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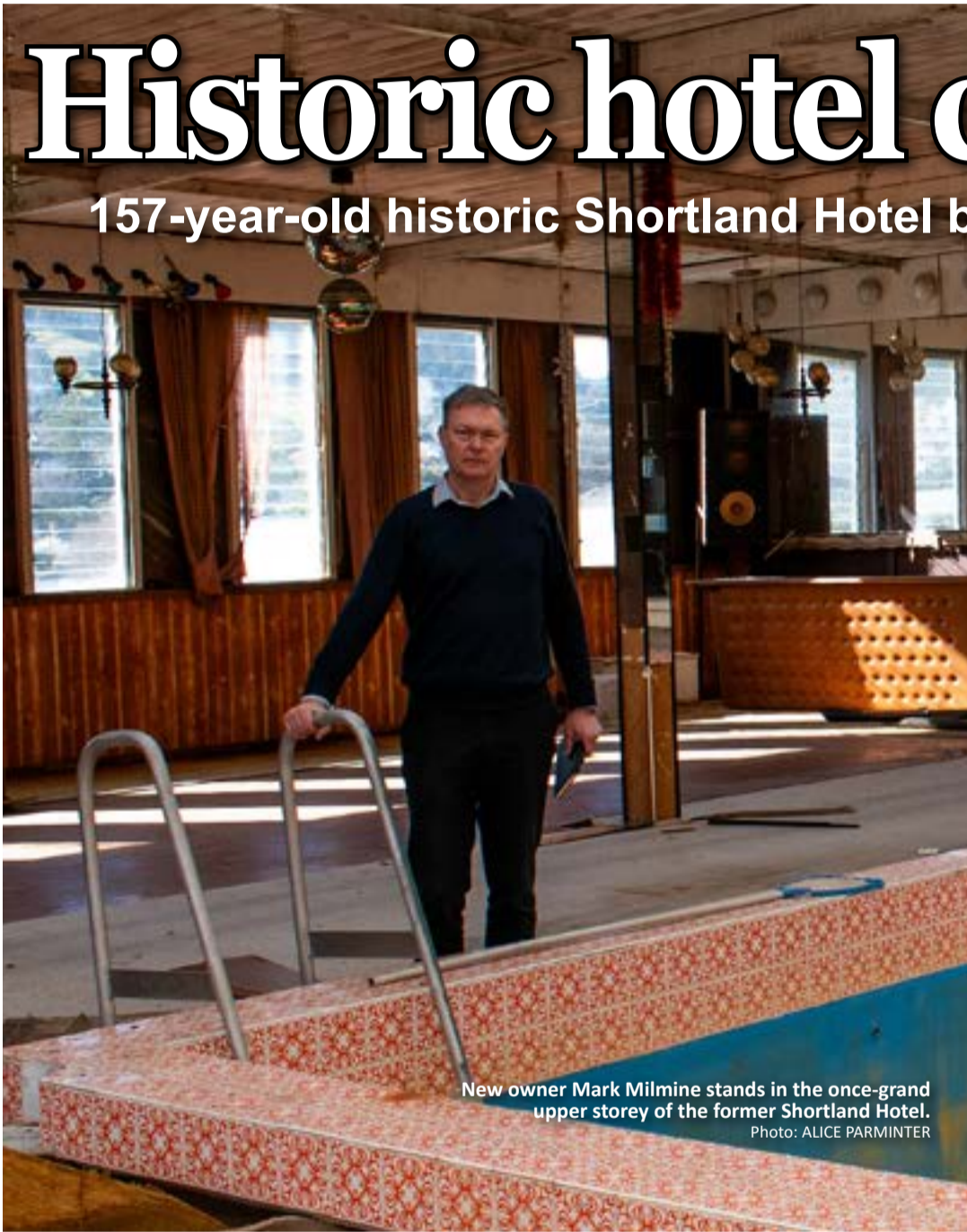
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ENABLING BETTER BUSINESS

Historic hotel checks out

157-year-old historic Shortland Hotel building to be demolished



New owner Mark Milmine stands in the once-grand upper storey of the former Shortland Hotel.
Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

An historic hotel-turned-fire hazard is facing its final days in Thames.

The former Shortland Hotel, on the corner of Grey and Pollen Sts, is scheduled for demolition in the near future, and its new owner says it's unsaveable.

Mark Milmine, owner of 100% Thames and the new owner of the building, said it was too dangerous to keep.

"It's a hazard, it's uninsurable," Mark said of the two storey complex, which includes the 670 square metre hotel and Fresho building, and the adjacent 820 square metre former site of the Bayon Espresso Cafe.

"There's letters on record from the fire department about just how dangerous the building is. So it's important for everyone's safety, I think, that it comes down in a sensible manner, as quickly as possible.

"We have contractors quoting at the moment, and as soon as those are in, we'll proceed, because I don't want it to become a focal point for vandals."

The fate of the 157-year-old building drew attention on social media in July when members of the public posted that fruit and vegetable business Fresho, the former occupants of the building, were having to vacate. Fresho ceased trading from the location on August 1. Mark said their lease

was terminated by the previous landlords.

Mark said the structure had become increasingly unsafe since a fire damaged the cafe and gutted one of the upstairs flats in October, 2019.

"The cafe side's been unoccupied for many years... [and] Fresho were in a fairly precarious position, probably without knowing it, just at the state of disrepair of the building," he said.

"It's leaking everywhere, rotting, and falling apart."

Mark has plans to build a new retail development on the site. The size and layout of the development is yet to be determined - he's still working with Thames Coromandel District Council on this - but he said he was keen to relocate 100% Thames to the site.

"Our current location was built in the 1890s. It's not very practical for modern retail, and it doesn't give us enough space to showcase what we'd like to present to our customers," Mark said.

"A larger, more modern premises has been on my radar for eight years and it's a small town where decent retail spaces don't change hands very often, so I felt I needed to take the future in my own hands and create one."

Mark said he'd like to create a space similar to the Coromandel Lifestyle Centre in Whitianga, with appliances, indoor and

CONTINUED ON P2

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157-year-old building to be demolished

CONTINUED FROM P1

outdoor furniture and similar lifestyle offerings under one roof.

In the meantime, Mark said he was doing what he could to preserve the history of the site, even as he plans for its removal.

"I hosted three members of the Thames Museum committee on Sunday to gather a photographic record of the original hotel and more recent additions, and to select parts of the hotel to be saved from demolition and donated to the museum," he said.

"The demolition crowd will try and recover as much as they can, [and] I have been approached about... some lead-light windows in the old cafe, which apparently have historical significance.

"That's important to me, that anything that is of historical use can be saved."

The two-storey side of the building has been part of Thames' history since 1867.

The Rutland Hotel, later known as Shortland Hotel, was opened on the site by seafaring trader Captain Butt at the beginning of the gold rush. The building's frontage still bears the words, "Butts American - Shortland Hotel". The hotel was closed in 1951.

In 1967, local businessman Dennis Larking had the upper floor converted into flats and renamed Shortland Place, while the ground floor became a showroom for car company Zenith Motors. A swimming pool, verandah and canopy were installed upstairs in the late 70s.

Over the years, the ground floor has been home to a number of businesses, including Mike Saunders Motors, cafe Bayon Espresso,



The now-hazardous building on Pollen St will soon be demolished.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

so, Beverly Anne Bridal, and Fresho. Dennis and his wife also lived upstairs for a number of years.

Zealand's list of significant historical places, nor on Thames Coromandel District Council's historic heritage building schedule.

The building is not listed on Heritage New

SHORTLAND HOTEL HISTORY, P7-8



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Thames Tides

Wed Aug 28	Thu Aug 29	Fri Aug 30	Sat Aug 31	Sun Sep 1	Mon Sep 2	Tue Sep 3																								
Morning 1:31am 3.2 2:05pm 3.2 7:38am 0.7 8:23pm 1.0 Afternoon	Morning 2:31am 3.1 3:14pm 3.1 8:42am 0.8 9:32pm 1.0 Afternoon	Morning 3:36am 3.0 4:21pm 3.1 9:51am 0.9 10:35pm 1.0 Afternoon	Morning 4:42am 3.0 5:19pm 3.1 10:55am 0.9 11:30pm 0.9 Afternoon	Morning 5:43am 3.0 6:09pm 3.2 11:50am 0.8 Afternoon	Morning 12:19am 0.9 12:36pm 0.7 6:36am 3.1 6:53pm 3.3 Afternoon	Morning 1:02am 0.8 1:16pm 0.7 7:22am 3.2 7:33pm 3.3 Afternoon																								
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<p><small>*Not for navigational purposes. Graphic supplied by OceanFun Publishing Ltd. www.tidewiz.com www.tidespy.com www.ofu.co.nz</small></p> <p>MOON AND FISH KEYS New Moon First Quarter Full Moon Last Quarter Good Fishing Fair Fishing Not So Good </p> <p>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. </p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>PLACE</th> <th>Hr</th> <th>High</th> <th>Low</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Coromandel</td> <td>-0</td> <td>04</td> <td>-0 04</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Whitianga</td> <td>-0</td> <td>01</td> <td>-0 05</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tairua</td> <td>+0</td> <td>11</td> <td>+0 21</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Whangamata</td> <td>-0</td> <td>02</td> <td>-0 05</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Waihi Beach</td> <td>-0</td> <td>11</td> <td>-0 12</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>							PLACE	Hr	High	Low	Coromandel	-0	04	-0 04	Whitianga	-0	01	-0 05	Tairua	+0	11	+0 21	Whangamata	-0	02	-0 05	Waihi Beach	-0	11	-0 12
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Toxic mining sediment ‘appears to be shifted’

By TERESA RAMSEY

A man was seen diving into the bright orange waters of the Ohinemuri River despite warnings to avoid contact with the water as it was likely to be highly acidic and contaminated with arsenic, authorities say.

The river turned bright orange on Friday afternoon after sediment appeared to have been shifted from an old mining asset in the hills above the Karangahake Gorge car park, Waikato Regional Council says.

According to photos on the NZ History Seekers Facebook page, the sediment appeared to be deliberately released from a mine called Comstock, which is more than 120 years old.

“Looking at photos we have received, someone has gone to a lot of effort to open up this mine,” the post said.

“Please stay away from the entrance of this mine due to collapses inside the mine that will be unstable due to the [sheer] amount of sludge that has been released.”

The Department of Conservation has put up signs near the site warning track users of potential contamination.

Council regional compliance manager Patrick Lynch said staff would now complete a thorough scene examination, including how the event occurred and what a “normal” discharge from the mine should look like.

“We really want to understand how this event happened and that investigation will take time,” he said.

Council said staff had taken wa-



The Ohinemuri River was bright orange on Friday afternoon.

DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA



Sediment came from an old mine.

KARL WILLIAMS

ter samples upstream and downstream, and taken more samples of the settled sediment, with results expected on August 27.

