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130-year old 'rare find' for family business, P3

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'LEFT IN THE DARK'



By GORDON PREECE

Karangahake Gorge residents were "left in the dark" during a prolonged power outage during a recent storm, sparking concerns about safety and a lack of communication.

High winds left nearly 3000 Coromandel Peninsula residents without power on November 11, but power was restored to most homes by 4pm the same day.

However, nearly 300 Karangahake Gorge residents say a lack of communication by Powerco during their 18-hour power outage left them wanting the national electricity distributor to improve its system.

Gorge resident Chris Morgan said she experienced communication issues with Powerco during the prolonged power outage, which meant she had to feed her baby son a cold bottle with infant formula in the middle of the night and she couldn't cook since her home had no gas supply.

"We must've got up at about 2am and we couldn't heat the water for his bottle so we made a cold bottle and hoped he would take it cold and thankfully he did," she said.

"I had to take the small fella over to Flat White [Cafe] at Waihi Beach to get something to eat, and my husband went into work, charged up some battery power banks and got some hot water in a flask."

Chris said there were no updates on the Powerco website when she checked it.

"We didn't know what to do when the power went off, so we were checking the Powerco website to see if there was an estimated time for the power to come back on, but there were no updates available.

"We have just moved over from Brisbane - we were blindsided, we weren't expecting it... we weren't sure who to contact."

Charlie Beach, who has lived in the

gorge for around 20 years, told *The Profile* Powerco failed to efficiently communicate the power outage to him and other residents.

"This was a very long power cut and perhaps the longest one we've had for some time, and when there's a prolonged power cut, people start to get tetchy and that's where [Powerco] need to be a bit more precise," he said.

"They need to be able to tell people where the fault is and what they're repairing so people have a better idea and they're not sitting there wondering.

"When you ring up, they're very vague in their communication, sometimes we're left in the dark, they say 'we're not sure when the power will come on' and sometimes they might say 'between four and 10 hours' - well that's not good enough."

Charlie said he had no power at his River Rd address between 1:30pm on November 11, and 10am on November 12.

"We went right through the night with no power, and of course at that stage the freezers were starting to freeze off and the fridges were losing all their coldness.

"We're prepared when the power goes off, we have a little gas cooker, torches and candles so we can get by with a power cut, but when you ring up to find out how long it's likely to be, we need to be given better information.

"I worked in the powerboard industry for over 50 years and we made far better contact with our customers in the days of the Thames Valley Electric Power Board and letting people know when the power went off."

Powerco said the Karangahake Gorge power outage began at 1:15pm on November 11 after high winds blew a tree branch into power lines, cutting power to 285 customers. Power was restored by 9:30am on November 12.

CONTINUED ON P2

The power outage began at 1:15pm on November 11 after high winds blew a tree branch into power lines. Photo: GORDON PREECE

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The Sunburst Coffee Lounge in Thames was targeted by a ram raider in August. File photo: KELLEY TANTAU

18-hour power cut to 285 homes

CONTINUED FROM P1

At the time, severe weather was battering the Coromandel and Bay of Plenty regions, with heavy rain and high winds causing widespread outages on Powerco's network.

Powerco Head of Network Operations, Caz Haydon, said because of the high number of weather-related outages at the time, crews were unable to get to the site and restore power until the following morning.

"Although our crews worked into that evening to get to as many outages as they could, for safety reasons we stood them down when it got dark, and they continued repairs at first light the following day."

The live outage map on Powerco's website provided the most timely and reliable updates for customers including estimated restoration times, she said.

"We try our best to provide accurate restoration times but during storm events the damage is significant, with many outages having multiple faults that need repairing or replacing," she said.

"This complexity of repairs means it can take longer than usual for crews to carry out repairs and restore power."

Bail request for ram raider

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

The man who allegedly ram-raided two Thames stores has asked for bail.

On August 10, court documents stated that the man, hailing from Glenbrook, Auckland, entered Sunburst Coffee Lounge and Thames Jewellers along Pollen St, without authority and with intent to commit an imprisonable offence, which carries a maximum sentence of 10 years.

He also faces charges of resisting police and possession of an offensive weapon.

In applying for bail, his counsel Georgia Edge said conditions

would include not contacting any of the victims, and not driving south of the Bombays unless appearing in court. He'll be back in Thames on January 20.

Meanwhile, a Ngātea man who lost a High Court appeal to halt his criminal court case has failed to appear in Thames.

Roger Blake, who is alleged to have sold bleach as a cure to cancer, HIV, and Covid-19, was scheduled to return to the Thames District Court on November 25, after the High Court declined his appeal to pause his case earlier this month.

Mr Blake was to appear in Thames on charges of "making a

declaration", while a company he is the director of - NZ Water Purifier Ltd - was facing 20 charges of "packing, labelling medicine".

District Court Judge D Clark said Mr Blake had indicated a position "not conducive of proceeding the case" and that he thought Thames Court "should not be dealing with this matter".

A transfer request from the prosecution to move the case proceedings to Hamilton was granted, with Roger Blake scheduled to next appear on February 15, 2023.



