Aug 1PM

What's On Listings

ONGOING
Movies at Everybodys Theatre in Opunake: Playing several days and nights each week. Refer timetable in newspaper.

MONDAYS: The Barnabas Centre Exercise and Social Morning: St. Barnabas Church Hall, 141 Tasman Street Opunake: Each Monday 10 am - 12:30 pm. Information call Jenny 027 379 6844 or Ian 027 622 4878.

Beginners Social Dance Classes: Central School Hall, New Plymouth, 7pm.

TUESDAYS
Opunake Walking Group: Every Tuesday 10am. Meet outside Club Hotel on Havelock St. Phone Margaret 027 477 5600 for more info if needed, or just turn up.

Pungarehu Golf Club Twilight: Tee-off between 4.30 & 6.30pm.

Opunake District RSA: Meet 1st Tuesday of every month at 5.30pm at the Opunake Fire Station. Financial Members are welcome to attend.

WEDNESDAYS
Coastal Young Farmers: Meet 2nd Wednesday of every month at 7pm at Butlers Reef Bar & Cafe, Oakura.

Lisa Keen Audiology at Coastal Care, Opunake: Wednesdays 9am - 5pm, for an appointment call 027 591 4222 - 0800 555 676

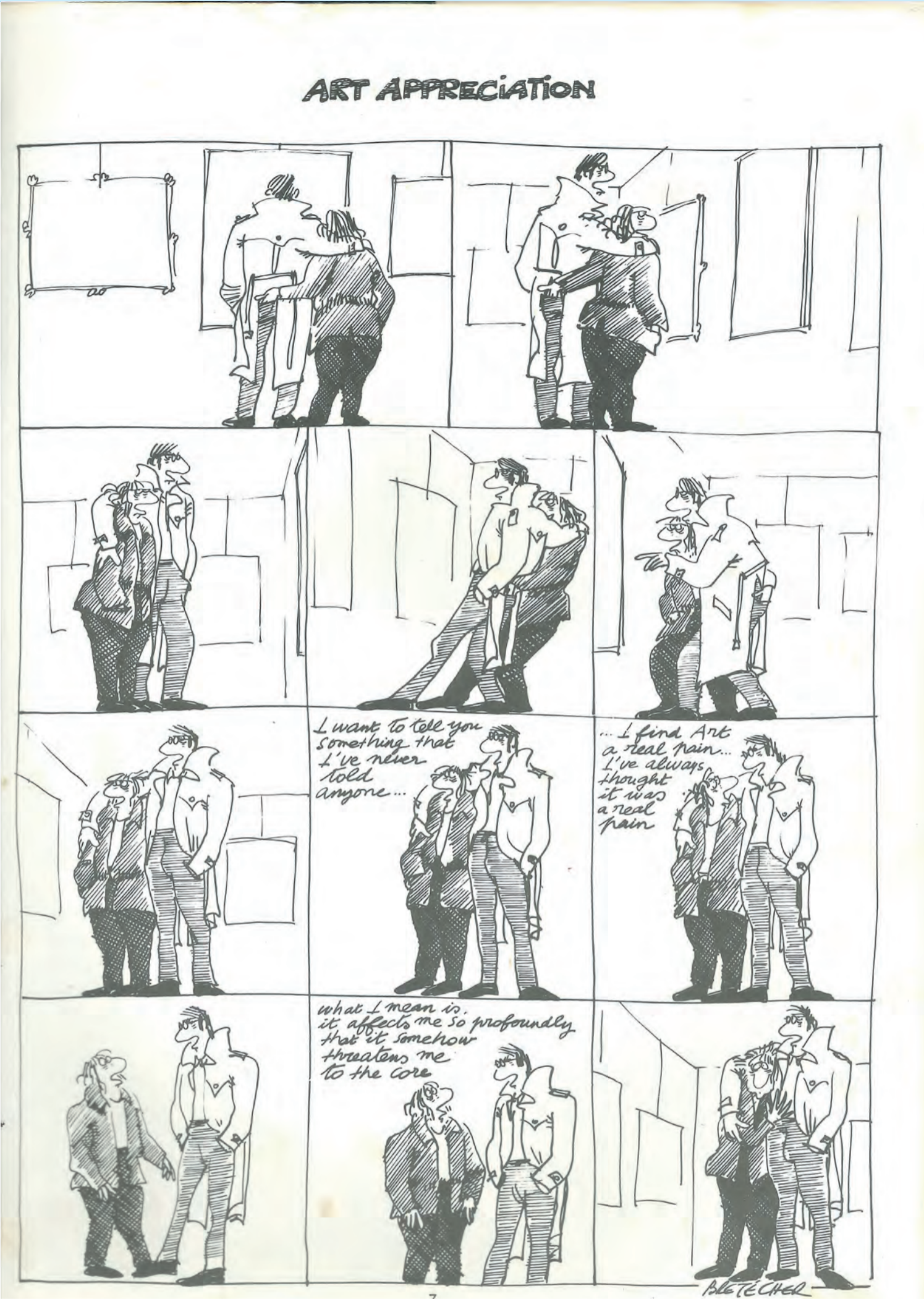
Okato & District Historical Society open every Wednesday: At the Okato Community Trust Hall, 47 Cumming St, Okato. phone Meg on 06 752 4566.

