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Aretha Macadam with the movie projector in need of repair.

Community throws lifeline to local theatre

The Opunake community has come to the rescue of Everybodys Cinema which faced an \$18,000 repair bill following a projector failure.

Aretha Macadam of the Everybodys Theatre Society said thanks to community fundraising they now have the \$20,000 needed to fix up the projector. The fundraising campaign will continue as they still need to cover the \$2500 a month in fixed costs needed to keep things going, whether they are open or not.

Aretha says they are unsure as to when they will be able to reopen.

"At this stage we are able to order the parts, but we are waiting for them to arrive. We've been informed one of the parts could be up to 12 weeks," says Aretha.

The first sign of trouble was at the February 26 screening.

"That wasn't too major. Just a bit of a flicker," says Aretha. "On the Friday we had problems come up again. Saturday morning was fine but Saturday night it was major, and on Sunday the First of March it just

wouldn't start at all."

It was announced that movies would be cancelled until further notice. Among the casualties was a pre-season showing and Q & A session of the movie No Tears on the Field which follows female rugby players from the Southern and Clifton Rugby clubs.

Aretha says Everybodys had had that projector since about 2014. She had been informed that about 80 per cent of the projectors in the world are of that style.

On March 11 Aretha and Everybodys Theatre Incorporated Society president Kim Gatenby were at the Taranaki Coastal Community Board meeting in Oaonui with a late application for \$5000 from the board's Local Discretionary Fund.

"We are in an urgent situation because of the catastrophic failure of our projector," Aretha said. "I'm not sure where we are at, at the moment."

They were facing an \$18000 repair bill.

"We're looking at another

\$2000 a month in fixed costs. We need the income to keep going."

Even before the problems with the projector they had been losing money anyway and had to increase their ticket prices because they were no longer sustainable.

"It reflects what's been happening through the country," she said.

"We pay the distributor a set fee to get a movie and on top of that we have to pay a percentage."

Aretha cited the effects of Covid and people getting out

of the habit of going to the movies, as well as the effects of the Hollywood Writers' strike and a poor choice of movies being available. Nevertheless they had had some success in getting people back to the movies, she said. Everybodys continued to be an integral part of Opunake and played a part in drawing people into town.

She said private bookings played a big part in keeping the theatre afloat and they already had to cancel four bookings from district

schools.

In answer to a question she said they tend to avoid showing R-rated movies. She was asked how far advanced they are with bookings. About 6-8 weeks, she said.

The board voted to grant \$2000.

Aretha says the Community Board grant seeded a community fund raising effort that raised the funds to fix the projector.

Continued page 4



Everybody's Theatre.

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Letters to the Editor

International law must be applied consistently

Kia ora,
I write in response to recent letters supporting the ongoing military actions by the United States and Israel against both Iran and the Palestinian people. Such positions overlook serious and widely documented concerns under international law and humanitarian principles.

With respect to Iran, a growing number of legal experts and analysts have concluded that recent United States-Israeli strikes lack lawful justification under the UN Charter. There has been no clear evidence of an imminent armed attack that would meet the threshold for self-defence, nor has there been authorisation from the United Nations Security Council. As such, these actions risk constituting a prohibited use of force — what international law defines as aggression —

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.

thereby further eroding an already fragile global legal order.

Turning to Palestine, the situation is even more stark. In the occupied West Bank, there has been a sharp escalation in house demolitions, land seizures, and violence against Palestinian civilians.

United Nations reporting indicates that thousands of Palestinian homes and structures have been demolished over time, with permits almost impossible for Palestinians to obtain, leading to widespread displacement and a deepening humanitarian crisis.

More recent reporting shows entire communities being uprooted, with tens of thousands displaced and

increasing settler violence occurring with little accountability.

At the same time, the devastation in Gaza has reached catastrophic levels.

Senior United Nations officials have described the situation as one of “wholesale destruction,” with the collapse of essential infrastructure and the widespread devastation of civilian life.

Human rights organisations have further warned that the scale and pattern of destruction may amount to war crimes, including the wanton destruction of civilian property and collective punishment.

In this context, it is essential to reaffirm that Palestinians, as a people living under prolonged occupation,

possess the right to self-determination and, under international law, a right to resist that occupation. Ignoring this reality distorts the nature of the conflict and obscures the structural conditions that give rise to repeated cycles of violence.

Equally important are the historical rights of Palestinians, including the right of return for those displaced from their homes. These are not abstract claims, but internationally recognised principles that remain central to any just and lasting peace.

Finally, it is necessary to acknowledge the ideological and political support that enables these policies, including from segments of Christian Zionist movements. Such support

has too often provided moral and political cover for actions that result in dispossession, displacement, and large-scale human suffering.

Faith should never be invoked to approve of injustice.

If international law is to have any meaning, it must be applied consistently not selectively.

Upholding the rights of all people, including Palestinians and those affected by unlawful uses of force, is not optional; it is the foundation of any credible plan to establish a lasting peace.

Ngaa mihi,

Rob Ritchie
Opunake

Continued page 4

Community throws lifeline to local theatre

Continued from page 1

The Theatre Society is continuing to raise funds, with raffles at CoastalCare, Farmsource and Opunake Four Square. They are still collecting for their Garage Sale on April 4 and items can still be dropped off at CoastalCare

Monday-Friday 9am-5pm or at Everybodys Theatre Saturday March 21 9am-midday or Sunday March 29 11.30am-12.30pm. There will be more raffles in April as well as culled cows and quiz fundraising nights at Surf Inn.

“Thank you, thank you, thank you for being an amazing community,” says

Aretha.

If there is any money left over it will be placed in a savings account, if they ever need money for repairs again.

Among those pleased to hear the money had been raised were Auckland visitors Steve and Pauline Pedersen who happened to be passing by the theatre.

“We come down here quite often, about two to three times a year,” said Pauline. “We’d lined up what we wanted to see and were very upset when we saw all the cancelled signs.” They had been looking forward to No Tears on the Field and Holy Days (even though they had seen it before). Steve says they had earlier enjoyed

watching The Mountain here.

“We tell everybody who’s interested that if they are in Opunake they have got to see the movie theatre,” says Pauline.

Everybodys Theatre is located in a building that was originally a grocery store and later converted into a picture theatre, with

the first movie being shown in 1921. It was later bought by Boss Whiting who passed it on to his son Bruce. When Bruce retired in 1980 the community banded together to buy the theatre. Apart from a period from 2012-15 when it was closed for earthquake strengthening, it has been run by volunteers ever since.

ADELPHOS

Back in 2023 Adelphos penned an article entitled “Expectations” in the July 13, 2023 edition that is in our paper’s archives. Seems like yesterday! I wrote, “I sometimes pass an empty section while out walking.

There used to be an old shed on the site until it was demolished three years ago. When I pass that section, I’m still wondering what will be built on it. I have an expectancy that it will be affordable housing.” So

what has happened to that empty section since then? Absolutely nothing. I’m still waiting after six years.

The word expectation is defined as, “hope or anticipation that something especially pleasant will happen” (Concise Oxford Dictionary). During the Easter holidays families

and friends are expecting to get together and are making holiday plans. Other hopeful expectations for 2026 are that dairy farmers’ butter fat prices will continue to rise as in 2025 and that Dave Rennie will do well as the new All Blacks coach.

Jesus’ Easter resurrection and His Second Coming

remind us of the expectation of our own bodily resurrection. And mixed with this great expectation is an increasing anticipation of Maranatha, which is an Aramaic word that has two special meanings. The first is said as maran atha which means Our Lord has come. The second is pronounced

as marana tha which is a prayerful plea for Our Lord to come again. This is a one-word prayer Christians have prayed since the first century anticipating the Second Coming of Jesus. Marana tha holds a sense of heartfelt yearning for His return, just as He promised (John 14:2-3; Matthew 24:27).

We live in an impatient 5G age of instant AI and Googled answers. Yet, believers are patiently waiting for Jesus’ return. Our Lord gave us multiple parables and accounts, too long to elaborate in this short article where he repeatedly said that He will come at an unexpected time, and, that many will sadly ignore His advice through indifference or saying that He is taking too long. These eternal words still caution us today, “So you must also be ready, because the Son of Man [Jesus] will come at an hour when you do not expect him.” (Matthew 24:44, NIV).

Jesus will come again because of His Easter resurrection victory over death. We are still patiently waiting, expecting and praying Maranatha—Even so, come Lord Jesus!

Maranatha,
Adelphos

Expectancy

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Sue Goble
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Easter messages

Easter is approaching and here in New Zealand we still celebrate it, but for many especially the emerging generations the historical reason is not known. So, whatever your beliefs let us tell our young the real story of Jesus Christ, a great story of Love, hope and mercy celebrated for over 2000 years by Christians all around the world.

Christ came from Heaven to earth to show us the way – how to live well and love one another. On Good Friday we remember that he lay his life down on a cross to pay for all our sin that we would be free from the penalty of our self-centred ways, free from guilt and shame. On Easter Sunday he rose from the dead bringing the greatest news of hope for humanity not only providing us with the power to love well but for believers’ assurance that life on this earth is not the end. One day we will see him face to face as we enter eternal life.

My prayer is that this Easter amongst all the fun of family get togethers, easter egg hunts and chocolate there will be a time when all can tell, reflect and embrace the hope of this great love story. Our world needs it more than anything!

*Jennie McCullough
Mission Enabler Opunake Cooperating Parish*

Jesus, God’s only son came into this world when most people’s hearts were far from God and sin was just about as black as could be. As he lived among men, he loved, healed and shared God’s message with those who were open to him and those who were not. The religious leaders of the day however, rejected him and his message, and one day he was led up Calvary’s mountain where he was nailed to a cross.

Suffering anguish, despised and rejected he bore the weight of the world’s sin upon himself so that we could be justified freely forever. His death on a cross conquered death and hell forever for those who believe. The grave could not hold him and when they rolled the stone away from the door, they did not understand that he had already risen.

When he appeared again to his followers and spent time with them, their eyes and hearts were opened as to the magnitude as to what had happened, and before he ascended he left them with the message that he would one day he would come again. From that time on his followers began to spread the message about what happened and how everyone could be made right in God’s eyes through what his son had done.

The same message continues to be told today throughout the earth. The free gift of salvation is available to us all. Will we receive it or reject it?

*The Wave Church
Opunake.*



On Good Friday April 3, members of Opunake churches will combine for the annual Walk of Witness which symbolises Jesus carrying his cross to his crucifixion. Assemble at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church at 8.30am the Walk visits each of Opunake’s four churches, returning to Our Lady Star of the Sea for a combined service.

We all have our own view of the world, what truth is, and what’s right and wrong. Jesus is universally recognised as a great teacher of how to see the world truly. Easter remembers the two key events of his life.

The first is the historical fact of his cruel death by crucifixion on Good Friday. It reminds us that if someone is challenging our prejudices, our self-centredness, our materialism, our rejection of God, and the ways we hold on to power, we will do our best to eliminate their voice rather than be open to change.

The second is the subversive rumour of his resurrection on Easter Sunday. If it is true, as Jesus’ followers have always claimed, then we know for sure, starting now and lasting forever, that life wins over death, hope wins over despair, forgiveness wins over revenge, love conquers hate, and that we have all found our way back to God.

This Easter, happy contemplating your world-view!
*Paul
St Barnabas*

My Easter preparation is in its early days but already two thoughts are shaping preparation. In our Catholic tradition we are reading Mark’s Gospel. The Gospel tells us that Jesus took Peter and James and John up a high mountain and gave them the experience of the Transfiguration and then later took the same three disciples with him into the Garden of Gethsemani. God the Father and Jesus gave those disciples enlightenment so they could deal with the darkness that Jesus’ passion and death would bring, so that they would recognize Resurrection, so that they could help their sisters and brothers to recognize Resurrection. God the Father, Jesus and the Holy Spirit gift us also, so that we will recognize the Resurrection that will lift us out of the darkness that we experience, so that we can help our friends and neighbours to recognize Resurrection.

The second thought comes from a reflection by Valerie Shultz. She talks about her struggles with judging others and how two sentences broke over her like dawn, like Resurrection, how they enlightened her. “Grace is when God gives us something we do not deserve. Mercy is when God does not give us what we do deserve”. We acknowledge the gifts of life and love, and all those who and all that which, sustains those gifts – Grace. We acknowledge that we often take those gifts for granted, that we lack gratitude, that we do not look at others and creation with the eye, the insight of Resurrection. We cease to hear Jesus saying, “Father forgive them, they do not know what they do” – Mercy.

May the blessing of Easter help you to recognise Resurrection as it enters your life and may the mercy you share bring Resurrection to life.

Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

Continued from page 2.

Celsius. There are just as many freight aircraft and unknown military aircraft flying. Ninety-two million people passed through Doha Airport in the last 12 months. Why? With today’s technology there is no valid reason for appearing in person.

All air travellers should pay a carbon tax on top of their fare-\$25-\$50 for every half hour of flight time. People work all year

building their castle and when they get a break they sod off, wasting their money in somebody else’s castle. Stay home and relax in your own castle. Plenty to see here.

Now back to the massive sheep problem. Millions is being spent ying to develop food for sheep that reduces their farting and as for us, I still enjoy Wattie’s Baked Beans

*Bruce Salisbury
Manaia*

proclaiming ‘Eretz’ Israeli property rights from the Nile to the Euphrates - half of Saudi Arabia, Iraq, Syria, Lebanon, Turkey, part of Egypt - and Rabbi Isser Z.Weisberg’s massaging Donald J. Trump as ‘the non-Jewish messiah chosen to establish kingdom over all mankind in Jerusalem,’ should have alarm bells ringing around parliament, given our government’s regard for stable leadership, mental health and ‘democratic rule of law.’

