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## 'Speedway' concerns raised



Te Mata Bay resident Gill Saunders is calling on residents to speak up over road safety concerns on the Thames Coast Road.

INSET: Among the numerous official signs along the coast imploring drivers to slow down, Waiomu residents have come up with their own take on the issue. Photos: ALICE PARMINTER

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Thames Coast residents concerned about excessive speeds and dangerous drivers along State Highway 25 will be able to have their say at a public meeting on February 27.

Thames-Coromandel Mayor Len Salt called for the meeting, scheduled for 6pm at the Te Puru Hall, in response to a petition and complaints from Thames Coast Road residents.

It will be attended by representatives from Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency, Thames-Co-

romandel District Council, and NZ Police. Its aim is to allow residents from Whakatete, Ngarimu Bay, Thornton Bay, Te Puru, Waiomu, Tapu and Te Mata to discuss their concerns about safety and speed limits within the coastal communities.

Residents Gill Saunders and Ruth Donnelly raised the issue with Mayor Salt in December, after realising the extent to which residents were "fed up" with drivers speeding along the highway, performing dangerous passing manoeuvres, and treating the relatively straight 50km per hour

residential zones as "speedways".

Gill's Te Mata home is perched on the corner of the bay, overhanging a sharp bend between Te Mata and Te Puru. Despite the clearly visible 50km road signs outside her window, she said she constantly witnesses unsafe driving, at all hours of the day.

"Cars come around that bend... You can't see past that curve [but] they actually overtake doing about 120[kmph], they'll pass cars, boats, trucks, the works," she said. "In October, November, it got so bad after a wet year - the traffic and the speed and the

overtaking and the recklessness. How there aren't more accidents is beyond me."

It's a similar story in Ngarimu Bay, where the driving is so bad Ruth has removed the garden in front of her property.

"It was too dangerous maintaining it; it's really dodgy being outside your property boundary and it scares me," Ruth said.

"It impacts all the residents - they encounter it as soon as they try to access the main road or turn off the main road. It seems that people think that nobody's about so they just take off out here."

Crash statistics from Waka Kotahi showed two fatal crashes and eight serious crashes on the Thames Coast Rd between Tararu and Wilson Bay in the last five years. Among them was a fatal crash on January 1, 2024, at Kereta; and a serious injury crash between a car and a motorcycle on November 10, 2023, at Te Mata.

While local residents were particularly affected by speeding cars, Gill and Ruth said pedestrians, cyclists and tourists also faced dangers.

CONTINUED P2

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The *Valley Profile* is delivered weekly to letterboxes in the Hauraki Plains, Paeroa, Waihi, Thames, Thames Coast, plus bulk distribution peninsula-wide. *Our focus is 100% local community news.*

**NEWS/EDITORIAL**

**Publisher/Editor Teresa Ramsey**  
Ph 0204 0944 853  
editor@valleyprofile.co.nz  
**Senior Reporter Kelley Tantau**  
Ph 022 619 4889  
kelley@valleyprofile.co.nz  
**Reporter Alice Parminter**  
Ph 022 527 0988  
alice@valleyprofile.co.nz

**ADVERTISING**

**Advertising Manager Nikki Sanders**  
Ph 022 130 3885  
nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz  
**Feature Writer Davidda Hikatangata**  
Ph 022 174 3988  
davidda@valleyprofile.co.nz  
ISSN 2703-5700  
**2 QUEEN ST, PAEROA**  
Ph 07 862 7077

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# Petition prompts public meeting

CONTINUED FROM P1

In Thornton Bay beachgoers need to cross the highway to reach the public toilets, and in some residential areas there are sections of road with no foot-path.

"Part of my petition is the bridge to Tapu... You're taking your life in your hands to even cross it," Gill said.

"You've got a State Highway bridge that doesn't have [pedestrian] access to the other part of the town, and people walk from there to the reserve."

In November, Gill drafted a petition and left copies at the Te Puru campground and shop, where it garnered 127 signatures.

In it she asked that steps be taken to improve the safety of the public, and suggested measures such as a speed camera and yellow non-passing road markings.

She also asked for the installation of a pedestrian bridge alongside the road bridge linking Tapu and Te Mata Bay.

The petition was put to Mayor Salt, and Ruth said she was pleased to find him taking their concerns seriously.

"I said I believe there needs to be a wider community meeting, because it's not just myself and Gill; it's a whole lot of other people," Ruth said. "So I was really thrilled that he's put this together, he's heard our concerns."

Mayor Salt said the meeting was an opportunity for residents to meet representatives from the agencies involved in the issue - council, Waka Kotahi, and



Signage at Tapu School shows the concern over driving is widespread among the community. Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

the police - and learn about the processes involved in setting and policing speed limits.

The flip-side to that, he said, was allowing the agencies to see first-hand the impact the issue was having on the community.

"They're the local people who live there, they know better than anyone else [what they're experiencing]," Len said.

"It's really just getting all this stuff out on the table with all the stakeholders, so that we can hopefully get some good solutions."

A Waka Kotahi spokesperson said its representative will be at the meeting to "provide the Te Puru community the opportunity to share their concerns, listen to what they have to say and report back so we can consider potential next steps".

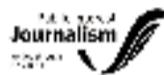
Ruth and Gill urged as many Thames Coast residents as possible to attend.

"We've only got one shot at this, and this is this meeting, to make some changes and to get some action to improve our safety for residents in the bay," Ruth said. "It's only about the [residential] areas, it's not going to be a discussion about speed limits anywhere else [so] it's really important that as many coastal residents as possible can attend this meeting to voice their concerns."

Gill agreed, asking people to put aside any apathy around the issue.

"We're all cautious here because of the speed... If they want change, come to the meeting."

**DETAILS: Public meeting, February 27, 6pm at Te Puru Hall. All residents welcome.**



# Calls for info service interest

By **KELLEY TANTAU**, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

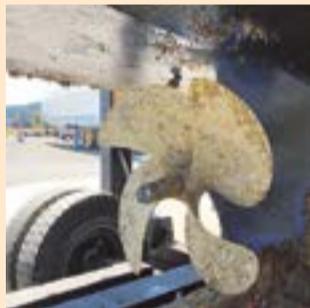
Thames-Coromandel District Council is seeking expressions of interest from anyone who may like to run the Thames visitor information service from July this year.

The current agreement to manage the service - currently housed in the entrance foyer of Goldfields Shopping Centre - expires on June 30. The relocation of Thames' information centre, plus its transformation into un-manned kiosks, upset residents back in 2021.

The *Profile* earlier reported that the i-Site, originally run by Destination Coromandel at its location on Mary St, closed its doors in October 2021, with two staff being made redundant.

Council said the i-Site service had become unviable since the Covid-19 pandemic, with visitor numbers and revenue both down significantly. According to council, those interested in taking on the visitor information services for 2024 would need to demonstrate they could provide "friendly, reliable customer service, and look for alternative funding streams if you want to deliver more than what is required in our service level agreement".

**DETAILS: Expressions of interest close 5pm Thursday, February 29. For more info or if you have other ideas on how to offer the service, contact Kirstin on 07 868 0200 or at kirstin.scarrott@tcdc.govt.nz**



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E: coro@haurakitaxation.co.nz

# Thames Tides

Wed Feb 21	Thu Feb 22	Fri Feb 23	Sat Feb 24	Sun Feb 25	Mon Feb 26	Tue Feb 27
 Morning 5:50am 3.0 Afternoon 6:08pm 2.9 11:59am 1.1	 Morning 6:46am 3.1 Afternoon 7:07pm 3.0	 Morning 7:33am 3.1 Afternoon 7:57pm 3.0	 Morning 8:16am 3.2 Afternoon 8:42pm 3.1	 Morning 8:55am 3.2 Afternoon 9:21pm 3.2	 Morning 9:33am 3.3 Afternoon 9:58pm 3.2	 Morning 10:09am 3.3 Afternoon 10:33pm 3.2
 6:54am 8:09pm	 6:55am 8:07pm	 6:56am 8:06pm	 6:57am 8:05pm	 6:58am 8:04pm	 6:59am 8:02pm	 7:00am 8:01pm
 Best At 10:55am 11:20pm	 Best At 11:45am	 Best At 12:09am 12:31pm	 Best At 12:54am 1:15pm	 Best At 1:36am 1:56pm	 Best At 2:16am 2:36pm	 Best At 2:55am 3:14pm
 Set 3:06am Rise 6:38pm	 Set 4:08am Rise 7:14pm	 Set 5:10am Rise 7:45pm	 Set 6:11am Rise 8:11pm	 Set 7:10am Rise 8:34pm	 Set 8:08am Rise 8:55pm	 Set 9:05am Rise 9:16pm

\*Not for navigational purposes. Graphic supplied by OceanFun Publishing Ltd. www.tidewiz.com www.tidespy.com www.ofu.co.nz

**MOON AND FISH KEYS**

Good Fishing	Fair Fishing	Not So Good	

**TIME DIFFERENCES FOR OTHER PLACES**  
To determine tide times at the following places, add (+) or subtract (-) the given time difference from the Thames times listed in the calendar.

PLACE	HIGH	LOW
	Hr Mn	Hr Mn
Coromandel	-0 04	-0 04
Whitianga	-0 01	-0 05
Tairua	+0 10	+0 21
Whangamata	-0 03	-0 05
Waihi Beach	-0 12	-0 12

# Workers take 'great pride' during demo

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Work to demolish Paeroa's historic maternity hospital began this month, with the land - once cleared - being offered to local iwi.

