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Inside

What are issues concerning voters. We continue to ask you. Page 8.



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Okato Lions have been busy. Read about it on page 14.



Singing and laughter at Opunake Players. Page 36

Does Opunake need a community patrol?

Fuel theft, car conversion and burglary are just some of the crimes community policing may help stop.

A public meeting is to be held to gauge interest in establishing a community policing patrol in the Opunake Coastal region.

Former Rahotu fire chief Paul Mundt, who is behind the initiative, said he is hoping to attract farmers as well as business owners and indeed anyone who feels it would be a good idea to help reduce crime in the region.

"I want to get community feedback," says Paul adding "everyone I've talked to has been as keen as mustard."

Since first floating the idea several months ago in the Opunake & Coastal News Paul has been canvassing locals. "Business owners and farmers have all given positive feedback," he says.

"There are reports of fuel theft," particularly said

Paul with the current oil crisis linked to the war in the Middle East which has seen petrol, and diesel prices soaring.

Among those invited to the meeting will be Constable Brad Coad from the Opunake Police. Paul is also hoping to get "a couple of South Taranaki District Councillors" along with the STDC mayor Phil Nixon, Member of Parliament David MacLeod and also a representative from the local iwi.

People interested in joining as well as people who support the idea are all welcome to attend.

"If we get support at the meeting it'll go ahead," says Paul.

The community service will be run as a charitable trust. How wide an area they cover will depend on funding.

The aim is for people to



Former Fire chief Paul Mundt is behind the proposal to have a community patrol in Opunake and the surrounding area.



The community policing vehicle which will patrol the area if the scheme gets the go ahead.

be the eyes and ears for the police and the public.

It's about being seen with an identifiable car so people will be aware of our presence, said Paul. "We're not here to catch people - just to make potential offenders aware of our presence."

The flashing lights of the vehicle will act as visible deterrent to anyone contemplating committing a crime.

The public meeting is held at the CoastalCare meeting room in Napier Street, Opunake during the day.

"People don't want to come out at night," said Paul hoping for a good attendance at the meeting which will be held at CoastalCare's meeting room in Opunake. He's also keen to get people to join.

"All interested parties should come along and have a say," said Paul. "We're

day. He's also keen to get people to join.

"All interested parties should come along and have a say," said Paul. "We're very open to ideas, good or bad, for or against."

The public meeting will be held at the CoastalCare meeting room on Friday June 26 at 1:00 pm.

COMMUNITY POLICING
Come and have your say.
Does Opunake need one?

Friday June 26, 1pm, at CoastalCare Meeting Room, Opunake.



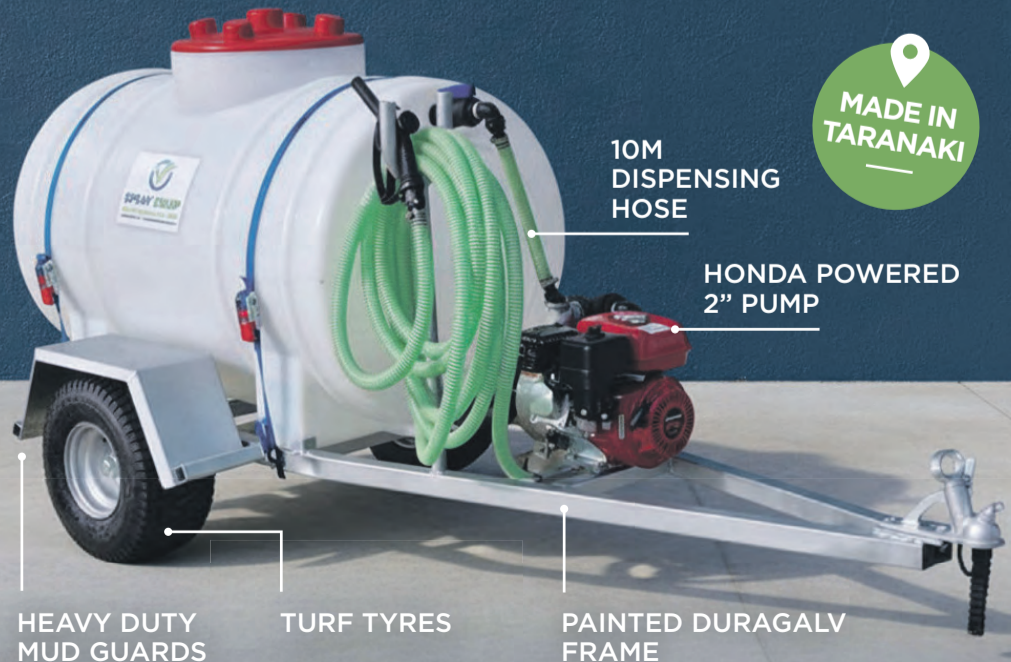
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The Opunake and Coastal News is distributed free to every home and business within the rural area bounded in the north by the New Plymouth city border, extending east to Egmont Village, and around to the edge of Stratford, south to the Hawera city border and inland to Kaponga and through Eltham.

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.

Evita's speech

I've always loved visiting Opunake/Oeo Rd and Taranaki in general - a beautiful region. It's been a while. I had hoped to come up a couple of weekends ago but I was in Auckland for the Race Unity Speech Awards - one day I will return :) Thanks so much for including Evita's speech in your wonderful Opunake & Coastal News newspaper. I've visited Opunake on various occasions over the years. I've been part of the crowds of locals and visitors during the Christmas parade, visited your op shops and art spaces, and cafes, stayed at the camping ground, and with family on Oeo Rd. I've read your newspaper many times to catch up on local news.

Community newspapers are essential for reflecting your community. Making local connections, keeping in touch with what's going on, who's doing what,

remembering those from another time. Through stories and articles, and through the important advertisements that keep your paper going. A real newspaper can be shared, at a cafe or library, the retirement village or the pub - it'll get you talking over the fence, over a cuppa or over a beer. You might agree or disagree with what you read. It might nudge you to want to know more - to understand a different point of view. You might just be happy to read the results of the local sports teams, find the sales, check out the price of a SIS Ball Cock Valve, where to hire a log splitter, or how to manage fuel cost pressures. It's all your community.

So thank you for keeping the team and typewriters busy gathering stories and ads to share far and wide. Long may it last. Sadly there aren't many community newspapers left to tell the stories. Turning pages online isn't quite the same - but

appreciated by those who live away and can keep in touch through the archives.

Jude,
New Plymouth

Dave Rogers

I wish to acknowledge Dave Rogers's 50 years (working) with Lands & Survey and the Department of Conservation. I might say he did some good things and made some not so good decisions with hand-shakes. There are several Department of Conservation workers who have served the department for long terms about the country, some who spent time in Taranaki, but they felt their services were better spent in other national parks, unlike our Dave Rogers who didn't choose to move.

A couple of those who did move who spent many years with them were Jim Clarkson and Ray Bellringer. Jim spent time in several national parks, including Chatham

Islands and Ray at Aoraki/Mount Cook National Park. I hope Dave Rogers is volunteering in Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki no.

Ian McAlpine
New Plymouth

EVs to help with power

Believe it or not, international researchers in San Francisco in the USA are beginning to experiment to see if EVs can balance a renewable heavy energy network. Well maybe it could, while maybe it couldn't, but if it did somehow in our electrical world of today it would become a mammoth task and how long would it actually last?

Our country's population is 5.5 million and it's growing year by year, while in the city of Johannesburg in

Continued page 5

ADELPHOS

What an almost impossible topic to write about in a short article. It's a virtue and an emotion that has challenged romantic poets and songwriters for millennia. Can you imagine a world where love doesn't exist? Imagine the shock of not having "Married at First Sight" on television! Just joking.

You may be aware that modern ideas about love in Western cultures are often based on ancient Greek and Roman ideas. Ancient Greeks described eight types of love: 1.) Eros love—romantic love from the male

Love

Greek god Eros; he displayed a fiery, irrational, passionate and temporary love. 2.) Pragma love—a practical love with an enduring bond of commitment as in long-standing successful marriages. 3.) Phileo love is a warm, heartfelt brotherly love. 4.) Storge love—an instinctive love between parents, children and family. 5.) Agape love is an unconditional, sacrificial and selfless love. 6.) Ludus love—a playful, flirtatious and passing affection. 7.) Philautia love—a healthy self-love when someone needs to first love themselves to become able to love others and 8.) Mania love—an obsessive, possessive, jealous or codependent love. Do you recognise any of these?

Eros love can go wrong when it mainly focuses on sexual gratification and immediate pleasure, often in the early stages of a relationship. Whereas, a faithful and lasting Pragma love emphasises a shared emotional connection, commitment and long-term attachment.

Christianity, Judaism and Islam all teach, from differing perspectives, that love spiritually originates from God. The core teaching of Christianity is that "... God is love" (1 John 4:8). Jesus' love for humanity is the highest example of Agape love for God and others. With God's help, or grace, Christians are called to follow Jesus' example of unconditional, sacrificial and selfless Agape love. We

often fail but God's grace never gives up on us.

The Bible's Agape love chapter is 1 Corinthians 13; it's often read at marriage ceremonies. The apostle Paul describes what Agape love is like when we treat others with patience and kindness, avoiding jealousy, pride, conceit, irritability, unforgiveness and being happy about evil things happening to others.

After being a New Zealand Family Court relationship counsellor for twelve years, I found that a loving relationship does not have a one-size-fits-all formula. That's why it still seems impossible to explain what love is in words.

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Hawera student selected for sought after overseas honour

On June 17 Lauren Kalin heads off to the United States where she will attend the New York Times Summer Academy for a two week high-intensity course reporting on arts and culture. Lauren, aged 17, is a senior student at Te Paepae o Aotea High School in Hawera studying statistics, psychology, economics, media studies and her two co-favourites english and history.

Lauren first spotted the acclaimed course two years ago on Instagram and was definitely interested. Finally, just last year with a 'it's now or never' attitude she applied and in October 2025 was

delighted to receive word that she had been accepted. One slight problem arose, however, it was going to be expensive to make the trip, as well as pay for accommodation in pricey New York, so she started part time work at Hawera's Subway and that certainly has helped. A partial scholarship has also been beneficial.

Lauren is already a talented writer who, at last year's Lysaght Watt Ronald Hugh Morrieson's Literary Awards was a finalist in all three categories of the secondary school section, namely short story, poetry and research article. In fact

she has been a finalist at all of the last three competitions in Taranaki's major literary event. Very early on she had 'the writing bug:' at primary school, for example, she was the one writing five pages (and more), while most of her classmates had their one page completed, with their arms folded.

One of the highlights of the New York course will be hearing addresses by outstanding journalists such as Michael Paulson, who has won many awards including the Pulitzer Prize. He has been with the New York Times since 2010 and is a theatre reporter for shows including those on Broadway. Another excellent keynote speaker will be Kathleen Massara, who is the editor for the Artnet News section of the New York Times. Also informative will be the address by Julia Jacobs, who also reports on culture and art for the newspaper. She writes features and profiles on such aspects as films,



Lauren Kalin.

television, theatre, comedy and dance. Just before her busy course starts (June 21) Lauren will travel to North Carolina to see her sister Ebony, who is studying at Duke University

(since 2024). Ebony, another outstanding young woman, has featured in the past in this newspaper as a STDC youth leader. Lauren will return to New Zealand on July 3, where

she'll doubtless write for the Lysaght Watt Ronald Hugh Morrieson Literary awards. "I'm super excited to enter again this year," she shares.

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Nominations opening soon for 2026 Taranaki Community Awards

Know of a quiet achiever? Impressed by the community initiative shown by a neighbour? Does the dedication of a volunteer impress you? Get your thinking caps on because nominations for the 2026 South Taranaki Community Awards open on Monday 15 June.

These awards are for individuals, groups and organisations within South Taranaki who have,

by personal leadership, inspiration, sacrifice or devotion, made a significant contribution to the wellbeing of their communities. "You could nominate individuals or groups who have shown initiative to make a difference in the community or have dedicated their time assisting others such as a sports coach or community volunteer or beautifying a public place for example," says Communications and Customer Services Manager Gerard Langford.

Like in 2023, there will be the South Taranaki Youth Citizen Award. This award is for individuals within the

South Taranaki District, who have achieved outstanding academic successes, sporting achievements, community involvement and arts or cultural achievements in their respective communities and are aged 11-24 years old. These awards usually happen once every two years, so take this opportunity to nominate an individual or a group you think deserves recognition for the work they do within the district.

The categories are:

- Volunteer Individual
- Volunteer Organisation
- Youth Citizen Award

Nominations will be open from Monday 15 June until Friday 31 July. Nomination forms are available from any South Taranaki LibraryPlus, the Council Administration Building in Hāwera, South Taranaki isite, TSB Hub and online at www.southtaranaki.com/communityawards

Completed nomination forms can be posted to Gaye Caddick at South Taranaki District Council, Private Bag 902 Hāwera, hand delivered to the Hāwera Administration Building at 105 Albion Street or emailed to communityawards@stdc.govt.nz

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Letters to the Editor

country's population. We now have EVs on our roads for those who can afford them, but some of these owners don't realise that their EV batteries are full of lithium and they explode. They would say literally

good bye to their vehicle, plus at the same time they are pulling much needed electricity from our electrical main grid wholesale. So we are seeing these EVs on our road as a lethal weapon. Now tests have shown that

tidal power has proven its worth, yet none of our world governments have seen how valuable this type of power is, and essential. Plus it would help out our main electrical grid.

Tom Stephens
New Plymouth

continued from page 2

in South Africa, their city's population is the same as our

New Plymouth residents say no to LNG

At a public meeting in New Plymouth on May 26, attended by about 100 local residents, the vast majority signed an 'Urgent Plea' to stop the proposed Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) import facility, addressed to Prime Minister Christopher Luxon, Energy Minister Simeon Brown, and Cabinet Ministers.

The plea states that the residents, many living within 2km of Port Taranaki, find that the low probability, but high impact risks and consequences of having a LNG import facility at the port, are unacceptable to them.

The residents also object to the government's intention to enact 'Enabling legislation' (without any community consultation) which would allow the LNG facility to be built and operational, and a levy put on all electricity users (not just those using gas) to fund the project, now estimated to cost \$2.7 billion or more.

They want the LNG proposal to be withdrawn altogether.

Instead of importing LNG, those who signed the plea want the government to support the many viable alternatives to the 'dry-year risk,' such as shifting

energy demand off peak and accelerating renewable energy generation, efficiency and storage.

The public meeting was jointly organised by Climate Justice Taranaki, Taranaki Energy Watch (TEW), and Community Energy Taranaki (CET), with speakers from the Sustainable Energy Forum, TEW and Rewiring Aotearoa.

"It was about informing the public on the wide range of problematic issues concerning the government's LNG plan. It is also about stopping the bad so we can get on with the good stuff. The Levy proposed by the government is akin to fossil fuel subsidies. Every dollar spent on prolonging fossil fuel reliance and a dangerous 'white elephant' like this is a dollar less for sustainable local energy systems that empower communities and build a resilient economy," said Catherine Cheung, spokesperson for Climate Justice Taranaki.

Discussion time following the presentations session drew out numerous questions and comments, including from engineers and concerned citizens who fought the first LNG proposal in 2008.

"The company who pushed for the LNG unloading, storage and regasification facility in Port Taranaki back in 2008 hadn't anticipated that there were a number of engineers, including several LNG experts and other professionals living in New Plymouth, who could show that such a facility would put 31,600 people, 2 hospitals and 20 schools at risk from a 'low probably, high impact' catastrophic LNG accident. As a result, the idea was quietly 'put on hold,'" said Ted Wells, retired planner and New Plymouth resident.

"Investing in an expensive, stop-gap LNG import terminal makes no economic sense when the global transition to cheap, distributed renewables is moving at an incredible pace. Building this infrastructure risks locking Kiwi consumers into higher power bills and outdated fossil fuels. Instead of importing gas, we should be investing in widespread solar and leveraging our existing hydro infrastructure as a massive, flexible battery to secure our winter energy needs," commented Michael Lawley of EcoInnovation Ltd.