This messianic lunacy is not just hustle or theatre; it portends World War 3. It requires demolition of Jerusalem’s Dome on the rock and explains the eschatological savagery

of Israel’s Genocidal war in Gaza. It also explains the illegal, reckless, pre-emptive war against ‘Islamic theocracy’ in Iran, by the Judeo-Christian Mafia, under war criminal Netanyahu’s stated 40-year regime change plan.

We, the ‘enlightened’ west, are being led by psychiatric Zionist fanatics and, according to the Epstein files, an aged paedophile. Desperately unhealthy men taking us full bore to world war and what that will mean to our pretending otherwise, is anyone’s guess.

Whichever way we look at it, the genocidal

Continued on page 5

Just following orders no defence

US Ambassador Huckabee,

Letters to the Editor

In gastronomic proportions

It looks like our sheep farting is a major concern affecting global warming. Our own farting is another issue, but we’ll keep that in our pants for now.

No one gives a toss about what goes on at 30,000 feet. There are a minimum of 12,000 passenger jets in the air during the week and 17,000 on weekends. They are burning over a million barrels of aviation fuel every day with an exhaust temperature of 1700 degrees

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Letters to the Editor

Continued from page 4.

Roger Morris
Oeo

In defence of seabed mining

Debbie Ngarewa-Packer and her Te Pati Maori cohorts have destroyed the best opportunity for South Taranaki to clean up our coastline. From 1970 till 1981 Japan mined off our coast taking out the ironsands, silicas and other toxic minerals, and within 10 years the marine growth returned, making it the best area off the Patea/Waverley coast for kai.

Today all our sewage is poured into the South Taranaki Bight raw. No UV treatment or microfiltering. Our shellfish and crayfish feed on it.

Instead of saying "no" to seabed mining they should be saying "yes," and we will have half the royalties paid by the miners, which will amount to millions of dollars that could be put into coastal recovery and preservation.

There's also the many jobs created to support the operation.

I live in Manaia and when

I flush my solids down the toilet I sing a little jingle.

Bye Bye Bye.

You're on your way to Aussie.

I hope you like the move.

You're on your way to Aussie.

To join my other poos.

That's something to consider while sitting on your pan. Happy Movements. I mean Moments

Bruce Salisbury
Manaia.

Trump deserves nothing

Of course President would still think he deserves the Nobel Prize. So my question to his (illegible) followers, knowing there's quite a few around, what has he done to really deserve such an award. To me he has done absolutely completely and utterly nothing at all.

Since becoming president for the second time to me anything he's really done is to upset many political leaders around the world by trying to take land off them because he wants minerals to upgrade America's defence force and dictate to them that he should be running their country, while his communist friend Vladimir Putin still thinks he can take

over Ukraine, also for their minerals.

I cannot wait to see the day when finally Donald Trump and his Republican Party is finally defeated for good by the Democratic Party. (illegible) also that (illegible) attempts have been made on Trump's life , but if I'm not too wrong, someone (illegible)

(illegible) the Republican Party (illegible) dislikes him could assassinate him without him knowing despite how much security that's around all the time and a message to our kiwi followers of Donald Trump maybe they could pack up and join Trump in America for good.

Very similar to our PM

– he's like Trump and real (illegible) he' had no political experience as our PM any get (illegible) he is (illegible) by his life long friend John Key.

Tom Stephens, New Plymouth.

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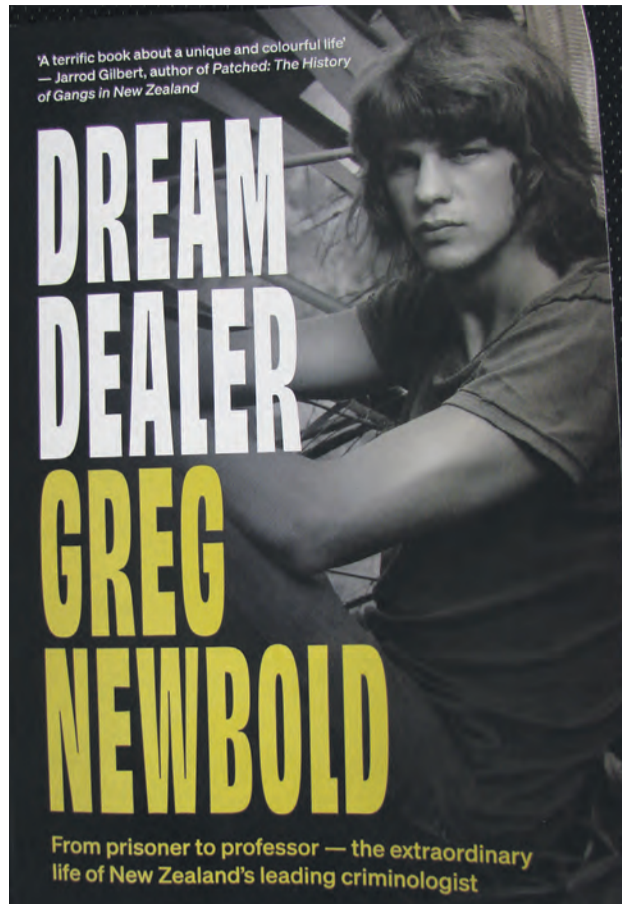
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Dream Dealer written by Greg Newbold - a book review

Published by Allen & Unwin *Dream Dealer* is an intriguing well-written autobiography about Greg Newbold, tracing his eventful life, which includes several years spent in prison to his life as a university lecturer and pioneering criminologist. The front cover states: From prisoner to professor – the extraordinary life of New Zealand's leading criminologist. The 298 page book is well-supported by illustrations and photographs. The opening paragraph outlines his arrival at Paremoro security prison in November 1975 where he has been sentenced to a seven and half year term. Born in 1951, he is just 24 years old and already a university graduate. He was arrested for attempting to sell 34 grams of heroin to a police informant. Greg's childhood was happy enough with devoted parents (Peter and June), but his mother gradually descended into alcoholism: 'But after the drinking

started arguments occurred more frequently and grew increasingly abusive. The marriage was now in trouble...' (page 33). The family first lived in Esmonde Road, North Shore near the home of Frank Sargeson 'the father of New Zealand literature' who used to stop and speak to them. A huge shock was June's parents and sister Dianne being killed in the Tangiwai disaster while travelling south to see June's newly born baby Rod. Upon a shift to Sunrise Avenue, Mairangi Bay in 1965 Greg attended Rangitoto College (third form). Tricks in class earned him a caning, but on the positive side he passed School Certificate biology with a B+, his highest grade. However, June was now mixing alcohol with her anti-depressants. In particular, 'driving home under the influence of alcohol and pills, started becoming dangerous.' (page 39). By 1967 the marriage was over and Peter left to join his new love interest a much



younger woman called Diane whom he later married. Now alone, June deteriorated further: '... there was Mum, head in the gutter, legs up on the back seat and completely blotto.' (page 43). Around this time Greg met his first girlfriend Cherry, but June didn't approve: '... one terrible thing she did when she was pissed one day was to burn all my diaries. ... she also burned all the beautiful oil and acrylic paintings I'd created as a child.' (page 46). There were more repercussions, he was also beaten up by Cherry's father and also by Cherry's other boyfriend, as well as being suspended from school (over the affair). The suspension was eventually revoked and

Greg was accredited with his University Entrance in all five subjects he had studied. With university in mind Greg got a job with the New Zealand Forestry Service (NZFS), which involved hunting deer and bush maintenance (eg cutting tracks, tree planting) as a hunter-workman in the Southern Ruahines. He spent time living in a hut with others under very basic conditions with scheduled leave revolving around the Woodville pub and too much drinking. After witnessing a violent incident in the confines of the hut, Greg resigned to return to Auckland and got as job (briefly) as a fire fighter. He enrolled at Auckland University for a Bachelor of Arts, majoring in anthropology. Returning home from a pop festival in Australia Greg had secreted a few marijuana seeds in his camera. With several seeds sprouting in baked bean tins the police came calling and they found these and also a small bag of marijuana.

Jim McLay (later National Party leader) was Greg's lawyer and, as a young first offender (aged 16 to 21), he was sentenced to time (3 months) in a Detention Centre. On appeal by McLay before the time was up this was replaced by Periodic Detention. Once released in September Greg was keen to resume his university studies, especially sociology a new unit. However, with his mother's drinking a disruptive issue he left home to go flatting. By the end of 1972 he was just one unit short of his degree. Cathy, his girlfriend, moved in with him. He started to use LSD, as well as marijuana. Next, he got involved in selling buddha sticks (highly potent marijuana). Soon, he was even injecting morphine into his blood vessels. He encountered drug dealer and mass murderer Terry Clark. "Getting busted was the best thing that could have happened to me." (page 113).

"In 1975 I was arrested and sent to jail. That was my lucky break." (page 115). Greg was caught by attempting to sell heroin to a police informant. After time in a remand facility, on November 11 1975 Greg was handcuffed to two other prisoners and put in a police van bound for Paremoro Prison in Auckland. For the next five months Greg was locked up 18 hours a day and, feeling stir crazy, his request for a different wing was allowed. He was allowed to continue his university studies for a Master of Arts (MA). His thesis, once completed was entitled *The Social Organisation of Prisons* (543 pages). Submitted in January 1978 the thesis was awarded with first class honours.

On February 27 1978 he was sent to the low security prison Hautu Prison camp, which has Mount Ruapehu as a scenic backdrop. While there he met Arthur

Allan Thomas who was wrongfully convicted for the murder of Harvey and Jeanette Crewe. They remain good friends. Aged 29, on July 11 1980 Greg was on his way to Auckland having been granted pre-release status. The pre-release hostel was at Kakariki Avenue. Mt Eden. While at the hostel Greg enrolled in a university paper on criminal law, ran a marathon and took up boxing. His reintroduction into society was greatly helped by Associate Professor Bill Hodge, an American. He worked a TEP job then was given an office in the Sociology Dept to start on his Ph D (doctorate) which dealt with the history of the maximum security prison in New Zealand. As background he read the 2,800 pages of his prison diaries. He wrote an autobiography *The Big Huey* (published 1982), which became a best seller. Greg's PhD draft was submitted in July 1986, a huge document at 695 pages. One of his examiners said it was the best PhD on the subject he'd ever read. After graduation as Dr Greg Newbold he won a lecturer's position at Canterbury University. He had many professional papers published and worked his way up to Emeritus Professor, finally retiring at the age of 69 (July 2020), a respected pioneer in the criminology field, having made a valuable contribution. Happily married to Lucy in 2012 he now lives in the Bay of Plenty.

Greg concludes, "I've had a wonderful life and today it's replete with happiness and fulfilment. At 74 I don't think I've ever been more content."

I thoroughly recommend this outstanding book about a man who overcame reverses to make a significant contribution to New Zealand.

Rolland McKellar

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The best thing about being a parliamentarian

One of the best things about being an MP is getting out to visit my electorate. I had the pleasure of spending a day down the coast and in Opunake recently, chatting to locals, visiting businesses and seeing what's new.

It was great to see the success of small businesses like Citizen Leather, Greencow Burger and Polly

Cleverly Art. Everywhere I went I felt the optimism and pride people have in their town.

I also stopped to check out the new Back Door Distillery (I was driving so didn't indulge, but my wife might have had one for me) and Four Square Opunake. New businesses in a town like this show confidence in the



DAVID MACLEOD MP
NEW PLYMOUTH

local market, drive progress and contribute to a thriving and vibrant main street that serves its community well.

Another sign of a humming community hub is well-run events. The recent Mountain to Sea bike ride

run by the Opunake Lions is a great example. Supported by many local businesses, farmers who open their gates, volunteers, bike riders and families, it's an event where people come together to make magic happen.

These things also contribute to the resiliency of your community. As I write this, fuel prices are still climbing. I know the impact this could have on everyone. Fuel is such a big, and necessary cost in our rural communities.

Even though there is sufficient fuel in the country for the next few weeks, these sharp increases are happening because fuel

companies are setting prices based on what it costs them to replenish their fuel stocks. The war in the Middle East is pushing those costs up. The Commerce Commission is watching fuel companies closely to ensure they are not using this situation to overcharge.

We believe the situation is serious enough that Government support for Kiwis is necessary. However, support will be disciplined and targeted to people in the most need, so we don't repeat the same cycle of higher debt and higher inflation that resulted from large-scale government spending during Covid.

There are likely to be further disruptions to fuel and supply chains. The government will provide what support it can and we'll keep you updated as the situation develops.

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

Follow facebook.com/davidmacleodmp to see when I'm next in Opunake and for my regular updates from our electorate.

David MacLeod, MP for New Plymouth.

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Many call for Luxon to condemn attacks on Iran by Trump and Israel

Thousands of people have signed a petition demanding Christopher Luxon stand up and condemn the illegal attacks on Iran by the United States and Israel. Greenpeace delivered the petition to opposition leader Chris Hipkins in Wellington today.

Standing on the steps of parliament, Greenpeace Aotearoa Executive Director Dr Russel Norman said, "This war is plainly illegal - it is not an act of self-defence nor is it sanctioned by the UN Security Council. "While we have come to expect that the US Government approach to international law is more honoured in the breach than the observance, nonetheless international law is critical for the security of everyone on the planet, but especially for a small nation like New Zealand.

"We expect Christopher Luxon to advocate in favour

of international law and hence condemn this reckless illegal war.