The building, which overlooked State Highway 2 for 94 years, was opened in 1930 by the then-Minister of Health, Arthur Stallworthy.

Thousands of babies were born during the hospital's lifetime, with baby number 1000 born in December, 1948, to a local Paeroa mother.

Land Information New Zealand leader project delivery crown property Matt Bradley said the hospital was "significant in the community history of Paeroa".

"Many people in the community were born there and iwi history with the whenua stretches even further back in time," he said.

"This is an important project for the Paeroa community, and we take great pride in working to remove the hospital building."

The contractors, Waikato Demolition, have already removed the roof and some walls of the main building. The next step, Mr Bradley said, was to remove the foundations before smoothing and grassing the site.

It's expected that the work will take two months to complete.

"There is asbestos present in the basement, and this will be removed following best practice," Mr Bradley said. "Asbestos removal was expected and planned



Work to demolish Paeroa's historic maternity hospital began this month.

Photo: SUPPLIED/LINZ

for and so won't impact on the timeframes of the demolition.

"An archaeologist will also be overseeing and managing all ground disturbance works. If we uncover any items during the work, work will pause to allow the discovery to be appropriately managed and cared for."

When the hospital closed, it was deemed surplus by the

Crown. It then entered the Treaty Settlements Landbank - one of 900 properties managed by Land Information NZ.

"When demolition is complete, the whenua will be offered to Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Tamaterā and Ngāti Tara Tokanui. Any future use of the land will be for iwi to decide," Mr Bradley said.

"This is an important project

for the Paeroa community and for LINZ as we work to remove the hospital buildings and return the land to mana whenua."

According to the Ohinemuri Regional History Journal's May, 1969, edition, from 1941 until June, 1949, Sisters Winifred and Daisy Moore were in charge of the hospital.

They were recorded as saying:

"Yes, the days and nights were always busy but there is little that can be more rewarding than the life we chose. Now after twenty more years we can look back and sincerely say that the people of Paeroa and district will always hold a warm place in our hearts".



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# Education

ADVERTISING FEATURE

## Leaders pave the way at Waihi College

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

Stepping up as a leader can mean different things to different people. One common thread that links the 2024 Waihi College Student Leaders together is their focus on student connection.

Seeing students contribute to group activities, getting involved in events and feeling part of the school are significant to the leaders and their hopes for their fellow students.

The Profile asked the student leaders about their role for 2024. Here's what the students had to say.

**As a collective, what would you like to see happen around the school or in your community?** "Students to be proud of where they come from and the school that they attend. Kids to get more involved and motivated in activities in and around school."

**What keeps students motivated to do their best at school and in the community?** "Support from peers and teachers. Having encouragement from all aspects of school including parents at home. Acknowledgment from the school for their success and efforts."

**What leadership qualities are important for helping others?** "Being patient and having confidence in yourself and others. Allowing others to share their opinions with you and validating their ideas."

**What advice would you give to other students?** "Have fun and embrace everything. Don't get caught up in



Student leaders Sabine Rush, left, Hayaat Dass, Moana Magee, Maya Dodd, Hamish McKinnon, Brooke Kelly, Hamish Mudford, Ana Whatarau, Zara Davies-Young. Photo: SUPPLIED

the hard times cause it will pass by. Take up every opportunity even if it is out of your comfort zone. You never know what you can achieve."

Leader of Sport Brooke Kelly said she wanted to motivate more students to get involved in sports, and planned to organise a team later in the term to provide games and activities during lunchtimes.

"Overall I just want to help students to connect to sporting opportunities and give things a go," she said.

Leader of Learning Hayaat Dass said she would love a quiet space for students to study independently or in groups, to share ideas and work on internal assessments. "I would also love to have our school attend some academic competitions throughout the year."

The main goal for Leader of Te Ao Māori Moana Magee was to whakapai, or correct, Te Reo Māori words that had been pronounced incorrectly and to whakapai te tikanga, or customs, in the

kura. "I really want to encourage more tamariki to take te reo Māori/tikanga."

Leader of Arts and Culture Hamish McKinnon said he wanted to provide students with as many arts and cultural opportunities as possible, whether that was inter-school music and cultural festivals, talents quests or even an arts club.

"It is also my intent to help spark a passion for the arts while helping to drive student growth, confidence and positivity to the

arts field." Leader of Service Maya Dodd's primary goal was to revitalise the Students Against Dangerous Driving [SADD] committee. "I also aim to be a relatable role model for young students, inspiring them to give things a go and never give up on their dreams," she said.

Leader of Well Being Zara Davies-Young said she wanted to be someone her peers could approach with issues or ideas, and make new people feel welcome and looked out for. "A way I plan to do this is [to] continue the program I was a part of last year, which focuses on nurturing the year seven's and settling them into college."

Leader of Environment Hamish Mudford said he wanted to highlight and address environmental issues within the school and also help students contribute to the wider community's environmental initiatives. "My position also allows me to raise awareness for global environmental issues."

Leader of Community Sabine Rush said she wanted to support the Waihi College community.

"I want to work to make sure that every student feels included and excited to be a part of our school and it's events."

"I believe looking after our school community is really important because it brings us together and makes us feel connected, whether it's the students, teachers or parents."



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Te Awhi Cooper



Shear Kelly

YEAR 9&10



Michael Wallis



Karl Budge

YEARS 11, 12 & 13

### SENIOR LEADERSHIP TEAM 2024



Brian Cumber-Scott

PRINCIPAL



Ju Hurrell

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL: Senior School Curriculum



Amanda Cook

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL: Pastoral



Arlene Te Waka

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL: Junior School Curriculum



Shannon Smith

DEPUTY PRINCIPAL: Junior School Curriculum (Term 1)

Kaiārahi means to guide, and that's what this great team is all about this year at Waihi College. Kaiārahi take on the role often referred to as the School Dean and chat to our students when they need a little extra support with behaviour, uniforms and pastoral care. You can find their contact details on our website: [www.waihicol.school.nz](http://www.waihicol.school.nz)

To keep informed with everything going on at Waihi College, keep an eye on the Keeping Informed section of our website. From here you can check Latest News, Daily Notices, the School Calendar as well as photos taken throughout the year [www.waihicol.school.nz](http://www.waihicol.school.nz)

# ‘Caretaker’ principal embraces Paeroa

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

It’s business as usual for the community at Paeroa College this year, even as a new face steps into the top job.

Acting principal Kieran Udy, freshly arrived from Kildare Catholic School in Wagga Wagga, New South Wales, has been appointed to the top job. His role is primarily one of caretaker for absent principal Amy Hacker; keeping her strategic plan on trajectory while she undertakes a year-long secondment in Hamilton, providing leadership support to other Waikato principals.

And if parents are worried this could spell drastic change for their child, they needn’t panic, Kieran said.

“The school is in a good position so it doesn’t need dramatic changes,” he told *The Profile*.

“As an acting principal really you’re maintaining the current direction, overseeing the day-to-day management of the school and just adding little bits where you can, but you’re not making strategic changes or anything to the school.

“It’s quite a pleasant role to be in, in many ways.”

There will, of course, be some changes to be made; government legislation around cell phone use in schools, for example, has necessitated the development of a new school policy this year.

Overall though, Kieran said



Acting principal Kieran Udy says it’s business as usual for Paeroa College this year.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

he is pleased with the current direction of the school and hopes to keep his tenure as smooth as possible for students and whānau.

“My approach is very collaborative and not confrontational, it’s sort of ‘let’s work together as much as we can for the betterment of our students and staff,’” he said.

“I’m open to any feedback or communication. We want to in-

volve whānau and community as much as possible in decisions around their children.”

Kieran’s education philosophy - summed up as “supporting others to be the best versions of themselves” - ties in well with the college’s ethos, he said, and the whole school experience, both academic and extracurricular, is key to that goal. It’s about providing kids options for when they leave,

not necessarily pigeonholing them into a certain pathway,” he said.

“School is not just academics and careers but also sport, cultural endeavours... Supporting students wherever they’ve got a passion or strength, as far as we can to help nurture that.”

The skills that can be developed outside the classroom, Kieran said, are just as important as those found in textbooks.

“There’s all the soft skills or transferable skills you can develop [in group activities] around dealing with conflict, dealing with loss, dealing with disappointment, working in a team, communication, problem solving,” he said.

“Those are skills that you can take into any profession.”