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Thames Tides

Wed Nov 30	Thu Dec 1	Fri Dec 2	Sat Dec 3	Sun Dec 4	Mon Dec 5	Tue Dec 6
Morning 12:35am 3.4 6:38am 0.5	Morning 1:31am 3.3 7:36am 0.7	Morning 2:30am 3.2 8:40am 0.8	Morning 3:33am 3.2 9:49am 0.9	Morning 4:39am 3.2 10:55am 0.9	Morning 5:42am 3.2 11:52am 0.9	Morning 12:13am 0.7 6:38am 3.3
Afternoon 1:11pm 3.6 7:21pm 0.7	Afternoon 2:10pm 3.5 8:21pm 0.7	Afternoon 3:10pm 3.4 9:21pm 0.8	Afternoon 4:10pm 3.4 10:22pm 0.8	Afternoon 5:06pm 3.3 11:20pm 0.7	Afternoon 6:00pm 3.3	Afternoon 12:43pm 0.9 6:51pm 3.3
5:52am 8:21pm	5:52am 8:22pm	5:52am 8:23pm	5:52am 8:24pm	5:51am 8:25pm	5:51am 8:26pm	5:51am 8:26pm
Best At 6:44am 7:10pm	Best At 7:35am 7:59pm	Best At 8:22am 8:45pm	Best At 9:07am 9:29pm	Best At 9:51am 10:13pm	Best At 10:36am 10:58pm	Best At 11:22am 11:45pm
Set 1:32am Rise 12:05pm	First Quarter Set 2:05am Rise 1:15pm	Set 2:33am Rise 2:22pm	Set 2:59am Rise 3:26pm	Set 3:24am Rise 4:30pm	Set 3:49am Rise 5:33pm	Set 4:17am Rise 6:37pm

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

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	05	-0	04
Whitianga	-0	01	-0	06
Tairua	+0	10	+0	21
Whangamata	-0	03	-0	05
Waihi Beach	-0	12	-0	12

130-year-old family business advert found

By GORDON PREECE

A bathroom renovation in an old Thames miner's cottage led to an unexpected "rare find" by a Thames plumbing firm recently.

Plumber Richard Battson said while removing the wall linings of the cottage bathroom on November 14, they found a 130-year-old newspaper advertisement for his family plumbing business.

The remains of *The Evening Star* newspaper published in 1892 contained an advertisement for Richard's great-great-great-great-grandfather's business: Francis Battson Plumbing, which was established in Thames in 1890.

Richard told *The Profile* the newspaper was discovered by his workmate Gareth Scott.

"Gareth found it when he was doing a bit of demolition work taking the wall linings off, and he said pretty much the paper was open right in front of him with the ad straight in view so it was quite uncanny," he said.

"When I came round to scope the job out, he then showed me and I thought I better take a quick photo of that. My old man [Gordon], who's a plumber too, he said he had never seen anything quite that old.

"He's got a bit of history in



Richard Battson said the newspaper was found in the walls of the Walter St cottage.

Photo: GORDON PREECE

regards to the family business so to find something of that vintage that was only two years after Francis had originally started the business is quite a rare find."

Richard, who has been the director of R H Battson

Plumbing since 2020, said the 130-year-old newspaper was "in pretty average condition" when it was found. It had been passed on to Gareth's father, Jim Scott, to keep it preserved. "He's going to look to frame the piece with a bit of kauri that's

come off the job as well, so he's going to frame it and probably give it to my old man," he said.

"Over the years my dad has found bits and pieces along the way with ties to the family business, but half of Thames has kind of been done by a lot

of past workers in terms of the plumbing side of things.

"Maybe when [the owners] built the place they put the paper in there for something like this to possibly happen, to find it 130 years later, but that's Thames for you."

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Revvng and rocking

The 50s and 60s were celebrated in Waihi, Thames and Whangamatā last week as part of Repco Beach Hop. Classic and vintage cars lined the streets, while some people got into the swing of it as rock and roll music echoed through the air. Reporter **GORDON PREECE** shook, rattled and rolled to capture the festivities.



Sheena Gardiner, left, and Larry Morgan perform on Seddon St.



Gary Jackson, left, Kresha Jackson, Brenda Jackson, and Tbird Willie.



Colleen Pascoe, left, and Carol Harwood enjoyed the event.



Mellow yellow Turua couple Irina Overend, left, and Greg Overend.



Dancers hop and bop in Waihi.



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Rural Life



Maureen hits 25-year target

Maureen Coleman has enjoyed witnessing youngsters grow into hunters during her 25 years with TVDA.
Photo: GORDON PREECE

By GORDON PREECE

Introducing youngsters to the thrill of the bush has been one of many highlights for Maureen Coleman at the Thames Valley Deerstalkers Association (TVDA).

The current president was recently awarded a life membership after more than 25 years with the organisation, which has around 550 members.

She told *The Profile* her involvement with the TVDA survival camps had been a good shot.

"They've been really cool, we go to a property up in Maratoto and there's cooking over the fire, tenting, they swim in the river, they do possum lines, a conservation

project and they do a bit of shooting, basic first aid and navigation," she said.

"It's about those little things which make up the big picture down the track and that's certainly been a highlight."

Maureen said she had also enjoyed seeing people hunt for the first time as a hunting instructor.

"We've got a young guy here who's a quadriplegic and he did the hunting course. To take him out hunting and help him get an animal and shoot with the gear that he's got, which is all mouth operated, it's all inspiring," she said.

"Those are the things you can't put a price on, it's just people

finding their niche and coming back with a smile on their face.

"My four granddaughters also just love it, I get nagged every week to take them hunting so yeah it's lovely being out there with them, they enjoy hunting."

Maureen said a role within an organisation like the TVDA was something she always scoped, despite never bush hunting during her King Country childhood.

