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**Schools' coping strategies
for home-learning... p4,5**

**Interview: TV investigator
David Lomas... p12**

**Navy boss reveals impact
of Covid duties... p20**

New World staff up first for jobs at village practice

Covid vaccinations started at MedPlus on Anne St in Devonport last week, kicking off with a project to vaccinate the local New World staff last Friday.

"Our first day has been vaccinating all the staff at New World," practice manager Dr

Heidi McRae said. "They were the people who had been first off the rank locally."

Appointments for colds and flu had dropped right off as people had been staying at home and not spreading germs, she said.

"That's completely slowed down because

they're not mixing in the community.

"At the very beginning it was very busy with swabbing because of the proximity to that first case in Devonport. That tapered off within a week; then we pivoted to trying to do more vaccinations."

To page 3

Beach babe draws onlookers



Fur patrol... A sunbathing seal pup created a flurry of interest at Cheltenham Beach last week. Story, seal safety advice page 3.

PHOTO KATHRYN NOBBS PHOTOGRAPHY



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Briefs

Valuations postponed

Property-valuation updates have been delayed until December, with Auckland Council citing lockdown difficulties in completing these for next month, as planned. The three-yearly valuations are already a year behind schedule due to having been postponed last year, due to the country's first Covid-19 lockdown.

Polite on peninsula

Bus and ferry users on the Devonport peninsula have not been implicated in cases of abuse aimed at public-transport workers. The Prime Minister and Auckland Mayor have both roundly condemned the abuse after confirmation by Auckland Transport last month of 16 reported cases. These relate to individuals being asked to comply with mask-wearing and other pandemic precautions.

Special Countdown hours for essential workers

Countdown supermarkets on the North Shore have started opening one hour early for essential workers to get their groceries. Stores are opening from 7-8am, for essential workers only, who must bring their work ID. Countdown Hauraki reopened on 2 September after previously closing so staff could be redeployed to other stores.

Local covid jabs cranked up

From page 1

The practice had only just been approved to vaccinate as there had been a backlog to gain the necessary approval, she said.

Vaccinations had started first at the practice's Hauraki Corner premises.

"That's our focus for Level 4 and possibly for Level 3 as well."

McRae, who does phone consultations for mental-health patients, said people had coped much better this time than in the previous Level 4 lockdown on the whole, but some were still struggling, especially young people.

New World Devonport proprietor John Ashton said his staff were essential workers but it was difficult for them to get vaccinated. It was more convenient to do it locally.

Customers were following social distancing and other Alert Level 4 guidelines. "The grocery shopping is very good. Everyone is behaving themselves," he said.

Any supermarket supply issues were largely caused by transportation to New Zealand, Ashton said.

Local vaccination sites are opening soon at Devonport Family Medicine and also Devonport 7-day Pharmacy.

Devonport Family Medicine practice manager Monique Nyemecz said they were open to care for patients and providing Covid testing. "[We] will be offering Covid-19 vac-

inations from the 15th September," she said.

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

The first death Delta outbreak death occurred at North Shore Hospital last week. A 91-year-old woman with several underlying conditions died on 3 September.

Visitors to the hospital are banned under Alert Level 4, with a few exceptions on compassionate grounds, including: one support person for the birth of a baby and the mother's post-natal stay; and one parent or guardian in the paediatric ward. A portable cabin is now set up at the entrance for symptom-checking patients and then directing them into the appropriate areas, to prevent symptomatic people coming into contact with others,

A DHB spokesperson said negative-pressure rooms were being built at Middlemore, Auckland City and North Shore hospitals in general wards, intensive-care units and emergency departments. Previously the city had 40 negative-pressure rooms: 17 at Middlemore, 13 at Auckland and 10 at North Shore. Auckland has also asked for 30 intensive-care nurses to be diverted from around the country to help the city with its Covid-19 response. Earlier this week, Auckland hospitals had 40 covid cases, eight of those at North Shore.