The idea about turning forestry slash into pellets to

cover the dry-year risk was well received, as speaker Steve Goldthorpe's analysis showed "black pellet" generation at Huntly Power Station would be cheaper up-front, cheaper to run, and with significantly lower emissions than fossil fuel alternatives.

Community Energy Taranaki is about saying "yes" to increased electrification, and investing in renewable energy (especially distributed, local options like residential solar & storage), energy efficiency & storage to significantly reduce the hydro "dry year risk." The more renewable energy we have, the less we drain our hydro lakes and rely on them in winter. Viable alternative options include promoting solar uptake, wind farms, EVs (and allowing them to be used as batteries on those few evenings every year where supply is low and demand is high), and further supporting energy efficiency (like recently announced \$1.2b Gas Transition Loan Scheme & by approving the Ratepayer Assistance Scheme, which is currently with Government for approval). CET works with Taranaki residents to support such initiatives.

Climate Justice Taranaki and the co-organisers presented the Urgent Plea, signed by over 70 locals at the NPDC Public Engagement Committee meeting, at the council chamber on Wednesday June 3.

"Local councils need to understand what's at stake - the danger to local residents, the liability if something happens, the financial costs and the loss of opportunity for a better, more resilient

energy future. The Urgent Plea is just the beginning of our collective community opposition. We encourage everyone to write to the Prime Minister, the Energy Minister, local MPs and candidates to express their concerns about the coalition government's LNG plan. We invite all to come along to the council meeting in support," concluded

Catherine Cheung.

On this month in history the Rose-Noelle capsizes

On June 4, 1989 the trimaran Rose-Noelle overturned in heavy seas just out of Picton on a proposed trip to Tonga. The four occupants had to spend

the next 119 days making do in the upturned yellow boat. Eventually the boat drifted back to land, and was cast onto a reef on Great Barrier Island where it was smashed

to pieces. Ironically, when they made it back to safety they faced some scepticism that their ordeal had occurred

at all. The skipper John Glennie and American Jim Nalepka both wrote books about their experience.

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Minister + Minstrel = Ministrel

Paul Bowers-Mason was back performing in Opunake on Friday night (May 29) three weeks after performing with his brother Wayne at a sold-out show at the Opunake Playhouse. This time he was with his wife Wynne performing as the Minstrels at the Greencow Burger Company.

"I'm exhausted after one week performing with my brother," he told his appreciative Friday evening audience.

Paul has been performing

as one half of the Mason Brothers duo with Wayne, whose storied musical career includes writing and performing The Fourmyula hit Nature, named by APRA as the greatest New Zealand song of all time.

Paul, who lives in Eltham is known locally as an Anglican minister whose ambit includes St Barnabas Church, Opunake.

Wynne is also a minister, so the idea of performing as a duo whose name combined the words minister and

minstrel seemed a good fit. Their repertoire included the Aotearoa favourite Pokarekare ana, which was followed by a bit of Dylan.

"From the sublime to the ridiculous, to a song written by someone so egotistical that when his girlfriend leaves him he writes a song about him leaving her," said Paul before introducing Don't think twice it's alright.

"That's how you win a Nobel Prize in Literature," he said at the end.

There was a bit of John Denver.

"This song's not written by people from West Virginia. It's written by people from Massachusetts, but it doesn't sound as good," said Paul.

As well as the protest classic "If I had a hammer."

"For all you teenagers of the 60s."

Throw in a bit of Gordon Lightfoot, The Seekers, The Carpenters, Andrew Lloyd Webber, as well as Will ye



Ministers and minstrels. Wynne and Paul entertain on a Friday evening.

go Lassie go, a solo from Wynne, harking back to her Scottish background.

After an hour and a half

of music and banter from two experienced musicians, everyone there seemed to agree that it was a

worthwhile way of spending a Friday evening.

Bryan Kirk.

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Semaglutide could help to quit craving smokes

In a small study on 24 people who smoked cigarettes, North American researchers suggest the diabetes and weight loss drug semaglutide - commonly sold as Ozempic and Wegovy - could help reduce people's cravings. The team randomised people into either receiving semaglutide or a placebo, and while they all still smoked relatively the same amount of cigarettes before and after the trial,

the semaglutide group had significant reductions in their cravings for smokes (as well as reductions in their body weight and average blood sugar levels). The team believe their research shows that the medication has the potential to change some nicotine needs in people who smoke, irrespective of what kind of treatment they are following to quit

JAMA Network Open

Sodium-ion batteries could be cheaper option

A sodium-ion battery used in Chinese electric vehicles could become a genuine low-cost rival to Tesla's lithium-ion technology, new research suggests. Researchers in Germany independently tested 120 battery cells using a range of physical and chemical techniques to compare performance against

Tesla's technology under real-world conditions. They found the battery matched Tesla's in several key areas and performed better than expected, though it struggled to charge efficiently in cold temperatures. Researchers say targeted improvements could make sodium-ion batteries a viable alternative for shorter-range vehicles and large-scale energy storage.



Rahotu School makes ANZAC donation

On Wednesday May 6 members from the Opunake RSA led the annual Rāhotū School A.N.Z.A.C. service. Afterwards William Kettlewell and Phoenix Wolff presented the R.S.A. with a poppy donation of \$250.00. This money was raised by the year 7 and 8 students who sold the poppies during their holiday break and goes towards earning their Rāhotū School service badge.

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\$50 million boost for Awakino Gorge resilience

Taranaki-King Country MP Barbara Kuriger and New Plymouth MP David Macleod have welcomed a major investment to improve the resilience of State Highway 3 through the Awakino Gorge, a route that is critical to keeping Taranaki connected with Waikato and the central North Island.

The Government has confirmed funding for resilience upgrades along the corridor as part of its \$400 million package of state highway resilience projects announced in Budget 2026.

“Anyone who regularly uses SH3 through the Awakino Gorge knows how important this route is for local communities, freight

operators and businesses across the region,” Mrs Kuriger says.

“The corridor between Mount Messenger and the SH4 junction has been closed 14 times since July 2021 because of weather-related events. Most recently, the road was closed for more than a month following severe weather earlier this year.

“Every closure causes major disruption for families, businesses and freight operators who rely on this route to move around the region and get goods to market.”

The Awakino Gorge resilience programme has a high-level estimated cost of around \$50 million and



DAVID MACLEOD MP
NEW PLYMOUTH

will target some of the most vulnerable sections of the corridor.

“The aim is simple: keep this road open more often and get it reopened faster when severe weather strikes,” Mrs Kuriger says.

Mr Macleod says the impacts of closures are felt

well beyond the gorge itself.

“When SH3 closes through the Awakino Gorge, the effects are felt right across Taranaki.

“For many freight operators, tradies and businesses travelling to and from New Plymouth, a closure can add at least five hours to the journey by forcing traffic to detour via Whanganui.

“That is hugely inconvenient, costly, and frustrating for people trying to get on with their day-to-day lives and run their businesses.

“There have been far too many closures over the past few years, and this investment will help make one of Taranaki’s most important transport links more reliable.”



BARBARA KURIGER MP
TARANAKI - KING COUNTRY

Mrs Kuriger and Mr Macleod say the investment is part of the Government’s plan to fix the basics and build the future.

“Budget 2026 includes major investments to strengthen roads and other

critical infrastructure, helping ensure New Zealand is better prepared for future weather events.

“We can’t stop severe weather from happening, but we can be much better prepared for it.

“For Taranaki and the King Country, that means investing in the roads and transport links that keep our communities connected, support local businesses, and help drive regional economic growth.”

Further work will continue to refine the final scope, design and delivery programme for the project.

Authorised by B Kuriger & D MacLeod, Parliament Buildings, Wellington

Budget misses opportunity to respond to mental health need

Te Hiringa Mahara – The Mental Health and Wellbeing Commission say they are disappointed to see no new explicit investment into mental health and addiction services in the budget.

Of particular concern is the lack of funding for specialist services, where too many people are already waiting far too long to get the help they need.

“At a time when mental health is the leading health concern for New Zealanders, this response does not match the scale of the need experienced across the country every day,” says Te Hiringa Mahara Chief Executive, Karen Orsborn.

“According to the recent Ipsos New Zealand health report 61% of New Zealanders say mental

health is the biggest health issue facing the country. This Budget does little to ease those concerns.

“A cornerstone of a well-functioning mental health system is making sure support is available long before people reach crisis. We are not seeing enough investment in this, which means people are missing out on vital care.

“It’s critical that when people reach out for help, they have someone to call, someone to respond and somewhere safe and welcoming to go, when and where they need it.

“The current system doesn’t always work well for Māori, young people or those living rurally in particular. This is unlikely to change without investment.

“Last November we welcomed the additional

funding announced by Minister Doocey for expansion of crisis cafes, crisis assessment teams and peer-led acute alternatives. This was a step in the right direction, and further investment will enable the much-needed expansion of options for people seeking support.

“This budget won’t take us any closer to having a cohesive national approach to crisis support. No matter where you live, you should have a range of support options to choose from.

Laser-powered engines bring us closer to smart 6G technology

Laser-powered engines could one day support ‘intelligent’ 6G networks, according to international researchers. The team built a laser-driven engine made from ceramic material that uses white light to move information over large distances. While conventional, LED-based visible light communication (VLC) systems typically operate over only a few

“We are pleased to see the investment into reducing online harms for young people announced today and acknowledge what it will achieve. We hope this investment reflects youth-led solutions, investment in education and a strong rigorous regulation on platforms and content.

“The longer we put off expanding the range of support in the face of growing rates of psychological distress, the worse it will be for people seeking help,” says Ms Orsborn.

meters, this new photonic engine can move data over 1.2km. The ceramic material used in the engine, which was produced by mixing calcium ions with chemical compounds used to make glass, was also developed at a low cost, allowing the material to withstand more power than other laser-driven technologies.

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OBITUARY John David Birchler

18 March 1926-18 March 2026

On March 18 2026 John David Birchler achieved his ambition of making it to 100 years old. It was also the day he passed away at 10.47am. A celebration had been organised for him that afternoon which was to be attended by, among others Mayor Phil Nixon and local MP Carl Bates.

“He always wanted to reach 100 years old and receive a card from the King,” says his daughter Mary Duggan. The card had arrived, but he had yet to see it, as it was going to be presented to him that afternoon.

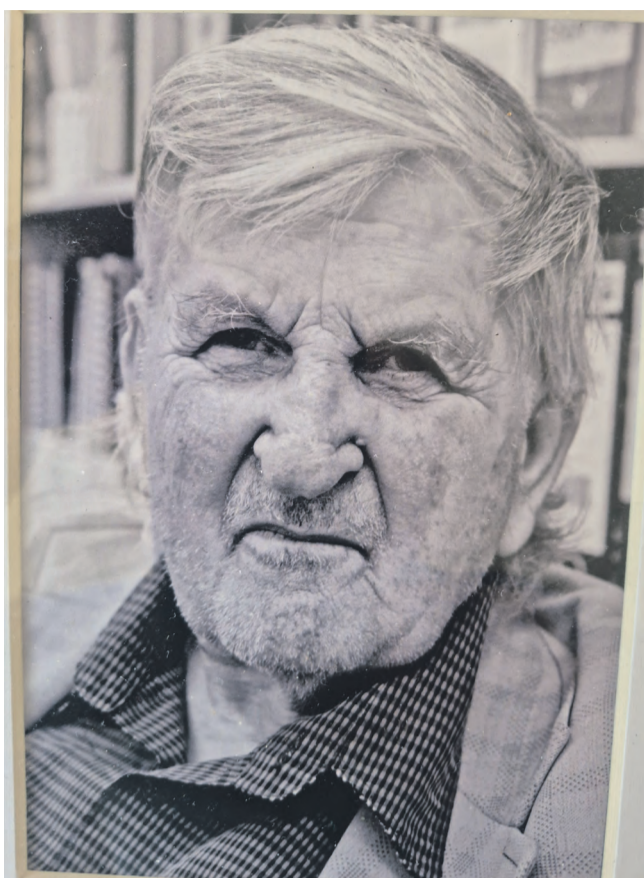
Known to some as “John,” to others as “David” his was a familiar face around Eltham, through his involvement in a myriad of groups and organisations.

“There were three Johns in the freezing works, so Dad said just call me David and it stuck,” says Mary.

He was a lay preacher, a scout master and active in groups as varied as the Eltham Historical Society, Manchester Unity Friendly Society, Eltham Foodbank and Red Cross among others. He was born on March 18 2026 in Palmerston North and attended Manchester Street School. After leaving school he worked at the Feilding Freezing Works and put up telephone poles for the local telephone company.

“His mother told him he needed a break because he was working too hard, so he went to Tasmania for a holiday,” says Mary. After he got back, he applied for and got a job as a meat inspector at the Huttons Freezing Works in Eltham. He would also occasionally relieve at the Stratford Abattoir.

The next issue of the Opunake and Coastal News comes out on 18 June 2026. Ph (06)761-7016 to advertise.



John David Birchler (1926-2026)

While playing badminton at the Presbyterian Church Hall in Eltham he met Sylvia Nairn. They married and had four children.

“When he finished work, he would come home and get into his gardening clothes and go do the neighbours’ gardens,” says Mary. “He would weed them, mow lawns and transplant plants. He liked working outside in the fresh air.”

Mary says her father also worked for the Stratford High School as a gardener and was a gardener at Ashleigh Lodge when it was still owned by the Wilkinson family. He was also for a time the local postie. Sylvia passed away in 1973, leaving David to raise the family on his own.

David was known for his strong Christian faith, something which Mary says, David’s mother also had. He was for many years a lay preacher in the Presbyterian

Church. The many groups he was involved with included the Eltham Food Bank of which he was a founder member, as was Marilynne Gernhoefer of Eltham Community Care which covers the Food Bank and the Op Shop.

“He was treasurer for many years. He was a faithful servant to the Eltham Food Bank and was one of the early members on the committee,” says Marilynne. David’s granddaughter Tracey remembers him as somebody who read a lot and was intellectually curious.

“He was a quiet man who didn’t talk much about his own history, but was always interested in everybody

else’s history.” This interest led to his involvement with the Eltham and Districts Historical Society. He was a founder member when the Society was set up in 1972 and served as Secretary from 1980-4 and Treasurer from 1980-6. In 2011 he was made a life member.

In a tribute to him, the Society acknowledged his 50 year- involvement in their work.

“David was well known for his firm grasp on meeting procedure, often signalled by his unmistakable wagging finger,” the tribute reads. “David had a deep passion for historical research especially old newspapers and White’s directories. Whenever a family name was mentioned he would return the following week with additional details, always eager to share his findings.”

He was also a scoutmaster and involved in the Red Cross, of which he was made a life member.

Another interest was the Manchester Unity Friendly Society. Taranaki Fraternal Administrator Rebecca Ameriks says he was a “devoted and valued brother” who gave 72 years’ service to the organisation after first joining the Eltham Lodge as a young man. He went on to serve in many roles including District Grand Master.

“He was especially respected for his long-standing service as Financial Secretary. Known for his warmth, loyalty, and love of the Society’s history, he remained an active and cherished member throughout his life.

“Dave was everything

Manchester Unity stands for—loyal, caring, and deeply connected to his community. He will be warmly remembered by all who knew him,” she said. His years of service to his community was recognised

with the presentation of a South Taranaki District Council Citizens Award.

In later life he developed an interest in computing, successfully completing a course at the age of 80.

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What actually helps young people feel connected? (Part 2 of 2)

Last issue's article explored recently published research from the *International Journal of Adolescence and Youth*, which examined more than 40,000 young people aged 11 to 15 and found strong links between loneliness and what psychologists call "perceived support," meaning whether young people actually feel emotionally supported by family, friends, and teachers. It showed rising loneliness among adolescents and the enormous importance of emotional support, belonging, and connection.