"We did go possum shooting a lot when we were kids because that was our pocket money, and shot goats for dog food with the neighbours, but had never been in the bush in my life until I started here," she said.

"I got the chance to go for a

hunt in the Kaimais [in 1990] and it was wet, horrible, heard and saw nothing, but just loved it.

"So I came home, went to Hamilton the next night and bought a decent pair of boots, a rifle and a day bag and joined up here at the same time, and the rest is history."

Maureen said the 25-year honour was "very humbling" and was a celebration of her family and members dedication to the TVDA. "I couldn't have done what I've done without the backing of the other branch members and my family, it's about the whole community we have here really.

"There's probably a lot of people who don't realise what I do.

I seem to be the person who unlocks the door and takes home the washing at the end of the night, and I guess I've been more involved in all facets," she said.

"I've done the [TVDA] newsletter for a number of years and I'm a New Zealand Clay Target Association [NZCTA] and New Zealand Deerstalkers Association [NZDA] range officer but I'm not a competition target shooter, I tell people you've just gotta have a go."

Maureen said she would continue aiming high in the years to come.

"It would take something pretty serious to keep me out of the hills," she said.

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Rural Life

Rural support recognised at awards

By GORDON PREECE

“Buzzing” was how the Waikato Hauraki Coromandel Rural Support Trust felt after winning an award for its community contribution efforts.

The trust won the community contribution non-commercial award at the Waikato Chamber of Commerce Business Awards on November 4.

Chairperson Neil Bateup told *The Profile* the trust was “really proud” and “really buzzing” to gain top prize in its category after being made a finalist in the not for profit category at the 2021 awards.

“We were encouraged to have another go from what we had learned in the first entry and we put those in place and it helped to strengthen our team,” he said.

“[The award is] a recognition of the fact we’re a small organisation, there’s a huge amount of voluntary work that goes into it and we’re filling a need in the community that no one else is filling.”

The community contribution category recognised an organisation whose ongoing work or projects had resulted in outcomes to the community that were visionary, high impact,



The trust was “really proud” and “really buzzing after receiving its award.

Photo: BARKER PHOTOGRAPHY

transformative, and embodied the qualities of excellence contribution.

Neil said the project the trust had cultivated which led to its award win was a new system to

support its team of three managers, seven trustees and 42 voluntary facilitators.

“We’ve put in place a computer programme to support the team and it holds policies,

procedures, data and training resources... and it’s been rolled out to all the Rural Support Trusts around the country.

“We were probably light on the ground in some of the

management and administration areas, and probably at risk if someone was ill or out of commission for a period of time, so we’ve strengthened that up so we’re able to cope if any adverse event happens.”

Neil said the adverse events the trust had previously dealt with to support farmers through their recovery included droughts, floods, storms, and Covid-19.

“We have an 0800 helpline and website access for people who have difficulties either in their personal life or their business life,” he said.

“We can meet with them and plan a way forward.”

Neil said the trust was also focused on holding community events for the rural sector.

“Farmers are often on their own on farms and don’t meet up with people a lot of the time, so we’re involved with the Surfing for Farmers programme and Rural Riders.

“We also run events with the likes of [Sir] John Kirwan and Tawera Nikau as speakers and sometimes just barbecues to get people together and off their farms.”

DETAILS: To contact the Waikato Hauraki Coromandel Rural Support Trust, Ph: 0800 787 254



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Rural Life



Peter and Lorraine Williams with their 1982 International T Line vintage truck. Photo: SUPPLIED

Vintage truck convoy

By GORDON PREECE

Hauraki Vintage and Machinery Club members Lorraine and Peter Williams joined a convoy of around 20 vintage truck drivers at Waitakaruru bound for Kawakawa Bay last month.

Lorraine told *The Profile* the event was part of the Northern Classic Commercial North Island Long Lap, which had around 90 vintage trucks travelling across the North Island and stopping in various towns between October 9 and October 22.

"We heard about it so we met up with them at Waitakaruru and they had travelled from Hamilton. There were probably 20 odd trucks that went up to Kawakawa Bay," she said.

"Our truck was a 1982 International T Line. I think it was 2012 when we bought it from Ryal Bush down south because we'd been to a few vintage

shows and travelled around on tractors, so we needed a truck to take us.

"It was great to catch up with a few friends and fanatics."

Lorraine said her and Peter were often stopped on their journey by people who wanted to admire their truck.

"We usually always had someone say 'oh I learned to drive in one of those'... people always wave and toot," she said. "They were a work horse in the 1980s and carried all sorts."

Lorraine said they also travelled with Peter's international harvester 685 tractor, which was around the same age as their truck.

"The truck travelled a lot better with a load on it because it's got no suspension, it's not like the modern trucks," she said.

Lorraine said her and Peter also took part in the 2018 event where they travelled from Cambridge to Whakatāne, Gisborne and Taihape.

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Rural Life

Mahe Drysdale presents to farmers

By GORDON PREECE

Two-time Olympic gold medallist Mahe Drysdale gave a motivational talk at a P3 Dairy Trust Speaker Series event on November 24 to help local farmers deal with pressure.

The event, held at Ngātea War Memorial Hall, was about getting farmers off their farms for an evening with Mr Drysdale, who shared the mental and physical challenges he faced to become one of New Zealand's most successful rowers.

Mahe told the audience of around 50 people his rowing career was an "awesome experience" but there were many ups and downs he hoped farmers could relate to.

