

The Valley Profile



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ONE MAN'S CASTLE



It's not unusual to see man-made structures on the beach - sandcastles, rock sculptures, driftwood huts. But Te Puru resident Danley Tonkin has taken the concept to extremes - and not everyone is happy about it. Reporter ALICE PARMINTER braves the moat to find out more

Danley Tonkin with his enormous sea-castle.
Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

Danley Tonkin has been building a castle in the surf behind his Te Puru home.

The structure is several metres high and constructed mainly from rocks, driftwood, and sand, along with pieces of steel bars. It's surrounded by a rock wall and moat.

The 23-year-old spends several hours a day on the beach, carting materials in an old wheelbarrow. He is the king of this castle, and he doesn't care what anyone else thinks.

"I was playing video games one day and I thought, this would be better if I made

this in real life," he said. "I'm building the castle so that I have a purpose that is mine and not someone else's. I think lots of lives throughout the ages are lived by the majority of people serving someone else's dream. And that sounds depressing when 40 years of your life are dedicated to earning an imaginary fiat currency to exist in someone else's world."

Danley said he spends a lot of time up on the castle. He has slept up there, and builds small fires to cook food and roast marshmal-

lows. In keeping with his medieval theme, he often sports armour or other costumes, and has constructed several homemade weapons. He chronicles his efforts in a series of diary-like videos on YouTube, which has just over 5200 followers, along with a number of self-published books.

"It's good exercise. It's my little goal. And it's a place to chill during the summer when it's hot, and you want somewhere that's alone and that people can't get to you unless they want to get wet socks."

Some residents, however, are opposed to Danley's activities. Among their concerns are what one resident described as threatening and violent behaviour.

"There's so many people who have been personally threatened by him and too scared to come forward," said the resident, who wished to remain anonymous. "Every time he saw me he'd abuse me... He lives in a fantasy world - he has no regard to rules and laws." Danley could often be seen stalking

CONTINUED ON P2

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CONTINUED FROM P1

up and down the beach with homemade crossbow and arrows, they said.

“He’s firing them all over the show,” they said. “They wash up occasionally. They’re like a metre long with feathers on it, and four inch nails sticking out the other end. We’ve seen him shoot them and they go a fair distance. If a person got hit with that, it would be pretty serious.”

However, Danley said the arrows were more likely to endanger himself than others, and he mostly shoots them from the castle in the direction of open water. “I tried going fishing with the crossbow, but it wasn’t very effective. I was just sort of shooting into the water randomly, and I thought, if I’m really lucky I’ll catch a fish. That didn’t happen. But I had a lot of fun.”

Senior Sergeant Nicola Cornes said Police were aware of an incident with a crossbow last year. “We have spoken with one person and do not believe there was any risk to the public. Police have not received any further related reports or complaints.”

The resident also said they, and several others, have major concerns over the castle structure, and have complained to maritime staff. “We were getting reports of other boaties having near misses on it and things like that,” the resident said.

“A member of the public [who’s] been kiteboarding here for years... hit the structure which made him crash off his board and get dragged across the oyster shells. He required 10 stitches in the arm.”

The resident believed the castle was an accident waiting to happen. “He’s got all these sticks poking out and steel bars... it’s just so hazardous.”

Danley is aware of the opposition to his



Danley Tonkin, the self-proclaimed “king of the castle.”
Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

castle, but said he intends to continue regardless. “I think there’s about four people that absolutely hate it and they’ve just made up their mind that they want to destroy it.”

“None of them have talked to me, except for the Police who came round and said it was pretty cool. There’s not really any recreational hazard beyond the one that you invent because you’ve got nothing better to do, in my opinion.”

Danley has been working on his current castle since January, after a previous, smaller iteration was removed by maritime officers. “I came home just as they were smashing it to bits. And then I watched it all get demolished in front of my eyes. I waited until they were done, and then I started rebuilding,” he said. “I quit my job, and I thought, I’m going to just fix this. Whoever sent the

digger wants me to be crushed by this, and has decided to try and stop me, and I am going to not be stopped.”

Maritime officer Jared Sturgeon said the previous castle was a navigational hazard as it was not visible to water users at high tide.

“There were complaints... We had someone run into it so it had to come down.”

The new structure was not a maritime issue as it was large enough to be visible, and his team were not likely to be taking any further action.

Meanwhile, Danley said he planned to continue building his current castle bigger and better, as long as his body would allow.

“I’m not really sure what [my] motive is... It is a lot of things, and it’s also kind of nothing. It’s just a pile of stones,” he said.

“It’s my little castle.”

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Thames Tides

Wed Jun 17		Thu Jun 18		Fri Jun 19		Sat Jun 20		Sun Jun 21		Mon Jun 22		Tue Jun 23	
4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm
Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon
2:13am 0.4	2:36pm 0.2	3:08am 0.4	3:27pm 0.2	4:03am 0.4	4:18pm 0.3	4:57am 0.5	5:10pm 0.5	5:51am 0.6	12:06pm 3.3	12:30am 3.4	12:58pm 3.2	1:22am 3.3	1:53pm 3.1
8:32am 3.6	8:58pm 3.8	9:28am 3.6	9:51pm 3.7	10:22am 3.5	10:44pm 3.6	11:14am 3.4	11:37pm 3.5	6:03pm 0.6	6:44am 0.7	6:59pm 0.8	7:37am 0.7	7:59pm 0.9	
7:30am	5:07pm	7:30am	5:08pm	7:31am	5:08pm	7:31am	5:08pm	7:31am	5:08pm	7:31am	5:08pm	7:32am	5:09pm
Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At	Best At
1:50am	2:22pm	2:52am	3:21pm	3:48am	4:14pm	4:39am	5:02pm	5:25am	5:47pm	6:09am	6:30pm	6:51am	7:12pm
Rise 9:34am	Set 7:15pm	Rise 10:18am	Set 8:32pm	Rise 10:53am	Set 9:45pm	Rise 11:22am	Set 10:53pm	Rise 11:47am	Set 11:57pm	First Quarter Rise 12:11pm	Set 1:01am	Rise 12:35pm	

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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	HIGH	LOW
Coromandel	- 0	04	- 03
Whitianga	- 0	01	- 05
Tairua	+ 0	10	+ 20
Whangamata	- 0	03	- 06
Waihi Beach	- 0	21	- 16

Chris Kemp's mission beyond MND

By KELLEY TANTAU

Chris Kemp can no longer hold the drumsticks that were once rarely out of his hands.

The Thames musician now uses a power wheelchair, relies on round-the-clock care from partner Kendall Todd, and is living with motor neurone disease (MND), a progressive condition that has steadily taken away his mobility since his diagnosis in 2023. Yet behind the lime-green front door of the couple's Thames home, life remains filled with music, plans, and purpose.

Chris is sharing his story as part of MND Action Month, which includes the return of the Ice Bucket Challenge to raise awareness and support for people living with the disease.

The illness is terminal, with a life expectancy of two-three years, and for Chris, it will progressively rob him of his ability to move, speak, and breathe.

But Chris, a drummer who once played in the support band for Chris Isaak at the St James Theatre, hasn't let the disease take away his passion for creating music.

He and Kendall have plans to write and record a third album together, using technology to recreate Chris' drumming.

"After thinking I would never get to play music again, we came up with a plan to adapt my drumming practice from physical to digital - this will involve learning how to use a recording software in combination with midi controllers and whatever else we can use to create," Chris told *The Profile*.

"It is ambitious as it can be a big learning curve for an analog musician! However, we now have the basic set-up to start creating and building from there."

Chris said he and Kendall focus on the "can do", rather than the "can't do", and he still enjoyed getting out and about in Thames - a community he was deeply grateful for, with supporters both locally and fur-



Before his MND diagnosis, Chris Kemp spent years behind the drum kit.

Photos: SUPPLIED



Chris is now sharing his experience of living with motor neurone disease.

organised by local band The Tuesdays and Carson's Bookshop. Donations also helped fund a family trip to the United States last year, one of several ways Chris, Kendall, and their children have continued to prioritise making memories together.

Chris is now on a mission to help raise awareness of the disease that he said he knew nothing about when he was diagnosed.

"I like to talk about it, because I want everyone to know what the hell's going on," he said. "I feel like it's the most horrible disease and I knew nothing about it."

Chris is also searching for someone to step into the role of run director for a local parkrun initiative he has spent the past two years developing.

He told *The Profile* in 2024 that he hoped establishing the event would be a lasting legacy following his diagnosis.

"I can't run anymore. My body wants to, but knees say no - I always get beaten by a small child or a pram," he said at the time. "[But] I want to do this for the community."

DETAILS: To help with the parkrun: support@parkrun.com. For info on the Ice Bucket Challenge or how to raise funds for MND NZ, visit www.mndactionmonth.org.nz.

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60 years for the good of the community

By ALICE PARMINTER

Max Bosselmann is a vestige of the golden era of service clubs.

The Thames resident this year celebrated 60 years of continuous membership in the Thames Rotary Club, and he has no intentions of slowing down.

"I've always had positive vibes about Rotary," Max told *The Profile*.

"We do everything we can for the good of the community, the good of our people, and the good of the world, really."

Max's introduction to Rotary was as a teenager, when he and some classmates were invited along to a club meeting as a reward for passing their School Certificate qualification.

In the following years he learned much about the organisation's values and its impact on the world, and in May, 1966, Max became a member himself.

"When I first joined, and for many many years afterwards, we always tried to avoid publicity - we used to try and do things behind the scenes," Max said.

"Rotary has changed in that respect and we now like the public to know what we're about - we bought bright yellow shirts with Rotary emblazoned all over them."

Max considers himself a "link to the old days".

"There wouldn't be another member that's done more than 30 years I don't think. I can remember grabbing an old Rotary bulletin one day and starting to talk



Max Bosselmann has dedicated 60 years of his life to serving at the Thames Rotary Club.

Photos: SUPPLIED



Carole and Max Bosselmann.

Carole. "She never joined [Rotary] but she has always been right behind me, and right behind club projects," he said.

"She's a life member of the bowling club and we would have raised hundreds of thousands of dollars over the years with the annual charitable bowls tournament."

