

The Valley Profile

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Awariki was one of six brown kiwi released to their home in the wild recently at Te Mata. Photo: RACHEL HOLMES

Kiwis back 'in the 'burbs'

By KELLEY TANTAU

A kiwi population on "the brink of extinction" has been given a helping hand in survival from a group running on goodwill and a desire to save the country's national icon.

Awariki was one of the six brown kiwi released to their home in the wild at Te Mata, along the Thames Coast, last

week. One more will be returning in a week or two.

The bright-eyed bird had been living on the predator-free Rotoroa Island in the Hauraki Gulf, as part of the Kiwis for Kiwi Operation Nest Egg programme.

The programme was launched in 2014, and involved removing kiwi eggs from their burrows on the Thames Coast and trans-

porting them to Auckland Zoo, where they hatched. The chicks were then moved on to predator-free islands where they had to reach a target weight of 1.2kg to be able to fight off stoats and return home.

"The kiwi that are returning are the ones that have grown up big and strong on the island," Thames Coast Kiwi Care co-ordinator Sheena Beaton said.

They now join about 100 kiwi in the Tapu-Te Mata area - more than three times the number of kiwi found to be in the same 4000-hectare site in 2006.

"There were only about 28 birds estimated to be up there," Sheena told *The Profile*.

"So, Thames Coast Kiwi Care was formed with the blessings of tangata whenua, and it was

their vision back then to protect and enhance kiwi populations on the Thames Coast, with the mission to hear kiwi calling from our backyards again.

"It's super cool because that part of the dream is definitely becoming a reality. People are hearing kiwi not just in the distance, but literally in their gardens in Te Mata."

CONTINUED P2

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The *Valley Profile* is a community newspaper that delivers 100% local news in the Thames Valley region. We deliver 12,500 copies each Wednesday to every letterbox, reaching more than 22,500 readers in Hauraki Plains, Paeroa, Thames, Thames Coast and surrounding rural areas, plus bulk distribution around the Coromandel Peninsula.

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Dream to hear backyard kiwi calls becomes reality

CONTINUED FROM P1

"We've got some urbanite kiwis living in the 'burbs'," she said.

Operation Nest Egg was in its sixth year and its success was made possible thanks to a "huge community effort" of more than 50 volunteer trappers undertaking 4000-plus hours a year, Sheena said.

"The fact that we are saving our taonga, our national icon, is the icing on the cake.

"All the work that we're doing is also protecting all of the biodiversity and forest health up there," she said.

"We've only got one more season of Operation Nest Egg and by then, hopefully our population will be self-sustaining.

"We do five-yearly surveys of the distribution of the kiwi, and it's very heartening that at the beginning stages of our next survey, it looks like they are going into the Tapu Valley. That's the first time since the early 2000s that there may be kiwi moving south."

However, Sheena said the longevity of the kiwi, and the lasting effects of the group's hard work needed support from the community to survive.

"We've come so far, so we now not only need a self-sustaining population and group, but the predator control needs to be a life-long project."

For more information or to donate, visit: www.thames-coastkiwicare.org.



Mayor Sandra Goudie, second left, and Mayor Ash Tanner, right, at one of the sheds. Photo: SUPPLIED

Blokes & Their Sheds event raises more than \$10,000

The Mayors of all three district councils in the region were recently out together to support the Life Education Trust's Learning with Harold at its Blokes & Their Sheds event.

Thames Coromandel Mayor Sandra Goudie and Matamata-Piako Mayor Ash Tanner visited a number of the 12 sheds open for the weekend during the event, while Hauraki Mayor Toby Adams hosted one of the sites.

Blokes & Their Sheds displayed vintage, classic and racing cars, vintage farm equipment, tractors, machinery, tools and memorabilia at the 12

sheds on show. Ticket numbers were limited for each display and were sold out to viewers from around the region, as well as some from as far away as Wairarapa. More than \$10,000 was raised for the trust, which works with primary school children aged 5-13 years.

A trust spokesperson said all funding for Life Education Trust was raised locally, support from local councils, charities and businesses was vital to the ongoing success of the programme.

"Waikato East Life Education is grateful to the hosts and supporters who attended."



Kiwi handler Neil John, right, shows off the brown kiwi before releasing it back to its home in Te Mata. Photo: RACHEL HOLMES

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Thames Tides

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
May 19	May 20	May 21	May 22	May 23	May 24	May 25
 Morning: 6:09am 1.0 12:22pm 3.1 Afternoon: 6:23pm 0.9 Sun: 7:13am 5:16pm Best At: 5:48am 6:13pm Rise: 1:07pm Set: 11:26pm	 Morning: 7:01am 1.0 1:12pm 3.1 Afternoon: 7:18pm 1.0 Sun: 7:13am 5:15pm Best At: 6:38am 7:02pm Rise: 1:41pm Set: 11:26pm	 Morning: 7:55am 1.0 2:07pm 3.1 Afternoon: 8:18pm 0.9 Sun: 7:14am 5:14pm Best At: 7:27am 7:51pm Rise: 12:32am Set: 2:12pm	 Morning: 8:52am 0.9 3:07pm 3.2 Afternoon: 9:22pm 0.9 Sun: 7:15am 5:14pm Best At: 8:15am 8:40pm Rise: 1:39am Set: 2:42pm	 Morning: 9:51am 0.7 4:10pm 3.3 Afternoon: 10:23pm 0.7 Sun: 7:16am 5:13pm Best At: 9:04am 9:30pm Rise: 2:48am Set: 3:12pm	 Morning: 10:49am 0.6 5:12pm 3.4 Afternoon: 11:20pm 0.6 Sun: 7:16am 5:13pm Best At: 9:55am 10:22pm Rise: 3:59am Set: 4:18pm	 Morning: 11:46am 0.4 6:10pm 3.6 Afternoon: 11:46am 0.4 Sun: 7:17am 5:12pm Best At: 10:49am 11:18pm Rise: 5:13am Set: 4:18pm

