

The Devonport Flagstaff

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July 16, 2021

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Helen Michell
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Local businesses mark
major milestones... p2-3

Fishy outlet makes a
splash in Hauraki... p5

Interview: New blood at
the Rose Centre... p18

Time to rise up for our heritage

Devonport residents need to take up the fight to preserve our heritage suburb.

The government has ordered more intensive development in Auckland – and our historic homes are far from safe.

Auckland Council is conducting a survey of heritage properties to judge their worthiness for protection. This may not go well for a number of Devonport streets, which could be slated

for multi-storey developments. It's time to remove any doubt in the council that an assault on heritage will not be tolerated.

Auckland Council has the ability to fight the government edict and front up for heritage, with a series of protections safeguarding our built history.

In the 60s, Ngataranga Bay was sold by then Devonport Borough Council to a devel-

oper. Determined action by residents saw the sale quashed. People do have power to make change. **Rob Drent, Editor**

Call and email the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board and North Shore Councillors Richard Hills and Chris Darby with your views. Send your letters to the Flagstaff: news@devonport-flagstaff.co.nz

Story page 10, editorial page 12.

Kapa haka heralds magical Matariki



Star power... Taenga Durie performs at Bayswater School's Matariki celebrations. More pics, p16-17.



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Devonport Chocolates still sweet after 30 years

Boutique chocolate makers Stephanie and Caroline Everitt are happy to see their customers enjoy just as much – or as little – chocolate as they fancy.

“People will sidle into the shop and say I’ll only have one,” says Stephanie, managing director of Devonport Chocolates.

“I say, ‘That’s perfect – it’s just like the French eat it.’”

Whatever a customer’s preferences, the pair take pleasure in sharing what daughter Caroline describes as the “moment of joy” that indulging in quality chocolate delivers.

And they are counting their blessings that the good taste of loyal local customers has supported their business through 30 years.

Covid-19 wiped out their tourist trade last year. “Then January and February were some of the worst months ever,” says Caroline. Domestic visitors were wary of Auckland and there was no bonanza from America’s Cup yacht racing.

But the outlook is now improving, with more New Zealanders visiting Auckland and even some Australians appearing around the village, travel bubbles permitting.

A second store, opened 10 years ago in Queens Arcade in the CBD, continues to trade thanks to “very kind landlords” and the support of office workers.

Here in Devonport, the locals keep popping into the Wynyard St premises, be it for a little daily treat, for gifts or to continue family traditions around Easter and Christmas. “We’ve become embedded in people’s lives, which is lovely,” says Caroline.

Stephanie’s vision, when she bought the business 22 years ago, was always to look to the future. Along with husband Terry and then university-student helper Caroline, they opened the retail store 20 years ago. This consolidated manufacturing on-site with retail sales, underlining their hand-made artisanal approach.

High-end couverture methods were introduced, using cocoa butter, rather than com-



Quality treat... Stephanie (left) and Caroline Everitt of Devonport Chocolates

pound chocolate, which is often made with palm oil. The company expanded beyond the gift market, to target chocolate connoisseurs and supply upmarket hotels.

Caroline, who was drawn back into the family business 12 years ago, looks after the retail and communications side, with Stephanie handling wholesaling and costings. They collaborate on product development, and Terry is the finance man. Caroline teases her mother, now an energetic 70, that she is not sure she wants to inherit looking after all of it.

To mark Devonport Chocolates’ 30th in style, a staff dinner is planned and there’s a special celebration box on sale.

To stay relevant, the business regularly trials flavours in response to culinary trends and the desire to hero local ingredients. One of its newest is a vegan blend of lemon and olive oil.

A topseller, its Hauraki Salted Caramel, takes its name not from the peninsula suburb where Caroline lives, but from the Gulf. It incorporates salt from Maraetai. Feijoa and other fruit fillings are also popular.

Stephanie says shoppers are becoming more adventurous. The taste for healthier dark chocolate is also on the rise, she says. This more intense flavour fits in with her ideal of quality over quantity. “That’s the way you should eat it, not like a block of cheese.”

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No play today



A keen group of Waitemata Golf Club members rallied to clean-up leaf debris after flooding turned parts of the course into a lake overnight on Sunday. Golf course manager David Herbert said 15 to 20 members turned out to help.

The course re-opened on Tuesday, with council staff also working on the Seabreeze Rd pump station that day. A pump failure and a closed drainage gate apparently led to the flooding.

Fleet St Panelbeaters knocks up half a century



Fifty not out... Dennis, Dianne, Nathan and Rebecca Hale of Fleet St Panel Beaters

Some businesses never go out of fashion – and the bumps, dents and scrapes that are part of every motorist’s life have proved an ongoing conveyor belt for Fleet St Panel Beaters.

The family firm marked 50 years in Devonport last week, making it easily the village’s oldest.

Dennis Hale started Fleet St as a one-man band on 9 July 1971. “It was 12 hours a day seven days a week back then,” he recalled last week.

The business has grown to its current staff of 12, and physically expanded to take in the paint shop downstairs. Two years ago, it took over and renovated the neighbouring shop (formerly Nord) for its office.

This was the cue for Dennis to retire from the business after 48 years, and also marked the departure of his wife, Dianne, who did the accounts for decades.

They had been in partnership since 1988 with son Nathan – who has now taken over the reins, with the help of his wife, Rebecca, who also works as an interior designer.

After five decades, the panel beaters is still located in the same spot – on the edge of the New World car park, with the odd supermarket crunch a steady source of work.

“We get a few come out of there every

year,” Nathan says, with a hint of a smile.

Fleet St Panel Beaters continues to do what it has always done – repair panels and accident damage.

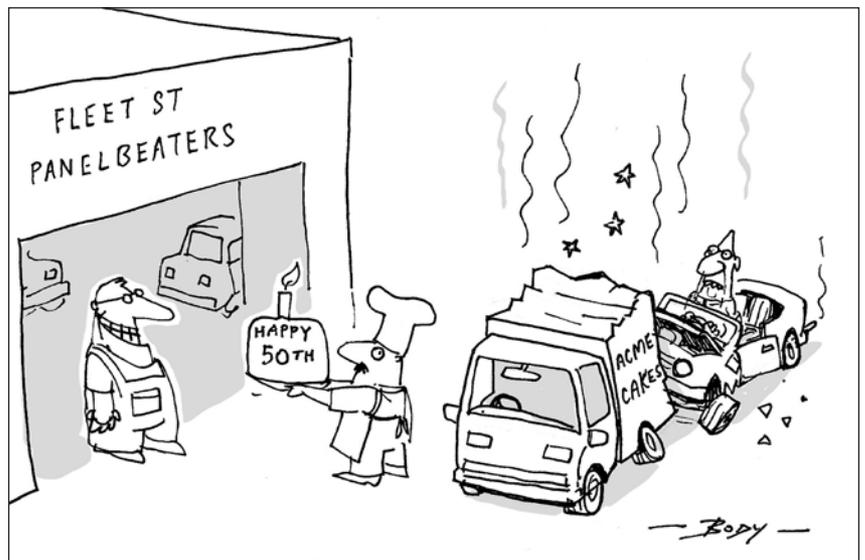
The shop changed to using water-based paints five years ago. And now electric vehicles are starting to come in.

“The repair work is the same, but there’s

a lot more work to get it to that stage – they have to be shut down by an electrician first,” says Nathan.

Fleet St hasn’t got anything major planned to celebrate 50 years in business.

“It’s kind of crept up on us,” says Nathan. “I don’t know where the last 10 years have gone.”



Make the most of your North Shore lifestyle



Shore people... the Quartz Wealth team (from left) Mark Humphrey, Anna Robinson and Glenn Read

Beaches, leisure, family, community – the team at Quartz Wealth are living the same lifestyle as their clients.

Based in Takapuna, Glenn Read and his team – Anna Robinson and Mark Humphrey – all live locally: Glenn in Bayswater and Anna and Mark with their respective young families in Forrest Hill.

“We are very much about helping you live life now and building for the future – we help people achieve the lifestyle they want by advising on the options and structure around money, we take the financial worry out of their lives,” says Glenn.

He grew up on the Shore, attending Westlake Boys, and after stints in London and Germany decided to move back with his wife and three daughters “for the lifestyle the area offers. I play squash and tennis and we love going to the beach and out in the boat.”

A Chartered Accountant, he left the institutional world to set up Quartz Wealth in 2009, wanting to establish a professional services firm which offered independent financial advice on a more personal basis.

“I’d seen lots of mums and dads badly burnt during the GFC ultimately because of poor advice, or not getting any advice,” he says.

Quartz Wealth was always different. Because it was independent and unbiased it could offer “best of the best” investment strategies. It has always aimed to work more closely with fewer clients offering a holistic approach to people’s lives, rather than seeking volume based business.

*“Live now and build
for the future”*

Anna joined the team six years ago, enjoying the people focused firm alongside a busy family life with three children. Mark, Quartz’s UK pension specialist, arrived in New Zealand via finance jobs in England and Singapore. His wife is German but spent some of her teenage years in New Zealand and “we always intended to raise our family (of two kids) here – we loved embracing everything the North Shore has to offer.”

Quartz “gave me the opportunity to reset from where I had been working in the corporate world and start helping real people,” he says.

With Covid-19, the housing boom and low interest rates, the Quartz team have picked up several trends.

Anna says: “People are coming to us in some cases 10 years earlier than they may have done in the past...there’s a trend to get your finances sorted out earlier in life.”

Glenn adds its never too early to get your financial affairs sorted out to facilitate the lifestyle you want.

The perception that you need to have huge amounts of wealth to get financial advice is disappearing, he says.

“We have all sorts of people as clients – sometimes they span generations – we’ve got clients starting up investment portfolios for their grandkids.”

Many clients seek financial advice when there is a major change or lifestyle shift, but most “clients wish they had come to see us earlier,” Glenn says. Recent statistics showed billions was sitting in New Zealand banks gaining little interest.

“A lot of people are wondering where they should put this money. We can advise on that,” he said.

Quartz offers clients a complimentary initial consultation to discuss their needs, problem or objectives.

Tank commander targets fishy business

At just 21 years old, Cameron Yaxley is one month into the bold gamble of opening his own business, a specialty store at Hauraki Corner for fans of tropical fish. “It’s not as hard as you think,” is the advice he has given friends from Takapuna Grammar School and Auckland University.

In reality, the venture, founded on borrowed money, does carry some stress. Luckily, Yaxley says being around fish is calming. “I’m finding it pretty good because it’s something I love – I just get to come here and hang out with the fish,” he says.

