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In remembrance

Anzac commemorations were held around the region on Saturday morning to remember those who served

A large Anzac parade through Waihi on Saturday morning. More photos: P7

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8.9 per cent rates hike for Hauraki

By ALICE PARMINTER
Hauraki District Council's Annual Plan for 2026/27 has been adopted, and with it a rates increase of 8.9 per cent.

The average residential property rates bill will increase by \$210, or 58 cents per day, from July 1.

Additionally, the average residential water bill will increase by \$364, or \$1 per day, for those connected to both wastewater and water.

The annual plan will also increase the council's borrowing capacity to a maximum debt ceiling of \$173 million - up \$5 million from what was previously forecast.

According to the annual plan, the main reasons for the rates hikes are an increase in roading depreciation expenses from \$5.3 million to \$9.7 million; a \$900,000 increase in costs to repair deteriorating footpaths coupled with a \$1.1 million reduction of pavement rehabilitation in line with Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Authority funding;

and a \$3.7 million forecast increase in overall operating expenditure.

Meanwhile, changes in Government legislation are behind the rise in water and wastewater costs, as these services face increased compliance requirements in preparation for their transfer to the newly-formed council-controlled organisation Waikato Water Limited next year.

Alongside the annual plan, the council also approved its Fees and Charges schedule for the 2026/27 year with only minor changes from the previous year. The main changes include an increase to some building consent fees, adjustment to project value bands, and the introduction of a fee for project information memorandums (PIMs) for small standalone dwellings such as granny flats.

Dog registration fees will also increase slightly, to cover increased operational costs.

Business awards back for 2026

By KELLEY TANTAU
The Claymark Hauraki Coromandel Business Awards will return in 2026, recognising businesses across the region amid ongoing challenges for the sector.

Set for October 15, the biennial event is expected to bring around 150 local business people from across Hauraki, Coromandel, and the wider Waikato region to the Thames Civic Centre for an evening of celebration and networking.

With the aim of highlighting businesses of different sizes and industries, the award categories recognise emerging businesses, business resilience, service to business, as well as a People's Choice award.

In 2024, The Waterworks, a tourist attraction along the 309 Road with water-powered inventions, took out the supreme award, while Dive Zone Whitianga and EPL Construction were named joint winners of the Community Contribution category after judges Mike Green, Sue Loder, and Ray Lewis said it was "impossible" to decide on only one.

Other winners included Hello World Travel Thames,

Flowers on Pollen, Wāhi Tukuru, Ōpito Bay Salt, Coromandel Shelly Beach Top 10 Holiday Park, Bayleys Coromandel, Major Oak Safety Training, and Evolution Fitness.

The awards are jointly hosted by Thames-Coromandel and Hauraki district councils every two years, and Thames-Coromandel Mayor Peter Revell said he was "proud" to once again celebrate the businesses that "drive the heartbeat" of the rohe. "We're honoured to stand alongside the people and enterprises who continue to shape a strong and successful future for us all."

In the lead-up to nominations opening on June 1, the council's Economic Development Team will be attending upcoming Business After 5 events across the district to talk about the awards, answer questions, and encourage nominations, starting in Coromandel-Colville on April 29 at the Combined Clubs, followed by Mercury Bay on May 12, Paeroa on May 21 at The Refinery, Whangamatā on June 9, Thames on July 2, and concluding with Tairua - date and location to be confirmed.

The Little Things
www.littlethings.co.nz © Lawry & Lole

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Thames Tides

Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun	Mon	Tue
Apr 29	Apr 30	May 1	May 2	May 3	May 4	May 5
 Morning 5:11am 3.2 Afternoon 5:50pm 3.2 11:27am 0.7 11:50pm 0.8 6:55am 5:35pm Best At 10:11am 10:32pm Set 4:12am Rise 4:02pm	 Morning 5:59am 3.2 Afternoon 12:13pm 0.7 6:43am 3.2 7:20pm 3.3 6:56am 5:34pm Best At 10:53am 11:15pm Set 5:13am Rise 4:26pm	 Morning 12:33am 0.7 Afternoon 12:56pm 0.7 6:43am 3.2 7:20pm 3.3 6:57am 5:32pm Best At 11:36am 11:59pm Set 6:14am Rise 4:52pm	 Morning 1:14am 0.7 Afternoon 1:37pm 0.6 7:26am 3.2 7:59pm 3.3 6:58am 5:31pm Best At 12:21pm Full Moon Set 7:15am Rise 5:22pm	 Morning 1:53am 0.7 Afternoon 2:15pm 0.6 8:07am 3.2 8:38pm 3.3 6:59am 5:30pm Best At 12:45am 1:09pm Set 8:17am Rise 5:57pm	 Morning 2:32am 0.7 Afternoon 2:53pm 0.7 8:48am 3.2 9:15pm 3.3 7:00am 5:29pm Best At 1:33am 1:58pm Set 9:17am Rise 7:24pm	 Morning 3:12am 0.8 Afternoon 3:31pm 0.7 9:29am 3.1 9:54pm 3.2 7:01am 5:28pm Best At 2:23am 2:49pm Set 10:14am Rise 7:24pm

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	MIN	Hr	MIN
Coromandel	-0	04	-0	03
Whitianga	-0	01	-0	05
Tairua	+0	10	+0	20
Whangamatā	-0	03	-0	06
Waihi Beach	-0	21	-0	16

Hauraki rubbish habits 'disappointing'

By ALICE PARMINTER

An estimated 10 metric tonnes of recyclable and organic waste is being tossed into Hauraki's landfills each week instead of being recycled, according to a council report.

The Waste Management Solid Waste Analysis Protocol report, detailing the results of a waste audit undertaken in March last year, was presented to councillors at a council meeting on April 8.

During the audit, staff collected 150 council kerbside rubbish bins from streets in Whiritoa, Waihi, Ngatea, and Paeroa, and sorted their contents into 23 categories.

The audit found 42.2 percent of the rubbish bins' contents by weight were composed of food waste, green waste, and other organic material, including vacuum cleaner dust, dead animals and animal faeces.

A further 9.8 per cent was made up of plastics, many of which were recyclable containers and soft plastics.

Recyclable paper made up

3.96 per cent.

This equated to around 9.6 metric tonnes of waste per week which could have been diverted away from landfill for recycling or composting, the report concluded.

"I was really disappointed by this report," councillor Anne-Marie Spicer said at the meeting.

"It just tells me people can clearly afford to chuck whatever they like in the bins and not give a toss where it goes..."

"I'm going to be remembering this report when it comes to putting up the price of rubbish tags.

"I think we've seen this coming for a long time," Deputy Mayor Paul Milner said.

The council's rubbish strategy received further scrutiny in the meeting, with the endorsement of a cross-regional project focusing on waste strategy.

The Waikato and Bay of Plenty Cross-Regional Waste Strategy and Waste Infrastructure Plan will help the councils involved in the project develop a co-ordinated approach to



The audit team sorts rubbish into 23 different categories.

Photo: SUPPLIED

waste management across the region, and encourage the development of a circular waste strategy.

"Anything we can do to enable a circular economy and collaborate is very worthwhile," councillor Amanda Ryan said.

Meanwhile, the council has ended its green waste disposal service in Ngatea due to unus-

tainable costs.

The service cost around \$109,000 over 18 months of operation, while generating only \$5244.91 in income.

Utilisation of the service was extremely low, council heard.

"We're making a practical change to how green waste is managed in Ngatea so we can focus our resources on services

that benefit more people and the environment across the district," group manager of service delivery Adrian de Laborde said.

"This is about making sure we're doing that in the most effective way."

Green waste can still be taken to the Paeroa and Waihi transfer stations.



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Education

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Exchange builds confidence, connection

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

It's "always been a dream" of Jonathan O'Neill's to take a group of New Zealand students to South Korea, where he was a teacher from 2001 to 2004.

The dream became a reality for the Hauraki Plains College deputy principal over the April school holidays, when 28 students, a group of parents and principal Sharon Moller joined him for the school's South Korea exchange trip.

The deputy principal and trip leader, who teaches the Korean language and culture learning lab at HPC, said they also added Japan to the trip.

"I thought while we are up in that part of the world we might as well take the opportunity to experience another unique culture."

