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Penguin sightings prompt call for care

By KELLEY TANTAU

Two kororā little blue penguins found on Waihi Beach in early January have highlighted the vital role the community plays in protecting one of the region's most vulnerable coastal species.

MiruMiru and Oscar were discovered on different days at the beginning of the year after members of the public spotted them stranded on the beach and called the Western Bay Wildlife Trust's dedicated sick penguin hotline.

"Both birds were weak, cold, and dehydrated - classic signs of exhaustion after being pushed ashore by rough seas and weather conditions," Sustainable Waihi Beach environmental co-ordinator Pip Coombes said.

"Neither had obvious injuries, which is typical of penguins that wash up due to fatigue rather than trauma."

Both penguins were collected

quickly by trained responders and transferred into specialist wildlife care, where they were warmed, rehydrated, and assessed.

"As with all kororā rescues, outcomes depend on the bird's condition when found and how well it responds to treatment.

"This can take several weeks."

Pip said the 0800 SICK PENGUIN hotline was the fastest way to give a penguin the best possible chance at survival, connecting callers directly to trained wildlife responders.

"When someone calls, they are first asked to ensure people move back at least 20 metres and that all dogs are immediately placed on leads. This is

CONTINUED ON P2

Pip Coombes works with a kororā little blue penguin as part of ongoing wildlife protection efforts at Waihi Beach.

Photo: SUPPLIED



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CONTINUED FROM P1

critical because dog attacks are the single biggest cause of penguin deaths on our beaches," she said.

"Even friendly, well-trained dogs are dangerous to penguins. Kororā are slow, defenceless, and highly stressed on land. A single bite or shake can cause fatal internal injuries."

If the caller feels comfortable, they can stay with the penguin until help arrives or gently place it into a cardboard box, keeping it quiet, dark, and sheltered.

At Waihi Beach, the Surf Club also keeps a dedicated penguin box and can safely hold birds until local kaitiaki arrive.

A DOC-approved kororā wildlife permit holder is then alerted to assess the bird, remove it from the beach, and arrange urgent transport to specialist wildlife care.

Early reporting could mean the difference between life and death, Pip said, pointing to "powerful local example" Buddy, a little blue penguin found in distress and reported quickly.

"Buddy was taken in by the Western Bay Wildlife Trust, where he received professional care over several weeks. He was microchipped by Sustainable Waihi Beach's Wildlife Permit holder and, once fully recovered, released back into the ocean at Mount Maunganui.

"That one phone call gave Buddy a future, and it shows exactly why early reporting matters... When people act quickly, these taonga get a second chance."

Waihi Beach and the wider Bowen-



Pip Coombes with Buddy, getting microchipped before his release. INSET: A little blue penguin is carefully transported by trained responders after being found on Waihi Beach. Photos: SUPPLIED

town-Anzac Bay-Orokawa coastline sit within an important kororā habitat and travel corridor.

Pip said penguins regularly came ashore to rest, nest, or recover from rough seas. After strong swells or storms, there was a higher likelihood penguins could wash up on the beaches.

But many of the kororā were unintentionally harmed because people didn't realise they were in trouble, Pip said.


"Many people think a penguin on the sand is resting or fine - when in reality it is almost always in trouble."

She also warned the public never to keep a penguin overnight or attempt to return it to the sea.

"Seeing a little blue penguin is special," she said, "but it is not a photo opportunity."

DETAILS: If you spot a penguin on a beach, put dogs on leads immediately; keep at least 20 metres away; and call 0800 SICK PENGUIN. Move the penguin into a quiet, dark box or stay with it on the beach until you receive instruction.

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Thames Tides

Wed Feb 4	Thu Feb 5	Fri Feb 6	Sat Feb 7	Sun Feb 8	Mon Feb 9	Tue Feb 10
<div><div>Morning</div><div>3:28am 0.3 4:00pm 0.5</div><div>9:50am 3.6 10:18pm 3.5</div><div> 6:36am 8:27pm</div><div> Best At 2:54am 3:17pm</div><div> Set 8:40am Rise 9:44pm</div></div>	<div><div>Morning</div><div>4:13am 0.3 4:45pm 0.5</div><div>10:36am 3.6 11:02pm 3.5</div><div> 6:37am 8:26pm</div><div> Best At 3:39am 4:01pm</div><div> Set 9:45am Rise 10:08pm</div></div>	<div><div>Morning</div><div>4:56am 0.4 5:28pm 0.5</div><div>11:19am 3.5 11:43pm 3.4</div><div> 6:38am 8:25pm</div><div> Best At 4:22am 4:43pm</div><div> Set 10:48am Rise 10:31pm</div></div>	<div><div>Morning</div><div>5:38am 0.6 12:02pm 3.4</div><div>6:09pm 0.6</div><div> 6:39am 8:24pm</div><div> Best At 5:05am 5:26pm</div><div> Set 11:49am Rise 10:55pm</div></div>	<div><div>Morning</div><div>12:25am 3.3 12:44pm 3.3</div><div>6:21am 0.7 6:51pm 0.7</div><div> 6:40am 8:23pm</div><div> Best At 5:47am 6:09pm</div><div> Set 12:50pm Rise 11:21pm</div></div>	<div><div>Morning</div><div>1:08am 3.1 1:27pm 3.1</div><div>7:07am 0.9 7:34pm 0.8</div><div> 6:42am 8:22pm</div><div> Best At 6:31am 6:54pm</div><div> Set 1:52pm Rise 11:51pm</div></div>	<div><div>Morning</div><div>1:54am 3.0 2:12pm 3.0</div><div>7:57am 1.0 8:21pm 1.0</div><div> 6:43am 8:21pm</div><div> Best At 7:17am 7:41pm</div><div> Last Quarter Set 2:53pm</div></div>

MOON AND FISH KEYS

New Moon First Quarter Full Moon Last Quarter

Good Fishing Fair Fishing Not So Good

TIME DIFFERENCES FOR OTHER PLACES

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

PLACE	Hr	Mn	HIGH	LOW
Coromandel	-	05	-0	03
Whitianga	-	01	-0	05
Tairua	+	10	+	20
Whangamata	-	03	-0	06
Waihi Beach	-	21	-0	16

Community rallies around flood-damaged park

By ALICE PARMINTER

A Paeroa non-profit has been blown away by an outpouring of community support following the storm events of recent weeks.

The garden at the Historical Maritime Park and Museum, which sits on the riverbank just north of Paeroa, spent several days under metres of water after the storm blew through.

Early weather warnings allowed the park's team to evacuate animals from the premises, tie down furniture, and remove artefacts to higher ground. But manager Fleur McDermott said the extent of the devastation once the waters had receded still took them by surprise. "We didn't anticipate it to be as bad as what it was... we've probably been worse off in the garden areas from this [storm] than we were for Cyclone Gabrielle," Fleur said.

"We had that high wind... I've never heard wind like that in my life. You couldn't even walk through [the lawn] - it was just full of trees, big limbs, all smashed."

Faced with months' of back-breaking cleanup work, Fleur put out a call on social media for volunteers.

"We have a lot of very large trees down and debris everywhere that needs manpower to tackle this," the posts read; "we are seeking assistance with the cleanup efforts and would be grateful for any volunteers who could spare time over the weekend to help restore the park to its former glory."

The response, she said, was overwhelming and humbling.



The Maritime Park was badly flooded during the storm. Photo: AE ELECTRICAL



Volunteers help clean up after the flood water has gone. Photos: SUPPLIED

By 9am on January 24, the museum's carpark was full as more than 60 community members - many with no direct association to the park, turned up with chainsaws, rakes, trailers, polearms and other tools in hand.

"The troops just kept coming - they came in their PPE gear and their goggles, with baking and trailers. It was incredible," Fleur said.

"There must have been at one

stage, I'd say more than 10 guys just on chainsaws and trailers backing in. There was a guy that brought in a big cage trailer. Just people everywhere."

By midday the work was largely done. "It was just amazing. We would have left here broken every night for the next two months, trying to deal with what we had in front of us," Fleur said.

"I love [our] community. And them shining like that - it's just



Fleur McDermott points out the floodline. Photo: ALICE PARMINTER



the typical Kiwi way, isn't it? You know, I'm very mindful. I was a bit reluctant doing that post with the devastation everywhere else. I knew that we'd been hit hard, but, gosh, other places have been hit way harder.

"But it's not just what they [did] for the park. I think it lifts the spirits of all of those people that were here, too, and it impacts the community. You can see by the comments on the Facebook page, it



The park is still muddy after the cleanup, with some large trees lost. warms everyone."

There is still plenty left to do at the park, as the team's attention now turns to restoration.

Evidence of the storm is still visible: the lowest third of the trees and all the underlying brush are brown with silt. In the river, a downed tree blocks the canal, preventing the historic paddleboat from leaving its pontoon. And muddy tracks still crisscross the lawns.