“We only know what could be lingering inside a mine and that could include residual arsenic and heavy metals, so people need to be cautious and not touch any of the orange sediment that still may be lingering in the environment.

“The colour indicates it will be iron-related, but it is likely to be highly acidic so again we advise people to treat it as contaminated and not touch it,” Mr Lynch said.

Substances that may be found

in old mine assets could include residual arsenic and heavy metals such as cadmium, chromium and antimony, and they could cause risk, so avoiding skin contact was the main thing, he said.

“We are testing for these heavy metals, and also mercury, both totals and dissolved.”

The flow of water coming from the shaft was running relatively clear by Saturday.

“There is still sediment that has settled in the river in quiet locations or around rocks, but most of it has been flushed through the system,” Mr Lynch said on Mon-

day.

A rain event would wash the contaminant away, he said.

“The more water it’s exposed to, the more diluted it will get.”

However, heavy rain forecast for this week may trigger more flushing of the settled sediment down the stream, into the river, he said.

A plane was being used to see if a sediment plume was apparent in the Firth of Thames, or whether it had dissipated, he said.

Meanwhile, Hauraki District Council asked people not to enter the water.

“Our Paeroa water supply intake

is upstream of this so is not affected, however we’ll be monitoring the situation carefully.”

Coromandel Watchdog chair Catherine Delahunty said toxic heavy metals persisted in the environment from the effects of mining.

“The impact on the Ohinemuri river and the species living in [it] will not be good,” she said.

“The Ohinemuri River also runs into the Waihou River and thus into the Hauraki Gulf.

“Dilution does not solve the problem, it merely redistributes it further afield.”





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Education

Students take on Get2Go Challenge

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

A group of Thames High School students got to put their outdoor education skills to the test during a set of challenges held in Cambridge on August 2.

The mixed team of eight students competed in the Get2Go Regional Challenge, which involved a combination of outdoor adventure activities such as orienteering, kayaking, mountain biking, stand-up paddleboarding and a bit of problem solving - but there's a catch.

Students needed to undertake each challenge in under 60 minutes and were required to work together as a team and use skills such as communication, problem solving, planning and decision making.

Thames High physical education teacher Rod Edwards told *The Profile* even though he was the teacher in charge, his job was to just transport the students there and allow them to solve the challenges and lead themselves through it.

Mr Edwards said there were between 10 and 12 teams in total but "we were just interested in how many mixed teams we were competing against".



Thames High School squad ready to compete at the Get2Go Challenge earlier this month.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Thames High came fourth out of the five groups that entered the mixed category, he said, but were supportive of the Whangamatā Area School team who came first overall.

"That's fantastic for such an incredibly small school, but

also [for] an area school to win something like this is huge. And they're now going to the nationals," he said.

"We're putting a lot of support in behind them and a lot of encouragement.

"We hope they win the Na-

tionals."

Mr Edwards said the students planned to head over and train with the Whangamatā Area School team while they build towards nationals.

Meanwhile, Thames High year 10 student Jodie Louden

said she was looking forward to taking some of the knowledge from the Whangamatā team and to build on her team's abilities.

Jodie said the Get2Go Challenge was a great experience with a lot of team bonding and challenging obstacles that "pushed me and my team mates".

Her team worked around their challenges by splitting into two groups and problem-solving, she said.

It was "quite stressful" in the last six minutes of their mountain bike race, Jodie said.

"We had to get as many laps as we could before the timer went off."

But one thing that stood out to Jodie was her team's positive attitude, she said.

Between challenges, Jodie said the team members reflected on the last activity and ways they could have improved.

One memorable moment for Jodie was orienteering and "getting lost in the bush", she said.

Jodie's advice for students who were interested in taking part in the challenge next year was to "give it a go, and go hard".

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Thames High School



Kia kōtahi ai te piki ake, kia ikeike rawa ki te taumata
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CELEBRATING SUCCESS



Get to Go Challenge

The Get2Go Regional Challenge on Friday 2 August was an exciting day of orienteering, kayaking, stand-up paddling, mountain biking, and problem-solving at Lake Karapiro.

Designed for all fitness levels, the event featured three 60-minute challenges: Mountain Biking, Kayaking and Orienteering.

Despite our team's limited experience and the cold waters of the Waikato River making kayaking particularly challenging, we scored points for each activity.

We performed well, learned valuable lessons for next year, and enjoyed excellent teamwork and outdoor fun.



Cadet Competition Wins

Congratulations to **Skylar Swindells** and **Eli Lester (Year 10)**, **Lexi Thomas (Year 9)** for winning first place in the Senior Team Drill & Inspection at the St John Cadets Competition on Sunday 4 August. Special recognition goes to Skylar, who also earned first place in Pairs 3 & 4. The cadets showcased their skills in first aid, drill, and communication. With 70 participants from Years 7 to 13, they tackled scenarios like CPR, amputations, and burns, using realistic casualty simulations. Excellent work, team! For more information on the St Johns Cadets visit their Facebook page Hato Hone St John Hauraki / Coromandel Community



Sporting Success

Congratulations to **Deputy Student Leader Hunter Growden (Year 13)** for being selected to play in an invitational Under 18 New Zealand rugby team at the World Schools Festival in Abu Dhabi.

Congratulations to **Harley Harris (Year 12)** who has been selected to trial for the New Zealand U18 Touch Team. He represented the Thames Valley Team U16 Mixed for the season of 2023/24.



Congratulations to **Ellie Johnson (Year 12)** for her recent Gymnastics wins at the Gym-for-All event in the Bay of Plenty. Winning Gold and Silver in five disciplines.



Sports Exchange Northcote College

Tuesday 30 July was an incredible day at our yearly sports exchange with Northcote College. While Northcote College were victorious we competed with spirit and a great time was had by all.

Sports Student Leader Mia Wilson (Year 13) had this to say about the events of the day:

"We were welcomed with a beautiful pōwhiri and the sports events were the highlight of the exchange! The games were both challenging and exhilarating, and I felt that our teams played exceptionally well.

Overall, the experience was very memorable, and I hope that it will continue to be so for the years to come."

More than 1000 hours of service celebrated

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Around 70 people from across Hauraki and Coromandel were recognised in a ceremony on August 19, for their dedication to Hato Hone St John.

A whopping 1115 combined hours of service was racked up between the recipients, whose roles ranged from employed paramedics and emergency service responders; volunteer caring callers, opportunity shop workers, friends of the hospital, transport drivers; and more.

The ceremony, held at the Thames Union Parish, was a chance for the organisation to show its appreciation for their hard work.

Awards handed out included five-year service pins, 10-year service medals, and bars for 15, 20, 25, 30, 35, 40 and 45 years of service.

One award recipient, Don Mahoney, received his 55-year bar of service. The bar, to be attached to his previously-awarded 50-year service medal, recognises the longest serving and most dedicated members of St John. Don joined St John in 1966 and was made a Member of the Order of St John in 1994. He is currently a paramedic at Thames Ambulance Station.



Clockwise from top left: The proceedings were opened with a procession and presentation of the colours. Don Mahoney is recognised for 55 years of service in St John. Sir Richard Blundell, the patron of St John, addresses the crowd. The award recipients.

Photos: ALICE PARMINTER

son handed out parliamentary certificates of appreciation for those celebrating 20 or more years of service.

“We have a rugged, geographically challenging region, we have weather, we have a [mature community],” Mr Simpson

said. “This is an organisation that remains true to the values of the founders... [and] apply those values today. An event of this sort is a physical manifestation of the thanks we give as a community.”

District Mayors Len Salt and Toby Adams were also in attendance to celebrate the dedication of their community members, as was St John’s patron Sir Richard Blundell.

Sir Blundell said he was proud of the dedication the recipients

have shown to the community. “The service award is for exemplary service,” he said.

“We look after people of every race, creed and colour in this country.”



Journey of three lounge suites to three stores

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Going down memory lane and our journey so far...

Kamal started the business with just three lounge suites from his garage until he found a store in the right location.

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Superprice Furniture specialises and promotes New Zealand made lounge suites, mattresses, furniture from Coastwood, Sofa Factory and Majestic.

There is also an incredible selection of furniture and décor pieces sourced from leading suppliers like Furniture By Designs, Debonnaire, Rembrandt, French Country and more.

Kamal finds this rewarding and reinforces his belief in hard work.

You promote your business as a family business, who is working beside you?

Kamal believes he couldn’t have achieved everything alone.

Initially in a partnership, he now relies solely on family members, each with their own expertise and strengths, which has helped him bring his business to the envisioned level.

Kamal’s bed store is managed by his brother-in-law, Sanket, who specialises in retail and information technology, handling logistics and website management.

Kamal’s sister-in-law, Sriz, is an ex-seafarer who switched to a career in interior decor and design.

Her creative mind and experiences have helped us elevate the merchandising of all our stores and assist our clients



Kamal, left, with Sriz and Sanket are ready to assist customers.

Photo: SUPPLIED

to elevate their spaces. She sources the unique decor pieces and furniture and helps us in our day to day business operations. Diamond, Kamal’s cousin, successfully runs and manages the Whitianga store.

What do you think your customers are looking for and what’s popular?

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Our local community’s overwhelming support and word-of-mouth recommendations from satisfied customers have brought others from far and wide to shop

with us.

Our adjustable beds, customised size lounge suites and more do really well in our Thames Stores, while our décor pieces and designer and contemporary furniture does really well in Whitianga stores.

Both areas have different demographics and tastes and we do our best to understand and cater accordingly.

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- **SPF Bed Shop** 543 Pollen St, Thames Ph 07 211 9307

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Education

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Pārāwai School embraces Matariki learning

By Pārāwai School principal Jordan Palfrey

During term two, Pārāwai School's big unit of learning covered Planet Earth & Beyond integrated with Matariki.

Our ākonga/learners developed their literacy, science, arts, maths and matauranga Māori through these varied and wonderful units of learning. Budding scientists developed critical understandings of our solar system and the many aspects of space, planets, asteroids and everything in between. With the guidance of Dr Korohere Ngāpō, our teachers integrated the kaupapa of Matariki (as it pertains to our Hauraki area) within their teaching and our ākonga/learners shared this with whānau through both their shared digital learning and through the amazing art displays we had in our hall.

Whānau feedback was incredibly positive towards the high

standard of work our students displayed for them.

For many of our visitors, the Kapa Haka was a highlight as they showcased Hauraki waiata they have been learning and performing. All of the learning was celebrated with our annual Matariki week at the end of term two.

We had many whānau members attend our final celebration of Matariki to see the awesome art work and enjoy the community hāngi. The hāngi was only possible through the amazing donations of both food and time and the combined efforts of our school community. This highlights our values of Manaakitanga and Whanaungatanga and will have a lasting impact on our students showing what can be possible when we come together as a team.

It was a delicious, colourful event. Ngā mihi mahana ki a koutou katoa.



Pārāwai School celebrates Matariki with community hāngi.

