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Hop to it



There were bright skies over Waihi for the Beach Hop Go Waihi Warm Up Party last week. Vintage and classic cars lined the main street, rock and roll dancers got their groove on, and hundreds of spectators donned retro wear. Reporter KELLEY TANTAU caught the action. More photos: P5

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Paeroa event a 'welcome back' for SS Puke

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

A steam launch that was restored in Paeroa and had many outings on the Waihou and Ohinemuri rivers is returning home for an event the maritime park hopes will become an annual affair.

The Paeroa Maritime Park is putting on a 'Steam Up' over the Easter weekend.

Spokesperson Gloria James said they'd been in talks with the Auckland Steam Engine Society about hosting a Steam Up event in Paeroa for some time, but they needed everything to "marry up" with SS Puke - a steam launch that spent many years in the waters of Hauraki.

According to the New Zealand Maritime Museum, SS Puke - named for the Puke Wharf where it was often berthed - was thought to have been a tender in the Kaipara logging trade, built by E. Thompson and Son at Aratapu, towards the end of the 19th century.

In 1977, she was salvaged from the Tamaki River and was restored in Paeroa, where she had a steam engine and boiler installed. She worked for several years on the Waihou and Ohinemuri rivers and in 1993, a major rebuild was carried out by the Boat Yard at Hobson Wharf.

She was purchased by the Union Steam Ship Company in 1989 and then donated to the Maritime Museum.



The steam launch SS Puke, which had many outings on the Waihou and Ohinemuri rivers, is returning home for an event this Easter weekend.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Gloria told *The Profile* the event acted as a "welcome back" to SS Puke and was a chance for visitors and locals alike to witness a fun-filled day of vintage boats, cars, and engines.

With an "eclectic mix" of steamboats coming down from Auckland for the two days - as well as other classic items such as a penny-farthing bicycle - it was also a good opportunity for people to see the park's ongoing development, she said.

It is also hoped this year's Steam Up

will be the first of many for the historical park.

DETAILS: The Paeroa Steam Up will be held at the Maritime Park over Easter Weekend, March 30-31. Gates open at 10am each day, closing time at 3pm. Boat rides start at 11:30am. Entry via Hubbard Rd, tickets: adult \$8; children (5+) \$5; family \$20; boat rides \$10. For more info go to: www.historicalmaritimepark.co.nz.



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Thames Tides

Wed Mar 27	Thu Mar 28	Fri Mar 29	Sat Mar 30	Sun Mar 31	Mon Apr 1	Tue Apr 2
 Morning: 3:21am 0.7, 9:37am 3.2 Afternoon: 3:44pm 0.7, 10:03pm 3.3 Sun: 7:27am 7:19pm Best At: 2:13am 2:33pm Set: 8:54am, Rise: 8:06pm	 Morning: 3:56am 0.7, 10:12am 3.2 Afternoon: 4:20pm 0.7, 10:37pm 3.3 Sun: 7:28am 7:17pm Best At: 2:54am 3:16pm Set: 9:54am, Rise: 8:31pm	 Morning: 4:33am 0.7, 10:49am 3.2 Afternoon: 4:55pm 0.7, 11:13pm 3.2 Sun: 7:29am 7:16pm Best At: 3:38am 4:01pm Set: 10:56am, Rise: 9:01pm	 Morning: 5:11am 0.8, 11:27am 3.2 Afternoon: 5:32pm 0.7, 11:50pm 3.2 Sun: 7:30am 7:14pm Best At: 4:26am 4:51pm Set: 12:00pm, Rise: 9:37pm	 Morning: 5:53am 0.8, 12:33am 3.1 Afternoon: 6:12pm 0.7, 12:07pm 3.1 Sun: 7:31am 7:13pm Best At: 5:17am 5:44pm Set: 1:05pm, Rise: 10:22pm	 Morning: 6:39am 0.9, 12:51pm 3.1 Afternoon: 6:57pm 0.8, 12:31pm 3.1 Sun: 7:31am 7:11pm Best At: 6:12am 6:41pm Set: 2:07pm, Rise: 11:16pm	 Morning: 7:31am 1.0, 1:21am 3.1 Afternoon: 7:48pm 0.9, 1:40pm 3.0 Sun: 7:32am 7:10pm Best At: 7:10am 7:40pm Set: 3:04pm, Rise: 11:16pm

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MOON AND FISH KEYS			

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	Hr	MIN	HIGH	LOW
Coromandel	-0	04	-0	04
Whitianga	-0	01	-0	05
Tairua	+0	11	+0	21
Whangamata	-0	02	-0	05
Waihi Beach	-0	11	-0	12

Ngatea musician tops New Zealand charts

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

Taylor Griffin is Hauraki Plains College's woodworking teacher by day. He's also a drummer and composer, and now he's added "chart-topping artist" to his resume.

The Ngatea-based musician's first EP, *In Green*, debuted at number nine on the New Zealand charts on March 11. The 20-minute album features six tracks, and lists an array of well-known New Zealand musicians among its credits, including singer Rachel Clarke, Polish-born keyboardist Michal Martyniuk, guitarist Geoff Ong, and trumpet player Guy Harrison.

Sitting alongside Taylor at the top of the list is renowned New Zealand musician Nathan Haines as co-producer and saxophone/flute soloist. His involvement in the project was a coup for Taylor, who said Nathan's mentorship and industry contacts helped pull his work to the next level.

Taylor, who honed his skills in the Auckland music scene, began work on the album in 2022. He drew on his life experiences during and after Covid-19 - the birth of his daughter, meeting and marrying his wife, navigating the experience of making music - to create a groove-based album he described as "a mishmash".

"I'm not writing to do anything in particular, I'm just following my instincts," Taylor said.

"It's not really pop music at all, it's not really jazz - there's no rules. It's all about feeling."



In Green was developed in Taylor Griffin's Ngatea-based recording studio "The Groove Suite". Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

In Green is a work which puts rhythm front and centre, an unusual perspective which Taylor said comes from his background as a drummer.

"Drummers don't usually do this [write albums]," he said.

"I come at it from the rhythmic perspective and the way I arrange - I'm not thinking about a key signature because I think it's a little bit too stagnant. It'll change key almost all the time... it's just where my ear led me to go."

When Taylor approached Nathan Haines with the tracks, the seasoned musician immediately heard something he liked.

"I originally approached him about doing some mixing," Taylor said.

"And he said, 'look, I could do a solo on this one and I could do a solo on this one... but once my name's on it obviously that's going to put you into a different territory.' I wasn't going to say no to that."

Taylor likened Nathan's involvement to a masterclass.

"I was sitting right next to him the whole time while he was mixing - it was like doing a post-grad. He mentored me through the whole process," Taylor said. "I got put in touch with Big Pop Records through Nathan too. He basically showed me the door and said, 'here you go, there's everything'."

Taylor was overseas with his family when he heard his finished tracks for the first time.

"I was sitting in my mother-in-law's kitchen in Italy and listening to the tunes, and I was just loving it," he said. "It was a real buzz... I was extremely proud of it."

Taylor said he was still trying to get his head around the reception *In Green* has received since its February 29 release.

"I literally came at this with just an idea in my head, and now just to see the progression of how it's gone, who I've been able to work with, who's listening to it and where it is in the popular culture - it's good," he said.




"I wasn't even expecting to register on the charts... I just wanted to make something that I would want to listen to. And I did, I love it. I think it's really good. But I'm even more stoked that other people think that as well."

Taylor is already hard at work on his next offering. He's recorded some tracks in London, and will be collaborating with Nathan again, this time on a full length-album.






