

# OPUNAKE & COASTAL

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fire callout Opunake. See page 6.



Carl back for more. See page 9.





Ngaruahine at the Kapa Haka.

# Iwi against Iwi

Ryan digs his way to victory. See page 16.



Ninety years for Manaia RSA. See page 35.



Te Kiri remembers the old schoolyard. See page

At the first Taranaki Tu Mai in 2009 there were barely enough people taking part for one gazebo. When the Taranaki Iwi hosted the Hayden Patene of the biennial festival in Opunake this year on November 21-23 there were 5500 registrations.

All eight iwi sent their teams, Taranaki, Ngati Ruanui, Nga Ruahine, Te Atiawa, Nga Rauru, Ngati Maru, Ngati Tama and Ngati Mutunga, and all eight came with their supporters. The festival which features cultural and sporting activities is held every two years, which each iwi taking turns to host it. This year was Taranaki's turn. The activities ranged from basketball, softball, volleyball, rugby league nines, through to bowls and golf and euchre and chess, as well as kapa haka, debates, quizzes, wananga (knowledge sharing and learning), and a hikoi to Te Namu Pa.

"Over the whole weekend

we're expecting 5500, and that's just registrations. That's not including supporters," an upbeat Taranaki Tu Mai committee said on Saturday morning.

He says the Tu Mai has continued to grow since the first one in 2009.



For the first time surfing was an event at the Taranaki

"At the first one there was only one gazebo and they struggled to fill that."

He said he understood that accommodation in Opunake was "hard to come by" during the weekend with many visitors coming from other parts of Aotearoa and from overseas. Local

marae were being used to accommodate iwi.

It's up to each host to decide which sports they wanted to introduce. This year for the first time surfing was included.

"There's enough

Continued page 3.

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to 350 words as we sometimes struggle for space to fit them all in.

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Mt Messenger muddle

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#### Choices

When accidents/events occur like what happened on Aoraki-Mt Cook it is the sad-side of mountaineering. All people who take off to climb mountains leave expecting to sleep in their

own beds next evening.

I send my support and sympathy to families and friends of the two climbers, plus the other two climbers.

Life is about choices, what people do when they wake up. Should I have tea or coffee? Will I go to work or find a job? Other climbers decide to challenge themselves in the mountains. It's their choice not yours.

Mountains are not there for everyone but mountains at times can deal out the unexpected. These two/ four were out enjoying themselves. Sadly, if you are not enjoying yourself, you might as well be dead. Life is about living the best we can. Better climbing your mountains, than fighting wars.

> Ian McAlpine New Plymouth.



Mangapeka Valley (near Ahititi) property of 683 hectares intact, Tony and Debbie Pascoe say the nineyear fight has destroyed them financially, mentally and physically. The couple live at the northern end of the Mt Messenger Bypass project and they have resisted attempts to acquisition part (11 hectares) of their land.

In their fight to keep their

The couple have been ordered to pay a huge amount (\$180,000) in court costs for doing no more than trying to secure the rights to their own property.

Meanwhile, the budget for the Mount Messenger Bypass has increased from \$89,000,000 in 2016 to a massive \$590,000,000 currently. This is almost a 600% increase in financial outlay; hardly an optimal use of hard-earned taxpayer

Of course there have been other non-financial costs, including environmental ones such as the disruption of the habitats of native birds and other species. Not so long ago many people were horrified that permission had been granted to kill certain species, including kiwi if their existence impeded the project's progress. I wonder who sanctioned that one?

Heaven knows how many hundreds of native trees have been destroyed in the process as the project has progressed.

Before the last election ACT leader and current deputy Prime Minister David Seymour argued that this project should be abandoned. It is a pity his view was not heeded. The local iwi were also against the project, on environmentally and spiritual grounds from the beginning, but their views

A Matter of Life and Death?

"...healing every kind of

sickness and disease among

and on site protests were ignored.

I've driven over Mount Messenger many and enjoyed the wild environmental beauty. Apart from some brief slow driving and a few road twists the road was fine as it was. From the outset, I thought the proposed bypass as unnecessary and environmentally ill considered.

However, another reason included the outrageous cost over runs and the harsh way this couple has been treated. What a mess in all sense of the word and what a sad way to treat residents and the environment.

Rolland McKellar

### Correction

In the report on the groundbreaking ceremony for the Green Space (20 November 2025 page 4) it was stated that the name Puna Manawa Ora had been donated by Taranaki Iwi.

South Taranaki District community Council development advisor Fran Levings says, "the name for the space was not provided by Taranaki Iwi. This was a locally driven initiative,

and we regularly meet with local Ōrimupiko kaumātua regarding another aspect of the project. For our communications, and at the request of the kaumātua, we reference them and say the...

new name was 'the endorsed by attendees of Te Puna Manawa Pou hui, which includes local kaumatua."

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#### **ADELPHOS**

"It isn't a matter of life and death!" How many times have we heard this cliché? It makes a point: To focus on really important stuff and not sweat the small things in life. But how can we ignore the everyday matters of life and death all around us? They are part of the natural life cycle in our farming and agricultural life. The wondrous birth of a child and a teenager's tragic road death remind us of the real matters of life and death.

Life has a beginning and an end. The American College of Pediatricians informs us that human life begins at conception when fertilisation occurs as the sperm enters the ovum and forms a zygote: the first stage of a baby. Then, there's death. The consensus opinion is

that death is the ending of all biological functions keeping a living organism alive. However, there

existence or noncontinuation of life after death. Jesus provided authentic and unique evidence for His promises of a new life beyond the physical world by His

own physical resurrection.

He

everyone's attention by,

His

three-year

captured

During

ministry

the people" (Matthew 5:23, New International Version). To clearly demonstrate God's ability to re-create life Jesus also performed three recorded resurrections in the New Testament. countless opinions regarding Because we know that crowds of

thousands followed, listened to and sought healing from Jesus, we read: "Jesus performed many other miracles which are not written down in this book. But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and through your faith in him you may have

life" (John 20:30-31, Good News Bible). After our own death Jesus offers us an imperishable, conscious and resurrected body like His own body when He returns (I John 3:2; 1 Corinthians 15:52-54).

miraculously Before resurrecting His good friend Lazarus from the grave, four days after his burial, Jesus assured Martha—Lazarus' grieving sister: "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in me will live, even though he dies; and whoever lives and believes in me will never die. Do you believe this?" (John 11:25-26, NIV).

Jesus is lovingly asking us the same question He asked Martha about believing in Him, "Do You Believe This?" It's a simple faith question about a matter of life and death.

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### Iwi against Iwi

Continued from page 1.

out there at the moment.," says Hayden. "Given that Taranaki Iwi are hosting and we border on the surf it's appropriate that we put surfing on the programme this year."

The festival began the previous day with a powhiri at Te Kura Kaupapa Maori o Tamarongo. Among those there were Dr Beverly Jacobs of the Mohawk Nation and Dr Roxane Keli'ikipikanededohaka from Hawaii, who were with Bonita Bigham (Nga Ruahine). They had been to the World Indigenous Peoples Conference in Auckland and were extending their stay in this country to be at the festival.

Taranaki Tu Mai Trust chair Wharehoka Wano told everyone he welcomed the addition of surfing ("I'm pleased that Tangaroa is in the mix with surfing this year") and the planting of kumara ("it's not just about sports and kapa haka").

He noted that all eight iwi had had their turns at hosting a Tu Mai, so they were now into their second round.

After lunch there was the Kumara Wananga, an opportunity to see what's being done on a prepared plot of ground at the southern end of Layard Street, learn about kumara growing and do some planting.

Glen Skipper talked about the various types of kumara and the best ways of looking



Bonita Bigham (centre) with Dr Beverly Jacobs of the Mohawk Nation and Dr Roxane Keli'ikipikanededohaka from Hawaii.

after and cultivating them.

Tihikura Hohaia said their aim was to have half the beds in kumara and the other half in potatoes.

"Ultimately we want to see kai going to the community and the ones in need, particularly our kids who prefer to eat chippies and chips."

He saw it as a way of bringing people together.

"We get people from the Cottage Rest Home coming over and we've started to form a relationship with

them. We like to see our old people and our young people connect."

When they took over there was only a residue of potatoes from what Tihikura understands had been a Lions Club project, growing among the weeds.

"It's about reconnecting with our roots," he said. "In 1865 the soldiers invaded and confiscated our land. As a consequence we forgot how to farm our own land. The Council got hold of it, and through the settlement process we got it back."

The sports began on Friday afternoon and carried on through the next day, with the march past of the teams on Saturday morning.

Among those at the bowls was Gareth Kahui (Te Atiawa) who plays with the Inglewood Club, and was enjoying the afternoon with his family. "Me, my son and my daughter made the finals at the last Tu Mai, but anything can happen today," he says. "Everyone thinks it's an old man's sport until you give it a go, and then you realise it's quite challenging. There's a saying pai tu paihinga-whether you win or lose it's still okay. We're winning just by being here

and making memories."

There was high drama at the softball final with Ngati Tama and Nga Rauru tied after three rounds, meaning that a tie breaker was needed. Ngati Tama ran out the winners 10-8.

At Opunake Beach there were eight teams of six competing in six disciplines for the surfing title. These disciplines were short board, body board, long board, Wahine, Under-15 and Stand-Up Paddle Board. The final was played out between Ngati Ruanui and Ngati Mutunga, who were the winners.

Kapa Haka teams kept an appreciative audience entertained at the Sinclair Electrical and Refrigeration Event Centre on Sunday morning. Ngati Ruanui finished first, with Taranaki second and Nga Ruahine third.

The final event was the Tautohetohe (debate) final between Nga Ruahine and Taranaki. A coin was tossed, won by Taranaki who chose to negate, before the topic was revealed, "that this

nation needs another Maori Party." The affirmative team (Nga Ruahine) was judged the winner.

This was followed by the prize giving. Ngati Ruanui were judged the overall winner, with Taranaki second and Nga Ruahine third.

Finally there was the

handing over of the mauri of Taranaki Tu Mai to Te Atiawa who will be the hosts in 2027.

"Each and every one of you come every two years and we look forward to being with you in two years' time in Te Atiawa land," Wharehoka Wano told everyone.



John Hooker in the debates.



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Gareth Kahui at the bowls.

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# Mayoral forum say changes must benefit Taranaki communities

Forum say they acknowledge the Government's intention to undertake a major review of local government across Aotearoa New Zealand and emphasise that any changes support positive outcomes for Taranaki's communities.

The Government's proposal, which could eventually see regional councils removed, marks one of the most significant potential reforms since the 1989 restructuring of local government.

The Taranaki Mayoral Forum brings together the region's three district mayors and the Chair of the Taranaki Regional Council. Forum Chair

Craig Williamson says members agree that it is timely to consider how local government can best serve communities into the future.

"We understand Government's desire to improve the way services are delivered across the country. Our focus is ensuring that reform genuinely benefits Taranaki. Our region has unique strengths characteristics, and it's important that any new

New Plymouth District Mayor Max Brough says the announcement is the beginning of an important conversation.

model reflects those."

"We'll take the time carefully review

proposals and understand what they could mean for our communities. Ensuring strong local representation and effective service delivery will remain central to our thinking."

Stratford District Mayor Neil Volzke says collaboration will be essential as the reform process develops.

"As more detail becomes available, we will continue to work closely as a region. The priority for all of us is

achieving outcomes that support and strengthen our communities."

South Taranaki District Mayor Phil Nixon says the Forum is committed to engaging constructively with the Government.

"We value the opportunity to be part of the discussion and will approach it with an open and considered mindset. It's important that any changes recognise the value of local leadership decision-making,

remembering that one size does not fit all."

Mr Williamson added that all four councils are aligned in taking a careful, informed approach.

"We need time to fully examine the proposal before forming detailed views. What we can say is that we will work together to ensure Taranaki's interests are clearly understood as the national conversation progresses."

### Teen vaping crisis worsens

Vaping is far from under use among teens, say the

control, with new figures Asthma and Respiratory showing a worrying rise in Foundation NZ. They say



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Letitia Harding.

that the latest Health Survey -showing daily vaping among 15-17-year-olds has climbed from 10.3 per cent to 13.6 per cent in a year highlights a serious issue.

Foundation Chief Letitia Executive MsHarding says this escalation serious questions whether about current anywhere

close to adequate.

"An increase like this doesn't happen by accident. "It tells us the protections

in place simply aren't enough." The survey also showed

that vaping among 18-24-year-olds is also unacceptably high at 23 per cent, Ms Harding says.

These new figures echoed those from the Foundation's latest nationwide youth survey - the 2024 ARFNZ/

SPANZ/NZAIMS Vaping in New Zealand Youth Survey.

It found high vaping use among older secondary students.

In 2021, 17% of Year 12s and 13% of Year 13s reported vaping in the last seven days. In 2024, those figures have risen to 20% for Year 12s and a striking 26% for Year 13s.

Foundation Community Liaison and youth vaping educator Ms Sharon Pihema says the new figures are a clear sign that things are still heading in the wrong direction.

"A rise from 10.3% to 13.6% daily vaping in just one year shows how easily these products are still reaching our teenagers.

"The fact is 15-17 year olds aren't legally old enough to purchase vapes, so this big increase shows the system has truly failed to protect them," she says.

"If access was genuinely under control, we wouldn't be seeing increases like this."

The lack of adequate resourcing for prevention and education is becoming increasingly difficult to ignore, Ms Pihema says.

"The Foundation is doing everything it can with the capacity it has - all with no support from government."

The Foundation has been running vaping education workshops in schools for years, Ms Pihema says.

"We even met with Associate Health Minister Casey Costello asking for financial support to run these workshops, but we are always turned down.

This year, the Foundation strengthened prevention through a new community Train-the-Trainer programme endorsed by the NZ College of Respiratory Nurses.

The initiative equips educators, youth workers and whānau advocates with the tools to teach rangatahi about the harms of vaping.

The Foundation wants to see the Government halt the establishment of further Specialist Vape Retailers (SVRs), ban the sale of vapes in general retailer stores, limit the nicotine content of all vape products to 20 mg/mL, and re-examine the prescription model.

Letitia Harding.

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### RC mahi continues during reform process

Council's vital work will continue as usual as the Government looks revamping the structure of local government, Chief Executive Steve Ruru says.

"While we prepare for change, our work continues.

"With up to two years to develop the proposed Regional Reorganisation Plan, it will be some time before the exact nature of

the future system for local government will be known. So for now, it's business as usual.

"There is a great deal of uncertainty at the moment. and I'd like to reassure our communities that we remain focused on delivering our work programmes," says Mr Ruru.

He says all Council plans, policies and rules remain operative during the transition to whatever new system eventuates.

"Existing plan rules continue to apply, and our staff will continue to process applications, monitor consents and work with landowners, provide buses across the region, care for our regional gardens and freshwater and protect indigenous biodiversity so

the public will still see us out there doing this essential work.

"The proposals by the ministers are far reaching and we will take some time to put together a submission during the consultation process which ends in February.

"This is an opportunity to address long-standing issues in the wider local

government sector and we welcome the opportunity for councils and the wider community to contribute their voices to this proposal on the future shape of local government."

Proposals announced by ministers could see the Council's 11 elected members replaced with a new Combined Territories Board made up of mayors from Taranaki's three district councils and possibly crown commissioners.

second proposal would see that Board lead work to reorganise local government work across

The public can have their say on the proposals until 20 February.

the four Taranaki councils.

### Pouakai boardwalk improvements underway

Upgrading the Pouākai boardwalk Tarns underway, marking one of the final phases of infrastructure development of the Taranaki Crossing project., which is a partnership involving DOC, Kānoa - Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit (Kānoa), Ngā Iwi o Taranaki and hapū which has seen several tracks across Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki upgraded. The Pouākai Hut has also been replaced.

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



Pouakai Tarns boardwalk. Image Wayne Boness, DOC.

Jacqui King, Taranaki Iwi representative, says the start of the final stage is an exciting milestone for all partners involved.

"Mana whenua have been working with our DOC and Kānoa teams to ensure each project - within the broader Taranaki Crossing project – is focused on protecting ngā maunga and providing manaaki (support) manuhiri (visitors)

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throughout their journey."

Jacqui says: "As kaitiaki (guardians) of this whenua, we hold a deep responsibility to care for this special place that sustain us all. This unique wetland is a taonga — a treasured ecosystem, rich with life and meaning.

"Over time, the growing number of visitors has placed stress on delicate environment, and it is our duty to ensure it remains healthy for future generations.

"The extended and renewed boardwalk will allow people to continue to experience the beauty and mauri (life force) of this special place, without harming the fragile Taiao (water, soils and habitats) that lie beneath."

"Patience and support from manuhiri (visitors) during this time of rebuild will help us improve the infrastructure to protect this special place so it can continue to thrive and inspire all who visit, for generations to come."