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# HDC NEWS



21 February 2024

## Rewarding results for recycling

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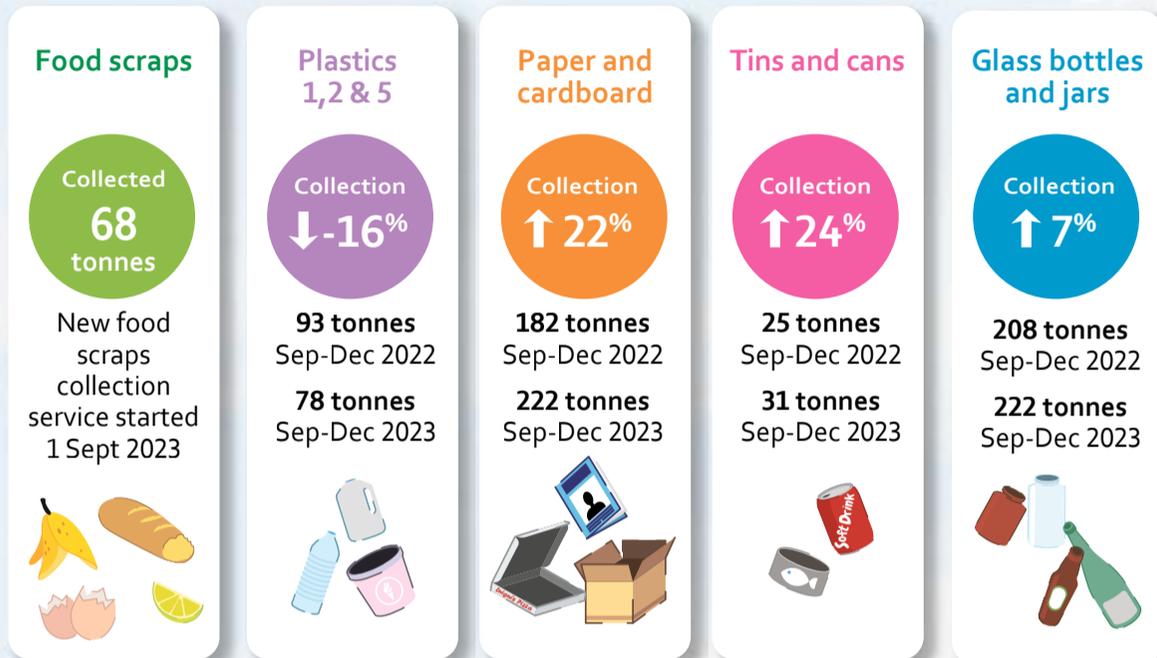
From 1 September – 31 December 2023, our kerbside collection stats show that we had a healthy increase in recycling collected, compared to the same months in 2022. The additional amount of 46 tonnes of recycling plus 68 tonnes of food scraps is equivalent to the weight of 21 elephants being diverted from landfill. Now that's worth trumpeting about. Thanks for that gigantic effort!

More good news, the new Ngātea Recycling and Greenwaste Centre is on track to open on Monday 4 March.

On the flip side, recycling contamination is a problem and has gone up from 3% to 25% (most of that is dirty or inappropriate items buried down in the bins where they can't be seen). Remember – contamination costs! Clean recycling's a must and place all lids in your rubbish bin (national standard across New Zealand from 1 February).

**Let's keep up the focus on reducing, reusing, repurposing, regenerating and recycling – it's the way to go!**

Toby Adams  
Mayor, Hauraki District Council



**Coming soon!**  
Household battery collections in council service centres and the opening of the Ngātea Recycling and Greenwaste Centre.

**Increase in recyclables**  
↑46 tonnes  
Sep-Dec 2023 (excludes food scraps)



## Purely PLACEMAKING

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Join our innovative designers Isthmus, for a 90 minute collaborative design workshop for your town's Placemaking Plan. See and hear what's already been suggested by the community, how that could look and what's still possible – it's getting exciting!

Check out what Isthmus has captured so far at [www.letstalk.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/placemaking-plans](http://www.letstalk.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/placemaking-plans)



### EVENTS!

**Mark your calendar!**

**Ngātea** - Tuesday 27 February, 5pm-6.30pm, or 6.30pm-8pm at the Ngātea War Memorial Hall.

**Kerepēhi** - Wednesday 28 February, 6.30pm-8pm at the Kerepēhi Community Hall.

**Paeroa** - Thursday 29 February, 6.30pm-8pm in the Hauraki Room, Hauraki District Council Building, 1 William Street, Paeroa.



Find out more about recycling and locations of soft plastics collection bins in the district.

## What's coming up?

There's a lot happening over the next couple of months. Here's a snapshot of what to look out for:

- **Placemaking Events**  
From 27 to 29 February
- **Whiritoa Community Catch up**  
Saturday 2 March, 10:30am, Whiritoa Community Hall
- **Ngātea Recycling and Greenwaste Centre**, River Road, Ngātea – opens Monday 4 March.
- **Creative Communities Scheme funding**  
Applications open until 4pm, Monday 18 March.
- **Hauraki Plains Adaptation Plan**  
Roadshow in Ngātea, Kerepēhi and Turua – 9 to 17 March
- **Love This Place (Long Term Plan Consultation)** Opens 18 March – 26 April and includes concurrent consultations for: Rates Remission Policy; Revenue and Financing Policy; Fees and Charges Policy; Development Contributions Policy and the Speed Management Plan.
- **Community Ward Meetings** - 19, 21 and 28 March
- **Representation Review**- Council approved introducing Māori seats for our 2025 Local Government elections. The Representation Review gets feedback on how that could look for the Wards. Consultation is planned for May-July 2024.

For more information visit [www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz](http://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz)



# Thames gin distillery leads medal table

**A**wildian Gins, made by The Coromandel Distilling Company in Thames, has recently brought home five gold medals at the World Gin Awards, more than any distillery from any country in the world.

This year's competition, which judges the very best in the world of gin, saw more than 900 entries from 47 countries in 12 categories, including London Dry, Contemporary, Flavoured, Navy, and Old Tom. There was one new category introduced for 2024: Colour-Changing Gin.

The only distillery to be awarded five gold medals across the field was the Coromandel Distilling Company, co-owned by Paul Schneider and Daniela Suess, and based in Thames.

They won for their Coromandel Dry Gin; Coromandel Dry Gin Blue Edition; Coromandel Manuka Gin; Coromandel Spiced Gin; and their Damson Gin.

Paul said the success of Awildian was down to their obsession with their craft. "We are constantly working and imagining new ways to make gin come alive, but needless to say, we'll be pausing for a drink to celebrate this," he said.

In 2022, the company's flagship Awildian gin was awarded world's best classic gin, becom-



The Coromandel Distilling Company, co-owned by Paul Schneider and Daniela Suess, have won big on the world gin stage.

File Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

ing the first New Zealand distillery to ever win the title.

In 2023, they won for having New Zealand's best classic, matured, and contemporary gins, and in 2024, in their third year of entering the awards, they have scooped five Country Winner Golds.

They now await the judges'

decision in February as to which may be crowned world's best.

The pair didn't expect to end up distilling gin. With five degrees between them, including a MSc and PhD, Paul and Daniela said it "wasn't exactly on the radar". But, as if by design, the parts of life that they'd

always loved fitted together as the perfect foundation for distilling.

They said they have always loved botany, and share a passion for wilderness and the unspoiled environment.

Paul said he can't see himself now doing anything else.

"I still can't think of another

business that encapsulates all the pieces of our lives as much as the distillation of gin does. That love for the wilderness, the passion to explore and be curious, it's all there," he said. "We called it Awildian because it means 'growing wild' or 'refusing to be tamed', and we've just never liked tame."

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# 'Good, hard work' the secret to 100 years

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Betty Baldwin's secret to living 100 years boils down to "good, hard work".

The Waihi woman recently celebrated reaching a century with her family by her side, and received her birthday card from King Charles.

Friend Kathy Ellison said she met Betty at the local 'Wednesday Event' - a social group for senior citizens held each week at the Waihi Baptist Church.

*"Betty is such an inspiration to all who may cross her path... she has so much history, so many stories."*

- Pat Dando

After Betty's husband Fred passed away more than 20 years ago, Geoff Steele heard of her living alone and started bringing her to the group.

Pat Dando, a neighbour and friend of Betty's, transports her to and from the event, and said when she visits, Betty always greets her with her smile and says: "I will put the kettle on".

"Betty is such an inspiration to all who may cross her path. She has good friends, loves



Betty Baldwin's secret to living 100 years boils down to "good, hard work".

people, and welcomes them into her home and is always ready to put the jug on for a cuppa," Pat said.

"Betty has so much history, so many stories, and I love going to her home and listen to her life."

Betty came over to New Zealand on the ship 'Captain Cook'

at the age of 30 and was married to Fred. She was living in England during World War II, but preferred to talk about the "good old days and her many fond memories in New Zealand", Kathy told *The Profile*.

"She is still very independent and has such a beautiful, bubbly personality. She inspires



She celebrated with friends and family in Waihi.

Photos: SUPPLIED

us all with her alertness and ability to still do most things for herself.

"She is always smiling and thankful for any small blessing that comes her way.

"I remember her saying at the Wednesday event that everyone was so kind and she felt so spoiled for [us] mak-

ing our first meeting this year all about her and her amazing milestone.

"She is so inspiring to us all." Betty puts reaching 100 down to good hard work while raising her five children.



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# Poetry book a snapshot of Paeroa

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

A Paeroa poet is releasing her first book this week, full of observations and musings from living life in the Hauraki.

Sybil Woolmore's poetry book, published by Austin Macauley Publishers, is called 'The Way I See It' and captures everyday happenings often inspired by the local writing group.

"It does contain a lot of local things, like walking through the park, and all my new neighbours from when we first moved in," she said.

Sybil helped start the Paeroa Writers Group alongside fellow local Glenys Lewis about seven years ago.

They meet at the Paeroa Baptist Church along Wood St and share prose and poetry without censure.

"Glenys is an amazing lady. We all get together every fortnight and she comes with a challenge for us, and quite a few of my poems came from the challenges.