"I'm sure you guys have seen it as farmers, you have the droughts, you have the floods, and you've now got the government on your back as well," he said.

"I think there's certainly times you could make the change and do things to influence the decisions that are made and absolutely fight for those.

"Making sure you've got enough feed if you're expecting a drought or doing the



Mahe Drysdale, centre, with P3 Dairy Trust chairman Craig Zydenbos, far left, and trustees Oliver Vincent, second left, Ilyse Jaennens, Jo Burton, Tessa Fisher. Photos: GORDON PREECE

remedial work to your farm, and if it's the government, try to find ways around their rules because it's certainly not easy."

One piece of advice Mr Drysdale gave the audience was to focus on what they could control and put together an execution plan.

"I would write down my goal before I went on the water,

and then I'd come in and put a rating on it and make note of what things I need to change for next time to work towards that overall goal," he said.

"We had a psychologist I worked with and he calls it the MOS and MOP, and MOP is moments of perfection and MOS are moments of s***, so you kind of sweep the mo-

ments of s*** out of the way and focus on those moments of perfection.

"Like if you've got 500 cows to milk and you screwed it up 499 times, just focus on that one good one and how you can do that in the afternoon milking on every single cow."

Mr Drysdale also discussed the importance of well-being



P3 Dairy Trust's Maria Baigent with Mahe and his Olympic medals.

during his time as an athlete. "Quite often what you're doing is breaking your body, that's what training is, and you need that time for it to regenerate," he said.

"As a dairy farmer it's very similar, you do the same thing, generally day in and day out, and it can become quite autonomous so it is important you find those outlets and ways you can get through those tough times.

"Make sure you rest, make sure you're eating the right food to allow you to perform everytime and make sure you bring in the people that you need to make sure you make those good decisions and hopefully end up with that success."

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Wandering cattle 'a curse'



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.

1915

Mrs Alexander was incensed by wandering horses and cattle disturbing the peace at Waikino. It was a curse at night, she told the Ohinemuri Council, as the cows and calves had bells around their necks and after a sleepless night on top of other sleepless nights she had had enough.

Finding water scarce on his Hikutaia farm, Bert Alley decided to sink a bore. At 18ft sand and mud were met with. At 100ft what appeared to be a large log was passed through.

At 170ft it was decided to give up but no sooner had the rods been lifted, than there was a rush of water. To everyone's surprise the water was hot with a similar taste to the Te Aroha waters. It was intended to have a careful analysis made in case the discovery was a valuable commercial one.

The opening of the Ngātea sale yards drew a



Waikino in 1905.

Photo: SUPPLIED

large gathering of settlers from all parts of the Hauraki Plains.

There was a large yarding of cattle, horses, pigs and sheep, all in excellent condition, testament to the nutritious nature of the pasture land on the Hauraki Plains. The sale was enlivened when two full grown pedigree Jersey bulls had a difference of opinion, and settled the argument in the good, old-fashioned way. They were very evenly matched and it took dogs to stop the contest.

Frank Morton, a well known writer, was less than impressed with Paeroa. The town, he said, was beyond all mortal hope of resurrection. It simmered in its own gravy, and the gravy had gone sour. The very birds flew over it in solemn panic and it resembled a gimcrack town built shabbily of inferior brown paper wet through and mouldy.

It was flyblown but there was nothing left for the flies to blow on. The bar of a boardinghouse was the saddest spectacle on earth.

There stood weary men drinking tepid pop, looking horribly bored and dismal. The undertaker had his work cut out in Paeroa – it was mighty hard to pick out the real dead from the huddle of apparently lifeless shapes.

A daring and well executed piece of horse stealing which began in Ngāruawāhia had a sequel at Thames.

The horses were put on a tram at Huntly en route for Thames. From there they were shipped to Auckland, where auctioneers, having received a wire from the supposed owner, who gave his name as George Snow, took the horses off the boat and put them up for sale.

Luckily a spy attended the sale, just in case the animals might be there. They were, but the spy had a hard job convincing the auctioneers that the horses were stolen.

"How could they be stolen from Ngaruawahia?" they asked, "they have come straight from Thames."

When 'Mr Snow' saw that the auctioneers were convinced of his guilt, he quickly melted away.

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SPORTS RESULTS

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CRICKET

A solid all-round team effort from the Hauraki Plains College senior cricketers resulted in a convincing victory over their Cambridge High School opponents in a clash at Cambridge High on Saturday. After four rounds of the Waikato Valley/Hamilton Secondary Schools Division 1A competition, Hauraki has moved to the top of the points table and will be endeavouring to maintain its unbeaten record over the next three weeks of pre-holidays matches. Although the un-seasonal weather pattern being experienced at the moment threatened to intervene at one stage, the match was played without loss of playing time. Hauraki bowlers maintained the high standards they have set for themselves in recent games, and coupled with the effect of a heavy layer of grass on the oval, the Cambridge team's run rate was always below what the home side would have been hoping for. Almost every time, lofted shots were attempted to collect quick runs, a safe pair of Hauraki hands were activated with an excellent outfield catch by Osea Muir being the fielding highlight of the innings. Daniel Sproul was Hauraki's main strike weapon on the day, earning himself the Man of the Match honour after knocking the middle stump out of the ground four times with his accurate medium paced deliveries. Andy Rogers, Cruz Collins and Cullen Crowe were also among the wickets as Cambridge High School were restricted to a modest total, mainly through the efforts of their lower order batsmen. Hauraki's run chase began at a slow but steady rate against the early Cambridge attack, but when Richie Gemmell joined captain Anthony Barker, the tempo soon changed in spite of the restrictive effect of the outfield on ground shots. These two simply hammered the ball to all parts of the boundary - and several times over it, to secure a convincing victory with plenty of overs to spare. Match details: Hauraki Plains College 125 for 3 wickets Richie Gemmell 5 not out, Anthony Barker 30 not out, Cullen Crowe 20, Daniel Sproul 20. Defeated Cambridge High School 122 all out. Daniel Sproul 4/19, Andy Rogers 2/12, Cruz Collins 2/14, Cullen Crowe 2/20.

