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DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY September 24, 2021 AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

**Jewellery store closes
after 20 years... p3**

**Centenarian recalls Shore
as it used to be... p9**

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John Robertson... p14**

Victoria Rd buildings set for heritage downgrade

In another blow to heritage protection in Devonport, most of the village's main-street commercial buildings will lose their A listing under an Auckland Council review.

The Masonic Tavern building should be stripped of any heritage status and Devonport's historic Memorial Drive should be

among sites to lose their A listing, according to the draft review obtained by the Flagstaff under the Official Information Act

The number of A-listed heritage buildings and sites in Devonport has been slashed from 43 to nine in the council review.

A number of sites marked by plaques and

other commemorations along the Devonport waterfront should be taken off Auckland Council's heritage list all together, the review says.

Many residents would not have heard of four category-A sites recommended in the review.

Background, stories pages 15-17.

Back in business at Alert Level 3



Busy boys... Matt Senior and Trevor Dean at Devonport Hammer Hardware on Tuesday get ready for the rush of orders expected under contactless trading allowed under alert Level 3 which began on Wednesday.



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Briefs

Business seeks support

North Shore MP Simon Watts' electorate office has been fielding increasing numbers of calls from local businesses struggling since the return of lockdowns.

The hospitality sector has been particularly hard hit. Devonport businesses were among those reaching out to him and wanting to see more help from the government, Watts said. National wanted more government support with fixed costs, such as rent. "The resurgence payment is not enough."

Auckland Council was noticeably silent on what it was offering to help business, Watts said. Rates abatements could be offered, for example.

Charity food parcels

The Devonport RSA, with support from New World, has delivered 80 care parcels to its older members. Many of its members live on their own, are unwell or have a partner in hospital or full time care. The RSA is also running a phone tree during lockdown to check on members and help with support like provision of groceries and medications.

Sea slug warning

Sea slugs have been sighted in growing numbers at Cheltenham and Narrow Neck beaches by several members of the public this week. One resident was told council warning signs were to be erected.

By the Flagstaff deadline, Auckland Council and the Auckland Regional Public Health Service (ARPHS) were unable to confirm if the slugs were the toxic variety which in past years have been linked with several dog deaths on the city's northern beaches.

Almost 10,000 North Shore covid tests

Nearly 10,000 North Shore residents have been tested for Covid-19 in the past six weeks, the Northern Region Health Coordination Centre says.

From 9 August to 20 September 9673 North Shore people have been tested across community testing centres, urgent care clinics and GPs. This means 16.2 per cent of the estimated 60,000 residents of Forrester Hill, Bayswater, Takapuna, Sunnynook, Belmont, Milford, Devonport, Castor Bay, Hauraki, Narrow Neck, Stanley Point and Campbells Bay have been tested during this time.

"Anyone in Tāmaki Makaurau with any symptoms of Covid-19 should get a test – even those with very mild symptoms or who feel just slightly under the weather," a centre spokesperson said.

The six-week testing period started just before the Delta variant was detected in the community when a Devonport man tested

positive on 17 August, triggering a nationwide alert Level 4 lockdown. The community outbreak had spread to 1071 cases this week, but many of those had recovered.

Sunnynook Countdown remained a location of interest earlier this week, after a positive case visited on 3 September, between 10.15am and 12pm. Earlier this week 16 cases were in hospital, with one in North Shore Hospital.

North Shore Hospital had called for more ICU nurses and prepared more negative-pressure rooms as the lockdown continued.

A Ministry of Health spokesman said nationally, as of 6 September, 326 ICU/HDU (high-dependency unit) beds were available in public hospitals across New Zealand.

Of the 133 resourced ICU/HDU beds across Metro-Auckland, 94 beds are in the Auckland DHB, 25 beds in Counties-Manukau DHB and 14 beds in Waitemata DHB.

Flagstaff gloves up to get the papers out

The Flagstaff has been able to print and be delivered contactless to stands during Level 4 lockdown – with a little help from our friends.

Luckily publisher Peter Wilson had a team of helpers on hand – his kids Ryoma, Ema and Toma.

Once delivered to our office in Wynyard St, the bundles went straight into the back of Wilson's car. For safety the team wore gloves and face masks.

For our September 10 issue the team delivered 5000 copies by hand to New World, dairies, and around our numerous stands in Devonport and Takapuna.

Papers were also dropped to the staff at the gates of Ryman and other retirement homes, who then passed the Flagstaff on to residents.



But did they get an ice cream?...the Flagstaff lockdown delivery team: Toma, Ema and Ryoma Wilson place papers in stands outside Whites Dairy

The Devonport Flagstaff
DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

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ROWLEY FUNERALS

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 MP for North Shore

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Jewellery store owner sad to leave after 20 years

Resigned to shutting up shop after more than 20 years in Devonport, Shatha Abed Ali says a piece of her heart will always remain in the area.

"I really appreciate all the support from the locals – they tried to keep me going all this year," she told the Flagstaff after sadly deciding that staying on at her Clarence St jewellery store, Marqeez, was no longer viable.

"I tried my best to keep going, but it's not enough."

Falling trade and visitor numbers under Covid conditions, with a lease increase signalled for next year, finally forced her hand this month.

While Abed Ali plans to start a weekly mobile service to Devonport for customers using her jewellery repair services, she will miss the over-the-counter chats.

Older people shared their stories and good friends had been made over the years, she says.

"I see all the children, how they grow. They are mothers and fathers now some of them."

Abed Ali and husband Hussain Alhasney's own four girls have grown alongside the business too. The youngest, Maryam Alhasney, now aged 26, gave her childhood nickname, Meemo, to the first shop the couple opened, in The Arcade between Victoria Rd and Wynyard St. Meemo's opened in 2000 and traded for 15 years, with Maryam – who went through Devonport Primary, Belmont Intermediate and Takapuna Grammar schools – often joining her mother there and becoming a familiar face to locals. "All her life was growing up in the shop."

In the first year or so of business, Abed Ali's husband tackled a man who snatched a bag from another arcade store, Urban Turbans, holding him down with another man until police arrived in an incident reported on by the Flagstaff.

Lockdown has been particularly tough on her husband, she says. The keen traveller has lost his father in Iraq in recent months and has an ageing mother he worries about.

In 2009, when it looked like Meemo's rent would rise sharply, the Clarence St store was secured to carry more high-end jewellery. Eldest daughter Neaam ran Marqeez for a year. After a

deal was struck, Meemo's carried on for another five or so years, before Abed Ali consolidated in one store.

"All my daughters have a background in business, from being in the shop," says a proud Abed Ali. Three, including Neaam, are in good jobs overseas. Maryam, who completed a graphic design degree, now lives in Wellington where she works for Volunteer Service Abroad.

When the Iraqi Alhasney family first came to New Zealand in 1995, it was through Abed Ali's qualification as a biologist. But after finding upskilling to a Master's degree tough while juggling children and being pregnant with Maryam, she began looking around for a suitable shop. A family retailing background and contacts with jewellery suppliers overseas eased the way. Devonport with its affordable arcade appealed as a location.

The family lived in Sunnynook at the time, having shifted to the Shore from South Auckland, partly so the three older girls could attend Westlake Girls High School. But all of Maryam's schooling was on the peninsula, after she joined her mother on the daily drive up Lake Rd.

The commute has become more onerous with the years, and longer since the family bought a home in Orewa. Abed Ali says with growing congestion it can now take her up



**More than a business...
Marqeez's Shatha Abed Ali**

to three hours a day in travel time. While she won't miss that, she is sad that in closing during lockdown she cannot say proper goodbyes to everyone. Her daughter had forwarded messages from online postings to her that had touched her heart, she said.

"I'm really sad to be leaving Devonport ... it's more than business."

• Customers can contact Abed Ali about collecting items when Covid restrictions allow or to find out about her new mobile service at marqeezjewellery@gmail.com

Local businesses suffer hit from pandemic

Around 10 main-street Devonport businesses have closed due to the Covid-19 pandemic, and while those still trading are trying to stay positive, the situation is "bleak", the Devonport Business Association says.

Devonport saw a slight rise in overall spending for the 2020-21 financial year, despite New Zealand's closed borders, association manager Shauly van Baaren told the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

International spending dropped 63.8 per cent, but a four per cent overall increase was recorded.

Board member Toni van Tonder asked how much of the increase related to the supermarket. Not as much as one would think, van Baaren said.

In the month of America's Cup racing, spending in Devonport had risen by a 10

per cent. In lockdown, businesses have tried to stay positive and increased online sales.

"But it's bleak. It's hard. They did not by any means recover from last year's various [lockdown] levels and to go to Level 4 is a big, big hit.

"Here in Devonport we've had roughly 10 street-level businesses close as a result of the impacts of Covid-19 since March 2020. Some of those, like Café 11:11 Make a Wish and the Devonport Public House immediately transitioned to new ownership, while others like Mixt, Echo Designer Living and Bistro la Poste remain vacant.

"The loss of long-standing, iconic businesses like Village Shoes, Cushlas and most recently Marqeez, businesses that enticed shoppers from all over, is a hard blow to our village," van Baaren said.

Ike's Emporium also closed. And just before the latest lockdown, Hemingway's restaurant pulled the plug.