"It could be a random word or saying, or a place, and you write what you feel."

Sybil's book is launching on Thursday, February 22 between 4-6pm at the Paeroa Croquet Club Rooms and she told The Profile it all still felt "surreal".

"The first poem I wrote was about my father because I wanted to write his life story because it was so interesting, and when I started writing, it



Sybil Woolmore's poetry book 'The Way I See It' captures everyday happenings of life in Paeroa. Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

was much easier for me to write in verse.

"I had a whole collection of poems and so sent [the anthology] off and couldn't believe the response," she said. "It's almost like it's happening to someone else."

Sybil said she's looking for-

ward to locals reading 'The Way I See It' and resonating with a lot of her observations.

"It's everyday stuff that pops into my mind that I just have to write about. Where it all comes from... who knows?"

Sybil said she now has to pen a new poem specially for the

launch.

**DETAILS: Sybil's book is launching on Thursday, February 22 between 4pm-6pm at the Paeroa Croquet Clubrooms on King St. The book is \$25, cash only.**



## In Brief

### MAN ARRESTED FOR BURGLARY

One man has been arrested following two burglaries and several reports of a person seen in properties in the Thames residential area over the last week. A 28-year-old man is due to appear in Hamilton District Court today on two burglary charges. Sergeant Shane Doddrell said he would like to commend the Thames staff for their work towards a successful arrest and making the Thames community safer. "Police would like to thank the public's support and assistance in providing important information to prevent crime and harm in our communities," he said. People can report offending as it is occurring by calling 111, or report matters after the fact by calling 105. Reports can also be made online by going to <https://www.police.govt.nz/use-105> or anonymously by calling Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

### ROTARY SHELTER COMPLETE

Thames Rotary has completed the build of a new shelter along the Hauraki Rail Trail. The shelter is located between the old and new Kopu bridges. This special Rotary Millennium project sees Rotary celebrating 100 years of service in New Zealand.

### JANUARY TRAFFIC STATS

According to the Thames Business Association, 394,598 vehicles were in and out of Thames throughout the month of January; 26 of these were stolen vehicles/number plates.



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# Rural Life

## Funding boost for flood resilience

Waikato Regional Council has been awarded \$2.286 million from the Local Government Flood Resilience Co-investment Fund towards three projects to improve the resilience of communities impacted by Cyclone Hale and Cyclone Gabrielle in 2023. The funding includes: \$940,000 towards river management within the Waihou Valley scheme, with a focus on gravel management and stabilisation/revetment works in the Kauaeranga River, Kirikiri Stream, Puriri River, Omaha Stream, Hikutaia River, Komata River and Ohinemuri river; plus \$704,000 towards mitigating future flood risk in the Waipā, lower Waikato and west coast catchments by removing waterway obstructions and constructing at least 85 in-stream erosion control structures; and \$642,000 towards the removal of storm affected vegetation (largely old poplar, willow and pine) from waterways in the Coromandel Peninsula and planting willows and poplars to help stabilise the riverbanks. The funding is in addition to the

\$1.038m it received from the fund in October last year, towards river management works in the Coromandel Peninsula and to remediate damage to its Graham's Creek catchment flood scheme in Tairua. Integrated Catchment Management Director Greg Ryan said the summer 2023 flooding from the cyclones and frequent localised heavy rain left behind a substantial trail of damage. "Within the Waihou Valley Scheme, for example, the cost of recovery and increased resilience of rivers is estimated at \$1.26 million above what we've already spent and is expected to take a further two years. "For all these projects, we need to do more than just the basic remedial works which will only withstand a flood of similar size of less," he said. "To increase resilience against larger magnitude events we need to conduct full scale stabilisation of the riverbanks and remove gravel, bed loads and debris that were deposited in the channels during the extreme weather events."

## Ensure your current allowance works for you

New year, new budget? Is your current allowance for your pet working for you? Paying for your pet's healthcare is inevitable, so it's important to budget for the cost of your pet's primary healthcare. But this can be hard, right? How do you know how often your pet might need to go to the vet this year? Consider Bundle – a budget-friendly plan that focuses on primary preventative care. Reasonable monthly payments help spread pet healthcare costs over 12 months. Enrolled pets receive unlimited consults, an annual health check with blood and urine analysis, routine vaccinations, nail clips, and microchipping as part of the plan. Plus, they get discounts on pet food, flea treatments, dental care, and surgery. "We have five rescue dogs, three with special needs, so it was a no brainer to put them on the Bundle. We can't afford to insure them all (especially with their pre-existing conditions) but Bundle is super affordable – we did the math, we're saving money," a customer says. "Free consults means if we're worried about something with one of our pups, we can just pop in and get it checked, without stressing about finding the money for it. It's amazing to get confirmation that it's just a sore tummy and not



Rachel and Simon's five rescue dogs. Photo: SUPPLIED

something more serious like an obstruction or poison ingestion. "Our paralysed girl Tinkerbelle gets reoccurring UTIs due to her condition, so it was great to have baseline bloods and urine checks to compare with across the year, and free consults when we need to get her checked out. "With Bundle, all of our latest rescue puppy Pickle's vaccinations and microchip were covered. And it puts a dent in the regular costs like dentals and vet diets etc too. So it's totally worth it for our healthy pups, but it really saved our bacon when our big boy Briggie got diagnosed with cancer last year. He required weekly check ups and tests during his chemo treatment, and towards the end we were in clinic multiple times a week. During this awful time it was such a blessing to not have to worry about the consult fees on top of everything else. "Our kids love visiting our amazing Te Kauwhata vet team, and being on the Bundle makes those visits much more enjoyable for our budget. The only thing that would work better for us would be frequent flyer points, ha! Thanks Anexa!" From Rachael, Simon, Briggie, Alfie, Tinkerbelle, Bindi, Stormii and Picklee. Find out more at your local Anexa clinic or check out anexa.co.nz/bundle. - Supplied by Anexa

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# Rural Life

## Feds: Time to fix potholes

For rural communities struggling with pothole-riddled roads, run-down bridges and never-ending slips, their challenge to the new government is 'show us the money', Federated Farmers says.

"Farmers recognise the government have a huge amount of work on their plate, and keeping a lid on taxes means there's only so much money to go around," Federated Farmers national board member and transport spokesman Mark Hooper said.

"While we are supportive of the 'Roads of National Significance' programme, there is some concern in rural areas that there won't be enough funding available for provincial state highways and local road renewal and maintenance."

For the agriculture and horticulture sector, those rural highways, local roads and bridges are critical to getting product to processors and markets in a timely manner, Hooper said. "In the absence of the public transport options available in most urban areas, they're also the access lifelines for farming families getting to schools, suppliers and other services."

During election campaigning, National's transport spokesperson Simeon Brown – now the new Minister for both Transport and Local Government – pledged his party would establish a \$500 million Pothole Repair Fund to "urgently address the shocking state of our local roads and state highways".

There's no mention of that fund in National's coalition agreements with ACT and NZ First. The agreement with NZ First mentions 13 new Roads of National Significance and four major public transport upgrades.

There's also a commitment to building a four-lane highway alternative for Northland's Brynderwyns and to investigate the use of private finance to accelerate construction.



Federated Farmers transport spokesperson Mark Hooper. Photo: SUPPLIED

ACT has agreed to National's plans for a network of 10,000 public EV chargers by 2030 but insisted this be subject to "a robust cost-benefit analysis".

Labour's speed limit reductions – a bone of contention in many provincial areas – will be reversed where it is safe to do so.

And in another clue on how the new government hopes to foot transport bills, ACT and National have agreed to "institute long-term city and regional infrastructure deals, allowing PPPs (public private partnerships), tolling and value capture rating to fund infrastructure".

Instructions to NZTA Waka Kotahi on government priorities come in the form of the three-yearly Government Policy Statement (GPS) on Land Transport.

In a move welcomed by Federated Farmers, the Labour Government's draft GPS, put out in April this year, made highway and local road maintenance a 'strategic priority', and significantly bumped up funding for it.

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# Rural Life

## Volunteering higher in rural New Zealand

More people volunteer in rural New Zealand compared to the national average, a new report from Tūao Aotearoa Volunteering New Zealand shows.

“We know volunteering across Aotearoa is generally strong but we wanted to understand how experiences might differ depending where you live,” says Volunteering New Zealand Chief Executive Michelle Kitney.

State of Volunteering Regional Report – volunteering in New Zealand’s regions analyses data from Volunteering New Zealand’s research and from Statistics New Zealand.

Around 58 per cent of people in rural areas volunteer, compared to the national average of 50.7 per cent and 47.5 per cent for the major urban centres, Auckland, Wellington, and Christchurch.

“When it comes to the type of volunteering, people in rural areas have higher rates of informal/direct volunteering (at 43.8 per cent) compared to the national average of 36 per cent. Yet this doesn’t come at the expense of formal/organisational volunteering which is above the national average,” Michelle said.

The turnover rates of volunteering are lower in the smaller towns and cities, compared to main centres. The report suggests volunteers in main centres have more choice of roles and might ‘shop around’ to find volunteer-



Around 58 per cent of people in rural areas volunteer, higher than urban centres. File Photo

ing they enjoy. Smaller towns and cities are likely to have fewer options for formal volunteer roles.

