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Three Ōtaki residents honoured

BY FRANK NEILL

Three Ōtaki residents – Peter Housiaux, Rod Graham and Di Buchan – have been recognised in the 2023 King’s Birthday Honours. All three have been awarded the Queen’s Service Medal (QSM). Peter received his award for services to surf lifesaving and canoe polo. Rod was awarded for services to the community. Di received the QSM for services to the community and the environment.

Saving lives and keeping people safe for more than 50 years has resulted in well-known Ōtaki resident Peter Housiaux being awarded a QSM. Peter joined the Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club in 1972, qualifying as a life guard when he was 13 years old.

His father was involved in surf lifesaving, and Peter followed in his footsteps.

During that time there have been many highlights, he says.

“Still being involved and watching how the club has grown over the years is one highlight,” he says.

The club has now reached a very high level of performance.

That was recognised in June when the Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club was named Surf Lifesaving’s Capital Coast district club of the year.

That award was “very significant for the club,” Peter says.

One of the most memorable saves “was probably when my dad, who has now passed away, and I pulled two people from [the sea] near the boat ramp.

“They were two very lucky to survive people.

“They had got caught in a rip and both were in trouble, and we were alerted by a member of the public.”

Peter was surprised when he found out he would be receiving a QSM in the King’s Birthday Honours.

“It was a bit out of the blue,” he says.

“It was not something I would expect to get.

“In my mind there are a lot of people around who would deserve it just as much as I would, and even more.”

Peter has served on the Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club’s committee for more than 40 years and has also served as a lifesaving coach and mentor.

During that time he has coached many of Ōtaki Beach’s young potential lifeguards to win regional and national awards and competitions.

He has been patrol captain for more than 20

Peter Housiaux, QSM, honoured for saving lives



years and in that time has been involved in numerous rescues at Ōtaki Beach.

Peter has had a major involvement with Canoe Polo for more than 30 years.

He formed the Ōtaki Canoe Polo Club in 1987.

The highlight of his time with Canoe Polo “would have to be winning the world title as coach of the [New Zealand] women’s team.”

The team won gold at the 2016 Canoe Polo World Championships.

“That was the first ever world Canoe Polo title for New Zealand,” Peter notes.

His long involvement with the sport has seen Peter in three roles: as a player; as a supporter; and as a coach, including coaching at both national and international levels.

Among the many awards Peter has received,

he was awarded the New Zealand Canoe Polo medal in 2008.

He has also been recognised with Surf Club and regional service awards and distinguished service awards.

Peter and his wife Ann-Marie established Concrete Doctors, located in Rimu Street, around 30 years ago.

The company has grown over the years, moving from just Peter and his wife to a firm that now employs 25 people – all local.

Concrete Doctors is a significant sponsor of community organisations in Ōtaki, including the Ōtaki Volunteer Fire Brigade, the Ōtaki Players Society, the Friends of the Ōtaki River, the Rāhui Rugby Club, Whiti te Rā Rugby League Club and the Ōtaki Sports Club.

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**Matariki Ramaroa at
Ōtaki College**
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Di Buchan: Much needs doing for the environment

BY FRANK NEILL

Both the environment and history “are really important to me,” says Di Buchan, who was awarded the QSM for services to the community and the environment.

“There is an awful lot that needs to be done in the environmental space,” she says.

“I think people are now finally waking up to climate change as an issue.

“Once you get over that tipping point things go down faster and faster.

“We have to do everything we can to try and pull things back and turn it around.

“That’s why I established the Environment Trust.”

This trust helps landowners who want to adopt more environmentally sustainable practices.

One aspect that may work positively for the environment and for climate change is initiatives by young people.

“I am so impressed with the young people coming through today. There are so many great young people coming through,” Di says.

Her environmental work has not been just locally, it has also crossed the Tasman Sea. She has served as vice-president of the Environmental Institute of Australia and New Zealand for six years.

Di is currently co-chair of the working group established to integrate indigenous environmental knowledge into mainstream environmental practice.

She is also a trustee of the Whakahiko–Energise Ōtaki Trust Board.

Energise Ōtaki also has a strong environmental focus, as it has been established to make the town self-sufficient in energy through a range of initiatives, including a solar farm.

She is, she says, “feeling very excited about my involvement with Energise Ōtaki.

“They have asked me to take on a project

involving tree planting for carbon sequestration, which I’m just about to get into.

“Energise Ōtaki is a truly impressive organisation.

“I can’t get over how many smart and talented people live in this town,” she says. History “is definitely another passion.

“I love reading history. My favourite page in the *Ōtaki Mail* is the Ōtaki Historical Society page,” she says.

“I think kids these days need to know what price their ancestors paid for them to be where they are today, and they learn that by reading history.”

It was at a historical society meeting that she first started thinking about the Ōtaki Children’s Health Camp and its rotundas.

“I thought ‘we need to have a record of this’.

“I started interviewing people about their experiences ... and put an item in the *Ōtaki Mail* saying I wanted to hear people’s stories. Fifty people replied.

“That’s how the book [her book about the camp called *Sun, Sea and Sustenance*] evolved. I didn’t intend it to be a book.

“That beautiful rotunda building kept catching my eye.

“It was good that I knew Jock Phillips and I talked to him about an organisation to save the rotunda.”

They called a public meeting, and out of that came the Friends of the Ōtaki Rotunda, which she chairs.

Di started her volunteer service as president of the Whangārei branch of the Women’s Electoral Lobby.

After moving to Wellington she set up the Riddiford Street Project, which revitalised the Newtown shopping area, and served on the Wellington Civic Trust for 10 years, seven years as its chair.



above: Di Buchan, QSM

What to do when buying a house

BY FLEUR HOBSON

Sponsored content

Buying a house, unit or apartment will be the biggest purchase many of us will ever make.

It can be very exciting and rewarding, if all goes well. To help make sure all does go well, there are a number of steps well worth taking.

One is to check the property carefully before you buy.

Is this really the home you want? Is the seller or their real estate agent aware of any problems?

What do the neighbours think? They may be able to give you information the real estate agent doesn’t have about the property, and also about the neighbourhood.

Checking a property also includes going to the council to get a LIM report. A LIM report can give you information about a lot of things, such as whether there is any building work that does not have proper consent, or whether there has been pollution of the land, to name just two things.

Getting a builder’s report on the property is also an excellent idea. That can alert you to any issues, such as structural soundness or moisture problems.

The seller or their real estate agent may provide you with a builder’s report. You should be careful about relying on that report. It’s a good idea, therefore, to first get legal advice about the risks of that.

And that leads on to the most important thing, which is to get good legal advice.

You should get a good lawyer lined up when you’ve found a house you think you’d like to buy.

Your lawyer will be able to advise you

before you sign anything. If a seller or a real estate agent puts something in front of you to sign, tell them you will take it to your lawyer.

Your lawyer can advise you about negotiating and on the sale and purchase agreement. They can check the paperwork, such as the Certificate of Title. They can also advise you on ways you can deal with issues that a builder’s report may raise and on any other issue that may arise.

Receiving information about the Certificate of Title is very important. This will let you

know if there are any conditions about how you may use your property.

There may be an “easement”, which will give rights to others to use part of your property for some reason (for example, a right of way). There may be restrictions on having animals. The title may even say you can only paint your house one particular colour. Your lawyer will be able to tell you what the Certificate of Title says.

This article gives you some of the key things to consider when buying. The Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment has

a more extensive checklist to help home buyers make informed decisions. It is at <https://www.building.govt.nz/getting-started/your-rights-and-obligations/homeowner-rights-and-obligations/buying-a-house/>.

This checklist makes it clear that getting good legal advice is very important when buying a property.

For expert advice, whatever your issue, contact Fleur, Susie or Freya at Hobson Mills Law, 364 7190, 282 Mill Road – opposite Farmlands.

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First bilingual school a highlight for Rod Graham

BY FRANK NEILL

One of the highlights of Rod Graham’s career was being part of the team that saw St Peter Chanel kura become the first bilingual school in Ōtaki, he says.

He was Deputy Principal at St Peter Chanel at the time, and worked with Sister Marie Roach and local people to make the school bilingual.

“It was the local people themselves that had been waiting a long time to have the language recognised,” he says.

“Bascially it was their story and I was honoured to be part of it.

“My motivation was along the lines of justice. The people gave the land for the church and the school.

“It was just a matter of justice that the language [te reo Māori] should be available to their children,” Rod says.

“It really opened the way, and after St Peter Chanel became bilingual you had schools like Te Rito [Te Kura Kaupapa Māori o Te Rito] being established and that was a really positive move,” Rod says.

Rod’s education career began at Wellington Teachers’ College in 1968.

After graduating from teachers’ college Rod was posted to Takapau School in the Hawke’s Bay.

While at Takapau, his enthusiasm for the arts saw him be part of a team that set up an arts centre in an old billiards saloon that had been empty for some time.

He then taught Form 1 and 2 (now years 7 and) at Ōtaki School for a year.

The following year, the year 7 and 8 classes were moved from Ōtaki School to Ōtaki College, and Rod moved along with them. He was keen on setting up clay modelling

for the students, as “working with clay no-one fails.

“When I became a Christian my motivation was to see people succeed. When you find out what a person’s passion or niche is – whatever gets them out of bed in the morning – then you can help them to flourish.”

For many of the students, that passion was for the arts.

At the same time he began looking for people in the community who were working with clay, another of Rod’s passions.

“We got a kiln in the classroom and we had Saturday morning workshops.”

The Saturday morning workshops continued until 1989 when a teacher arrived at the college who didn’t want the kiln in the art room, because it was giving off fumes and because the clay was dusty and messy.

“I got a group of people together to form a club together – the Ōtaki Pottery Club.

“We got money from the Education Department so that were could put a building up.”

After being located at the College for 30 years, the pottery club was expanding to the point where it needed bigger premises, so it moved to its present site at the Ōtaki Racecourse.

“The racecourse had a building they were keen to rent and it came at just the right time.

“We have to give Caitlin Taylor the credit for that. She was the person who arranged the move to the racecourse, and she’s the current president of the pottery club.

“I was president for 22 years from 1999.”

During his time with the pottery club, Rod

has encouraged the arts through projects such as “Clay in Schools”, the Festival of Pots and Garden Art, the Matariki Star Glaze Festival and community raku firings.

Rod has been chair of the Cobwebs Community Trust since 1989. This charity works to support people in hardship.

“One of the highlights for me in the Cobwebs Trust is doing the breakfasts.”

Having retired from Ōtaki College as a resource teacher for learning, Rod found the breakfasts helped keep him in touch with kids, something he really enjoyed.

below: Rod Graham, QSM



Terisa Ngobi


MP for Ōtaki


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BY VIVIENNE BAILEY

Te Horo Hall future

Current feedback from the recent questionnaire sent out by hall committee members indicates strong interest in preserving the heritage hall although conservation strategies have yet to be confirmed (more details to follow in August Ōtaki Mail).

For those interested in the history of our community hall check out Historical Journal (Ōtaki Historical Society), 2014; v.36: p.23-25. Compiled and written by then Te Horo resident and hall stalwart, Peter Rahr, it records the social and financial history of the hall from its inception in 1914 (through the donation of land by Mrs. Tocker). Copies are available from Kāpiti Coast District libraries.

Te Horo School fundraising

Te Horo School's Home & School Committee recently opened their hall doors to a flurry of colourful patrons armed with heads of general knowledge and a sense of

fun. It was part of the year's fundraising, and the success of the event was due to an array of generous sponsors (as well as the crowd of jolly contestants).

The major fundraiser for the school, Paddy's Mart, takes place on Saturday 9 September. This year the winner of the traditional (and popular) Cow Pat Bingo wins a \$500 cash prize. More information to follow in next month's Ōtaki Mail.