The motivation to make it all happen was when his students asked if they could one day go to South Korea to experience the language and culture firsthand, he said.

He travelled to Incheon City, South Korea, in 2024 for a family holiday and met representatives from Incheon schools to start a reciprocal exchange programme.

The programme was kicked off when a group of 28 students from Incheon visited and stayed with HPC families in 2025. "Our intention is to continue with this reciprocal homestay and school experience every two years," he said.

The same Incheon students hosted HPC during an exchange



A group from Hauraki Plains College visits Korea and Japan during the April school holidays.

Photo: SUPPLIED

earlier this month.

The Hauraki group stayed in Incheon, Seoul and Busan, then headed to Japan and stayed in Hiroshima and Tokyo.

The students were willing to "give everything a go" and were openness to new experiences with things, such as learning a K-Pop dance, eating the food or participating in a Kendo martial arts lesson in Japan. "Our students often had to step out of their comfort zones but they were rewarded with some incredible experiences."

It was true for year 13 student

Georgia Green, who told *The Profile* her confidence grew as she stepped outside her comfort zone by communicating despite the language barriers, giving speeches and meeting new people.

The 17-year-old said the trip was a "life changing experience", and the most rewarding part was with her homestay buddy from Incheon. It made the experience "more personal and meaningful", she said, as they could reconnect and experience day to day life from her buddies' perspective. "Our relationship grew even further and

we have now built a genuine connection between not only each other but our families as well."

She said the group participated in a range of activities which included cultural and school experiences, sightseeing and spending time with host families.

"We visited historical sites, experienced lots of local food, and took part in group activities that helped us learn more about the culture and history of both countries."

The most memorable part for Georgia was when the group vis-

ited Hiroshima.

"We were lucky enough to have the opportunity to listen to an 89-year-old atomic bombing survivor share her story. Hearing her firsthand was incredibly moving and eye opening," she said.

"The depth and detail she went [in]to in her explanation was beyond what anyone could have imagined.

"It was a powerful reminder of the impact of history, and it left a lasting impression on everyone, with many people becoming emotional during her talk."

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Yakiniku meal in Tokyo



Kendo lessons



Gyeongbokgung Palace



Making gimbap



Hiroshima



Mrs Moller & Mr O'Neill with the leadership team at Youngwha International Tourism High School



Han River in Seoul



Sharing a presentation about NZ life

"This trip was a life changing experience for me" - Georgia Green

"We had new once-in-a-lifetime experiences each day; in cities and in nature" - Jasmine Davis

"I loved learning about the rich history, culture and language of Korea and Japan" - Karauria King

"The kindness and generosity of the Korean and Japanese people really stood out for me" - Noah Jenner

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Queen musical ready to rock

By KELLEY TANTAU

Thames Music and Drama will be bringing the iconic jukebox musical *We Will Rock You* to life this May, with director Stuart Floan saying audiences can expect a high-energy, feel-good show full of Queen anthems, clapping, and stomping along.

Written by Ben Elton and built around the legendary catalogue of Queen, the show first hit stages in the early 2000s. But more than two decades on, its themes feel more relevant than ever.

Set in a dystopian future where the internet rules all and creativity is suppressed, the story follows young renegade Galileo Figaro and his sidekick Scaramouche as they fight to reclaim music - under control of the all-seeing villain Killer Queen, who has even renamed Earth the "iPlanet."

"Everybody basically just spends their entire life on their phone," Stuart told *The Profile*. "It's about how many likes you can get, how many online friends you have, all those things. AI [Artificial Intelligence] kind of plays in a little bit, but it wasn't really around too much at that point."

Stuart said the show was a funny one, packed with wordplay, pop culture references, and plenty of "dad jokes", but it also carried a deeper message about modern life. He said that was part of what drew him to directing the production. "If I look at where the world is now, you know, we do spend so much time on our phones. If somebody asks a question, you



Stuart Floan, Sheli Taylor, Tina Haakma, and Babs Floan. SUPPLIED

Google it to find out what the answer is. When I first saw the show, it resonated a little bit, because I'm old enough to remember proper dial-up phones and the internet before it became the internet."

The show will feature the "anthem songs" Queen were masters of, Stuart said, including *Another One Bites the Dust*, *We Will Rock You*, *A Kind of Magic*, and *Radio Ga Ga*. "All that classic stuff that people can clap and stomp their feet to and enjoy."

The atmosphere will be amplified by a live band, with creative

director Babs Floan, musical director Tina Haakma, and dance director Sheli Taylor helping bring the production to life on stage.

"*We Will Rock You* was always the show that I wanted to do, just because I enjoy the music, and it's really cool, really interactive, with lots of energy and fun," he said.

"There's some moments of empathy or pathos too, because Queen did some heartfelt songs as well, so there's a really good balance."

DETAILS: More info or bookings: www.thamesmad.co/buy-tickets.

Irish music, imagery to combine

Sean Kelly & Friends present an intimate show of live Irish music played to the backdrop of Super 8 movies taken by Sean's Dad, a renowned Cine enthusiast, in and around Derry & Donegal 1958-1988.

The show will be held on May 2 at 7:30pm at the Kauaeranga Hall, featuring Sean Kelly on vocals, whistles, bodhran and guitar, Jono Lonie on fiddle and electric mandolin and Maree Limpus on AV and cello. As well as the professional music and visual delivery, Sean also presents an authentic dialogue on a tumultuous time in the history of Derry, Donegal and the north of Ireland. It is a sensory-rich experience blending authentic Irish music with authentic imagery, no special effects whatsoever. This show is designed to entertain but also to enlighten and to leave the audience with that elusive sense of wonder.

Sean Kelly is a full-time Irish

musician based in New Zealand since 1990. Sean started out as lead vocalist with Irish Band Róisín Dubh in the 1990s, The Celtic Flyers in the 2000s and is now solo or with friends. He has also sung Ireland's Call twice at Eden Park before two All Blacks vs Ireland games, and shared the stage with The Chieftains and duetted with Florence Welsh of Florence and the Machine fame.

Jono Lonie was originally involved in the Dunedin rock scene in the 70s and 80s, moving to Auckland in the 90s to join the burgeoning Irish and folk music scene, which is where he first played with Sean. They now have 30 years of playing together.

Maree Limpus, originally from Wellington, has played the cello since she was a teenager. She joins Sean and Jono on cello on a select number of songs and also triples up as tour co-ordinator and AV operator.



Sean Kelly and Jono Lonie are set to perform.

Photo: SUPPLIED

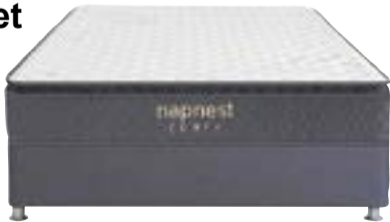
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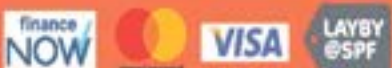
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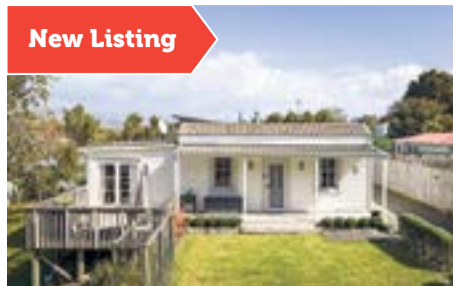
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2 2 1

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In remembrance

Anzac Day was observed around the region on Saturday morning with parades, and civic and dawn services to honour those who served.



Thames High School students gather at the War Memorial Hall. Photo: SUPPLIED



A minute's silence is observed at the dawn parade in Kerepēhi. Photo: TERRY KING



Speeches at Thames. Photo: SUPPLIED



Barry Robinson at Kerepēhi. TERRY KING



The Paeroa civic service. ALICE PARMINTER



Horses take part in the Waihi parade. Photo: TERESA MAXWELL



A flagbearer enters the Paeroa War Memorial Hall for the civic service. Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

LEFT BANK THEATRE

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Movies from Thursday 30 April to Wednesday 6 May
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The Devil Wears Prada (119 mins) M. Almost 20 years after their iconic turns as Miranda, Andy, Emily and Nigel—Meryl Streep, Anne Hathaway, Emily Blunt and Stanley Tucci return to the fashionable streets of New York City and the sleek offices of Runway Magazine in the eagerly awaited sequel to the 2006 phenomenon.

