



# OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS

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NEWS  
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## Huge turnout to rescue cinema

Around 300 people turned up at a Friday January 30 public meeting (5pm) following the proposed closure of Hawera's cinema. The meeting was held at the Hawera Civic Centre. Clearly Hawera was not prepared to see their cinema close.

It was "an amazing turnout," said the chair of the meeting Andy Beccard in greeting those present, a sentiment later echoed by the South Taranaki District mayor Phil Nixon who was among those who attended the meeting. The current trust of six members had given notice that the cinema would be closing on February 12 having decided the cinema is no longer financially viable.

"The meeting had been called to get feedback from those who want to keep the cinema running," with people asked for their suggestions to keep the cinema open, said Andy Beccard.

"We have the opportunity to put new names forward for a new Trust. We need some vibrant people to have a 'vibrant trust,'" he explained.

He also made it clear, at the outset that the existing trust who had given "countless hours to make it work" is not to be blamed for the situation and added: "A councillor on the trust worked tirelessly to make it a success," he



Many concerned people turned up at the public meeting in Hawera.

said along with some "very capable volunteers."

"We need to make it work," he concluded.

Unfortunately, the financial records of the Hawera cinema complex, described as a community asset, were not available prior to the public meeting, but would be available on the Monday following the meeting, said Tania Elkerton who deals with the cinema's accounts

and was at the meeting.

It was explained that the cinema gets a grant of \$40,000 from the STDC, \$30,000 of which is paid back in the form of the annual \$7,000 lease and rent. It also employs a person to run the cinema.

One of the most important ways to save the cinema is "bums on seats," was a point made forcefully and the main issue. If those here today were attending regularly there wouldn't be a problem said someone involved with the theatre.

There were issues that had contributed to attendance in recent years, included COVID, the screenwriters strike and the digital age. Looking forward, however, Universal Pictures is releasing a whole lot of blockbuster movies, which should bode well for future attendance, was another point made by someone also associated with running the theatre.

Mayor Nixon, who addressed the meeting, commented that the South Taranaki District was

expensive to run, citing the number of swimming pools and all sorts of facilities in the little towns. He also drew a link with rate capping and available money.

Among ideas from the floor was one suggestion for people to pay an annual sub to the cinema. This came

from a man who, using the model of the golf club of which he's a member, pays a membership fee of \$250 a year.

If attending the cinema was made cheaper we could get more bums on seats was another viewpoint. However

*Continued on page 18*



Mayor Nixon makes a point while Shannon Reid takes notes.



Andy Beccard (standing) chaired the public meeting.

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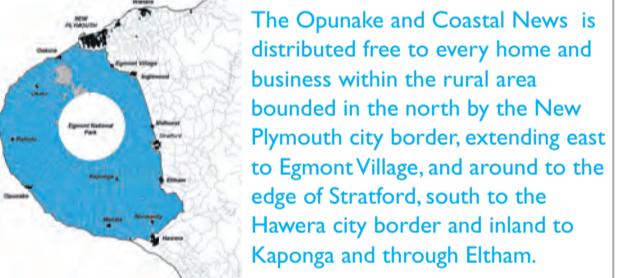
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While we welcome free speech, the views expressed in the Letters to the Editor do not necessarily reflect those of the Opunake & Coastal News. Please limit letters to 350 words as we sometimes struggle for space to fit them all in.

## Bus timetable changes

I read with interest, the latest instalment of the continued story of Public Transport throughout Taranaki. When I first started to read the article (Opunake & Coastal News January 29), I thought to myself "here we go again, reduced services."

I have written two articles in the past pertaining to this subject, mainly the Coastal route of which I used to drive when the route was operated by Newman Coachlines in the eighties. The first article was when it was mooted that the service would be cancelled. "Use it or lose it." The second was

to congratulate the Taranaki Regional Council on the increase in Services.

Having had over 40 years in the Bus and Coach Industry in various parts of the world and a lot of that time in a manager and senior management roles, now retired from my last role as Assistant GM for a prominent Bus and Coach Company in Queensland. I have now started my own Advisory and Consultancy Service to the Bus and Coach Industry. By reading through the article I feel that Cheryl and the Regional Council are on the right track. Cancelled services do not increase patronage, but giving the traveling public what they want definitely will. Services at the right

time for the right fare and the right vehicle. I read that the Regional Council is investing in 11 new electric buses. This is a great move. I was instrumental in the commissioning of the first electric timetabled service in Queensland operated with full electric buses. Queensland have recently introduced two new concepts to public transport, one being 0.50cents fares no matter the distance. Patronage has soared. the second was the introduction of the Metro service, full electric with a capacity of 150 passengers per bus and five-minute departures using the Busway only. I am not saying this is what Taranaki needs but it shows how far technology and engineering has come.

Good luck with the forthcoming changes.

Robbie Harrop  
Queensland

## Long time waiting

On a visit to Dawson Falls two years ago I discovered a beautiful new building being erected on the site of the old lodge. At first I was a little disappointed the old lodge was gone but soon realised change was necessary. I quickly embraced the prospect of a new facility which I believed was going to be a restaurant/

Continued page 4

## ADELPHOS

Drs. Francis Crick and James Watson received the 1962 Nobel Prize in Science for revealing the double-helix structure of our DNA molecule. DNA in one human cell has been described as an instruction manual or programme for the entire body, displaying mind-boggling biochemical and mathematical complexity. Bill Gates famously observed, "DNA is like a computer programme far more advanced than any software ever created."

Francis Crick, a molecular biologist, described himself as an "evangelical atheist." His goal was to dismiss belief in an intelligent designer God by explaining life entirely through physical and chemical reactions. He argued, "...it is detailed scientific knowledge which makes certain religious beliefs untenable." (Of

Molecules and Men, 1966). Scientific knowledge negates belief in a non-material immortal soul and spirit. Love, hate, compassion and consciousness are solely the chemical activities of, "...nerve cells and their associated molecules."

However, Crick was astonished by DNA's complexity. Doubting that such complex DNA arose from non-living matter on Earth, through undirected spontaneous biochemical reactions, he proposed another hypothesis—directed panspermia—intelligent aliens seeded Earth with molecular life 5 billion years ago. He later admitted, "An honest man, armed with all the knowledge available to us now, could only state that in some sense, the origin of life appears at the moment to be almost a miracle, so many are the conditions which would have had to be satisfied to get it going." (Life Itself: Its Origin and Nature, 1981).

Other "origin-of-life" hypotheses are: 1.) Life on earth started in a "primordial soup" struck by lightning,

## The Miracle Molecule

or 2.) RNA first caused random chemical reactions in this lifeless soup or 3.) Comets/meteorites fell to earth containing organic life 3-4 billion years ago. Science doesn't know the foundational event for all biological life, including humans.

Nonetheless, despite increasing origin-of-life theories, mainstream evolutionary science aggressively asserts itself as an unquestionable fact. Credentialed scientists and individuals questioning the biochemical, geological and archaeological premises are intellectually ridiculed and scientifically marginalised as "science deniers." See Professor David Gelernter of Yale University (Giving Up Darwin, 2019). Consequently, most churches now accept the optional belief of Evolutionary creationism: God didn't supernaturally "create" human life. Rather, He "evolved" human beings, using Neo-Darwinian processes over 5-9 million years, from a now extinct shared common ancestor with African apes.

Evolutionary Creationism disputes God's supernatural creation in Genesis 2:7.

Geophysicist and author Dr. Stephen C. Meyer argues for a science-based intelligent design theory, independent of religious belief. Using standard evolutionary models, he points to gaps in the fossil record and the virtual mathematical impossibility of undirected chemical mutations producing complex DNA (Return of the God Hypothesis, 2021). Working with renowned synthetic organic chemist Dr. James Tour of Rice University, their work is free online but is dismissed as "pseudoscience" or "creationism."

Thank God for Drs. Crick and Watson for revealing the structure of our DNA. But we are more than merely mindless, mechanistic, biochemical molecules in motion. We are God's handmade and wondrously designed molecular miracles.

Nga mihi nui,  
Adelphos

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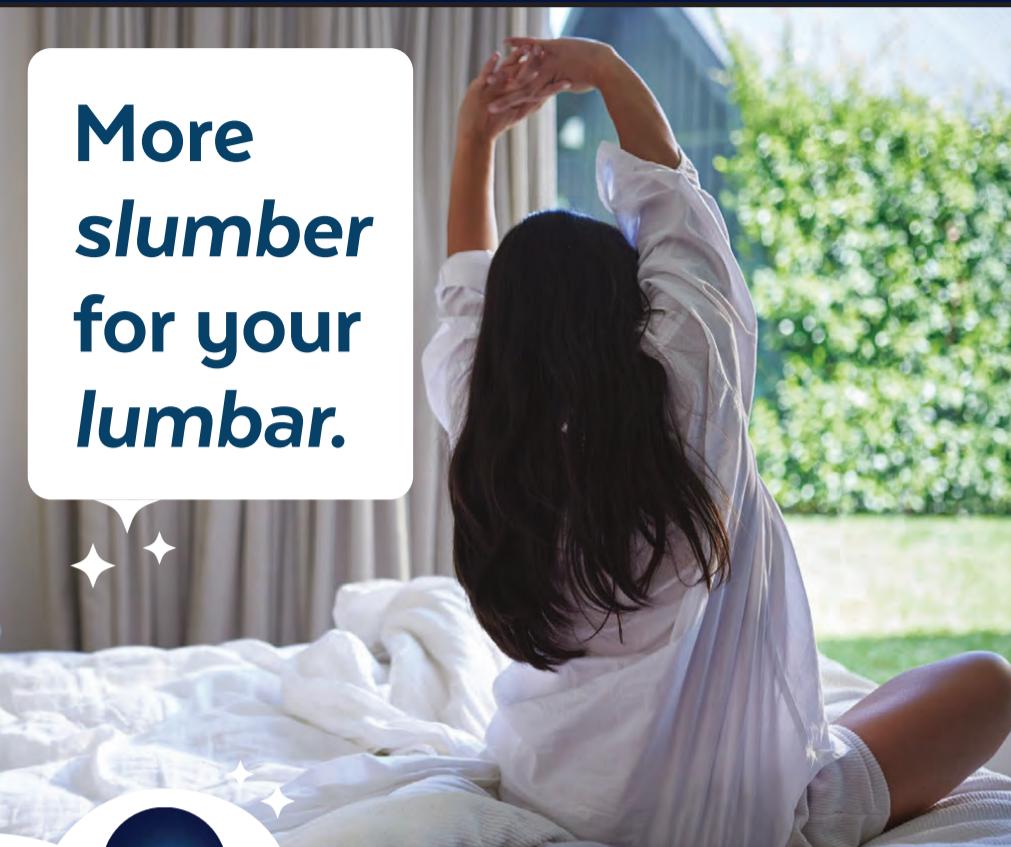


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accommodation. Soon after this the project came to a grinding halt. After much investigation and many phone calls, including to local Iwi I have been given no reasoning as to the mothballing of the project.

Some may consider it none of my business, but as it is being erected as a tourist/hospitality venue on public land (i.e. DOC reserve) I feel we deserve an explanation. Surely I'm not the only one who feels this way?

Grumpy Old Man

### Dear Editor,

Dear God here we go again. On the one hand, let us

say left, this letter could be one of celebration around seabed mining, except the word Draft depending on Government.

On the other hand i.e. right, the government has managed to work behind the scenes as selling out Taranaki will be developed? Start investigating. It could be good, but is it an example of Luxon's transparency Did you know the process requires huge amount of water, so often sea water is used which when returned upsets sea life. However fresh water can be used. I suggest we get informed.

To transport Gas it has to be liquefied at very cold temp.

Submissions have already been put forward in November. Taranaki location has not been identified. Refining is not allowed to be near households. Currently the great saving to household is \$50.

Wake up Taranaki

journalists at to what's happening in our back yard.

Check out Google: What does LNG look like? Check out ships transporting it from where? What part of Taranaki will be developed? Start investigating. It could be good, but is it an example of Luxon's transparency Did you know the process requires huge amount of water, so often sea water is used which when returned upsets sea life. However fresh water can be used. I suggest we get informed.

Lesley Dowding,  
Okato

Mary Moore  
Manaia.

## Manaia Facility

In reply to Tom Stephens' letter of January 29, 2026. Mr. Stephens, the Manaia facility has been finalized. Finally. This was decided at a council meeting in August 2025. Council plans to demolish both the Town Hall and the Sportsplex and to build a hub on the current site of the Sportsplex. As you know, Manaia has waited a very long time for this decision.

The community looks forward to a speedy, easy process.

## Clearing the way for less flooding in Waitara

The next stage of NPDC's innovative flood reduction project in Waitara is underway.

Tangaroa Stream is being cleared of pest plants to transform it from a clogged, unclear channel to a stream that drains freely into the Waitara River. Last year, about 250m of stream was restored, and in stage two more than 400m will be cleared.

"Basically, we're helping the stream to do what it originally did before urban development and weeds came along: drain the land of excess water during heavy rainfall rather than it building up on fields and private properties," says NPDC Manager Three Waters Amy Quattlebaum.

NPDC is working with Otaraua Hapū on this project, which will also enhance the mana of this culturally important stream and provide a better habitat for birds, invertebrates and fish.



One section of Tangaroa Stream where the culvert will be removed and the watercourse opened up so that it flows freely and naturally into the environment.

"Otaraua Hapū is proud to support this mahi as kaitiaki of Tangaroa Stream. Restoring the health and mana of this taonga is vital for our community and the wider environment," says Kai Whakahaere Matua Donna Eriwata, from Otaraua Hapū.

"This project reflects our commitment to kaitiakitanga and working in partnership to protect and enhance the taiao. Our vision is that

future generations will inherit a healthy, thriving waterway that sustains life and upholds the values of our hapū."

This next phase includes clearance of pest plants as well as building a walking path and tidying up an adjacent green space.

The improvements will ensure Tangaroa Stream's long-term management and good health, given its cultural importance to mana

whenua.