It’s a seven-days-a-week commitment, with Yaxley manning The Aquarium Project store single-handedly Wednesday to Sunday, doing tank installations and servicing on the other days.

Already, just a month after opening, he is attracting regular visitors, including children from over the road who like to pop in daily to look at the fish. They have even delivered him little fish drawings, now pinned to a corkboard behind his counter.

Growing up in Devonport, Yaxley, like many kids, had a few fish in a small tank. But it was only a few years ago that he got his first “serious” tank, leading to him breeding fish. He now has a “fish room” at the home he shares with his partner in Bayswater.

“My personal interest is the big fish, I’d love to make it more accessible to people to have them,” he says. A favourite is the Asian arowana. He is also involved in rehoming axolotls, working with a Dunedin woman who rescues the amphibians when they are unwanted or unwell.

His aim is to be a “one-stop shop”, offering advice on aquarium set-ups, catering for family needs through to the bigger-spending specialty market. “I’ve been doing a lot of locals with their kids and tanks in the kitchen,” he says. He recommends a minimum tank of at least 20 litres, saying more water is easier to manage. A good set-up costs around \$200.

Yaxley is an advocate of the benefits of fish tanks in both home and commercial settings, saying they are ideal for the likes of a doctor’s surgery, offering a tranquil distraction. Having suffered from anxiety and depression himself, Yaxley found his fish helped him relax and were something to put his energies into. For children, he says they offer a way into “science-type stuff”.

With a paper still left to complete his Bachelor of Arts, it was only late last year that he decided to open the store, drawing up a business plan with advice from his father, a wholesaler.

Encouragingly, he has had customers from as far away as Whangarei and Hamilton – and has met his business targets to date.



Going swimmingly... Cameron Yaxley says his Hauraki Corner fish business is meeting its targets

Central Banks Behind the Curve

Central Banks around the world are sitting on their hands as markets begin to price in interest-rate increases sooner rather than later. It seems they are all waiting for the US Fed to start raising rates before anyone else is prepared to move. It is evident that there has been record growth, inflation and employment rebound from the Covid collapse last year, and these ultralow rates seem no longer appropriate.

All that has happened is that people have invested heavily into hard assets, such as equities and property, and the owners of these have had considerable asset-price appreciation, underwritten by the Central Bank accommodative monetary policies, while those without have fallen well behind.

Hence, we are now seeing the social consequences of this growing wealth disparity, and it’s hard to see it changing much without a rebalance of this loose monetary policy.

Be prepared for interest-rate increases sooner than later, as we are seeing US inflation at 5%+ ... and is it transitory?

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Devonport Rotary Club



Woodall Park Pump Track Project

To advance its project to develop a BMX pump track at Woodall Park, Devonport Rotary and the Devonport BMX club, with Tim White and friends, held a very successful Information Day a few weeks ago down at the park.

Despite the unsettled weather, we had around 100 people who stopped by to talk about the project and all were very positive and supportive. Devonport Rotary would like to thank all of those people, including the 30 or so who left their contact details and expressed interest in attending site working bees or donating cash and materials. Thanks to Tim White and some of the other local BMX gurus, who dropped by to answer questions and explain aspects of the project.

It was great to see so many family groups using the existing informal track amongst the trees, which demonstrated the level of demand for the proposed track.

Rotary plans to set up a Givealittle page to assist with fundraising to complement funds already allocated. Watch this space and The Flagstaff for further information regarding when work will start on-site. We are looking to begin at the end of September when the weather is suitable. Generous support has already been pledged by Gill and Gundry, Cirtex Industries, Hume Pipes and Highway Stabilisers.

Resource consent has now been granted by council from plans and specifications funded by council, and the details put together by professional track-and-landscape designers Bespoke Landscape Architects.

Specifically Rotary needs help with items such as:

- Supply of construction yard fencing
- Supply of trees to replace five that will be cut down and removed
- Tree removal and stump grinding
- Supply of metal aggregate
- Timber supply for the start jump and drainage-outlet abutments
- Attendance at working bees

There are also opportunities for sponsorship of all or parts of the project.

**If you can help in any way,
contact info@devonportrotary.co.nz
or visit www.devonportrotary.co.nz**

This month's column was sponsored by

Bob McGuigan ph 0274 741 075

Colin Cannon ph 021 296 0407

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Lantern Hikoi lights up village



Lighting up the night... (left to right) Ethan Smythe, Poppy Weekes, and Georgia and Eden Smythe

A 50-strong lantern hikoi made its way through Devonport village last Saturday night to celebrate Matariki.

Between 40 and 50 people made lanterns at a Matariki workshop held that day at Kerr St Artspace. They were joined by people with lanterns made at previous Whare

Toi workshops held around the peninsula, including five at Whare Toi, two at Bayswater School and one at Belmont Primary School.

The group processed from Takarunga to the Depot Artspace in Clarence St, where a Matariki exhibition was on display. Some in the hikoi stayed on for a hangi.

Navy marae staff share traditions

Staff from the Navy marae, Te Taua Moana, shared their waiata and wisdom at the Navy Museum to enhance community understanding of Matariki.

Around 100 people visited the Torpedo Bay during a morning session held last week, ranging from local families to adult language school students from Browns Bay and even a group from Papakura.

Marae manager Ngahiwi Walker led proceedings and played traditional instruments. His wife, Teresa, demonstrated raranga or weaving skills, with participants crafting a

flower from flax. Weaponry was also on display. Poi twirling lessons and, of course, the story of Matariki and songs in celebration of it rounded out the activities.

Enthusiastic audience members included youngsters from the Naval Community Daycare.

This is the fourth year the museum has collaborated with the marae around Matariki, with its communications manager, Jane Cotty, saying it made sense to draw on the rich resources of knowledge locally and within the service.



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Shore on a roll – into Chatham Cup quarter finals

It must have been one of the quickest goals in Chatham Cup history. But North Shore United's penalty, awarded after 30 seconds of play, was all it needed to beat Waiheke United last Saturday to move into the cup quarter-finals.

The last time Shore made it through to the last eight was more than a decade ago.

The football game got off to an enthusiastic start at Allen Hill Stadium in Devonport, with a large contingent of Waiheke's South American supporters swelling the crowd to around 1000 and providing the sides a rousing welcome onto the pitch.

But the flares and fireworks had barely subsided when Jake Porter was brought down and a penalty awarded. He coolly hit the back of the net from the spot.

Although Waiheke's band played on and on, the visiting team could not get the ball in the back of the net. Both sides had a number of shots in the first half, and it was only through a couple of good saves by North Shore's goalkeeper, Silvio Rodic, that Waiheke was denied.

North Shore coach Malcolm McPherson admitted to a few nervous moments towards the end of the match, but felt Shore's defence held up well. The fact that McPherson left Waiheke after one season to move to Shore "meant the Waiheke boys were pretty fired up... they don't like me much."

It has been an excellent effort by Shore to make the Chatham Cup quarter-finals. The prestigious club competition started with 126 teams, with the first four rounds played in regions. It now becomes a national competition for the last eight sides standing, with the next game on 31 July.

• North Shore has gone unbeaten in nine games. It next faces Eastern Suburbs in the Northern Premier League on 17 July at 2.45pm at home.

Goalscorer... Jake Porter (below, right) who scored from the penalty spot for Shore, on attack. Meanwhile Waiheke's fans were entertainers themselves (below).



Lining up a shot... Shore's Horace James (above) while referee Mazhar Batoor (below) had to calm players down as passions ran high



North Shore makes Harbour championship rugby final

North Shore Rugby premiers face the old foe Takapuna in the final of the North Harbour championship this weekend after defeating Marist at home 25-15 in front of a bumper crowd of around 2000.

Takapuna beat Northcote 23-10 at Onewa Domain, in the other semi-final.

It will be an intriguing final – with Shore possibly favourite based on a solid season where it lost only two matches and posted its best win against Takapuna 37-16.

Takapuna has been the competition’s explosive points scorer, however, amassing a large number of bonus points to finish second in pool play.

Judging by Shore’s match against Marist though, the championship is far from assured.

A couple of tries from line-out drives set Shore up with a 15-3 lead at half-time. Shore’s forwards were dominant, its backs energetic. Then immediately after the break, another line-out drive saw hooker Tom Hardy score. With a 22-3 lead, Shore looked set to run away with the match.

Then came the big wobble. Against the run of play, an intercept by Marist fullback Josh Moala-Liava’a saw him score under the posts. Five minutes later, a try out wide by Lemiki Lamoa put Marist right back in the match, trailing 22-15. The spirited side missed at least six penalty shots and conversions which, if even just a few had landed, could have changed the complexion of the match.

Shore, to its credit, tightened up its game and began defending stoutly, with loose forwards Donald Coleman and Sione Teu leading the pack on a number of drives. It was unlucky not to go over a couple of times, but one attack yielded a penalty that Connor Hill knocked over on full-time to stretch the lead.

So a solid, if unspectacular performance by Shore. The forwards were the difference with Hardy, Jacob Pierce and Edgar Tu’inukuafe



Eyes on the prize... Shore backs Maui Hausia (left) and Bryce Shearer hard on attack

also putting in top efforts, as did James Fiebig when he came on late in the match.

The backs need work. They lacked cohesion and kicked away too much ball. Coach Frano Botica will hope they sharpen up.

Veteran halfback Luke Hamilton, who has played 129 games for Shore, was a surprise on the team list. He replaced Jarrod Barker for a five-minute cameo at the end.

• The final kicks off at 3 pm this Saturday, 17 July, at North Harbour Stadium. Takapuna reserves play Northcote in the minor premiership after beating North Shore 16-13 last Saturday.

Champions roll call

Since the formation of the North Harbour Union, North Shore and Takapuna have met in the final on six occasions, with North Shore winning twice and Takapuna four times.

Takapuna has won 12 championships and been runner-up six times. North Shore has won six titles and been runner-up 10 times.

Shore may have decades of history on its side. It won in 2001 and 2011, so perhaps in 2021 is due one again. (It also won the championship in 2014.)



Forward power... Edgar Tu’inukuafe (left) breaks the line, with Tom Hardy



Donald Coleman (above) charges

Intensification push threatens local heritage protection

A major review of Devonport's heritage houses will be conducted as part of a government directive to intensify inner-city living.

And some parts of the suburb are not expected to measure up to being worthy of protection.

Auckland Council's Unitary Plan, introduced in 2013, opened up many areas of the city for intensification, but this has not been enough for the government.