Matariki High Tea

Ruth Pretty Catering will celebrate the start of the Māori New Year by hosting a delicious Sunday High Tea on Sunday 16 July in the Garden Room. There are two sittings: 11.00am to 12.30pm and 1.30pm to 3.00pm <https://www.ruthpretty.co.nz>

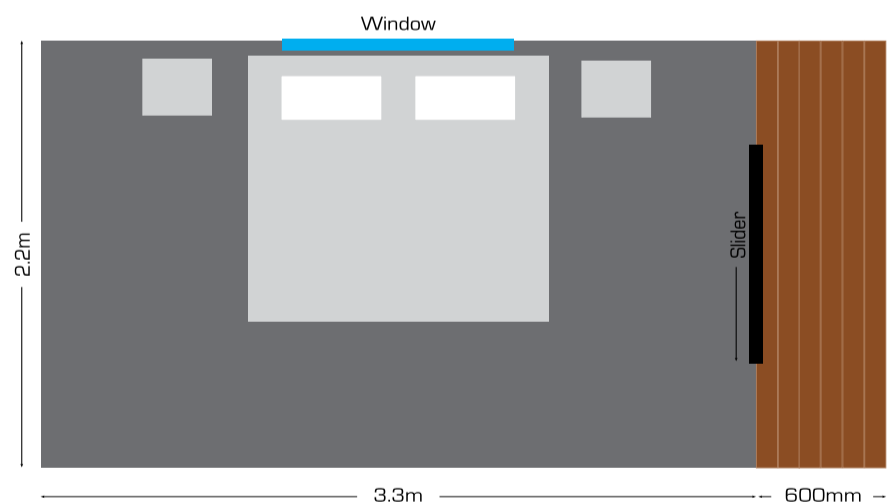
The Garden Room is a popular stopping-off point for local cyclists in search of a warming coffee. To combat the overflow of bicycles and to keep allocated car spots free, a special parking area adjacent to the Garden Room is being cleared for future use.



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Taking Ōtaki's pulse

And the good news is...

BY ANN CHAPMAN

Prescription charges have been dropped. You will no longer have to pay \$5 per item each time you visit the pharmacy for your regular drugs.

This will have profound effect on family budgets, especially for those with long-term chronic conditions like asthma and diabetes or heart disease.

There was anecdotal evidence that prescriptions were not being picked up because of the cost.

This will help the family budget and, in the long term, may help the health system as

people who cannot afford to take their prescribed medicine may need the services of the hospital.

Minister of Health Ayesha Verrall says in a media release that 'the \$5 prescription charge can be a barrier to some people getting the medicines they need, especially now when there is pressure on household budgets. Free access to medicine will also relieve pressure on the health system. Removing the co-payment charge will help reduce the demand on hospitals and other health services.'

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The Rongoā Space

BY JOANNE HAKARAIA

Rongoā of the Month WHAUWHAUPAKU

Whauwhaupaku or Houhou is an offspring of the stars Rehua (Antares in Scorpio) and Puanga (Rigel in Orion). During the months of July and August this rākau is in flower. The rākau are stirred by the rumblings of Rūaumoko the Atua of earthquakes and stimulates the rākau to burst into flower. Rūaumoko signals a change in mauri or a change in season and signifies new beginnings.

ABOUT

Whauwhaupaku (Pseudopanax arboreus) or Five-finger is a small, bushy tree with glossy green leathery toothed leaves arranged in fans of 5 (up to 7) leaflets that radiate from a central stalk. They have large clusters of tiny flowers from July to September with nectar that attracts birds such as Tui, Hihi, Tauhou and Kāka. The rākau are wonderful for bees because they provide abundant pollen and copious, rich nectar very early in the season when few other species are in flower. Flowers in purple fragrant clusters during winter with inside flowers in limegreen white. The female trees have no petals and produce only nectar. When the nectar is in flow it makes a tasty treat for insects and birds. The male trees provide both nectar and pollen.

RONGOĀ

Externally, the juice of Whauwhaupaku can be used for cuts, burns, wounds, boils and ulcers.

Place a handful of leaves in to a pot. Bring to a boil. Boil leaves for a couple of hours making sure the leaves are always covered with water. The wairākau is ready when the leaves start to break up. Place the wairākau in a tub or vessel for bathing the wound. Alternatively, use a cloth to soak and gently rinse the affected area.

Internally, the wairākau was traditionally used for kidney and bladder issues.

The gum, called pia houhou, was used to seal and prevent leakage in vessels.

I encourage you to find Whauwhaupaku while it flowers. Check out the deep purple star clusters especially during this auspicious time. Get up early and observe Puanga to the east as it rises and make the connection between plant and planet. Observe te taiao to learn more for your own benefit. Te taiao provides us with mātauranga and can guide us.

If you have any questions or would like to learn more please feel free to pop into our new premises Rongoā Mauri, 211D Main Highway, Ōtaki. Open Fri – Sun, 10am – 3pm.



Zero Waste Ōtaki: Wood recycling update

BY JO LYNCH



When a big load of different-sized wood arrives early and then a buyer comes in shortly after and takes half of it – it’s a definite win for the volunteers who do the sorting, de-nailing and stacking. That’s what happened recently when Tony Hoskins and Tony Nightingale picked up a big load of sound timber.

We talked to Tony Hoskins, who is a busy dad, but is free during school hours and keen to make a little bit of money – but even keener to stop stuff going to the landfill:

“I’m passionate about recycling waste, any waste. Tony and I often work together repurposing old garages, which otherwise would have gone into a skip, flat packing them and then rebuilding them as the demand is there. We come to ZWŌ often, to find some sound structural timber, or some character bits of wood for other projects. Recently I built a small fale-style summerhouse for a man whose Samoan wife is ill. He wanted something that connected her to her culture, to remind her of the past, somewhere she could feel more comfortable. I felt as though I was doing something for a good cause as well.”

That’s the motivation that, of course, the organisation depends on.

During these mostly warm and sunny Wednesdays the volunteers have, as usual, been working hard to keep the site orderly – and attractive. That matters, too. So the two volunteers who are keen gardeners have been busy weeding and planting on the bund – the curved earth mound on the eastern edge of the site. And some of the new group of rangatahi have been working on an area that is being developed near the entrance. It has a picnic table and is surrounded by the pou for the organisations that contribute to ZWŌ. The rangatahi have designed and will erect their own pou. They’ve also planted a peach tree and have begun preparing the ground for more planter boxes and trees. The others have been assembling small planter boxes – ones that might be used by people with limited space but who are keen to grow some lettuces or herbs. Alan, one of the committee members, has put together pre-cut and -drilled packs and has been showing the rangatahi how to put them together.

Alan has also organised a training session

for volunteers wanting to use the chainsaw. Recently Sebastien from Stihl kindly agreed to run a session during the evening. One more health and safety box has been ticked. Supplies are always welcome. Many thanks to the Wānanga which delivered three truckloads of pile off-cuts, with the promise of more construction waste within the next couple of weeks.

And news from the very busy ZWŌ Facebook page, which continues to grow it’s reach: a rather lovely door has found a new home in Eketāhuna.

ZWŌ is open to the public every Wednesday 9.30 – 10.30 am, on the last Sunday of the month and at other times by arrangement. Phone Jane 027 2323051.



Energise Ōtaki: Healthy homes, warm people

BY EMILY MCDOWELL



above: Warm Up Ōtaki participant Dr. Aroha Spinks at her home-heating check-up, with Matt Brenin. “The whole process was just easy, and you feel really good afterwards.”

Did you know that opening doors and windows for fifteen minutes in the morning will help your home look after you and your whānau? ‘Wet’ air (damp from our breath, cooking and showering etc.) will be replaced by drier, fresh air, which is easier to heat. Warmth stored in walls and furnishings will mostly remain, and your sealed house can then heat up under the sun.

Want more tips like these, tailored to your situation?

Warm Up Ōtaki is having free heating advice sessions every Thursday in July, between 9-12pm, at Energise Ōtaki’s office on 7 Main St.

Come talk with builder and Warm Up lead Matt Brenin about how your home can be warmer and healthier, and likely cost less to heat. Got a Community Services Card (CSC) and need curtains? We can help.

Got a CSC and own your home? Matt also does free home check-ups, giving advice specific to your place, helping you get support you may be eligible for - like

highly subsidised insulation and a heat pump.

And, potentially, even making free repairs.

So many of us live in gappy, under-insulated houses. Helping our homes look after us means energy can be used differently; ours, and the stuff from the electrical sockets. Warm homes for better energy! Nau mai haere mai, all welcome.

More good energy news: 217 hours of volunteer time lead to an 85% fixing success rate for items brought in to the recent Ōtaki Repair Café. 128 items were re-energised, preventing waste, saving on the need to buy new. Ōtaki (including our projects) runs on the generosity of volunteers. Thank you for all that you do.

Thank you too to our new sponsors: New World Ōtaki is boosting Ōtaki Bike Space. Kelly & Co. are helping heat up Warm Up Ōtaki. And Winstone Aggregates are growing our new project, Ōtaki Carbon Forests.

Kapa haka success for WRM

Congratulations to Te Kura ā-iwi o Whakatapuranga Rua Mano who participated in the regional kapa haka festival for secondary schools on 23 June

and placed second overall out of 11 high schools from Wellington to Ōtaki. A vision was presented to the students at the start of term two and they had been training in the

hope of securing a spot at Nationals.

It is the first time they have had their own secondary kapa haka team and they are

extremely excited to be participating in Nelson next year at the Nationals, which only happens every two years.



Ōtaki River Estuary plantings vandalised by four-wheel drive

A month ago GWRC flood protection staff alerted local police to the damage created by a four-wheel-drive vehicle tearing through an mature stand of flax.

Days ago when revisiting the damage, it was discovered the vandals had returned to extend the track they were trying to carve through the estuary.

“For over 20 years the Friends of the Ōtaki River (FOTOR) volunteer group have

worked with Greater Wellington Regional Council to restore and re-generate the Ōtaki Estuary Key Native Eco System,” says Max Lutz, Chair of the Friends of the Ōtaki River

“It is an area that is enjoyed by so many people.”

“This reckless vandalism of the FOTOR plantings is so disappointing, for all concerned and we can only hope this

damage doesn’t happen again.”

Cr Penny Gaylor of GWRC says there are plenty of tracks in the estuary area for people to drive to their favourite spots for fishing or swimming, or whatever, but these vandals are plowing over the established flaxes in a senseless manor.

“Shame on them for their selfish, destructive behaviour,” says Penny. “We have an amazing group of volunteers who have

worked for many years to improve the natural habit of our estuary. And thanks to their work with GWRC, we have an amazing area to enjoy, and a thriving environment where birds can nest and feed.

“I’m just going to say what many others will be thinking; I bet these types who did the damage won’t be volunteering to help our community.”

below: GWRC Cr Penny Gaylor stands in the tracks to show the scale of the damage made by a 4WD that has torn a track through mature flax planting



below: the Ōtaki River estuary landscape, with Kapiti Island on the horizon



Three generations of footballers

BY FRANK NEILL

The Ōtaki Purutaitama footballers have a special, if not unique, feature they are celebrating this year – three generations of one family play together.

Wakahuia Porter, his sons Hape and Wakahuia junior and his grandson Te Haumoana (Hape’s son) all take to the field to play for Ōtaki Purutaitama.

And there are two generations of player-coaches. Hape is the player-coach of the premier Ōtaki Purutaitama team, while Wakahuia senior is the player-coach of the second division Ōtaki Puru Master Blasters.

It all began 18 years ago when Wakahuia senior, his brother-in-law Troy Cook and Daniel Clode began playing football for the Ōtaki Sports Club in the Horowhenua-Kāpiti second division.

“We had been playing for a couple of years

as a retirement plan from other sports we had been involved in,” Wakahuia senior says.

“All three played football from age five until age 14, then switched to rugby and rugby league – all having played for Whiti Te Rā, with Troy and Daniel playing at representative level.

“All three of us had also played touch rugby at rep level for Kāpiti-Horowhenua, winning the first gold medal for our region at the 1990 national tournament.”

Just as he is player-coach of the Ōtaki Puru Master Blasters, Wakahuia senior was player-coach of the gold-medal-winning team.