The Biggest Little Farm (91 mins) E. Special Organic Week screenings. Follows two dreamers and a dog on an odyssey to build one of the most diverse farms of its kind in complete coexistence with nature. Chronicles eight years of daunting work and outside idealism as they attempt to create the utopia they seek.

Michael (130 mins) M. Musical biographical drama telling the story of Michael Jackson's life from lead of the Jackson Five to how his creative ambition led him to become the biggest entertainer in the world.

Solo Mio (96 mins) PG. After being left at the altar in Rome, a man decides to go on his honeymoon alone.

Mr. Nobody Against Putin (90 mins) E. Multiple award-winning and eye-opening new documentary. A Russian teacher secretly documents his small town school's transformation into a war recruitment centre during the Ukraine invasion, revealing the ethical dilemmas educators face in Russia.

Tenor: My Name Is Pati (104 mins) PG. Music-packed documentary. Tells the story of Pene and brother Amitai Pati, and their journey from Samoa to platinum-selling success in the trio Sol3 Mio and the world's greatest opera stages. Bursting with humour, heart and soaring performances.

New next week- The Sheep Detectives: PG. Follows a shepherd who loves his sheep and raises them only for their wool. Every night he reads aloud a murder mystery, pretending his sheep can understand, never suspecting that they can. **A Private Life:** French comedy. When a renowned psychiatrist learns of the death of one of her patients, she is deeply troubled. Convinced that it was murder, she decides to investigate.

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May Featured Artists



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WAIKATO

On the Land

Boat salvage complete with five figure bill

By KELLEY TANTAU

A major salvage operation at Thames Wharf has now been completed after a large vessel strained against its mooring during severe weather earlier this month.

As Cyclone Vaianu bore down on the region over April 11-12, the vessel - the *MV Gleaner* - listed heavily onto its side, with part of its hull submerged as it pressed against the historic Thames Wharf.

Waikato Regional Harbourmaster Chris Bredenbeck confirmed the boat was successfully refloated last week on the incoming tide.

"It required dragging by specialist tow trucks into shallow water and significant volumes of mud in the holds and engine room to be slurried and pumped out," he said.

"There was a setback at high tide [the night before] with a hole being discovered that required repair."

Chris said the vessel was moved into a slipway, and preparation and planning was now underway for its dismantling and eventual scrapping.

"From here, the plan is to dismantle the vessel, and where it can be, it will be recycled with a scrap metal recycler. The vessel is of steel construction and the scrap metal value will help offset some of the costs involved," he said.

Waikato Regional Council said it had contacted individuals linked to the previous ownership of the *MV Gleaner*, who advised they no longer owned the vessel, therefore legal ownership remained undetermined.

Council also said that while the work



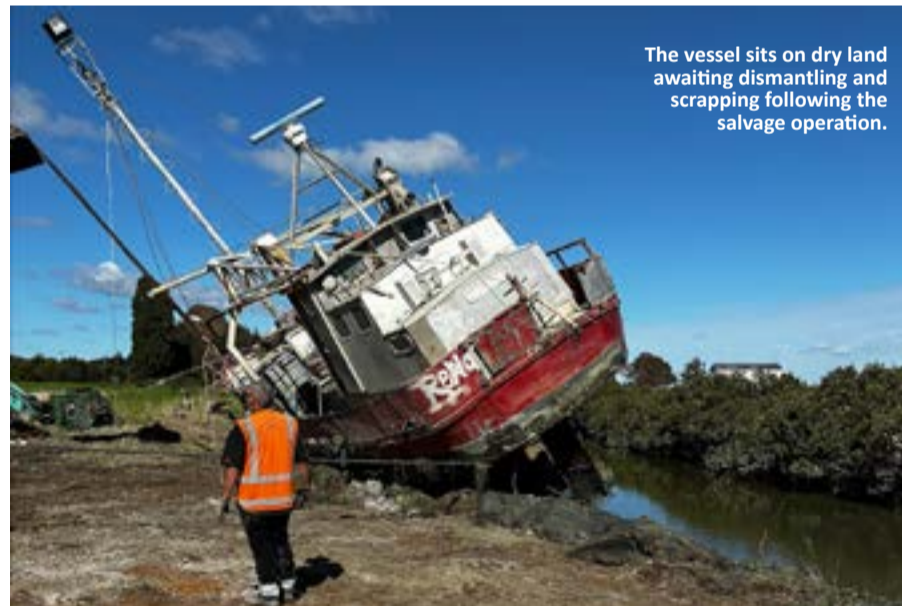
The *MV Gleaner* on dry land. Photos: WRC was ongoing, the precise cost of the salvage operation could not be known, but was expected to be in the tens of thousands of dollars.

"This type of salvage operation includes many unknowns, including the scrap value of the vessel," Chris said.

"The scrap metal value of the boat can only be estimated and cannot be confirmed until it is weighed by the metal recycling company. The weight of the vessel is estimated at 20-30 tonne. We will not be in a position to provide a firm cost until the salvage is complete and the scrap value is known," he said.

"We remain committed to ensuring the salvage is as cost effective as can be."

Before the salvage operation, the *MV Gleaner* was underwater at high tide and partially submerged at low, and council earlier confirmed to *The Profile* that the vessel had not leaked any diesel or other hydrocarbons during the salvage effort, with Regional On-Scene Commander Celeste Davies-Calway, and Maritime Services monitoring the situation throughout.



The vessel sits on dry land awaiting dismantling and scrapping following the salvage operation.



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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Art to 'capture the imagination'

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

For the month of May, people will be able to enjoy the art works of Mike Tate and Lesley Weston at the Thames Art Gallery.

Wood carver and photographer Mike Tate was set to showcase a collection of his latest works at the northern end of the gallery, which includes native timber pieces in a distinctive style combining woodcraft with photographic inspiration. Once he got an idea in his head, the Coromandel Peninsula-based artist said: "I can't stop until I finish".

He draws from an extensive range of photographs, selects his favourites and reinterprets them through wood. Each work is carefully constructed, cut into many pieces, painted and put together like a jigsaw puzzle, which could sometimes take weeks to complete.

"The best thing about making art for me is being able to bring things that I see and photograph into the homes of people that don't go to the places I travel to.

"I spend a lot of time sailing around New Zealand landing on sanctuary islands, walking for hours in our rainforest. Not everyone understands that in my art work but the ones that do love it. My art is quite varied and getting more so," he said.

Mike, who also contributes conservation efforts with Thames Coast Kiwi Care, said his work reflected a connection to the Co-



Lesley Weston and Mike Tate will exhibit their works at Thames Art Gallery in May. Photos: SUPPLIED

romandel region - coastal roads lined with pōhutukawa, beaches and native bush.

Meanwhile, in the southern end of the gallery, Lesley Weston's hope for her exhibition was that people would "feel that it's worth seeing". The artist told *The Profile* she wanted her paintings to "capture the imagination".

It was her second exhibition at the gallery, and would feature a lot of new paintings, she said.

She painted on and off across

the years from the age of 17.

The now 79-year-old said she got back into painting seriously when her children left home, and then again 13 years ago when she reached retirement. "Although I still don't have a dedicated space in my house [for painting], at least I've got the time. I've been doing quite a few since then."

Lesley said even when she made her paintings based on a photo, she didn't want to reproduce it exactly as it was.

"I'm always looking for something just a little bit different," she said, such as the photo of the pōhutukawa tree she painted and then added a big spider web on.

"I just like to put something - a different perspective on things."

That's what motivated her, she said.

DETAILS: Thames Art Gallery, 604 Tararu Rd, Thames, from May 1 will be open from 10am to 2pm Monday to Friday, and 10am to 4pm on weekends.

Chris' Quiz

Weekly quiz compiled by Chris Parminter

1. Which flight is shorter in distance, Melbourne to Perth or Melbourne to Auckland?
2. The song *All About That Bass*, released in 2014, was the debut single by which musical artist?
3. Does the term 'yak' refer to a) just the male, b) just the female, or c) both the male and the female from the animal species?
4. The Rugby League State of Origin team from Queensland competes in which colour (also their nickname)?
5. When the last calculation was undertaken in 2024, approximately how many sheep were estimated to be in New Zealand? a) 12.3 million, b) 16.2 million, or c) 23.6 million?
6. The most popular type of plant-based milk in New Zealand comes from what type of plant?
7. Which hormone class beginning with E is produced by the body in response to pain, to help relieve the sensation?
8. Is the US state of Utah considered to be part of the so-called 'Bible Belt'?
9. Which movie is the highest grossing film of all time? a) *Avatar*, b) *Jurassic Park*, or c) *Titanic*?
10. Who was the first president of the United States of America, serving from 1789 until 1797?