SoS to help local businesses

A Devonport-born pre-purchase voucher system, which went national in 2020 to help businesses stay afloat in lockdown, is back in earnest during Alert Level 4.

SOS Business (previously known as SOS Cafe) was the brainchild of David Downs, who saw the cash-flow problems small firms faced during lockdown. It was initially launched to support cafes but was

later extended to other businesses.

It has paid out hundreds of thousands in pre-payments to help keep businesses going.

"Our local businesses add so much colour and culture to our suburbs, it's now our turn to give back," said Downs.

Go to www.sosbusiness.nz to buy vouchers.

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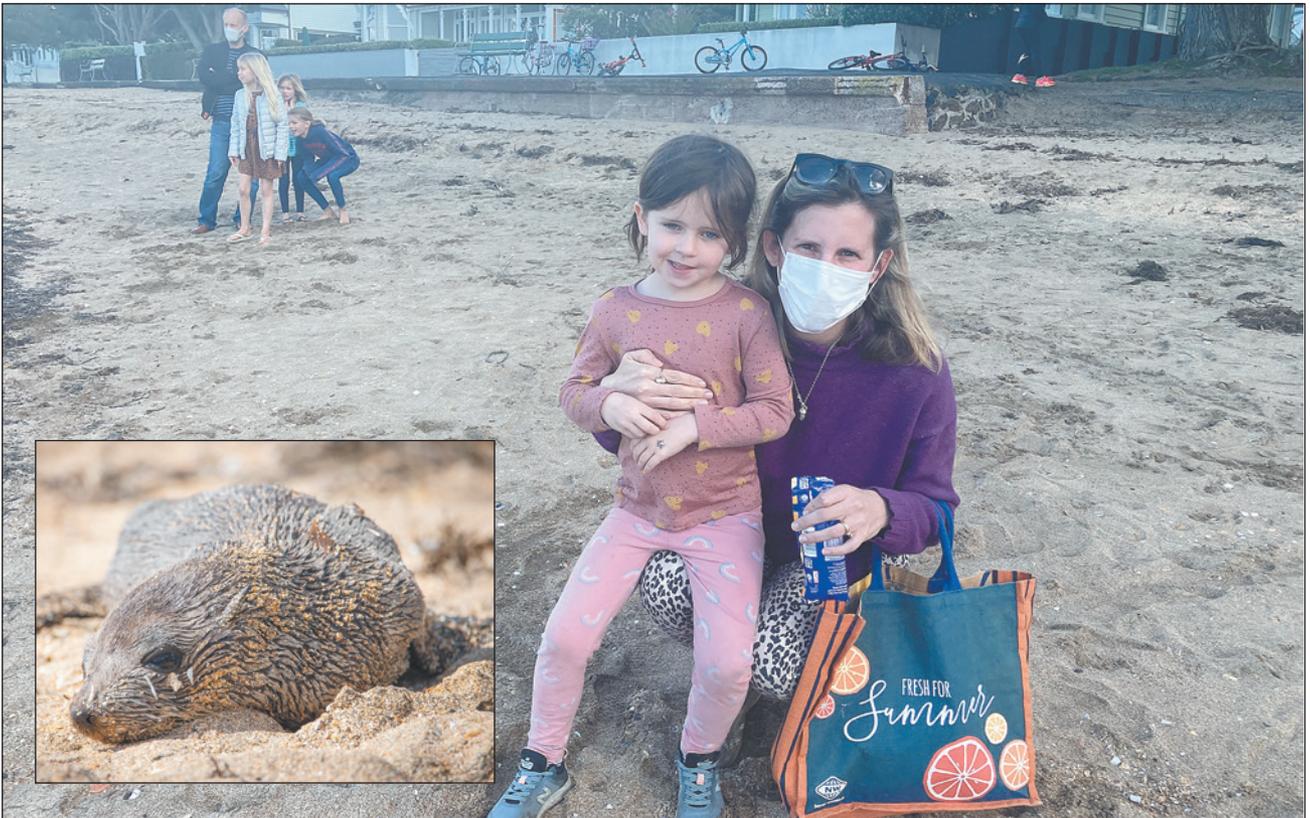
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Authorised by Simon Watts MP, Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.