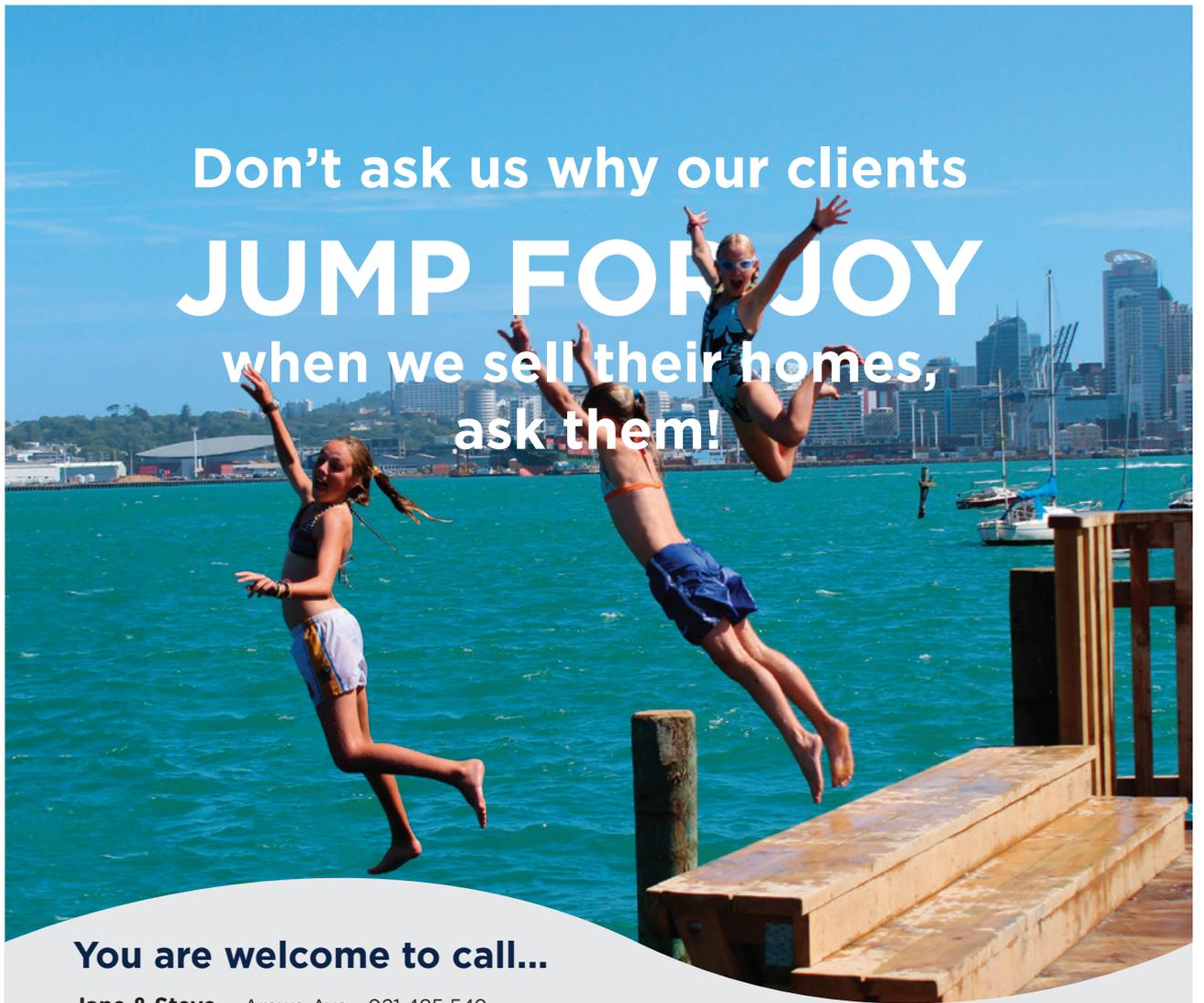
Van Baaren hoped more businesses would see the opportunity of trading in Devonport.

Each business association receives \$25,000 in board funding for community events.

Van Baaren said plans for Artweek may change due to lockdown. But Friday After 5, when Clarence St will be closed off for entertainers, art and food, is set for 3 December. The 2020 edition was attended by more than 2500 people, with spending on the day hitting \$377,000.

Takapuna Beach Business Association Terence Harpur said Takapuna had lost 41 merchants since the arrival of Covid. The Milford association reported one closure.

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Lockdown lethargy: Devonport languishes on a spring day



Biding time... Cheltenham Beach last Monday

Even the pre-schoolers seem to have acquired the lock-down look: a mixture of boredom, resignation and a lack of joy.

A drive round Devonport by the Flagstaff earlier this week on a beautiful spring Monday revealed many people out and about, walking, taking kids to the beach.

The standard newspaper caption would read: Dozens enjoying the beach on a sunny day. But not after five weeks of lockdown with the prospect of more on the horizon.

A toddler at Windsor Reserve was eyeing the closed playground. At Cheltenham Beach people were sitting on park seats waiting. Waiting for a government announcement on alert levels later that day. Waiting for their lives to return to a greater level of normality. There's only so many times you can check your cell phone to see nothing much is happening.

Walkers were out in abundance, but had grim faces of trepidation rather than exer-

cise exuberance. It was a clear still day. But people were striding along as if they were heading into a stiff breeze. Battling, not particularly enjoying the experience. How many hard yards still needed to be done?

Shops in the main street had the closed-hurriedly-overnight look. Some had "see you when we go down to level two" signs in the window. For most, this can't come soon enough.

Rob Drent, Editor

Land and building costs up

Interesting to hear of Auckland Council substantially increasing the Reserve Contributions they charge property developers for providing services to new land developments (600%+ in one example) as they struggle to meet budgets – this will undoubtedly be passed on to new section buyers and to the cost of building new homes, which have also been hit by increased materials costs and shortages.

It seems at odds with the government and Reserve Bank who are trying to reduce house price inflation and it may also reduce investor new-build appetite and the associated social housing they provide in lieu of state housing – just another tilt (NOT) towards first home buyers!! Buyers must also be beware that funding for some new builds can involve cost escalations. So read the fine print before committing to something settling well into the future.

And as home ownership rates slip in New Zealand, maybe it's time for councils to look at a Citizens Tax rather than taxing a shrinking number of property owners??

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Benjamin the cat memorial delayed by Covid

The installation of Benjamin the Devonport Library cat's memorial has been delayed by Covid-19 disruption.

Plans were hatched for a memorial sculpture soon after the funeral for Benjamin, who was run over in 2017, having become well-known around the village and beyond.

A donor to the sculpture project recently contacted the Flagstaff to ask about progress.

The sculpture has been cast, said Anne Bucholz, a member of the Devonport Library Associates committee.

The sculptor was working in the South Island when the first round of Covid hit in early 2020. "Benjamin was put on the

backburner and there have been a few little glitches," she said.

The pile of books on which Benjamin is to sit had to be re-cast, Bucholz said.

A plinth is already in place on the grass outside the library, but the final installation of the sculpture is "definitely Covid-dependent", she said.

"The people that donated can rest assured. Nobody wants to see it done more than I do, because I looked after him for many, many years."

Bucholz recalled Benjamin as a fierce defender of his patch. "No dog could get past Benjamin. He was just amazing. He was just an incredible cat; very smart, bright and just loved the library for some reason."



Cast of one... The sculpture of Benjamin will be installed outside Devonport Library when the lifting of Covid-19 restrictions allows work to proceed

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Sculpture on Shore canned

The Sculpture on Shore exhibition at Fort Takapuna has been cancelled for the second year due to the disruptions caused by Covid-19.

The exhibition had been scheduled for 30 October to 14 November, with a grand opening planned for 29 October.

Organisers still plan to go ahead with an exhibition of sorts online.

"After the tremendous effort and hard work

of the last few months, we are sadly in the position of having to cancel our planned public exhibition," organisers said in a statement.

"With the current lockdown situation and the future uncertainty around alert levels, the risk of proceeding with an exhibition of this scale and expense is just too great.

"Having already postponed the event by a year due to Covid-19, this is a huge disappointment for our team."

Heritage festival axed too

The Auckland Heritage Festival, which was to include a programme at the Devonport Museum, has been cancelled.

The annual festival was scheduled to run from 2-17 October, but Auckland Council has decided that uncertainty over alert levels made it necessary to call off the event.

Many events were to be run by individuals or community groups, said the council events manager, David Burt, which would place them under a lot of last-minute compliance

pressure, even if the festival could proceed in some manner.

"We felt that it would not be possible to deliver a safe and quality festival this year. The lockdowns were bad timing for the festival."

Another casualty of Covid is the final of Stand Up, Stand Out, a big youth music and dance competition which was to have been held at the Auckland Town Hall at the end of this month. A summer showcase of entrants may be arranged.

Wedding ring rescued from thief

A decades-old wedding ring has been returned to its owner after a Devonport letterbox thief was apprehended.

Police said last week they received a report of a man "suspiciously going into letterboxes" in Devonport. Officers located him and found numerous items of stolen mail in his car, including a distinctive ring and packaging suggesting who it belonged to.

"Our team managed to find the owner of the ring, which was a 54-year-old wedding

ring, which had been sent to her jeweller in Dunedin for repair and was returned today by courier."

A birthday card, gifts and documents were returned to other victims. Police were tracking down the owners of stolen credit cards.

They encouraged people to clear mail regularly and to report suspicious behaviour around letterboxes.

A 33-year-old man has been charged with theft and burglary.



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Nice one, Cyril! Centenarian reflects on changing times

Cyril Hicks, who turned 100 last month, has seen a lot of change on the North Shore in his decades of association with the area.

He shared his memories of the 1940s and 1950s, when Devonport was a suburb of old cottages and villas on small sections, and Bayswater, Belmont and Hauraki were still semi-rural.

