

Hikutaia publicans pour their last pint, P3

# The Valley Profile

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067 April 27, 2022



Women dressed in Thames nurse uniforms from World War I take part in the Thames Anzac parade on Monday. MORE PHOTOS: P4  
Photo: GORDON PREECE

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The Valley Profile is a community newspaper that delivers 100% local news in the Thames Valley region. We deliver 16,000 copies each Wednesday to every letterbox, reaching approximately 35,000 readers in Hauraki Plains, Paeroa, Thames, Thames Coast and surrounding rural areas, plus bulk distribution around the Coromandel Peninsula.

**NEWS/EDITORIAL**

**Editor** Teresa Ramsey  
Ph 0204 0944 853  
editor@valleyprofile.co.nz  
**Senior Reporter** Kelley Tantau  
Ph 022 619 4889  
kelley@valleyprofile.co.nz  
**Reporter** Gordon Preece  
Ph 022 174 3988  
gordon@valleyprofile.co.nz

**ADVERTISING**

**Ad manager** Nikki Sanders  
Ph 022 1303 885  
Email: nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz  
**MISSED PAPERS/ADMIN**  
Ph 021 100 8709  
Email: admin@valleyprofile.co.nz

**OFFICE: 2 QUEEN STREET, PAEROA**  
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# Rotary puts screws on licence plate theft

By GORDON PREECE

Rotary Thames members replaced vehicle registration plate screws for the public on Saturday in an effort to reduce licence plate theft in the region.

Rotary members used anti-theft screws intended to deter opportunist thieves with a standard screwdriver and make it very difficult for them to steal licence plates.

Rotary Thames president Warren Sly said Rotary held the initiative at Goldfields Shopping Centre on April 23 after noticing an increase in car and licence plate thefts in the Thames area.

"We've become very aware of car and number plate theft increase in the [Thames] area, which seems to be happening on a wider scale as well around New Zealand," Mr Sly said.

According to the Thames Business Association, 384,516 vehicles drove into and out of Thames during December. Of those, 33 were either stolen vehicles or had stolen number plates. In recent times, with the cost of petrol rising, Thames Police earlier told *The Profile* more criminals were stealing plates to be used in service station thefts.

Mr Sly said the licence plate initiative was also driven by Rotary's desire to fundraise and provide a service for the community to secure their licence plates.

"We're always needing to fundraise to support especially



Warren Sly replaces licence plate screws as part of a Thames Rotary fundraiser.

Photos: GORDON PREECE

our youth programmes, and with Covid, our fundraising has been struggling so we've had to cancel many of our fundraising events.

"So we decided to combine this as a fundraiser and provide a service to secure their number plates."

An ANPR camera in Thames was installed in late 2020 after calls from the business community, which has been struggling with ram raids and burglaries - most of which committed using stolen vehicles.

With the camera installed, Thames Police are now alerted to a potential stolen vehicle within seconds.



Rotary's Warren Sly, left, Owen Smith and Tamara Marsden replaced around 20 licence plate screws by midday on Saturday.

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## Thames Tides

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
Apr 27	Apr 28	Apr 29	Apr 30	May 1	May 2	May 3
<b>Morning</b> 4:08am 3.3 10:17am 0.8	<b>Morning</b> 5:04am 3.4 11:13am 0.7	<b>Morning</b> 5:56am 3.4 6:26pm 3.3	<b>Morning</b> 12:30am 0.7 6:43am 3.4	<b>Morning</b> 1:13am 0.7 7:28am 3.4	<b>Morning</b> 1:53am 0.7 8:11am 3.4	<b>Morning</b> 2:33am 0.7 8:53am 3.3
<b>Afternoon</b> 4:34pm 3.2 10:51pm 0.9	<b>Afternoon</b> 5:34pm 3.2 11:44pm 0.8	<b>Afternoon</b> 12:03pm 0.7 6:26pm 3.3	<b>Afternoon</b> 12:50pm 0.6 7:12pm 3.4	<b>Afternoon</b> 1:33pm 0.6 7:54pm 3.4	<b>Afternoon</b> 2:14pm 0.6 8:34pm 3.4	<b>Afternoon</b> 2:53pm 0.6 9:12pm 3.4
6:54am 5:37pm	6:55am 5:36pm	6:55am 5:35pm	6:56am 5:34pm	6:57am 5:32pm	6:58am 5:31pm	6:59am 5:30pm
<b>Best At</b> 9:28am 9:50pm	<b>Best At</b> 10:12am 10:34pm	<b>Best At</b> 10:56am 11:17pm	<b>Best At</b> 11:39am	<b>Best At</b> 12:01am 12:23pm	<b>Best At</b> 12:46am 1:09pm	<b>Best At</b> 1:32am 1:56pm
<b>Rise</b> 2:46am <b>Set</b> 4:00pm	<b>Rise</b> 3:50am <b>Set</b> 4:26pm	<b>Rise</b> 4:53am <b>Set</b> 4:51pm	<b>Rise</b> 5:55am <b>Set</b> 5:16pm	<b>Rise</b> 6:57am <b>Set</b> 5:44pm	<b>Rise</b> 7:58am <b>Set</b> 6:14pm	<b>Rise</b> 9:00am <b>Set</b> 6:49pm

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

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 First Quarter   
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**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	LOW	Hr	Min
Coromandel	-	05	-	04	
Whitianga	-	02	-	06	
Tairua	+	10	+	21	
Whangamata	-	07	-	07	
Waihi Beach	-	12	-	12	



# Lest we forget

Anzac Day was commemorated across the district on Monday, with RSA dawn and memorial services, and a civic parade and service in Thames. Civic parades and services in Hauraki were cancelled due to Covid-19 concerns, but RSA commemorations went ahead in Ngatea, Paeroa and Waihi, with an Anzac service in Kaihere. Dawn services were also planned for Tapu, Thames and Kerepēhi. *Valley Profile* reporter **GORDON PREECE** headed to the Thames Civic Parade for their Anzac commemorations.



A large number take part in the Thames Anzac parade down Pollen St on Monday morning, followed by a civic service.



Thames South School pupil Violet Hale displays her wreath.



Police and RSA veterans lead the parade.



Moanataiari School students carry their wreath.



Thames High School leaders take part.



Thames Troubadours march in the parade.

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# Students gain insight into vets' service

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

College students sat down with returned servicemen ahead of Anzac Day to hear their stories of service.

Filmed as part of a video made to honour the Kiwis who served and lost their lives in armed conflicts, Paeroa College students listened in as actor Mark Wright asked three returned servicemen about their time in war.

Danny Te Iri, Barry Maddern, and Richard Gabriel, answered questions such as: 'Where around the world did the army take you?' and 'What does Anzac Day mean to you?'

Each of the three men had unique stories.

Mr Maddern, for example, joined the army in 1964 and finished his stint 10 years later, on the day before Anzac Day.

He served across New Zealand, and in Singapore and Malaya.

"My father served in World War II, my grandfather served in World War I. Because I joined the military, it became very important to me; even more so when I heard in 1965, one of my best friends had been killed by standing on a landmine in Vietnam."