"Silence in the face of injustice is complicity, and thousands of New Zealanders agree that Luxon should be standing up to bullies like Trump, who is attempting to destroy any possibility of a rules-based international order."

Greenpeace delivered the petition to the Parliament Opposition who have been open about their condemnation of Trump's illegal war.

Greenpeace also made the link from this illegal war to the escalating price of fossil fuels.

"This illegal war has disrupted oil, gas and fertiliser supplies, exposing Luxon's Trump-like obsession with outdated fossil fuels, leaving New Zealanders paying the price," continued Dr Norman.

"Luxon has collapsed the



The petition being presented to the leader of the Labour party Chris Hipkins by Russel Norman.

EV market by killing the clean car discount, making it cheaper to import gas guzzling cars. He's ended public transport subsidies for young people, blocked funding for cycleways, but wants to spend billions of dollars to build new roads. "Now Luxon wants to expose us even further to the volatile global fossil

fuel market by charging New Zealanders a gas tax to build a LNG import terminal.

"The Luxon government should be investing in renewable energy and the electrification of transport to insulate New Zealanders from energy supply shocks and rising energy prices, as well as cutting climate pollution," says Dr Norman.

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Labour candidate all ears for the big issues



Amanda Clinton-Gohdes the Labour Party candidate for the New Plymouth electorate.

Labour candidate Amanda Clinton-Gohdes will be all ears during her campaign to become MP for the New Plymouth electorate.

“It is most important to listen attentively to what community members are saying. The last thing they need is public figures telling them what to do,” she says. “What our community wants is for someone who is a strong advocate, understands the issues and can be a strong voice in parliament.”

Amanda spent two terms as a New Plymouth District councillor and, during those six years, always listened to the needs of people – and advocated for action. “I was really proud of my role in increasing housing for the elderly,” she says.

During a council meeting she also tabled a motion opposing seabed mining, which was passed. This highlighted her proactive stance to protect the environment – something she would like to continue in Parliament. That’s why she was pleased to be chosen as the Labour

Party candidate for the New Plymouth electorate. “It is a real privilege. I’m really energised and excited to accept this role.” Her main opponent will be sitting MP David MacLeod

(National). The New Plymouth electorate stretches from Waitara to Ōpunake and inland to Egmont Village. Amanda is well-served by her university qualifications

in law and science, and a background in the education sector. These allow her a deep understanding of issues as they arise and all their implications.

“I can take a structured data-driven position with a range of issues.”

With legislative action proposed by the coalition government to deal with homelessness in urban areas, Amanda says it’s a complex issue. “But the question arises – moving the homeless people on to where exactly – the suburbs?”

“The government has worsened the situation with its social housing policy strictures, making it harder to get social housing.”


Amanda’s formative years were spent in a single parent family where things were tight financially. That means she understands, from a personal standpoint, the pressures many people face, economic and societal.

Amanda leads a busy life with her supportive partner and their young sons, something which she says helps her to understand how hard families are working day to day.

“Generally, I feel we are at the crossroads with people having more economic pressures and issues, as well as the need to protect the

environment.”

Facing such issues Amanda says she would be a strong advocate for positive change.



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Government drops plans to revive the live animal trade

Many are celebrating the news that the Government will not move forward with plans to reinstate live animal exports by sea, ensuring the ban on the trade remains in place at least for this parliamentary term.

Associate Agriculture Minister Andrew Hoggard confirmed that Cabinet had been unable to reach agreement on reviving the industry. SAFE CEO Debra Ashton says the announcement is a huge relief.

“Live export forces animals into gruelling journeys across oceans where they can spend weeks confined on crowded ships, exposed to extreme heat, distress, and injury,” says Ashton. “No animal should have to

endure that.” Ashton says the outcome reflects the strength of public opposition to the trade. “More than 57,000 people signed a petition in 2024 calling on the Government to protect the ban. New Zealanders made it clear they did not want to see animals shipped overseas on long and dangerous journeys.”

The Government had previously signalled it intended to revive the trade under what it described as a “gold standard” for animal welfare. Ashton says that promise was never credible. “There is no such thing as a ‘gold standard’ for shipping live animals across oceans. The risks are inherent to the trade itself.”

“No amount of regulation

can remove the suffering animals endure during weeks at sea or guarantee their welfare once they arrive overseas.” SAFE says it remains concerned that the minister responsible for animal welfare continues to support the trade.

“Live export has repeatedly been shown to put animals at significant risk,” says Ashton. “It raises serious questions about whether someone who supports this trade is the right person to hold the animal welfare portfolio.”

SAFE says the announcement will be welcomed by the tens of thousands of people who spoke up to defend the ban. “This is a moment to cel-

brate,” says Ashton.

“People across the country stood up for animals, and today those animals are safer because of it.”



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Why your best sleep - might not be my best sleep

What new research says about mood, movement, and why one-size-fits-all wellness advice may be a bit like using the same gumboots for everyone

If you have ever been told that everyone needs exactly eight hours of sleep, 10,000 steps a day, a green smoothie, a gratitude



RICHARD HALL

journal, and a sunrise walk to be mentally well, a new study may come as welcome news.

In other words, if your friend in Ōpunakē swears they feel marvellous after six and a half hours of sleep, while you need closer to eight and a half just to stop looking at people suspiciously before morning tea, you may both be right.

A large new study published in *JAMA Network Open* this month looked at 1,476 people seeking mental health care and found something both simple and important. Sleep, physical activity, and mood all affect each other, and they do not do so in exactly the same way for every person. The key message is that mental wellbeing may be a lot more personalised than the usual one-size-fits-all advice would suggest.

That will not surprise many people in Taranaki. We already know that not everybody works the same. Some people are up before sunrise, cheerful as a tui, mowing lawns and reorganising sheds before the rest of us have found the kettle. Others do not fully become human until about 10.15am and a second cup of coffee. Both can happily co-exist.

The study found “bidirectional” links between sleep, activity, and mood. That is the scientific way of saying they go both ways. Better sleep may support better mood. Better mood may make it easier to be active. Being active may help sleep. Poor mood can affect sleep. Poor sleep can drain motivation. It is less like a straight line and more like one of those roundabouts where no one is entirely sure who is meant to go first.

What stood out most was that people seemed to have their own “optimal” sleep duration for peak mood. In plain language, there appears to be a sweet spot, but it is not identical for everyone. Too little sleep was linked with worse mood afterwards, which will not shock anyone who has spent the night awake listening to the wind rattling the ranch slider. But interestingly, too much sleep beyond a person’s own best range was also linked to worse mood too.

That matters because wellness advice often gets delivered like a universal recipe. Sleep eight hours. Walk this much. Exercise that much. Go to bed at this hour. Wake at that hour. Ideally meditate while looking serene in activewear that costs more than your first car.

Real life, of course, is not quite so tidy.

One person may feel mentally stronger after seven hours of good sleep and a brisk dog walk on the beach. Another may need eight and a half hours, a slower start, and a potter in the garden. One person gets a lift from a decent bike ride. Another gets the same benefit from hanging washing out in a stiff Taranaki breeze and marching around the section after the recycling bin has blown over again.

That is not laziness. That is individuality.

Many people feel they are somehow failing at wellness because they cannot force

themselves into the routine that worked for someone else. Maybe they read about the miracle of 5am starts, ice baths, protein oats, and jogging with alarming levels of optimism, then compare that to their own life, which may involve children, shift work, stress, poor sleep, or simply being a normal human being.

This research suggests the better question may not be, “What is the perfect routine?” but “What tends to work best for me?”

That is a far more useful question. It is also a kinder one.

Instead of clinging to the idea that eight hours is the magic number for everybody, it may help to notice your own patterns. How much sleep leaves you feeling most steady, patient, and like yourself? How much movement seems to help your mood, and what kind? A punishing boot-camp class might energise one person and make another want to fake their own disappearance.

That is where the study becomes practical. It points towards more personalised behavioural advice. That does not need to mean expensive biohacking equipment or a smartwatch that disapproves of your lifestyle choices.

You can start by becoming a bit of a detective in your own life.

Notice how your mood is after different amounts of sleep. Notice whether a short walk improves your headspace. Notice whether being indoors all day makes you feel stale and scratchy. In short, observe your own system the way a good farmer watches the land, the stock, and the weather instead of relying only on what a textbook says should be happening.

Taranaki people are generally pretty good at practical wisdom. We know the mountain can look calm while the weather does something completely different by lunchtime.

Human wellbeing is a bit like that too. General advice is useful, but local conditions matter.

And your “local conditions” include your age, health, stress load, personality, responsibilities, and what season of life you are in.

Perhaps the nicest part of this research is that it gives people permission to stop treating themselves like failed versions of somebody else’s ideal routine.

Maybe your best mental-health formula is not the one from social media. Maybe it is seven hours and a walk with the dog. Maybe it is eight and a half hours, no doom-scrolling after 9pm, and some gardening. Maybe it is an evening swim, a solid laugh, and not volunteering for quite so many things in one week.

The point is not perfection. It is pattern.

So the next time someone confidently tells you that everybody needs exactly the same sleep, the same steps, and the same schedule, you can smile politely and carry on.

It turns out your body and mind may have their own preferred settings.

And frankly, that sounds a lot more realistic than pretending we are all running on the same operating system.

Richard Hall, www.mindsupport.co.nz, Ōpunakē



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Citizen Leather founder inspires at BPW Hāwera Dinner Meeting

Business Professional Women (BPW) Hāwera members and guests gathered on Wednesday March 18 at Someday Café for a powerful and inspiring evening with Ōpunake entrepreneur and maker Layla Cann, founder of Citizen Leather. Her story captured attention from the outset, highlighting not only her creative journey, but also her deep commitment to reducing waste in a fast-paced, consumer-driven world.

Since launching Citizen Leather in 2009, Layla has built a business grounded in purpose—transforming discarded, high-quality leather into beautifully crafted, long-lasting bags. Beginning with little formal sewing experience, she developed her skills through determination, experimentation, and resilience, all while balancing the demands of family life. Her journey is a testament to what passion and perseverance can achieve.

A central message of the evening was the importance of valuing quality over



From left Anna Dunlop-Paaka, a member of Business Professional Women (BPW), Hāwera thanking Layla Cann for her speech about Citizen Leather. Anna is holding a delicious bottle of fruit juice from The Fine Lime company.

convenience. Layla spoke about the significant amount of leather and textiles sent to landfill simply due to changing trends or minor imperfections. Through her work, she challenges this cycle—breathing new life into materials such as jackets and furniture, while preserving their history and character.

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sourced, designed, and made, every Citizen Leather piece reflects a commitment to sustainability and local craftsmanship. Layla emphasised the importance of working locally to reduce environmental impact and strengthen connections between maker and customer.

Guests were also introduced to a locally made

lime and apple juice from Hāwera, adding a refreshing touch to the evening.

Layla's values strongly resonated with BPW's mission to empower women through connection, learning, and opportunity. Attendees left inspired, reminded of the impact thoughtful choices—and determined women—can

make. BPW Hāwera meets like-minded women to every third Wednesday at connect and grow. Email Someday Café, welcoming bpw.hawera@gmail.com.

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South Taranaki District moves to Level 1 water restrictions

South Taranaki District Council is introducing Level 1 water restrictions from Wednesday 18 March 2026. With little recent rainfall, no meaningful rain expected through the end of March, and stream and river levels sitting low for this time of year, this step is necessary to protect the health of local water sources.

Level 1 restrictions mean all unattended hoses, sprinklers, pool filling, lawn watering, and residential irrigation systems are banned, and apply district wide. Hand held hoses may be used early in the morning or in the evening on the odds and evens system — even numbered houses on even calendar dates and odd numbered houses on odd calendar dates between 6pm – 8am.

“Level 1 restrictions are a good reminder for our community to use water wisely,” says South

Taranaki District Council works delivery manager Rahul Sharma. “While summer might be over, the downward trend in river levels due to reduced rainfall is clear. Taking this proactive step now helps protect our water supply so there is enough to go around.”

These small, practical adjustments, taken collectively, help ensure the district continues to manage its water responsibly over the late summer period, especially as river levels approach resource consent thresholds.

Residents can also help by looking for, and fixing, any leaks on your property or farm. All water savings can make a difference.

Restrictions will remain in place until further notice.

Ways to help conserve water include:

- Avoid unnecessary outdoor watering

- Use the odds/evens system for permitted hand-held hose use

- Check taps, pipes, and outdoor fittings for leaks and repair them promptly

- Run full loads when washing clothes and dishes

- Reduce how often you wash your car or boat

- Domestic users, farms, and industry are also asked to use water sparingly.

- Don't hose down driveways or buildings

- Report any leaks in the public system to 0800 111 323

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COASTAL CURIOSITIES

Marble games in NZ history

The history of marbles in New Zealand is deeply rooted in the cultural and social fabric of the country. The game has been played since ancient times and was a common children's game in the 19th and 20th centuries. It used to be popular in school yards. The game has also been played in various forms across different cultures, with

archaeological evidence showing its popularity in Lithuania since the Middle Ages. The game's evolution and popularity have been influenced by various factors including the availability of marbles and the cultural context of each society. **Collectible marbles and their popularity**
Collectible marbles have gained popularity as a hobby



and investment due to their rarity, beauty and historical significance. The demand for these marbles is driven by their unique designs, intricate craftsmanship and the desire to own a piece of vintage art. Whether you're a collector or just enjoy playing with marbles, the market for collectible marbles is thriving, with many rare and antique pieces fetching high prices at auction.

Cecilia's on Tasman, Opunake have jars and shoe boxes of collectible marbles.
Cecilia's on Tasman.