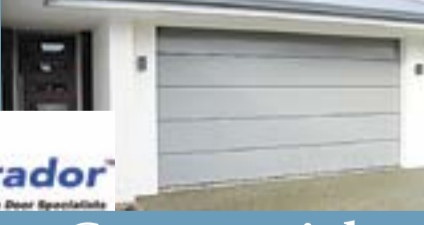
"It's a lot of work putting something together like this," he said, crediting the support of his family as instrumental in his success.

"You have to try and do this and you also have to be dad and husband... There were definitely moments where it was getting too much, but I always just had faith that it was going to be a good thing, followed my instinct, and it turned out to be a success. It's more than I would have ever hoped for."



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Education

Outdoor ed puts students to the test

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

Inspiring students to work as a team and embrace challenges is what the Outdoor Education programme at Thames High School is geared up to do for its senior students.

The programme offers year 12 and 13 students an informative learning experience both inside and outside the classroom. Focusing on team work, problem-solving, and leadership skills, students will learn the theoretical aspects of different activities, followed by opportunities to apply their learnings in practical assessments.

Head of the health and physical education department Taryn Slee said the programme was “resilience building”.

“It’s supposed to be challenging. It’s not supposed to be an easy course.”

Miss Slee said part of the course was intended to test students, whether it was physically, mentally, or both at times.

“The other part is the teamwork and the collaboration with the other people in the class.”

Miss Slee said it was really cool to see people stepping up to help others in class who needed extra support.

“You can tell that they’ve got those leadership skills that they’re developing.”

White water rafting at Vector Wero Whitewater Park in Manukau was the first activity NCEA



Students take to the water, left, the outdoor education class is ready for action, right, students get prepped for rock climbing, below.



Photos: SUPPLIED

Level 2 students prepared for this year.

Students had to analyse risk management strategies, think about the health and safety issues around rafting and how they might try to mitigate them, Miss Slee said.

Students used four or five rafts during the day, and afterwards, students talked about what they did to keep themselves safe in the raft, Miss Slee said.

Year 12 student Abbey Mobberley said it was her first time trying white water rafting, along with everyone else in the group.

“It’s a different activity that we’d not usually do or have the opportunity to do,” she said.

Experience and having more confidence to step out of her comfort zone were some things Abbey said she would like to gain from the course.

“Confidence in my peers as well because in the groups that we get put in, it’s not usually just our friends.”

Abbey said she was interested in the programme because of all the fun trips and it being a “different type of learning”.

“All our trips are spaced out -

so we’ve always got something to look forward to,” Abbey said.

The next class trip will be black water rafting at Waitomo caves in May.

When asked what the best thing about working as a team was, Abbey said “we’re all becoming closer”.

“I feel like all our communication’s definitely building up.”

For students who are thinking about doing the outdoor education programme next year, Abbey said it allowed students to step out of their comfort zone.

“Definitely do it.”



Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga
Thames High School



Kia kōtahi ai te piki ake, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata
We grow together to achieve ones true potential

CELEBRATING SUCCESS



Thames Valley Swim Champs

Congratulations to our swim team. Thames High School were the overall winner of three age groups and won the Mixed 6 x 25m relay.

Top achievements:

Junior Girls Champion

Maia Whitney Year 9

Junior Girls Runner up

Nova Sawyer Year 10

Junior Boys Champion

Luca Yamamoto Year 9

Intermediate Boys 3rd place

Lorenzo Yamamoto Year 11

Senior Girls 5th place

Lexi Rohrlach Year 12

Senior Boys Champion

Austin Court Year 12

Thanks to all the staff at Thames Centennial Pools



Thames Valley Athletics

Well done to our 24 athletes who participated in the Thames Valley Secondary Schools Athletics Championships at Paeroa and achieved impressive results.

Top achievements:

Senior Boys 800m and 1500m 2nd

Austin Court Year 12

Intermediate Boys 200m 2nd

Lorenzo Yamamoto Year 11

Junior Girls High Jump 2nd

Alzora Taylor

Junior Boys Triple Jump 2nd

Archie Stove

Junior Boys High and Long Jump 2nd

Rocky Tuhakaraina

Junior Boys 200m 2nd

Lincoln Donaldson



Drama at Te Pou Theatre

On Wednesday 6 March our senior Drama cohort took a trip to Henderson to watch a production of Te Tangia te Tai at the Te Pou Theatre as part of the Auckland Arts Festival.

An epic tale of love, loss and hope ensued - weaving Te reo Maori and cirque theatre. Given that many of the students had previously participated in a Cirque workshop at the end of last year, witnessing the continuation of these skills in a professional production was particularly rewarding.

Thank you to the volunteers who helped with transport



Debate Club shines at Regionals

On Sunday 17 March Thames High School Debate Club made waves at the Bay of Plenty Debating Regionals Competition, showcasing the exceptional talent and dedication of its members.

The Senior Team secured victories in two out of three debates, demonstrating their skills and teamwork on the debating platform. Additionally, Immanuel Hulwald, a standout speaker from the Year 11 Team, earned a spot in a development program for his remarkable performance, highlighting his promising potential.

Congratulations to all participants and supporters of Thames High School Debate Club on this impressive achievement.

Blue skies for Beach Hop

There were bright skies over Waihi for the Beach Hop Go Waihi Warm Up Party on March 20. Vintage and classic cars lined the main street, rock and roll dancers got their groove on, and hundreds of spectators donned retro wear. The Repco Beach Hop has been running since 2000, and this year's event saw cars flood to Waihi, Thames, and Onemana before the main festivities at Whangamatā on March 23 and 24. Reporter **KELLEY TANTAU** caught all the action from the warm up.



Lucy Light, 9, and California Highway Patrol trooper Andrew Brooking.



Miss Polly Rose dons fashionable retro ware.

Photos: KELLEY TANTAU



Amy Starry-Moon from Upper Hutt walks the street.



Stylish Repco dog Benny with Tony Heuvel and Greg Overend.



Wade Roycroft in his 68 Dodge Charger.



Darci and Aria dance along.

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News from Thames-Coromandel District Council

27 March 2024

Long term plan input

Please give us your take on Long Term Plan 2024-2034 budgets and projects before public feedback closes on Monday 8 April.

Our Council is proposing a 'just the essentials' budget for our future planning that will make provision for the basics, such as repairing and improving our roading network, dealing with the effects of climate change, and supporting communities to become more resilient.

To achieve this, we're proposing an average district-wide rates increase of 12.9% for the 2024/25 financial year.

You can check our proposed rates for 2024/25 on our website at tcdc.govt.nz/rid

Some issues we're asking you about:

- How to manage the rates increase to lessen the impact on our ratepayers – should we pay for increases straightaway, or spread them over two or three years?



- Options for future planning, so that our towns can grow and develop in a way that builds resilience.
- Investing in community development so it's firmly embedded into our business.

Our Consultation Document is your guide to our LTP proposals. Please read it before you provide your feedback. It's on our website or ask for a copy at our service centres.

How can you give your feedback?

- Online: tcdc.govt.nz/LTP-2024-2034
- Email consultation@tcdc.govt.nz with 'LTP feedback' in the subject line.
- Pick up a feedback form at a Council service centre and post it (address below) or drop it off in person.
- If you wish to speak to Council about your submission make sure you indicate this in your feedback.
- Invite us to talk to your ratepayer or community group – contact us on 07 868 0200, email customer.services@tcdc.govt.nz or pop into one of our offices to have a chat.
- Speak to your elected members: tcdc.govt.nz/ourcouncil

ANZAC DAY COMMEMORATIONS THURSDAY 25 APRIL

THAMES

5.45am Dawn Parade – from Sealey St (outside BNZ) to Thames War Memorial Civic Centre

6am Dawn Service followed by breakfast at Thames Bowling Club

9.45am Civic Parade from Sealey St to Thames War Memorial Civic Centre, for a 10am service, followed by refreshments at Thames Bowling Club

Kōpū marine project

Work on the Kōpū Marine Servicing and Business Precinct project is in its final stages with all major marine work finished, in time for opening in May 2024. The exact date will be confirmed and publicised soon.