Richard Gabriel served in the English navy as a telegrapher from 1950 to 1957. He showed the students a model of a type of ship he served on called a Destroyer - a fast, long-endurance warship intended to escort



Actor Mark Wright checks out Richard Gabriel's model of a Destroyer ship.

Photos: KELLEY TANTAU

larger vessels and defend them against short-range attackers. Mr Gabriel said it took "quite a lot" of hours to make his Destroyer model, having to construct most of it by memory.

Danny Te Iri served in the New Zealand army from 1963-1971 and saw active service in Malaysia, Borneo, and Vietnam.

He said his two uncles served in World War II and were "lucky to come home".

"I had a lot of respect for them... and even today, I still remember all the guys we lost in Vietnam."

Actor Mark Wright, who appeared on *Shortland Street*, worked with Hauraki District

Council on its video series, *Voices behind the Uniforms*, which has been released in parts to the public on YouTube. It cost council up to \$1500, funded through existing budgets, and showcased a series of Anzac-related monologues.

The Q&A with Paeroa College students was part of the footage.



Actor Mark Wright, right, talks to Paeroa College students.



Barry Maddern joined the army in 1964 and finished his stint 10 years later, on the day before Anzac Day.



College students hear the stories of Paeroa returned servicemen.



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# Lucrative claim part of archaeology tour

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

A walk through two “significant” valleys that were “front and centre” of Thames’ gold production aims to educate people about the history of the town.

Run as part of the New Zealand Archaeological Association’s Archaeology Week (April 23 to May 1), the guided tour will take participants up Moanataiari Creek Rd to the mountain bike track car park, then will follow the tramway route up to the archaeological site of the Rainbow Hotel.

Participants will then follow a track across to the Waiotahi Valley, before returning to the Thames Goldmine Experience car park via the historic (and lucrative) Waiotahi claim - known as “the last great bonanza” of the Thames goldfield.

Tour guide and historian Russell Skeet said the Golden Crown, Caledonian, and Waiotahi mining sites were the “three big producers” of Thames’ goldfield.

While there was “nothing much to see there now”, participants would be able to become familiar with the heritage features of the route, he said.

“We’re walking up two valleys that were smack-bang in the middle of the history of this town, in terms of its foundation.

“It doesn’t really get any more significant than that.”

Other features along the walk, scheduled for May 1, include tramways, Messenger’s Hill, stamper battery sites, Roberts’ battery and mine sites, and the



View of upper Moanataiari tramway, showing Rainbow Hotel, circa 1871.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Kuranui Battery site, amongst others. With Te Takanga o Te Wā and Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories being part of all schools’ curriculum from 2023, Mr Skeet said it was “really timely” for residents to “come to grips with the good pieces and the bad pieces of our history”.

“It’s fascinating, it’s exciting, it’s really interesting, and the reason I’ve been involved in heritage for many, many years is, in part, to try and educate people to be interested in our history,” he said.

“To understand where this town has come from, to understand who it is that you are, and the place you fit in with the world - if we have that clear understanding about our past, that allows us to face down some of

our big challenges that we’ve got in the future.”

The New Zealand Archaeological Association is a volunteer organisation that works to promote research and teaching in archaeology, and encourage conservation of archaeological sites within New Zealand.

**DETAILS: Moanataiari and Waiotahi Valley tour, Sunday, May 1, 9am to 12pm. Medium difficulty walk (all on marked tracks) with about 40 per cent uphill - fairly gentle grade. Start/end point at Thames Goldmine Experience car park, corner State Highway 25 and Moanataiari Creek Rd. Cost: \$5 per head (includes handout with photos etc). Under-12s free.**



## LETTERS

Send your letters to the editor to [editor@valleyprofile.co.nz](mailto:editor@valleyprofile.co.nz) or our office at 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.

### LATE MEETING NOTIFICATIONS

It seems that effective public consultation on matters of district importance is sadly lacking in the TCDC area. As residents of Moanataiari, Thames, we recently received a letter from Amon Martin, the project lead of the Shoreline Management Plan, advising us that there was to be an online public meeting on April 4 to discuss the all important coastal adaptation pathway. His letter arrived on April 5. I emailed him immediately regarding this matter and at the time of writing this two weeks later, have had no acknowledgement of my concerns. Others, we note, have made the enforced adaptation to the current, appallingly slow postal system. It would appear that TCDC needs to do the same.

Following this, in a recent local paper (the *Hauraki Herald*), there was an invitation to, “tune in and join [Denis] Tegg on a webinar on Thursday, April 7 at 6pm to discuss proposals from Waikato Regional Council for new bus services in Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki”. Another vital issue for locals. The paper it appeared in was dated April 14.

We have a right to be able to contribute our thoughts on these matters in a timely manner. All we request is that we be given the chance to do so.

- Althea Hill, Thames.

**EDITOR’S NOTE:** The *Valley Profile* previewed details of the Waikato Regional Council webinar on its proposed bus services in a front page story on April 6, in time for the April 7 webinar. *The Profile* also followed up with coverage of the webinar,

printed on P2 of our April 13 edition.

Our readers can rely on up to date and timely information in the *Valley Profile* as we are the only publication with reporters based in the Hauraki-Thames Valley region covering issues that affect our communities.

- Teresa Ramsey, editor

### TCDC REPLY

Unfortunately some people in the Moanataiari neighbourhood of Thames didn’t receive their postal invitation to the online meeting about coastal risks and pathway options relating to projected sea-level rise until very close to, or after, the meeting date of April 4. The letters were posted to arrive in good time before this date but were delayed as the post only gets delivered there twice a week. The meetings were advertised on our council’s website, social media, radio and our email newsletters. However, because of the postal delays, we’ve scheduled another online meeting for the Moanataiari community for Wednesday, April 27, at 7pm. The link to the meeting is available on our website at [www.tcdc.govt.nz/smp](http://www.tcdc.govt.nz/smp), where information about our Shoreline Management Plans project can also be found. The meeting will be recorded and linked on that web page, where links to recordings of online meetings in some of our other coastal communities are also available. We’ll also be holding face-to-face meetings in our communities over the next few months, and we will post those details on the web page as they are available. Any resident who has queries or concerns can contact us directly at [ourcoast@tcdc.govt.nz](mailto:ourcoast@tcdc.govt.nz).

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# Ross to leave 'Harris' hole on council

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

In an effort to avoid turning "stark, staring mad" Ross Harris stood for council.

He attempted five months as a retiree, and even travelled around the East Coast with his wife Cheryl, but after returning home to the Hauraki Plains, "frustrations" from being outside of the corporate world he'd known for 35 years, started to take their toll.

It was only when former deputy mayor Bruce Gordon tapped him on the shoulder that Ross indulged in the request that had been asked of him for 20 years: become a local politician.

Six years and two terms later, Ross has decided to give retirement another crack, but being a member of Hauraki District Council came not without its learnings, he told *The Profile*.