Its National Policy Statement on Urban Development instructs councils in major cities to go further. It seeks an increase in intensive development in the city centre, and close to metropolitan centres and major rail and bus stations.

The government has also instructed Auckland Council to review areas with 'Special Character' overlays – parts of inner-city suburbs such as Herne Bay, Ponsonby and Grey Lynn, as well as Devonport.

The Special Character areas are being surveyed to determine whether they are "high, medium or low".

Each property in these areas will be given a score of between one and six based on: relationship to the street, period of development, typology, architectural style and the level of physical integrity.

The government has made it clear streets with only a high level of heritage values should be protected.

It says where Special Character values are overall of medium or low quality, building heights of six storeys or more should be "enabled".

Likewise, business sites in Special Character areas should be able to have heights of six storeys or more in a "manner which retains special-character values".

City-side suburbs were being surveyed



Heritage issues... flats like these on Vauxhall Rd make heritage protection for parts of Devonport far from guaranteed

first, with Devonport in the "second tranche", North Shore councillor and Auckland Council Planning Committee chair Chris Darby said.

Council officers, and Darby himself at a Planning Committee meeting earlier this month, made it plain they were not in favour of "pepper potting", for example allowing buildings of six storeys or more next to heritage homes.

"That is not good planning," Darby told the Flagstaff.

While the survey results were some way off, Darby was confident "we won't be seeing six storey buildings in Devonport (residential streets)."

Although some areas – such as parts of Vauxhall Rd, which had many old homes replaced

by sausage-block flats in the 1970s – would not hold up to close heritage scrutiny, Darby said.

Other parts of Devonport were exempt from the Special Character overlay.

Owners of the large Spencer property at Stanley Point had successfully appealed against the zoning in the Auckland Unitary Plan hearings.

Darby and others at the planning meeting seemed to view the government push for more intensification as unnecessary, as growth was allowed for in the unitary plan.

Officers told Planning Committee members that "tough political decisions" would need to be made around heritage to fulfill the government's intensification directive.

Campaigners alarmed at return to 'ground zero'

The looming threat to inner-city heritage homes was being thrashed out in a crisis meeting between Devonport Heritage, the Character Coalition and an Auckland Council planning chief on Tuesday, as the Flagstaff went to press.

Going into bat for the retention of Special Character heritage areas, Devonport Heritage chair Margot McRae and Sally Hughes of the Character Coalition (an amalgam of heritage-protection groups), met with John Duguid, Auckland Council's manager of inner-city planning.

The Special Character areas are at risk from government intensification directives. "It's the greatest threat to Auckland's heritage we have seen," said McRae.

"After all the years of battling, we are at ground zero again – we thought we had got beyond this and people had become mature enough to appreciate heritage."

The government wants housing blocks of more than six storeys around rail and bus transit

hubs, extending out from metropolitan centres like Takapuna, and has raised the prospect of blocks in heritage areas as well.

McRae and Hughes will be arguing for the retention of heritage-home protections in Special Character areas defined under the Auckland Unitary Plan.

"All this was thrashed out in the Unitary Plan – the council recognised the volcanic cones, the harbour and the old areas were so important that they needed protection," said McRae. "The council can't just roll over to the government's demands and now say none of this is worthy any more."

Space in Auckland was still available for intensification without destroying the heritage fabric, she said.

The heritage groups wanted to get in early to help shape the council direction, before any reports were written and "we are left with the submission process," she said. "We would argue anything over two storeys moves towards

the destruction of the character of area."

The quantity of heritage housing was important. "The streetscapes – so you can look around seeing dozens and dozens of houses. When you start intensifying that is when the ruination of heritage starts."

All the great cities of the world – Sydney, San Francisco, Paris – had areas of character, which are "loved and visited", McRae said.

The old kauri villas and cottages of Auckland's inner-city were built from trees felled in Northland and the Coromandel. "Forests were sacrificed for these houses, so they are part of our history – they are a legacy to the forests."

She said public pressure would make a difference, and encouraged local residents to put their views to Devonport-Takapuna Local Board members and North Shore Councillors Chris Darby and Richard Hills.

And while Devonport was a focus, "we are just as keen on protecting heritage homes in Ponsonby, Grey Lynn and Parnell."

Bulk of Lake Rd action still five years away

Work on improving Lake and Esmonde Rds is set to peak in 2025-26, when \$28.5 million is due to be spent from a total budget of \$48.4 million for the project.

The figures come from the Regional Land Transport Plan (RLTP) for Auckland, a 10-year outline of work across the city that was recently adopted by Auckland Council.

Auckland Transport (AT) intends to spend the next two years finalising designs and planning for the contentious Lake Rd project, before funding the construction work to take place over three years.

That initial phase has been allocated a total of \$2.1 million, following lobbying from North

Shore councillors Chris Darby and Richard Hills to bring forward funding to progress the draft design, beginning this year.

Spending by year is given as: 2021-22: \$1m; 2022-23: \$1.1m; 2023-24: \$7.3m; 2024-25: \$10.6m; 2025-26: \$28.5m.

AT has yet to give the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board a requested update on the project.

Board member George Wood said it was disappointing a so-called priority-one project was facing a wait to get started.

The board last year opted to accept AT's draft design, on the casting vote of the board's then chair, Aidan Bennett. Some members want more work and detail around the design, while

others want to push on and get what money is on offer. The Automobile Association wants the budget doubled, but AT has ruled this out.

The RLTP says the work will include new transit lanes, and walking and cycling facilities.

It's hoped that by making walking and biking safer and public transport and car-pooling more attractive, a shift from single-use private vehicles will be encouraged.

The board wanted funding for a Bayswater ferry terminal to be included in the plan, but it was not. The outlook for the proposed Francis St to Esmonde Rd cycleway connection is brighter, with the reinstatement of a local-initiatives transport fund that might aid this.

Rugby at risk: call for board to tackle traffic

Worsening Lake Rd congestion is threatening to delay the start times of Saturday afternoon matches at North Shore Rugby Club.

North Shore is warning opposition teams to allow 40 minutes to travel down Lake Rd for games on Saturdays, club member Roger Brittenden told the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board public forum last month. "It's really reached a crisis point," he said.

As well as potentially delaying game starts, the state of the road caused week-round problems and Auckland Council had had years to deal with it, he said. "We're still waiting for something to be done."

Brittenden asked what had happened with talks the board had called for with Auckland

Transport (AT) several months ago on plans for the road. "They're not going to talk to you and we all know why. AT is a law unto themselves."

He suggested the board needed to be proactive rather than be rolled over. Storming the Harbour Bridge, as cycle-pathway advocates had done recently, "seems to work", he said.

The back route along Hamana St was increasingly congested and getting out of Devonport on weekday afternoons took an age, he said. Removing incompatible cycle lanes from Lake Rd would be a start to freeing it up. "Some people would be up in arms, but a lot of people would be cheering."

Brittenden said his cycle counts showed few commuters used the lanes, with around 10

times as many kids cycling on the footpaths as on Lake Rd. "Measure that against the 40,000 plus who drive up every day."

Board member George Wood queried Brittenden on where he thought the cyclists should go. The green route through O'Neill's Pt cemetery was his answer. Aidan Bennett said there were many opinions on the road. "The problem is, the community can't agree."

"How did you get here today," asked board member Toni van Tonder. "I drove," said Brittenden, who complained at having to leave Devonport early to reach Takapuna, which he also visits regularly to use the the swimming pool.

The journey took van Tonder eight minutes on her e-bike. "That is the future," she said.

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By Rob Drent

In 1998, the Flagstaff won a national award for a heritage-awareness campaign in the suburb, after what was known as Old Joe's House in Church St was left open to be destroyed by the elements (it eventually burnt down in a suspicious fire).

And over the past 25 years, heritage has been a focal issue for the suburb (Lake Rd congestion would be a close second).

Campaigns were launched to save old buildings, one keeping Victoria Theatre in public ownership and leading to its restoration.

Some were lost: the Masonic Tavern was converted to apartments despite opposition.

But demolitions masquerading as renovations were exposed, and planning regulations were tightened to give council and homeowners more exact guidelines on what could and could not be done to historic homes.

By 2010, the year North Shore City was amalgamated into the new Auckland Council, heritage by-laws had become pretty clear. In summary: pre-1930 houses south of the golf course could not be demolished, street frontages of homes were protected, while some additions out the back were allowed under strict guidelines.

Under the pro-development Auckland Unitary Plan, which was introduced in 2013, things became a little murkier.

A Devonport Heritage campaign to get

Devonport its own protected heritage status didn't get a look in. However, protections were put in place, with planning rules replaced by overlays.

In Devonport (and other areas of older homes around the city) a Special Character overlay was introduced. It generally meant one house per site, with a maximum two storeys. Frontages were protected.

But while resource consent was needed, the blanket non-demolition clause was removed. Some Devonport houses were knocked down and replaced with modern homes. A bit of heritage was lost around the edges, but historic suburbs remained largely intact.

Now the government is poking its large, and fairly blunt oar into the subject, demanding more intensification across the city. It's talking about buildings of six storeys or more unless there are "qualifying matters" – mitigating factors against the development.

Heritage areas are not immune, and Auckland Council has launched a major survey of its older housing stock. Each home will be viewed from the street, marked on a six-point criteria, and given a ranking on its heritage value. On the surface, it seems the numbers will be added up to see if a street is worthy of protection or not.

To me this seems very once-over lightly: the future of buildings that have been part of Devonport's history for more than a century could be decided by little more than a glance from the footpath and a few ticks, crosses and notes on a clipboard.

Auckland Council is putting a lot of work into the "qualifying matters", such as volcanic cones, view shafts and Special Character areas. These are likely to save the majority – but not all – of Devonport residential streets from apartment blocks. I

can envisage some allowance for more high-rise in the village centre, where five-storey buildings are already allowed.

The construction of Devonport's only real high-rise building, Devonpark, which opened on Stanley Point in 1968, created a furore, mainly due to its dominant position overlooking the harbour, and consequent planning rules ruled out the possibility of further such buildings – until now.

The fact remains, Devonport has one of the most intact collections of Victorian and Edwardian villas in the world. Rather than moving to allow planning changes to knock them down, perhaps a bid should be made to obtain a World Heritage listing.

Heritage should be retained, encouraged and fought for – it is part of our past, and our character as a suburb and nation.

Devonport has a history of fighting battles against authority – and no doubt the community will rise up for this one.

Are there a few barristers and town planners in Devonport prepared to donate some time to help Devonport Heritage lodge a legal challenge against Auckland Council?