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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	Hr	Min
Coromandel	-0	04	-0	04
Whitianga	-0	02	-0	06
Tairua	+0	10	+0	20
Whangamata	-0	07	-0	08
Waihi Beach	-0	12	-0	13

Man forbidden from kids bailed near school

By KELLEY TANTAU

Parents fear for their children's safety after learning a man awaiting trial whose bail conditions forbid him to be alone with children under 16 has been remanded to an address near Waitakaruru School.

As members of the community retaliate with offensive spray-painted messages on the road outside the primary school, the school has implemented safety measures which will stay in place "until the person moves on".

A Police spokesperson told *The Profile* that, for privacy reasons, the police were not able to disclose the specific location or details of an individual in this position.

However, the man's bail conditions were provided to the school's Board of Trustees chairman Kevin van Eyk, who said the man was not to be with any child under the age of 16 outside his residence, or to have the sole care of children inside the home.

"It's not a pleasant situation, and we would rather he wasn't in our district," Mr van Eyk told *The Profile*.

"The best case for us would be that he wouldn't be living near our school, exactly how that would work, I'm not sure. Legally, we have no ability to move him; legally, he can live there."

Waitakaruru School has implemented safety measures, such as expanding their voluntary mini-van service to include pupils who would normally bike or walk to and from school.

"The school is well-aware of the situation, and we're monitoring it daily," Mr van Eyk said.

"Our principal and teachers are doing a great job keeping our children safe, and will continue to do so until this person moves on or goes to trial."

According to the Courts of New Zealand, the presumption that a person was innocent until proven guilty was "fundamental to criminal law".

On one hand, a court must not unnecessarily keep people in custody who may later be found not guilty. On the other hand, a court must take into account that certain people who have been charged with or convicted of offences may pose a risk of harm to the community, that they may offend again if bailed, or that they may fail to appear before the court if not kept in custody.

Police said there were strong processes in place to ensure anyone bailed to a specific address was monitored and adhering to their conditions.

800 trees planted at Solarpunk event



Lillian Balfour, right, was one of around 30 people to plant hundreds of trees at a Solarpunk event.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Rain did not put off 30 or so intrepid conservationists who turned out on Mother's Day to plant around 800 native trees at the Thames Burke St dog park.

The May 9 event, organised by Solarpunk Aotearoa, was held to "celebrate mother earth".

"We are planting trees because we are in the middle of a climate crisis caused by too much carbon dioxide in the atmosphere and the best way to absorb carbon dioxide is

to plant trees. The side effect is that they give us oxygen to breathe," Solarpunk arborist John McKeowen said.

The trees were provided by native plant nursery Help Waihi as well as local growers, and paid for by donations from the Thames community.

Species planted on the day included cabbage trees, flax, Manuka, Kanuka, Ti Toki, Puriri, Kohekohe, Putaputaweta, Coprosma, Kowhai, Karo and Koromiko, Wineberry, Whiteywoods and Totara. Home-

baked scones and roasted chestnuts helped keep up the spirits of those planting trees.

According to Solarpunk Aotearoa, Solarpunk was described as an art movement that encouraged people to envision a more sustainable and optimistic future in the face of threats from environmental destruction and climate change.

Solarpunk Aotearoa is planning another tree planting at Matariki. The group plans to hold an event monthly.

More info: Ph 021 063 5483.

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Kahikatea wood in demand at Turua mill



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.

1877

Paeroa was regarded as a township of publicans and disappointment. Had the flat lands between there and Hikutaia been secured by the government when the goldfield opened, and sold in sections to settlers, it would be in a more flourishing state. As it was, its miserable broken ground was not very tempting. Paeroa consisted of five public houses, three stores, one restaurant, one bakery, one surgeon and chemist, one druggist, a millinery establishment, one timber merchant, two carters, a horse stables, a shoemaker, and two or three private cottages. There were also two butchers, but the two put together hardly made one. They were mostly shut for want of meat.

A fishing excursion to Miranda on the steamer Aroha was described as a real novelty in aquatics. There were about forty travellers and once they reached shore they made their way to Mr Smith's house, Sea View, which was about a quar-

ter of a mile from the beach, and in a most delightful spot.

The excursionists were hospitably entertained with milk, tea, and various victuals.

Games were indulged in until about 6pm, when the steamer, which was lying at anchor, whistled for all to return home again.

The white pine (Kahikatea) of Turua had come into favour as a cheap and serviceable timber and the sawmill could scarcely keep up with orders.