But it's much better than it could have been. "We were incredibly lucky. Most of the artefacts are up there in the main museum - down here, our biggest tragedy is the loss of our big trees," Fleur said.

"You look back down there and it feels quite sad because that canopy through there was beautiful. [And the lights] have all been totally submerged and because of the movement in the trees some have broken off."

"We're still trying to get in touch with an arborist, because we're not sure on the stability of some of the [remaining trees]. But with what the community has done for us, we're in a pretty good position."



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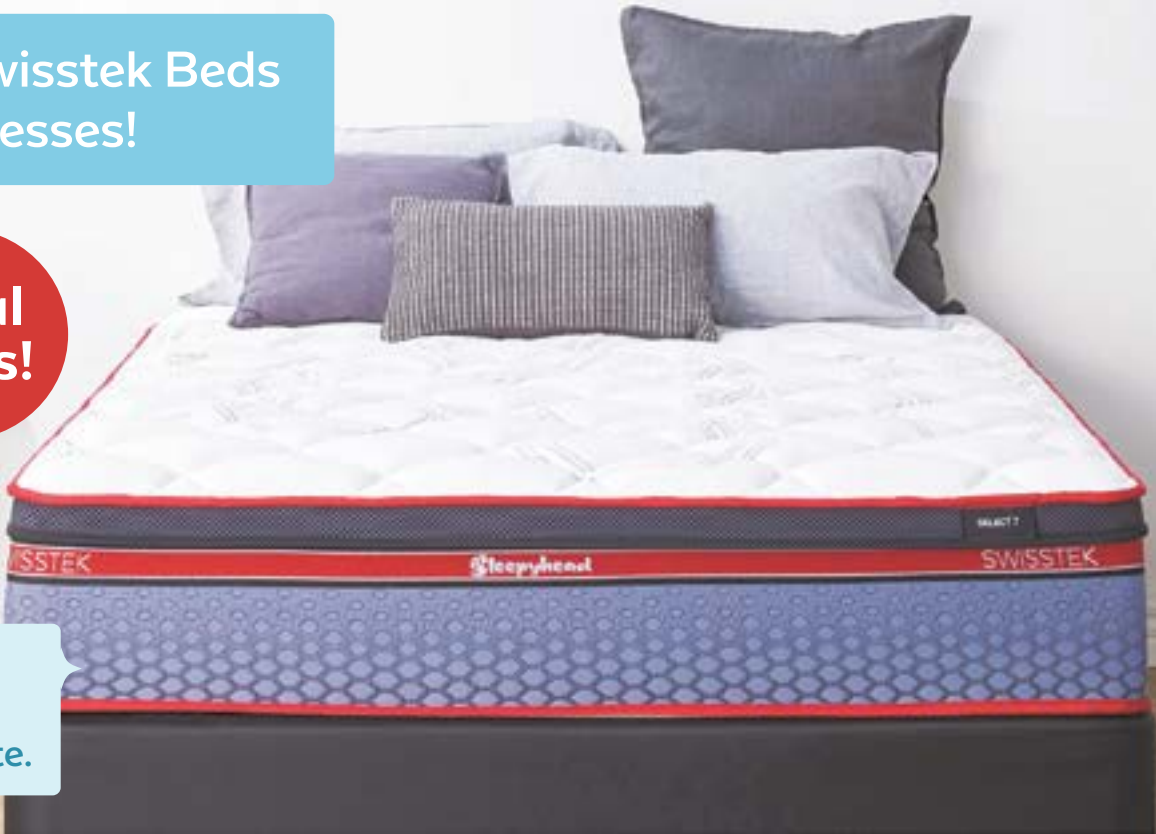
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‘Keep active’: key to centenarian’s longevity

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

If there’s one thing Betty Smith believes about herself, it’s the fact that “I’ve always been a very practical person and done things”. “I aimed to bring my children up the same way, actually - being practical and doing whatever needs to be done,” Betty told *The Profile*.

It’s a philosophy that has guided Betty through to a monumental milestone as she prepares to celebrate her 100th birthday on February 6 with all her family.

“Thankfully, I’ve still got all my marbles, or most of them. Not all of them, but most of them,” the centenarian said.

“Family from everywhere” were set to attend Betty’s celebration including her five children, 10 grandchildren and eight great-grandchildren.

“The management here [at Richmond Villas, Thames] is very kindly allowing us to use the dining room. So we’re having a family lunch and then everyone, everyone in the whole place was invited to come to afternoon tea.”

Betty was born on February 6, 1926, at Wharewhitu private hospital in Dannevirke, and brought up on a small dairy farm in Maharahara with her mother and two older sisters.

As a child Betty said she helped her mother with various tasks such as spreading fertiliser, or if there was fencing to do “we would do it together”.

There was no denying the sharpness of Betty Smith’s memory.

Betty recalls the start of her



Betty Smith is set to celebrate her 100th birthday on February 6.

nursing training at Hastings Memorial Hospital, towards the end of World War II on March 8, 1944.

“It’s funny, isn’t it, how things stick in your mind?”

Nursing was something she said she wanted to do “all my life, right from the start” - and after she completed four years of nursing at Hastings Hospital, Betty married Reg Smith in 1948.

The couple moved to Hamilton and had five children: Anne, Rex, Terry, Penny and Trish.

“They’re a great family. I am extremely lucky because we all get on very well. They’re all such nice, good, hard-working, decent people.”

Betty said she and Reg parted around 46 years ago.

She worked as a theatre nurse

part-time at Waikato Hospital from the time her youngest child was six years old, and once she grew up Betty went back to full-time work at the hospital for a 22-year stint.

Her son Rex, who now takes care of her, told *The Profile* Betty was a very competent knitter who could knit and read at the same time.

Before Betty’s eyesight wors-

ened, she would read six or seven books a week, but now she was only able to manage one or two, she said.

But Betty still makes it out and about to places with the help of Rex.

“Rex looks after me all the time now here. He is absolutely tremendous. He takes me everywhere, takes me to the doctor, takes me to the library, does my shopping for me.”

Rex said it was “gratifying” to know that his mum would celebrate 100 years of life.

“It sort of makes you feel, well, maybe I’ve got a chance too.”

The secret to her long life boiled down to “longevity genes”, Betty said.

Her mother lived until she was 99 years old, and her brothers lived until they were 86 and 94.

“And we’re very active, very active people. My sisters were too. We played sport when we were younger. We always worked and we always did things, you know? So none of us were a family that sat around.”

Betty’s advice for people was to “keep active”.

She still goes for walks around her home but only when the weather’s nice, she said.

In her younger years, Betty played in the Hawke’s Bay representative hockey team, and once again for the Waikato Hockey team, where she became the captain.

“It’s been a bit of a busy sort of life, I suppose, in lots of ways, but it’s been a very ordinary life.”

Photo: SUPPLIED

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Crafty library fun

Thames Library was filled with creative and crafty activities to keep the kids busy during the summer holidays, with everything from a jungle-themed escape room, to rock painting, fairy garden building, jewellery designing and even a scavenger hunt. The free programme was highly popular, with the escape room often fully booked and craft sessions filled with eager participants. Reporter **ALICE PARMINTER** popped along for the butterfly and sensory bottles session on January 14.



Maeve, 6, with her sparkly creations. Photos: ALICE PARMINTER



Manu, 7, works on his butterfly.



Glitter and pompoms form the basis of this group's sensory bottle collection.



A young participant shows off her butterfly and sensory bottle.

Man named after fatal water incident in Hahei

Police have released the name of the man who died following a water-related incident in Hahei on Monday, January 19.

He was 37-year-old Jack Oliver-Hood, of Mount Eden, Auckland.

Police said they were alerted at about 3.15pm to a report of a man in trouble in the water near Tutaritari Rd.

The man was located and brought ashore in a critical condition.

Despite best efforts by emergency services, he died at the scene.

Police said enquiries into the incident were ongoing and the death had been referred to the Coroner.

Surf Lifesaving NZ said its Hot Water Beach Search and Rescue squad and paid lifeguards responded to the incident immediately after Police raised the alarm.

Crews responded by road, launching both a rescue watercraft and a lifeguard swimmer to search the area.

The incident occurred at an unpatrolled beach, it said.

For patrol locations and conditions, it advised the public to check Safeswim before heading to the coast.

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“I’m a firm believer in the value of physical media. Digital is an important part of it but there’s a lot of misinformation which is totally unregulated in the internet space. From a marketing point of view I see some value in sticking with something that’s reputable and physical. There are still young and old people that see properties in the newspaper and buy properties at a staggeringly higher rate than you would think. For us, it’s still one of our most important components in marketing and probably because there are still a lot of buyers that see it first in the newspaper. Percentage-wise the quality of buyers that come out of a newspaper is considerably higher than what comes out of the internet - I would say it’s 100 times better. So that’s why I still love newsprint, and obviously The Valley Profile is our local paper. There’s still some value in sitting down and drinking a coffee or a cup of tea and reading the paper.”