DOC's Hauraki-Waikato-Taranaki Regional Director Tinaka Mearns says the tarns are a sensitive and significant wetland feature Te-Papa-Kura-owithin Taranaki, offering visitors dramatic views of both the

Pouākai Range and Taranaki Maunga.

"For many enjoying the walk, it's a chance to get the iconic image of the maunga reflected in the tarns' water," Tinaka says. "It really is a fabulous peaceful location, which makes it so popular with visitors."

Tinaka says about 120m of boardwalk across the tarns will be replaced. At 1.2m wide, the new boardwalk will be nearly twice as wide as the existing structures and will be elevated above the sensitive tarns at heights between 20cm and 90cm.

The construction will take about nine weeks - good weather allowing - and will mean staged closures of different sections of the boardwalk while work is completed. There will be no detours, to keep visitors off the sensitive plants which are found across the tarns, and people enjoying the walk are asked to alert contractor staff to their presence.

Tinaka explains replacement of the boardwalk will mean some delays, and visitors may not be able to get that special photograph they're after.

"But we're confident the investment and this part of the project will deliver a memorable experience for visitors who'll be out naturing when the work is completed - and we'd encourage them to come back another time."

The project as expected to generate \$3.70 million annually for the region's economy in years to come.

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### Car fire quickly extinguished

On the opposite of the road from St Joseph's Catholic School in Whitcombe Road, Opunake a parked car was burning furiously at the front of the car. This incident occurred at about 3.05pm on Friday 29 November; a fire engine and Operational Support Vehicle quickly on hand.

There was a fiery 'furnace' in vicinity of the car's engine, but the firefighters had the flames extinguished within five minutes. Thereafter

there were profuse clouds of smoke which persisted for some time. A considerable amount of water was used to ensure the situation was safe and under control, ensuring there were no hot spots.

At one stage, after about 20 minutes, a firefighter inserted a thermal imaging camera inside the driver door to check the situation. There were many onlookers, as well as parents collecting their children. One man, presumably in answer to



Fierce flames were quickly replaced by clouds of smoke as the car fire was dealt with by firefighters in Opunake.

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his child's query said, "It could have been a bird nest or maybe the battery caught

firefighter However, spoken to was unsure as to Volunteer Fire Brigade for

the cause of the fire. Well done to the Opunake

dealing with a potentially dangerous situation skilfully and quickly.



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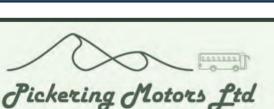
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ABOVE: Another view of the car fire in Opunake.



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### Local support on coast comes with heart

along the coast's top road is being met by local farmers and businesses.

months of After six fundraising, and with support from local farmers and businesses and the Okato Lions Club, the Taranaki Family 4WD Club

A dearth of defibrillators have installed four AED defibrillators which can be accessed 24/7 along the upper road between Okato and Opunake.

> AED defibrillators have been installed at Stone Creations at 310 Dover Road, and at 287 Pitone Road, 2008 Wiremu Road

and 94 Ngariki Road.

The defibrillators are in cabinets and placed on shed walls. Most are visible from the road. Each one can be accessed 24/7 and anyone needing to use it can dial 111 to get the relevant security code. From there the equipment is easy to use, and takes users through the



Help where you need it.

Callum Mahy of the Taranaki Family 4WD Club says they are appreciative of those who have supported the project (see ad). He would like to see more of these placed along the "top road" and is interested in hearing from any more farmers who may be interested in having one installed at their place.

The Taranaki Family 4X4 Club

would like to thank the following for their help towards supplying and installing life saving AED equipment in the community:

> Callum & Mandy @ Stone Creations NZ Katie Simmons @ Stepping Stones Child Care Lloyd and Jo Morgan Daryl Hickey Amanda & Bryan Goble

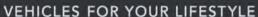
Okato Lions Club Jayde and Ricky @ Oakura 4 Square



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2018/22 Nissan Leaf



2015 Toyota Highlander LTD



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2017 Audi Q7 S LINE 3.0, Sunroof, 2 to choose, Black/Blue, 44kms



2019 Audi Q8 S LINE 3.0, Full spec, New model, Brilliant car, 71kms

### Looking back moving forward

As the year races towards its finish and the pace of life feels relentless, it's easy to get swept up in the rush. Some families are opening their advent calendars each day and enjoying the treats, but what if we paused for a moment? Advent, at its heart, is about slowing down, taking stock, and reflecting on the year that's been, while looking ahead to



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what's next.

For many of us, 2025 has been a year of challenges globally, change, nationally, and here in Taranaki. As people continue to struggle with the cost of living, putting petrol in the car and juggling bills, rents or mortgages, how do we find a moment to breathe and reflect on how we've managed to make it through? This year has stretched our resilience and for many, hope has felt hard to hold onto. Families have faced tough choices, communities are under pressure, and Parliament along with our district and regional councils have had to make difficult decisions.

Yet amid the challenges, one thing shines through, the strength of community. From neighbours lending a hand to local businesses finding new ways to adapt and volunteers stepping up when it matters most. These moments remind us that real progress isn't forged in Wellington's corridors of power, it's built right here, in places like Opunake and Okato.

Politics often feels like a shouting match, but at its commitment to care for one heart, it's about people. It's about ensuring fairness, opportunity and dignity for all. That's why I'm here,

Taranaki and for a better Aotearoa.

You might not know that the chocolate advent calendar isn't just a store gimmick. It's part of the festive season that carries four words I encourage you to reflect on during the silly season: hope that tomorrow can be better than today; peace in how we engage with those who see things differently to us; joy in the small wins and shared moments; and love, not in a sentimental sense, but as a another and for the land we call home.

These aren't just empty words, they're building fighting for the people of blocks for our communities and politicians need to embody them too. When we choose collaboration over division, when we invest in people rather than polarisation, we create a

future worth believing in. So, as you gather with whānau, enjoy the summer sun and spend time at the beach, take a moment to think about what matters most.

Thank you for the conversations, challenges and the support this year. Here's to 2026, a year of possibility. Meri Kirihimete and happy holidays from my whānau to yours.

Glen Bennett MP.

### A time to reflect



DAVID MACLEOD MP NEW PLYMOUTH

With Christmas and the end of 2025 fast approaching, it's a great time for reflection.

Two years ago, National came into Government to rebuild the economy, restore law and order, and deliver better health and education. Since then, we've restored discipline to government spending, helping drive

down inflation and interest rates and leaving Kiwis cheaper mortgage repayments. A family refixing an average mortgage today is saving around \$10,000 a year.

We've delivered tax relief for the first time in 14 years, and FamilyBoost is giving families up to \$6,240 a year to help with childcare costs. We're investing in the future - building 17 Roads of National Significance and 12 Roads of Regional Significance to improve reliability safety and nationwide.

The infrastructure pipeline is now worth \$275 billion and includes nearly 12,000 projects - meaning more roads, schools, hospitals, houses, and thousands of jobs nationwide. We've attracted a record

number of tourists from Australia, boosting businesses, and under National, exports have grown by \$12 billion.

We're also making good progress on restoring law and order. Ram raids are down 85%, tougher sentencing and a stronger gang crackdown are making communities safer, there are 38,000 fewer victims of violent crime, and youth offending is down 16%.

We've made the biggest investment in health of any government in New Zealand's history, funding going to frontline. There are around 2,000 more nurses and hundreds more doctors. We've delivered 33 new medicines cancer reduced elective surgery waitlists.

cellphones in classrooms, mandated an hour each of reading, writing, and maths daily, and introduced a structured approach to literacy and numeracy. New entrants achieving at the expected level have risen from 36 to 58 per cent, and the number exceeding expectations has doubled. We've focused on fixing the basics and are delivering the reforms building the future

In education, we've banned

money in Kiwi pockets. As always, please reach out if you need information or assistance. 06 759 2580 david.macleodmp@ parliament.govt.nz

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David MacLeod MP for New Plymouth

#### On this month in history Michael Joseph Savage becomes prime minister

On December 6, 1935 Micheal Joseph Savage became the 23th prime

minister of New Zealand. His Labour Party won 55 seats out of 80 with 46% of Savage was born in Australia

and moved here on October 9, 1907 – fittingly Labour Day. He was first elected as an MP in 1919 and from 1933 was Leader of the Opposition.

His government did much to improve the lot of poorer people including instigating a social security system, and the provision of state houses. Thie popularity was reflected in the result of the 1938 general election where Labour's share of the vote increased to 56%.

On the international stage Savage's warning about the invidious rise of fascism did find favour with other leaders. However, when World War 11 broke out he committed New Zealand to the fight against Hitler and his axis cronies.

Savage became ill and died of cancer on 27 March 1940 and was buried at Bastion Point, Auckland.





**NEW PLYMOUTH** p. 06 759 0105

**ELTHAM** p. 06 764 8305

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Regional councils will have a "significantly reduced role," in the future foresees Taranaki-King Country MP Carl Bates.

"We do need to simplify local government because change is coming with the Resource Management Act," he says. The plan is to take away the elected members and try to align the work of the regional councils with the district and city councillors. It's an opportunity to review how efficiently work is being completed by both and to streamline and to consider whether further local government alignment could occur."

It was 1989 when it was last reformed and he believes reform is overdue.

"There are 69 regional and territorial authorities and local bodies," he says adding we're only a country of 5 million people.

"Local government is here to serve the country," he continues adding that there is duplication, disagreement over decisions. It results in delays in buildings getting built he says by way of example.

"I do appreciate the work of our regional councils and all of our elected officials and I hope they will help support us into a more future fit model," Carl wanted to

The busy MP, who was recently reselected for his Taranaki-King Country seat, is going to be even more busy.

His electorate has now expanded by 5000 hectares.

The 5,300 square metres addition to his electorate



Carl Bates with his wife Candice and three children from left Angus, Bonnie-Ann and Logan.

adds about 5,200 people said Carl and will now include an area east including Taumarunui.

He explained the redrawing of the electorate boundary because they've reduced the number of rural electorates in the North Island by one. The South Island meanwhile gains

another seat. "The South Island is growing faster than the North Island," says Carl, an interesting statistic.

"It means more travel and more community to represent," says Carl who had a majority of 5,512 on election night. As to how the redrawn boundaries might affect his future support he adds, "I don't take any vote

The Taranaki-King Country MP sits on the education select committee and chairs the enquiry into the harm young New Zealanders face online. Interim reports are coming out in December and he says, "we're very pleased we're looking into it. The legislation banning young people under the age of 16 from engaging with social media will be enforced from December 10 in Australia and Carl says while National supports a similar initiative, it is also dependent on the two coalition partners. "There are things we need to do than simply banning social media," he says, referring to consideration of the classification online.

He is a fan of print media including community newspapers and proudly shows a video of an enormous stack of newspapers which he says he reads cover to cover. He says a large part of what community newspapers report is "good news" which "a lot of the dailies don't. You share the positives."

At 11:15am Carl was off to his third meeting in the electorate that morning. The energetic MP seems to be everywhere and a 60th wedding anniversary, a 101st birthday, a community barbecue at Pihama and the Stratford A & P Show he'd recently attended.

He'd clocked up 130,000 km on his car he said since his political journey began when he was selected to stand in the Taranaki-King Country electorate for the National Party prior to the 2023 general election.

He's a busy man, but as Carl said the following quote comes to mind: "If you want something done, ask a busy person."

#### On this month in history Sir Peter Snell born

Peter George Snell was born in Opunake on December 17, 1938. He lived in Opunake until the age of nine when his family shifted to Te Aroha. He was good at most sports, but his first love was tennis. At age 19 our greatest coach Arthur Lydiard took him in hand. By now Snell was living in Auckland.

After winning his first NZ championship (880 yards) he was selected in the NZ team for the 1960 Rome Olympics. Although being ranked just 25th in the world (based on fastest time), he won the gold medal for the 800 metres, beating the world record holder Roger Moens of Belgium into second place (silver medal).

By the end of his career he had set world records in several middle distances including the mile (twice), 1000 metres, 800 metres and 880 yards. In addition, he was a member of a New Zealand quartet which set a world record for the four by one mile relay At the 1964 Tokyo Olympics he won gold medals in the 1500 metres and 800 metres.





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for granted."



### The importance of listening

We all know someone who could talk the hind leg off a Taranaki cow. They mean well, but when you're trying to get a word in edgeways, you start wondering if they breathe through their ears. In relationships, whether it's your partner, your friend, your kids, or your boss, it's not what you say that builds connection, it's how well you listen.

Listening sounds simple, right? Two ears, one mouth, nature's that's surely way of telling us to use them in that ratio. But in practice, most of us aren't truly listening. We're half there, nodding along while secretly planning what to say next, checking the time, or thinking about what's for tea. In a world full of pings, buzzes, and Bluetooth distractions, genuine listening has become a bit of

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RICHARD HALL

a lost art.

Why listening matters

Psychologists counsellors (and your Mum) have long known that being heard is one of our deepest emotional needs. When someone truly listens, without interrupting, fixing, or judging, it signals, "You matter. Your experience counts." That's powerful medicine for any relationship.

For all of us, listening builds trust. When you stop trying to win the argument and start trying to understand, the tone shifts from "who's right" to "how can we make this right?" The same applies in all relationships, at work, in families, and even at the local rugby club when tempers flare after that questionable ref call.

#### The difference between hearing and listening

Imagine your partner says, "I'm exhausted."

A bad listener says, "You should go to bed earlier."

A great listener says, "Sounds like it's been a long day. What's been draining

See the difference? One shuts the conversation down. The other opens it up.

Being a good listener also means not jumping to conclusions. As the saying goes, "Don't shear the sheep before you've seen the fleece," in other words, wait until you've heard the full

#### Communication's a twoway street

We always go on about the importance of listening, but let's be honest, talking comes with responsibilities too. Good communication works both ways: one person listens with care, and the other makes sure their words actually land where they're meant to.

It's not fair to expect someone to read your mind while you mumble into your cuppa or drop hints thicker

with clarity. If they didn't get it the first time, maybe it's not their ears. Maybe it's your delivery.

#### Simple ways to be a better communicator

1. Be clear, clever: Say what you actually mean, in plain language. Don't expect your partner/family/friend to read between the lines - they're not a mind reader.

Use "I" language: 2. Focus on how you feel and what you need: "I feel left out when plans change," not "You never tell me anything." It keeps things calm and constructive.

Choose your moment.: Pick a good time not when one of you is tired, stressed, or halfway out the door. Good timing can make the same words land completely differently.

Ask, don't assume: Check that you've understood: "So you meant you'd rather stay home tonight?" Clarity grows from curiosity, not guessing games.

Close with care: 5. Finish even tough talks with kindness - a touch, a smile, or a cuppa together. It reminds you both that you're on the same team.

#### Simple ways to be a better

Be present: Put the phone down, turn the TV off, and give the other not just facts: If your mate says, "The boss is on my back again," you might reply, "Sounds like that's getting stressful for you."

Notice your own impatience: When you feel the urge to jump in, take a breath instead. The silence might feel awkward, but that's often where the gold

#### Listening, the Kiwi way

Let's face it, Kiwis can be a bit understated when it comes to emotions. We'll happily talk for 30 minutes about the weather, the All Blacks, or the best place to get the weed eater fixed, but we often freeze up when it comes to discussing feelings.

That's why listening is so powerful here. It cuts through the stoic "she'll be right" mask and reminds us we're all just people trying to be understood. In South Taranaki, where you can bump into the same person three times in a day, listening well isn't just good manners, it's community glue. It's how you build relationships that last.

Listening in everyday life Picture this: you're having

a chat at the dairy, and someone's clearly bursting to share their latest drama. You can either half-listen while scanning the specials on pineapple lumps, or you

can really tune in. Face them. Nod. Listen with curiosity. That person will walk away feeling seen and valued.

Or think of your kids. You might only get snippets of their inner world between TikToks, Minecraft, and toast crumbs, but when they do talk, they're testing the water: "Is Mum or Dad really listening?" Listening builds a bridge of trust that will matter when the big stuff comes along.

#### Final thoughts

Listening isn't passive, it's an act of love. It says, "I care enough to put my own thoughts aside and really step into your world." It doesn't require a degree, a mindfulness app, or a couch session. It just takes practice and presence.