Photos: SUPPLIED



Pārāwai School Kea class art pieces on show.

Digital art for community

With Apple resources at our fingertips, we were able to captivate our students' imagination and knowledge with this hologram activity. The tamariki, enabled with their own allocated ipad, were able to research, design, measure, develop their geometry skills, animate and produce their own story of the star they had chosen. All this resulted in an outcome to be proud of - a hologram depicting their interpretation of a Matariki star. One celebration from our Matariki learning was to present an art piece for the community to admire during our Matariki hākari. The children were challenged to extend their knowledge and using technology were able to present their work in a new and unique way which encompassed their creativity and

knowledge. The everyday access to their ipads enables the learning and integration of key curriculum areas while including the key school values. Each child has the opportunity to learn and discover components of ipad apps like Keynote and Sketches School while using literacy, maths, colours, patterns, design and animation, to present their individual work. The options can be limitless. Matariki - a time to come together to honour the past, but also to embrace the future. Tino pai Room Piwaiwaka. Thanks to Gateway Glass who supplied the perspex for our giant hologram catcher. "The best part was making my designs and then putting them into my star. It was cool to see it floating. I

didn't think it was going to be that easy!" - Olivia, 9
 "I like how realistic it looked and seeing all the people's faces when they saw them." - Vaylen, 10
 "I think they are really cool because I could use my colours and it was fun doing a new way to make a picture." - Micah, 8
 "Mine was so cool how it changed using the animation from the kauri into a whale and then I got them to go together to make a star." - Rylee, 9
 "My best bit was when the hologram catcher made my star float." - Jordan, 10
 "I was proud [of] how I worked out how to use the keynote animation and was the class expert to help others" - Jett, 9
 - By Piwaiwaka Class

WHAT'S HAPPENING AT PĀRĀWAI SCHOOL?

Kororā class created a mural based around our local Taniwha Ureia. After research and based on stories from our kaumatua, we learnt that Ureia lived in and around Tikapa Moana (Hauraki Gulf). He is known to have been a shape-shifting taniwha. This is our interpretation of our local taniwha Ureia, a mōkai/pet and beloved guardian of the Hauraki people.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

2024 has seen a substantial increase in International students to Pārāwai School. We love to welcome all of the new students and their whānau into our learning community and it is always fantastic when there are opportunities to share aspects of different cultures and languages with one another. All classrooms at our school have hosted International students this year and it allows our students to experience a whole new culture and practice our school values, especially whānaungatanga and manaakitanga. We have many short stay students and whānau who stay between three and four weeks as well as longer term students who stay for a term or even a year.

STUDENT VOICE

"Hello my name is Ellee and I have been part of the TCDC youth voice for the past 11 months. Every month we have a meeting and talk about what could be better in our town and what can be changed. There are around nine kids that go and they are from

three different schools Pārāwai, Mata-toki and Pūiri. This program goes onto high school as well. So far we have been brainstorming ideas, walking around the town looking at different art pieces/murals, shops etc, and how we should have a cute space for youth to go and study, eat, listen to music, or just hang out. A place where anyone can come and feel welcome and safe and much more. I'm also excited to continue my journey with youth voice."

- Ellee Blank, 13

"At Pārāwai School, we have a great programme known to students and teachers as Breakfast Club. Breakfast Club runs on Monday, Wednesday and Fridays, and offers free breakfast to all students. We are lucky to have volunteer parent helpers who do run this for us. They provide a range of cereals and tinned fruit each day while on the third day, the menu consists mainly of toast, generously offering a variety of toppings. Every day that Breakfast Club is open, they provide free Milo's for all the students to enjoy, warming up their throats between mouthfuls of cereal and fruit, and helping wash down their toast. Pārāwai School Breakfast Club is a wonderful community, great for making sure no students miss their brekkie, and purely making someone's day with a radiatingly kind smile."

- Sophia Haakma, 13

"Another amazing activity at Pārāwai School is Epro8. Epro8 is a competition where groups of four students from

across the country compete against each other in engineering challenges including: a toaster that can launch toast more than 2.5 metres into the air, a fully functioning scale, a scaled up version of an old toy and a working air duct. This year's Pārāwai team managed to make it all the way to the grand finals doing the challenges mentioned above and managed to place fifth in the whole North Island. Epro8 is an incredibly entertaining activity for participants and spectators alike. Epro8 runs once per year from Year 5 all the way up to Year 13. Along with Epro8 there are still many more activities to do at Pārāwai School, so keep on reading."

- Alex Atrill, 12



TOP TO BOTTOM: Weka Class art, Kapa haka in action and Kororā class mural.



'Butt's Corner' famous for meetings, speeches, fights



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 man tossed to a considerable height by a bull at Butt's Corner outside Thames' Shortland Hotel in 1871 was par for the course for the once famous area. In its heyday the corner was a rendezvous for miners, dignified, elaborately tattooed Māori chiefs, wāhine of great beauty and kaumātua smoking clay pipes. It was the scene of public meetings, polling day crowds, fiery speeches and frequent fights. Grievances were aired, loafers loafed and protests, parades and processions passed by.

Captain John Butt, from the earliest days of the Thames goldfield, proved to be a man of enterprise, going heart and soul into the advancement of the town – whether in business or entertainment. He was described as the right man in the right place.

The first township of Thames was named Shortland after Willoughby Shortland, an English naval captain who served as Colonial Secretary and Acting Governor of New Zealand. It consisted principally of tents and crudely constructed stores on mudflats but within weeks of the goldfield being proclaimed on 30 July, 1867, Butt's Shortland Ho-



Looking north from the landing place on the Kauaeranga River showing part of Shortland, Thames, and Butt's Shortland Hotel and American Theatre, centre, 1868. Photo: SUPPLIED

tel was open. It was a weatherboard building, originally intended as a house for Ngāti Maru Chief Hauauru Tikapa Taipari, who was later baptised Wirope Hoterani - a Māori transliteration of Willoughby Shortland.

The hotel was a large building, soon crowded with diggers drinking and discussing prospects of all kinds.

In one room men paired up and danced to a fiddle. The Shortland Hotel was replete with every comfort and was said to put more pretentious hotels to shame. Outside stood a colossal Māori image used as a lamp post.

By January, 1868, Captain Butt had built the American Theatre adjoining his hotel. This was capable of holding 600, while the bar had a 'liquoring up' capacity of 200. The cellar under-

neath held 60 large casks of beer and great quantities of iced drinks. The Pollen St frontage was handsomely fitted for private apartments in every way suitable for newly wealthy miners. Behind the theatre was an elaborate kitchen range, able to supply a table for 200 people.

The theatre was leased and run by J L 'Johnny' Hall, a famous actor and comedian. The theatre scenery was designed by artists Thomas Monkhouse and George Fawcett. The ventilation of the building was provided by large louvre lights, and the vomitories, or means of egress, ingress or regress to the building, were ample for a crowd.

Butt's American Theatre would go on to pulse nightly with the entertainments of burlesque, drama, variety troupes, and acrobats. There were

fundraising performances, rowdy public meetings, lectures, inquests, Māori Land Court hearings, and on Saturdays, a couple of thousand men were to be seen milling about there. These were the days of the picturesque digger - with his red Garibaldi shirt, neckerchief, silk sash, and brown beaver slouch hat.

The NZ Herald correspondent was astonished that this building, which on the 1st of August, 1867, was being built as a whare for Chief Taipari, was now enlarged and extended into a handsome hotel, with extensive accommodation and a theatre. "As one of our very earliest and still our most enterprising men," he wrote, "we all here wish Captain Butt a good voyage on his present ship."

John Butt was born in 1830 in Sus-

sex, England and at the age of 14 began an indentured apprenticeship in the Merchant Navy. By the age of 21 he had earned his Masters Ticket for Shipping and in his career he would go on to sail to nearly all parts of the globe.

In 1852 he married Ann Wood and a few years later the couple came to New Zealand, settling in Auckland. He worked principally on the schooner's *Osprey* and *Henry* sailing between several New Zealand ports, and once to Tahiti to bring back an exotic cargo of oranges, pineapples, coconuts, preserved bananas and arrowroot. Ann and John had a daughter, Annie, in 1856 but within days of the birth Annie died. Annie survived only a few months, dying early the next year.

In 1858 John married Mary Ann Bell and the couple would go on to have 10 children. In 1860 he began working for Henderson and Macfarlane's Circular Saw Line – a sailing ship fleet established in 1842 in Auckland. He commanded the *Constance*, one of the vessels trading between Auckland and San Francisco.

Between 1862 and 1866 John and Mary Ann suffered the loss of two children before they reached a year old, although their first three sons survived. In 1865 Captain Butt started business as a shipping agent in conjunction with Captain Anderson in Auckland.

John Butt's initial reaction to the Thames goldfield was one of caution, and a misleading newspaper article suggesting he possessed a fine specimen of gold indicative of great riches to be made at Thames drew a heated rebuttal from him. "The facts of the case are simply these: I received as a present a small specimen of gold

CONTINUED ON P8

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Tragedy sees Butt list Shortland Hotel for sale

CONTINUED FROM P7

from miner, and I showed the same to three or four persons here, but positively refused to send it to town [Auckland], as I did not consider it sufficient to warrant the belief in a payable goldfield... I should be very sorry to be in any way connected with creating a rush to this place, which at present is totally uncalled for... At all events, I trust for the future you will not use my name on such a subject, without my written authority."

He did not want, he said, to appear a swindler. However, by September, 1867, the partnership with Captain Anderson dissolved; John Butt was well and truly established on the Thames goldfield. He became a successful businessman and a civic leader, chairing dozens of meetings, often at his hotel, and was the driving force behind establishing a municipality at Thames, building the hospital, churches, and a wharf at Shortland, supporting the formation of Pollen St as well as arranging Christmas sports, regattas and fundraising for local causes.

On 1 March, 1868, a daughter, Helena, was born to John and Mary Ann, likely the first white child born on the Thames goldfield. Their daughter was not to enjoy life in the town that her father worked so hard to support; she died six weeks after birth.

John Butt was elected to the Auckland Provincial Council for the electoral district of the Thames goldfield in 1869. By 1870 moves were afoot to present him with a testimonial in recognition of his services and the esteem in which he was held. In 1871 the Shortland Hotel and American Theatre were briefly put up for sale but there appeared to be no takers.

In 1873, with the opening of the Whangamatā goldfield, a township



The Shortland Hotel building today.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

was established at Hikutaia, the track to Whangamata being in the locality. Captain Butt, with an eye to business, promptly built a large hotel there.

"The lower end of Shortland is, I hear, to be reproduced at Hikutaia. There will be a court house, with Butt's Corner opposite," marvelled a *Daily Southern Cross* reporter. The rush subsided and the place became deserted, and Captain Butt was compelled to close his hotel, after having spent a very large sum of money on it. In 1874, he was elected to the Thames Borough Council and proved a spirited councillor with a peppery temperament, once leaving the Mayor visibly upset. In some quarters he was referred to as the 'fossil politician' of Thames.