“All volunteer-involving organisations, no matter where they are, should value volunteers. We encourage them to tap into resources, such as our Best Practice Guidelines, to ensure volunteers have a great experience.

“The report has highlighted challenges and opportunities to ensure the sector can support volunteering across all of New Zealand. We advocate for better data about volunteering and unpaid work for all communities.”

Volunteering New Zealand will be repeating its bi-annual State of Volunteering surveys of volunteers and community organisations in early 2024.

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# Concerns voiced over Piako swamp sections



As part of a Valley Profile series, **MEGHAN HAWKES** searches through old newspapers to bring you the stories Thames Valley locals once read about themselves.

**1910**

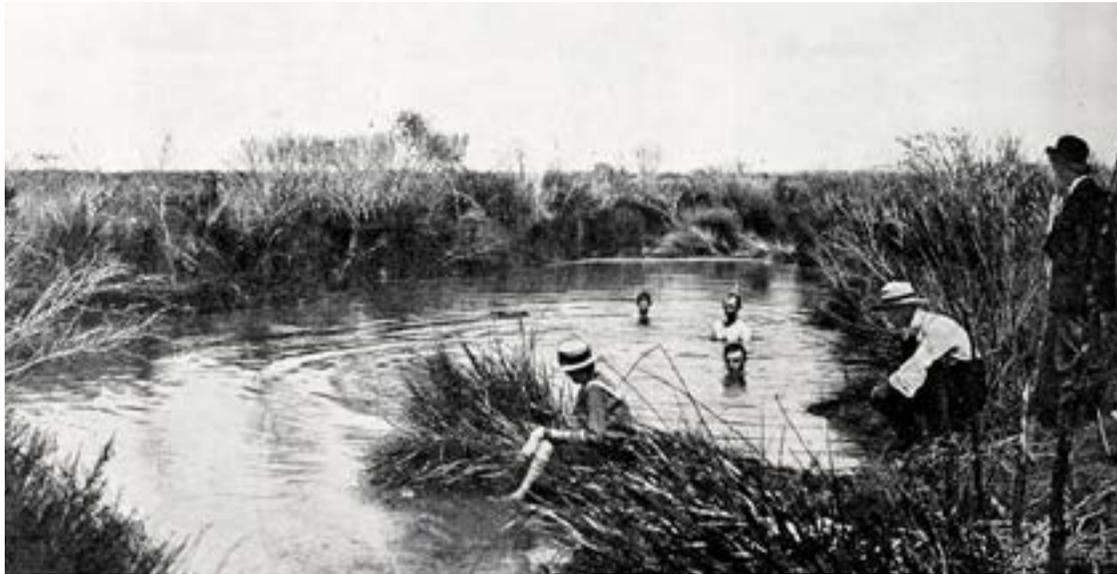
Great uneasiness was caused by a man who declared at a public gathering "God help the man who takes up land at Piako".

The Lands Department lost no time in countering that the new settlement would turn out to be as successful as had all along been confidently anticipated.

But a practical farmer, writing to the newspapers, agreed with the pessimist saying the Piako swamp was a failure. At high tide the sea backed the river up and the water spread all over the land. The drains that were cut were useless.

At low water they were full to the surface and dead water lay all over the sections up to one's knees. It would never be drained dry enough to grow anything.

There was no fresh water on the land and Artesian wells sunk by the government resulted in a flow of only hot soda water. There was no timber of any sort on or near the swamp; it would all have to come from Rotorua, and stone for the roads would need to be brought from Thames.



A hot pool near Miranda in the great swamp being reclaimed at the head of the Hauraki Gulf.

Photo: SUPPLIED

The only way to get to the swamp was by oil launch from Thames and the nearest railway - the Waikato line - was 25 miles over an impassable road.

The first class land at Piako would be good if it could be got dry; but the second class land had from 2ft to 8ft of peat full of water on it. It was all taken up mostly by people who had never seen it - shop assistants and the like.

The Lands Dept rebutted all these criticisms, adding that a few months previously, while a comet was in close proximity to the earth, it was noticed that the sea rushed into the Piako River at a phenomenal rate, and out again as quickly, but none went over the stop banks.

From all accounts, settlers were well pleased with their sections, and there was every reason to

believe that the settlement would thrive. There was even a thermal pool in the great swamp near Miranda which could have some sort of possibility.

Meanwhile, Mr McLiver, of Puriri, had solved the problem of how New Zealand could carry 20 million inhabitants - by growing fruit.

Mr McLiver, who had demonstrated the feasibility of making a financial success of a few acres of land, was an expert in fruit growing, and apples grown by him not only commanded the best price on the market, but had the honour of being selected by the government for exhibition in England.

One of Auckland's leading nurserymen agreed saying it was an acknowledged fact that the best spot in New Zealand to cultivate the luscious and profitable

apricot was the strip stretching from Puriri to Tapu and the coast.

The market for this fruit was never glutted and owing to the limited area on which they could be grown successfully, never likely to be.

At Paeroa, there was a large gathering of devotees to the graceful art of skating at the rink and a highly enjoyable evening was spent.

The potato race was won by Mr Edwards, who was also successful in the cigarette race with Mrs Dean. Future attractions included a tandem race for ladies and gentlemen and an egg and spoon race.

The management was making arrangements for music to be provided at the evening sessions to add to the enjoyment of all patrons.

## In Brief

### PAEROA ST JOHN CALL-OUTS

It was another busy month for Paeroa St John Ambulance crews who attended 203 jobs during January, with nearly 100 of those within the Paeroa township itself. According to a post on the ambulance's Facebook page, the start of the year had seen crews attend a marked increase in the number of road traffic accidents. "These jobs can be complex in nature, stressful for our staff and take up a considerable amount of time. During these events we are unable to attend to other incidents within our region and some people are having to wait a considerable amount of time for an ambulance to come from other areas which we acknowledge is not ideal," it said. St John Paeroa encouraged locals that, if their situation was not life threatening, consider contacting their local medical centre or Te Korowai for an appointment or advice or phoning Healthline on 0800 611 116 which is available 24/7. If you think you could help look after your community when the front-line ambulance is busy contact Hato Hone St John via [join.stjohn.org.nz/home](http://join.stjohn.org.nz/home).

### TURUA FAMILY DAY

A Turua Family Day is being planned for April, and those interested in having a stall or to be involved are encouraged to get in touch with organiser Brendan Walsh, aka The Rocker Warrior. The event will feature live entertainment, bouncy castles, and food and drink, and will be held at the Turua Domain on April 13. To be involved, contact Brendan at [turuacommunity@gmail.com](mailto:turuacommunity@gmail.com).

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With the cost of fuel and the pressure on other household expenses, it makes sense for people to utilise the Health Shuttle service to go to their medical appointments. There is no charge for this; simply contribute a donation or koha as you can. Getting to your appointments is a priority for good health outcomes and the service is supported by our community for the benefit of our community.

Our Thames Health Shuttle service is available to anyone in the Thames, Paeroa, Ngatea wider communities (including Kaiua) for transport to attend any kind of health related appointment either locally or inter-regionally including Hamilton, Auckland and Tauranga localities. Patients can have their own support person accompany them if required.

A core part for this service are our volunteer drivers who drive the shuttles. We currently have some vacancies for drivers for our Thames and Paeroa based shuttles so if you want to find out more information on being a volunteer driver give us a call on **0800 934 287** or email [hauraki.community@stjohn.org.nz](mailto:hauraki.community@stjohn.org.nz)

For Health Shuttle bookings: phone us on **(07) 868 0567** or **0800 934 287** and discuss your needs with us.

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The Valley Profile

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## Explore Thames Valley clubs

### Hauraki Thames Scottish Country Dance Club

Beginners are welcome to head along to the Hauraki Thames Scottish Country Dance Club as there is no experience necessary. For anyone wanting to try something new, pop along to the Thames Band Room on Queen St, Thames on February 29 at 6.15pm for the club's first dance night of the year.

### Thames Search and Rescue

Thames Search and Rescue is a volunteer organisation tasked with helping the lost or injured in the community or bush. The group also administers Wandersearch, or Wandatrack, providing pendants which can help find individuals who may wander

or get lost. Recent searches by the group include the missing man and dog at Wentworth Valley, a Thames Coast kayaker, and a lost person at Pirongia. Volunteers are encouraged to join the team. Contact chairman John Sanford, Text: 027 220 5646 or email john.sanford@xtra.co.nz.

### Thames Valley Hockey

Thames Valley Hockey are seeking new players from throughout the Thames Valley district for the winter season, for all grades. They welcome newbies and those who have played before. Games are played at the new Ngatea water turf. Get in touch with secretary@valleyhockey.org.nz or visit www.valleyhockey.org.nz.

CONTINUED ON P15



## PATETONGA MOTORCYCLE CLUB COME JOIN US!

Keep an eye on our Facebook page for events and club gatherings!

Check us out on  Patetonga MX

Our website [www.patetongamx.co.nz](http://www.patetongamx.co.nz)

or flick us an email on [patetongamcc@gmail.com](mailto:patetongamcc@gmail.com)



Beginners of all ages are welcome to head along to the Hauraki Thames Scottish Country Dance Club as no experience is necessary.