“Troy then played in the New South Wales Trans Tasman series where he excelled and was chosen as player of the tournament.

below: three generations of Ōtaki Purutaitama footballers (from left) Wakahuia Porter, Hape Cook-Porter, Te Hau Cook-Porter and Wakahuia Cook-Porter junior, with the possible fourth generation of footballers (from left) Takuna, Karauria, Hape, Haeata and Kimiha.



above: the original Ōtaki Purutaitama team, with two generations of the Cook and Cook-Porter family (back row from left) Tipene Roa, Hape Cook-Porter, Tyson Mathews, Hendrix Maru, Wakahuia Porter, Daniel Clode, Jaziah Lewis, Dillan Cook and Darren Cook; (front row from left) Huia Cook, Troy Cook, Kyran Cook and Awatea Cook.

“We had been playing for the local Ōtaki club team for couple years when we decided that we would like to create a Māori value based soccer team starting with our own children, as at that time I had one son and Troy had three sons keen and ready to play.

“The Purutaitama team was created within the Ōtaki Sports Club and over the years we have been proud to carry the name Purutaitama as a Māori Soccer team and more importantly to create a culture within the group which promotes core human and Māori values such as Kotahitanga – we are one energy, Whanaugatanga – we are brothers together, Pūkengaatanga – use all your skill and knowledge to the best of your ability, Rangatiratanga – self determination to challenge yourself and stand strong within yourself, and Manaakitanga – be fair, honest and hospitable, Wakahuia says. Puru Taitama, which translates as “young bulls”, references a famous waiata written by Kingi Tahiwī.

“This year represents 18 years since our

inception and, in celebration, we have been able to establish a second team.

This is particularly poignant in acknowledgement of the recent passing of our brother Troy Cook who represented all the above mentioned values.

“We called him Maaori Dona because his skill and ability to beat opponents was famous.

“He is remembered as one of our most talented Ōtaki sport legends who left us far too early.

“This has given us the drive and determination to continue to create a sporting environment that promotes positive wellbeing, which has far-reaching benefits well beyond just kicking a ball around,” Wakahuia says.

“The future looks bright with the growth nationally of our beautiful game and we welcome all wanting to engage in a positive sporting environment, Ōtaki Purutaitama – Mauri Ora.”

Mayor Holborow's report

BY JANET HOLBOROW - KĀPITI COAST DISTRICT MAYOR

Thursday's Climate and Environment Committee saw a presentation by Council's Cycleway, Walkway and Bridleway Advisory Group (CWB). This group meets every two months and provides valuable advice to Council and Waka Kotahi about the district's active transport network. Members represent users of active and micro-mobility transport throughout the Kāpiti Coast, including Ōtaki.

The opening of the new shared pathway to Ōtaki, forming part of Coast35 – 35 km of pathway spanning the district – was the culmination of a long and involved piece of work by the group as advisors to the project. It was great to see the Minister of Transport take an active interest when he announced the new trains for Ōtaki, and included a visit and walk along the pathway. The Coast35 route has already proved to have a positive impact on local businesses in Ōtaki, with the old SH1 shops packed

with cyclists on fine weekend days. It will be important as we progress the SH1 revocation works to make sure that there is adequate provision of cycle racks in the township, and that there is safe easy access for bikes along the main road. This is one area of focus for the CWB, who have already been working with the revocation team.

The CWB looks at a wide range of active transport, from recreation to commuter transport options, and advises on how we provide a district-wide and safe alternative to private motor vehicles.

With the new trains coming on stream, we need to make sure that bikes are a part of that, making sure people can get to the train safely and park their bike securely when they get there, or stow it on the train. Already the newly refurbished Capital Connection trains have a dedicated bike carriage with plenty of space for bikes.

There is also an important piece of work developing safe on-road sectors between existing off-road paths; those sectors reduce confidence, and a route is only as safe as its least-safe sector. Earlier this year I took a bike trip with members of the Ōtaki Community Board and the CWB to identify areas where biking could be made safer, and I look forward to progressing that work.

Routes that are safe for children and encouraging cycling groups to get children safely to and from school are also in focus. Ōtaki is a town with a strong culture and history of biking to and from school, and to just generally get around town. This is acknowledged by the CWB, who are working on ways to encourage this and make it safer, including bike-to-school groups.

As well as promoting the existing network, the CWB is working on finding and developing new walking and riding

opportunities. This includes the development of a proposal to create a Kāpiti Cycle Trail Network, which would link up existing trails; upgrade walking tracks into shared paths; and provide an extensive network encompassing a range of difficulties. This would have the potential to be a significant tourist attraction, and make Kāpiti a 'Trail District'. This would have the potential to further enhance the business opportunities and success that can be created by a safe and attractive cycling network.

I know in Paekākāriki, where I live, we have large numbers of people visiting on the weekends, and part of what draws them are the cycling opportunities. The same is starting to be true of Ōtaki, and it will be great to see that grow and businesses thrive as a result.

Thanks to the CWB who are doing such valuable work in so many areas of our active transport in Kāpiti.

Out and about with Shell

BY SHELLY WARWICK – ŌTAKI WARD COUNCILLOR

I had the pleasure of joining many others on 17 June for the Coastguard Ball at Southwards. It was a great evening and a great amount of fundraising for such a worthy cause. Being a coastal community we are lucky to have the coastguard who provide search-and-rescue operations, training and education, and keep our community safe at sea. Big thanks to all who contributed to the evening and those who do the volunteer work to run our Coastguard, an invaluable service to the many who recreate along our coastal playground.

There is a lot of work being done by councils, not just our own, on climate-change adaptation and planning for the predicted change ahead. We have a coastline that runs the length of the district that we need to consider in our planning and infrastructure.

Climate-change effects need to be anticipated, prioritised and planned for in the Kāpiti District. Council has established the Takutai Kāpiti project to help our

community become more aware of potential coastal hazards resulting from sea-level rise and climate change. A Coastal Adaptation Plan, with draft adaptation pathways, will be shared with communities and feedback will be sought from the public. You can go onto the website <https://takutaiKapiti.nz/> and sign up, or attend the next public information session on Saturday 1 July, 10:30am – 12:30pm, at Ōtaki Baptist Church. Your input and thoughts are needed to provide a robust plan to come back to Council for adoption. We need to hear and consider the communities' views.

With the weather getting a bit more frosty, I hope you all are keeping warm. Our very own Energise Ōtaki crew, with the help of MensShed volunteers, run a Curtain Bank for those on low incomes who may need thermal curtains to keep their homes warmer. You can get more information from the Citizens Advice Bureau about eligibility if you think this may help keep the winter chill out. Stay safe, whānau. Nga mihi nui kia koutou. Take care, Shelly x



above (l-r): Deputy Mayor Lawrence Kirby, Mayor Janet Holborow, Ōtaki Ward Councillor Shelly Warwick and Greater Wellington Regional Councillor Penny Gaylor

Ōtaki Community Board: out in the community

BY JACKIE ELLIOTT – ŌTAKI COMMUNITY BOARD MEMBER



left: Ōtaki Community Board Chair Cam Butler, ŌCB member Jackie Elliott, Ōtaki Ward Councillor Shelly Warwick and Districtwide Councillor Rob Kofeod on an evening site visit to the Winstone Lakes entry point off Te Roto Road. They were looking at the future vehicular access routes for waka ama, canoe polo and disabled persons to be able to enjoy their activities at the new lakes recreation area.



left: ŌCB member Jackie Elliott, Mayor Janet Holborow, ŌCB member Christine Papps, members of Kāpiti Cycling Action Group in fluro, and ŌCB Chair Cam Butler with his youngsters, all heading out for a guided cycle tour of the town to scope danger spots, improvements needed for cycle access and possible sites to connect the dots, ie, joining up the suburban cycleways with the new Expressway shared pathway.



above (l-r): Dave Hardy, KCDC Transport Team, talking to ŌCB members Jackie Elliott and Simon Black, Mayor Janet Holborow, Ōtaki Gorge residents David and Kathleen Campbell and their advocate Anthony Baker. On one of the four Blue Bluff site visits ŌCB and KCDC staff have organised to give Council the opportunity to see for themselves the magnitude of the job ahead to regain some sort of access to the Gorge beyond the Blue Bluff slip.

Women footballers win promotion

BY FRANK NEILL

Ōtaki Kāeaea has won promotion to Capital Football's women's first division after they topped the division two table at the end of the first round of the 2023 competition.

With five wins and three draws, the undefeated Ōtaki team finished round one on 18 points, two points ahead of second-placed Miramar Rangers seconds.

In its final round one match Ōtaki Kāeaea defeated Stop Out 1–0 at Haruātai Park on 18 June.

The home team was all over Stop Out, creating many scoring opportunities.

Defender Erena Cooper finally converted one of these, kicking a very well-taken goal from outside the box to give her team the victory.

Emily Wikingi had an outstanding game for Ōtaki Kāeaea and was awarded three most valuable player (MVP) points.

Jordan Housiaux also played well and was awarded two MVP points, with goal scorer Erena Cooper taking out one MVP point.

Ōtaki Kāeaea had to settle for a 2–2 draw with Tawa Twisters at Tawa on 11 June.

Aria Epiha-Edwards and Rebekah Wright both found the back of the net for Ōtaki.

Rosa Green was the stand-out player for

the visitors and was awarded three MVP points. Rebekah Wright also had a great game and received two MVP points and Huia Paul's good performance saw her net one MVP point.

Ōtaki Kāeaea dominated a struggling Wainuiomata on 4 June, taking out a convincing 3–0 victory.

Aria was once again in scoring mode, and Evana Brothers and Louisa Donnell also found the back of the net.

With many of the team playing well, it was difficult to allot the MVP points. However Vanessa Harfit (three points), Aimee Porteners (two points) and Alannah Taylor (one point) rose well to the occasion.

Ōtaki Kāeaea had a bye on 28 May.

Ōtaki Purutaitama continued their unbeaten run in the Horowhenua–Kāpiti first division with a 6–1 victory over Paekākāriki Tuatahi on 17 June.

The Ōtaki team won all nine of its matches to head Kāpiti Coast United on the table at the end of the 17 June round. Just how dominant Ōtaki Purutaitama is in the 2023 competition can be judged from the fact that they have scored 44 goals and have conceded only four.



above: Chris Hawley-Stone scoring one of his two goals

In a local derby at Haruātai Park on 10 June, Purutaitama dominated Manakau Hui Mai and took out a 3–0 victory.

The home team created numerous scoring opportunities, in contrast to Manakau, who only threatened the goal three or four times. Chris Hawley-Stone had an outstanding

game, scoring two goals for this team. Te Hau Cook also shone, and he also found the back of the net.

Ōtaki Purutaitama won its previous two games 4–0, defeating Paekākāriki Tuatahi on 3 June and Kāpiti Coast United Sopranos on 27 May.

Basketball

BY PAXMAN TAURIMA



The 2023 Concrete Doctors Men's Basketball League is now into the play-off rounds. Last year's champions, Masters of the Universe (Ōtaki), have just scraped through in 4th spot to qualify for the Cup semi finals and will play off against this year's top team, Bagless Boys. The other semi final sees 2nd place team Paraparaumu College Senior Boys take on Spag n Treys (Levin), these two teams met two weeks ago and Paraparaumu took that game in a close 2-point win. Rounding the remainder of the competition, and competing in the plate play-off section, are Kapiti, Offensive Threats (Levin), Ngā Toki (Ōtaki), and Fire Bears (Kapiti), who have all had closely contested games against each other.

This is the third year of the Concrete Doctors Men's League, and the league continues to grow in numbers and talent. Keep an eye on the Raukawa Basketball Facebook and Instagram pages for livestream and highlights.

Following the mens league, term 3 will see the return of the popular mixed basketball league. The registration details will also be found on the Raukawa Basketball Facebook page.



Rāhui extends its winning run

BY FRANK NEILL

Rāhui's premier Rugby team continued its winning run with a 25–23 victory over Waikanae at Waikanae Park on 17 June.

The win is Rāhui's ninth from the nine matches it has played this season and has ensured it a place in the semi-finals of the Ramsbotham Cup competition.

It also means that Rāhui cannot be topped in the round robin section of the 2023 competition, despite there still being three rounds to play following the 17 June matches. Foxton is the second team on the table with six wins, but they have played one more game than Rāhui.

Vaianu Donaghy played outstandingly for the Ōtaki team, scoring one of his team's four tries and being awarded three most valuable player (MVP) points.