"It's a long-term view of working with the environment on stormwater management, which will benefit the community for generations to come," says Amy.

The entire project was funded with \$14m from NPDC and \$1.8m from the Ministry for the Environment's Jobs for Nature Investment Package.

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# New head prefects at Opunake High school

A greater involvement in the community and more sporting options are things the new Opunake High School head prefects would like to see happen in the coming year.

Hadlee Marsh and Karys Jones, both from Opunake have been named the school's head prefects for 2026.

"Throughout their entire time at Opunake High School, these two students have consistently role-modelled our Dreams values," says Opunake High School principal Andrea Hooper. "They are selfless servant leaders who place the needs of others above their own.

"Their courage is evident in their unwavering commitment to academia, sport, the arts, and our school culture and tikanga. As true ambassadors for our kura, they have earned the full support of staff, students, and the wider community. They bring our mission statement: 'growing good people for a rapidly changing world', to life, spending their time empowering others to do the same. We are immensely proud of these two kaitiaki (guardians)



Opunake High School head prefects Karys Jones and Hadlee Marsh.

and kaiarahi (leaders) of our values and vision."

Hadlee is studying statistics, calculus, physics, biology and P.E, while Karys is studying history, statistics, English, photography and biology.

Hadlee says he is still keeping his options open for next year. He is looking at different university courses, and says he could potentially go into trades or the army.

Karys says she had been doing work experience at Hardings Funeral Service and been meeting with Hardings owner Kelly Judkins, and when she finishes school would like to carry on working there while doing health courses

at WITT.

Hadlee and Karys both talked part in a Race Unity gathering at Stratford last year and they are keen to pick up on the lessons they learned there.

"It made us more aware of race unity," said Hadlee.

"I would like more cultural support in our kura as there are a lot of different cultures here. It's definitely something I hope our prefects can work towards," says Karys.

She would like to see students, particularly Years 9-10 do more in the wider community.

Hadlee says he would like to see more sporting activities made available in

school time.

"There needs to be more sport at break times, more things that kids can join in on," he says.

Hadlee is kept busy with sports at school, playing soccer for the school's 1st XI on Tuesdays and rugby for the 1st XV on Saturdays,

as well as being in the Senior A basketball team.

Away from school he likes hiking and has done five summits of Taranaki Maunga.

Karys plays netball for the school's Senior A team. Away from school she enjoys swimming at the

beach and travelling. She had enjoyed a family holiday in Rarotonga.

"I like sightseeing around New Zealand when I can and I would like to do more," she says.

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# AMI reveals NZ's top 10 stolen cars for 2025

For the fourth consecutive year, the Toyota Aqua claims the title of New Zealand's most stolen car, AMI reveals.

AMI Insurance received more than 9,000 vehicle theft and attempted theft claims in 2025.[1]

The lengthy claims list spans more than 760 different makes and models, with the Toyota Aqua making up 8% of all stolen vehicle claims, followed by the Toyota Corolla (7%) and the Nissan Tiida (6%).

The data also shows Toyota Aquas are disproportionately targeted, with a theft rate nearly four times that of the country's most insured vehicle, the Toyota Corolla. For every 1,000 insured Toyota Aquas, 54 had a theft claim, compared with 15 per 1,000 Toyota Corollas.

Top regions for vehicle theft rank as follows: Auckland, Canterbury, Waikato, Wellington, and the Bay of Plenty.

AMI Executive General Manager Claims, Steph

Ferris, says claims have been relatively lower over the past few years, following a peak in 2023.

"Lower crime rates, improved security systems in newer vehicles, and New Zealanders adopting security practices - including being more mindful about where they park - likely play a part in this."

AMI's top 10 list underscores New

Zealanders' commitment to the practical Toyota brand, with five different models ranking within the top nine, including the Toyota Vitz, which moved up two places.

AMI is also seeing a clear trend when it comes to vehicle age and theft risk, with nearly nine in ten stolen vehicles being older than 10 years.

"Older vehicles often lack modern, electronic

encrypted locking systems, making them easier for thieves to compromise."

Steph notes that there are a number of anti-theft measures to consider, like car alarm systems, immobilisers, fuel cut out switches, steering wheel locks, handbrake locks, as well as parking behind a locked gate if a garage isn't available.

Around 64% of stolen

vehicles are recovered, and 40% of these are repairable, with the remainder typically written off and auctioned for parts.

Despite some hybrids topping the chart, they account for only around 5% of total thefts, with petrol or diesel-powered vehicles making up the vast majority.

In Taranaki the most frequently stolen vehicles are Toyota Corollas and Nissan Tildas.

## Single vehicle accident near Pihamo



Emergency services attended a vehicle versus power pole accident.

Police, Hato Hone St John and the Opunake Fire Brigade attended the accident on the Surf Highway between Pihamo and Opunake on the evening of February 2.

A police spokesperson said police had received a call around 4.20pm with a report of a single vehicle accident. It appeared the vehicle had collided with a power pole.

A Hato Hone spokesperson said one ambulance responded, and two patients,

both in minor condition, were assessed and treated at the scene. No transport was required.

A Fire and Emergency

The police spokesperson said the road was partially blocked while the power company dealt with the power pole.

## Burnt out car on Ihaia Road



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information about this crime could they please contact the Police.

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Manai residents Diane and John Meads are not happy with the way their neighbourhood berms and trees have been looked after.

## “Is this a new form of topiary?”

Manai resident Diane Meads, who was once the local postie slammed the state of the town's trees and berms at the latest meeting of the Taranaki Coastal Community Board.

Diane Meads told the board the town had been well maintained under the previous Waimate West Council and the high standards that were maintained then made it the envy of many other districts in New Zealand.

“Lawns were mowed constantly, trees pruned and weeds were under control. I’m sure that if there was ever something that was not up to scratch the person responsible for it would have been pulled up about it at the pub on Friday night.”

When the South Taranaki District Council took over in 1989 the locals were told that these standards would be kept, said Diane.

“In the early 2000s I took up the postie position in the

town and over the coming years there was quite a rapid decline in how things were being managed. Many locals and I put together a petition signed by one person from nearly every house in town demanding that the berms be mowed more than the nine times a year that the standard had slipped to.”

In 2015 the Council voted 7-4 that the number of times the berms were mowed be increased to 15. Councillors Alex Ballantyne, Rob Northcott and Kirsty Bourke voted against because they thought the berms should be mowed 24 times a year.

“Manai looks even worse now than it did in 2015,” says Diane. “The trees need pruning, the berms are a mess, and the weeds are out of control. Thankfully this year’s weather means we don’t have Cape Daisy everywhere, but we do have Deadly Nightshade everywhere.”

“The berms are large and they were thoughtfully

designed that way. We only have footpaths on one side of the street and no curbing to allow for good drainage from the roads and footpaths. Manai has an ageing population now. Although most people do mow their own berms, maybe the over-65s could arrange for them to be done by the Council.”

Another concern was the state of the Pohutukawa trees lining the streets of the town.

“Many are in the power lines and the ones that have been trimmed from the wires look like Pacman did them, or is this a new form of topiary I don’t know about yet?”

“Manai has an awesome little pub and café. Wouldn’t it be nice if we had a nice little town to visit as well.”

“The value of the rates has gone up. Why can’t the basics be done. Just keep the town tidy.”

South Taranaki District mayor Phil Nixon said

he was aware of the issues around the berms, particularly with good grass growth this summer.

“We would love to do it more often, but it costs money.”

He said South Taranaki was an expensive

community with a large number of facilities to maintain. The Council was also facing pressure from the government with rates capping.

“I would like to see rates lowered but we are a very expensive community. We need to find a way to do things.”

He said the idea of getting this work done “in house” rather than through contractors had been looked at, but it had been decided it

was not the way to go at this time.

“I am certainly open to ideas and options,” he said.

Community Board Chair Andy Whitehead said that the board has organised a drop-in session from 9am - 12pm on Friday 13 February at Manai Library. Residents will have the chance to come and tell the Community Board what is important to them.



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# Hung parliament likely at the next general election if opinion poll correct

Hung Parliament as cost-of-living concern soars to highest level since May 2024

Neither the Centre-Right or Centre-Left blocs have enough seats to form a Government in the latest Taxpayers' Union-Curia Poll.

The poll shows Labour drops 0.3 points to 34.1 percent, while National

drops 0.2 points to 31.3 percent.

New Zealand First drops 1.4 points to 10.5 percent, while the Greens jump 2.6 points to 10.3 percent. ACT drops 0.3 points to 6.7 percent, while Te Pāti Māori drops 0.1 points to 2.9 percent.

Headline results and more information about the methodology can be found

on the Taxpayers' Union's website at [www.taxpayers.org.nz/jan26poll\\_nztcuria](http://www.taxpayers.org.nz/jan26poll_nztcuria)

For the Minor parties, TOP is on 1.4 percent (+0.7 points), NZ Outdoors and Freedom is on 1.2 percent (+0.6 points), Vision NZ is on 0.4 percent (+0.1 points), and New Conservatives are on 0.1 percent (-0.2 points).

This month's results are compared to the last Taxpayers' Union-Curia Poll conducted in January

2026, available at [www.taxpayers.org.nz/jan26poll\\_nztcuria](http://www.taxpayers.org.nz/jan26poll_nztcuria)

The combined projected seats for the Centre-Right is down 3 to 60, while the combined seats for the Centre-Left rose 3 to 60. On these numbers, there would be a hung Parliament.

Cost of Living remains the most important issue, jumping 7.4 points to 34.9 percent. This is its highest result since May 2024.

The Economy more generally follows on 12.0 percent (-2.8 points), followed by Health on 9.2 percent (+0.4 points).

Commenting on the results, Taxpayers' Union Spokesman James Ross said: "As we move deeper into election year, the race is neck-and-neck. This poll will serve as a wake-up call for the Government to lift its game."

"The sizeable shift in the

seat numbers mostly reflects changes in support for the Greens and New Zealand First since last month."

"The other big shift is the increase in the number of voters more worried about the cost of living. It's now higher than anytime since May 2024. This is significant as it is counter to much of the media commentary about the recovering economy. Clearly people just aren't feeling it yet."

## Taranaki Maunga reacts at news of a possible hung parliament



This picture was taken last week at the Stratford Mountain House as light was fading.

## Vaccine delivery could make the switch from symbol of colonisation tool to decolonising tool

Vaccine delivery could make the switch from symbol of colonisation to decolonising

tool. Community-led, culturally responsive delivery is

needed for future vaccines to reduce high rates of Strep A, and resulting acute rheumatic fever, in Māori and Pacific populations, according to an NZ study. Researchers interviewed 20 whānau members and nine people working in healthcare about how they viewed Strep A vaccines being developed. Although most thought a vaccine would be valuable,

some worried that it would mask underlying problems like poverty, poor housing and healthcare access.

The researchers said that NZ needs to change the way vaccines are delivered, alongside wider efforts to reduce inequities, to make vaccines into "tools for Indigenous health and sovereignty."

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#### Barbara Kuriger MP for Taranaki-King Country

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# Summer is a busy time

Hello from me for the first time in 2026. It was great to see so many of you at the Ōpunake Christmas parade back in December – it's always a good time and a true show of your community and Christmas spirit. I heard the Beach Carnival was a great success, and I'd also like to commend your excellent surf lifesavers on their work this summer – several people have them to thank for their lives, and we should all thank them for helping to keep our



**DAVID MACLEOD MP**  
**NEW PLYMOUTH**

families safer in the water. Summer's always a busy time once the holidays are over. For you it's probably

making hay – and silage – while the sun shines. I know there was a healthy amount of rain early this season too which must have been a relief after the drought conditions we've had in previous years.

For me, it's back to Parliament for what is promising to be a big year on all fronts. I'm going to be especially busy; along with my role as the Chairperson of the Māori Affairs Select Committee, I have been appointed to the Environment Select

Committee which will soon hear submissions on the Planning Bill and the Natural Environment Bill set to replace the RMA.

I'm also excited to have been asked to be the Seconder Spokesperson for Simon Watts on his Energy portfolio, which is going to be especially relevant given the announcement that we will soon be importing LNG into Taranaki. This will be a huge investment in our infrastructure and capabilities and the benefits of it will be seen not just

in New Plymouth but throughout the whole region. In other news, inflation has fallen, interest rates are far below where they were two years ago, new entrants are doing better at school, there is less violent crime and growing business confidence. Come the election in November, I think we'll be seeing even more solid proof these policies are working and that we're truly fixing the basics and building the future. If you would like to catch up to talk about anything of

interest or concern, please join me for a coffee on Friday 27th February from 10:30am to 11:30am at Greencow Burger Co, 80 Tasman Street, Ōpunake. Additionally, reach out if you would like me to visit your business or organisation on my trip around the coast. Please contact me at [david.macleod@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:david.macleod@parliament.govt.nz) or (06)759 2580. I look forward to seeing you.

*David MacLeod  
MP New Plymouth.*

# Climate Justice asks at what cost mineral extraction?

Climate Justice Taranaki say they have serious concerns over the government's push for critical minerals mining. Prime minister Chris Luxon has said he wanted a critical minerals sector.

"Over the next 20 years, AI super conductors that's where the focus will be, and that critical minerals are critical to unlocking that." Luxon also said that it'd be developed on our "brutal self-interest".

Climate Justice Taranaki do not agree.

No, we don't want a critical minerals sector here in Aotearoa New Zealand. We are this little country at the bottom of the world. Our natural assets are our unique ecosystems, our remnant forests, wetlands, indigenous species and wild oceans. As has happened repeatedly, thanks to brutal self-interest, typically of foreign firms, mining will destroy these and the clean waterways

and land that we, Maori and pākehā, depend on for wellbeing and a sustainable economy.

"The Planning and Natural Environment Bills put corporate property rights over human health and the environment. The Fast Track Approvals Act facilitates extractive industries and there is a general disregard for the Crown's obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi," said Catherine Cheung of Climate Justice Taranaki.