Turua, a quiet, peaceful village, was adjacent to the mill and bush, and had deep water in front of it, with two substantial wharves for the loading and unloading of vessels. The Bagnall's from Prince Edward Island, Canada, ran operations. Timber was dragged out by bullock teams to the mill and then along the tramway by horses. The logs were rolled into the river, formed into rafts and floated down with the tide, then secured at the mill dock.

The machinery was worked by steam generated from a tubular boiler. Fourteen hands were employed at the mill and twenty-four in the bush and rafting the timber. Besides the young men who boarded together, there were eight families resident in the village.

Walking by moonlight about 9pm along the bridge track from Grahamstown to Hastings (Tapu) a nocturnal wanderer met several moreporks, and was rather surprised when near Puru to find two men stacking firewood by moonlight.



The barque Aldebaran loading Turua white pine.

Photo: SUPPLIED

A little further on he met a couple of men sluicing for gold. He next met two boys, who were en route to Tararu from the Mata Creek gum diggings. Improvements had recently been made to the track but a hand-rail was needed along the Puru Bridge as on windy nights, even by moonlight, it was rather dangerous. A few finger-posts would also be a great convenience. The Waiomu Bridge had been newly boarded, and a

substantial new bridge erected over the Tapu Creek making life for night owls much more pleasant.

At Tapu, a little boy received a nasty cut on the forehead from the kick of a mule. His mother wanted one of her neighbours to sew the wound with her sewing machine, but as his head was too big for the machine, Dr Hawkes was sent for, who stitched the cut to the mother's satisfaction.

Canada celebrated at federation event

The Thames Hauraki Plains District Federation of Women's Institutes recently held their Social/International Day in the Ngatea Memorial Hall. International Day is held every two years and this year, Canada was chosen as this where Women's Institute started in 1897 in Stoney Creek, Ontario.

President Shirley Harding welcomed everyone and the Ode was sung. While judging was taking place, members bought up large at the sales table as well as looking at a display about Canada. The speaker for the morning was Jackie Scott, sister of Shirley Harding. Jackie and her family lived in a small place close to Edmonton, Canada, for 28 years but came back to New Zealand because of the Covid-19 pandemic. Some of the challenges Jackie experienced was the different seasons, winter being the hardest, but Autumn was her favourite. They miss family who stayed in Canada, but overall she benefited from being in Canada and has a very special place in her heart for the country.

Lunch was provided by the Maramarua/Kopuku WI with delicious soup and buns. After lunch, Shirley presented the group with three quizzes, which were very interesting and entertaining.

Raffles were won by Morgane Cochrane, Ruth Rhodes, Patsy Maddox and Jan Herd.

COMPETITION: Collage: Lyn Fowler 1, Lyn McQuire 2, Shirley Harding 3. Floral: Lyn McQuire 1, Patsy Maddox 2. Cooking: Trish McConachie 1, Jill Clark 2, Doreen Boston 3. Limerick: Elaine Jolliffe 1, Debbie Smith 2, Jan Edmonds 3.

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Town promotion funding dwindles

By KELLEY TANTAU

Funding for Hauraki town promotion organisations has been slashed in recent years, with more cuts on the table as Hauraki District Council this week hears from the public over its proposed long term plan (LTP).

Council's proposed new town promotion funding model will set aside \$411,000 for the 2021-2022 year for town promotion, visitor information services and district events co-ordination, including a new district events co-ordinator role within council.

However, funding to the three town promotion organisations will be cut to \$10,000 each per year.

This is a huge drop from their 2020-21 allocations, which saw Go Waihi receive \$63,720, and Positive Paeroa receive \$57,047. Positively Promoting the Plains hadn't fulfilled criteria to receive funding for 2020-2021, council said.

This compares to more than \$642,000 council set aside for town promotion over three years from 2016-2019. In the following three years from 2019-2021, council reduced town promotion spend to around \$222,000, as well as up to an additional \$148,000 to match external funding.

Town promotion organisation Positive Paeroa earlier

told *The Profile* the reduced amount would put the organisation's future "in jeopardy", and indicated they would be making a submission to council against the proposal during council's LTP hearings on May 18 and 19. The reduced amount of \$10,000 per year would only cover the Santa Parade, leaving them unable to support other big events in the town, including the Twilight Markets, the Rotary Paeroa V8 and Motorcycle Show and the Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo.

The organisation, which currently has a town promoter position, was also at risk of a re-structure should the proposed new model go ahead.

According to an October, 2020, council report, the need for a new district events co-ordinator role within council was identified to fulfil some of the tasks the town promotion organisations were currently responsible for, but with a "whole of district" approach.

There will also be an additional \$226,000 allocated to the newly formed Manaaki Toiora Committee for other projects and social initiatives, such as providing healthy and affordable homes.

Hauraki District Council chief executive Langley Cavers said the proposed changes were made with a view to equalise promotion services over the district "for the benefit of all".



Some of the team at Harv's Butcher Shop. Michelle Ritchie, left, Heather Oxenham, Mark Harvey, and Chris Stuttard. Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

The butcher's back in town

A butcher who has returned to Thames more than 15 years after selling his butcher shop says small butcheries are primed to make a comeback.

Mark Harvey opened the doors to Harv's Butcher Shop on Pollen St on May 10.