The encouraging part is this: the solutions are often far less complicated than people fear.

Modern life sometimes creates the impression that young people require an expensive programme, a specialist intervention, three wellbeing apps, magnesium gummies, mindfulness podcasts, and perhaps a retreat involving cold plunges and interpretive journaling.

You will be pleased to know that in reality much of the research points toward something surprisingly old-fashioned: emotionally safe human connection.



RICHARD HALL

Not perfection.

Not endless lectures.

Not turning every family dinner into a TED Talk about resilience.

Just consistent, supportive presence.

One of the biggest things adults can do is reduce the urge to immediately "fix" every emotion. Teenagers often do not need instant solutions as much as they need emotional safety. Many young people stop talking because conversations quickly become advice, correction, interrogation, or reassurance delivered too fast.

Sometimes the most regulating thing an adult can say is simply:

"That sounds really hard."

Not immediately launching into solutions, lectures, life lessons, or a 25-minute comparison with surviving winter in 1984 when apparently people were able

to just "get over it."

The nervous system settles when people feel understood.

Young people often do not need adults to instantly fix everything. Usually they are trying to work out whether somebody is listening, whether their emotions make sense, and whether they are emotionally safe.

Simple phrases can help enormously:

"I can see why that upset you."

"I'm glad you told me."

"Do you want me to listen, or help you solve it?"

"That would knock anyone around."

Even "I don't fully know the answer, but I'm here" can reduce emotional pressure significantly.

Human beings regulate emotionally through feeling connected to other humans. Which turns out to be far more useful than beginning every conversation with:

"Have you tried getting off your phone?"

Research also suggests that small, repeated interactions matter more than occasional dramatic gestures. Human connection is usually built gradually rather than through huge emotional breakthroughs accompanied

by cinematic background music.

Simple routines matter: shared meals, walking together, driving without phones, watching sport, helping with practical jobs, or regular check-ins.

Teenagers often talk more comfortably side-by-side rather than face-to-face. Car rides, fishing, exercising, cooking, or kicking a ball around can reduce emotional intensity enough for conversations to emerge naturally.

South Taranaki parents may be pleased to know that psychology increasingly supports the long-established local therapeutic method known as:

"Come help me with this for a minute."

Physical activity also appears enormously protective for mental health. Exercise helps regulate mood, sleep, stress hormones, and emotional resilience. Importantly, researchers increasingly believe the social side of exercise may matter just as much as the movement itself.

Sports teams, walking groups, kapa haka, dance, surf clubs, martial arts, gyms, and volunteering all create repeated experiences of belonging.

Young people do not necessarily need deep emotional conversations every day. Sometimes they simply need regular experiences of:

"I have a place here."

Schools also matter more than many people realise. Research shows emotionally safe teachers can significantly buffer loneliness and distress. Thankfully, this does not mean teachers suddenly need to become therapists while also surviving reports, curriculum changes, and camps involving forty teenagers and one mysteriously missing

sleeping bag.

Usually it is the smaller things that matter: consistency, warmth, fairness, humour, encouragement, and noticing when someone quietly withdraws.

Smaller communities may also possess hidden psychological advantages. Familiarity creates emotional safety. Repeatedly seeing the same people around town, sport, clubs, shops, and community events helps build a subtle but important sense of belonging.

Humans appear wired to regulate through recognition and connection.

Modern technology also requires balance rather than panic. Most experts are no longer suggesting phones themselves are "the problem." The concern is more whether online interaction gradually replaces sleep, movement, face-to-face connection, and emotionally present relationships.

A heart emoji still does not fully replace an actual human being sitting beside you.

Perhaps most importantly,

adults need to remember that loneliness is not always obvious. Some young people become quieter when lonely. Others become louder.

Some throw themselves into achievement.

Others disappear into gaming, social media, anxiety, exhaustion, or endless distraction.

And some become extremely skilled at looking completely fine.

The hopeful part of the research is that young people are often remarkably responsive to genuine connection once emotional safety is established. Human beings appear deeply built for reconnection.

Which may be why the solutions still look surprisingly simple: more listening, more humour, more movement, more shared experiences, more community, more warmth, and slightly fewer conversations conducted entirely through memes from opposite ends of the house.

Richard Hall, Opunake
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Students recognised in programme's 25th year

Two passionate young Taranaki students have returned from a once-in-a-lifetime marine conservation experience after being selected to attend a special expedition to the internationally renowned Poor Knights Islands Marine Reserve.

On May 22, New Plymouth students Stella Delmar and Paige Kershaw joined 30 students from across Aotearoa aboard the annual Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) trip, run by the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust.

The programme rewards young people who have demonstrated exceptional commitment to marine conservation through creative action and environmental leadership projects.

This year marks the 25th anniversary of the initiative, which gives students the rare opportunity to immerse themselves in one of New Zealand's oldest and most celebrated marine reserves.

The Ngā Motu Marine Society delivers the EMR programme throughout Taranaki and worked with Highlands Intermediate, Devon Intermediate and Oakura School during 2025.

Highlands Intermediate Marine Studies teacher and NMMS committee member Pat Swanson said Stella and Paige stood out for their passion, creativity and dedication to protecting the moana.

"Each year I'm lucky to work with passionate tamariki who care deeply about our moana and kaitiakitanga," Swanson said.

"This group became especially engaged with the issue of seabed mining in the South Taranaki Bight. Paige and Stella stood out through their strong commitment and contributions to both their action and art projects. One of the highlights of this programme is that it



All the 2026 winners on the bow of Perfect Day. Image by Lorna Doogan and Sophie Journee. Credit Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust.

engages not only students, but their whānau as well."

Projects created by students this year included a beautifully illustrated children's book titled Detective Finn and the Case of the Missing Sand, alongside a giant turtle sculpture made from recycled materials highlighting the dangers plastics pose to marine life.

Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust Poutokomanawa (Co-Director) Sarama Nicholas said the impact of the programme continues to grow every year.

"Feedback from families who attend these trips highlights just how special it is for tamariki and parents to connect with the ocean together," Nicholas said.

"I've also been blown

away by the depth and quality of the conservation action projects coming from different regions around the country. It's especially exciting to hear about projects that continue long after the programme finishes."

Nicholas said visiting a protected marine environment like the Poor Knights leaves a lasting impression on students. "A protected marine space like the Poor Knights shows young people what effective conservation can achieve and hopefully instills a lifelong sense of kaitiakitanga."

Student participant Stella Delmar described the experience as unforgettable.

"I was astonished at the number of fish and how close they came to me. It has been an amazing journey,"

she said.

The Ngā Motu Marine Society is the regional partner of the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust and the endorsed Taranaki provider of the nationwide Experiencing Marine Reserves (EMR) programme.

EMR provides Taranaki schools and communities with the expertise, knowledge and snorkelling equipment needed to experience local marine environments first-hand, fostering kaitiakitanga and environmental stewardship.

Each year, the programme works with one or two classes from schools across Taranaki, connecting with a wide range of communities, from coastal to rural schools,

north to south.

Students begin by learning about marine biodiversity and conservation in Aotearoa before practising snorkelling skills and safety in school pools with the EMR Coordinator, Rachel. Once confident, they explore local marine environments, usually Ngāmotu Beach, supported by trained parent snorkel supervisors.

An essential part of the programme is a visit to a marine reserve such as Te Hāwera-a-Maki/Goat Island (east of Warkworth), where students compare protected and unprotected marine ecosystems first-hand.

Throughout the year, students continue their learning through environmental action projects designed to benefit and protect the marine environment.

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Pihama WI host Pink Ribbon lunch



Pihama WI get into the pink for breast cancer.

A very successful third year Pink Ribbon luncheon was organised by Pihama Womens Institute on 13 May.

Our very active member Diane Campbell kindly

hosted the event and decorated her home in all things pink.

Forty guests also dressed up in pink were treated to six choices of soup, followed by sweets decorated in pink,

with non-alcoholic punch [also pink] and Rose to complement the meal.

We all enjoyed a couple of quiz games. A donated raffle was very well supported.

The Breast Cancer Foundation have been

sent \$2850-00 from the day's activities. Previous donations were \$1400-00 and \$2400-00.

A big thank you to all our members for your continued support. Well done Girls.

Bernadette Bourke.

Rents are now cheaper

Latest data from realestate.co.nz shows rents are cheaper than a year ago in most parts of New Zealand, with the average weekly rent falling in 10 of the country's 19 regions.

The Central North Island led the charge with a year-on-year decline of 8.6%, followed by Gisborne with a year-on-year decline of 5.4%.

Wellington, which has not recorded an average rent above \$700/week since January 2025, also experienced a year-on-year decline.

But, bucking the national trend, Nelson and Waikato both hit record rental price highs.

Vanessa Williams, spokesperson for realestate.co.nz, says cheaper rents

in 10 of the 19 regions will be welcome relief for many renters, while the decline seen in Wellington reflects wider economic forces in the region.

Highlights from the April 2026 Rental Report include:

- The national average rent was \$631/week in April 2026, down 1.4% compared to April last year and almost \$30 below the highest recorded rent in May 2024 of \$660/week.
- Waikato's average weekly rent increased 4.1% year-on-year from \$560 in April 2025 to \$583/week in April 2026.
- Nelson & Bays recorded an average weekly rent of \$617, an increase of 7.8% compared to \$573 in April 2025.
- Central Otago Lakes District, remains the most expensive place to rent in New Zealand, continuing to sit well above all other regions with an average rent of \$860/week.
- National new rental listings increased 5.1% in April 2026 to 6,165, up from 5,868 in April 2025.
- National stock levels fell 0.9% in April 2026 to 7,955 rental properties.

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Race Unity Speech Awards

Seen. Heard. Understood. Three steps to unity. But most of the time, we stop at the first. Because seeing is easy. Listening is not. I learned that the day my family moved into our neighbourhood. The first thing my neighbour said to me wasn't 'What's your name?' It was: 'How long have you been in the country?' For the record, nō Taranaki ahau. But in that moment, that wasn't what they saw. I was seen, but I wasn't heard. And I definitely wasn't understood. And the truth is, across Aotearoa, that moment isn't rare. People often look at me and simplify me as African. But they don't see the other half of me. I'm also half Austrian, not Australian, Austrian. They don't see the generations, the languages, the traditions, of my South African mother and my Austrian father, intertwined.

Other times, I am not just reduced, I am redefined. A migrant. An outsider. A problem to be managed, not a person to be understood. In a single glance, I can become a headline. A statistic. A stereotype. Not a student. Not a son. Not someone with ambition, discipline, or dreams. Not someone born down the road. And the hardest part? The silence. The calculation of whether to correct them without causing a racist snap. The strength required to carry a story others keep trying to rewrite. That glance, followed by its certainty, hits so much harder than people realise. Because it reveals how quickly we replace listening with assumption. And last year's statistics tell me one out of six of you have felt it too. The moment someone decides who you are before you can speak. The moment they see colour and think it tells the whole story. You see, racism is not always loud. Sometimes it's quiet but persistent, making speaking up feel risky,



Far left Lukas Strohmeier from Francis Douglas Memorial College who was awarded the Tohu Aumangea – Hedi Moani Memorial Award for Advocacy at the Race Unity Speech Awards 2026 held on 10 May 2026 with some of the other finalists.

exhausting, pointless. To be seen but not heard is to feel partially erased.

Every conversation becomes a negotiation. Do I assert my voice? Or retreat to avoid discomfort? Each unanswered question, every ignored story, places another brick in the walls that divide us. And when this quiet burden meets systemic barriers, when opportunities are overlooked, achievements questioned, potential underestimated, the silence is no longer personal. It is structural. And structural problems require intentional solutions. This is why listening matters. Listening to not reply. Not to argue. Listening to understand. Whakarongo kia mārama. A Setswana aphorism goes, "Go Reetsana go aga kagiso mo bathong, listening to one another brings peace among people." But that peace is not automatic. It is not the product of silence or agreement, but of understanding earned through genuine attention to one another's lived reality.

When understanding is absent, what we are left with is not connection,

but distance disguised as familiarity. For racial unity to grow, we must move beyond visual diversity. Beyond people of colour on prospectus brochures. Beyond a multicultural event once a year. Beyond statements on walls that say, "Everyone Belongs." Because if voices are not absorbed, if experiences are not truly valued, representation without listening becomes nothing more than decoration. Unity is not built on what is displayed, but on what is listened to and understood. Anti-racism begins with whakarongo kia marama. It must be embedded in our schools, our communities, and our government.

First, in our schools, research in developmental psychology shows that between the ages of six and ten, children begin to recognise, understand, and even use racial stereotypes in how they interpret others. Yet in schools, structured media studies, where students critically analyse stereotypes in advertising, media, and language, are not introduced until high school, years after

these patterns of thinking have already formed. In an age dominated by social media, this delay becomes even more problematic, as young people are continuously exposed to stereotypes online without the critical tools to question them. This creates a gap. By the time we teach young people to question stereotypes, they have already learned them. Media studies cannot be delayed until secondary school. They must begin at a primary school level, when children are first forming how they see the world, because this is where we can build their ability to question bias before it becomes belief.

Second, in our communities, just as community sit-down circle groups help people recover from substance abuse, "reflection groups" could be introduced for people who have engaged in prejudice. With sessions grounded in whakarongo kia mārama, these spaces would prioritise listening to understand the lived impact of racism, not to defend or justify actions, but to develop awareness and accountability. Community

centres could host these sessions, led by trained facilitators, with structured dialogue and follow-up support. By addressing discrimination at its source, we not only support those affected but we also change the thinking of those who perpetuate it, breaking cycles before they continue.

Third, in our government, racial equity policies should not be created by one government only to be weakened, rebranded, or scrapped by the next. They must be protected by long-term agreements across political parties, recognising Te Tiriti o Waitangi, the 1994 Human Rights Act and the 1990 Bill of Rights Act, so they ensure continuity beyond election cycles. We should not be in a position where fundamental equity measures depend on which party holds power. We shouldn't be at a point where United Nations committees have raised concerns about the protection of Māori rights in Aotearoa. Justice cannot be conditional on politics. It must be guided by whakarongo kia mārama: listening not to respond, but to understand those affected before decisions are made.

Inclusion must be lived. Not performed. Racial unity begins not with optics. It begins with listening, and with acting on what we hear. I speak today not because I have all the answers, but because I know silence cannot be one of them. Seen. Heard. Understood. These are not passive ideas. They are choices. I think back to when my family moved into our neighbourhood. I met two very different responses. While one neighbour saw me and immediately asked, "How long have you been in the country?"

The other was different. They asked questions. They listened. Not to respond, but to understand. And to be honest, only one of those neighbours built a real relationship with my family. So be like that neighbour. Not the one who assumes. But the one who listens. The next time you meet someone ask before you assume. The next time someone speaks, listen before you label. And the next time you think you already understand someone at first glance, pause and question it. Because when we see, hear and understand, the line between "us" and "them" begins to disappear, and what remains is a shared world where we stop defining each other by difference and start recognising each other as human.



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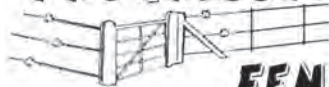
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Okato Lions

Okato Lions club have been busy this year, from mulching the local orchard, assisting with ANZAC Day and Poppy Day, a canned food collection for World Hunger Day, BBQ with the Coastal School Pet Day and many other BBQs at the local market, 4x4 adventures, all thanks to the new BBQ trailer built by Stone Creations, Maxwell Engineering and the Taranaki 4x4 Club. A couple of members cleared the old trees from the Four-Square carpark.

We are currently raising funds to get the local Playcentre a shade cloth for the sand pit. Security cameras for Okato are underway, as well as other local projects.

Coming soon will be a community shared book Library at the Coffee Cart. Thanks to Bex Ripia for the space.



Join local Lions clubs and help your community.