Work to install new culverts at Quay Street commenced mid March. Boat ramp users should access the existing Kōpū Boat Ramp via the newly formed King Street. Directional signage will be installed, but please take care when crossing the Hauraki Rail Trail and around the current construction site.



Thames Community Board UPDATE

Board Chair, Adrian Catran JP reports:
 "Currently Council is deciding on our Long Term Plan which'll affect your rates. I urge you to go the website, click on the Long Term Plan box and make your submission online. It is critical that as ratepayers you have a say as to what will happen over the next 10 years, both in infrastructure and maintenance of existing facilities.

April 25th is ANZAC Day which starts with a dawn parade. On a personal basis the day is particularly poignant to me as I have four family members buried overseas and my father was a POW for 4.5 years."

adrian.catran@council.tcdc.govt.nz

The Board's next meeting is on Wednesday 10 April, 10am in Thames Council Chamber.
tcdc.govt.nz/meetings



Representation Review 2024

PRELIMINARY FEEDBACK

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CLOSES 31 MARCH 2024

tcdc.govt.nz/review

If you have questions, you can email repreview@tcdc.govt.nz

KERBSIDE COLLECTIONS AND TRANSFER STATIONS

Rubbish and food scraps collections are one day later in the first week of April following the Easter Monday public holiday on 1 April. Thames Coast and Manāia will be collected Thursday. Thames & Surrounds and Thames Rural South will be collected Friday.



Check your schedule for the year at tcdc.govt.nz/bindays

Thames Refuse and Recycling Transfer Station (RTS) is closed on Good Friday, but open the rest of Easter Weekend. From 7 April, with Daylight Saving ended, all RTSs are open 8.30-4.30pm.

Check RTS locations and hours at tcdc.govt.nz/RTS

PORRITT PARK UPGRADE

Work on Thames' Porritt Park upgrade is steaming along. The main play structure with Wakatere and the lighthouse are taking shape.



Earthworks around the skatepark, paths and the BBQ area have also taken place.

Donations are still being sought to enhance the playground. Please contribute to collection jars at the Council offices or selected retailers.

tcdc.govt.nz/porritt

Local identity Jock Munro remembered

OBITUARY

Jock Munro
1938 - 2024

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

Uncle Kenny was a creature of habit.

Every morning, the man Thames knew as Jock Munro would go and fetch two sausage rolls from the nearby cafe, taking them back to his car yard at 203 Walter St.

Along the way, driving his mobility scooter and donning a cap and scarf, he wouldn't be shy to use his horn, with locals dodging and side-stepping out of the stubborn 86-year-old's path.

Kenneth Owen "Jock" Munro, the well-known identity behind Jock Munro Motors, passed away in his happy place, surrounded by his cars on February 13, 2024.

His nieces, Raewyn and Joanne, told *The Profile* that while Jock's scootering left a lot to be desired, he was also a lousy back-seat driver.

"He was just the worst passenger," Raewyn said. "It was always nerve wracking with his continuous instructions - you had to always have both hands on the steering wheel at 10 and 2 o'clock."

It's for these reasons that the family wanted to thank the Thames Shuttle Service for transporting Jock to Waikato Hospital in Hamilton during the last 12 months of his life - as well as the staff from Thames Hospital.



Jock Munro and his sister Milly.

Jock was born and raised in Waihi, the youngest and "most spoiled" of 10 children.

He moved to Thames at age 18 and was poached by Fraser Chapman to work as a car salesman, with Fraser teaching the young Jock all the tricks of the trade.

In 1975, when Jock was 38, he opened his own business and throughout the decades helped

finance people into cars - all on a trusted handshake.

In 2017, he received a long service award from Thames-Coromandel District Council.

Forever a bachelor but fond of his family, one of Raewyn and Joanne's first memories of their Uncle Kenny was watching him

turn up to his weekly visits in Waihi, driving one of his many

vehicles.

Their grandma had even taught her budgie to say: 'Come home, Kenny, take us for a ride in your car'.

Asides from motor vehicles, Jock's other love were his cats.

Over the years, he had three companions - the first, Francis, was credited with saving his life after a fire broke out in Jock's



Jock Munro, left, with his brother Alex and sister Milly.

house on Brown St.

The second was Bluestone, who lived for 16 years and whose ashes sat atop Jock's casket during his funeral.

The third cat was Chloe, who, following Jock's death, has been seen visiting Twentymans Funeral Home and the local vets.

And despite being a "grumpy old thing", the number of Thames residents who kept an eye on Jock reaffirmed to his family how highly he was regarded around town.

"The community has always looked out for him," Raewyn said, "checking up on him, doing drive-bys."

He was still going to work as often as he could, she said, and his passing at the car yard couldn't have been scripted any better.

"He did it his way right to the very end."

Jock is survived by his older siblings, brother Alex and beloved sister Milly.

Photos: SUPPLIED



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SPORTS

Splash champs

Thames Valley primary school students met at Thames Centennial Pool on March 19 for the school swimming championships. The last of the summer weather saw brilliant sunshine for the competitors, and the poolside was packed with cheering spectators. Swimmers competed in regional clusters, with each cluster made up of the best swimmers from the schools in its zone. **ALICE PARMINTER** popped in to see the splashy fun.



The nine year old boys take to the water for their 25m freestyle.



Jackson Taaffe, 10, from the Hauraki Plains cluster in the 100m freestyle.



Eleven-year-old Alex Atrill from the Thames cluster competes in the 100m backstroke.

Photos: ALICE PARMINTER



Olivia Baines, 12, from the Thames cluster in the 100m freestyle.



Nine-year-old girls prepare.

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Hauraki rates likely to rise 17.4%

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

Costs have risen for Hauraki District Council and it doesn't expect them to drop in the coming years.

According to its 2024 Long Term Plan consultation document - now open for public feedback - council forecasts its infrastructure operating costs are likely to increase more than 71 per cent over the next 10 years. Over the next 30 years, it expects inflation alone will cause council costs to more than double.

All this to say that Hauraki ratepayers could be expecting a 17.4 per cent rates increase for the coming 2024/2025 financial year.

"Every year, regardless of whether there's a rate increase or not, we always worry about our ratepayers' ability to pay, and we are always looking at mechanisms or cost of living ideas to try and keep [rises] minimal," Hauraki district Mayor Toby Adams said.

"These are just costs that are facing all of New Zealand."

Speaking to *The Profile* while on his way to discuss the Long Term Plan with members of Grey Power Waihi, Mayor Adams said ratepayers don't "necessarily like" the increasing rates but, once the financial side

of things has been explained, "they get it".

"To do the exact same stuff we did last year, to do that now is where the 17 per cent [increase] has come from. We've got nearly no new projects [in the LTP]... but with the likes of laying a pipe last year, it is now nearly 100 per cent dearer to do that same job," he said.

According to a report authored by economist Brad Olsen, there's an average 15 per cent increase in rates for New Zealand homeowners this coming year, as seen in data from draft long-term plans across 48 councils.

In Hauraki, the average rates increase for 2024/25 for a medium value residential property is \$528, or an additional \$10 per week.

In Thames-Coromandel, the district council is floating an 11.4 per cent average rates increase for the coming financial year, which is almost 4 per cent higher than what was forecast in 2021.

DETAILS: Hauraki District Council's consultation on its 2024-34 Long Term Plan is open for feedback until April 26, with hearings scheduled for May 14-16.



LETTERS

Send your letters to the editor: editor@valleyprofile.co.nz or 2 Queen St, Paeroa, 3600. Letters must include your full name and address, be 250 words or less and may be edited, abridged or rejected at the editor's discretion.