“Lake Road was a strip of concrete (still there beneath the tarmac), but side streets remained unsealed well into the 1950s – some into the early 60s. House sections extended half an acre from road frontages. Over the back fences, a few farm paddocks remained in rough pasture, still grazed by sheep, cattle and a horse or two.”

Once the harbour bridge opened in 1959, new houses sprang up on the subdivided farmland.

“Weekends were time off work, most shops were closed, and many families walked or bussed to a local church on Sundays,” the centenarian recalled.

He, his late wife of 55 years, Alice, and the family went to Belmont Presbyterian Church, which he still attends.

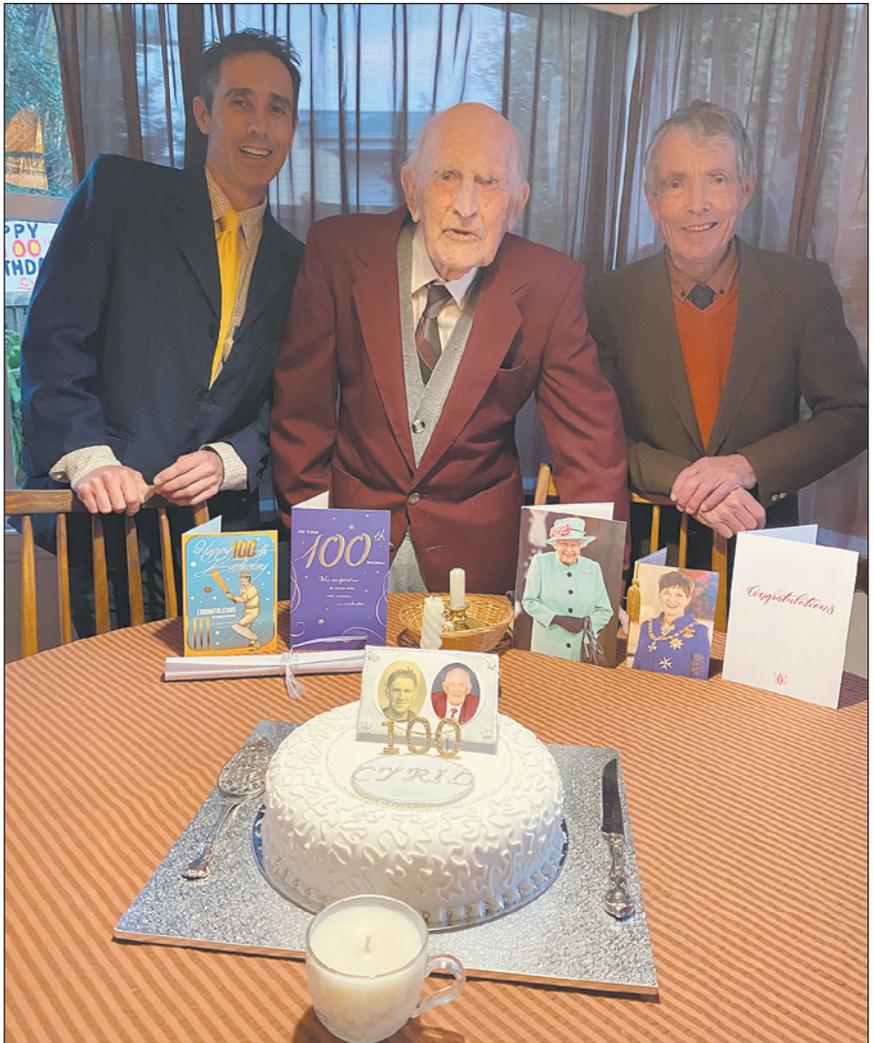
Hicks was born in Lower Hutt, then lived in Halfmoon Bay on Stewart Island, where his parents operated a guesthouse during the summer season. In the 1930s, he boarded with his aunt and uncle near Invercargill while at high school. He went to the University of Otago in 1939 – until the outbreak of World War II disrupted his study.

Hicks served in the New Zealand Army from 1941 until 1943, before transferring to a New Zealand naval training intake sent to join the Royal Navy’s Fleet Air Arm in Britain from 1944 to 1946. He returned to New Zealand in 1946 and completed university part-time while serving another five years in the Royal New Zealand Navy as an instructor officer.

After leaving the Navy, Hicks went into teaching, eventually becoming principal of Seddon High School (now Western Springs College).

“By 1970, most families had motor cars, so the Shore’s first traffic lights – and rush-hour traffic queues – appeared.”

Hicks retired in 1983, and he and Alice enjoyed a long retirement at their home in Hauraki, interspersed with visits to Cyril’s childhood home on Stewart Island and Alice’s Scottish hometown, Dunfermline.



Big birthday... Cyril Hicks celebrating turning 100, with grandson Daniel (left) and son Douglas

After 55 years of marriage, Alice died in 2001.

Today, the pace of work, traffic, shopping and leisure activities seem hectic compared with what they used to be, he says.

“Except that lockdowns resemble the old quiet weekends, minus Saturday visits to the cinema or Sunday church attendance.”

He celebrated his birthday on 23 August, at the house where he still lives, with his younger son Douglas and elder son David’s son Daniel – the only other family members

resident in Auckland – in attendance. Numerous relatives, friends and neighbours conveyed their congratulations by post, telephone, email – and signs on the boundary fence.

Hicks says there’s still a sense of local community in Devonport, Bayswater, Belmont and Hauraki. “Neighbours look out for one another. Most strangers greet one another as they pass on the footpath or in the park. Shop staff are friendly and courteous.

“A great place to be alive at age 100!”



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Dr Lisa Collins joins the Devonport Health team

As the Devonport Health Centre celebrate their first year anniversary in the new Victoria Rd premises, they also welcome a new doctor to the team: Dr. Lisa Collins. Recently arrived to NZ from the UK, Dr. Collins shares with the Flagstaff her initial impressions of life in Devonport and her recent experiences working in the UK.

What brings you to Devonport?

I moved here to join the fantastic team at Devonport Health Centre as a GP. A number of years ago I worked in Paediatrics and General Medicine at Waikato hospital, loved it here and always wanted to return. I was impressed by the team at Devonport Health Centre and the Devonport location is perfect with its beautiful scenery, heritage and atmosphere making the decision for us to move here an easy one.

What is your initial impression of living in Devonport?

My family and I arrived soon after lockdown was announced, so haven't yet had much time to spend out in Devonport. We feel privileged to be able to walk or run along the coastline and explore North Head and Mount Victoria. I would love to do the Devonport Half Marathon if the situation allows.

What was it like practising in the UK with such a high rate of COVID-19 infections?

I worked in Harley Street and other Clinics in Central London and North London where I lived.

Firstly, having come from the UK with such a high rate of covid19 infections, I have been really impressed by how everyone here is helping through testing, vaccinations, wearing masks and social distancing.

In the UK despite the amazing dedication of healthcare professionals, the level of infections meant that it was difficult for patients to get the care they needed. Accident and Emergency rooms and critical care units were full and there were long delays for ambulances. Many patients died from other illnesses as well as covid-19. Although most GP services were able to be provided remotely, some colleagues working in the front line sadly passed away.



How did you overcome those challenges? What's the biggest challenge facing the UK as they "live with" COVID-19?

I had to accept that I could only do my best to help, within the limitations of the health services available. The vaccinations were a major turning point and are the best way to protect yourself and others. By getting vaccinated you are also reducing the risks to children under 12. In the UK wearing masks in public places is not mandatory, but community actions like these can significantly reduce transmission.

In the UK some of the most vulnerable are yet to take up the vaccination. Long covid symptoms can also be debilitating for any age-group and will continue to impact on healthcare in the UK.

On the Centre's website it says that you are into "lifestyle medicine and health coaching". Could you please elaborate?

Lifestyle medicine is about preventative medicine and focusing on the whole person, including social and environmental factors and not treating any health concerns in isolation. Health coaching is about individuals understanding the tools they have available to

help themselves keep healthy. This holistic approach to health is something which GPs here do really well.

Could you please tell us little more about your education, training and experience in your specialist areas of Paediatrics, Women's Health and Dermatology.

I was debating whether to train in Paediatrics or General Practice once I qualified as a doctor. I worked in Paediatrics at Waikato Hospital and really enjoyed it. I loved the variety of General Practice so decided to specialise in child health as a GP. I took the DCH (Diploma of Child Health) examination during GP training.

I also took the DRCOG (Diploma of the Royal College of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists) and have since also specialised in women's health as a GP.

My dermatology experience came from doing a year-long postgraduate qualification at Queen Mary University of London.

You volunteered in Tanzania - was this with Doctors without Borders? Did you have any special learnings from this experience?

I organised this on my own at a hospital near Mount Kilimanjaro. There were 200 beds and at weekends there was only one other doctor covering the whole hospital. They were grateful for any help. The electricity generator would sometimes pack up. We are very fortunate to have such a good healthcare system here in NZ.

Would you like to give any special message to our readers?

Devonport Health Centre is providing a Covid-19 vaccination service for our patients and their whanau. This is going really well.

Having gone through a similar phase in the UK and seeing the protective effect this vaccine has, please do book if you haven't already. I am privileged to be working at Devonport Health Centre, and to be part of a fantastic team. It has been great to be able to offer telephone and video consultations as well as face to face consultations in level 4. Please continue to seek advice for any health concern as the team is available to provide consultations as needed. I am looking forward to meeting some of you in person when we can.

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devonporthealth.co.nz/enrol

Chalk drawings brighten up locked-down village

Chalk art has been used to brighten up the “ghost town” of Devonport in lockdown, bringing one grateful retailer to tears.