Home cooks could be protecting themselves from dementia

Older people who cook a meal from scratch at home at least once a week may have a lower risk of developing dementia, according to Japanese research. The researchers collected data on how frequently 10,978 Japanese people cooked meals at home, as well as how skilled they were in the kitchen. Over six years of follow-up, 11% of them developed dementia. The researchers found that cooking at least once a week was linked to a 23% lower risk of dementia in men and a 27% lower risk in women. Cooking frequently without having many cooking skills was linked to especially high protection against dementia they add. The researchers say activities required to cook meals including prolonged standing and leaving the house to get groceries are likely contributing to this link, and those who find cooking more difficult but do it anyway are likely keeping their brain active. The researchers say that while it's unclear if this link would apply outside Japanese food culture, it's possible that helping older people stay in the kitchen longer could be important for preventing dementia.

Current Biology

Marbles. The game for all ages.

As whale populations recover, older males sing more

Scientists studying humpback whales in the South Pacific have found that as they recover from commercial whaling, older males' reproductive tactics are getting more successful. The researchers looked at humpbacks in the breeding grounds of New Caledonia over 19 years, over which

time the male population in the study area grew five-fold, and shifted from being mostly young to a more even distribution across age groups. When the whale population was larger, older males were more often seen singing and escorting a female - behaviours linked with reproduction - and had more success in becoming fathers.

The authors suggest the success of younger males when the population was smaller could have helped "buffer" the loss of genetic diversity, at a time when it was critical.

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Your friendly local barber on the coast

The Coastal Barber is not just a place to get your hair cut. It's somewhere you can chill out and open up. Third generation barber Sean Horscroft has been cutting hair in Opunake since December. Based on Longfellow Road across the road from the High School he operates out of a purpose-built studio next to the home he and wife Kristie have been living in since they arrived in Opunake from Hamilton in September last year.

"When the flag's out and the gate's open, we're open," says Kristie.

Opening hours are Tuesday-Friday 9am-5pm and Saturday 9am-12pm. Appointments can be made by phoning Sean 02041792410, or via Facebook link, or simply dropping in where a friendly greeting is guaranteed from Sean, not to mention Sean and Kristie's two dogs, Maple, their whippet-cross bull terrier, and a French bulldog called Colin.

Skilled in all aspects of hair cutting, barbering is something Sean has always done. Think the kind of barber we all remember from our younger days. Sean says he's surprised at the way the "young ones" have come in and opened up to him.

They started the Coastal Barber because they felt it would fill a need in town.



Sean the Coastal barber.

Kristie said there was nothing in the community outside of the local hairdressers, who when people came into town during the summer months had been prepared to send people their way, "when guys came in and just wanted a hair shave."

Outside of cutting hair, Sean likes surfing, fishing and building, which is another line of work he has been involved in.

Sean and Kristie have two of their children still at home, one attending the High School and the other

the Primary School. Sean is originally from Hawke's Bay, while Kristie is originally from Taranaki, having grown up in Bell Block.

Kristie says they were attracted to Opunake by the house prices, and they always wanted to live by the coast.

"We wanted somewhere with a fresh breeze," she says. She's also been able to catch up with relations, including uncles from her mother's side she hadn't seen in 20 years.

They are also enjoying the lifestyle.

"My daughter was playing netball at 8pm last night. You couldn't do that in

Hamilton," says Kristie. They also appreciate the family-focused events like Americana and the Christmas Eve Christmas Parade.

"We've been overwhelmed with the response from the community. They've been awesome. Yesterday we had someone turn up with a pumpkin," she said.

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New Plymouth Motorcycles sells to new owner

New Plymouth Motorcycles has a new owner Derek Hosking selling his business after 65 years in the motorcycle trade.

Grant Woolford has bought the former New Plymouth Motorcycles, now known as Cyclespot Taranaki. Grant who lives in Auckland currently owns motorcycle shops in Auckland and Wellington. The New Plymouth shop will be his third.

He has known Derek for around 30 years he says. They first met in Europe when they were both doing an Alpine Star trip.

One of the attractions of buying the business was being able to venture into new brands of bikes which he's been unable to do in his other two businesses in Auckland and Wellington, says Grant. He'll be doubling the number of brands to six adding to the existing Suzuki, Triumph and Kawasaki brands a further three, Indian, CF Moto and Royal Enfield.

"We feel there's a huge opportunity to look after the farmer with ATVs, side by side DMs and two wheel farm bikes," says Grant. His apprenticeships were all in farm bike shops and he went on to own a farm bike

shop in Warkworth where he started his apprenticeship.

He feels the added brands will give their customers a choice.

Grant grew up on a deer farm in Dairy Flat, north of Auckland and has been in the motorbike industry for 35 years, the last 28 in business for himself.

"Since I was 17 - It's all I've ever done," says Grant. "I'm deep into motorcycles," he comments.

"It's given me a great life," he continues looking back adding he's met people from all over the world.

From Siberia in Russia, to the outback of Australia he's been everywhere, often by motorcycle.

Dirt bike racing and road bike racing are also interests. He's also raced in the Bert Munro for the last 14 years.

As well as selling and servicing, Cyclespot will be selling second hand bikes and also have a huge range of accessories.

While he's been negotiating buying the New Plymouth business Grant's been spending time in New Plymouth and "getting acquainted with the food" he

says. He's also been really impressed with the people.

"The people are just amazing," he says. He feels he could "fit in nicely here".

He will of course however continue to reside in Auckland. Andrew Foot will be running the New Plymouth shop as Dealer Principal.

Four of the former staff of New Plymouth Motorcycle have been retained plus another three have been employed and Grant hopes to employ another. "We always employ local," he adds.

There was an official opening of Cyclespot on Thursday evening March 5 to meet customers and also show off their shop which has had a bit of a facelift and to also meet customers. This has included adding a new ceiling. The floor has also been re-grounded and the interior rearranged with the parts computer moved to the back of the shop.

Derek is officially retired but, Grant quips with a grin, "He's been in most days to make sure they're doing a good job."



ABOVE:

Derek Hosking flanked by new owner Grant Woolford (right) and at left shop manager Andrew Foot.

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65 years selling bikes

Selling motorcycles for 65 years has been "a long road" and "a good road" says Derek Hosking reflecting on his long career in the motorcycle business.

Derek has just sold his business New Plymouth Motorcycles.

His long career in motorbikes has certainly been a highly successful one judging by its longevity. He once received an award from Triumph for selling the most motorcycles per head of population worldwide.

He got his motorcycle licence at the age of 15 when still at school. On leaving school, he trained as an automotive mechanic serving his apprenticeship at Phillips Ford in New Plymouth.

He started out in business in Brougham Street in 1969, just up from the taxi rank, selling Yamaha and Triumph motorbikes. He recalls the rent was 12 pounds a week in premises leased off the Salvation Army next to their chapel. He and his business partner were there for two years.

They next moved to Queen Street beside White Star buses just down from the Govett Brewster Art Gallery in premises that



Derek in his office. at New Plymouth Motorcycles.

were once an old flour mill, one of four which operated in pioneer days. The rough stonework in the basement of the business which they bought off the old Ridd Company was a fascinating and visible record of its long gone history. Derek also found some old letters in the basement, one by a satisfied cow cocky dated 1918 about his new Ridd milker which

Derek kept and makes for amusing reading. It has been reproduced (at right) as it was written courtesy of Derek who gave us a copy.

They needed even more room however the business having grown steadily so the next move was to found a second motorcycle business Yamaha Kawasaki.

They ran both shops but eventually closed one down,

50-60 quads at a time." He'd sell around 700 bikes a year with regular trips to Japan to replenish stock.

Working for five and a half days a week which included opening on Saturday morning it's been a busy life. He remembers for example leaving work in the early evening to deliver a bike to Tauranga and having to get to work at the usual time the next day.

Over his many years in the motorcycle business Derek observes motorbikes are "safer now" with features such as ABS breaking. They're also faster. The biggest bike he's stocked was a 2500cc.

Though sales can fluctuate and can depend on who is in government - he has harsh words for past Labour Governments - its clearly been a very sound business

with Derek at the helm.

His perceptive observations on a variety of subjects which he entertainingly espouses is no doubt a factor in its success.

Derek has sold the business to Grant Woolford and says, "He'll be good for the province."

He said he would like to thank the Taranaki people for their support.

Derek's wife Leonie who said tributes had come from all over when people knew Derek was selling.

As for Derek future plans, they include doing the jobs around the house he's "neglected for years" which Leonie has been totalling up and, doing a bit of fishing.

We wish Derek and Leonie who has also played a large role in the business in the past, our very best wishes for the future.

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A letter dated 1918 found in the basement of their new motorcycle premises in Queen Street.

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An advert (reduced in size) for New Plymouth Motorcycles that appeared in the Sunday Express, October 29, 1972.

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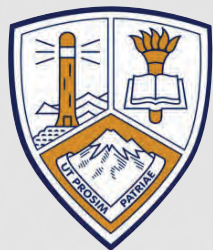
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Our students have launched into their academic learning with reports on biodiversity, statistics, whare tapa wha, and sporting technique being investigated, and composed. Not to mention some breathtaking portfolio boards being designed, and the beginnings of our musical performance (to be performed later in the year) starting to take shape.

From music to murals, agriculture to algebra our tamariki on the coast have the opportunity to experience it all, so that they can future proof themselves for the ever changing employment landscape.

I would like to thank our dedicated, driven and dynamic teachers here at Ōpunakē High School, and to that end farewell our wonderful, smiling, soccer playing chemistry teacher Godfrey Hlahla who is moving on to continue his studies of science. Here at Ōpunakē High School we don't only grow good students, but also really good staff!

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Senior Girls	Taylah Gargan		Alicia Hurly		Taylah Gargan	
Senior Boys	Kianu Wallace		Kymani Parata		Hadlee Marsh	



Call to dig in for landmark garden celebration

Taranaki's green-fingered folk can have a dress rehearsal for the Centuria Taranaki Garden Festival's 40th anniversary next year.

Festival manager Jessica Parker says those new gardeners and earlier entrants, keen to be part of the 2027 milestone celebration, may want to consider taking part this year in preparation.

"We're always interested to talk to gardeners, new and former entrants," says Jessica.

"There's a lot of gardens out there that used to be in the festival, and their owners may have retired or they may have sold the property.

"The new owners of these gems, which are throughout the whole region, may just be interested in coming back into the festival – whether it be this year, in the future or for the 40th anniversary."

Jessica wants to get the message out now, especially to those garden owners who may be hesitant about opening their gates for the 10-day festival on from 30 October to 8 November this year, and 29 October to 7 November in 2027.

For shy gardeners she has encouraging words about



Taranaki Maunga reflected in the kitchen window of Jenny and Guy Oakley's Manaia home. Jenny, renowned for her hanging baskets, has been in the Centuria Taranaki Garden Festival every year since it began. Photo credit Jenny Oakley.

coming forward.

"What I find is so many of our gardeners, who have got a passion and love for gardens and gardening and the space they've created think their gardens wouldn't be good enough to open for New Zealand's longest-running garden festival.

"And quite honestly, I'd say 95% of the time, that's not the case. We love to see new gardens, and we love to see gardens in development coming through."

Opening this year is a great opportunity to prepare for the 40th celebrations – and Jessica suggests, gently, that people "dob in" a gardener with a glorious place to share.

Being in the festival is

also about giving back to Taranaki.

"So many of our gardeners, in fact a large proportion, love the contribution that opening their garden makes to our community and the region as a whole," says Jessica.

The festival attracts many visitors from out of the region, who spend money on accommodation, retail, hospitality, plants and more, significantly contributing to the GDP each year. Last year that figure was \$4.7 million.

"So our gardeners actually really enjoy sharing their space, bringing pleasure to the visitors, and helping our community and region to prosper."



Poor knights lillies flank the steps down to the couple's tennis court. Jenny is a trained horticulturalist.

Photo credit: Dove Juneau.

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Joint chief executive announced for TRC and NPDC

New Plymouth District Mayor Max Brough has announced Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) Chief Executive Steve Ruru as NPDC's interim Chief Executive, a role that he will hold alongside his existing position at TRC.

Both NPDC and TRC agreed in principle to share a Chief Executive at respective council meetings and Mayor Max says the appointment strengthens

both organisations at a pivotal time for local government and Mr Ruru's extensive experience will be invaluable.

"By working together through shared leadership, both councils will be better positioned to respond to upcoming reform and prepare for the future of local government.

"Importantly, today's announcement reflects our commitment to stable local



Steve Ruru.

government leadership, strong partnerships in the region and delivering for our communities now and into the future."

Regional Council Chairperson, Craig Williamson welcomed the announcement.

"Steve understands the complexity of regional functions, the operational realities of territorial

authorities, and the critical importance of collaboration between the two. He is the perfect person for the job."

Mr Ruru says he is looking forward to the opportunity and to exploring how the councils can work more closely for the benefit of Taranaki communities.

"The vacancy at NPDC provides an opportunity to pilot an innovative leadership approach in the region. Joint leadership gives us a strong platform to examine service models that could better serve

Taranaki. This work will benefit both organisations and, most importantly, the communities we serve."

Mr Ruru will take over from Gareth Green, who concludes his three-year

tenure at NPDC in the coming weeks and will be in the role while NPDC is recruiting a permanent Chief Executive.

He says this will give both councils time to progress work on evaluating how service delivery and community outcomes can be improved as part of the wider Simplifying Local Government reforms.

"My focus will be on preparing both organisations for the future. I'm passionate about the role of local government in supporting our communities, and I am committed to ensuring both councils remain well positioned through this period of transition."