LEARNING TO READ

I would like to tell you how awesome it is to see someone else learning to read at our age, (*Valley Profile*, February 14, P3, *Learning to read at 65 after life of 'listening'*). I was 58 when I started learning to read and write, which was over three years ago. I watched my wife reading to my grandchildren and I wanted to do the same. I was always ashamed of not being able to read. I had an opportunity to be taught by a lovely lady who lives in Tinopai in the North Island.

I live in Invercargill. It's really hard to trust somebody to teach us to read and write. Yeah, Linda, she is amazing, she's got patience and we do everything online. We use Google Meet. I wrote a book with Linda about my life growing up being unable to read, it was just an exercise in writing. We self-published it in a photo book and the Literacy Trust we work with published part of it in their magazine. Then it went

crazy, I did interviews for the radio and newspaper articles, and I did a podcast for the BBC in London. It was so humbling. So what I'm saying is anybody can read with the right help. It's been a challenge for me and it hasn't been easy. It's been bloody hard. My biggest personal journey I ever had to do. The hardest thing is keeping motivated, keeping going. It is so easy to give up. I don't know how many times I thought about not doing it anymore. Linda, she's a person I respect. So Linda is helping me to write to you. Keep going with your reading journey.

- Michael Kingpotiki, Invercargill

ELUSIVE LITTER

Most of us at some time have tried to retrieve a piece of paper that we've dropped or are just doing the Tidy Kiwi bit. We have a good supply of stray paper, donated by altruistic motorists. Even in the lightest of winds, the mission becomes major. The quarry has settled down, you

advance to stoop to pick it up - zoom! It's off in an unexpected direction. The process is repeated several times and the project is abandoned. The paper then remains, gloating over its victory.

When discussing the phenomenon of the elusive paper with erudite persons, they adopt a lofty stance similar to that of Sherlock Holmes explaining a matter to Dr Watson. "My dear chap, you are dabbling in anthropomorphism!" (Attributing a human personality to an inanimate object).

"It is merely the fact that when your body is close to the paper, it disrupts the airflow, creating a small turbulence which moves the paper off." I reject this logical explanation and would rather believe that Gaia/Mother Earth is having a wee chuckle at our expense. A parting question: How do you escape the smoke when you're tending an outside fire?

- Merv Bergerson, Waihi

In Brief

CARVING SYMPOSIUM

The Ngākau Carving Symposium is returning for its second year. The event will be held at Te Kura o Te Kauaeranga/Thames South School from April 18-27, with an auction on April 27. This year 16 carvers from around Aotearoa, including many from Hauraki, will be working in stone and wood. The symposium is a community event and everyone is welcome.

HOLIDAY CAMP

Kauaeranga Valley Christian Camp is holding two holiday camps

during April. The junior camp for years 3-5 will be held April 15-18, and the senior camp for years 6-8 will go ahead on April 22-26. The camps will include games, adventures, go-carts, fun, food, biblical teaching, accommodation and new friends. "Here at KVCC we create a space for campers to grow in confidence make new friends and try new adventures that will grow each young person in a deeper way." More info: www.kvcc.org.nz.

WALKING FESTIVAL

The Echo Walking Festival is on from April 8-21. The festival encourages all to enjoy the

outdoors, appreciate the beauty of the region, and keep fit and active. Registrations are open now for the nearly 30 walks taking place around the Coromandel region. See echowalkfest.org.nz for details.

LIBRARY CLOSED

Thames Library will be closed May 4-13 to replace the carpet. There will be limited car parking available during this time. Reserved books cannot be picked up during this period. Items will not be able to be returned to Thames during the closure, but the library has extended its loan period during the closure.

ADVERTISEMENT

ADOPTION IS LOVE is initiating a monthly discussion forum, **LIFE MATTERS WITH BENNY**, fostering the exchange of ideas and perspectives — a reflection of a free society. Our focus encompasses various topics such as open adoption, adoption reforms, abortion, mental health, infertility, family life, and free speech.

Join the conversation by sharing your thoughts. Feel free to email Benny, a lawyer with a background in Family Law and founder of **ADOPTION IS LOVE** at info@adoptionislove.org.nz

LIFE MATTERS WITH BENNY

From our **ADOPTION IS LOVE** Facebook page, Benny received this comment:

"Taking a baby from its Mother is not love. Adopted children are more likely to need specialist care for mental health issues. Few studies have investigated PTSD in adopted children, but children in foster care are twice as likely as war veterans to have symptoms of PTSD, such as tension, difficulty concentrating, emotional numbness, etc." A

Hi A, No one takes a baby from the mother. A child should naturally be in the loving arms and care of a mother and father. When a mother places her child in a family of her choice for adoption, it is often because of mental health issues, drugs, trauma, financial insecurity, abuse, lack of support. Whatever the mother's circumstances for feeling unable to raise her baby, that child deserves to be loved by whoever is able to fill in for that child. We are not promoting foster care, for the reasons you list, but open adoption. A mother can choose the family she dreams of for her baby and will be able to stay in as much contact as she desires with her little one as they grow.

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Rural Life

WDC proposes 13.75% rates increase

Waikato District Council has opened consultation on a proposed 13.75 per cent general rate increase as part of its draft 2024/25 Annual Plan.

Council said the consultation aimed to ensure residents could voice their opinions and contribute to the decision making process.

"The council acknowledges the impact the proposed rate increase on everyday living cost and the need to work together during these difficult times."

Waikato District Mayor Jacqui Church said: "while our current financial projections may not be affordable for many ratepayers, this draft annual plan allows us to reset, find alternative funding sources, and make necessary adjustments".

Affordability concerns had been a priority for the council, it said.

The proposed rate increase reflected council's commitment to maintaining essential services, completing planned projects, and upholding infrastructure standards. It also emphasised the importance of working within means and keeping rates as affordable as possible while delivering on council's vision for a liveable, thriving and connected communities.

Council's 2021-2031 Long Term Plan accounted for a consumer price index of 3.3 per cent per year from June, 2021, while actual costs have increased by almost three times this amount, at 9 per cent per year. The proposed rate



The Waikato District Council is proposing a 13.75 per cent rates increase.

Photo: SUPPLIED/WDC

increase of 13.75 per cent aimed to sustain essential services and infrastructure, although with challenges posed by limited funding sources, council said.

"We have explored various options to mitigate the impact of this proposed increase, including finding savings and alternative funding sources. We invite our communities to have their say about the proposed rates increase and share their feedback as we navigate these challenges together," Mayor Church said.



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Rural Life

Volunteers pitch in for Thames Coast kiwi

A chance meeting at the Thames Market between an Auckland Engineering Company director and Thames Coast Kiwi Care has led to a satisfying partnership that was recently marked by a third annual working bee helping tackle pest eradication on the Thames Coast.

Robert Mannes, founder and head of 22 Degrees, a Ponsonby engineering consultancy active in sustainability and the design of building services (involved in projects like Commercial Bay and Bay of Islands Airport), had his fateful encounter with a TCKC market stall during a Save the Kiwi month promotion in 2019 while spending the weekend at his property in Puriri.

Robert saw a great fit with company values and as a strong supporter of the Predator Free 2050 vision to protect native species, he was so impressed with the work of TCKC's volunteers and outstanding results in improving local kiwi numbers, he pledged on the spot to become a financial sponsor.

But Robert and fellow director Jennifer Austin Mannes didn't stop there, wanting to create a way for their staff to get involved, and so the 22 Degrees Working Bee Days were



Volunteers travelled from Auckland recently to help TCKC install two new traplines.

Photo: SUPPLIED

born. Now in their third year, there's been a steady increase in staff participation and a day out of the office, to help wild kiwi thrive, has become a highlight for their employees.

Seventeen people (originally 20 but Covid-19 struck) travelled from Auckland on March 9 to help TCKC install two new traplines.