Between 1996-2005, he owned Meat at Harvey's in Pollen St, Thames. When he sold that, he went on to open The Meat Man in Paeroa, which he owned for a decade between 2006-2016.

"It's very exciting to be back, and there's been a lot of positive comments which is humbling.

"All the old customers I had years ago have come back and I'm very happy to see them again," he said.

Mr Harvey has lived in Thames

all his life. It was where he started his apprenticeship in 1980, and where he bought his first shop at age 25.

He now reckoned small butcher shops were making a comeback.

"I think small shops all over New Zealand are saying they're actually doing better since Covid. People may be wanting to stay away from big supermarkets a bit more and support local businesses," he said.

Harv's Butcher Shop is located in the former IXL Butchery, which had been sitting empty for about eight months, Mr Harvey said.

"I couldn't see it sitting here any longer, so I had to do something about it."

It took two months to refurbish the store, and Mr Harvey said it

was exciting to know they've since "created a business out of nothing".

"I just think the way the customer thinks. They like to have good service, something that can go the distance, and something they can enjoy when they take home. I wouldn't sell anything to anybody that I wouldn't eat myself."

And when it comes to the butcher's favourite meat, Mr Harvey said you couldn't go past the humble snag.

"My favourite meal has always been sausages, mash potatoes, and peas, and they are the thing people have been asking for most," he said. "It's incredible how many sausages we've actually sold."

- KELLEY TANTAU

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WHAT'S ON

Email your community event or club or group notice to editor@valleyprofile.co.nz. Listings are published at the editor's discretion and may be edited. Clubs and groups are responsible for keeping listings up to date.

UPCOMING EVENTS

May 19: Pink Ribbon Brunch: 10.30am-2pm, Old Paeroa Racecourse to raise funds for the Breast Cancer Foundation. Live music and raffles. Transport available, Ph: 027 681 8610.

May 21: Te Puru School Quiz Night: Register your team of up to six people now for this school fundraiser. \$20 per person. BYO. Snacks, cake, tea, coffee available. Ph 07 868 2747 or TePuruPTA@gmail.com to book.

May 28: Waikato Students Instrumental Group will perform at St Georges Church, Thames, 12:15pm. Entry is free but koha appreciated.

June 13: Gliss Harp Quartette: at St Georges Church, Thames, at 2pm. Tickets at the door or at Carson's Bookshop.

July 3-10: Thames Music and Drama presents *Peter Pan & the Medallion's Secret*, at Thames Civic Centre, July 3-10.

August 13-15: 150 Years of Thames Rugby: Thames Rugby & Sports Club, Rhodes Park, catch up function, invitational game and celebration dinner.

August 21: Thames Valley Chess Championship: at the Thames War Memorial Civic Centre Conference Room, Mary St. Must be level one to play. Free entry.

September 12: Trail Trilogy: Run or walk in five events on the Hauraki Rail trail, from 10km to 140km. More info: www.trailtrilogy.com.

LOCAL MARKETS

Kaiaua Seaside Market: Opposite the garage in Kaiaua, last Sunday of the month. Set up a stall or come along to hunt out a bargain. Ph 021 130 1851.

Karangahake Hall Market: Fourth Saturday of the month, 9am-2pm, 12 Crown Hill Rd. A great variety of stalls selling handcrafts, preserves, plants and more. Ph 027 678 2035.

Paeroa Car Boot Market: First and third Saturdays of the month, 101

Normanby Rd, weather permitting. Treasures, creative wares and yummy food. Ph 07 862 7833.

Thames Market: Every Saturday in Grahamstown, 8am to 12pm. A huge range of stalls, fruits and veggies, arts, crafts, collectibles.

Turua Market: Third Sunday of the Month at Turua Hall, 9am to 1pm. Homemade food, lots of stalls. Contact Betty, Ph 027 696 7644.

COMMUNITY CONTACTS

Classical Music Club: Kim Reid, Ph 07 862 3839

Corinthian Masonic Lodge, Thames: Colin, Ph 07 868 8196 or 021 259 6699

Craft Market: Lynette Mapson, Ph 027 617 4470

Diabetic Support Group: Thames Hauraki, Brian Corr, Ph 07 868 8551

Goldfields Women's Institute: Ph 07 868 8984

Grey Power Paeroa: Ken Carter, Ph 07 862 7271

Hauraki Bowling Club Mangatarata: Pene Koch, Ph 07 867 3380

Hauraki Cardiac Support Club Thames: Ph 07 868 6148

Hauraki Country Music Club: Tina Haakma, Ph 07 868 3443

Hauraki Golf Club: Len Cameron, Ph 07 867 7660

Hauraki Plains Co-operating Parish: Jane, Ph 027 471 4654

Hauraki Plains Diabetic Support Club: Ryan Corr, Ph 07 868 8551

Hauraki Plains Lioness Club: Jill McIntosh, Ph 07 867 7373

Hauraki Plains Rural Show: Sonia, Ph 027 431 5825

Hauraki Plains St John: Call or pop into the Op Shop, Ph 07 867 8073

Hauraki Plains Youth Cricket: Anna Dodunski, Ph 027 466 4126

Hauraki RSA Memorial Club: Ph 07 867 7898 (evg) or 07 867 7301

Hauraki Vintage Machinery Club: Ph 07 867 7281

Jig Saw Puzzle Library: Mangatarata, Ph 07 867 3250

Kerepehi Brass Band: Rowan Gar-



Register a team for the Te Puru School Quiz night, May 21.