"There is one philosophy that I try to use, and that is: we're all born with two ears, two eyes, and one mouth, and they should be used proportionately."

Being Hauraki Plains born and bred, and as the grandson of quarrying stalwart HG Leach on his mother's side, and Mangatarata farmer Thomas Harris on his father's side, Ross said while standing for council was not intended, it was unsurprising.

His brother Greg Harris had also been a Hauraki District Councillor, while his dad Allen was involved in what is now called the Western Drainage Board Committee, as well



For the first time in more than a decade, there will be no 'Harris' around the Hauraki District Council table, as Ross Harris decides not to stand again this year.

Photos: KELLEY TANTAU

as the Hauraki Golf Club. His mum, Velma, was also involved in Plunket Mothers, The Country Women's Institute, Catholic Women's League, and the women's section of RSA.

"You couldn't help becoming involved in the community, and right from a very early age, all of us recognised that communities were made up of people, it wasn't just bricks and mortar and roads and infrastructure," he said.

"You think of all the hours a whole group of people that were all intertwined and related had

spent listening to our community... It's a history that I'm so proud of."

Born in Mangatarata, Ross moved with his parents to Kaihere Rd in 1950. He met his wife, Cheryl, from Kerepēhi, when he was 17 and they went on to have three children together.

For three decades he worked in either corporate roles, the dairy industry, sports administration, and with FVC Vet Services as its chief executive.

In the 80s, he received a delegation to stand for the central

government elections and considered it for three months, but decided against it due to the role's demands on his home life.

He said he had a "privileged life" - but with that, came an important aspect of advocacy.

"One of the frustrations I have is when people sit around making decisions for communities and believe they're making a decision for their future. It's not their future. It's not my future," he said.

"We need to be thinking 30 years out, 40 years out. I've got

12 grandchildren, and I use them as a sounding board."

Ross was this term the chair of the Hauraki Plains ward, and his highlights throughout his local council career were simple things, like the Hugh Hayward Domain walkway and cricket nets, the self-opening doors at the Ngatea service centre, and the Wharekawa Coast 2120 project.

Two "big disappointments" were the conflict between council and community over the Ngatea Library upgrade, which featured a petition signed by more than 1200 people; and the Ngatea main street upgrade, which dragged on for more than a year.

"I hurt really, really badly. I never recognised that," he said.

"I hurt really badly over the Ngatea library fiasco, and I hurt really badly over the fiasco of the State Highway 2 upgrade."

Now, for the first time in more than a decade, there will be no "Harris" around the Hauraki District Council table, but Ross, who was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2018, said the time was right.

"I'm worried about the next chapter, in that, for the last 35-40 years I've been active in a community with all walks of life... but I think we've got a use-by date stamped on our bum, I'm sure we have, but most of us don't back up to a mirror and see what it is."



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# Rural Life

## Arms Act proposals cause concern

By GORDON PREECE

Thames Valley Deerstalkers is concerned proposed shooting regulations could encourage unsafe firearm use among youth.

Police are currently seeking submissions on a raft of proposed new regulations under the Arms Act.

One proposed change includes banning youth members from participating in shooting activities organised by gun clubs because under 16s aren't eligible for a firearm licence.

"This option does not prevent young people using a firearm under the immediate supervision of a licence holder on private property or hunting or on a range, but removes the option of participating in the competing elements of club-organised shooting activities," the proposal said.

Thames Valley Deerstalkers Association (TVDA) president Maureen Coleman told *The Profile* the proposed changes could result in unsafe firearm use among youth.

"[The proposals are] saying [under 16s] are not allowed to take part in any club shooting activities at all. They're allowed to go hunting and use firearms on private land but they're not allowed to use them in a safe environment beforehand," she said.

"In the Plains... it's dead flat but somebody can go out and have 20 people in their front paddock shooting at targets which is fine because they're not an organised club, but the minute it's a club activity, it has to be on a legal range and once it's on a legal range, [Police] don't want you to have anyone under 16.

"More and more people are becoming urbanised so they don't have a matter of course to use private farmland... I think it's just vital there's an area where people can get some tuition on firearms training."

If the proposed change went ahead, it would remove generations of club members, she said.



New regulations proposed by Police could see under 16s banned from participating in shooting activities organised by Thames Valley Deerstalkers Association.

Photo: GORDON PREECE

"Juniors have been a really integral part of TVDA for years. It's not like they're just here to go in shooting competitions, they're here for the greater good of conservation and firearm safety.

"We're not anti-regulations - they need to be reasonable and workable, and allow kids to be able to shoot."

The TVDA has 75 members under 16 years. Maureen said club activities for youth members would disappear if the proposed regulations were enacted.

"The club's survival camps had been a focal point of this branch... they're around firearms, you get taught how to be responsible around them and when you get to 16 when you can

use them, you've had years of training. Things like that would be lost," she said.

Maureen was also concerned about additional costs the club would need to certify their shooting range by the Police Commissioner under the proposals.

"Because we do rimfire shooting, centrefire shooting and clay target shooting, we have a few ranges... and there's probably not going to be any change out of at least \$15,000 just for us to register and get our first audit," she said.

"That's not taking in any voluntary time to produce those documents, that's just what we have to pay Police... It's absolutely ridiculous."

Maureen said Police also used the club's range for training.

"If we had to shut down due to changing disciplines, Police wouldn't be able to train," she said.

Maureen said Police's proposed compliance audit fees for clubs that sell ammunition would also impact TVDA.

"We might only sell a small amount of ammunition in a year compared to other clubs... but we already have all our accounts checked, we have a balance sheet, we have an AGM, we do all that meets the incorporated societies and charities commission requirements," she said.

"But now [Police] are saying we would have to have fully

audited accounts undertaken by auditors, so that potentially could be \$5000."

Maureen said TVDA was holding open days and open nights over the coming weeks for the community to discuss the proposal, find out more information and make submissions, which are open until May 4.

"After the 4th of May, we'd just have to wait and see how Police actually summarise the answers [from] all shooting fraternities," she said.

**DETAILS: TVDA will hold open days at its Morrison Rd, Paeroa, clubrooms on Saturday, April 30, 9am to 1pm and Monday, May 2, 5pm to 8pm. For more information, contact Maureen, Ph 027 333 7786.**

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# Rural Life

## New service to pinpoint data for farmers

Farmers can now access high quality and site-specific weather forecasts and data from their phones in a new partnership between global farm-management company CropX and MetService, New Zealand's national weather authority.

MetService says it will provide weather data for CropX to share on its cloud-based platform directly to an app on the farmer's phone.

The data will be backed by science, based on modelling as well as from local observations from specific weather stations in farming hubs.

The agreement will see CropX using MetService weather data on their farm-management platform, with MetService now a licensed reseller of CropX's technology.

MetService says it rigorously evaluated CropX technology and was impressed by the consistency and accuracy of the data and the seamless setup and operation.

MetService business development manager Peter Fisher said MetService was "very impressed" with both the hardware and software CropX had developed to monitor various aspects of soil, including moisture levels.