Organiser Katherine Downs said she had walked through the empty streets in Alert Level 4 and worried for the local businesses. “I had been walking through the shops and it just was like a ghost town. It was miserable and needed warming up.”

Chalk drawings have since popped up across the suburb, with the artists involved in the running for a voucher.

Downs’ husband, David, had founded SOS Business – a way to support small businesses by buying vouchers redeemable after lockdown.

“I just felt like it would be nice to do something a bit more vocal from the community as well, and how they were feeling towards businesses.

“The messages of support on social media for it have been really lovely and obviously showed that people want to express their support for the businesses and maybe just don’t know how.”

Local artist Jason Taylor has also been out with his chalk, Downs said. “In lockdown last year he did this as well.

“He’s a very talented fellow. I actually contacted him just before I posted it and said, ‘Are you willing to get your chalk out?’ And within minutes, honestly, he was out there.”

The response has been positive, Downs said. “There was one woman, I can’t remember who it was, who said it brought tears to her eyes and others who said it made them smile. If just one person had responded that would be worth it.”

Downs said she wanted to thank the people who got on board with her “wacky idea”, had some fun with it and “put themselves forward to put smiles on other people’s faces”.

Chalk it up... Artist Jason Taylor (top right) has created some of the most striking images in the lockdown outbreak of footpath art around Devonport. Other enthusiastic contributors of artwork and messages included Nicole and Thomas Garde (bottom right).





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Amateur snapper focuses on backyard birdlife

John Robertson talks to Helen Vause about his fascination with our feathered friends.



Beak district... A feeding station and reliable water supply have kept the birdlife – including kereru like this one – flocking to John Robertson’s garden

It was a lucky day for a bald and helpless pigeon chick when he fell from his nest to land with a ‘plop’ on the windowsill of John Robertson’s London office.

Robertson – who as a boy was the youngest member of his local budgie fancier’s club – couldn’t get the hapless little bundle out of his mind that night at home in his London flat. He returned to the office and brought home the chick that he and his wife Steph would name Bertie.

The young Kiwi couple figured out fast how to nourish Bertie. The pigeon thrived in their care, free-ranging around their little city flat and escaping the attention of the landlord. When Bertie was ready to fly and the Kiwi couple were expecting their first child, they released their young pigeon in a London wild space and flew home to New Zealand.

Forty odd years later, a few other pigeons can count themselves lucky to have turned up injured in the Robertsons’ back yard, along with the many other birds who’ve made it a favourite spot. Pigeons, tui, sparrows, blackbirds, fantails and many others have all found food and water in the large Stanley Point garden – providing amateur photographer Robertson with hours of interest right outside his own back door.

For a few years, Robertson’s bird photos have been charming viewers online. And when he talked to the Flagstaff about the world of

birds in his own back garden, he was awaiting the first draft of a book he’s put together capturing many of his favourite images of the birds.

“I guess I’ve always loved watching birds and I’ve been lucky to be living in an environment that attracts them,” he says.

Keen to enhance the appeal of the garden and to keep the birds coming, tui in particular, Robertson experimented with and built a bird-feeding station and set up reliable water supplies for his feathered friends.

Pretty soon, the birdlife in his garden was noticeably more abundant. The birds’ antics around the feeder are often the subject of his photos.

While he has a particular eye for the beautiful tui, Robertson says he likes them all and has a soft spot for the oft-maligned pigeons and the feisty magpies who visit.

“I know a lot of people hate pigeons but I have always really liked them. They’re beautiful birds.”

Some of those pigeons have benefited from the home comforts at his house. First, there was Limpy, the pigeon with the injured leg that got a bit of medical attention and got to live indoors in his own large cage until he was back on his feet. Limpy still touches down on the back door knob daily, says Robertson, and his offspring often try to come indoors.

Then there was Captain Hook, who caught

Robertson’s attention when he saw the bird hobbling in the garden with a fish hook embedded in his leg, which was wrapped tightly in fishing line.

“That was looking like a very nasty end for him,” says Robertson, who took the bird to the vet then home to the indoors cage to convalesce.

And then there was Bella, the pigeon with lead poisoning, which also needed the vet’s attention and a gentle recovery period indoors overseen by her rescuer.

The life of the birds in his garden, their injuries and escapades and battles around the feeder had largely been Robertson’s private world, along with the worries of keeping the water feeder running when he travelled away from home.

But the photos posted online began to introduce the inhabitants of the Stanley Point garden to the wider world.

Robertson, who once considered becoming a professional photographer, became more interested in his subjects and more adept at capturing images of birds in flight and at rest. Even on the rainiest of days, he kept his photos coming, first in retirement and lately in the weeks of lockdown.

“It really is a very pleasant interest,” says Robertson, who also photographs birds further afield and often on the edges of neighbouring



wetlands.

His book of his bird photos is in draft form, while he works out how best to publish them, says Robertson.

Meanwhile their online life has created local interest but also seen them sent to Devonport people's homesick offspring and friends in Sydney, London and many other cities.

He was particularly tickled that a local

school asked to use his pictures within their lessons.

"I came to realise that people really liked the pictures," he says.

"And just at the moment everyone seems very interested in their local environment and noticing all the birdlife while they are out walking. We're appreciating more what's right around us, I think."

All sorts... Spectacular tui (top left) are a particular favourite, though Robertson trains his camera on all kinds of birds which visit his garden and Stanley Point neighbourhood

Navy houses need upgrading or replacement

I have read with great interest your news article on 'Navy houses affected by subsid-ence' (Flagstaff, 10 September).

I have lived in Beresford St, where the affected houses are, since July 2003.

They have not been lived in for well over 18 months. They were condemned as unstable, inhabitable and not fit for residential use. Being so old – built in the early 50s – they reflect a bad image of our street. They lack basic character, and if they remain, need to be upgraded.

The lawns are mowed on a regular basis by a contractor, but the mail boxes are always full of papers which litter the ground and footpath.

In 2014, Ngati Whatua Orakei – under the Treaty Settlement – gained access to the properties from the Navy, and a comprehensive development programme of terrace



A blight on the landscape?...The empty houses

housing and apartment buildings was proposed. This did not happen and the houses have reverted back to the Navy on lease.

The Navy housing department spends a lot of money on repairs and maintenance to these

houses, which is a waste of taxpayers' money.

As a resident, I would like to see the properties replaced with new buildings to improve the look of our street.

W. Andrew

Thank you RSA

Thank you Devonport RSA for the surprise food parcel– keeping up the RSA motto "People helping people". You will be remembered with my poppy day donation.

Jimmy Jones

Write to the Flagstaff

We welcome letters. Please limit to 300 words on local topics. Nom de plumes or submissions without a name will not be printed.

Email news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz or write to Letters, PO Box 32 275, Devonport.

Sculpture disfigured by jumble of scaffolding

It is unfortunate that Greer Twiss's sculpture on Devonport's Victoria Wharf (pictured, right) is disfigured by a jumble of support scaffolding distracting from the beautifully crafted albatross.

This visually confusing structure at our harbour gateway would be more meaningful if the supports were decluttered and anodised to a mat background colour, thus allowing the albatross to soar free of human restraint.

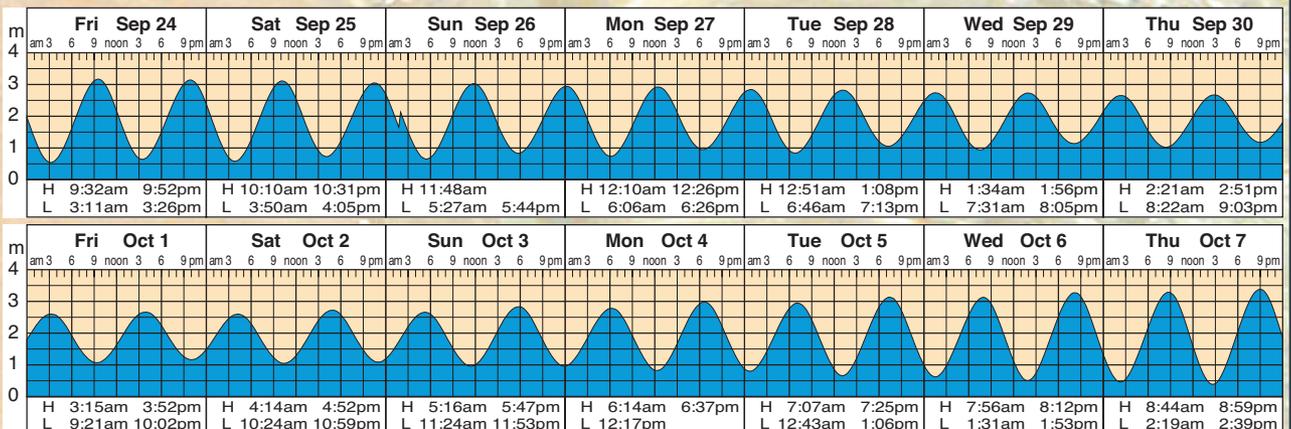
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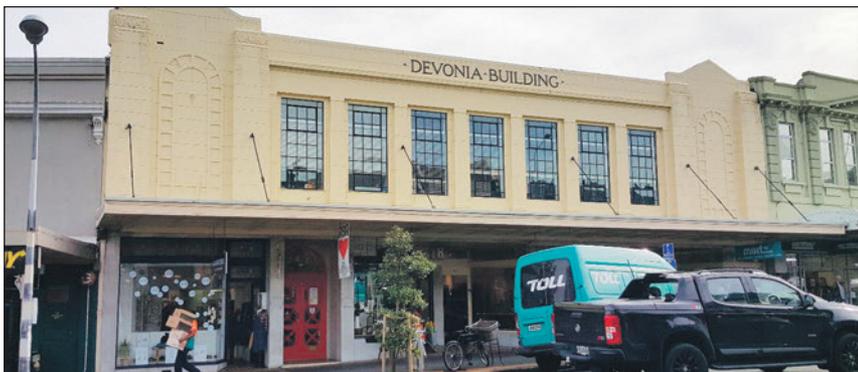
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Main-street buildings to lose A-list status

All of Devonport’s commercial heritage buildings except the Esplanade Hotel and the Victoria Theatre will have their listings drop from A to B in the Auckland Unitary Plan including: Alison’s Buildings at 73-79 Victoria Rd; The Devonia Building at 61-67 Victoria Rd; the former Bank of New Zealand at 14 Victoria Rd (now occupied by The Patriot pub); the former Post Office at 10 Victoria Rd; Mays Buildings at 5-15 and 19 Victoria Rd; the former Devonport Post Office and former Devonport Borough Council building at 3 Victoria Rd, and the former shop and Porterhouse Blue Restaurant at 58 Calliope Rd. The former Dudding’s Store at 335 Lake Rd, Hauraki Corner, will also be downgraded.



