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# Down the rabbit hole

*Pollen St transformed into Wonderland for the annual Steampunk the Thames parade on Saturday, which took many on a journey down the rabbit hole. More photos, P2*

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## Down the rabbit hole

Thames came alive with colourful costumes and activities during four days of events at the annual Steampunk the Thames Festival, which had a theme of down the rabbit hole. **TERESA RAMSEY** captured the parade along Pollen St on Saturday.



There's some confusion about which way to go.

Photos: TERESA RAMSEY



Megan Thomas, left, Craig Ki and Sue Chalk, of Auckland.

## The Little Things



Hi, my name is Pete the Pukeko and I'm here to help you. Find me in one of the display advertisements in *The Valley Profile*, then email [admin@valleyprofile.co.nz](mailto:admin@valleyprofile.co.nz) with your full name, postal address, and the business name and page number of the ad by the following Monday to go in the draw to win a Lotto ticket. Last issue it was in the Carpet Court Thames ad.



Plenty of rabbit ears are on display.



Thames' Karin Verryt with her dog, Jade, and Deborah Newman with Vann.



There were many sights and sounds at this year's parade.



**PLACE AN ADVERTISEMENT:** Advertising Manager Nikki Sanders, Ph 022 130 3885, [nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz](mailto:nikki@valleyprofile.co.nz); Feature Writer Davidda Hikatangata, Ph 022 174 3988, [davidda@valleyprofile.co.nz](mailto:davidda@valleyprofile.co.nz).  
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# Thames Tides

Wed Nov 13		Thu Nov 14		Fri Nov 15		Sat Nov 16		Sun Nov 17		Mon Nov 18		Tue Nov 19	
4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm	4 am	6 NOON 6 pm
Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon	Morning	Afternoon
4:55am 3.2	5:26pm 3.4	6:00am 3.3	12:12pm 0.6	12:39am 0.3	1:06pm 0.5	1:33am 0.2	1:58pm 0.4	2:24am 0.1	2:49pm 0.4	3:14am 0.1	3:39pm 0.4	4:02am 0.2	4:30pm 0.5
11:13am 0.7	11:42pm 0.5	6:23pm 3.5	7:00am 3.5	7:18pm 3.6	7:54am 3.6	8:12pm 3.6	8:46am 3.7	9:06pm 3.6	9:35am 3.8	9:58pm 3.6	10:24am 3.7	10:50pm 3.5	
☀️ 6:01am	8:04pm	☀️ 6:00am	8:05pm	☀️ 5:59am	8:06pm	☀️ 5:59am	8:07pm	☀️ 5:58am	8:08pm	☀️ 5:57am	8:09pm	☀️ 5:57am	8:10pm
🐟 Best At 10:20am 10:46pm	🐟 Best At 11:12am 11:38pm	🐟 Best At 12:06pm	🐟 Best At 12:35am 1:04pm	🐟 Best At 1:35am 2:06pm	🐟 Best At 1:35am 2:06pm	🐟 Best At 2:37am 3:09pm	🐟 Best At 3:40am 4:11pm	🐟 Best At 4:11pm	🐟 Best At 4:11pm	🐟 Best At 4:11pm	🐟 Best At 4:11pm	🐟 Best At 4:11pm	
🌙 Set 4:01am Rise 4:53pm	🌙 Set 4:29am Rise 6:08pm	🌙 Set 5:00am Rise 7:26pm	🌙 Set 5:37am Rise 8:44pm	🌙 Set 6:20am Rise 10:00pm	🌙 Set 7:13am Rise 11:08pm	🌙 Set 8:15am							

\*Not for navigational purposes. Graphic supplied by OceanFun Publishing Ltd. [www.tidewiz.com](http://www.tidewiz.com) [www.tidespy.com](http://www.tidespy.com) [www.ofu.co.nz](http://www.ofu.co.nz)

MOON AND FISH KEYS			
☾ New Moon	☽ First Quarter	☀ Full Moon	☾ Last Quarter
🐟 Good Fishing	🐟 Fair Fishing	🐟 Not So Good	

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

PLACE	Hr	HIGH	LOW
Coromandel	-0	04	-0 04
Whitianga	-0	01	-0 05
Tairua	+0	10	+0 21
Whangamata	-0	03	-0 05
Waihi Beach	-0	12	-0 12



# Aim to put 'local' back into local government

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

Just a few days into his new role as chief executive at Hauraki District Council (HDC), David Speirs has already hit the ground running.

The former Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency director of regional relationships was welcomed into the council with a formal pōwhiri last week, following the retirement of Langley Cavers after 23 years in the top seat.

Since then, David has been on a tight schedule, meeting his staff and getting his head around the council's current work programme.

David brings with him a career's worth of experience in local government, operations management, and natural resource management in fields such as flood protection, river ecology and roading. And with former roles at Waikato Regional Council, the Department of Conservation and NIWA, David said he understands the needs of farmers and the local environment.

"I understand the challenges that go with trying to farm on flat land that floods and doesn't drain well, and the challenges around managing nutrients... I understand the challenges that go with a large gold mine and all of the issues that go with that and the interaction that has with the conservation estate... I get the role of the flood protection scheme," he said.

"I understand the value that the services that council provides can make for those communities."



David Speirs is the new chief executive at Hauraki District Council.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

David said he was focused on what he could offer HDC, and the people of Hauraki.

"My career's been about public service and I really value that. One of the reasons I wanted to come back to local government in this kind of a context is I really like the fact that you are close to your community," he said.

"I think the role of local government is an enabling role. It's about making communities thrive. It's about enabling people to live their best lives."

One of David's goals is to ensure people feel they have a voice with the council. And he's an open book, he said; happy to have a yarn with anyone who's got something to say. "Things you do that are positive and work well, you get real-time feedback.

"The things that aren't going so well, you get real-time feedback. And the fact that I can literally walk across the road to buy a coffee and those are the people that are paying me to do my job - that's really important to me."

He's already looking ahead to next year's local government elections, and planning on getting the community as engaged as possible with the process. But for now, there was little that needed to change, he said.

"I don't think that this is a council that's broken. I think this is a council that's actually doing really, really good work. It's a really high performer in the context of local government around New Zealand," David said.

"So I'm not intending to rock the

boat next week, but I'm also really conscious that there's always room for improvement."

One of the ways David said he could encourage improvements was through having a different perspective.

"How do we make Hauraki District the best district in the country, how do we bring development while we manage that?" he said.

How do we make this a place that people want to come and be for a day and spend their money, or be for the rest of their lives and bring their family? And how do we balance that while we still maintain the character that this district has? I'll see opportunities, I think, that are unique because of where I've come from and it's about using those opportunities to better the council and better the district."

In the meantime, David is just happy to be settling in. While he and his family currently live near Morrinsville - his youngest child still has a few years of schooling to go - he's spent a lot of time in and around East Waikato and is looking forward to getting reacquainted with the area.

"We are a very active family. We do a lot of tramping, camping, we have a holiday home in Coromandel at Whitianga, So, we do spend a lot of time out and about, and we'll be doing a fair bit of that in and around Hauraki in the summer.

"I'm really keen to meet lots of people, so I will be wandering around the streets and saying hi."



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# Education

ADVERTORIAL

## Victory lap for HPC Team of the Year

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

Celebrating students and their sporting achievements is a big part of Hauraki Plains College culture.

The school hosted its 2024 Sports Prizegiving on October 24 which celebrated sports individuals as well as teams.

But it was a team of rugby players who snapped up the special group award.

The Hauraki Plains Boys First XV Rugby Team were awarded the Team of the Year award - the Mahurangi College Cup, which was donated by Mahurangi College in honour of the 50 years of sports exchanges between the two schools.

A team of the year is selected for their regional or national success, the team culture they demonstrate in representing their school with pride, with overcoming challenges and demonstrating a positive team spirit.

First XV coach Herman Harmzen said he was overwhelmed with joy and pride when the team won the award.

"I think we were fortunate to have a group of young men that were all friends, and they love spending time together on and off the rugby field."



Some of the HPC First XV rugby team players, with captain Chris Lourens, centre.

Photo: SUPPLIED

Captain Chris Lourens told *The Profile* it was great to finish his college rugby on "such a high".

"A lot of us started together back in year 9."

The year-13 student said after they finished second on the

table for the last two seasons, it was amazing to have won the Coulter Cup earlier in the year, and then the Team of the year trophy.

"The boys were all stoked."

The 18-year-old student also won the James McDuff and

Stella Clayton-Greene trophy for outstanding leadership in sport.

"It was nice to be acknowledged for being the captain for the First XV Rugby team for the last couple of years."

The coaches and his team

"definitely contributed" to his achievement, he said.

"We are a great team and that made it easy to lead a group of great players."

One thing that helped the team mates gel together as a unit was the fact most of them were mates and hung out socially outside of rugby, Chris said.

They played junior rugby together and have just "continued to grow together", he said.

"And when new boys would join they just became part of us and the team. We have fun on and off the field. We just work so well as a team."

One way Chris managed to keep motivated throughout the season was "to lead by example".

"I give it my all at trainings and on game days and - the boys just follow my example."

"I love the game so it was pretty easy to stay motivated."

"Our coaches also guided me and their input into our game and game plans was essential for me to lead the team properly."

For others who wanted to be a team captain one day, Chris said to work hard. "Show up and give it your all. You gain respect by respecting others."

# SPECIAL Sports Awards



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Manaia Taipari

ACHIEVEMENT IN MINORITY SPORT  
TINA DICKIN CUP



Chris Lourens & Melissa Barber

OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP IN SPORT  
JAMES MCDUFF & STELLA CLAYTON-GREENE TROPHY

TEAM OF THE YEAR

BOYS 1ST XV RUGBY TEAM  
MAHURANGI COLLEGE CUP



# In search of 'Good Bitches' who like to bake

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

A charitable baking group with a memorable name is in search of new members in Thames.

Good Bitches Baking is a movement which sees more than 3000 volunteers nationwide prepare baked goods on a regular basis, for community groups helping those going through tough times.

The Thames chapter is currently the smallest in the country at only 15 members, but "Head Bitch" Stacey Dunlop is keen to recruit.

"Bitches' come across like it has to be females... Anyone's welcome. We've got a big age range, it's a large range of people that do it. [But] it's dwindled a bit lately - no one has heard about it," Stacey said.

"I feel like there's more of a need, and I think we could be utilised a bit more, if people knew about this. I like that it's Thames people giving straight to Thames people. That's quite cool. I'd like to make it grow."