"We employ over 100 meteorologists in New Zealand and operate the most in-depth weather observation network in the country, including New Zealand's weather radar. We are excited to leverage off each other's expertise to provide very specific data to sectors outside of agriculture," Peter said.

CropX New Zealand managing director Eitan Dan said the partnership meant farmers would have access to data CropX

soil monitors provided, as well as weather information to make good water and nutrient management decisions, and ensure the best outcomes for the pasture in the growing cycle with minimal water and fertiliser inputs.

"No business could be more at the mercy of weather than farming," Eitan said.

"New Zealand farmers make important and costly decisions based on the weather multiple times a day - so accuracy and ease of accessing weather information is essential. We want to provide this to our CropX customers to supplement the data they receive from our soil sensors."

CropX used an international weather company in other countries, he said.

"This partnership recognises the credibility and track record MetService has in the provision of very accurate weather information which successfully guides businesses in New Zealand every day."

CropX was founded in New Zealand six years ago after angel investors provided capital for initial work carried out by Manaaki Whenua - Landcare Research, a New Zealand Crown Research Institute. The company then moved to Israel.

It has recently returned to New Zealand after acquiring Regen, an effluent and irrigation decision support company.

Eitan said he was excited for CropX to continue growing its national presence and to work with more New Zealand businesses to help Kiwi farmers and growers. "We're very much a New Zealand business and we want to provide products and services which respond specifically to the needs of growers and farmers here in New Zealand."

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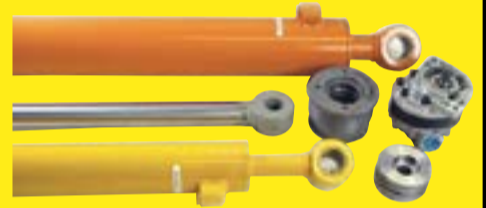
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SPORTS

# High standard of horsemanship at TPC

CLUB PROFILE

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

Thames Pony Club is in a fortunate position.

Over the past few years, those involved have grown the club to a level where spaces for new members are limited.

It means there's a steady stream of young riders to ensure the club's longevity, as well as a deep talent pool to draw from for events.

"There was a time where we were hoping for new members," president Katherine Forsyth says, "[but] we've had quite a growth in membership over the last season, so we have been having a lot more successes."

This month marks the end of the season for the pony club, located along State Highway 25 in Thames' south, and in March, six of its young members successfully competed at Timberlands - a very competitive North Island event that consists of cross country, dressage, and show jumping.

Lucia Suess, Hannah van Derstruys, Lydia Beaver, Sydney Stuart, Anna Hart, and Lily Hart were all part of the team that won the cross country trophy, and the girls also



Club president Katherine Forsyth

placed third overall.

"It was a very big thing for our club; I'm not sure that's happened for quite a few years," Katherine says.

Head instructor Lynda Underwood, whose daughter Heather was one-half of a pair that came second at the National Mounted Games in Hastings in early March, says when her daughter started riding at the club, there were only eight members under the age of 18. There are now around 26 young riders and 15 adult riders.

"We run a 'Riders without Ponies' programme early on in the season - September/October - which can lead to new members as they get bitten by the horse bug," Katherine says.

"Younger riders are great as they ensure the future of the club, as often we lose our senior riders as they go off to university."

The club is run under the



Tamzin Forsyth-Lees, 13, clears a jump with horse Coco.

Photos: KELLEY TANTAU

New Zealand Pony Club Association, and has a "high standard of horsemanship", Katherine says.

Its grounds feature a large sand arena equipped with showjumping jumps, and a large paddock with cross country jumps.

The club is also fortunate

enough to utilise land up in the Kauaeranga Valley, where they host summer camps and treks.

But while the club's land, which they lease off Thames-Coromandel District Council and Waikato Regional Council, is in a prime position for spectators along the state highway, there are still those who don't

understand the sport, Katherine says.

"I think some people might not see it as being a particularly important thing to have in the community, but I tell you what, a pony club is an amazing thing to have for the kids of the town," she says.

CONTINUED ON P11

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# SPORTS



Lucia Suess, left, and Hannah van Derstruys with the trophy they won at Timberlands.

### CONTINUED FROM P10

“We’re like a big family and it’s so neat for kids to be able to come here and enjoy their ponies and enjoy their friends.”

Club secretary Janet Stuart, who rode with Thames Pony Club as a child in the 80s, agrees. “I think there is a perception that horse riding is all about money and appearances, but I think our club is a good, old-fashioned, grassroots club where we try to support kids in whatever discipline of riding they want to do.”

Katherine, who has been president at the club for three years, also did the “whole pony club thing” when she was a child. Now, her children, Amber Forsyth-Lees, 17, and Tamzin Forsyth-Lees, 13, are

riding, too. “My mum and dad both rode horses and nurtured a love for them in my sister and I, who grew up owning ponies. It’s nice to continue that family tradition with my own daughters,” she says.

“Just looking after a pony teaches a child so many things. They’re very big animals, so you have to build up an understanding of how they work and it’s good to learn that responsibility.”

And while the club’s growing numbers offer an array of benefits, there are also challenges.

When holding rallies (lessons) or events, members can feel the squeeze of the small grounds, and have to navigate the obstacle of where to park all the horse floats.

It can also be difficult to find



Neka Woolfe, 13, with her pony and “best friend” Luna.

Photos: KELLEY TANTAU

grazing and equipment for larger numbers of members, but the club was working on “different options and solutions for the future”.

“I’m proud of our little club and its history in the area,” Katherine says. “I enjoy seeing the companionship the children have with their ponies and how they grow in confidence.”

**CLUB PROFILE:** Want to be part of the Valley Profile’s new Club Profile series? Email details to [kelly@valleyprofile.co.nz](mailto:kelly@valleyprofile.co.nz).



Amber Forsyth-Lees, front, and her horse Nitrous.



# Storm, floods cause hardship



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.

## 1924

A heavy storm which passed over the district left behind a trail of damage and hardship. A breach in stop banks on the Ohinemuri River caused wholesale destruction at Netherton. The surging waters poured through the break, quickly surrounding the farmhouses. Government launches were requisitioned and isolated families were rescued. The breach, although it devastated Netherton, saved Paeroa from being inundated.

Hikutaiia's main street flooded, with a foot of water through the Pioneer Hotel. All country roads were damaged. Telephonic communication was disorganised owing to electric power lines falling across telegraph wires.

The Railway Department was also a heavy loser with almost all of the lines in the district unworkable. There were several washouts on the railway line at Omahu, Hikutaia and Paeroa, and slips and washouts on the Paeroa-Waihi



Settlers leave the flooded district of Netherton for Paeroa. Photo: SUPPLIED

section. The Waikino waterfall bridge was washed completely away and there was a big slip some 200 yards on the Waihi side of the Karangahake.

Communication with Waihi by road was arranged with cars leaving both Paeroa and Waihi, connecting with each other at the slip at Owaharoa.