Relegated... Victoria Rd sites facing a downgraded heritage rating include (clockwise from above) the Mays Building, the former Post Office, the Devonia Building and the former BNZ (now the Patriot)



Campaigners will fight Vic Rd downgrade

Devonport Heritage aims to continue fighting for A-list protection for the commercial buildings downgraded in the heritage review.

Council officers met with the heritage group as part of the review, when it advocated for Elizabeth House and the Esplanade Hotel to be added to the A list, said group chair Margot McRae. “We were less successful with our commercial buildings and our churches,” McRae said.

“We fought hard for St Pauls and Holy Trinity to be included in the A-list.”

While many of the commercial buildings were not “nationally significant”, as required to meet the criteria, the heritage buildings on Victoria Rd should be classified together as a “heritage area” as had been applied to

part of the Onehunga business district and the Upland Rd shops in Remuera, she said.

A-listed buildings cannot be demolished. While B-listed buildings had substantial protections from demolition, what could happen behind the building frontages was a concern, McRae said. If four-storey or higher apartments were built behind the Victoria Rd buildings the historic fabric of the buildings – and the street – could be destroyed.

McRae was unsurprised the Masonic Tavern had been delisted: “we have always regarded what happened there as a replica and we don’t support replicas.” The Group houses that were A-listed were important, she said, but the public had little interaction with them.

What led to the review?

The council review aims to establish if the A listings under North Shore City met the higher thresholds for category A inclusion under the Auckland Unitary Plan. Under Category A, places have to be “of outstanding significance well beyond their immediate environs”. Category B includes places that are “of considerable significance to a locality or beyond”. A team of council heritage specialists wrote a report on the history of each building and each was rated on its significance in areas including: historical, social and physical characteristics.

What happens next?

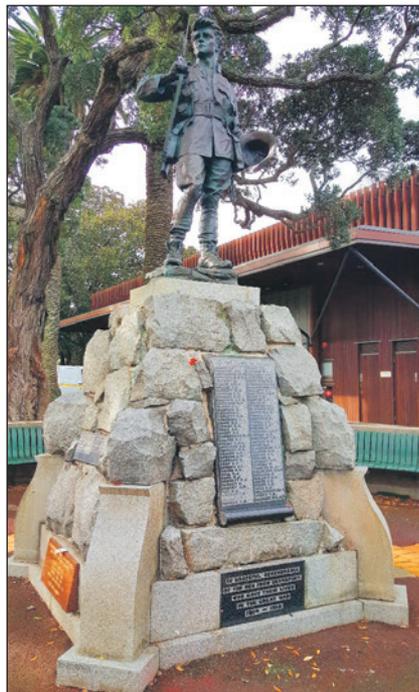
Auckland Council is currently in consultation with landowners, mana whenua and “stakeholders”, so “these reviews may be revised”, the council told the Observer. To implement the recommendations arising from the review, a change to the Unitary Plan is needed. This is being prepared by council officers to be put to a Planning Committee meeting in October for approval. Once the change is notified the public can make submissions.

Just nine local sites make the A-list grade

Only nine buildings and sites on the Devonport peninsula are worthy of A heritage listing in the Auckland Unitary Plan, according to the council review.

These are:

- The Victoria Theatre on Victoria Rd: which “has historical value as a example of a nationally rare heritage place. The Victoria Theatre was the second purpose-built cinema in New Zealand and is the oldest remaining purpose-built cinema in Australasia.”
- The Esplanade Hotel on Victoria Rd, was built in 1902/3 and represents important aspects of national, regional or local history. The site has been continuously used for hotel accommodation since 1864.
- The World War I memorial at Windsor Reserve, outside the Devonport Library, unveiled in 1924, and viewed as having considerable national significance. (The Victoria Theatre, the Esplanade and the war memorial are also “category 1 places” on the New Zealand Heritage list.)
- Elizabeth House at 5 King Edward Pde, now in apartments, is nationally and regionally significant for its use as a boarding hotel from 1911-1951, and as the barracks for Navy Wrens from 1952-1977.
- O’Neill’s Point Cemetery, Bayswater Ave, nationally and regionally significant as the main burial ground serving Devonport and Takapuna from the 1890s to the early 2000s and also the resting place of more than 20 Pakeha, Maori and Pacific Island soldiers connected to the Narrow Neck military camp who died in 1918-19 from the influenza pandemic.
- Rotherham House, 27a Rutland Rd, Stanley Bay; First House, 20 Northboro Rd, Hauraki; and Second House, 18 Northboro Rd, Hauraki – nationally significant examples of houses designed by the Group Architects in the early 1950s, and representative of New Zealand developing its own built identity.
- The Te Puna springs site at Torpedo Bay, King Edward Pde, was a water source for early Maori. It has “multiple layers of significance” with links to the arrival of the Tainui, one of the voyaging canoes that landed in Aotearoa during the mid-14th century.



Suggested A-listers... (clockwise from top left) Victoria Theatre; Esplanade Hotel; Second House; the World War I memorial; Elizabeth House; Rotherham House; and First House; (and below, from left) Te Puna springs and O’Neill’s Point Cemetery



The Masonic: consigned to the dustbin of history

The Masonic Tavern building should be stripped of its heritage status in the Auckland Unitary Plan – with the reconstructed building regarded as a replica of no historic value, according to a council review.

Under North Shore City Council the building, which opened in 1866, had an A listing in the council's heritage schedule.

It had operated as a public house until 2008, and was later developed into apartments.

The restoration has now been ruled a new build. "The Masonic Tavern is a two-storey timber commercial building constructed between 2011 and 2017," said Rebecca Freeman, Auckland Council's senior specialist in historic heritage, in a review completed in October 2020.

"It is a replica of the Masonic Hotel, which was located on the same site, and was constructed in 1866 and demolished in 2011 for a townhouse development," said Freeman.

The building has "limited historic heritage significance" beyond its association with the original hotel building, she said.

"The Masonic Tavern does not meet the thresholds for scheduling as a Historic Place."

The development – while attempting to mimic how the hotel may have looked from the front in 1900 – actually destroyed heritage.



Lookalike... the Masonic refurbishment was a replica rebuild, says a council review

"Council records indicate that the corner tavern and 1883 extension along Church St, which were meant to be retained and restored, were demolished entirely (except, possibly for the front entrance, though this is unclear)," Freeman said.

"This was apparently necessary because the heritage fabric was so deteriorated that it could not be retained for restoration, and instead, the developer constructed replicas of the original buildings.

"Therefore, the only authentic heritage building on site is the 1861 boarding house,

though this has been relocated within the property and subject to alterations," Freeman's report said.

In initial renovation consents, part of the Masonic's downstairs was to be set aside as a cafe, but the developers successfully applied to have this changed to general commercial use. The downstairs is now offices, removing any social connection the building had with people.

"It is disconnected from the community and from its former uses as a public house and community hub and meeting place," Freeman said.

Memorial Drive on the list for heritage demotion

Memorial Drive, at the entrance to Devonport, has considerable local, rather than outstanding national historical significance so only rates a B heritage listing in the Auckland Unitary Plan, the review says.

Devonport Borough Council established Memorial Drive to remember the 62 local men who were killed in action or died from injuries overseas during World War II.

In the early 1950s, Norfolk pines and pohutukawa, with accompanying plaques, were planted on the roadside alongside flower beds and seats to honour the men.

Other buildings, structures or sites around Devonport which the review found should have their A listing under North Shore City Council drop to B in the Auckland Unitary Plan are: the Watson Memorial clock at Duders Beach; St Augustines Church Hall at 95a Calliope Rd, Stanley Point; the Tainui

Landing Monument at Torpedo Bay Reserve on King Edward Pde; the Mays and Frankham Memorial Fountain at Windsor Reserve; the Hydrographic Survey Station and Mast on Windsor Reserve; The E.W. Alison Memorial Clock at Marine Square; Earnscliffe at 44 Williamson Ave, Belmont; St Francis de Sales Catholic church and graveyard, 2a and 2b Albert Rd; St Paul's Presbyterian church and graveyard, 100a and 100b Victoria Rd; Buffalo Hall, 2 Lake Rd; 27 Niccol Ave – the first state house on the North Shore; 9 Mays St; Takapuna Grammar School; Rockcliff, 6a King Edward Pde; St Michael and All Angels Church, 159 Bayswater Ave; Takapuna Boating Club and saltwater swimming pool at 17 Bayswater Ave; Devonport Power Station, 47-49 Church St, Devonport; Holy Trinity Church and Hall, 20 Church St and Duder House, 11 Church St.