In 1876 tragedy hit the family when seven-year-old Edwin died. Captain Butt's health began to fail and in April, 1877, he put his Shortland Hotel and American Theatre up for sale again.

Amongst his stock were rare and valuable engravings, a large eight-day clock, a case of stuffed birds, a chandelier and hot water fountains. "The Shortland Hotel and Butt's Corner carry with them the oldest associations of European settlement in this district, and John Butt was a pioneer

in every respect, enterprising and energetic in promoting progress," *The Thames Star* said.

In July, 1877, yet another son, four-year-old Frederick, died, a newspaper notice asking English and Californian papers to please copy.

Despite the hardships, John Butt carried on. In October, the agency of the steamers *Durham*, *Enterprise*, and *Lalla Rookh* were transferred to him and he opened business as a shipping and commission agent in his new premises, the old Royal Hotel, in Pollen St. He also opened a large store near Shortland Wharf, capable of storing 300 tons of merchandise. In January, 1878, he ran for a position on the Thames Harbour Board but was defeated. By December of that year he resigned as agent for the Auckland and North Shore Steam ferry company, unable to attend to business due to sickness.

The final blow came in January, 1879 when his 14-year-old son William, a bright, intelligent lad, drowned in the wreck of the *Schiehallion* off the coast of the Isle of Wight.

William was holding on by the bulwark when one of the men sent him to fetch some money from a chest. William was washed overboard, and

although he tried to swim to safety, he soon disappeared. Reports vary as to why he was on the ship – he was an apprentice, he was going to stay with an uncle, or he was allowed, most unwillingly by his parents, to make a sea voyage to England, they hoping it might "sicken him of the sea". The second mate also drowned and their bodies were found at Rocken End, Isle of Wight. It was said the loss of William was one of the greatest trials of John Butt's life.

Ailing with congestion of the lungs brought on by catching cold while at the Upper Thames in his capacity as shipping agent, Captain Butt now kept indoors. He appeared to improve but the complaint returned with greater intensity and he was compelled to take to his bed. He continued to grow worse day by day, the inclement weather not helping. Despite Dr Gilbert attending him with the greatest possible care and skill, Captain John Butt died on 26 July at his Hape Rd home, from chronic hepatitis and pulmonary consumption, aged 49. He left a wife and family of four, who deeply lamented the death of a kind and indulgent husband and father. Flags flew at half-mast on vessels in the harbour.

Captain John Butt was remembered as the man who cast his lot with the hardy and enterprising who journeyed to the new goldfield, taking an active interest in those stirring times in everything pertaining to the public interests of the Thames community, and exercising his considerable influence in local politics. He was buried at Shortland cemetery with full Masonic Honours. The great heyday of Butt's Corner lasted roughly five years but in its time this place of wild nights and thrilling days was once the very hub of Thames.

Chris' Quiz

Weekly quiz compiled by Chris Parminter

1. What is the English translation of the French phrase 'Je ne sais pas'?
2. If a female child in Iceland is named Emilía Jónsdóttir, what is her father's first name?
3. Which string instrument is smaller? Violin or cello?
4. Which animal represents the deadly sin of envy?
5. Which spice is derived from the Crocus flower and is one of the most expensive spices in the world?
6. In which United States city is the United States National Zoo? a) New York, b) Massachusetts or c) Washington DC?
7. Thames, New Zealand was formed from two historic towns. The one to the south was known as Shortland; what was the town to the north known as?
8. Who was the first Spice Girl to leave the group to pursue a solo career?
9. Melbourne's Docklands Stadium is known by naming sponsorship as a) Marvel Stadium, b) Disney Stadium or c) Pixar Stadium?
10. The 2024 World Championship Domino Tournament was sponsored by which company? a) Dominoes, b) Pizza Hut or c) Hasbro?



ANSWERS: 1. I don't know; 2. Jón (Surnames in Iceland are patronymic or occasionally matronymic; they indicate the father (or mother) of the child and not the historic family lineage); 3. Violin; 4. Snake; 5. Saffron; 6. (c) Washington DC; 7. Grahamstown; 8. Geri Hallgrímsson; 9. (b) Pizza Hut; 10. (b) Marvel Stadium.

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See the difference

Pottery, tartan-inspired art to feature

The first of the September featured artists for the Thames Art Gallery is Jim Neilson, aka Skotty.

He emigrated to New Zealand from the “land of heather and tartan” 27 years ago. Like his kilt, Skotty loves bright colours, especially red, which is evident in his paintings.

Until recently, he preferred to work in acrylics but for his latest exhibition he has ventured into water colours and mixed medium.

Skotty says he is besotted with the Coromandel Peninsula and particularly Thames, where he lives, and finds the area a great source of inspiration. He simply desires to promote his own “backyard” and his exhibition will be aptly themed *The Gateway*.

The second of the featured artists for September is the collective known as the Thames Pottery Group, which is based at the Thames Art Gallery.

The group was formed back in the 1970s and now has two groups meeting on a Wednesday.

There are about 15 members in total and with everyone’s different interests and talents they learn from one another, as well as enjoy the social side of a common interest.

They are fortunate to have a dedicated pottery room attached to the gallery which houses an electric kiln.

They also have their own Raku kiln which is fired a few times during the year plus a pitfire is available, too. A couple of potter’s wheels are at the



Jim Neilson, aka Skotty, with his tartan-inspired art.

Photos: SUPPLIED

disposal of those who wish to throw clay, so a variety of techniques are able to be utilised.

Most years the group has an exhibition in the gallery, where the members produce a garden totem pole to fundraise to sustain some of their expenses.

Over the years they have had a variety of tutors and workshops to inspire their creativity. They also enjoy having trips away visiting other art galleries and pottery studios for ideas and inspiration.

There will be a vast range of products on offer at their exhibition, showcasing their diverse styles, creativities and passion for all that is pottery.

DETAILS: Thames Art Gallery, 604 Tararu Rd, Thames, open Monday to Friday 10am to 2pm and weekends 10am to 4pm.



Thames Pottery Group members in action.

In Brief

SERIOUS CRASH

Emergency services responded to a crash on Puke Rd (State Highway 2), in Paeroa involving a quadbike and police vehicle on Sunday. Police said the two occupants on the quadbike were in moderate and serious conditions. The road was closed at the scene while a scene examination took place, with cordons in place on Puke Rd at Hubbard Rd and Brenan St, and traffic in the area was being diverted through Paeroa. An investigation into the crash was underway, Police said.

SPEED LIMITS TO CHANGE

Temporary speed limits on State Highway 25 (SH25) around the Coromandel Peninsula will be returning to their former level by early October, NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi said. Speeds along the coastal highway were temporarily lowered in 2023 as an emergency provision following the summer’s damaging storms. The agency said the temporary reductions were only allowed to remain in place for a maximum of 12 months, and it was not seeking renewals for the limits. “Following the 2023 weather events and closure of SH25A, traffic patterns and volumes changed on the Coromandel Peninsula, leading to concerns about the impact of increased traffic flows through communities,” Waikato/Bay of Plenty director of regional relationships David Speirs said. “Now there’s no longer an emergency and SH25A has reopened, the temporary speeds will be removed, and permanent speed limits reinstated.” Waka Kotahi said it was aware of community support for retaining reduced speed in some areas, but noted that permanently changing speed limits was a legal process with multiple steps. A new land transport rule for setting

speed limits is currently being considered by the Ministry of Transport, and is due to be finalised in the coming months. “Once the new speed rule has been finalised, NZTA will consider how it applies and if any of the temporary SH25 speed limits can, or should be made permanent, to meet community needs,” Mr Speirs said. SH25A between Kōpū and Hikuai has a permanent speed limit of 80km/h and this is not changing.

BYLAW CHANGES PROPOSED

Thames Coromandel District Council is seeking public feedback on a new parking bylaw, as well as proposed changes to the existing traffic bylaw. The new parking bylaw would replace the council’s existing 2014 parking control bylaw. It will have a different structure reflecting current best practice guidelines, the council said. Changes would include reorganising existing parking provisions for on-road and off-street car parks into separate parts of the bylaw; replacing the current bylaw schedules with a standalone register of parking restriction resolutions; and reorganising existing boat trailer parking rules into zone parking areas. The council is asking for feedback on whether people should pay to park their boat trailers and whether zones should only apply at peak times. New boat trailer parking zones and fees are also being proposed for two locations in Tairua, one in Whangapoua and the marine precinct in Kōpū. Proposed amendments to the traffic control bylaw are updates and edits to the formatting and wording of the bylaw, and removal of clauses which are not used or no longer necessary. TCDC also plans to update the bylaw’s register of resolutions to reflect several changes which have already been in place since 2023. Feedback can be submitted on tcdc.govt.nz or at council offices until September 9.

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Rural Life

Wilding pines to be removed

Trees in the wrong place are set to be eradicated from Hauturu Motu/Clark Island, off the coast of Whangamatā.

Tangata whenua guardian group Tunaiti Kaitiaki Rōpū and Waikato Regional Council are partnering on a project to prevent the further spread of the island's wilding pines, which threaten native flora, fauna and archaeological sites.

Hauturu is one of four islands that comprise Tunaiti Motu. Tunaiti Kaitiaki Rōpū is working towards the upkeep of the islands as wildlife sanctuaries, including eradication of all rodents since 2020.

Kaitiaki spokesperson Errol Gilbert says the removal of the pines and ongoing wilding pine management is part of Tunaiti Kaitiaki Rōpū's efforts to restore the ngahere and native biodiversity of the motu back to their former glory.

"We need to treat the natural environment with respect and restore, improve and preserve the biodiversity values, to honour those who were before us and for future generations," he said.

"Wilding pines, along with rats and mice, dogs and rubbish – they never belonged on the motu and they do not support our kaupapa."

Kororā (little blue penguin), tītī (mutton bird), at least three species of skink and gecko, and many species of passerine birds call the Tunaiti Motu home.

But once abundant in native wildlife, including tuatara, the islands are today rated category 1 priority biodiversity sites, which mean they are critically endangered and naturally uncommon ecosystems that support threatened and at-risk flora and

fauna.

Hauturu, the largest of the islands at 7 hectares, was likely cleared of vegetation prior to the early 1940s and has regenerating coastal cliff and coastal forest ecosystems.

Waikato Regional Council Biodiversity Sites Lead Jacob Dexter said the wilding pines were threatening that regeneration because of their ability to invade and impact upon indigenous ecosystems and landscapes. "Wilding pines are a tree in the wrong place that can overwhelm landscapes, outcompeting native plants which provide food, habitat and other resources that native flora and fauna need to survive," Jacob said. "Production forestry may play an important role in the economy of the Waikato region, but wind-dispersed conifer seed can result in unplanned and unmanaged wilding trees that grow much faster and quickly out-compete native forest species."