Thames received a highly satisfactory report from the Health Department which showed that there had only been one scarlet fever, seven diphtheria, no typhoid, and 18 tubercular cases in the previous 12 months. Considerable progress had been made with sewerage installation.

The council expressed great satisfaction at the town being healthy, the proportion of sickness to a population of 5000 being so small.

Information for holiday motorists advised that no route was more used than that to Paeroa and Te Aroha via Pokeno and the Hauraki Plains. At one point the road forked, with one branch going through Mar-

amarua, the other through Miranda. Each route had its drawbacks. On the former there were about 10 miles of more or less loose metal. The last part of the Miranda road was close to the sea and flooded at spring tides, making progress impossible. The settlers there were raising the crown of the road about two feet, hoping to get above high tide mark.

The Thames Coast Rd was in a deplorable state according to T Scanlon. "Has a man got to go on his bended knees to the Thames County Council to beg for justice in regard to the Coast road?" he asked. The bank of the road at Loughlin's Bay was getting stripped of sand, and it would only take a great westerly gale to come up and destroy the whole road.

While being towed up the Piko River the scow *Hero* became involved in a traffic jam below the Ngatea wharf and despite the warning notices displayed on the bank, dropped anchor. This became caught in the Thames Valley Power Board 11,000-volt cable causing a disconnection. The fuses at the Waikino switching station and at several transformers were blown out, causing a stoppage of many milking machine motors. There was a length of cable at the Ngatea depot, and work to install this was commenced immediately. The stoppage caused great inconvenience at the Ngatea butter factory, where one big churn and one of the refrigerating plants were electrically driven.



The boats are dressed in eye-catching bunting and flags.

## Classic yachts cruise in

Classic boats set off from Auckland's Waitemata Harbour and journeyed through the Hauraki Gulf to get to the Paeroa Maritime Park on April 15. Held as part of the Classic Yacht Association's Easter Rally, the flotilla of around 15 boats set sail through the opened Kōpū Bridge and headed for Turua and Netherton before they arrived at the park.

**RICHARD HORNELL** caught wind of the action.



Spectators line up to see the old Kōpū Bridge open for the boats.

Photos: RICHARD HORNELL PHOTOGRAPHY

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# SPORTS

## Bowling brothers head to nationals

### CRICKET

### BOWLS

By GORDON PREECE

Two brothers will be the first Kerepēhi Bowling Club pair in 17 years to represent Thames Valley in a national bowls tournament.

Daniel and Shaun Harrison will travel to Dunedin for the Champion of Champions Pairs tournament after they bowled to victory in January's Thames Valley Men's Champion of Champions Pairs.

The brothers were also the first Kerepēhi Bowling Club juniors as far as the club was aware to win a Thames Valley bowling tournament.

Daniel and Shaun, aged in their late 30s, told *The Profile* they were nervous and excited ahead of July's tournament.

"There'll be some good bowlers... and it'll be our first time playing in an indoor facility too, so that should be interesting," Daniel said.

"We'll give it our best... we've still got a lot to learn, just consistency and trying to pick the green before the opponent," Shaun said.

Daniel, who has played bowls for three years, said the key to his success was having fun and had stemmed from his family's legacy with Kerepēhi Bowling



Brothers Shaun, left, and Daniel Harrison say they're nervous and excited ahead of their debut national tournament in July.

Photo: GORDON PREECE

Club. "Dad's father had been bowling for around 40 years and mum's dad had bowled for 60 years, so it runs in the family on both sides," he said.

"Dad's younger brother Gavin was number one bowler in Thames Valley and represented New Zealand in the under 25s."

Shaun, who has played bowls for four years, said the sport was about meeting new people

and was something he could do for himself.

"It was between the parents wanting me to get out there and do something for myself without the kids... and [bowls] is very addictive," he said.

Daniel said it was "very tough" to win January's Thames Valley Pairs tournament but was "a pretty good buzz" for him and his brother to be the first juniors to win it

for Kerepēhi.

"Stiff competition out there, a lot of good teams, we played well to get through in the end though," he said.

"We only lost one game to Tairua and we went through after that unbeaten."

Daniel and Shaun said they had also won the junior pairs, triples and fours in their club championships for three consecutive years.

In their last outing of what has been a highly successful season, the Hauraki Plains College First XI cricketers turned on another solid performance to defeat Hillcrest High School, Hamilton, in their Gillette Cup elimination match on April 14. The late season fixture was played on a perfect late summer day at Hauraki Plains College. Although the local players had the challenge of motivating themselves after the dizzy heights attained five days earlier on Seddon Park's hallowed turf, most managed to do so. After Cooper Green and Daniel Sproul gave the innings a solid start, Hunter Crowe, Ni Wickramathunga and Anthony Barker kept the runs flowing at a very healthy rate. Just when it appeared that another huge runs total was likely, the innings ended suddenly with unused overs in the bank.

The Hillcrest batsmen never threatened to break out of the grip the Hauraki bowlers applied from the start of the run chase. Daniel Sproul and Cooper Green were in top form and with every bowler used bowling to well set fields by Captain Crowe, the visitors were starved of runs. A resounding victory for HPC ended what has been a golden summer for the team with well-deserved rewards resulting from many hours of planning, training and support from parents and the college throughout the season. The team now faces a David and Goliath match against Whangārei Boys High School at a neutral venue in October-November for a place in the national Gillette Cup tournament.

**MATCH DETAILS:** (50 overs match) Hauraki Plains College 231 all out off 40 overs, Nihindu Wickramathunga 55, Hunter Crowe 51, Anthony Barker 38, Cooper Green 27, defeated Hillcrest High School 61. Daniel Sproul 4/12, Cooper Green 3/7, Xavier Anderson 1/0 Cullen Crowe 1/10 Hunter Crowe 1/18.

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## SPORTS

# Junior rugby team numbers soar

## RUGBY

The number of junior rugby teams in the Thames Valley has “jumped significantly” since 2021 - a “great reward” for the sport in the region.

Thames Valley Rugby Football Union game development manager Scott Day said the increase in teams came as a pleasant surprise, considering only a month ago they were unsure if some members would have the opportunity to be involved due to Covid-19 restrictions.

“With restrictions at ease now, it seems everyone wants something positive to commit to,” he said.

“We have gone from 42 teams over all competitions in 2021, to a whopping 54 teams across the board from all clubs in 2022, including an entirely new grade (year 7) which will be hugely beneficial for the growth of our younger players coming through into full field and 15-a-side.”

Mr Day said the rise in numbers was across the board, with all nine junior clubs having an increase of teams and player numbers from the previous year.

There is also an increase of 150 player registrations from years 3-8, meaning the union will have more coaching and managing opportunities for parents, caregivers, and members of the community.



Junior, secondary school, and club rugby competitions kick off on Saturday, May 7. File Photo: TERESA RAMSEY

“When we talk about growth of the game, we look at growing numbers and registrations of players, coaches, managers, volunteers, sponsors, clubs, teams, and referees, and it’s fair to say we are well and truly heading in the right direction in this space,” he said.