These days, membership in service clubs were in decline, but Max said he is hopeful for a resurgence.

"With the loss of Lions, Lionesses, Jaycees and Round Table - service clubs are not fashionable... today," Max said.

"I'd love Rotary to return to 30-plus members... When you're bigger you're more effective."

"Rotary is changing rapidly in an attempt to modernise itself and appeal to younger people with different skills and attitudes..."

"As I see it we have to move with the times and I hope and expect all the effort being put in in this area will bear fruit."

about some of the things we used to do in the old days, and you know five minutes later I think half the club was asleep," he joked.

"[But] each year I'm amazed at how much we seem to be achieving by just nibbling away each week. It's a tribute to the people that are in Rotary: they're capable, they're intelligent, and they're motivated, and they make things happen."

Max has fond memories of the

many civic improvement projects he was a part of over the years, including the refurbishment of Moanataiari School's Thomas the Tank Engine, the Kauaeranga Valley Model Dam, and the recently completed rail trail shelters.

Max and his wife Carole also had a large part to play in the development of the Thames club's International Student Exchange programme. The couple hosted

many students themselves, forming lasting friendships.

Over the years Max has also served in every post the club has to offer - with the notable exception of Song Leader. He has been awarded the club's highest honours: a Paul Harris Fellow Recognition and the Rotary Sapphire Pin.

Max said his ability to serve for so long was due in large part to

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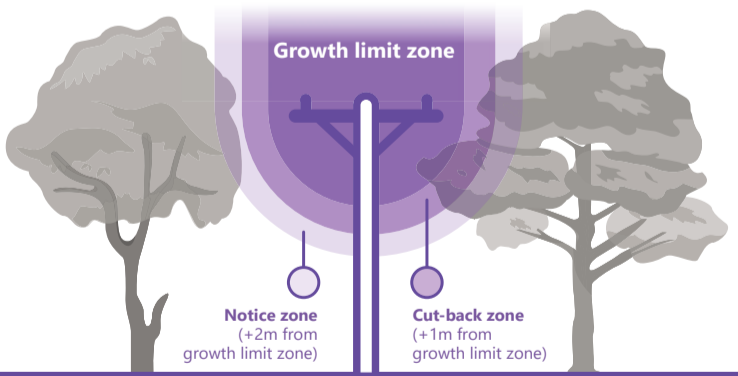
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Body found on the rocks identified by note



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

A resident of Devonport searching for driftwood near the wharf on a Friday night in June, 1910, was startled to come across a body on the rocks.

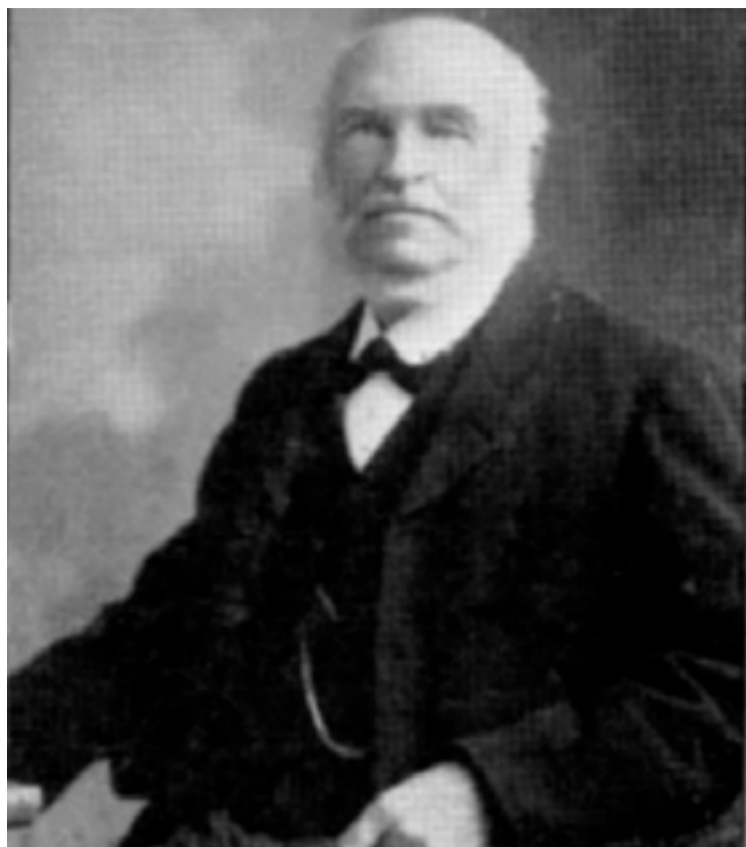
The man was respectably dressed, of medium height, partially bald, with grey beard and hair. Papers found on him indicated he was 70-year-old Robert Burra, bookseller and stationer, of Thames.

A note found in a coat pocket read: "Dr Aubin, Thames, having notified me that I am liable to heart failure, in case of accident my address is Queen St, Thames. - R Burra." How and when he came to be in the sea was a mystery.

Robert, an Englishman had arrived in New Zealand when he was 23. He had been well known in Auckland's early days as a partner of Baron James de Hirsch, conducting business as brokers and shipping agents in Fort St.

In 1866, the men went bankrupt and when the Thames goldfield opened the next year they relocated there.

In 1874 Robert began a station-



Robert Burra was one of the most familiar figures in Thames. Photo: SUPPLIED

ery business in Brown St, Grahamstown, becoming one of the most familiar figures in Thames.

His shop stocked a variety of office supplies as well as American, English and Australian novels.

Any book not in stock, he promised, could be procured to order. He sold writing desks, blotters, photo albums, birthday books, purses and photo frames.

He was also a music seller, supplying sheet music and instruments. Tickets to concerts, theat-

ricals, and entertainments could also be purchased at Burra's store.

On the side he sold Hendy's Egg Julep - a tonic for strengthening the hair, destroying dandruff and giving a soft glossy appearance, and Hendy's Frizzaire - an invaluable preparation for keeping the hair in curl in all weather. Photographs were exhibited in his windows as well as samples of gold.

In 1876, Robert married Elizabeth Mill and they had one child, Grace, who died at five months

old. For the next 18 years or so, Robert ran his bookshop in Brown St. In 1894 he announced he was giving up the stationery business although he continued to advertise as a music seller in Grahamstown.

Elizabeth died in 1902 and two years later Robert married Flora Lawlor. A Burra's stationery store opened in Pollen St, Shortland opposite the Salvation Army barracks the same year. The couple welcomed a daughter, Agnes, in 1905.

But as time went on Robert became worried. Business had declined a good deal. Lately, he had felt quite unwell. He had bouts of giddiness and trembling, and dared not go out in the dark for fear of falling. Dr Aubin had warned him about heart failure.

Robert was methodical in all that he did and it was no surprise that he had taken the precaution of carrying an identification card in case he was stricken down.

The inquest at Auckland was held to suit the convenience of Captain Farquhar and the sailing of the steamers as Robert and his relatives were to be returned to Thames by steamer.

It was established that Robert had dined at Devonport on Friday evening and afterwards walked along the wharf. He had fallen, as he had feared, in a fainting fit into the water and accidentally drowned.

Robert was buried at Tararu cemetery. He was remembered as a quiet, self-contained man, who always minded his own business, and let other people alone - which, said the *Observer* newspaper, could not be said of everyone.

Chris' Quiz

Weekly quiz compiled by Chris Parminter

1. What brand were the first rental e-scooters available in New Zealand? a) Beam, b) Flamingo, or c) Lime?
2. Bananas are slightly radioactive, mostly due to the presence of which chemical element?
3. Is a honey bee's sting acidic or alkaline?
4. Which basketball player appeared in the movie *Airplane!* as co-pilot Captain Roger Murdock? a) Kareem Abdul-Jabbar, b) Larry Bird, or c) Magic Johnson?
5. How many 'dah's' are mentioned in the radio version of Dave Dobbyn's *Slice of Heaven*? a) 24, b) 72, or c) 240?
6. Which of the following people worked for a spy agency, developing a shark repellent, before becoming a celebrity chef? a) Jamie Oliver, b) Julia Child, or c) Nadia Lim?
7. Poutine is a dish invented in and most associated with which country?
8. True or false: Blackbeard the Pirate was a creation of author Robert Louis Stevenson?
9. Batman is the alias of which fictional character from Gotham City?
10. "Pass-agg" is informal slang for which communication style?



ANSWERS: 1. c) Lime; 2. Potassium; 3. Bee venom is acidic (around pH 5); 4. a) Kareem Abdul-Jabbar; 5. b) 72; 6. b) 72; 7. Canada; 8. False; Blackbeard was a real pirate born in c.1680; 9. Bruce Wayne; 10. Passive aggressive.



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New awards honour Hauraki community mahi

By KELLEY TANTAU

Nominations are now open for Te Pā Harakeke, the Hauraki Māori Community Awards, recognising people whose “quiet, consistent mahi” strengthens whānau and communities across the district.

Established by Te Whāriki Manawāhine o Hauraki - Hauraki Women’s Refuge, Te Pā Harakeke is the first of many Hauraki Māori Community awards.

“These awards are about honouring those whose contributions often go unseen, but whose impact is deeply felt by our communities,” Tania Weidenbohm, co-chair of Te Whāriki, said.

The inaugural awards will be held on Saturday, July 11, at the Thames War Memorial Civic Centre, during Matariki, bringing together whānau, hapū, iwi, community organisations, and partners to uplift the carers, kaimahi, kaitiaki, rangatahi, and wāhine toa whose mahi sustains the wellbeing of Hauraki.

Nominees for the awards - which last week received \$2650 in funding from Hauraki District Council’s community development grant fund - can be an individual, whānau, kaupapa, or rōpū whose work deserves to be recognised.

“There are people across Hauraki whose mahi holds our

communities together, and most of them would never ask to be acknowledged,” Michael Barlow, co-chair of Te Whāriki Manawāhine o Hauraki said.

“That’s exactly why we’ve created these awards,” chief executive of Te Whāriki Manawāhine o Hauraki, Denise Messiter, added. “Te Pā Harakeke is our way of saying: we see you, we honour you, and we are stronger because of you.”