Work to remove the trees will begin on August 27 and is expected to take four to five days. There will be no public access to the island while work is underway. Jacob said some of trees are quite large and in rugged and precarious terrain, so removal will be a logistical challenge.

"The larger trees visible from Whangamatā beach will be cut down, but the smaller, less accessible trees located on the northern cliffs will require abseiling by the contractor to drill and fill them with a non-residual poison. After the initial knockdown, we'll do a further two years of seedling and sapling removal if needed."

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Rural Life

Second chance for Holly after diagnosis



By Dr Asse E Bosch, BVSc BSc

Holly, a 12-year-old domestic shorthair cat, was brought to Franklin Vets by her concerned owner.

She had noticed Holly drinking more water than usual, urinating frequently, and showing a decreased appetite.

Upon examination, we found Holly to be slightly underweight and dehydrated. Blood and urine tests were performed, revealing early kidney failure.

This is a common condition in ageing cats, where the kidneys gradually lose their ability to remove waste from the blood properly.

We explained to her owner that while her kidney problems couldn't be cured, they could be managed to improve Holly's quality of life. The primary treatment recommendation was a switch to a specialised renal diet.

This prescription food is formulated with reduced protein, phosphorus, and sodium levels to decrease the workload on Holly's kidneys.

Holly gradually transitioned to the new diet over two weeks, with fresh water available to encourage her to drink.

Within a month, Holly showed positive changes. Her energy levels improved, and



Holly is recovering from early kidney failure.

she seemed more interested in playing. Her water intake normalised, and her coat regained its former lustre.

Three months after the diagnosis, Holly had gained weight and was back to her old, affectionate self.

She was more active and engaged, even initiating play with her toys.

This case study highlights the importance of regular veterinary check-ups for ageing pets and the impact proper diagnosis and management can have on a pet's quality of life.

Holly has regained her health and vitality, allowing her to enjoy her golden years comfortably.

- Supplied by Dr Asse E Bosch, BVSc BSc Franklin Vets, Waihi



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Conservation Week

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Kōpū Bridge wheelhouse restoration complete

Restoration works have recently been completed on the Historic Kōpū Bridge wheelhouse which should see the building and the machinery inside protected for another 100 years.

Kōpū bridge and community trust chair Jonathan Broome said the trust was really chuffed with the wheelhouse restoration.

“We’ve been working behind the scenes for several years to restore the bridge and this is the most visible progress so far.”

Work on the wheelhouse was carried out by local tradesmen (STM Roofing and Liddell Building) in accordance with a conservation plan prepared under the direction of Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga.

“This was a tough job. First the scaffolding had to be installed, which wouldn’t have been easy given most of the wheelhouse sits out over the Waihou river, and then the builders were perched out there working in mid-winter”.

The conservation plan requires that, wherever possible, the original appearance of the bridge be retained and that where maintenance or



The Historic Kōpū Bridge wheelhouse before and after recent restorations.



Photos: SUPPLIED

replacement is needed, similar materials and colours are used.

The trust is working toward replacing some missing railings before hopefully getting the bridge open for summer.

“The bridge is a very interesting place to be, it’s very close to the water and the current.

“It’s much quieter than the new bridge and you get a good appreciation for how well the

bridge was constructed back in 1928.”

The Kōpū bridge and community trust would like to thank New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi for as-

sisting with restoration works undertaken to date, and the friends of the historic Kōpū bridge who have been active organising events and activities on the bridge.

Historic Kōpū Bridge

The last operational swing span bridge in NZ ...

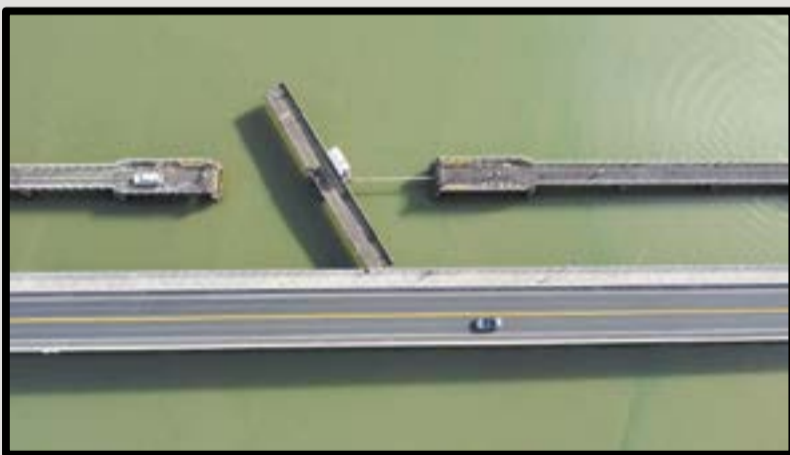


Photo Supplied by Stu Caisley

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Burke Street Reserve. BYO gear.

All welcome.

Thanks to Seagull Centre funding.

To forget how to dig the earth and to tend the soil is to forget ourselves.

‘Mahatma Gandhi’

Conservation Week

ADVERTISING FEATURE

Busy bees get stuck in at Kaiaua stream planting day

A community working bee co-ordinated by the Western Firth Catchment Group and the NZ Landcare Trust planted 430 native plants on the banks of Haurahi Stream in Kaiaua on August 15, part of their efforts to revitalise the riparian land along the stream.

Twenty-five volunteers spent two hours ripping out all kinds of weeds including privet, agapanthus, cotoneaster, and nightshade. They were replaced with plants from Te Whangai nursery, and topped with wood chip and daggy wool donated by local farmer Stu Hill. The group also weeded around existing native plants, and installed Garto tree protectors, a reusable and recyclable weed suppression tree guard showcased at the National Fieldays Innovation Hub.

Landcare Waikato catchment co-ordinator Ric Balfour said volunteers came from across the region to help out.

“Thanks to the NZ Motorcaravan Association members who have a programme of contributing funds and volunteer time to projects near their campgrounds,” he said.

“Kaiaua has a new NZMCA campground thanks to Justin and Vicki Johnston, who turned their nearby pasture property into a campground in 2023. In the process they have cleaned up the whole area between the Bowling Club and the bridge over the Haurahi Stream. It has been a massive undertaking, followed by three successive community planting events to bring back native plants to the edge of the stream.”

The group also included volunteers from Westpac’s Auckland, Morrinsville and Hamilton offices. Ric said the working bee was part of a long-term plan to work with local landowners to fence and plant the entire riparian margin of Haurahi Stream all the way up to the Toft Rd crossing.



Clockwise from top:
The stream bank was a hive of activity during the working bee. Some of last year’s plantings have been installed with Garto tree protectors. Westpac Volunteer Jessica Lane gives the thumbs up on a job well done.



Take action for nature this Conservation Week

Spring is finally here, and as flowers start to bloom it’s the perfect time to turn our attention to the things that make our place special.

This year’s annual Conservation Week runs September 2-8, and its theme calls for people to take action for nature.

Whether it’s by planting a tree or being a responsible pet owner, there’s always something you can do to help our environment and the native species that make the Coromandel special.

As the season progresses, we’ll start to see migratory birds returning to our coastlines and many of our resident birds beginning to breed.

It’s a vulnerable time for many already threatened species, and our behaviour around them can make all the difference for their survival.

For those of us who love to live in and visit the Coromandel, we have the privilege and responsibility to take action to protect our rare and special species.

Our top take action tips: be a responsible dog owner – keep your pooch on a leash and keep an eye out for wildlife even in off-lead areas.

On the beach? Give birds space and stay alert for camouflaged eggs and chicks – species like NZ dotterel/tūturiwhatu are good at hiding, but not so good at avoiding feet and vehicles.

Keep your cat at home - you’ll help protect them from cat fights and traffic, while protecting our native birds from the cat hunting instinct. Take action for nature this Conservation Week and watch as it blooms into a new season.

- Supplied by Department of Conservation



Give birds space, such as the NZ dotterel/tūturiwhatu. Photo: SUPPLIED/DOC

Mō te Taiao e take Conservation Week 2-8 September 2024 conservationweek.org.nz

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DAFFODIL DAY

Thanks to these generous businesses, the Profile will donate to the Cancer Society

Support group fills the gaps for terminal patients

By ALICE PARMINTER, Public Interest Journalism funded by NZ On Air

Life with cancer and other illnesses can be stressful when needing support beyond medical needs. That's where the Thames Cancer Support Trust comes in.

The entirely volunteer-run local group offers assistance with anything one might need, from petrol and food vouchers, accommodation assistance for medical treatment, help with unexpected expenses like school-related costs, counselling, therapeutic massages, and more.

Despite the name, the trust's members say they are not solely for cancer sufferers - they offer help to anyone with life-shortening illnesses, such as motor neuron disease, Parkinson's disease, and chronic end stage respiratory, kidney and heart diseases. Their services are available to patients and their families across the Hauraki Plains and the Thames Coast.

"We try to find all the gaps that there might be for people, we take referrals from district nurses, GPs, and they can self-refer to us as well," secretary Lynne Wood said. "Often the support isn't just [for] the cancer sufferer, it's the family and the supporters of those people. They kind of get missed out on that whole thing," treasurer Graham Higgs added.

The trust was formed in 1997, by a group of district nurses and patients' families who saw the need for additional support. Since then, the charity has assisted where it can. It receives no public funding; its work is made possible through donations, bequests and countless volunteer hours. So far this year, they've helped an estimated 20 to 30 people.

"Sometimes when you're talking to someone, they don't ask. But we see what they need and say, 'would it help if we paid for



Lynne Wood, Graham Higgs and Maureen Hill from the Cancer Support Trust.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

that or we did something?" co-chair Maureen Hill said.

"[We had] a grandmother looking after this young grandchild who's desperately ill and in Starship, and she does not have much money. We've done petrol vouchers there, we've also done groceries for her."

Another family also needed extensive assistance over several months for their eight children when the mother became terminally ill, Maureen said.

"They were the most beautiful family, and those children were beautifully turned out. They were very self-sufficient in a lot of ways, but they were struggling," she said.

"We did give cash, but we also gave petrol, school uniforms, that sort of thing. A couple of us used to go up and visit her in hospital, too. And one of the incredible things was her 10-year-old daughter, towards the end, stayed in her

hospital room right through, even at night.

It's actually really humbling when you have that sort of encounter with a family. It's rewarding, and awfully sad."

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For all enquiries, Contact Bruce Nicol 021 781 560

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ADVERTORIAL

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We host different events and game nights across both sports. Tennis meets on Mondays for club nights during winter. Team tennis is great fun and will start up from mid-October to December for up to 88 players. Junior coaching is after school on Thursday nights with Shannon Paki from Thames - join up for term four now. Ladies only squash is on Monday nights from 6pm. Beginners are welcome. Men's squash interclub is on Tuesday nights from 7pm. Women's interclub is on Wednesday nights from 7pm. Thursday night is club night from 6pm, and every two months the club will run three weeks of round robin for squash nights. These organised evenings are a lot of fun. Beginners are welcome.