Opunake Embroiders Guild: Meet 2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month, 10.30am-3pm at the Opunake Business Centre, Napier St, Opunake. Just come along or phone Sheryl 06 761 8769.

Okato Market: In Hempton Hall, Okato 4pm to 5.30pm.

Free singing experience with Taranaki Harmony Chorus: Meet every Wednesday at Inglewood Mamaku Centre, 7-9.30 pm Phone Helen 021 296 0700.

THURSDAYS
Egmont Euchre Club: Every Thursday 1pm at the Opunake Bowling Club. Inquiries, 06 761 8337 or 06 761 8607.



Taranaki Country Music Hall of Fame, Manaia: Running every Thursday night from 7.30pm, 11 Surf Highway, South Road, Manaia.

FRIDAYS
Eltham Business Association Friday Markets: 9:30am to 1pm, Carpark of Touch Point, High Street, Eltham.

Beginners Social Dance Classes: Oakura Hall, 6.15pm..
AUGUST 9, 10, 16 & 17

Giraffes Can't Dance: A production by Val Deakin Dance Group. At the Dance Centre, St Aubyn Street, New Plymouth. 10.30am and 1.30pm each day.

AUGUST 18
Grey Power South Taranaki Special Meeting at 10am, followed by Members Meeting at 10.15pm: Senior Citizens Hall, Hawera.

AUGUST 26
Opunake Districts Rest Home Trust AGM: Coastal Care Meeting Room, Opunake. 5.30pm.

AUGUST 28
St Josephs School Opunake presents Giraffes Can't Dance: A school production at 1pm, 7pm.



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- Flu vaccines
- COVID boosters
- Cervical screening self-tests
- Hepatitis C screening

TUI ORA

PUBLIC NOTICES



Auroa School

734 Auroa Road, RD 28,Auroa, 4678
office@auroa.school.nz

Applications for Out of Zone Pupils

Auroa School is a decile 8 full Primary School (includes year 7/8 students) located in South Taranaki. Enrolment at the school is governed by an enrolment scheme, details of which are available from the school office.

The Board has determined that there will be 20 vacancies available for Term 4, 2025.

Applications can be made by applying in writing to the school by either post or email and by visiting the school office.

The deadline for applications is 3pm,
Wednesday 17th September, 2024.

If the number of applicants exceeds the number of places available, students will be selected by ballot.

Claire Gargan, Board of Trustees

M D HURLEY SOUTH TARANAKI
VETERINARIAN STUDENTS
CHARITABLE TRUST

The Trustees of the Marguerite Dorothy Hurley South Taranaki Veterinarian Students Charitable Trust invite applications for financial assistance to be granted from the Trust.

The main objective of the Trust is to assist in the education and training of persons looking to study either Veterinarian Science or Veterinarian Nursing. It is intended to assist persons who reside in the South Taranaki area. The Trust will also assist qualified Veterinarians and Veterinarian Nurses with funding for further education or research.

Application forms are available from Welsh McCarthy Parker Limited, Lawyers, 52 High Street, Hawera or can be requested by emailing katrina@wmplaw.co.nz after the open date.