rett, Ph 07 867 6762

Kerepehi/Paeroa Indoor Bowls: Ph 027 418 4300

Kerepehi Women's Institute: Ph 07 867 6002 or 07 868 8582

Mahjong: Nola Walker, Ph 07 867 7301

Music and Movement: Suzanne, Ph 027 337 2544

Ngatea Badminton: Jenny Adams, Ph 07 867 3028

Ngatea Chinwag Cafe: 10am-12 Tuesdays, parish hall, Darlington St

Ngatea Community Garden: Jane, Ph 07 867 7245

Ngatea Garden Circle: Alice Douglas on 07 867 7463

Ngatea Indoor Bowling Club: Ph 07 867 6082 or 07 867 8015

Ngatea Lions Club: Bruce Foster, Ph 021 043 9280

Ngatea Playcentre: President, Ph 027 327 5536

Ngatea Pony Club: Nicky Hamblyn, Ph 07 867 7078

Ngatea Scouts: Kim Donaldson, Ph 07 867 7350

Ngatea Women's Institute: Nola Walker, Ph 07 867 7301

NZ Red Cross Thames: Betty Sut-

cliffe, Ph 07 868 6148

NZ Society of Genealogists Thames: Pam French, Ph 07 868 6492

Paeroa Citizens Advice Bureau: Tuesdays/Thursdays 10am-1pm, Ph 07 862 8093

Paeroa Community Programmes: Ph 07 862 9129

Paeroa Grey Power: Secretary Gail Locke, Ph 07 862 6256

Paeroa Society of Arts: paeroaartsociety@gmail.com

Paeroa Walking Group: 9am Mon Wed Fri, Elaine Lally, Ph 07 862 8409

Probus: Jill McIntosh, Ph 07 867 7373

Runner Runner Poker Club: Thursdays, 6.30pm at Punters Bar. New poker players welcome.

Scrapbooking: Pam Tonks, Ph 07 867 7780

Solarpunk Aotearoa: John McKeowen, Ph 021 063 5483

St Paschal's Catholic Church: Ph 07 867 7401 and 07 867 7056

Tai-Chi exercise Kaiaua: Stacy, Ph 09 576 3705

Tasty Books & Wine Tasting: Anne, Ph 07 867 3367

Thames 50+ Cycle Group: Chris, Ph

0274 998 159

Thames Bonanza Club: Meets third Thursday of month, Ph 07 868 6673

Thames Chin Wag Cafe: Mondays 12.30pm to 2pm, 608 Queen St

Thames Continuing Education: Fourth Wednesday of month, Ph 021 564 339

Thames Creative Fibre Group: Dana Catley, Ph 07 868 7310

Thames Croquet Club: Dennis Karl, Ph: 07 868 2423

Thames Dahlia Club: Paul Silvester, Ph 07 868 9346

Thames Hauraki Parents Centre: Meike, Ph 07 867 3163

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Thames Lions Club: Ph 07 868 9873 or email: pandb@xtra.co.nz

Thames Menz & Womenz Shed: Tony Winter, Ph 027 290 0023

Thames PickleBall Club: Tuesdays, 10-11am, Ph 027 290 0023

Thames Probus Club: Meets second Tuesday of month, Ph 07 868 5573

Thames Rotary Club: Warren Sly, Ph 021 772 351

Thames Ruby Redz Red Hatters: Ngaire Potter, Ph 07 868 3421

Thames Senior Indoor Bowls: Tuesdays 9.30am - 12pm, St James Hall. Ph Val, 021 054 2337

Thames Tennis Club: Maree, Ph 027 217 1682

Thames Toastmasters Club: Meets 2nd and 4th Thursday, 7pm, at St James Church Hall. Ph 027 296 8585

Thames Valley Adult Riding Club: Helen Pooley, Ph 021 233 1245

Thames Valley Zonta Club: Pam Harsant, Ph 027 495 5583 or 07 868 9554

Totally Thames Inc: Deb MacDonald Brown, Ph 027 228 8011

Turua Playcentre: Estelle, Ph 027 371 8511

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Archilles runner helps Te Huia cross the finish line

By JON VYCE

The first weekend in May was one that will stay with me forever.

The day itself may have been somewhat grey and overcast but its memory will be as brilliant as a summer's day.

The occasion was the 2021 Waihi Nugget Multi-Sports Festival which offers entrants the chance to compete in a range of events, from trail runs to the blue ribbon event of the Full Nugget - a 23km road cycle, followed by a 10km kayak, 8km on the bike, and a 10km trail run, then a 21km mountain bike ride and finally a 400m run to the finish at the Cornish Pump house adjacent to Martha Gold Mine.

Now, if like me, you found that exhausting to read, let alone compete in, you'll understand why I entered the 10km trail run. I may be what some would describe as a seasoned runner, which really means so mature he should know better, but I'm not completely mad.

There was however another reason for entering the run and that was my friend, Te Huia Apaapa, and Achilles. You may not have heard of Achilles, even if you are a runner, and yet they deserve to be a household name for the amazing work they do.