Jake Quin also shone, scoring a try and netting two MVP points. The other MVP points scorer, Regan Verney dotted down and Joel Winterburn scored the other Rāhui try.

The team had a two-week break before the match against Waikanae, as they had a bye

on 10 June and there were no Ramsbotham Cup matches during King's Birthday weekend.

Rāhui dominated their match against Shannon, winning 36–14 on 27 May.

Alizay Roach chalked up a major milestone in the game, played on the Ōtaki domain, bringing up 200 premier points. Alizay kicked four conversions and one penalty.

The home team scored five tries, with Teraiti Donaghy, Tama Cook, Morehu Connor-Phillips, Liam Tooman and Regan Verney all dotting down.

Jake Quin put in a superb performance for his team and was awarded three MVP points. Jonathan Fuimaono, who was awarded two MVP points, and Leon Ellison, who gained one MVP points, also played outstandingly.

right: Alizay Roach, who chalked up his 200th premier point in the match, makes another good run for Rāhui, supported by the man of the match Jake Quin.



Champs feature fantastic tennis

BY FRANK NEILL

Emma Whiterod was the star of the Ōtaki Sports Club's tennis championships, decided on the weekend of 27 and 28 May. Emma won all three finals she played in, and is the 2023 women's single champion, the women's doubles champion along with Monique Moore and the mixed doubles champion along with Callan Nikora. Callan came close to emulating Emma's feat when he won two titles and was runner-up in the men's singles after a closely contested final. His victor was Nizar Veerankutty, who became the 2023 men's singles champion

when he won the match 6-3, 7-5. Emma met Hannah Grimmett in the final of the women's singles, and took out the match 6-3, 6-4. She then teamed up with Callan to win the mixed doubles by beating Nizar and Hannah 6-4, 6-2 in the final. The victory saw the pair take out the Whiterod Wānau Trophy, played for the first time. The other two finals were won by default – one because of an injury and the other because of illness.

Emma and Monique won by default (through injury) over Leonie Campbell and Jodie Lawson to take the women's doubles title. Callan and Pātaka Moore won the men's doubles by default (through illness) over Nizar and Archie O'Sullivan. The club's 2023 finals was extra special, not just for the fantastic tennis on display, but also thanks to a stunning hand-carved trophy for the mixed doubles given to the club by the Whiterod whānau. Amiria Whiterod was club tennis captain for six years in the 1990s, and a club singles

and doubles champion. She organised legendary tennis tournaments that saw the Haruātai Park courts surrounded by tents and caravans as people travelled from near and far to camp over for the popular events. Amiria, Don and their family have given the Ōtaki Sports Club the Whiterod Whānau Trophy for presentation each year to the mixed doubles champions. The new trophy features the work of master carver Brian Climie. He has created a traditional design that also reflects in its shape the head of a tennis racquet.



above: Amiria Whiterod with the new Whiterod Whānau Trophy



above: the finalists in the Ōtaki Sports Club's 2023 women's singles tennis championship, Hannah Grimmett (left) and Emma Whiterod.

Ōtaki Canoe Club

BY CAM BUTLER

The Ōtaki Canoe Club has a long history of competing in national-level competitions and in particular the New Zealand National league, which is split into 4 grades (A to D) with A and B grades having Open and Women's divisions. C and D grades are mixed. While the club had teams and competitors in the A and B grade competitions, which finished in May, it was the turn of the C and D grade leagues to have their finals over the 3 days of King's Birthday Weekend at the Kilbirnie Aquatic Centre in Wellington. Teams from all over the motu assembled in Wgtn for the chance to battle it out and see who was the best in New Zealand for these grades. In C grade, Ōtaki had a full team (Ōtaki Aces) who, after some indifferent results in earlier competitions, climbed up to finish 7th out of 14 teams, which was the highest possible result they could achieve at the finals. Their final was won in golden goal extra time, where the first goal wins after the scores were tied at the end of normal time. Nerve wracking for the coach and supporters! The Aces are almost entirely made up of secondary-school-age players and, while often giving up 10s of kgs on some adult players, they made up with enthusiasm and skill to get their result. Captain William Fogden led by example with being top goal-scorer for the team, plus also saving goals at the defensive end of the court as team goalkeeper. In the D grade, local players James Wilson and Kieran Butler joined in with Palmerston North players to form a team of 11-14 year olds and again compete against teams from Auckland to Christchurch. In a hard-fought bronze-medal final they couldn't maintain earlier momentum in the competition

finishing 4th of the 6 teams in D grade. Ōtaki has a long history in canoe polo with Peter Housiaux, QSM, forming the Ōtaki Canoe Polo Club in 1987, and it has operated near continuously since then. The club

always warmly welcomes people to come and try this fun and challenging sport – no matter their age – and we have our beginner nights in the nice, warm Ōtaki Pool. All equipment is provided for this fun 1.5 hours

so all you need is togs, towel and a smile. Sundays, 4.00–5.30pm during school terms. Contact Cam Butler 021 703 095, or otakicanoeclub@gmail.com for more information.





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Flower garden

Prune your hydrangeas and fuchsias.

Cut back untidy, overgrown growth of perennials, divide and replant.

July is the major month for pruning roses. Take out weak and diseased wood, thin shoots and excessive growth – prune to an outside bud.

Spray roses with copper and protector oil to guard against scale, mites, aphids and fungus disease.

Plant out trees and shrubs adding generous quantities of compost to the planting hole.

Spray deciduous plants with copper and protector oil to control over-wintering insects and their eggs.

Feed spring bulbs with a side dressing of bulb food as flower heads appear.

Prepare ground prior to planting summer flowering bulbs and tubers by adding general fertiliser. Towards the end of the month plant gladioli, tuberous begonias, dahlias and calla lilies for summer flowering. Gladioli will flower approximately 100 days after planting. Plant your bulbs and tubers at intervals to extend summer flowering season.

Sow seeds of aquilegia, wallflower, larkspur, dianthus, nemesia, pansy, stock, snapdragon, primula, sweet pea and salvia.

Plant out seedlings of pansies, primula, sweet pea, lupin, stock, lobelia, larkspur and dianthus.

Fruit and vegetable garden

It's time to start preparing soil for spring vegetable planting. Cultivate empty spaces, digging in autumn-sown green crops – add compost and lime if necessary. Don't cultivate if your

soil is wet and boggy.

Find a sunny spot and sprout potatoes in seed trays ready for planting.

Plant out garlic and shallots, asparagus crowns and strawberry plants.

Sow seeds of broccoli, cabbage, beetroot, parsnips, carrots, radish, broad beans, cauliflower, peas, lettuce, onions, spinach, silverbeet, turnips and swede.

Plant out seedlings of artichoke, cauliflower, lettuce, onions, potatoes, silverbeet and cabbage.

Plant new fruit trees – citrus, apples, pears, plums, peaches and nectarine.

Prune deciduous fruit trees, and spray with copper and protector oil to protect from over-wintering pests and diseases.

Lawns

Mid-winter lawns differ in the sort of treatment they need, depending on the type of lawn used. Summer-growing lawns, such as kikuyu and couch grass, slow down their growth in autumn, and pretty much stop growing altogether in winter. They need little care and almost no mowing. Cool season grasses, such as Kentucky bluegrass, will continue to grow, needing gentle feeding and the occasional mow.

Avoid walking on lawns that have been frosted – every step leaves a mark that will be visible until the lawn grows again.

Second thoughts

July is the best month to trim macrocarpa and other conifer hedges. A regular light pruning is better than a heavy occasional cut. Never cut back beyond the foliage line or permanent damage can occur.

Focus on growing grapes

Properly sited and cared for, your grape vine (a member of the *Vitaceae* family) will produce multiple bunches of juicy fruit in late summer or autumn. In summer the floppy green leaves create welcome shade before turning a gorgeous golden colour in autumn. Grapevines give a truly Mediterranean effect when grown over a pergola, balcony or deck, with the added benefit of letting in the winter sun once all the leaves are lost.

Plant from late autumn to early spring, choosing a site with full sun and good air movement – a north or northwest facing one is ideal, with well-drained, light-textured soil.

Grapes like hot, dry summers and cool winters and are not nutrient hungry – don't overdo fertilisers, especially high nitrogen ones or your vine will tend to grow leaves at the expense of fruit. Mulch vines with generous amounts of compost once or twice a year and keep the base weed-free. They also enjoy a regular light liming – you can add bone dust or crushed shells when planting as an alternative source of calcium.

Vines need strong support – they will reach a height of 1–3m and a spread of 3m or more if unchecked. Make sure whatever support you use is in place before your grape is planted, because young growth is easily broken if left unsupported.

They also need pruning more than any other fruiting species – irregular or poor crops are produced if the vine is not pruned and trained.

There are two different forms of pruning, both undertaken

annually when vines are dormant in winter.

Spur pruning is excellent for training vines over pergolas and fences. The first winter after planting, select the strongest and longest stem for the main stem and remove all others. Train two shoots along your support to form the side arms of the T (called a cordon). Each year cut all growth off the T-shaped vine except for a few two-bud stubs, each 30cm apart along the arms. The following winter, cut out the cane produced by the top bud and cut the bottom cane down to a two-bud stub again.

With the second method, cane pruning, two canes are left on each side and trained along a support. Each year remove all growth, but leave 2–4 canes of 12 buds length on each side – also leave a few two-bud stubs to provide next year's canes.

Most established grapes survive and fruit well without regular watering, but in a drought you'll need to provide sufficient water to prevent the vine becoming stressed.

Be prepared to share your crops with birds or cover ripening bunches with a net.

Popular proven varieties include my old garden favourite, 'Albany Surprise', a disease-resistant, heavy cropper with black, aromatic fruit which ripens from March to April; the heirloom green-gold grape 'Niagra', which produces large clusters of sweet, juicy fruit with a mild flavour in February/March; 'Italia', a golden-yellow grape with a musky flavour, ripening March to April; and 'Bishop Pompalier', a disease-resistant, large, black grape with a sweet flavour.

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the Ōtaki Mail

BY VIVIENNE BAILEY
viv.bailey@xtra.co.nz

Top trees for compact gardens

Even a small garden can benefit from having a tree, but choosing the right one for restricted areas can be challenging. Try to go for one that gives you more “bang for your bucks,” a double-banger that provides at least two stand-out features.

To make it into a top small-tree list, a tree needs to be resilient and undemanding, perhaps staging a stunning spring or summer floral show and/or a fiery autumn finale.

Cercis ‘Forest Pansy’ is a strong contender for top tree. It has become one of New Zealand’s most popular garden trees for good reasons – cerise, pea-like spring flowers followed by bright, purple-red new foliage, bronze foliage all summer and a distinctive autumn display. This feature tree grows quickly, tolerates a wide range of soils and drops its leaves quickly once chilly weather strikes. For a stunning autumn show give it a sunny position with good wind shelter.

‘Purple plums’ (bronze-leaved forms of *Prunus cerasifera*, such as ‘Nigra’ and ‘Thundercloud’) also provide all-season bronze foliage but with rather more of a brown undertone. These trees generally lack the Cercis charm and character, but they produce pale pink or white blossom very early in spring, grow quickly and don’t mind clay soil.

If spring blossom stirs your soul, consider a flowering cherry with its colourful autumn foliage. Just be careful to allow for growth – cherries resent being cut back hard. Spreaders like ‘Shimidsu Sakura’ don’t grow high but do grow wide – double pink ‘Kanzan’ is more erect but taller. If a cherry is too big to contemplate, there are crabapples with pretty blossom that are smaller growing and don’t

resent a bit of needed pruning. Some excellent red or bronze foliaged crabs like ‘Tom Matthews’ and the weeping ‘Eilerslie’ easily fit the double whammy criterion.

When it comes to foliage display however it’s the Japanese maples (*Acer japonicum*) that are the supreme stars in spring, summer and autumn. Although frost-hardy they are best planted in a sheltered spot away from wind.

Well-established favourites include ‘Bloodgood’, Red Dragon’ and ‘Butterfly’.

Magnolias such as the smaller cultivars, ‘Ann’, ‘Pristine’, ‘Shuishoren’ and ‘Sayonara’ only just make it to the double banger list but get through for their unrivalled floral display – and their fat furry winter buds. The spectacular, often fragrant blooms, appearing late winter/early spring, are followed by large, fresh-green leaves.