Ten people helped with self-

resetting AT220 traps for possum and rat control while the other team of seven lugged hefty DOC 200 stoat traps up the steep Te Mātā ridge to create a loop extension for an ex-



isting trapline.

Robert and Jennifer said they appreciated the tangible benefit of their financial contribution as they see TCKC go "from strength to strength with outstanding results".

But they really value the opportunity for their staff to participate and feel like they're making a hands-on difference.

"So many of our guys are passionate about sustainability and preserving our wildlife and natural habitats. We have been trampers and birdlife enthusiasts on our team who feel privileged to help out."

22 Degrees new graduate Kees Albers Connolly was just one of the team that was buzzing afterwards. "It was really fun and I'll definitely come back next year."



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Thames Art Gallery
604 Tararu Road, Thames Coast

April Featured artists

KATHRYN RUSSELL



Kathryn creates high quality semi precious gemstone and timeless freshwater pearl jewellery. All her pieces are nickel free silver over brass

KAY DE BLAAUW



Kay is a mixed media artist who enjoys using bold colours, texture and free flowing form. Kay has learnt many interesting techniques from her travels

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Mixed media and jewellery to feature at Thames Art Gallery

The first of Thames Art Gallery featured artist for April is Kay De Blaauw. Kay is a mixed media artist known for a modern eclectic style, incorporating the use of bold colour, texture and free-flowing form.

Kay's journey as an artist began in her childhood, where she grew up in a family that valued art and freedom of expression, and she often had a paintbrush in her hand. In adulthood, she has continued experimenting, both with textiles and paint.

Her formal training started with watercolour and life classes, progressing to modern art and abstract courses. Lately she has been experimenting with layering and mixed media.

Kay is well-travelled and has seen many famous works of art, including works by her favourite artists Klimt, Van Gogh, Gauguin, Cezanne, to name just a few. She has used this experience to further inspire and influence her work. Impression and abstract are her favourite styles of painting, incorporating colour and texture. To get texture, Kay often paints over old paintings, adding lots of colour along the way.

She also enjoys the freedom of using a cold wax method which gives a thick texture. From her experience in Japan, Kay uses collagraphs which is another way of obtaining texture from collage.

The gallery's other featured artist for April is Kathryn Russell, a jewellery maker. Kathryn began her passion for this art by attending a beading night school class. After one class, she felt very excited to learn more, which she did by attending more classes, reading and experimenting.

While she loved all the beautiful glass beads, Kathryn wanted to do something a bit different. That's when she found and fell in love with semi-precious gemstones. She finds the range of stones, colours, sizes



Jewellery maker Kathryn Russell.

and shapes is endless. Choosing which ones to buy and import was challenging due to the range available. Her main inspiration comes from the stones themselves.

Kathryn's goal was to produce a high end product. As a sufferer of allergies to metal, she discovered that nickel tended to be the culprit found in many cheaper items, so she aimed to use nickel-free silver over brass. She was excited to find a toggle clasp, which as we get older is a godsend, as parrot clasps become more and more difficult for older fingers.

In the past, Kathryn built up a small business selling into retail outlets which she enjoyed doing but she now produces jewellery more as a hobby.

As well as using semi-precious gemstones she makes an array of freshwater pearl jewellery, which are both beautiful, timeless and very affordable.

For this exhibition, Kathryn will be displaying semi precious gemstone jewellery.

This is not fashion jewellery that gets worn for one season then thrown into the back of the drawer but rather pieces to be worn forever.

DETAILS: Thames Art Gallery, 604 Tararu Rd, open Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm, and weekends 10am to 4pm.



Mixed media artist Kay De Blaauw.

Photos: SUPPLIED



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Finding light in the darkness

OPINION



By MICHAEL WILKES

As we approach Easter for most of us, we are making plans for the long weekend and looking forward to the much-needed break after hitting the ground running. I have plans for family to visit and our annual easter egg hunt for the kids is in preparation.

Yet as the season draws near, I thought it would be fitting also to consider the person that the season was first centred around and explore a hard but really valuable learning that we could take from the journey to Easter. Because for some of the people I work with, the season they are in right now is hard and their mind is no friend.

And maybe for yourself, or someone you know, it feels as if you're in the wilderness thirsting and hoping just to make it to the other side.

If you are in that place right now and things feel desperate, please reach out for help. Find someone to talk to. Because there is hope. You have overcome every other wilderness season in your life before this one.

You have always come out of it in the past, so let's have hope and believe that this time will be the same. Its ok to ask for help, we all need each other.

And no one feels like a hero in the wilder-

ness, and this is a journey which I too must learn to accept.

After having just walked through his own mental breakdown, Anglican priest Harry Williams observed, "In Gethsemane (before the cross) Jesus was left entirely alone with his panic and horror. For Jesus there was no escape. But there was victory... The victory consisted precisely in not running away, in not trying to escape. It meant squarely facing the enemies inside – the doubts, the despair, the perplexity, the panic, the isolation... Jesus did not hide under a cloak of illusion, pretending to himself that things were better than they were".

In our work in schools, we teach a therapeutic model called DNA-V (google it to find out more, its pretty helpful). And one key point is to notice the hard thoughts. We don't need to fight them or run from them. Acknowledge the hard thoughts, but don't sit in them.

The thoughts are there, but the thoughts are not you. You can pause, breathe deep and learn to notice the beauty around you for a moment. You can notice and acknowledge the hard thoughts and choose to remember what's important to you and lean towards those things.

That was the moment in the garden. Jesus acknowledged his fear and pain but also moved towards his purpose. Every year I have a season or two where the dark clouds gather. I feel down and like a loser. But I know its just feelings and thoughts. I know they are not true.

And so, I acknowledge those feelings, I share them with my wife, and I keep doing the things that are important to me. Because I know that the feelings are normal and that the season will pass. So please if you are in that dark season now, share the struggle with someone and lean into the things that have value in your life, lean into the things that give your life purpose.

- Michael Wilkes is a Living Well Trust Youth Worker

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Gardening

It's time to breathe new life into your soil

April in the garden is a great time to finish harvesting the summer crops and then start to breathe new life into the soil. As the temperatures begin to cool, it is easier to spend more time outside getting the garden prepared for the new plants.

Vegetables

Harvest the last of your late summer vegetables – pumpkins, potatoes and onions, and store in a cool place.

If you choose to give your vegetable patch a rest over the winter, add nutrients back into the soil by sowing a crop of blue lupins or mustard seed, which will add nitrogen and improve the soil structure. Raised vegetable beds can be a bonus in winter, increasing the drainage and helping with growth rates due to the warmth in the soil. Replenish soil and add blood and bone, sheep pellets and mulch if you wish.

Transplant your winter seedlings or sow seeds of beetroot, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, carrots, leeks, onions, spinach, swedes and turnips directly into your garden.

Once you have cleared your tomato patch, dig in some compost, blood and bone and sheep pellets, and plant leafy greens like spinach, silverbeet, broccoli,



Harvest the last of your late summer vegetables, including pumpkins.

cabbage or cauliflower. A liquid seaweed fertiliser is an excellent plant starter - it helps to stimulate root growth.

Flowers

Cultivate and side dress with fertiliser winter and spring flowering annuals and bulbs. It is not too late to plant some more spring bulbs.

After late autumn annuals have finished flowering, remove old plants add to compost and replenish soils for new planting.

You can begin planting sweet peas seeds, also alyssum, aquilegia, calendula, cineraria, cornflower, dianthus, hollyhock, livingstone daisy, lobelia, nemesia, snapdragon, statice and stock to

name a few. Once seeds are sown, water gently and keep the soil moist while they establish.

Fruits

Continue to harvest late season apples, many can be left to tree ripen. These can be harvested through May and June.