An interesting aside from Auckland Council heritage manager Noel Reardon, during the Planning Committee meeting on the government's intensification push: Reardon summarised the planning regulations in place for Special Character zones as permitting one dwelling per site, but with an option to put a minor dwelling behind the main one in the front.

Not quite true, Noel. In Devonport, you can now build a major dwelling on the back of your property and call the front house 'minor' – if you cut off enough for it to fit the size. Just ask Cherie Lane of consultant town planners Lane and Associates and the owners at 110 Victoria Rd how to do it.



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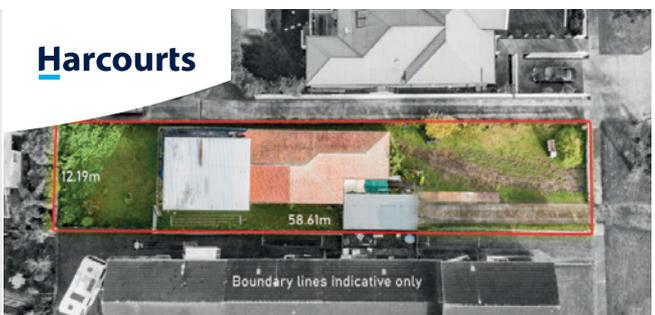
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3 🏠 1 🚗 2 🚘 2 🚲

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Jackie Mark
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Bayswater 4A Beresford St

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This lovely residence looks out over the reserve and across the wonderful vista to the yachts in the marina and beyond.

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4 2 1 1

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Jenny Hinton
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4 3 2 1

Looking north, this stunning architecturally designed waterfront home benefits from sea views, all day sun and spectacular sunsets.

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4 3 3 2

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2 1 1 1

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Devonport 1/173 Victoria Rd

2 1 1 1

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Crowd braves the chill for Matariki festival



Starry, starry night... (from left) Petra Wehrle, Tiana Mita and Breah Mclean were up front for Bayswater School's senior kapa haka group

Hundreds rugged up and headed to Bayswater School for its Matariki Festival, doubling the turnout for the last festival, in 2019.

Close to 2000 attendees were greeted by fairy-light displays draped throughout the school courtyard, and perfect conditions to celebrate Matariki.

Children enjoyed games, crafts, and face-painting, and food trucks were supported by many hungry customers.

"The vibe was so good," says festival organiser Norah Wilson, "We couldn't have asked for a better night."

Highlights of the evening included a

performance by Tom Scrase on the taonga pūoro, and the mihi whakatau by Danny Watson and Aru Waihirere and, of course, the kapa haka.

Several groups from peninsula schools performed throughout the evening, concluding with the Bayswater senior kapa haka.

In an especially moving moment, two groups of whānau stood up from the audience to tautoko the group with a haka of their own.

"It was stunning" says Wilson, "It's exactly why Bayswater does this festival – to celebrate the Māori New Year together."

Wrapping up the night, the highly anticipated bonfire was set alight to the delight of the crowd.

Accompanied by a thrilling performance from Thomas Basset, families cozied up to the blaze and children gleefully chased dancing embers, a warming close to a beautiful Matariki celebration.

"We really enjoyed ourselves, and are very grateful to the community for all the support and aroha," says Wilson.

Proceeds from the festival will go towards refurbishing the school's bike shed and building a new junior playground.



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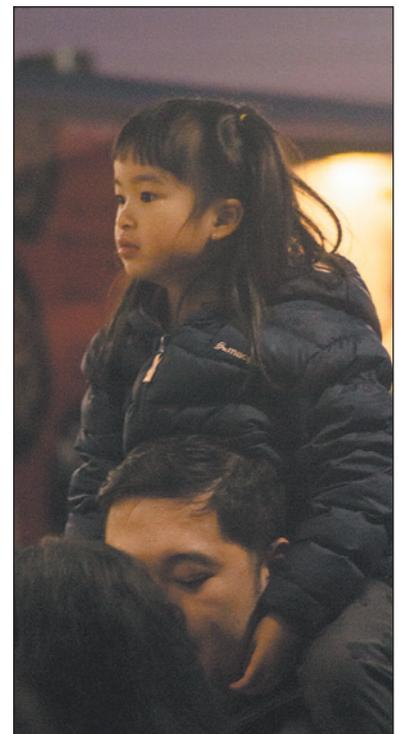


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Matariki a sure-fire hit... (clockwise from above) the evening culminated in the lighting of a bonfire; musician Tom Scrase playing a taonga pūoro; winter jackets were required; best seat in the house; and (from left) Hazel Singh, Willa Shapiro, Ivy-lee Carew, and Juno Donaldson of the Bayswater School junior kapa haka group



Duo promotes fresh growth for Rose Centre

Siobhan Yurak and Ann Langis, who met as Playcentre parents, are now leading a push to expand the role of Belmont's main community venue. They tell Helen Vause about their vision for a vibrant community hub.



Ideas blooming... Ann Langis (left) and Siobhan Yurak are seeking input on developing the Rose Centre into a sustainable community hub

Between them, Siobhan Yurak and Ann Langis have a colourful history of life and work experiences that would do half a dozen people proud.

And together they're a high-energy package raising a range of possibilities for what could soon be on the programme at the Rose Centre in Belmont.

New board chair Yurak and vice-chair Langis are set on expanding the centre's performing-arts focus, making it more of a community hub.

They are seeking community input through a survey and say this is the time for people to come forward if they have a vision they'd like included in the mix.

"Right now we are asking the community how they would use the space. If we can accommodate it, if we can make it work, it could be a goer," says Yurak.

She comes most recently from a human-resources role in the communications and marketing sector, after many years in hospitality. Before that, she'd had a decade or so as what she calls a junior "vagabond" on solo world adventures.

As a teen, Yurak came very close to a life on stage and set her sights on the National School of Ballet when she left school. When she missed

out on selection, the very disappointed 17-year-old didn't have a plan B and rather than settle for another course of study, she figured travelling the world would be her education.

Yurak, in her own words, is "a talker" and in colourful fashion she reels off the list of adventures a girl in her late teens had, travelling far away from home on the other side of the world. She sold encyclopedias, worked in bars and cafes, and even recalls digging graves. She hitch-hiked everywhere she went.

Her travels lasted for a decade, sometimes running out of steam when there seemed to be nothing new in the offing. "At one stage I heard there was a great shortage of women and hairdressers in Alaska and I did actually get to hairdressing training," she laughs. But she didn't head off to Alaska.

She met her partner, North Shore local Miles Williamson, and a new life began running bars and hospitality ventures together. The couple have lived in many different addresses around the neighbourhood, from Devonport to Bayswater, and raised their children here.

"I decided I liked Bayswater best and we settled here," laughs Yurak. "I also figured out hospitality, late nights and kids don't really go together.

With the arrival of her children came the

Playcentre years, a whole new group of women and kids, and among them a new friend, Ann Langis.

American-born Langis came with her partner to New Zealand 20 years ago on their OE, and is yet to move on.

"After 20 years in Bayswater, I guess I call it home," says Langis, whose three children have also grown up here, each going through Narrow Neck Playcentre.

The seed for her future career was sewn early in her education in New York. She attended the LaGuardia High School of Music & Art and Performing Arts, and at university studied subjects relating to child advocacy, going on to complete a masters degree in education policy from Harvard University. This provided the base for years of working with children and a lifelong interest in performing arts. Her passion is child advocacy, but she's also a storyteller, and a public speaker.

Early in her career, Langis taught special-needs children, and through the preschool years of her own children had a decade of hands-on involvement with her local Playcentre. As her children grew up, she began thinking about developing a career around her skills.

Today, she has a business founded on her expertise in play-based learning.

Play provision for all ages is now a recognised as an important community goal for maximising physical, mental and social well-being, Langis says.

The latest addition to her play-based work is 'Junky Monkeys', which has had children in schools and workshops across Auckland learning how to upcycle and turn stuff that's headed for the landfill into toys and temporary playgrounds.

"Back in our Playcentre days, we were full of ideas about what could happen around here for the community," says Langis.

She and Yurak were two of a number of their local peers who saw that for Devonport and Takapuna people there were many public spaces and places, but felt the Belmont and Bayswater community was the poor cousin when it came to local hubs.

Back then, The Rose Centre, with its theatre amenities, hadn't really entered their consciousness as a possibility for much wider use and appeal as a community hub.

But a public meeting revealed an opportunity for new blood at the centre. Yurak got involved and soon thereafter became board chair. Langis couldn't resist being part of it and was soon involved too.

"There are many possibilities for what could happen here," says Yurak. "But whatever we do has to be sustainable and done well. Our vision is for a community hub for everyone around here that people can walk or bike to. A place people will want to come to and be part of all sorts of activities."

The survey seeking community input closes

soon, and this is the chance for anyone with an idea for the space to make a pitch, says Yurak.

Meanwhile, as they scope the viability of proposals, there have already been a number of successful new moves: More than 100 local people packed in for free Matariki workshops,

"Our vision is for a community hub for everyone around here that people can walk or bike to. A place people will want to come to and be part of all sorts of activities."

dinner and kids movies recently. Earlier in the year, the centre reached out to local food businesses and arranged for people to take their own containers to buy dinner for a shared evening meal.

"It wasn't a big crowd," says Langis, "but it was the beginning of making more connection with the business community on these four corners right next door to us."

"I see scope for lots more activity around zero waste," says Langis, and floats the prospect of a regular 'Repair Cafe' for local people to come along and fix stuff together with a bit of guidance and encouragement.

With an eye to the teenage population, Yurak recently invited Takapuna Grammar School drama students to come and make use of the space. Now the school drama club is on-site every Monday and Tuesday afternoon.

"We're right next door to them," says Yurak, "and the small theatre is perfect for them to try out much smaller shows. We see this as just the beginning of bringing teenagers together here."

The centre is still home to the Company Theatre and the Rose Singers, but there are thoughts of regularly bringing in a range of other performing-arts groups and shows from around the city.

Negotiations are underway and the community can expect new things, for a different demographic, coming soon to the Rose Centre Theatre.

"But right here around us in Bayswater and Belmont there are people with all sorts of talents and skills that they may be able to share with their local community. There are possibilities for specialised talks, workshops and groups," says Langis.

"I believe that part of a community must be a space or place to go, where you can belong. It's the concept of tūrangawaewae – having a space local people of any age can feel they belong to and can identify with. That's what has been missing in this great Belmont and Bayswater community for years."

To our valued patients,

We are pleased to announce that Dr. Adeel Punjwani has joined as a new dental associate at Devonport Dental.