Three times a year we have a great competition with our organised outside tournaments for graded players on Friday nights and Saturdays. The club organises a lot of activities, but there is plenty of time for members to use the 11 tennis courts and two squash courts for their own games and practice. And club membership is for both squash and tennis facilities.

Great value, great for fitness, great fun and all weather. For more information about squash, contact Bruce Nicol 021 781 560. And for tennis, contact Mandy Souchon 0274 311640.

-Supplied by The Paeroa Tennis & Squash Club

Paeroa Golf Club

It's coming up to that time again when we all need some summertime activity. What better way than getting involved in a fun, friendly activity like Business House/Twilight Golf. No experience necessary, make up a team of three to four for 9-holes of Ambrose style golf. Only \$5 per head. Afterward, enjoy a hamburger, chips and some liquid refreshments while sharing all your experiences. Commencing from 4.30pm to 6pm each Wednesday from the first week in November until the last Wednesday before Christmas, then again in the new year until late March. (Sponsored by Linn Motors Paeroa).

For all enquiries contact Colin on 021998851. You can also visit www.paeroagolf.co.nz to find out about the history of the club, and see course descriptions and maps.

-Supplied by the Paeroa Golf Club

Hauraki Bowling Club

We may be one of the smallest in the Thames Valley Region, but we think we punch well above our weight. Located about ten minutes Nor/West of Ngatea, the club is easy to find. There you will see a very well looked after grass green in one of the most picturesque spots in the Valley. We cater for all ages and abilities and are one of the few clubs which has two club days for members, along with the usual Open Triples Tournaments and Champ events. Our signature event is our 2 day tournament which is very popular and has been running for over 40 years. Something else in our favour is that we have floodlights-very useful when we host our quote, 'seriously good' Business House Competition in spring and summer.

Luckily for us, we have plenty of bowls for people to use for this competition and for anyone wanting to try our sport. Of course, we have to mention the fact we are renowned for our hos-

pitality and our food. Our afternoon teas are the best around, (just think cinnamon oysters!) So come and see us; you will be 'bowled' over by what we have to offer.

- Supplied by Hauraki Bowling Club

Pristine workouts at TCA Fitness

Located in the centre of Thames township, TCA Fitness Club stands out as a premier destination for fitness enthusiasts and beginners alike.

With a wide range of top-quality gym equipment, members have access to everything they need to achieve their fitness goals - whether it's strength training, cardio, or group training classes. The club boasts state-of-the-art machines, free weights, and specialized equipment, ensuring that every workout is effective and enjoyable. What truly sets TCA Fitness Club apart is its commitment to cleanliness and safety.

The facility is meticulously maintained, with regular cleaning protocols in place to create a welcoming environment for all.

Members can feel at ease knowing they are exercising in one of the cleanest gyms in the country. In addition to exceptional facilities, the supportive team at TCA Fitness Club plays a vital role in fostering a positive atmosphere. Certified trainers are available to provide personalized guidance and motivation, helping members navigate their fitness journeys.

Whether you're a seasoned athlete or just starting, the team is dedicated to ensuring everyone feels empowered to reach their potential.

With 24/7 access, this fitness haven caters to all schedules, making it easier than ever to prioritize health and wellness.

Join the TCA Fitness Club community today and discover the perfect blend of top-notch equipment, cleanliness, and support—your fitness goals are just a workout away.

- Supplied by TCA Fitness

Thames Valley 4WD Club

The club meets on the first Thursday of the month in Ngatea at 7.30pm. We are a diverse group of people of different ages, ethnicities, and vehicles. Some members prefer shiny trips and avoid scratching their vehicles, while others enjoy bush trips or participating in 4WD competition challenges. We organize day trips and sometimes longer trips.

Every few years, we take a tour of the South Island, and every five years, we organize a tour of Australia. We fundraise for our club by hosting national events and also allowing other 4WD groups to join us in these efforts. Our most recent fundraiser supported Starship Hospital, where we raised \$3000. This event involved 30 vehicles driving around local farmland. If you're interested in doing something different or want to learn more about us, feel free to contact us through Facebook or attend our next meeting. Our club members have had a lot of success competing in the national series with Ash Tonkin finishing joint third in 2023, a superb achievement.

Our next 4x4 big fundraising event is a national series, come and see the mud fly. Put it in your diaries now, 1051 Tahuna Rd on November 30. Look forward to seeing you.

- Supplied by Thames Valley 4WD Club

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SPORTS REPORTS

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Thames FC women finish season on a high

FOOTBALL

It was another year of positivity for Thames Football Club Women, as they conclude the season on a high.

A 3-1 victory over Unicol B was the final crescendo in a season-long symphony for Thames' Women. Described by manager Xavier Brown as a "beautiful journey," the 19-year-old reflected on a progressive season.

April 7 marked the opening fixture, but the work began months earlier with an extensive pre-season, setting the tempo for the year ahead.

"Our target for this year was to win the league, as most teams aim to do. We worked on new ideas during pre-season.

"I emphasize working hard and pressing immediately after losing the ball, squeezing our opponents. Once we win the ball back, we focus on moving it effectively in tight areas, teaching players how to create space for themselves and their teammates," Xavier said.

The hard work paid off as Thames hit the ground running, picking up three wins and two draws in their opening five games. A 7-0 thumping of Northern United was the standout performance, showcasing the attacking threats within the squad. "In training, I like us to work on game scenarios where the players have to move the ball quickly, get it wide to the wingers, and deliver it into dangerous areas," Xavier said.

It was six weeks into the season before Thames experienced their first taste of defeat. Waihi Football Club, which had also started well, emerged victorious in a tight game, a result Thames would later avenge. The defeat galvanized Thames, and they entered June firing on all cylinders with back-to-back 8-0 wins against Huntly Thistle and Claudelands Rovers II - title fight well and truly on.

Xavier had attacking talent in abundance with 11 different scorers throughout the year and was quick to heap praise on captain Keltie McManus.

"There's a reason she's the highest goal scorer, not only in our division but in every women's division in Waibop [Waikato and Bay of Plenty]. Confident with the ball at her feet, able to weave, link up, and score from just about anywhere."

It wasn't only the team's attack that impressed; Thames also boasted the best defensive record in the league, conceding just 19 goals.

"Georgia Hinds-Haye was the heart of our defense, an absolute brick wall. Without her, we wouldn't have kept as many clean sheets. Her speed and composure on the ball is exactly what you need in a leading centre-back," Xavier said.

Thames maintained pace with the league leaders, and all eyes turned to a crucial match versus Morrinsville Ladies II on July 14. The victor would take pole position heading into the final games.

Thames came up short losing 5-4, a game Xavier looks back on with a hint of regret. "It stands out as a low point because it was a title decider, and the game could have gone either way. It was gutting because I know how much effort the



An impressive season in midfield from Thames FC Women's Emma Hinds.

Photos: SUPPLIED/MARK BROWN



Keltie McManus is the club's top scorer with 30 goals.



It was another successful year for Thames FC Women.

team put in, and to lose in such a close game was tough. But that's football; it all comes down to those moments."

The defeat was a bitter pill, giving Morrinsville II the impetus to convert their points advantage into a league title. However, Thames responded admirably, pushing until the end of the season with a 5-0 win against Waihi, a particular highlight that delighted the manager.

"A high point was definitely at home to Waihi, especially after they had beaten

us 2-1 in the return fixture. This result showed how much the team had improved. I wanted to help every player not just as individuals but as a cohesive unit; this was proof of the progress the squad made."

The season finished on a high, Thames winning three of their last four games and securing third place in the table.

The only defeat during this period came away at Huntly Thistle, where Thames were only able to field 10 players - high-

lighting one of many difficulties faced by the club, Xavier said.

"Numbers are a huge challenge because we are such a small town compared to our opponents. Bigger clubs can bring in additional players when short, but because we only have one team, injuries and illness massively impact our numbers on match day."

Young players breaking through will be key in securing the team's future.

"This year, we gained two new young

players in Jess Rendall and Ceyda Nem-burt. Jess, being just 15 and only recently eligible to play for us, is fast, nimble, and able to whip great balls into the box. Ceyda, in her final year of high school, is dangerous inside the opposition's box, chipping in with goals. Both are great additions to the squad," Xavier said.

Despite the season just finishing, there is already one eye on next season, where Thames will look to improve on their third-place finish.

"As of right now, the goal for next season is to start pre-season early and come out even stronger. The main objective, as always, is to fight for the title and win as many games as possible."

The continued progress and competitiveness of the club are commendable, especially considering the lack of resources available when compared to the majority of their opponents. The club continues to rely on volunteers and fundraising to support its activities throughout the season.

Xavier and the team go into the break with their heads held high, before doing it all over again next year.

"I am incredibly proud of the women this season. The improvement they showed from start to finish was remarkable, and some of the football they played was outstanding," Xavier said.

- By Jonathan Coles and Xavier Brown

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Japanese screen legend Koji Yakusho in this Wim Wenders feature about a humble janitor.
- Top Hat (101 mins, 1935)** G Wed 10am
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- Whetū Mārama-Bright Star (94 mins, 2001)** Exempt Wed 1pm
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- Ghostlight (115 mins, 2024)** M Offensive language & suicide references Wed 4pm; Sat 7pm
A construction worker joins a local theatre's production of Romeo and Juliet.
- Kawahawai Tonu (114 mins, 2024)** M Violence, offensive language & content that may disturb
The story of a pivotal battle in the first NZ land wars in the Waikato region. Wed 7pm; Sun 4pm
- The Mountain (89 mins, 2024)** PG Thurs 4pm; Fri 7pm; Sat 4pm;
Drama about three children on a mission to find healing under the watchful eye of Taranaki Maunga.
- The Edge of the Blade (100 mins, 2023)** M Violence Thurs 7pm; Fri 4pm; Sat 1pm
French swashbuckling historical drama set in the 1880s.

For more information or to buy tickets, go to www.leftbanktheatre.co.nz or pop into the cinema when the doors are open at 659 Pollen Street, Thames.

SPORTS REPORTS

Email your sports reports and photos to editor@valleyprofile.co.nz

HEARTLAND RUGBY

From the touring Tighthead Ted Heartland Round 2, Thames Valley v North Otago, August 24, Te Aroha. BOOOOM, there you go, two from two. The Swampies did it the hard way, two early tries, a late try, and seven zillion tackles in between as they gifted North Otago possession through the middle 70 minutes of the match! But at the end of the day, the boys are Kings of the Mountain at Te Aroha for 2024.

With the rain pelting down, after holding off for the two curtain raisers, Valley hit the ground running, while North Otago were sleeping. With Jake O'Connor finding more holes in the edge defense than in a pair of my 10-year-old daks, the halfback caused mayhem, and two tries in the first three minutes looked like the end of the road for the Old Golds before the journey had even started.