Numbers were expected to grow even higher with the season starting on May 7, and that was not including the region’s 200-plus rippa rugby players under the age of six, who represented their clubs at in-house competitions, he said.

“The growth of these statis-

tics [have] been seen in other neighbouring regions, with clubs on our boundaries seeking information and showing initiative that they want to affiliate with Thames Valley Junior Rugby moving forward.

“This is a great reward [coming] from some big decisions made by the junior management board since the start of the year,” Mr Day said.

“The small squad sizes initiative which promotes ‘maximising participation’ and ‘less standing on the side-line’ has obviously been well received, with all clubs and coaches re-

lying on this framework when building their teams.

“The change of the start date, which is now on the first weekend of term 2, Saturday, May 7, has given clubs an extra 4-6 weeks to promote the season, whilst also giving children the opportunity to finish their summer sport commitments and have a well-deserved break before the hectic junior rugby schedule.”

These changes have Mr Day hopeful that rugby has “picked up its spark” after a “brutal three years of constant disruptions and frustration”.

## In Brief

## NEW FINFISH RULES

Rules for daily limits on recreationally caught finfish will change to include species that previously had no limit, Oceans and Fisheries Minister, David Parker announced last week. With more than 1000 finfish species found in New Zealand waters, only 43 species have been subject to a daily recreational fishing limit, leaving the rest open to overfishing. The changes now mean that all finfish species will be included in the combined daily bag limit for finfish, putting an end to “excessive take” and making the rules “easier to follow”.

## E-VEHICLE CHARGERS NEEDED

Waikato Regional Council is leading a strategy for greater collaboration between district councils as they face the challenge of providing better electric vehicle charging facilities. Denis Tegg, Thames-Coromandel’s constituent member on the regional council, said the uptake of electric vehicles was increasing rapidly, and it was essential the charging infrastructure was planned across the region in a co-ordinated way to meet demand. He said WRC was keen to hear from the public if they had any ideas about suitable places to locate EV chargers.

## CORRECTION

The first Rotary shelter erected on the Hauraki Rail Trail is near Shelly Beach Rd in Kopuarahi, not Miranda as published in *The Profile* on April 6. We apologise for the error.

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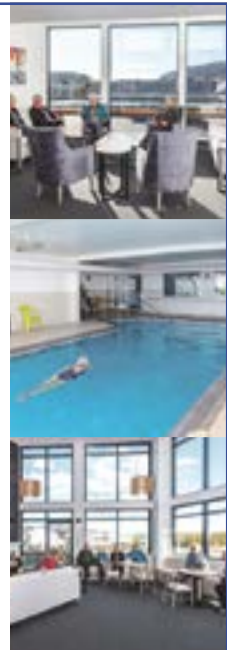


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## SUDOKU

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

2	7		1				5	
5	8		2	4				7
			7			2		8
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1	2						3	4
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EASY

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	6		7			4		9

HARD

47

HARD

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

MEDIUM

3	9	7	8	6	1	2	5	4
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EASY

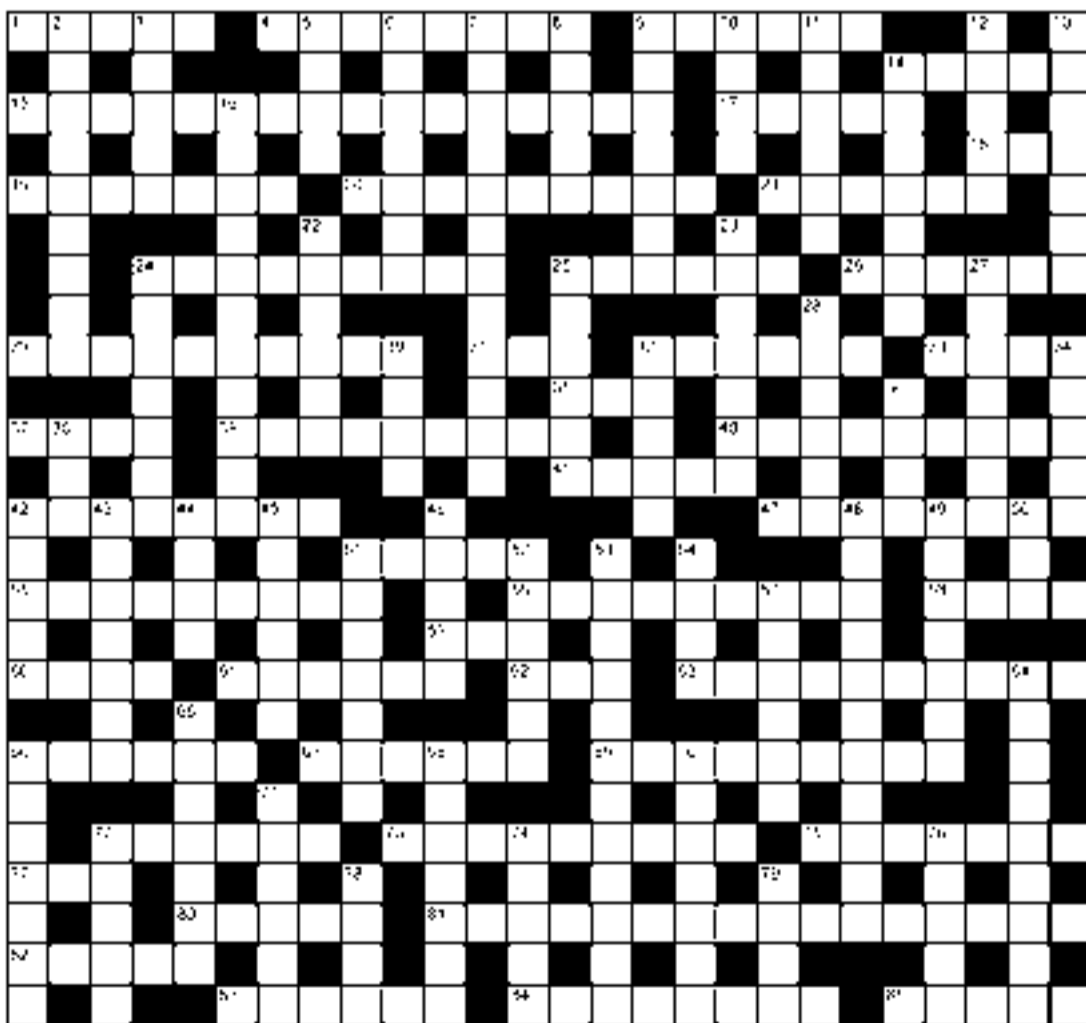
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8	5	9	6	3	7	1	4	2
4	6	3	9	1	2	8	7	5
7	1	2	4	8	5	3	9	6