The premise for the group is simple. Members sign up to a roster where they commit to baking once or twice a month, or whatever suits their schedule. They fill up a baking box with a batch or two of whatever they feel like whipping up, and then deliver the goodies to their rostered recipient.

Recipients meanwhile, are simply people who are doing it tough - whatever that means



Stacey Dunlop's involvement in a charitable baking group is all about kindness.

Photo: ALICE PARMINTER

to them. Currently the Thames chapter has five recipients on its books: the Waikato Cancer Society, Hospice Waikato, Te Whāriki Manawāhine O Hauraki - Hauraki Women's Refuge, the Living Well Trust Foodbank, and the Thames Hospital chemotherapy room.

Stacey, who took over management of the Thames chapter just three months ago, is also

keen to expand the recipient list. She said the ideal candidates would be organisations servicing those who were struggling and needed something to brighten their day - a group with regular scheduled meetings or deliveries was ideal.

"Like Hospice: they've got meetings on a particular day, they've got their bereavement group. And I've been a nurse in

Thames for probably the last 12 years or so, so it's kind of how I got the chemo room involved," Stacey said.

"The food bank just love us, they think it's great. They get excited when they see the white boxes coming, which was cool to hear. And the chemo room, we just started, but they've been really happy as well with how it's worked out and it's

been a smooth process to bring them on."

And potential bakers need not be put off by the group name.

"Anyone can be a Good Bitch - it's a very admiring and gender-inclusive term," the web-site said.

"Good Bitches are people who want to help and like to just get stuff done. You don't have to be a master baker, because it's your kindness that matters the most."

Stacy agreed, saying it was all about giving back to others. She got into baking herself as a hobby during lockdown, and now that she has small children she said it's something that she can do for others that fits her lifestyle.

"I like baking but I also like giving it away for people who are having a rough time. It's nice to be able to give them something," Stacey said.

"And the kids [are] trying to get involved too, which is quite fun for my four-year-old. He's quite good at baking, he likes to crack the eggs in and stuff."

"So that's fun for the both of us. And he knows what I'm doing as well, which is nice. He brings it with me [on deliveries] and sometimes hands it over."

**DETAILS:** To find out more or to register as a baker or recipient, visit [www.gbb.org.nz](http://www.gbb.org.nz) and click "get involved".



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# £15,000 kauri log drive contributes to deforestation



As part of a Valley Profile series, **MEGHAN HAWKES** searches through old newspapers to bring you the stories Thames Valley locals once read about themselves.

## 1911

At Pūriri, splendid drives of logs from the operations of the Kauri Timber Company in Pūriri Valley Rd were forwarded to the Auckland mills in rafts towed by the *Waitangi* and the *Pelican*.

About £15,000 worth of timber had been released at Pūriri, while the total for the peninsula would run into considerably over £100,000.

The deforestation of the Hauraki Peninsula was noted with satisfaction to be proceeding apace.

At Paeroa, a mystery regarding a crate of chickens ended in the Magistrate's Court. Mrs Tanner, Waihi Hotel proprietress, came in to Paeroa and purchased some fowls from Mr Whitten, paying half-a-crown each for them. Mrs Tanner told Mr Whitten to send out as many more as he liked at the same price up to Christmas time.

Shortly afterwards Mr Whitten sent out a crate of ducks, but ducks not being fowls, they



Besieged by logs - the office of the Kauri Timber Company at Pūriri, after the bursting of a timber boom. SUPPLIED

were promptly returned. Later he sent out a crate of fowls, but in the meantime Mrs Tanner had left Waihi, and the fowls disappeared. Still later Mr Whitten sent out another crate of fowls, and these were delivered to Mr Samuel Tanner.

This gentleman, not having ordered any fowls, declined to take delivery, and after having a conversation with Mr Whitten over the phone, was told to send them to the auctioneer.

This was done and the fowls were sold, but afterwards Mr Whitten sued Samuel Tanner for their value without success. The address on the crate of fowls that found its way to Samuel Tanner's shop was not too distinct - Mr Tanner said it was certainly not addressed to the Waihi Hotel. The amount

Mr Whitten claimed from Mrs Tanner was £1 6s but the Magistrate decided against the plaintiff and ordered him to pay costs £4 1s.

Meanwhile, the matter of a crossing over the Waihōu River at a point near Thames to connect the Hauraki Plains by road with Thames was occupying the attention of the Thames Chamber of Commerce.

They sent the Minister of Public Works a resolution that communication between Thames and the Plains should be opened up by a bridge.

The most suitable site was in a line as near as possible with the continuation of the road leading from Pipiroa to a point on the Waihōu River, nearly opposite Kōpū.

A road had been formed

from Pipiroa to Turua to enable settlers to cross the Waihōu River at Turua. They then travelled three miles of road to the Matatoki train station and on to Thames by rail.

A continuation of the Pipiroa to Kōpū road and a crossing over the river at Kōpū would shorten the journey from Pipiroa to Thames by over six miles.

At Thames a man who refused £8000 cash for 16,000 shares in a mining proposition was afterwards reduced to poverty. His fluctuating fortunes continued over the years but when the *Thames Star* came across him they found him as hopeful and courageous as ever. "They got it all - at least I lost it all," he explained, almost apologetically.

"I should have accepted the offer made me in Auckland years ago - at the time of the 1906 boom. But I didn't, and it's no use crying over spilt milk. I worked hard at the Klondike, and afterwards came back to New Zealand, and went packing, fossicking, and gum-digging, and, again got a little put by.

"But I started farming and storekeeping up the Kauaeranga and lost my little all and now I have a little claim down the coast and I hope that before long I will be all right again. I have good prospects and I think I will make a success of it."

And with a confident smile and a hearty shake of the hand, he was off to purchase his weekly supply of stores.

## Chris' Quiz

Weekly quiz compiled by Chris Parminter

- Which of the following is the name of a player in the 2024 Australian Super Rugby team Western Force? a) Draco Malfoy, b) Harry Potter or c) Ron Weasley?
- Which American pro-wrestler turned actor made his official debut in WWE as the 'Doctor of Thuganomics'? a) Dwayne Johnson, b) Hulk Hogan or c) John Cena?
- In Poland, how many points is the letter Z worth in a game of Polish Scrabble? a) 1, b) 2 or c) 10?
- Kiwikiwi in te reo Māori translates to which colour in English? a) Brown, b) gold or c) grey?
- Roma, Brandywine, Cherry and Moneymaker are all types of which fruit?
- Which is New Zealand's largest enclosed harbour? a) Kaipara, b) Kawhia or c) Waitemata?
- Which is the most populated Australian state?
- Who was the first female Prime Minister of the United Kingdom?
- What is the chemical symbol for the element gold? a) Au, b) Ag or c) Go?
- Who wrote the novel *1984*? a) Aldous Huxley, b) Ray Bradbury, c) George Orwell or d) F. Scott Fitzgerald?



ANSWERS: 1. b) Harry Potter; 2. c) John Cena; 3. a) 4; 4. c) Grey; 5. Tomatō; 6. a) Apple; 7. New South Wales; 8. Margaret Thatcher; 9. a) Au; 10. c) George Orwell.

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# SPORTS

## Hockey hoorah

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

The grand opening of the Thames Valley Hockey Turf in Ngatea kicked off on October 19.

The Thames Valley Hockey Turf Society and Thames Valley Hockey Association upgraded its facility from a sand turf to a specialised water-based synthetic turf in December, 2023.

While financial funding for the project came to \$855,000, the upgrade itself was \$820,000 with the surplus covering associated expenses.

Although the turf had been in use since last December, hockey hobbyists, friends, family and the community showed up for the official opening celebration to offer

support for the town's new blue turf.

Thames Valley Hockey Turf Society chair Julie Stephenson told *The Profile* it was an awesome day.

A special ribbon-cutting ceremony was conducted by Hauraki district Mayor Toby Adams and former New Zealand representative hockey player and life member of the Thames Valley Hockey Association Lorraine Hayward.

The Thames Valley Hockey Association said they wanted to thank the funders, volunteers, supporters, VIPs, players and umpires who helped to celebrate the installation of the new water turf, and memorial unveiling for the Black Sticks shirts.



Mayor Toby Adams and Lorraine Hayward cut the ribbon.

Photos: LUKE MITCHELL/CHILLED EDGE PHOTOGRAPHY



Former Black Stick Lloyd Stevenson, of Hauraki.



Tension rises for Josh Toone, left, and Ursula Carstens.



Stacey Clarke plays a tough game.



Former English international player Steve Smith, left, and Ashton Carter, 32.

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# Waihi man takes action against diabetes

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

One reason David Parish feels so strongly about diabetes awareness is his long history of active involvement in advocacy efforts.

While David said he wasn't an expert on the disease, he had his own journey with type 2 diabetes and by taking action - "I've got no worse".

And now he's planning a special event in Waihi to raise awareness.

According to Diabetes New Zealand, pre-diabetes is also known as impaired glucose intolerance which occurs when the glucose (sugar) in blood is higher than normal, but not high enough to be called diabetes.

The 83-year-old told *The Profile* he was advised a long time ago that he was pre-diabetic, but he ignored it, and about a year ago - David was diagnosed with type 2 diabetes. But he was motivated to make lifestyle changes to improve his situation.

"If you take the appropriate steps, you can actually fight it back."

He met with a diabetes nurse who offered him a Diabetes New Zealand pamphlet with a brief outline of what steps to take, he said. "They're quite explicit about what you can and can't eat, or you should and shouldn't eat."

There were also guidelines for meal sizes and a recommendation to exercise, which David said he took seriously. He avoided sugar at all costs, he said. "I used to eat a lot of honey, I was a beekeeper. I love my honey."

David said he also used to eat biscuits like they were "going out of fashion", but "I don't eat biscuits at all now".

He signed up with his local gym and got set up with a 30 minute exercise regime. Over the following six months, David said he lost 10kg.

"I'm not a big person, but I had a pot



David Parish.

Photo: SUPPLIED

tummy."

When people would point out to David he'd lost weight, he would tell them: "yeah, I've done it on purpose".

David said he got his blood sugar levels tested regularly. His blood pressure is normal and "I'm enjoying the exercise that I do", which includes time on the rowing machine.

He heard the best way to lose weight was to go on the rowing machine because it exercised almost every muscle with no impact, he said. "If you go running, there's an impact."

While biking was another low impact exercise, he said it didn't work all the muscles. "I'm trying to better my time [on the rowing machine]. So I try and go a bit harder each time."