A canned food drop-off is being planned for the local food bank. We will be having the BBQ going at the Mid-Winter market and the Market Garage Sale. The Market is a great place to meet local residents and support local producers.

Did you know Lions have

a local Health Screening Caravan which travels around Taranaki (One of two Lions Caravans operating)? This is a free health screening service. On average 25% of people get referred to their GP for further checks. A new project is the Eye Screening programme, which is being

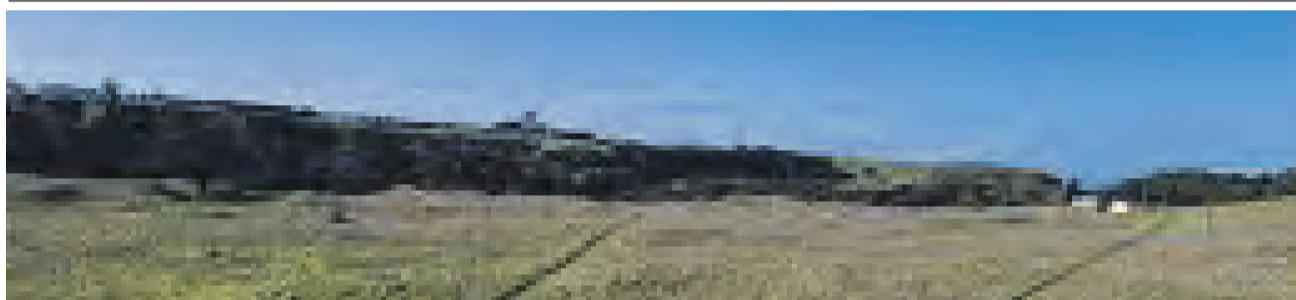
rolled out to schools to check young children's eyesight. One in five children have shown to have issues with their eyes.

There are many other projects that residents can be involved with, some of the youth programmes, Environment, Diabetes, Youth Cancer, Youth Camp etc. We are volunteering for the upcoming Tarmac Rally around Okato, the Egmont Half Marathon, and Daffodi Day for the Cancer Society. If you know of anyone who would like a hand, to support any community projects please let us know.

If you are interested in joining the Lions club, feel free to come along on the first Wednesday of the month at the Hempton Hall or contact Colin 027 5421853 email okatolionsclub@gmail.com

Colin Tyler

Front page: Colin's dog Reilly whose a bit of a character. Amazing what you can do with AI!



The shared pathway can be used for walking, running, cycling and dog walking.

New coastal track opened at Pātea reforestation site

South Taranaki District Council has officially opened a new track through one of its coastal reforestation sites in Pātea, following a site blessing held on Tuesday 12 May.

The blessing was attended by Mayor Phil Nixon, Deputy Mayor Rob Northcott, Jacq Dwyer from the Pātea Community Board, Council staff and iwi representatives from Ngāti Ruanui. Kaumātua led the blessing, marking an important milestone in the development of the site.

Mayor Nixon acknowledged the significant work currently taking place at this site and across the district to develop

and enhance Council-managed spaces, noting the positive benefits for both the environment and the community.

"It also highlights the success of our environmental cadetship programme, with cadets gaining valuable, hands-on skills in site preparation, planting and predator control," he said.

The official opening of the track coincided with the Pātea Area School cross country event, providing an opportunity to see the new community asset in action. The event showcased the track's intended use while highlighting the wider benefits of environmental stewardship.

The new track is a 2.1km grass pathway winding through 10 hectares of

native planting. By the end of this winter, around 40,000 native plants suited to local conditions will be established across the site.

Designed as a shared pathway, the track can be used for walking, running, cycling and dog walking. Two access points have been created off Egmont Street, opposite the golf course and near Bourke's Lookout. Barriers have been installed to enable access for bicycles and prams while restricting motorbike entry, helping to protect the fragile sandy terrain from damage.

Council's Environment and Sustainability Manager Cindy Koen says that while the track is regularly maintained, users should be aware that a reasonable level of fitness is required

due to some short and steep sections.

"As this is a nature trail, the surface is uneven in places and may not be suitable for people with balance or mobility limitations," she says.

"The new track links with existing recreational routes, extending the Pātea Loop Track and complementing recent track upgrades from Bourke's Lookout to the beach, as well as the Riverside Track and the great work of the Pātea Planting Trust."

This project reflects the strength of community support, with valued contributions from Toi Foundation, the Ministry of Social Development, and Trees That Count.

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BPW Hāwera celebrates 40 years

On the evening of May 20, BPW (Business and Professional Women) Hāwera marked a remarkable milestone—its 40th birthday—with a vibrant celebration held at Someday Café. The occasion was nothing short of magical, bringing together members, supporters, and guests for a night filled with laughter, connection, and plenty of sparkle. The café buzzed with conversation as attendees



Creating autumn flower pots.

shared memories and celebrated the relationships and achievements that have shaped the organisation.

A special highlight was the presence of founding

President Diana O'Brien, who travelled from Tauranga to attend. Her presence provided a meaningful link to the organisation's beginnings

and honoured the vision that established BPW Hāwera 40 years ago. Speakers throughout the evening reflected on the group's journey, recognising its

growth into a thriving organisation that supports and empowers women while contributing positively to the wider community. Their stories celebrated both past achievements and ongoing impact.

Giving back remains central to BPW Hāwera's mission, highlighted by a donation to the Taranaki Health Foundation.

The contribution supports a travel fund assisting patients who must journey to Base Hospital for cancer treatment, demonstrating the group's commitment to making a real difference. The evening concluded with a creative activity led by Grace Hornby and Jo Stevens, where guests crafted autumn flower pots to take home—ending the celebration on a relaxed and joyful note. As BPW Hāwera looks ahead, its commitment to connection, empowerment, and community remains as strong as ever.

Pukekura Park sewer upgrade to protect Main Lake

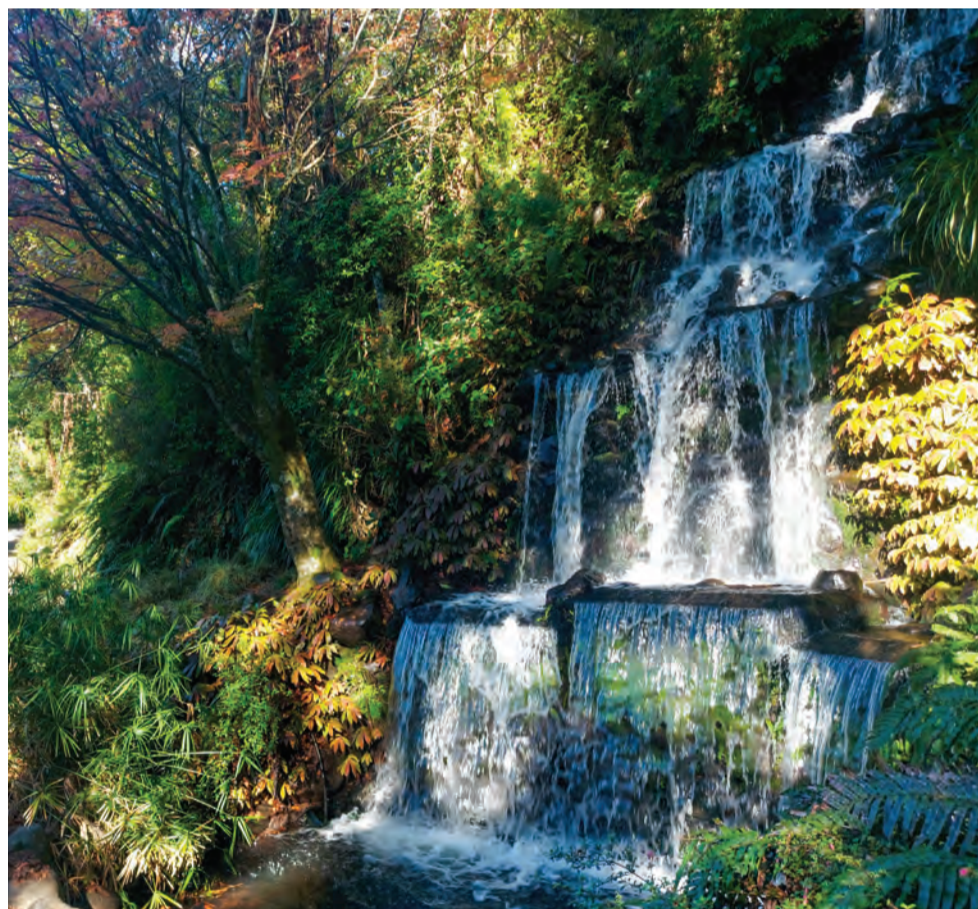
Work has begun to replace a 90-year-old clay sewer pipe that runs alongside Pukekura Park's Main Lake.

NPDC Project Delivery Manager Gordon Davenport says the pipe runs immediately next to the lake's bank.

"The pipe isn't leaking but we've identified it as a risk to both the lake and the integrity of the dam, so we're getting in there now to prevent any issues occurring later," he says.

About 45m of new plastic pipe will be laid from the waterfall to the bottom of the path that leads to the Victoria Road entrance. The pipe will be placed in a concreted trench to keep it stable and provide extra protection for the environment if a fault ever occurs.

Due to heavy machinery on-site, the pathway between the waterfall and Poet's Bridge will be closed for up to four weeks. Poet's



The new pipe will be laid between the park's waterfall and the pathway up to the Victoria Road entrance.

Bridge will remain open for use throughout the project.

Night works will be required for up to two nights

at the end of the project, to connect the new pipe to the sewerage network.

The sewerage network

through Pukekura Park carries wastewater from properties in the Brooklands and Vogeltown suburbs.

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

Council agrees to take part in Government's Head Start pathway



South Taranaki District Council has unanimously agreed to participate in the Government's Head Start pathway for simplifying local government, at Tuesday's (26 May) Extraordinary Council meeting.

South Taranaki Mayor Phil Nixon says the decision ensures the district has a strong voice in shaping what future local government arrangements could look like across the region, in collaboration with the other Taranaki councils.

"Developing a proposal under the Head Start pathway gives us the opportunity to help shape how local government could operate more effectively in the future, rather than having change imposed on us," he says.

"Importantly, Council's decision does not commit South Taranaki to any future amalgamation, shared service arrangement or structural change. Instead, it enables us to be involved from the outset in shaping a proposal that reflects local needs, protects local representation, and ensures the community's interests are part of the conversation," says Mayor Nixon.

The Government announced the Head Start pathway earlier this month as part of its wider simplifying local government reform programme. The pathway gives councils a limited window, ending 9 August 2026, to develop and submit high-level proposals that would simplify and strengthen local governance arrangements. If councils do not take part in the voluntary pathway, the Government has signalled it may move ahead with a mandated backstop process after the 2028 local authority elections.

"We know that this matter is important to our residents, but at this stage, the decision is simply about taking part in a process — it's not about making a final decision on any change to the structure of local government in Taranaki," says Mayor Nixon.

"The Head Start timeframe set by central government is very tight, but over the coming weeks we want to hear our communities' views, so please keep an eye out for upcoming information on how you can do this."

Independent report confirms South Taranaki's strong financial position

South Taranaki District Council, as part of its annual review, received a strong result from S&P Global Ratings, with the internationally recognised agency affirming Council's high AA-rating and stable outlook.

The independent report released by S&P Global highlights the Council's exceptional liquidity, sound financial management, and strong long-term planning as key strengths which put it in a strong financial position and well placed to support the community now and into the future.

South Taranaki District Mayor Phil Nixon says the rating reflects the Council's commitment to responsible stewardship of public funds while continuing to invest in essential infrastructure.

"This is a great result and a strong endorsement of the way we manage the district's finances and the work we're doing to set South Taranaki up for the future."

"To have independent global experts recognise the strength of our financial management shows we are balancing investment in critical infrastructure with long-term financial sustainability," he

says.

A key strength identified in the report is the Council's strong financial buffer, supported by its Long-Term Investment Fund, which holds around \$151 million in assets. This provides flexibility to respond to unexpected events while continuing to invest in core services.

S&P also highlighted the Council's careful approach to spending. Strong planning, disciplined budgeting and prudent borrowing means the Council can invest in important infrastructure, including water services, in a way that is controlled and sustainable. Mayor Nixon says this reflects a balanced approach. "We are making smart investments in our district while keeping a tight focus on financial sustainability. This report shows we're getting that balance right."

While the report notes some challenges, including a smaller population and concentrated economic base, it finds these are being managed well. The stable outlook signals confidence in the Council's ability to continue delivering for the community.

Upcoming Meetings

CANCELLED: Workshop

He Pou Tikanga

Wednesday 3 June, 1.30pm

Ordinary Council

Wednesday 3 June, 4.00pm

Eltham-Kaponga Community Board

Rāwhitiroa Hall, 4 Horoi Road

Monday 8 June, 10.30am

Te Hāwera Community Board

Ōhawe Town Hall, Ōhawe Terrace

Monday 8 June, 4pm

Taranaki Coastal Community Board

Manaia Golf Club, Bennett Drive

Wednesday 10 June, 10.30am

Pātea Community Board

Waverley Golf Club, Ihupuku Road

Wednesday 10 June, 4pm

Workshop

LTP Groups of Activities

Monday 15 June, 8.30am

Te Kāhui Matauraura

Wednesday 17 June, 10.00am

Workshop

He Pou Tikanga

Wednesday 17 June, 12.30pm

Environment and Hearings Committee

Wednesday 17 June, 2.30pm

Extraordinary Council

To adopt the Annual Plan

Monday 22 June, 12.30pm

Policy and Strategy Committee

Monday 22 June, 1pm

Workshop

LTP Groups of Activities

Wednesday 24 June, 8.30am

Water Services Committee

Monday 29 June, 1pm

Risk and Assurance Committee

Wednesday 1 July, 1pm



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

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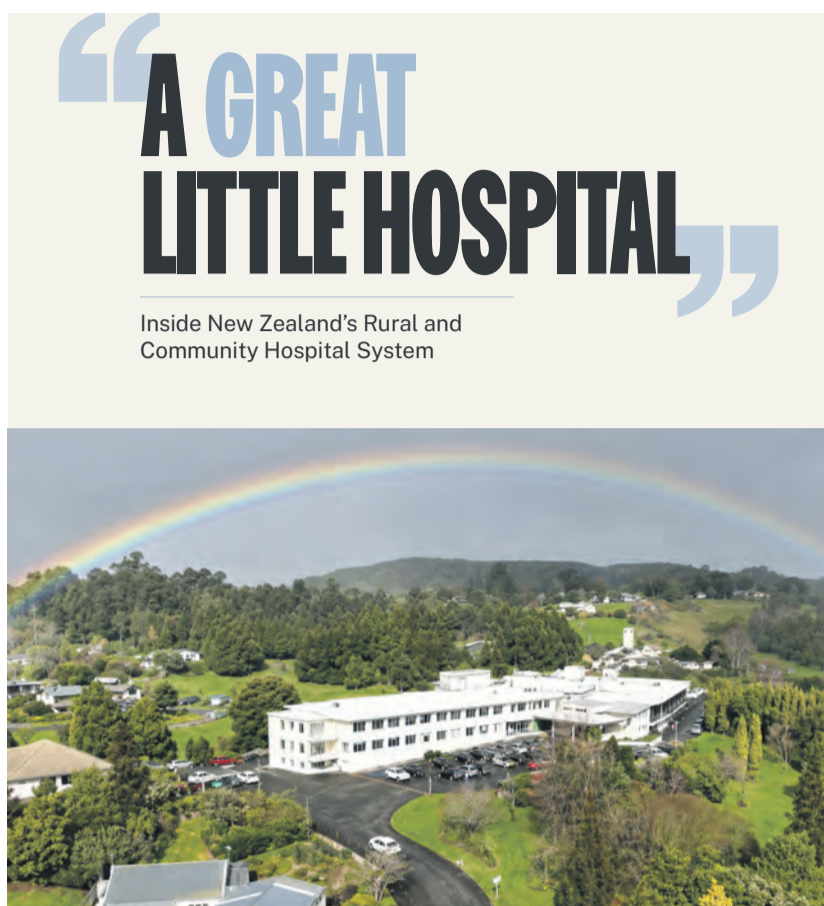
Companion Planting Workshop

Saturday 13 June, 10am - 12noon at St Mary's Community Garden, 101 Collins Street, Hāwera.