File Photo

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# JOIN A CLUB JOIN A CLUB JOIN A CLUB

CONTINUED FROM P14

### Paeroa Golf Club

Dubbed the little gem in the valley, Paeroa Golf Club surprises most visitors with its pleasing views and rural location. The membership is a collective mix of retired ex-local business couples and more recently, younger members, with the Longridge Village attracting newcomers to Paeroa. People are welcome to join in the nine hole group on Tuesdays along with the 18-hole ladies group. The men's section plays on Thursdays and Saturdays. Known also as the friendly club, people won't be left on their own at any time. Head over to the Paeroa Golf Club and give them a trial visit.

### Valley Rockers

Valley Rockers host a mixed group of people ranging from beginner level to confident dancers who are eager to share their skills. For an introduction to rock 'n' roll, join up to the four week course starting May 7 at 7pm. Entry will be \$20. The club meets at the Thames Bowling Club, 512 Mackay

St. Valley Rockers will celebrate its 37th birthday on September 7 at the Ngatea Hall, with tunes provided by music legends Shane and the Shazam Band.

### Grey Power Paeroa

Grey Power Paeroa would like to welcome new members to join the club. Find out what it's all about on the second Monday of each month from 1:30pm down at the Paeroa Bible Chapel in Wharf St. This is an opportunity to meet with other seniors in the area, enjoy afternoon tea and good company. See you at the next gathering.

### Hauraki Plains Football Club

Hauraki Plains Football Club was established in 1984. Based at Hugh Hayward Domain in Ngatea on the Hauraki Plains, the club offers football to children aged 3 to 13 years and youth and adults from 13 years in the Hauraki District. The purpose of the club is to promote, encourage and develop football and to assist in the development of sportsmanship and community spirit.



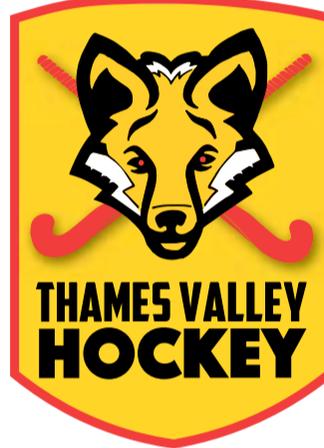
The Valley Rockers meets at the Thames Bowling Club. Photo: SUPPLIED



The Hauraki Plains Football Club is based at Hugh Hayward Domain in Ngatea. File Photo: PIXABAY

## PLAY HOCKEY

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Enquiries to: [valleyrockersthames@gmail.com](mailto:valleyrockersthames@gmail.com)

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People 50 and over may join.

In Thames we work with other organisations on behalf of all older people.

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# Fresh start, fresh art at Matatoki

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

Matatoki School and its community has entered the school year in a brand new way.

Students, teachers, staff, and parents gathered together on February 13 to witness the unveiling of their new waharoa, or, entranceway, which was brought to life by many hands, minds and hearts.

Invited to bless the waharoa was local kaumātua Mātua Waati, who supported schools in the area in teaching and learning about Te ao Māori.

The artwork on the waharoa was called "Ka mua, ka muri,"

which meant looking to the past to inform the future, and was created by local artist Rick Fisher, who also worked with school students to bring their ideas to life.

The back of the waharoa showcased artwork made by the school's relief teacher, Whaea Gail Escombe, and junior students.

That's not all the Matatoki community observed. Festivities continued as the new admin block and sensory garden were also opened on the day, followed by a morning tea for students, staff and invited guests.



The Matatoki School community stands behind "Ka mua, ka muri" by artist Rick Fisher. Photos: DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA



Students sing a waiata for their peers, wider school family and guests.



Board of Trustees chair Elliot Burton shares some words surrounded by the artwork of Whaea Gail and junior students.



Principal Hine Viskovich receives a gift from Waharoa artist Rick Fisher.



The new sensory garden.

# Celtic harp performance inbound

Adriano Sangineto, an Italian virtuoso musician, is performing in Thames this month.

Internationally recognised for his unique style and exceptional contribution to celtic harp music, Adriano has taken his music from Europe to New Zealand, from the United States to Australia, regularly participating in major festivals dedicated to celtic harp as a performer and teacher.

During his two decade musical career, he has transcended the traditional limits of the instrument to create an original and innovative sonic dimen-

sion. He is known for his original compositions, with each piece a sensory experience that combines rhythm, melody, and suggestion.

He will now perform in Thames on February 29.

Arpa Creativa (Creative Harp) is an original show where the celtic harp is the extension of the lively character of Adriano, twisting the mainstream vision of this instrument. The celtic harp turns into a percussive instrument, expanding its rhythmic and harmonic capabilities.

This is an evening not to be missed.

Adriano can play anything from medieval to pop, celtic to classical and during their last tour, Ensemble Sangineto wowed audiences playing a full concert of songs singing every last word in Italian.

**DETAILS: Adriano Sangineto, performing at Thames Squash Club on Thursday, February 29. Tickets can be purchased from Carson's Bookshop in advance, or at the door. Doors open at 6:30pm, concert starts at 7:30pm. For more details contact harpmad@gmail.com**

Adriano Sangineto will be performing in Thames on February 29.

Photo: SUPPLIED



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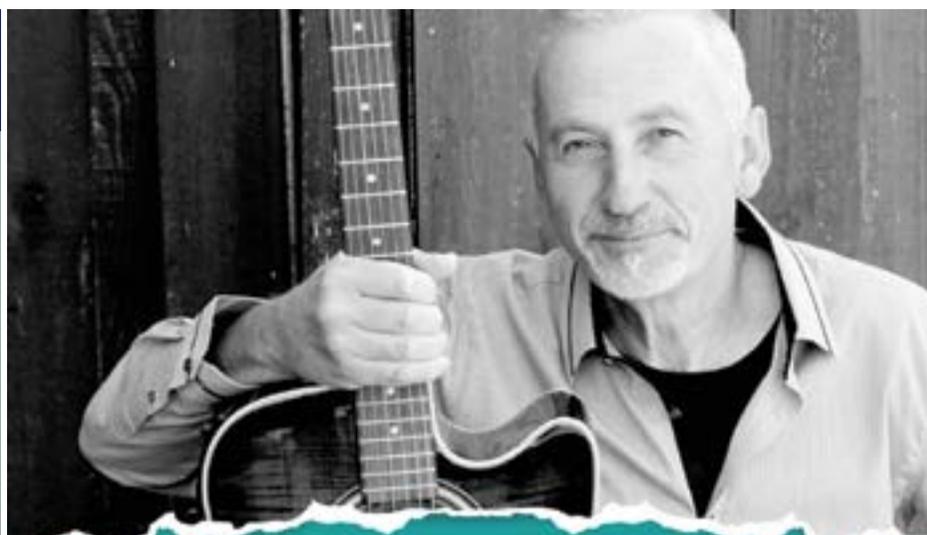
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Fancy a glass of wine with your cheese board while sitting under a shady tree? Then BYO wine to The Cheese Barn at Matatoki and enjoy the peace of the countryside while you eat. The kids love the big outdoor area and can feed the animals like alpacas, goats, guinea pigs, rabbits, birds, and chickens.

The cafe is open seven days a week from 9am to 4pm every day, (the kitchen closes at 3:30pm). Situated in a picturesque area between Thames and Paeroa, only 5km from Kopu and on the Hauraki Rail Trail so they get plenty of cyclists call in for coffee and cheese boards or tasty pizzas made with aged cheese. They use Coffee LaLa beans and organic milk processed in the factory. You can

also buy Organic Unhomo-genised Milk in 1 liter glass bottles with a refund on the bottle once returned. The milk is also available at the Thames Organic Shop in Pollen St.

They make their own Gelato and Sorbet Ice Creams using organic milk and cream and are only made and sold on site. They are sold in tubs or cones and also on Belgium Waffles, which are a real treat.

There is a Breakfast Menu served on Friday, Saturday and Sunday from 9am to midday and the Waffles are available with Mascarpone and Berry Compote or Bacon and Maple Syrup. They have only been doing the cooked Breakfasts since March last year and it's proving a real hit, especially the Eggs Benedict Bacon and The Big Barn Breakfast.



Enjoy a delicious cheese board, a sip of wine and sunshine at The Cheese Barn. Photo: SUPPLIED



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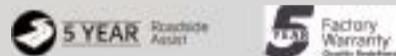
# Kia Seltos

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# Kia Niro

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The Kia 7 Year Warranty Programme runs for 7 years or up to 150,000 kms (whichever occurs first). All other on road costs (ORC) are additional. Terms and conditions apply, see [kia.co.nz](http://kia.co.nz) for full details.

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Splinta's Firewood continue serving the community with new owner Earl Mathers. Photo: PIXABAY

## Sorted for winter with Splinta's

Earl Mathers is the new owner of Splinta's Firewood, but not new to the industry. "I used to do firewood just on a lowkey basis before I bought the business," he said. "I'd been doing firewood locally around Waihi, Waihi Beach and Katikati area for the past five years, just on a small scale." With an offering of split firewood in pine and gum, Splinta's will carry on its strong reputation as the go-to local supplier in the Thames Valley region. "With Janella shutting down, that was gonna leave a big hole in the market, so that's kinda why I jumped at the opportunity," he said. "I feel like I've hit the ground running."