So next time someone's talking, whether it's your partner venting, your teen mumbling, or your mate down the road chewing your ear off about the price of fuel - pause, breathe, and listen. You might be surprised how much more connected you

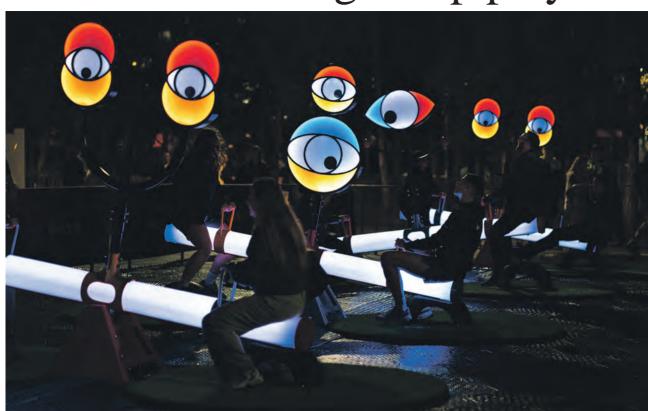
Because in the end, the best relationships aren't built on clever words. They're built on moments of genuine listening.

> Richard Hall Mind Support Ōpunakē,





## Pukekura Park lights up play



Curiosity, an eye-catching installation by Amigo & Amigo, is set to be one of the highlights of the TSB Festival of Lights 2025 season.

### Economic pressures begin to ease in Taranaki

Te Puna Umanga Venture Partnerships at Te Puna forestry and logging are released latest Quarterly Monitor Economic for compiled Taranaki, by independent economic consultancy Infometrics. The data confirms economic conditions have been challenging but also points to early signs that the downturn may be starting to

Over the year to September 2025, the region's GDP has provisionally fallen 2.3%, compared with a national decline of 0.5%. However, the most recent quarter recorded a smaller year-on-year drop in output (down 0.4%), the mildest contraction since late 2021, suggesting the sharpest phase of the downturn may be passing.

The unemployment rate has lifted to 4.3%, slightly up from 4.0% last year, but still sits below the national rate of 5.2%. Young people are particularly affected, with 16.4% of 15-24-yearolds in Taranaki not in employment, education or training, compared with 13.3% nationally.

Anne Probert, Director Strategic Sector Umanga Venture Taranaki, says the data reflects the pressure many households and employers are feeling.

"The latest report shows tight economic conditions, combined with the contracted gas supply situation, are continuing to weigh on activity across several key sectors," says "Construction, Probert. metal manufacturing, and some service industries are all under strain, and the job market is tougher than it has been for some time."

"At the same time, we are starting to see some stabilisation. Consumer spending in Taranaki has fallen only slightly compared to the national average, and there are clear bright spots in housing and the primary sector that are helping to buffer the region."

The rural economy remains a major source of resilience. The dairy sector is expected to receive another near record payout in the 2026 season potentially injecting around \$1,828m into the local economy. Over the year to September 2025, prices for lamb were up 31% and beef up 29%. In contrast, under pressure as wood prices hit their lowest levels in a decade.

Taranaki housing market is also comparatively good shape. House sales are up nearly 15% over the year, listings

continue to rise, and average values have increased to \$587,000, still well below the national average of \$867,000. Rents increased only modestly, and housing affordability in the region remains better than the New Zealand average.

Meanwhile across the

visitor sector, guest nights 2.3%, outpacing national growth (1.7%). Although tourism expenditure fell in the year to June 2025, the lift in guest nights signals that demand is still there, but individual visitors are spending less on average, a clear reflection of current economic pressures.

In line with the national trend of slowing population growth, Taranaki recorded zero net growth in the year to June 2025 - the first time in 20 years that the population has not grown.

Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki Chief Executive, Kelvin Wright, says this stall in population growth highlights the importance of a strong, diversified regional economy.

"A healthy economy underpins our ability to retain and attract talent and supports the rating base needed to fund the services and infrastructure our communities expect,' says Wright. "If our population shrinks, the cost of running the region is shared across fewer households and businesses.'

"These latest reinforce the need for Taranaki to stay adaptive innovative and coordinated as a region to access new marke opportunities."



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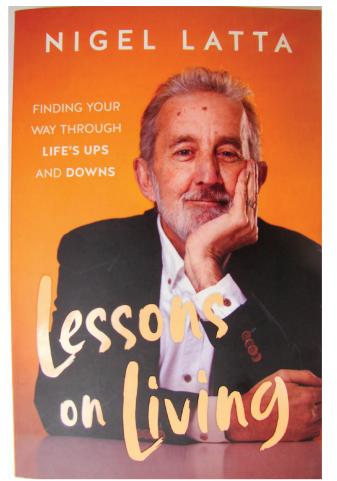
### Lessons on Living: Finding your way through life's ups and downs. by Nigel Latta. A book review



This book, published by Harper Collins (Auckland), unusually came out on the day the author died (September 30, 2025). It has 291 pages and only one photograph (within) of his wedding day to Natalie (his second wife) on November 25, 2023. However, the front and back cover have recent pictures of the author, which reveal a man seemingly in a positive frame of mind.

Yet, the book was written while Nigel Latta was under a kind of death sentence - he had been told, in September, 2024, he was terminally ill (stomach cancer).

Therefore, unexpected that the book's tone is both lively and surprisingly uplifting. His basic kindness (which many people have commented upon) and humanitarianism shines through – he is still determined to help people regardless. He also is refreshingly blunt, calling



a spade a spade and if you shrink from reading obscene language (there's plenty within), this is not the book for you.

However, from my perspective, I found it very readable, entertaining and in many ways inspiring.

When I was very young I read an account of the

great Antarctic explorer Robert Falcon Scott, when he was close to dying in his blizzard-bound tent in 1912, who nevertheless found the courage and sensitivity to write letters of condolence to the loved ones of his two soon-to-die explorer colleagues, who were nestled nearly frozen beside him. Wow! Nigel's account reminds me of Captain Scott' humanity in many ways. Incidentally, Nigel makes brief mention of Scott's two Antarctic huts in the book.

Nigel was a clinical psychologist for 30 years, a broadcaster and a bestselling author. In the lessons he imparts he cloaks his clinical knowledge in easy to understand non-technical ways. And he uses his own life experiences as an example of what to do and sometimes what not to do. He is upfront about his own life, which he shares involved plenty of mistakes and misfortunes, but insists that he (and the reader) still have choices. "But every time I lost, I still got to choose how I was going to respond ... I got to choose my attitude in defeat. I got to drive the bus." (page 35).

Now, in a summary of an eventful life, here is an excerpt: ... I've published eight books in 19 countries, made a bunch of television series, blown a hinge off its door in a proper SAS kill house, worked with thousands of young people and their families, talked to thousands of people who've done all kinds of bad things, travelled to far-flung places in the world, found true love and managed to stay positive after getting an incurable cancer diagnosis.' (page

What a man. This book which is one of the very best I've ever read, is available from bookshops such as Paper Plus Stratford and Paper Plus Hawera.

Rolland McKellar



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### **Fashion show at Rest Home**







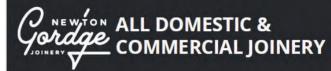
The owner of Country Chic and hats. Wendy McLean took her shop to Opunake Rest home recently.

delighted Wendy residents with a fashion show of some of her clothes, boots enjoyed the entertainment.

Wendy opened her shop at 78 Tasman Street in November 2024.

The residents had fun and

Left: Wendy and her friends entertained the residents of the Opunake Cottage Rest Home with some glitz and glamour.





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## Salary unjustified after rates hike

New Zealand Taxpayers Union is calling out the 15.3 percent salary increase for councillors at Tauranga City Council at a time when rates bills continue to spiral. Councillors will now be paid an average of \$163,000 a year, while Mayor Mahé Drysdale receives \$193,402.

**Taxpayers** Union spokesperson Rhys Hurley

video to a new \$45 million HQ, council has already loaded the ratepayer tab up with as much spending as possible. Ratepayers were hit with an average 35.98% rates rise last term, so can it really be called sensible to line up some of the same people responsible for a 15 percent pay hike?"

"Tauranga City Council's own website states being a councillor is a 3-day-

councillors are being paid almost the same as Members of Parliament. How can anyone justify that lack of respect for ratepayers' pockets?"

"Councillors should pay back salary increases until ballooning council costs are under control. Councillors must focus on core services before rewarding themselves with massive pay increases and lavish premises."





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#### E PAPA-KURA-O TARANAKI - THE FOUNDATION OF LEARNING OF OUR TREASURED TARANAKI

Currently at Kindy we are exploring Te papa-kura-o Taranaki. The term papa-kura can refer to "the red earth," however, it also carries the meaning of "a foundation of learning" or "the learning ground." When placed within the context of Taranaki, Te papa-kura-o Taranaki can be understood as the whenua (land) of Taranaki acting as a place of knowledge, teaching, and cultural grounding. The learning concept moves beyond simply using the outdoors as a play space; it frames the whenua as a living knowledge system that holds history, whakapapa (genealogy), and cultural narratives that shape how our tamariki (children) grow, belong, and make meaning. In te ao Māori, whenua is inseparable from identity. Land is understood as an ancestor, a source of mana (essence), and a living entity that sustains and teaches. The maunga (mountain), the awa (river), the ngahere (forest), and even the minerals and textures of the soil offer possibilities for learning that tie our tamariki to place in a relational way.



Above: Our Te papa-kura-o Taranaki wall.

Te papa-kura-o Taranaki aligns seamlessly with placed-based education which emphasises learning that is grounded in the unique ecologies, histories, and communities of our place. For our tamariki, learning emerges most powerfully through first-hand experiences - touching soil, noticing changes in plants, or listening to local pūrākau (story) or at this very moment we started our learning journey by focusing on the different view or perspective of the maunga from our respective home. This learning supports children to:

- · develop curiosity and inquiry skills
- experience emotional connectedness to their environment
- understand sustainability and kaitiakitanga
- · explore identity and belonging
- engage in holistic, embodied learning

This approach encourages our kaiako to view the local environment not as a backdrop but as a pedagogical partner. When learning is situated in the specific landforms and stories of Taranaki, our tamariki develop a sense of tūrangawaewae - a place to stand - and an awareness of their role as kaitiaki of the places they inhabit, and to grow as confident, connected learners rooted in their place.

#### **CO-CREATING AND CARING FOR LIVING LANDSCAPE**

We continue our living landscape journey at Kindy by going into deeper learning and engaging in the co-creating and caring for our living landscapes. Together it helps us deepened our understanding of how meaningful environmental education connects us; tamariki and kaiako (teachers) to place, people, and culture. Through collaborative projects such as planting, composting, and designing sustainable outdoor spaces, our tamariki actively participate in caring for Papatūānuku while developing empathy, responsibility, and a sense of belonging.

This process reflects the principles of kaitiakitanga (guardianship) and whanaungatanga (relationships), as tamariki, kaiako, and whānau work together to nurture both the environment and relationships. Co-creating living landscapes supports holistic wellbeing and place-based learning by weaving together science, culture and environment, and encouraging our tamariki to see themselves as capable contributors and guardians of their world.







Above left: Making fire bricks from shredded paper converting a common waste product into valuable and practical resources, while reducing landfill volume and lower carbon footprint.

Above centre: Nurturing and planting vegetable seeds in out māra kai.

 $Above\ right\ Worm\ juice\ /\ tea\ collected\ from\ our\ worm\ farm\ and\ used\ as\ an\ excellent\ natural\ fertiliser\ for\ Kindy\ plants.$ 

#### BEING KIND AND KUPU MĀORI FOR KINDNESS

Being kind is an essential part of building a warm, inclusive learning environment. When our children experience and witness kindness, they begin to understand how their actions can positively influence others. Small gestures and using gentle words will create a culture where our children feel safe, valued and connected. Our acts of kindness strengthen relationships, foster empathy, and support children's social and emotional growth. Celebrating and modelling kindness each day reminds us that we have the power to uplift others, and reinforces that being kind is not just important but it is also truly awesome.

So, let's add some te reo Māori to our kindness and we like to share with you this valuable resource from https://teachertalk.org.nz that we all can learn and use together.





Stage 1b of the extension includes rest stops among its features.

### Coastal Walkway extension project takes next big step

Construction of the next stage of NPDC's coastal pathway extension Te Pae o te Rangi between Waitara and Bell Block has started.

The work is on a section starting from the recently redeveloped Otupaiia Marine Park in Waitara and involves creating a shared pathway travelling in front of Battiscombe Terrace and Hume Street, then along Brown Road up to the Tate Road intersection.

"We finished the first part of stage one in Otupaiia last year, and this second part will bring the offroad connection closer to New Plymouth Airport," **NPDC** Manager Project Management Office Raymond Teunissen.

"This section has some lovely features, including rest spots and a deck area with a great view out to sea, and some alternative 'slow' paths that connect with nature."

Says Hapū Otaraua spokesman Rawiri Doorbar: acknowledge "Otaraua the strong contributions of the community, while recognising our focus remains with the whenua and the collective of hapū Kotahitanga, commitment and collective effort are evident in the work being carried out. Ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata."

Detailed design-work for stage two (Brown/

Tate intersection to New Plymouth Airport) is finished with construction expected to start mid-2026. Detailed design-work for stage three (New Plymouth Airport to Tiromana Crescent) is about

The 9.7km extension of the walkway between Waitara and Bell Block is scheduled to be completed by the end of 2027, creating a great experience for walkers, runners and bike-riders as they take in rich historical, natural and culturally important sites.

This construction project has been gifted the name Te Pae o te Rangi – The Ledge of the Heavens. It refers to the pathway connecting

our land to the water and providing a space for people to rejoin our environment.

The pathway is co-designed by NPDC and Manukorihi, Otaraua, Pukerangiora and Puketapu hapū , with the support of Te Kotahitanga o Te Atiawa Trust.

The Coastal Walkway is currently 13.2km long; the project will extend this distance to almost 23km.

Planning for the Coastal Walkway began in 1997. Construction of the first 7km (New Plymouth CBD to Waiwhakaiho River) began in October 1999 and was completed in December 2001, with Ellesmere Avenue to Bell Block Beach section completed in 2014.

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There is only one more issue of the Opunake & Coastal News left for 2025. The next issue is out on the 18th December.

We would like to take this opportunity to thank our advertisers in 2025. Without you, we wouldn't have a paper. Call us on 06 761 7016 to be in the next issue.

### Taxpayers Union advice on capping rates

The Taxpayers' Union has released a paper, How to Cap Rates Now, providing a benchmark for the Minister of Local Government to use in formulating the rates cap policy promised by Christmas. This follows the 30,000 signature Cap Rates Now petition and Minister Watts' commitment to having policy announced before the end of the year.

Tory Relf, spokesperson for the Taxpayers' Union,

"With rates rising on average 34 percent in

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the last three years, the Government can't afford to wait. Councils are already drafting their 2026/27 budgets, and unless a cap is put in place now, they'll lock in higher baselines that households will be stuck with for years."

"With Local Government New Zealand trying to defang this policy, we have set out what an effective cap must look like. It must cover all local government revenue so councils can't simply change their method of picking ratepayers' pockets. It should be tied to inflation,

account for population growth so councils aren't punished for growing communities, and make sure ratepayers, not bureaucrats, remain in control of major decisions."

"We're also calling for safeguards so councils can't use emergencies as an excuse to lock in permanently higher rates, and for any oversized rates hikes to be refunded directly back to the people who paid them."

"A bottom line is an inflation measure that isn't based on council's own

AUTHORISED DEALER

inefficiency. We already have measures for inflation (the Consumer Price Index and the Producer Price Index) that are objective and transparent."

"New Zealanders have been clear: they want real relief from skyrocketing rates. Our proposal gives the Minister everything he needs to act quickly and deliver a genuine, comprehensive cap that protects Kiwis from further cost increases."





### Egmont Village man dubbed Taranaki's best excavator operator

Egmont Village's Ryan Prankerd has been crowned Taranaki's ultimate excavator operator after outperforming seven other competitors at the Civil Contractors New Zealand Taranaki CablePrice Regional Excavator Operator Competition on Saturday (November 29).

The event returned to the public stage at Stratford A&P Showgrounds as part of the Stratford A&P Show on 29 November, marking a welcome shift back to spectator-friendly territory after last year's private event.

Lead organiser Joe Ingram said the A&P Show setting elevated the competition experience for the operators this year.

"Holding the event at the A&P Show brought the buzz of a crowd atmosphere back. These operators thrive on performing under pressure, and there's nothing quite like executing a precision teacup pour using your excavator with hundreds of eyes watching your every move."

Eye-catching challenges that entertained the hundreds visitors included familiar favourites such as the delicate teacup pour, precision painting using excavator arms and slamdunking basketballs into



Winner Ryan Prankerd doing the teapot pour.

manholes using excavator buckets.

Prankerd said he was "grateful and a bit surprised" about the win as the competition had been tight, with some well-known and highly skilled operators among the field.

The regional competition victory qualifies him for the national excavator operator competition finals at the Central Districts Field Days in March next year, and he was looking forward to it.