Details on how Mr Ruru will split his time between

the two organisations is still to be finalised.

Steve has been Chief Executive at the Taranaki Regional Council since 2020, having previously served in the same role at the Southland, Kaipara and Thames-Coromandel district councils.

He has held governance roles with Milford Sound Tourism, Lakes District Health Board and the Department of Corrections. Of Ngati Raukawa and Ngati Ranginui descent, Steve was awarded a Bachelor of Management Studies from the University of Waikato, and is a Chartered Accountant Fellow (FCA) with Chartered Accountants Australia and New Zealand.

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No u-turn to petrol for New Zealand EV owners

New research from Consumer NZ shows an overwhelming 96% of electric vehicle (EV) owners would buy another EV, confirming strong satisfaction among current owners.

Consumer has released findings from its latest car reliability and satisfaction survey, representing responses from 5,791 members and supporters collected in November and December 2025.

"This survey canvassed car owner experiences, providing insights into preferred engines, brand performance, reliability and overall owner satisfaction," says Consumer NZ chief executive Jon Duffy.

While petrol vehicles continue to dominate the nation's roads, making up 59% of cars New Zealanders own, the landscape is shifting. The share of EVs and plug-in hybrids (PHEVs) has grown from



EV owners make the switch.

12% in 2023 to 17% in 2025. Hybrid ownership has also risen significantly, increasing from 10% to 15% over the same period.

"This indicates a gradual but growing shift towards going electric on our roads," says Duffy.

Over half of EV owners made the switch with the anticipation of lower running costs, and 81% of current owners say their operating costs are much cheaper. Environmental considerations were also a key factor.

"Our research found that one of the more affordable electric vehicle brands

ranked highly when it came to price and reliability, outstripping performance on some better-known petrol brands," says Duffy.

However, despite 56% of EV owners wanting lower running costs, 29% kept the same power plan after buying an EV, even though they would now be using more energy.

"This highlights the importance of heading to Powerswitch to the find the best deal for your energy needs. There are significant savings to be made on power by shopping around," says Duffy.

The survey also explored

how drivers feel about vehicle safety technology. Reversing cameras and sensors topped the list as respondents' most valued safety features, while lane-keeping assist was ranked the most annoying.

For more insights into New Zealand's best and worst cars, including reliable motoring, owner satisfaction, maintenance and repair costs, and the recipients of Consumer NZ's annual People's Choice awards, see the full survey results at consumer.org.nz/products/car-reliability

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Black spots on Surf Highway aired at board meeting

Whanganui MP Carl Bates' successful advocacy for a cell phone tower in Patea could be a model for cellphone coverage on the coast, it was suggested at the latest meeting of the Taranaki Coastal Community Board.

"The cell phone coverage in this area is atrocious," Chris Harvey told the board at their March 11 meeting which was held at the Oaonui Hall. "Carl Bates got a cellphone tower for Patea. Shouldn't we be lobbying (New Plymouth MP) David MacLeod for one in Rahotu?"

The Opunake and Coastal News reporter noted "No Service" showing on his

phone at one point during the meeting. Chris told him after the meeting that it was not unusual for cellphone coverage to drop out three times while driving along the Surf Highway.

Deputy mayor Cr Rob Northcott said the Council had been lobbying for better cellphone coverage in Patea and Carl's involvement had "moved it along." He suggested people along the coast lobby David MacLeod. "The more people lobbying the better."

Chris said he had contacted David MacLeod's office and been told he was the first person to have brought up this issue.

Cr Northcott said better cellphone coverage was something that Mayor Phil Nixon had been lobbying for.

Chris Harvey also brought up the matter of policing on the coast and said the coast seemed to be overrepresented in crime and bad behaviour. One example of this was a recent confrontation between police and people attending a car meet on Kina Road. He noted that in one 18-month period there had been three murders in the Opunake area.

Cr Northcott said he and Mayor Nixon regularly meet with senior police to discuss issues to deal with local

crime.

Board deputy chair Monica Willson said she had been told police resources are allocated on the basis of crime statistics.

"The biggest problem is apathy among the community about making reports," she said. "People need to report so they can get the resources."

In other matters brought up in the Open Forum part of the meeting Lisa Ison said she wanted to see more No Freedom Camping signs on country roads leading to the coast.

Manaia resident Diane Anderson commented on "rubbishy trees" obstructing

the view of traffic coming from the direction of Kaponga at the intersection of Tauhuri and Karaka Streets.

"Traffic buzzes through there really fast," she said.

Manaia issues also came up during the main part of the meeting. South Taranaki District Council group manager community services Rob Haveswood said the Council is looking at tenders for the demolition of the Manaia and District War Memorial Hall. There

had been a community drop-in session organised by the community board where this was among the matters discussed. Other issues included the lack of a bus shelter. Kirsty Meynell said the hall offers some shelter for students waiting for their bus to turn up, but this would be gone after the hall was demolished. Local residents had also spoken about the state of the town's footpaths and trees, as well as staffing levels at the town's swimming pools.

Community Board say yes to Gardens application- but knock two others back

The Taranaki Coastal Community Board declined two of the three district-wide funding applications that came before it at their most recent meeting held at Oaonui on March 11. These were applications that had been sent to each of the four community boards in the South Taranaki District.

"Do you feel we have enough information?" asked board chair Andy Whitehead. "If they are going to ask for thousands of dollars then they need to come to each individual board."

"I feel we've missed the opportunity to ask questions of the applicants," said board deputy chair Monica Willson.



The funding application by the Taranaki Garden Trust was the only successful district-wide application coming before the Taranaki Coastal Community Board.

The subject of Community Board funding had come up earlier in the meeting. South Taranaki District Council policy project coordinator Tanille Drysdale was giving a presentation on the three year review of the Long Term Plan. For this year's Annual Plan there was a predicted 6.2% rates increase, but a workshop with councillors was looking at getting this number down to around 5.9%. Andy Whitehead asked if this could affect the amount of discretionary funding which community boards could allocate. South

Taranaki District Council group manager community services Rob Haveswood said this had been looked at but it had been decided not to do anything, although there had been a reduction last year. The introduction of rate caps would also need to be considered, with South Taranaki looking at a potential four per cent rate cap.

Deputy mayor Rob Northcott said Community Board funding was a last resort, so he would encourage groups to seek funding from elsewhere before coming to the community boards.

The first application from Sustainable Taranaki was declined, after the Eltham-Kaponga Community

Board had voted \$1500 and Te Hawera had voted \$2000. Cr Janet Fleming said the money being asked for looked too much like a wage, which is ineligible for funding.

An application from Horses Helping Humans was also knocked back after Eltham-Kaponga had voted \$2060 and Te Hawera had declined funding. Monica Willson said it appeared their only funding was to come through the community boards.

"We're a last resort, not the initial funding provider. It's a fantastic service and lots of rangatahi have benefitted. This is not a judgment on them."

Board member Kirsty Meynell also said the money

being asked for with this application looked too much like a wage.

The board voted \$1792 for the Taranaki Garden Trust after Eltham-Kaponga had voted \$1300 and Te Hawera voted \$1500. Andy Whitehead said this reflected the number of participating gardens from the Taranaki Coastal Ward in the Taranaki Fringe Garden Festival.

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PSA calls on MPs to sign pledge to stop cuts to holidays and pay for thousands of workers

The PSA is calling on all MPs to sign a pledge promising to oppose a law change that will slash the pay and leave entitlements of tens of thousands of working people being debated in Parliament.

The first reading of the Employment Leave bill, which seeks to replace the Holidays Act, was recently held.

Under the bill employees who regularly work overtime or pick up extra hours will have less leave than they do under the current law. Any work outside of 'contracted hours' will not accrue sick or annual leave.

"We are asking all MPs from each party in Parliament to sign a pledge that they will not support any changes that will leave workers worse off," said Fleur Fitzsimons,

National Secretary for the Public Service Association Te Pūkenga Here Tikanga Mahi.

"Most MPs from across the political spectrum like to think they come to Wellington to make the lives of New Zealanders better, not worse, so we are hopeful our pledge will get wide support."

"Anybody who works irregular hours or gets irregular pay will suffer if these changes are passed. No MP should support these changes, and this pledge is a chance for them, as individual decision-makers representing communities all over New Zealand, to show the public whether they stand for working people."

The PSA represents many of the people who would be worse off, including those

working in hospitals, those caring for mental health patients, corrections officers, staff keeping our borders secure, care and support workers looking after our most vulnerable, and library workers running the beating hearts of our communities.

"These people all undertake vital work supporting communities up and down New Zealand and keeping us safe. How is cutting leave entitlements fair in a cost-of-living crisis when household budgets are under more pressure than ever?" said Fitzsimons.

"Part time workers are particularly badly affected, many of whom are women.

This is the latest war on women from a Minister and Government that cancelled pay equity settlements in the dead of night with no prior notice."

The bill will cut the amount many workers are paid while on leave. Leave pay won't account for commissions, bonuses, or occasional allowances, and if you take leave for a shift where you'd paid more than one rate, you'll get the lowest rate for the entire period of leave.

The Government is also proposing cutting leave for people who've been on ACC compensation, and no longer providing a full day in lieu for people working shorter

shifts on public holidays.

"This so-called attempt to simplify leave entitlements is simply giving a leg up to exploitation - employers will take more from workers while giving less in return," said Fitzsimons. "This is just more from a government prioritising the profits of its business mates over the pay of workers."

"Let's not forget that on top of cancelling pay equity, workers are suffering after the Government has suppressed minimum wage rises, stripped away their job security, and is also trying to undermine their health and safety."

"Working people deserve

holidays, and they deserve to be paid properly for them. The PSA will campaign against this attack on leave entitlements and make sure everyone knows how this bill would leave so many people worse off.

"We are also reaching out to New Zealand First and its leader Winston Peters, who has repeatedly claimed to support the interests of working people. He had a chance to block the Fire at Will Bill and didn't help working people then. We hope now he can work constructively with unions to stop this latest anti-worker bill."

Planting mānuka might bring birds, bats and insects back to farms

Research led by mānuka honey company Comvita has found that 5 years after replanting a farm's grazing fields with mānuka, there was a similar variety of animals living there to in decades-old mānuka. Scientists also recorded more bat calls in the 5-year-old mānuka than in the fields, and found that a stream near



Mānuka. a mānuka forest on the farm was cleaner, with more water critters than one in the fields. While they only looked at one farm, the scientists say converting

grazing fields into mānuka forests for honey collecting could have positive effects on the ecosystem *New Zealand Journal of Ecology*



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Tender closes Thursday 16 April, 4.00pm at 51 Devon Street West, New Plymouth (no prior sale)
View Sunday 29 March 1.00-2.00pm www.harcourts.co.nz/L33977586



Cath Matthews
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View Sunday 29 March 2.15-2.45pm www.harcourts.co.nz/L26326340



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

Easter Holiday Kerbside Collection

Kerbside collection will continue as normal over the public holiday, so please put your bins out on your usual day.
Visit www.southtaranaki.com/easter for more information on Council facility open hours.

Upcoming Meetings

Water Services Committee
Monday 30 March, 1pm

Risk and Assurance Committee
Wednesday 1 April, 1pm

Ordinary Council
Wednesday 15 April, 4pm

Eltham-Kaponga Community Board
Tuesday 28 April, 10.30am
Taumata Recreation Centre
Preston Street, Eltham

Te Hāwera Community Board
Tuesday 28 April, 4pm
Hāwera Senior Citizens Association
81 Victoria Street, Hāwera

Taranaki Coastal Community Board
Wednesday 29 April, 10.30am
Manaia Golf Club, Bennett Drive,
Manaia

Pātea Community Board
Wednesday 29 April, 4pm
Aotea Utanganui, 127 Egmont
Street, Pātea

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



Council urges residents to dispose of batteries and vapes safely after two fires

Council is urging residents to take extra care when disposing of batteries, vapes, and any items containing batteries, following two recent fires at the Hāwera Transfer Station.

Council's Environment and Sustainability Manager Cindy Koen says both fires were caused by vapes containing batteries being placed in kerbside rubbish bins.

"While our crews were able to contain the fires quickly, they highlight just how dangerous these items can be when they're thrown out with general rubbish," says Cindy. "Batteries are found in everyday portable, rechargeable devices, which is why they so often end up in household rubbish by mistake."

How to safely dispose of batteries and vapes:

- Drop off batteries, battery embedded or small devices at Battery Collection Stations at the Hāwera Administration Building or at the Eltham/Ōpunakē/Pātea LibraryPlus.
- Small quantities (up to 500g) of household batteries can be taken to the Hāwera Transfer Station for free.
- Return used vapes to participating stores that offer a take-back programme.
- Dispose of larger volumes of batteries, vapes, and battery embedded devices at the Hāwera Transfer Station for a small fee.

Residents who are unsure can visit www.southtaranaki.com/recyclingsearch to find the correct disposal method for their battery items.

Most common items that contain batteries:

- Mobile phones and smartphones
- Laptops and tablets
- Power banks/portable chargers
- Wireless earbuds and headphones
- E-readers (Kindles)
- Digital cameras and camcorders
- Electric toothbrushes
- Rechargeable shavers and hair trimmers
- Handheld vacuum cleaners
- Cordless power tools (drills, sanders, hedge trimmers, etc.)
- Vapes / e-cigarettes
- Electric scooters, bikes, and skateboards
- Drones and remote-control toys
- Camping lanterns and rechargeable torches
- Bluetooth speakers
- Smartwatches and fitness trackers
- Car key fobs

\$5.9m Pātea Water Treatment Plant Upgrade Underway

Work on the Pātea Water Treatment Plant upgrade has now begun, marking an important step in improving the town's water quality and treatment capacity. The \$5.92million upgrade is expected to continue through to late 2026 and will future-proof water supply for the community.