Frost-hardy magnolias need a well-drained soil and shelter from wind.

With numerous cultivars of our native kōwhai (*Sophora* species) available, it’s not difficult to find one suitable for even the tiniest space. Choose from dwarf kōwhai, *Sophora prostrata* to the taller *S. microphylla* and *S. tetraptera* trees – all produce distinctive gold-yellow flowers and have fine, delicate leaves that won’t overly shade lawn grasses. Kōwhai trees are semi-deciduous and like free-draining soil and plenty of sun.

Don’t overlook the lancewood (*Pseudopanax crassifolius*). The saw-toothed leaves don’t appeal to everyone, but the slender, sculptural juvenile form of these natives is often a highlight, lending form to the smaller garden. Plant in a dry or free-draining spot, in sun or semi-shade.



A sweet smell of winter

Blooming in the dying days of winter and, like the first daffodils, a sign that spring is on the way, *Daphne odora* has an air-freshening, jasmine-like scent as strong as anything in an aerosol can.

Available in pale pink (Leucanthe), deep pink (Rubra) and pure white (Alba), the attractive, compact shrubs are indigenous to Europe, North Africa and temperate Asia.

Daphne can be a bit of a fuss-pot to grow as it’s quite particular about soil conditions and is slightly frost-tender in cold winter areas. It prefers a cool, moist, humus-enriched, well-drained, acid soil in full sun or light shade (I find part-shade best; too much shade limits flowering). Well-drained soil is critical – daphne hate wet feet, and once established are more likely to live a long life in relatively dry conditions than in soil that lies wet in winter.

Nutrient imbalances caused by high pH and/or poor drainage can result in yellow leaves (like camellias and rhododendron, daphne likes a near-neutral soil). Iron deficiency usually appears first on new growth as small leaves or yellowing between veins. If your soil is well-drained and yellowing persists, try a dose of iron chelates to correct a possible iron deficiency.

Maintain a layer of organic mulch such as leaf mould or fine bark, and feed regularly with liquid fertiliser. They’ll also appreciate an occasional side dressing of acid fertiliser.

Trimming lightly after flowering, or simply picking the flowers, is all the pruning you’ll need, and it also keeps growth compact (don’t prune right back below the foliage).

Kept healthy your daphne may grow to 1.8 m x 1.2 m but it is not a long-lived shrub – expect to have to replace your plant every 8 to 10 years (it’s a good idea to get another one growing if yours is getting on in years). Virus-free plants, propagated by tissue culture, are now available, making *Daphne odora* a much more reliable plant than in the past.

But there are other daphne worth planting – the genus includes more than 50 naturally occurring deciduous and evergreen species, and several garden cultivars.

Daphne bholua (Himalayan daphne) is a tall, upright, slightly scruffy shrub, either deciduous or evergreen

depending on the type you select. Clusters of highly scented, pink-white flowers appear in late winter. Plant near the back of a border where its unruly habit is hidden but the brilliant fragrance can be enjoyed.

‘Perfume Princess’ is an erect, slightly spreading shrub, a cross between *Daphne odora* and *Daphne bholua*, and bred by New Zealand plantsman Mark Jury. It is the earliest and longest-flowering (winter to late spring) of all daphne, with an intensely sweet perfume, and a profusion of large, blush-pink (fading to white) blooms produced along the stem, making it great for cutting to bring inside.



Ōtaki – Education Town

Stunning new school entrances

BY FRANK NEILL

Both Ōtaki School – Te Kura o Ōtaki – and St Peter Chanel School – Hato Petera Kaniera – have stunning new entrances and administrations blocks.

The new work at St Peter Chanel School was blessed by Pa Pita SM and Rawiri Rikihana – one of Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki leaders – at a ceremony on 12 June.

The ceremony was very well attended. As well as the staff, students and Board of Trustees, there were people from the Pukekaraka parish, the Wellington Catholic Archdiocese, the Ministry of Education and the contractor – The Licensed Handiman.

Following the blessing, the St Peter Chanel students sang the hymn 'Mo Maria' and there was a shared morning tea.

The school also presented a gift to the building contractor – The Licensed Handiman – to acknowledge their work with a mihi of gratitude.

The Licensed Handiman had done an outstanding job, the school's Tumuaki, Urutakai Cooper says.

Not only was their workmanship excellent, but they also looked carefully at the plans and made suggestions (which were adopted) so that the final building reflected the culture of the school.

"They considered everything about us as a people and they took into account the spirituality of the place," Ms Cooper says.

Following the blessing "I thanked them on behalf of everybody and our children sang them a waiata Māori."

The project had its genesis around a year ago during conversations the school's former Tumuaki had with the

Ministry of Education, the Archdiocese and the architect. Work then began in mid April.

As well as the new entrance, which includes a deck, there is a new administration area, a new reception area and a new teachers' work room.

A special feature is a new room for the learning support co-ordinator. Before the upgrade the learning support co-ordinator did not have their own room and had to share.

Another big advantage is that the new administration block is now a lot warmer.

"We are going to be a lot healthier this winter," Ms Cooper says.

Although Ōtaki School's new entrance and administration block is now open, there is still work to be done.

One major piece of work, which is nearing completion, is a new carving for the front entrance.

The school approached local kaumatua and carver Bill Doyle and asked him to make a carving for the entrance, Ōtaki School's Principal Rauru Walker says.

"He's in the process of putting the finishing touches to it."

Mr Doyle has very strong links to Ōtaki School. He attended the school as a student and his daughter taught there.

One of the aims of the refurbishment was "to make the entrance front-facing so it was more visible and obvious where the entrance was," Mr Walker says.

As well as the new reception area, the new administration

block also has a new teacher-resource room and a new meeting room.

The school's office manager, Gemma Rutherford, is based in the new reception area.

Ms Rutherford, who celebrated her one-year anniversary at the school on 20 June, is well known in the Ōtaki community.

Her mother is the manager of Ballantynes, Ōtaki, store and her sister is the owner of Main Street Bakery.

"We like to keep things as community as we can," Mr Walker says. "Community is key for us."

Another feature of the new administration area is that the school library has been moved from its space in the old administration block to a new space next to the school hall.

At the same time, the library introduced a new system where borrowings and returns are no longer recorded.

That has the advantage of freeing up more teacher time, as they no longer have to keep the borrowing and return records.

"If the kids return the book that's good, but if they don't it means more books in homes, which is good too," Mr Walker says.

Although the new entrance and administration block is now open "there is still a bunch more work going on," Mr Walker says.

Among the continuing work, the bathrooms are going to be rearranged and a new accessible toilet is going to be installed.



above: the view on walking through the new entrance at St Peter Chanel School. The paintings were a koha from Rawiri Barriball and feature the birds that have given their names to the school's four houses (from left) Ruru, Kererū, Kākāpō and Tūi.

below: the new entrance to St Peter Chanel School.



above: Ōtaki School's Office Manager Gemma Rutherford flanked by students Tama Napier-Bell (left) and Ary Tumanako in the new entrance hall.

below: the new entrance to Ōtaki School.



Ōtaki College News

July 2023

www.otakicollege.school.nz

From Principal Andy Fraser

I am acutely aware that students and whānau are finding the current situation around staffing and the rolling home of year levels incredibly frustrating, as are we. We continue to see a number of staff and students away with illness. As you are aware, we have struggled to find relievers as most of the reliever pool are now employed in fixed term positions in schools due to, what I would consider to be, the national education crisis and teacher shortage crisis.

The reliever situation, along with further proposed secondary teacher industrial action, is set to continue, however we have heard that this could go to arbitration and if this were to be the case, industrial action would cease during this process.

All of our staff are very concerned about this situation and the disruption this brings to learning. The scenario we now face is a central government issue brought about by successive governments not investing in education. As a result of this we face chronic teacher shortages and an antiquated education system that is no longer fit for purpose for the growing and diverse needs of our young people across all sectors of education. This current government is showing a huge reluctance to meet, what I consider to be, very reasonable requests by secondary teachers.

I would like to thank all those whānau who have sent in emails of support to the staff at the college, despite the impact this has on teaching and learning. I would urge whānau to politicise this situation by contacting your local MP, the Minister of Education and the Prime Minister to voice your concerns around teacher shortages and encourage them to invest in teacher training and in teachers in an effort to address the education crisis we are now experiencing.

Powercut – First in Smokefreerockquest Manawātū Regional Heats

Joanna Devane, Curriculum Leader of Performing Arts, writes:

“On 9 June two of our bands performed in the regional heats of Smokefreerockquest. The standard of performance was very high from all the bands that performed and we were on the edge of our seats as the results were announced.

Misdirected – our Yr 9/10 band – played both of their songs exceptionally well. They were the youngest band playing and, even though they didn't win any prizes, they were thrilled with their performance. The students in Misdirected are: Parearohi Edginton, Ella-Jaye Milldove-Henderson, Charles Henderson, Lily El Kour, Mackenzie Sherlock, and Christian Lange-Gerrard. They are currently making a decision about whether they will enter the Tangata Beats part of the competition.

Powercut – our Yr 11/12 band of Freddy Sayer, Logan Hughes, Pierre Lange-Gerrard, and Ethan Kyle – came 1st!! Freddy also picked up a Musicianship award. We were all so excited for these boys, who will now make a video of three original songs. They will be busy over the coming few weeks writing a new song for this part of the competition. They will then wait and see if they are one of the top 30 bands in the country – if so, they will go on to perform in the National finals.”

Forensics – The Real Story

Monday 22 May began with much anticipation as students gathered in S4 for their chance to experience real forensics at work. Tom and Allie Coyle, Directors of Crime Centre/Fingerprint Services lead the sessions.

Each session opened with an introduction from Tom on how forensics really works, as opposed to Hollywood's version as seen on CSI and other such shows.

Myth No. 1 dispelled: no, the crime is very rarely solved in 1 hour.

Myth No. 2 dispelled: no, the forensics scientists do not solve the crime, they find the evidence and the detectives work out who did it.

Myth No. 3 dispelled: detectives, etc., are not allowed to rush up to the crime scene, dropping various hairs, skin and other foreign objects over the crime scene, contaminating it and making the evidence gathered unreliable. Everyone entering the scene must be fully dressed in PPE from head to foot.

This led us into the investigation of the crime scene set up in the back of S4. A dead body, Doug, money and jewelry across the

floor, blood smears on the wall and overturned tables.

Obviously something has happened, but what and by whom?

Enter the forensic scientists, students from senior biology and chemistry, along with Tom and Allie to guide us through the correct procedures.

Footprints were cast, rubbed and compared. The important parts were not what was on the sole of the shoe but what had, over time, been removed due to general wear and tear. This makes our footprints unique.

Blood samples were then tested for DNA and these were compared using 10 to 25 different marker points. Only a few were needed to make a match.

The last stage was to lift fingerprints from a cup. The cup was brushed with fingerprint powder – definitely a case of less being better. The powder was lifted using tape, without smearing the fingerprints or adding our own. These were then compared using the loops, whorls and arches that are unique to all of us. Did you know that even identical twins have unique fingerprints? Yes, our fingerprints form while we are still in the womb and are formed due our position and how much space we have, which is different for each growing child.

The last step was to declare that the mystery was solved and the students had successfully identified the guilty party.

All in all, an interesting time for everyone involved.

Comments from students:

"I found the forensics day activities to be incredibly interesting and fun, where I was able to experience the ins and outs of working around a crime scene. At first, when I walked into the room, I was quite taken aback by the presence of 'Doug' a mannequin prop who was lying in a pool of blood surrounded by hidden clues that unfolded a dark story. The forensics team walked us through multiple different scenarios as-well as activities that helped us figure out who the culprit was, via analyzing collected data such as footprints and DNA samples. My favorite part was interpreting the hidden fingerprint evidence, where I transferred the prints onto a sheet of paper to match up potential suspects. Overall this experience has been an amazing opportunity and I learnt a lot of new things from the forensics team."

"I enjoyed all of it, especially the data analysis where we found out who 'committed the crime'"

"It was all good, a real eye opener on what happens behind the scenes. Thank you for the shared knowledge."