But David's big motivation was knowledge. "It's knowing that very fact that... If I manage this properly, I can live a perfectly normal life."

David said the other side of it was that if he didn't manage it - "the consequences are dire and the consequences of type two diabetes are terrible".

"You know, lower limb amputation, loss of eyesight, kidney failure - the list

is not good."

David said if he had done the kinds of things he was now doing, he might never have tipped over into the type 2 diabetes range. He said he was now out of what he called a holding pattern, which meant he was only just over the threshold of being pre-diabetic and being diagnosed as having type 2 diabetes.

"I am hoping that my current lifestyle balance of regular exercise and sensible eating will keep me in that situation."

David's involvement with diabetes awareness goes back more than 30 years, and it's always been in conjunction with the Lions Club, of which he is also a member.

In November, which is National Diabetes Awareness month, Waihi, Paeroa, Katikati and Omokoroa Lions Clubs will hold a special event in Waihi to help get the word out there.

Project leader David said the plan was for people in the community to join Lions in the Lap The Map for Diabetes Awareness event which would be a fun walk around the Waihi Martha Mine pit rim. "The distance is approximately five kilometres."

People are invited to meet at the Pump House at the top of Seddon St, Waihi on November 17, anytime between 8am and 12pm and it is a gold coin donation.

Diabetes awareness was always a very important part of the Lions Club philosophy, he said, which David also shared.

**DETAILS: Lap the Map event on November 17, gold coin donation, meet at the Waihi Pump House anytime between 8am and 12pm to walk the Waihi Martha Mine pit rim. To find out more information about Diabetes visit [www.diabetes.org.nz](http://www.diabetes.org.nz).**

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# Rural Life

## New flood protection asset a bird sanctuary



Attendees of the opening ceremony and blessing gather beside the new bird hide.

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

The sun was shining for the official opening of a new \$8 million flood protection asset on Shelly Beach Rd in Pipiroa on October 21, and the local shorebirds were already making use of the environmentally-friendly structure.

The project, officially known as the Piako River Mouth Right Stopbank Asset Rationalisation project, is one of the Waikato Regional Council's (WRC) "shovel-ready" environmental projects funded by the government in the wake of Covid-19.

Its construction saw three ageing floodgates replaced by one single structure, with the aim of reducing replacement and ongoing operation and maintenance costs, while still protecting around 850 hectares of communities and agricultural land in the area.

However, flood protection was not the sole consideration for the project. The new floodgate is located

in an area of significance due to its proximity to two Ramsar wetlands, one in the Firth of Thames, and the other at the Kopuatai Peat Dome. So along with the floodgate, the project also includes a 10ha wetland habitat with a large island, suitable for the wading birds and shorebirds of the area to seek refuge during flood events. The island is surrounded by a tide-controlled flood overflow area, and there is an inlet drain which allows fish to seek refuge in the pond during drought conditions.

The wetland sits alongside the Hauraki Rail Trail, and the inclusion of a purpose-built bird hide looking over the island means the site is now also an asset for the public to enjoy and explore.

Council chair Pamela Story said the project, which has taken three years to complete, was an example of council's move towards a more environment-conscious and future-proofed approach to flood protection infrastructure.

"I think it's a great way to integrate meeting the service standards that are expected around flood and drainage, but also recognising that we can provide a really positive impact and habitat for our native species as well," she said.

"Importantly, this project speaks to the approach our council is taking to climate change, delivering solutions that ensure we are more easily able to accommodate the predicted changes in sea level and rainfall... Collectively, we are addressing critical flood infrastructure replacement, we're enhancing and protecting important habitats for nationally and internationally significant bird life, we're creating a refuge for fish during drought conditions, and we're supporting jobs for local people."

Project manager Grant Ockleston said the new island would eventually be surrounded by mud as the tides pushed sediment into the flood overflow pool, creating an ideal shelter for the feathered



Grant Ockleston, Pamela Storey and Adrian de Laborde plant trees to mark the occasion.

Photos: ALICE PARMINTER

inhabitants of the nearby firth. "We built a roost habitat for almost twice the number of birds that are in the Firth of Thames - we needed about 3000 square metres of roost island, and we've built 5000 square metres.

are in decline or threatened can thrive in an environment like this," he said.

"It'll have water around it, so that they're free from predators. Because there's no vegetation, that's exactly what the shorebirds want

"We hope that the species that

CONTINUED ON P11

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# Rural Life



ABOVE: The new floodgate replaces three ageing gates at the mouth of the Piako River. BELOW: The wetland habitat surrounds a man-made island, which is overlooked by the bird hide.

**CONTINUED FROM P10**

because that's where they feel safe. We hope that it gets crowded after a while, because if it does, it means we've done our job." The Pūkoro Mirānda Shorebird Centre was also delighted by the project outcome, centre manager Keith Woodley said. "The council commissioned us to design and build a hide and to do the signage for it, and of course we were delighted to do that because anything advocating for shorebirds in their habitats, that's right up our alley," he said.

"We're delighted with this. And it still needs further work to make it a good shorebird roost, we need to be able to get

all this vegetation controlled. "But we hope in the next year or two that we'll manage to achieve that. And it'll be just fantastic." The regional council received \$2.6 million from the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment's climate resilience programme; \$250,000 from the New Zealand Lottery Commission's environment and heritage fund; and \$35,000 from Hauraki District Council towards the project. The remaining funding was contributed by ratepayers of the Piako River scheme, and wider Waikato region.



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# WAIHI COLLEGE ACADEMIC PRIZEGIVING

Last Friday night, Waihi College held its annual Senior Academic Prize Giving, a fantastic celebration of achievement and community. The hall was filled with excitement as students, whanau and staff came together to honour the hard work and dedication of Waihi's senior students. Congratulations to Hayaat Dass, who took home Dux; a testament to her dedication and outstanding academic performance. Hamish McKinnon received Proxime accessit (runner up to Dux) award, and Maggie Gerbich-Burroughs placed third in Year 13, showing the depth of talent and commitment across the senior cohort. These students were separated by such a fine margin and have all been exemplary students throughout their time at Waihi College.

We farewell Tuihana Jack-Ainsley, Jennifer Cochrane, Jay McKechnie and Matty Match this year after decades of care, knowledge and nurture showered on the students and staff in their care. They will be extremely missed amongst students and staff alike and leave huge shoes to fill. We also farewell Brian Hennessy who has been away on sabbatical for 2024 but has decided to take permanent retirement. Lastly, Jess Michalchuk who was with us for a year in a temporary position while enjoying a short break from life in Canada. They are much loved by the students and staff and 2025 won't be the same without them – we wish you all well for your next adventures.

A highlight of the evening was the awarding of various scholarships. Waihi College students who are preparing to embark on tertiary studies received generous scholarships totalling just over \$83,000, providing them with vital support as they transition into the next chapter of their education and careers. Thank you to all our sponsors for their continued support of our students, school and community. The Year 13's received their graduation certificates with pride, and our new leaders for 2025 were also announced:



## 2025 STUDENT LEADERS



Leader of Arts & Culture:  
**Bayley Goddard**



Leader of Sports:  
**Rylee Morgan**



Leader of Service:  
**Maddie Oliver**



Leader of Environment:  
**Ruby Wilhelmi**



Leader of Te Ao Māori:  
**Mahana Magee**



Leader of Learning:  
**Māhe North**



Leader of Well Being:  
**Ben Jarvis**



Leader of Community:  
**Zoe-Beth Naisby**



Leader of Manaakitanga:  
**Brea Peka**



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Representative: **Moana Magee**

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# WAIHI COLLEGE CELEBRATES SUCCESS

## 2024 ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENTS SPECIAL PRIZE WINNERS

Particular congratulations go to the winners of the 2024 Special Prizes which recognise academic success as well as leadership and community involvement.

The night's key winners are:



The Kurt Hahn Award: Kurt Hahn established the Outward Bound movement, and this award is for a person who best fits the Outward Bound movement motto "to seek, to strive and not to yield".  
**HAYAAT DASS**



The John van der Zwan International Student Award for outstanding contribution This trophy is awarded to the international student who has embraced opportunities and contributed to school life.  
**CEYLIN BEKTAS**



The Bronwyn Wightman Memorial Trophy: This award is for a student who has enthusiastically participated in school activities, has a bubbly personality and has a great sense of community.  
**SABINE RUSH**



Ara Poutama Award: This award is presented by Whaea Tuihana Jack-Ainsley for someone who shows leadership qualities and is a positive role model for our Maori Students.  
**MOANA MAGEE**



Maia Short Memorial Scholarship: This is for a year 13 Girl with a top academic performance, who is a good citizen, friendly and helps others. Maia Short was destined for leadership and her Taha Māori was incredibly important to her.  
**MAYA DODD**



The Chandel Cup: This is for the student who has made the most consistent effort during the year.  
**HAMISH MCKINNON**



The Jack Silcock Memorial Cup: This cup is named in memory of Jack Silcock and recognises students who have shown tremendous strength and resilience throughout their schooling at Waihi College. It recognises a person who has put others before themselves.  
**IAIN HARTLEY**



The Ethel Madgwick Cup – Rural Women NZ: This is awarded to a student who wishes to further their studies outside of Waihi College.  
**MAGGIE GERBICH-BURROUGHS**



The O'Leary Cup for Leadership: For being an exceptional role model and showing leadership within the school.  
**MAYA DODD**



The University of Otago Vice-Chancellor's Scholarship This scholarship was established in 2015 to recognise Excellence in its undergraduate entrants.  
**MAGGIE GERBICH-BURROUGHS**



The Golden Apple: For Year 12 Art  
**ZARA DAVIES-YOUNG**



Penny Bowden Trophy for Performing Arts: This award is in memory of Penny Bowden who was a former Head of English. This award is given to the student who has been a mainstay in the performing arts, worked hard to achieve their artistic talents while helping others do the same.  
**BAYLEY GODDARD**



The Sel Baker Cup for Humanities: For the student who has dedicated time and passion to helping others through community spirit and tackling current issues.  
**MAYA DODD**



The Ryan Family Trophy: This trophy is for Service to school and community.  
**MAYA DODD**



Grover Plate: For Year 13 Art  
**SCARLETT CHAMBERS**



David Johnstone Charitable Trust Scholarship for Tertiary Education. This award is designed to financially assist students who are going to WINTEC or Waikato University within the fields of Science or Technology.  
**HAMISH MCKINNON**



Waihi Lions trades Scholarship: This significant scholarship is to financially assist a student who is entering into a Trades apprenticeship.  
**BRIONY RICKWOOD**