Free event - no registration required.

Visit www.southtaranaki.com/gardenseries for more details.

New report on rural and community hospitals



Inside New Zealand's Rural and Community Hospital System

A new report from the health unions APEX and NZRDA on the state of New Zealand's rural and community hospital system has found many are operating well below capacity, even as demand for emergency medical care and diagnostic services rapidly increases.

The report 'A Great Little Hospital' - Inside New Zealand's Rural and Community Hospital System, highlights the need for leadership of Te Whatu Ora - Health New Zealand to pay careful attention to how making better use of capacity in rural hospitals could improve care for rural patients and decompress overcrowded metropolitan hospitals.

The key findings of the report are:

- Rural emergency departments are under pressure - Across 12 rural

hospitals between July 2023 and June 2025, patient presentations increased by 4.7% however the number of patients who did not wait for treatment leapt 20%.

- Many rural hospitals have spare capacity - The average bed utilisation across rural and community hospital networks was 79.5% - well below the national average and under the recommended best-practice threshold. Recent Health New Zealand data shows that between 2023 and 2025, hospitals such as Tokoroa (52.1%), Kaitiāia (55.3%), and Ashburton (58.8%) used on average just over half of their hospital beds each month.

- Demand for diagnostic services is growing - Radiology scanning and laboratory testing volumes are rocketing upward, reflecting increasing pressure on these services nationally.

- Rural medical staffing is key - Sufficient medical staffing remains the rate limiting step in providing timely ED assessment, hospital admissions, care, and discharges.

- Shifting to a 7-day service model - Demand on clinical services - particularly diagnostics, outpatient, and mental health - continues to grow. Traditional models relying on call after hours rosters are outdated and more investment in 7-day rosters are required.

"Resident doctors and allied health professionals tell us rural hospitals are great places to work and train. However many of these hospitals are not meeting patient needs or their full potential due to a lack of focus on ensuring sufficient medical staffing, diagnostic support and 7-day service models," said Dr Deborah Powell, National Secretary of APEX and NZRDA.

NPDC community boards invest in life-saving defibrillators

Lifesaving emergency medical treatment will be closer than ever this year as the NPDC's community boards invest in more public defibrillators.

Inglewood, Clifton and Waitara community boards have fully funded five new automated external defibrillators (AEDs), which use electricity to jumpstart a normal heartbeat in the event of a sudden cardiac arrest.

The new defibrillators - outside the TET Stadium offices and the clubrooms in Karo Park in Inglewood, Tarata Hall, Waitara Golf Course, and Ōkoki Outdoor Education Centre

near Urenui - bring the total number of community board-funded AEDs in public places in the district to nine.

"The rollout of AEDs shows that our community boards are putting the health and wellbeing of our communities first. These are modern defibrillators with clear instructions and designed so that anyone can use them in an emergency," said Clifton Community Board Chair Murray Seamark.

"Every year about 2,000 New Zealanders experience a sudden cardiac arrest. The rapid use of a defibrillator within three to five minutes can increase the chances



Clifton Community Board Deputy Chair Tyla Nickson with the new defibrillator in the yellow box at Camp Okoki.

of survival by over 70 percent. There are other AEDs around, but they're not always accessible to the

public." If a person is unresponsive and not breathing normally, that could be a sign that

they've suffered a cardiac arrest. The AED will talk you through the steps and tell you if a shock is required.

The cost of each defibrillator is about \$3,500 and is covered by each community board's \$150,000 discretionary fund.

The AEDs are housed in bright yellow cabinets that are accessible to the public around the clock.

All the AEDs have been supplied by Hato Hone St John and will be registered on the nationwide AED Locations website (aedlocations.co.nz), which is also available on the AED Locations mobile app.

NPDC has five community boards to give our smaller communities a voice on issues that matter to them. They are: Clifton

Community Board, Inglewood Community Board, Kaitake Community Board, Puketapu-Bell Block Community Board and Waitara Community Board. Each board has four members and \$150,000 each year to fund small projects in their community. Every three years each board creates a Community Board Plan to set out the issues and aspirations and to identify where resources are needed.

We look forward to your contributions in our next issue June 18. Please observe our absolute deadline of Monday June 15.

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Celebrate the legacy, reconnect for the future

Stratford is set to become the heart of rural New Zealand this winter, hosting not only the prestigious FMG Young Farmer of the Year Grand Final, but also a special New Zealand Young Farmers Reunion that promises to bring generations of rural legends back together.

On Friday July 3, 2026, the Stratford A&P Showgrounds and Stratford War Memorial Hall will come alive as past and present members gather to celebrate nearly 100 years of New Zealand Young Farmers and Country Girls history. Timed to coincide with the Grand Final

weekend from 2-4 July, the reunion is shaping up to be one of the standout social events on the rural calendar.

With New Zealand Young Farmers rapidly approaching its centenary milestone, this reunion is more than just a catch-up, it's a celebration of the people, friendships, leadership, and rural communities that have shaped the organisation since its earliest beginnings in the 1920s and 30s.

Let's celebrate all the many years of Young Farmers and Country Girls that set the scene for so many young rural New Zealanders who began their journeys in

one of the countless local clubs, before going on to become leaders, advocates, innovators, and supporters across the agricultural sector. The movement has helped shape generations who have contributed to farming, agribusiness, governance, education, rural advocacy, and the many organisations that continue to support and lead New Zealand's primary industries both nationally and internationally, and who continue to shape the way we do business as farmers today.

From the first clubs established in Feilding and Auckland, to the pioneering

Taranaki groups like Karawaka in Lepperton, Young Farmers has played a major role in building rural New Zealand.

Across Coastal Taranaki and the wider Taranaki-Manawatu region, generations of members have forged lifelong friendships, developed leadership skills, and created countless stories that still get talked about today.

Now organisers are calling on anyone who was ever part of a Young Farmers or Country Girls club, whether recently or decades ago, to come along, reconnect, and relive the memories.

The reunion will begin with the excitement and atmosphere of the FMG Young Farmer of the Year Grand Final at the Stratford A&P Showgrounds before guests head to the Stratford War Memorial Hall for an unforgettable evening of live music, great food, refreshments, and plenty of storytelling.

Current Young Farmers members will also be part of the celebrations, creating a rare opportunity for generations to come together and honour the legacy of an organisation that continues to shape the future of rural New Zealand.

Organisers are also eager to hear from anyone with old photographs, memorabilia, club records, or keepsakes that help tell the story of Young Farmers and Country Girls in the region.

There's strong demand for tickets as Grand Final weekend draws visitors from around the country, so early booking is recommended.

For more information contact Bronwyn Muir on 027 664 5212.

*Bronwyn Muir
Risk and Assurance Lead*

Clifton Community Board signs put brakes on risky driving around Mimi School

New road safety signs near rural Mimi School in north Taranaki are helping to create a safer zone for kids getting on and off the school bus thanks to funding from NPDC's Clifton Community Board.

An electronic vehicle-activated "Kura School" sign has been installed on Pukearuhe Road, off SH3 north of Urenui, to warn drivers that they're approaching the school. The sign features flashing yellow lights and LED text that come on when vehicles approach during school hours, prompting drivers to slow down.

The community board is also funding another electronic sign further along Pukearuhe Road advising drivers to "Slow down" with flashing lights as they approach the intersection with Johnson Road, which has been the scene of numerous scares because of the limited visibility. That sign is due to be installed in the second half of this year.

Mimi School Principal Tom Hardy said the road was noticeably safer for the 14 Mimi schoolchildren and



Mimi School principal Tom Hardy and three students who use the bus by the kura school warning sign.

about 10 children going to Waitara schools who use the bus stop each day.

"Drivers are more cautious and aware of the potential of school students crossing. We notice that cars are approaching the school far more slowly and are also stopping to let students cross. It also puts our staff at ease when they are on bus duty before or after school," said Mr Hardy.

"Parents and caregivers have been overwhelmingly

positive. There have been several comments about how much nicer it is to see cars driving slower around their kids and also the ease of now pulling in and out of the school car parks without worrying about cars travelling 100km/h."

Safety on rural roads, where motorists often travel at speed, is an ongoing concern for residents, especially near schools, said Clifton Community Board

Chair Murray Seamark.

"Rural roads are a lifeline for small communities and we need them to be as safe as possible. Our community board discretionary fund enables us to address risks relatively quickly because locals drive these roads every day and they can see where the biggest risks are. We don't want to wait for an accident to happen before they become an issue," said Mr Seamark.

The Mimi School safety

sign received \$15,000 from the board's 2024-25 funding allocation and the Johnson Road sign \$16,500 from the current financial year. This covers the costs of the signs,

installation and consenting requirements.

The New Plymouth District Council will manage and maintain both signs.

Rural Women New Zealand celebrate 100 years

For Rural Women NZ Taranaki – this past year has been an ongoing Celebration – firstly in Stratford in July 2025, secondly at the Okurukuru restaurant in November 2025 which was a fitting venue being only a few kilometres from where the very first branch in New Zealand was formed on Koru Road, Taranaki. Our third celebratory event was held recently at Tairoa Lodge in Hawera with a “High Tea” afternoon.

Rural Women New Zealand, originally known as the Women’s Division of the Farmer’s Union (WDFU) was founded in July 1925. During a Farmers Union Conference in Wellington, at that time, 16 women decided to form a rural women’s organisation – to improve conditions for rural communities, especially related to rural women and children. One of these women was a lady by the name of Florence Jane Carter, who lived and farmed on Hunter Road, Eltham. To muster up numbers to join this newly formed women’s organisation, it is said that Florence stood



Back row: Organisers of the day - RWNZ members Jennie Purdon, Helen Bayliss and Joyce Lawrence with MP Carl Bates (obscured) and Hawera Deputy Mayor Rob Northcott. Front row: Sandra Kirby RWNZ CEO and Felicity Bunny RWNZ National Office.

on Patterson’s Corner in Hawera, asking for 2/6d as a joining subscription. A lot of money at the time but membership she did get.

So, at our recent “High Tea” celebration we were able to welcome six members of Florence Carter’s family to share the afternoon with us – three daughters-in-law, two granddaughters and one great granddaughter. Memories of Florence Carter and all she was involved with at both a

local and national level were recounted.

Amongst the 82 people present at this High Tea we had our National President Heather Sorensen, National CEO Sandra Kirby and Felicity Bunny from National Office attending along with many past and present Taranaki RWNZ members,

who ‘bubbled over’ with memories and what RWNZ had meant, and still means to them – friendship, fun, family, community support, housekeepers, advocating for postal services, school bus routes, fibre connectivity, leadership roles – the list could go on.

It is this emphasis on what

Rural Women have done over these past 100 years, and will continue to do so in years to come that makes this organisation special –

- To support local rural communities, people in need locally and nationally through community projects and charitable work
- To provide opportunities for leadership and advocacy by rural women on social, economic, equality and environmental issues
- To celebrate rural success.

Even though this 100 year Celebratory year is coming to an end, Rural Women New Zealand has many more years ahead to continue the connectivity of what is happening in rural communities, especially as related to rural women and children.

If you would like to know more about Rural Women or join up with other Taranaki Area members, see their web page or contact Jo Morgan, our local President, email morgl@xtra.co.nz or Helen Bayliss, our local Secretary, email harrybayliss@xtra.co.nz

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Six descendants of the Carter family, of Hunter Road Eltham. Along with a photo of Florence Carter and the South Taranaki RWNZ Centennial celebration cake.

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LIC bull wins top national Jersey award

Paynes Titus Excelsior ET, an LIC bull bred by Brad Payne and Claire Brodie in the Waikato, has won the JT Thwaites Sire of the Season 2026 Award.

The annual award by Jersey NZ recognises outstanding New Zealand-bred Jersey sires whose daughters demonstrate exceptional production and conformation performance.

LIC Livestock Selection Manager Kelli Buckley says the recognition reflects years of dedication and careful breeding decisions by the Payne family.

"This is such a special result, and one I'm



Paynes Titus Excelsior ET.

incredibly proud of. Brad and Claire have put an enormous amount of dedication, care and hard work into breeding bulls of this calibre, and it's a real

privilege to work alongside breeders like them.

"Paynes Titus Excelsior ET is a great example of what's possible when great breeding decisions

are backed by long-term commitment and attention to detail. To see that effort recognised nationally is hugely rewarding - not just for LIC, but for the Payne

family and for Jersey farmers who will benefit from these genetics for years to come." Excelsior achieved the highest Breeding Worth (BW) of all qualifying new-proof Jersey bulls this season, while also meeting important criteria for management, fertility and conformation traits.

Steve Ireland, Genetics Convenor for Jersey NZ, said Excelsior is likely to appeal with farmers focused on breeding replacement heifers.

"Excelsior stands out for his ability to breed daughters with exceptional, long-lasting udders and top fertility. This should ensure his daughters remain

very productive well into maturity."

The Payne family has built a strong reputation for breeding Jersey genetics over many years, making the recognition especially meaningful. Brad Payne says the award was a proud moment for the family.

"We feel incredibly privileged to receive this award. Looking at the trophy and seeing the calibre of bulls recognised over the years, it's very special to know one of ours is now among them."

Excelsior is currently the top ranked Jersey bull on the industry's Ranking of Active Sires (RAS) list.

It's time to close the gap on rural mental health and wellbeing

Rural Women New Zealand has submitted on the Draft Mental Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026-2036, because a person's postcode should not determine the quality of their mental health support.

The strategy sets out how New Zealand will create a system that promotes mental health and wellbeing for all, and provides mental health and addiction support and services that meet people's needs.

Rural Women New Zealand welcomes the strategy's direction, and has used its submission to bring

the lived reality of rural communities to the Ministry of Health's attention.

"Anyone who has lived rurally knows that getting help is rarely simple," says Bronwyn Main, Health Policy Action Advisory Group Convenor.

"You might be hours from the nearest service, juggling the farm, the kids, the animals and still trying to find the courage to ask for help in a small community," she says.

The submission draws on the experiences of RWNZ members to show how distance, cost, stigma,

and workforce shortages combine to push rural people to crisis point before they can access support.

It also makes the case that mental wellbeing cannot be separated from the broader pressures of rural life, from farm finances to extreme weather events to the slow loss of local services.

"In a small rural community, you notice when someone is not doing well. You notice when they stop coming to things, when they go quiet, when the mail is piling up in the letterbox. And nine times out of ten it is a neighbour, or someone at

the school gate, or the postie on their rounds who notices first and does something about it.

"Some of the most important conversations I've had have been leaning against a four-wheel drive in a paddock, just listening.

"Rural is not just urban with longer driveways, and we want to see that understood when this strategy is put into action," says Bronwyn

Main.

Where to get help
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or email talk@youthline.co.nz or online chat.

Samaritans
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Suicide Crisis Helpline: 0508 828 865 (24/7). This is a service for people who may be bethinking about suicide, or those who are concerned about family or friends.

Depression Helpline: 0800 111 757 (24/7) or text 4202

Feds welcomes investment in provincial highway resilience

Government investment in roading resilience in the face of an increase in severe weather events is sound thinking, Federated Farmers infrastructure spokesperson Mark Hooper says.

"Federated Farmers has been calling for more funding for rural roads and key regional freight and access routes.

"It's very pleasing that in a tight Budget the Government has found \$400 million to tackle

drainage, slope stabilisation and rockfall protection at known weak spots, such as the Waioweka Gorge in Gisborne and SH60 Takaka Hill in Tasman-Nelson.

"This is in line with the truism that 'a stitch in time, saves nine.' Building in better resilience ahead of the next flood or storm makes sense.