Dawn Hirschberg, Curriculum Leader of Science

below: Powercut members Pierre Lange-Gerrard, Ethan Kyle, Logan Hughes and Freddy Sayer (image courtesy of Smokefreerockquest)



right: fingerprint lifting in action.

below right: The Scene is Set. Sam Georgetti looks for evidence.



Native fish flourish following stream restoration

BY CR. PENNY GAYLOR, GREATER WELLINGTON REGIONAL COUNCIL TE PANE MATUA TAIAO

We can celebrate progress for Ōtaki’s biodiversity, as inanga (whitebait) eggs are detected for the first time at a critical spawning spot in Waitohu Stream following restoration work by Greater Wellington’s Mahi Waiora (Wellbeing of Water) team.

Inanga are important for our environment, as a food source to locals, and to mana whenua’s role in providing manaakitanga (care for others).

The critical spawning spot where saltwater meets fresh water was identified in the Waitohu Stream by the Mahi Waiora team, a collaboration between Greater Wellington, Kāpiti Coast District Council and Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki. The team then helped local iwi to carry out monitoring for native fish species.

Sadly in 2020 it was found that there was limited habitat for spawning, as steep, unvegetated banks provided virtually no sites for inanga to lay their eggs.

The team recontoured the streambanks, removed exotic trees, and planted the now much flatter banks with native grasses, working with local landowners and the Ōtaki and Porirua Trusts Board. Native trees were also planted in the surrounding margin at a community planting day organised by Mahi Waiora in June last year.

A recent visit by the Mahi Waiora team found inanga spawn in almost all the stream edge grasses – a fantastic result after only a year of planting.

A couple of months after spawning, the

inanga hatch and are washed out to sea, where they develop into adults.

Adult inanga then swim back up our streams and rivers; along the way they promote the natural balance of our waterways, benefiting tuna (eels) and leading to cleaner rivers.

Greater Wellington is always seeking opportunities to support biodiverse ecosystems across the region. Following this early success, the Mahi Waiora team hopes to organise future planting days, continuing to connect the local community to Waitohu Stream.

Mahi pai to all those involved in this project. To see the spawning site develop into a healthy habitat within a year is a testament to all involved. I look forward to

sharing more success stories. To help Mahi Waiora restore our environment, keep an eye on gw.govt.nz/mahi-waiora for future events.



July 2022



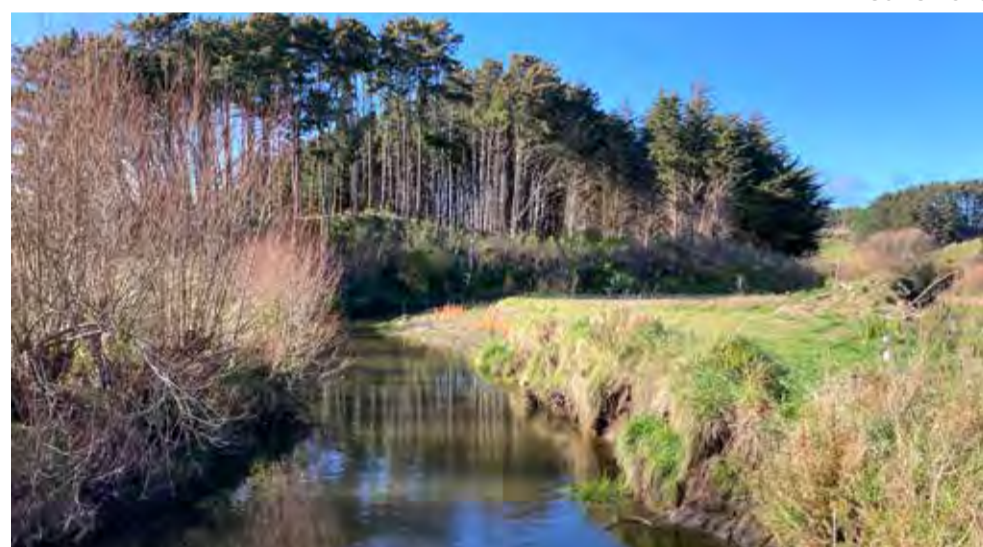
Inanga egg, June 2023



June 2023



June 2023



Jessica and Caleb Rural Contractor Trainees of the Year

A 25-year-old woman from Pahiatua, who gave up working in a local accountancy office, was last night named the Rural Contractors NZ Trainee for 2023.

Jessica Bills grew up on her parents’ dairy farm and her proud parents Gary and Amanda Bills were with her last night at the Rural Contractors conference in Invercargill when she collected her award. Gary said it was not a big surprise she turned to contracting.

“Whenever she got home from school and I was in the tractor, she’d kick me out.”

Jessica only joined Mabey Contracting in her home town last October.

Andrew and Catherine Mabey were also there last night and were among 10 firms recognised for the support they as employers had provided to the finalists including Jessica.

The runner-up was Caleb Turner from Sims Contractors in Ōtaki. The previous year’s winner was Mat Peart, also an employee of Sims Contractors, Ōtaki.

Both won \$1000 travel prizes sponsored by

Tulloch Farm Machinery, Nufarm and RCNZ.

Jessica says she’s learning everything she can in the job, including raking, baling, mowing, wrapping and stacking hay and silage as well as servicing machines in the workshop.

“I love every minute of it.” She hopes to stay in the rural contracting industry and eventually manage an operation.

– Rural Contractors NZ

right: Ōtaki’s Runner-up Rural Contractor Trainee of the Year 2023 Caleb Turner (left) with winner Jessica Bills



Caii-Michelle
TE AO MARAMA

Ōtaki College

Thursday 13 July

6 - 9pm

A fun filled evening for all the community

*Featuring the fabulous
international artist*

** Caii-Michelle Te Ao Mārama*

** Orbital Blaze Fire Performers*

** Mukume Taiko Drummers*

and also our very own

** Pretty Boys &*

** Power Cut*

** Lantern display*

** Food Stalls*

** Gorgeous market stalls*

** Face painting*

MATARIKI

NIGHT MARKET

Entry by Koha

Sponsored by:

Tall Poppy
REAL ESTATE

Jayden Matthews

WINSTONE
AGGREGATES



**MATARIKI
RAMAROA**

Proudly Supported
By Matariki Ramaroa Arts
Festival,
Kāpiti Coast, July 1-23



ABC: Arts, Books Corner

An 'intergalactic' view of colonisation: *Turncoat*, by Tihema Baker

Turncoat is a new satirical sci-fi novel by Ōtaki writer Tihema Baker (Raukawa te Au ki te Tonga, Ātiawa ki Whakarongotai, Ngāti Toa Rangatira).

Exploring tensions faced by Māori working for government, *Turncoat* is set in a distant future where Earth has been colonised by Aliens, and Humans have become a minority on their own planet.

Daniel, an idealistic young human determined to make a difference for his people, joins the Alien government called the Hierarch to push for it to honour the founding agreement between the Hierarch and Humans.

From casual racism to co-governance, Treaty settlements to tino rangatiratanga, *Turncoat* is a timely critique of the Aotearoa zeitgeist, holding a mirror up to Pākehā New Zealanders and asking: "What if it happened to you?"

Tihema Baker, author of *Turncoat*, is a Tiriti o Waitangi-based policy advisor with ten years' experience working in the public service. He grew up in Ōtaki and recently moved back there with his young whānau. Tihema wrote *Turncoat* in 2020 for his Master of Arts in Creative Writing at the International Institute of Modern Letters, under the supervision of Kāpiti-based writer Dr Tina Makereti (Te Ātiawa, Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Ngāti Rangatahi-Matakore).

Turncoat was launched by the Lawrence and Gibson Collective at Unity Books Wellington on 15 June, alongside *The Words for Her*, the new novel by Thomasin Sleigh. Following speeches by Lawrence and Gibson founding editor Murdoch Stephens, Tihema and Thomasin, both books were welcomed into te ao mārama with a brief ceremony led by Tihema's father, Andre. The launch was also supported by contributions from whānau and friends, including Te Rūnanga o Toa Rangatira and Cellardays.

Turncoat is available from Books & Co, Ōtaki, for rrp\$30.



Turning memories into meaning

Kate Camp will be the July speaker in the Friends of Kāpiti Libraries series, 'Readers and Writers.' Kate is best known for her seven collections of poems. A reviewer wrote that 'her observations on the world we live in are recognisable, immensely enjoyable. Comic, but never pointless.'

She herself said that her poems are about 'things that I remember and that matter to me for some mysterious reason – however banal, obscure or humiliating those memories are ... I have a poem that talks about a flaw in the lino in our toilet when I was growing up. While I was workshopping it with my writing group, I heard them say, "Oh, this reminds me of the carpet in my grandparents' house", or "Oh my god, that made me remember our kitchen". From their voices, I could tell how it was bringing their own memories to life.'



Poneke-based poet and reviewer
Kate Camp

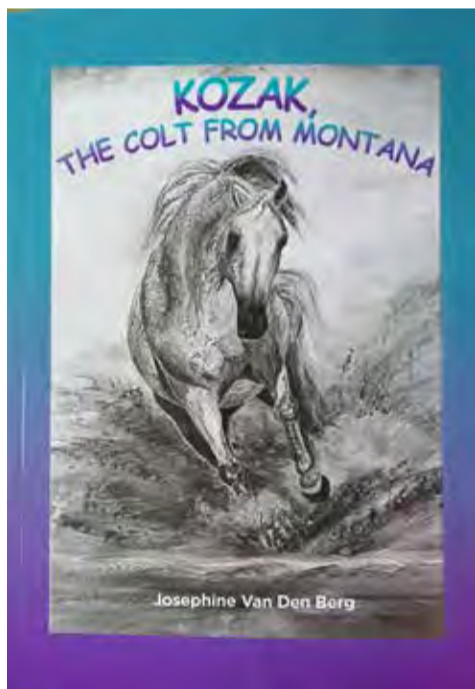
Of her recently published memoir, *You Probably Think this Song is About You*, Linda Burgess writes: 'I didn't want it to end. Kate is clever, observant, funny, moving yet never sentimental, wise, and as brave as they come.'

Many people remember with pleasure her broadcasts, *Kate's Classics*, giving fresh views on *Middlemarch*, *Pride and Prejudice*, *Jane Eyre* and many others.

Everyone is welcome to her talk on Sunday 2 July at 2 p.m. in Ocean Road Community Centre, Paraparaumu Beach. Entry is free, though a koha is appreciated, and refreshments will be served.

Some of Kate's published works are available from Books & Co, Ōtaki, and at the KCDC libraries.

DO YOU LOVE HORSES? THE GREAT OUTDOORS? ADVENTURE?



Ōtaki author and illustrator Josephine Van Den Berg has completed a new book, called:

KOZAK, THE COLT FROM MONTANA.

In this novel Josephine Van Den Berg has penned a thrilling adventure that should captivate young and old. It's a moving story about the bond between a girl and an incredible young horse. With its non-stop action, tension and drama, this book will thrill many a reader. The author skilfully interweaved the exciting events of Kozak's journey with the beautifully portrayed characters of the girl's family and friends. She also displays a real gift in her ability to paint clear pictures of personalities, relationships and the beauty of the wild.



Josephine is from the Netherlands and emigrated with husband (who is a fine horseman!) and their three children to New Zealand in 1990, Ōtaki. They've been here for 33 years and love beautiful Aotearoa; "Ko Ōtaki taku kainga!"

Josephine has always been a bit of a dreamer and the story of Kozak is a dream coming true... To express her love for animals and the wild outdoors in this amazing adventure, she began writing this novel in her teenage years in Holland, many decades ago! The manuscript had been lying in the bottom of a cupboard for years, until she decided to translate it in English.

The magnificent cover picture is taken from an oil painting by her son, Thomas Van Den Berg, who specialises in wild life paintings. Being a gifted artist herself, Josephine has illustrated this book with more than 25 beautiful pencil drawings, to enhance the experience to an extra level.

So yes! A really good book to enjoy curled up by the fireside this winter, or under a shady tree in the summer. At the moment for sale at Ōtaki Courthouse Gallery on the Highway, in the little park across from BP petrol station, also in Books & Co bookshop Ōtaki, and most likely in Paper Plus Paraparaumu and Unity Books Wellington.