The awards celebrate seven areas of community mahi: Whanaungatanga me Whakamana He Tangata - Whanaungatanga and Collective Empowerment; Te Haumarua me te Manawaroa o te Hapori - Community Safety and Resilience; Whakaora Ahurea me Manawaroa Tangata Whenua - Cultural Revitalisation & Identity; Tane Ora - Tane Maori Leadership; Daniel Gage Memorial Award - Te Auaha Rangatahi, Te Oranga a Hapori [Rangatahi Community Innovator Award]; Liane Ngamane Memorial Award - Mana Wahine Award; and the Whaitiri (Betty) Williams Memorial Award - Manaakitia Papatūānuku [Guardian of Papatūānuku].

DETAILS: Nominations can be submitted online at form.typeform.com/to/yzbuATia. Manual nominations: email poutahuhu@hauraki.refuge.co.nz. Nominations close at 5pm, June 19.



Students test out the new play equipment.

Photos: ALICE PARMINTER



Hanging around on the ropes.



The basketball hoop is a hit.



Mayor Toby Adams and head students cut the ribbon.



Snacks and free time for students.

\$321k playground opens

By ALICE PARMINTER

June 11 was the International Day of Play - and it also marked the official opening of the revamped Kerepēhi Community Playground.

The entire student body of nearby Kerepēhi School was present for the occasion, along with various councillors and staff from Hauraki District Council.

The ribbon was cut by Kerepēhi School’s head students, Tawhiro Luke Nathan and Briar Stockley, and the school also sang several waiata.

“We have officially opened this park to the dreamers, the runners, the climbers, and the makers of tomorrow,” principal

Moana Te Moananui said.

Hauraki Mayor Toby Adams invited the tamariki to “enjoy [the playground], honour it, look after it, and have an enormous amount of fun”.

The playground was reimagined with input from the school’s students, who workshopped ideas with the council in July, 2025. Alongside the existing swings and seesaw, it now also features a quarter-court basketball court and hoop, large main play structure, and other play equipment.

Toilets will be installed at the site at a later date.

The project cost \$321,000, which included \$200,000 from the Better Off Fund.

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Moss & Freud (100 mins) R13. Biopic about the life of era-defining supermodel Kate Moss, centred around her relationship with the British artist Lucian Freud. Filmed in NZ, starring Elie Bamber and Derek Jacobi.

Glenrothan (97 mins) M. Compelling family drama set in the stunning Scottish Highlands. Donal (Alan Cumming) returns to his family-owned whisky distillery for the first time in nearly 40 years.

Disclosure Day (145 mins) M. Steven Spielberg blockbuster that ponders what the current world would look like if we got undoubtable proof of the existence of alien life in the universe.

The Way (15th anniversary) (121 mins) PG. An unlikely quartet of misfits from around the world on a pilgrimage on the Camino de Santiago in France and Spain. In English.

The Christophers (100 mins) M. Comedy starring Ian McKellen. The estranged children of a once-famous artist hire a forger to complete his unfinished works so they can be “discovered” and sold after his death.

Caterpillar (97 mins) M. Follows a daughter, mother and grandmother (who has an obsession with raising monarch caterpillars and one day seeing the butterfly migration in Mexico) living in a leaky Wellington villa.

The Sheep Detectives (109 mins) PG. About a shepherd (Hugh Jackman) who reads detective novels to his sheep, assuming they can’t understand. A mysterious incident occurs, and the sheep become detectives.

Starting these school holidays: Toy Story 5: Buzz Lightyear, Woody, Jessie and the rest of the gang’s jobs are challenged when they come face-to-face with Lilypad, a brand-new tablet device that arrives with her own disruptive ideas about what is best for their kid, Bonnie. Will playtime ever be the same?

Moana (Live Action): Moana answers the Ocean’s call and, for the first time, voyages beyond the reef of her island of Motunui with the demigod Maui on an unforgettable journey to restore prosperity to her people.



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New Hauraki litter bins to save \$108k in costs

By ALICE PARMINTER

Hauraki District Council has approved a new litter bin system that it says will improve staff safety, maintain litter services across the district and eventually save the community \$108,000 a year in operating costs.

Aluminium bin enclosures containing 240-litre wheelie bins will replace 49 Big Belly Bins currently dotted around the district.

The council will also be removing 13 bins from low-use sites and replacing 11 park and reserve bins with wheelie bins on secure stands.

Twelve recycling bin units will also be replaced with standard bins as they were consistently being contaminated with too many non-recyclables to be effective.

A detailed review found council was not using the smart technology of the previous Big Belly bins to its full potential, meaning anticipated benefits, such as optimised collections, reduced servicing costs and improved efficiency were not being realised.

“Big Belly bins were an innovative solution when they were introduced, but after reviewing how they’re performing in Hauraki we’ve found there are more

practical and cost-effective ways to deliver this service,” Mayor Toby Adams said. “The new system will allow us to keep providing litter bins where they’re needed most while reducing health and safety risks for our team and make better use of public funds.”

Total spending on litter bins across the district reached \$382,456 in 2023/24, more than \$114,000 over budget.

Annual operational savings under the new approach are projected at around \$108,000 from year two onwards.

The capital cost of the transition is approximately \$334,905, funded through the Recreation Reserves and Plant and Vehicle Capital budget.

Meanwhile, the council has received a grant of \$45,000 from the New Zealand Community Trust to go towards construction of a D-shaped basketball court and pathway in Paeroa’s Railway Reserve.

The build is part of a raft of planned upgrades to the playground area.

An opening date for the new Ngatea council building has also been set.

The He Pātaka Kōrero Hauraki Plains Library and Community Centre is due to open on July 9, with a dawn blessing followed by a civic opening ceremony at 9am.

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Matariki 2026

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

‘Fresh vision’ for Paeroa Country Music Club

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

June 21 is the date country music lovers across the Hauraki-Coromandel should circle on their calendars.

That’s when the newly returned Paeroa Country Music Club will kick off its opening event for 2026 with a hiss and a roar.

Guest artist Michelle Lightband (nee Greaves) is set to provide an afternoon of musical entertainment with support from the Paeroa Country Music Club house band.

Promotions and entertainment officer Carolyn Parker said the Greaves’ family were well-known for their country music across New Zealand and the United States. “The Greaves family have been around for a long time. There’s 14 of them and the whole lot of them sing so it’s a big country music family.”

The club, which is under new leadership and a new committee, had been revitalised with a “fresh vision” to provide a welcoming platform for musicians, singers and songwriters of all ages, Carolyn said.

As a singer-songwriter herself, Carolyn said the idea was to bring live music, friendship and community spirit that builds connection and supports artists together. “It will be a space to connect, perform, learn and be inspired.”

Current club membership sits at around 30 people, and people are in-



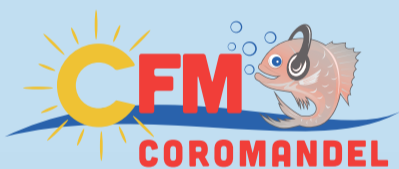
Guest artist Michelle Lightband will sing at the Paeroa Country Music Club. Photo: SUPPLIED

ited to join. Club days will be on the third Sunday of each month and hosted at the Paeroa Baptist Church.

“Whether you sing, play an instrument, write songs or simply listen to music, there is a place for you at the Paeroa Country Music Club,” she said.

“Come along [and] meet fellow music lovers and help us write the next chapter in the Paeroa Community.”

DETAILS: Paeroa Country Music Club official opening event with guest artist Michelle Lightband at 1pm on June 21 at the Paeroa Baptist Church, 2 Wood St. Entry \$5 for non-members. Follow Paeroa Country Music Band on Facebook to stay up to date.



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Jett Drummond, Benny Coburn and Josh Pratt with some of the art.

Photos: SUPPLIED

Students create sculptures from waste

More than 75 Waihi Beach School students gathered to create fish sculptures made entirely from discarded waste materials as part of an environmental art project that focuses on the issues of plastic pollution in the Pacific Ocean.

It was an initiative guided by Sustainable Waihi Beach called Forgotten Promises Project - Ocean Conservation Art Installations, which saw tamariki work alongside Pacific creative and cultural leader Stan Wolfgramm.

Students used discarded plastic bottles and recycled waste materials, including nurdles - tiny lentil-sized plastic pellets that continue to wash ashore at Waihi Beach following the *MV Rena* grounding.

Sustainable Waihi Beach's Pippa Coombes said their presence served as a stark reminder that, even 15 years on, the environmental impacts of the disaster continued to threaten fragile marine ecosystems and coastal wildlife.

"These individual student-created pieces will come together to form a large-scale hanging mobile artwork designed to spark conversation, raise awareness about plastic pollution in the Pacific Ocean, and highlight the urgent need for collective action to protect and restore our marine environments," she said. "It is hoped the completed installation will be displayed within

regional libraries and community spaces to educate and inspire wider conversations around sustainability, marine conservation and collective responsibility for the health of Te Moana-nui-a-Kiwa Pacific Ocean."

Stan shared the development of a new digital platform he designed called Moana Pasifika, which combined indigenous knowledge systems with conservation and environmental action. "The app is currently in final-stage development, and is designed as an interactive 'Ocean Guardian' experience where users create and restore their own virtual ocean sanctuary.

"Combining education, conservation and indigenous knowledge systems, the platform encourages users to reconnect with the ocean through restoration-based gameplay and environmental action."

The platform is currently being explored for future launch across Apple and Android devices and is being tested by the environmental student leaders at Waihi Beach School to better understand how rangatahi engage with environmental learning through digital technology and interactive storytelling.

Waihi Beach School principal Rachael Coll said the visit represented an exciting opportunity to connect creativity, culture and environmental action in meaningful and practical ways.



Rachael Coll, Stan Wolfgramm and cohort two of the art class. BELOW: Stan and students.



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On the Land

Kaimai Mamaku free of kauri dieback

New Zealand's southernmost kauri forest has been confirmed as free of *Phytophthora agathidicida* (PA), the pathogen that causes kauri dieback disease.