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Lego hobby ‘brings out the creativity’

January 28 was international Lego day, with enthusiasts around the world celebrating the creative hobby. DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA catches up with Thames’ own Lego enthusiast to find out more.

When Edwin Booth and his family shifted to New Zealand from South Africa in 2016, the only pieces of Lego he owned fit inside a medium-sized storage box. It was the Lego from his childhood.

As I look around the Lego enthusiasts’ garage some 10 years later, I see how small beginnings have flourished into full-blown passion. There’s a medieval village scene to my right, a favourite of Edwin’s on par with an impressive Lego city along the back wall.

The city has modular buildings, which are a series of building sets released annually - busy with buses, trains, cars, taxis, cafes, people on motorcycles, people on foot, dogs, skateboards and that’s only touching the surface.

There’s a pool table with helicopters in front of me, and down one side of the room there are all sorts of scenes from carnival rides and rollercoasters, a spooky haunted house to trains and construction. A tier above hosts a vast collection of pieces that make up the vintage space, or classic space section: rockets, spacecrafts, astronauts and aliens.

My eyes can’t sit still, there’s something to marvel at in every direction.

It’s clear Edwin, who is a CNC machinist at A&G Price, takes



Lego enthusiast Edwin Booth with some of his collection housed in his garage.

Photo: DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

pride in the details and intricacies of the Lego worlds he creates.

The nice thing about Lego was that it’s creative: “you know, it brings out the creativity in an individual”, he told *The Profile*. “It’s a cool hobby. I really enjoy it.”

When asked how many Lego pieces he has, the enthusiast just said “lots”. “I like trains as well. I’ve got a lot of trains.”

Edwin said the vintage Lego railway lines used to be blue, but the modern ones were now grey.

“I only had one set, which was

just an oval. And I thought, shit, I need more track now because I want to go bigger.”

That’s when Edwin discovered Trade Me and said “it hooked me”.

“So, what I do is I buy your old Lego. So, if you’re selling your old Lego, I will go buy a whole tub.”

He buys Lego from the sellers, takes it home and sorts it all into colours, then pulls out all the minifigures and all the obvious pieces, which are pieces that have a number or code on them that correlates to the set number.

“I Google the set number, and then you can get the parts list. So, then you can go look in that bulk lot that you bought, and you can go see how much of that [you have]. If I’ve got more than 70 per cent of the parts there, then I’ll put it back together. And then I resell,” he said. “So, I buy and sell and that’s what feeds the hobby.”

“I’m not a free builder. I can’t just take some bricks and build something. Being an engineer, I’ve got to work to a plan.”

Something Edwin said he

learned from Lego was the ability to wait. “In everyday life, I don’t have patience. But obviously when it comes to this, I do have a bit of patience.

“When it comes to sorting and, and having something there that’s incomplete, a lot of people go, ‘oh, I need to complete it’.”

Edwin shows me an incomplete vehicle, it’s missing one wheel.

“I’ve got patience because I know I’m going to buy somebody else’s Lego next week or next month or 12 months down the line and that piece might be in there.”

Edwin also built display cases to house Lego minifigures, and he also 3D printed keyrings and stands and made Lego brick-shaped glow in the dark keyrings and Lego minifigures out of resin. “So, I drilled a hole in the [minifigure] head, and you just pop them on your Christmas lights. And now, it glows the color of the light.”

His creativity led to other hobbies too such as competitive barbecuing as The Firestarters with his brother in law.

It was evident that Edwin’s interests led him to “his tribe”.

The “best part” about it was that he would spend time with like-minded people. When he saw the amount of people who paid to go through the doors and look at the displays at the Auckland and Hamilton Brick Shows, he realised: “in every one of those people, there’s a person that loves Lego”.

“It’s my tribe, you know? I’ve found my tribe”.

DETAILS: For more info, email Edwin at: iamedwinbooth@gmail.com.




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The Choral (113 mins) M. Starring Ralph Fiennes. 1916. With war on the Western Front, a Yorkshire choral society has lost most of its men to the army. The choral's committee decides to recruit young males and a new chorus master to swell its ranks (despite their suspicions that the chorus master has something to hide). As conscription papers start to arrive, the community decides to make music together.

Nuremberg (148 mins) M. The Allies, led by an unyielding chief prosecutor, have the task of ensuring the Nazi regime answers for the unveiled horrors of the Holocaust while a US Army psychiatrist is locked in a dramatic psychological duel with former Reichsmarschall Herman Göring (Russell Crowe).

Hamnet (126 mins) M. From Academy Award® winning writer/director Chloé Zhao, HAMNET tells the powerful love story that inspired the creation of Shakespeare's timeless masterpiece, Hamlet. **Award winner.**

Anchor Me: The Don McGlashan Story (88 mins) E. Captivating documentary celebrating the extraordinary journey of Don's career. an uplifting tribute to a truly original talent.

Song Sung Blue (132 mins) M. Based on a true story, two down-on-their-luck musicians (Hugh Jackman and Kate Hudson) form a joyous Neil Diamond tribute band, proving it's never too late to follow your dreams.

Next week: Mārama a Māori Gothic revenge horror set in Victorian England, 1859. **Wuthering Heights** - a passionate and tumultuous love story set against the backdrop of the Yorkshire moors (2026 film).



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Storm recovery continues across region

By ALICE PARMINTER

Recovery efforts from the January storm event that swept across the Coromandel Peninsula are now well underway. Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) and Hauraki District Council (HDC) last week moved out of emergency mode, and began making assessments on the stability of roads, water services, parks, reserves, and other infrastructure across the region.

ROADS
Almost all the roads in the region have now reopened, although not to full capacity as work continues across the roading network to clear slips and repair damage.

In Hauraki, a section of SH2 through Karangahake Gorge has been reduced to one lane and will remain under stop/go traffic management for some time.

The Waitāwheta Bridge will be closed for detailed structural assessment work on February 3-4 between 8am and 4pm. The closure is not storm-related; however, it had to be postponed from its original closure date in January. Traffic will need to detour through Waihi during this time.

On the peninsula, SH25 between Hikuaia and Kūaotunu West is open, but delays will be likely with stop/go traffic management operating along parts of the highway for the foreseeable future, the NZ Transport Agency said.

The agency said the ongoing cleanup is expected to take some

months. "Currently, there are around 20 locations around the Coromandel where SH25 is down to one lane due to slips above or under the road. Some of these will be simple to clear, however others will need further work to stabilise the slope before the road can reopen to two lane traffic."

Further road closures are also scheduled due to routine road maintenance work.

A section of SH25 in Whangamata will be closed between February 10-13 for guard-rail installation and surfacing work on the Moana Anu Anu Bridge, with a detour in place via Port Rd.

Meanwhile, part of SH25 through Waitakaruru will be detoured for two weeks from February 9-20 while a section of the highway is rebuilt at Mangatarata and resurfacing is carried out on the Waitakaruru River Bridge. The detour, via SH2 and Pipiroa Rd, will be in place from 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday. The road will reopen each evening and over the weekend of February 14-15, with speed restrictions in place. Access for property owners and emergency services will be maintained at all times.

FINANCIAL RELIEF
Both councils have now opened their Mayoral Disaster Relief Funds to applications. The funds are available for residents, ratepayers or small business owners who have suffered financial hardship due to damages from



Teams work to clear a large slip near Whiritoa. Photo: SUPPLIED/NZTA

the weather event, and will provide one-off assistance for extraordinary circumstances where a real need can be shown. These can include costs like clearing debris from uninsured properties; essential daily needs such as food, accommodation,

and utilities; and other costs not covered by insurance, WINZ or other support.

The closing date for applications in TCDC is March 6, while HDC closes on February 27.

TCDC also announced a rates rebate for property owners

whose homes were assessed as unsafe and received red placards following the storm.

TRAILS AND RESERVES
Several Department of Conservation (DOC) tracks are still closed following the storm. These include Crosbie's Hut via the Karaka Track; campsites in Port Jackson, Stony Bay, Fantail Bay, Fletcher Bay, and Wai-kawau Bay; and several tracks across the Coromandel Peninsula and in Karangahake Gorge.

The walking tracks to Mautohe Cathedral Cove have reopened after inspection by geotechnical specialists, although DOC warned that people should still be alert for rockfall, landslips and debris both on the track and on the beach itself.

DOC also warned on its website that although many of its tracks are not formally closed, it will need time to assess the network and plan for repairs, and visitors should remain vigilant to the possibility of landslides, washouts, or downed trees.

The Hauraki Rail Trail has also been impacted by storm damage. Section C between Karangahake and Waihi is closed, including the rail tunnel, and the trail management have advised the area is currently extremely dangerous. A small section of the track between Waikino Cafe and Owaharoa Falls is open to walkers only.