He is from the North Island, with over 15 years of experience in providing personalised dental care to families in NZ and Australia. We are thrilled that he is now part of our clinical team.

We are glad to say that Dr. Andrew Steele and Dr. Adeel Punjwani will both be practising at the surgery.



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Kerr St traffic campaign supported

I was very pleased to read about Tim McBride's campaign Re Kerr St traffic (Flagstaff, 2 July). Like Tim says, it's an accident waiting to happen. The speed that some drivers travel on Kerr St is incredible. It's like a racetrack.

Several years back, the school and residents petitioned the council, requesting speed bumps. Nothing has been done. Every parent who was approached signed the petition – around 150 in all. I think that this speaks volumes. Well done, Tim, for taking up the reins on this.

Max Thomson

Plan does peninsula no favours

The Regional Land Transport Plan has certainly not dealt a winning hand to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area.

Firstly, the Lake Rd project seems to be a hard outcome when Auckland Transport (AT) describes this project as being Category 1, which means it is "committed and essential", but the major work isn't going to be undertaken until between 2024 and 2026.

Other projects in adjoining local-board areas have had their projects brought forward, even though they are prioritised Category 2.

Local Devonport, Belmont, and Bayswater communities have every reason to be aggrieved at this delay in Lake Rd construction getting to the start line.

Let's hope that we have some positive discussions with AT and get a better deal for the Lake Rd project in the next Auckland Council long-term plan. In 2024, Auckland Council and AT will go through this process again.

Public transport in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area has also taken a huge hit. Ferry infrastructure, like the design and build of the new ferry terminal at Bayswater, hasn't even been included in this plan.

Neither will improvements to the Northern Busway stations between Akoranga and Constellation see any progress until between 2027 and 2031. This means that when patronage gets back to pre-Covid-19 times, passengers will have to put up with standard facilities.

This is completely unacceptable. North Shore communities have flocked to using public transport and now AT is waiting another 10 years to get the improvements completed.

Let's hope that this doesn't push too many current bus passengers back to their cars to commute to work.

People who live near the busway stations have been extremely supportive of the bus services provided. Failure to improve the passengers' waiting areas and platform facilities may not make travelling by bus so attractive.

One good funding source is the Local Board Transport Capital Fund. It is good to see that in this fund there will now be a citywide \$20 million per year over 10 years. This will enable the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board to complete some important smaller projects.

One of these will be the Francis St to Esmonde Rd walking and cycling connection. This project had to be put on hold when the Covid-19 emergency budget stripped boards of their discretionary funding.

The fund also gives the current and future boards some discretion to do the smaller transport projects that may have been overlooked.

George Wood
Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member

Simon Watts

MP for North Shore

Your local MP, supporting you and our local community

1 Earnoch Avenue, Takapuna
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Authorised by Simon Watts MP, Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.

Bayswater Marina surrounds – clarification

In a story about Bayswater Point, the Flagstaff (2 July) reported that Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Aidan Bennett said he had walked the suburb and found it sorely

needed development. Bennett was referring only to the marina area and immediate surrounds, including the boat club. The wording was mistakenly altered in production.

Harcourts Devonport Tides

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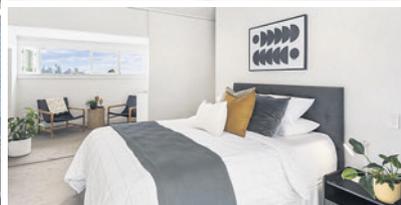
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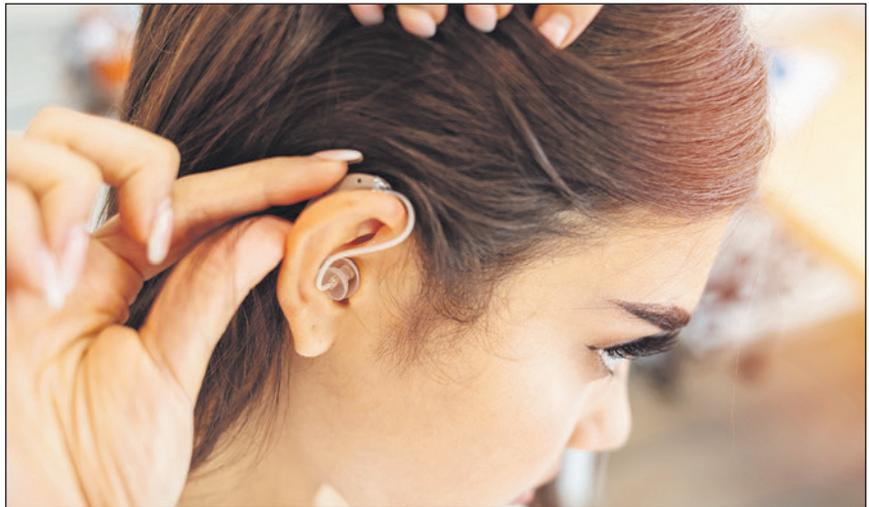
The World Health Organisation estimates that globally, 466 million people have disabling hearing loss. This number is likely to increase to over 900 million by 2050.

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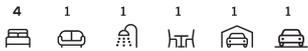
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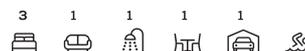
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Veteran Foster ices rivals to win Waiheke ocean swim

Fifty-four-year-old Devonport swim coach Brent Foster crushed a high-class field to win the inaugural 2km Iceberg swim event between Little Oneroa and Big Oneroa Beaches on Waiheke Island.

He was up against accomplished former Olympic and Commonwealth swimmers Dean and Steve Kent, but his time of 23.05 put him more than half a minute ahead of his younger rivals. Almost 570 swimmers completed the event, held on 3 July.

“Steve Kent got ahead and I was back in a bunch, but then I managed to catch him,” Foster said. “I built a bit of lead, which was good as I didn’t want to race Steve up the beach.”

Foster is a veteran in swimming terms, but he’s extremely fit from training and racing almost continuously since his teens, competing nationally and internationally in triathlons, swimming, and surf life-saving.

He represented New Zealand in the 200m and 440m medley events at the 1986 and 1990 Commonwealth Games. He was also part of New Zealand’s world-title-winning surf life-saving team at Auckland in 1998, taking out the tube-rescue title with Trent Bray.

Foster is now largely based in Devonport. He’s been head coach at the Devonport Swim Club for the past five years, training masters, triathletes and kids. He also does massage and some property renovation work.

For his own training, Foster typically swims a couple of squads in Devonport, then several 4-5km solo swims at the Glen Innes pool. He tries to fit in a 5-6 km ocean swim once as week as well – often between Narrow Neck and Takapuna.

Surfing at Bethell’s Beach or Mangawhai completes Foster’s fitness regime.

“I’m trying to work up to doing a half Ironman (tentatively at Taupo later in 2021) but I’ve got a dodgy knee and achilles, so its



Out in front... Brent Foster exits the water at Big Oneroa Beach on his way to winning the Iceberg open-water swim event

been a bit stop-start.”

And he retains the desire to compete internationally. Next year, he moves into the

55-60 age group and has the 2022 World Masters aquatics champs in Kyushu, Japan in his sights.

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Records tumble at BIS cross-country

Two records were broken at the Belmont Intermediate School (BIS) cross-country event recently.

Asha Edwards lopped a massive 47 seconds off the Year 8 girls record, while Angus Waddams shaved six seconds off the record for Year 7 boys.

Asha last year broke (and currently still holds) the Year 7 girls record.

“I feel really proud” she says. “My goal was to break the school record and I’m so happy to have achieved that. I’m now really looking forward to the Harbour Zone Day.”

Teacher Caitlin Milligan led all the students in a short warm-up before racing began. To conclude the day, each student received a well-earned ice cream, provided by the PTA. The top 50 runners from each age group were also awarded house points.

The course is approximately 3.4km, having been made slightly shorter a few years ago. Asha went around it in 11 mins and 53s, to break a record set by now Takapuna Grammar student and competition athlete Sascha Letica, in 2019.

Angus ran his record in 12min 29s to overtake a time set by Alfie Steedman in 2018. Alfie, who studies at Westlake Boys High School, this year won Auckland and North Island junior secondary schools middle-distance races.

The top 10 BIS students in each age division will go on to represent BIS at the upcoming North Harbour Cross Country Zone Day in August.

Podium places:

Year 7 girls: Elizabeth Ellis 1, Nadia Letica 2, Jessica Ellis 3.

Year 7 boys: Angus Waddams 1, Jacob Howell, 2, Baxter McNaughton 3.

Year 8 girls: 1st: Asha Edwards 1, Jessica Donnelly 2, Nova Powles 3.

Year 8 boys: Leo Hobson 1, Cooper McNaughton 2, Harry Shannon 3.



Record breaker... Year 8 girls winner Asha Edwards



On the fast track... Year 8 boys winner Leo Hobson, Year 7 boys winner Angus Waddams, and Nadia Letica, who was second in the Year 7 girls race

Top seeds: local tennis clubs dominate awards

Ngātaringa Tennis Club has been crowned Club of the Year by Tennis Northern, the governing body representing 24 tennis clubs across the northern region.

The Club of the Year trophy was presented at the annual Tennis Northern awards ceremony.

“There are some really great clubs within Tennis Northern and just making the finals placed us in esteemed company,” says Ngātaringa president Allister Irving.

“Winning was a real honour. It’s a reflection of the great people we have coaching, volunteering, and participating here. They make Ngātaringa a very welcoming, inclusive club to be a part of.”

The judging panel was impressed by the club’s list of recent achievements, including court upgrades, regular club activities, community involvement, and participation in inter-club and coaching programmes.

Located in Stanley Bay Park on Calliope Rd, the club was one of the first in the country to adopt Tennis New Zealand’s new booking programme.

It allows online public court bookings to encourage interest in tennis by players who don’t want to commit to a full membership.



Top club... (from left) Ngātaringa club captain Raewyn Rumble, with head coach Lucien Lemay, and president Allister Irving. Below: The trio celebrating with some up-and-coming tennis lovers.



Smashed it: Nielsen coach of the year

Mark Nielsen's tennis students range from toddlers to the very elderly.

"I just did a lesson with a 90-year-old, working on his serve," says Nielsen, who has been named Tennis Northern Coach of the Year.

Former professional and national number-one player Nielsen has been the coach at Belmont Park Racquets Club in Bayswater for 14 years.

He believes the strength of the club's tennis programmes, across all ages, gave him the edge in taking out the coaching award.

Tennis Tots can start as two-and-a-half-year-olds, then progress through programmes that includes junior, schools, school-holiday and adult sessions.