The Board Chairman's Award and the Waihi Beach Lions Trophy for Citizenship:  
**CAMPBELL DOUGLAS**



The John Combes Memorial Cup for Science and Mathematics: This cup was presented to the College by the Combes family in memory of John Combes who was an outstanding student of Maths and Science  
**HAYAAT DASS**



The Principal's Award: For someone who has worked hard all year and made a significant contribution to the life of the school.  
**HAMISH MUDFORD, ZARA DAVIES-YOUNG, EMILY DAVISON**



The Rogers Calculus Cup: First in Calculus  
**HAMISH MUDFORD**



Waihi Agricultural Education Trust. Formed for the purpose of fostering and supporting education in the agricultural sector.  
**NEVAEH VAUTIER, HAMISH MUDFORD**



The Kathleen Adams Memorial Award (also known as the Jubilee Award): This is awarded to a student who is hard working and has a mature attitude and approach to their studies.  
**EMILY DAVISON & THALIA TREPELS**



University of Waikato Scholarships  
**HAMISH MUDFORD, HAMISH MCKINNON, MAYA DODD AND HAYAAT DASS.**



Toi Ohomai School Leavers Scholarship. These awards are given to students who have high achievement in school and demonstrate strong potential to succeed in further education.  
**EMILY DAVISON, DAISY BURGESS**



The Shepherd Cup & Waihi Lions Scholarship for DUX: Top academic achievement for Waihi College  
**HAYAAT DASS**



The Coombes Cup for PROXIME ACCESSIT: Runner up to Dux  
**HAMISH MCKINNON**



Te Paewai o te Rangi scholarship from the University of Waikato This award is given to a student who has shown commitment to learning and one who strives for excellence and distinction. It recognises students who have achieved to a particularly high standard and those who show outstanding potential.  
**HAYAAT DASS**



Best All-Round Girl, Board Chairman's Award & Martha Women's Club Award: For academic, cultural, sporting and service.  
**MAYA DODD**



Best All-Round Boy and Board Chairman's Award: For academic, cultural, sporting and service.  
**HAMISH MCKINNON**



**YEAR 11**  
First  
**Zoe-Beth Naisby**



Second  
**Zara Clare**



Third  
**Max Morley**



**YEAR 12**  
First  
**Charlie Joyce**



Second  
**Bella Paulsen**



Third  
**Māhe North**





# WAIHI COLLEGE CELEBRATES SUCCESS

## Cultural Prizegiving 2024

On 29th October, Waihi College came alive with energy, talent, and celebration at the annual Cultural Prize Giving. The event was a true cultural extravaganza, recognising the dedication and talent of students across kapa haka, drama, art, media design, hall tech, culinary arts and music. The winners for 2024 were:

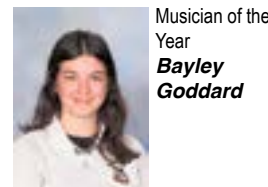
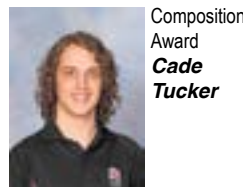
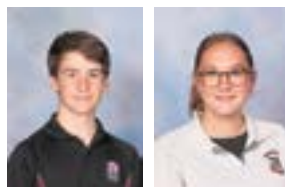
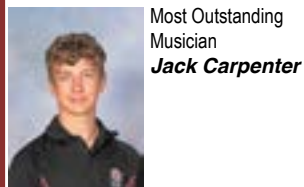
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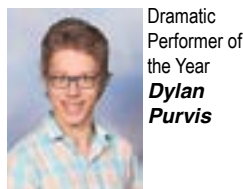
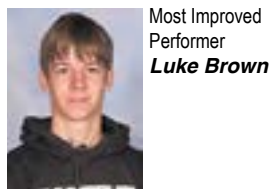
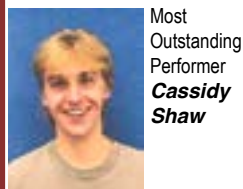
### HALL TECHNICIAN



### MUSIC



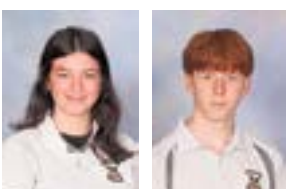
### DRAMA



### KAPA HAKA & MAORI AWARDS



### CULINARY ARTS AWARDS



**SUPREME CULTURAL AWARD**  
**Hamish McKinnon**



## Service Prizegiving 2024

Service is a huge part of Waihi College. The College proudly boasts many students who serve either the school or community, or often both, in a multitude of ways. This year, the following students were celebrated for all they do to help make Waihi a great community.

- Abi-Mae McHardy** Student Council
- Aidan Butler** Surf Life Saving, Service to Sport, Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Alexis Hughes** Service to School
- Aliya Smith** Leo's Club
- Amy Harris** Leo's Club, Ball Committee
- Ana Whatarau** Board of Trustees Rep 2024, Service to Community
- Ashley Samkin** Leo's Club, Service to Sport
- Aysheia Domasing** Service to Music
- Bayley Goddard** Service to Music
- Beau Fitzgibbon** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Ben Jarvis** Leo's Club
- Ben Paulsen** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Brea Peka** Service to Sport, Service to School
- Brooke Kelly** Leader of Sport 2024, Leo's Club, Service to Sport, Service to School
- Cade Tucker** Service to Music
- Campbell Douglas** Hall Tech Leader, Service to School, House Leader 2024
- Cassidy Shaw** Public Speaking for ADHD
- Ceylin Bektas** House Leader 2024
- Chace Tawhiti** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Cole Nidogma** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Daisy Burgess** House Leader 2024
- Emily Davison** House Leader 2024, Service to Sport, Ball Committee, Student Council, Service to School
- Emma Beaumont-Simpson** Student Council
- Erana Telekolio** Service to Music
- Farish O'Flaherty** Ball Committee, Service to Sports
- Greta Spicer** Leo's Club Secretary, Public Speaking for ADHD, Service to Sport
- Hamish McKinnon** Arts & Cultural Leader 2024, Service to School, Service to Music, Ball Committee
- Hamish Mudford** Environmental Leader 2024, Service to School, Hall Tech
- Hayaat Dass** Learning Leader 2024, Service to School, Leo's Club, Ball Committee
- Hoani Pollock-Wilson** Student Council
- Iain Hartley** Public Speaking for ADHD
- Isla Menary** Service to Community
- Izzie Cannell** Leo's Club, Public Speaking for ADHD, House Leader 2024
- Jackson Howard** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Jaylah Rolleston** Service to Sport
- Jules Lovell** Service to Music
- Kate Townsend** Leo's Club
- Kyle Sorley** Ball Committee
- Lachlan Hewlett** Service to Sport
- Leia Moritz** Service to School
- Lily Maslen** Service to School
- Logan Brady** Service to Sport, Ball Committee

- Louise Miller-Lonergan** House Leader 2024
- Luke Butler** Surf Life Saving, Service to Sport, House Leader
- Luke Stephens** Service to Music
- Lydia Pennell** House Leader 2024
- Mace Harries** Service to Music
- Maddie Davies** Service to School
- Maddie Oliver** House Leader 2024, Leo's Club, Service to School
- Maggie Gerbich-Burrows** Service to School, House Leader 2024
- Malea Hutchins** Service to Sport
- Max Morley** Service to School, Service to Sport, Surf Life Saving
- May Kwast** Service to School
- Maya Dodd** Service Leader 2024, Service to School, Ball Committee
- Moana Magee** Leader of Te Ao Maori 2024, Service to School
- Naelene Donaldson** Service to Music, House Leader 2024
- Oliver Goddard** House Leader 2024, Service to Sport
- Paige Capper** House Leader 2024
- Palace O'Brien** Service to Sport/Waihi Mini Ballers
- Ra-Anthym Selwyn** Service to Sport
- Reese Neame** Service to Sport
- Romain Wiki** Leo's Club, House Leader 2024
- Romain Wiki** House Leader 2024, Ball Committee, Leo's Club
- Ruby Wilhelmi** Leo's Club
- Rueben Snow** House Leader 2024
- Ryder Holtz-Taylor** Service to Sport
- Rylee Morgan** Service to Sport, Waihi Mini Ballers, Service to School
- Sabine Rush** Community Leader 2024, Leo's President
- Saki Izutsu** Service to Music
- Sam Bjerring** Service to Sport, Service to School
- Sam Morrow** Leo's Club, Ball Committee
- Scarlett Chambers** Ball Committee
- Shayla Roycroft** Service to Sport
- Stella Shave** Service to School
- Tapene Ropiha** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Thalia Trepels** Service to School
- Toby van der Zwan** House Leader 2024
- Xandrex Manaot** Service to Sport
- Zara Davies-Young** Leader of Well Being 2024, Leo's Club, Service to School
- Zenith Gresley** Waihi Lions Book Fair
- Zoe-Beth Naisby** Leo's Club
- Zoe Hug** Service to School






KEI KONEI TĀTOU E TŪ ANA  
HERE WE STAND

# WAIHI COLLEGE CELEBRATES SUCCESS

## SPORTS AWARDS 2024



Congratulations to everyone who has represented Waihi College at sport in 2024. Special thanks to all of the volunteers, including all of the coaches, managers and team supporters, as well as to all of those that run the events. Thank you also the community which continues to support our young athletes by sponsorship or by liking and commenting on our Facebook page. Special congratulations to the following athletes who have worked extra hard this year and have been rewarded for their efforts.