Since taking over Splinta's, Earl has polished up his trailer backing skills with deliveries to "quite a few areas" including Coromandel, Thames, Hauraki, Waihi, "right down to Omokoroa". There are no set business hours, just pick up the phone and contact Earl to book a delivery. "I'm pretty flexible, I just arrange a time with customers," he said. "I find it pretty good to catch up with the customers and have a conversation, it's quite interesting who you bump into." CONTACT: Ph 0800 7754 6827 or find us on Facebook splintasfirewood.

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<b>Assembly of God</b> 10am Sundays. Scout Hall. Baker St, Waihi	<b>Plains Healing Centre</b> Since 1989 now in Paeroa & Thames as <b>Romoco Wellness.</b> Gentle therapeutic manipulation as per Harley Blows 07 862 9167	<b>Thames Taxis</b> Driver with Passenger Licence required. Please apply to thamestaxis@xtra.co.nz or call 02102952879 to find out more. Evening and weekend work involved	
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<b>Garage Sale</b> Saturday 24th February. 302 Pahau Street, Thames 8-1pm. A good range of household goods and various tools	<b>Healing &amp; Miracle Meeting</b> February 23 at Thames Baptist Church Mary St. 7pm Live band All welcome	<b>Public Notice</b> <b>The Thames Community Menzshed Inc</b> 410 Queen St. (Behind the old post office) is holding an open day on <b>Saturday Feb 24th from 10am to 3pm.</b> A great opportunity to come and see what the Shed offers. We welcome new members interested in learning new woodworking or engineering skills. Learn Handyman tips and the use of power tools useful around the home.	
<b>Gardening</b> STUMP GRINDING. All sizes, all areas. Thames based. Ph 021 060 7659	<b>Public Notice</b>  & CITIZENS CLUB INC. The Annual General Meeting will be held in the RSA Clubrooms 1pm Sunday 24th March 2024  Nominations for Office close with the secretary 6pm Friday 8th March 2024  Notices of Motion close with the secretary 6pm Friday 1st March 2024  Nomination forms are available at the club.  A Rohrlach, Secretary	<b>Handyman</b>  THAMES HANDYMAN & BUILDING SERVICES Building, home maintenance & general gardening services Phone: Fleur or Crighton • 0273 913 283	
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# The lost art of silence

## OPINION



By MICHAEL WILKES

In the last article I shared about a story of my daughter walking around in oversized shoes. A moment where I paused and was reminded of an important life lesson. The value of embracing the moment and being fully present. I must admit like all of us it is easy to miss such moments. In our day and age we are surrounded by constant demands for our attention. Silence is something we can only enjoy through intention. We are busy people surrounded by relentless noise. And I was intrigued to discover that constant exposure to noise has negative effects on our well being and our motivation. Noise that constantly draws us away from ourselves. Yet its not just noise; music constantly in the background, people around us, road traffic or the lawn mower next door.

It's the noise we create within ourselves. Conversations at the café with our phone on the table at the ready, Netflix to fill the empty evenings, and infinite amounts of news to read. We have unlimited opportunity to escape ourselves, and we do. Silence has become one of our rarest commodities. And I meet people all the time who struggle with hard feelings and have no idea why or how to face it. And so, they turn up the volume in the hope it goes away. And yet it is the opposite that we need. It is sustained silence that is required of us. Regular space where we can be still, allow the self-reflection, allow ourselves to see life around us from the quiet. This is no crazy new movement, no new fad. This is simply something that has been constant through all human history. Spaces of stillness and loneliness were the norm. Valuable spaces to consider self and life. And its still there. Turn of the radio in the car, stay off your phone in the loo, go for a walk without headphone in your ear. And allow yourself to consider life. Because the funny thing is that much to my surprise silence is often the highlight we hear from students. I run cool as adventures, amazing team building challenges filled with laughs and giggles. Yet so often when asked about their highlights, it is often the silence. Because silence and stillness has become a lost art and we have become disconnected from the quiet voice within us.

# Kōpū Marine precinct build on final stretch

Thames-Coromandel District Council has announced that building work for the Kōpū Marine precinct is heading into its home stretch. Heron Construction have returned to site and have removed the cofferdam from around the commercial slipway. The commercial wharf is also near completion, with the concrete decking just poured, the floating pontoon installed, and the fendering systems fixed to the fender piles. The gangway, lights, bollards and other fittings will be installed over the next few weeks. Land & Sea Civil have commenced the abutment for the commercial slipway's catwalk. The catwalk is due to be installed soon. Fulton Hogan returned to site and are currently progressing: trenching for

the services out to the boat ramps and wharf (includes power and water); and laying kerb lines at King Street. Work is on schedule for a May, 2024 opening. Most of the \$15.3m cost of the project is being met through an \$8.2m grant from the government's Crown Infrastructure Partners Fund, \$4m from the Three Waters Reform 'better off' funding, and \$1.4m from the Thames Community Board's Thames Urban General-Purpose Reserve. A further \$565,000 has been granted from the Waikato Regional Council's Regional Fund. The Thames Community Board has currently underwritten the contingency shortfall while external funding is sought for the remaining \$565,000.



Work on the \$15m Kōpū Marine Servicing and Business Precinct is making good progress. Photo: SUPPLIED/TCDC

# ENTERTAINMENT



Jules Riding will perform in Paeroa on February 26. Photo: SUPPLIED

## Singer to perform in Paeroa

Christian singer Jules Riding will perform at the Paeroa Bible Chapel on Sunday, February 26 at 6pm.

A full time Christian singer, Jules has released 12 albums and twice won Gospel Album of the Year at the New Zealand Music Awards. He has three Gold albums.

He became a Christian after an "extensive search for truth" through alternative religions, he said. He met a Christian woman, who became his girlfriend, and said a personal cri-

sis forced him to examine the meaning of life.

Jules founded and directed the Elkanah School of Music Ministry, which ran for eight years on Great Barrier Island, but he now concentrates his energies on concert ministry and teaching on worship throughout Europe.

His album *Cataclysm* is a close examination of the way people handle personal struggles in a pluralistic society, he said. He also believed the "growing number of global

cataclysms indicated we live in a time of human history the Bible calls 'the last days'." His latest album *Rivers* focuses on renewal in the Holy Spirit.

He lists his musical influences as the folk greats from the 60s and 70s: Bob Dylan, Paul Simon, James Taylor, Cat Stevens, Leonard Cohen, Joni Mitchell, and various Christian singers: Keith Green, John Michael Talbot, Michael W Smith, Ian White, Kari Jobe, Yonina and the Australian group Sons of Korah.

## V8s to roll into town

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

The Rotary Paeroa V8 Car and Motorcycle Show and Swap Meet is speeding into Paeroa for its 19th year this weekend.

The event will be held at the Paeroa Domain on February 24, and there will be plenty to do and see. From 8am, the swap meet will commence, with enthusiasts putting their wares on display.

The main event kicks into gear at 10am with plenty of fantastic cars and motorbikes on display, as well as V8 trucks, police cars, limos, and an Austin 7 rocket car with twin pulse jet engine built by Paeroa resident Colin Brookes.

The fire department will be conducting a demonstration, and there will be a tug of war and a tyre-changing competi-

tion, as well as food and market stalls, a tattoo artist, and displays from local businesses.

This year, there is also a new category aimed at kids and teens, for bikes under 125cc. Up for grabs is a free motorbike lesson from Rev's, while the winner of the main cars and bikes category will receive a \$500 petrol voucher.

Rotary Paeroa president Katie Mclauren said there would be something for everyone at the show.

"We've got an amazing rockabilly band from Hibiscus Coast called Boom Boom Deluxe, they're fantastic," she said.

"There will be awesome cars and motorbikes, fantastic displays, lots of market stalls, an amazing band and it's just a great day out."



Roy Rowe stands by his 1932 Ford V8 Coupe at last year's event.