"We have about 600 people on our books in summer time – individuals, groups and kids," says Nielsen, who is often on court coaching 60 to 70 hours per week..

He has a team of four coaches, plus himself, with an additional four or five part-timers in summer.

Nielsen says the beauty of tennis is that most courts are located locally, so players don't have to travel far to play.

And tennis is increasing in popularity, if his website store is any indication.

"We've had 275 per cent growth in our online store since Covid," he says.



Still winning... former top player Mark Nielsen now sets the standard as a coach at Belmont Park Racquets Club

Belmont juniors organiser named tennis volunteer for 2021

Louise Welte was awarded the Tennis Northern Volunteer of the Year after a decade running the junior programme at Belmont Park Racquets Club.

"It's so rewarding working with the kids," she says. "They're a lovely bunch. It's been great to see them improve and mature."

She says running the programme is "an awesome way to connect to the community".

Welte, who is also on the Tennis Northern committee and a Belmont inter-club player herself, became involved with the junior programme when her kids Emma and Benny took up tennis.

Her work as junior convenor has expanded hugely over the last 10 years, and includes running 25 inter-club teams.

Junior membership has grown to several hundred – and reached such a level the club champs are a major event. This year, 147 matches were played to find the eventual champions.

Nurturing talent...Belmont junior convenor Louise Welte with promising talent Sam Nikolai-Denton (9)



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Champion cricketers celebrate



Champion U16 team... (from left) Scout Hallman, Issy Smith, Izzy Fox, Lucy Collett, Clara Hart, Jasmine Perry and White Fern Anna Peterson (absent: Lucy Perry, Olivia Priddy, Rishika Jaswal, Maia Scott)

North Shore Cricket Club's champion girls teams got together recently to celebrate their summer of success.

Because there was no formal prizegiving hosted by Auckland Cricket at the end of the season, the club organised an event to recognise its winners of the under-13 and under-16 grades.

Club president Kevin Robinson spoke of the long history of female cricket at North

Shore and how proud the club was of its current cohort of talented athletes.

White Fern and Auckland Hearts player Anna Peterson described the club as her second home, before presenting each player with their champion's pin.

Girls convenor Johanna Melhuish and coaches Karl Lear and Kent Hallman, all expressed their admiration for the players, a number of whom play for Takapuna

Grammar School, which the club supports.

The club hopes to field a premier women's team next summer. Last summer, it fielded three under-13 teams and one at under-16 level, plus a premier reserve team. It is also looking at employing a part-timer to focus on female cricket.

Registration for girls and boys cricket will open in August.



Champion U13 team... (from left) Jemima Biss, Natasha Busch, Brodie Webb, Raiha Jeory Reynolds, Holly Alderson, Orla Langdon, Summer Lear, Audrey Melhuish. Club Manager Tendai Chitongo is at the back, and White Fern Anna Peterson is at front (right), leaning in.

Cricketers invited to look at TGS facility

Takapuna Grammar School (TGS) is opening the doors to its indoor cricket-training facilities – considered to be some of the nation’s best – for young North Shore cricketers to check out. “If you’re a keen cricketer and currently in Years 6 to 8, or thinking about coming to Takapuna Grammar School in the near future, bring your parents and guardians to see the new TGS indoor cricket facility,” says the school’s director of cricket Michael Tillett.

Girls and boys will get the chance to inspect the spacious building on the school’s back fields and learn about the cricket programme at an open evening on 4 August, from 6pm to 7pm.

Tillett, who is also an Auckland age-group and New Zealand Maori schools coach says: “Come along and speak to some of our players – past and present – about our growing and successful cricket programme for boys and girls.”

To register your interest for the cricket evening, or for more information, please email Joshua Choice at j.choice@tgs.school.nz

• The school is holding its wider open day on, 29 July. Principal Mary Nixon will make presentations at 4pm and 5.30pm, with tours to follow of the newly renovated school buildings, and its arts and sports facilities.

Vauxhall wins rippa award for sportsmanship



Good sports... Troy Flavell, ex-All Black, Maori All Black and former Blues captain with Vauxhall School Rippa Rugby players

Vauxhall School won the Troy Flavell Sportsmanship award at the recent North Harbour Primary Schools Rippa Rugby Tournament.

The school had 72 children in eight teams (boys and girls) playing in the tournament

held at Sunnynook Park.

The award was for players who showed their commitment to the game, respect to other teams and had fun while playing.

The school will go into a draw for a skills session with Flavell.



**DEVONPORT
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TERM 3 2021**

Enrolment at the school is governed by an enrolment scheme, details of which are available from the school office.

Applications for out-of-zone places in Year 1, Year 2, Year 3, Year 4, Year 5 and Year 6 are now being invited for those students who will become eligible for enrolment during the period 26 July to 1 October 2021.

The deadline for receipt of applications for out-of-zone places is 26 July 2021.

If a ballot for out-of-zone places is required, it will be held on 26 July 2021. Parents will be informed of the outcome of the ballot within three school days of the ballot being held.

If you live in the home zone and have not yet signalled your intention to enrol your child later this year, please contact the school immediately to assist us to plan appropriately.

Applications are also invited for parents interested in enrolments for 2022.

The Board of Trustees will also hold multiple ballots throughout 2021 to enable out-of-zone children to continue to enrol in 2022.

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Takapuna

SCHOOL NEWS



Grammar

JUL 16, 2021

From The Peninsular

Exhibition Of Student Art 2021



Original print by Helen Song, Year 9

Vauxhall School • Belmont Intermediate • Devonport Primary • Wilson School • Takapuna Grammar • Hauraki School • Bayswater School • Stanley Bay School

37 Fred Thomas Drive, Takapuna
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 Lake House Arts
lakehousearts.org.nz

24 Aug-11 Sep
Community
Celebration
Sat 28th Aug
1-3 pm

From The Peninsula - showcase of student artwork

From The Peninsula 2021 at the Lake House Arts Centre will showcase the artwork of nine schools from the Devonport-Takapuna Peninsula from year 1 to year 13. The participating schools are:

Takapuna Grammar • Belmont Intermediate • Devonport Primary • Belmont Primary • Vauxhall School • Hauraki School • Wilson School • Bayswater School • Stanley Bay School

Seven of the schools participating in this show belong to the Devonport-Takapuna Kāhui Ako (or Community of Learning). A Kāhui Ako is a group of schools that work together to help students achieve their full potential. It sets shared goals or achievement challenges, based on the particular needs of its children and young people.

This biennial exhibition, now running for a third time, continues to create a visual focus and identity for the Devonport-Takapuna Kāhui Ako. It gives its ākonga the experience of displaying their artwork in a public space, and for many of our young participants it will be their first taste of being part of a public art event. The show will feature a range of different types of media and art disciplines.

From The Peninsula 2021 will run from 24 August until 11 September. There will be a community celebration on Saturday 28 August from 1 pm to 3pm.

TGS Pat Hanly awards finalists



On 24 June, Sasha Bremner and Emilia Perry attended the Pat Hanly Creative Awards night. These two students were the 2021 TGS awards finalists, and attended with the head of the art department, teacher Mr Potter.

Sasha submitted some amazing photography work and Emilia incredible design work. They were among 60 people recognised for these awards and it is a great achievement for both themselves and Takapuna Grammar. They won prizes such as art gallery memberships, Gordon Harris vouchers, art supplies and a certificate each. Their success is a great achievement for both of these students and their creative work going forwards. We are proud to have them representing our school with their amazing artwork.

BY GABRIELLA DELLABARCA

TGS Pink Ribbon Breakfast

Four Takapuna Grammar Students, who held a Pink Ribbon Breakfast at Devonport Community House, successfully raised almost \$200 for the Pink Ribbon Breakfast Foundation. Their goal was to raise awareness and funds whilst also informing the community about Breast Cancer.



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For only a \$10 entrance fee, attendees got access to freshly baked goods such as pink buttermilk waffles, cinnamon rolls and drinks. The students hosted a raffle where attendees could purchase a ticket for \$1, and nearly 40 raffle tickets were sold. The prizes donated to the raffle were: a Skincare bag (worth over \$100) from Sianna Skincare and a voucher for a free haircut and blow-dry (worth \$50) from Nicola Minett. Overall, the day was a positive success with lots of happy faces.

Huge thanks to Sianna Skincare, Nicola Minett and The Devonport Community House, who kindly donated a space for the event.

For more information on Breast Cancer, check out www.breastcancerfoundation.org.nz

BY ZOE MINETT, ALEXIS ABRAZALDO,
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PUBLIC NOTICES

Join the Devonport Squash Club's social squash night every Thursday from 7-9pm at our Narrowneck club. Beginners are welcome. We have racquets you can borrow at no charge and there is no obligation to join the club. 69 Wairoa Road, Narrow Neck.

Letters to the Editor

We welcome letters on local issues that are less than 300 words. Noms-de-plume or unnamed submissions will not be printed.

Email your submissions to news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz or post to Devonport Flagstaff, PO Box 32 275, Devonport

IN MEMORIAM

Rt. Wor. James Williamson
PDGM

Aged 93. Died July 2020

Tragically from a raised-footpath accident. His service and acknowledgement was cancelled due to Covid-19 restrictions. A past master and endless worker for the Browns Bay Masonic Lodge 346. Ex-member of Devonport Memorial Trust. He refused a life membership of the Devonport RSA saying others were more deserving. He was always putting others first. A true gentleman and a good friend. RIP Bro J.P. Jones M.M

THE NAVY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

WHAT I LEARNED FROM THE NAVY

By Emma Bartlett, Devonport local

The Auckland suburb where I live is the home of the Royal New Zealand Navy. Last month, the graduation parade of the Junior Officer Common Training course 21/01 and Basic Common Training course 21/01 took place.

My eight-year-old daughter, having heard the band practising this week, was desperate to see if we could watch some of the ceremony. So on Saturday morning, we walked down the road to see what we could see.

The sun was shining and families were gathered around the parade ground to see their loved ones accomplish this milestone. We were on the other side of the chain-link fence looking in.

After the formal awards ceremony, the graduates did a PT demonstration to *Mambo No.5*. The line between exercise drills and dancing became blurred. The impeccably precise rifle drill was conducted to AJR's *Bang!* One new sailor sang a soul classic whilst the band jammed behind him. On the other side of the fence my girls and I danced.

Discipline. Pride. Strength. Comradeship. Mana. It was all there in



abundance. So was Joy. Oodles of it, mischievous and uplifting. And plenty of Aroha too. It was utterly, gloriously Kiwi. My girls and I were on the other side of the fence but felt a part of it.