### SUPREME AWARD






**Emily Davison**


### SPORTSWOMAN OF THE YEAR

Winner:  **Rylee Morgan**  
 Runner Up:  **Palace O'Brien**


### SPORTSMAN OF THE YEAR

Winner:  **Max Morely**  
 Runner Up:  **Alex Maitland**  
 **Brooke Kelly**



### SERVICE TO SPORT

 **Brooke Kelly**

### LORRIS NOBILIS AWARD

 **Lachlan Osborne-Sole**

### FAIR PLAYER OF THE YEAR

 **Oliver Goddard**  
 **Sabine Rush**


### TEAM AWARDS

- Basketball - Year 7&8 Girls**  
Most Potential: **Anahera Osbourne Brielle**  
Fair Player: **Michalchuk Sophia Pillai Brielle**  
Most Improved: **Michalchuk & Rikki Morgan**  
Most Valuable: **Anahera Osbourne Brielle**
- Basketball - Year 7&8 Boys Development**  
Contribution: **Logan Cooper**  
Fair Player: **Sam Davidson**  
Most Improved: **Xavier Hope**  
Most Valuable: **Jordan Holmes**
- Basketball - Junior Boys Development**  
Most Potential: **Ra-Selwyn Anthem**  
Fair Player: **Max Walton**  
Most Improved: **Reef Frewin, Blake Silk**  
Most Valuable Player: **Dominic Bismark**
- Basketball - Thames Valley Junior Boys**  
Fair Player: **Levi Morton**  
Most Potential: **Brooklyn Frewin, Kevin Ainsley**  
Most Valuable: **Lachlan Osborne-Sole**
- Basketball - Thames Valley Senior Boys**  
Contribution: **Logan Brady**  
Fair Player: **Toby van der Zwan**  
Most Improved: **Lincoln Alexander**  
Highest Point Scorer: **Logan Brady**  
Most Valuable: **Logan Brady, Cassidy Shaw**
- Basketball - College A Girls**  
Contribution: **Emily Davison**  
Fair Player: **Jaylah Rolleston**  
Most Improved: **Brea Peka**  
Most Valuable Player: **Emily Davison**
- Basketball - College A Boys**  
Contribution: **Logan Brady**  
Fair Player: **Tapene Ropiha**  
Most Improved: **Lachlan Osborne-Sole**  
Highest Point Scorer: **Cassidy Shaw**  
Most Valuable: **Logan Brady**
- Basketball - Senior Boys Development**  
Contribution: **Sam Bjerring**  
Fair Player: **Callan Dodd**  
Most Improved: **Brooklyn Frewin, Mahsiyah Stockman**  
Most Valuable: **Chace Tawhiti, Peke-Tupaea Ropiha**  
Highest Point Scorer: **Chace Tawhiti**
- Football - Year 7&8**  
Contribution: **Bradley Crowe, Elijah Capper**  
Fair Player: **Jonah James, Daniel Carson**  
Most Improved: **Emma Clark, Chirawat Upex**  
Most Valuable: **Callum Morgan, Nicita van de Merwe**
- Football - 1st X1 Girls**  
Contribution: **Brooke Kelly**  
Fair Player: **Celeste Rush**  
Most Improved: **Indie FitzGibbon**  
Most Valuable: **Charlie Joyce, Madison Muir**
- Football - 1st X1 Boys**  
Contribution: **Farish O'Flaherty**  
Fair Player: **Oliver Goddard**  
Most Improved: **Alex Maitland**  
Most Valuable: **Max Morely**
- Football - Year 7&8 Piwakawaka**  
Contribution: **Xavier Motley**  
Fair Player: **Kimiora King**  
Most Improved: **Jade Jennett**  
Most Valuable: **Skylar Lloyed**
- Football - Year 7&8 Kereru**  
Contribution: **Kate Goodwin**  
Fair Player: **Poppy Shave**  
Most Improved: **Breeze Clothier**  
Most Valuable: **Olive Kelly**
- Football - Year 7&8 Development**  
Fair Player: **Zariah Brewerton**  
Most Improved: **Paige Hermond**  
Most Valuable: **Zoe Fisher-Peet**
- Football - Year 10/11**  
Contribution: **Hannah Bismark**  
Fair Player: **Kylia Muir**  
Most Improved: **Piper Elmsley**  
Most Valuable: **Savarna Brightwell**
- Football - Senior Girls Development**  
Contribution: **Palace O'Brien, Brea Peka**  
Fair Player: **Reese Name**  
Most Improved: **Asha Davies-Young**  
Most Valuable: **Rylee Morgan**
- Rugby - 1st XV Girls Composite Team**  
Most Improved: **Gracie Tempelmeyer, Palace O'Brien**  
Most Valuable: **Rylee Morgan**
- Volleyball - Year 7&8**  
Contribution: **Tegan Clare**  
Fair Player: **Lexie Davies-Young**  
Most Improved: **Zoe Shave**  
Most Valuable: **Brielle Michalchuk**
- Volleyball - Junior A Boys**  
Contribution: **Dominic Bismark**  
Fair Player: **Eli Townsend**  
Most Improved: **Tate Randell**  
Most Valuable: **Blake Smith**
- Volleyball - Senior A Boys**  
Contribution: **Trent Ewing**  
Fair Player: **Rian Morgan, Alex Maitland**  
Most Improved: **Stuart Hartley**  
Most Valuable: **Tapene Ropiha**
- Volleyball - Junior Girls**  
Contribution: **Whole Team**  
Most Improved: **Whole Team**  
Most Valuable: **Whole Team**
- Waka Ama**  
Contribution: **Lockie Patea**  
Fair Player: **Jacob Adams**  
Most Improved: **Hale Nand**  
Most Valuable: **Isaac Honey**

### TEAM OF THE YEAR

Nominees:  
 UNISS College A Netball  
 1st X1 Football - Boys  
 Senior Girls Development- Netball


Winners:  
**UNISS College A Netball**




### COACH OF THE YEAR

Nominees:  
 Chantelle Archer  
 Jess O'Brien  
 Shannon Hargreaves


Winner:  
**Jess O'Brien**



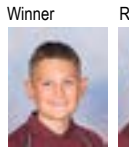

### MULTI DISCIPLINE CUP

 **Emily Davison**



### YEAR 11 Highly Commended Sportsman

 **Declan Coxon**

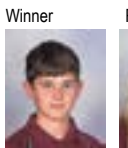

### YEAR 7 SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR

Winner:  **Lachlan Hewlett**  
 Runner Up:  **Jack Kayes**



### YEAR 8 SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR

Winner:  **Hunter Pert**  
 Runner Up:  **Thierry Smith**





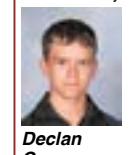





### YEAR 9 SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR

Winner:  **Stanley Anderson**  
 Runner Up:  **Leah Kelly**


### YEAR 10 SPORTSPERSON OF THE YEAR


Winner:  **Lachlan Osborne-Sole**  
 Runner Up:  **Jasmine Jones**

### NZ REPRESENTATIVES - BLUES AWARDS


Gymnastics	Surfing	Surf Rescue	Surf Rescue
			
U16 Representative Netball Team	In Line Hockey	In Line Hockey	Hockey
			
	<b>Declan Coxon</b>	<b>Jasmine Jones</b>	<b>Hunter Pert</b>
			
	<b>Beau FitzGibbon</b>	<b>Max Morley</b>	<b>Thierry Smith</b>

### EQUESTRIAN


Sportmanship/Spirit Award:  **Tamsin Douglas**

Rider of the Future:  **Isabelle Carey**


### GOLF

Golfer of the Year:  **Kobe Phillips**







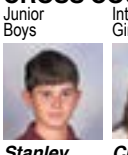
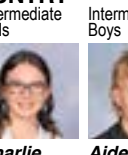
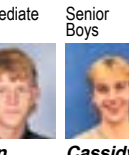
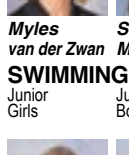
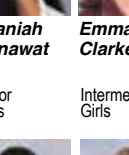

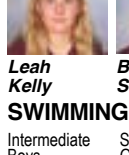
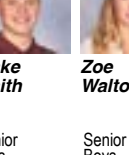
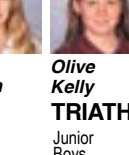



### BOAT RACING

Boat Racer of the Year:  **Kendall Tacon**


### SURFING


Surfer of the Year:  **Beau FitzGibbon**


### SCHOOL CHAMPIONS - ATHLETICS


Intermediate First Equal	Senior Girls	Senior Boys
 <b>Māhe North</b>	 <b>Trent Ewing</b>	 <b>Brooke Kelly</b>
Year 7&8 Boys	Junior Girls	Junior Boys
 <b>Thierry Smith</b>	 <b>Leah Kelly</b>	 <b>Dominic Bismark</b>
Year 7 Boys	Intermediate Girls	Intermediate Boys
 <b>Stanley Anderson</b>	 <b>Charlie Joyce</b>	 <b>Aiden Butler</b>
Year 7 Girls	Year 8 Girls	Year 8 Boys
 <b>Myles van der Zwan</b>	 <b>Shaniah Manawat</b>	 <b>Emma Clarke</b>
Junior Girls	Senior Girls	Senior Boys
 <b>Leah Kelly</b>	 <b>Blake Smith</b>	 <b>Zoe Walton</b>
Intermediate Boys	Senior Girls	Senior Boys
 <b>Aidan Butler</b>	 <b>Zara Davies-Young</b>	 <b>Ben Jarvis</b>

### TENNIS

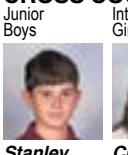
Year 7&8 Boys:  **Trent Ewing**

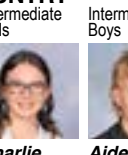
Junior Girls:  **Leah Kelly**

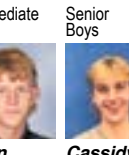
Junior Boys:  **Brooke Kelly**


Senior Boys:  **Toby van der Zwan**

### CROSS COUNTRY


Junior Boys:  **Thierry Smith**


Intermediate Girls:  **Leah Kelly**


Intermediate Boys:  **Dominic Bismark**


Senior Boys:  **Nivek Smith**

### TRIATHLON

Year 7 Girls:  **Emma Clarke**

Year 7 Boys:  **Jack Kayes**

Year 8 Girls:  **Lexie Davies-Young**

Year 8 Boys:  **Thierry Smith**

### TRIATHLON TEAMS

Year 7 girls - **Gia Sharpe, Sonny Fitzgibbon**

Year 7 boys - **Beau Wilson, Xavier Hope, Noah McNeil**

Year 8 girls - **Zoe Shave, Sophia Pillai, Tegan Clare**

Year 8 boys - **Harrison Muir, Reuben Carey, Marlo Nopper**

Junior boys - **Blake Smith, Tate Randell, Truman Alexander**

Intermediate girls - **Celeste Rush, Aliya Smith, Asha Davies-Young**

Intermediate boys - **Josh Smith, Conner Peters, Brody Orchard**

Senior girls - **Sabine Rush, Brooke Kelly, Zara Davies-Young**

Senior boys - **Cameron Lamont, Arashjot Sunner, Māhe North**

Senior Mixed - **Romain Wiki, Hayatt Dass, Kate Pooley**



# ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

## The Messiah to return for annual Christmas concert

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

The Christmas tradition continues for Tauranga-based Scholar's Baroque, as the choral ensemble brings its annual concert, *The Messiah*, back to Waihi.

And this year, featured soloist Jonathan Evers is returning to the choir for the first time since 2019.