Seal offers free nature lesson to pupils in lockdown



Seal of approval... Alice Berryman and daughter Olivia Lancaster (5) were among family groups checking out the pup (inset) on Cheltenham Beach

The appearance of a young seal on Cheltenham Beach proved a drawcard for walkers last Thursday.

Most gave the pup the required wide berth as it lazed in sun at the northern end of the beach.

It was the second seal visit to Devonport shores in the the last month.

Five-year-old Olivia Lancaster described the seal, which blended in with washed-up seaweed near the water's edge, as looking like "a rock".

Her mother, Alice Berryman, said growing up near Cheltenham Beach "we never ever saw seals". They now seemed more abundant in the Hauraki Gulf.

Sightings are certainly rare enough to draw interest, however, with a few dozen people, mostly family groups, gravitating to the beach for a spontaneous nature lesson to break up home-schooling during lockdown.

Olivia is in her first year at Devonport Pri-

mary School. Berryman, a part-time graphic designer, said with her daughter at home she was thankful she had an employer with realistic expectations. "It's hard trying to work at the same time."

The junior school day started with a half-hour online lesson in the morning, which was good for routine, she said. There were also weekly work plans, which helped with setting objectives to fit in as best as possible.

...But fur patrol launched to protect seals' space

Seal patrols have been increased along the Devonport coastline after reports of pups getting injured.

After the seal appeared on Cheltenham Beach last Thursday, by Sunday, reports of a pup being bothered by dogs at Narrow Neck and another requiring attention at Thorne Bay, Takapuna, were a reminder of their vulnerability to human interaction. This sparked Auckland Council to remind people to remain at a distance and keep their dogs leashed.

"Our Animal Management team has increased patrols in the area and will advise dog owners to be cautious of the seals," said council's manager of Animal Management, Elly Waitoa. The Department of Conservation (DoC) said people should stay 20 metres away from seals.

"We are receiving a lot of calls about seals and seal pups at the moment...this is normal for

this time of the year," a DoC spokesperson said.

When the council responded to a call about a seal pup in distress last Sunday, one was found to be "very much alive" when it was reached at Narrow Neck around 3pm.

"The seal pup was located on the rocks and after closer inspection the officer could see minor cuts on the seal's back. However, it could not be established how these injuries occurred," said Waitoa. DoC was notified so that an investigation could be undertaken, she said.

That afternoon, a dead pup was seen by a number of beachgoers under the cliffs at the south end of Narrow Neck, suggesting there were at least two in the area.

Council staff returned to the beach the next day – assisted by the Flagstaff with directions as to where we had seen the dead animal the previous day – but staff could not find the seal's body, so it may have been washed out to sea.

The Flagstaff confirmed with Auckland Zoo, however, that around midday on the same day, it had uplifted an underweight seal pup from Thorne Bay, Takapuna. This was now recovering at the zoo's vet hospital, the New Zealand Centre for Conservation Medicine.

This call-out, separate to the council's efforts, had involved both DoC and police to ensure people were kept at safe distances. DoC told the Flagstaff that under Alert Level 4, it was able to respond to wildlife emergencies, but not to calls about dead animals as these were not "essential".

The zoo spokesperson said there was no sign of a fish hook in the animal's mouth.

DoC says it is normal for seal pups to be left on the beaches, often for hours, by their mothers when they are out feeding. "Keep your distance and keep dogs under control and well away from seals.

Peninsula schools adapt to life in lockdown:

With children stuck at home, the Flagstaff surveyed schools' remote-learning options

Devonport peninsula schools are taking a flexible approach to learning under lockdown, with a range of routines for students.