Thinking back, I would have been running for about five years before I became aware of Achilles myself. I was crossing the finishing line of the Queenstown Marathon when a group of spectators and supporters all dressed in matching fluorescent yellow erupted into whoops and cheers

of genuine delight. The reason was not, as my self-inflated ego momentarily suggested, to celebrate my mediocre mid-pack crossing of the line but rather to cheer home the two competitors behind me. These two were also dressed in fluorescent yellow and seemingly tied to each other at the wrist. The taller man with 'Achilles Guide' written large on his top was in constant communication with his companion, who I soon realised was partially sighted at best. The look of determination on both faces was evident in spite of their grins. They crossed the line together, with their arms held high and their Achilles family went wild with delight. I don't mind admitting the moment was emotional.

Maybe it was my own exhaustion or maybe it was the sheer effort and love of running that these two Achilles runners had displayed so clearly but for a second something rose from within me, and a tear pricked the corner of my eye.

Since then I have encountered Achilles athletes at many events and in recent times have become involved with the Hamilton Chapter, encouraging and enabling people with disabilities to access and enjoy the pleasures of running and/or walking. Many of these Achilles runners are from the Plains region and are indeed athletes in their own right.

Which brings me to Te Huia.

I had the honour of running with Te Huia as his Achilles Guide for the Nugget 10km trail run - a distance that requires stamina and speed, and a course that will hurt you if you under-



Te Huia Apaapa, left, with Jon Vyce at the finish line of the 10km Nugget.

Photo: SUPPLIED

estimate it. Te Huia and his mother, Dawn, were already at the Poppet Head start line when I arrived, having made the short trip from Waikino. Te Huia has intellectual disability and is autistic but above all else he is an athlete. His excitement and enthusiasm were obvious and infectious, making any greyness to the day disappear. He, and now we, couldn't wait to start. I had concerns about the hills, the slippery surface, correct pace etc.

Te Huia had none.

Before we knew it, the adrenaline was peaking and we were into the first kilometre. We settle into the leading group. Now I'm concerned we may be pushing too hard too soon. Te Huia

is happy. Constantly chatting to me, I think he's guiding me as much as I'm guiding him.

We approach the hills and Te Huia attacks them. We hit the front. I'm worried about the downhills but Te Huia navigates the tricky terrain with fast feet. We are past halfway.

We have a small lead on the pack and Te Huia is smiling, momentarily singing, he's enjoying the run. In that instant, he teaches me a lesson. I abandon worrying and forget about tactics, and we just run. And we run fast. We increase our lead. We link arms to cross the road as we re-enter the mine site. By the time we enter the pit rim we are clear, I am exhausted and Te Huia knows

his way to the finish. He winds up the pace, flies down the home straight, breaks the tape. When I cross the line, still applauding his efforts, he's jumping for joy and we high five. He tells me he "ran like a rocket" and I agree.

In the few hours that follow to prize giving, Te Huia manages to tell what seems like most of Waihi that he won. To be honest, his smile tells them before his words need to, the Achilles grapevine is abuzz with messages of congratulation and amazement, and I reflect what a good event the Nugget is, what a great thing Achilles is, and what legend Te Huia Apaapa is.

- Jon Vyce is an Achilles runner from Waitakaruru

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'Funerals are for the living' at Twentymans

Adrian Catran cannot recall a type of death he hasn't seen.

Working at Twentymans, a funeral home in Thames for more than three decades, has equated to around 10,000 deceased persons.

He still gets a knot in his stomach when he heads to a house or a scene or to a place where a person has died.

"Once I get there though, another mechanism switches on."

Adrian started working part-time at the Pollen St funeral home in 1990, full-time since September 1993, and within a week, he was told to enrol in a funeral directing course in Wellington, which was completed in 1994.

"I was the oldest one in the course at 47, and the youngest was 20," he said. "It was very hard to sit at a desk for eight hours a day listening to a tutor."

He bought a half-share in the business in September, 1993. Three years later, he owned Twentymans outright. Death, he said, still had a "mystique" about it.

"I can remember when I first got on [Thames-Coromandel District] council, in 1993, the then-mayor shaking my hand and asking if I'd washed them before I got there," he laughed.

"But I'm lucky here. There are lots of strange little things that have happened since I've been here."

One of those moments was when a man called the business, asking how to sell his plot at the Totara Cemetery. The location of the plot turned out coincidentally to be right next to Adrian's parents', so he purchased it off the council. In another instance, Adrian serendipitously stumbled across one of his father's long-lost cufflinks when visiting a family at their home for a funeral arrangement - something he didn't normally do. The family returned the cufflinks to Adrian.

The 74-year-old is now, to the best of his knowledge, the oldest funeral director still working 24/7 in New Zealand.

He has conducted funerals as far north as Ngawha Springs in Northland, and as far south as Martinborough, near Wellington, and he even drove through the forestry roads amid flooding



The Twentymans team, rear: Rochelle Scott, left, Philippa Godwin, Nick Collingwood; front: Amba Catran, left, Adrian Catran and Julie Catran. Absent: Max Hetherington, Kate Jones and Brodie Campbell.

Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

to get to Pauanui so as not to be late for a funeral. In more than three decades, Twentymans had never been late for a funeral. After 31 years, he said he had no interest in selling up.