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## JUMBO CROSSWORD

67

- ACROSS**
- 1 Fire remains (5)
  - 4 Last month (8)
  - 9 Handwriting (6)
  - 14 Trap (5)
  - 15 Die in a very unpleasant situation (4,2,1,6,3)
  - 17 Swagger (5)
  - 18 Dead heat (3)
  - 19 Infatuated (7)
  - 20 Stained (9)
  - 21 Airless (6)
  - 24 Astronaut's craft (9)
  - 25 Accident (6)
  - 26 Assisted (6)
  - 29 Illegal or dishonest behaviour (10)
  - 31 Route (3)
  - 32 Dung-beetle (6)
  - 33 Trim very short (4)
  - 35 Dunk in liquid (3)
  - 37 Slight advantage (4)
  - 39 South American country (9)
  - 40 Reduce expenditure (9)
  - 41 Sailboat (5)
  - 42 Systematic fact-finding (8)
  - 47 Foolhardy (8)
  - 51 Privileged class (5)
  - 55 Catches unawares (9)
  - 56 Percussion instrument (9)
  - 58 Scuttled (4)
  - 59 Self-image (3)
  - 60 Cold crystals (4)
  - 61 Plump (6)
  - 62 Digit (3)
  - 63 Occurring from time to time (10)
  - 66 Scamp (6)
  - 67 Calamitous (6)
  - 69 Persuades to believe (9)
  - 72 Fish covering (6)
  - 73 Throbbing (9)
  - 75 Contaminate (7)
  - 77 Chop off (3)
  - 80 Basket-making willow (5)
  - 81 Usually (4,5,4,3)
  - 82 Angler's basket (5)
  - 83 Flaw (6)
  - 84 Put off until a later time (8)
  - 85 Dog's lead (5)
- DOWN**
- 2 Cobbler (9)
  - 3 Occurrence (5)
  - 5 Effortless (4)
  - 6 Tombstone inscription (7)
  - 7 Cake-making ingredient (6,6)
  - 8 Stinks (5)
  - 9 Melancholy (7)
  - 10 Stood up (4)
  - 11 Sea robber (6)
  - 12 Flavoursome (5)
  - 13 Ebbled (7)
  - 14 Starch (7)
  - 16 Repeatedly (4,3,4)
  - 22 Quit (6)
  - 23 Nightclub floor show (7)
  - 24 Open and genuine (7)
  - 25 Distress signal (6)
  - 27 Of or like pigs (7)
  - 28 Persuade by flattery (6)
  - 30 Long fixed look (4)
  - 32 Small mark (5)
  - 34 Push down on (5)
  - 36 Courtroom enclosure (4)
  - 38 Immediately payable (3)
  - 42 Corrodes (5)
  - 43 Solemn (7)
  - 44 Well ventilated (4)
  - 45 Habit (6)
  - 46 Assorted (5)
  - 48 Coarse loosely-woven cotton gauze (11)
  - 49 Classes (7)
  - 50 Male child (3)
  - 51 Wide tidal river mouth (7)
  - 52 Not native (6)
  - 53 Heated quarrels (12)
  - 54 As far as (2,2)
  - 57 Exotic flower (6)
  - 64 Large seabird (9)
  - 65 Sunshade (7)
  - 66 Copy (7)
  - 68 Connoisseur of good food (7)
  - 70 Incessant (3-4)
  - 71 Formula (6)
  - 72 Seller's patter (5)
  - 74 Remnant (5)
  - 76 Spear (5)
  - 78 Costing nothing (4)
  - 79 Shortly (4)



### PREVIOUS SOLUTION

**ACROSS:** 1 Make a pig of oneself, 10 Spacious, 15 Comedy, 16 Wisecracks, 17 Sri Lanka, 19 Recycle, 21 Sitar, 22 Innocuous, 25 Paramount, 27 Forsake, 29 Varied, 33 Hatch, 34 Beverage, 36 Bottleneck, 39 Raw, 41 Vinegar, 42 Molars, 43 Author, 44 Weld, 45 Instant, 48 Referendum, 53 Genesis, 57 Gait, 58 Bridle, 59 Cramps, 60 Request, 62 Era, 64 Timekeeper, 65 Liberate, 66 Still, 69 Assess, 70 Propose, 71 Infirmary, 76 Prolonged, 77 Graph, 78 Ignited, 83 Scorpion, 84 Diminutive, 85 Bellow, 86 Deserved, 87 Behind closed doors.

**DOWN:** 2 Adored, 3 Enemy, 4 Pry, 5 Gown, 6 Fashion, 7 Nectar, 8 Star, 9 Likeness, 11 Pursue, 12 Calculated, 13 Owns, 14 Started, 18 Rock-bottom, 20 Lead, 23 Cover, 24 Wireless, 26 Ancient, 28 Oversee, 30 Ration, 31 Manage, 32 Strong, 35 Erode, 37 Kudos, 38 Gain, 40 Ward, 45 Ingot, 46 Skirmish, 47 Tureen, 48 Red herring, 49 Flee, 50 Recalls, 51 Nearby, 52 Upper, 54 Even, 55 Equator, 56 Insult, 61 Skyscraper, 63 Strip, 67 Appetite, 68 Smog, 69 Accused, 72 Nuptial, 73 Alcove, 74 Argued, 75 Devour, 79 Igloo, 80 Nous, 81 Mini, 82 Lens, 85 Bid.



# GARDENING

## Ideal time to weed and mulch

The last month of autumn is looming and so it's the perfect time to do some important soil nourishment.

Continued warm weather and some welcome rainfall hopefully will prolong the growth of plants and unfortunately weeds. It is an ideal time to remove weeds, dig in compost and nutrients for soil health before the ground becomes too heavy and cold.

Mulching after this provides a blanket to keep soil warm and prevent weed growth.

### FLOWERS

As gaps appear in spots around the garden sprinkle annual seeds of poppies, calendula, cornflower, marigold, stocks, alyssum to name a few. Before planting, dig in compost and sheep pellets. Cover seed with a fine sprinkling of seed raising mix if you have some.

Autumn is the best time for planting new shrubs and trees so they can get established over the cooler winter months. It is time to plant new seasons daphne, camellias and rhododendron. These will add welcome colour to the garden in winter and early spring.

May is the last time to be planting spring bulbs such as daffodils, freesia, hyacinth, jonquil, Muscari and tulip. You still have time to plant lilies, which are easy to grow and can be planted any time between May and September. Dig in bulb food before planting and cover with 100mm of soil.

Once dahlia stop flowering the tubers and gladioli corms can be lifted stored in a dry place ready for replanting in spring. Plan for the addition of new roses by preparing the soil by adding

compost. New roses should be coming into garden centres next month.

Existing roses can have a light tidy up and spray with a copper spray.

### FRUITS & VEGETABLES

Continue harvesting autumn treats of Feijoa, Guavas and Tamarillo as they ripen. Apples, Pears – Continue late season harvesting.

Once harvest is over and leaf fall is complete these can be pruned and sprayed. Citrus – Fertilise around the base out to drip line. Strawberries – Prepare beds for sowing young plants in June - November.

Harvest available vegetables planted late summer such as beetroot, cauliflower, cabbage, spinach and lettuce. The ground is still warm enough to be planting lettuce, spinach and brassicas. The last of the tomatoes are still ripening if a little slower due to shorter days. Continue to sow seeds of broad beans, peas, lettuce and spinach.