"We can't continue to see communities like the East Coast or Golden Bay cut off every time a major rain event occurs."

Ultimately, however, if

experience shows a route or piece of public infrastructure continues to be highly vulnerable to weather events, investigation and funding of alternatives is needed.

"The cost of repeated highway and rural road patch-ups quickly mount.

"As the Infrastructure Commission has pointed out, New Zealand needs an agreed, prioritised 30-year pipeline of infrastructure upgrading to build and retain a skilled workforce."

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Fieldays powered by volunteers for 58 years

While Fieldays is synonymous with the atmosphere of crowds and exhibitors, there's a vital force of volunteers who work closely behind the scenes with the wider event team to ensure the event runs smoothly over the annual four-day event.

Last year, 151 volunteers contributed their time to Fieldays, and the New Zealand National Fielddays Society is looking for a number of new volunteers to join their returnees for this year's event, to be held on 10 – 13 June at Mystery Creek.

Like many long-standing events, sustaining this legacy requires ongoing renewal. As valued volunteers relocate or step back after years of dedicated service, they must invite the next generation to come on board.

"Our volunteers are the reason we have reached 58 years," says Beth Jobin, People & Culture Executive. "Their commitment and passion are what keep the tradition alive. Every year, we look for new faces to join us and become part of something truly special."

Peter Fisher, a retired seed industry specialist, has



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volunteered for seven years. He began volunteering in 2018 at the 50th anniversary Fieldays event, helping in the New Zealand International Business Centre, and now supports the mobility parking space.

"I had always enjoyed coming to Fieldays during

my working life and wondered what it would be like to volunteer. I had good knowledge in the seed industry and an interest in agriculture and felt I could add value," says Fisher.

"I enjoyed meeting many people from across the world, all coming to Fieldays

at the bottom of the world to do business."

For Fisher, he loves meeting and working with a great group of people.

"Volunteering is a good

social thing to do, enabling you to give back to the community. You make lifelong friends." Anita van Beek's connection with Fieldays began in the early 2000's when she was a carpark attendant with NZ Young Farmers.

It wasn't until 2014 that she officially signed up to become a volunteer with the Society, volunteering for the full four days.

"Those first few years were full-on, helping in the Site Services team. I would start on Gate 2, welcoming exhibitors, then move on to deliveries, then helping with the vintage tractor parades, and then either roaming or area-specific exhibitor assistant, and of course, afternoon traffic management," says van Beek.

Over the past 12 years, she has filled several roles, last year driving the visitor shuttle.

"I enjoyed chatting with people, asking about their plans for the day or how their day had been so far."

What van Beek loves most about volunteering is

the sense of team unity, whether it's with familiar faces or new ones.

"It's incredibly satisfying to be part of something so dynamic and to interact with such a wide variety of people, whether that's team members, exhibitors, or visitors," says van Beek.

"Mostly I love the spirit and atmosphere around the site," she adds.

Keith Flockhart became a volunteer in 2024 and last year won the Society's 'Volunteer Rookie of the Year Award'. He says, "Winning this award was an unexpected honour." After learning that the Society relies on volunteers, he joined and has helped with pre-Fieldays signage installation, as well as woolly nightshade weed control throughout the year.

"Volunteers are integral to the Society as a charitable organisation, and to Fieldays, supporting all aspects of the event operations and driving its core mission of advancing agriculture in New Zealand," says Jobin.



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Major breakthrough in battle against wilding pines

After years of pushing for more funding to tackle wilding pines, Federated Farmers says today's Government announcement is a major breakthrough.

"Most Kiwis don't see the problem day to day, but these invasive trees are spreading across some of our most iconic landscapes at an alarming rate.

The Government has committed an extra \$79 million for wilding pine control over the next three years, taking the total commitment to \$109 million, targeting some of the country's worst-affected areas.

"The time to ramp up control efforts is now, and this funding boost will make a real difference.

"The Government deserves enormous credit for stepping up and backing meaningful action."

Richard Dawkins welcomed the focus on major seed source areas in Wānaka and Marlborough, along with priority regions including Queenstown, Wakatipu, Mackenzie, Molesworth, and the North Island's Central Plateau.

"For the first time, we're seeing a serious effort to tackle some of the country's worst seed source areas, including Branch Leatham

in Marlborough, which has long fuelled the wider South Marlborough infestation," he says.

"That area was originally aerially seeded with conifer pines by the Crown for soil conservation purposes, with a commitment to address any unintended consequences.

"While some funding has been allocated over the years, it's been piecemeal and nowhere near enough to get on top of the problem properly.

"This new investment is a significant step forward, and everyone involved deserves real credit."

Federated Farmers president Wayne Langford says the key now will be combining this new funding with action from landowners and land managers.

"The Government has really stepped up and done its part to control wilding

pines. "We already have many farmers doing a lot of work out there, but now we need other landowners, councils, and the private sector to do the same so we can maximise the impact of this funding.

"If we can throw a big wave of control work at these pests, we've got a real chance to start turning the tide."

Federated Farmers has long warned that the wilding pine eradication programme was severely underfunded.

Unlike managed plantation forests, wilding pine infestations rarely provide any productive value.

They intensify wildfire risk, smother native vegetation, and reduce groundwater supplies.

Even a handful of trees can spread seed vast distances on the wind.

Mr Dawkins says Federated Farmers identified the issue

as an urgent priority more than a year ago, and he's encouraged to see that advocacy helping drive meaningful action.

"That said, we still believe around \$50 million a year is needed for the next decade to halt the spread of these invasive trees across productive farmland and DOC land.

"While this funding is a massive step forward, wilding pines are an intergenerational challenge and there's no quick fix.

"The focus now needs to be on securing stable, long-term, bipartisan support, so communities can have confidence this work will continue well beyond the next few years.

"We also need to look at how large areas of land are managed day to day, including greater use of active management tools such as managed grazing

where appropriate, to reduce future spread and risk."

Mr Langford says many others have also played an important role in highlighting the threat posed by wilding pines.

"We'd also like to acknowledge the communities, landowners, volunteer groups, and councils who have worked tirelessly to keep this issue front and centre for many years."



A wilding pine.

Average rainfall in the region has been swinging wildly between dryer and wetter

April was similar to January when Taranaki experienced well above average rainfall with an average of 222.4mm of rainfall last month – that's 45% more than normal. February (40%) and March (50%) both enjoyed significantly less rainfall than usual for the two months.

lowest average rainfall was also in the north of the region with our monitoring site at Waiwhakaiho at Hillsborough recording 14% less than normal.

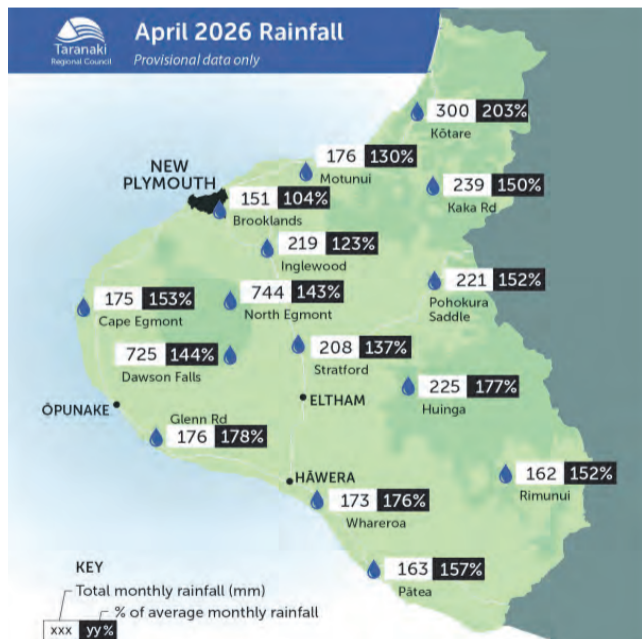
Year-to-date rainfall is lowest at Stony at Mangatete Bridge with 12% less rainfall than normal, Waitōtara at Ngutuwera has had the highest year-to-date rainfall with 34% more rainfall than normal, on average there has been 10%

more rainfall than normal across all rain gauges.

Mean river flows for April were 35.1% greater than typical values, low flows were 16.9% greater, and high flows 53.5% greater than typical values while mean river (non-mountain) water temperatures were 14.2°C, an average of 0.1°C warmer than long-term April values.

The average air temperature for the region (excluding Te Maunga sites) was 13.7°C, which is 0.6°C cooler than long-term April averages. The maximum air temperature recorded in April was 25°C at Brooklands Zoo at New Plymouth on 6 April.

April average wind speeds were 11.3km/hr, with average gust strength of 38.5km/hr, these were 0.3km/hr lighter, and 0.6km/hr gustier than the long-term average with the maximum wind gust recorded in April was 102.6km/hr at Kapoiaia at Lighthouse on 21 April.



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Fitzroy Beach turns on surf for WSL Egmont Honey Longboard Pro

Steady surf throughout the day for the World Surf League Egmont Honey Longboard Pro held on May 30 meant the competition could be surfed through to the finals in one day at New Plymouth's Fitzroy Beach, in New Zealand.

The first heats started at 730am in clean three-foot surf conditions and wrapped as the sun set with the men's finals in smaller conditions and cross shore winds.

The men's final was contested by the current men's top seed for Australia/Oceania, Nicholas Brewer from Queensland, and Jack Tyro from Christchurch. Tyro eventually triumphed with a score of 14.44 to Nicholas Brewer's 11.80. However, both were winners as Brewer's second place earned him enough qualifying points to be on the 2026/27 WSL World Longboard Tour.

Beatrice Conroy from New South Wales won



Jack Tyro

the women's final with a score of 12.86 to Te Waiotu Fairlie's (Gisborne) 8.86.

As the final stop of the 2026 WSL Australia/Oceania Regional Longboard

Qualifying Series, the event carried competitive weight, with qualifying points and a NZ\$12,000 prize pool on offer.

The event's programme

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included the Egmont Honey Pro, junior divisions, social men's and women's divisions, and an expression session. All results can be found on the LiveHeats website.

The event is on the cards to be run again next year says Surfing Taranaki CEO Craig Williamson.

"Having a World Surf League Longboard Qualifying Series event here at Fitzroy is a significant opportunity for Kiwi and Australian surfers to experience competition at that level and also earn

qualifying points to be on the world tour," says Williamson.

Results. Egmont Honey Pro Junior Boys Final.1. Jaxon Willows 13.90. 2. Jacob Morris 6.63. 3. Levi Devine-Collins 6.40. 4. Uruao Fairlie 5.20. 5. Ben Dixon 4.83.

Egmont Honey Pro Junior Girls Final. 1. Luana Matthies 10.43. 2. Izaro Williamson Sasia 8.00. 3. Lara Lay 5.87.

Images. My Perspective Pilot.

Core group of Taranaki Bulls contracted squad announced

The Yarrows Taranaki Bulls have confirmed 25 players currently contracted for the 2026 NPC season, locking in a stable core of Super Rugby talent ahead of new Head Coach, Jarrad Hoeata's first campaign in charge.

The 25-player contracted group features five All Blacks in Beauden Barrett, Jordie Barrett, Scott Barrett, Josh Lord and Tupou Vaa'i, whose availability will be dictated by their All Blacks commitments during the test window, while the remaining contracted group is built around the core of the side that has driven Taranaki's success over recent seasons, including the 2023 championship-winning campaign. That continuity gives Hoeata a strong platform as he steps into the top job following Neil Barnes' elevation to All Blacks Assistant Coach.

With up to 11 spots still to be filled, depending on All Blacks duties, the door is wide open for new players to push their case through the CMK Premier Club Rugby season. The pathway, established by Barnes during his tenure, has consistently produced Bulls debutants and reinforced the club rugby to provincial pipeline that Taranaki is built on.

"It's a strong base to build from," says Yarrows Taranaki Bulls Head Coach Jarrad Hoeata. "The leadership and experience is locked in, and now we get to see who steps up through CMK Club Rugby. That competition has allowed us to build depth in this province. If you're firing throughout the season, you'll get a look."

"We've built a pathway that genuinely rewards form and loyalty to the region. My job is to keep that door open and back the players who earn the right to wear the Amber & Black."

With Hoeata still committed to Super Rugby Pacific duties with the Chiefs through to June, vastly experienced local coach Leo Crowley is leading the



Logan Crowley.



Jacob Ratumaitavuki-Kneepkens.

Yarrows Taranaki Bulls local programme.

Crowley will run the wider training group, support locally based contracted players, view CMK Premier Club Rugby matches each weekend and feed observations directly into Hoeata's selection planning.

"Each year, the wider training group has given 40 to 50 players a chance to develop their skills and learn how we want to play," says Hoeata. "From there, it's on them to perform in CMK Club Rugby. Some of those players have been contracted before, for others it's their first crack at it. Having Leo running that programme while I see out my Chiefs

commitments means our wider group is in great hands."

2026 Taranaki Bulls (so far):

Contracted All Blacks: Beauden Barrett, Jordie Barrett, Scott Barrett, Josh Lord, Tupou Vaa'i.

Contracted Taranaki Bulls: Jared Proffit, Reuben O'Neill, JJ Pokai, Bradley Slater, Fiti Sa, Jayden Sa, Arese Poliko, Michael Loft, Hemopo Cunningham, Kaylum Boshier, Adam Lennox, Logan Crowley, Josh Jacomb, Sam Clarke, Daniel Rona, Meihana Grindlay, Haki Wiseman, Kini Naholo, Vereniki Tikoisolomone, Jacob Ratumaitavuki-Kneepkens.



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COASTAL RUGBY 2026



FBT / Osflo Div 1

It was another fine day for playing footy. The boys were at home in Opunake against Clifton. The referee controlled the game well and let it flow nicely. Both teams were playing well and it was a great match to watch. Coastal opened the scoring off the back of a well worked forwards try to Dylan Schuler which was converted by Scott Anderson.

Coastal continued to apply the pressure and a hole opened up for Kobe Sinclair to race away for a 50m try. It was an easy conversion for Scott Anderson in front of the sticks. Dylan backed up his try from earlier in the half to go in for a double, once again converted by Scott. Coastal went into the half time break up 21-12. The coaches were happy but said the boys couldn't rest, needed to keep playing



well and apply the pressure. It was new half of footy and Coastal needed to keep up the momentum if they were to win.

The second half carried on where the first half left off – with entertaining footy displaying both teams great skills and speed. Clifton had upped their game and managed to score two tries while Brodie Calder managed to cross for Coastal's only try in the second half. The points earned in the first half managed to secure Coastal a win 26-22 in a hotly contested game.

Player of the day was Kobe Sinclair who was strongly supported by Dylan Schuler and the rest of the forwards.

Left: Kobe Sinclair striding out for his try.

Photos: Spinna Photography

Property Brokers Premier Men



Logan Crowley in action against Clifton.

It was the second game of one of our home grounds in round two and we travelled to Opunake to take on Clifton.

It was another weekend of fantastic weather.

Clifton opened the scoring within the first 10 minutes and with a converted try. They crossed again for a second converted try close to the 20-minute mark. Jerram Sinclair got Coastal

Photos: Spinna Photography

on the board shortly after with Jackson Sinclair adding the conversion. Clifton got a roll on and added another 14 points with two converted tries. This gave Clifton the advantage going into the half time break up 28-7.

Sixty minutes into the

match, Logan Crowley scooted away and scored a superb try off the back of a scrum, which was converted by Jackson Sinclair. Shortly after, Clifton added three more points from a penalty

The team put in a strong performance throughout the match. Logan Crowley (pictured) earned Player of the Day with three points, while Beau Pari picked up two points and Jerram Sinclair was awarded one point for his efforts.



Best view in the house that made the Legend of Marty Banks facebook page.



Opunake and Coastal legend Peter Burnnard doing the most important job.