Meanwhile, Gilmour Lake Reserve in Waihi has reopened, but sections of the boardwalk are still closed with work still ongoing in the area.

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‘Deep gloom’ after headmaster’s sudden death



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

Walter Sullivan’s great ‘hobby’ was the Paeroa Public Library.

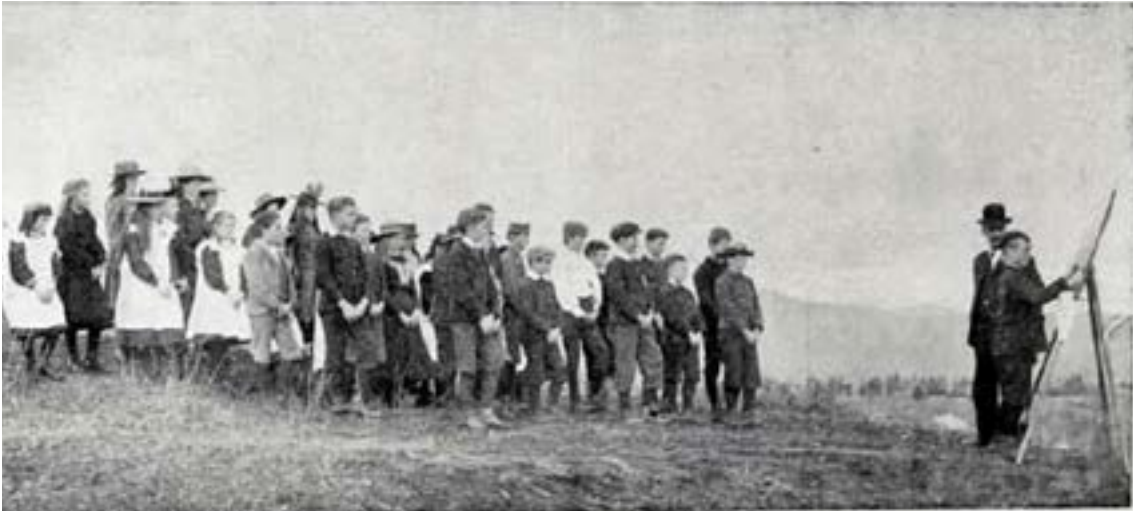
He had essentially established the institution, nursing it over 15 years from its infancy, developing it from a small room with a few books, into one of the best appointed and run country libraries in the colony.

Forty-eight-year-old Walter was also headmaster of the Paeroa Public School and no master could have been more popular among his pupils.

As a citizen he took a lively interest in social matters, always acting with charity and kindness.

In May, 1901, there was consternation in the community when Walter was the victim of a paralytic stroke.

He was constantly attended to by Dr Gilbert Smith, the ladies of the Catholic Church, as well as teachers of the school,



Paeroa Public School children having an open air geography lesson, 1901.

Photo: SUPPLIED

local priests and members of the school committee.

Walter had been born in Liverpool, England, arriving in Auckland aged 27 in 1880.

He settled in the Thames Valley becoming master of the Waitekauri, Owharoa, and Mackaytown schools, and in 1885 became head teacher of the Paeroa School.

The next year he married the school’s first pupil teacher Julia Bartle, and they would go on to have five children.

Over the past 16 years, under Walter’s stewardship, Paeroa School’s roll increased to more than 300, two more classrooms were built, and he oversaw the education of two generations of scholars.

The Sullivan family lived at the Junction Rd school house

which was over a mile from the school.

Several lady teachers lodged with them but flooding was a problem, often marooning the family and staff. Plans were now afoot to buy a section for a house nearer the school.

It was a great shock to the community when Walter died after a week or so of illness.

In Paeroa, when the announcement was made, a deep gloom was cast over the district.

The Paeroa library and the Ohinemuri A&P Society noted he would be almost impossible to replace, and his loss was felt by the whole town.

All flags flew at half-mast and the school children were dismissed as a mark of respect. His funeral cortege was followed by 22 vehicles and 200 people

on foot. When the school was reached, a very large number of pupils joined in the procession to Pukerimu cemetery.

To honour their popular resident, a suggestion for a tribute was made by ‘Citizen’ in the *Ohinemuri Gazette*: “None fitter would be a tablet or memorial in the public library, which institution was made and magnified almost solely by Walter Sullivan.

“Quietly, stolidly, through thick and thin he built up the Paeroa Public Library, thus doing more than his duty ... It is a poor reward to praise one who is dead, but it would at least show our grace ... and our good memory of his name on the walls of the book-house, so woven with the name of Walter Sullivan.”

Chris’ Quiz

Weekly quiz compiled by Chris Par-minter

1. Which actress sisters are the only set of twins to receive a joint star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, which they received in 2004?
2. What type of creature was ‘Happy Feet’, who achieved global fame in 2011 after washing up on a New Zealand beach?
3. Which company closed its remaining physical stores in New Zealand last week (January 31, 2026)? a) EB Games, b) Tandys, or c) Video-Ezy?
4. Which country was the first in the world to recognise the United States of America as an independent country? a) Malta, b) Mexico, or c) Morocco?
5. Which of these occurred first? a) the birth of David Attenborough, or b) the first commercially available sliced bread?
6. Which of these actors auditioned unsuccessfully for the part of Han Solo in *Star Wars: A New Hope* (1977)? a) Arnold Schwarzenegger, b) Chuck Norris, or c) Sylvester Stallone?
7. The culinary term ‘sweetbread’ usually refers to which organs? a) heart or lungs, b) kidneys or spleen, or c) thymus or pancreas?
8. ‘You’re going to need a bigger boat’ is a quote from which movie? a) *A Poseidon Adventure* (1972), b) *Jaws* (1975), or c) *Treasure Island* (1973)?
9. Jimmy Barnes’ signature song, *Working Class Man*, was written by a member of which soft rock band from the 1980s? a) Foreigner, b) Journey, or c) Starship?
10. What colour(s) are Agapanthus flowers? a) blue or white, b) red or pink, or c) yellow or orange?

Blue or white.
Journey (specifically by Jonathan Cain). 10. a)
(c) Thymus or pancreas; 8. b) *Jaws* (1975); 9. b)
from July 7, 1928); 6. c) Sylvester Stallone; 7.
predating sliced bread which became available
The birth of David Attenborough (May 8, 1926.
3. a) EB Games; 4. c) Morocco (in 1777); 5. a)
2. Penguin (specifically an Emperor Penguin);
ANSWERS: 1. Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen;

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Waihi
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New Listing



Boundary lines are indicative only



Waihi
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New Listing



Waihi
17 Somerset Street

2 2 1

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On the Land

Cathedral Cove to reopen after slips, caution urged

Coromandel’s Mautohe Cathedral Cove tracks was set to reopen last weekend after several days of hard work by local Department of Conservation staff and Ngāti Hei, and the completion of a geotechnical inspection.

The recent closure, under DOC’s Trigger Action Response Plan (TARP) for Mautohe Cathedral Cove, stems from the recent extreme rain event across the North Island. Landslides and rockfalls are a known risk across the wider coastal area DOC manages, including Mautohe Cathedral Cove.

DOC Coromandel operations manager Nick Kelly said geotechnical specialists visited the site on January 28 and recommended a continuation of the landslide

risk management approach, which has given DOC confidence the track can be reopened.

“We have a large body of data about landslide and rockfall risk at Mautohe Cathedral Cove, a lot of experience managing the site - and combined with our TARP, we’re able to make well-informed and quick decisions, like this one to reopen the track,” Nick said.

Part of DOC’s risk management for Mautohe Cathedral Cove is to monitor known landslips areas, and that will continue. DOC closes Mautohe Cathedral Cove after heavy rainfall events in line with the TARP.

Nick said public safety remained DOC’s top priority – and people should be alert

for rockfall, landslips and debris, both on the track and on the beach itself.

Recent events on the East Coast and in Mt Maunganui – along with advice previously obtained by DOC – have shown the risk to public safety must be carefully managed based on reliable information, he said.

There has also been a large landslide on the closed Hahei coastal track to Grange Rd – reinforcing the previous decision not to repair and reopen that part of the track network. Work to completely decommission that closed section of the track will be planned.

Reinstatement work at Waimata Gemstone Bay remains on hold and the track is not available to the public.

Assessments last week have also revealed damage at two other north Coromandel DOC visitor sites.

Nick said the North Coromandel Walkway required a geotechnical assessment so the scale of the damage and the possibility of further slips can be fully understood. There are also sections of the track where there is a fall risk due to the proximity of the damaged sections of the track to cliff faces and steep drops.

“People should not go naturing at these two locations – we believe they are not safe, and there is a risk of injury to visitors,” Nick said.