"The inconvenient truth is that the Crown does not have confirmed ownership of all territories including the seabed. There are several ongoing court cases around Customary Marine Title under the Marine and Coastal Area Act (MACA) which companies ought to be wary of," said Tuhi-Ao Bailey, also of Climate

Justice Taranaki.  
“It is naive to believe that opening Aotearoa for more mining, whether it’s for AI

development, US military or other purposes, will be in our self-interest. Sure, there will be some royalties and tax revenues. But reality tells us that most of the economic benefits will boost the wealth of the already wealthy rather than 'trickle down' to struggling families. If history serves, big chunks of the supposed benefits may also end up for costly decommissioning or site remediation when companies like Tamarind

Taranaki Ltd. go broke.  
"More difficult to quantify are the unfixable losses of nature and fractured communities resulting from mining.

Rather than joining the global mining race, we should focus on strengthening our resilience like food security and restoring our precious natural capital,” concluded Cheung.

# Upgrade your fuel, upgrade your life

Last time we talked about the human system running on electricity and chemicals. This week, let's talk about the fuel that keeps the whole show on the road - the stuff you eat and drink every day. Think of this as the page that should've been in the owner's manual.

Imagine two identical vehicles driving around South Taranaki. Same model. Same age. Same roads.

One gets clean fuel, regular servicing, and a driver with a bit of mechanical sympathy.

The other gets whatever is cheapest, services get "missed," and it's thrashed uphill into a headwind.

Six months later, they feel like two different machines. That's not bad luck. That's a lot about what fuel they ran on and how they were driven.



RICHARD HALL

## Good fuel: steady power, clean signals

When you put the right fuel into the body, energy comes out steadily. Brain signals fire cleanly. Mood is less all-over-the-place. Power delivery feels smooth rather than jerky.

## Real food is your steady burn:

- Vegetables, fruit, oats, kūmara, rice, legumes, and whole grains tend to release

energy more gradually.

• Protein is the scheduled servicing - it provides the building blocks your body uses to make key brain chemicals involved in motivation and mood.

• Healthy fats are the quality oil - they support brain structure and keep the "wiring" running smoothly.

• Water is the coolant - without enough fluid, everything thickens and slows.

Trying to think clearly while dehydrated is like driving along Surf Highway in summer with low coolant. You might get there, but you're stressing the system.

Bad fuel: rough running, spikes and crashes

## Poor fuel doesn't usually cause an instant breakdown.

It causes rough running. Ultra-processed food can behave like dirty petrol: quick burn, big spike, then residue. The common pattern is short bursts of energy followed by crashes, irritability, and fog.

Excess sugar is like flooring the accelerator over and over: quick surge, hard stall, more wear over time.

Too much caffeine is borrowed performance - it makes the engine rev higher without adding anything to the tank. It works for a bit... then overheating and shutdown follow.

Alcohol isn't "calming oil." It can quiet the noise temporarily while interfering with sleep and recovery, which means the tank is lower tomorrow.

What this looks like over time? Starts get harder. Mood becomes unpredictable. Small hills feel steep.

In Taranaki terms, it's like towing a caravan into a strong headwind with bad fuel and cheap oil. You can

do it, but you'll likely smell something burning.

## The sneaky stuff: when fuel looks helpful but causes trouble

Some "fuels" look like they'll save the day: bright packaging, big promises, instant energy. It feels like finding a full jerry can on the roadside.

Energy drinks are the classic example. They aren't real fuel, they're stimulants with a marketing department.

They push the nervous system to fire faster and harder even when reserves are already low. It can feel powerful for a short time (like you're flying), then comes the drop - as you now have no wings. No energy - super tired, your sleep gets disrupted - which means the tank doesn't refill properly overnight.

You think the answer is then to drink another 'energy drink' - and so it repeats. Groundhog Day.

Sweets and cakes do something similar. They're basically accelerator to the floor, then a stall: a sugar surge, then the slump. That flat, irritable, foggy feeling afterwards isn't a personal flaw - it's the engine stalling after a hard rev.

Occasional treats are fine. The trouble starts when they become the main fuel source.

## Fuel grades: 91, 95 and diesel

Not all fuel is the same. Most engines will run on a range - but that doesn't mean they run well on all of it. Humans are the same.

## Running on 91: it works, but it's not ideal.

Think of 91 as the minimum requirement. You'll get from A to B. You function. You cope.

But under load, long days, stress, poor sleep - the engine works harder. Rough

running. Less efficiency. More wear.

In human terms: rushed meals, low water intake, constant stress, just enough nutrition to get through the day.

## Premium 95: smooth, efficient and quieter.

This is what the system is designed for: regular meals with real food, enough protein, healthy fats, good hydration, and decent sleep.

Nothing flashy happens. You just feel more stable. Energy lasts longer. Small challenges feel manageable instead of overwhelming. That's the nervous system running as intended.

## Diesel in a petrol engine: wrong fuel, wrong system.

Putting diesel into a petrol engine doesn't make it "a bit slower." It makes it stop.

In human terms, "diesel" is anything that looks like fuel but can't be used properly: constant energy drinks, excess sugar, ultra-processed food, chronic stress masked by caffeine. It creates smoke and noise, not usable power.

## Why this matters more than people think

A lot of people assume they're broken when they're actually just running the wrong grade of fuel.

"I need more motivation." "I need to push harder." "I should cope better." "I need more energy" You wouldn't blame a

car for performing badly or cutting out if it's built for 95 but you've always filled it with 91, and it's constantly running under load - or for cutting out if diesel was put in by mistake. You'd change to the correct fuel. Common sense.

## The Taranaki test

If you had to tow a boat up the Surf Highway into a stiff southerly in a premium petrol-powered turbocharged Ute, which fuel would you choose?

You wouldn't risk 91 if you had a choice. And you definitely wouldn't put diesel in the wrong engine.

Your nervous system is doing that drive every day.

## Bottom line

You can't think your way out of a fuel problem. No amount of self-criticism fixes an empty tank.

Most people don't need a new engine. They need better fuel, decent oil, and basic maintenance.

If you want a simple starting point this week:

- Add one extra glass of water a day.
- Add protein to breakfast (even something small).
- Swap ultra-processed snacks for something that actually fuels you.

Run that plan for a week - and you'll feel the difference.

Richard Hall  
Mind Support  
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# New owners touched by friendly welcome

New Opunake Four Square has new owners/operators.

Brook Melody and partner Georgia Carr took over the business on the ninth of February.

Brook is the fourth generation of his family to work in the grocery business, his great grandfather, grandfather and father all having worked in the industry. Brook recalls aged 12 "doing gift baskets for his father in order to buy my first mobile phone" It gave him an early appreciation of hard work.

The couple both from Taranaki who were living in New Plymouth have moved to Opunake and say they are delighted to become owner operators of their own business in Taranaki.

"We were prepared to move anywhere in the North Island," says Brook who completed his training to be an owner operator at Oakura



New Opunake Four Square has new owners/operators.



## Cow on the MOOVE

The Crams who come up with some entertaining "farming sculptures" at the corner of their farm on the junction of the Opunake Stratford and Auroa roads continue to entertain and amuse all who pass by. It's a amazing effort!

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Four Square and comments they are so pleased to be able to remain in Taranaki where all their friends and family are.

And Opunake seems to be the perfect place for them.

"We're loving it here," says Georgia. There's a real sense of community here. People have been very friendly and very welcoming. "You can tell it's a closeknit community, people address you on the street – you feel really welcome," adds Brook.

Monday was their first day, they were helped by "the incredible team" of 13 staff

who showed them the ropes.

Georgia currently works in HR at People Passion, an HR consultancy business based in New Plymouth. She is committed to supporting and helping the business with many of the skills being transferrable. They say they are both keen on fostering a positive team culture and people being happy.

They're also very open to feedback and want to know if people would like to see anything in the store they're "100 percent open to it."

When they're not working Brook says he's "a golfer" and also enjoys fishing and is

keen on football. Georgia is an avid gym goer. She grew up "dancing - doing jazz and contemporary dance and entering competitions." Both are pretty active they say.

The couple also do a lot of walking their two labrador dogs Bobby and Pippa and love the beach.

The enthusiastic pair themselves lucky to be running their own business in Opunake.

Says Georgia, "We're grateful to be part of this community and excited about what we can add."



Brook and Georgia outside Opunake's new supermarket.

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## COASTAL CURIOSITIES

## Hospitality shown following shipwreck

These two brass buddhas were found by a local Opunake guide. The guide would take interested tourists to Te Namu and share the stories of the Pa and the shipwreck. The buddhas have writing on them which I assume is Chinese.

**The story is:**

One wild windy Taranaki night in 1862, a ship bearing 66 people veered off course and on to enemy lands. This is the story of the Lord Worsley, a 600-ton steamer that smashed on to rocks in Te Namu Bay near Opunake.

About 1am on 1 September, the call went out: "All hands on deck." The 35 members of the crew and 31 passengers went up top to find the royal mail steamer in a perilous position. "It was blowing hard on shore and raining heavily; land was visible on each side and right ahead of the doomed ship, with heavy breakers all around" a newspaper report said. "There seemed



Two brass buddhas found by a local guide who would share the stories of Te Namu which included the wreck of the Lord Worsley.

but small prospect of any on board reaching land. However, the ship drove on and got near the shore, she touched, still, on she went and at length settled fast on the rocks perfectly upright."

**Hold tight**

The Lord Worsley became wedged in boulders, but the high tide was still seven feet deep around the ship. Because of this, a decision was made to hold tight until daylight. Meanwhile, the crew, headed by Captain James Bowden, got the life rafts ready to abandon ship if things got worse.

Among the Lord Worsley's passengers were Captain Vine Hall, Robert Graham, Captain Butler, C.I. Taylor, Captain and Mrs Campbell, their two children and two

servants, Miss Briggs, Captain Muirhead, several ladies and more children.

The luggage was also valuable, especially that of Miss Briggs, who was a wealthy lady with a large amount of jewellery and plate with her. But the biggest treasure was a large amount of gold consigned to the Bank of New Zealand.

When the rising sun began to shed light on the wreck, and the tide began to draw away from the rugged rocks, the passengers were helped from the stricken vessel. And into war-torn Taranaki.

**Warm welcome**

They were soon to face their "foes" because, just 300 yards (275 metres) from the wretched wreck, was the thriving Māori village of Te

Namu led by Chief Wiremu Kingi Te Matakātea. He came down to the frightened passengers and told them to make use of any of the houses in his kainga (village) and assured them they were among friends.

Under a sub-heading "Parleying With The Natives", the newspaper article tells how the crew and passengers settled themselves into the village, while the officers, Matakātea and fellow chief Arama Karaka inspected the ship. It was a total wreck.

A deal was discussed to leave the remains of the ship to the people of Te Namu, if they helped the crew, passengers and their luggage get safely to New Plymouth. "Some presents were also made to the chiefs, who seemed pleased, and dispatched a messenger to the king's gate at Kapoiaia," the newspaper said.

After a few hours the messenger returned, saying news of the wreck had been sent to New Plymouth and some of the King's men would be arriving at Te Namu to decide whether the party would be allowed through.

On 3 September, Captain Bowden and four men took a small boat and headed out safely through the breakers and towards New Plymouth to get help. On land, talks began. "The natives now held a korero (talk), which resulted in one of the leading men of the tribe handing in an account for 28 pounds 10 shillings, for the use of the six whares (houses/huts) for two days," the old news story says.

Captain Vine Hall agreed

to pay the money – once the band of travellers got to New Plymouth. This did not satisfy the people of Te Namu.

**Te Whiti steps in**

Suddenly a cry arose that the King's people were coming and some 20 horsemen galloped up, headed by Erueti, afterwards known as Te Whiti (the prophet of Parihaka)." He shook hands with Captain Butler. Then Te Whiti spoke, "This is not an affair between the Government and the natives, but Iwi Mate [people of God] and the King's natives. When the Governor comes we will settle that; if he passes through the King's gate it will be settled. Our feelings towards the Governor are bad, because he is not sincere; he only speaks well to us to get our land. If he is our friend let him treat the natives the same as he treats the Europeans; leave off lying to get our land, acknowledge the King, allow free trade in powder, etc."

Following a long debate with Captain Butler, Te Whiti then spoke to the large gathering of Māori people, urging them to allow the passengers and crew to leave. The luggage was inspected and toll charges taken for the King's gate.

The following morning, the castaways left Te Namu. "... the ladies' carts started, followed in half an hour by the luggage," the news report said. "That night the party slept at the King's council house, and on the 6th they were all safe in New Plymouth."

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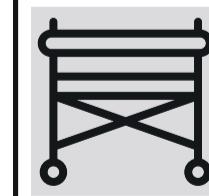
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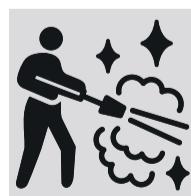
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# Suberb small house built by Dan's Building Company

An attractive board-and-batten house at 424 Warea Road, built by Dan's Building Company, is now occupied by very contented clients, Richard, Sarah Ponder and their children. "We love it," shared Richard. The house was built during 2024.

The building site was the family's home for a couple of years as they lived in a caravan. In fact, they have owned the property for about 4-5 years and have carried out extensive planting, which enhances both privacy and shelter. The 4,000 square metre property (just over an acre) has stunning sea views. A feature of the house is the tall, large windows which allow considerable natural light and a great view of the



Side view of the Stent Road house.

impressive scenic setting.

The extensive decking is another positive feature, allowing a pleasant space to enjoy refreshments and nature's gifts, while gazing out on the azure seascape.

Before building was underway Richard and Sarah explained to Dan Lawn, director of Dan's Building Company, that their budget was somewhat limited – around \$250,000, which included a two stage water treatment system and other services. The completed building, after three months of expert construction, was quite a small house at 73 square metres. Dan explained that he has "lost count of how many houses he has built," but this one is unique as being the very smallest.

The couple were impressed at how Dan was able to come

up with flexible ideas as to how to make their budget stretch as far as possible without compromising quality.