COASTAL RUGBY 2026



This Weeks Games:

Round 11 vs Southern @ Raho Domain

2.45pm Premier Men

1.00pm Div 1

1.00pm Colts

Corkill System Colts

Saturday afternoon at the Chook House saw the Coastal Colts take on Tukapa, with an impressive 48-12 victory. The boys came out firing from the opening whistle, bringing plenty of energy and intensity that they maintained throughout the full 80 minutes. Strong defence, disciplined play, and some exciting attacking rugby allowed Coastal to build momentum and keep Tukapa under pressure for most of the match.

The tries were shared around this week, with Thomas Fisher, Tomai Collins Taiapo, Jorvyn Katene, Douglas Jones, Jordan Bird-Luke, Brayden Shaw, Koby Bird-Luke, and



Sam Douglas all crossing the line. Peter Grayling added the extras, successfully converting four tries. It was a great team performance with contributions right across the park, and another strong result for the Colts as they continue to build confidence and momentum through the season.

Player of the day: 3 points- Douglas Jones, 2 points- Caius Owen, 1 point- Jono Lang

This weekend sees them take on Southern at Raho Domain with the aim of remaining on top of the table

Left: Douglas Jones

FBT / Osflo Div 1



Above: Beauden Fleming.

FBT/Osflo Coastal played Tukapa in New Plymouth and went down 24-21 in a closely contested match.

The boys put in a strong effort, but handling errors and a few unlucky bounces of the ball proved costly

throughout the game. Despite this, they remained competitive right to the final whistle and showed plenty of determination.

There are plenty of positives to take from the performance, and the team

will look to build on those lessons in the coming weeks.

The boys take on Southern this week and are aiming to get one over them after the 31 all draw in the first round.

Property Brokers Premier Men



Above: Ben Dufficy. Photos: Spinna Photography





Ōpunakē High School

Te Kura Tuarua o Ōpunakē

CONTACT DETAILS

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Tasman Street, Ōpunakē 4616
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www.opunake.school.nz
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GROWING GOOD PEOPLE FOR A RAPIDLY CHANGING WORLD | HE WAIHANGATANGA O TE TANGATA PAI I ROTO I TÉNEI AO HURIHURI

PRINCIPALS' ADDRESS

Andrea Hooper Carr

Kia kōpū tō tū, kia whai kaupapa tō mahi, kia mau ki te tikanga.

Be grounded in your presence, let your work have purpose, and hold fast to your practices.

We continue to focus on Presence, Purpose, and Practice at our kura - Mrs Hooper Carr's 3Ps! - as result we have seen a huge leap in attendance, 21% improvement of students attending Ōpunakē High School 90% of the time.



In order to 'grow good people', we need to ensure our ākonga are attending in the first instance so we can then support them in their journey to become the kaitiaki of Aotearoa. And it has been wonderful

to see this shift. However, not only are we concerned with our current students in front of us, but we also want to acknowledge their future selves, and send the person they will be in 20 years some gifts - the gift of hauora, opportunities, and happiness. It is so easy to value today over tomorrow, however we continuously encourage our tamariki to understand that what they do today, they have to live with tomorrow. And so a focus on the present as well as the future is optimal.

We recently had the Education Review Office visit, and it was heartening to hear their feedback which identified all the many areas we are excelling in as well as having the huge mahi the staff continue to do for our young people, being acknowledged.

This sentiment was reiterated with us finding ourselves in the top-10 for a NZ Excellence Award in Education for raising student achievement. An acknowledgement of which we are not only deserving but hugely proud.

We continue to be the best kept secret on the coast. And as always a huge thank you to all our die hard supporters out there, who not only trust us with your most treasured taonga, your tamariki, but also give us your time, energy and feedback. Nga mihi nui, a huge gratitude to you all.

Arohanui.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- | | |
|---|---|
| School Reports issued
Friday 13th June | Year 12 Work Experience Week
29th June - 3rd July |
| Tough Guy and Gal
17th & 18th June | EnviroDay
Friday 3rd July |
| Parent Night w/ Subject Teachers
Thursday 25th June | End-of-term 2
Friday 3rd July |
| Showquest
Monday 29th June | Enrolment for 2027
Open Now! |

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Thinking about attending Ōpunakē High School ?
Te Kura Tuarua o Ōpunakē



OPEN DAY

Rachel Taylor | Year 9 Dean

Already thinking about 2027? At Ōpunakē High School we are! It was a pleasure to host our local Year 8 students and families on Friday 29 May for our annual Open Day. On this day, we welcome our future cohort to experience 'A Day in the Life' of a high school student.

Our amazing student leaders, supported by current Year 9s, led their groups through the different learning areas and completed tasks by following their timetables. Interactive games and activities provided an engaging view of learning and demystified what life as a high school student is like.

From shooting hoops on the new basketball machine and getting a taste of hospitality, to throwing down some great literacy challenges and showing us a true vision of themselves in art, there was something for everyone.

Open Days are often a way to put your best foot forward and show prospective students and families what is on offer. For us, we demonstrated what we do every day — help everyone realise their DREAMS in a safe, supportive, whānau-focused environment.

Thank you to all who came along and enjoyed the day. It was wonderful having you all and look forward to welcoming you into our whānau next year.



Early moveable classroom receives heritage recognition

A rare surviving example of a relocatable classroom in Taranaki which dates back to the 1930s has been listed by Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga as a Category 2 historic place on the New Zealand Heritage List / Rārangī Kōrero.

The Pembroke School Moveable Classroom (Former), now located at the Taranaki Pioneer Village museum near Stratford, was constructed by the Taranaki Education Board. Used at four different schools, its journey took it across lands historically occupied by Taranaki Iwi, Ngāti Mutunga, Te Atiawa, Ngāti Maru, Ngāti Ruanui and Ngāruahine.

Anna Renton-Green, Heritage Assessment Advisor, who wrote the listing report with Brie Gullery during their time with Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga, says its first recorded use at Puniho School, a former Native School, established a direct association with Māori education within the colonial schooling system.

Originally built to address fluctuating school rolls and economic constraints during the Great Depression years, the classroom was relocated four times across the region – to the now-closed Puniho and Waiau Schools, then to



The exterior...

Mangorei School, before its longest placement at Pembroke School and eventual transfer to Taranaki Pioneer Village.

“It stands as a tangible witness to the resilience and resourcefulness of Taranaki’s schooling infrastructure during a period of national hardship and reform,” says Anna.

“This humble classroom has quite a big story, and deep connections with education in Taranaki. Many people will have tupuna who attended school here, studied, played and enjoyed being children,” says Anna.

“People can still experience the authentic ambience of this classroom by visiting the Pioneer Village – which may bring to mind memories of school life from a different era.”

The building retains a high level of physical integrity, with vertical timber cladding, exposed roof framing and original joinery. The bolts used when dismantling and reconstructing the building for transportation – essentially as a flatpack – can also be seen.

These features demonstrate the technical ingenuity of the Taranaki Education Board’s

workshop-built designs and reflect the influence of Board architect Charles Howard Moore, from 1920-1943, known for his regionally-responsive school buildings.

The classroom’s continued use as an interpretive space within the museum complex reinforces its social and educational significance. This is demonstrated through visits made by current and former Pembroke School staff and students. The building features significantly in the School’s centenary and jubilee publications.

Surviving examples of pre-



...and interior of the Pembroke Road School moveable classroom.

World War Two moveable classrooms are uncommon nationally. There is a documented list of thirty contemporaneous moveable units used in Taranaki. This building’s demonstrable survival against the unknown

fate of others on the list adds to its value as an example of a declining building type important to educational and Taranaki - history.

Mt Everest climbing season drawing to a close



Mt Taranaki at sunset.

Ian McAlpine who has summited Mt Taranaki many times has assembled some interesting statistics about another great mountain, Mt Everest. The peak time to climb the world’s highest mountain is mid April through May, a small window which is soon to end.

Despite unstable ice block conditions, higher costs and permits around 464 people (364 males and 100 females) from 55 countries are attempting Mt Everest in the 2026 climbing season defined as from late April to late May.

The 2026 Everest season is closed to foreigners on the Tibet side of the mountain.

To date around 50 New Zealanders have successfully made an ascent of Everest since Sir Edmund Hillary and Tenzing Norgay became the first to climb the world’s highest mountain in 1953. New Plymouth’s Nick Banks was the second New Zealander to successfully summit Mt Everest in 1979, the 100 ascent of Mt Everest.

Mark Whetu is the only Maori to have made an

ascent of Everest and so far no Maori females have made an ascent.

A total of 339 people have died climbing Everest from the Nepal side. Of these 116, 51% were not using supplemental oxygen and from the Tibet side of the 41 fatalities, 37% were not

using supplemental oxygen. The permit fees in 2026 are \$15,000 USD.

The record for the number of ascents of Mt Everest by New Zealanders is held by Mark Woodward 10 ascents, Dean Staples 9, Lydia Bradey 6 and Rob Hall 5.

Climate change linked to rising antibiotic resistance in Salmonella

Climate-change is fuelling a rise in antibiotic-resistant Salmonella, a new global study shows. Researchers analysed nearly half a million Salmonella samples from 139 countries over eight decades and found warming temperatures and shifting rainfall patterns are associated with a 10% increase in antibiotic resistance genes globally – on top of a 38% rise already recorded since 1940. Researchers say without action, the problem is projected to worsen significantly in the next decades. However, the team

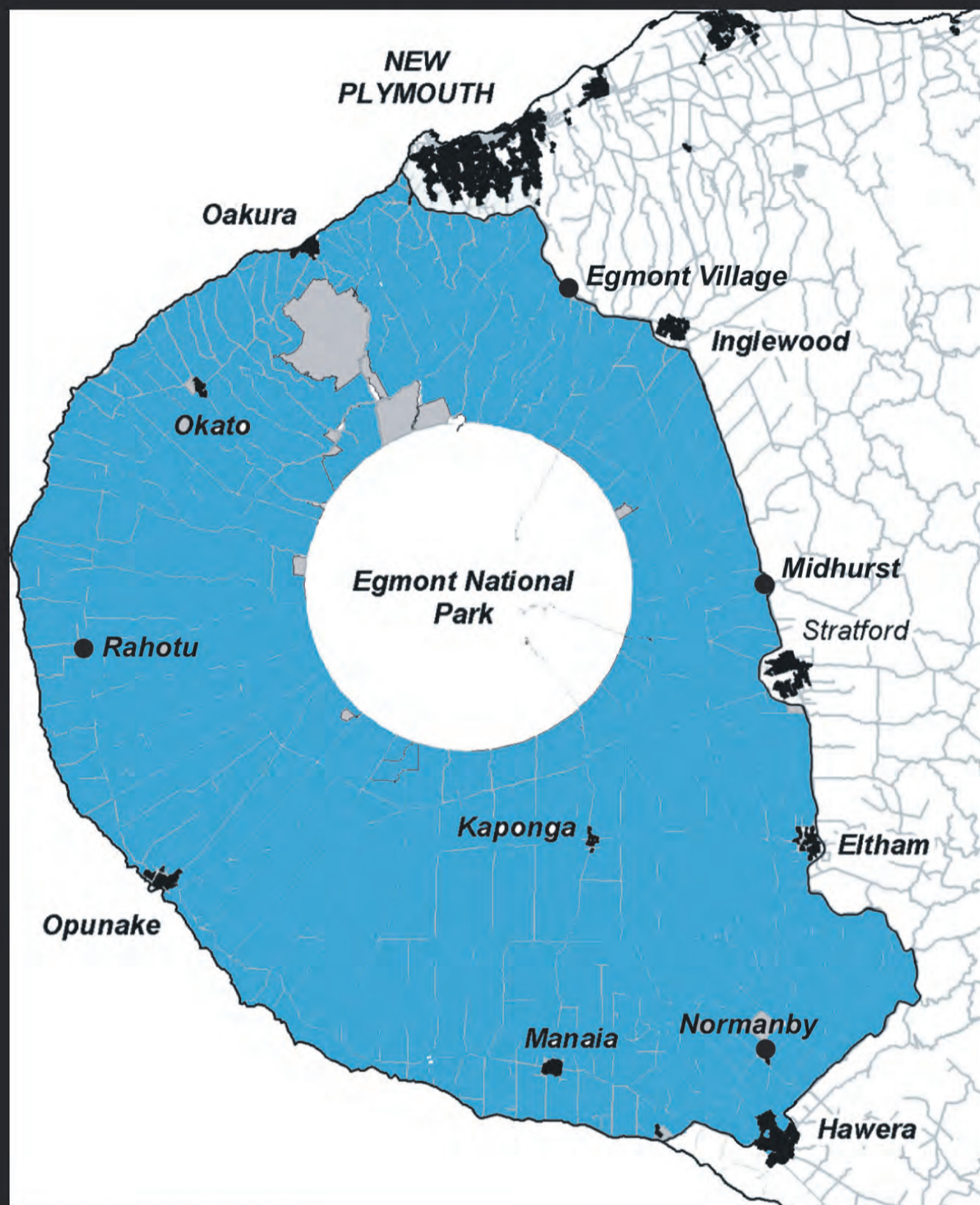
also highlight how meeting low-emission climate targets – alongside stronger controls on antibiotic use – could reduce resistance by nearly a quarter compared to high-emission scenarios.

The Lancet Planetary Health

The next issue of the Opunake and Coastal News is coming out on 18 June 2026.

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Together, we're building a thriving, inclusive, and equitable Taranaki.

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Increased Access to Opportunities

Through our Strengthening Communities Fund we increase people's ability to access and participate in opportunities that meet their needs and aspirations.

Improved Environment

Supporting the protection, care and resilience of our natural environment to ensure the long-term survival and care of Taranaki whenua.

Rangatiratanga Empowering Māori Aspiration

Our aim is to prioritise Māori aspiration and rangatiratanga to ensure Māori eco-systems including whānau, hapū, iwi and mātāwaka are thriving across generations.



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Sister Act proves theatre is a family affair in Hāwera

Community theatre has always been about connection, and Hāwera Repertory Society's upcoming production of Sister Act – A Divine Musical is proving just that, with several families sharing the stage together in this feel-good musical spectacular.

Opening at the Hāwera Memorial Theatre from 24 June to 4 July, Sister Act is packed with powerhouse vocals, dazzling dance numbers, outrageous comedy, and heartwarming moments. Based on the beloved film, the musical follows nightclub singer Deloris Van Cartier as she is placed in protective custody inside a convent, where she unexpectedly transforms the struggling choir and discovers friendship, purpose, and community along the way.

While audiences can expect all the fun and energy the show is famous for, behind

the scenes Sister Act has also become a celebration of family and shared passion for the arts.

Ken and Karla Kimi are part of the production alongside their daughters Jewel and Jazmine. Ken joins the cast on stage, while Karla lends her talents as one of the show's backing vocalists. Their daughter Jewel takes on the role of Michelle, while Jazmine joins the ensemble, making the production a true family experience.

Another mother-daughter pairing sees Abigail Landsborough stepping into a nun's habit alongside her mum, Glenda Landsborough, while long-time Hāwera Repertory favourite Michelle Glover shares the stage with daughter Jade Burgess, who appears in the ensemble.

Adding to the family connections, Paula Frearson joins the cast alongside



Bottom left to right: Michelle Glover, Jade Burgess, Erina Frearson, Paula Frearson
Top left up right: Glenda Landsborough, Abigail Landsborough, Jewel Kimi, Ken Kimi, Jazmine Kimi, & band members Bobby and Izzy Logan (Father and daughter).

daughter Erina, making Sister Act an especially special production for both of them.

Director and production team members say the

number of families involved reflects exactly what community theatre is all about — bringing people together across generations to create something joyful,

memorable, and meaningful for audiences.

“This show has so much heart, and seeing families share the experience together both on and off stage has been

incredibly special,” the society says. “Community theatre creates lifelong memories, friendships, and connections, and Sister Act really captures that spirit.”