Kaimai Mamaku Conservation Park is the second forest in Aotearoa to have a clean bill of health from kauri dieback disease, after the Hūnua Ranges in 2025.

Kaimahi/workers from the Department of Conservation (DOC) and the Kaimai Mamaku Restoration Project, including Ngāti Hako, Ngāti Tumutumu, Ngāti Hinerangi, Ngāti te Wai, and Ngāmanawa Incorporation, spent more than 1686 hours (70 full days) collecting data across more than 20,000 hectares of the park.

DOC regional lead of Kauri Protection Tracy Mezger co-ordinated the extensive survey effort. She said it was a relief to have confidence that PA was now absent from the forest. "Our worst fear was it was already here and we'd be playing catch-up to protect these beautiful trees from the devastating impacts of kauri dieback disease.

"But the level of sampling done means we're very confident it's not there - and we're committed to keeping it that way."

The survey assessed the presence or absence of PA in the soil, and established baseline kauri health to inform ongoing protection, treatment, and forest health strategies. "Almost 80 per cent of sites had kauri seedlings or saplings present,

which is an encouraging sign of ongoing regeneration and ecosystem resilience," Tracy said.

There are estimated to be more than 23,000 mature canopy level kauri in the Kaimai Mamaku, and potentially millions of seedlings. Considered "ecosystem engineers", kauri root systems reduce erosion and downstream flooding, and create environments promoting other indigenous plant life.

Tracy said the survey was co-designed with iwi and hapū. "Iwi kaimahi were empowered to take an active role in all aspects of the work, from tūkanga and planning, all the way to biosecurity protocols and taking samples. It was true collaboration and learning for all of us," Tracy said.

Although no PA was found, there were many signs of human and introduced animal disturbance, and other plant pathogens which could affect the health of the forest giants as the climate changes.

General manager of Wairere Mahi, the conservation arm of Ngāti Hinerangi, Tim Aoake said the job was just getting started.

"Doing this work felt like we were retracing the steps of our tūpuna. We were learning more about the significance of our mahi in the taiao, and how kauri contribute to the care and protection of our ngahere and wai," he said. "And now we know we have kauri free from PA, the question we ask is 'how do we protect them?'"

Riki Nelson of Ngāti Te Wai said visitors to the Kaimai Mamaku should remain vigilant to ensure these taonga endure for generations to come. "While

we're relieved comprehensive testing has found no evidence of the disease, this is not a signal to relax. The risk remains, and we all have a responsibility to continue biosecurity measures that help protect these iconic forests for future generations," he said.

To help protect kauri, visitors heading out naturing in the Kaimai are encouraged to remove all visible soil from boots or shoes, use all hygiene stations, and stick to the tracks.

Manaaki Kaimai Mamaku Trust chief executive and Kaimai Mamaku Restoration Project co-ordinator Louise Saunders said the finding was timely news.

"Kauri are one of the tallest and most significant trees in the motu. When you see mature kauri, you can't help feeling inspired and connected to nature.

"Knowing our kauri forests are disease-free, we can significantly improve forest health with the DOC feral goat eradication programme and landscape-scale pest control projects, safeguarding these forest giants for future generations to feel inspired by too," she said.



Workers spent more than 1686 hours collecting data across more than 20,000 hectares. SUPPLIED

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On the Land

Inaugural Paeroa Crop Swap a success

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

The first Paeroa Crop Swap, Share and Learn event kicked off on May 31 with around 30 people equipped with goods to share.

Organiser Teresa Tosi told *The Profile* she was “absolutely thrilled” with how it all went.

“The tables were full of fruit, vegetables, seedlings, seeds, preserves, baking and gardening items, and it was wonderful to see people sharing so generously with each other.”

People also popped in to drop off items even though they couldn’t stay for the event.

“What I loved most was seeing people connect. Some came for the produce, some [came] for the gardening knowledge, and others simply to meet like-minded people.”

One attendee told Teresa: “I think I’ve found my people”, which she found humbling and really summed up the atmosphere of the day.

“The short presentation I gave on growing food in pots and fabric grow bags was well received and it was encouraging to hear how informative people found it and a few ordering grow bags to get started,” she said.

“One of the biggest highlights



for me personally was making new connections and friendships with people who share the same interests and passion for growing food, sustainability and community and a couple of them have offered to help out with future swaps.”

The group was also able to make sure nothing went to waste, with surplus produce donated to the Pataka Kai on Taylor Ave, Paeroa, and a local kindergarten, she said.

“Looking ahead, I’d love to see the Crop Swap continue to grow into a regular community gathering where people can

share produce, plants, seeds, skills and knowledge.

“Whether you’re an experienced gardener or just getting started, there is something for everyone.”

Teresa said the goal was always simple - to reduce waste, share abundance, help people learn to grow food and bring community together.

“I feel our first event achieved exactly that.”

DETAILS: Head along to the next Paeroa Crop Swap, Share and Learn event on June 28. Join the Paeroa Crop Swap • Share • Learn group on Facebook.



People gather for the first Paeroa Crop Swap, Learn and Share event on May 31, which had fresh produce, seedlings, preserves, gardening goods and more.

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Pedestals are dangerous places - stay grounded

OPINION

By MICHAEL WILKES



Have you ever noticed how quickly we build people up... and how quickly we tear them down?

We all have voices we look up to. People who inspire us. Leaders, mentors, authors, teachers — people who've shaped how we think, lead, or believe. And that's not a bad thing. We need examples. We need people ahead of us to learn from.

But sometimes we place people so high on a pedestal that

when they fall, it shakes us too. Over the years we've watched well-known leaders stumble. And what often happens next can be brutal. People circle. Everything they ever did gets discredited. Books get thrown out. Years of impact get erased as if none of it ever mattered.

And I wonder if that says as much about us as it does about them. Because here's the reality: every single one of us carries the capacity for incredible good... and the capacity to get things wrong.

Leaders aren't some different species. They're human. Human with gifts, yes. Human with responsibility, pressure,

and expectations — often amplified far beyond what anyone was designed to carry.

And when someone is elevated high enough, expectation can quietly become performance pressure. Instead of living from grace, they can begin striving to hold everything together.

If we're honest, most of us have even tried to keep up that version of ourselves.

Tried to keep up appearances. Tried to be more than we are. Tried to carry an image we weren't built to sustain.

So maybe the lesson isn't to stop learning from leaders. Maybe it's to stop worshipping

them. Take inspiration. Learn from the good. Be honest about failures. But remember — no leader was ever meant to be flawless.

In fact, maybe mature leadership is not about pretending perfection, but learning how to walk humbly with weakness.

Because when we put people on pedestals, their fall hurts everyone. But when we recognise shared humanity, failure can become a place for restoration, growth, and wisdom.

There's a difference between accountability and cancellation.

One restores. The other destroys. And in a world quick

to idolise and even quicker to condemn, maybe we need more grace, more realism, and a little less hero worship.

So here's my challenge. Don't idolise people. Don't cancel people.

Learn. Grow. Stay grounded. And remember — the people you look up to are walking the same human journey as you.

Michael Wilkes is a youth worker with Living Well Trust, running mentoring and resilience programmes across Thames and Paeroa. To support local youth work or follow more stories and insights, find him on Facebook, Instagram, or TikTok @michaelwilkes.kiwi. If you'd like to connect about a speaking engagement, community initiative, or supporting youth work, email michael@livingwell.org.nz.

Pet Profile

Halo is ready for her forever home

Meet Halo, a beautiful puppy who is ready to find her forever family!

Halo is a confident, playful girl who loves being part of the action.

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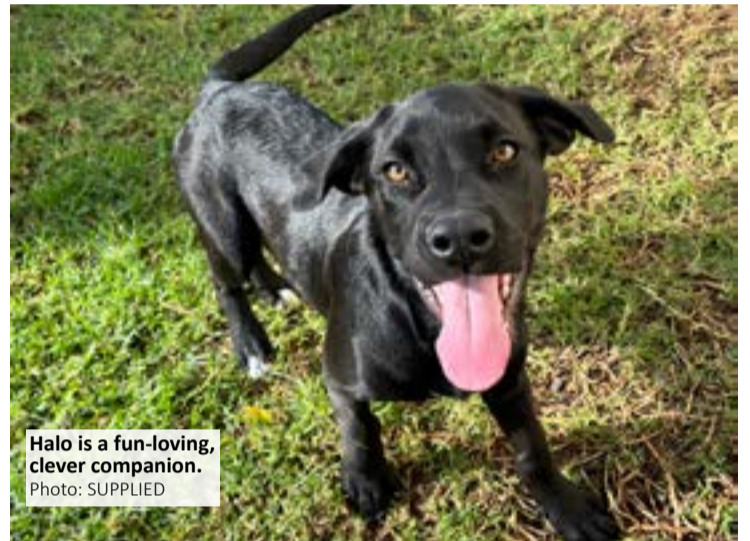
Halo is both food and toy motivated, making her eager to learn and easy to train. She would thrive with a family who can continue her train-

ing and provide plenty of love, enrichment, and adventure. The best part? Halo is ready to go home now! She has been microchipped, vaccinated, flea and worm treated, and is already booked in to be desexed.

If you're looking for a fun-loving, clever companion who will keep you smiling every day, Halo could be the perfect match.

To learn more about Halo please contact Thames SPCA or Register to adopt online.

DETAILS: For more information about Halo, visit: www.sPCA.nz/adopt/animal/663834/puppy-halo-thames.



Halo is a fun-loving, clever companion. Photo: SUPPLIED

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Some food places also offer their venue for hire, catering for functions, cooking workshops, and even portable food or coffee carts for events.

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The *Foodies* page where locals go to find their next favourite spot.

Foodies page where locals go to find their next favourite spot.

DETAILS: To find out more and to join the *Foodies* page, call Davidda on 022 174 3988 or email: Davidda@valleyprofile.co.nz

By Davidda Hikatangata

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ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Minecraft Movie: behind the scenes in Thames

By ALICE PARMINTER

There was an outpouring of positivity and goodwill from Thames locals last month, when film crews arrived to shoot scenes for *A Minecraft Movie Squared*, the sequel to 2025's *A Minecraft Movie*.