ANSWERS: 1. Melbourne to Auckland is shorter - 2699km versus 2634km. 2. Megan Trainor. 3. a) Male. A female yak is usually referred to as a cow in English. 4. Maroon. 5. (c) 23.6 million. 6. Oats. Oat milk makes up 41 per cent of plant based milk, with its nearest rival being almond milk at 27 per cent. 7. Endorphins. 8. No. It is further west in what's known as the Mormon Belt. 9. a) *Avatar*. 10. \$2.9 billion. 10. George Washington.

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Student Life

ADVERTISING FEATURE



Students set up to thrive at St Josephs in Paeroa

When families choose a school, they often ask three simple but important questions: Will my child be happy? Will they do well? Will they have friends? At St Joseph's, the answer to all three is yes - and by design, not chance.

We believe children thrive when they are both emotionally supported and academically challenged.

This belief sits at the heart of our philosophy: Cognitive-Affective Learning, which develops both the thinking mind and the feeling heart.

In the classroom, thinking and feeling are inseparable. When a child is anxious or overwhelmed, their ability to think clearly is reduced, and learning becomes harder.

By explicitly teaching emotional literacy and self-regulation strategies alongside academic content, we help students understand and manage their emotions so they can engage more deeply and confidently in their learning.

Cognitive-Affective Learning is not an additional programme; it is how we teach every day. Teachers design rich learning experiences in literacy, numeracy, and inquiry, while also intentionally developing capabilities such as resilience, self-awareness, collaboration, and empathy.

Our teachers act as coaches in social and emotional learning, building strong relationships and responding to the individual needs of each child.

This approach strengthens high-impact teaching practices, deepens learning, and leads to strong academic outcomes. It also equips learners to think critically, adapt to challenges, and form positive relationships with others.

The result is a warm, accepting environment where children are supported to thrive and not only academically, but as confident, capable, and connected people.

- Supplied by St Joseph's Catholic School, Paeroa

Students are ready to learn at St Joseph's Catholic School in Paeroa.

Photo: SUPPLIED



Miller Avenue School New Playgroup Brings Fun Fridays for 3 and 4-Year-Olds

A new playgroup has started at **Miller Avenue School**, giving young children a fun place to play, learn, and make friends. The playgroup runs every Friday morning from 9:00am to 10:00am and welcomes 3 and 4-year-olds and their families from the local community.

The Friday sessions are filled with fun activities designed especially for young children. Tamariki can enjoy arts and crafts, building, stories, and music while developing important social skills. It is also a great opportunity for parents and caregivers to connect with others in the neighbourhood.

The playgroup focuses on creating a safe, friendly, and welcoming environment where children can explore, be creative, and grow in confidence. Families are encouraged to come along, meet new friends, and enjoy a relaxed morning of play and learning together.

When: Fridays, 9:00am – 10:00am

Who: 3 and 4-year-olds and their families

Where: Miller Avenue School, 30 Miller Avenue, Paeroa

Come and see our friendly team to enrol or contact us: 07 862 8602; office@millerave.school.nz

Children must be supervised by an adult, everyone is welcome!



A fresh start, new school

There's nothing quite like starting fresh at a new school.

It can feel like a big step, especially when it's a completely new area too.

One thing people in the Hauraki-Coromandel regions can count on is the fact there are lots of schools in the area where children can learn, build strong friendships and an even stronger education.

Students and families will need to adjust to different things such as new teachers, classmates, school layout and routines. The first few days of school can come with a mix of nerves and excitement, and it's completely normal to feel uncertain while getting used to a new environment.

The good news is that most schools are ready to help with welcome programmes, student buddy systems and supportive staff who can help make the shift a little bit easier. It will take time, but students can gain the confidence to feel at home in spaces of learning.

But a new school is more than just a change of scenery, it's the beginning of a new chapter.

A good dose of encouragement, support and a little bit of patience can help young learners to find their way and begin to thrive in their new surroundings.

- By Davidda Hikatangata



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Student Life

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Children learn to explore at Pukekos

Sometimes in the most unlikely places, you meet the most inspiring individuals.

Such is the team at Pukekos Educare.

Beyond the traditional Educare model used by many early childhood centres, this amazing team go above and beyond the regular education requirements to focus on facilitating and developing a stimulating curriculum that fosters life skills of relationships, creativity, independence and learning skills, testing personal boundaries and limits, to develop natural confidence, tenacity and problem solving.

The team works cohesively to ensure the best outcome is created for the children - one of stimulation, exploration and discovery - learning by doing.

Intuitiveness and imagination are encouraged and are interwoven within the core building blocks of the all-important literacy skills -maths, science, art, language, games, play, with a good dose of fun and laughter. And the reality of how much they believe in what they do - these professional teachers measure their own performance by the same criteria that they use to nurture the children.

The centre itself - is one extensive playground filled with limitless opportunities to connect with nature and learn to be out in the 'wild blue'.

So, like the pukekos that cross through the wetlands behind it, the



children learn to explore, wander, test, poke, prod and grow in a natural habitat that is the hallmark of the good old fashioned kiwi values that we all grew up with.

- Supplied by Pukekos Educare



People an asset at Matatoki

Nau mai. Haere mai.

Matatoki School is a great place to learn and play. Our biggest assets at Matatoki School are our people; our dedicated teaching team and our wonderful students. We are confident to meet the learning needs of your child.

Our main focus is striving for positive learning outcomes for all students and celebrating student achievement and success.

We aim to achieve these goals through: teaching excellence. Our teachers are constantly upskilling their curriculum knowledge and implementing effective pedagogies.

An inclusive, caring school culture: Based on our school values of courage, attitude, respect and excellence.

We have a school culture where students feel emotionally safe to learn, develop positive learner dispositions and respect the needs of others. Our senior students help nurture and enjoy fun relationships with their peers and younger students. Quality learning en-

vironments: we ensure all our teachers and students have the tools and resources they need to access learning, and that support effective teaching practice. Our classrooms are spacious and inviting, our play spaces and gardens provide an attractive place for sports activities and flourishing friendships.

Home and school partnerships: We are both highly invested in your student's success.

So we work closely with families to support their child's learning and wellbeing.

The strength of these relationships makes a positive difference for our learners.

Come and visit us and see for yourself. Our learning: We have a specialised New Entrant Programme to ensure your child starts their learning journey with confidence.

We have specialised Year 8 programmes and student leadership learning so your child leaves our school well prepared for the challenges of secondary school.

- Supplied by Matatoki School

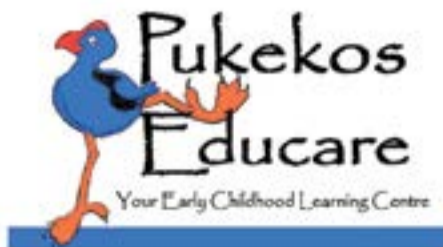


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Achievement focused:

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Wellbeing matters:

We foster confidence, resilience, and lifelong success.

Beautiful grounds and play spaces:

Lush gardens, sports areas and an onsite pool.

Community spirit:

A warm and welcoming school community.



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Achieving Excellence Together

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Contact:

9265 State Highway 26,
Matatoki, Thames

<https://www.matatoki.school>

Office: office@matatoki.school.nz

Principal: principal@matatoki.school.nz

078681079

Come and see for yourself! Pop in for a visit at Matatoki School. We would love to see you!



Our learning:

We have a specialised New Entrant Programme to ensure your child starts their learning journey with confidence.



We have specialised Year 8 programmes and student leadership learning so your child leaves our school well prepared for the challenges of secondary school.



TIROHIA SCHOOL

Tirohia School offers a balanced and practical approach to education, with a clear focus on knowing each child and supporting them to succeed. Tirohia provides smaller classes where students are not just another number, but individuals with their own strengths, needs, and goals.