“We’ll lift the website alerts for all our damaged sites once we’re satisfied they’ve been cleaned up and are safe.”

There has been a change of plan in reopening DOC’s North Coromandel campsites. DOC previously signalled it hoped to reopen the campsites last weekend. However, closer inspection of the campsites revealed more damage than first thought, and the availability of contractors is crucial to being able to make the campsites ready for visitors.

Nick said the revised target to reopen the north Coromandel campsites was Waitangi Weekend, but that relied on a range of factors still being worked through. Would-be campers should keep an eye on the DOC website and contact Booking Services.

Tracks to Mautohe Cathedral Cove were closed in February, 2023, due to extensive damage caused by Cyclone Gabrielle. DOC repaired the tracks through the second half of 2024, and they reopened to visitors in December, 2024.



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Debris on the beach at Cathedral Cove after the recent storm.
Photo: SUPPLIED



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SPORTS

Hauraki ballers shine

By ALI KOIA-HAMLING

Hundreds of basketball teams from across the country touched down in Rotorua on January 19 to 24 for the Poitukohu Maori Basketball Tournament, including groups from Hauraki, Coromandel and Te Aroha.

People represented in the U8-U20, Tāne, Wahine, Kōeke, Whaikaha divisions.

The junior division games kicked off from January 19 to 21, where Hauraki represented the Under 10s Tama and Koti-

ro divisions.

The Under 10s Tama fought hard and walked away with a bronze medal win, while the Under 10s Kotiro secured a silver medal in the division and placed second overall.

The senior division games began on January 22 to 24, where a few athletes from Paeroa and Te Aroha played for Tuwharetoa in the Under 18's division.

The team swept up a bronze medal for placing third overall in the division.



U10s kotiro with coach Danny Williams.



Lola Barbarich, 9, prepares to pass to her team mates.

Photos: SUPPLIED



U10s tama with coach Jazz O'Brien.



Hauraki won't let the ball go.



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The space between intention and perception

OPINION



By MICHAEL WILKES

When Jovana and I were prepping to get married, we did something that's probably one of the smartest moves we've ever made — we signed up for premarriage counselling.

It wasn't because anything was wrong. It was because we knew something eventually would be. And man, it was gold.

We surfaced stuff we didn't

even know could trip us up — things lurking below the surface that needed a light shone on them. But the biggest lesson we walked away with was simple, and powerful:

Serve each other. Love each other. And communicate, communicate, communicate.

Because here's what I've learned: when people stop talking, things unravel.

One communicator put it this way: "When people stop talking, really bad stuff starts... When marriages stop talking, divorce happens. When civilisations stop talking, civil war ensues".

When communication stops, the mind doesn't.

We keep thinking. But now, the only voice we're hearing is our own — and that's a dangerous echo chamber.

You stew on something someone said. Replay the comment. Imagine a tone that maybe wasn't there. Add intention that may never have existed. And suddenly, a throwaway moment becomes a silent grudge.

Like when a colleague snaps — we carry it all day. But what if they just had a rough morning and you were the first thing they bumped into?

Or when someone says some-

thing that lands wrong. It stings. You feel mocked or dismissed. But what if it was just bad timing, or a poorly-worded attempt to help?

This is where intention and perception collide.

And unless we talk, we'll never know which one was true.

So here's something practical: If something's been sitting heavy with you — a moment, a comment, a silence — don't let it fester. Ask. Check. Communicate.

Try: "Hey, that thing you said yesterday — it really stuck with me."

"I just wanted to check, was that what you meant?"

You might be surprised. Often, they'll be shocked you even took it that way. And connection is restored.

Because when we stop talking, connection dies.

But when we lean in — gently, honestly — we often find grace where we expected tension.

Michael Wilkes is a youth worker with Thrive Trust, supporting mentoring and resilience programmes across Thames and Paeroa. To support his local youth work or follow stories and insights, find him on social media @michaelwilkes.kiwi. Enjoy these articles? Grab his book *The Unschooled Life* at michael-wilkes.kiwi.



Pet Profile

Dewy: A little gentleman looking for home

Dewy is a sweet male tabby kitten with soft markings and a gentle, curious expression that quickly wins hearts.

Calm and relaxed by nature, he has a lovely quiet confidence and enjoys lounging, watching the world go by, and soaking up gentle affection.

Dewy is desexed, microchipped, toilet trained, and up to date with his vaccinations, flea, and worm treatments, so he's ready to head straight into his forever home. If you're looking for an easy-going, sweet-natured kitten who brings calm companionship and lots of heart, Dewy could be the perfect fit. He loves a cuddle and craves human attention!

Meanwhile, the first of our *Pet Profile* dogs both now have homes, including China, who was adopted on Friday after a reader saw the story in the *Valley Profile*.

DETAILS: Visit Dewy at the Thames SPCA or visit: www.sPCA.nz/adopt/animal/654709/kitten-dewy-thames.



Volunteer Chalize with Dewy, who is looking for a home.

Treasury Talks to kick off

Te Whare Pātaka The Treasury Heritage Research Centre and Archive invites the community to attend the first Treasury Talk for 2026 at 2pm on February 12.

Community ranger and Department of Conservation Hauraki team leader Maree Limpus is set to share a short presentation on native species in the Coromandel and some of their quirks.

There will be an opportunity to view a virtual reality programme developed by Waikato Regional Council with local iwi, which will take viewers back in time to the Kauri forests.



People will also be able to see Jane Ashby with her native geckos, and have the opportunity to ask questions and possibly hold a gecko.

Garden raffle tickets will be on sale for \$2 per ticket or three for \$5.

DETAILS: Entry is \$5 and includes a light refreshment; February 12 at 2pm in the Old Carnegie Library, 705 Queen St, Thames.



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ADVERTISING FEATURE

Health & Wellbeing

New name for Well Child service

The Korowai Hauora o Hauraki, as part of the national Well Child Tamariki Ora programme, continues to provide support to parents and whānau throughout the Hauraki rohe: to build a strong foundation for their tamaiti (child) to maximise their health, wellbeing and development.

This month, our team formally launch their new service name, Te Rito e Tupu Ana, which has been gifted to the organisation by Hauraki Kaumātua Dr Korohere Ngāpō.

Te Rito e Tupu Ana encapsulates the whānau-centred, integrated and responsive wrap-around approach that empowers whānau to support the growth and development of their tamaiti - so they can thrive.

Te rito is a symbolic reference to the central shoot of the harakeke (flax) plant, representing the pēpi (baby), surrounded by the protective embrace of te awhi rito (parents) and tūpuna (grandparents and wider whānau).

Te Rito e Tupu Ana - the growing centre shoot - reminds us that all growth begins small, requires protection, and follows the wisdom em-



bedded in the natural world around us.

Our service, Te Rito e Tupu Ana, is free for all tamariki up to five years of age, residing within the Hauraki rohe.

We carry out scheduled well child core checks, and are also available for help and advice, and can schedule extra visits when needed.

Whānau can enquire directly, or be referred through their midwife, whānau members, GP clinic, Kōhanga Reo/ECE, or other service providers.

DETAILS: Call/text Kaiāwhina: 027 225 1790; Freephone: 0508 835 676; E-mail: teritoetupuana@korowai.co.nz.

Ear and skin services start up in Ngatea

Health Ngatea has set up clinics for 2026 for both micro ear suctioning and skin checks.

Micro Ear Suctioning Service - Ear Clinic Micro-suction ear cleaning is a safe and effective method for removing earwax using a gentle suction technique, performed by a practice nurse.

Microsuction is considered to be a safe procedure and highly effective, with a success rate of approximately 91 per cent in removing earwax.

It is typically recommended when there is a significant buildup of earwax that causes symptoms such as: hearing loss or muffled sounds, earache or discomfort and Tinnitus (ringing in the ears).

Skin Clinic - A skin check is a thorough check of all the skin on your body in a systematic way.

It takes up to 30 minutes to do properly, and to do this we use a special light called a dermascope. We aim to pick up skin cancers, and also lesions that are premalignant. This means lesions that may not be cancerous yet, but may become so in the future. If we can treat these early, we can prevent the lesions from developing into a cancer. Early detection increases the likelihood of successful skin cancer treatment. Please note this service is open to "casual" patients, you do not have to be enrolled with Health Ngatea to access this service. Phone us on 0786-77521 to book your appointment.

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Motocross riders all revved up for Valley Champs

MOTOCROSS

By ALICE PARMINTER

Local racers are revving their engines for the Valley Champs, which is on this weekend at the Patetonga Motorcycle Club.

The two-day event will see racers from age five years through to mid-60s tackle the clay course, which features table tops, step ups, a supercross section and more.

Entries are still open, with categories available for several classes of bike, including ATVs - one of the few clubs to still offer racing for four-wheelers, committee member Jodi Morrison said.