Hollywood actors, including Jack Black and Kirsten Dunst, were the main focus for onlookers during the shoot. But hundreds of other people were also involved, both on camera and behind the scenes - and many of them were locals.

Allan Judd was one of several Thamesites on-site, acting as a featured extra in the street scene shot in Grahamstown. "There were about 65 extras they brought in, but then you've probably got 250 people-plus behind the scenes," he said. "Everything from the costume and makeup, your assistant directors, cameramen, sound... For every actor, there's probably four or five [other] people."

Allan's role involved a short conversation with Jack Black's character, Steve. "I was on the steps of Twentymans [Funeral Home], and all I had to do was get up, stand there, walk down the steps, and deliver these couple of lines to Jack," he said. "I had a good little chat with him... He thought [Thames] was a pretty cool sort of place - the wonderful vibe that's in town, and the people."

Allan's *Minecraft* experience began in Auckland for costume fittings. On the day of the shoot



Jared Fisher with his '87 Chevy Silverado, one of the vehicles used during filming. Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

he was called around 6am, when he and the other extras were costumed, made-up and sent for breakfast. "The food that they put on was astronomical, they really do look after you."

Then came several hours of filming the same scene. Like any acting job, he said, it was all about consistency. "They're doing take after take from different angles, they want to see you in that same position doing the same thing."

Thames-based panelbeater Jared Fisher also had consistency on his mind. During the shoot, he was managing 19 vehicles lining

the street or being driven by actors.

"The vehicles are used on the American side of the road, and it's always got to be reset for every take... There's a lot of dressing and making things look right."

Jared's career has seen him provide multiple vehicles for film shoots. His Bella St workshop is filled with dozens of props suitable for films set overseas, including American cop cars, left-hand-drive vehicles, and licence plates from around the world.

During the *Minecraft* shoot, he sourced and prepared many of the

vehicles for the set, fitting them out with the correct American plates and stickers.

"Before the shoot we had two days prep, so early Monday morning we could start at 6am [and] have everything ready to go," he said. "It was a pleasure to work with that team. [They were] really professional, and the vehicle side of things went like clockwork."

The shoot also indirectly involved many of Thames' business owners. The shops being filmed were transformed with signage and props to resemble stores from the fictional Idaho town of Chu-

glass, and they were closed for business during the shoot itself, with the film company compensating them for any loss of income during the closure.

Twentymans owner and Thames Community Board chair Adrian Catran said the company was very considerate to affected businesses. "It was just incredible the way they came in on Sunday afternoon and they were gone by Tuesday afternoon - they were in and out and no damage, no mess, no nothing," he said.

"We're a 24/7 business and they acknowledged that and allowed people to come in down Kirkwood St and come the back way into our property. So in turn, we gave them the use of our car park across the road so that they could drop all the actors and actresses off."

Adrian said the financial gain for Thames would have been considerable, with both locals and the film crew spending generously at the town's restaurants and eateries. Thames also made an impact on the film company, he said.

"The set manager said when they first came through and the producer looked up there [between the buildings] he said, 'oh my God, it just looks like in the hills in the back of Idaho'.

"They were absolutely amazed about having those buildings here, and about the willingness of people to help them in any way possible," he said. "It really was tremendous and a real boon and a boost to Thames and in particular to Grahamstown."

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Celebrating volunteers

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Students give back to their communities

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

National Volunteer Week is in full swing across New Zealand right now, setting the scene with the theme *Your Year to Volunteer - Tōu tau ki te tūao*.

Three high schools across the Thames Valley and Hauraki areas offer a glimpse into the ways students are making a difference in their communities.

Students from Hauraki Plains College, Waihi College and Thames High School share stories of their volunteering efforts and encourage their peers to take on the mantle.

Hauraki Plains College students aim to support Volunteer Week by helping clear the bush walk at Kaihere School.

Year 13 students Selwin De Haast, Rebecca Higgins and Jasmine Davies told *The Profile* as part of the school's Student Volunteer Army it was a great way to "give back to our community". It's not their first rodeo either, as each student also offered support for their communities in a variety of ways. Selwin said he had volunteered every school holidays at the Kauaeranga Valley Christian Camp as a cabin leader since he was a year 11 student. One of the most rewarding parts for Selwin was "building relationships" with some of the more challenging campers, he said, as "it's nice to see them improve".

"It's made me a lot more interested in social work and helping in the community and trying to improve people's lives." Selwin was set to do a full internship at the camp in 2027, which he said would give him more time to do things behind the scenes and work with school groups.

Fellow volunteer Rebecca said her motivation was "giving back to others" and to know it would always come back around to help her.

She umpired adult, senior and junior hockey games for three nights a week at the Thames Valley hockey turf.



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: HPC SVA members, Waihi College's Isla Menary at the Athenree Life rest home and Thames High SVA plant along the Pārāwai School pump track.

"I have really enjoyed coaching my year 5 and 6 hockey team, The Orcas, because I got to see them learn new skills and really enjoy themselves out on the field." She was inspired to take on the volunteer spot because there was a shortage of umpires, she said, and "if we don't have umpires it means we can't play".

Meanwhile, fellow volunteer Jasmine said she was able to develop her time management and social skills in volunteer spaces such as babysitting, hockey umpiring, school events, dog walking and local building clean ups.

Her favourite experience was when she led the archery activity at a year 9 camp.

"[It] was fun teaching a skill that a majority had not done before and making friends with the other leaders." All her experiences "made me grateful" for all the people who showed up as volunteers because she understood how much time and effort it took to do just a small event. "I like helping out. I feel the community has given me so many opportunities that it's a nice way to give back." It's a hop, skip and a jump to Waihi College where year 13 student Isla Menary rolls up her sleeves to help out. The seasoned volunteer said she first started her journey in year 11 when she worked on her bronze Duke of Edinburgh award and volun-

teered at Athenree Life rest home.

"I would chat to the old people, help to run activities like visual bingo in the dementia ward, and during meal times, I would feed patients who were unable to feed themselves."

Isla said she currently led a drama class of around 20 kids and was also a Students Against Dangerous Driving (SADD) leader at Waihi College. Across the valley at Thames High School, year-13 head student and Service and Environment prefect Brooklyn Jiang was a strong advocate of volunteering. "For the past four years I've volunteered at the Seagull Centre, where I've helped as a technician and e-waste coordinator. A large part of my role involves processing electronic waste so it can be recycled responsibly, as well as repairing donated electronics that can then be sold through the centre," he said.

"The proceeds help support community grants and local initiatives."

He was also part of the Thames High Student Volunteer Army (SVA) for three years as one of the original members who helped to establish the group, he said. In his second year, he said he became the club leader and helped it grow to around 72 active members. Even though he said he's stepped back from the leadership role, he still supports the group where he can.

Brooklyn said they hoped to organise some native tree planting in the Kauaeranga Valley through the schools service leaders and SVA for volunteer week. For people keen to get involved in volunteering, Brooklyn said give it a go.

"If you're nervous, try volunteering alongside a friend. That can make the first step much easier," he said. "For me, volunteering has led to great friendships, valuable skills, and opportunities I never expected. Even a small contribution can make a real difference, and you'll often gain just as much from the experience as the people you're helping."

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Celebrating volunteers

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Volunteering, a way to meet others

Thames Museum Te Whare Taonga o te Kauaeranga collects, safeguards and displays taonga and artefacts relating to the history of our district, from Hikutaia to Waikawau.

Our Taonga Māori Gallery was created in 2022 in consultation with Ngāti Maru iwi and is a special space for learning and reflection for visitors from all around the world.

Other displays cover early pioneer settlement from the goldrush era, and further development up to the 1970s. Special features include the history of Thames Hospital and Nursing School; commemoration of those who served during World War I and II, with medals, letters and uniforms; and unique to us, the Ted Egan Building Thames Gallery which showcases models of many fine buildings from the town's heyday.

Other displays highlight pioneer domestic life, early transport, local schools and sports, our iron foundries, and more.

Our volunteers enjoy welcoming visitors to the museum. We are open six days a week, 10am to 1pm and volunteers can choose to join the roster from once a month or more. Full training is given and no, nobody needs to know the district's full history! In fact, many of our volunteers are recently retired to Thames and volunteering with us is the perfect way to meet people and learn about the district while helping us to keep our history vibrant and accessible all year round.

If you would like to join our team, pop in for a chat. We're a friendly bunch and will be delighted to meet you.

- Supplied by Thames Museum Society



A call for digital volunteers

We applaud and thank our volunteers who weave the stories and bring the history of the Victoria Battery site alive for visitors to enjoy and learn about the significant part that this site in Waikino played in the processing of quartz to find the gold hidden from sight.

Our volunteers work together at the site so visitors can discover the history in a way that suits them. They can explore our museum, board our tram which weaves

throughout the site or head on underground to get a truly one-of-a-kind experience.

The stories, photographs and knowledge of the Victoria Battery site are incredibly special and unique, so recording and preserving them for years to come is critical.

We are in a changing world that relies on social media and the use of digital and online systems. We need Digital Volunteers to help achieve this.

People with skills in communication, social media and

digital technology who can help record and transform the stories and history so it can be there to share.

If volunteering by driving a Tram, showing people around the Museum, and taking people underground is not for you, consider becoming a Digital Volunteer.

If you're interested in helping out, email info@vbts.org.nz. Come join the Volunteers at play?

- Supplied by Victoria Battery Tramway Society Inc



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Our artefacts and taonga all have stories to tell, and our **VOLUNTEERS** bring those stories to life. For as little as 1 half day a month, you can make a difference.

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- ✓ Indulge your passion for history,
- ✓ Learn about our past and how we're future-proofing it,
- ✓ Meet like-minded people,
- ✓ Keep our museum open 6 days a week, all year round,
- ✓ Keep our taonga and artefacts accessible to locals and visitors,
- ✓ Keep our history alive!