"It still piques my interest to be here, and the challenge is still there," he said.

"And our team works really hard to ensure that the funerals we conduct reflect on the person that has passed away. We try to cel-

ebate their life, because funerals are for the living, so we try to put together a package that encompasses all the good things about a person."

Twentymans also provides professional cremation services to the wider district, using the latest equipment and state-of-the-art technology. Its cremator was installed after a seven-year wait for consent approval, and attracted opposition from members of the pub-

lic; however, Adrian said the extension to the business had been a big success. They had completed 409 cremations since the service was added in late-2019, adding more than \$250,000 annually into the Thames Community instead of Hamilton City Council coffers.

"We pride ourselves on the fact that there is no such thing as a problem, just challenges, and I love a challenge," he said.

- KELLEY TANTAU



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Rural Life

Alpacas find success at home and overseas

By KELLEY TANTAU

The conversation about alpacas begins with their reproduction.

There's an explanation about induced ovulation, a mention of a sound called "orgling", and talk about the strange accuracy of when alpacas give birth - generally, between 11am-2pm.

Lyn Skilling, from QTAZ Alpacas in Hikutaia, knows all about the procreation of the species, and it's a valuable piece of wisdom to have.

Award-winning alpacas are derived from good breeding.

"When we first started, we bought our females from New Zealand, but we had the opportunity to go halves on a male alpaca, and so we bought Seth [from Australia], and he really has been the foundation of our herd," Lyn says.

Alpacas are judged on their conformation and fleece, and the ones that do well in shows are sought after in Europe, she says, and QTAZ has had a number of alpacas head overseas.

Last year, they sold two to Germany; the year before that, three to Belgium.

The alpacas travel across in

"five-star" conditions and are used to increase the quality of breeding at their new farms.

Lyn and her husband Alan have owned QTAZ since 2004 and the name came about after Alan searched for alpacas online and found one that was "cute as".

"We didn't even know what they were," Lyn says, "but we used to get this magazine called Alfresco, and there was an article in it about a lady who had been paralysed. She used to work with horses but now worked with llamas.

"I said to Alan: 'A couple of llamas would be cute', and when we went on any llama websites, there were these things called alpacas, and every farm we went to, we fell in love with some."

They own about 60 of the huacaya species now, and breed fawns and browns. They've recently started to breed blacks, too.

Ten newborns have graced the Hikutaia farm in recent weeks, and Lyn says she and Alan first started naming their herd after song titles.

There's Macho Man, Cinnamon Girl, Kiss Me All Over,



Lyn Skilling has owned QTAZ Alpacas since 2004 and has had a lot of success in the show ring. Photo: KELLEY TANTAU

Midnight Rendezvous, and Sweet Caroline - though there's nothing sweet about her, Lyn says.

Midnight Rendezvous and Kiss Me All Over recently won big at the North Island Colourbration in Pukekohe. They were both named supreme champions in their fleece categories.

QTAZ also won the Bruce Johnston Memorial Trophy for most successful brown breeder at the same show.

"I don't really like being on show, and yet I love showing them... and I'd be lying if I didn't say I love winning," Lyn says with a laugh.

"We have been successful in

the show ring and we are proud of it."

Lyn and Kiss You All Over are planning to be at a national show in Fielding in September, and Lyn welcomes anyone to call in to their farm for a visit.

To keep up with QTAZ, and for more information, find them on Facebook.



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SPORTS

Football now at domain

The Paeroa Rangers football club faced off against the Hauraki Plains Junior Soccer Club at Paeroa Domain on Saturday. The Rangers are now officially playing at the domain on Saturdays during the season. *Valley Profile* reporter **KELLEY TANTAU** went down to catch some of the action.



James Rawnsley gets control of the ball and heads for the goal.



Players from Paeroa and Hauraki Plains face off for the ball.



Paeroa player Sofia van Eyk, 9, tumbles in her race for possession.



Sofia van Eyk and Kian Rangihika tussle for the ball.



Zara Deihl celebrates her team's successful shot at goal.



Tom Rimmelink lines up a kick for Paeroa Rangers.



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RT5634

3 2 2 1

712 Mackay Street, Thames

Deadline Sale by 25th May 2021

OPEN HOME SAT & SUN 2 - 2.30PM



NEW LISTING



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RT5638

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This beautifully refurbished home with uninterrupted views, offers spacious living, three double bedrooms, three outdoor entertainment areas and large double garage with exquisite hobby room above which can become a guest suite for family, guests or B&B's. Sunroom and front covered deck offers sunset views over the Firth.

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Death Notices

HADFIELD, Malcolm Robert (Mal) :
Passed away suddenly 11 May 2021, aged 70. Much loved dad of Jacqui and father in law & mate of Jason. "The seven spanish angels have now taken you to the big brewery in the sky, you can now breathe easy!"