With more than 90 entries already received, committee member Daniel “Gonk” Bryan said the long-running Valley

Champs event would be a visual extravaganza and fantastic day out.

“Every farmer’s kid, every local kid has been through the Patetonga Motorcycle Club,” he said.

“Some of our local riders are now recognised as the best in Australasia and the world, so it’s a breeding ground for success.

“All the kids who go through here are better off for it.”

DETAILS: Valley Champs 2026, February 7-8 at the Patetonga Motorcycle Club, Top Rd, Patetonga. Saturday: Minis, Junior Pro 65, 85s, Junior Women and ATV; Sunday: Junior 125, 250 and Senior MX1, MX2, MX125, Clubman, Vets and Women. Spectators free. See Patetonga MX on Facebook for details and to register.



The Valley Champs motocross event is on this weekend in Patetonga. Photo: SUPPLIED

Successful tournament for croquet club

CROQUET

Thames Croquet Club held a very successful tournament with the help of our sponsor, Richmond Villas, on January 14.

Teams from Howick, Pt Chevalier, Manurewa, Kaitiaki, Waihi and Thames had a competitive day on the Thames

club lawns.

Winners of the first division were Mattie Clarkson and Prem Soundra from the Howick club, Mattie is New Zealand under 21 champion.

It was great to watch a champion play.

Second division winners were Pamela Grant and Praveen Sihag from the Pt

Chevalier club.

Congratulations to them all and a big thank you to our sponsor.

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First division winners Mattie Clarkson and Prem Soundra with Amy Parker of Richmond Villas, centre, and tournament manager Dennis Karl. Photo: SUPPLIED



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SUDOKU

236

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

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

EASY

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MEDIUM

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

HARD

236

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

JUMBO CROSSWORD

256

- ACROSS**

1 Excessively fat (5)

4 In the open air (8)

9 Turn aside, deflect (6)

14 Penniless (5)

15 Jonathan Swift satire (9,7)

17 Punctuation mark (5)

18 Fabric scrap (3)

19 Celebrate (7)

20 Light metal (9)

21 Naked (6)

24 Started (9)

25 Of the stars (6)

26 Quick to take offence (6)

29 Film, TV drama or stage play taken from a written work (10)

31 Brim (3)

32 Loathing (6)

33 Knock (4)

35 Organ of sight (3)

37 Musical work (4)

39 Country in SE Asia (9)

40 Viewer (9)

41 Scallywag (5)

42 Horticulturist (8)

47 Sully (8)

51 Drug addicts (5)

55 Intentionally overhear (9)

56 Showing possibilities (9)

58 Appear (4)

59 Bind (3)

60 Gramophone record (4)

61 Pain in the chest (6)

62 Unreturnable serve (3)

63 Theory (10)

66 Self-effacing (6)

67 Slough (anag)(6)

69 Building designer (9)

72 Dozing (6)

73 Animal collection (9)

75 Bibliotheca (7)

77 Small amount (3)

80 Changes direction (5)

81 Badly considered decision (5,2,9)

82 Bring up (5)

83 Fractures (6)

84 Bothersome (8)

85 Confronted (5)

DOWN

2 Broad tree-lined avenue (9)

3 Volley of shots (5)

5 Entice (4)

6 Withdraw (7)

7 Colourful leaded pane (7,5)

8 Cricket spells (5)

9 Repugnance (7)

10 Workshop bench clamp (4)

11 Gypsy (6)

12 Plank (5)

13 Drawn out (7)

14 Inflatable rubber bag (7)

16 Precaution against disease (11)

22 Neatened (6)

23 Milk sugar (7)

24 Presumed upon (7)

25 Come into view (6)

27 Flat-topped shop fitment (7)

28 Calm (6)

30 Religious sisters (4)

32 Living fence (5)

34 Doorway shelter (5)

36 Check or stop (4)

38 Small vegetable (3)

42 Avarice (5)

43 Brought up to date (7)

44 Compass point (4)

45 Task (6)

46 Wax match (5)

48 Tourists' activity (11)

49 Examine (7)

50 Signal (3)

51 Perpendicular (7)

52 Utters (6)

53 Solid figure with twelve faces (12)

54 Near (4)

57 Mar (6)

64 Lack of knowledge (9)

65 Set apart (7)

66 Enigma (7)

68 Futile (7)

70 In the main (7)

71 Great fear (6)

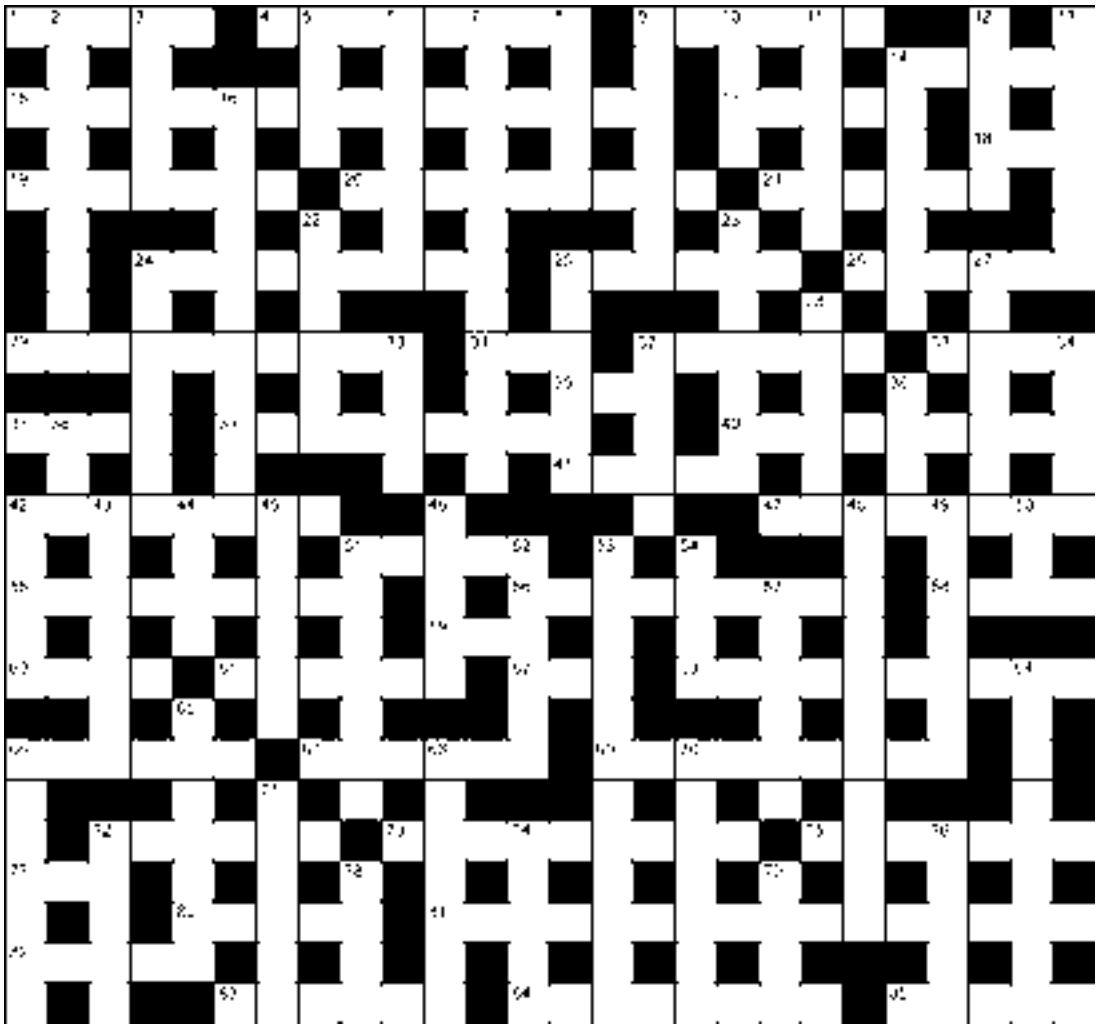
72 Confess to (5)

74 Major artery (5)

76 Cuban dance (5)

78 Continent (4)

79 Downfall (4)



PREVIOUS SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Suite, 4 Tilt at windmills, 14 Drain, 15 Mimic, 16 Ridiculous 17 Lance, 19 Elf, 20 Outlook, 21 Diversion, 22 Envied, 25 Bandstand, 27 Desire, 28 Peddle, 33 Formulated, 35 All, 36 Combat, 37 Avid, 39 Era, 41 Gaining, 42 Asylum, 43 Candidate, 44 Merge, 45 Greatest, 50 Ra, 51 Immodest, 55 Spine, 58 Portfolio, 59 Atomic, 60 Stirrup, 61 Eel, 63 Dock, 64 Devoid, 65 Irk, 66 Consonants, 68 Seesaw, 69 Triple, 71 Associate, 76 Factor, 77 Tolerable, 79 Pannier, 81 Due, 84 Disco, 85 Indistinct, 86 Musty, 87 Eerie, 88 Wish you were here, 89 Askew.