"I'll be going there with a clear head and giving it a good crack. It will be great to meet some other excavator operators

from around the rest of the country too," Prankerd said. The return to the Stratford



Ryan Prankerd receiving the award for Taranaki's top excavator operator from CCNZ Taranaki Branch Chair Kimberly De Vries.

A&P Show wasn't the only highlight of this year's Taranaki competition. The event also introduced a new 'services dig' challenge that required operators precisely excavate around a buried gas duct demonstrating the care and control that their day-to-day roles require.

Drawing inspiration from the classic children's game Operation, competitors were also challenged to keep an electrified hoop clear of a four-metre-long wire course without making contact, in one of the more light-hearted challenges of precision.

Prankerd, who works as owner-operator at King Road Contracting, said Saturday's excavator battle was his second attempt at the regional championships, following a debut outing last

"The vibe was great and it's a really accepting competition, whether you are there for the first

time or returning. The painting challenge using the excavator was probably the most difficult for me - it's not the kind of thing we do every day.'

John Northcott from Graham Harris secured runner-up honours with a solid performance, while William Adlam from AA Contracting came in at third

Ingram congratulated everyone who competed, as well as all the organisers and judges.

In addition to the main event, a guided mini dig experience was on show for children and young people to provide them with a chance to try their hands behind the controls of an excavator.

"Our region's operators are true professionals and events like this help inspire the next generation while celebrating the expertise we have right here in Taranaki," Ingram



A mini-dig experience was held alongside the competition course to help inspire the next generation of operators.

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### Zero waste success at Taranaki Tu Mai



Taranaki Tu Mai saw a successful concerted effort to stop waste ending up in the

Taranaki Tū Mai 2025 has set a new benchmark for sustainable events in the region, successfully diverting significant volumes of waste from landfill, and becoming the first large-scale festival to trial Sustainable Taranaki's new food-waste-to-compost initiative, Green Loop.

The three-day hākinakina, wānanga and kapa haka festival, hosted this year in Ōpunakē (21 - 23 November), brought together 5,500 participants from across Taranaki's eight iwi. Building on the momentum of the successful pare kore efforts at Te Matatini earlier this year.

Taranaki Tū Mai's zero waste efforts delivered impressive landfill diversion outcome, with volunteers and attendees helping redirect

majority of event waste into recycling, composting and food recovery streams. Over the weekend, the festival collected one skip bin of recycling, one skip bin of compostable containers (plus two wheelie bins), two tubs of glass, two rubbish bags of soft plastics, and six 120-litre Green Loop foodscrap bins. Only one skip bin of landfill was generated across the entire event. Additional food scraps were fed to local chickens and pigs, ensuring that almost nothing went to waste.

"This was our first major event using Green Loop, and the results exceeded all expectations." Said Suzy Randall, Zero Waste Events Manager. "To see six full bins of food scraps diverted from landfill and on their way to becoming nutrientrich compost for Taranaki

soils is exactly why Green Loop was created. It's a powerful example of climate action in our own backyard."

The Zero Waste approach was embedded across the festival, from vendor guidelines to reusable kai kit expectations, encouraging attendees to bring their own drink bottles, containers and utensils.

"We are proud of our partnership with Sustainable Taranaki and would like to thank their volunteers for their mahi and the para kore education they shared with our whānau." Said Te Kāhui o Taranaki tumu whakarito CEO, Damon Ritai

Green Loop co-founders Mieke Verschoor Sophie Walker, whose social enterprise launched earlier this year, said the outcome reflects what is possible when community, tikanga and sustainability come together.

Loop Green established to provide Taranaki businesses and events with an easy, local alternative to sending food scraps to distant landfills. With the nearest facility near Marton and other organic processing options as far as 294 km, the environmental impact of transporting organic waste has long been a barrier to meaningful action. Green Loop collects food scraps locally, preprocessing them through Bokashi fermentation, and composting them on-farm locally, to create microberich, nutrient-dense compost.

The next issue of the Opunake and Coastal News comes out on December 18 2025. Ph (06)761-7016 to advertise.

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### Honda Hub Hawera Christmas with Honda

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Looking back on 2025, Honda Outdoors, Marine, and Motorcycles achieved major milestones: Outdoors launched its first battery-powered chainsaw, Marine refreshed its high-power outboard range including the award-winning BF350 V8, and Motorcycles celebrated racing dominance and new model releases.



As we celebrate the achievements of 2025, we're excited for what lies ahead. In 2026, Honda Hub 🧦 looks forward to welcoming new customers into our family - whether it's through our expanding outdoor range, refreshed marine engines, or the latest motorcycles.

This Christmas, we wish you joy, peace, and safe travels. May your holidays be filled with laughter, warmth, and wonderful memories.

From all of us at Honda Hub - Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

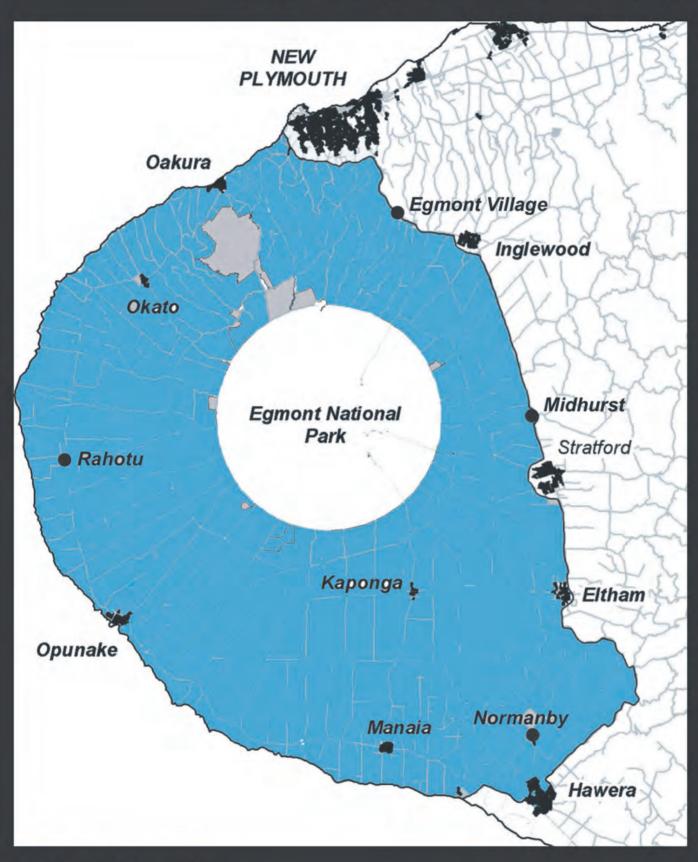






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He karere tā te Kaunihera ō Taranaki ki te Tonga News from the South Taranaki District Council



### Consultations launching in December

Kōrero Mai! Have your say

Pick up hard copy forms from the Administration Building or your local LibraryPlus, or tell us what you think online at www.southtaranaki.com/consultations



Council is inviting feedback on a proposal to permanently close a short section of Cambridge Street in Patea, between Egmont Street (State Highway 3) and Dorset Street, to create a safer and more vibrant pedestrian space at the town's southern gateway.

The proposal is part of the wider Pātea Town Revitalisation Programme. The idea for transforming the space was first identified in the 2019 Pātea Town Masterplan, which called for safer pedestrian areas, better public spaces and stronger links between the town centre, river and beach.

A Traffic Assessment completed in July 2025 found that permanently closing this section of Cambridge Street would have minimal impact on traffic flow, with alternative routes available for vehicles. The study also identified that the closure would improve safety by replacing two crossroads with safer T-intersections. Local businesses and Waka Kotahi NZTA were consulted and expressed their support for the proposal.

Pātea residents are invited to share their views by completing the feedback form before Saturday 14 February, available at Pātea LibraryPlus, Council's Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera or online at www.southtaranaki.com/consultations

Time to spill

It's time to spill! Council is asking the community to take part in an anonymous alcohol survey to help decide whether or not we need to adopt a local alcohol policy.

The survey seeks feedback on how alcohol affects people, families and communities in the District.

The information collected will help the Council understand if a local alcohol policy is required and, if so, what it should include.

The data pulled from the survey, combined with information from agencies such as Police and Health NZ, will inform a social impact assessment report.

Residents can complete the anonymous alcohol survey online, download a copy from the Council's website or pick up a hardcopy from any of the District's LibraryPlus centres. The survey is open until Friday 30 January.

For more information or to take part, visit www.southtaranaki.com/consultations.

### **Speed Management Plan**

The South Taranaki District Council is inviting feedback on proposed speed limit changes in South Taranaki.

Traffic volume and pedestrian activity have increased and will continue to do so due to rapid residential and commercial development in Hāwera, particularly around Glover Road, Turuturu Road and South Taranaki Business Park.

The proposed speed limit changes intend to create safer environments for residents, businesses, and schools while supporting community wellbeing and economic growth.

Additional proposals include variable speed limits around marae to respect cultural practices and adjustments to rural school zones to better reflect local conditions.

These changes aim to improve road safety, protect vulnerable road users, and ensure compliance with the Land Transport Rule: Setting of Speed Limits 2024.

Consultation is open for two months and we encourage residents, schools, marae, and businesses to have their say. Submisions close on Friday 30 January 2026

For more information or to participate, visit www.southtaranaki.com/ consultations

### **Parking Control and Traffic** Bylaw under review

The South Taranaki District Council is reviewing its Parking Control and Traffic Flow Bylaw and would like your feedback.

The review aims to improve accessibility, safety, and efficiency on South Taranaki roads. Proposed changes include:

- Introducing an interactive parking control register—an online map showing all parking restrictions and their legal status.
- Clarifying definitions and adding new ones for mobility devices and personal transport devices.
- Adjusting clauses to protect pedestrian access and allow flexibility for special events.

The changes reflect evolving transport trends, community expectations, and legal requirements under the Land Transport Act (1998) and Local Government Act (2002).

Submisions close on Friday 30 January 2026. Anyone can make a submission on the proposed changes online at www.southtaranaki.com/consultations or pick up a hard copy at any LibraryPlus centre or Hāwera Administration Building.

# Tuia Taitonga uthlink



He karere tā te Kaunihera ō Taranaki ki te Tonga News from the South Taranaki District Council

### ARTS IN THE PARK

SATURDAY 6 DECEMBER, KING EDWARD PARK, 10AM - 4PM, FREE ENTRY



Don't miss the premiere outdoor arts and crafts market in our District. There's something for everyone - stalls (just in time for Christmas shopping), roaming entertainment, food

trucks and vendors as well as a kids zone with rides and activites for the young ones. Don't miss a great day out!

Please bring cash for stalls and children's rides.

### A MAGIŒL GRISTMAS

FRIDAY 12 DECEMBER, TSB HUB, FROM 5.45PM, \$70PP OR \$650 FOR A TABLE OF 10

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Headlining the annual Christmas Cabaret is internationally acclaimed comedy magician Brendon Dooley, known for his highenergy performances and mind-blowing tricks. Enjoy a three-course meal with all of the trimmings and

then dance the night away to Campbell Vibe. Tickets are available online at www.iticket.co.nz until midnight on Friday 5 December.



### ELTHAM FAMILY FUN DAY

SATURDAY 10 JANUARY, SOLDIERS PARK, 10AM - 3PM, FREE ENTRY

There is literally something for everyone - enjoy some music, find a bargain with some of our stall holders and catch our local fire fighters in full demonstration and much more. Bring your togs to head to the swimming pool, or your wheels to enjoy the skate park.



### SOUNDS ON THE SAND - PARTY PATROL

SATURDAY 17 JANUARY, ÖPUNAKĒ BEACH, 1PM - 6PM, FREE ENTRY

Bringing the heat to the coast is dynamic duo Party Patrol, Featuring Campbell Vibe and Karla Kimi. Expect high energy covers, feel-good anthems and a whole lot of fun. Grab your friends, pack your picnic and soak up the ultimate summer soundtrack at the beach with Party Patrol.



SATURDAY 24 JANUARY, KING EDWARD PARK, 4.30PM, FREE ENTRY

On Saturday 24 January, King Edward Park will transform into the ultimate summer stage for an evening of music, sunshine and good vibes with one of New Zealand's brightest stars, Cassie Henderson. Bring along the whānau and a picnic (or grab some dinner from the food vendors).

# Tuia Taitonga outhlink



He karere tā te Kaunihera ō Taranaki ki te Tonga News from the South Taranaki District Council

## **Summer Blast Holiday Reading Programme**

We're powering up for another high impact season of reading with this year's LibraryPlus' Summer Blast holiday reading programme.

Summer Blast is a six-week programme designed for tamariki aged 5 to 12, building

positive reading habits by encouraging at least 15 minutes of reading a day and three check ins at your local LibraryPlus. Children who complete the programme by the end of January will receive a free book to take home.

Registrations open Monday 8 December, just pop into your local LibraryPlus to register. The first check in needs to be completed before Christmas to secure one of the limited spots in the programme.



Council's senior community outreach librarian Hannah Hancock says there's activities galore throughout December and January in each of the seven LibraryPlus centres around the District. The fun continues into February with Bird Life

Productions sessions, adding an extra layer of excitement to the programme.

"Keeping reading alive over the summer is a strategic investment in our tamariki," says Hannah. "When kids stay connected to books, they stay confident, curious and ready to hit the ground running when school starts again. Summer Blast helps prevent the reading slide and keeps young minds switched on right through the break."



### **Outdoor pools** opening for season

The outdoor pool at the Hāwera Aquatic Centre opened to the public last weekend - and the free community summer pools aren't far behind...

Most are opening their doors on Monday 8 December, with the exception of Waverley which will open on Wednesday 10 December from 3.30pm.

If you would like to know more, head to www.southtaranaki.com/summerpools

### Is it safe to go swimming? Check beore you go...

Taranaki beaches, lakes and rivers will be back under the microscope this summer, with the Can I Swim Here? programme.

Every Tuesday until the end of March, Taranaki Regional Council staff will take water samples from around the region to check for faecal contamination.

The nationwide programme uses a traffic light system for results, where green is suitable for swimming, orange is caution advised and red is unsuitable for swimming.

A general rule of thumb is to avoid swimming for three days after heavy or prolonged rain, particularly in rivers or beaches close to where rivers flow into the ocean, and look out for signage. If the water is smellier, cloudier or greener than it usually is, you might

want to find another swimming spot or stick to the shore that day.

For more information on what to look out for and to check the latest CISH results, go to www.lawa.org.nz/explore-data/swimming.



#### **December Meetings**

Public are welcome to attend

#### **Risk and Assurance Committee**

Monday 8 December, 1pm Council Chamber, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera

#### **Ordinary Council**

Wednesday 10 December, 4pm Council Chamber, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera



Scan the QR code with your cellphone to be taken to the Meetings Calendar on our



#### Sign up to our **eNewsletter**

Sign up to our fortnightly Southlink electronic newsletter to get Council news and updates sent directly to your inbox.

Email at southlink@stdc.govt.nz or head to www.southtaranaki.com/ publications to sign up online.

### Are you bin day ready? Get your new calendar

Download the Antenno App to get a reminder the night before your rubbish day with which bins to put out. All you need to do is save your address as a place, and Antenno does the work for you! Scan the QR code or go to southtaranaki.com/antenno





Download and print the new 2025/26 calendar by going to www. southtaranaki.com/calendar

(There's also a property search there if you're unsure which Zone you're in).



Pick one up - Head to your local LibraryPlus or Hāwera Administration Building to pick up a hardcopy of the new calendar to pop on your fridge.

# Memories of vertigo at 1300 metres

This short story by Anne Bayliss was the winner of the Open section of the Lysaght Watt Ronald Hugh Morrieson Literary Awards. A prize of \$500 accompanied the award.

Taranaki sun sends tentative rays peeking through low clouds on a cold Sunday morning in May. I am snuggled up, warm in my bed. He is already up. "Come on we don't want to miss the light on the mountain." Reluctantly rolling out of bed, gathering thermals, I head for the bathroom. "Give me five minutes." It takes fifteen. Boots on, I have gloves, scarves, hats and at least four jackets as we rush out the door.

The sun, disregarding a photographer's wishes, continues to rise. Seemingly in defiance. Boldly gaining height. Despite our cars increasing speed, it keeps pace beside us. Burning mist off paddocks, steam rising from cows' backs. Hawks rise from their roadkill breakfasts, as we munch apples.



White breasts turned towards the rising sun. Kereru sit on the highest branches catching rays. A white flash atop the ancient moss covered trees. Daisies an echo in roadside weeds. Flashing by as we head upwards on Pembroke Road, towards the plateau's empty parking space. No one else around. We must beat the sun which draws mist from cold ravines. Mist which rises from sun struck ridges obscuring views. The temperature plummets as she ascends sucking the warmth from stones.