The baritone, who sang with Scholar's Baroque for its first *Messiah* performance in 2015, said he was excited to be returning to the group for this year's concert series.

Jonathan has since embarked on a successful career overseas, with opera credits across England and Europe.

Most recently, he placed third at the prestigious 2024 Wigmore Hall/Bollinger International Song Competition in London.

Soprano Gina Sanders, alto Charlotte McDonald, and tenor Iain Tetley will join Jonathan as featured soloists.

Scholar's Baroque said it was looking forward to bringing the performance back to Waihi.

The performance was very popular last year, it said, with one audience member calling it an "exceptionally good, world-class performance".

The choir will be joined by the NZ Barok orchestra, and conducted by musical director Chalium Poppy.

**DETAILS: Handel's Messiah, November 24, 2.30pm at Waihi Memorial Hall. See [scholarsbaroque.com](http://scholarsbaroque.com) for more information.**



Baritone Jonathan Evers will perform with Scholar's Baroque in this year's performance of *The Messiah*. Photo: SUPPLIED



Scholars Baroque with NZ Barok cordially invite you to this Christmas Tradition!

**NZ BAROK ORCHESTRA**

Handel's **Messiah**

TAURANGA Sat 23 Nov 7:30pm St Mary Immaculate Cameron Rd / Elizabeth St  
 WAIHI Sun 24 Nov 2:30pm Waihi Memorial Hall 41 Seddon St

TICKET iTICKET.co.nz or scholarsbaroque.com or phone 0508 iTICKET (484 253)

**LEFT BANK THEATRE**

Ph: 07 868 3142 www.leftbanktheatre.co.nz 659 Pollen St, Thames

**Movies from Thursday 14 November to Wednesday 20 November**

**Quartet (98 mins) M. Thu & Wed 10.30am:** Billy Connolly, Maggie Smith and Michael Gambon star in this comedy about a retired group of opera singers who put on a fund-raising concert to keep their home running.

**Memoir of a Snail (94mins, 2024) M. Thu 4pm; Wed 1.30pm:** Beautiful animated film for grown ups. Memoir of a melancholic woman - a hoarder of snails, romance novels, and guinea-pigs.

**Thelma (98 mins) M. Fri 10.30am; Wed 5.15pm:** Encore screenings. 93-year-old Thelma gets duped by a phone scammer and sets out on a quest across the city to reclaim what was taken from her.

**The Critic (101 mins) M. Fri 1.30pm & 4pm:** Sir Ian McKellen (The Lord of the Rings) stars as a powerful London theatre critic who lures a struggling actress into a blackmail scheme with deadly consequences.

**Bookworm (103 mins) PG. Sat 1pm; Sun 10.30am:** 11-year-old Mildred's world is turned upside down when her estranged father takes her camping to find a mythological beast known as the Canterbury Panther.

**Lee (117 mins, 2023) M. Sun 1.30pm; Tue 4.30pm:** Story of photographer & model Lee Miller who became a war correspondent. Includes a photo of Miller herself posing defiantly in Hitler's private bathtub.

**British & Irish Film Festival films 7.15pm sessions:** **Chuck Chuck Baby (Thu)** A film of love, loss and music set in a chicken factory; **Tarrac (Fri)** Drama set on the coastlines of Kerry in the tough world of Naomhóg racing; **The Return (Sat)** Gritty retelling of Odysseus' return home from war; **Lies We Tell (Tue)** A chilling and atmospheric gothic tour de force; **Merchant Ivory (Wed)** First definitive doco about the producer & director of Howards End and The Remains of the Day.

**4pm sessions:** **Howards End (Sat)** Dazzling adaptation of E.M. Forster's novel. Starring: Anthony Hopkins, Vanessa Redgrave, Helena Bonham Carter, Emma Thompson; **Remains of the Day (Sun)** Follows head butler Stevens (Anthony Hopkins), whose world of manners & decorum is tested by the arrival of housekeeper Miss Kenton (Emma Thompson)

**GBD**

Spring Hours:  
 Closed Monday  
 Tues-Fri: 12pm to 8pm  
 Sat: 9am - 8pm  
 Sun: 12pm to 8pm

**Sunday Lunch ROASTS**  
 (bookings essential)  
 plus full a la carte available

GBD is running a weekly quiz  
 Every Tuesday from 6.30pm

**Qwizard**

**Thursday Cocktails**  
 \$10  
 5-8pm

700 Pollen St, Thames - Phone 868 6008 - [f](https://www.facebook.com/GBDThamesLtd) GBDThamesLtd



Adrienne Lockwood with her winning mixed media piece of Coffey's Creek. Photos: SUPPLIED

## ARTWaikino showcase

The ARTWaikino art exhibition was held in Waikino's Victoria Hall on Labour Weekend, and organisers said it was a great success.

More than \$6000 was raised and 37 artworks sold at the three-day event, which saw artists from across the district and further afield compete for prizes in several categories, including painting, mixed media, sculpture, craft and photography. There were also special awards for young artists, best use of recycled material, and people's choice. The funds raised will go towards the upkeep of the hall.

"It's the highest number of art pieces we've sold since pre-Covid - we only have sales records from 2018," committee member Sarah Holmes said "The level of skill involved in the entries this year was great, and many people commented how wonderful the event was."

"It was awesome to have so much support from local businesses, especially when business is hard at the moment. We're proud to have put on this event for the benefit of artists and the community and hope to have a great 25th year next year."



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: First prize in the painting category went to Heather Stuart with her untitled oil painting. The winning sculpture, Hawk, was constructed by Les Hughes. The people's choice winner, Storm brewing lake - Wakatipu by Gavin Smith. Wendy Henderson won the reuse category with Tea in a pinstripe suit.







**DIRECT CREMATION within 15kms of Thames: \$3100.00**  
**DIRECT CREMATION requiring transfer from Whangamata, Tairua, Whitianga, Waihi, Paeroa, Ngatea and Coromandel: \$3345.00**  
**DIRECT CREMATION requiring transfer from North of Coromandel or Waikato Hospital: \$3445.00**  
**Outside all of these areas: \$3445.00 plus mileage**

SUPPORT LOCAL

For additional information please refer to Twentymans website: [twentymans.co.nz](http://twentymans.co.nz) CONTACT: 07 868 6003

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



Please advise your Vet of your wish to use Forever Pets Crematorium



Visit the website: [foreverpets.co.nz](http://foreverpets.co.nz) for further information.

CONTACT: Forever Pets 07 868 6003.

We guarantee the ashes you get back belong to your pet and only your pet.

SUPPORT LOCAL



# SUDOKU

176

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

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

EASY

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

MEDIUM

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

HARD

176

HARD

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

MEDIUM

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

EASY

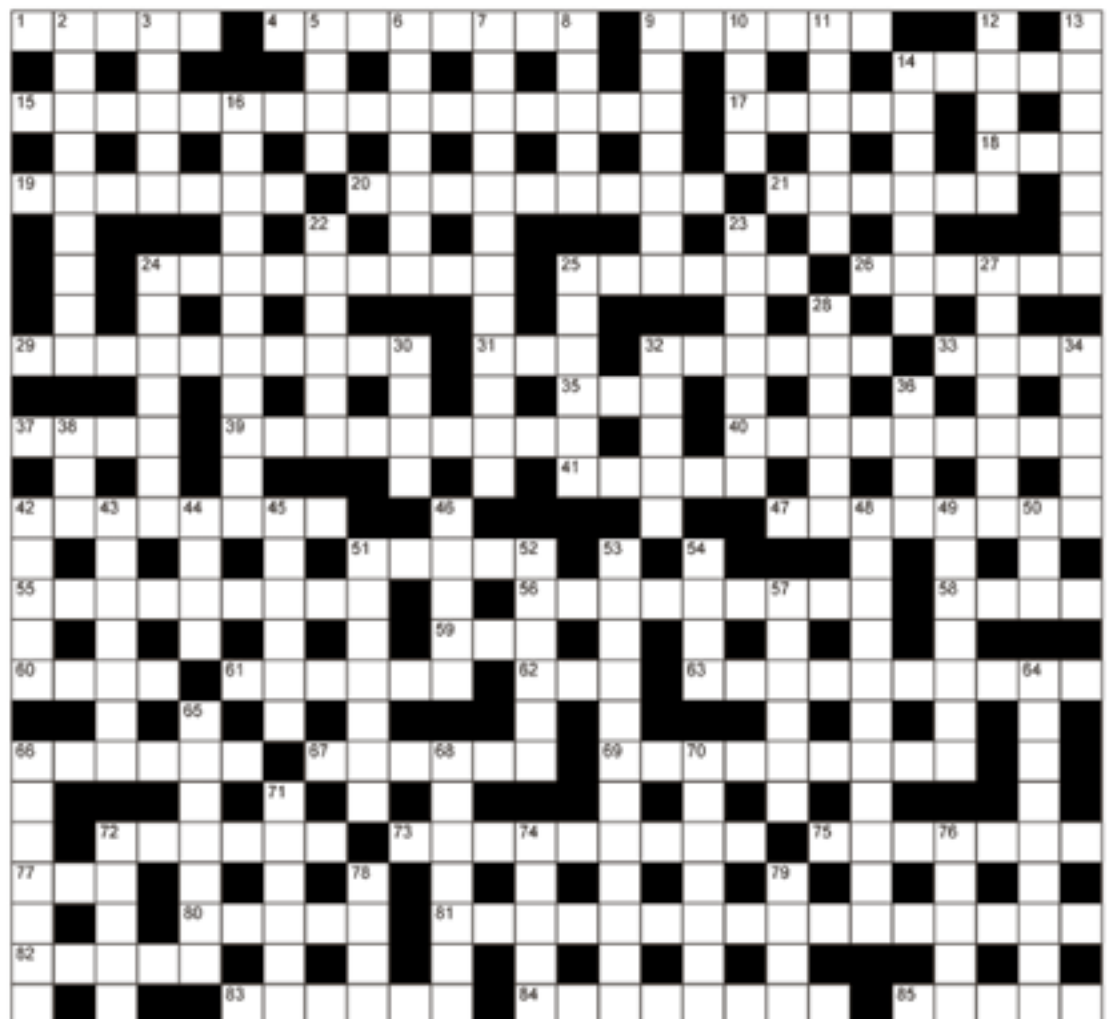
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2	6	5	1	3	9	4	8	7