One of the key advantages of the school is its size. With fewer students in each class, teachers are able to give more targeted support and build strong, respectful relationships with learners. This helps create a calm, settled environment where students feel comfortable, confident, and ready to learn.

The school's setting is another point of difference. Surrounded by open, park-like grounds, Tirohia offers space for students to be active and engaged beyond the classroom. These areas are used not just for play, but as part of everyday learning and social development.

Tirohia School also works to make attendance manageable for families. The school van service is available at a low weekly cost, helps ensure students can get to school regularly and reliably with multiple trips to Paeroa and back each day.

Ongoing improvements, including the addition of a new playground, show a commitment to maintaining a positive and functional environment for students. These spaces give children opportunities to build friendships, develop confidence, and enjoy being at school.

At its core, Tirohia School is a place where relationships matter, learning is purposeful, and students are encouraged to do their best. It may be a smaller school, but it offers a strong foundation for learners and a supportive environment for families.

Tirohia—The gem of the Hauraki Plains near the township of Paeroa. A school where kids can be kids and where artists, authors, scientists, musicians, leaders, mathematicians, farmers, environmentalist and sporting legends are made.

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NCEA success at Thames High

At Te Kura Tuarua o Te Kauaeranga | Thames High School, our approach to learning and teaching reflects our values, our vision, and our commitment to every young person reaching their potential.

We are committed to providing learning environments that are welcoming, inclusive and purposeful, where students feel safe to learn, take risks, and grow.

Our approach is grounded in research about how students learn best, and in culturally responsive, relational practice that honours identity, language and belonging.

Across the school, we use a shared approach to learning and teaching that creates clarity and consistency for students, while respecting the professional judgement of teachers.

This approach: supports high-quality learning across all subjects and year levels; makes expectations clear, visible and fair for students; builds strong relationships and a positive learning culture; and helps students understand what they are learning, why it matters, and how to succeed.

It is not a script or a one-size-fits-all lesson. Different learning areas and learners will look different, but students can expect common features that support focus, understanding and success.

Following the release of the 2025 NCEA data, we are proving that a commitment to academic excellence and student well-being alongside strong family and community support is a winning formula. The results tell a story of a school on the rise, marked by significant gains across all levels.

The standout achievement is a "soaring" Level 1 pass rate, which jumped an incredible 18 percentage points in just one year to reach 83 per cent. This rapid growth is matched by elite success at Level 2, where the school boasts a 92 per cent achievement rate. At



Purposeful learning environments at Thames High School. Photos: SUPPLIED

Level 3, Merit and Excellence endorsements have more than doubled, proving that students are being pushed to "aim for the podium".

For those heading to tertiary study, the success is equally definitive, with over 90 per cent of UE-pathway students securing university entrance through expert academic mentoring.

The school is always open for enrolments and we encourage whanau to arrange a tour during class hours to really get to know our environment.

- Supplied by Thames High School



Kōpūārahi School - small in size, big on heart

Mā te whetū ka kitea te ara - By the star, the pathway is seen.

Tēnā koutou e te whānau o te Hauraki Plains.

In a busy and changing world, there is something powerful about a school where every child is truly known.

At Kōpūārahi School, that sense of connection guides everything we do.

Our small size allows us to build strong, authentic relationships with each learner and their whānau.

We understand our students - their strengths, their needs, and what helps them succeed.

This means learning is personalised, support is timely, and every child has the opportunity to thrive.

We place a strong emphasis on the foundations of reading, writing, and mathematics, alongside a rich, localised curriculum

that reflects our rural environment.

Through outdoor learning, environmental projects, digital technologies, and creative experiences, students are engaged in learning that feels relevant and meaningful.

Guided by our values - Be Brave, Be Empathetic, Be Strong, Be Truthful - we grow confident, capable young people who are ready to seek, explore, and navigate their own pathways.

Families often tell us the difference is immediate - a calm, inclusive environment where children feel they belong and are supported to be their best selves.

Kōpūārahi School is more than a place of learning - it is a place to grow, connect, and succeed.

- Supplied by Kōpūārahi School

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Pointing Kids in the Right Direction

Seek • Explore • Navigate

At Kōpūārahi School, every child is known—really known. We understand how each learner learns, what they need, and how to help them succeed.

Our small class sizes mean more teacher time, stronger relationships, and a calm, focused learning environment where no one gets lost in the crowd.

What sets us apart:

- Strong foundations in reading, writing, and mathematics
- Personalised learning tailored to each child
- Localised curriculum with outdoor and real-world learning
- Wellbeing focus—growing confident, resilient learners
- Digital access for all to support learning and creativity

Guided by our mission - *Seek • Explore • Navigate* - our students grow as capable, curious learners, ready for what comes next.

Families often notice the difference straight away - children feel settled, supported, and ready to learn.

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Choose your ruts wisely

OPINION

By **MICHAEL WILKES**



Are you happy with who you're becoming?

That's a confronting question, but one worth asking — often. On a recent 4x4 trip, I kept getting caught in the wrong ruts. If you've ever done serious off-roading, you'll know what I mean.

Deep tracks carved out by the vehicles before you... they pull you in and lock your wheels onto a path — whether you want to go that way or not. And it got me thinking: that's what life can feel like. We fall into the ruts around us. The ones carved by culture, friends, family, or even our own past mistakes. And after a while, they run so deep you can take your hands off the wheel and still be dragged somewhere you never chose to go. One of my daughters asked me recently, "Why do adults always seem so tired or grumpy?" And I didn't have a great answer — because sometimes I am grumpy.

Sometimes I am stuck. But I also don't want that to be the rut I keep driving in. And

that's the thing. If you don't choose who you want to become, the world around you will do it for you. I've had to dig myself out of some deep ruts over the years — fear, anger, insecurity, people-pleasing, burnout.

And like off-roading, it's hard work. Sometimes you have to reverse. Sometimes you need a winch. Sometimes you need someone to pull you out and set you on a new path. But it's worth it. Character doesn't grow by accident. Faith doesn't deepen on autopilot. Healthy habits don't form while you're stuck in yesterday's story. Science calls this neuroplasticity — your brain can form new pathways. The Bible calls it renewing your mind — being transformed by truth instead of trapped by lies. So I'll ask again: Who are you becoming? And if the answer feels off — then maybe it's time to get out of the rut and start digging a new track. One that leads somewhere better.

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 Unschooling Life at michaelwilkes.kiwi.

Gardening

Weed, compost and mulch

Winter is drawing near and it's a busy time in the garden before it arrives. It has still been warm during the day, so has prolonged the growth of plants. It is an ideal time to weed, dig in compost and mulch which provides warmth and is a weed suppressant. Do this before the ground becomes too heavy and cold.

Fill gaps that appear in spots around the flower garden, sprinkle annual seeds of poppies, calendula, cornflower, marigold, stocks or Alyssum. Before planting dig in compost and sheep pellets. Cover seed with a fine sprinkling of seed raising mix if you have some.

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

May is the last chance to get spring bulbs in the ground. You still have time to plant lilies which are easy to grow and can be planted anytime between May and September. Dig in bulb food before planting and cover with 100mm of soil. Apply bulb food to bulbs already in the ground.

Once dahlia stop flowering the tubers and gladioli corms can be lifted stored in a dry place ready for replanting in spring. They need to be lifted every couple of years because, left any longer, dahlia tubers quickly grow into heavy clumps.

If the ground, gets very wet or you suffer from too many hard frosts and may rot. If you do lift your dahlia and gladioli corms clean and store.

New roses should be coming into garden centres next month so prepare the soil ready for planting. Existing roses can have a light tidy up (but don't prune yet) and spray with copper.

Continue harvesting autumn treats of feijoa, figs, guavas and persimmon as they ripen if you can beat the birds.

Apples and pears, continue late season harvesting. Once harvest is over and leaf fall is complete these can be pruned and sprayed.

Plum trees can be pruned once harvest is completed. Fertilise citrus around the base at the drip line.

Prepare strawberry beds for sowing young plants in June - November.

Continue harvesting your late summer crops of beetroot, cabbage spinach and lettuce. If the ground is still warm enough continue planting lettuces, spinach and broccoli and cauliflower. Protect from frost.