Meanwhile, Hauraki Plains College - Waikato Valley Representative selections have been announced for up coming tournaments. Five cricketers from Hauraki Plains College have been named in Waikato Valley Cricket Association

teams to take part in Northern Districts tournaments over the next two weeks. Cullen Crowe, Daniel Sproul and Andy Rogers are playing in the Under 17 Tournament in Whangarei this week. The Under 19 age group team for the ND tournament in Gisborne (December 8-12) includes Hunter Crowe, with Cooper Green being named as a non-travelling reserve.

- Mike Cotter

BOWLS



The winning team of the Kerepehi Bowling Club Murray Fisher Memorial: Jon Liddell, Adrian Perritt, Phil Kennedy, Justin Sara. There were 34 team entries, 30 teams played, with 3 -4 winners, 1 3.5 winner and 2 -3 winners all playing to kiddy for eventual prize winners. 1st 4 wins Justin Sara, Adrian Perritt, Jon Liddell, Phil Kenny. A good turnout of 24 teams for the optional fours Christmas Hams Tournament (Pak N Save Thames and Linn Motors) on November 27. Good weather for the morning and luckily just on lunch time a heavy rain squall. A few more challenges during the afternoon's playing. Prize winners: 1st 4 wins 34 points 23 ends (Paeroa family team) Peter Rowling, D Rowling, L Rowling, D Paulsen (nee Rowling); who came second last year. 2nd 4 wins 31 points 19 ends (Kerepehi) Grant Sharpe, Peter Glass, Philippa Garrett, Andrew Mc Cowatt; 3rd 3.5 wins 30 points 20 points (Hauraki/Kerepehi) Lance Trow, Kelsy Trow, Graham Pyke, Margaret Henderson; 4th 3.5 wins 11 points 18 ends (Thames) K Paul team, who came 3rd last year. Hard luck prize John Ridings, George Morehu, Archie, Danny Te Iri. Coming up on December 8 is the finals of Business House bowls, December 18 (club members only) ham and chicken with 1pm start. 2023 sees Opt 3s on January 11 (Twentymans Funeral Services), and Local Bodies Opt 4s on January 26 (Kerepehi Transport and Leeds and Co).

- Terry King

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Gardening

Ngatea Garden Ramble a great success

Ten enthusiastic local gardeners participated in the recent Ngatea Garden Ramble to raise funds for the Hauraki Co-operative Parish, and it was a very successful day for all concerned.

I was fortunate to have my garden included, which was a first for me. It certainly is a catalyst to get some of the tasks done that you have been putting off. It was a lot of fun, and the weather was kind.

A little tip given to me recently as a suggestion for Christmas gifts. This applies to adult and children alike. To save unwanted Christmas presents ending up in landfill, buy smallish plants/herbs for indoor or outdoor. Buy some inexpensive colourful pots and pot them up for Christmas gifts. Be sure to choose easy care houseplants that will stand the test of time.

A daily stroll around the garden is your first line of defence against problems that may be developing in the garden. Catching them when they are small makes for simple solutions. Squashing little groups of aphids or a few shield bugs can prevent later larger infestations.

Vegetables

The month of December is about



Harvest and dry herbs before they flower, and some herbs are nice to use for flavoured oils.

succession of crops, especially the ones that you are most likely to eat plenty of. Sow direct, summer salad greens, spring onions, cucumber, beans, carrots, beetroot, capsicums, and eggplants. Pinching little laterals off your tomatoes and peppers leaves

tiny wounds that heal in a flash preventing viruses and bacteria getting in. This allows the trusses of fruit to develop better and promotes better airflow. Continue to mound up potatoes to prevent them going green. They should be nearly ready for

Christmas Day harvest. It is also harvest time for garlic and onions. Harvest and dry herbs before they flower. They can be hung in small bunches or laid out in single layers in a warm, dry, airy place out of direct sunlight. They can also be dried in a dehydrator.

Some herbs are nice to use for flavoured oils, one example is rosemary infused olive oil. Ensure the herbs are completely dry so there is no chance of bacteria forming. Sterilise the bottle or jar, add 2-3 stems of rosemary, cover with a good olive oil to the top then seal the container. Shake the jar/bottle a couple of times then keep in a cool place for 3-6 weeks before use. This makes a lovely Christmas present if you use attractive containers. Use whatever herbs you prefer, but ensure they are dry before starting.

Flower Garden

Plant cosmos, phacelia, calendula, cornflower and cleome, and more sunflowers. These are all great for attracting nectar loving bees to help the pollination cycle. Whatever you are planting, be it seeds or seedlings, water well and prepare the soil with blood and bone and sheep pellets.