Leaf fall of most deciduous trees commences.

A late autumn clean up fungicide spray is needed to give protection and prevent carry over of diseases into next season. Apply a copper spray and include your stone fruit trees as well.

Citrus trees require constant feeding and watering if rainfall is low. It's a busy time for the trees with fruit ripening over the next few months. Feed each week with liquid feed or with dry citrus food around the drip and watering well. Remove lower hanging branches to improve air flow around the trunk. Mulch well, keeping it away from the trunk.

Lawns

This is the best month for sowing a new lawn or repairing your lawn.

Mix in Saturaid with your grass seed and spread over prepared soil. This will help improve the water penetration through the soil and reduce any dry patches.

Mow regularly, remove clippings and water in the morning. Aerate or core to improve drainage and feed.

Herbs

Sow sage, rosemary, thyme and chives.

Compost Heap

Add fallen leaves, and prunings. Stay safe and well.

- Ngatea Garden Circle

File Photo: PIXABAY

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22 Plant above ground crops	23 Plant above ground crops	24 Full Moon	25 Plant root crops, Liquid Feed	26 Non planting Day	27 Non planting Day	28 Non planting Day	
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Easter death of Thames' Father Norris keenly felt



As part of a Valley Profile series, **MEGHAN HAWKES** explores our local history by seeking out stories of life and death in the Thames Valley

No one could convince Father James Norris of Thames to slow down during Easter week in April, 1874.

The 35-year-old had imposed a severe discipline on himself in observing the Catholic traditions of Easter - praying, delivering sermons, and fasting during Lent. By Easter Sunday, Father Norris was noticeably ill and his immediate friends became alarmed, particularly as it appeared the strain on his physical capabilities had affected him mentally.

"We regret to learn," reported the *Thames Advertiser*, "that the Rev Father Norris is suffering from a severe indisposition of a nervous character. We hope the rev gentleman will soon recover from this illness, which has in a great measure been brought on by over-exertion during the past week." His parishioners were greatly concerned. Father Norris had succeeded Father Nivard as Thames' Catholic minister just 10 months earlier. He was an eloquent preacher and quickly established himself in the affections of his flock. He was respect-

ed by all denominations at Thames for his religious dedication and his quiet, unassuming demeanour as a citizen.

James Norris had been born at Piltown, Kilkenny, Ireland, and studied at Carlow College before coming to New Zealand. He was ordained to the priesthood in Auckland in the mid-1860s and was for some time in charge of a large district on the East Coast, residing at Ōpōtiki, where he was universally liked. He was then removed to the South and it was mainly owing to his energy and zeal that the Ōamaru church was freed from debt. When returned to Auckland Province, he was pastor in St Patrick's Cathedral.

Now Father Norris was obviously suffering from a serious mental aberration and he was taken by the Rev Father Golden and other friends to Auckland where he was admitted to the Whau Asylum. It was hoped that the change of air and scenery would restore him to his usual health, but Father Norris remained in a disturbed condition for nearly three weeks. Suddenly he came out of his strange state and became quite alert. He was aware that his recovery of reason showed that he was near death and he calmly prepared for the coming change. He had several interviews with priests, speaking placidly of his demise, and mentioning his parents and friends in Ireland. The next morning, Mrs Robertson, the wife of one of the warders at the Asylum, asked that he be removed to her house, just outside the Asylum gates.

Dr Aicken consented and Father Norris was taken there late morn-



Rev James Norris' grave.

Photo: SUPPLIED

ing. He died around 2:30pm and was laid out at St Patrick's Cathedral soon after midnight.

At Thames, his loss was keenly felt and there was intense regret amongst all classes of the community.

When the news reached the South he was remembered as a gentleman in the prime of life, with a kindly and genial nature who made friends of all he came in contact with. Father Norris was a man of the highest standing, and of powerful, as well as cultivated, mind. He was a scholar, a gentleman, and a Christian whom the Colony could ill afford to spare. The loss to the Church and the ministry to which he was so devoted was considered irreparable.

The day before his funeral the Thames branch of the Hibernian Society, of which Father Norris was chaplain, as well as a large number

large number being unable to gain admittance. Among those present were nearly 200 mourners from Thames representing nearly every corporate body, political, religious, and social, at the goldfields.

Around 5000 people marshalled for the funeral procession which included the Processional Cross, girls carrying wreaths, girls from St Mary's Orphanage, boarders from the Convent schools, members of the Catholic Institute, members of the Christian Doctrine Society, the Hibernian societies, Sanctuary boys, the clergy, and several priests. A large number of private mourners in carriages and on foot joined the procession as it passed along. Houses were arrayed with black fabric mourning drapes and men in the street raised their hats every yard of the way. When it arrived at the church, the procession had swollen to an enormous length. Father Fynes completed the service at the church and grave.

The next morning, representatives from Thames were hospitably entertained at the Presbytery in Wyndham St before their departure on the *Golden Crown*.

The resident Fathers thanked the visitors for the solicitude for their pastor's fate. There were many reflections on the untimely death of Father Norris, who it was felt was taken in the inscrutable wisdom of the Almighty in the summer of his life and usefulness.

Father Norris was buried Symonds Street cemetery Auckland, but re-interred 94 years later with Abbott Wilfred Allcock at St Patrick's Roman Catholic cemetery, in 1968.



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In Memoriam

BOYD, William Fletcher:
Dad, Popa and Great Popa passed away 2 years ago on the 2nd of April 2022. You have been dearly missed and are thought of every day by each of us. We miss your sense of humour, all the laughs and conversations that we've all had with you over time. You are always remembered and forever loved. Tam, Rigby, Emerald-May, Nick, Riley-Ray, Roxannah-Lee and family pet Pollie. XOXO

Church Notice

EASTER AT ST JAMES

Good Friday – 10 am service
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Ribbon day

ATHLETICS

The Paeroa Amateur Athletics Club held its ribbon day on March 9 at the Paeroa Domain. Athletes, ranging in age from tiny tots to late teens, attended from around the Waikato and Bay of Plenty. They competed in events such as relays, high and long jumps and running. There was plenty of encouragement and cheering from the sidelines as they were put through their paces.



John Neutroski hands over the baton in the shuttle relay.



ABOVE: Aurora Hunt, grade 7 from Thames, competes in the long jump.
TOP RIGHT: Brothers Ollie and Toby Hopson show off their hard earned ribbons.
RIGHT: Kian Rangihika leads the pack as the 800m race commences.



Photos: SUPPLIED

CLASSIFIEDS - Deadline 12pm Thursday

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Public Notice

Hauraki District Council
April 2024 Meetings



Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is hereby given that the following meetings will be held during the month of April 2024 in the Council Chamber, Hauraki House, 1 William Street, Paeroa unless otherwise stated.

Western Plains Drainage District Committee
Thursday, 4 April 2024, 10.30am

Eastern Plains Drainage District Committee
Thursday, 4 April 2024, 1.00pm

Regulatory Hearings Committee
Monday, 8 April 2024, 9.00am (if required)

Community Partnerships Committee
Wednesday, 10 April 2024, 9.00am

Planning Committee (if required)
Monday, 15 April 2024, 9.00am

Audit and Risk Committee
Tuesday, 16 April 2024, 9.00am

Regulatory Hearings Committee
Monday, 22 April 2024, 9.00am (if required)

Finance Committee
Monday, 22 April 2024, 10.00am

Council
Wednesday, 24 April 2024, 9.00am

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SPORTS

Wet start for Valley's premier rugby

CLUB RUGBY

Silcock Shield Round 1 - from your roving reporter, Tighthead Ted.

Wet weather was the order of the day as Thames Valley Premier rugby kicked off for the 2024 season. All matches were played in less than ideal conditions, but the fields held up well, and close tussles across the board resulted.