While teachers are generally on standby for advice between usual bell times, often the hours spent in lessons each day have been curtailed to allow flexibility for families grappling with the challenges of learning and working from home.

This approach is being seen across the age groups, allowing younger children time to play and older children time to chill and connect with friends. It recognises the need to help students stay positive and reduce stress in what is a second disrupted school year.

NCEA exams have been put back by two weeks. They will run from 22 November to 14 December. Extra credits have been extended to Auckland students to help make up for disruptions.

Takapuna Grammar School (TGS) says it is planning for various contingencies around practice examinations and time for portfolio and technical and practical work, depending on how long lockdown lasts.

Principal Mary Nixon said students had engaged well with a quick switch to online learning. "Parents and students say learning is going well this time, but they wish they were at school with their teachers and friends."

TGS teachers had set remote programmes that students could work on routinely as if they were at school, while being flexible enough so families could work with a different schedule as required.

Staff and student leaders were motivating and reassuring others and communication was helping "so everyone knows their part in the job we are doing together." Existing good bonds within the school and with parents made this



Furry assistant... Mae Wilson (Year 4, Bayswater School) at a class hui with puppy, Bonnie

much easier.

Belmont Intermediate School (BIS) has distance learning with teachers and classmates from 8.45am to noon.

Students are encouraged to use their afternoons for "well-being, active pursuits and family time," says acting principal Claire Janes.

Hauraki School's day runs from 9am to 3pm, with teachers available throughout this time to provide support and feedback to students on their work. Teacher aides and specialist teachers are also on hand for those who benefit from extra help.

Principal Clarinda Franklin says: "While we encourage children to engage with the learning provided, we know how challenging it can be for some families and so our message to parents is just do what you can. We need to be mindful of the bigger picture at this tricky time."

St Leo's Catholic School also has its teachers

available from 9am to 3pm, but says they often field messages outside these times.

Stanley Bay School surveyed its community after the last lockdowns to find out how the school could improve what it did. Principal Lucy Naylor said it settled on a structured home-learning plan, aiming to deliver high-quality teaching and learning rather than just "busy work". The day begins with the class roll and news. Teachers share what is coming up, then they teach reading, writing and maths groups. This runs from 9am to noon each day.

In the afternoon, students have independent learning. Teacher support is available online for this work, which students bring to class the next day.

Devonport Primary School students each attend one daily Zoom session with a group of classmates. Work is sent out daily. Daily videos explain the learning tasks.

Principal Beverley Booth says: "We know that everyone has their own set of circumstances during lockdowns and our programme is designed to be flexible for parents and this helps to make sure that everyone can take part."

Vauxhall School says it is up to each whanau to engage with its distance-learning programme at a level that suits them.

Bayswater School's learning activities are considered suggestions. Families can work to their own timetable and expectations. Sharing of both set learning as well as other activities is encouraged, says acting principal Marianne Coldham. "In this way, children's own personal passions are celebrated and valued." An example was a child who had decided he wanted to learn how to do quadratic equations. After teaching himself online, he had been interacting with a teacher to consolidate his understanding.

Students feel loss of axed sports and cultural events

The loss of winter sport and other events students were looking forward to is one of the hardest impacts of lockdown.

Principals on the peninsula told the Flagstaff the switch to learning from home had generally gone smoothly, but it was student morale that took more managing. Communication was key to keeping pupils on track.

Most Takapuna Grammar School students had missed out on events they had prepared for and were excited about, said principal Mary Nixon. This was hugely disappointing. For Year 13s, it was their last opportunity to excel at a national level. "Our students have been exceptionally resilient in understanding and accepting these losses are necessary in the current situation, but they are devastated."

Primary schools were also hit hard. "The way Covid affects sport is perhaps what many students notice most," said Hauraki School principal Clarinda Franklin. "But we're grateful to have got most of the games behind us compared to last year."

For the juniors, a popular inter-school rippa-and-tackle rugby competition could not

proceed late last month. Intermediate students looking forward to the AIMS Games in Tauranga had this cancelled for the second year in a row, a fate also suffered by secondary sports teams aiming for national winter tournaments.