Irrigation

Its going to be another hot dry summer so ensure you have a good regular watering regime to maintain your garden. Happy gardening and have a wonderful, safe Christmas and New Year.

- Ngatea Garden Circle

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12 Non planting Day	13 Non planting Day	14 Non planting Day	15 Non planting Day	16 Non planting Day	17 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	18 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs
19 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	20 Plant root crops. Liquid Feed	21 Plant root crops. Liquid Feed	22 Non planting Day Summer Solstice	23 New Moon	24 Plant above ground crops	25 Plant above ground crops
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SPORTS

2022: The year of the Valley's Vixens

CLUB PROFILE

In the space of a year, the Thames Valley's women's rugby team, The Vixens, went from 12 players to 45. At the height of the sport in New Zealand, the squad is proving they've got what it takes on field and off. **KELLEY TANTAU reports**

The girls in the red and gold were a little green. Some had never stepped foot on a rugby field before, let alone played a game.

And yet, in the span of one season, they not only played games, but won them, and instead of dwindling in numbers, they grew. This turning of the tide is a long time coming for Thames Valley's The Vixens, and yet the timing couldn't be more perfect.

With the Black Ferns' history-making Rugby World Cup win on November 12, conversations about women's rugby in New Zealand have risen to a crescendo. But even before the Kiwis' victory over the English, Thames Valley had been working hard to improve the sport at home.

Brendan Clark, a former Swampfox hailing from



Brendan Clark, right, with Hinemoana Collier.

Ngatea, became The Vixens' coach in February. With training kicking off in March, he was surprised to find there was no team list to draw upon, forcing him to start from scratch. By the end of the 2022 season, however, he enlisted 45 women to play for the team.

Arleen McLaren, who wears the Number 8 jersey, said the credit lay with their new coach, who put meaning into the matches.

"As cheesy as it was, every single game, he'd tell us: 'You're doing it for the person standing next to you; you're doing it to make history'."

"He'd tell us we were doing it for the Valley, for the next girl coming through and wearing the jersey, and I think if it wasn't for that mentality going in, we probably wouldn't have stuck around."

Arleen, from Te Aroha, is also a board member of the Thames Valley Rugby Union.

She said Brendan was a



The Vixens hone their lineout skills during practice.

"keen driver" behind promoting the sport in the region, encouraging players to show up "week in and week out".

"In the Valley, it's been quite challenging. It's exactly like what Ruby Tui has been saying she hears: 'Who exactly are the Black Ferns?', 'Why do women play rugby?'"

"There's still that stigma here

unfortunately," she said.

"But the historic [Black Ferns] win is challenging a lot of the social norms, and what females are up to in the sporting realm."

"I personally think there are people out there that don't accept it, but, fortunately, things are changing, and we'll just have to run with it if we can."

Photos: K WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

During the club season, The Vixens played in the Waikato Development Competition, which Brendan said included newer teams that were interested in advancing into premier rugby.

The Vixens made it to the final where they drew against an experienced Matamata squad.

CONTINUED ON P17

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SPORTS



The Vixens have an ex-Black Fern committed to playing for the team in 2023.

Photos: K WHITE PHOTOGRAPHY

CONTINUED FROM P16

"In that first competition, I think about 90 per cent of our girls had never played rugby before," he said, "so they did a good job in making the final."

The second campaign was a round-robin against five North Island Heartland teams.

It was the first time a Valley team had played against those sides, Brendan said, and The Vixens won three out of five of their matches.

The Thames Valley club, Hauraki North, also played in the local sevens tournament on November 19, beating Leamington 19-12 to win the contest.

Not only were the competitions vital in allowing players to play rugby without having to travel to another region, they also gave school players a pathway to represent the province, Brendan said.

They also proved a point.

"If you'd said at the start of the year we were going to win

three out of five of the Heartland games, I don't think many people would've thought that was possible," he said.

"The girls' toughness was probably my biggest concern going into it.

"Having never played rugby before, they were coming up against a lot of experienced girls, but they ended up throwing themselves into everything - they were probably too tough for their own good, at times - but it was cool to see the way they got stuck in."

Brendan and Arleen reckon women's rugby is "exploding" at the moment, and that there will be "massive opportunities" in the sport over the next few years. They even have an ex-Black Fern committed to playing for the team in 2023.

But the momentum needed to continue.

"I think there are people out there who want to drive it, who want to be activators and champions of the sport... and



The second campaign was a round-robin against five North Island Heartland teams.

I'm still trying to figure it out myself, but there are people out there who seem to have a strong influence in not driving the sport forward," Arleen said.

"But with the Rugby World Cup just happening, all of those emotions... I feel as a union, we just need to jump on the bandwagon and capitalise on what just happened, because if we don't, that whole momentum will go and we'll be back at square one, and it'll be Thames Valley's young women turning to other sports."

BLACK FERNS PLAYERS VISIT PAEROA, P22



The girls' toughness surprised coach Brendan Clark.

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Hauraki Tyre and Battery owners Tania and Craig Moore.

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SPORTS

Never give up

Eight to 13-year-old Hauraki Plains students took to Hugh Hayward Domain in Ngātea for the Hauraki Plains Athletics Day on November 15. Event spokesperson Vicki Coles said it was an awesome day for local schools to come together and for the kids to build friendships and compete in athletics. Reporter **GORDON PREECE** took his marks to capture the action.



Eleven-year-old boys dash for the finish line in the 100m race.