Paeroa v Waihi Athletic; Centennial Park, Paeroa. Referee: AJ Hartley.

An ill-disciplined Paeroa side gifted their neighbours Waihi a win in this first round clash, with five penalties and a penalty try cancelling out two tries to their powerful blindside flanker Ionatana Talea Faaleaoga.

An early Waihi penalty was countered by the two Paeroa touchdowns, both unconverted. Waihi then controlled the remainder of the first spell, and some long range goalkicking from Quinn Collard saw them take the lead back in three point bites before a penalty try for a blatant offside saw the halftime score 19-10 to Waihi.

The second 40 saw an arm wrestle in the dour conditions, Collard landing another three pointer the only scoring. Waihi controlled much of the spell, turned down points trying for lineout drives, which the large Paeroa pack repeatedly repelled. Paeroa had their moments late in the game, but Waihi were up to the challenge.

Big games from Waihi came from number eight Isaac Sului and open-side flanker Kenan Gilson, and first five Collard controlled the match well. Paeroa's big pack was well served by two try hero Faaleaoga and big lock



Thames' Laulea Mau heads for the try line amid the Bay's fierce defence.

Photo: TERESA RAMSEY

Silao Talimao. Waihi Athletic 22 (Penalty try; Q Collard 5 penalties) beat Paeroa Rugby & Sports 10 (IT Faaleaoga 2 tries). HT 19-10.

Whangamata v Waihou; Boom Pitt, Whangamata. Referee: Dali Tui-Taylor.

Waihou continued their recent dominance over Whangamata with a solid 19-13 victory over the red 'n' whites. Despite the wet conditions, a high tempo game of rugby unfolded in front of a good Beach Hop weekend crowd at the Boom Pitt.

With neither pack being able to gain clear ascendancy, the game was on the knife edge from the first whis-

tle to the last. With the scores tied up at the half 10 all, Waihou managed to win the battle of threes in the second stanza.

In his blazer game for Waihou (60 matches) number eight Hamish McClelland was powerful with ball in hand, constantly breaking the advantage line, and fellow milestone man (150 games), Ryan Waite was also powerful, snaring Waihou's only try. Whangamata were well served by powerful scrummaging props Jordan Cordice and Tobias Pulley, converted flanker Jack O'Halloran and veteran halfback TJ Wise.

Waihou Rugby & Sports 19 (R Waite

try; A Ratcliffe conversion, 4 penalties) beat Whangamata 13 (S Rau try; TJ Wise conversion, 2 penalties). HT 10-10.

COBRAS v North; Boyd Park, Te Aroha. Referee: Ryan Rogers.

In the closest match of the weekend, the home team managed to hold out visitors Hauraki North 8-5, after holding the visitors scoreless until the final act of the match. With neither team being able to exert clear dominance, and conditions making ball handling a lottery at times, the final margin of victory was a fair indication of the how the match went.

COBRAS number eight Kahura

Moke led from the front, ably assisted by hooker Shontayne Dare, while returning midfielder Sione Etone was into everything.

Te Aroha College Old Boys Rugby and Sports 8 (K Moke try, S Schuler penalty) beat Hauraki North 5 (F Anderson try). HT 8-0.

Thames v Mercury Bay; Rhodes Park, Thames. Referee: Wayne Berry.

Another game in the wet, going down to the wire with Mercury Bay bringing the game to 16-19, and Thames holding on for the win. Thames scored an early converted try before the young Mercury Bay side ground their way back into the match with three penalties to take the lead at the orange break 9-7.

The halftime break did wonders for Thames, and with the subs rolling on they started to gain some forward dominance. With the score at 19-9 a comfortable win looked in the offing.

However, in typical Mercury Bay fashion, the coastal boys hit back with a late try but were unable to crack the solid Thames defence for a winning score. The Thames loose trio of Luke Chambers, Dalton Broughton and Laulea Mau Fangufangu combined well for the winners, and showing their class for Mercury Bay were hard working forwards Austin Brear and Jammie Finnerty, along with Charlie Best and Connor McLeod in the backline.

Thames Rugby & Sports 19 (J Ward, C Saunders, L M Fangufangu tries, S Havealeta 2 conversions) beat Mercury Bay Rugby & Sports 16 (C Best try, C Curran conversion, 3 penalties). HT 7-9.

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

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JUMBO CROSSWORD

163

ACROSS

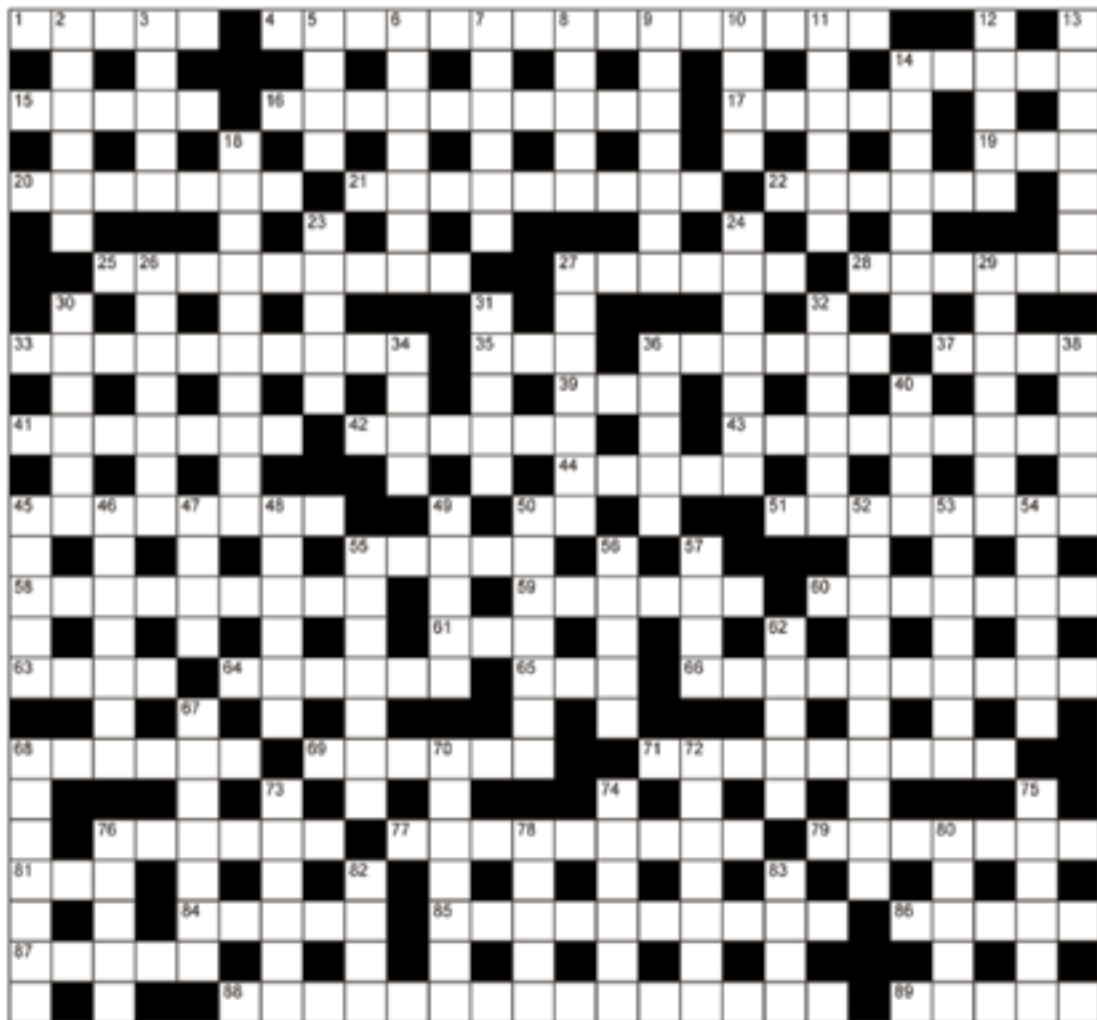
- 1 Pollute (5)
- 4 Feeling of blamelessness; untroubled by guilt (5,10)
- 14 Form (5)
- 15 Lance (5)
- 16 Tall building (10)
- 17 Apparition (5)
- 19 Bashful (3)
- 20 Strongly alkaline (7)
- 21 Square in London (9)
- 22 Mixture of tunes (6)
- 25 Table game (9)
- 27 Digit (6)
- 28 Muslim place of worship (6)
- 33 Intruder (10)
- 35 Squeezing snake (3)
- 36 Subtle distinction (6)
- 37 Droop (4)
- 39 Beverage (3)
- 41 Guilty party (7)
- 42 Tight undergarment (6)
- 43 Lifelike (9)
- 44 Way in (5)
- 45 Knitted garment (8)
- 50 Symbol for zinc (2)
- 51 Heavy textile with woven picture (8)
- 55 Stringed instrument (5)
- 58 Fundamental truth or law (9)
- 59 Fish-hawk (6)
- 60 Burn (7)
- 61 Lubricate (3)
- 63 Liability (4)