North Harbour Netball and North Harbour Rugby called off their seasons with just a few games to play, with other winter codes also again accepting there would not be time to wrap up seasons before the end of term 3 on 1 October.

Arts and cultural events have also been lost, from group exhibitions, a dance festival and speech contests to the annual primary-school Book Battle and a sustainability challenge.

The national Big Sing final, involving choirs from Takapuna Grammar and both Westlake schools has also fallen by the wayside.

Schools' own events, including trips and fundraisers, have also been hit.

"If there are any events that can be postponed, we shall endeavour to plan accordingly," said Belmont Intermediate's acting principal Claire Janes.

But Devonport Primary School principal

Beverley Booth says with Term 4 always busy, carrying over events is tricky. "A huge disappointment" was the cancellation of a ski competition that a school team entered.

Vauxhall will do what it can to postpone or run its own alternative events, says principal Gary Lawrence, but is wary of putting extra pressure on children when they return to school.

"We know that when they come back it is best to have a slow steady transition focused on friendships, connection and well-being. If we pack the days full of catch-up events, it runs the risk of creating too much pressure for some children"

Stanley Bay School principal Lucy Naylor says that while students are getting used to last-minute changes, that doesn't stop them being disappointed. St Leo's principal Maureen Harris echoes that, saying a lot of effort goes into readying for events.

That said, lockdown brings at least one upside. "One teacher pointed out that she has seen many families out exercising and enjoying family time, which they would not have normally had time for," Harris observed.

Home learning turns kitchens into classrooms



Food for thought... Bayswater School pupils Willa (Year 2) and Marnie Shapiro (Year 1) learn about Archimedes Principle, while Bastion Bowen (Year 1) follows online instructions on a colour experiment

Previous experience gives teachers a head start

When lockdown was announced last month, Devonport Primary staff were handily together, having been doing an after-school first-aid course.

“It was a shock to find that Covid was on our doorstep,” says principal Beverly Booth. Staff quickly discussed next steps and gathered up things they would need before heading home.

At Stanley Bay School, principal Lucy Naylor and deputy Scott Boniface gathered devices to deliver to students. Other schools arranged device drop-offs as well.

Peninsula schools said they were well prepared from prior experience. “There was very much a stoic attitude of ‘we’ve been here before’ and ‘let’s get stuck in,’” said Naylor.

Booth said Devonport Primary had work planned for the first three days of any lock-

down, ready to be sent out. Switching fully to online learning via video and Zoom took a few days longer.

Vauxhall School had recently reviewed its distance-learning plans, so was good to go, as were Bayswater and St Leo’s School with their set-ups.

Students were accustomed to online interfaces through daily learning at school, said Hauraki School principal Clarinda Franklin. “There is just a bit more of it at this lockdown time!” Most enjoyed it and for those who struggled, online chats or phone calls could help.

For one group, however, it was all about the shock of the new last week, with Stanley Bay School having a group of entrants to welcome. “A very strange way to meet your new class

and teacher,” notes Naylor.

At Bayswater School, acting principal Marianne Coldham says daily learning and sharing hui allow teachers and students to interact. Families are encouraged to join in with Facebook-posting and video-sharing. Other schools also emphasise the importance of the social side, of morning greetings and allowing time to interact.

Building resilience and well-being is a theme most of the principals mention. Supporting teachers, communicating with parents, setting realistic expectations and keeping students engaged and positive is a juggle. Special-needs help also has to be factored in, with individual interaction. “Everyone is holding up well, but they would prefer to be at school”, said St Leo’s principal, Maureen Harris.

Banks are raising rates

We see that banks are raising interest rates themselves rather than waiting for the Reserve Bank to change the Official Cash Rate. These rate rises range from around 0.20% in the short-term fixed rates to over 1% in longer-term fixed rates, so watch out for even more rate rises over the next few months assuming Covid does not linger too long!