Only a B-lister... Memorial Drive was established to remember those lost in World War II

Plaques list suggested

Eight Devonport heritage A listings should have their heritage status removed, according to the council review.

In addition to the Masonic Tavern these include a number of plaques along the waterfront which could be included in a register of plaques. They are: the Nothing Happened Plaque at Windsor Reserve; the D'urville of the Astrolabe plaque at Torpedo Bay which marks the landing spot of Dumont D'urville in 1827; the execution site plaque, at King Edward Pde Reserve, which marks the site

where Robert Snow, wife Hannah, and six year old daughter Mary were killed by Joseph Burns in 1847; and the boat building industry plaque at Duders Beach.

Other sites which should be removed from the historic register schedule include the spot of the original wharf on King Edward Pde (nothing left intact); magazine rock site of a naval Depot on King Edward Pde (cut out in 1921 and nothing remaining); and the shell path on Queens Pde (not worthy of heritage recognition).

What do the Heritage A and B classifications mean?

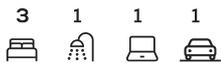
Under Auckland Council's Historic Heritage overlay greater protection is applied to A-listed buildings, including the avoidance of the "total demolition or destruction of their primary features". In practice any proposed works on A-listed buildings require heritage plans and extensive vetting from council heritage experts. Less protection is afforded B listed buildings, especially beyond their street frontages. In practice more demolition and change to the building beyond the street-facing parts is allowed.

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By Rob Drent

2021 is proving a tough year for Devonport on the heritage front. One of New Zealand's oldest suburbs, with dozens of well-preserved buildings, seems to be under attack from multiple angles.

First, there's the government directive to Auckland Council to increase intensification. This has sparked a review of all Devonport's housing stock to gauge which streets are likely to be offered protection. While decisions are still to be made, allowances for three- or four-storey buildings are likely in some parts of Devonport south of the golf course. The suburb's single-house zone is also under review. If this goes ahead further development pressure will mount on the housing stock, with greater density options.

Now, a long-standing Auckland Council review of A-listed heritage buildings and sites under North Shore City Council is in draft form.

Obtained by the Flagstaff under the Official Information Act, it shows only nine Devonport peninsula sites have been A-listed – thereby retaining top-level protection.

Victoria Rd is particularly disadvantaged. Only the Victoria Theatre and the Esplanade Hotel and the War Memorial A listings, leaving numerous other landmark buildings more vulnerable – particularly to internal development and demolition.

Facadism is a very real danger – with the frontages of buildings retained and multi-storey apartments developed behind, for example, particularly with greater yields per site needed to pay for earthquake strengthening. Readers need to look no further than the former Masonic Tavern for an example: heritage experts in the current council review say the redeveloped building on the site is a replica with no heritage value at all.

As locals – and our many tourist visitors over decades – know, the charm of Devonport's Victoria Rd lies in a combination of all the buildings. The sum of the whole is worth more than each individual structure on its own. More effort by Auckland Council is needed to consider all the Victoria Rd buildings together as a precinct.

Others unlucky to miss out on A listing are the two churches at the entry to Devonport – St Francis de Sales and St Paul's – and their associated graveyards. Heritage is somewhat subjective, but I can't see why these are any less historic than the O'Neills Point Cemetery at Bayswater, for example.

Some locals will also question why the site of an old spring near the Navy Museum and the three Group houses – examples of

an architectural style – have been given A status ahead of other Devonport heritage structures.

Another building perhaps unfortunate to be judged outside an A listing was the Devonport Power Station in Church St. Providing the first electricity to customers on the North Shore, this was considered regionally, but not nationally significant.

Auckland Council makes a lot of noise when it introduces anything that has a sniff of green about it. Take the recent water crisis: the megaphone from city hall started blasting loudly that resource consents for water tanks would be waived. Compiling the '20 years ago' from the Flagstaff files this week revealed this was nothing new – in fact the North Shore City Council was offering more back then. North Shore City ran regular double-page better-environment advice advertisements in the Flagstaff (something Auckland Council has never done). In October 2001, North Shore was waiving consents and also stumping up grants for 20 water tanks and 50 grants for stormwater-friendly landscaping.

The advert reads: "Did you know... even a small rainwater tank can prevent the flooding and erosion that results from a small storm; collecting rainwater can significantly reduce demand for city water supply, this can help improve beach water quality; the more water we collect, the less stormwater will flow onto our beaches.

"If every household could install a 5000-litre rainwater tank the city could halve water demand while significantly reducing beach water pollution."

Some of the advice aimed at reducing impervious surfaces appears at odds with Auckland Council's pro-intensity Unitary Plan and the new central government directives to increase density.

Whether by luck or design, a bouquet of free blooms picked up from Devonport Flowers when lockdown was announced, is still going strong on our kitchen table – more than a month later. Thanks, owner Morag, they have brightened our days.

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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.

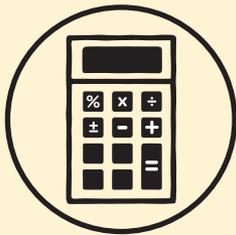
Email your submissions to news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz or post to Devonport Flagstaff, PO Box 32 275, Devonport



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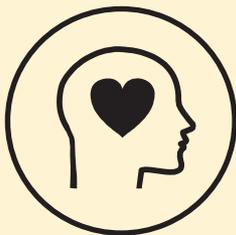
Support in tricky times



Financial

COVID-19 can make it hard to keep on top of things you're normally able to take care of.

If you need a little help paying essential bills or getting some kai to tide you over call **0800 559 009**, 7am – 6pm Monday to Friday, and 8am – 1pm Saturday to see what's available.



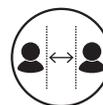
Mental Health

Many of us feel anxious or stressed in times of difficulty. However, there are ways to feel better:

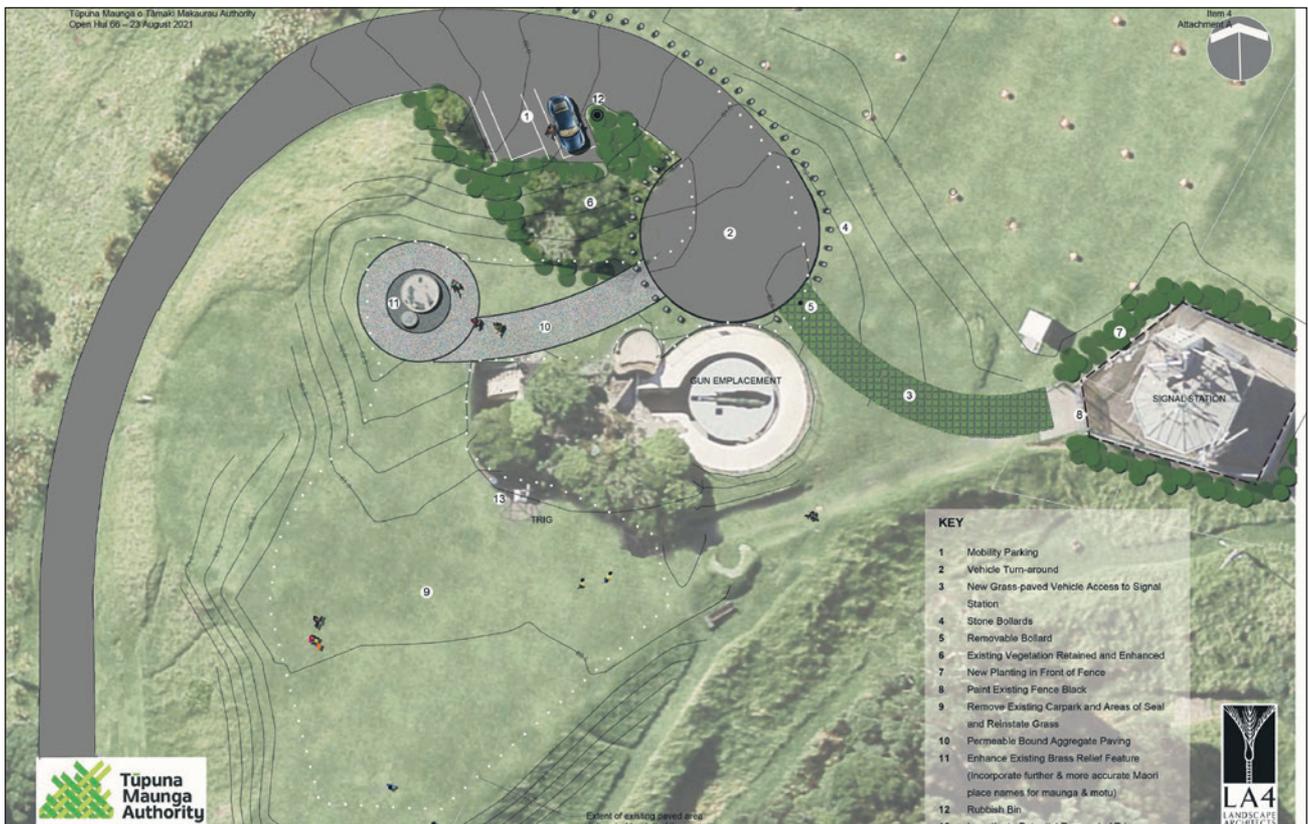
- Stay connected with others.
- Acknowledge your feelings – it's normal to feel overwhelmed, stressed, anxious, worried or scared.
- Stick to routines where possible.
- Check in on other people who might need help.