Dan is grateful for the

professional input he received from various experts, such as Thaddeus Poole of Unity Electrical, "For his very professional and friendly service." Another example was Marty Warren of Surf Highway Plumbing and Gas: "He provided all the plumbing work for the project and offered a very reliable professional service."

Dan has owned the company for almost ten years, with 2017 his first year. He insists on the highest standards and this is reflected by the legend on his Toyota Highlander vehicle: exceptional; spaces, uncompromising standards.

He has 17 years experience as a builder including "a

lot of high end residential work." He adds, "We go the extra mile with work." He is proud to include a free consultative service amongst his many activities.

However Dan admits he is greatly helped by his capable experienced staff, which include his foreman Dean Waiwaki, Michael Wanden, Sean Phillips and his apprentice Ralph Michell.

Although he puts in many hours of work, including quite a few dealing with the admin side, Dan loves his vocation: "I get a kick out of it. The more I do the more I get energised."

Dan still finds quality time, of course, for his family including his four young children (aged 8 to an infant), his Christian commitment (including associated voluntary work), and a bit of surfing.

If you have some construction work, such as a much overdue renovation, a much-needed fence, a deck to enhance your home, or concreting work, as well as landscaping give Dan's Building Company a call. Quality friendly professional service guaranteed.



View of the sea from the lounge.

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# Foodie February

Celebrates being powered by potatoes

This 'Foodie February' is powered by potatoes, with potatoes taking the spotlight as one of New Zealand's most powerful and versatile food heroes — delivering flavour, nourishment and value on plates across the country.

Grown in paddocks by local growers, potatoes are a cornerstone of Kiwi cooking. From vibrant summer salads and barbecue sides to comforting family meals and globally inspired dishes, the potato delivers across every cuisine, season and occasion.

Potatoes New Zealand Chief Executive Kate Trufitt says Foodie February is a chance to recognise the true strength of the potato.

"The potato is a powerful performer — naturally nutritious, incredibly versatile and proudly grown here in New Zealand. During Foodie February, we're encouraging people to celebrate potatoes, try new ideas and enjoy the

many ways they can shine in everyday meals," says Trufitt.

Potatoes provide sustained energy, essential vitamins and fibre, making them a smart choice for active lifestyles and growing families. They also represent excellent value for money, helping households create satisfying, nutritious meals without compromise.

Behind every potato is a network of committed growers focused on quality, innovation and sustainability, continually improving practices to produce outstanding crops while caring for the land for future generations.

"Foodie February is about enjoying great food and celebrating what's grown here at home — and the powerful potato delivers on every level," says Trufitt.



## Ideal time of year for a crop swap

An abundance of garden produce means this time of year is ideal for crop swaps Fiona Young told the Taranaki Coastal Community Board. Speaking in the open forum part of the board's first meeting for 2026 held at Rahotu on January 28 she was wanting to get a series of swaps going at the Opunake Town Hall, which she said currently wasn't getting much use.

Fiona said there was as a lot of interest in the community to get something going, and she was representing a group that wanted to make this happen.

"There are lots of people in full bloom in the garden with an excess of this and an excess of that," she said. "If people don't have a pumping garden they can bring baked goods or excess food."

The crop swaps would last for an hour. The cost of hiring the hall is \$35 an hour and Fiona said she was hoping to get some funding to help cover this.

She said there are similar events held in Manaia and Okato and people involved in these would be welcome to come to the Opunake one.

Mary Moore who was also at the meeting said nine years ago she had started the crop swap in Manaia which was held outside under shelter.

Community board member Kirsty Meynell suggested the Opunake Green Space could be a good place to hold them,

where the shelter could be used as well.

Board member Lynelle Kuriger asked if the cost of hiring the hall could be reduced.

"There's a cost to



Community crop swap.

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## Through My Eyes

**We all have something special  
Maybe it's hard to see  
If you had a longer look  
It might jump out at thee**

**Maybe it's a smile  
Or a cheeky grin  
A simple act of kindness  
That comes from deep within**

**Your eyes, they tell a story  
Give away the clues  
If you are happy, sad or angry  
Or really have the blues**

**The manner in which you speak  
Or the softness of your voice  
To raise your tone in anger  
Is really not the choice**

**If someone wants to talk  
And wants you to lend an ear  
They do not want a sermon  
Just want you to hear**

**If we saw the good in everyone  
And took the time to care  
The world would be a better place  
To love, be kind and share.**

*Tony Andrews*



Tintin and Snowy at Back Beach (New Plymouth), a recent work by Coastal Taranaki artist Graham Kirk.

**Nathan Dodunski**

P. 027 902 8684

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# Good news for our moana and coastal communities!

Last week, on the evening of February 5th, there was celebration, relief and joy for many as the news spread of the draft decision released by the Fast-Track Approvals expert panel.

Their in-depth report, spanning 436 pages, has made the informed conclusion to DECLINE the Trans-Tasman Resources' (TTR) seabed mining proposal in their 'Draft' decision document. This has been widely considered a very positive outcome. TTR has until 18 February to respond and provide additional information. A final decision is expected later in March.

This good news was warmly welcomed by many and offered a more buoyant entry to Waitangi Day and the long weekend. The proposed, highly controversial and experimental mining project, which has been seeking approval to mine substantial amounts of iron ore and other minerals from the South Taranaki Bight seabed, is, again, being affirmed as harmful and too high risk.

This is now at least the 5th time in 12 years TTR's seabed mining proposal off Pātea has been declined. First it was rejected by the Environment Protection Authority (EPA) in 2014, then the Environment Court in 2016. The High Court also rejected TTR's Seabed mining proposal (2018), then the Court of Appeal upheld the High Court ruling to reject TTR's seabed mining bid (2020). This was

followed by the Supreme Court, our highest court in the country, dismissing TTR's appeal (2021). Then in March, 2024, TTR attended an EPA public hearing in Te Hāwera and after two weeks in, pulled out to instead pursue the new 'Fast Track' option. Now, at this stage, encouragingly through the Fast Track Expert Panel, another decline will hopefully help seal the deal, with the final decision due later in March 2026.

## Why the Panel have Declined seabed mining

The expert panel's draft decision outlines a wide-ranging set of environmental, cultural and legal concerns that it determined could not be adequately mitigated.

Key findings include:

- Unacceptable risk to marine ecosystems, including benthic habitats and food chains critical to seabirds, fish and marine mammals

- High uncertainty around sediment plumes, which the panel found could extend far beyond the mining site, affecting fisheries and sensitive ecological areas

- Potential impacts on protected and taonga species, including Māui dolphins and other vulnerable wildlife

- Insufficient evidence that proposed monitoring and adaptive management could prevent irreversible harm

- Failure to appropriately recognise and protect Treaty settlement values, wāhi tapu, and the cultural relationship of mana whenua with the moana

The panel concluded that the likely environmental and cultural harm outweighed the claimed economic benefits, and that approving the project would pose risks inconsistent with sustainable management.

## The Fast-Track and Ministerial Power

The Fast Track Approvals Act has been very controversial from the get go. Early versions of the law could have allowed ministers to override expert panels and approve projects deemed as harmful and not



Circling up and spelling it out with surf boards. Community Activation for our moana (oceans/sea), Ōpunakē Beach, 26th April, 2025.

Photo Tania Niwa Photography

worth the risk. Fortunately, those powers were removed after widespread public pressure and law changes in late 2025.

Mining enthusiast Shane Jones (NZ First), Minister for Resources, Regional Development and also Minister of Oceans and Fisheries, has continued to argue, and now is set to campaign, for greater ministerial control and powers over fast-tracked projects. He wishes to elevate Ministers (including, and especially in this case, himself) over expert panels. However, under the current law, expert panels still play the key decision-making role.

## A Decade of Leadership and Persistence

Across 12 years there's been a lot of time, money, energy, organising, emotional heartache, stress, rigor, leadership, success, disappointment and downright resilience amongst those who have been at the forefront of fending off this activity here in Taranaki. As well as unity, strengthened alliances and beautiful experiences, from communities coming together, with this very important, shared cause.

Acknowledgements and special thanks especially go to the hapū and iwi of Ngati Ruanui, Ngāruahine and Ngā Rauru, for leading the opposition from the

beginning, alongside all our local coastal and Taranaki communities who've been involved, showed care and engaged with support in some way, also Kiwis Against Seabed Mining (KASM) and other environmental organisations, scientists, fishers, farmers, surfers, and local councils, all the Iwi and hāpu of Taranaki and Whanganui who also voiced their opposition, as well as communities up and down the west coast, in particular, and around the country. Thanks also goes to all who gathered and supported more recent community activations organised by 'Protect Our Moana - Taranaki', and all those who presented and submitted information to the fast track panel. Such huge efforts have been made to reach this current decision.

## Paddle Out for Our Moana

- Community Activation, Ōpunakē Beach, 26th April, 2025. Photo credit: Marama Ratahi

Consistently our communities and all those mentioned and more have raised concerns and opposed seabed mining in favour of protecting our oceans. They have collectively brought forth and highlighted the detrimental, illegal and likely long-term consequences of this proposed mining, in an area that is also one of Aotearoa New Zealand's

most biologically diverse marine areas.

For many, this draft decision gives hope and recognition that even under the highly controversial Fast Track legislation, designed to accelerate approvals, the substantive environmental, cultural and community impacts have, in this case, been heard and well considered by the deciding panel.

It will be difficult, and likely impossible, given the gaps in their proposal, for TTR to convince the Fast Track panel to change their decision. Debbie Ngawera-Packer of Ngati Ruanui and a Pātea resident, who has been a long time leading voice and presence in opposing seabed mining, entered politics upon this issue, and has now revised and lodged her members bill, for a second time, to ban seabed mining in our waters, in hopes this time, it receives enough support. Another proactive step on the journey.

The Fast Track Panels full draft decision can be viewed on the Government's Fast-Track Approvals website: <https://www.fasttrack.govt.nz/projects/taranaki-vtm>

The process is not yet complete, and more hurdles could arrive - though it's a very encouraging and worthy milestone to celebrate!

Stronger together.

Fiona Young

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# Tuia Taitonga ki Tai Southlink



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

## Third Rates Instalment

Ratepayers are reminded that the last day for payment of the third instalment of rates without incurring a penalty will be Wednesday 25 February 2026.

# Hāwera to Celebrate 100 Years of Naumai Park in 2026



The Friends of Hāwera Parks, in partnership with the Council, will mark the 100th anniversary of the naming of Naumai Park in 2026 with a vibrant year long programme of events. Celebrating a century of history, biodiversity and community connection, the programme will bring together local groups, artists, schools and volunteers to honour the park's heritage and encourage people of all ages to engage with the space.

Centenary events include a Naumai Park book launch, tai chi and poetry sessions, art, music and drama performances, a fun run or walk, children's and youth activities, and celebrations linked to World Puppet Day, Arbor Day and International Day for Biological Diversity.

"Naumai Park holds a special place in our community, and this centenary celebrates its natural beauty, rich history and the generations who have cared for it," says Friends of Hāwera Parks spokesperson Miranda Cullen.

Council's Places and Spaces Volunteer Co-ordinator Alice Arnold says the programme reflects strong community collaboration and hopes it will inspire people to explore the park and care for it into the future.

The centenary events are organised by the Friends of Hāwera Parks and a range of community groups, with support from the Council and can be found on The Friends of Hāwera Parks Facebook page or on Council's website [www.southtaranaki.com/naumai](http://www.southtaranaki.com/naumai)

## The booklet launch of 'The History of Naumai Park'

Come along to this special occasion on Sunday 15 February, 2pm at Naumai Park as we honour the Park's beginnings and the incredible environment its founders created—a legacy we continue to enjoy today. All are welcome.

## We've moved to Objective Build

Council is now using a new online portal called Objective Build for all building consent applications. It will also manage Project Information Memoranda (PIMs), Certificates of Acceptance (CoAs) and Registrations for exempt building work. Visit [www.southtaranaki.com/building](http://www.southtaranaki.com/building) for more information.

# AmeriCARna Roars Back Into South Taranaki

AmeriCARna is rolling back into Hāwera and Ōpunakē this month! On Wednesday 25 February, the AmeriCARna convoy cruises to Ōpunakē Beach at 11.30am. Come along to admire the line-up of vehicles and grab something to eat from local vendors. The cars will depart at 2pm.

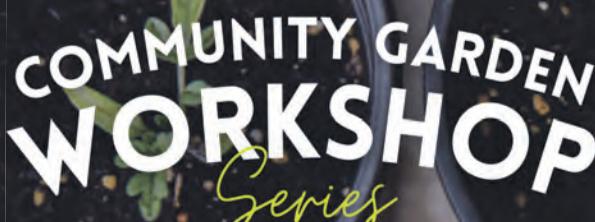
On Friday 27 February, the cars travel from Stratford to Hāwera (via Kaponga and Manaia along SH45), filling the CBD for the afternoon. The Town Square will come alive with music, alongside the regular Bizlink Hāwera market day on High Street. Vehicles are expected from 1.15pm, with the event wrapping up at 5.15pm.

The Acceleration event returns to Albion Street from 2.30pm, where cars will be timed over an 80 metre sprint. Spectators are reminded to follow volunteer and staff instructions.

"Nearly 700 cars have registered for the event this year – we're expecting the beach and streets of South Taranaki to be packed!" says Council's Events Co-ordinator, Ella Tosland.

Motorists should take care on the road, allow extra travel time, and plan ahead around road closures:

- **Wednesday 25 February:** Beach Road, Ōpunakē will be closed to all traffic except AmeriCARna vehicles. Visitors are encouraged to park on side streets and walk to the beach.
- **Friday 27 February:** Cars will be displayed along High Street (Argyle St to Caledonia St), Regent Street (High St to Little Regent St), part of Union Street (80m from High St), and the Community Centre carpark. Albion Street (High St to Rowe St) will be closed for the Acceleration event.