Puzzles © The Puzzle Company  
www.thepuzzlecompany.co.nz

# JUMBO CROSSWORD

196

- ACROSS**
- 1 Time-teller (5)
  - 4 Enjoyable (8)
  - 9 In arrears (6)
  - 14 Slightly drunk (5)
  - 15 Wildly improbable yarn (4,3,4,5)
  - 17 Smoked roll (5)
  - 18 Slice (3)
  - 19 Exceptionally large (7)
  - 20 Fight initiator (9)
  - 21 Be killed (6)
  - 24 City in Spain (9)
  - 25 Send back (6)
  - 26 Inform (6)
  - 29 Brewer's craft (4-6)
  - 31 Tree (3)
  - 32 Educate (6)
  - 33 Chew on (4)
  - 35 Watch (3)
  - 37 Garden lake (4)
  - 39 Knocked loose (9)
  - 40 Tiredness (anag)(9)
  - 41 Capitulate (5)
  - 42 Mountaineers (8)
  - 47 US state (8)
  - 51 Freight (5)
  - 55 Baton waver (9)
  - 56 WWII leader (9)
  - 58 Match (4)
  - 59 Go hard (3)
  - 60 Consumes (4)
  - 61 Loud explosive sound (6)
  - 62 Donkey (3)
  - 63 Burdened (10)
  - 66 Up-to-date (6)
  - 67 Middle (6)
  - 69 15th-century Dutch painter (9)
  - 72 Fitted with glass (6)
  - 73 Flame-resistant (9)
  - 75 Young tree (7)
  - 77 Small piercing tool (3)
  - 80 Vegetable (5)
  - 81 Mean, cruel person (5,5,2,4)
  - 82 Discover (5)
  - 83 Be at (6)
  - 84 Coming into view (8)
  - 85 Upright (5)
  - DOWN**
  - 2 Dead ringer (9)
  - 3 Baked items (5)
  - 5 Ear part (4)
  - 6 Briskly (mus) (7)
  - 7 Absolutely certain (2,4,2,4)
  - 8 Implements (5)
  - 9 Refuse to do business with (7)
  - 10 Chop at (4)
  - 11 Lump of gold (6)
  - 12 Era (5)
  - 13 Baffle (7)
  - 14 Double-crosser (7)
  - 16 Don't ever give up (5,3,3)
  - 22 Mental giant (6)
  - 23 Fruit farm (7)
  - 24 Tedium (7)
  - 25 Cure (6)
  - 27 Batting spell (7)
  - 28 Water-diviner (6)
  - 30 Praiseworthy (4)
  - 32 Waste drain (5)
  - 34 Stinging insects (5)
  - 36 Thought (4)
  - 38 Night bird (3)
  - 42 Revolution (5)
  - 43 Set alight (7)
  - 44 Boxing match (4)
  - 45 Decayed (6)
  - 46 Faith (5)
  - 48 Mountain in Tanzania (11)
  - 49 Lack of due care and attention (7)
  - 50 Intention (3)
  - 51 Bent (7)
  - 52 Eight-note interval (6)
  - 53 Childhood verse (7,5)
  - 54 Throb painfully (4)
  - 57 Brings upon oneself (6)
  - 64 Oddball (9)
  - 65 Senator (anag)(7)
  - 66 Handcuff (7)
  - 68 Diluted (7)
  - 70 Anchorage (7)
  - 71 Fight against (6)
  - 72 Shine (5)
  - 74 Happen afterwards (5)
  - 76 Let down (5)
  - 78 Long ago (4)
  - 79 Religious image (4)



**PREVIOUS SOLUTION**

ACROSS: 1 Block, 4 Come down to earth, 14 Droop, 15 Extra, 16 Dermatitis, 17 Drive, 19 New, 20 Prudent, 21 Islanders, 22 Rising, 25 Sightseer, 27 Tiered, 28 Biting, 33 Proficient, 35 Ebb, 36 Moscow, 37 Scum, 39 Ape, 41 Macabre, 42 Picnic, 43 Sharpened, 44 Cadet, 45 Deceased, 50 Po, 51 Farewell, 55 Tango, 58 Racehorse, 59 Origin, 60 Sultana, 61 End, 63 Exit, 64 Thorax, 65 Let, 66 Knighthood, 68 Theory, 69 Campus, 71 Sorcerers, 76 Chilly, 77 Stammered, 79 Affront, 81 Tar, 84 Aroma, 85 Incredible, 86 Opium, 87 Creel, 88 Stick to one's guns, 89 Adder.

DOWN: 2 Luxury, 3 Cured, 5 Open, 6 En masse, 7 Outlay, 8 Noted, 9 Observe, 10 Aide, 11 Trivia, 12 Young, 13 Upswing, 14 Deficit, 18 On the cards, 23 Ashes, 24 Persist, 26 Inflate, 27 Tobacco, 29 Incense, 30 Grease, 31 Jeans, 32 Sonata, 34 Twin, 36 Mends, 38 Medal, 40 Apse, 45 Dirge, 46 Cocaine, 47 Ache, 48 Earthy, 49 Index, 50 Poodles, 52 Rough draft, 53 Watcher, 54 London, 55 Tear gas, 56 Ditty, 57 Link, 62 Circa, 67 Arrival, 68 Tactics, 70 Patriot, 72 Opening, 73 Almost, 74 Delete, 75 Endure, 76 Cruel, 78 Macho, 80 Rapid, 82 Talc, 83 Plan.



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As we move into the spring, no doubt farmers are thinking about their soil health and fertility. Understanding the benefits of putting lime on their land is becoming critical to farming, Bryce believes.



Owner Bryce Manderson. Photo: SUPPLIED

Lack of liming has major detrimental effects on soil structure, soil biology and the availability of soil nutrients to the plant.

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## Death Notices

**HARROD, Aileen Desma:**  
 Passed away peacefully on 4th November, 2024; aged 89 years. Dearly loved wife and best friend of the late Brick. Much loved Mum of Maree and Brett, Ian and Deb. Cherished Nan of John, Tiana, Mereana, Courtney, Ben and Brittany, and great-grandmother of John, Blake, Jai and Leah. A celebration of Desma's life will be held in the Grahamstown Chapel, 102 Kirkwood Street, Thames on Friday 15th November at 11am, followed by interment at Totara Memorial Park Cemetery. Messages to: 72 Mountain Road, Western Heights, Rotorua 3015.



**NICHOLLS, Mary Ellen:**  
 Peacefully in Thames on Saturday 9th November; aged 92 years. Loved mother of Cheryl, David (deceased), Lindsay and Christine. Honouring Mary's wishes a private cremation has been held



**ROBINSON, Lois Rae:**  
 Passed away peacefully on November 10th surrounded by her loving family. Much loved Mum of Graham and mother-in-law to Geraldine. Best grandmother to Lenita, Andrew, Kate and husband Buzz. Great grandmother to Riley, Tahliah, Mia and Korra. A life well lived. She will leave a huge gap in the lives of so many who loved her.

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## Public Notice

### PAPER DELIVERIES

Although we endeavour to deliver our paper to everyone, sometimes we just cannot achieve this. If you are one of the few who does not receive your weekly paper, please note they are available here:  
**NGATEA** - Ngatea 4 Square, HDC Council Offices, Ngatea Post Shop, Z Petrol Station, Ngatea Purple Dairy  
**PAEROA** - Moores Caltex, Countdown, HDC Council offices, Takenote, Paeroa 4 Square, Paeroa Information Hub  
**WAIHI** - Maybelle Superette, New World, Toyworld/ Takenote, Information Centre, Daffodil Dairy, Waihi Supervalve  
**THAMES** - Totara Veggie Shop, Mobil Kopu, Gull Service Station, Martina 4 Square, Bin Inn, Tararu Dairy, Queen St Mobil, Goldfields Mall, Pak'N'Save, Paper Power, Thames 4 Square, Carson's Bookshop, Thames Council Offices, Kauaeranga Store  
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# Social fundraiser held at Tapu community hall

Tapu Hall was alight with laughter, music and conversation last month when the community gathered for a Country and Western Social.

Reminiscent of years past when dances and socials were a common event, old friends, neighbours and acquaintances from up and down the Thames Coast gathered to enjoy each others' company in an "old-fashioned" fun evening.

At least one Dolly Parton and a Freisen cow gallivanted on the dance floor amidst the cowboys and cowgirls (the \$2 shops in town must have done a roaring business selling cowboy hats).

Jeans and boots were the order of the day for more than 150 people who attended the hugely successful event.

"I remember the summer dances as a teenager", "This is where I had my 21st", "I met my husband here", were some of the comments from the oldies.

From those who could not remember the days when Tapu Hall was the centre of social fun, the comments were: "We should do this more often".

The live music provided by musicians who travelled up from Te Awamutu and Otorohanga was easy to dance to and even easier to sing along with as it was mostly familiar tunes and old favourites.

Everyone soon forgot their shyness and the dance floor was filled the whole night.

The spacious hall easily accommodated everyone, and when a breath of fresh air was needed, tables were set out in the big landscaped garden out the back.

And it wouldn't be a community social without a "please bring a plate" supper and raffle.

The tables laden with food stretched the entire length of the hall – sausage rolls, pizza, club sandwiches, savoury eggs, chicken wings, lamingtons, pecan pie, chocolate cake, lemon slice and more.

When the balloon dropped from the ceiling it was as if everyone once again was at a child's birthday party with 37 prize tickets to be found once they were all popped.

The organising team, led by Colleen Flavell – who has lived on the Thames Coast her whole life – did a solid job of promoting the event, with tickets virtually sold out immediately, decorating the hall and making sure everyone had an enjoyable night.

The tickets were priced to cover expenses with anything leftover going to the Community Response (Civil Defence) Group, which has its hub at Tapu Hall and is organised by Tapu Hall Board Chair, Barrie Russek (who happens also to be Colleen's younger brother) and the Thames Coast Sports group.

The final accounting after expenses, which included donations from people who could not attend, came in at \$2000. This is an unexpectedly high total and the organisers want to say a big thank you to the community for their support.

The organising team for the Country Western Social was mostly made up of Thames Coast Sport pickleballers who play every Wednesday alternatively at

Tapu Hall and Te Puru Hall, and hope to use their share of the funds to buy new nets and paddles.

Anyone who would like to join this friendly group is encouraged to come along on a Wednesday at 1pm.