For free support, call or text **1737** to talk with a trained counsellor 24/7.

Find out more at **Covid19.govt.nz**



Takarunga to lose summit parking, gain toilets



Car park removed... 660 sqm of impermeable surface will go in the new summit layout shown in the Tūpuna Maunga Authority concept plan

A toilet will be built next to the tennis courts on Takarunga and parking spaces removed from the top of the mountain.

Natural play equipment will also be investigated by the Tūpuna Maunga Authority for installation on the banks near the courts.

Access to Takarunga was changed in 2018, being limited largely to pedestrians (with some disability vehicles allowed).

Since the pedestrianisation, many more people were using the mountain, Tūpuna Maunga officer Liz Parkin told an authority hui last month.

The toilet development will include seating and native planting, including puriri, taire and kohekohe.

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board representative on the authority, Toni van Tonder, asked if the courts fencing would be replaced as part of the project.

Parkin said fencing replacement was not part of the budget for the works and the existing fencing would remain. It was unclear whether both courts would be retained or only one, she said.

On top of the mountain, 660 sqm of imper-

meable surface will be removed, but several disability parks will be retained. A new, reinforced grass access will be provided to the Ports of Auckland signal-station building.

Old seating will be replaced with new tables and seats. Native species will be planted in front of the building fence.

Richard Tong's mountain-top model of Tamaki Makaurau, its harbours and mountains, will be updated and have additional Maori place names added.

The Authority approved the concept plans, which will now be finalised.

Track upgrade approved

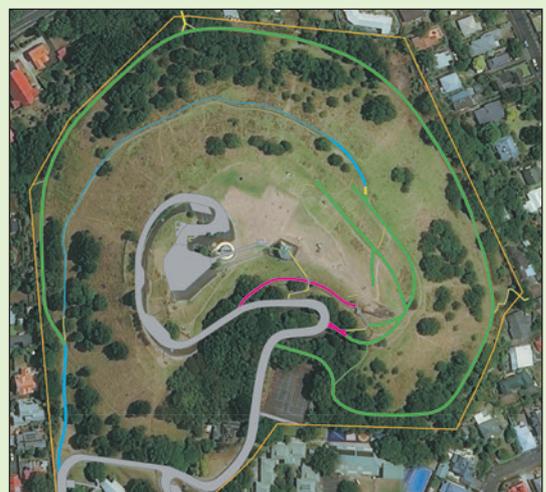
Plans to upgrade the lower loop track on Takarunga were approved at a Tūpuna Maunga Authority hui last month.

An upgrade to the main track leading the top of the mountain has already been completed. The lower loop track will be upgraded to a 'day-visitor' standard, similar to that on other Auckland maunga. This includes a compacted aggregate surface, shaped to drain water from the track.

No boardwalk or raised timber staircases are planned in the project, but where the track is steep, timber boxed steps will be built. The track will be between 800mm and 1200mm wide, with some timber handrails, where needed.

The budget for the work has yet to be secured and no timeline has been set.

On track... the lower loop track on Takarunga (in green) is set for an upgrade



Seal given send-off by local with DoC in lockdown

The Devonport woman who disposed of a seal pup found dead on Cheltenham Beach this month says she did so because she didn't want children to have to see it.

Lianne Boucher, a grandmother who lives not far from the beach, told the Flagstaff: "It's gone back to sea, that's all I could do with it."

In fact, Boucher did quite a bit, checking with the Department of Conservation (DoC) and with a local Maori community member, Terehia Walker, for advice. Then, on a rainy day and wearing the recommended gumboots, gloves and a mask, with some help she bagged the seal and after saying a blessing sent it on its way from rocks at the southern end of the beach.

"It's a nature thing," she says of the death. "My motivation was to get down there before children saw it or dogs ran up to it."

During Alert Level 4 lockdowns, DoC does not respond to calls about dead animals.

Discovery of the dead pup on 7 September came five days after many locals were delighted seeing a live sea pup at the beach (as pictured in

the Flagstaff). Two days later there were reports of both an alive and a dead pup at Narrow Neck. These sightings prompted DoC and Auckland Council advice for people to stay well back from the animals and keep dogs leashed around them.

It is not clear if the pup Boucher disposed of had been washed around from Narrow Neck by the tide or was a different animal. When she learned of the body at Cheltenham, she rang DoC to see what could be done. The staff member she spoke to was upset someone could not be sent out, she says.

She advised Boucher that if she wished to arrange for its removal she should wear protective clothing because the animals could carry disease, such as tuberculosis.

Boucher did not want to bury the seal at the beach in case it was later exposed. With no yard space at home, she decided to put it back in the sea. She turned over the sand where it lay in case it was contaminated.

Sightings around the New Zealand coastline are not unusual at this time of year. Mothers

leave their pups on beaches when feeding during weaning season, when the animals become independent.

Auckland Zoo says this means it can be a vulnerable time for them. A malnourished pup that DoC uplifted from Thorne Bay, Takapuna, and took to the zoo on 5 August after hotline calls from the public had to be euthanised after days of treatment failed.

Meanwhile, seal pups were sighted at Maungauika and at the Hauraki end of Takapuna Beach. Auckland Council which sent its animal management team out to peninsula beaches to ensure dogs were not bothering any wildlife, said there had been no reports of fresh issues last week.

The experience has left Boucher feeling that perhaps more could be done to help educate people about wildlife matters. "Everyone seems to have a different story," she said.

A community seal patrol might be an option, whereby a few people who knew what to do could pass on that knowledge.

20 years ago from the Flagstaff files

- Work stops on the controversial cellsite antenna being installed near Devonport Primary School, after public complaints about Vodafone breaching resource consent conditions.
- Devonport windsurfer Paul Page wins the World Masters title in Italy, coming first in seven out of his 10 races.
- Husband and wife Jan and Chris Gilmore are awarded 2nd Dan black belts in Seido Karate. They are believed to be the oldest couple to achieve the ranking in New Zealand
- A boy is threatened with a knife on North Head and his shoes demanded. The offender is apprehended at the scene after he fails to start his Vespa.
- Prince Philip's planned visit to the Devonport naval base on 19 October is cancelled.
- The Devonport visitor-information centre will be relocated to the council area-office building in the new year.
- Hundreds of runners and walkers will sweep through Devonport streets in November on a masters fun run/walk.
- The Navy's annual open weekend is cancelled because no overseas warships are arriving. Six warships – from China, India and Thailand – were destined for Devonport, but stayed at home after the 9/11 attack on New York.
- Devonport Chocolates returns to Wynyard St after a spell manufacturing in Glenfield.
- Sharon Wilson takes over ownership of the Flagstaff Gallery from founder Kath Jenkins
- Vauxhall Primary School wins the North Shore school chess championships
- Mediators are called into a row over a dangerous building notice at the Devonport Park apartment complex. North Shore City Council issued the notice after the Fire Service discovered the complex lacked sprinklers and alarm systems. Residents don't want to pay for the upgrades.
- North Shore City Council sets up a tourism advisory group to promote and facilitate tourism in Devonport
- Zoe Thompson, an 18-year-old striker from Devonport, is named New Zealand young female football player of the year.
- A three-bedroom villa at 2 Lytton St is on the market for \$389,000.
- Musician Ross Mullins is the Devonport Flagstaff interview subject.



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Kiwi classic

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A sixties' bungalow, a 680sqm freehold site, garaging, a pool, decking, some grass, fruit trees, and an absolute tonne of potential! Currently humble in its appearance, this once cherished family home is now ready for a glow up. Join the resurgence that Birkdale, and neighbouring suburb Beach Haven, are experiencing - the areas offer a young and growing multi-cultural vibe, great schooling, and a Beach Haven ferry to the CBD. Vacant - must be sold!

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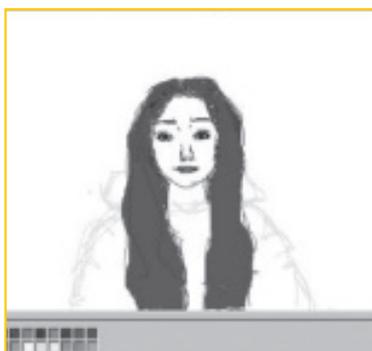
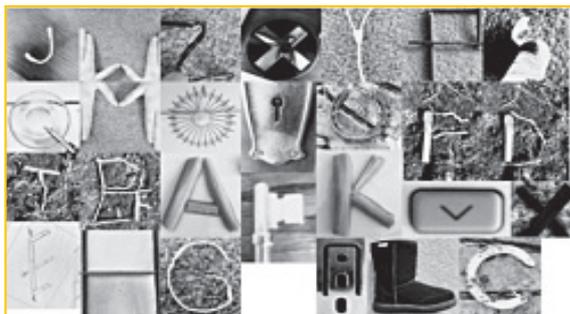
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Locked Down – a virtual exhibition of student artwork

Locked Down, presented by Te Wāhi Auaha and powered by Kunstmatrix 3D, showcased the artwork of several year 10 TGS students made during Level 4 lockdown. It was a virtual exhibition, in which viewers could 'tour' a virtual gallery space. Unable to return to school and with limited resources, ākonga at TGS have begun to turn to digital and virtual methods of art-making. At the frontier of a Covid-19 landscape, it is an opportunity for their artwork to be shown in a new, emerging format.