DOWN

- 2 Come into view (6)
- 3 Approaches (5)
- 5 Be keen on (4)
- 6 Self-confident (7)
- 7 Table wine container (6)
- 8 Himalayan country (5)
- 9 Sure (7)
- 10 Slight advantage (4)
- 11 Ornamental neckband (6)
- 12 Lawn flower (5)
- 13 Use again (7)
- 14 Strong rich cheese (7)
- 18 Deceptive (10)
- 23 Give rise to (5)
- 24 Liquid metal (7)
- 26 Bland (7)
- 27 Squash (7)

ACROSS

- 29 Group of five (7)
- 30 Emotional shock (6)
- 31 Maltreat (5)
- 32 Layers (6)
- 34 Space for movement (4)
- 36 Dapper (5)
- 38 Slightly adhesive (5)
- 40 Helper (4)
- 45 Managed (5)
- 46 Coloured arch (7)
- 47 Hankering (4)
- 48 Charm (6)
- 49 Alliance (5)
- 50 Animal study (7)
- 52 Stock of foods (10)
- 53 Branch of knowledge taught at school (7)
- 54 First film prints after shooting (6)
- 55 Nomad (7)
- 56 Malice (5)
- 59 Greek B (4)
- 62 Newspaper exclusive (5)
- 67 Appease (7)
- 68 Expressionless (7)
- 70 Of doubtful quality; untrustworthy (7)
- 72 Outdoor clock (7)
- 73 Rogue, scoundrel (3,3)
- 74 Window-shop (6)
- 75 Heavenly body (6)
- 76 Spasmodic, fitful (5)
- 78 Unconcealed; done or shown openly (5)
- 80 Climb (5)
- 82 Food shop (4)
- 83 Fashionable (4)



PREVIOUS SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Nutty as a fruitcake, 10 Diminish, 15 Chalet, 16 Supplement, 17 Coiffeur, 19 Trinket, 21 Views, 22 Barometer, 25 Rehearsal, 27 Sojourn, 29 Siding, 33 Panic, 34 Ricochet, 36 Titillated, 39 Cog, 41 Custard, 42 Bistro, 43 Iguana, 44 Zero, 45 Freedom, 48 Incoherent, 53 Layette, 57 Rice, 58 Hamper, 59 Update, 60 Waybill, 62 Tug, 64 Strongroom, 65 Hacienda, 66 Arrow, 69 Ballad, 70 Valleys, 71 Bellyflop, 76 Bandalier, 77 Stops, 78 Dynasty, 83 Coercion, 84 Maintained, 85 Potage, 86 Slapdash, 87 Beat a hasty retreat.

DOWN: 2 Unhurt, 3 Talon, 4 Aft, 5 Apse, 6 Replica, 7 In-laws, 8 Comb, 9 Kangaroo, 11 Ironed, 12 Inflexible, 13 Idea, 14 Herring, 18 Tourniquet, 20 Ewer, 23 Brain, 24 Ointment, 26 Epistle, 28 Outcome, 30 Jaguar, 31 Ghetto, 32 Signal, 35 Onion, 37 Drove, 38 Trio, 40 Give, 45 Farms, 46 Encircle, 47 Meagre, 48 Improbable, 49 Cart, 50 Haughty, 51 Reduce, 52 Nitre, 54 Ajar, 55 Embargo, 56 Tallow, 61 Unbalanced, 63 Adult, 67 Alienate, 68 Iffy, 69 Bisects, 72 Expands, 73 Odious, 74 Attach, 75 Stigma, 79 Actor, 80 Feta, 81 Gnat, 82 Eddy, 85 Pie.

SPORTS

Rucking in as role models at Ngatea

RUGBY

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

The Ngatea Rugby and Sports Club is fielding a women's side for the first time in its history, and its members are geared to show what they're made of and inspire the girls of the Plains.

The new team is made up of women of all ages, hailing from Kerepēhi, Turua, Paeroa and Ngatea. Twelve women have committed to play so far, with a further six potential players and more showing interest every week.

Player Courtney Luke said she was thrilled at the turnout.

"When I got asked to see if I could find anyone to play, I did not think that I would actually get anybody," she said.

"We're like a little whānau now. We're a cool bunch too, we all come from different walks of life. Every single one of us is totally different."

While many of the new recruits have never played rugby before, Courtney said the improvement was clear just a month into training.

"I am honestly very, very proud of where they were to where they are now - from the very beginning, there's a major difference," she said.

"Games aren't until June, but the better prepared we are now, the better we will be come game



The Ngatea Rugby and Sports Club has mustered the first womens' rugby team in its history. Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

time." Many of the women are mums, and they said they were embracing the opportunity to do something for themselves. At the same time, they said it was also a chance to bring the family together around a common interest, as well as role modelling healthy behaviours for their children.

"It just shows that women can do anything they put their mind to," Courtney said.

"Women's rugby is finally get-

ting the recognition it deserves, and if we can help a high school girl maybe want to give it a go - I think that's cool."

And for Courtney, the benefits stretch even further than being an inspiration to her six-year-old daughter.

"We're a competitive family. My kids said I can't, and so I'm going to try and prove that I can. I want my daughter to see Mummy on the field," she said.

"And I'm diabetic at the moment... focusing on my health

and mental health [I've almost] reversed my diabetes.

"And I've done that literally from training and stuff. That's a big accomplishment for me - you ask me if I'd play a year ago and I'd say no way."

The club, meanwhile, is doing everything it can to support the women. Director of rugby Pieter Aucamp, an experienced development coach from South Africa, will be overseeing the team, and the club is also aiming to become a more family-friendly

space to accommodate families. "We're working on a few plans now to create a kids' space in the clubroom so they can be in there while mum and dad are training," Luke said.

"The men tend to, on a Wednesday night, ditch the kids and leave them with Mum. So now, that creates a few more considerations for the women and how much they have to be prepared and organised to make [training] happen."

And, come game time, the ladies are determined to shine.

Club president Luke O'Neil said the Thames Valley Rugby Union was introducing its inaugural Thames Valley Women's Rugby Club of Origin Competition this year, and he was hopeful the other clubs would muster enough teams for a good contest.

"I think we're going to be almost the underdogs of the competition, [but] we're not just making ourselves proud, I think even the community," Courtney said. "We have so much support, it's really, really cool to see. From nothing to something. Any other women who want to be amongst it, come and join us."

DETAILS: Training on Wednesday evenings at Hugh Hayward Domain. Contact Pieter Aucamp, Ph 021 212 4795 to find out more.



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