Discipline and respect, and service and leadership can absolutely coexist with (and be strengthened by) delight and joy, and warmth and vitality. And when they do, the buzz is contagious.

My daughters were mesmerised that morning... "Mum there are so many girls in the Navy, and everyone is having fun together".

Congratulations to all of the weekend's graduates. You shone brightly! And you showed two young girls what work and service can look like.

Reprinted from Emma's LinkedIn page with permission

Devonport Naval Base security reminder – for the safety of the community please take care and remain outside the 60-metre perimeter of the Naval Base at all times. This includes when swimming, diving, kayaking, fishing and sailing.

**Congratulations? Thanks?
Problems? Complaints?**
DEVONPORT NAVAL BASE TEL 445 5002



Get your fix – at village’s new ‘Repair Cafe’

Got a broken toaster? Or a bike with a buckled wheel? Or a sweater full of moth holes? They can all be fixed at the new Devonport Repair Cafe, which kicks off next month.

Half a dozen repair stations will be located at the Devonport Community House on Clarence St, on 7 August from noon till 4 pm.

Electricians and other volunteer repair experts will be available to help make all repairs, free of charge. Tools and materials will also be on hand.

Organiser Chris Lindley said the Devonport Repair Cafe would be held on the first Saturday of every month.

“If it takes off, we may look at extending the hours as well.”

A special event will be held on 16 Octo-

ber to coincide with a national repair-cafe promotion.

“We’ve got a couple of qualified electricians, a sewing-machine person and couple of people on the station to fix furniture and toys, where all that is needed is a screw or a bit of glue,” said Lindley.

“We are hoping to have a computer station as well.”

A repair cafe had been held at the Devonport Recycling Centre in recent years, but tools used to operate it had been stolen.

Lindley said he had always felt very strongly against the “throw-away culture” created by corporates, and the decline in people’s ability to fix things themselves.

“It used to be normal for us to tinker and fix things. I want the country to get back to that way of life, because it’s empowering.”

Lindley’s company, BraveGen, works at the other end of the spectrum: helping companies gather carbon-and-sustainability data to make better environmental decisions.

The Devonport Repair Cafe is affiliated to the Repair Café International Foundation and its New Zealand arm.

• The Devonport Repair Cafe is looking for more volunteer repairers. If you fit the bill, or you want more information, contact Chris Lindley on 021 380 845 or email clindley@bravegen.com.

Claystore extends hours to an evening

The Devonport Community Claystore Workshop recently extended its hours to open on Wednesday evenings from 6pm to 9pm.

The workshop at 27 Lake Rd workshop is

part of a network of venues, offering a place with woodwork and metalwork tools, and advice on projects for both men and women.

It also opens mornings, 9am to noon, from Monday to Saturday.



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Devonport Community Recycling Centre expands

Devonport Community Recycling Centre will get a bigger second-hand shop and two new weighbridges, as part of site upgrades due to be finished by February next year.

But some members of the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board believe improvements in waste management need to go beyond facility upgrades and involve smarter thinking to drive behaviour change.

“What’s the point of investing in something that doesn’t improve the environmental outcomes?” said Toni van Tonder, who is concerned the facility does not accept or divert a wide enough range of items, meaning many end up going to landfill.

Officials from Auckland Council’s Waste Solutions division last month outlined to the board the planned improvements at the council-owned, privately operated community recycling centre (CRC).

A process seeking proposals to operate the facility is underway, with a decision to be made next month, which will take effect in March 2022 when the current contract expires. The existing operator was “in the mix,” officials told a board workshop.

Budget for the upgrade comes from an already announced \$883,000 from the Government’s Covid-response shovel-ready fund. The council is co-funding this to the tune of \$687,000.

The centre will remain open throughout the upgrade, which includes reconfiguring the positioning of some facilities, with the new shop to be located near the current site exit.

The aims were to help make the CRC more sustainable and encourage greater community waste diversion and the circular economy, officials said.

“My expectation to get out of the investment is to increase the amount we divert to landfill,” said van Tonder. She asked if



there was a forecast on this, but was told no.

An official did say the CRC at Waiuku had successfully increased its throughput with a larger shop. The Devonport shop was “not that profitable,” she said, but it was hoped turnover would increase.

While welcoming the upgrades at the Devonport CRC – which will include better paving, fencing, bin shelters and toilets – board chair Ruth Jackson said: “I’m worried we don’t have a bigger, more ambitious vision [for its operation]. They’re not really profit-making things, they’re things you do for the planet.”

Under waste-acceptance criteria outlined to the board, the CRC would still not accept e-waste, metal hardfill, polystyrene, food waste and some categories of plastics that require sorting. Jackson queried why the city’s various CRCs could not have some sort of transfer system, where people could dump more locally, but items could be moved onto another centre if the local centre was not set up with the right processing facilities for reuse. She also wanted more sorting done to increase diversion.

“There is huge community appetite to be greener, to keep things out of landfill,” said

Jackson. “We need to make it possible for people to do the right thing.”

Board members wanted to know if the garden supplies sold by the CRC would remain if the operator changed. They noted their provision locally saved people driving up Lake Rd to shop elsewhere. Officials explained that would be up to the operator at the time, because individual operators made their own decisions on how to run the CRCs, within wider parameters set by the council.

Each CRC site was slightly unique, council officers said, and Devonport’s had size limitations, but revenue from garden supplies was part of the current business model.

Board member Aidan Bennett asked if the building-works contractor would be a local one. He was told it would be from Auckland.

Officials said they would look to weave in some ideas raised at the workshop into the operator’s proposal documents. The upgrade presentation will come back to the board at a monthly meeting for its sign-off as landholder.

Van Tonder said: “The long and short of it for me is there’s still work to be done.”

20 years ago from the Flagstaff files

- A house at 9 Stanley Point Rd sells for \$4 million – a record price.
- Around 40 people charge into the water off Windsor Reserve for the Devonport midwinter swim. Jennifer Whelan wins best adult’s costume and Rupert Lethaby best child’s costume. The Jervis family has four members taking part.
- Weed-spraying on Devonport’s streets is once again in the news, with North Shore City councillor Joel Cayford asking the council to investigate alternatives to pesticides. Council has entered into a citywide contract, using chemical, manual and mechanical weed-killing methods. For seven years, Devonport’s weeds have been killed with hot water.
- Bayswater Marina Ltd applies to cut

back the amount of land available to the public around the edge of its Bayswater reclamation. It asks the Department of Conservation to reduce the required 20-metre-wide marginal strip to widths ranging from 3.5 metres to 9.27 metres.

- The Devonport visitor information centre should be moved to the council area office at 3 Victoria Rd, a report to the Devonport Community Board says.
- Telecom agrees to remove 13 concrete power poles on Queens Pde.
- The Belmont Intermediate team of Daniel Foote, Conor Whitten, Luke Davies and Joseph Allis wins the North Shore Intermediate Schools Mathex Quiz.
- Restoration work is underway at

Fort Takapuna and on Mt Victoria’s disappearing gun. The historic Fort Cautley is having its brickwork repointed, while the Mt Victoria 14-ton eight-inch disappearing gun is having its surrounds concreted.

- A wet winter has seen many instances of grounds closures affecting rugby and soccer timetabling.
- Artist Gaf Ferner exhibits at the Depot Artspace.
- Belmont Intermediate student Ben Frost (12) dies during a hockey match. He had a genetic heart condition.
- North Shore United is set to play Tauranga in the fourth round of the Chatham Cup.
- Polly Pollock, who planted a 4000-tree glade at Ngataranga Bay, is the Flagstaff interview subject.

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Events Assistant Coordinator (part-time)

Devonport Peninsula Trust is looking for an Events Assistant Coordinator for their summer season. An opportunity has arisen for a skilled events assistant to join the team at the Devonport Peninsula Trust in a part time (9.5 hours per week), fixed-term capacity.

Key responsibilities are to assist with the Trust's popular, annually recurring events; e.g. Summer Fun Tamariki Play, Kids Athletics, Devonport Christmas Festival and others, working closely with the Summer Events Coordinator and Devonport Community Coordinator.

The ideal candidate:

- An outgoing personality and can relate well to children and their caregivers
- Skilled communicator (both written and verbal)
- An understanding of the Devonport peninsula community
- Experience with grassroots, community events
- Able to work well in a small team and equally able to work autonomously
- Physically fit
- Clean drivers' licence and comfortable to drive a manual transmission van
- Competent user of MS Office suite of programmes.

For more info, and to apply (with a CV and cover) letter before 16 July.

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**Qualified
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Age School in Takapuna is looking for Qualified Relief Teachers to join their team.

Age School is a boutique urban school, designed for children for year 1 to 12 who thrive on smaller classes.

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Cafe Chef

The successful candidate will have at least 2 years experience as a chef in a cafe, be able to multitask and work under pressure, be well organised with regards to the preparation of food including stock control and ordering, be able to deliver good/consistent cooked food, work well in a team and have great communication skills.

Apply via ShoreJobs.co.nz



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Hauraki School, Takapuna is seeking a reliable, organised, energetic person with excellent interpersonal skills who has a passion for maintaining the school and grounds to a high standard.

A variety of skills are desirable including handyman, gardening, and contributing to the day to day running of the school.

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OUT & ABOUT

Maria Teape Community Coordinator

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JANE WALSH & DARNELLE LOUIE - CHROMATIC FIELDS

Exhibition dates: Wed 14th – Wed 21st July

Opening: Sat 17th July, 2:00-4:00pm

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Tuesdays, 9:30am–11:00am

The Rose Centre, School Rd, Belmont

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Devonport Peninsula Community eNEWS

To receive the Devonport Peninsula eNEWS, a monthly email listing of community events, and other community notices, please email us at maria@devonportpeninsulatrust.nz

With special thanks to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board for funding the Devonport Peninsula Trust.

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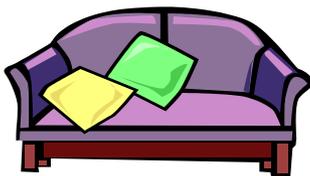
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Author shares tips and tales at children’s book launch

Students from two local schools this month enjoyed the first visit to Devonport Library of author Swapna Haddow, as part of the annual Storylines Festival.

Dunedin-based Swapna Haddow shared writing tips and her history of “telling tales” as a girl growing up in the UK.

In reading from her latest book, *Bad Panda*, she told around 60 children from Devonport Primary and St Leo’s Schools that she was thrilled to be giving the book its “very first ever reading” in Devonport.

“Storylines do talks all over the country every year and we are very fortunate to have been chosen,” said senior librarian, June Swarzbroom.