OTAKI POTTERY CLUB
CELEBRATES MATARIKI

Star
GLAZE

JULY 13 - 15, 2023 | 10AM - 4PM
ENTRY BY KOHA
OTAKI RACECOURSE | INDOOR EVENT

SEEING THE
WOOD
FROM THE
TREES

A mixed media
interpretation by
local artists

Old Courthouse Gallery
239 Main Highway, Ōtaki
June 24 - July 30 2023

Ngā arotakenga mai i Te Whare Whakamatau o Ōtaki



Dust Child by Nguyen Phan Que Mai



Set during the Vietnam war and in present day. This is a suspenseful and immersive saga about family secrets, hidden trauma and the power of forgiveness. Two sisters Trang and Quỳnh, leave their village to become “bar girls” in Sài Gòn, entertaining American GIs in return for money. Innocent Trang gets swept into an irresistible romance with a charming American helicopter pilot, Dan. Decades later Dan with his wife returns to Việt Nam hoping to find a way to heal from his PTSD and deal with past secrets. Phong, the son of a black American soldier, searches to find both his parents and a way out of Việt Nam. Past and present converge when these characters come together to confront decisions made in the past and forces them to find common ground across race, generation, culture and language.

Code Name Sapphire by Pam Jenoff



If you are a fan of Pam Jenoff’s previous novels, then you will also enjoy this new World War 2 novel inspired by the true story of resistance fighters in Belgium, who helped rescue Jewish people on a train bound for Auschwitz. Hannah Martel escapes from Nazi Germany and turns to her cousin Lily, in Brussels, for assistance. Hannah becomes involved once again with the dangerous underground work she had previously left – this time joining ‘The Sapphire Line’. Unfortunately Lily and her family end up being arrested for deportation to Auschwitz - and Hannah is faced with finding a way to rescue them!

Everything is Beautiful and Everything Hurts by Josie Shapiro



Everything is Beautiful and Everything Hurts is Josie Shapiro’s debut novel and it won the Commercial Fiction prize for Allen & Unwin Publishers. It is a fantastic first novel and you don’t have to like running or be a runner to like this book. Running is the main theme but it’s also about endurance and stamina, it’s about family dynamics, community, and it’s a little romantic. But mostly it’s about following your dreams even if they’re a little different from than the ones you imagined. You will fall in love with Mickey Bloom as she navigates her way through the world. There’s a magic and energy to this book, and you won’t want to put it down.

Lessons in Chemistry by Bonnie Garmus



This book is a delight, and you don’t have to know anything about chemistry to read it! It tells the story of Elizabeth who is living her dream as a research chemist in the early ‘60s. It is a male-dominated workplace where she faces challenges, falls in love, and has a child. She then becomes a cooking show host while raising her daughter. Elizabeth is quirky, forthright, and determined. I love the way the writer makes you love Elizabeth even though she appears to have no soft edges and is very outspoken, the latter a trait she passes onto her daughter. The book is about adversity, but it’s uplifting—you feel yourself cheering from the sidelines as she empowers her television audience and empathising with her producer as she refuses all direction. We also have a loveable dog who understands English, a precocious child, cooking tips, romance and injustice. It’s one of my favourite reads this year.

Pop in and see us or find us online

facebook.com/kapiticoastdistrictlibraries kapiticoast.govt.nz/libraries



We know it’s tempting to treat your furry friend every time they give you those hard to resist puppy dog eyes – but remember those extra treats could be leading them down a path to poor health.

To help determine if your pet may be at risk of obesity here are a few questions to consider.

- Is it difficult to feel your pet’s ribs?
- Does your pet have little or no defined waist?
- Does your pet have constant access to food and snacks?
- Does your pet beg for more food after feeding?
- Do you ever skip playing or exercising your pet?

If you answered “YES” to any of these questions, it might be time to bring your furry friend in for a **FREE** weight consult with one of our nurses. Together, we can tailor a weight loss program and help them reach and maintain their optimal body weight.



www.otakivets.nz
 06 364 6941
 otaki.contact@tvlg.co.nz
 269 Mill road, Otaki, 5512



OTAKI IN THE NEWS - 1890s

Selected from early New Zealand newspapers, as written and published at that time.

July 15, 1899

Miss Alice Rochfort had been appointed Matron of the Otaki Cottage Hospital, out of 13 applications.

August 3, 1899

The Otaki Mail states that Mr. J. E. Fulton, of Wellington, has been entrusted with the preparation of plans and specifications of the bridge which the Horowhenua County Council (with some assistance from Government) intends to erect alongside the Manawatu Railway Company's bridge at Otaki,

August 7 1899

The Governor, accompanied by the Premier and several Members of Parliament, made his first official visit to Otaki to-day. The weather is magnificent, and the visitors were driven round to inspect a number of places of interest in the vicinity, including the Native Church, erected by the first missionaries in 1840. The visitors were welcomed by Mr Vent, (Chairman of the County Council) and Wi Parata (ex M.H.R.) Chief of the Ngatiawa tribe. The latter went into the Maori grievances at some length, especially the land question. His Excellency, responding, said that Wi Parata's remarks were directed to the Premier. The latter did not reply, but will probably do so at the banquet this afternoon prior to the opening of the Otaki Cottage Hospital by the Governor.

August 8, 1899

Otaki has been fortunate in securing the services of Dr. Mason as medical officer for its new Cottage Hospital. The doctor, who has degrees of M.D. (Brussels) and D.Ph. (Cambridge), came out to the colony a few years ago for the benefit of his health,

which had broken down while he was studying for the law, he having qualified to practise as a barrister of the Inner Temple, London. The doctor found the mild climate of Otaki district suited to his case, and decided to settle there. He is a skilled bacteriologist and pathologist, and has read valuable papers on those subjects before our Medical Congresses and has recently received a request from the Medical Congress of South Australia to deliver an address upon bacteriology before that body. Since his arrival in the colony Dr. Mason has acted as Parliamentary Secretary for the New Zealand Branch of the British Medical Association, and at yesterday's ceremony of opening the Otaki Cottage Hospital he said that he had found the Government very responsive to his applications with regard to placing up-to-date facilities for medical men in the colony for purposes beneficial to the people. Dr. Mason, who is an original investigator, intends making an effort to treat the sewage from the Otaki hospital by means of a septic tank, which will be the first application of the system to any hospital in the world. The sewage of Exeter (Devonshire) is treated most successfully by this system, and the experiment at Otaki will be watched with interest by medical men generally as well as by sanitarians.

August 19, 1899

The Otaki Hospital Ball does not show up as a great financial success as though the receipts for tickets realised £15 17s, the credit balance was only £2 3s 6d.

August 31, 1899

At Otaki a mounted rifle corps is in course of formation. It is expected that sixty members will be enrolled.

September 21, 1899

For some time past, says the Mail, the young natives in Otaki have been indulging in steady practise in hakas, poi dances etc. We understand that at no distant date several important meetings of Maoris from all parts of the Island will take place here, and the natives wish to be in readiness to entertain their visitors right royally.

September 23, 1899

Mr Walter Freeman has secured a renewal for two years to the dining car on the Manawatu railway and the refreshment rooms at Otaki.

October 7, 1899

OTAKI TOWN HALL.

The largest and best appointed between Wellington and Wanganui. Travelling Companies and Public Entertainers should come and try it; but before you come, advertise well in the local paper, and put up placards, for the district is large. ALFRED A. LANDALL,

Agent, Otaki.

November 4, 1899

The Otaki people have been more fortunate than their neighbours of Rangitikei in the matter of securing a bridge over their river. According to a telegram despatched to Otaki on Thursday by the member for the district (Mr. H. A. Field) the Otaki bridge plans were signed by the Minister of Public Works on that day, and tenders were to be called within a couple of days. The news was deemed important enough to be the subject of an extra issued by the Otaki Mail.

November 4, 1899

At a meeting of the Otaki Swimming Club held on Tuesday evening it was decided to affiliate with the New Zealand Amateur Swimming Association, and a committee was appointed to draft a programme for an aquatic carnival to be held on Boxing Day.

December 10, 1899

Mr H. A. Field, M.H.R. for Otaki, died at 12.30 today. He has been suffering from heart disease, and the excitement of the election campaign had a harmful effect on him, bringing on a severe attack of heart trouble. He rallied on Saturday night, and the doctors had hopes that he would pull through, but he had a relapse this morning and passed away quietly just after mid day. Personally the late Mr Field was popular throughout the district, and his demise will be universally regretted.

December 15, 1899

A pathetic feature in the funeral of the late Mr H. A. Field, member for Otaki, was that a copy of the "Otaki Mail," containing the official statement of the result of the general election, and of the return of the deceased to Parliament, was laid in the coffin by the returning-officer.

Ōtaki Community Board, June meeting report

BY MARGARET ANDREWS

The 20 June meeting of the Ōtaki Community Board saw the end of the 2022/23 financial year and a "big splash-out" of all remaining funds in the Board's grants funds.

The meeting was opened by Chair Cam Butler, who welcomed all present and, following formalities, opened the floor for public speaking time. There were five applications for funding plus two late applications which were considered, too.

With the end of the financial year, any remaining funds are returned to KCDC's general fund, but Community Boards are permitted to give these funds to different organisations and groups at their discretion. Some of the remaining funds, this year, were given to three of our schools to assist with providing students with essentials to be able to attend class. Community Grants funds were allocated to Cobblers Lunch \$1,500 to cover venue rental. Energise Ōtaki received \$2,500 to assist with heating Ōtaki homes with curtains, insulation and/or heat pumps, as well as educating families about keeping mould out of the house and other easy draught stoppers.

Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club received \$2,000 to purchase surf-fins for club members' training.

Kāpiti Chorale received \$293 towards the hire cost of Te Raukura ki Kapiti for the choir's 40th anniversary concert and the world premiere of *Pirate Girls* by American creators Hanson and Hanson.

Ōtaki Free Food Pantry: \$2,000 to purchase groceries.

Applications to the Sporting Activities Fund were successful. Ōtaki Pickleball Club received \$812 to purchase paddles and balls. This is a new sport, played on either a part of a tennis court or indoors. Te Kura-a-iwi o Whakatupuranga Rua Mano received \$2,000 to help families purchase sports uniforms and partake in sports events.

Ōtaki College, Waitohu School and Ōtaki School each received \$2,000 to support families and children to attend school with school necessities.

From the Ōtaki Initiatives fund, Te Ataarangi o Ōtaki was granted \$500 to assist with costs of hosting a Wellington-wide wānanga in August. Wellington Regional Emergency Management Office received \$679.96 to purchase solar chargers and batteries. Stowers received \$1,500 to purchase containers and labels. Theo Arraj was granted \$9,000 to paint a mural in the Ōtaki Community.

Kāpiti Youth Support, \$2,873.94 for graffiti removal. Ōtaki Sports Club received \$1,258.10 for rebranding and signage. Ngā Hapu o Ōtaki, \$5,000 to assist Moko Morris with the community food supply initiative. Altogether, funds through the Ōtaki Community Board funding initiatives put \$38,137 into Ōtaki schools, sports groups and many other programmes and support groups.

A Takutai Kāpiti Coastal Advisory panel member gave notice of a community meeting on Saturday 1 July at the Ōtaki Baptist Church, 10.30–12.30am to hear and suggest development ideas and initiatives for the Ōtaki Beach area and the effects of climate change. This is part of a programme involving all the beach areas along the coast.

Following the confirmation of the ŌCB May meeting minutes, Mr Butler closed the meeting at 9.09pm.

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Media Muse

By Manakau's Tom Frewen

The only dairy on SH1 between Ōtaki and Levin is the Manakau Store at — the clue's in the name — Manakau.

Every day I cross the busy main road, often waiting for several minutes for a break in the traffic, to get the newspaper and the news. The paper I take home for doing the crossword and the sudoku but the news comes from the shopkeeper, Sonya Martin.

On Saturday 10 June Sonya had what television calls "breaking" news. "Tonight we begin with breaking news," TV news readers say, barely containing their excitement. For good measure, they run a banner across the screen stating in capital letters BREAKING NEWS for events that have occurred quite recently and may even be still occurring, or unfolding, also called "developing" news.