South Taranaki Business Park reaches major milestone

The South Taranaki Business Park achieved a significant milestone in February with the completion of "the quadrant". After almost two years of construction and extensive planning before that, Fitzgerald Road, Houston Road (formerly Little Waihi Road), and Kerry Road are now fully complete.

Remaining work includes connecting Fitzgerald Road with Glover Road and building a new intersection.

South Taranaki businesses have room, infrastructure and confidence to stay, grow and thrive within the district. Council's business development manager, Scott Willson, says the development reflects careful planning and a clear, long-term commitment to supporting local enterprise.

"This development is about creating the right environment for businesses to succeed. Industry told us what they needed, the feasibility work backed it up, and the Business Park is delivering on that evidence. It's a strategic, future-focused asset that will support growth for decades to come."

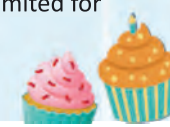


Happening Holidays: School Holiday Programme for April

Need to keep the kids busy these school holidays? Council is rolling out its Happening Holidays School Holiday Programme – your go to guide for fun activities happening across the District this April.

Kids can try something new with roller skating, cupcake decorating, or even a special rugby training session led by the Taranaki Rugby Football Union (TRFU). New to the programme this year is the Golden Egg Easter Hunt, where children aged 5 – 13 years can hop into their local LibraryPlus to find a hidden golden egg and win a free book to take home.

"We've got a great mix of activities to suit a range of interests and ages. It's a fantastic way to keep tamariki busy, active and having fun during the holiday break," says council's operations manager - property and facilities Johan Gray. Some activities require registrations, so be sure to check the programme for details. Bookings can be made at the South Taranaki i-SITE (inside Te Ramanui o Ruapūtahanga on High Street) or at the TSB Hub in Hāwera. Spaces are limited for popular events, so get in early and don't miss out! Find out more at www.southtaranaki.com/happeningholidays



Autumn Propagation Workshop

**Saturday 11 April, 10am - 12noon
at Manaia Maara Kai, 30 South
Road, Manaia.**

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

Tātari atu Taranaki ki te Tonga



Sort it out,

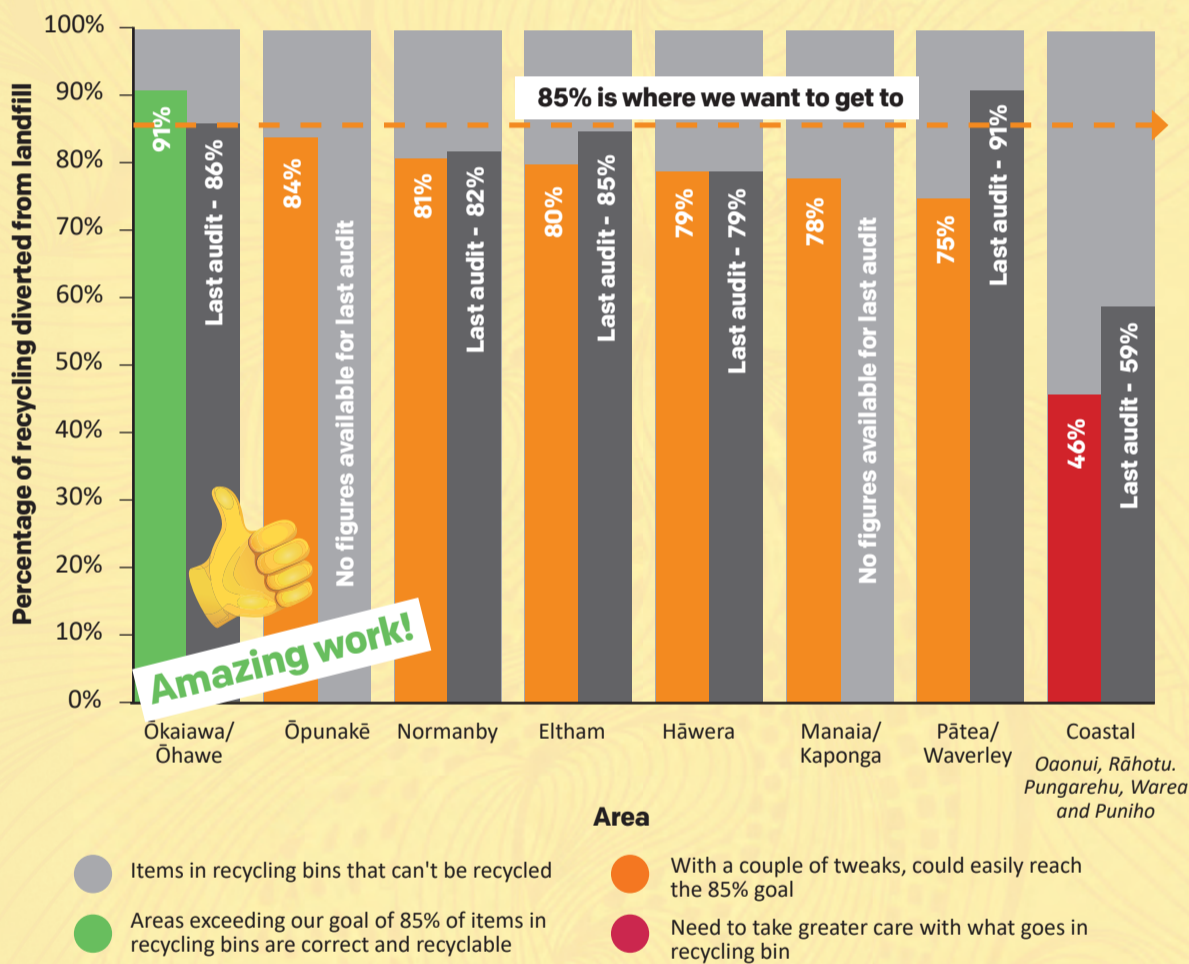
South Taranaki

Autumn 2026 edition

Recycling needs to be left loose in your yellow-lidded bin - do not bag them up

Recycling Review

Recycling diverted from landfill



Top five nasties found in recycling bins

Don't forget - recycling is hand sorted, so please make sure all recycling is clean.

- Lids**
All lids need to go in the **red general waste wheelie bin**.
- Soft Plastics**
Soft 'scrunchable' plastics can be dropped to **Woolworths, Egmont Refuse and Recycling**, or your red general waste bin.
- Dirty Plastics**
Plastics need to be **rinsed clean** before putting into your recycling.
- Waxed Cartons**
Waxed cartons (e.g. UHT Milk and McDonalds burger containers) need to go into the **red general waste bin**.
- Wrong Plastics**
We can only recycle **1, 2 or 5 symbol on it**. Other plastics need to go in the red wheelie bin.

Safely dispose of vapes and batteries

South Taranaki District Council is urging residents to safely dispose of vapes and other items containing batteries after two fires at the Hāwera Transfer Station. Both incidents were caused by vapes being placed in kerbside rubbish bins.

Safe disposal options include:

- Safe disposal options include:
- Dropping off lithium-ion batteries, battery-embedded or small devices at Battery Collection Stations at the Hāwera Administration Building or the Eltham, Ōpunakē, and Pātea LibraryPlus'.
 - Taking small quantities (up to 500g) of vape batteries to the Hāwera Transfer Station for free.
 - Returning used vapes to store take-back programmes.
 - Disposing of larger volumes of vapes at the Hāwera Transfer Station for a small fee.

Residents can check proper disposal methods online at

www.southtaranaki.com/recyclingsearch



Do not put batteries or vapes into any of your bins.



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Years of hard work produce regional award

When Awatuna farmers Philip and Lyneyre Hooper were encouraged to enter the Ballance Farm Environment Awards they were told that one advantage in doing so would be getting free feedback on their farming operations. They surprised themselves by being named the Taranaki Supreme Winners. They will go up against other regional winners in July for the Gordon Stephenson Trophy, which last year was won by



Philip and Lyneyre Hooper scoop prizes at the Ballance Farm Environment Awards.

Taranaki regional winner, Brendan Attrill of Huinga.

The judges described Philip and Lyneyre of the Hoopman Family Trust as “a great farming couple working and living on the land, while enhancing and protecting the natural resources that surround them.”

The Hoopers have a 144ha (90ha effective) farm bordering Te Papa-Kura-o-Taranaki National Park. Originally a sheep and beef unit, it is now used for dairy

grazing.

Judges said theirs was “a well-managed farming operation working with the high-altitude environment to enhance biodiversity...a great example of a low input farm operation which takes account of the fragile nature of the area, while still maintaining a productive pasture-based system.”

The Hoopers are also involved with the Awatuna/Auroa Catchment Group.

This is the first time they have entered the awards. Philip says Vanessa LeProu, who with husband Jacques graze stock on the Hooper farm had encouraged them to enter.

“She said we have a unique story and if you enter you get feedback on how you’re doing,” recalls Philip.

The land on which the farm is based was once classed as unfarmable. Philip’s father Ian had leased it, and then with wife Barbara bought it in 1962. They brought in a house for which they paid 60 pounds. Back then there

was no power or water says Philip.

In 1996 the Department of Conservation bought 280h of bush remnant off the Hoopers and together with land purchased from neighbour Ray Lynskey added it to what was then the National Park.

Ian and Barbara retired and leased the farm out. In 2002 Phil and Lyneyre took up the lease and bought it a year later.

In 2007 they had enough equity to buy 270 cows and went 50:50 sharemilking for Lyneyre’s parents Russell and Lois Simpson at Kina Road, Oaonui. They were there for 10 years. Lyneyre worked the farm while Philip continued teaching at Opunake High School. All the while they were continuing to develop the Awatuna property.

When they took over there were only four troughs, large paddocks and no races.

“The stock would have plenty of fresh water, but the trouble is it came straight

from the river,” says Philip.

Since then the Hoopers have embarked on an extensive programme of fencing, riparian planting and stock exclusion. They have also introduced more mixed grass species.

Today all rivers are fenced, and all paddocks have reticulated water. Samples show that the water leaving their farm is the same as when it enters from the National Park. There is a lot more birdlife, particularly tui, kereru and fantails, assisted by the riparian corridors which the Hoopers have created.

The Hoopers have retired 32ha of wetland forest remnant. Lyneyre says the tree life is something that she and Philip appreciate.

“There are beautiful patches of bush,” she says. “There’s no way we would ever want to touch them.”

Philip has put his DIY skills to good use on the farm, including making a sprayer from which their

Continued page 25.

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Reesby books his second spot at Grand Final

David Reesby has pushed hard and secured his spot for Taranaki Manawatu at the Season 58 FMG Young Farmer of the Year Grand Final in New Plymouth.

Reesby, 25, was announced as the winner of the Taranaki FMG Young Farmer of the Year after competing in a series of challenges at Feilding High School.

This win qualifies him for his second Grand Final appearance, having previously competed in Season 54, where he finished seventh overall.

"I'm really excited to be heading back to the Grand Final," Reesby explains. "There's a lot of work to be done between now and then, and you've got to find the time to make it happen even with a full time job as well."

"I tried to have fun out there on Saturday, I had a bit of trouble with the bale on the Agri-sports but got it done in the end"

"It was good to be challenged, I didn't really know what to expect when I got out there but I tried to make sure I had a good average across everything"

After competing in Grand Final in 2022, and convening across his region, Reesby had a bit more experience under his belt and an understanding of how the Contest works.

"I've had a bit of a break between when I last competed but helping in the background across the last few years has definitely helped"

"Even in our day to day



David Reesby competing in the Taranaki-Manawatu final Head to Head.

jobs, I tried to think of scenarios that could be applied in the competition, so when it was busy with work we were still doing prep".

Participants entered one of three categories based on age, ranging from the AgriKidsNZ competition for primary school pupils, the Junior Young Farmer of the Year for High School Students, and the tightly fought Young Farmer of the Year category, where eight contestants battled it out for the top spot.

Reesby edged his way to victory by clocking up the most points on the day, defeating Central Taranaki Young Farmers member Ethan Muir. Josh Wilkinson from Fitzherbert Young Farmers claimed third place.

With a number of individual challenges thrown their way, including

a head-to-head, general knowledge 'buzzer-style' quiz and sponsor-led modules, contestants were tested on a broad range of practical skills, technical know-how, and their ability to cope under pressure.

With the Grand Final just a few months away, Reesby's preparation is underway.

"I know I've got to start making the time for this now, so while work is busy it will just mean other things will take a bit of a back seat" "I'll be busy studying now till Grand Final and figuring out what I need to achieve in between now and then"

The AgriKidsNZ competition was another crowd-favourite. After a busy morning with over 90 primary school children being challenged to their industry know-how, Jaxon, Elise and Riley from Hunterville School emerged

as the region's victors.

Ben, Sam and Elsie-Rose from Waituna West School placed 2nd and Josh, Louis and Hunter from Halcombe School took out 3rd place and will be making their way to Grand Final

Meanwhile, in the FMG Junior Young Farmer of the Year competition, Kate Hopkins (Feilding Area High School and Tabitha Askin from Palmerston North Girls High School took out the title of Aorangi FMG Junior Young Farmer of the Year, ahead of Logan Baker and Daniel Volkerling from

Feilding Area High School. Along with Reesby, the top AgriKidsNZ and FMG Junior teams will now represent the Taranaki Manawatu region in July's Grand Final in New Plymouth

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OPUNAKE & COASTAL NEWS
06 761 7016

Years of hard work produce regional award

Continued from page 24.

organic liquid fertilisers are dispensed, as existing models were too expensive. Solar power is used for the house and the farm. Solar powered pumps have been installed, and mobile-monitored flow meters can detect leaks instantly.