Next workshop: Saturday 14 February, 10am-12noon, Eltham E-Kai Community Garden. Visit [www.southtaranaki.com/gardenseries](http://www.southtaranaki.com/gardenseries) for more information.

## Upcoming meetings

**Policy and Strategy Committee**  
Monday 9 February, 1pm

**Water Services Committee**  
Wednesday 11 February, 1pm

**District Plan Committee**  
*Plan Change 4 Hearing*  
Monday 16 February, 10am

**District Plan Committee**  
*Plan Change 4 Hearing*  
Tuesday 17 February, 9am

**Risk and Assurance Committee (Mercer)**  
Wednesday 18 February, 11am

**Extraordinary Council**  
*To hear submissions on the Parking Control and Traffic Flow Bylaw*  
Monday 23 February, 3pm

**Eltham Drainage Committee**  
Wednesday 25 February, 10am

**Extraordinary Council**  
*To hear submissions on the proposals to close part of Cambridge Street, Pātea*  
Monday 2 March, 2pm  
Hunter Shaw Building, Egmont Street, Pātea

**Ordinary Council**  
Wednesday 4 March, 4pm

**Eltham-Kaponga Community Board**  
Tuesday 10 March, 10.30am  
Rotokare Scenic Reserve, 365 Sangster Road, Eltham

**Te Hāwera Community Board**  
Tuesday 10 March, 4pm  
Ōkaiawa Hall, Ahipaipa Road, Ōkaiawa

**Taranaki Coastal Community Board**  
Wednesday 11 March, 10.30am  
Ōaonui Hall, 5142 South Road, Ōaonui

**Pātea Community Board**  
Wednesday 11 March, 4pm  
Waitōtara Community Hall, Kaipo Street, Waitōtara



Unless otherwise specified, meetings are held in the Council Chamber, Administration Building, Albion Street, Hāwera.


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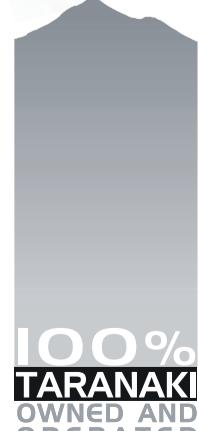
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# Huge turnout to rescue cinema

*Continued from page 1.*

from the accountant's point of view ticket sales could not be any cheaper. Discounted family passes was another suggestion posited to increase attendance. Others included naming rights with a not entirely serious suggestion from someone in the audience of Ross Dunlop Farms Cinema - drawing a big laugh from everyone not least from former mayor Ross Dunlop who was at the meeting. Bob Clark, formerly from Opunake, suggested the cinema could be run along similar lines to Opunake's Everybodys Theatre which is voluntarily run.

One lady commented, "you don't see the young kids in there like you used to." In response, undertaking a poll on why people don't come to the cinema, was suggested.

Suggestions that the cinema be run as a charitable trust was vetoed by the chair



**Signing up to be a member of the working party.**

on the grounds that "the theatre would not meet that criteria." It is a charitable trust, but it's not got charitable status," explained

Tania. Fundraising was another idea mooted by a woman who queried, "how much do they need?" She replied. "It's not insolvent." She added however that in the last 5 years, there had been losses in three of the years.' The wages are the biggest cost, she added.

It was concluded at the meeting that top on the agenda was to ask for more time to get things in place beyond the February 12 date earmarked for closure was needed to be extended which Andy said he would speak to the trust. If they couldn't get 6 new trustees by March 31 they could have an interim trust for 6 months.

The point was made by someone to be a trustee, "you need to know what you're in for". He felt that a working group should be appointed initially comprised of

approximately 20 people from "all works of life, ages etc." He also had praise for the trust who he described as "pretty reasonable people" whom he said "should be applauded" and added he was on the council when it was set up.

Towards the end of the one hour meeting the chair asked for people who would be prepared to form a working group. A number came forward to sign their names as part of a working group in the first instance. "We have the opportunity to put new names forward for a new trust," said Andy Beccard - adding a new trust is to be selected from the working group.

If anyone would like to see the financial accounts of the Hawera Cinema they are available by request from Tania Elkerton.



**Former mayor Ross Dunlop has his say.**

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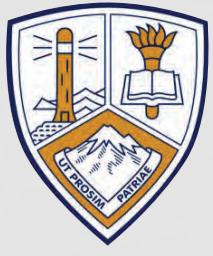
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### PRINCIPALS' ADDRESS

Andrea Hooper Carr

#### 2025 NCEA ACHIEVEMENT



He waka eke noa  
We are all in this together.

And together, we shall continue to trailblaze in the academic, cultural, arts, and sporting arenas. That is my commitment to all those current and

new students at Ōpunakē High School.

As we move into 2026, we are still celebrating the success of our 2025 senior students, with 87% success at Level 1 NCEA, 98.6% at Level 2, and 89% at Level 3. We are so proud of each and every one of our ākonga who attained these results. Not to mention our staff, who supported these students and never for a moment questioned their abilities.

As a kura we have huge aroha for our students, but as whānau and hapori, we need to also love the adults that these students will become. In order to ensure that our ākonga grow into the good people of Aotearoa, we need to do the hard work when they are young. This means ensuring books over phones, exercise over couch surfing, and vegetables over lollies!!! These conversations are difficult, challenging, and take lots of energy. However, if we invest in the mahi now, our tamariki will become adults of whom we can be proud.

To help us with 'growing good people' we have several new staff here at OHS. We welcome the awesome Allister Adamson (Tech Teacher), the dynamic Debra O'Connor (Te Reo Teacher), along with three terrific teacher aides: Renee Heron, Val Martyn, and Deb Hohaia. What wonderful additions to our waka.

However, we have a couple of staff who will be moving on to further their own academic careers. So, with heavy hearts, we will be farewelling Godfrey Hlahla (Science Teacher) and Sara Bishop (Pathways Coordinator).

We thank you both for your investment in our students, school, and community. You will be truly missed.

And so to our year 9s. Thank you to all those whānau who have entrusted us with their most valuable taonga (treasure), we are so excited to have such a vibrant, talented, passionate group of young people. For the next five years we will work together to realise their hopes and dreams. And at OHS may they learn lots of facts & skills, develop profound friendship, and live experiences that will dismantle and reassemble their sense of possibility. The future's so bright for these ākonga we will all have to wear shades!

Arohanui, and may this, our 101st year, be the best one yet!

#### CONTACT DETAILS

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Tasman Street, Ōpunakē 4616  
PO Box 4, Ōpunakē 4645  
[www.opunake.school.nz](http://www.opunake.school.nz)  
[admin@opunake.school.nz](mailto:admin@opunake.school.nz)

#### UPCOMING EVENTS

Swimming Sports  
Monday 23rd February  
Athletics  
Friday 6th March  
Cross Country  
Tuesday 10th March  
Year 10 Mana Camps  
Week 7 & 8

For more media visit:  
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## WELCOME YEAR NINES



# Eric Ardern's secret way for Lions Club fundraising



Michelle Doidge, left, thanks the Opunake Lions for the large TV, with Sasanka Gunatunga, Kathy Stanley and Eric Ardern.

Residents at the Cottage Rest Home in Opunake were treated to a stunning

January 2026.

The programmes beamed forth from a huge television

donated by the Opunake Lions Club were amazing. "It livened up our days - I

even watched Coronation Street," one enthusiastic resident's face was joyful.

The presentation was held in front of the residents.

Sandra Deegan, Facility

Manager, was unable to be present as she was called away to New Plymouth on clinical duties.

Michelle Doidge and Genessa Mullin showered praise and they assured the three Lions Club members how wonderful the project was.

"It was awesome," Michelle told the gathering. The residents clapped their hands in delight.

Eric Ardern explained that club members collected \$1,500 for the project this year.

"People were so generous when they learnt about proceeds from the Pig in the Barrow."

"This is one of the most popular schemes we do," Eric Ardern who has been involved with the fundraiser for 24 years said. "The delicious pork has been kindly donated by the Stanley Family for many years."

Local resident, Brian Roach (Ticket Number 976) was the lucky raffle winner this year.

Sasanka Gunatunga, President of Opunake Lions Club, was thrilled with everyone and their generosity.

"This raffle is really fun and very popular with our members and very well supported by the community. We are grateful for the support we receive every year."

## Okato Lions: Active in Community Since 1970

Over the past few months, the Okato Lions Club has continued its strong tradition of community service and local engagement in the Okato and coastal Taranaki region. The club remains a visible and energetic part of community life, living up to the Lions' global motto "We Serve" through hands-on volunteering and support for local causes.

One of the key activities recently has been the organisation and promotion of community fundraising events, including Mud Mayhem — a paddock day for 2WD and 4WD vehicles — in partnership with Offroad Adventure NZ, designed to bring people together and raise funds for local initiatives.

Members have also been involved in local community support efforts, such as assisting at school galas and BBQs, helping with coastal school and market events, and selling daffodils for the Taranaki Cancer Society. Four boxes were donated to the Foodbank in the Foodbank can collection. These efforts not only raise funds but also strengthen community connections.

A major focus has been community health and wellbeing with the free Health Screening caravan "The Glob" providing checks for rural farmers and residents along with truckies. The caravan is available for any Taranaki events.

Current projects include fundraising for a shade cloth for the Okato Play Centre, mulching the Local Orchard, assisting with planting at Greenwood Rd with the locally built BBQ Trailer (thanks to Stone Creations, Maxwell Engineering and the Taranaki 4x4 club) so Lions can assist with local BBQs

The club continues to encourage new members to join their monthly meetings at Hempton Hall, where they plan future activities and work to broaden their

community service reach (first Wednesday of each month)

Contact Colin on 0275421853



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# Ovarian cancer outcomes improve when diagnosed quickly

Every day in Aotearoa New Zealand, a woman is told they have Ovarian Cancer. The average Kiwi woman has a 1.6% chance of getting Ovarian Cancer in their lifetime. This means that 16 out of 1,000 women will get ovarian cancer at some point according to the Ovarian Cancer Foundation of New Zealand.

Ovarian cancer can affect women of any age but is more common after you have been through menopause.

It's a cancer that is easy to miss and hard to treat, and symptoms are often mistaken for some of the less serious issues women experience regularly.

February is Ovarian Cancer awareness month so it's important to know the common ovarian cancer symptoms which include:

- Bloating



## Ovarian cancer can affect women of any age.

- Eating less and more or urgently feeling fuller
- Abdominal, pelvic or back pain
- Needing to pee
- Bowel changes
- Fatigue
- Indigestion, abnormal vaginal bleeding or discharge, unexplained weight changes and painful sex are also possible.

Even if your symptoms

are mild, if they haven't gone away after four weeks make an appointment to see your GP. Most of the time the symptoms won't be ovarian cancer, but it is important to get them checked just in case

because Ovarian Cancer is easier to treat when it is diagnosed quickly.

For more information visit [www.ovariancancerfoundation.org.nz](http://www.ovariancancerfoundation.org.nz)

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The hurt we cannot bandage

The cries we do not hear

Are we not listening to

The ones that have their fear

Do we need to listen more

Not just shake our head

Help them to cope with life

And understand their dread

Are we missing the cries for help

There are signs to see

A young lass clutches a pillow

All is not right with she

Someone sits beside you

And wants to hold your hand

Maybe all they want

Is for you to understand

Our youngsters gone all silent

Quiet and withdrawn

Trying to find the courage

To face another dawn

Their only place of safety

Is hiding in their room

Not wanting to show face

To another day of gloom

If I could help in any way

To get one in from the cold

That would mean more to me

Than the rainbow and its pot of gold

Tony Andrews

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# Opunake Floral Art Group celebrate 65 years



Margaret Holmes & Helen Bayliss.

The Opunake Floral Art Group recently celebrated their 65th anniversary.

The inaugural meeting was held at the St Andrews Presbyterian Church hall in December 1960, with Joyce Young elected as president.

Joyce was widely known for her amazing talent as an artist, not only was she a foundation member of our floral art group, but also painted in watercolour, acrylics and pastels and was a creative gardener having her garden in the annual garden festival, but Joyce was also renowned for her amazing pottery.

Joyce was President of Opunake Club from 1960 until 1967, when Mrs Winsome Sarten was elected. Winsome was a

very creative floral artist and started a successful florist business in Opunake and then New Plymouth.

The monthly meeting dates were set for – the fourth Wednesday of the month – this tradition is still upheld today.

The subs were set at 2 shillings and a sixpence, with 2 shillings to be paid each month as an attendance fee.

Approximately 40 women and two men attended the first meeting in 1960 and due to such a great interest, it was soon decided to move the meetings from the church hall to the Opunake High School.

The group were very active within the community also, creating wreaths and displays for Anzac Day, Margaret Holmes who started her floral art journey with the Opunake Club contributed so much to floral art as an active member, demonstrator, teacher and judge. Margaret is a

floral art displays open for public viewing and floral displays for local events held at the school and halls.

One floral art display in 1967 which was widely advertised and attended was titled “Travel the World with Flowers” consisting of eight sections depicting countries set up in the High School Assembly Hall and entry fee was 30 cents, with a large mass arrangement in the foyer and afternoon tea supplied.

The founding members attended Taranaki Floral Art club days, workshops and many members passing their floral art exams, some going on to be demonstrators, judges’ and teachers.’

At the first AGM of the Floral Art Society of NZ First AGM held in Wellington on 14 April 1965, Joyce Young was elected one of the founding committee members. Also recorded in the minutes were six remits, two of which were submitted from the Opunake Floral Art Group.

Margaret Holmes who started her floral art journey with the Opunake Club contributed so much to floral art as an active member, demonstrator, teacher and judge. Margaret is a

Taranaki Life Member and was recently made patron.

Long serving members Robyn Chard and Andrea Thomas cut the anniversary cake.

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Robyn Chard & Andrea Thomas Cutting the cake.