If you have planted leeks at the end of summer as they grow, pile up the soil around the stems to provide support and keep the stems white.

Add new herbs of thyme, coriander, parsley, rosemary and mint.

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

Lawns need aeration, fertilising at this time and reseeding if required.

Enjoy autumn in the garden.

*Stay safe and well.
- Ngatea Garden Circle*

Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
May 2026 Moon Planting Calendar			Calendar Supplied by Gilmer Farms	1 Plant above ground Crops, Liquid Feed	2 Full Moon	3 Plant root crops, Liquid Feed
4 Non planting Day	5 Non planting Day	6 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	7 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	8 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	9 Non planting Day	10 Non planting Day
11 Plant root crops, Liquid Feed	12 Plant root crops, Liquid Feed	13 Non planting Day	14 Non planting Day	15 Non planting Day	16 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	17 New Moon
18 Non planting Day	19 Non planting Day	20 Plant above ground Crops, Liquid Feed	21 Non planting Day	22 Non planting Day	23 Non planting Day	24 Non planting Day
25 Non planting Day	26 Plant above ground crops	27 Plant above ground crops	28 Plant above ground crops	29 Plant above ground Crops, Liquid Feed	30 Plant above ground Crops, Liquid Feed	31 Blue Full Moon



DIRECT CREMATION within 15kms of Thames: \$3225.00*
DIRECT CREMATION requiring transfer from Whangamata, Tairua, Whitianga, Waihi, Paeroa, Ngatea and Coromandel: \$3470.00*
DIRECT CREMATION requiring transfer from North of Coromandel or Waikato Hospital: \$3580.00*
 Outside all of these areas: \$3225.00 plus mileage

SUPPORT LOCAL

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*Additional mileage may apply, according to roading conditions. ** Plus Doctors Fee. The Doctors Fee for medical paperwork required for Direct Cremations is an additional charge. This fee ranges from \$45.00 to \$200.00, determined by the patient's Doctor.



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SUPPORT LOCAL



SUDOKU

248

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

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

EASY

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

248

HARD

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

MEDIUM

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

EASY

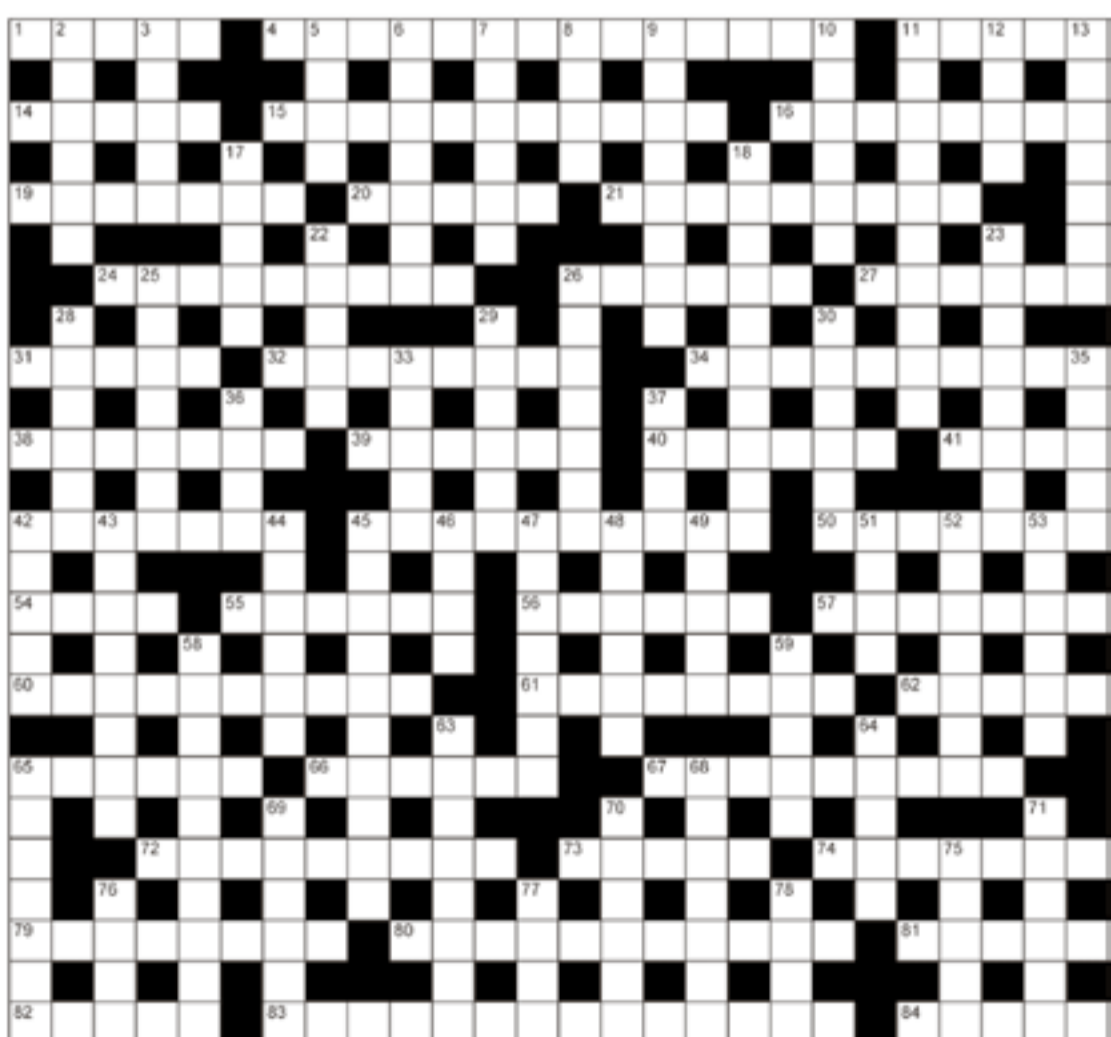
1	8	3	5	4	6	2	9	7
9	4	6	2	3	7	5	8	1
7	5	2	8	9	1	3	6	4
4	2	5	1	8	9	6	7	3
3	6	1	7	2	4	8	5	9
8	7	9	6	5	3	4	1	2
6	9	8	3	7	2	1	4	5
5	3	7	4	1	8	9	2	6
2	1	4	9	6	5	7	3	8

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JUMBO CROSSWORD

268

- ACROSS**
- 1 Damages (5)
 - 4 Make great profits (4,2,3,5)
 - 11 Holding device (5)
 - 14 Reflection (5)
 - 15 Bug spray (11)
 - 16 Curved sword (8)
 - 19 Meat supplier (7)
 - 20 Welds together (5)
 - 21 Carving (9)
 - 24 Apart (9)
 - 26 Complete (6)
 - 27 Pick (6)
 - 31 Poisonous fluid (5)
 - 32 Australian island (8)
 - 34 Unplug (10)
 - 38 Least (7)
 - 39 Alter slightly (6)
 - 40 Rang (6)
 - 41 Inform on (4)
 - 42 Computer accessory (7)
 - 45 Culpably involved (10)
 - 50 Went in (7)
 - 54 Zero (4)
 - 55 Out of view (6)
 - 56 Whip strokes (6)
 - 57 Take over from (7)
 - 60 Dexterity (10)
 - 61 Thug (8)
 - 62 Wined and dined (5)
 - 65 Awning (6)
 - 66 Stock pen on American ranch (6)
 - 67 Stubborn (9)
 - 72 Aids sleep (anag)(9)
 - 73 Doughy cake (5)
 - 74 Novice (7)
 - 79 Site (8)
 - 80 Stylist (11)
 - 81 Old gold coin (5)
 - 82 Church council (5)
 - 83 Naive, innocent, over-trustful people (5,2,3,4)
 - 84 Power cables (5)
- DOWN**
- 2 Defensive covering (6)
 - 3 Sorcery (5)
 - 5 Relation (4)
 - 6 Put to death (7)
 - 7 Spice (6)
 - 8 German white wine (4)
 - 9 Healing drug (8)
 - 10 Shy act (anag)(6)
 - 11 Grasp (10)
 - 12 Male voice (4)
 - 13 Scent (7)
 - 17 Hold up (5)
 - 18 Top-secret (10)
 - 22 Waterway (5)
 - 23 Jointly (8)
 - 25 Feeling (7)
 - 26 Excessively agitated (7)
 - 28 Higher-ranking (6)
 - 29 Yearly (6)
 - 30 Plot (6)
 - 33 Brothel boss (5)
 - 35 Recorded (5)
 - 36 Confident (4)
 - 37 North Briton (4)
 - 42 Black-and-white animal (5)
 - 43 Unaware (8)
 - 44 Rules over (6)
 - 45 Slightly unwell (10)
 - 46 Small horse (4)
 - 47 Outlawed (7)
 - 48 Away (6)
 - 49 Makes level (5)
 - 51 Requirement (4)
 - 52 Distinguished (7)
 - 53 Begrudged (6)
 - 58 Located exactly (10)
 - 59 Trivial (5)
 - 63 Intrude illegally (8)
 - 64 Beginning (5)
 - 65 Waxy lights (7)
 - 68 Cutting machine with an endless steel blade (7)
 - 69 Self-assurance (6)
 - 70 Blacken with heat (6)
 - 71 Reimbursed (6)
 - 75 Waken (5)
 - 76 Glance over quickly (4)
 - 77 Golf club (4)
 - 78 Decision-blocking vote (4)