We three dressed in puffer jackets, scarves and hats. Pulling on gloves as we set out. Checking cameras, batteries and phones, pockets for energy bars and apples. Observation of flora not seen at lesser altitudes slows us

on the track. "Hurry" I say, "you'll be able to see that hebe on the way back."

First glimpse. It hangs by tiny threads. A high diving board cantilevered above the ravine, muted in dawns mist. Ninety three metres of clear span lightly tethered to rock walls above the ravines floor 49 meters below. A total of 106 metres across the Manganui Gorge.

My apprehension grows.

Upwards we tramp arriving at the tunnel which has saved a life or two. "Killed by falling rock" an epitaph appears on memorials of this maunga's dead. Feeling safe for a moment in its concrete embrace I notice my son has grown tall enough to see through the small apertures in its side. I no longer need to lift him. He can catch the view of far off cliffs, while I

need to stand on tippy toes to just get a glimpse.

Out on the track again, exposed on a narrow path clinging to the gorges wall. Around one more corner we are below the bridge at last. Wooden steps, with rails to hold on to, a climb which takes my breath away. There is no wind. Only drift-ing wisps of mist curling upwards from the gorge. "Come on Mum," impatiently says my son as he strides away ahead of me.

I carefully draw in the oxygen I need to fill my straining lungs. Slowly, so slowly my heart beat steadies. One more step puts me on the bridge. With a hand tentatively touching the wire side I take a second step. Bravely letting go. Seeing straight ahead fog, which drifts over the bridge,

obscure the other end. It is not the bridge which takes my breath away, but the volume of air it suspends me above.

On a clear day looking east, a spider web of cables with natural curves to withstand wind, murmur at zephyrs gentlest touch. I imagine falling. The sensation of flight. Wind rushing upwards toward me. Holding me up, pushing me away from the ground. Not letting me land. I am a bird. A Kea in its natural habitat, above a magnificent southern mountain range. Slowly beating my strong wings against the up-draught until sufficient altitude for my screaming decent. My voice shouting with delight. Wings tucked in. Beak pointing towards this foreign Maunga in the north. Flashing past tarns. Down into the gorge. One wing out to turn toward the rising sun. Now swiftly gliding over this bridge with its spi-ders' web of wires singing. The breeze whistles and strains against gravity while I fly

My father said, "it's not

the fall which kills you, it's the landing."

I have no plans to land.

"The wires gave way." That is how it happened. The day I first fell. The wires on the roof of the old coop, three metres above the run. The boy leant on them too. The mystery is how he defied gravity, jumping away while I flew with the chickens on that forgotten day. Like the downy chick I was, I did not know how to land.

I stand blinking in the middle of this bridge. Memories of vertigo exhaled on my breath, at thirteen hundred metres above the sea. Reaching for the side I close my eyes tight. Lost in the memory.

I came to hearing my mother's voice. "Get that child out of here, she's dripping blood all over my clean floor." Dad carries me into the bathroom, placing me gently in the empty tub. Blood runs down the length of it, circles around the plug hole then disappears down the drain. I couldn't

continued next page

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# Memories of vertigo at 1300 metres

continued from previous

breathe, swallowing blood, seeing grazes on my knees. No idea why I couldn't

Abruptly opening my eyes I find myself standing totally alone in the middle of this bridge. Recalling another time on this mountain when vertigo halted me on an exposed ridge above scree and clouds. Frozen, afraid, unable to move, calling to my lover, "come back, come back," as he strode away disappearing into vegetation five metres away. Terri-fied until he turned around and I breathed again. Walking slowly, breathing wonderful alpine air I am surprised to find I am almost across the bridge! They are ahead of me ascending to the ski fields devoid of snow. The photogra-phers, gathering records as we climb. These old buildings need a face lift I think, when we arrive at the ski lodge. But there is merit in their service all these long years. Asking not for beauty, but utility to be their reward. Brutal cold winds kept at bay by their sturdy walls. While I recall those young climbers exposed on our Maunga's coldest nights. All for a view from its snow-covered heights. The stars and moon

I will never make that summit climb, but one day I will be flying over it with the wings of a southern kea, flashing a red warning. I will see beyond the delineated terrain made in 1881. A line on a map protecting the old volcanic cones. Saved as New Zealand's second national park "Egmont" in the year 1900.

lighting their way.

I will see Taranaki as an unnamed raging god in his youth, magma exploding into the air, shifting tons of rock. Rivers of molten lava covering sediment on the sea bed. He made a

MATERIAL HANDLING

difference then, which no man observed. The years, mov-ing swiftly for me, pass glacially for him. His temper cools while his cruelty grows. Oh yes it's subtle, the quiet death he employs. Enticing like a siren with his views. Pristine tarns mirror pristine snow.

The colours of dawn an aurora glow reflected from men's eyes. Enticing them to the glorious freedom he offers in each ascent, climbing to the stars.

Kind young Ed Hillary experienced its pull. He climbed here a hundred times to escape the machinations of the Second World War, which he could not avoid.

Yellow flowers, tiny things peek through the dried straw of grasses amidst the spongy moss fields on this cold May day. It is not winter yet, but I feel it's promise seeping into my old bones. Time to go. Time to leave this rarified air. Making my way slowly and very, very carefully down the track back to the bridge. I now think how fabulous it is to step out onto that flat deck, avoiding the long and difficult old track around the gorge walls below.

Confident I can make it in one piece across this swing bridge arrested in midair. Vibrations of others steps behind me, a comfort. Nothing to fear. Stopping in the middle and looking towards the snow sprinkled cone above I silently salute ghosts who wander there.

Farewell I say to the metallic creature offering a stone in his right claw. I stand on my toes to touch the small round rock. Eyes like a cats, with a secret he is not sharing, stare blindly back.

Descending to the car park we meet more climbers coming up the track. The sun is warm now out of the shadow of the gorge. "A great day for it," they say. I surreptitiously check that all have suitable clothing.

Watch as children on sturdy legs race ahead, knowing my anxiety is misplaced, when they listen to their mother. They will not fall, as I fell.

Ghosts of youthful nurses haunted me as I slept at the Barrett Street Nurses Home in the early 1970s. They whispered in my dreams. Live, do not climb in the snows where ice forms. Be one who loves the view of the mountain from afar. Listen to the birds. Do not fly too high.

In my dreams the sheer weight of that volume of air pressing the oxygen from my labouring lungs stirs memories of verglas. Slipping on frozen scoria, loose rocks rolling underfoot. No crampons. No ice axe. No rope. No hands pulling me up. Just the slide and increasing speed of the fall.

The descent is always swift. Falling, flying, driving. I watch the mountain receding, like memories, in the rear view mir-ror. Breathing deeply, my ears pop on our journey down towards the warm sea and home. That small sound, "pop" brings me, quite gently out of the past. It seems I have learnt to land unharmed back on

September 2017 my partner and I felt privileged to be witnesses to the release of 6 Kiwi at North Egmont. Kiwi have surprisingly soft feathers, and shockingly sharp claws. I bandaged up a wounded DOC worker that day and watched as a kiwi emerged from its new home close by the visitor's centre.

It took 1080 to do a three-sixty and bring the kiwi home to Taranaki. Extermination of feral cats, possums, stoats and rats, caught in many traps, to keep them safe. Hunters culled the goats, deer and rabbits to save the alpine flora. Signs to

now above streams on low bush clad tracks.

Looking back I am suddenly caught in an avalanche of grief.

He is responsible for the lives lost. The gathering of clouds to cover his crimes not enough to shield him from my an-ger. I look back at this marvel, this bridge taking me high on the mountain's side. High enough to catch an up-draft. While he stealthily forms ice crystals, a crust on snow and rock. Carelessly, greedily, gathering bloodied bodies to himself.

Upwards of a hundred at last count. A rockfall of emotions crushing my lungs in too thin air, barely breathing. Can we sue him? How will he pay? In this warming world will he no longer be able to gather clouds, to hide his face, cover his tracks, blanket in white, bodies of those who

Will we now have to ask the mountain to protect himself? Lawyer up, if he is a man? When all it takes is a politician with dollar signs in his eyes to undo 125 years of protection. Will all the unpaid work and unacknowledged deaths now stand for nothing as snows melt away? Men make gold their only god. Reducing gods to mountains once again, or elevating men to gods?

Local Alpine clubs continue to train high altitude rescue teams and volunteer fire and helicopter crews stand by. While tourists take in the views, the government rakes in cash.

But still he calls to us, come see what I have on show today. The challenge is to stay away.

Anne Baylis, New **Plymouth** 

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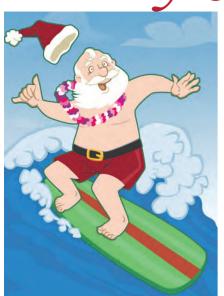
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### Dogs die in hot cars don't risk their lives

SPCA is once again urging dog owners across Aotearoa to never leave their pets unattended in vehicles during the summer months as it can cause severe distress and in worse cases, death.

The warning follows a recent incident where a dog was found suffering in a hot car despite clear signs of heat stress.

**SPCA** Inspectors responded to a call in the Wellington region earlier this year, regarding a dog left in a car for at least hour. The vehicle was parked in full sun, and although the outside temperature was 22°C, the temperature inside the car was significantly higher. The large crossbreed dog was found panting heavily, drooling, and seeking shade in the footwell, which are clear signs of heat distress.

Despite the windows being cracked slightly, the car was locked and the dog was visibly suffering. The Inspector attempted to contact the owner via the car registration details, but there was no matching dog owner information available.

After unsuccessful attempts to find the owner at

nearby houses, the Inspector made the call to remove the dog from the car. Just as she was about to do so, the owner showed up and reluctantly opened the vehicle but showed no concern for the dog's condition. He said the dog "was fine" even though it was making clear attempts to get out once the door was open.

The Inspector managed to give the dog some water, which it drank eagerly, draining the bowl quickly. The owner then returned the dog to the hot car and drove away. The vehicle returned briefly, with the dog still inside and visibly panting.

The owner was issued a \$300 infringement fee and was educated on the risks of leaving their dog in the car on hot days.

SPCA is reminding the public that even on a mild day, the temperature inside a car can rise rapidly. On a 21°C Day, a car parked in the shade with windows down can reach over 31°C in just ten minutes, and over 40°C in thirty minutes. On hotter days, temperatures inside vehicles can exceed 50°C – conditions that can cause irreparable brain damage, organ failure, or death.

Dogs pant to keep themselves cool — something they cannot do effectively in warmer and enclosed spaces. Parking in the shade or cracking windows does little to reduce the risk.

SPCA receives hundreds of calls every summer about dogs left in hot cars – a preventable and heartbreaking welfare issue.

"You wouldn't leave a child in a hot car," says SPCA CEO Todd Westwood. "Please do the same for your furry family members."

"If you can't be without them, take them in the car in the evenings or in the early morning when the weather is cooler, or leave them at home in the shade. If your dog struggles with separation anxiety, speak to friends or family who may be able to care for them when you need to pop out."

If you see a dog in distress inside a vehicle, call SPCA on 0800 SPCA NZ or contact the Police immediately. Do not attempt to break the window yourself, as this can pose risks to both you and the animal.

#### Dogs bacteria could be your teens best friend

Pet dogs could potentially improve teenagers' wellbeing not only through cuddles, but also by changing the bacteria living in their bodies. Japanese researchers assessed the behaviour and emotional state of over 300 teenagers, finding those with pet dogs

tended to have fewer social and behavioural problems. In tests of the teens' saliva, dog owners had more of some types of bacteria - and when saliva bacteria from six teenagers were fed to mice, those given bacteria from dog-owning teens tended to become more social. The researchers say that while mouse and human behaviour can't be directly compared, this suggests the bacteria teens get from their dogs might help improve their wellbeing.

iScience



# Government's war on nature sparked powerful nationwide resistances

Greenpeace says the Luxon Government's "war on nature" has been met with an unprecedented wave of resistance from tens of thousands of New Zealanders over the two years since the coalition took office. Greenpeace has released a timeline illustrating the scale of public pushback.

"From the moment it was sworn in, this Government launched an all-out assault on the environment," says Greenpeace Aotearoa Executive Director Dr Russel Norman.

"But just as swiftly, New Zealanders stood up. And they haven't stopped. The resistance to this Government's antinature agenda has been powerful, determined, and nationwide." The timeline covers marches, petitions, occupations, court challenges, submissions, rallies, and acts of civil disobedience that have confronted the Government's anti-environment agenda.

Dr Norman says the record shows a clear divide between a Government aligned with corporate polluters and a public fighting to defend the places and species that make Aotearoa home.

"People from every walk of life have refused to let this Government sacrifice our rivers, oceans, forests, and climate for corporate gain. They've shown courage in

pushing back against Fast Track, seabed mining, coal mining, and dangerous nitrate contamination."

### Battery blazes beware

Toxic chemicals are released when lithium-ion batteries (from devices like e-bikes and vapes) catch fire inside rubbish trucks (and elsewhere), according to NZ researchers who deliberately started these fires under controlled conditions. For example, the amount of carbon monoxide released

RIGHT:

The remains of three tractors ignited by a lithium battery.

from a burning truck was over 30 times higher than it's acceptable for workers to be exposed to in one day.

After the fires had been extinguished, the water that ran out of the truck contained fluoride and metals, like aluminium and lead, at levels far above safety standards

for the environment.

As lithium-ion batteries become more common, the researchers called for regulations for putting out such fires, to make sure workers, the public, and the environment are kept safe. Paper is freely available online.





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### Young innovators shine at 13th annual STEMFest Taranaki

More than 230 Year 4-6 students from across the region showcased their creativity, teamwork, and problem-solving at the 13th annual STEMFest Taranaki, held in New Plymouth.

Schools travelled from across Taranaki to take part in the two-day event, highlighting students' growing interest in science, technology, engineering and

Encouraging students to be curious, confident, and to pursue future STEMS



Inspiring young people at STEMFest.

pathways for 13 years, **STEMFest** Taranaki is delivered by Energy Resources Aotearoa.

STEMFest is one of the most uplifting events in the science education calendar, says Sheree Long, Director of Workforce Development Energy Resources Aotearoa.

"Seeing hundreds of young people proudly presenting their first science and engineering projects is a powerful reminder of the talent and creativity we have in Taranaki. Experiences like these help spark future

OPUNAKE & COASTAL

career pathways."

Omata School Principal, Stuart Bennett, said the event has become a fixture in their school year.

"STEMFest gives our students a chance to collaborate, explore new ideas and build confidence in a supportive and inspiring environment. They look forward to it every year."

Ake Ara Energy Innovation Manager Evelien Wallace says the organisation is proud to support STEMFest.

"Ara Ake has been a proud premium sponsor of STEMFest for the past five years. We believe that progress in energy innovation is essential to creating an efficient, clean, and fair energy ecosystem that supports the needs of all New Zealanders.

"Inspiring young people to discover the joy and potential of a future in STEM is a crucial part of building Aotearoa's bright, equitable future - for both our communities and our environment."

John Carnegie, Chief Energy Executive of Resources Aotearoa, said the event reflects its commitment to developing regional capability, and thanked the other key sponsors Beach Energy, JERA Nex bp, Powerco and First Gas.

"Taranaki has a proud of technical history expertise, and events like STEMFest help ensure that continues.

These students building skills in teamwork, problem-solving innovation attributes that will shape region's future energy and technology workforce. We're proud to support an event that brings schools, families and industry together in such a positive way."

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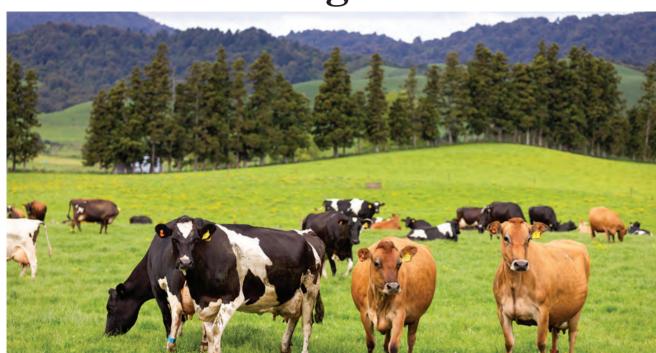
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### Finish line in sight for M.bovis



On track to achieve eradication by June 2028.

The Ministry for Primary Industries, OSPRI and the country's dairy and beef sectors are marking that New Zealand is on the home straight to eradicate the cattle disease Mycoplasma bovis.

"Spring bulk tank milk testing across the country has found no sign of M. bovis. That's a big win," says MPI Director-General Ray Smith.

"Thanks to the hard work of farmers, their sector bodies, MPI people, OSPRI and many others, there's been no new M. bovis infection detected for two years and we can now enter the very final phase of the eradication programme called 'confidence of absence.'