DOWN: 2 Unique, 3 Trill, 5 Iris, 6 Tuition, 7 Toupee, 8 Irons, 9 Despots, 10 Idle, 11 Lining, 12 Faded, 13 Sniffle, 14 Devised, 18 Condolence, 23 State, 24 Grimace, 26 Ammonia, 27 Dilemma, 29 Deviate, 30 Hot air, 31 Walls, 32 Magnum, 34 Dusk, 36 Carry, 38 Dwelt, 40 Lino, 45 Gaped, 46 Earache, 47 Tofu, 48 Seller, 49 Fired, 50 Realise, 52 Methodical, 53 Dormant, 54 Stunts, 55 Sojourn, 56 Books, 57 Zinc, 62 Union, 67 Bar code, 68 Studied, 70 Proviso, 72 Selfish, 73 Bonsai, 74 Hawser, 75 Beetle, 76 Ferry, 78 Endow, 80 Nouns, 82 Moth, 83 Scar.

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National funding boost for Waikato-BOP waste project

A joint Waikato-Bay of Plenty initiative to better plan how waste is prevented, resources are recovered and residual waste is managed has received significant support from a Ministry for the Environment (MfE) fund.

Te Pūtea Whakamauru Para – Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF) is providing \$303,274 in support of the ‘Cross-Regional Waste Strategy and Waste Infrastructure Plan Project’.

The funding enables a collaborative effort to co-design a unified approach to waste reduction – impacting community wellbeing and the transition to a circular, low-emissions economy.

It includes development of a cross-regional waste strategy and a waste infrastructure plan. The WMF funding represents 56 per cent of the project’s total cost, with the remaining funding provided by Waikato and Bay of Plenty Regional Councils.

“The project aims to address gaps in existing waste systems and infrastructure in the Waikato and Bay of Plenty regions through co-ordinated planning and investment,” Waikato Regional Council waste prevention advisor Valerie Bianchi said.

“The infrastructure plan will map out the systems, facilities, and partnerships needed to support resource recovery, re-use, and circular economy solutions, as well as recycling and disposal, especially in rural and underserved communities.

“An important aspect of the project involves engagement with local government waste specialists, local iwi and hapū, large industry bodies, and waste-focused community organisations.”

The purpose of Te Pūtea Whakamauru Para – the Waste Minimisation Fund (WMF) is to boost New Zealand’s performance in waste minimisation.

The fund is primarily enabled through the waste disposal levy.

There was considerable scope in New Zealand to reduce waste and increase the recovery of useful resources, council said.

“Lifting our performance in recovering economic value from waste also provides environmental, social, and cultural benefits and reduces the risks of harm from waste.”

DETAILS: More information about the fund can be found on the Ministry for the Environment website environment.govt.nz/what-you-can-do/funding/waste-minimisation-fund.

ENTERTAINMENT

Tattoo marches back into Paeroa

By ALICE PARMINTER

The Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo is back for its 33rd year, with a full day of entertainment and competition set to delight visitors.

This year will see 16 pipe bands taking part - the most bands the event has had for a long time, organisers said.

There will also be performances from special guests Boom Boom Deluxe, Thames High School’s Te Puni o Te Pito Mata and the Hamilton Caledonian Pipe Band.

The Games will begin as always with a variety of contests during the day.

Performance contests will be scattered throughout Paeroa Domain, including solo piping, Highland dancing, solo drumming, and the pipe band contest.

Meanwhile, athletes will compete in the Axemen’s Chopping Carnival and heavyweight field events, with young up-and-comers trying their hand at the Junior Highland Games events.



A parade during last year’s Highland Games. File Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

The Clan Village is also onsite again this year, along with market stalls, food stands, the Steam-punk Tartan, and entertainment on the variety stage.

The 12-hour extravaganza will be rounded out by the Street March, as the amassed pipe bands march on to the main stage for a three-hour Evening Tattoo featuring music, dancing, the Caber Toss and Farmer’s Walk events and more.

DETAILS: February 14, 9am-9pm at Paeroa Domain. See www.paeroa-highlandgames.co.nz for more.

Reggae vibes set for Waitangi Day

By ALICE PARMINTER

Laid-back tunes are heading to Kauaeranga Valley this Waitangi Day, for Dub in the Valley.

The community event, funded by Creative Coromandel, will run from 12-9pm at the Kauaeranga Valley Community Hall and feature a backdrop of reggae tunes from artists including Auckland soundsystem operator Red Robin, vinyl DJs Undercover from Sandy Bay Social Club, Empress Naïma from Auckland, Misteek from Wellington, and a live dub

set from Auckland’s Burning Soundz.

The aim of the event is simple, organisers said - bringing people together in unity to chill, dance, and enjoy good company while celebrating our national holiday.

Entry is by gold coin donation, with all proceeds going to a nationwide fundraiser supporting the Alpha School of Music - Jamaica’s oldest music institution. Alpha’s mission is to rebuild and support Western Jamaica’s musicians, studios, and venues most

impacted by Hurricane Melissa.

Participants are encouraged to bring a picnic and blanket, plenty of water, sunscreen, and of course their dancing shoes. There will be no food or alcohol sales onsite, but water, tea, and coffee will be available in the hall.

DETAILS: Dub in the Valley, February 6, 12-9pm at Kauaeranga Valley Community Hall. Gold coin entry; BYO picnic and blanket. See www.facebook.com/events/833589692905935 for more information.

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Valley touch triumph

By ALI KOIA-HAMLING

The Rowdy's Junior Touch tournament: He Whetu Anamata - Our Future Stars 2026 kicked off in Rotorua from January 24-25. Thames Valley represented the region with an Under 10s boys team, under 12s boys and girls teams and Under 14s boys and girls teams. The under 10s boys team finished

fifth overall, the highest out of any Thames Valley team. Meanwhile, the Under 12 boys and girls both finished seventh in their division. The under 14 teams finished 14th and 10th in their divisions respectively. The teams played through a mix of sunshine, rain, wind and mud.





The Thames Valley junior teams.



Noah King, left, sprints for the tryline.