Morgan Lange, left, Maddison Brunt, and Milla Kopper in the 60m race.



Kaihere School student Bailey Wellington reaches new heights in the high jump.

Photos: GORDON PREECE



Deacon Discombe, 11, motors towards the finish.



Blaze Watene-Johnson hurls the discus.



Nine-year-old Indy Finn gives her best.



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HARD

78

HARD

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

EASY

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JUMBO CROSSWORD

98

ACROSS

1 Draw inferences from insufficient evidence (4,2,11)

10 Intense unfounded suspicion (8)

15 Keg (6)

16 Troops' training trek (5,5)

17 Felon (8)

19 Team members (7)

21 Theatre attendant (5)

22 Uncomfortable, nervous (3,2,4)

25 Exact copy (9)

27 Insufficiency, dearth (7)

29 Hypothesis (6)

33 Distance between railway tracks (5)

34 Petty (8)

36 Gives official approval to (10)

39 Conclude (3)

41 Irrigated (7)

42 Flour maker (6)

43 Tainted (6)

44 Grotto (4)

45 Decorate elaborately (7)

48 Simple radio receiver (7,3)

53 Window cover (7)

57 Bacon, cheese outer (4)

58 Strongly built (6)

59 Point the way (6)

60 Punishment (7)

62 Antiquated (3)

64 Big city (10)

65 Neighbourhood (8)

66 Reject with contempt (5)

69 Spoof (6)

70 Temporary stay (7)

71 Person in novel, play, film (9)

76 Contagious viral infection (9)

77 Alter (5)

78 Huge sum (7)

83 Innkeeper (8)

84 Open to attack (10)

85 Language (6)

86 Satisfactory, acceptable (8)

87 Carry out plans with arrogant disregard for others or their wishes (4,9,4)

DOWN

2 Incapable (6)

3 Celebration (5)

4 Lubricate (3)

5 Evil monster (4)

6 Give advice, guidance (7)

7 Bumpy (6)

8 Formerly Persia (4)

9 Jewellery item (8)

11 Thought the same (6)

12 Earth's air mass (10)

13 Has (4)

14 Hypersensitivity (7)

18 Early hearing aid (3-7)

20 Expose to danger (4)

23 Clever (5)

24 Unvarying (8)

26 Add to (7)

28 North African country (7)

30 Move out of (6)

31 Meadows (6)

32 Refrain (6)

35 Religious brother (5)

37 State on oath (5)

38 Decision-blocking vote (4)

40 Expires (4)

45 Discussion group (5)

46 Hygienic (8)

47 Idea (6)

48 Cancer-causing substance (10)

49 Stringed toy (2-2)

50 Young child (7)

51 Song words (6)

52 Perform exceptionally well (5)

54 Take notice of (4)

55 Trudge wearily (7)

56 Obtain by intimidation (6)

61 Cookery of the highest class (6,4)

63 Aft part (5)

67 Greek form of mandolin (8)

68 Sound rebound (4)

69 Small bone in leg (7)

72 Small carried case (7)

73 Red wine (6)

74 Developing unborn (6)

75 Bear (6)

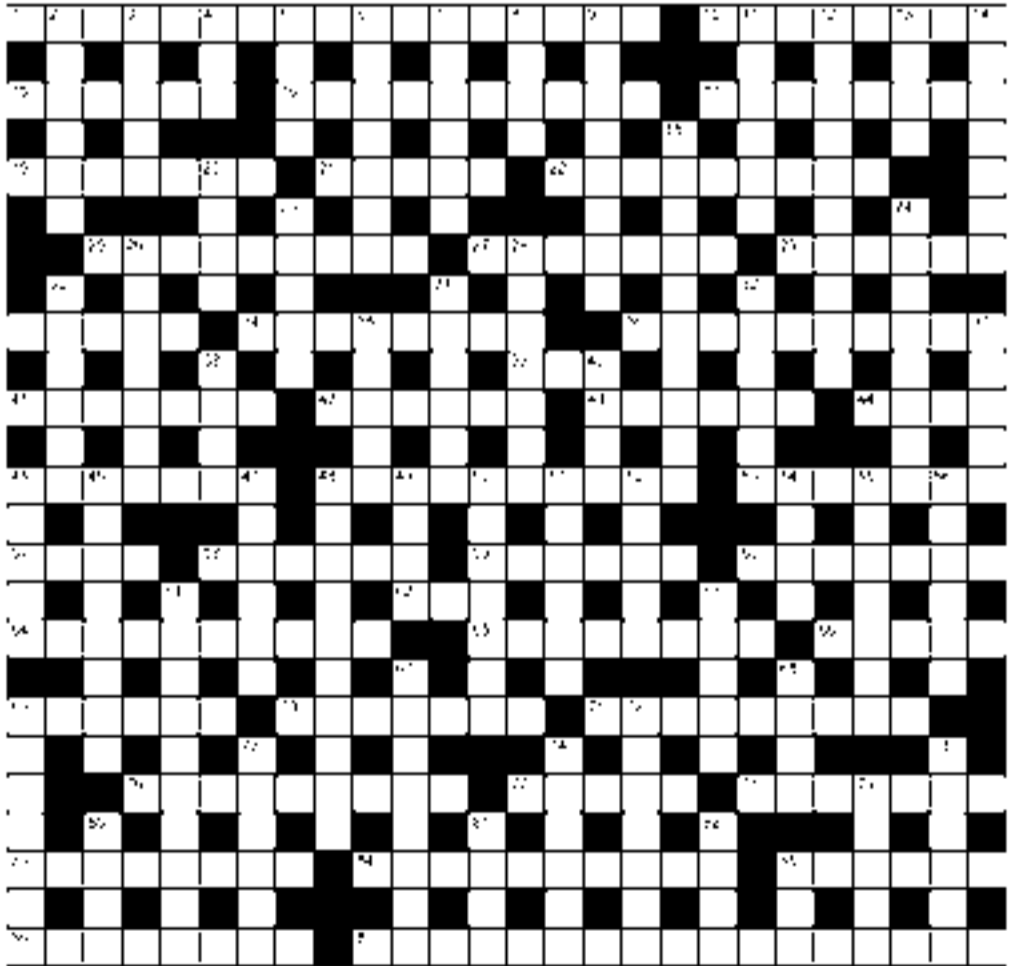
79 Latin American dance (5)