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One Acts and Tuesday Birds Opens June 16

Opening night for Opunake Players triple bill of two one act plays and a musical group opens on Tuesday 16th June. Tickets are selling fast so get down to Sinclair's to secure your booking. The plays are "Snip", directed by Alexandra MacBeth, and "Bonking James Bond", directed by Sammie Allison, both written by April Phillips. The music group is Opunake's own "Tuesday Birds".

"Snip" is directed by Alexandra MacBeth, a task she is relishing. "Snip is not only a fun, hilarious play with two strong male leads, it has some strong, kick arse female characters," says Alexandra, who previously directed "StiFF" for Opunake Players. "I've enjoyed developing those characters through pauses, stage spacing, and physical comedy".

Sammie Allison is the director of "Bonking James Bond", who previously directed "Cinderella". "I'm loving watch the characters evolve and how quirky they are," she says, "Not only is the play fun, it's also real. What happens in the play, happens more often than we want to believe. Watching Betty, (one of the characters) get stronger, more self-assured and sexy as heck, is great to watch. You'll all be cheering her on."

The fun aspect of the plays is something the cast members agree on. Lynelle Kuriger, who plays Betty in "Bonking James Bond", says she's enjoying the plays and knows the audiences will too. "They have a real quiriness to their humour," she adds. Sherrie Flanagan, who plays Penelope/Svetlana in the same play, agrees and says there is a balance of



The Don, (played by Brian Gasson), and Dr Sam, (Michelle Julian) are extremely interested in what's happening at one end of Frank, (Anthony Bennett). A scene from "Snip". One of the one act plays soon to be performed at the Lakeside Playhouse. See article for dates and booking details.

seriousness and humour. Sherrie, better known as one half of musical duo "Moemoea", is appearing in her first major role after a number of small walk on parts.

"Tuesday Birds" consists of Bert Treffers, guitar and vocals, and Stephanie Mackenzie, vocals.

This talented duo, both from Opunake, have been gaining quite a reputation around Taranaki with their Country Folk sound and pleasant harmonies. They'll be performing a bracket of their well-crafted original songs. Performance details. Lakeside Playhouse,

Layard Street Opunake. All dates, June, beginning at 7.30. Tuesday 16th and Wednesday 17th, tickets \$30. Thurs 18th, Sat 20th, Sun 21st, Wed 24th, Thurs 25th, Fri 26th, Sat 27th and Sun 28th tickets \$35. Note there is no Friday 19th performance.



"Tuesday Birds" consists of Bert Treffers, guitar and vocals, and Stephanie Mackenzie, vocals..

Tickets now on sale at Sinclair Electrical and Refrigeration



Bonking James Bond.

OPUNAKE PLAYERS PRESENT

Two one act plays written by April Phillips

SNIP
The Sharp New Comedy by April Phillips
Directed by Alexandra MacBeth

Bonking James Bond
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16th - 28th June 2026

Tickets on sale May 18th from Sinclair Electrical

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The Adventures of Super Danny

My name is Victoria McCready, raised in Hawera, but residing in Warea. I am very excited and proud to announce that I have published my first book of a new book series called The Adventures of Super Danny.

My youngest son Odin (Danny), was diagnosed with Type 1 diabetes just before he turned 5. The book series follows Danny whilst he navigates his way through his diagnosis with new life changing events like starting school, his school swimming sports, meeting his best friend Benji, being bullied at school, playground adventures, his first birthday party and dentist visit.

It covers introducing his teacher aide or Mum monitoring his highs and lows, when his insulin pump "beeps" resulting in more insulin to manage the highs, or fast acting sugar to manage the lows and carbs to maintain health with Type 1 diabetes.

But wait, with a quick tap of insulin, the ordinary disappears. In a flash

of courage, "Zoom" Danny transforms into the unstoppable Super Danny; he dons a mask and cape and then he can do anything at all with the help of his best friend Benji.

The series is not only for those with Type 1 diabetes, but to educate others in our community that may have a child like Danny in their children's classes. A wonderful educational resource. We badly want to end the stigma that is currently attached to diabetes, especially in children because they are perceived as 'different' especially when their machine beeps during class, swimming with their site displayed on his tummy which is connected to insulin pump then in his arm is Dexcom, which reads blood glucose/sugar levels.

In book 2, we would cover what it means when the 'beeping' starts, often during the night lol and what gets done when it beeps. My goodness, to be honest, I had no idea how

Type 1 diabetes affected someone and what was involved. Been quite the learning curve for this Nanni lol

Then we'll lead into Danny starting school because it beeps there too.

Each book is written with alliterative and rhyming text verses to make it fun for the children to read with their Mum and Dad. The pages are all in colour and are wonderful and bright, again appealing to children everywhere.

The books have been printed.

A wonderful review from SENCO follows:

The Adventures of Super Danny is a truly wonderful and inspiring children's book that deserves the highest praise. The author, Victoria McCready, has created a story that is not only educational and meaningful, but also engaging, warm, and enjoyable for children and families alike.

What makes this book especially remarkable is the way it explains diabetes in a gentle, positive, and

child-friendly manner. The writing is clear and easy for children to read independently, while also being perfect for parents, teachers, or caregivers to read aloud.

The illustrations are absolutely superb — vibrant, expressive, and beautifully designed to capture a child's imagination on every page. They bring Danny's adventures to life in a way that keeps young readers interested and excited to turn the page.

This book is an amazing resource for helping children better understand diabetes while also promoting confidence, kindness, and inclusion. The author (Victoria), should be incredibly proud of creating such a heartfelt and impactful story that will no doubt make a positive difference in the lives of many children and families.

David Cripps SENCO (SENCO - Special Education Needs Coordinator)



Sea goddess at the Village Gallery Eltham

Piecing Together at the Village Gallery Eltham



Piecing Together runs until June 27.

Kaye Anderson's exhibition entitled Piecing Together combines fabric, paper, stitch, paint, and found objects to create expressive mixed-media pieces exploring texture, memory, and storytelling.

The exhibition features a collection of sculptural and wall-based works that reflect her creative process of assembling fragments into meaningful forms.

An artist talk and demonstration will be held on Saturday June 6 at 2pm, with tea, coffee, and cake provided.

The exhibition continues until Saturday June 27.



To Mum



Remembering Taranaki.

Piecing Together



Kaye Anderson
2-27 June, 2026

Baby teeth matter



If baby teeth aren't looked after it can affect adult teeth.

Tooth decay is such a serious issue that each year thousands of Kiwi kids have teeth removed prematurely – often under anaesthetic.

In fact, it's one of the top reasons why children are hospitalised. Along with the pain and discomfort decay causes, if baby teeth aren't looked after it can affect adult teeth. And it's very preventable. Along with a good diet, brushing twice a day with fluoride toothpaste is an effective way to prevent tooth decay.

Looking after baby teeth

will help your child to eat and speak well and ensure their adult teeth come through healthy and strong.

As soon as baby teeth start to show, an adult should start brushing them twice a day. Once at night before your baby goes to bed and again in the morning. Use a small, soft brush and a half-pea sized amount of family fluoride toothpaste.

Once your baby is over one year old, brush their teeth for two minutes. Brush all around the inside surfaces, where the teeth meet the

gums, and also the top chewing surfaces. Brush on the front of their teeth, all around the outside surfaces, and close to the gums.

Dental care is free so enrol your baby with your local community oral health service at birth or as soon as possible after that by phoning 0800 TALK TEETH (0800 8255 833). Your midwife or nurse will be able to help you enrol. The service is free and supports you and your whānau to care for your child's teeth.

Ka Ora Telecare - Rural after-hours healthcare

Ka Ora Telecare is an after-hours video and over-the-phone health service for people living in or visiting rural communities. It is free to speak to a nurse. All appointments are free for Tamariki / children under 14 years old.

The service is open from: 5pm to 8:30am during weekdays, 24 hours during weekends and on public

holidays.

When you call Ka Ora you will speak to a kaiāwhina (support person) or a nurse, who will ask you some questions to assess your health needs. They can connect you with a doctor or nurse practitioner depending on your needs. If you prefer, you can choose to book an appointment for a later time.

You do not need to be

enrolled with a healthcare provider to use this service.

To speak with a nurse, doctor or nurse practitioner, call Ka Ora on 0800 252 627 (0800 KA ORA). While it is free to speak to a nurse, there is a charge for appointments with a doctor or nurse practitioner.

For more information, visit the Ka Ora website: kaora.co.nz

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ONGOING

Movies at Everybodys Theatre in Opunake: Playing several days and nights

CHURCH NOTICES



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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
4th Sunday at 2pm - Cake & Debate
Open church for silent reflection, Pew for You, every 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4-5pm

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 1st, 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 Hempton Hall.
Everyone welcome

St John's Community Church. Kaponga

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

Manaia Union Fellowship

Terou St. Manaia.

Meet 10am every 3rd Sunday of the month with communion

Friend & Fellowship Group

Thursdays @ Manaia
Support our Faith and support each other with Prayer and Bible study
Encouraging interactive discussion and Praise
All are welcome
We would love it if you could come
Rodney & Val 274 8550 or 0272384187

St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church

90 Regan St., Stratford,
9:00am Sunday: Breakfast and Study
10:30am: Breakfast is followed by "Coming Together Worship Service"
Thursday: Study Group at 2 pm at 96b Brecon Rd., Stratford.
Contact Rev. John Mattock 027 2039799

Methodist Church Hawera

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

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

each week. Refer timetable in newspaper.

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

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

TUESDAYS

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

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

Wayoutwest Jiu Jitsu: Juniors 6pm, Adults 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.

Toi Foundation drop-in sessions: Opunake Library, 11am-3pm.

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

Naumai Toastmasters: Every first and third Wednesday of the month. 6.30pm sharp start. St Mary's Anglican Church, 206 Princes Street, Hawera. Find us on Facebook. Guests always welcome. Contact Steve 021538101.

Sober and Drug Support Group: Coastal Care Meeting Room, 7pm

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.

Wayoutwest Jiu Jitsu: Juniors 6pm, Adults 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.

JUNE 2 TO 27

Piecing Together An exhibition at the Village Gallery, Eltham.

JUNE 8

Opunake & District Business Association AGM: Hughsons & Associates Boardroom, Napier St, Opunake, 6pm..

JUNE 13

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

JUNE 15

Mens Health Workshop with Adam Banks CoastalCare Opunake, 12.30pm..

JUNE 16 TO 18

Bonking James Bond: A production by Opunake Players.

JUNE 19

Ruiral Aid First Aid Course: CoastalCare Opunake, 9am - 5pm.

Singer Songwriters Opunake: At the Lakeside Playhouse, Opunake, 7.30pm.

JUNE 24 TO JULY 4

Sister Act: A production by Hawera Rep. At the Hawera Memorial Centre.

JUNE 26

Community Policing Public Meeting: CoastalCare Meeting Room, 1pm.



Tui Ora Heartlands Hub
Napier Street, Opunake
10am - 1.30pm

NO
APPOINTMENT
NEEDED

DROP IN CLINIC | 18 JUNE

Our friendly nurses can help with:

- Childhood and adult immunisations
- Flu vaccines
- COVID boosters
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18 May - 12 Jul 2026

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EMERGING MĀORI ARTISTS

Watch three artists creating fresh works which embody the enduring principles of te ao Māori, in a collaborative open studio setting.

NPDC

Puke Ariki

PUBLIC NOTICES

**Te Kāhui o Taranaki
Notice of Special General Meeting**

Te Kāhui o Taranaki Trust gives notice to Taranaki iwi members that a Special General Meeting (SGM) is to be convened by the Chairperson, in accordance with section 26 AMENDMENTS TO CHARTER.

Date: Sunday, 28 June 2026
Time: 10.00am
Venue: Ngāmotu House Level 4

Purpose of the SGM

The purpose of the SGM is to consider and vote on proposed amendments to the Charter of Te Kāhui o Taranaki and Taranaki Iwi Fisheries Limited Constitution (TIFL) that are required to meet our legislative obligations under the Māori Fisheries Amendment Act 2024.

SGM Agenda:

- Karakia / Mihi
- Explanation of proposed rule changes
- Questions and answers
- Voting on resolution
- Karakia whakakapi

Special Resolution

The proposed special resolution must be passed with the approval of not less than 75% of those Adult Members of Taranaki Iwi who validly cast a vote in favour of the proposed Special Resolution of Members.

Voter packs including explanatory information will be mailed to adult registered members of the Trust with current postal addresses on Thursday, 28 May 2026. Adult members will be able to vote on the resolutions at the Special General Meeting, online or return their ballot in the envelope provided. Members requiring replacement voter packs or with voting enquiries can contact the election helpline on 0800 666 032 or email vote@electionz.com

The Trust also takes this opportunity to invite all adults of Taranaki Iwi descent who have not already registered, to do so by completing a registration form. Registration forms are available from the Trusts office, Level 4, 139 Devon Street West, New Plymouth or taranaki.iwi.nz

Jacqui King
Chairperson - Te Kāhui o Taranaki Trust



FOR SALE

AB & DM SYBRANDY CONTRACTING LTD - Available Now - Firewood , Screened Topsoil & BRANDY'S BOTANICALS BARN- Indoor Plants, Home & Giftware, Seeds & More. 6m3 Split Pine \$500.00, 6m3 Split Mac \$620.00 supplied & delivered Hawera, Normanby, Manaia areas - other areas may incur small delivery fee. Orders and Payment can be made by phoning Andy 0274456464 or calling into Brandy's Botanicals Barn- 15 Livingston Rd Hawera.- WINZ Quotes, Afterpay & Eft-pos available at the Barn.

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Every Wednesday
4 - 5.30pm

Hempton Hall

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AGM

Monday June 8 2026, 6pm

Hughsons & Associates Boardroom at the

Opunake Business Centre, 23 Napier St, Opunake (opposite the Coastal Care Medical Centre)



Singer Songwriters COMING TO OPUNAKE

Friday June 19

at The Lakeside Playhouse,
Layard Street, Opunake
7.30pm

WAYOUTWEST Jiu Jitsu, Tuesday & Thursday at Sinclair Events Centre. Juniors 6 pm, Adults 7 pm.

COMMUNITY POLICING

Come and have your say. Does Opunake need one?

Friday June 26, 1pm, at CoastalCare Meeting Room, Opunake.



Call us on 06 761 7016

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2015 Toyota HIGHLANDER GXL
7 SEATER NZ NEW 4x4
Keyless Entry & Ignition, Roof Rack, Daytime Running Lights, Rear Ventilation, Tinted Windows, 3.5, Petrol, Auto, 235kms



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2014 Holden TRAX LTZ
COMPACT NZ NEW SUV
Driving Lights, Electric Mirrors, Heated Seats, Parking Sensors, Descent Mode, Roof Rails, Traction Control, 1.8, Petrol, Auto, 128kms



\$11,995

2009 Mitsubishi Outlander
NZ NEW 7 SEATER 4x4
Roof Rails, Tow Bar, Cruise Control, Keyless Entry & Ignition, Parking Sensors, Tinted Windows, V6, 3.0, Petrol, Auto, 190kms



\$9,995

2012 Mazda 6 GSX
Driving Lights, Monsoons, Stability Control, Keyless entry & Ignition, NZ New, Tinted Windows, 1.5, Petrol, Auto, 21kms



\$10,995

2019 Mazda Cx-5 GLX
NZ NEW POPULAR SUV
Lane D2019 Mazda Cx-5 GLXarture, Reversing Camera, Auto Headlights & Wipers, i-Stop, Sports Mode, Tow Bar, Keyless Start, 2.0, Petrol, Auto, 94kms



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



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2013 Toyota AURION AT-X
Alloy Wheels, 6 Cylinder, Auto Headlights, NZ New, Reversing Camera, 3.5, Petrol, Auto, 158kms



\$13,995

2011 Nissan Dualis
COMPACT 4X4
Driving Lights, Reversing & Side Mirror Cameras, Tinted Windows, Tow Bar, Panoramic Sunroof, Keyless Entry & Ignition, 2.0, Petrol, CVT, 158kms



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