Would you like to join our Team? Get in touch or pop in for a chat

- ✓ Learn about what we do,
- ✓ Meet other volunteers – we're a friendly bunch.
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OUR VOLUNTEERS AREN'T JUST HELPERS. THEY ARE KEEPERS OF OUR COMMUNITY'S LEGACY!





Celebrating volunteers

ADVERTISING FEATURE



Hato Hone St John needs the support of volunteers.

Photo: SUPPLIED

St John set to raise funds

This month, Hato Hone St John is raising funds to help build future-proof, fit-for-purpose ambulance stations that will meet the needs of our growing and changing communities.

These stations will help ensure New Zealanders continue to receive the best possible care when they need us most in a medical emergency.

On June 27, our volunteers will be out collecting donations at Goldfields Mall and

outside Thames Pak'nSave.

We'd love to see you there!

Come and meet our local volunteers, learn more about the work we do, and if you're able, make a donation to support this important cause.

Every dollar makes a difference and helps Hato Hone St John continue caring for communities across Aotearoa.

Thank you for your support.

- Supplied by Hato Hone St John

A place to care for animals

This National Volunteer Week, Thames SPCA is proud to recognise and celebrate the dedicated volunteers who help make a difference for animals in our community.

From animal care, events and fundraising, to offering a warm safe space in their home for foster animals, volunteers are essential to Thames daily operations.

"Our volunteers are quite simply the backbone of Thames SPCA," Centre Manager Brent Thomas said.

"Without them, we couldn't provide the level of care and support that our animals receive every day."

Volunteer Week is a wonderful opportunity to celebrate those who already support us and to welcome new faces to our Thames SPCA family. To help celebrate, they are inviting keen local bakers to donate some sweet treats to welcome volunteers to their shifts throughout the week.

Thames SPCA is still in need of more volunteers to help support the volume of work that they do daily, especially for their canine areas, and pups like Tiger, pictured with volunteers Alana and Charlize.

There has never been a better time to get involved. "I like giving animals attention and always laughing with the staff", SPCA volunteer Charlize said.

"There is a whole bunch of cute animals, it's really, really fun and a great team environment", SPCA Volunteer Alana said.


Our group of just under 30 centre volunteers range from 16 years old, through to well past retirement age, with each person bringing their own unique skills, experience and personality. There is always plenty to do - so if you have ever thought about volunteering, this is your sign!

- Supplied by Thames SPCA



Volunteers Alana, left, and Charlize care for Tiger the pup, and kittens who are all looking for new homes. Photos: SUPPLIED





Hato Hone St John Thames

VOLUNTEER WEEK 14th - 20th June 2026

We acknowledge and thank the valuable volunteers who willingly give their time back to the community through Hato Hone St John.

Without the support of the volunteers, Hato Hone St John would not be able to provide those programmes and services that help to reinforce our community's connectedness, resilience and strength.

Thank you to:

- > the volunteers that help with our Opportunity Retail Shop
- > the volunteers that run our Health Shuttles
- > the volunteer Friends of the Emergency Department / Hospital
- > the volunteers of the Thames Area Committee and our Patron
- > the volunteers on our Ambulances
- > the youth and their volunteer leaders in our Youth programme
- > the volunteer Caring Callers
- > the volunteer members of the Order of St John of Jerusalem

Thank you for your dedicated service and contribution to your community through Hato Hone St John.

St John - local people serving the needs of our community.



Building community bonds

Our community, our strength - Ko to hapori, kō mātau.

At our kura, we live by our motto: "We work together to achieve one's true potential." The close relationship we share with our community is our greatest strength, and we are immensely proud of these bonds.

Our community supports our students in diverse ways. We see it in our dedicated sports volunteers, academic study sessions, and staff volunteer firefighters - like English Kaiako Ms Yorke, whose recent Sky Tower Challenge provided phenomenal role modeling for our taiohi.

Our Gateway programme thrives thanks to local businesses providing vital real-world experience.

We also appreciate environmental guidance from Rachael Cheeseman at Enviro-schools, the Thames Community Centre's Drivers Programme, music donations, collaborations with Thames Music Group, and whānau initiatives like the Ball Dress Lending scheme.

Equally inspiring is our Student Volunteer Army (SVA), led by Student Leaders Kim Ju Taing and Shanarra Smook.

Our SVA volunteers have been doing amazing work, from supporting the Rhodes Park rugby event and Christmas Parade, to packaging flood-relief parcels for local families.

Recently, they spent a week assisting the Salvation Army and helped Moanataiari School with poster distribution, security, and parking management for the Light Up Thames event.

These volunteer hours cross-credit for students participating in the Duke of Edinburgh's Award.

On top of this, our Enviro group managed waste at the food festival and attended the Climate Summit to study sustainability.

Weekly student leadership also thrives within our walls through peer tutoring, refereeing, and library assistance

Looking ahead, the SVA is excited to partner with Thames Coast KiwiCare, participate in Tapu planting, and run a Food Bank drive to celebrate National Volunteer Week, with all proceeds donated to the Baptist Church.

Thank you to everyone strengthening our kura!

- Supplied by Thames High School

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their clients were farmers and councils. "They all keep getting us back, so we must be doing a good job," he said. "We cover South Auckland, down to the Waikato, to the Coromandel Peninsula and the Hauraki Plains." Tim said the future plans for the company, which currently has four staff, was to expand if an opportunity arose. **CONTACT: Get in touch by phoning 027 278 5384.**

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Hauraki swimmer splashes to the top

SWIMMING

Nothing can stop Rylee Sayer. The swimmer from Hauraki Plains College competed at the New Zealand Swimming Championships in May, where she was named the Domestic and Emerging Para Swimmer of the Year for 2025.

The award-winner also snapped up four qualifying times for the Para Pan Pacific Swimming Championships with a gold medal in the 100m Butterfly and 50m freestyle, silver in the 50m butterfly and 4th place in the 100m freestyle.

Following her achievements at the NZ Swimming Champs, Rylee zoomed to Japan for the Para World Series as part of the New Zealand Swimming Team and blew even more achievements out of the water. The aquatic athlete continued her streak and won youth gold in the 400m freestyle and silver medals in the 100m breaststroke and 50m freestyle.



Swim star and winner of the Domestic Para Swimmer of the Year for 2025 Rylee Sayer.

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

New face at the helm

A familiar face in the local community is set to carry on Kauaeranga Music's tradition of bringing live performances to Thames.

Jeremy Fitzsimons has been appointed the new lead of Kauaeranga Music, the volunteer-run group that has been bringing local, national, and international musicians to perform at the historic Kauaeranga Hall for more than 20 years.

The organisation has been led for the past decade by Peter Revell, who stepped aside after being elected Mayor of Thames-Coromandel last year, prompting the search for a successor.

For Jeremy, the role is a natural fit. Growing up in a family of musicians, he started playing the violin to complete the family quartet. At age 11, he moved on to the drums to accompany his older brother on bass.

Playing through high school, he eventually moved into classical percussion and was selected to join the undergraduate course at Victoria University in Wellington and then on to a Masters in Chicago.

Over the years, Jeremy has played with a variety of orchestras, chamber music groups and bands, while also supporting musical events through the hireage of a growing number of his own instruments.

His connection to the Kauaeranga Valley stretches back more than three decades. In the early 1990s, his mother, Jeanette, and her partner Harry Parke purchased a property south of the river.

After a career based in Wellington,



Musician Jeremy Fitzsimons has taken the reins of Kauaeranga Music. Photo: SUPPLIED

Jeremy and his family moved to Thames three years ago and now live on that same property, just across the river from the Kauaeranga Hall.

In his new role, Jeremy hopes to continue attracting national and international acts while also expanding the programme to include more classical, jazz and indigenous artists.

DETAILS: Kauaeranga Music's evening concerts are open to all and are fun, friendly and include a cup of tea and a snack. Check out www.khallmusic.nz for upcoming events.