PREVIOUS SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Lacquer, 4 Phenomenon, 9 Brittle, 13 Slag, 14 Stress, 15 Tickle, 16 Bigoted, 19 Remunerate, 20 Paradise, 21 Divan, 24 Sermon, 25 Chores, 27 Appaloosa, 32 Telegram, 33 Ageing, 34 Elevate, 38 Torments, 39 Invert, 40 Crew, 41 Aside, 42 Night, 45 Rattle the sabre, 52 Havoc, 55 Gravy, 56 Clan, 57 Fasten, 58 Scenario, 61 Secrets, 62 Serene, 63 Domestic, 66 Isolation, 68 Ornate, 69 Friend, 73 Oasis, 74 Sailboat, 76 Disinfects, 81 Visible, 82 Absorb, 83 Useful, 84 Plan, 85 Moistens, 86 Mysterious, 87 Dressed.

DOWN: 1 Loser, 2 Claymore, 3 Return, 4 Pleat, 5 Ease, 6 Octopus, 7 Escort, 8 Oiled, 10 Ruin, 11 Tropics, 12 Leeway, 17 Incoherent, 18 Usual, 22 Criminal, 23 Mould, 24 Shorten, 26 Harp, 28 Panacea, 29 Pester, 30 Pestle, 31 Studio, 33 Agent, 35 Vesta, 36 Brag, 37 Tear, 43 Israel, 44 Hover, 46 Able, 47 Tangelo, 48 Eiffel, 49 Haste, 50 Sledding, 51 Excuse, 52 Handicraft, 53 Vary, 54 Clogged, 59 Stalk, 60 Omit, 64 Steal, 65 Hercules, 67 Spirits, 68 October, 70 Casino, 71 Bow out, 72 Liquid, 75 Lobby, 77 Ideas, 78 Synod, 79 Flue, 80 Sumo.

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LETTERS

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HELP APPRECIATED

On Saturday 11 April, I went to the sandbag station in Thames to load bags in preparation for the arrival of Cyclone Vaianu. Instead of the hard work I anticipated, I met a bunch of young people, aged, I guess, from under 12 to mid 20s, who had taken it upon themselves to fill sandbags, and load them into people's cars. All this done with a cheerful attitude and happy smiles. At a time when many oldies, like myself, complain about lack of initiative and effort in the young, their actions really brightened my day. I don't know if they were part of a family or a group of friends, but that lot of young folks deserve high praise and thanks for their unselfish actions.
Bob McIntyre, Te Puru

DON'T CUT SERVICES

TCDC: Cut the Bureaucracy, Not the Services. Ratepayers are once again being asked to dig deeper. Thames-Coromandel District Council's executive proposed an average 14 per cent+ rates increase. Councillors trimmed it to 3.77 per cent. Both figures are unacceptable — and both entirely dodge the real problem. Nobody is talking about TCDC's burgeoning bureaucracy. Housed in Thames, TCDC now employs an estimated 255 full-time equivalent (FTE) staff at a cost approximately \$28 million per year (TCDC 2024/25). That is ratepayers' money. Yet in all the consultation documents, all the carefully worded proposals, there is not a single mention of reducing staff numbers. Not one. Instead, we are offered four choices: mow the grass less, cut transfer station hours, pay more fees, or lose rates remissions. That is the sum total of TCDC's vision for fiscal discipline — make ratepayers pay more or receive less, while the organisation itself remains untouched. Look at the legal function alone. TCDC employs an army of lawyers in-house — and still spends hundreds of thousands of dollars on external legal opinions. Why? If the in-house team cannot do the job, why are ratepayers funding them? Then there is communications. A heavily staffed department producing material that, with standardised templates and modern AI tools, could be handled by one person. Councils far larger than TCDC are already doing exactly this. And the consultation process itself? Whangamata residents were notified of a community meeting — Thursday 10 April, 10am to 1pm — by a notice published Wednesday 8 April. One working day. That is not community engagement. That is window dressing. The numbers make this even harder to swallow. According to TCDC's own figures, the Whangamata ward alone contributes \$23.9 million — 22.3% — of the district's total 2024/25 rate take of \$107.3 million. That figure is projected to climb to \$117.5 million in 2025/26 and \$122 million by 2026/27, before accounting for the proposed shift from Land Value to Capital Value rating.

More broadly, the eastern Coromandel — from Whangapoua to Whangamata — contributes some 75% of all district rates. Communities paying the lion's share of the bill deserve far better than this. TCDC exists to serve ratepayers, not the other way around. Before a single dollar is added to rates, or a single service is cut, this council owes its community a full, honest accounting of its staffing levels, its management structure, and whether 255 FTE employees is remotely justified for a district of this size. Submissions are open until 28 April. I urge every ratepayer to have their say — and to demand the question TCDC refuses to ask itself.
Patrick Kerr, Whangamata

MAYOR'S REPLY

Patrick Kerr asks why nobody is talking about staff costs and fiscal discipline at TCDC. I am happy to answer that directly. My Mayoral Efficiency Taskforce, working alongside community boards, councillors and staff, has already reduced a projected average district rate increase for next year of over 13 percent down to below 3.8 percent, the figure I campaigned on. That work did not happen by accident, and it did not happen because someone wrote a letter to the editor. It happened because elected members did the job they were elected to do. The savings measures already on the table include reducing consultancy budgets, extending borrowing terms, adjusting depreciation provisions, and reducing personnel costs by \$1 million. Mr Kerr's letter does not mention any of these. They are all set out in the consultation document, which I would encourage every ratepayer to read before forming a view. This council has risen to the challenge to minimise the impact of cost pressures for ratepayers. The cost pressures on council - inflation on contracts, materials, insurance and energy - don't go away as every homeowner will know. Ageing infrastructure must be renewed. Government reforms have shifted costs onto local government. Storms cost money. These are not excuses, they are the reality of running a district of 3,000 square kilometres with 400 km of coastline, 23 fresh-water or waste-water treatment plants, and 704km of council-owned roads. Mr Kerr also notes he had limited notice of the Whangamata community meeting. The engagement sessions were confirmed and publicised from the 24 March council meeting. Over 600 submissions have now been received to our consultation on the Annual Plan, one of the strongest responses to a consultation this district has seen. Feedback continues to come in daily. That suggests ratepayers are engaged and taking the process seriously, which is exactly what should happen. Submissions close 28 April. Read the full consultation document at tcdc.govt.nz and have your say. This council is listening.
- Peter Revell, TCDC Mayor

Pet Profile

Meet Cashew - a special soul

Some puppies are cute... and then there's Cashew — a truly special little soul who leaves a lasting impression. This beautiful 5-month-old Sharpei cross, with her tan coat and striking black muzzle, is as gentle as she is adorable. Cashew has a soft, loving nature and a quiet way of melting hearts, leaning in close for affection and making you feel like the most important person in the world. Now available for adoption, Cashew is ready to find a family who will cherish her sweet nature and help her grow into a confident, well-rounded dog. She adores affection, loves being close to her people, and brings a calm, comforting presence wherever she goes. With the right love and guidance, she's sure to blossom into something truly incredible.