- By Kathryn Reed



Tables were laden with food. BELOW: The hall was packed for the Country Western social fundraiser. Photos: SUPPLIED



## Free meditation workshop to be held

A free introductory meditation workshop is being held at the Grahamstown Community Centre on November 22. Meditation instructor and author Prachar Stegemann from Canberra is the guest speaker. Stegemann spent many years developing his own practice under the tutelage of the late Indian master Sri Chinmoy. The inspirational one evening workshop will include guided meditations, the use of mantra, an overview of the different paths of yoga, lifestyle recommendations supporting meditation, and essential steps needed in developing a successful practice. Simply turn up on the evening, or register by text to: 022 188 7432. November 22, 7pm at 760 Pollen St, Thames. All welcome, admission free.



Prachar Stegemann

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## CLASSIFIEDS - Deadline 12noon Monday

### Public Notices

#### Temporary Road Closure

Pursuant to the Section 11(e) of the Tenth Schedule of the Local Government Act 1974, notice is hereby given that for the purpose of a Motorsport Rally Tarmac Sprint event, the following road will be closed to ordinary vehicular traffic for the period indicated below. During the period of closure provision will be made for ordinary vehicular traffic, which would otherwise use the road, to use alternative routes.

**Period of closure:** Sunday 17 November 2024, 8.00am to 6.00pm.

**Road to be closed:** Golden Cross Road, WAIKINO (RP 5.345 – 5.524).

Alternative provision for ordinary vehicular traffic will be made with signs, cones and barriers to redirect traffic on detour.

It will be an offence under the above regulations for any person otherwise than under authority of an authorised permit to use the road for ordinary vehicular traffic during the period of closure.

David Speirs  
Chief Executive  
Hauraki District Council

### Public Notices

**Thames Museum Society Inc**  
Special General Meeting  
To ratify our revised Constitution as required by current Incorporated Society regulations.  
**Thames Museum**  
**Te Whare Taonga o te Kauaeranga**  
**1.30 pm Saturday 23rd November**  
Enquiries 07 868 8509

**2024 A.G.M**  
Monday 18th November  
6pm  
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Election of Officers & Committee  
General Business  
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**Hui ā-Tau**  
**Annual General Meeting**  
**Friday 6th December 2024,**  
**10:00am Whare Āwhina,**  
**Te Korowai Hauraki o Hauraki,**  
**210 Richmond Street, Thames**

**Agenda**

- Whakatau | Welcome
- Ngā Whakapahā | Apologies
- Ngā Minitī hei Whakāāe | Minutes of the Last Meeting
- Ngā Rīmīti | Standing Items
  - Te Rīpoata o te Tiamana | Chairperson's Report
  - Te Rīpoata o te Manukura Hauora | CEO Report
  - Ngā Rīpoata Pūtea | Financial Report
- Te Pōtītanga o Nga Kaitiaki | Appointment of Executive Committee Members (elected roles)
  - Confirmation of Scrutineers
  - Nominee Presentations
  - Nomination and Election of Executive Committee Members
  - Election Results
- Ko Ngā Kaupapa Tūmatawhānui | General Business
- Whakakapi te Hui | Close of AGM

Refreshments will be served after the meeting.

For rules of Te Korowai Hauraki o Hauraki Incorporated, please go to our website [www.korowai.co.nz](http://www.korowai.co.nz) or contact Fiona Wasiolek 0508 835 676 or 021 902 461.  
Nō reira koutou mā, nau mai haere mai.

**Harry Mikaere CNZM**  
**Tiamana**

### 2023-2024 OHINEMURI CLUB INC AGM AGENDA

Notice is hereby given that the 106th Annual General Meeting of the Members of the Ohinemuri Club (Inc) will be held at the Club premises on

Sunday November 24th 2024 at 1pm.  
**Please contact the club ph: 07 8627987**  
**e: [ohinemuriclub@xtra.co.nz](mailto:ohinemuriclub@xtra.co.nz)**  
**for further information**

### CAPS HAURAKI INC.

The Annual General Meeting of CAPS Hauraki Inc. Will be held on:

Tuesday, 17th December 2024 at 7.00 pm,

At the CAPS Hauraki Office, 301 Pollen Street, Thames.

**Please RSVP by the 10th December 2024 to:**  
**Phone: 07 868 8644 or**  
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# When the child follows us into adulthood

OPINION

By MICHAEL WILKES



My dad was generally a good bloke—gentle, generous, and full of heart.

He loved a good adventure, rough and tumble, and

was always up for some fun.

My formative years with him were pretty special. But everything changed when I was 13.

He got hit by a car that didn't see him coming. He broke three limbs and suf-

fered a head injury that turned our lives upside down. From that day, he lived in a cloud of frustration.

The fitter-turner engineer I knew struggled with the simplest of tasks, and his personality shifted overnight.

The kind and gentle man I adored became a short-tempered bloke who felt everyone was out to take advantage of him. At 13, I didn't grasp the full picture.

I just knew my dad was different, and I didn't like this new version one bit.

I fought and argued, snuck out of the house, made life difficult for my siblings, and dealt with bouts of depression.

I blamed my dad for everything and harboured a lot of resentment.

Funny enough, even as I grew up and learned the value of helping and serving others, my feelings towards my dad didn't change.

Then one day, everything flipped.

I was at a prep camp for a church mission trip, where we helped struggling communities overseas. My dad came to help with the cooking, and as I looked at him, I tried to put myself in his shoes. In that moment, my childhood perspective shifted.

I started to weep and went to my dad, both to forgive him and to seek forgiveness myself.

From that day on, I was able to celebrate the traits in me that reflected my

dad and support him as he battled deeper struggles due to his condition.

It serves as a reminder: sometimes, confronting those deep hurts is worth it.

Step back into the past as an adult, and maybe, just maybe, you'll see things from a different angle that frees you from some pain.

*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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3 1 1 3

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**View** by appointment  
**Glenn Tanner** 027 486 2399  
 glenn.tanner@bayleys.co.nz  
**Maddy Aislabie** 027 780 4389  
 maddy.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz  
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 & 11-11.30am Sun 24 Nov or by appointment  
**Josh Smith** 027 229 8865  
 josh.smith@bayleys.co.nz  
**Karl Davis** 027 496 4633 karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz  
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**Ngatea** 55 Puhunga Island Road South

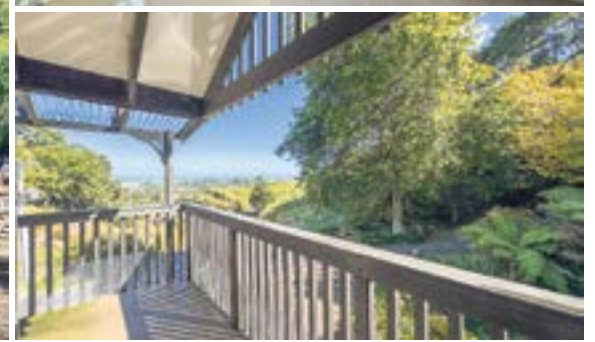
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**Karl Davis** 0508 83 83 83  
 karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz  
**Sam Aislabie** 027 429 5410  
 sam.aislabie@bayleys.co.nz  
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**Karangahake** 113 Aorangi Road

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2,634<sub>sqm</sub> 3 1

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**Karl Davis** 027 496 4633 karl.davis@bayleys.co.nz  
**Seth Roe** 027 320 6937 seth.roe@bayleys.co.nz  
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SPORTS

# A hop, jump and skip to the world stage

By DAVIDDA HIKATANGATA

One thing that motivates Sacha Willetts in her jump-rope skipping is to watch athletes who are at “the top of the game”.

But the 40-year-old jump roper is on the brink of her own significant journey, preparing for the chance at an international title at the World Jump Rope Championships next year in Japan.

The Thames woman told *The Profile* she always pushed herself to do things she shouldn't be able to do after joining the sport “so late” and “being the age I am”.

“And I think that has helped me get better because I've always tried to do stuff that is out of my league.”

However, the Thames athlete's recent competition results proved she was doing something right. Sacha competed at the Australian Rope Skipping Championships in Canberra from September 27 to 30 and medalled in five out of seven events. But that's not all. The jump roper also managed to clinch the win and claim gold in the Masters Freestyle category, which Sacha said was “my specialty”.

“It's the thing I feel most comfortable in.”

The Masters Freestyle category consists of a 75 second routine, put to music, with all the best tricks the skipper can dish out.

Sacha said she made a “fairly big mistake” because her rope got caught and took a few seconds to recover from it. “I lost the time there where I had to kind of adjust in my head.”

There were certain skills that needed to be executed in the routine so Sacha said she had to think quickly to make sure she covered all of the elements. While it didn't stop her from sweeping up the win, “I felt like I could have done better”, she said. “But I am very hard on myself.”

Something Sacha believed set her apart



Sacha Willetts skips her way to gold at the Australian Rope Skipping Championships.

Photo: SUPPLIED

from the others was her multiples or triples skills, which is when the rope is rotated around the body three times in a single jump, she said.

But something else happened during the final day of the competition.

Sacha, who is also the president of Skipping New Zealand, said New Zealand

gained membership into the International Jump Rope Union (IJRU) and was officially welcomed by one of the Board of Directors and the Executive Vice President.

The IJRU was the global body for the sport and now New Zealand was a member, “it opened doors to the World Champs”, she said.

It meant Sacha's first place victory in the Masters Freestyle event secured her a spot to compete and “make history” as the first New Zealand competitor at the World Jump Rope Championships in Japan in 2025.

She also placed second in the endurance speed and 30 second speed sprint categories, which meant she could compete in those events too, she said. “I just want to go out there and have fun, really, and not sort of worry about how well I do.”

Even though the Thames jump roper achieved a gold medal and a spot on the 2025 world stage - she was hesitant at first to take part. “I didn't want to compete and I was terrified to be honest.”

But Sacha said she could see what the sport could be for New Zealand kids.

“I had to go into competitions to learn more so that I can bring it home and, you know, introduce it to more kids.”

Sacha was helping to grow the sport in New Zealand by running skipping classes for kids in Thames at the Jack McLean Centre during the school terms.

And thanks to the Rotary Club of Thames, which gave Sacha a \$1000 grant towards the classes - not only would kids be provided with new equipment, the hall hireage would also be covered so classes could be free for local tamariki, she said.

But the “number one” thing in the sport, according to Sacha, was fun.

“That should always be the number one, right? That should be the focus, first of all.”

And secondly, “just give it a go”, she said.

Sacha's classes for kids were very casual and fun - “there's no pressure”, she said.

“You just don't know what you're capable of until you give it a go.”

**DETAILS:** For more information about Sacha's skipping classes, visit [www.sachaskips.com](http://www.sachaskips.com) and to follow Sacha's skipping journey, follow her on instagram: [@sachaskips](https://www.instagram.com/sachaskips).

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