Also be aware that on 1 October, the new Consumer Credit Contract Act comes into law. This will require lenders to be even more specific about lending in terms of the purpose of the borrowing and the income and expenses required to service that debt. It is another measure to tighten the credit environment, which may help to reduce the house-price increases we have seen over the last few years. We think there may be more legislation to come.

Speak to us if you have any borrowing requirements, including reverse mortgages, parents helping their kids, bridging finance when looking to buy before you sell, or first-home buyers. The market is holding up, but we don’t see another rush to property like we did after the previous lockdown in 2020.

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Ryman residents Zoom in to lockdown entertainment

Ryman says some of its William Sanders retirement-village staff have had to stand down due to being in locations of interest, while others are helping out to keep residents in supplies.

No visitors are permitted at retirement villages, except to residents in end-of-life care. However, an entertainment programme via Zoom is helping enliven lockdown.

Communal areas at the Devonport village have been closed, with those living in independent apartments being classified as in their own household bubbles.

To help all Ryman residents feel connected, management last week called on TV presenter Hilary Barry to talk about her career and former Masterchef winner Brett McGregor to offer a cooking class and contest. Exercise classes, games, a wine-appreciation session and musical performances are also on the menu of activities.

For those in the care centre, unit bubbles have been formed, alternating socially distanced meal times and meals in rooms.

Ryman spokesperson Maryvonne Gray said staff from the hospital area did not mix with staff from the rest home and the organisation was following infection-control procedures.

During lockdown, staff pay rates had been increased by \$2 an hour as a thank you.

“We have good experience from more than 200 days in lockdown in Victoria about the best precautions, and the double reassurance of N95 masks and face shields has worked well. We have not had a single case of Covid-19 in



Pitching in... Ryman construction worker Brendon Joicey (left) and gardeners Aaron Brown and Abigail Passmore have taken on new roles at the William Sanders Retirement Village during lockdown, helping with deliveries while their work is on hold under Alert Level 4

Victoria,” Gray said.

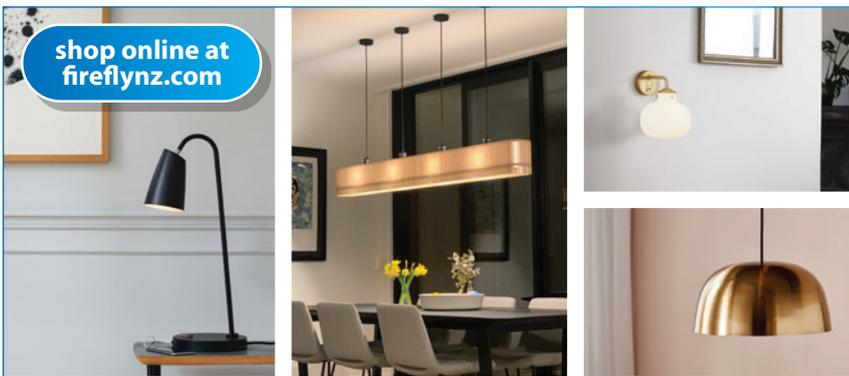
Across New Zealand, vaccination rates among Ryman staff and residents had reached 95 per cent. Although some staff had needed to stand down to ensure they were Covid-free after being in locations of interest, others had been able to be redeployed, given Ryman construction sites and offices were currently closed.

Some were helping with deliveries at William Sanders, which had surged under lock-

down, said Gray. “There were 120 households that received deliveries last week.”

These included weekly grocery essentials (bread, milk, biscuits and toilet paper) provided by Ryman and ensuring outside deliveries to the gate from families or retailers reached residents.

An extra delivery made last Friday was a Happy-Hour-in-a-bag treat distributed before Father’s Day.



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Wharf lures hopefuls after regulatory thumbs-up

Torpedo Bay wharf proved a popular spot on a sunny lockdown afternoon last week, with around a dozen people spaced along its length trying their luck fishing.