File photo: KELLEY TANTAU



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# SUDOKU

138

Fill the grid so every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9

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138

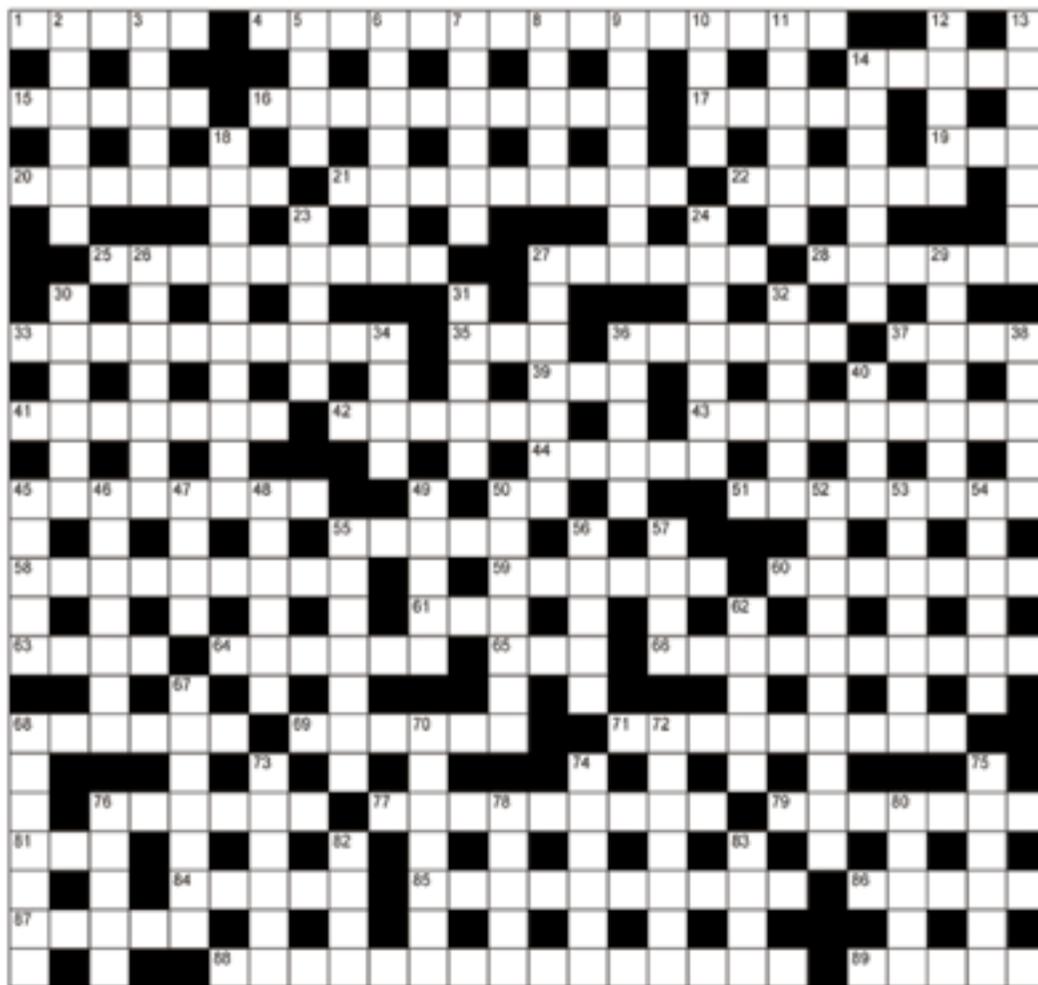
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2	9	3	7	8	4	1	6	5
6	5	7	1	2	3	9	4	8

# JUMBO CROSSWORD

158

- ACROSS**
- 1 Room on ship (5)
  - 4 Exaggeratedly shy person (9,6)
  - 14 Brownd bread (5)
  - 15 Homeless cat (5)
  - 16 Meet halfway (10)
  - 17 Elevate (5)
  - 19 Morning moisture (3)
  - 20 Predict (7)
  - 21 Menagerie custodian (9)
  - 22 Very dirty (6)
  - 25 Pirate (9)
  - 27 Slice of bacon (6)
  - 28 Calm (6)
  - 33 Elderly man who lavishes gifts on a young woman (5,5)
  - 35 Embrace (3)
  - 36 Rite (6)
  - 37 Cosy (4)
  - 39 Playing card (3)
  - 41 Large ape (7)
  - 42 Tot (6)
  - 43 Red food colouring (9)
  - 44 Commerce (5)
  - 45 Nuclear weapon (4,4)
  - 50 Father (2)
  - 51 Edible subterranean fungi (8)
  - 55 Disloyal (5)
  - 58 Controversial, awkward or risky issue (3,6)
  - 59 Spice (6)
  - 60 Dearth (7)
  - 61 Donkey (3)
  - 63 Space (4)
  - 64 Moves stealthily about (6)
  - 65 Unwell (3)
  - 66 Orbiting devices (10)
  - 68 Ingenious (6)
  - 69 Copper-tin alloy (6)
  - 71 Undercover work (9)
  - 76 Lets (6)
  - 77 Break the continuity of (9)
  - 79 Gossip (7)
  - 81 Friend (3)
  - 84 Irrigate (5)
  - 85 Money-making (10)
  - 86 Derisive smile (5)
  - 87 Requirements (5)
  - 88 Scarce (4,2,3,6)
  - 89 Under (5)
  - 29 Hide (7)
  - 30 Rudimentary canoe (6)
  - 31 Inexpensive (5)
  - 32 Small dish (6)
  - 34 Pull with a jerk (4)
  - 36 Majestic (5)
  - 38 Seaside birds (5)
  - 40 Short repeated phrase in jazz etc (4)
  - 45 Detest (5)
  - 46 Result (7)
  - 47 Explosion sound (4)
  - 48 Scanty (6)
  - 49 Assumed name (5)
  - 50 Deep in thought (7)
  - 52 Asymmetrical (10)
  - 53 Emotion (7)
  - 54 Engraved with acid (6)
  - 55 Send on (7)
  - 56 Steps over a fence or wall (5)
  - 57 Charges (4)
  - 62 High-up room (5)
  - 67 Fire-puffers (7)
  - 68 Firm (7)
  - 70 Skittle (7)
  - 72 High singing voice (7)
  - 73 Exchange (6)
  - 74 Difficult, annoying (6)
  - 75 Summerhouse (6)
  - 76 Amend (5)
  - 78 Era (5)
  - 80 Distance attainable by a gun (5)
  - 82 Small bird (4)
  - 83 Open pastry (4)



**PREVIOUS SOLUTION**

ACROSS: 1 Cleaver, 4 Misogynist, 9 Blotter, 13 Rave, 14 Stance, 15 Gauged, 16 Android, 18 Dog, 20 Belling, 21 Learners, 22 Jemmy, 25 Repast, 26 Porous, 28 Esperanto, 33 Serenade, 34 Putter, 35 Debacle, 39 Lightens, 40 Revise, 41 Plot, 42 Focus, 43 Abyss, 46 Day of reckoning, 53 Sleet, 56 Canal, 57 Case, 58 Tanker, 59 Surprise, 62 Reserve, 63 Malice, 64 Clippers, 67 Taxidermy, 69 Fester, 70 Volume, 74 Waste, 75 Sayonara, 77 Penicillin, 81 Top, 83 Admirer, 84 Bought, 85 Expand, 86 Weak, 87 Intense, 88 Fraternity, 89 Contend.

DOWN: 1 Carob, 2 Envelope, 3 Rotund, 4 Mince, 5 Shed, 6 Goggles, 7 Nougat, 8 Stern, 10 Lens, 11 Torment, 12 Enigma, 17 Prospectus, 19 Brief, 23 Tone-deaf, 24 Lager, 25 Rubella, 27 Oral, 29 Sleep in, 30 Penned, 31 Streak, 32 Blouse, 34 Prime, 36 Atoll, 37 Ugly, 38 Join, 44 Blazer, 45 Stale, 47 Away, 48 Overarm, 49 Retain, 50 Canoe, 51 Overcast, 52 Grumpy, 53 Supersonic, 54 Evil, 55 Theatre, 60 Avoid, 61 Like, 65 Delay, 66 Bullseye, 68 Astride, 69 Flatter, 71 Harden, 72 Caught, 73 Picnic, 76 Odour, 78 Empty, 79 Naked, 80 Legs, 82 Peri.

## SPORTS

# Targa rally planned for rural roads

By KELLEY TANTAU, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

An upcoming event could draw the car enthusiasts and the curious to the rural roads of Maramarua, Mangatāwhiri, and Mangatangi this March.

Targa New Zealand is planning on bringing its Bambina 2024 tarmac rally to rural Hauraki over the weekend of March 16 and 17.

Ultimate Rally Group managing director Peter Martin said Targa has been running in New Zealand since 1995, and during this time, they have regularly hosted events around the Hauraki district.

"But it has been about five years since we were last in this particular area as we try to change the course for every event," he said.

Targa NZ is a road race series in which competitors race against the clock in 'Special Stages' and compile points over each race leg (up to eight per day), to arrive at a series champion. These legs are held as part of an event, two or three times per year, with each taking place within a few hours commute from Auckland.

Peter said getting from the big smoke to rural Waikato was simple, as each participant sets off in one minute intervals.

"In terms of normal travelling around on the open roads,



Targa NZ is one of the last Tarmac Motorsport Events in the world that involves public roads, attracting racers from all over the world. Photo: SUPPLIED

the rally cars don't interfere with the normal flow of traffic because it's not like there's 50 of them bumper to bumper. They're each separated by a minute," he explained.

The March Targa will be based out of Te Kauwhata Col-

lege as the central service park, with the cars returning to the school throughout the day.

When speaking to The Profile, Peter was out plotting the course, with the road closure proposals already being lodged with Waikato District Council.

The proposed road closures for the Hauraki area relate to the first day of the event on March 16. They are: Coalfields Road; Kopuku Road; Monument Road; Miranda Road; Mangatangi Road; Mangatāwhiri Road; Jeffs Road; and

McKenzie Road.

"Once we have council approval for the road closures, we will then create recommended areas for spectators to view the passing cars, in addition to the school stop where spectators can meet the drivers," Peter said.

The organisation acknowledged that the proposed road closures may cause inconvenience to residents, however, they hoped people would take the opportunity to watch New Zealand's leading tarmac rally drivers and cars "in action".

"Targa NZ is one of the last Tarmac Motorsport Events in the world that involves public roads, and as such attracts people from all over the world, such as Australia, Japan, USA, UK and Europe, just to name a few," Peter said.

"[There's a] wide range of vehicles, from vintage early 1900's through to the latest 2024 Supercars, so there is a diverse mix of machinery that will appeal to a variety of people, so don't miss the show and get along to view some of the best tarmac drivers displaying their skills."

**DETAILS: Visit [www.targa.nz](http://www.targa.nz) for more information. For full list of road closures and times, visit the Public Notices page of [www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz](http://www.waikatodistrict.govt.nz).**



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