Applications open 1st September 2025 and close 30th September 2025 at 4.30pm

Please return all Application forms to Welsh McCarthy Parker Limited, Lawyers, PO Box 434, Hawera 4640 or via email to katrina@wmplaw.co.nz

THE ROBERT AND AILEEN MORTON
CHARITABLE TRUST

The Trustees of the Robert and Aileen Morton Charitable Trust invite applications for financial assistance to be granted from the Trust that was set up by the late Robert Morton, formerly of Auroa.

The main objective of the Trust is the advancement and encouragement of education of persons in or about the South Taranaki area. It is intended to assist students with their tertiary education. Priority will be given to residents of the South Taranaki area.

Application forms are available from Welsh McCarthy Parker Limited, Lawyers, 52 High Street, Hawera or can be requested by emailing katrina@wmplaw.co.nz after the open date.

Applications open 1st September 2025 and close 30th September 2025 at 4.30pm

Please return all Application forms to Welsh McCarthy Parker Limited, Lawyers, PO Box 434, Hawera 4640 or via email to katrina@wmplaw.co.nz

Grey Power
NEW ZEALAND FEDERATION INCORPORATED



GREY POWER
SOUTH TARANAKI

Monday 18th August
Special meeting called 10am
(re Constitution)

Members Meeting 10.15am
Senior Citizens Hall
81 Victoria St Hawera

Guest Speaker: Meg Pholi

From Annie Brydon

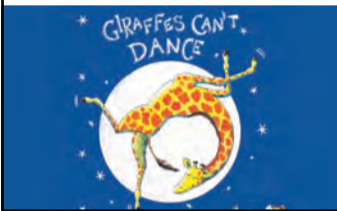
All welcome

Jackie Morrow, Secretary



ST JOSEPH'S
SCHOOL OPUNAKE
FAITH, VALUES & SKILLS
TE KURA O HATO HOHEPA KI OPUNAKE

GIRAFFES CAN'T DANCE



School Show

August 28

1pm & 7pm

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THE NEXT
ISSUE OF OCN
WILL BE OUT
ON THURSDAY
AUGUST 28



THE NEWSPAPER
TARANAKI
LIKES BEST



OPUNAKE & COASTAL
NEWS

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Stevenson Calf Rearing
MILK & COLOSTRUM WANTED

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Applications close – 30/09/2025

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NICELY SPEC'D
Electric Leather Seats, Sports Mode, Sun Roof,
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107kms



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Electric Mirrors, Spoilers, Cruise Control, Stability
Control, 2.0, Petrol, Auto, 156kms



\$11,995

2014 Toyota RAV4 GXL
AWD, Descent Mode, Sports Mode, VVT-i, Daytime
Running Lights, Roof Rails, Tow Bar, 2.5, Petrol,
Auto, 191kms



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2018 HYUNDAI SONATA Elite
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2016 Mazda BT 50 GSX

NICE SET UP!

Double Cab, Canopy, Rear Diff Lock, Roof Rack, 2WD,
Side Steps, Tow Bar, 3.2, Diesel, Auto, 166kms



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LOW KM NZ NEW HATCH
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Stability Control, Cruise Control, Tinted Windows,
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STYLISH SPORTY HATCH
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Tinted Windows, 1.0, Petrol, Auto, 31kms



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2014 HYUNDAI Santa Fe DM ELITE
NZ NEW 7 SEATER 4WD
Auto Headlights & Wipers, Bonnett Protector,
Nudge bar, Roof Rack, Tow Bar, Turbo, 2.2, Diesel,
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SHARP LOW KM'S SUV
Alloy Wheels, Driving Lights, Keyless Entry &
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Petrol, Auto, 77kms



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Alloy Wheels, Auto Headlights, Roof Rails, Sun Roof,
i-Stop, Stability Control, Tinted Windows, 2.0, Petrol,
Auto, 66kms



\$18,995

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POPULAR TIDY LOW KM AUTO HATCH
Stability Control, Electric Windows, Electric Mirrors,
Reversing Camera, Tinted Windows, Monsoons,
Stability Control, 1.0, Petrol, CVT, 60kms



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Tinted Windows, MIVEC, 1.5, Petrol, CVT,
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