Philip says he has been interested in getting an electric car, and after getting advice from Corban Gilham he is converting a Nissan Leaf for use on the farm.

In 1995 the wetland herb Gratiola Concinna was

discovered on their farm, the first recorded sighting in their area since 1886, introducing another project, which in the 30 years since then the Hoopers have, working with DOC, been actively involved in.

"It's getting rarer as people have drained the wetlands and destroyed it," says Lyneyre.

Their efforts in fencing off and protecting the herb produced fruit when some plants from the Hooper farm were transferred to the Rotokare Sanctuary in 2024.

Philip says they have been receiving reports on their progress since then and these have been encouraging. In return, Philip says he had long wanted to release a kiwi into the National Park and asked DOC if he could do so. Not only were they agreeable but they said he could provide a name, so he chose Ian.

The Hoopers say they have got a lot of satisfaction from what they have done.

"It's been an enjoyable journey, but a lot of work," says Lyneyre.

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Wellbeing Fund a ‘game changer’



Wayne Langford and Todd McClay.

Federated Farmers say today’s announcement of a \$4 million rural wellbeing fund will be an absolute game changer for rural mental health and wellbeing. “This funding will do so much good for rural New Zealand and help a lot of people who need it,”

Federated Farmers president Wayne Langford says.

“There are some amazing organisations out there doing great work in our communities, but there have been real issues with central coordination and longer-term certainty of funding.

“Full credit goes to the Government. They’ve recognised there’s a need and have really stepped up to partner with those existing grassroots organisations, providing financial support.”

Langford says it’s no secret that mental health is a major issue for farmers and rural communities, with many factors contributing to that.

“Living in more remote communities, limited digital connectivity, reduced access to mental health services and healthcare, and the day-to-day stresses and pressures of farming all play a role.

“We’ve been aware of these challenges for a long time now, and a lot of different initiatives have popped up to meet a real need in our rural communities.

“It’s great to see the Government recognise that they don’t have to reinvent the wheel or develop their own programmes for rural New Zealand, run centrally out of Wellington.

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OPUNAKE & COASTAL
NEWS
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Horticulture New Zealand sets out election priorities for the sector

Horticulture New Zealand (HortNZ) has released its 2026 election manifesto, outlining priorities to support the sector’s growth, resilience, and contribution to New Zealand’s food security and export revenue.

“The horticulture sector is essential to the health of New Zealanders and contributes significantly to our economy,” says HortNZ chief executive Kate Scott.

“The Ministry for Primary

Industries’ latest Situation and Outlook for Primary Industries (SOPI) report forecasts horticulture export revenue will rise five per cent to \$9.2 billion in the year to 30 June 2026.

“Together with Government, industry, Māori and science partners, the sector aims to double the farmgate value of horticulture production by 2035.

“To achieve this, we need practical policy settings including strengthening biosecurity and crop

protection access, cutting red tape, ensuring sustainable water security, building a skilled workforce, supporting fair grocery markets and investing in critical infrastructure.

“Our growers are committed to meeting environmental and food safety standards, but current regulations are often inefficient.

“Streamlined processes, clear national direction, and recognition of trusted industry standards can reduce compliance burdens while maintaining strong outcomes.

“By backing growers and removing unnecessary barriers, New Zealand can strengthen its food system, support regional growth, and ensure horticulture continues to contribute to wellbeing, regional economies, and export growth.”

Key priorities outlined in the manifesto

- Strengthening biosecurity and access to

- Supporting food production by cutting red tape and duplication
- Sustainable and enduring water security and climate adaptation

- Building a skilled and sustainable workforce

- Ensuring fair, competitive grocery markets

- Investing in critical infrastructure that enables horticulture.

“A future-focused horticulture sector underpins New Zealand’s long-term economic goals, from increasing productivity and diversifying exports to building a low-emissions economy with strong international competitiveness,” says Scott.

“With consistent policy, fair markets, secure water and workforce settings, and access to modern tools, horticulture can remain one of New Zealand’s standout sectors.”



HortNZ chief executive Kate Scott

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Miles to go

Fonterra Co-operative Group Ltd has announced that Chief Executive Officer Miles Hurrell has resigned.

Chair Peter McBride says that after a 25-year career with Fonterra, including eight years as CEO, Miles has decided that the time is right for him to leave the Co-op.

“When he was appointed CEO in 2018, Miles was tasked with leading a reset of the business to turn around Fonterra’s financial performance and rebuild farmers’ trust.

“Under Miles’ leadership the team has done that and

more. From day one, Miles was able to unite the team under a single purpose and drive performance right across the business, setting the Co-op up for the future.

“On behalf of the Board, I thank Miles for his courageous leadership. He has overseen a significant strategic reset, focused on getting the Co-op back to its core strengths. In doing so he has helped lift Fonterra’s financial discipline and built the strong foundations the Co-op has today.

“I know I echo the sentiment of farmers when saying that Miles will leave



Miles Hurrell

with sincere thanks for his 25 years of loyalty and best wishes for the future,” says

Mr McBride.

Miles Hurrell says it has been an incredible privilege to have a long career with Fonterra which he has enjoyed immensely.

“When I took the role of CEO, I understood our financial results are not just numbers but the livelihood of thousands of New Zealand farming families.

I have always felt a great sense of responsibility to do what’s right for farmers and

I believe the Co-op is now in a really good place.

“While it’s not an easy decision to step away, the time is right for both the Co-op and me personally. Fonterra’s entering the next phase in its strategic implementation, which marks a natural turning point for a new leader to step in while I consider what’s next for me.

“I know that the business will be in good hands. There’s an exceptional team

of people who will carry the Co-op forward and continue to drive value for farmers,” says Mr Hurrell.

Peter McBride says Miles has a six-month notice period, which enables an organised leadership transition.

“Board and management regularly discuss succession as part of good governance practices. We are confident we can run a robust selection process and appoint a new CEO in the coming months,” says Mr McBride.

February brings respite from January rains

It’s been a year of contrasts so far for our climate with January recording well above normal rainfall while February saw 40% less than usual, according to Taranaki Regional Council (TRC) figures.

On average last month, there was 69.1mm of rainfall which ranged from 68% less than rain than normal at Pātea at Stratford, and 10% more at Kotare at OSullivans.

Year-to-date rainfall is lowest at Stony at Mangatete Bridge with 20% less rainfall than normal, Tawhiti at Duffys has had the highest year-to-date rainfall with

42% more rainfall than normal and on average there has been 19% more rainfall than normal across all rain gauges.

Mean river flows for February were 23.9% greater than typical values, low flows were 82.6% greater, and high flows 56.2% lower than typical values while mean river (non-mountain)

water temperatures were 17.6°C, an average of 0.5°C cooler than long-term values for the month.

The maximum air temperature recorded was 29.4°C at Brooklands Zoo at New Plymouth on 12 February, but the average air temperature (excluding Te Maunga sites) was 16.8°C, which is 0.7°C cooler than

normal.

February average wind speeds were 10.9km/hr, with average gust strength of 36.3km/hr, these were 0.6km/hr lighter, and 0.1km/hr weaker than the long-term average. The maximum wind gust recorded in February was 108.1km/hr at Waiwhakaiho at Hillsborough on 15 February.

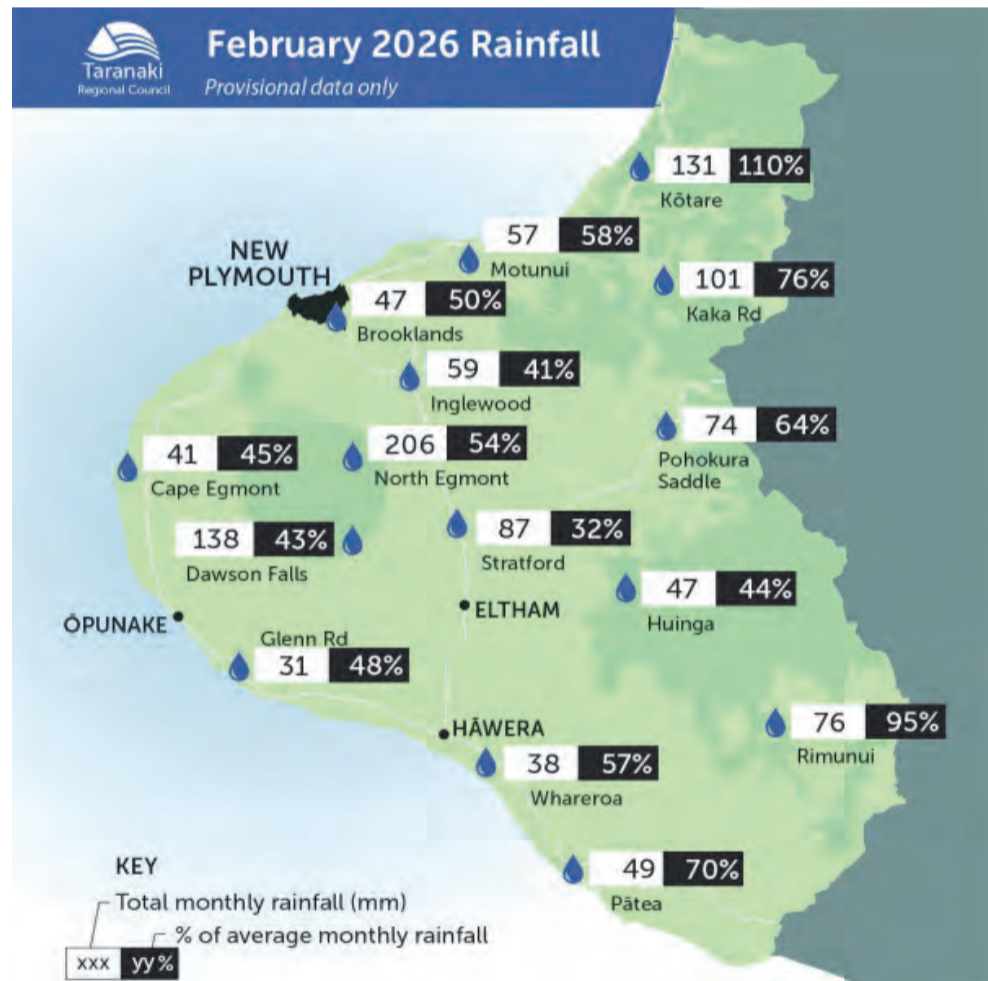
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Former Ōpunakē High School student selected for NZ U20 Development Camp

A proud moment for Ōpunakē and the wider coastal community, local teenager Harry Rankin has been selected to attend the New Zealand Under-20 Rugby Development Camp, a significant step on the national rugby pathway.

Harry, who attended Ōpunakē High School, first made his mark in the First XV, helping lead the team to success in the Taranaki Secondary Schools competition. Coming from Ōpunakē High School, outside the traditional "New Plymouth rugby"

pathways, Harry's selection is a testament to his work ethic and his belief that opportunity isn't defined by the school you attend, but by the effort you put in.

Following school, Harry moved to Wellington to study a Diploma in Sport and Exercise, while continuing to pursue his rugby ambitions. He played Colts rugby for Petone Rugby Club, where his performances quickly saw him recognised at a higher level.

In 2025, Harry was selected for the Wellington Under-19 team, before

earning a place in the Wellington Rugby Academy and progressing into the Under-20 environment. His latest selection into the New Zealand U20 Development Camp places him among the top young rugby players in the country.

Standing at 6ft and weighing 115kg, Harry plays in the front row and

is known for his physicality, work rate, and commitment to continual improvement.

For many in the community, his journey is particularly special.

"It shows that you don't have to come from a big school or a traditional pathway to make it," a local supporter said. "Harry's done it through hard work,

backing himself, and taking opportunities when they've come."

The New Zealand U20 Development Camp brings together around 100 of the country's most promising players, with the aim of identifying those who will go on to represent New Zealand at the World Rugby Under-20 Championship.

While there is still a long road ahead, Harry's selection is already a significant achievement — and one that reflects not only his dedication, but also the support of his family, coaches, and community along the way.

Ōpunakē will be watching with pride as his journey continues.

Taranaki Secondary School Sports Association (TSSSA) croquet event



TSSSA having a crack at Croquet.

It was great to welcome Patea Area School, Stratford High School and Te Paepae Aotea to croquet on Thursday March 12 at the Park Croquet Club. We had 82 students participate in both social and competitive grades. A lot of the students were new to the game and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. A big thank you to our helpers who assisted during the games, help build skills and prepared and cooked the barbecue. Commented Carla, the TSSSA organiser, "The children got to choose different sports to try out. It was a very successful day and the students seemed to really enjoy it. There were some very keen students who wanted to stay on."

Lois Smith

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Southerners take mallet to Manawatu



Congratulations South Taranaki who won the Gibbs Cup Challenge. Association Croquet is played annually between South Taranaki and Manawatu. This year it was played at Marton on Saturday March 21. Unlike most games this is decided on Total Hoops not wins. South Taranaki got 153 hoops and Manawatu 145 hoops.

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Taranaki Home and Garden Show a must visit

The Taranaki Home and Garden Show returns for its fourth year, quickly becoming a must-visit event for both exhibitors and visitors. Since launching in 2023, it has grown into a key platform for local and national businesses. In 2026, the Show is set to be bigger than ever, with 150 exhibitors showcasing the best in products and services.