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Riverlea Women’s Institute meet on the first Wednesday of each month and members enjoy a varied program. We sometimes have a guest speaker, share ideas and crafts and get out and about. Members especially enjoyed a visit to the Aotea Museum, Patea, lunch at Renate’s Cafe and checking out the local art gallery. We recently had our AGM and our long serving Executive remain the same for 2026 -

President Lynette Gargan; Vice-President Bev Clark; Secretary Leonie West; Treasurer Helen Cameron. Results of our Annual Prize-giving:- Bloom: Riverlea Vase. 1. Lynette Gargan and Leonie West. Cluster: 1. Myra Gibson Handcraft: Cherry Willingham Tray: 1.t Margie Bishop.

Homecraft: Kapuni Trophy. 1. Leonie West. Mrs N Kuriger Cup; Most Points overall: Leonie West.

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## Riverlea W.I.



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# Uhlenberg goes back-to-back

Karl Uhlenberg has proven that he is still the fastest Minisprint competitor in New Zealand when he retained his position as New Zealand's number one Minisprint driver at the Zodiac Signs sponsored New Zealand Championship at Stratford Speedway on Saturday night (January 31).

Uhlenberg has been a dominating force on the racetrack in the class since he won the New Zealand title last season at Palmerston North Speedway for the first time. His dominance proven with regular podiums, including winning the Taranaki champs for the second season in a row on December 28.

Racing in a field of twenty cars, Uhlenberg set down the fastest lap time of the event in just lap four of the first of three fifteen lap races where drivers would have points accumulated from their finishing positions to find the overall winner. That lap time of 14.018 second was untouchable by any of the other competitors, the only driver able to get close being Regan Ogle with a time of 14.129 in the same race. Uhlenberg won this first race from a grid two start before again winning race two from grid twelve. Starting from the rear of the field in race three, he worked his way



Palmerston North driver Riki-Lee Kauri (#23), seen here racing with Bailey FitzGerald, won the Taranaki Precast Concrete Under 23 Stockcar Champs.

up to position five, finishing there and winning the overall title by a five-point margin.

Regan Ogle, who has been quick after moving into this class from Youth Ministocks a few seasons ago placed third in race one, sixth in race two and survived an incident in race three where he became airborne but managed to land back on his wheels and keep going to finish third in that race and claim second spot overall and will now get to wear the number 2nz on his car for the next twelve

months. Palmerston North Contracted driver Daniel Nickel was third after recording a fifth place in race one, seventh place in race two and winning race three. Luck wasn't on everyone's side with Bronson Pierce looking good on points going into heat three, but he did not finish that race while event sponsor Cameron Hurley was caught up in an incident in the first race, taking him out of championship contention.

A near full field of twenty-seven young drivers from all

over the North Island raced for the Taranaki Precast Concrete Under 23 Stockcar Champs. Riki-Lee Kauri, who raced here recently in the Queen of the Mountain Stockcar Champs and was familiar with the track, dominated the racing in the class to take the overall win after placing second in the first race, fourth in the second and winning the third. Auckland driver Sam Wright was second while Whanganui racer Cody Lockett was third after beating club mate Tobey

Matthews in a runoff that was needed after the pair were tied on points for third place.

Saloons raced for their Mufflers NZ Taranaki Champs with Thomas Korff and Bradley Korff again dominating the racing. The event was closely fought with the pair equal on points for the top step of the podium after three races. T.Korff won the runoff to decide the winner. Blake Hooper, driving his dad's car as his new one isn't yet ready, was third.

Superstocks raced two



Karl Uhlenberg won the Zodiac Signs New Zealand Minisprint Championship on Saturday night.

Photos-Loaded Glass Photography

Jarrod MacBeth

## NEXT EVENT

**SATURDAY FEBRUARY 14TH**  
**King of the Mountain Minisprint Champs & OST**  
**Wayne Trott Stockcar Memorial (1st year drivers)**  
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## Obesity linked to higher risk of severe and fatal infectious diseases

People with obesity are more likely to be hospitalised or die from infectious diseases, according to a study of over 540,000 British and Finnish people. The researchers found that this was consistent across most of the 925 diseases they looked at, but the link was strongest with skin and

soft tissue infections, and acute viral infections like COVID-19. The likelihood of being hospitalised or dying from the diseases increased with the level of obesity, regardless of factors like age, sex or ethnicity. Severe obesity was linked to a three times higher risk of being hospitalised due to

The Lancet

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# Federated Farmers warns of 'water tax' risk

Federated Farmers warns of 'water tax' risk

Federated Farmers says while it supports the intent of the Government's resource management overhaul, a deep dive into the draft legislation has revealed some serious concerns.

Most concerning are provisions allowing freshwater rights to be auctioned, tendered, or levied - effectively enabling freshwater to be taxed, says Federated Farmers RMA reform spokesperson Mark Hooper.

"It's not an exaggeration to say we were alarmed when we read clauses in the Natural Environment Bill that give future ministers sweeping powers to tax water to manage demand.

"There is no way on earth Federated Farmers can or will support that.

"I'll be seeking urgent clarification from the Beehive, because any reform that allows water taxes by stealth is completely unacceptable to us."

Last December the Government released two new bills - the Planning Bill and the Natural Environment Bill - to replace the Resource Management Act.

Hooper says Federated Farmers staff have spent the past eight weeks working through the detail.

"It's important to state up front that Federated Farmers is completely on board with the aims of the reform.

"The promise of a stronger focus on property rights, a tighter scope, fewer resource consents, more



**Federated Farmers RMA reform spokesperson Mark Hooper.**

standardisation and less litigation all sound like the reset farmers have been calling for.

"But as we've worked through the detail, it's become clear that there are parts of these bills that do not align with those aims at all."

Hooper says the risk of water taxes is not the only concern. As currently drafted, the new system may be more permissive where environmental limits are comfortably met, but significantly more restrictive where a catchment is at or near its limit.

"Councils often set limits that aim to maintain current water quality levels, so this could mean many catchments are immediately at or beyond environmental limits from the outset.

"As the Natural Environment Bill becomes

more restrictive as catchments approach those limits, that could actually mean more resource consents for farmers as the bills are currently drafted.

"This is on top of requirements for all farmers to also have a Freshwater Farm Plan.

"Federated Farmers supports a shift to a farm plan approach, but only if it replaces, rather than sits alongside, the need for a resource consent."

Another area of concern is the wording around when councils must compensate landowners for loss of property value.

Hooper says Federated Farmers welcomed the Government's earlier commitment to compensation when restrictive overlays - such as Outstanding Natural Landscapes and Significant

Natural Areas - are imposed on farms.

"But now, when we read the draft legislation, we're seeing a compensation regime that's much more uncertain than many expected.

"It relies on proving a 'significant impact on the reasonable use of land', which means compensation could be very limited and will ultimately depend on how future court cases interpret that threshold."

Hooper says another major concern is that Water Conservation Orders remain largely untouched, despite being an outdated planning tool.

"Farmers and growers are pretty baffled that these relics haven't been ditched, as they're a very poor way to manage freshwater resources.

"They allow any member

of the public to override regional council processes and push for stricter freshwater controls."

Hooper says much of the most important detail in the Natural Environment Bill - including the meaning of key goals, the scope of regulation, and what regional plans must contain - is deferred to future national direction set by the Minister.

"That creates a 'trust us and wait' model and opens the door to wildly different interpretations by future governments.

"Farmers need certainty

if they're going to invest in their land. A system that leaves key details up to future ministers creates risk, delays decisions, and undermines confidence in the whole reform."

Federated Farmers is preparing a strong submission aimed at highlighting weaknesses in both bills and supporting the Select Committee process to amend both bills.

"We'll be doing all we can to ensure the reform delivers what farmers were promised," Hooper says.

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# Reminder to farmers after effluent contamination of Taranaki streams

Taranaki Regional Council is reminding farmers to properly maintain their equipment and have an effective effluent discharge plan after a farmer and sharemilker were fined for polluting waterways near Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki.

Effluent contaminated the Paopaoaonui Stream and tributaries of the Tapuae Stream in the winter of 2023 from irrigators at the Hurford Road farm owned by Nicholas Barrett and managed by Martin Strauss' Siyabonga Ltd sharemilking

company.

Investigations found an unnamed tributary of the Tapuae Stream was discoloured nearly eight kilometres downstream of a stationary irrigator on the farm.

Council Compliance Manager Jared Glasgow says: "The contamination and adverse impact on these streams is hugely disappointing given the property had a resource consent and the necessary equipment to discharge to land.

"Instead, we found effluent

going onto an already sodden paddock and flowing overland into a waterway. This was in breach of the resource consent and abatement notices we had issued to get the irrigation at the farm up to scratch.

"We don't think this is rocket science and remind farmers to ensure if they have a consent to discharge onto land then they must take care not to contaminate our rivers and streams."

In the New Plymouth District Court, Barrett was fined \$91,000 and Strauss' Siyabonga Ltd was fined



A contaminated stream.

\$36,000 for the three charges brought under the Resource Management Act 1991.

Mr Glasgow added that the hundreds of inspections the Council undertakes each year are invaluable in preventing damage to the region's environment and precious waterways.

"While Mr Barrett has now taken steps to resolve this situation, this case is a timely

reminder to never take your eye off the ball when it comes to preserving our natural environment," Mr Glasgow says.

"As ever, if farmers have issues or want help with knowing what the rules are, please give us a call on 0800 736 222 and we're only too happy to chat with you or pop out to your farm to see how we can work together."

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## Year ends on a wet note

There was an average rainfall of 185.1mm in Taranaki in December – that's 12% more than normal, according to Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) figures.

This ranged from 33% less rain than usual at Mangorei Upper at Forest Hill, and 59% more rain than usual at Kapoaaia at Lighthouse.

Compared to typical full year totals, on average sites in 2025 received 101% of a typical year's rainfall, with the highest value at North Taranaki at Camphouse,

118% of normal, whereas Waitotara at Hawken Rd sits at 83% of the typical year's total.

Mean river flows for December were 3.6% lower than typical values, low flows were 37.4% greater than normal, and high flows 33.3% lower than typical values while mean river (non-mountain) water temperatures were 16.9°C, an average of 0.1°C warmer than long-term December values.

The maximum air temperature recorded in December was 27.5°C at Brooklands Zoo at New Plymouth on 10 December and the average air temperature for the region (excluding Te Maunga sites) was 17°C, which is 0.7°C warmer than long-term December averages

December average wind

speeds were 13.9km/hr, with average gust strength of 46.9km/hr, these were 0.6km/hr stronger, and 6.4km/hr gustier than the long-term average.

The maximum wind gust recorded in December was 97.6km/hr at Waitotara at Ngutuwera on 30 December.



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# Young Farmers edge towards 100-year milestone

Young Farmers edge towards 100-year milestone

Stratford will play host to a New Zealand Young Farmers reunion on 3 July 2026, timed to coincide with one of the most significant dates on the rural calendar, the FMG Young Farmer of the Year Grand Final being held in Stratford and New Plymouth from July 2-4..

With New Zealand Young Farmers edging closer to its 100-year milestone, alumni from the Taranaki-

Manawatū region are keen to seize the moment and bring people together while this prestigious national event is right on our doorstep.

At its heart, the reunion is about connection. It's a chance for past and present members to reunite, share stories, and celebrate the enormous contribution Young Farmers, and Country Girls, have made to rural communities across generations.

Nowhere is that more

evident than along Coastal Taranaki, where there's a deep well of history, characters, and stories still waiting to be shared.

Young Farmers and Country Girls clubs first emerged in Feilding in 1927 and Auckland in 1930, before the formation of the first Young Farmers' Federation in Otago in 1934. From those early beginnings, the movement spread nationwide, supporting rural youth and shaping New Zealand's agricultural communities for nearly a century.

Taranaki has been part of that journey since the early 1930s, with clubs such as Karawaka (Lepperton, North Taranaki) helping to pave the way. Today, the region is home to five active Young Farmers clubs — Urenui,



South Taranaki, Coastal, Central, and Inglewood — but the legacy stretches far beyond current membership lists.

Membership today is open to those aged 15-31, and current members are very much part of the reunion.

However, this event is just as much about reconnecting with those who wore the badge years, or decades,



Members competing at a YFC event.

being held at the Stratford A&P Showgrounds and then move to the Stratford War Memorial Hall for a great afternoon and evening live music, food, and refreshments, creating the perfect backdrop for reminiscing and reconnecting.

Organisers would also love to hear from anyone who has memorabilia, old photos, or keepsakes from past events — pieces of history that help tell the story of Young Farmers and Country Girls in our region.

If you were once part of it, now's the time to get in touch, come back, catch up, and help spin a few more stories.

There's a rich history there, and undoubtedly plenty of yarns that deserve another airing.

The reunion will encourage

those attending to attend

the FMG Young Farmer

of the Year Grand Final



Photos supplied by Eric Chainey (Midhurst Young Farmers Club)

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## ACC partnering with Young Farmers

The Government is backing New Zealand's next generation of food and fibre sector leaders by investing in its premier youth competition, Associate Minister for ACC Nicola Grigg has announced.

For the first time, ACC is partnering with NZ Young Farmers (NZYF) and sponsoring this year's FMG Young Farmer of the Year competition.

"The FMG Young Farmer



Aorangi grand finalist Tom Adkins.

of the Year competition is one of New Zealand's most exciting agricultural events, showcasing the skills, innovation, leadership and practical know how of young farmers from across the country," Ms Grigg says.

"This partnership reflects the Government's focus on fixing the basics and building the future - making sure farmers have the strong foundations they need today, while investing in the skills, leadership and resilience required for tomorrow.

"Farmers are the backbone of our economy. They support regional jobs, drive our exports and underpin New Zealand's food security. That's why this Government is backing them in practical ways and focusing policy on what actually works on farm, letting farmers spend more time doing what they do best.

"However, despite the incredible talent and capability of New Zealand farmers, agriculture remains one of our highest risk industries, with thousands of farming related injury claims made every year."

In 2024, ACC received over 23,000 claims for injuries sustained on farms. The cost to help people recover was around \$120 million.