Photos: CHRISTINA DRENT

CLASSIFIEDS - Deadline 12 noon Monday

Death Notice NESBIT, David John: Passed away at Waikato Hospital, aged 67 years. Father of Leah, Rebecca, and the late Ricky. Grandfather of Anaru, Diamond, Giovanna Couture, Sovaan, Boston & Drake. In accordance with David's wishes, a private cremation has been held. Messages may be left c/- 262 Ohaupo Road, Te Awamutu 3800, or via David's online tribute book at www. rosetown.co.nz	For Sale Firewood for sale. Pine. \$100 per cube. Ph 027 385 2806  Now taking orders Pine \$90m3 Delivery to Paeroa, Thames, Ngatea and surrounds Shaun & Channele Neustroski Ph 027 938 0349	Personal Seeking male born 1967-68? Te Aroha area who rang Robert Greenwood, Te Awamutu in 1980's. Please ring 022 365 3758 - no voicemail. Wanted Park up spot for retired couple in 9 mtr motorhome, self contained. Long term, no pets. Will consider all options but prefer beach or rural area. Extra security for your property too. Ph Graham 021 366 952	Trades FENCING CONTRACTOR Residential & Rural Retaining walls & more High quality workmanship Competitive prices Call Matt 021 1727 148 Builders Reno's , decking, fencing. For free quote ph Phil 021 088 63559 Friendly licensed builder. 40 years exp. All aspects .No job too small. Ian 021 540 376 Painters HAURAKI REGIONAL PAINTERS Over 12 years experience, interior/ exterior. Refs available. Free quotes. Phone Graeme for all your painting needs. 020 485 1312 Professional roof painter. Mario Kerkhof 027 961 4055	Situations Vacant Due to our membership growth we are looking for an experienced bar manager and bar person to work at the Ohinemuri Club in Paeroa. Approximately 20 hours per week and must be able to work Saturdays. Please email CV to the Manager ohinemuriclub@xtra.co.nz or drop it into the club.	Piano Tuner Sharyn Clark Piano Tuner & Technician 'Fully Qualified' and Covering all areas of Hauraki and Coromandel M: 0274 485 089 sharynclark22@gmail.com
In Memoriam AITCHISON, Rex: 21 November 1948 - 1 February 2023. It's been 3 long years and not a day goes by that I don't think of you. Your presence I miss, your memory I treasure. I think of you in silence and often speak your name. Loving you always, forgetting you never. Missing you forever. Your loving wife and soulmate Joy.	Handyman An experienced handyman covering all trades with over 20 years exp building trade. Please contact Laurie King 021 251 0246 ktpropertyservice.com Mowing , hedges, fencing, gardening, carpentry, painting, retaining walls, welding, waterblasting. Work is good quality and I will not attempt to work outside of my skills. Insured. Dennis Schuler 022 129 0169	Sheep Shearing Sevices Mobile shearing , crutching, hoof trimming & drenching. For lifestyle block owners, competitive rates.Call Richard 022 128 0852 Or email richard.collier@xtra.co.nz for details	Storage STORAGE KOPU, PAEROA "New Units" Ph 027 440 7101 07 868 3033 Safe n Sound Storage www.safestorage.co.nz	STEPPING OUT Hauraki INC 100 SEALEY STREET THAMES PART TIME POSITION FOR A QUALIFIED MENTAL HEALTH PEER SUPPORT WORKER (18HRS per week) - Wed/Thurs/Fri If you think you can work in a demanding but rewarding position that offers a huge range of variety – have a strong empathetic nature and able to motivate and encourage others while working in a small dynamic team. Please enquire. For job description: Email: manager@steppingouthauraki.org.nz or office@steppingouthauraki.org.nz Applications close by the 13th February 2026	Public Notices  Tenders invited for cleaning: Two two-storey Commercial Buildings (Regular interior + periodic deep cleans) Experienced, Insured providers preferred Docs/Site viewing on request Closes 20th February 2026 Submit: Jane Smith, CAPS Hauraki Inc jane@capshauraki.co.nz 027 537 3435 Lowest tender not necessarily accepted
For Lease Yards for lease, Thames and Kopu. Suitable for trucks, vehicles or trade business base. Ph 027 440 7101	House Cleaning Castle on the Coast Cleaning Service. All housework, ovens, laundry, ironing. Ph 027 437 1195	Storage Unlimited 25 Ngati Maru Highway Kopu, Thames Clean, secure, dry Units available 7 x 3.6m and 7 x 5.5m Phone 07 868 9944	Situation Vacant We are looking for 2 mechanics to join our team. A qualified car mechanic must have a WoF ticket & a motorbike mechanic. Some experience would be an advantage but training will be given to the right applicant. If you are reliable and a team player send your CV to miles@hpmotors.co.nz or ph 027 227 1121 for a chat.	Last month's winner of the lotto ticket was Beryl Oppert, who found Pete in the January 20 edition in the Central Motors advert. Go to page 2 for details on how to enter. 	Temporary Road Closure Pursuant to the Section 11(e) of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974, notice is hereby given that for the purpose of a Motorsport Rally Tarmac Sprint event, the following road will be closed to ordinary vehicular traffic for the period indicated below. During the period of closure provision will be made for ordinary vehicular traffic, which would otherwise use the road, to use alternative routes. Period of closure: Sunday 15 February 2026, 8.00am to 6.00pm. Road to be closed: Golden Cross Road, Waikino (RP 5.345-5.524) Alternative provision for ordinary vehicular traffic will be made with signs, cones and barriers to redirect traffic on detour. It will be an offence under the above regulations for any person otherwise than under authority of an authorised permit to use the road for ordinary vehicular traffic during the proposed period of closure. D A Speirs Chief Executive Hauraki District Council
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40.989_{ha}

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karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
Seth Roe 027 320 6937

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Mangatangi 410b Mangatangi Road

Lifestyle land with space & schooling

Discover the scope of this 1.08 hectare (more or less) lifestyle block in Mangatangi and shape a future that reflects your vision. With appealing contour, an accessible location and a motivated seller, interest is expected to be strong. The land lends itself to a well-planned home, with room for considered landscaping, a shed, swimming pool and open lawns for everyday living. Established boundary trees provide definition and separation from the road. Power is available at the boundary, simplifying the build process. The Firth of Thames lies 16 kilometres away, with Pokeno just 18 kilometres. Education options are close, including Mangatangi School within walking distance.

bayleys.co.nz/2630189

1.0893_{ha}

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Pipiroa 1944-1982 State Highway 25

Two homes and two titles – options abound

Flat in contour, this 81.6ha (more or less) holding spans two titles with 360-degree views to the eastern and western ranges. A versatile block suited to grazing, investment, or a future home base. Regular in shape with extensive road frontage, fertile clay soils and strong pasture growth with limited reliance on nitrogen fertiliser. Both titles include a central race, metered water reticulated to troughs, and 47 paddocks. Fencing is 7-wire post and batten with 2-wire electric, with SH25 frontage largely 7-wire, ideal for finishing sheep or calves. The 42ha title includes a 1910s four-bedroom villa and shedding, while the 39ha title offers a three-bedroom 1960s home, gardens, and shedding.

bayleys.co.nz/2630182

81.61_{ha}

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Closing 3pm, Wed 25 Feb 2026
View 11am-12pm Wed 11 Feb
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Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410
sam.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz

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Ngatea Pouarua Road

Quality peat block, 6km from town

Good quality pasture, flat contour and practical infrastructure in a prime spot close to Ngatea. This 15-hectare (more or less) rectangular block features sought-after peat-over-clay soils. Improvements include a half-round shed, stockyards and loading race (all “as is”). Ideal for calf rearing, a reliable support block, or future development into blueberries or cropping. Water is supplied via two council metres. Less than 6km from Ngatea, with great services, schools and the Hauraki Rail Trail nearby, plus easy access to fishing and Coromandel beaches. Contact Karl or Sam to discuss.

bayleys.co.nz/2630180

15.92_{ha}

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karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410
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Mangatarata 428a State Highway 27

New year in the country starts here

Ready to swap city life for a country New Year this summer? This family home on 7,802sqm (more or less) offers generous open-plan living, with a spacious kitchen and dining area for easy entertaining. Featuring a large master, two double bedrooms, and a family bathroom with bath and separate shower. A large laundry adds practicality, with extra buildings on site. Enjoy sweeping farmland views from the patio - ideal for summer BBQs and laid-back outdoor living. In the golden triangle, close to Hamilton, Auckland Airport and Ngatea, plus schools and amenities nearby. Waihi Beach is an easy day trip. Motivated vendor - act now!

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7,802sqm 3 1 2

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 5 Mar 2026
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OPEN HOME



Thames 155 Maramarahi Road

Two dwellings - endless options

Set on 3.5200 hectares (more or less) just minutes from Thames township, this well-established lifestyle property offers flat, usable land with beautiful rural views. The spacious main home features three bedrooms, multiple living areas, and a seamless outdoor flow to a sunny deck and landscaped grounds. A separate one-bedroom dwelling adds flexibility for income, guests, or extended family. Infrastructure on the property includes a double garage with internal access to the main home, an additional double garage with workshop, stables and a tack room. The flat land and established paddocks offer practical space for keeping horses at home, with room for grazing and shelter.

bayleys.co.nz/2180852

4 3 3 4

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 26 Feb 2026
96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
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glenn.tanner@bayleys.co.nz
Maddy Aislabie 027 780 4389
maddy.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz
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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Hearts in Harmony for cultural concert

By ALICE PARMINTER

An “unforgettable cultural experience” will grace the stage at Thames’ Civic Centre on February 13, as the St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church holds its Hearts in Harmony fundraising celebration.

The event will see different cultural groups from the local community showcase songs and dances, alongside a smorgasbord of ethnic food and desserts.

The St Francis School poi group will be the opening act, with a special guest performance by a Russian bubble artist as the grand finale.

There will also be spot prizes, raffles, and games throughout the night.

“It’s going to be a big concert - it’s just taken off,” fundraising committee chair Barbara Takase said.

“In our parish, we’ve actually got a lot of nationalities. We’ve got a lot of new immigrants with young families from the Philippines and from India and from Slovakia and from Indonesia, all sorts of places.

“They’re all in groups that have got cultural things going on, and we thought, maybe we can get some of those groups together and put on an entertainment show.

“We were hoping to get about six or seven different entertainment groups, but what happened is we ended up with 14.

“We’ve got a Bohemian group coming in and a Scottish group coming in and a group from Japan - it’s just amazing.”



The concert is in aid of the parish’s efforts to renovate and earthquake-proof its parish hall.

The hall, which is nestled in between the church and St Francis Catholic School on Willoughby St, is quite run-down and in need of attention, Barbara

said.

“We’ve sold about half of [the tickets] so far, and there will be tickets on sale at the door on the day,” Barbara said.

“Whatever we raise, every dollar will just go into the fund for the renovations. We haven’t set a target, but of course,



Hearts in Harmony will be a multicultural affair celebrating the many nationalities of Thames’ St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church. This includes performance artist Kiera, left, the school’s kapa haka group and the Art of Middle Eastern Dance.

Photos: SUPPLIED

the more the better.”

DETAILS: *Hearts in Harmony, February 13, 5-9.30pm at the Thames Civic Centre. Tickets from Carson’s Bookshop for \$15; under 15s \$10; under 5s free. Family tickets \$35. Contact heartsinharmonyevent@gmail.com or Barbara 027 249 1224 for more.*

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