Thinning carrots seedlings will help them develop fully and avoid short misshapen produce. Transplant the thinning's to increase overall yield. It is a time consuming task but well worth the effort. The herb garden can be tidied up by cutting back lightly to refresh the plants and allow for new growth.

### COMPOST HEAP

The compost heap will benefit from the addition of the autumn leaf fall. Many tree leaves are a particularly rich source of plant nutrient and make a valuable contribution to soil fertility. Turn compost heaps over regularly.

Stay well, and enjoy your garden.

- Ngatea Garden Circle



As gaps appear in spots around the garden, sprinkle seeds of poppies.

Photo: PIXABAY

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30  New Moon		May 2022 Moon Planting Calendar				1  New Moon
2  Plant above ground crops	3 Non planting Day	4 Non planting Day	5  Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed	6  Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed	7  Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed	8 Non planting Day
9 Non planting Day	10 Non planting Day	11 Non planting Day	12 Non planting Day	13  Plant above ground crops	14  Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed	15  Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed
16  Full Moon	17 Non planting Day	18 Non planting Day	19  Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	20  Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	21 Non planting Day	22 Non planting Day
23  Plant root crops. Liquid Feed	24  Plant root crops. Liquid Feed	25 Non planting Day	26 Non planting Day	27 Non planting Day	28  Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	29  Plant root crops, trees and shrubs

## MAY GARDENING AT AEROVIEW

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Printanor garlic bulbs  
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Shallots

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Megan Guthrie says stocking a wide variety of products keeps her business going. Photo: GORDON PREECE

## Many fabrics at Needles N' Pins

Needles N' Pins on Thames' Pollen St offers a huge range of haberdashery, embroidery, and quilting fabric, wool, knitting and crochet supplies.

The store also sells Janome sewing machines and can direct customers to sewing machine repairs.

Megan Guthrie has co-owned Needles N' Pins with her husband Brendon since October, 2019, after moving to Thames from Rotorua.

"I got told [the store] was on the market, came up and had a look, put our house on the market, sold it and bought [the store]," she said.

Megan said being friendly and approachable was the key to good customer service.

"Trying my best to get what people are looking for and trying to stock a wide variety of products is what's kept us going," she said.

"I think if I'd been limited to just fabric or wool we wouldn't still be here."

Megan also hopes to introduce knitting and sewing classes in the near future.

Visit Needles N' Pins at 468 Pollen St, Thames, Ph 07 868 8190. Open Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm; Saturdays: 9am until noon.

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Murphy Group is seeking to employ a fully qualified diesel mechanic with experience in heavy vehicles. This is a permanent full time position including some weekends based at our Kopu depot.

**Your responsibilities will include:**

- Performing repairs and maintenance on buses, trucks and trailers
- Undertaking diagnostic work
- Providing timely customer service
- Liaising with technical support staff
- On call (roster system)

**The successful applicant will possess the following skills and experience**

- Relevant trade qualifications with experience servicing Heavy Equipment
- Class 2- 5 licence with a clean driving and police record
- Strong Electrical diagnosis and repair ability would be desirable
- Able to produce NZQA approved qualifications

Ideally applicants will be energetic with a strong work ethic and the ability to think outside the square along with the ability to work unsupervised.

In return Murphy Buses offer a clean tidy work environment along with a competitive remuneration package, a culture focused on recognition of effort and reward for achievement, a strong Safety focus and excellent working conditions.

If you think you've got what it takes to work at Murphy Group send your CV and cover letter to [employment@murphybuses.co.nz](mailto:employment@murphybuses.co.nz).  
Applications close 1st June 2022, unless position is filled earlier.

Applicants for this position must have NZ residency or a valid NZ work visa

## MEET THE LOCALS



Introduce your business/service to new farming families arriving in our area in our **Meet The Locals** advertising feature, June 1  
With a 1/4 page or larger booking you are welcome to supply editorial of up to 250 words and a photo  
Booking deadline, Monday, May 20

### Contact Nikki

022 130 3885 | [nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz](mailto:nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz)

16,000 copies delivered to every letterbox in the Thames Valley every Wednesday



SPORTS

# ‘Through thick and thin’: Valley Rugby turns 100

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

As a ball boy, Kelly Plummer watched as Thames Valley beat North Auckland at the Paeroa Domain in 1958.

He was able to interact with his local rugby heroes and stand behind the posts during goal kicks, anticipating the flight of the ball as he attempted to catch it on the full.

Now, he’s the Thames Valley Rugby Football Union’s president as it this week marks 100 years.

Founded on April 29, 1922, the union (TVRFU) was permitted independence from Auckland when members were advised by telegram that direct affiliation to the New Zealand Rugby Football Union had been granted.

The Thames Valley name was immediately adopted by the sub-unions which made up the new provincial union - Hauraki Plains, Waihi, Piako and Paeroa - while Thames decided to remain with Auckland and did not permanently join Thames Valley until 1951.

The first Thames Valley president was James Silcock, who remained closely associated with TVRFU until his death in 1970.

The first patron was Mr Hugh Poland, a former Auckland representative and Member of Parliament for Ohinemuri.

“As one of the smaller pro-



Kelly Plummer, left, has followed Thames Valley Rugby since he was a ball boy in 1958. RIGHT: The first Swamp Fox mascot pictured with minders Peter Davidson, left, and Brian Lockyer.



Photos: SUPPLIED

vincial unions, Thames Valley has often been the underdog, but looking back over the last 100 years, there have been many highlights,” Kelly said.

“Bob O’Dea and Kevin Barry are the union’s only two All Blacks but in recent times Carl Hoeft and Keith Robin-

son started their careers with Thames Valley and were selected for New Zealand from Otago and Waikato, respectively.

“Victories over Fiji, Australia, and Tonga stand out in matches against overseas teams while three Division Three NPC titles and winning the Meads Cup

in 2018 are significant milestones.”

According to Kelly, one of the best marketing exercises possible took place in 1975 when a supporters club was formed in preparation for a Ranfurly Shield challenge against Auckland. They took on the name

Swamp Foxes and created a suitable mascot to take to games.

“The nickname stuck and to this day the Swamp Fox name is symbolic for Thames Valley players and supporters right throughout New Zealand and beyond.”

Kelly told *The Profile* it was wonderful to see the union had survived “through thick and thin” to reach its century milestone.

In doing so, 1231 players have represented the province in a total of 824 first class games, he said.

“As president, I am looking forward to the celebrations in August and catching up with past players and officials. Many stories will be told as past glories are re-lived and the ‘what ifs?’ hotly debated.

“A highlight will be seeing the old timers getting in behind the 2022 Swamp Foxes when they play West Coast in the feature match of the weekend.”

**DETAILS: TVRFU centenary celebrations will be held at Te Aroha on August 26-27. The feature game will be a Heartland Championship match against West Coast. A book titled *Swamp Foxes Alive* is being written for the centenary. Registration information is available from the Thames Valley Office in Paeroa.**



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