"Our government is laser focused on early intervention and practical support that improves the lives of New Zealanders. Bringing ACC's expertise in injury prevention and recovery into the heart of this competition helps young farmers build safe, sustainable careers from the outset.

"This new partnership reinforces NZ Young Farmers' commitment to developing confident, capable and

healthy future leaders across agriculture.

"Farming is one of New Zealand's most demanding and rewarding industries, requiring skill, resilience and constant decision making in often unpredictable conditions. The contest showcases the real pressures and realities of farming life.

"ACC's involvement brings a stronger safety and recovery message to the competition programme, helping contestants understand how to work safely, manage risks and support recovery as they build successful careers in agriculture, Ms Grigg says."

The FMG Young Farmer of the Year competition consists of seven regional contests from January to April 2026. Winners from each region will then compete in the grand final in New Plymouth in July.

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# Ambulance workload reaches new highs



## Falls are now one of the largest reasons for callouts.

Emergency ambulance demand continued to climb in 2025, reaching the highest level on record, with Hato Hone St John responding to more than half a million incidents.

New national ambulance data shows there were 706,194 emergency 111 calls for an ambulance last year, an increase of nearly 30 percent over five years, while frontline crews attended 551,399 incidents, up 17 percent since 2020.

"Demand on our emergency ambulance service has never

been higher," says Dan Ohs, Hato Hone St John Deputy Chief Executive – Ambulance Operations.

"Despite significant changes to how we operate, the volume and complexity of cases continue to grow year on year."

The pressure was most acute over winter, with August recording the highest monthly call volume ever, at 63,888 emergency calls. Mr Ohs says this reflects wider system pressures, an ageing population and rising acuity.

Leading reasons for calling an ambulance remained

consistent, including referrals from health practitioners, breathing problems, chest pain, falls and loss of consciousness. Several largely preventable incident types increased sharply, with drowning and diving incidents up 32 percent to 582, animal bites and attacks rising almost 19 percent to 1,212, and falls increasing eight percent to 52,559 incidents.

Falls are now one of the single largest drivers of ambulance demand and disproportionately affect older New Zealanders. Nearly half of all ambulance responses involved people aged 65 and over, underscoring the growing impact of falls-related harm on both emergency services and hospitals.

"Falls are not just accidents, they are a major and growing health issue," says Mr Ohs.

"Many falls are preventable, and when they do occur, early intervention can reduce long-term injury, loss of independence and pressure on hospitals."

Cardiac and respiratory arrest incidents also continued to rise, increasing five percent to 5,750 in 2025. Survival outcomes are highly time-critical, making rapid response, bystander CPR and access to defibrillation essential.

"Improving cardiac arrest survival is one of our most urgent priorities," says Mr Ohs.

"Our data reinforces the importance of early intervention, community CPR training, public access defibrillators, and seamless coordination from first call

to hospital care."

Higher-acuity cases continued to dominate ambulance demand, with patients assessed as having serious but not immediately life-threatening conditions accounting for 43 percent of incidents, and life-threatening cases making up a further 35 percent. About 10 percent involved patients whose conditions did not appear serious, and at the highest rate last quarter, 7.4 percent of incidents were safely resolved through clinical advice over the phone.

"Our clinicians are increasingly helping people avoid unnecessary trips to emergency departments," says Mr Ohs.

"Enabling patients to be safely cared for at home or in their community keeps ambulances and hospital resources available for those who need them most."

Auckland recorded the highest number of ambulance responses, followed by Canterbury, Waikato and Bay of Plenty, reflecting population growth and urban density.

Hato Hone St John also saw a rise in the number of Māori patients which had increased by 14 percent and accounted for 21 percent of all ambulance responses. Given Māori make up around 17 percent of the national population, the data indicates Māori are using ambulance services at a higher rate per capita.



Hato Hone St John.

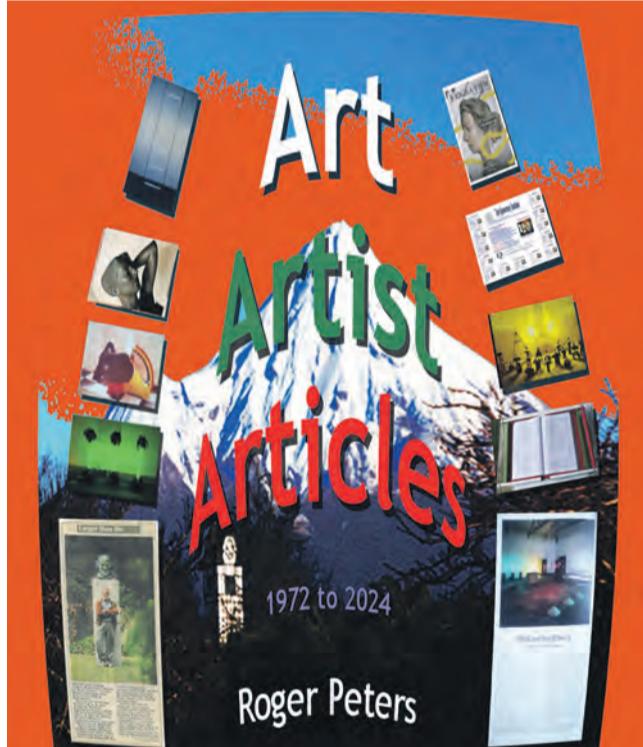
"This is a good thing from our perspective, we know tāngata Māori can feel hesitant to access healthcare, and it's great to see they are accessing our services when they need them."

In response, Hato Hone St John is strengthening engagement with iwi

Māori, improving culturally appropriate models of care, and using data to better target services where inequities are greatest.

"With demand continuing to rise, prevention, equity and system efficiency are no longer optional, they are essential," says Mr Ohs.

**Gallery Gathering**  
February 22nd  
from 2pm  
**Antonia O'Mahoney**  
**Printmaking & Puja**  
a wonderful armchair travel opportunity  
from out of the blue studio gallery  
18 Halse Place, Opunake  
free event  
all welcome



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# Americarna



Wednesday 25 February the popular Opunake Beach park-up.

New Zealand's premier celebration of American car culture, returns to Taranaki from Tuesday 24 to Saturday 28 February 2026, delivering five days of colour, chrome, and family-friendly entertainment.

Americarna is proud to welcome back Supercheap Auto as the 2026 Naming Rights Sponsor, continuing their support of this iconic event after backing Americarna again in 2025. Their involvement reflects a shared passion for automotive culture and community events that

bring people together.

Americarna is far more than a car show — it's a week-long celebration that brings American car culture to life across the region. Spectators can expect to see everything from beautifully restored classics to modern American muscle. Throughout the week, spectators are invited to enjoy the sights and sounds as the cars cruise through towns and park up in key locations across the region.

Public highlights begin on Wednesday 25 February with the popular Opunake

Beach park-up, offering a relaxed coastal setting where visitors can view the cars up

close. Thursday night brings evening entertainment to Inglewood, creating a lively atmosphere for locals and visitors alike.

One of the most anticipated moments of the week takes place on Friday night, when Americarna rolls into New Plymouth's CBD for the Main Street Cruise. Crowds line the streets to watch the vehicles cruise through the city, making it a favourite experience for spectators.

The event concludes on Saturday 28 February with the much-loved Americarnival in the New Plymouth CBD. This free, family-friendly day features American vehicle displays, RC car action, chainsaw sport demonstrations, and



Saturday Americarnival.



Friday CBD Night Cruise.

a showcase of American tractors, with plenty more exciting attractions and entertainment still to be announced.

Proudly supported by the Taranaki community, Americarna continues to deliver an event that celebrates cars, entertainment, and community spirit.

For more information and updates, visit [www.americarna.com](http://www.americarna.com)

**SUPERCHEAP AUTO**

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**18th Annual AMERICARNA**

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**2026**

**25 FEB WED**

**ÖPUNAKĒ BEACH**  
11:30AM - 2:30PM - ÖPUNAKĒ BEACH

**26 FEB THURS**

**WAITARA & INGLEWOOD**  
12:30PM - 3:30PM - WAITARA  
4:00PM - 8:00PM - INGLEWOOD

**27 FEB FRI**

**STRATFORD & HĀWERA**  
10:30AM - 12:30PM - STRATFORD  
1:15PM - 5:15PM - HĀWERA

**27 FEB FRI**

**CBD NIGHT CRUISE**  
6:00PM - MANGOREI ROAD  
6:00PM - 9:30PM - NEW PLYMOUTH CBD

**28 FEB SAT**

**AMERICARNIVAL**  
10:00AM - 3:00PM - NEW PLYMOUTH CBD

**GET MORE INFO AT [AMERICARNA.COM](http://AMERICARNA.COM)**

# Hāwera to celebrate 100 Years of Naumai Park

The Friends of Hāwera Parks, in partnership with the South Taranaki District Council (STDC), are marking a significant milestone in 2026 — the 100th anniversary of the naming of Hāwera's much loved native reserve, Naumai Park.

To celebrate a century of history, biodiversity and community connection, a vibrant year long programme of events will be held in the park. Local groups, artists, schools, and volunteers will come together to deliver activities designed to honour the park's heritage and encourage people of all ages

to engage with the space.

Planned events for the centenary year include a Naumai Park book launch, tai chi and poetry sessions, art activity, music and drama performances, a fun run/walk, children's and youth activities, and special celebrations aligned with World Puppet Day, Arbor Day and International Day for Biological Diversity.

Friends of Hāwera Parks spokesperson Miranda Cullen says the centenary is an opportunity to both reflect and look forward.

"Naumai Park holds a special place in the hearts of our community. This centenary is about

celebrating its natural beauty, rich history, and the generations of people who have helped care for it. We're excited to work with so many local groups to bring the park to life throughout 2026."

South Taranaki District Council Places and Spaces Volunteer Co-ordinator Alice Arnold says the programme highlights the strength of community collaboration.

"These events showcase what's possible when passionate community volunteers and Council work together. We hope the celebrations encourage more people to explore the park,

learn its stories, and join us in caring for it for the next 100 years."

The centenary events are organised by the Friends of Hāwera Parks and a range

of community groups, with support from the South Taranaki District Council.

## Creative Communities funding opening soon

Do you have a community arts project that needs some funding support? The next application round for Creative Communities funding opens on Friday 13 February 2026 and closes at 5pm on Friday 13 March 2026.

The South Taranaki Creative Communities Scheme provides funding assistance for community based arts activities in South Taranaki that take place between 14 March

2026 – 14 March 2027 and meet one or more of the following funding criteria:

- Broad community involvement - A project that will create opportunities for local communities to engage with and participate in arts activities.
- Diversity - A project that will support the diverse arts and cultural traditions of local communities, enriching and promoting their uniqueness and cultural diversity.

Application forms are now available on the South Taranaki District Council website [www.southtaranaki.com](http://www.southtaranaki.com) or at your local LibraryPlus. For further information, email [funding@stdc.govt.nz](mailto:funding@stdc.govt.nz) or phone (06) 278 0555 or 0800 111 323.

**175 Opua Road, Opunake**

**Mike: 027 422 4394**



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Hāwera native reserve, Naumai Park.

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# Egmont A & P Summer show

Our up-and-coming Egmont A & P Summer show Saturday 21st & Sunday 22nd February will be held at our Hawera A&P showgrounds and this year are collaborating with the Taranaki Vintage Machinery Club who are bringing their Fossil Fuelled Extravaganza to our event. We see this

as an exciting addition and element to this year's A & P show which we can see as being the biggest event that we will be holding at our grounds this year

The A & P show will be open both days 10am – 4pm where we will be including all of our usual attractions: Side Shows,



Cattle showing.

Outdoor trade, Indoor markers, Free Kids Zone area, Art workshops, food trucks, local entertainment as well as the very popular small animal tent including Billy Black Wool Man and sheep shearing. There will be Cattle showing & a Prime Lamb competition on



Billy Black, Wool Man.



Chickens at the small animal tent.



Side show attractions.

Photos by Kathy Keddie  
Best Mates Photography

kid's crafts, adult's crafts, cooking, horticulture sections as well as model building. We are also introducing some new aspects to our event which include a Health Hub where we will be having the below organisations as well as local community groups and a Farmers Market for local growers and producers.

Alzheimers Taranaki  
Diabetes NZ  
Kidney Health NZ  
Taranaki Cancer Society

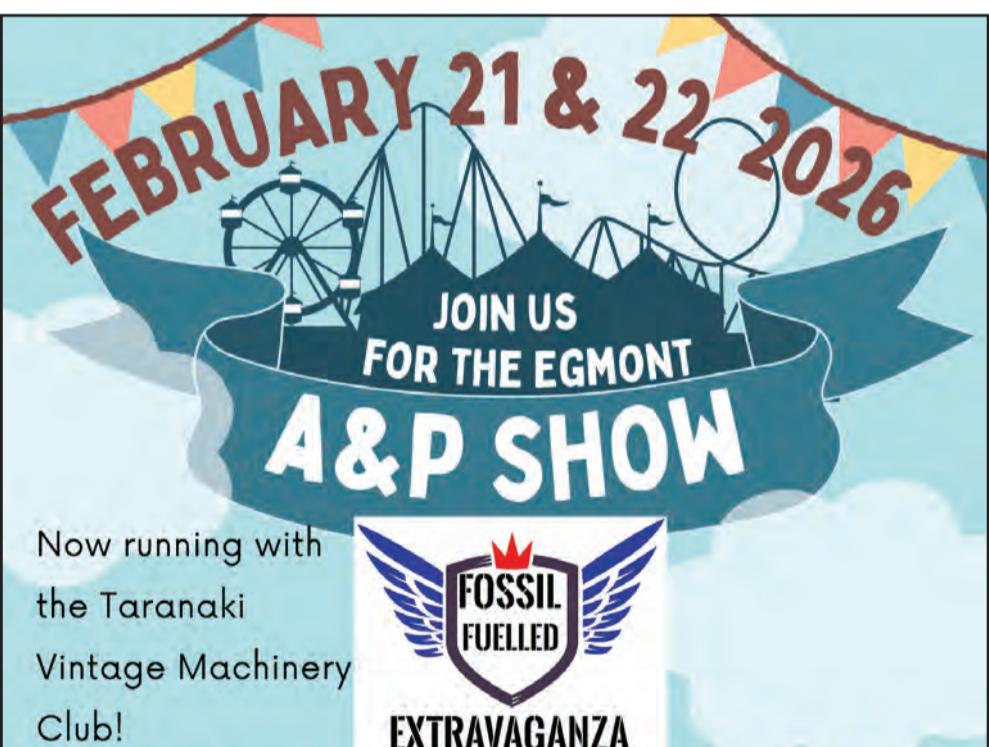
St John Taranaki  
The Taranaki Vintage Machinery club will be running their event from the oval here at the Egmont show grounds where they will have everything from steam engines to water pumps, the Fossil Fuelled Extravaganza showcases everything powered by fossil fuels along with Word War two re-enactments with real explosives, hay stakes, static displays as well as working machinery.