Hosted at TSB Stadium, the Show is the perfect place to gather ideas for your home, garden, and lifestyle.

“No project is no problem,” says Marketing Manager Emily Shanley. “Whether you’re mid-renovation or just love browsing, there’s something here for everyone.” From robotic vacuums to spa pools, décor, art, wellness products, and delicious treats, there is plenty to explore. Show-only specials, great coffee, tasty food, and family-friendly entertainment make it a fun day out and a chance to score fantastic deals.

The list of first time exhibitors is extensive this year, bringing fresh ideas to the Show including Plantation Bamboo with stylish decking, cladding, and flooring, Location



The Taranaki Art Show on the mezzanine floor.



There is plenty to explore at the Taranaki Home and Garden show.

Homes with new builds and house-and-land packages, Steel to Love with custom indoor and outdoor steel designs, and VAC Direct with the latest robot and

cordless vacuums, and the list goes on.

Foodies are in for a treat with Juno Gin, Potter Brothers Chocolate, Mons Flavours, and The Original Smoke

and Spice and so much more, while the Taranaki Art Show on the mezzanine floor adds another layer of creativity and inspiration for visitors. “It’s a fantastic opportunity for people to explore contemporary New Zealand art while they are at the Show. “The 2026 exhibition, presented by The Collaboration, features a talented mix of emerging and established artists from across Aotearoa, making it a must-visit for art lovers and first-time visitors alike.”

The Taranaki Home and Garden Show is the ultimate destination to discover, connect, and get inspired. Lock it in your diaries today.



See us at the Taranaki Home & Garden Show

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Lotteries funding supports rural heritage work



Studio portrait of two young Māori women and a young girl. The woman on the right has been identified as Mere Iwi Tahī Ratahi. GNF2942.

NPDC's Puke Arika is about to embark on a project to bring the stories of Ōpunakē and surrounding communities into the spotlight thanks to a grant from Te Tahua Taiao Ngā Taonga, the Lottery Environment and Heritage Fund. The \$200,000 grant will

support the first year of a two-year project to catalogue and digitise the highly significant collection of 10,000 glass-plate negatives known as the 'Feaver Collection.' These unique images of Ōpunakē and the surrounding rural areas

span the period from the 1890s to the 1940s, when the Feaver family ran a chemist in the coastal town, which incorporated a photographic service.

"We are very grateful to the Lottery Environment and Heritage Fund for choosing to champion this rural heritage project, which will allow us to provide access to this unique photographic collection," says Frith Williams, Puke Arika Museum Director.

Williams says locals will gain rich insight into their collective past. The museum is also keen to hear from anyone who may know the names and stories of the people shown in the images.

The team are hoping to have dedicated section on the website for the images soon but until then, people can explore Puke Arika's online collection to find images in the Feaver Collection.

Puke Arika, meaning Hill of Chiefs, stands on a former prominent pā site in central New Plymouth.

It opened in 2003 as a combined library and museum—an innovative storehouse for Taranaki's taonga and stories.

The museum presents both long-term and regularly changing exhibitions across



John Feaver in Feaver's Chemist, Ōpunakē. GNF3096 (above)

six gallery spaces. The central and community libraries offer many events designed to foster a love of reading, learning, and connection.

Puke Arika also houses a

Local news, Local people, local businesses, local sport, local arts and events. Delivered free around the mountain every fortnight.



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Walk-through milking shed, Ōpunakē area, 1910s. GNF408.

Easter Services at Anglican Churches

Good Friday 3 April – Combined Churches Walk of Witness

- Eltham 8:30am starting at Baptist Church
- Opunake 9am starting at Cenotaph
- Stratford 9:30am starting at Baptist Church
- Hawera 9:30am starting at Baptist Church

Easter Day Sunday 5 April

- 9am St Barnabas Opunake
- 9am All Saints' Eltham
- 8am and 10am St Mary's Hawera
- 10am St George's Patea
- 10:30am Holy Trinity Stratford
- 10:30am St John's Kaponga



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The Pink Hammer portrays a feast of great acting

As part of their celebration of 80 years of community theatre, Hawera Repertory Theatre have put on an ambitious drama comedy, *The Pink Hammer*, written by the late Michelle Amas (1962-2016). Michele was an extraordinary talent who won many awards in acting, poetry and playwriting.

When I saw the show on Saturday March 21, the sign said it all - A full house. Peter Meikle is the Director Designer, Clive Cullen the Production Manager and Sandra Richards the Stage Manager.

As Act one opened I was struck by the excellent set - a man cave replete with carpentry tools (immaculately mounted), power tools, dart board, a beer fridge and even the



From left, Helen (Donnella Weir), Louise (Christine Cameron), Siobhan (Kristy Logan), Woody (Ron Scott), and Annabel (Kathryn van Gameren).

kitchen sink. Well-chosen music complements the proceedings throughout the show.

Apart from their excellence all the characters suited their parts to a t. First up was Louise (played by Christine Cameron) a nervous, overly talkative woman who immediately gets on the nerves of horse breeder Helen who is a cool customer. Siobhan (Kristy Logan) has a delightful Irish accent and a penchant for married men. Finally counsellor Annabel (Kathryn van Gameren), a strong feminist, appears to keep the other strong personalities in check.

These women arrive at the Pink Hammer workshop, having each paid a hefty \$400 for carpentry tuition. However, it transpires their tutor Maggie has not turned up, having absconded with the tuition fees.

Unexpectedly, Maggie's estranged husband Woody (Ron Scott), an unemployed carpenter arrives to spot the women who have invaded his man cave and explodes. He is especially outraged that Annabel has taken down his "sexist" girlie calendar. "You can all take off on your broomsticks," he shouts.

More quietly, they respond by comparing him to one of the Seven Dwarves, "Grumpy I think."

"He's showing very poor impulse control," comments Annabel.

There are many complex themes explored by the

interaction and dialogue of the characters, such as overcoming insecurity, finding personal strength and challenging gender roles. Gradually, Woody and the women reach an understanding and he agrees to tutor them - notwithstanding some near mishaps as Louise almost runs someone through with a power drill which is (or isn't!), "Just like an eggbeater."

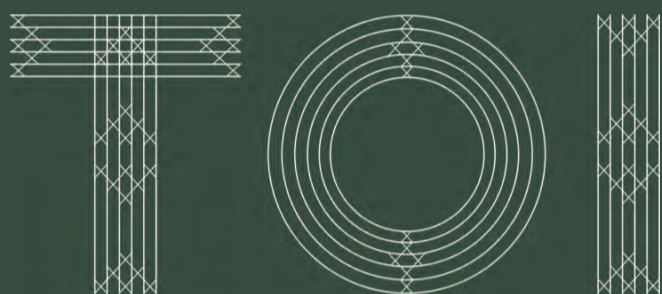
"Who put butter on my chisel," complains Woody.

With several performances still on offer I won't spoil things by revealing too much more, but Michele Amis' own words are worthy of mention: "The Pink Hammer is outrageous, laughter-filled and heart-warming," and "What happens to a bloke when his man shed is taken over by four women who want to get their hands on his tools."

Great performances by all players, but perhaps Donnella Weir has the edge in her astute portrayal of an especially complex character in Helen. Ron Scott is simply brilliant in his role as Woody.

Well done to everyone who contributed to making this production a success on both sides of the stage - including those responsible for the delicious supper at the interval. Last performance is Saturday March 28, so don't miss out.

Rolland McKellar



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With hundreds of young people/rangatahi getting ready for new ventures this year it's a timely reminder to protect them from Meningococcal disease by getting them vaccinated for FREE in their first year of close-living situations (including up to 3 months before).

Close-living situations include boarding schools, hostels, halls of residence, military barracks, and prisons.

Meningococcal disease can develop rapidly and be life-threatening. It can become deadly in just a few hours. People who survive meningococcal



disease often have serious long-term effects, including amputation of limbs, hearing loss, seizures, brain injury, and permanent skin scarring.

The meningococcal vaccines protect against the bacteria that cause meningococcal disease so encourage your friends and whānau to get protected.

There are a number of strains of meningococcus bacteria. The most common one in Aotearoa New Zealand is meningococcal B. The meningococcal B vaccine is free for all:

- Pēpi / babies
- tamariki / children under 5 years old
- rangatahi ages

13 to 25 years in their first year of certain close-living situations.

You can also be immunised against other strains. Make an appointment with a doctor, nurse or healthcare provider or visit www.info.health.nz/immunisations for more information.



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Happening Holidays School Holiday Programme for April 2026

South Taranaki District Council is rolling out its Happening Holidays School Holiday Programme – your go to guide for fun activities happening across the District this April.

Kids can try something new with roller skating, cupcake decorating, or even a special rugby training session led by the Taranaki Rugby Football Union (TRFU). New to the programme this year is the Golden Egg Easter Hunt, where children aged 5 – 13



Need to keep the kids busy these school holidays?

years can hop into their local LibraryPlus to find a hidden golden egg and win a free book to take home.

“We’ve put together a great mix of activities to suit a range of interests and ages. It’s a fantastic way to keep tamariki busy, active and having fun during the holiday break,” says council’s operations manager - property and facilities Johan Gray.

Some activities require registrations, so be sure to check the programme for details. Bookings can be made at the South Taranaki i-SITE (inside Te Ramanui

o Ruapūtahanga on High Street) or at the TSB Hub in Hāwera.

Spaces are limited for popular events, so get in early and don’t miss out.

Find out more information at www.southtaranaki.com/happeningholidays

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What's On Listings

ONGOING

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CHURCH NOTICES



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

Opunake Co-operating Parish

Havelock Street, Opunake - St Pauls - every Sunday
9am: Coffee prior to service
9.30am: Service
Rahotu - Wesley - 11am first Sunday of the month

Okato Co-operating Parish

St. James, Oakura - Sunday Service every Sunday, 10.00am
St. Paul's, Okato - 1st and 2nd Sundays - Worship Service; 3rd Sunday - Communion Service and 4th Sunday at 7.00pm
St. Paul's, Okato - Open church for silent reflection, Pew for You, every 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4.30pm-5.30pm

Opunake Catholic Church

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

Other areas

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

St Patricks Catholic Church, Kaponga

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

St Patricks Catholic Church, Okato

Saturday Vigil 6.00pm - weekly

The Wave

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

St. Barnabas Anglican Church

141 Tasman St, Opunake
Sunday Services 9am
Communion 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
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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

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.

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

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

WEDNESDAYS

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

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

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

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

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

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

Free singing experience with Taranaki Sober and Drug Support Group: Coastal Care Meeting Room, 7pm.

Harmony Chorus: Meet every Wednesday at



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THURSDAYS

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

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

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

FRIDAYS

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

Beginners Social Dance Classes: Oakura Hall, 6.15pm..

Hawera Country & Variety Music Club: Held every 2nd & 4th Friday monthly. Held at Hawera Pipe Band Hall, 89 Collins Street, Hawera @ 7pm. All welcome. Supper provided. Ph 021 2622 166.

MARCH 10 TO APRIL 4

Luminous: An exhibition by Carina McQueen. The Village Gallery, Eltham.

MARCH 18 TO APRIL 28

Pink Hammer: A production by Hawera Repertory Societ.y. At Repertory House.

MARCH 21 TO APRIL 8

Opunake Boat & Underwater Club Annual Fishing Tournament: Opunake. See ad in the Feb 26 issue for details.

MARCH 26

Tumahu Hall Society AGM: At the hall, 7pm

MARCH 27

New Plymouth Boys High School Boarding Open Day: At the school. 10.30am-2pm.

GOOD FRIDAY APRIL 3

Easter Walk: Assemble at Our Lady Star of the Sea Catholic Church at 8.30am. Walk starts at 9am..

Easter Family Service: St Pauls Church, Okato, 10am.

APRIL 10 TO 12

Taranaki Home & Garden Show: TSB Stadium, New Plymouth.

APRIL 11

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

APRIL 18

Opunake District RSA AGM: Opunake Fire Station, 1pm.

JUNE 13

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

PUBLIC NOTICES

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Easter 2026 dates

April 1st: Passover meal & shared meal from 6pm (To book a place, ring Phil 027 424 8318 or 06 278 8187)

April 3rd: Walk of Witness from 10am

April 5th: Resurrection Sunday from 10am

All held at the Gibson Hall, Tauhiri Street, Manaia
All welcome



Opunake District RSA A.G.M.

1pm, Saturday 18th April
at Opunake Fire Station
34 King St, Opunake
ALL WELCOME

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

The next issue of the Opunake & Coastal News is due out on April 9. Contact us on 06 761 7016 to be part of it.



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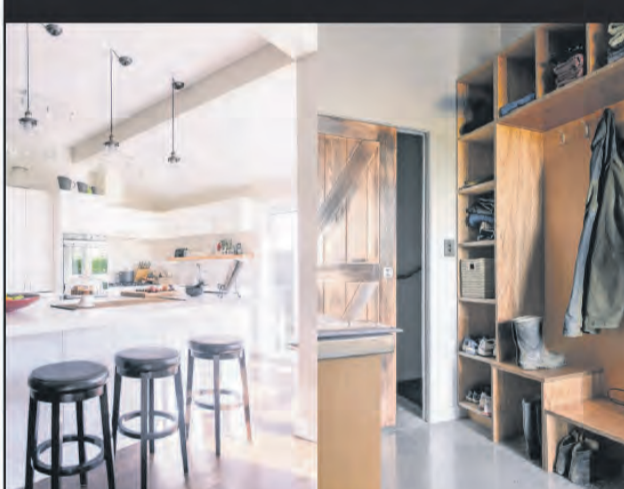
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