CLASSIFIEDS Deadline Monday Noon

Cleaning	Handyman	Handyman Services	Situations Vacant	Public Notice
<p>Pinay Cleaning Service. Exterior, interior and property maintenance. Ph 027 4694 334</p> <p>For Lease</p> <p>Yards for lease, Thames and Kopu. Suitable for trucks, vehicles or trade business base. Ph 027 440 7101</p> <p>For Sale</p> <p>Packing sheets for sale Particle Board From \$10.00 to \$15.00 per sheet S/SCW Custom Wood (Various colors & Woodgrain) From \$15.00 to \$20.00 D/SCW Custom Wood Various colours & Woodgrain From \$20.00 to \$30.00 Collection and Viewing Saturdays 9am-12pm Baker Joinery Ltd 46 Johnston street Waihi Ph: 0204 092 9555</p> <p>Gardening</p> <p>STUMP GRINDING. All sizes, all areas. Thames based. Ph 021 060 7659</p> <p>Land Wanted</p> <p>Wanted to Lease/Rent land while I look for another farm to buy anything considered Please call or text Richard 0279332015</p>	<p>An experienced handyman covering all trades with over 20 years exp building trade. Please contact Laurie King 021 251 0246 ktpropertyservice.com</p> <p>Health Wellness</p> <p>Wellness Festival, Grahamstown Hall, Saturday 20th June from 9am to 3pm. Free entry. There will be holistic therapists, tarot/clairvoyant readers, crystals and jewellery for sale. Afterwards, from 4.30pm - 6pm personal growth and developmental group exploring spirituality.</p> <p>Trades</p> <p>FENCING CONTRACTOR Residential & Rural Retaining walls & more High quality workmanship Competitive prices Call Matt 021 1727 148</p> <p>Painter</p> <p>HAURAKI REGIONAL PAINTERS Over 12 years experience, interior/exterior. Refs available. Free quotes. Phone Graeme for all your painting needs. 020 485 1312</p>	<p> THAMES HANDYMAN & BUILDING SERVICES Building, home maintenance & general gardening services Phone: Fleur or Crighton • 0273 913 283</p> <p>Piano Tuner</p> <p>Sharyn Clark Piano Tuner & Technician <i>'Fully Qualified'</i> and Covering all areas of Hauraki and Coromandel M: 0274 485 089 sharynclark22@gmail.com</p> <p>Builder</p> <p>Friendly licensed builder. 40 years exp. All aspects .No job too small. Ian 021 540 376</p> <p>Storage</p> <p>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</p> <p>STORAGE KOPU, PAEROA "New Units" Ph 027 440 7101 07 868 3033 Safe n Sound Storage www.safestorage.co.nz</p> <p>TOTAL STORAGE LTD KEREPEHI / PAEROA We will beat any legit quote for storage in 10ft or 20ft containers <small>T&C's apply</small> 021 67 67 99 info@totalstorage.co.nz</p>	<p>FULL TIME QUALIFIED DIESEL MECHANIC REQUIRED Monday - Friday. Must be a team player and have a full drivers licence. Send CV to andrew@centralmotors.co.nz or phone Andrew on 027 285 0349</p> <p>We are looking for Tractor, car & bike mechanics. Some experience would be an advantage but training will be given to the right applicant, WoF ticket is preferable. <i>Also</i> A motivated, energetic go-getter to promote & sell our Honda Motorcycle brand & farm machinery. You will need to be able to manage your own schedule & territories, build strong relationships & demonstrate product knowledge, provide solutions to existing & potential customers and have a clean full drivers licence. A company vehicle will be provided. If you're reliable and a team player send your CV to miles@hpmotors.co.nz or ph 027 227 1121 for a chat.</p> <p> HPM HAURAKI PLAINS MOTORS LTD</p> <p>PAPER RUNNER REQUIRED Paeroa Retail area Please contact Geoff: admin@valleyprofile.co.nz for more information.</p>	<p> HAURAKI DISTRICT COUNCIL</p> <p>Notification of Request to Withdraw Proposed Plan Change 6: Extension of Martha Mineral Zone Pursuant to Clause 8D of Schedule 1 of the Resource Management Act 1991, Hauraki District Council (HDC) gives notice that on 2 June 2026 OceanaGold advised the Council that it withdraws Proposed Plan Change 6 (a private plan change request) to the Hauraki District Plan. HDC has recorded that request and gives notice that processing of Proposed Plan Change 6 ceased from 16 June 2026. DA Speirs Chief Executive Hauraki District Council 16 June 2026</p> <p> www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz</p> <p>The Valley Profile's Paeroa office is now closed To place an advertisement Ph 022 130 3885 or email nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz For editorial or to order newsprint roll ends, email: editor@valleyprofile.co.nz www.valleyprofile.co.nz The Coromandel App</p>

Tender



EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST for residential works and services

We're seeking Expressions of Interest (EOI) from suitably experienced local contractors to deliver a package of private residential works and services as part of our proposed new subdivision on our Knowles Crescent/Barry Road property.

The project is still in the planning and approvals phase, so any contract award will depend on approvals being granted and final tender details being confirmed. The subdivision will feature 10 homes on individual titles (three with additional granny flats) and is intended to provide housing for our increased workforce, following the approval of the Waihi North Project.

This EOI relates to works required on each residential section, including service connections, driveways, fencing and landscaping. Bulk earthworks, wider subdivision civil works, and relocatable house construction will be delivered separately.

We welcome interest from local contractors who can manage and deliver a mix of different types of work, coordinating subcontractors or trades to complete all of the works.

For each residential section, the appointed contractor will be responsible for delivering:

- Power and water supply connections from boundary to house
- Stormwater detention/soakage pit installations and connection to house
- Wastewater connections from boundaries to houses and subfloor drainage
- Construction of decking, stairs, balustrades, and baseboards
- Construction of residential concrete driveways and parking
- Internal fencing and landscaping works.

TO REGISTER YOUR INTEREST

Email: gordon.garcia@oceanagold.com and include:

- Company details
- Relevant experience (1-2 examples)
- Confirmation of appropriate insurance
- Current capacity/availability
- Capability statement
- Quality Assurance.

**CLOSING DATE:
25th June**



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SUDOKU

255

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

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HARD

255

Puzzles © The Puzzle Company
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MEDIUM

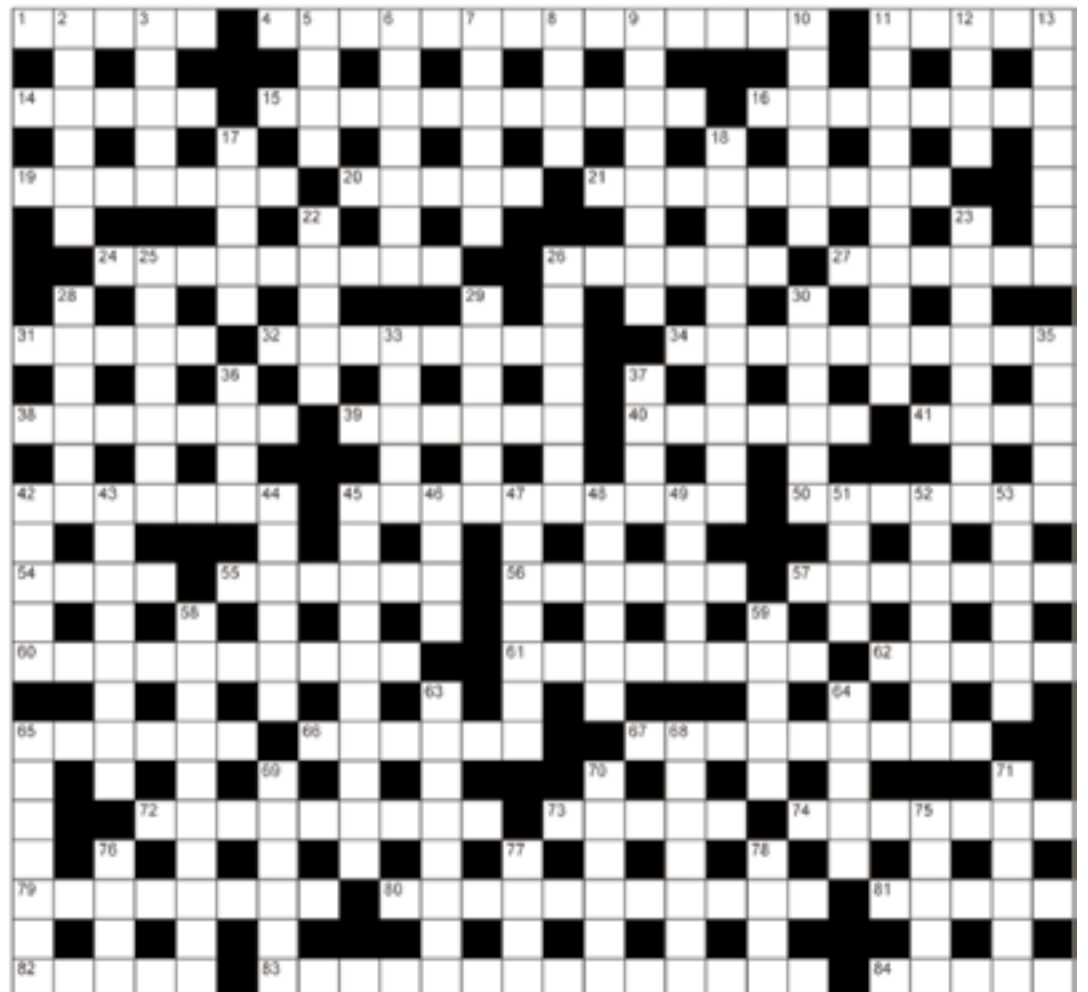
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8	9	1	4	3	7	6	5	2

EASY

JUMBO CROSSWORD

275

- ACROSS**
- 1 Sun-dried brick (5)
 - 4 Smoker's tissue (9,5)
 - 11 Black suit (5)
 - 14 Move stealthily (5)
 - 15 Included
 - 16 Law practitioner (8)
 - 19 Seats on horses (7)
 - 20 Hirsute (5)
 - 21 Large sea bird (9)
 - 24 Buoyancy (9)
 - 26 Spanish city (6)
 - 27 Give to (6)
 - 31 Arms, legs (5)
 - 32 A treetop (anag)(8)
 - 34 Large important churches (10)
 - 38 Strong liquor (7)
 - 39 Worshipped (6)
 - 40 Maltreated (6)
 - 41 Heart (4)
 - 42 Violent tropical storm (7)
 - 45 Marginal (10)
 - 50 Out of the ordinary (7)
 - 54 Component part (4)
 - 55 Alcove (6)
 - 56 Natural fabric (6)
 - 57 Etch into surface (7)
 - 60 Most memorable parts (10)
 - 61 Excited anticipation (8)
 - 62 Perch (5)
 - 65 German city (6)
 - 66 Genetically duplicated (6)
 - 67 Financial expert (9)
 - 72 Slanderous accusation (9)
 - 73 Log (5)
 - 74 On fire (7)
 - 79 Directed (anag)(8)
 - 80 Stamp of approval (11)
 - 81 Beef cut (5)
 - 82 Distance down (5)
 - 83 In a straight line (2,3,4,5)
 - 84 Fireplace (5)
 - DOWN**
 - 2 Repudiation (6)
 - 3 Embark (5)
 - 5 Public houses (4)
 - 6 Green-fleshed fruit (7)
 - 7 Die (6)
 - 8 Elongated tooth (4)
 - 9 Prevent from happening (8)
 - 10 Go back (6)
 - 11 Intersection (10)
 - 12 Arm bone (4)
 - 13 Horizon (7)
 - 17 Trivial (5)
 - 18 Exaggerated comic representation (10)
 - 22 Organ controls (5)
 - 23 Tubular pasta (8)
 - 25 Broad-minded (7)
 - 26 Wander (7)
 - 28 Body tissue examination (6)
 - 29 Looked fixedly (6)
 - 30 Bed linen (6)
 - 33 Wireless (5)
 - 35 Bomb (5)
 - 36 Astound (4)
 - 37 Hired car (4)
 - 42 Long seat (5)
 - 43 Holding on tenaciously (8)
 - 44 Come to light (6)
 - 45 Panting (10)
 - 46 Put one's feet up (4)
 - 47 Let off (7)
 - 48 Most modern (6)
 - 49 Rope loop (5)
 - 51 Garden lake (4)
 - 52 Inquisitive (7)
 - 53 Counsel (6)
 - 58 Horseshoe maker (10)
 - 59 Expending (5)
 - 63 Proclaim (8)
 - 64 Sufficient (5)
 - 65 Threatened (7)
 - 68 Confectionery flavour (7)
 - 69 Swiss city (6)
 - 70 Fragmented puzzle (6)
 - 71 Not damaged (6)
 - 75 Measuring instrument (5)
 - 76 Small army vehicle (4)
 - 77 Male pig (4)
 - 78 Leg joint (4)



PREVIOUS SOLUTION

ACROSS: 1 Cirled, 4 Put on an act, 9 Verdict, 13 Apse, 14 Images, 15 Mother, 16 Carrier, 19 Misfortune, 20 Darkroom, 21 Abate, 24 Energy, 25 Ferric, 27 Trickster, 32 Gruesome, 33 Shut up, 34 Vampire, 38 Shooting, 39 Groove, 40 Idea, 41 Elfin, 42 Donor, 45 Lend me your ears, 52 Mango, 55 Baker, 56 Leap, 57 Grasps, 58 Contempt, 61 Flushed, 62 Tennis, 63 Bachelor, 66 Unskilled, 68 Client, 69 Final, 73 Dread, 74 Spoonful, 76 Insulation, 81 Legible, 82 Scrimp, 83 Lavish, 84 Bier, 85 Elegant, 86 Free-for-all, 87 Trainee.