80 Site of 69 down (4)

81 Long ago (4)

82 Fetches (4)

85 As well (3)



PREVIOUS SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Diagram, 4 Enterprise, 9 Abusing, 13 Away, 14 Hyphen, 15 Fathom, 16 Rulings, 19 Ammonia, 20 Lock stock and barrel, 21 Denial, 22 Tripod, 24 Sculpture, 29 Ministry, 30 Plaque, 31 Illicit, 35 Multiply, 36 Flawed, 37 Slag, 38 Affix, 39 Apt, 41 Rowdy, 43 Parade, 47 Perch, 50 Lob, 54 Pilot, 55 Keep, 56 Jabbed, 57 Inundate, 60 Sextant, 61 Pursue, 62 Onlooker, 65 Scratched, 67 Fierce, 68 Colony, 72 Sail against the wind, 75 Outlast, 77 Laundry, 78 Quartz, 79 Deadly, 80 Lime, 81 Prelude, 82 Balderdash, 83 Nightie.

DOWN: 1 Drama, 2 Alarming, 3 Mayday, 4 Exhilarate, 5 Tunic, 6 Refused, 7 Ration, 8 Stock, 10 Bluebottle, 11 Stirrer, 12 Nugget, 17 Unfamiliar, 18 Knoll, 21 Dilemma, 23 Payslip, 25 Clumsy, 26 Willow, 27 Candid, 28 Libido, 30 Power, 32 Iffy, 33 Glut, 34 Care, 40 Privet, 42 Duet, 44 Adjust, 45 Amble, 46 Eyesore, 48 Random, 49 Henceforth, 50 Loam, 51 Brewery, 52 Bout, 53 Spouse, 58 Endangered, 59 Black Death, 63 Scrim, 64 Botanist, 66 Colonel, 67 Freezer, 69 Bazaar, 70 Stared, 71 Pollen, 73 Sauna, 74 India, 76 Theme.

SPORTS

Black Ferns touch down in Paeroa

By GORDON PREECE

Hundreds queued outside the Hauraki District Council Paeroa office last week for photos with Black Fern stars and the Women's Rugby World Cup trophy.

Former Paeroa College student Renee Wickliffe and her wife and Black Ferns teammate Portia Woodman brought the silverware to town on November 25.

Renee told *The Profile* the session aimed to inspire and motivate the local rangatahi (youth).

"Hopefully this will inspire and motivate our rangatahi to do well in life in whatever sports they want to do, and that's pretty much my vision is to hopefully encourage our people here from Paeroa and Hauraki," she said.

"[Women's rugby] has grown in the last couple of years and after the finals I think our vision was for women's rugby to grow from there.

"I think that's happened and I think there's a lot more girls who are wanting to play rugby, which is something that we've wanted to do for a long time."

Renee said during her time at Paeroa College between 2000 and 2005, she represented New Zealand at touch rugby and played in the boys First XV team since there was no girls rugby team.

"Vanessa Cootes, an Ex-Black Fern, a legend of the game, she



Portia Woodman, left, and Renee Wickliffe, right, with delighted fans Kohana Kauika-Rameka and Te Koha Kauika-Rameka.

Photos: GORDON PREECE

came to Paeroa College and shared her knowledge and I had no idea about Black Ferns. I think after that I wanted to be a Black Fern after meeting her, so that was special," she said.

Renee said after leaving Paeroa College, she moved to Auckland to pursue her Black

Fern dream and was selected in 2009.

"I was just a caretaker of the jersey and every time I got that opportunity to wear it I would have to obviously work hard for it, but whenever you get an opportunity take it with two hands," she said.

The Black Ferns retained the Womens Rugby World Cup on November 12 after beating England 34-31 at Eden Park.

Renee said winning at home was "mixed emotions" but also the "icing on the cake".

"[I felt] just proud to be Kiwi," she said.



Renee Wickliffe's nephew Davon Pokiha, left, and niece Hazel Bidois.



Miller Ave students Marlee Millen, left, Zaria Millen and Ezmay Millen.

"We had a fully-packed stadium and to be able to just walk out and see the crowd was probably the highlight, but winning at home is the icing on the cake.

"We played overseas every other time and we couldn't have whanau come over there so it was very special because we had family members there."

Renee said she "wasn't expecting" the crowd numbers at the photo session and thanked the community for attending.

"It was very nice to have as many as we did today, and it's pretty cool to share the cup with everyone and get photos and I'm sure every girl here in Paeroa would've appreciated that too," she said.

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