Sonya's news was breaking in more than one sense of the word. "I've been robbed," she said as I handed across the \$3.40 that the newspaper now costs, despite being reduced to little more than a life-support system for its puzzle page.

"What?" I said. "Robbed? We don't have that sort of thing going on round here. This is Manakau, as close as you can get to a United Nations World Heritage Site, a unique semi-urban/rural village, a virtual leafy suburb (eg Remuera) with unusually wide berms, but without the hoity-toity neighbours and ram-raids that go with living in Auckland.

"Yes," Sonya, confirmed. "Robbed. At 20 to eight this morning."

She'd been out the back making her famous sandwiches — fillings include cucumber and egg, very popular with locals, and salami and tomato, a perennial favourite — when she heard a loud thump out in the shop.

Its cause remained a mystery until, going through

the security camera footage later with the cops, she saw it been caused by a tall geezer wearing a balaclava running into the shop and skidding on the floor, landing heavily on his arse and slamming into the icecream fridge. A ram-raid Horowhenua-style.

By the time Sonya came through from the back to investigate, Mr Balaclava was behind the counter and at the tobacco cupboard. He was brandishing a big screwdriver, about 30cm in length with, Sonya noted, a Phillips head.

While Mr Balaclava was helping himself to an armful of tobacco packets, taking only the cheapest brand for some reason, his mate in a hoodie and bandana worn as a face mask, was into one of the drinks cabinets, stocking up on — get this — two-litre Meadow Fresh LITE milk, showing no interest in the bacon and other good stuff on the shelf below, also grabbing some orange drink before running back out to their car carrying an estimated 17kg of liquid in plastic bottles.

Ignoring her own strict instructions to deal with this sort of situation by retreating back behind a reinforced door, locking it and hitting the "panic button" to call the cops, Sonya chases the robbers out the front door.

Their getaway car, a rental stolen from a driveway in Levin, was facing south. Sonya tried to slam the driver's door onto Mr Balaclava's ankle as he got behind the wheel.

They take off, scattering packets of tobacco on the road, while Sonya goes back inside and dials 111. The first cop from Levin arrives within minutes. The robbers, meanwhile, hoping to avoid police cars coming up from Ōtaki, get off SH1, turning onto Manakau Road South on which their vehicle becomes the 21st — according to a reliable local source who's been keeping count — to come to grief on the famous

nasty tight bend going over the ridge.

They then took off cross-country with their haul of tobacco in 100gm pouches, priced at between \$70 and \$90 each, amounting to nearly \$3000, and their LITE milk and orange drink worth another \$50.

News of the raid spread quickly on the Horowhenua-Kāpiti-Wellington traffic updates Facebook page, keeping Sonya busy responding to texts from anxious customers. Had her shop been in Man-U-kau, in South Auckland, the robbery might even have made that evening's TV news, and would have been reported on local radio and the next day's newspaper.

Local daily newspapers in towns between Wellington and Whanganui disappeared years ago, bought and eventually closed down by the two Australian newspaper chains, Fairfax (now Stuff) and NZME. Stuff ceased publication of its weekly Horowhenua Mail some months ago while NZME continues to produce the Horowhenua Chronicle on Fridays. Although its 16 June issue carried a report of an aggravated robbery of a Winchester Street dairy in Levin the previous Tuesday, there was nothing about the similar raid on Sonya's store only just over 5km further south and in its circulation area.

An article in the Spring issue of Nieman Reports, a journal published by the Nieman Foundation for Journalism at Harvard University in the United States, reports that in places where newspapers "have been hollowed out or shut down, the heartbeat of local news is holding on in a form that's stood the test of time — local public radio."

The article points out that radio costs much less than newspapers and television to produce. A recent study involving 215 National Public Radio (NPR) stations had found that most of them were "well-positioned to be leading providers of local news in their communities — especially with additional funding to increase their local reporting capacity."

While public radio in the United States relies on sponsorship, raising funds from listeners and

philanthropists, local stations in New Zealand would have to look for financial support from the government's two broadcast funding agencies, NZ on Air and Te Māngai Pāho (TMP). The 14 access radio stations funded by NZ on Air get a total of \$3.2 million a year, with grants to individual stations of between \$100,000 and \$200,000, well short of meeting the cost of maintaining a newsroom. The 21 iwi stations supported by Te Māngai Pāho each get \$600,000 a year. Another \$1.6 million for a national radio news service takes total TMP radio funding to \$15 million a year.

A recent article about one iwi station on the Te Ao Māori news website reported that Radio Ngāti Porou in Ruatōria supports 12 paid staff and has annual operating expenditure of around \$1 million requiring additional revenue from advertising and other sources.

"I'm constantly looking for funding to purchase new equipment, pay my staff well and make sure everyone is over a living wage," says station manager, Erana Keelan-Reedy.

NZ on Air's access stations, on the other, hand are not allowed to earn revenue from advertising or even have regular radio programming such as breakfast shows.

The Te Ao story about Radio Ngāti Porou notes that the last six years had seen a shift to providing critical civil-defence support in times of emergency.

"Whenever a storm hits the East Coast," according to the report which, ironically, was produced on additional public funding from the Local Democracy Reporting Service managed by Radio New Zealand, the Newspaper Publishers Association and NZ on Air, "Radio Ngāti Porou is the first port of call for information that could prove lifesaving."

Surely, if Ruatōria's 700 residents can support a publicly-funded local radio station, Ōtaki with nearly 4000 residents should be able to do the same. Unfortunately, it will require a change of government with a completely new broadcasting policy for this to happen.

Funding for community projects

BY FRANK NEILL

Nine Ōtaki organisations have benefitted in recent funding allocations.

The Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club received a grant of \$12,000 from the New Zealand Community Trust towards the cost of shed doors.

Four Ōtaki groups received grants from the Kāpiti Coast District Council (KCDC) Community Grants programme.

Ōtaki Promotions received \$1,000 for improvements to the Community Christmas Wonderland Project.

The Ōtaki Stroke and Wellness Support Centre received \$1,000 towards Sit and Be Fit classes. These aim at increasing cognitive, sensory and physical function.

The Ōtaki Toy Library received \$1,831 to improve their toy library.

The Ōtaki-Waikanae Presbyterian Parish was granted \$500 towards a new barbecue.

Two organisations with Ōtaki links were among the four recipients of KCDC's Arts Sustainability Fund grants.

Kia Emiemi was one recipient. Through a strengthening collaborative relationship between Mahara Gallery and Te Wānanga o Raukawa, Kia Emiemi focuses on the Toi Whakarākau weaving and carving

programmes, providing an internship programme, and sharing traditional Māori taonga creation with the community.

The Matariki Star Glaze Festival also received a grant. Star Glaze will be an annual mid-winter Ōtaki-based art festival that celebrates Matariki through the arts, supports creative excellence, and provides a sustainable platform for Kāpiti creatives (ceramicists, potters, visual artists, weavers, sculptors, and photographers) to exhibit and sell their work.

Two Ōtaki organisations were also among the four recipients of KCDC's Museums and Heritage Development Fund grants.

The Friends of the Ōtaki Rotunda received one grant. It will support the Friends in their work with the Department of Conservation and Ngā Hapu to restore the Ōtaki Children's Health Camp Rotunda as a visitor destination and venue for community events.

The Ōtaki Museum received a one-off contribution to its project to upgrade its technology and increase the participation of visitors to the museum through more interactive displays.



Takutai Kāpiti.
COASTAL ADVISORY PANEL



Ōtaki, Te Horo, Peka Peka: What's the plan for adapting to coastal hazards?

10:30am - 12:30pm, Saturday 1 July 2023
Ōtaki Baptist Church, cnr State Highway 1 and Te Manuao Road, Ōtaki

Join the Takutai Kāpiti Coastal Advisory Panel at a community meeting to discuss their draft recommendations for adapting to coastal change from sea level rise in the Northern Adaptation Area (Ōtaki, Te Horo and Peka Peka).

Kāpiti Coast District Council has asked the Coastal Advisory Panel to represent your views so it's important we hear your feedback on the recommendations.

Join us: **10:30am Saturday 1 July**
or have your say online at
haveyoursay.kapiticoast.govt.nz/coastal

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Tel: 364 6838
Email: rangiatea.church@xtra.co.nz

Waikanae Whakarongotai Marae
2nd Sunday, 11.30am

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Club of the Year and a Queen's Service Medal for our Club Captain

BY NIKKI LUNDIE



Peter Housiaux, QSM

What a moment in time! Not only has our club been awarded the title 'Club of the Year' at this year's Capital Coast Awards of Excellence for the 2022/23 season; but our current Club Captain Peter Housiaux, has been awarded a Queen's Service Medal* in the King's Birthday and Coronation Honours 2023, for services to surf lifesaving and canoe polo.

Surf Life Saving New Zealand's criteria for 'Club of the Year' award are based on points received for the number of new lifeguards, crew persons and IRB drivers; the number of refreshed lifeguards, crew persons and IRB drivers; competitors in junior & senior competitions during the season; and patrol audit results and administrative tasks that have been completed including filing out patrol statistics, etc. We are absolutely stoked to have received this award and are thankful to all of our clubbies for their commitment and dedication during a very successful season.

Peter Housiaux has been involved with the Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club for more than 50 years. He has also been a key figure in the Ōtaki Canoe Polo Club, which has achieved national and international successes.

Pete joined the surf club as a lifeguard in 1972, following in his father John's footsteps. Pete has held many roles in the club ranging from patrol captain, committee member, search and rescue co-ordinator, coach, mentor and, more

recently, club captain.

Pete has also been passionate about canoe polo and formed the Ōtaki Canoe Polo Club in 1987. He got into canoe polo through cross training for triathlons and surf lifesaving. In those days many of the Ōtaki Surf Lifesaving Club members played canoe polo. Pete went on to play and coach internationally. A highlight was coaching the women's team to gold medal success at the 2016 Canoe Polo World Championships in Italy.

After hearing the exciting news of his award, Pete thanked the club for all the congratulatory messages and kind words received. He said, "it makes me very proud

to be an Ōtaki clubbie, especially after Ōtaki winning the club of the year award, what a crew, aye!"

Congratulations, Pete, we are all ridiculously proud of you, and feel very lucky to have your friendship, leadership and experience in the club.

* The Queen's Service Order and its accompanying medal, the Queen's Service Medal, is still named after the late Queen Elizabeth II this year, but will change name to the King's Service Order and King's Service Medal to acknowledge the new monarch. The first honours using the new titles are likely to be announced as part of the King's Birthday Honours List 2024.

below: Peter Housiaux (centre) with children Joshua (left) and Jordan



New Police officer loving Ōtaki

BY FRANK NEILL

Ōtaki Police officer Trey Bassett has loved moving to the town, so much so he hopes to live here "forever," he says.

Constable Bassett made the move from South Auckland, initially for a "change of scenery".

Also, he says, "the cost of living was beginning to bite me, and it was getting quite dangerous in Auckland, so I thought it was time to move."

It has proved a very good decision.

"It's been a breath of fresh air for me," Constable Bassett says.

"The community is really engaging and I like the Te Reo Māori around here.

"I like the slower pace, and the small-town vibe is really nice compared with the rat-race in Auckland.

"You've got a good gig going here."

As well as enjoyed the Ōtaki township and community, Constable Bassett is also valuing being part of the Ōtaki Police team.

"The staff here are awesome and we've got a good boss [in Sergeant Phil Grimstone]," he says.



A keen sportsman, Constable Bassett has joined the Ōtaki Sport Club's football squad, which has fielded two teams in this year's Horowhenua-Kāpiti competition. This is his second year playing football, having switched from rugby league.

While in Auckland he played league for the Mangere East Hawks and before that he was with the Linton Cobras when he was in the army.

Constable Bassett is coming up to five years of service with the Police, having transitioned from the army, where he served for just over five years.

After leaving secondary school Constable Bassett worked in the butchery department at Pak'nSave for a year before joining the military.

He was attracted to make the move from Auckland by the Police's Ōtaki recruitment campaign and decided to "give it a good roll of the dice and see what happens."

It has proved a winning roll.

left: Constable Trey Bassett

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