Several told the Flagstaff they were chuffed to be now allowed out with their rods after a recent revisions to Alert Level 4 regulations.

Among those enjoying this new-found freedom to fish from shore, near home, was Ray, who didn't want to give his last name. "I normally fish on a boat," he said. But he was happy to have come from nearby to drop a line. "It's just a good chance to get out and about, other than just a walk or a bike," he said.

Three young tradie flatmates were also among those relishing being able to pick up an activity outdoors. With partners who were working from home in Devonport, they thought they should get out of the house and give them some space.

Two had fishing gear, but plumber Jaeden Alott had used his DIY skills to make a 'rod' on the day – a piece of timber, with line attached. He was yet to get a bite.

But for lockdown, the flatmates would have been holidaying together, with Maukino Skelton having just finished up his job in building supplies. "I was meant to be down south for a couple of weeks. This threw a spanner in the works."

Builder Brendan Herbst said the men were also filling their down time by picking up some household activities.

"I made my first ever lemon tart the other day," he said.

Gone fishin'... Jaeden Alott (top) improvised a rod while another local resident, Ray, had more conventional gear for a fishing expedition to Torpedo Bay wharf



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TV investigator uncovers peninsula pleasures

David Lomas is well known for TV shows that fill in the missing pieces of people's lives. He's also enjoying the outdoor attractions of Devonport. He spoke to Helen Vause.



Familiar face... David Lomas made a switch from newspapers to television in the late 80s, when he worked on the groundbreaking new *Holmes* programme – and survived a tragic fatal helicopter crash

When David Lomas was a boy playing ice hockey in Wellington, he wondered if his sport could get a mention alongside all the others in the sports pages of the city's newspapers.

So the sports-mad 13-year-old thought he'd have a crack at making it happen. After his Saturday ice hockey game, he'd race home, write up the results, then whip into the city on his bike, story in hand.

His older brother was a junior newspaperman, so when young Lomas arrived at the front of the *Evening Post* offices, he knew what to do with his story.

He'd just pop it into the special box out front where all the other seasoned sports-report contributors would also leave their work.

The newspaper ran the first story he sub-

mitted – and all the others that he faithfully delivered after his weekend games.

Not long after that, the editor tracked him down and sent him a cheque for his efforts, encouraging him onto the first rung of what became a long media career. When they began putting his name on his ice-hockey reports, that really set the ink running in his veins.

"I was pretty tickled to see my name out there in print," he chuckles.

Decades later, sport and storytelling are still very much his passion. Lomas talked to the Flagstaff about a media life that's in recent years made him a well-known name as the presenter of TV shows, notably *Lost and Found*, in which he applies his distinctive investigative style to resolving family mysteries and reuniting grateful people.

Through the show, many have been happily reconnected and discovered networks of new family relationships.

By the age of 15, Lomas was regularly out and about covering weekend sports for the capital's *Dominion*, dictating his stories from phone boxes and working out that he very much wanted to make a career as a sports journalist.

He kicked around university for a while, before getting a diploma in journalism and getting his first real job.

Lomas seized the offer of a junior reporter's job at the *Whanganui Chronicle*, turning away from the bright lights of bigger papers where his classmates hankered to work.

In the provinces, figured Lomas, he'd get the chance to "do a bit of everything" and

chase big stories that might fast-track his copy into the front pages of the paper, alongside the work of much more senior reporters.

His strategy worked, and before long he was back in Wellington, working for the *Dominion*, as an enthusiastic all-rounder.

His interests, beside sport, lay in crime-reporting, digging into stories and discovering information others couldn't seem to turn up. One way and another, in print and on screen, Lomas has since then never strayed far from his modus operandi of painstaking research and the assemblage of missing pieces into ripping yarns.

"Back then, TV journalism was in its early days and we all started in print jobs on newspapers. For serious journalists, a newspaper was the place to be," he says.

He had no thoughts of himself on camera – or as star of a TV show. He progressed to writing probing long-form feature articles.