OSPRI's CEO Sam McIvor says the 'confidence of absence' phase requires a further couple of years of testing to gather sufficient data to prove M. bovis has gone from the national herd, and to declare eradication.

"At that point, we'd be confident to declare freedom from the disease which will be a world-first eradication.

"These last two spring seasons (2024-25) of zero infections were important because this testing includes the new-born heifers from the year before, entering the milking herd for the first

time. In many cases, this will be the first time these animals have been tested for M. bovis through the bulk milk tank testing process.

"Staying the course for the next period of surveillance will enable young cattle to become adults and be captured in the results.

"But the good news is that, with the lower risk of disease now, we'll no longer routinely use movement controls while investigating bulk tank milk detect results," Mr McIvor says.

DairyNZ Chair Tracy Brown welcomes the news of the clear spring bulk tank milk testing.

"Without the collective effort of dairy and beef farmers, as well as the wider sector stakeholders, we wouldn't be where we are today - with a stronger and more resilient biosecurity system.

"I encourage farmers to continue supporting this important programme – including by enabling testing on farm if required."

Beef + Lamb New Zealand Chair Kate Acland says the M. bovis eradication programme has protected the sector from the productivity losses and animal welfare impacts of the disease.

"The progress to date is

renewed direction that leads

the organisation into the next

100 years..

in large part due to the hard work and sacrifices of farmers and the wider pastoral sector.

"We need to maintain our focus for a little longer. One important way farmers can support this work is by keeping their NAIT records up to date. This is essential for preventing the spread of disease and supporting effective disease management."

The Mycoplasma bovis programme eradication programme is to achieve a 10-year, \$870 million June 2028.

collaboration between the Government and industry partners DairyNZ and Beef + Lamb New Zealand.

Allowing the disease to become endemic would have cost \$1.3 billion in lost production in the first ten years alone and continued to burden the sector into the future.

The last transmission of M. bovis in cattle was on 7 September 2023 and the programme remains on track to achieve eradication by





New Season Hay and Straw Call to order

#### Rural Women New Zealand announces new Chief Executive

The Board of Rural Women New Zealand have announced the appointment of Sandra Kirby as Chief Executive.

Sandra Kirby is an experienced Chief Executive across member organisations and the not-for-profit sector, most recently as CEO of Physiotherapy New Zealand and Arthritis New Zealand.

National President Sandra Matthews says it's great to have Sandra onboard.

"She brings extensive experience from her previous roles, and a career comprising of over two decades dedicated to service and improving the lives of others

"It's been a huge year for Rural Women New Zealand, celebrating our Centennial and growing our National Office. Now we have Sandra as our Chief Executive, I can't wait to see what we achieve for rural women and communities across Aotearoa," says Matthews.

Incoming Chief Executive Sandra Kirby says she's honoured to join Rural Women New Zealand in such an auspicious year.

"With a strong foundation of innovation and passionate people, I look forward to building on the legacy that supports future generations of rural women," she says.

Matthews also thanks Interim CE Nicola Eccleton for her contribution to the organisation over the past six months.

"Nicola joined the team during a huge period of transformation, as new staff were onboarded and our strategy updated. She has been a key part of our FINER SPRAYING SERVICES

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### Record cow productivity helps drive strong season

New Zealand dairy farmers are achieving more with fewer cows, shown through record milk production per cow and continued genetic progress.

The latest New Zealand Dairy Statistics 2024/25, released by DairyNZ and Improvement Livestock Corporation (LIC), reveals

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total milksolids production rose 2.9 percent in 2024/25 to 1.94 billion kilograms, despite a 0.5 percent fall in cow numbers to 4.68 million.

The lift was driven by record-high productivity per cow, with the average cow producing 414 kilograms of milksolids, which is up 14kg

from last season.

DairyNZ chief executive Campbell Parker says the results reflect farmers' strong focus on performance and adaptability despite a range of challenges over the past few years.

"Farmers continue to focus on doing things smarter and driving productivity, including managing their herds more efficiently, improving feed use, and leveraging science technology to lift production per cow, while responding to higher milk prices last season," says Campbell.

"The trend towards fewer, larger herds is continuing, but the focus on highperforming, healthy animals remains strong, with fewer cows producing more milk. It's a real credit to farmers' skill, resilience, and ongoing investment in herd improvement and farm management. That combination of efficiency and innovation keeps New Zealand dairy farming at the forefront internationally."

Meanwhile, improvement activity strengthened notably in 2024/25, with farmers continuing to invest in data and genetics to support longterm gains.

A total of 3.84 million



A focus on high-performing, healthy animals.

were herd-tested, which is a 5 percent increase from last season, with 82 percent of the national herd now tested in 2024/25. The proportion of cows mated to artificial breeding (AB) also increased slightly to 81.5

LIC Chief Executive David Chin highlights farmers'

strong commitment genetic progress and herd performance, driven by their focus to lift productivity across their businesses.

"Farmers now have access to the most accurate data and advanced genetic tools ever available, and they're using these to make very smart, highly targeted breeding

decisions," says David.

"The record milk production per cow is no coincidence. It's the result of decades of genetic improvement and a relentless focus on cow efficiency. Genomic evaluations, milk quality, and herd testing have all become integral as farmers identify and breed from their top-performing

cows." David notes that the long-term trend towards crossbreeding is another sign of farmers' focus on breeding a balanced, fertile and highly efficient herd.

"Holstein-Friesian/ Jersey crossbreds now account for just over 61 percent of the national herd. This reflects farmers' confidence in cows that combine strong production with high milksolids, good conformation and fertility - key traits for a resilient national herd."

The average dairy cooperative payout (including dividends) was \$10.75 per kilogram of milksolids. an increase from \$8.90 in the previous season. When adjusted for inflation, the 2024/25 payout was \$0.90 above the five-year inflationadjusted average of \$9.25 per kilogram of milksolids.

Campbell says that dairy farmers continue to play a large role in contributing to the New Zealand economy.

"Looking ahead to the current 2025/26 season, we will likely see the impacts from the extreme wet weather experienced in some regions during spring flow through. However, there are some positives, with strong production at the start of the season, accompanied by a stronger than average retro payment and reduced interest rates, which will likely improve the cash position of many farmers."

#### Fonterra updates forecast milk price

Fonterra Co-operative Group Ltd has provided an update on its forecast Farmgate Milk Price and milk collections for the 2025/26 season.

The Co-op has narrowed the forecast Farmgate Milk Price range from \$9.00-\$11.00 per kgMS to \$9.00-\$10.00 per kgMS, with the midpoint changing from \$10.00 per kgMS to \$9.50 per kgMS.

The Co-op has also increased its forecast milk collections for the 2025/26 season from 1,525 million kgMS to 1,545 million kgMS.

CEO Miles Hurrell says we've seen strong milk flows this season, both here in New Zealand and other milk producing nations.

"This increase in milk supply has put downward pressure global

commodity prices, with seven consecutive drops in recent Global Dairy Trade events. As a result, we have narrowed the forecast Farmgate Milk Price range for the season and adjusted our midpoint.

"Fonterra started the season

with a wide forecast range of \$8.00-\$11.00 per kgMS. The new midpoint of \$9.50 per kgMS is in the middle of this range and remains a strong forecast for the season. "We continue to be focused on maximising returns for farmer shareholders through

both the Farmgate Milk Price and earnings. This includes through building strong relationships with customers who value our products, utilising price risk management tools, and optimising our product mix," says Mr Hurrell.

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### Shake-up of local government long overdue

say they are cautiously welcoming signals from the Government that a major shake-up of local government is on its way.

"This discussion is long overdue and will be welcome news for farming families and rural ratepayers," says Federated Farmers local government spokesperson Sandra Faulkner.

Localism must sit at the heart of local council reforms, Faulkner says.

"Federated Farmers strongly supports a single layer of local government based on communities of interest.

"That means exploring councils unitary that separate large cities from rural and regional areas where appropriate.

"This reflects the reality

that those in urban areas have different needs, priorities, and interactions with local councils than those in rural areas.

"This would allow the efficiency of a single layer of local government while maintaining connection with the people and communities they serve."

Faulkner rural says representation must be maintained under any government new local arrangements.

"Rural communities pay a significant share of rates under the current structure and those rates bills just keep climbing.

"Yet at the same time, we're increasingly seeing our rural representation around council tables diminished particularly with councils that share large urban population centres.'

Regional councils currently undertake important functions that are critical for rural communities, including flood-protection schemes, pest management, and civil defence co-ordination.

"The reform process needs care and debate. Local government structures have come under increasing scrutiny in recent years as rates have skyrocketed and service levels have declined.

"With the rising cost of living top of mind for most households and businesses, there is a real need to strip out the inefficiencies and duplication that pull a

handbrake on productivity.

"With that in mind, it's clear why looking at better ways we could structure and run our local government has become a top priority for the Beehive."

Faulkner says there is room for some of these functions to move to central government, but it is important that policy decisions relating to resource allocation remain local decisions rather than being centralised through Wellington.

"Federated will support reforms that streamline processes create efficiencies while also maintaining local representation and communities of interest."



than usual in October with an average of 259.9mm as the region was hit by spring showers, according to Taranaki Regional Council

long-term averages.

October average speeds were 17km/hr, with average gust strength of 50km/hr, these were 2.6km/

gustier than the long-term average. The maximum wind gust recorded in October was 126.7km/hr at Uruti at Kaka Rd on 27 October.





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(TRC) figures.

While there was 80% more than normal at our rain gauge at Mangorei Upper at Forest Hill, there was 6% less than usual at the Kaupokonui at Glenn Road monitoring site in South Taranaki.

Year-to-date rainfall is lowest at Waitotara at Hawken Rd with 19% less rainfall than normal. North Taranaki at Camphouse has had the highest yearto-date rainfall with 20% more normal rainfall but on average year-to-date rainfall across all gauges has been close to normal (100%).

Mean river flows for October were 53.1% greater than typical values, low flows were 104.5% greater, and high flows 42.8% greater than typical values, while mean river (non-mountain) water temperatures were 13.3°C, an average of 0.3°C warmer than long-term values for the month.

Kaupokonui at Glenn Rd also had the maximum air temperature in October -26.3°C - on 11 October. The average air temperature for the region (excluding Te Maunga sites) was 13.1°C,



### Agtrans co-founder Phil D'Ath retires after 13 years at the helm

Agtrans, a leading name in Taranaki's craneage and commercial transport industry, officially announce the retirement of co-founder Phil D'Ath, marking the end of an era for the company.

Founded in 2012 by CJ Mahony and Phil D'Ath, Agtrans began as a two-truck, two-tractor business serving the region's agricultural sector. Over the past 13 years, the operation has grown into a trusted transport partner for key industries across Taranaki, unique in their approach to heavy haulage, craneage, and truck-mounted crane work.

"Phil's departure opens the door for an exciting



Phil in Mongolia,



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new chapter for Agtrans," says managing director CJ Mahony. "While we'll miss his presence around the depot, we're excited for him as he embarks on his next adventure — and we're equally excited about the opportunities ahead for our team and customers."

Drawing on his background in farming, building, and precast concrete, Phil brought practical knowledge, and deep industry insight to Agtrans from the outset. Known for his strong people skills and commitment to client relationships, he played a pivotal role in shaping the company's culture, reputation, and success.

"In the early years, it was all hands-on deck. Phil's ability to connect with people, and his commitment to our client relationships have been central to who we are today," says CJ Mahony.

As he steps down from his role, Phil and his wife Helen are preparing for their next big adventure — a long-anticipated two-year motorbike trip from Nordkap (North Cape), the northernmost point of the European continent, to Cape Town, the southernmost point on the African continent.

"If you think you can, or think you can't, you're probably right. Both CJ and I thought we could, and here we are - quite a way on from two trucks, two tractors, and the two of us.

"Thanks to CJ for being a supportive business partner, if we hadn't aimed for the sky and challenged ourselves and our team to adopt new skills and technology, Agtrans would not look the way it does today," says Phil D'Ath.

CJ Mahony says Agtrans remains privately owned, and that it is business-asusual for customers and suppliers. The leadership transition has been in motion for several months, with internal succession seeing Phil Harrison and Logan Willemen, rise in rank to Projects Manager and Operations Manager respectively.

"Our team is committed to a seamless transition. We look forward to continuing to serve our customers with the same values, commitment to excellence, and strong partnerships that have defined us since day one," says CJ

Phil's parting message is one of gratitude:

"It takes a lot of people to create a company the scale of Agtrans - to become as successful as it's become. I'm appreciative of all the customers, the staff and suppliers we've had over the years – thank you to everyone."



The Agtrans leadership team; (from left) Phil Harrison; contract manager, contract co-ordinator, CJ Mahony; co-founder, director, financial director, Logan Willemen; director, operations manager.



## CONTRACTING SEASON IS IN FULL SWING

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### ZAC rugby rivalry coming to Stadium Taranaki

Wallabies will clash in a blockbuster showdown at Stadium Taranaki for the ANZAC Day Classic on Saturday 25 April 2026.

Expect an epic blast from the past, when home-side heroes Chris Masoe, Nehe Milner-Skudder, and Jason Eaton line up against Australian greats Radike Samo, Wycliff Palu and Andrew Walker, under the coaching guidance of legendary winger David Campese. The full lineup of legends will be announced

Proudly hosted by NPDC and presented by Taranaki Like No Other, this landmark event will bring locals and visitors together for an iconic celebration of sporting rivalry.

Plymouth District Mayor Max Brough says Taranaki is made for events like this with world-class facilities, a passionate sporting community and a backdrop that's second to none.

"We love our rugby here and we've seen some great clashes over the years. Having some of the game's legends from here and across the ditch for an ANZAC day showdown will be a real treat for fans and who knows, maybe we can regularise a classic Bledisloe fixture."

Chris Haden, Manager of The Classics, adds:

"The Classics were built on the idea that a player's story doesn't end when they hang up their boots - it continues connection. through community, and the love of the game. The ANZAC Day Classic is the crown jewel of our calendar and Taranaki is the perfect stage for this



Stadium Taranaki - East Stand from the West Stand.

celebration of rivalry and camaraderie."

Brylee Flutey, Destination at Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki, says the event will provide a welcome boost for tourism and hospitality.

"We're proud to support The Classics through the Plymouth Major Events Fund. This is a fantastic opportunity to attract visitors from across Aotearoa and Australia to experience Taranaki's stunning landscapes, vibrant culture, and world-class dining.'

Taranaki Stadium

owned by Taranaki Council and Regional operated by New Plymouth District Council. The venue has a capacity of 21,000 (expandable to 23,000) and has hosted events including international rugby and FIFA fixtures to major entertainment events and community gatherings.

The Classics reconnect New Zealand rugby greats with communities across the country and international opposition around the world. Built on camaraderie, connection, and the enduring spirit of the black jersey, The Classics celebrate legacy of our game while inspiring the next generation through regional matches, community engagement, and charity initiatives.

The ANZAC Day Classic kicks off at Stadium Taranaki on Saturday 25 April 2026 at 2.35pm



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### Sandfords Manaia Golf results

November 16. 1. Jackson Laing and Joseph Baylis. 2. Elliott Baylis. 1. Lennox Finnigan and Romyn Tupuse. 2. Olivia Lynskey and Liam Lynskey.

November 23. 1. Joseph Baylis. 2. Jackson Laing. 3. Elliott Baylis. Nett. 1. Harry Gopperth. 2. Romyn Tupuse. 9 shot. Lucy Gopperth.

November 30. 1. Jackson Laing. 2. Irie Arapeta. 3. Brontea Arapeta. Nett. 1. Romyn Tupuse. 2. Lennox Finnigan.



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### Jailhouse Frocks an entertaining frolic

Plymouth's Little New Theatre, The Jailhouse Frocks was written by New Zealand playwright Devon Williamson.

Directed by Emma Walker, the comedy is set in a jailhouse where the mild mannered and rather dim police officer successively arrests three women for various offences who all end up together in the clink one a mad cat lady recently returned from India, the second, drunk - arrested despite protests she's the mayor's wife - and the third, a young punk who is disturbing the peace by

roaring around on her noisy motorbike.

amiable The though somewhat distracted warder - periodically breaking out into song - attempts to keep order among the three who are initially sceptical of each

When a New York gangster, disguised as an FBI agent with revenge on his mind, later storms the jail the three women who have now formed their own formidable gang manage to thwart his plans and he ends up in the lock up.