The library had lobbied to be part of the children’s book festival in previous years, so she was happy it was included for 2021.

With the children sitting on the library’s tiered seating at its northern end, Haddow ran a lively interactive session.

She encouraged children to play fact-or-fiction guessing games. For example, whether on meeting Prince Charles all Haddow could say was: “I don’t like bananas”.

The regal encounter occurred when she was working at the Royal Drawing School and he visited. Haddow got tongue-tied before blurting this fact out. She compounded her embarrassment on another royal visit, when she said to the prince, on being introduced again: “I’m the one who doesn’t like bananas.” He looked at her like she was bananas, before moving on.

Haddow got the children to construct a story based on some guidelines to help them overcome writer’s block.

“If you have a very simple idea of your story – a character, a place, something to do – that will help,” she explained. Adding in feelings and perhaps another character could round things out.

Bad Panda is not yet on bookshelves in New Zealand, but came out in the UK on the same day that Haddow was in Devonport.

“It was brilliant because it was all kids for the launch, not a room of publishers, as it often is,” Haddow told the Flagstaff.

The book, her 30th, will be available locally from September.

Cool bananas... Mary Nguyen of Devonport Primary reads a piece of writing produced during a session at Devonport Library with author Swapna Haddow (right). Below: Haddow (centre) surrounded by her entourage or young storytellers.





WHAT'S ON @ Devonport Library

Tēnā Koutou katoa

Come in out of the cold and relax by the fire! It's school holiday time and we have a lovely programme of Matariki events for the children in both weeks of the holidays.

There are crafts, holiday yoga or making soup from stones. Finish off the fortnight with a family film on the final Saturday. Call into the library for a flyer if you would like to see the full programme.



Tuesday 27 July at 7pm, an evening talk at Devonport Library. C.K.Stead and Kevin Ireland will be discussing the third volume of C.K. Stead's memoirs; with an introduction by Sam Elworthy of Auckland University Press.

Colouring Crossword Collective - we have a group that meet on Wednesday mornings at 10am. Until July 28th, they get together and draw, colour, do a crossword or just have coffee and chat. If that sounds like you, do come along. All are welcome.

The Newcomers (Migrants) Book Club will be starting at Devonport Library on 7 Aug from 2-4pm. A great way to meet people and a chance to explore New Zealand literature.

Remember, the library staff are always available and happy to answer any questions or queries...in the meantime, stay warm!

Ngā mihi

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Takapuna Grammar choirs

Takapuna Grammar School's Chorale has continued a fine tradition of choirs from the school in reaching the national finals of the Big Sing secondary schools competition.

Another of TGS's choirs, the TakaCrooners, was also among those from across Auckland recognised at the Big Sing regional finals.

Although the Crooners did not make the cut for the New Zealand Choral Federation's hotly contested nationals in Christchurch next month, winning a best-performance award in the 'Other Styles' category was a noteworthy achievement, said the school's head of music, Lauren Raby.

TakaCrooners are on the reserves list for Cadenza. Their entry included a New Zealand composition or arrangement, a choral art piece from overseas, with their third piece chosen from another style.

TGS's Leonessa girls choir is on the reserves list for the nationals in late August and was picked to participate at Cadenza, a showcase event for upper North Island schools.

Joining Takapuna's Chorale at nationals will be a strong North Shore contingent, including choirs from Westlake Boys and Girls High Schools, Rangitoto and Kristin.

The Big Sing is the largest choral competition in the Southern Hemisphere. It attracts around 10,000 high students entered in 200 choirs from throughout New Zealand. The Auckland regionals are the largest, involving 60 choirs in three full days of competition.

At nationals, to be held in the Christchurch Town Hall on 26-28 August, the finalists compete for gold, silver and bronze awards.



Recognition... TakaCrooners members Scarlett Sommerville-Ryan (left) and Si'ia Faulalo with the choir's achievement award



Write note... Matthew Spooner is having his composition workshopped at the Choral Federation's annual conference

Young composer shines in national contest

Year 12 Takapuna Grammar student Matthew Spooner has been picked as one of the top five in the country in a young-composers competition run by the New Zealand Choral Federation.

His work, *I Wandered Lonely as a Cloud*, will be workshopped by the New Zealand Voices choir at the federation's annual conference, Choral Connect, this week.

Matt was up against students nationwide, as well as some entries submitted by school choir teachers. They were judged by leading composer David Hamilton.

"So this is a wonderful win for him," said the school's head of music, Lauren Raby.

The same composition won third-equal at the The Big Sing composition competition.

It has been a busy time for Matt, who sings in both TGS's Chorale and the Sultans of Swing choirs.

He also accompanies the Leonessa choir on piano.



make their mark in Big Sing regionals



Full voice... TakaCrooners, with their director, Keani Taruia-Pora, performing in the Big Sing regional finals at 3 Auckland Town Hall

Presented by Nightsong with Auckland Live

Te Pō

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Musician on a mission to revive forgotten stories

Contemporary folk music about old New Zealand is how Chris Priestley describes the songs he and band the *Unsung Heroes* champion.

But that barely tells half the story of their shows – which have “become more than a concert” – and doesn’t touch on his own standing as an entrepreneurial pioneer helping shape Auckland’s music and coffee culture since the early 1980s.

Priestley will soon bring his special style of storytelling to The Bunker, the folk-music venue nestled on Takarunga above Corelli’s café, where he has worked on and off for around 10 years. The silver-haired musician serves customers up to six days a week, but says “somehow I manage to fit in the odd concert”.

He performs with friends, co-writing songs based on colourful characters from the past. “I just like spreading history,” he explains. Old photographs he has unearthed are projected during performances, and a theatrical introduction is provided by noted actor Peter Elliot.

Elliot will don a top hat to compeer The Bunker show on 2 August, a role that will include readings from Victorian-era newspapers. He will tell of heroes and villains, ferry crashes and fires that scarred Devonport in the early 20th century, setting the scene before the music really kicks in, and Elliot turns his hand to some percussion.

Another familiar face in the band is television current-affairs journalist Cameron Bennett, who these days, Priestley says, works mostly as a producer for Radio New Zealand digital and Maori TV.

Between them, Bennett and Priestley write all the songs. Both men sing and play guitar, with Bennett also playing steel guitar. The other musicians are guitarist Nigel Gavin, and Sonia Wilson, singing harmonies.

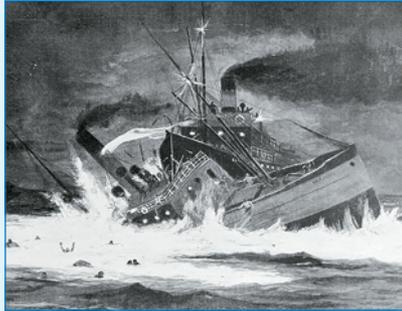
Priestley has been going to The Bunker for around 40 years. Over the decades he has honed his musical interests from early days as a collector and co-founder of Real Groovy record shop, to opening College Hill venue Java Jive, and setting up the original Atomic café in Ponsonby.

After singing and recording other people’s songs back in the day, in recent years – freed from running his own businesses – he has had more time to research and write original ma-

terial. This is often triggered by items he finds on the Papers Past website.

“They’re things that historians know about, but not the average Devonportian,” he says.

Such as the chilling story of axe murderer Joseph Burns who, in 1848, became the first European to be hanged in New Zealand under British law. Maori and settlers gathered to watch him swing on the waterfront, near where his victims had lived.



Noteworthy... Chris Priestley’s songs tell of events such as a 1880 ferry crash off Duder’s Wharf (above) and a 1910 fire that destroyed houses and the Ventnor hotel (before and after, below)

The heavy-drinking former Royal Navy man, who had been living rough at Shoal Bay, broke into the home of a Lieutenant Robert Snow, to steal his pay. He murdered Snow, his wife and six-year-old daughter, mutilating the bodies before burning down the house, sparking rumours of an attack by Maori who were camped in the area. Burns fled, but returned with the intention of marrying his common-law wife, Margaret Reardon, so she could not give evidence against him. She refused marriage and he attacked her. She was then coerced into backing his attempt to blame others for the crime, before the charade unravelled, leading to Burns’s hanging and Reardon being transported to Australia for seven years for perjury.

Priestley welcomes an upsurge of interest in New Zealand’s past and sees more singers incorporating it into song. He notes that, “If you go to Australia and America, there’s hundreds of songs about Ned Kelly and the like”.

It’s the quirky tales that most fascinate him. Such as that of Darling Jennie, a touring magician from Thames, who was swept to her death while crossing the Waitaki River in a Cobb & Co carriage. A song about her is on the CD, *Unsung Heroes* – which in 2013 was a finalist in the folk category of the Tui Awards. Since then, while still trying to find a photograph of Jennie, Priestley discovered she had performed in Devonport, in 1874.

Her song will be on the set list, as likely will that of another character who came to an unfortunate end, one Captain Charles Lorraine. He may have lived in Devonport, Priestley has heard. The balloonist certainly tried to fly from here, failing to get off the ground on the old racecourse, where the golf course is now.

A second CD, *Rogues*, tells other stories, including that of a 19th-century teenaged Taranaki highwayman, Robert Wallath, who robbed the rich, ended up in jail for three years, then spent 60 years as a Salvation Army preacher.

Now with a repertoire of around 30 songs, with slide shows and hundreds of extra images organised geographically, Priestley has rich pickings to tailor what he shows audiences in different areas. In October, the band will play in the Auckland Heritage Festival.

Priestley hopes to uncover more Devonport tales, but says he’s missed the boat on buying into the area. He rents in Westmere, commuting by e-scooter and finding that having recently turned 65 has its perks. “I just got my gold card and get the ferries for free.”

Another project he has on the go is called Godzone Country. Initial research began prior to Covid-19 lockdown, and before he contacted fellow songwriters, including John Hanlon and Geoff Chunn. The idea was to come up with words to go with subjects. For Hanlon, it was the story of Archie Baxter, the jailed World War I conscientious objector and father of poet James K Baxter; for Chunn, the loss of the *Orpheus*, New Zealand’s worst shipwreck in which 189 people died. One day, Priestley hopes the project will lead to recordings.

“Wherever I go, people come up and say, ‘Here’s a really interesting person to write about,’” he says.

• Chris Priestley and the *Unsung Heroes*, at The Bunker, Monday 2 August. For tickets (\$20), call Hilary on 09 445 2227.





Unsung Heroes... (from left) Peter Elliot, Cameron Bennett, Sonia Wilson, Chris Priestley and Nigel Gavin

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