DOWN: 1 Claim, 2 Resisted, 3 Demote, 4 Pagan, 5 Task, 6 Nomadic, 7 Nature, 8 Cheer, 10 Edam, 11 Durable, 12 Create, 17 Songwriter, 18 Touch, 22 Free from, 23 Essay, 24 Elapsed, 26 Eros, 28 Routine, 29 Kennel, 30 Bureau, 31 Prying, 33 Story, 35 Polka, 36 Town, 37 Tear, 43 Oracle, 44 Ovens, 46 Even, 47 Deplete, 48 Engine, 49 Ovals, 50 Republic, 51 Stores, 52 Methodical, 53 Numb, 54 Oatmeal, 59 Desks, 60 Icon, 64 Slope, 65 Division, 67 Nearing, 68 Calypso, 70 Ordeal, 71 Office, 72 Sunset, 75 Oscar, 77 Novel, 78 Nerve, 79 Glen, 80 Flea.

BAYLEYS



Boundary lines are indicative only






Paeroa 6736 Wilson Road

A project property with scope to improve

For those seeking to add value over time, this property offers a practical base with excellent infrastructure already in place. The large concrete floor half-round barn with three-phase power and a five-bay lean-to provides ample space for storage, workshop use, or future plans, supported by rural industrial zoning. The two-bedroom home offers scope to modernise and enhance, while a separate unconsented sleepout adds flexibility. Post and rail batten fencing defines the usable land. Set in the Netherton area, the property enjoys open farmland surroundings with Paeroa's schools, cafés, supermarkets, and everyday services close by, while Thames, Hamilton, and Tauranga are within easy reach.

bayleys.co.nz/2630248

6,627_{sqm}  2  1 

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 25 Jun 2026

96 Ulster Street, Hamilton

View 9.30-10am Sun 21 Jun

Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83

karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz

Josh Smith 027 229 8865

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Boundary lines are indicative only

Te Kauwhata 812 Waiterimu Road

Hunters haven - deer, ducks, goats and pines

A substantial 110 hectare (more or less) hunting and forestry property with deer, ducks, goats, and established pines, conveniently located 20 minutes from Te Kauwhata. For hunting enthusiasts, this is a property that offers year-round enjoyment. Deer, goats, and ducks are regularly found throughout the block, creating a destination where family and friends can gather to enjoy the outdoors and make the most of the hunting opportunities on offer. Whether it is an early morning duck shoot, tracking deer through the forestry margins, or spending weekends exploring the property's network of tracks and natural features, there is always another reason to head outdoors.

bayleys.co.nz/2630172

110.71_{ha} 

Asking Price \$675,000 + GST (if any)

Phone for viewing times

Karl Davis 0508 83 83 83

karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz

Sam Aislabie 027 429 5410

sam.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz

SUCCESS REALTY LIMITED, BAYLEYS, LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008



Thames 104 Clarence Street

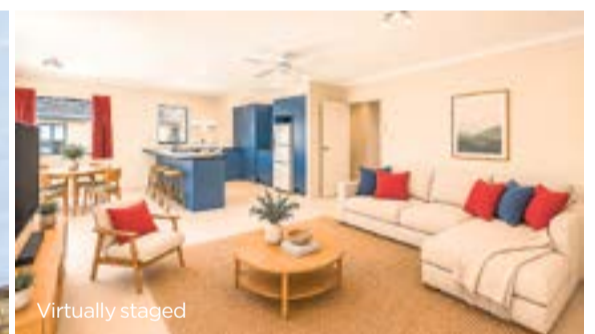
Elegant living, thoughtfully designed

Designed by Cook Sargisson Architects and crafted by master builders, this beautifully appointed home combines timeless design with exceptional quality. Positioned in a quiet street just a short stroll from Thames township, it offers a lifestyle of comfort, convenience, and understated elegance. The light-filled open-plan living area features soaring sarked ceilings, American oak flooring, and full height windows that capture natural light throughout the day. At the heart of the home, the designer kitchen blends premium appliances with practical functionality. French doors open to a generous covered deck and landscaped gardens, creating an inviting space for entertaining.

bayleys.co.nz/2180987

3 2 2

Auction (unless sold prior) 11am, Thu 9 Jul 2026
 96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
View 2.15-2.45pm Sun 21 Jun & Sun 28 Jun
 or by appointment
Pippa Jackson 027 747 7000
 pippa.jackson@bayleys.co.nz
Karl Davis 027 496 4633 karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz
M H REALTY LIMITED, BAYLEYS, LICENSED UNDER THE REA ACT 2008



Thames 301b Fenton Street

Auction - Modern living, freehold freedom

If you're considering a retirement village or seeking a low-maintenance two-bedroom townhouse, this property deserves your attention. Offering the ease of lock-up-and-leave with the security and independence of freehold ownership, this well-maintained home is one of the newer properties in the Thames market. Set on a fully fenced section, it provides privacy, security, and peace of mind, ideal for retirees, downsizers, couples, or investors. A sunny and manageable garden create a comfortable outdoor space for relaxing or pets. Inside, the open-plan kitchen, dining, and lounge enjoys a north-facing aspect for natural light and warmth. Less than 2km from Thames town. Call today.

bayleys.co.nz/2180976

250 sqm 2 1 1

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 96 Ulster Street, Hamilton
View 11-11.30am Sun 21 Jun or by appointment
Pippa Jackson 027 747 7000
 pippa.jackson@bayleys.co.nz
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‘Epic’ event to see elite squash players on court

SQUASH

By KELLEY TANTAU

Some of New Zealand’s leading squash players are heading to Thames for an event next month that will highlight the sport and celebrate the local club’s thriving community.

Made possible through the support of Westpac and other local businesses, the event will see Aotearoa squash superstar and current World No. 2 Paul Coll taking part in a special exhibition match against Oli Dunbar.

Coll is one of the world’s leading players and continues to fly the flag for New Zealand on the international stage, having previously become the first Kiwi male to reach World No. 1. This month, he also claimed his third Quilter Cheviot British Open title in Birmingham. Also joining the event is former World No. 3 and Commonwealth Games gold medallist Joelle King, who will face New Zealand prospect Ella Lash in a second exhibition match.

King remains one of the country’s most accomplished squash players, while Lash continues to build momentum on the PSA World Tour as one of New Zealand’s most promising emerging professionals.

Thames Squash Club men’s club captain Casey Owen said it was hard to overstate “just how significant” the event would be for the club and community.

“As a rural town, we’re not often exposed to elite-level sport on our



Current squash World No. 2 Paul Coll is taking part in a special exhibition match in Thames.

Photo: SUPPLIED

doorstep. But the reality is that opportunities to see players of this calibre are rare no matter where you live in New Zealand,” she said.

“Most people only ever watch Paul and Joelle on television or online, so to have them coming to Thames and playing in our club is pretty incredible.”

Casey said the event originally came about through a Squash New Zealand fundraising initiative to help support the New Zealand Men’s Team heading to the World Team Championships.

As part of the fundraising effort, Paul Coll was scheduled to take part in three exhibition events around the country.

“We saw it as a unique chance not only to support New Zealand squash, but also to bring a world-class sporting experience to our local community.”

Beyond the exhibition matches, junior players will also be able to take part in on-court hitting sessions with Coll and Dunbar, while all attendees will have access to meet-and-greet opportunities

and Q&A sessions throughout the event.

In terms of profile, scale, and the calibre of players involved, it was set to be one of the biggest events Thames Squash Club has ever hosted, Casey said.

“The response from the community has been epic. Seated and standing tickets sold out within 24 hours, which shows just how excited people are to see two of New Zealand’s greatest squash players up close.”

Casey said the event reflected

the club’s ongoing commitment to growing the game and creating opportunities for players of all ages to learn from and be inspired by some of New Zealand’s best.

The squash scene in Thames was “really strong at the moment,” with more than 100 members, three courts, and three ladies interclub teams and four men’s interclub teams competing throughout the Waikato.

“Our junior programme is thriving as well, with junior club nights attracting great numbers and creating a real buzz around the club. There’s an epic atmosphere at the Thames Squash Club at the moment, with a strong mix of competitive squash and social play. It’s a club that’s growing, active and well connected both locally and across the wider squash community.”

Casey said the event would have an impact on the club’s young players as well as the club as a whole. “It’s one thing to watch top players on a screen, but it’s completely different being able to meet them, ask questions, watch them up close and even step on court with them,” she said.

Seeing first-hand the skill, professionalism and dedication required to reach the top of the world can be incredibly motivating for young players. To have both of them coming to Thames is something most of our members never imagined would happen.”

DETAILS: To follow along with the club, find the Thames Squash Club on Facebook.

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