Jenny McKegney Brown as Elena arrives as a very convincing drunk. Loud and



From Left Tony Romano (Justin Lowcay), Elena (Jenny McKegney Brown), Gloria (Briar Tucker), Mary Barron and Officer Dwayne (Bailey Thompson).

unabashed she played her part beautifully while Briar

Tucker as Gloria Romano, the young punk with edge reprimanding Elena that she needed to forge her own identity and not just shelter under the moniker of the mayor's wife, was just perfect in the role. Chere Stevenson who stepped in at short notice to play Cathy, a role Mary Barron was to play before she pulled out due to a painful injury, played the part she inherited of a slightly dotty hippy earth mother figure commendably. Of the music that

periodically accompanies the action I especially enjoyed the delightful first song by officer Dwayne (played by Bailey Thompson). His

was nicely captured as he, in the end, falsely takes credit for the arrest of a lifetime when the police chief (Andrew Beale) arrives. Justin Lowcay as the gangster initially disguised

character, naïve and inept

as an FBI agent, now captured and at the mercy of the lascivious Cathy, licking her lips in anticipation, provided a very funny end to the action in the final scene. I did miss Mary Barron

who is a great comic actor (as well as director in many of the New Plymouth Little Theatre's plays) originally cast as Cathy who had to pull out of the play at such short notice; an unfortunate

It was all rather fun. I found myself highly amused chortling at the end of the first half at the ludicrousness of the unfolding action and, cheered by the end that women together using their combined wit and courage were able to foil the notorious gangster.

Great stuff.

Jailhouse The Frocks continues its run at New Plymouth's Little Theatre till December 13.

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#### **Rooftops** could produce affordable green hydrogen

Extra power generated by NZ's home solar panels could produce environmentally friendly or 'green' hydrogen to help meet decarbonisation targets, researchers say. Their models looked at power needs and the areas available for residential rooftop solar panels in Auckland and Christchurch, to see how much electricity might be left over. Even with increasing use of electricity for the likes of EVs and heat pumps, there was extra electricity generated in summer that could be used to make hydrogen for power storage, transport fuel, or fertiliser manufacturing. As the technology gets cheaper, the study authors say this green hydrogen could become comparable in cost to hydrogen produced from

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### Lysaght Watt's diverse exhibitions



**Pretty Potty.** 

The Lysaght Watt Gallery is renowned for presenting a diverse range of exhibitions.

We believe exposure to art in its many mediums is integral to a successful relationship

with our community.

Following the success of our current exhibition of Whakairo the Lysaght Watt Gallery is pleased to present Cross Stitching.

This will run from December 13 2025 to January 4 2026.

Stitching Cross wonderings of a needle and thread.

Gail Thompson

Gail Thompson has, over the last 30 years, mastered the Art of the cross stitch.

Some would consider the cross stitch as craft work, however, in the hands of a master the humble cross stitch has created an exquisite piece of art that transforms generations. We are pleased to present these incredibly detailed pieces.

blends Cross stitch traditional craft with contemporary design. Considered one of the

"longest taking art forms in the entire world" it is a medium of artistic expression. Historically it is seen in museums around the world, from the Victoria and Albert in London to the Smithsonian in Washington and our own Te Papa, from samplers to the creation of images such as the Bayeux Tapestry.

Cross stitching has kept its appeal from ancient times to today, making it an enduring art form.

This is an exhibition not to be missed.

The Chair Affair January 4 – February 8 2026

From the wildly whimsical to the brilliantly practical, this exhibition celebrates the imagination of everyday creatives who were challenged to reinvent the humble chair.

Whether it is handy, crafty,



Nesting.

witty or just plain clever, each piece tells a story.

Explore the light-hearted, feel-good showcase

whimsy.

You will smile, admire and maybe even rethink your favourite chair.

### TSB Festival of Lights set to shine bright this summer

NPDC's iconic summer everything else we have to festival returns to Pukekura Park, transforming it once again into a spectacular showcase of light, music and creativity.

Across 36 nights from 20 December 2025 to 24 January 2026, visitors can enjoy an extraordinary free programme of light installations, live music and entertainment for all ages.

New Plymouth District Mayor Max Brough says the festival is much loved by locals as well as the thousands of visitors it attracts giving a much-needed lift to the local economy.

"People from all over New Zealand as well as overseas come here for the festival and then take time to experience offer while they're here. It's a key tourism drawcard and economic driver for our district."

Festival Manager Lisa Ekdahl says this year's programme is our most diverse and vibrant yet.

"From high-energy performances to interactive experiences, all within an illuminated utopia, there's something for everyone to enjoy all summer long."

GMBrylee Flutey, Destination, Te Puna Umanga Venture Taranaki

"Venture Taranaki is proud to support the TSB Festival of Lights through our facilitation of the Major Events Fund. As a flagship event in our region's

summer calendar, it creates unforgettable vibrancy for whānau and visitors alike, as well as providing a significant boost for the local economy, and we will be leveraging this across our promotions to showcase Taranaki as an unrivalled visitor destination."

This year's programme features 12 new light installations by leading international and local artists. Highlights include Lisa Reihana's Te Whekea-Muturangi, a striking 15m floating artwork inspired Māori mythology. Interactive works from Curiosity by Amigo & Amigo and The Hive Beamhacker invite audiences to engage with

light in imaginative and unexpected ways.

The festival offers more than 70 events, designed to captivate and entertain.

Opening night features Kiwi rock band Racing, supported by New Plymouth's People of the Sun. Headline acts include Caravana Sun, Lost Tribe Aotearoa, Mazbou Q, and Flamingo Pier who will lead the New Year's Eve celebrations.

For tamariki (children), the Festival Kids programme delivers an array experiences from foam glow-themed parties, activities, Pukekura power play, and a tots-to-teens music night.

Special events add to the

magic with Dream Garden (acrobatic performance), Full Moon Gong Journey, The Book Factory, and Dancing to the Ritz.

The outdoor cinema is back with showings of Cool Runnings, The Mountain, and Mamma Mia! SingAlong.

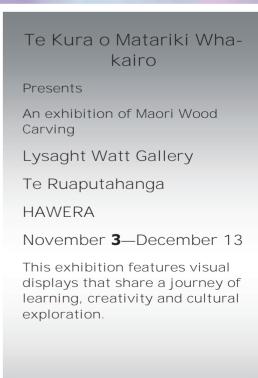
Glow Boats are returning to the lake, and visitors can take part in a TSB Treasure Hunt for prizes.

Around 155,000 attended the 2024/2025 festival, with 44 per cent from outside









### Spring into Summer



25th Nov - 20 Dec

THE VILLAGE GALLERY 166 HIGH STREET, ELTHAM



### Carols for Christmas

Everyone is invited to an evening of singing.

With St Patrick's School Choir,

Kaponga School Choir & the Methodist Multi-Cultural Choir

Sunday 7 December 2025 at the Kaponga Town Hall @ 7pm. Supper Provided



Supported by the combined churches of Kaponga

oldest tractor Barry currently owns is a 1928 John Deere BN, imported from the states.

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**Maketawa Museum** 

Eight years ago Barry Bishop started the

Maketawa John Deere Museum. Barry's

Museum is full of vintage classic John

of 40 green and yellow beauties. The

Deere Machinery. He now has a collection

### **Spring into Summer at The Village Gallery**



Sue Morton's Patchwork Tui.

The current exhibition at The Village Gallery (back section), Eltham features 20 watercolour paintings by landscape artist Veronica Tee.

exhibition The continue until December 20. The uplifting art is a reflection of Veronica's joy in experiencing the transition from spring to summer. The Malaysian born artist shares, "It is this transition period that fills me with great joy and it is this emotion that I hope to evoke with my art."

Several of the paintings feature cherry blossoms,

which Veronica has depicted with joyfully exuberant colour, such as The Blooming of Cherry Blossom, one of the larger

exhibit The which immediately caught my eye was entitled Wisteria featuring purple hues. This was my personal favourite of her exhibits. I noticed that there were prints (two sizes) of this work, which could be purchased at a reasonable price.

The front of the Gallery had an amazing selection of art from 27 artists in all its creative diversity, all of which would make superb presents for Christmas, I imagine. Included was

pottery, clothing, mixed media, woodwork, as well as paintings - to mention just some, One which really stood out was Sue Morton's colourfully vibrant Patchwork Tui -

photography on canvas. Veronica Tee's wildly colourful Arrowtown certainly captured my positive attention.

The Reversible Waistcoat, upcycled mixed yarn (wool and acrylic) by Robyn Smaller was wonderful to behold.

Interesting and excellent was the watercolour by Yvonne Geeraedts entitled Back in Time (an historic view of Bridge Street, Eltham).

The felted bag by Claire Francis entitled Butterflies was as intriguing as it was aesthetically appealing.

Make sure you find time to visit this excellent array of quality art. The Village Gallery is located at 166 High Street, Eltham. The Gallery is open Tuesday to Saturday 10am to 3pm. Remember - last day December 20.



Arrowtown a water colour painting by Veronica Tee.

### Thank you for a wonderful year in art

As 2025 draws to a close, we'd like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported The Village Gallery this year: our artists, visitors, volunteers, and the wider community. Together, we've hosted 12 inspiring exhibitions, each one a celebration of creativity, connection, and the vibrant Wilson, a beautiful way to arts spirit.

Our final exhibition for the year, "Spring into Summer' by Veronica Tee, is on now and runs until 20th December. After that, the Gallery will take a short summer break, reopening on 13th January. We'll begin 2026 with "Artistic Inspiration" Louise McFetridge Amiria start the new year. Until then, we wish you a relaxing and joyful festive season.

Looking ahead to 2026, if you're an artist interested in exhibiting, now is the time to get in touch. Spaces are limited and bookings fill quickly, so don't miss out.

Kind regards from The Village Gallery Team



10am to 1.30pm All types of records, tapes and CDs New vendors welcome

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### Manaia RSA marks 90-year milestone

Manaia holds its Christmas Parade on December 20, the town's Returned and Services Association will also celebrate ninety years as a branch.

When a meeting was held in 1935 to set up the Manaia and District Returned Association Services branch there were 135 invitations sent out to local returned service people to join up.

There had however been ANZAC commemorations in Manaia before then, with the Manaia RSA acting as a subbranch of the South Taranaki RSA.

On ANZAC Day 1924 the RSA Memorial Cross was unveiled at the Manaia cemetery. After World War II the Manaia RSA laid out what is now the Services Section of the Manaia Cemetery and the Memorial Cross was moved here.

"While we are a small branch by New Zealand standards we are very conscious of who we represent, and that's the veterans," says Manaia president Barry "Presidents like David Self and John Graham kept that going,



Three trees descended from the Lone Pine that gave its name to the battle.

and it was suggested to me when I became president that we keep it going."

He says the RSA represents all the world conflicts that New Zealand has been involved in, and they hold an ANZAC Day service every year.

Their home base was the Manaia District War Memorial Hall until that was closed for failing to meet earthquake strengthening standards. They are now based at the Manaia Bowling Club, and the RSA Honours Boards and memorabilia were extricated from the hall and transferred here.

The annual ANZAC Day dawn service continues to be well attended. It begins with a march from the Manaia Bowling Club to the band rotunda where the service is held, before returning to the Bowling Club for refreshments. Barry Smith says Manaia would be one of the few towns in the country with a band rotunda as its town centre. The idea of having a rotunda as a memorial for those who fell in what was then called The Great War had been

mooted by the Manaia Patriotic Society in 1917, but it wasn't completed until 1921-22.

A more recent initiative of the Manaia RSA was setting up the Lone Pine Grove near the Manaia Golf Course. Lone Pine on the Gallipoli peninsula was the site of



Manaia Band rotunda ANZAC Service.

a bloody battle in 1915 involving Australian troops. The Manaia RSA heard that 12 seedlings descended from the Lone Pine that gave its name to the battle were being made available for RSAs in New Zealand to apply for. John Graham, who was then president of the Manaia RSA had had an uncle, Private Alexander Herbert Graham, who was killed at Lone Pine after having got mixed up with the Australian troops in the heat of battle. In the hope of getting maybe one of the seedlings, the Manaia RSA applied for three and got three. They were planted in 2015 and have since grown and flourished. As well as being an integral part of the Manaia Walkway the grove has been a venue for several well attended Armistice Day commemorations.

The Manaia commemorations are being held in conjunction with the Manaia Christmas Parade on December 20 and will include a military vehicle parade. Barry Smith says the Wellington-West Coast-Taranaki regional chairman, as well as the South Taranaki District mayor and MP for Whanganui have indicated that they will be there.



#### **CELEBRATING 90 YEARS**

Join us for a special Military Vehicle Parade in conjunction with the Manaia Christmas Parade.

#### 20th December at 11am

With funding support from Taranaki Community Board



Opunake And District Business Association

Opunake Christmas Parade 2025

Wednesday December 24<sup>th</sup>, gather from 6.15pm onwards for 7pm Start Tasman Street Opunake

Welcome to our celebration. Please complete and return the bottom portion of this official entry form by 20th December to guarantee your position in the parade lineup

All entries who pay the entry of \$10 will be judged this year and prizes will be awarded.

FIRST PRIZE \$2000 **SECOND PRIZE \$1000** THIRD PRIZE \$500

A special thanks to our amazing sponsors Opunake Rahotu Veterinary Trust 1st Scott Tenbroek - Coastal Sprayers 2nd Viv Scott and Tara Gibson - Mc Donald Real Estate 3rd

Please review the parade safety rules and guidelines on the back of this page Keep this portion for your records Return the bottom portion to Agrimec 38 Ihaia Rd or email – agrimecauto2022@gmail.com

Name of Entry
Type of vehicleLength of entry (mtr)
No of adultsNo of children
Responsible personDaytime Phone
Email address
2025 PARADE ENTRY FORM

My printed name or signature below is my bond that I understand the rules and guidelines for the 2025 Opunake Santa Parade and warrant that my/our entry will fully comply.

Signature

Safety Rules and Guidelines

Special Note the Parade begins at 7 pm on 24th December

- 1. Parade officials will inspect all entries and reserve the right to eliminate any entry that is in violation of these rules
- 2. The 2025 parade will start at Tasman Street and Ihaia Road corner and end again at that
- 3. Once your entry has started along the parade route, no one may board your float.
- 4. Cover all open wheels for safety so marchers cannot snag clothing or be pulled under
- 5. Your entry may not exit the parade before the end of the parade.
- 6. No alcohol is allowed.
- 7. For public safety, nothing may be thrown from your entry.
- 8. All motorized fleets must have wheel watchers on both sides.
- 9. All entries must have clear identification signage.
- 10. Changes in the parade line-up the day of the parade will be made at the sole discretion of the parade officials.
- 11. A representative of your entry must make themselves known to the officials upon arrival.

Keep this portion for your records.



Entries must be received by 20th December.

Please email your completed entry to <a href="mailto:agrimecauto2022@gmail.com">agrimecauto2022@gmail.com</a> Or drop it into Agrimec Auto.

### Te Kiri to end year by celebrating the past

The rural school of Te Kiri has been closed, long gone and buried, but its vibrant community continues to survive and thrive.

The hub of the community is now the hall, which has recently been refurbished, and the Sports and Recreation Society still supports several hockey teams, who play in

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the tournament between the turfs in Stratford and New Plymouth.

The school opened in 1900 as Te Kiri school, previously Punehu School, and was closed by the ministry in 2003 amongst much anguish and disappointment from this community.

On New Year's Eve 2025 community members, past

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Filling the time capsule on New Year's Eve 1999 just before the new millennium. A beard growing competition was held as part of the Te Kiri School centennial held in March 2000. From left Mike Starsmore, David Shimmin, Bernard Mullin (holding the

time capsule) with Jonathon Ardern behind him, and Janine Mullin at the side.

and present, past school interested visitors will have a chance to return to Te Kiri to share stories, look over the many photos and records of what has happened in Te Kiri over

The celebration will start at 1pm New Year's Eve 31December 2025 when the hall will open for anyone to drop in to browse over photos and important old relating documents the school and district. Light refreshments will be available free of charge.

and

pupils,

125 years.

Later in the day the district plans a pig on the spit and burger night for those who want to stay on, and for evening visitors. This will be a charged event at \$30 a family with children under 13 years, or \$12.50 per person. Bookings for this meal need to be in by 22 December 2025. This is a BYO drinks event.

This precedes a bit of fun as the district digs up a time capsule at 8 pm, which was put down 26 years ago the night of a millennium celebration in the district. Also, there are plans to bury another time capsule so there is an invitation for district members and families and any interested people to bring along something small to contribute to this capsule. Replies for the dinner to 0212620269 or tekirihall@

advise We also that applications for Te Kiri scholarships for are now open. This was an initiative which was invested in by the district, using funds raised and held

gmail.com

by the school committee at the forced closure in 2003. It is paid out to former students plus those who have lived in the district for two or more years, to help with apprenticeships, university study, other types of study, or representative sport or cultural events. Applications must be in by 20 February 2026. For further information and forms contact Mike on 0278607874.

**OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS** 

To date, 112 students have been helped and \$29,400 has been paid out, something our district is very proud of.