Even better, Cashew is part of our "Clear the Shelter" promotion, running until May 3, where adoption fees are reduced by 50 per cent to help more animals find loving homes before winter. That means this unforgettable girl can be yours for just \$77. Desexed, vaccinated, and microchipped.



In Brief

MOTHER'S DAY MUSIC
Waihi music club A Friends Place recently entertained visiting school groups and locals with a lively 90-minute performance in the lead-up to Valentine's Day, raising funds for Hato Hone St John. The group has been invited to return for a Mother's Day performance at the Waihi Library on Rosemont Rd on May 5 from 11am to 12.30pm.

PUMP STATION UPGRADE
Hauraki District Council will begin upgrading the Criterion Bridge stormwater pump station over five days between May 1-26, to improve flood protection for homes and

businesses in low-lying areas near Normanby Rd. Local businesses will remain accessible.

VOLUNTEER AWARDS OPEN
Nominations are now open for Volunteering Waikato's Annual Volunteer Awards, celebrating the dedication and impact of volunteers across the community. With eight categories, including Youth, Unsung Hero and Long Service, the awards recognise a wide range of contributions. Anyone can submit a nomination, and you don't need to be a Volunteering Waikato member to take part. Nominations close on May 3. Submit a nomination at: volunteeringwaikato.org.nz/annual-volunteer-awards.



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High profile retail location with holding yield

Positioned in the very heart of Thames' established retail precinct, this high-profile main street property presents a rare opportunity to secure a tightly held asset with both immediate income and compelling future upside. Held by the same ownership for over 40 years, the property has long been home to the iconic Snowden's Menswear store — a testament to the strength and consistency of this location.

Now offered to the market for the first time in decades, the property provides flexibility to suit a range of buyers, with options for continued income or a fresh start. The existing tenancy delivers a valuable 12-month holding income stream.

bayleys.co.nz/2180958

471_{sqm} 300_{sqm}

Tender (unless sold prior)
 Closing 4pm, Thu 21 May 2026
 459 Pollen Street, Thames
View by appointment
Geoff Graham 021 733 430
 geoff.graham@bayleys.co.nz
M H REALTY LIMITED, BAYLEYS, LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008



Boundary lines are indicative only

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Thames 59C Totara Valley Road

Clear instructions – must be sold

This is a genuine opportunity to secure a well-positioned section on Totara Valley Road, just a short drive from Thames. The property has returned to the market, and the vendors are highly motivated — it must be sold. Set on an elevated site of approximately 1,257sqm (more or less), the section enjoys a peaceful rural outlook with space and privacy that's increasingly hard to find so close to town. The land's contour is ideal for maximising the surrounding views, offering a great foundation for your plans. Whether you're building a permanent home or creating a weekend retreat, there's flexibility here to bring your vision to life.

bayleys.co.nz/2180960

1,257_{sqm}

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 21 May 2026
 96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
View 10-10.30am Sun 3 May
Glenn Tanner 027 486 2399
 glenn.tanner@bayleys.co.nz
Maddy Aislabie 027 780 4389
 maddy.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz
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Kopu 52 Kopu Road

Vacant “entry level” industrial opportunity.

Unlock this opportunity to secure a strategically located industrial property at an affordable price. Situated next to the newly established Kopu Marine Servicing and Business precinct, this small-scale, high-potential asset is ideal for land bankers, entrepreneurial investors, or owner-occupiers. The property features two independent, free-standing industrial sheds with a combined floor area of 260sqm (more or less) on a 556sqm (more or less) industrial-zoned site. Offering absolute flexibility, you can occupy one shed for your own business while generating rental income from the other. Both buildings are structurally sound, with positive earthquake ratings of 60% NBS and 80% NBS.

bayleys.co.nz/2180959

556_{sqm}  260_{sqm} 

Tender (unless sold prior)
Closing 4pm, Fri 22 May 2026

459 Pollen Street, Thames

View by appointment

Geoff Graham 021 733 430

geoff.graham@bayleys.co.nz

M H REALTY LIMITED, BAYLEYS, LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008



Boundary lines are indicative only





Kopu 9 Ngati Maru Highway

High-profile rural retail investment

- 3,568 sqm (more or less) high-profile site
- National tenant, Farmsource
- Returning \$136,742 pa + GST & outgoings

A high-profile industrial investment positioned on busy Ngati Maru Highway in Kopu. This well-maintained facility comprises a retail showroom, warehouse, offices, secure yard, & is fully leased to Farm Source—the retail arm of Fonterra, New Zealand’s largest company & a global dairy leader. Located alongside established national & local operators, the property offers a reliable income & long-term appeal in one of the country’s key dairy regions.

bayleys.co.nz/2180954

3,568_{sqm}  940_{sqm} 

Auction (unless sold prior) 2pm, Thu 21 May 2026

1030 Victoria Street, Hamilton

View by appointment

Josh Smith 027 229 8865

josh.smith@bayleys.co.nz

M H REALTY LIMITED, BAYLEYS, LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008




Boundary lines are indicative only




Pipiroa 1338 State Highway 25

Established grazing or cropping, dual road frontage

Set across 48.4 hectares (more or less), this well-established property supports productive grazing alongside hay and silage production. The land is largely flat and includes a recently renovated three-bedroom home, dual road frontage, and a practical range of outbuildings supporting everyday farming activity. Around 45 paddocks are formed mainly by two-wire electric fencing, with five-wire post and batten boundary fencing. A reliable council water supply services the farm. Near the entrance sits a former cowshed with adjoining yards, plus an implement shed and haybarn. The home looks across surrounding farmland and is complemented by a double garage.

bayleys.co.nz/2630233

48.4914_{ha} 

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 7 May 2026

96 Ulster Street, Hamilton

View 11-11.45am Wed 29 Apr

Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83

karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz

Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410

sam.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz

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Boundary lines are indicative only




Waitakaruru 33 and 92 Back Miranda Road

Two titles, land, location, and layered potential

Rarely available, this 41.79 hectare (more or less) holding brings together scale, contour, and a well-placed setting for a versatile rural holding. Offered across two titles near the Firth of Thames, it suits a range of uses. Currently supporting dairy grazing, it also lends itself to lifestyle living, with a defined building platform near the front. Cattle yards with a loading race ensure practical stock handling, complemented by a high-stud implement shed. The dual titles provide purchasing flexibility. Located within a connected rural district, it is around 13km from Ngatea, 15km from Thames, with schooling nearby and coastal amenities within easy reach.

bayleys.co.nz/2630230

41.7958_{ha} 

Tender (unless sold prior)

Closing 2pm, Wed 13 May 2026

96 Ulster Street, Hamilton

View 12.30-1.30pm Tue 5 May

Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83

karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz

Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410

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BAYLEYS



Boundary lines are indicative only



Waitakaruru Back Miranda Road

Room to create your country home

Set across 4.2370 hectares (more or less) in Waitakaruru, this lifestyle block offers a clear canvas with a building platform ready for your plans. The contour suits a range of builds, from a generous country home to a compact design, with space for gardens, sheds, or a pool. With no covenants, you can shape the layout to suit. The nearby Firth of Thames coastline adds appeal, with leisure options including golf and coastal escapes. Schooling includes Hauraki Plains College and local primary schools. A flexible landholding with scope to build and develop over time.

bayleys.co.nz/2630229

4.237_{ha} 

For Sale by Deadline Private Treaty (unless sold prior)

2pm, Wed 13 May 2026

96 Ulster Street, Hamilton

Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83 karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz

Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410

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Ngatea 168b Bush Road

Four-bedroom character villa with two bathrooms

This established 204sqm (more or less) villa enjoys wide rural views and strong privacy. Built in 1913-14 as the original homestead, it retains a clear heritage connection. Inside, generous proportions feature three-metre stud ceilings (more or less), matai flooring and a wide hallway, with north-facing living bringing in natural light. The home includes three double bedrooms, one single and a separate lounge, with the master offering ample wardrobe space. Comfort is ensured with insulation, double glazing, two heat pumps, two wood burners and a heat transfer system. Established grounds feature mature trees, a paddock and open lawns, with a triple-bay garage completing the setting.

bayleys.co.nz/2630186

6,742_{sqm}  4  2 

Asking Price \$999,000

View by appointment

Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83

karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz

Seth Roe 027 320 6937

seth.roe@bayleys.co.nz

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