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Adults	S15
Seniors (with Gold card)	S10
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Children (U14)	FREE

# Thought provoking exhibition worth a visit

An exhibition of works by Kaponga artist Roger Peters is coming to Percy Thomson Gallery at Stratford.

The solo exhibition entitled Art, Artist and Articles 1972-2024 includes exhibits from his large body of work over various genres along with old press clippings, newspaper reviews and his own writing from notebooks he has kept over the years.

A bust of William Shakespeare cast in bronze by the artist stands outside the Percy Thomson Gallery and Stratford Library in Prospero Place Stratford.

Speaking to the Opunake & Coastal News Roger recounts he began studying architecture at the Auckland School of Architecture but after several years switched to Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland majoring in sculpture where he received the second year prize in sculpture. He also won the Air New Zealand Fine Arts Award in 1972 with an installation entitled



Part of one of Roger Peter's installations

Being in Space using light and other forms of energy. In an art review which appeared in the Auckland Star a clearly impressed Hamish Keith, CNZM OBE writer, art curator and arts consultant, described it as "an intriguing collection of warm sensations gathered

together in one space."

Roger has since exhibited widely at the Auckland Art Gallery who bought one of his works, the Govett Brewster Art Gallery in New Plymouth, and Whanganui's Sarjeant Gallery among others.

He also later developed an avid interest in Shakespeare and has written four volumes of work on Shakespeare's sonnets.

His interest in Shakespeare began when he joined a group in Whanganui studying Shakespeare's plays where they would do play readings.

It led to a fascination with Shakespeare's works and especially his 154 sonnets which he has analysed in depth and which he believes are the key to the playwright's philosophy behind his plays finding also a link to his own artwork.

The exhibition at Percy

Thomson is an intriguing mix of his diverse works. The reviews which have featured in various media are an interesting addition by journalists (mostly) who in reviewing his works attempt to explain Peter's own philosophy on various subjects. Roger identifies as an artist not a writer he says.

The thought-provoking exhibition will run at Percy Thomson Gallery and also the Stratford District Library from February 13 to March 15.

## RIGHT:

The bust of William Shakespeare by Roger Peters which has a permanent home in Prospero Place in Stratford.



## FIRST FIRES

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Roger Peters with the catalogue of his new exhibition.

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<b>Wuthering Heights</b> 2hr 16mins   M Fri 13 Feb 7PM   Sun 15 Feb 1PM   Sun 22 Feb 7PM	<b>Scarlet</b> 1hr 50mins   M Sat 14 Feb 1PM
<b>Crime 101</b> 2hr 20mins   M Sat 14 Feb 7PM   Sun 22 Feb 1PM	<b>The Choral</b> 1hr 53mins   M Sun 15 Feb 7PM
<b>GOAT</b> 1hr 40mins   PG Fri 20 Feb 7PM   Sat 21 Feb 1PM	<b>Fackham Hall</b> 1hr 37mins   M Sat 21 Feb 7PM

**Wuthering Heights**  
Sex scenes & offensive language | 2hr 16mins | Rated: M  
Fri 13 Feb 7PM

**Scarlet**  
Violence | 1hr 50mins | Rated: M  
Sat 14 Feb 1PM

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**What's On Listings****ONGOING****Movies at Everybodys Theatre in Opunake:**

Playing several days and nights each week. Refer timetable in newspaper.

**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 Philp  
027 935 6191

**St. Barnabas Anglican Church**

141 Tasman St, Opunake  
Sunday Services 9am  
Communion 2nd, & 3rd Sunday  
Prayer & Praise 4th Sunday  
Every 5th Sunday all 4 churches gather for a Combined Service

**Okato Community Church**

Meets 10.30am Sunday at Hemptop Hall.  
Everyone welcome

**St John's Community Church. Kaponga**

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

**Manaia Union Fellowship**

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

**Friend & Fellowship Group**

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 Mattcock 027 2039799

**Methodist Church Hawera**

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

**Manaia Community Church part of the Global Anglicans**

Robert Gibson Hall, Manaia  
1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th Sundays at 10 am  
3rd Sunday Family Service at 4pm with shared meal to follow  
Contact: Rev Phil Woodmass 027 424 8318

Thursday, February 12, 2026

OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS

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

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

**TUESDAYS**

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

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

**Brazilian Jiu Jitsu:** Adult classes, 7pm, Sinclair Events Centre, Opunake.

**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 Community Market:** In Hemptop Hall, Okato 4pm to 5.30pm.

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

**THURSDAYS**

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

**Brazilian Jiu Jitsu:** Adult classes, 7pm, Sinclair Events Centre, Opunake

**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. Supper provided. Ph 021 2622 166.

**FEBRUARY 13 TO MARCH 15**

**Art, Artist, Articles:** An exhibition by Roger Peters, Percy Thomson Gallery

**FEBRUARY 14**

**Community Garden Workshop:** Eltham E-Kai Community Garden, Eltham. 10am-2pm.

**FEBRUARY 14 & 15**

**National Dahlia Show:** Community Centre ~~ce~~orial Hall, Hawera. See ad for more details.

**FEBRUARY 14**

**Community Garden Workshop:** Eltham E-Kai Community Garden, Eltham. 10am-2pm.

**FEBRUARY 19**

**Tui Ora Drop-in Clinic:** Heartlands Hub, Opunake. 10am-1.30pm.

**FEBRUARY 22**

**Gallery Gathering with Antonia O'Mahoney - Printmaking & Puja:** At from out of the blue studio gallery, Opunake.

**FEBRUARY 25**

**Americarna:** Opunake Beach, 11.30am-2.30pm.

**FEBRUARY 26**

**Americarna:** Waitara, 12.30pm - 3.30pm; Inglewood, 4pm-8pm.

**FEBRUARY 27**

**Americarna:** Stratford, 10.30am-12.30pm; Hawera, 1.15-5.15pm; New Plymouth CBD Night Cruise 6pm.

**FEBRUARY 28**

**Americarnival:** New Plymouth CBD, 10am-3pm.

**Taurean Kenny Mill sings Elvis:** The Hideaway Sound Shell, 683 Egmont Road. 6-10pm.

**MARCH 7**

**Full Metal Orchestra Rock festival:** The Hideaway Sound Shell, 683 Egmont Road. 6-10pm.

**MARCH 22-23**

**First Fires:** An overnight adventure for boys 12-14yrs and their men. Koru Farm, Taranaki. See ad in this issue for details.

**APRIL 11**

**Community Garden Workshop:** Manaia Maara Kai. 10am-2pm.

**JUNE 13**

**Community Garden Workshop:** St Marys Community Garden, Hawera. 10am-2pm.

  
**National Dahlia Show 2026**  
Community Centre Memorial Hall  
Albion St, Hawera

**Saturday February 14th 12-4pm**  
**& Sunday February 15th 10am-3pm**

**ENTRIES CLOSE: 7pm Thurs February 12**  
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**TUI ORA**

## PUBLIC NOTICES

## Public notice of application for ON Licence

Section 101, Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012

MORRESEY PEARCE TRADING LIMITED, 195 High Street, Eltham, Eltham, 4322, NZ has made application to the South Taranaki District Licensing Committee for the renewal of an ON licence in respect of the premises situated at 49 Egmont Street, RD 29/Kaponga, Hawera, 4679, known as KAPONGA HOTEL.

The general nature of the business conducted (or to be conducted) under the licence is Tavern.

The days on which and the hours during which alcohol is (or is intended to be) sold under the licence are:

Monday to Sunday from 8:00 AM to 2:00 AM

The application may be inspected during ordinary office hours at the office of the South Taranaki District Licensing Committee at 105/109 Albion Street, Hāwera, 4610.

Any person who is entitled to object and who wishes to object to the issue of the licence may, not later than 15 working days after the date of the first publication of this notice, file a notice in writing of the objection with the Secretary of the South Taranaki District Licensing Committee at:

The Secretary, South Taranaki District Licensing Committee, Private Bag 902, Hāwera, 4640.

No objection to the renewal of a licence may be made in relation to a matter other than a matter specified in section 131 of the Sale and Supply of Alcohol Act 2012.

This is the second publication of this notice.

This notice was first published on: 29/01/2026.

## OKATO COMMUNITY MARKET

Every Wednesday  
4 - 5.30pm

Hempton Hall  
Vegetables, Baking, Op Shop, Chocolate,  
Crafts, Books, and more

BRAZILIAN JIU JITSU,  
Adults, Tuesday & Thursday  
7pm at Sinclair Events  
Centre.

## FOR SALE

DRY FIREWOOD. \$99  
per metre plus cartage. Ph  
021 068 3700.

## HOUSE FOR RENT

HOUSE FOR RENT. 3  
brm. 2 storey, Opunake.  
\$495 pw. Ph 027 4887 448.



# OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS

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Phone 06 761 7016  
23 Napier St, Opunake

SITUATIONS  
VACANT

### ŌPUNAKĒ HIGH SCHOOL

## SPORTS CO-ORDINATOR

An energetic and passionate person is required to co-ordinate activities for students in a range of sporting areas. Fixed term to cover maternity leave, starting Term 2 2026. 20 hours per week. Job description available from the office.

Written applications should include a brief CV to:

The Principal  
Ōpunakē High School  
PO Box 4  
Ōpunakē 4616  
sl@opunake.school.nz

Applications close Friday  
27 February 2026

WAYNE CHAPMAN,  
male tetraplegic requires  
a morning caregiver for  
assistance with personal  
care. Must be physically fit.  
Training provided. Ph 06  
763 8323 or 027 345 7587.

## HOUSE FOR RENT

HOUSE FOR RENT. 3  
brm. 2 storey, Opunake.  
\$495 pw. Ph 027 4887 448.

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all scrap metal Taranaki  
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Hawera, Normanby, Manaia  
areas - other areas may  
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15 Livingston Rd Hawera-  
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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

Call us on 06 761 7016

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The next issue of the Opunake & Coastal News is due  
out on February 26, 2026.

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NZ NEW  
Stability Control, Alloy Wheels, Electric Mirrors, Tiptronic Auto, 2.0, Petrol, 175kms



**\$9,995**

**2009 Nissan X-Trail 4WD**

Auto Headlights, Roof Rack, Tinted Windows, Monsoons, Sunroof, Keyless Entry & Ignition, 2.0, Petrol, CVT, 160kms



**\$9,995**

**2017 Holden SPARK LT**

VALUE FOR MONEY!  
Driving Lights, NZ New, Keyless Entry & Ignition, Spoiler, Daytime Running Lights, 1.4, Petrol, CVT, 144kms.



**\$9,995**

**2016 Suzuki Vitara TURBO**

LOW KM POPULAR NZ NEW SUV  
Auto Headlights & Wipers, Daytime Running Lights, Cruise Control, Android Auto & Carplay, Tinted Windows, 1.4, Petrol, Auto, 51kms.



**\$18,995**

**2013 Toyota COROLLA GX**

NZ NEW HATCH  
Stability Control, Steering Wheel Controls, VVT-i, Cruise Control, Sports Mode, 1.8, Petrol, CVT, 179kms



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### THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL:

### 2021 HYUNDAI KONA

LOW KMs, NZ NEW

Auto Headlights, Stability Control, Lane Departure, Parking Sensors, Reversing Camera, Sports Mode, 2.0, Petrol, CVT, 18kms



**\$27,995**

**2013 Mazda 6 GSX**

NZ NEW  
i-Stop, Stability Control, Tow Bar, Driving Lights, Reversing Camera, Parking Sensors, Roof Rails, 2.5, Petrol, Auto, 159kms



**\$13,995**

**2019 Mazda CX-3 GSX**

i-Stop, Tinted Windows, Blind Spot Monitoring, Electric Parking Brake, NZ New, Sports Mode, HUD, Auto Headlights & Wipers, 2.0, petrol, Auto, 119kms



**\$21,995**

**2005 Toyota COROLLA FIELDER**

LOW KMs  
Factory Body Kit, Immobiliser, VVT-i, Auto Headlights, Roof Rails, Tinted Windows, 1.5, Petrol, Auto, 114kms



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**2017 Nissan QASHQAI TI**

Dual Climate A/C, Heated Electric Leather Seats, Panoramic Sunroof, 360 Degree Cameras, Tinted Windows, Driving Lights, 2.0, Petrol, CVT, 102kms



**\$18,995**

**2013 Holden COMMODORE VF**

STUNNING VF COMMODORE SV6  
Half Leather Seats, RWD, Tow Bar, Spoiler, Tinted Windows, Alloy Wheels, Daytime Running Lights, NZ New, 3.6, Petrol, Auto, 175kms



**\$18,995**

**2005 Toyota RAV4**

Driving Lights, Tow Bar, Body Kit, VVT-i, Retractable Electric Mirrors, Tinted Windows, 1.8, Petrol, Auto, 132kms



**\$10,995**

**2014 Mazda CX-5 GSX**

NZ NEW AWD  
Keyless Start, Tow Bar, Driving Lights, Traction Control, i-Stop, NZ Navigation, 2.5, Petrol, Auto, 177kms



**\$15,995**

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