Public Notices



Notice of AGM Saturday 22 May 2021 10:00am

AGENDA

- Apologies
 - Minutes of previous AGM
 - Matters Arising
 - President's Report
 - Manager's Report
 - Presentation of Statement of Accounts
 - Subscriptions
 - Confirmation of Returning Officers
 - Election of Board of Appeal
 - Election of Auditor
 - Election of Committee
 - Rule Change re Quorums
 - General Business
- President J Gailbraith**
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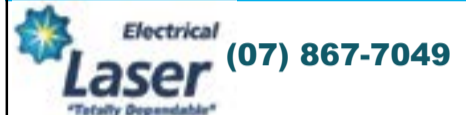


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After you have read *The Valley Profile* from front to back, because it is all local content, the newspaper can be recycled in so many ways. My favourite is using it as a weed mat instead of plastic. Worms love eating newspaper so they are attracted to this part of your garden, a win win for your plants.

SPORTS

Great season for Hauraki cricket

After the nationwide lockdown prematurely ended last season days before the semi-finals, the Kaihere Cricket Club's senior cricket team, the Kaihere Cougars, was eager to get back to their winning ways.

After a slow start to the season with a couple of losses to Pirongia and Te Awamutu Marist, the Kaihere Cricket Club put together some great performances.

The Kaihere Swampies entered the inaugural Thames Valley Sunday 30 over social competition.

Thoughts of friendly social cricket quickly evaporated in what turned out to be quite a competitive competition.

Kaihere managed two wins from the six matches. Thank you to all the players who made themselves available, from 50 year olds to 11 year olds.

Hauraki Plains Youth Cricket had three junior cricket teams playing out of Ngatea this past season while a number of other youngsters got to have a go at the traditional game.

All sides played in the

Thames Valley competition, including teams from across the peninsula and valley area.

Cricket at Hauraki Plains College (HPC) has been in a steady building phase over the past couple of years.

The strength of the Kaihere Junior Club is showing through in the number of kids playing cricket for HPC.

In term one this year, HPC had a First XI, a Junior Colts team, a Year 9 team and two girls sides who played in the mid-week Waikato Valley competition. Easily the best numbers we've had for many years.

The quality of the cricket and the enjoyment the kids are getting out of the game has been great to see and this certainly holds cricket at HPC in a strong position going forward.

Plans are under way to investigate the development of more wicket blocks installed to host home matches for all Hauraki Plains cricket teams.

Currently up to 10 teams are sharing only three wickets in Ngatea, which is not ideal.

The additions will increase



the supply for more home matches to be played on a regular basis.

The Kaihere Cricket Club now turns their attention to the centenary celebrations to be held February 26 next year.



ABOVE: Kaihere Cougars celebrate a successful season. Photo: SUPPLIED

RIGHT: The Hauraki Tornados (years 7-8) was one of three Ngatea junior teams. Photo: Bev's Cracking Shots

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UTE MASTER

Firefighter and new mum to face gruelling climb

By KELLEY TANTAU

A Thames Valley woman will climb more than 1000 stairs for the Firefighter Sky Tower Challenge this weekend - just three months after having her first child.

Roseanne Hitchman will ascend the 51 flights of stairs of the 382m-tall Auckland Sky Tower alongside seven other Ngatea Fire Brigade members on May 22. The annual event is a fundraiser for Leukaemia and Blood Cancer New Zealand, and was called off last year due to Covid-19.

Since then, Roseanne, 33, transferred to the Puriri Fire Brigade and has had her first child, a son named Braxton.

"It meant I couldn't start training again until after I had the baby, which was in January, so I've had a short period of time to train for it," she said.

Roseanne has been climbing the 135 steps of Jacob's Ladder, in Thames, and has also been running the hills around her rural home, with baby Braxton in the front pack. His extra weight was a training benefit because the firefighters were required to wear up to 25kg of kit for the challenge, she said.

"The gear is heavy anyway, but when you're on the job, you're not lugging it up over 1000 stairs," she said. "When I first started going up Jacob's Ladder after having Braxton, I

could barely walk the next day... and when you go up the Sky Tower, there's no windows or anything to look at, so it's just you going around and around until you get to the top."

The Firefighter Sky Tower Stair Challenge was developed by firefighter Tony Scott in 2005 as a fundraiser for Leukaemia & Blood Cancer New Zealand. In 2016, he was awarded a Queen's Service Medal for services to the New Zealand Fire Service and the community.

Roseanne has participated in the challenge five times, but not in the past three years. She got involved because her brother-in-law was taking part.

This year, Roseanne's sister Rachel Ross, from the Ngatea brigade, will make the climb alongside her with fellow Ngatea Brigade members Dylan Adams, Maia Rangihika, Jade Cochrane and Quesera Matete. Roseanne joined the Ngatea brigade at age 16 following in her father Ian Hitchman's footsteps, who has been a Ngatea member for 27 years. She completed 16 years of service in Ngatea before recently moving to Puriri. Being a part of Fire and Emergency NZ was her way of giving back to the community, she said.

When she makes the gruelling climb on May 22, her driving force will not only be the charity behind it, but baby



Braxton, as well. "Get to the stop and see him, that's what I'll be thinking."

To help Roseanne in her fundraising efforts, visit firefighterschallenge.org.nz/roseanne-hitchman.

ABOVE: Roseanne Hitchman will take part in the challenge just three months after having her first child.

RIGHT: The Ngatea Fire Brigade team: Dylan Adams, left, Maia Rangihika, Jade Cochrane, Quesera Matete, Rachel Ross, and Roseanne Hitchman.

Photos: SUPPLIED



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Look forward to hearing from all you Valley Profile readers.

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