The first five pointer, to first five Toddy Doolan, came off a Oneone Faafou rumble down the touchline before Fletch Morgan linked to put Doolan away under the sticks. Duly converted by Morgan. Morgan then dotted down for the second try to Valley almost before the scoreboard had clicked over to seven-zip. A break from O'Connor and a perfectly timed pass saw just a fullback to beat, which Morgan did with ease to slide over in the corner. Conversion knocked over from the sideline, 14-zip, and the subs hadn't even made it to their benches yet.

The rain eased with just a couple more showers through the game, but the Valley couldn't crack North Otago open again. Hard running number eight Laulea Mau, in his blazer game, was held up over the line, and a few other promising attacks led by Faafou,



The rain didn't stop the Swamp Foxes claiming a victory.

Photos: SUPPLIED/TVRU

winger Alex Thrupp on debut, and Leroy Van Dam at centre were not capitalised on. On the stroke of halftime, Morgan slotted a penalty to take the teams into the orange break up 17-nil. North Otago had woken up through the middle of that first spell, and in a foreshadowing of the second stanza, Valley had to put in some serious work on the 'D' line, holding the visitors out for phase after phase.

The second half started with the visitors holding on to the pill like Scrooge McDuck hoarding pennies in his money vault. Valley was forced to defend for long periods of play, and there'll

be some sore bodies today from the amount of tackles the lads made. Young front ranker Will Martin, Kenan Gillson in his first start for the Valley, and veteran lock Connor McVerry, in fact the whole forward pack, rose to the occasion, and tackle after tackle was completed. The 'YOU SHALL NOT PASS' award though would again have to go to Faafou, who bends people when he makes tackles, Mau not far behind.

North Otago finally got some reward for their eight million phases on attack with two tries, one gifted when fullback Cam Gerlich thought he was

playing sevens, slapping the ball back into play for the North Otago winger to scamper 80 metres for the five pointer, and put the score to 15-17 with 20 to go. Finally getting some possession late in the game, Valley nabbed a second try to Morgan after a nice move down the left saw Charlie Marsh on the wing put through a grubber that no defender covered before Morgan flopped down for the try – again converted from wide out.

The match drew to a close with the Valley up by nine and pushing for the win, a late penalty was turned down for a line out five metres out. The Val-

ley eight won the lineout, and drove over the line for hooker Josh Tye to not score the try.

Ole Tighthead is not one to criticise the whistle blowers, as there are plenty out there to do that anyway, but apparently the drive stopped, and the 'use it' call whispered out. It must have been half a nano second stoppage, as the boys looked like they could have driven this one as far as they wanted, they were that in control. Let's just hope that the lost bonus point does not come back to bite as the semi final spots are sorted later in the season!

Standout players, hard to pick as every man Jack tackled themselves to a standstill. The high balls this week were diffused with aplomb, Gerlich at fullback being untroubled, and joined by his two wingers Morgan and Thrupp in a reverse bomb squad. O'Connor at halfback is in a rich vein of form, playing the best rugby I have seen from the young fella.

Up front, flankers Gilson and Cam Dromgool had a field day, chopping runners like Sonny Bolstad on steroids, and the second row pairing of Skipper Axtens and McVerry were, ahhh, 'uncompromising', to say the least. Props Kutia and Martin also got through a ton of tackles.

Well, regardless of the hows and whys, a win's a win, and we'll take it. Two from two, and still plenty to work on for the boffins with the whistles at training. Onwards and upwards, away to Te Kuiti and King Country next week – the boys owe them one after the pre-season loss, and winning the Bill Osborne Taonga would certainly be payback!

Thames Valley 24 (T Doolan, F Morgan 2 tries; Morgan 3 conversions, penalty) beat North Otago 15 (2 tries, conversion, penalty). HT 17-0



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September Featured Artists

<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">JIM NEILSON AKA SKOTTY</p>  <p style="font-size: small;">Until recently Skotty enjoyed working with acrylic paints, but for this exhibition he will be featuring mixed media and watercolour</p>	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;">MEMBERS POTTERY GROUP</p>  <p style="font-size: small;">This month will feature a collection of the pottery/ceramics created by the Thames Gallery members pottery group based at the gallery</p>
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TURUA: Turua Dairy **KEREPEHI**: Kerepehi Dairy

CLASSIFIEDS - Deadline 12pm Monday

Church Notice

Thames Spiritualist Church, Sunday September 1, 2pm Grahamstown Hall. Speaker: David Foster plus one...

Assembly of God

10am Sundays. Scout Hall. Baker St, Waihi

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Public Notice

Paeroa Society of Arts AGM was postponed due to unforeseen circumstances. Now the 4th September at 10am. In the Art Room, 109 Normanby Rd

Public Notice

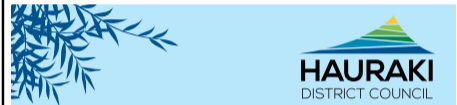
Victoria Battery Tramway Society Inc. AGM
Sunday 1st September 2024 1.00pm
Victoria Battery Museum

Public Notices

Enrolment at Netherton School is governed by an enrolment scheme. Information and forms are available on the school website www.netherton.school.nz
Limited places for out of zone children are available for the 2025 school year. Applications close midday Friday 6th September 2024 and are to be emailed to brook.hill@netherton.school.nz



Situations Vacant



Pool Lifeguards - Fixed Term Seasonal Opportunity

It's that time of year again! Hauraki District Council are recruiting Lifeguards for the summer period. The pools are located in Paeroa, Ngatea and Waihi and will be open from October 2024 to late April 2025. We are looking for team players who are available and willing to work variable rostered shifts to cover opening hours over 7 days per week.

To apply for this job go to: haurakidc.recruitmenthub.co.nz
Applications close 16 September 2024



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Rainbow run

The skies were grey, but Netherton School's field was splashed with colour for the annual fun run event on August 16. The students were joined by kids from Paeroa's Goldfields School for the event, tackling the obstacle course while being pelted with colourful powder. The slip n slide proved popular, with many participants lining up for multiple turns. ALICE PARMINTER headed along to capture the chaos.



His face is blue, but Daytona's all smiles.



Goldfields School's Moses is looking cool in colour.



Etuare and Levi face off with the powder flingers.

Photos: ALICE PARMINTER



Jasper from Goldfields School admires his colourful attire.



Sage storms through a haze of red.



Stella rocks a red hair-do.

CLASSIFIEDS - Deadline 12pm Monday

Public Notice

Thames-Coromandel District Council Meetings – September 2024

Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is hereby given that the following meetings will be held during September 2024.

Council meetings

Ordinary Meeting

Tuesday 3 and 4 September 2024, 09:00 am, Thames Council Chambers, 515 Mackay Street, Thames

Community Board Meetings

Tairua-Pāuanui Community Board

Monday 9 September 2024, 10:00 am, St Francis House, 248 Main Road, Tairua

Whangamatā Community Board

Tuesday 10 September 2024 10:00am, Opoutere Community Hall, 1 Opoutere Road, Whangamatā

Thames Community Board

Wednesday 11 September 2024 10:00 am, Thames Council Chambers, 515 Mackay Street, Thames

Coromandel-Colville Community Board

Tuesday 17 September 2024, 9:00 am, Coromandel Service Centre, 355 Kapanga Road, Coromandel

Mercury Bay Community Board

Wednesday 18 September 2024, 9:00 am, Mercury Bay Service Centre, 10 Monk Street, Whitianga

Citizenship Ceremony

Thursday 19 September 2024, 09:30 am, Thames Council Chambers, 515 Mackay Street, Thames

Please visit <https://www.tcdc.govt.nz/Our-Council/Meetings/Agendas-Reports-and-Minutes> for copies of agendas and order papers.

A Lawrie
Chief Executive
Thames-Coromandel District Council

Public Notices

LEFT BANK THEATRE

Left Bank Theatre thanks everyone for their wonderful support since we opened for screenings last Thursday. From 2-9 September inclusive the cinema will be closed so we can have the break we'd hoped to have before opening, catch up on admin etc, and do things like finding childrens movies for the next school holidays.

We look forward to seeing you again after that.

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Annual General Meeting
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Wednesday, 11 September 2024, 6pm
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Karen and Ian Hydes and guests in Filipiniana attire.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Thames wedding honours Filipino tradition

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

Tying the knot is a significant moment, but a special event made one celebration even more memorable for a Thames newlywed couple.

Karen Caliso and Ian Hydes celebrated their wedding day with family and friends at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church in Thames on August 17, where 10 guests arrived wearing the Filipiniana, or the national costume of the Philippines.

Newly married Karen Hydes told *The Profile* she was so happy guests wore what was required in the invitation.

"It's beautiful because we are representing our country by

wearing our national costume." Filipiniana attire played a big role in the Philippines culture.

"In many history books and museum archives, it can be seen that the dress gave many Filipino women a sense of identity."

Mrs Hydes said the traditional dress can be identified by its puffy butterfly sleeves, plain blouse, baro or camisa, long skirt, or saya, and a pañuelo, which is a square cloth used as a head covering or worn as a scarf, worn over the shoulders.

Mrs Hydes said they chose this theme to symbolise Filipino culture in New Zealand. The guests said the dresses were really beautiful, she said.





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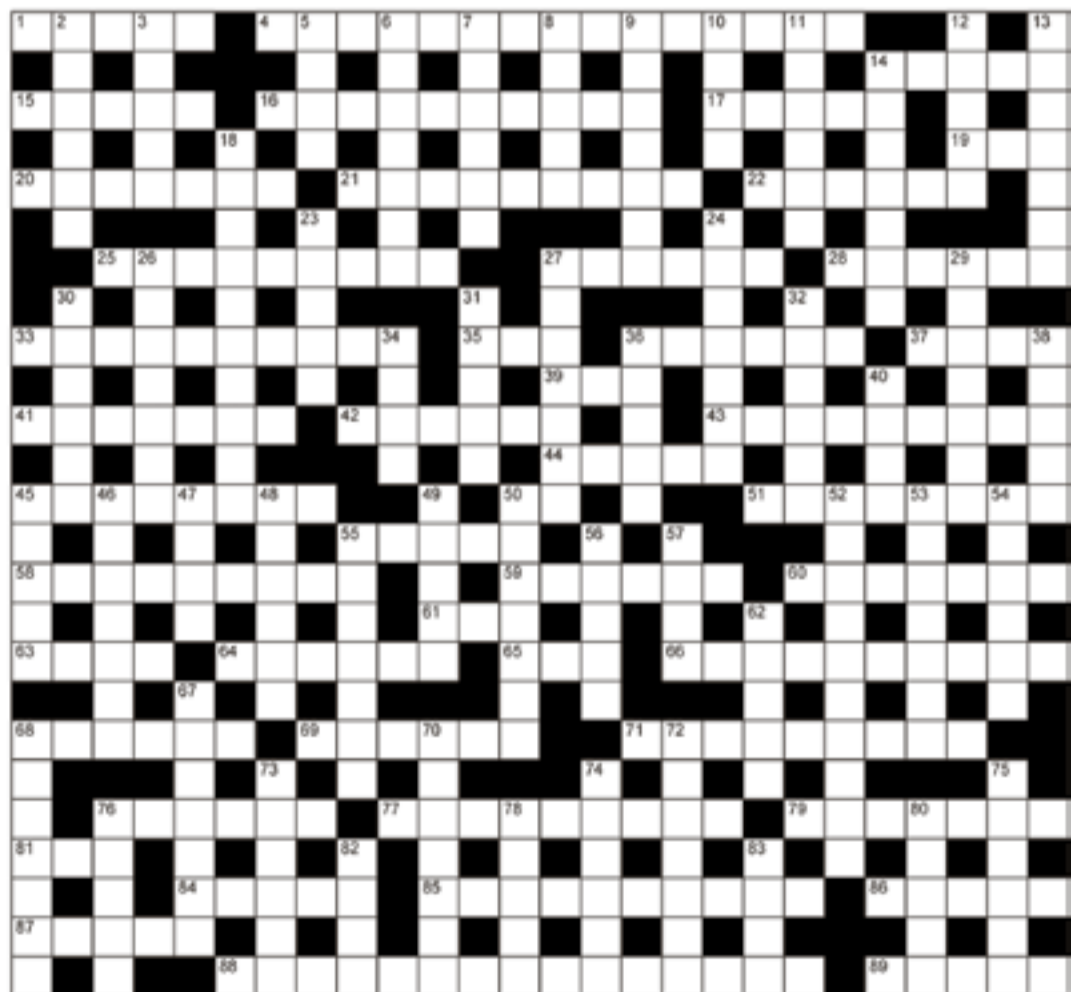
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Gardening