Intensification drive's likely impact remains murky

The level of extra intensification in Devonport demanded by government directives is still unclear and will depend heavily on the number of properties which score highly in heritage reviews and whether the single house zone is retained.

The special-character and volcanic-view-shafts overlays, the single-house zone, and various building-height restrictions all protect Devonport at the moment.

However, the single-house zone is under review by Auckland Council and all properties in Special Character Areas are being surveyed by council officers. Council has made it clear tough criteria will be applied to heritage gradings. While houses will not be singled out, whole streets may not make the grade for specific protections.

To facilitate the government directives, major intensification will be allowed within 800 metres of planned rapid transport network stops, such as Akoranga station, and within 1200 of metropolitan centres like Takapuna.

While Devonport is outside of these categories, a question mark appears to hang over the status of the Devonport Ferry Terminal and its 10-minute ferry ride to the city.

Accessibility to jobs and services and high-demand for properties are two of the government triggers for intensification – and Devonport has both these. Especially if planning committee councillors – many of them intensification advocates – line up the ferry terminal as an additional transport network hub.

On the other hand, the planning committee at its 1 July meeting resolved that where “significant historic heritage values are identified within the Special Character Areas Overlay, develop a plan changes for places or areas to be added to the Auckland Unitary Plan historic heritage schedule.”

Council workshops and consultation are planned before final changes are made and “spatial implications” are worked through council’s planning committee.

What happens next

According to a memo sent out last week by Auckland Council general manager of plans and places John Duguid:

- Workshops are planned for local boards in October and November 2021.
- Combined local board and planning committee workshops in February/March 2022.
- Public consultation, and feedback in March/April 2022.
- Combined local boards and planning committee workshops to consider the feedback.
- Plan change to the Auckland Unitary Plan notified by August 2022

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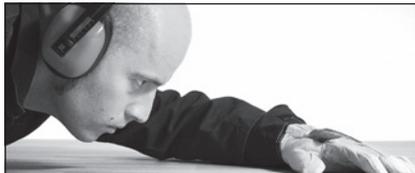


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OUT & ABOUT

Maria Teape Community Coordinator
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WELLBEING TIPS

Here are a couple of well-being tips from the series we've shared online: facebook.com/DevonportPeninsulaTrust

CONNECTION Call a friend or join a virtual club.

There are ways that we can be physically socially distanced but still emotionally connected with others.

FRESH AIR If you can get this fresh air in a green space or by the sea, even better. Studies have found this is great for mental wellbeing. If this is not possible, step into your garden or pop your head out of the window.

EVENT POSTPONEMENTS/ CANCELLATIONS

AUCKLAND HERITAGE FESTIVAL

After much consideration, the difficult decision has been made to cancel this years' Auckland Heritage Festival. While this is disappointing, their priority is the safety of all participants. For more information on this and other cancellations, visit www.ourauckland.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz

FUN PALACE AT NAVY MUSEUM

Torpedo Bay Navy Museum are sad to announce that due to COVID-19 restrictions in Auckland, and uncertainty around when we are likely to be at Alert Level 1, they have decided to cancel Fun Palace at Devonport. They would like to thank those who had generously offered to share their time and skills at Fun Palace.

Stay safe and well everyone.

COVID-19 LEVEL 4 LOCKDOWN SUPPORT

There are a number of volunteers in the Devonport Peninsula community who are willing to help with grocery shopping or pharmacy pick-ups, if you are unable to get out or feel uncomfortable doing so.

Please contact one of the following people who will link you with a volunteer:

- Jacki Fortune, Devonport Self-Isolation Support Group: 021 515 532 or jackifortune@yahoo.com
- William Neale, Connect Church Devonport: 021 105 3842
- Nicola Teague Grundy, Devonport Methodist Church: 021 274 1957 or minister@devonportmethodist.org.nz

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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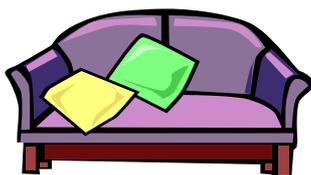
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PUBLIC NOTICES

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.

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AGM

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WE WANT YOU!

He angitūanga: The opportunity

Following the success of installing a new management team, The Rose Centre Inc Board requires 2 new Board Members to join us, who will bring energy, creativity and diversity. You will have a passion for the Community, Performing Arts or ECE. The Treasurer & a general board member position are on offer, to ideally start in November.

The Board meets monthly and an additional 6 hrs approx per month are required. 2022 will be an exciting time as we develop our strategic plan, celebrate new Centre offerings & review the constitution. We envisage your commitment will be for a 3 year cycle.

He kōrero mōu: About you

We are looking for peninsula people with a can-do approach, who are committed, caring, connected & who have the desire to constructively contribute. Experience in a profession, small business or community service is a must, with governance a plus!

Ngā āhuatanga kei a mātou: What we offer

This role enables you to make a difference in our community, as well as gaining understanding & knowledge of board processes & discussions, governance & strategic planning. We are a vibrant group who enjoys a laugh too!

Sounds interesting ? - make contact for a korero with us today

EMAIL: chair@rosecentre.co.nz / ph 027 521 5667



WHAT'S ON @ Devonport Library

Tēnā Koutou katoa

Kei te pēhea koutou - How are you all?



1924: Looking East from Mt. Victoria (Courtesy of Auckland Libraries, Heritage Images)

We miss not being able to see you in the library, but hope you are able to take advantage of our many online offerings. We have ebooks, eaudiobooks and Beama films (a great selection of films for all ages) which you can stream, just use your library card to access. Visit our website (www.aucklandlibraries.govt.nz) if you need support in using any of these. There is also a video on our facebook page which guides you through using Libby - to access ebooks. As well as books (fiction and non-fiction) Libby also has magazines.

If you enjoy heritage photos, such as the one above, Kura on the Auckland Libraries website has a huge collection of heritage images to look through - if you are interested in local history, Devonport particularly, then type in Devonport and you can browse through those. A great activity on a wet afternoon in lockdown!

Any queries about any of the above please feel free to send a message through our facebook page or ring Library Connect, they will be very happy to help

Stay well and safe,

Ngā mihi nui,

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Local board opposes water reform

Proposed water reform has too many unknowns and is not needed in Auckland, the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board says.

The board held an extraordinary meeting via video conference on Tuesday last week, agreeing to oppose the plans, which would see control of drinking water, wastewater and stormwater taken from councils and handed to four bigger entities.

Auckland currently has Watercare overseeing waste water and drinking water, while council manages the storm water. Under the plan, all three areas would come under one roof, combined with Kaipara, Whangarei and Far North councils in 'Entity A' - but all have opposed the move.

"There is strong pushback from councils around New Zealand," board chair Ruth Jackson said. "Everybody's poking holes in this and have issues with it and is pointing out numerous fine details which have not been worked out."

There were "strong signals from government" that if councils did not come to heel, then they would force the changes, Jackson said. "There are not terribly strong signals from government that they are prepared to make significant changes to what is proposed.

"Councils must be allowed to decide whether this is right for their communities. I also agree Auckland should be a standalone entity. We're already a unitary authority."

In Victoria, Australia, which has about the same land area as New Zealand and a slightly higher population, there were 19 water overseers, including three just for metropolitan Melbourne, 12 for regional towns and smaller cities, and four for rural areas. "It's not a fair and equitable distribution of

representation."

Board member Jan O'Connor said she did not believe it was a good business case. A better option would be to give the money to councils that needed to get their infrastructure up to scratch, she said. "We're going to lose ownership of what we own."

Member George Wood raised concerns about how far the council was already in debt, "and we're now trying to rectify that by going in a different direction in how we handle the three-waters situation".

Member Toni van Tonder said the Auckland system did not need fixing.

Member Trish Deans said it was the government's responsibility to bring water supply up to scratch. "We don't want to shoulder the problems of every other council. We really can't afford to."

The board's thoughts will be added to the Auckland Council submission to the government.

Any central government reform must ensure water entities are responsive to and accountable to councils and local communities, and the proposed entities would be too far removed, the board said.

"We are concerned about the possible removal from council of ratepayer-owned stormwater infrastructure and streams, and portions of associated reserves and parks, and the effect on local parks decision-making. The board believes that, if the reforms go ahead, there must be legislative protections to guarantee that there can be no privatisation of water services entities or providers in the future."

The government is expected to outline the next steps, following feedback from councils, next month.

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Ryman partygoers keep their distance together

Residents at the William Sanders Retirement Village in Devonport have been making a song and dance on Fridays.

These images, captured by drone camera, show them in action recently.

The inspiration came from pictures seen worldwide last year of apartment dwellers in Italy singing from their balconies to boost morale in the first wave of Covid-19.

Happy Hour Friday is Ryman's reply, with room deliveries lifting spirits before some socially distanced socialising.

"The balconies lend themselves quite well to it, having a boogie at a safe distance," a Ryman spokesperson, Maryvonne Gray, told the Flagstaff.

"It's just having a bit of light-hearted fun, really, so everyone can let their hair down."

Colourful or fancy dress is optional, but adds to the fun. Popular tunes including *We Are Family*, *YMCA*, *Crocodile Rock*, *Runaround Sue* and *Sweet Caroline* have been played.

Dancing is led by two staff members with some residents heading downstairs and out into the village grounds to get in step.



A touch of Italy in Devonport... Ryman residents had Latin inspiration for song and dance Fridays



**Ryman rumba...
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Lockdown stretch... Sue Glasgow, Ruth Chapman and Gabrielle Gill

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