Please come and accept our invitation to join in our celebration and fun of 125 years of Te Kiri.



The school sign.

#### **TE KIRI COMMUNITY** 125 YEARS SINCE SCHOOL OPENED

31 December 2025 at Te Kiri Hall Ipm onwards: View old photos & documents, share stories. Cuppa available.

6.30pm: Meal - Pig on Spit. Burger Night. BYO drinks - to be booked by 22 Dec \$12.50 / adult, \$30 family. Book and pay via tekirihall@gmail.com or 021 262 0269

8pm: Lift time capsule buried 31 December 1999. Prepare new time capsule - bring your family's items along any time the hall is open.

Light supper served later for those who want to see 2026 in. Raffles on sale.

Applications are open for 2026 Te Kiri Scholarships Sports, cultural, academics, trades. Closes Feb 20th 2026 For forms & information contact Mike Starsmore, Ph 0278607874



#### Christmas Services for Anglican Churches of South & Central Taranaki

Sunday,7 December,	6pm-Carol Service, Good Shepherd, Waverley 7pm-St Mary's, Pakaraka/Maxwell
	7pm-Kaponga Community Carols at Kaponga Town Hall
	7pm- "Blue Christmas" St Barnabas, Opunake
Sunday 14 December	4pm-St Hilda in the Woods, Ngamatapouri
	7pm-9 Lessons and Carols, All Saints', Eltham
Wednesday 17 December	7pm-All Saints, Alton
Sunday 21 December	10:30am-Christmas Service at Kaponga Community Church
Christmas Eve	7pm-St George's, Patea
Wednesday 24 December	9pm-St Barnabas, Opunake
	11pm-All Saints, Eltham
	11pm-St Mary's, Hawera
Christmas Day	8am-St Mary's, Hawera
Thursday 25 December	10am-St Mary's, Hawera
	10am-Holy Trinity, Stratford
	10am-Church of the Good Shepherd, Waverley



#### **OPUNAKE POP UP** TRAVEL SHOP **HELLO** WANT TO TRAVEL BUT DON'T WANT OPUNAKE TO DRIVE TO NEW PLYMOUTH? Let's Talk Travel Over Coffee - We are coming to you Opunake with our pop up travel shop! Whether it's a cruise, a tour, or a relaxing escape, we're here to make it easy and enjoyable.

Date: Tuesday 9th December 2025 FREE COFFEE!\* **Time:** 10:30am - 1pm

Come sit down with us for a friendly chat about how we can help make your travel dreams come true — and the coffee's on us! Pop in, relax, and let's plan something wonderful together.



available — a thoughtful gift for family and friends who love to explore. Ask us for more information when you visit!

**Helloworld Travel Strandon** 

**Where:** Arty larts Cafe





### **Arts in the Park Hawera**



King Edward Park set to shine.

Hāwera's iconic King Edward Park will burst into life on Saturday 6 December as the much-loved Arts in the Park returns for another vibrant celebration of creativity and community.

From 10am to 3pm, the park will transform into a hub of colour and craftsmanship, with over 100 stalls scattered around the Park showcasing unique, handmade arts and crafts. Whether you're hunting for the perfect Christmas gift or a one-of-a-kind piece for your home, you'll find treasures ranging from handcrafted jewellery and garden art to woodturning, knitting, and more.

Food trucks and live entertainment will keep the atmosphere buzzing throughout the day. Enjoy from music talented local performers, roving entertainers to delight the kids, and plenty of spots to relax, grab a bite, and soak up the festive vibe.

Families are in for a treat with a dedicated Kids' Zone featuring free face painting, games, a bouncy castle, and

train rides. Plus, don't miss the Arts Tipi, where South Taranaki District Council Arts Coordinator Stoneman Michaela will lead fun, hands-on creative activities for children.

This free event is the perfect way to kick off the holiday season—mark your calendar and join us for a day of art, music, and family fun.

Arts in the Park Saturday, 6 December 10am – 3pm King Edward Park, Hāwera

#### Art show explores meaning of Christmas

The Wave Church is inviting the community to experience Christmas through fresh eyes — and to enjoy some festive treats along the way.

This year, the church is hosting an Advent Art Show, a reflective outdoor installation comprising 15 stations that explore the meaning of Christmas through a contemporary lens. Each panel invites viewers to contemplate "the vulnerability of incarnation"

through a blend of words and imagery, with accompanying meditations available via QR code.

The artwork is created by American artist Scott Erickson, well-known for his contemplative visual style and his significant online following under the handle @scottthepainter.

The installation will be open on the church lawn from 13–21 December.

As a special welcome, on 13 December from 1pm to 4pm, The Wave Church will also be serving nonalcoholic mulled wine and freshly cooked pancakes to

Both the art exhibition and the treats are offered free to



Artwork created by American artist Scott Erickson.

#### the community. EVERYBODY'S THEATRE Opunakē 72 Tasman Street, Opunake | www.everybodystheatre.co.nz Five Nights at Freddy's 2 Pets on a Train 1hr 44mins | M Fri 05 Dec 7PM | Sat 13 1hr 27mins | PG Sat 06 Dec 1PM | Fri 12 Dec 7PM Dec 7PM The Running Man Springsteen: Deliver Me from Nowhere 1hr 59mins | M Sun 07 Dec 1PM 2hr 13mins | R16 Sat 06 Dec 7PM **A Paw Patrol Christmas Nuremberg** 2hr 28mins | M Sun 07 Dec 7PM 1hr 7mins | G Sat 13 Dec 1PM

**Five Nights at** Freddy's 2 Violence | 1hr 44mins | Rated: M Fri 05 Dec 7PM

Wicked: For Good

2hr 17mins | PG Sun 14 Dec 1PM



Pets on a Train Violence & scary scenes | 1hr 27mins | Rated: PG Sat 06 Dec 1PM

**Christmas Karma** 

1hr 50mins | PG Sun 14 Dec 7PM | Fri 19 Dec 7PM



### Season's Greetings

As the year comes to a close, we extend our warmest wishes to the Opunake & surrounding communities. Stay safe, and thank you for your continued support. Ngā mihi nui,

Ōpunake Medical / Coastal Medical

#### **Holiday Hours**

**CLOSED** 3.00pm Tuesday 23 December **REOPEN** 8.30am Monday 5 January

For medical advice during the holiday period, please contact: Ka Ora Telecare on 0800 252 672 Available after-hours (5:00pm - 8:00am) and statutory holidays only.

If you require urgent medical attention during this time, please visit Medicross or Taranaki Base Hospital.

In an emergency phone 1-1-1

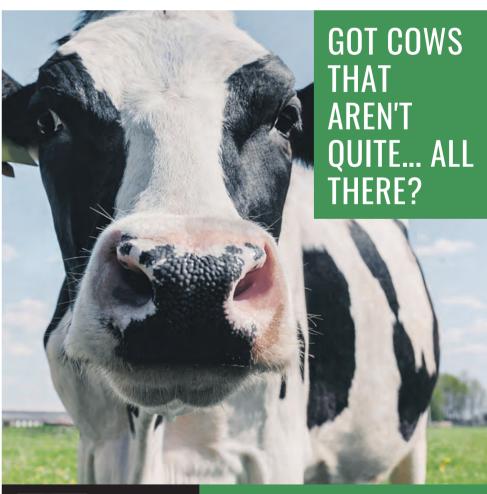
Please ensure any repeat prescriptions have been requested by 2pm Friday 19 December.

06 761 7324

opunake@coastalmedical.nz

opunakemedical.co.nz







Kane Barrett 027 403 6469



Brendon Kelly 027 664 6605



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ANZCO, AFFCO, and Silver Fern Farms are working with CoastalCare to help you take care of your "special animals", donating proceeds to CoastalCare Health Trust to help us with the funding we need to repaint the building.

#### 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

#### **CHURCH NOTICES**



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

#### **Opunake Co-operating Parish**

Havelock Street, Opunake - St Pauls - every Sunday 9am: Coffee prior to service 9.30am: Service

Rahotu - Wesley - 11am first Sunday of the month

#### **Okato Co-operating Parish**

St. James, Oakura – Sunday Service every Sunday, 10.00am St. Paul's, Okato - 1st and 2nd Sundays -Worship Service;

3rd Sunday – Communion Service and 4th Sunday at 7.00pm

St. Paul's, Okato - Open church for silent reflection, Pew for You, every 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4.30pm-5.30pm

#### **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 Philo 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 & Fellowhip Group

Thursdays @ Manaia Support our Faith and support each other with Prayer and Bible study Encouraging interactive discussion and Praise

All are welcome We would love it if you could come

Rodney & Val 274 8550 or 0272384187

#### St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church 90 Regan St., Stratford,

9:00am Sunday: Breakfast and Study 10:30am: Breakfast is followed by "Coming Together Worship Service Thursday: Study Group at 2 pm at 96b Brecon Rd.,

Stratford. Contact Rev. John Mattock 027 2039799

#### **Methodist Church Hawera**

Regent Street 10am, 2nd and 4th Sundays each month

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 to5 .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..

Hawera Country & Variety Music Club: Held every 2nd & 4th Friday monthly. Held at Hawera Pipe Band Hall, 89 Collins Street, Hawera @ 7pm. All welcome.

# ELTHAM LIONS CHRISTMAS PARADE Friday 12th December 6pm. Markets from 4pm all around town Floats to be at Stanners Street by 5.30pm for Judging.

Supper provided. Ph 021 2622 166.

#### **NOVEMBER 25 TO DECEMBER 20**

**Spring Into Summer exhibition by Veronica Tee:** Village Gallery, Eltham.

#### **NOVEMBER 26 TO DECEMBER 13**

The Jailhouse Frocks: A production by NP Little Theatre

#### **ON NOW**

**Hawera Elf Hunt:** On now. Grab an entry form from Te W'anake - the Foundry or from a participating business. Find at least 20 elves, write down their numbers and vote for your favourite elf window.

Entry forms available from and entries to: Te W'anake The Foundry before noon on Monday, 22 December.

#### **DECEMBER 7**

Hawera Record Fair: Senior Citizens Hall, Hawera,

Carols for Christmas: Kaponga Town Hall, 7pm.

#### **DECEMBER 9**

**Opunake Pop Up Travel Shop with Hello World:** Arty Tarts Cafe, 10.30am-1pm.

#### **DECEMBER 10**

Christmas Market: Methodist Carpark, Hawera. 10am-3.30pm.

Manaia Golf Club Inc. AGM: At the clubrooms, 7pm.

#### **DECEMBER 12**

Eltham Lions Christmas Parade: 6pm, Eltham. Markets from 4pm.

#### **DECEMBER 15**

Christmas Party at the Woolshed: Dunlop Woolshed, Ohawe Rd, 5.30pm.

#### **DECEMBER 13**

Hawera Parade Day and Morning Street Festival: High Street, Hawera, 12pm.

#### **DECEMBER 17**

Christmas Market: Hempton Hall, Okato, 4pm. **DECEMBER 20** 

Manaia & District RSA Military Vehicle Parade: 11am, Manaia.

#### **DECEMBER 24**

**Opunake & District Business Association Christmas** Parade, 2025: Opunake. From 6pm onwards. See this issue for entry forms and details.

#### **DECEMBER 31**

Te Kiri Community 125 Year Celebration: Te Kiri Hall, from 1pm. See this issue for more details.

#### JANUARY 4 TO FEBRUARY 8, 2026:

**The Chair Affair:** Lysaght Watt Gallery.



Ph 027 278 5074

hello@brandysbotanicals.co.nz

#### **PUBLIC NOTICES**

#### **CHRISTMAS MARKET**

Wednesday 17th December Hempton Hall 4 till 7pm

Okato Community Market

Crafts, Op Shop, Veges, Plants, Baking, Chocolate.

**OKATO DATES TO REMEMBER** 

Come to celebrate Christmas with your local

community Church. All Welcome.

ST PAULS, OKATO

7th DEC @ 10am.ADVENT 2- LOVE

6.30 Community Christmas Parade

14th DEC @ 10am. ADVENT 3 - JOY

21st DEC @ 10am. ADVENT 4 - PEACE

Christmas Communion with

Rev. Helene Young

7pm Community Carols and Candles

social celebration **24th DEC** @ 7pm

**CHRISTMAS EVE** Family Service

music by Alpine Connection

Next Meeting is on

Monday December 8, 2025at 5.30pm

Members will receive the agenda beforehand

#### **WANTED TO RENT**

**GRAZING WANTED** for 20 Jersey Calves. Ph Peter at 027 6195 445.

#### **GARAGE SALES**

CHRISTMAS decorations, materials for homecrafts & odds and ends, knitting wool. 25 Wilson Street, Hawera, Saturday November 22, 8am opening.

#### **TRADES & SERVICES**



0800 877 746





POWERCO

### **E** powerworx@obertech.co.nz



0272106939 Email: elkayroofingltd@gmail.com

197 Parihaka Road, Rd35, Pungarehu

Hawera Budget Advisory Service at the Heartlands offices in Opunake, every second Tuesday from 9am. Appointments are necessary, please phone 0800 333 048. Facebook page: Hawera Advisory Service. Email: info@hawerabudget. co.nz

#### **HAWERA LAWN** & RECYCLING

- Lawns
  - Chimner
  - Gutter Cleaning

#### **FREE QUOTES**

Phone Craig McGill 021 031 2411

16 Cambria St, Hawera craig.mcgill65@gmail.com

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#### **WANTED TO BUY**

### **Stevenson Calf Rearing**

### **MILK & COLOSTRUM WANTED**

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The next issue of the

Opunake & Coastal News

is due out on Dec 18 Get

in early to get in it.

Phone us on 06 761

7016.

#### **CALF MILK WANTED** Any volumes - 24/7

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

**OPUNAKE** 

& DISTRICT
BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

#### **SITUATIONS VACANT**

#### ST PATRICK'S SCHOOL, KAPONGA





Fixed term position for the 2026 school year.

Part time 9:30 am to 1:30 pm.

We are looking for a teacher aide to work with a year 1 student with special needs. Must be reliable, caring and positive.

To discuss the job requirements or visit the school contact Rose Kelbrick 027 725 8760.

Please apply listing previous experience and with contact details of 2 referees.

As this job involves working with children, police vetting will be necessary.

Applications close at 1 pm on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> December. P.O Box 170, Kaponga or principal@stpatskaponga.school.nz

#### TO LET



#### Office Rooms/ Board Room available

Long term, short term or casual basis Building has kitchen facilities, wheelchair access, cleaning services and plenty of parking on Napier Street or at rear of building on King Street. Inquiries to Clare Moss - Ph 06 278 4169

clare.moss@hughson.co.nz

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Auto Headlights, Reversing Camera, Keyless Entry & Ignition, Remote Boot Release, 2.5, Hybrid, CVT, 224kms



\$11,995

2022 Kia Stonic GT Line STYLISH SPORTY HATCH nsors, Roof Rails, Turbo, Sports Mode, Tinted Windows, 1.0, Petrol, Auto, 31kms



**2019 FORD ESCAPE TREND** 

**POPULAR LOW KMs SUV** Blind Spot Monitoring, Parking Sensors, Stability Control, Auto Headlights, Turbo, NZ New, Roof Rails, Tinted Windows, Petrol, 1.5, Auto, 61kms



2021 Kia Picanto X-LINE

Alloy Wheels, Driving Lights, Auto Headlights, eyless Entry & Ignition, Tinted Windows, Parking Sensors, 1.2, Petrol, Auto, 28kms



2017 Skoda Octavia TSI132KW7DSG

Auto Headlights, Daytime Running Lights, NZ New, Roof Rails, Electric Tailgate, Turbo, 1.8, Petrol, Auto, 98kms



#### 2017 Toyota RAV4 GXL SUV

2U1 / 10y0ta KAV4 GAL SUV NZ NEW 4WD Auto Headlights & Wipers, Reversing Camera, Sports Mode, Tinted Windows, Roof Rails, VVT-i, 2.5, Petrol, Auto, 162kms



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#### THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL:

**2017 Mazda BT 50 GSX** 

**LOW KMs NZ NEW, DOUBLECAB** 

Hard Cover, Ciesel Turbo, Rear Diff Lock, Tow Bar, Driving Lights, Side Skirts, 3.2, Disel, Auto, 102kms



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**2016 HYUNDAI TUCSON 2.0 CRDI ELITE WELL PRICED NZ NEW LUXURY 4X4** Electric Leather Seats, Keyless Entry & Ignition, Sunroof, Turbo, Driving Lights, Electric Tailgate, 2.0, Diesel, Auto, 230kms



2012 Subaru IMPREZA

Monsoons, Reversing Camera, Driving lights, 8 Seater, Tinted Windows, 2.0, Petrol, CVT, 146kms



\$10,995

#### 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, Auto, 146kms



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