Spring growth sees a blaze of colour

Spring has sprung. Daffodils are in full bloom and in some cases finished blooming. New blossoms and leaves on deciduous shrubs and trees are beginning to show.

Week by week the rate of spring growth becomes increasingly rapid. Many shrubs, trees and perennials are in full bloom and spring flower gardens are a blaze of colour. Any new plantings should be protected from late frosts. Remember last October!

It's time to start planting spring crops and get your property ready for the warmer months. Harvest the last of the winter crops in the vegetable garden to make room for the new season plants.

If you are like us, we are still harvesting broccoli, cauliflowers, kale, and beetroot so we are just about to start new planting in the next week.

This has been a real bonus considering the prices of vegetables. I would encourage would be gardeners to have a go at growing a few vegetables to help with the weekly shop, and they taste so good.

Now is the time to get your potatoes ready to go in the garden for the Christmas lunch. Put seed potatoes on a tray in a sunny position to sprout before planting. They like a sheltered warm spot in your garden or in pots or bags. Mound your potatoes as the shoots grow, to help warm the soil which promotes better tuber development.

Complete your vegetable garden preparation by digging in some good compost, blood and bone and sheep



Spring flower gardens are a blaze of colour.

File Photo: PIXABAY

pellets. If the soil is too wet just wait until it dries out a bit more. Better, warmer weather is sure to arrive with spring. Fingers crossed.

Any new plantings require the protection of slug and snail bait and keep your eye on the weather for late frosts. It is a good idea to consider mulching around new seedlings for added warmth. Try some pea straw.

Continue to plant strawberries, blueberries, and raspberries. Add pea straw around your berry plants for soil warmth.

Prune passionfruit removing some of last seasons excessive growth but remember they fruit on last year's growth so don't be too harsh. Feed berry vines, citrus and fruit trees with a citrus fertiliser or liquid fertiliser.

Refresh your herb garden with new plants either in the garden or pots.

Trim back any old growth on woody herbs to refresh. It's time to also give the flower garden some attention with new Alyssum, Azaleas, Calendula, Cosmos, delphinium, Fuchsia, Petunia and Geraniums. Make sure to protect new seedlings with slug bait and frost protection if needed. Feed roses, shrubs and flower beds and mulch.

Plant Dahlia tubers and Gladioli corms for a summer display. This month is the perfect time to sow a new lawn and over sow any bare patches in the existing lawn. Spray now for Onehunga weed (prickle weed) and broadleaf weed with a specific Onehunga Weed spray. It makes summer on the lawn so much more enjoyable.

Enjoy your spring garden.
- Supplied by Ngatea Garden Circle

Start the day right

OPINION

By MICHAEL WILKES



BEEP, BEEP, BEEP.

I throw my hand out, press snooze and go back to sleep.

Ten minutes later. BEEP BEEP BEEP. I turn it off, but this time for good. I love sleep, I love my bed. It's just so...

"Dad, Asher's done a poo." I groan and fall out of bed. And the day begins.

Groggy, dealing with a flailing two-year-old who seems determined to put his heels into his over filled morning nappy.

Am I ready to face the day ahead...? not at all.

For me this is a rare occasion. Because I know that starting my day in this way leaves me in catch up mode.

Chasing the kids, chasing the clock and figuring it out on the run.

My days that start like this often continue like this. I get so caught up in a rushed start that I don't stop rushing.

Ok lets take a moment to take a breath. Rewind.

BEEP, BEEP, BEEP.

I throw my hand out and hit snooze. I roll on to my back and lie there awake for a moment.

My most helpful thought here is simple. All I need to do is get my feet on the ground.

If I do that now, most days

start well. I head downstairs and put on some reflective music, make my morning coffee and read a daily reflection followed by a bit of exercise.

I pause to consider what lays ahead for the day and commit it to the spirit.

"Dad, Asher's done a poo." I smile. He is as regular as clock-work that boy.

I race to grab my toddler as he tries to escape, giggling and laughing. And the day begins.

Relaxed and ready (most of the time), with a vision for the day already before me, and an excitement for the things to come.

I was recently asked if I have always been a morning person.

I considered the question and answered: "No, not always. But I have come to understand that routine and starting the day right is so important."

So what about you. How do you start your day.

Does it set you up for the things ahead?

Michael Wilkes is a Living Well Trust Youth Worker. He and his team provide mentoring and resilience programmes across Thames and Paeroa to more than 300 students a year. They are passionate about supporting our young people to thrive. Much of this work is funded outside of schools and it becoming increasingly challenging in the current climate. Email michael@livingwell.org.nz to sign up to their quarterly newsletter or to become a supporter.

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Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
30 Non planting Day	September 2024 Moon Planting Calendar			Calendar Supplied by Gilmer Farms		1 Non planting Day
2 Non planting Day	3 New Moon	4 Non planting Day	5 Plant above ground crops	6 Plant above ground crops	7 Plant above ground crops	8 Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed
9 Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed	10 Non planting Day	11 Non planting Day	12 Non planting Day	13 Plant above ground crops	14 Plant above ground crops	15 Non planting Day
16 Non planting Day	17 Plant above ground Crops. Liquid Feed	18 Full Moon	19 Non planting Day	20 Non planting Day	21 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs	22 Plant root crops, trees and shrubs
23 Non planting Day Spring Equinox	24 Non planting Day	25 Plant root crops. Liquid Feed	26 Plant root crops. Liquid Feed	27 Non planting Day	28 Non planting Day	29 Non planting Day Daylight saving starts

SPORTS

Diamond selected to sparkle in Ireland

By ANDREW CONNAUGHTON

Hauraki North Diamonds Vice-Captain Dana Lang has been selected to travel to Ireland to compete in the Connacht Rugby Competition for the upcoming season.

Dana, who lives in Ngatea, and is aged just 17, is already excelling in her chosen sport of rugby. With the support of Thames Valley Rugby Union, which has organised this experience through Galway University, Dana is the first female player to head over to the Emerald Isles.

For the past two years, Galway University has sent four girls to play for the the Diamonds, and now we are sending them a Diamond to 'sparkle' in Ireland.

Dana's journey into rugby began six years ago playing for Ngatea Primary School's Rugby Sevens team for the Aims Games. This led to Dana playing for the Ngatea junior rugby team and progressing through to the Thames Valley Rugby open weight team. Dana said "that's where my passion grew" for rugby.

Dana then went to Hauraki Plains College, where she is currently head girl, and joined the Girls XV rugby team, where she's been a team member for the past five years and team captain since the 2023-24 season.

Again, throughout this period, Dana continued to compete for and represent Thames Valley Rugby, playing for the under 19s girls Thames Valley representative team, with the privilege to captain the team bestowed upon her throughout the 2023 season. In addition, Dana has been named in every Thames Valley



Dana Lang in action for Hauraki.

Vixens team since 2021.

Last year, Dana was awarded a scholarship to the Inside Running Academy Programme, where she spent two weeks training alongside international players from the United States, England, Argentina, and New Zealand. This experience gave Dana a glimpse of what a Black Fern's week is like.

Dana was then selected to play in the New Zealand Dutch Barbarian Rugby Sevens team, in the Global Youth Sevens competition where teams from all over the world came

to compete. "It was an experience I never thought I would be doing until I became a Black Fern," she said.

Dana then made history becoming part of the region's first ever competitive women's team, The Hauraki North Diamonds and was named vice-captain. "Making history showed me how many people there are who support me and women's rugby in general," she said.

Finishing off this season, Dana was also named vice-captain for Hauraki North in the inaugural Club of Origin competition.

File Photo: CHILLED EDGE PHOTOGRAPHY

Hauraki North president Andrew Williams expressed excitement about Dana's opportunity.

"What a fantastic opportunity for Dana, an exciting young woman with great potential. We wish Dana all the best on her trip to Ireland," he said.

Scott Day, of Thames Valley Rugby Union said it had been fantastic to see the growth of women and girls rugby in the Thames Valley province.

"Dana has been a part of the journey since the beginning in 2020 and has been a dedicated participant across all internal competitions and

representative teams. This overseas opportunity again amplifies the opportunities for female rugby players both currently and in the years to come," he said.

"Dana will be the first official female Rugby player to formally play overseas and the TVRU are excited to see what she can achieve in her time in Galway, Ireland. She will have opportunities to play alongside quality players involved in the Connacht franchise, and also be exposed to player development from the Irish Women's Sevens coaches. The TVRU wish Dana the best of luck on her endeavours".

Dana's parents, Graeme and Jackie Lang, said they were incredibly proud.

"She has worked so hard and her determination, leadership skills and her passion for women's rugby has landed her this amazing opportunity," they said. "While she is hearty and puts all her energy into the game she is always laughing, smiling and making sure all her teammates are okay, and is always there to support them. We will miss her halftime hugs on the sideline while she is away, but our hearts are so full and we are so excited for her."

After recounting her journey to this point, Dana said, "And now I am here, preparing to go to Ireland for six months".

"I couldn't be more grateful for my parents' involvement in this whole exchange. Now that it's confirmed, I am feeling a mix of terrified-ness and happiness."

DETAILS: To help with the costs of sending Dana to Ireland, please go to: www.givealittle.co.nz/cause/help-send-dana-to-ireland.



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