But when the call came from contacts in television in the late 80s, Lomas took his chance to try working with sound and moving pictures.

"I loved it, the buzz of it all. And after life in newspapers, I was blown away by the resources we had back then in current affairs to just go and chase after stories, wherever they were."

It was just a few months after the 1989 launch of the new nightly current-affairs show hosted by the late Paul Holmes, when Lomas, Holmes and crew found themselves in the middle of a terrifying story of their own.

They had flown to Gisborne and then choppered off to a remote marae, to shoot a story. Flying back at dusk over remote coastline in bad weather, the chopper flipped into freezing waters about a kilometre offshore. Never had Lomas – a triathlete in his spare time – been so pleased to be in top shape, helping him to cope with the ordeal.

Cameraman Joe von Dinklage lost his life, but the rest of the group scrambled to shore and staggered on in the dark over rough country to find help at a farmhouse.

Lomas's career in television developed through subsequent current-affairs shows such as *Fronline*, *Assignment* and *Sunday*, and making documentaries like 2004's *The Real Mr Asia*.

But he took a major step into the limelight when he began hosting and directing the *Missing Pieces* series, launched on TV3 in 2009.

The hit series was later renamed *Lost and Found* and given a wider brief as *David Lomas Investigates* in 2020.

The show has evolved over the years, and its stories have taken Lomas all over New Zealand and to many different corners of the world.

*"I loved [television],
the buzz of it all.
And after life in
newspapers, I was blown
away by the resources we
had back then in current
affairs to just go and
chase after stories,
wherever they were."*

Thousands of people have applied to be part of the show and take the journey with Lomas, trying to find whoever they are searching for.

Of the stories he and his team decide to follow, only around one in five makes it to air, often because some family members want no part of such a public tale.

When a story stalls through lack of cooperation, Lomas says he will pass on his findings to whoever initiated the search – many times someone seeking a birth parent years after adoption.

"We pass on our findings because it's just publicly available information anyway that we've been able to dig out," says Lomas, adding that often people just don't have the research skills to make their search successful.

Lomas is enormously proud of his pro-

grammes.

"We've made a difference to a massive number of lives. I believe we've been part of making an important social change too by normalising being part of a family with a split or members or who have been fractured in some way. There are so many of them out there."

He says in the era from the 1950s to 1970s, before the birth-control pill and more-available pregnancy terminations, around 80,000 adoptions took place in New Zealand. He explains what that means: 160,000 birthparents, 320,000 grandparents and countless siblings and half-siblings, all part of the fractured families and 'family secrets' from that era alone – well over half a million people, without taking extended family numbers into account.

"When you look at the numbers," says Lomas, "it's no wonder the show has found such acceptance and that so many people have been inspired to come forward and tell their stories."

Over the years, Lomas has honed his research skills and use of technology. And advances like DNA testing have had a major impact.

But the heart-wrenching stories have the same timeless common thread.

"When we get on a plane to meet whoever we are looking for, we really have no idea how people are going to react. From years of experience, there are no easy answers when it comes to what might have happened in individual stories. It is full of surprises."

Lomas's own world was shattered when he lost his partner, TV colleague Sue Donald, to cancer in 2012.

Four years ago, he met Devonport resident Clarinda Franklin. The Hauraki Primary principal is now his partner, drawing him to the peninsula and a new community.

Now in his late 60s, Lomas is still as fit as a fiddle – running, swimming and kayaking around the neighbourhoods of Devonport.

"I try to swim all year round, and over the years I've kayaked all over the country. I really enjoy it but it's also about health for me. I always want to be able to do what I want to do and not be restricted by my own lack of condition. I want to be able to live life to the fullest in the years ahead."



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By Rob Drent



Auckland Council seems to have caught Auckland Transport's obsession with abundant signs placed in the community as indication the organisation is doing something. In Covid-19 Level 4 lockdown, hundreds of council notifications have appeared around the peninsula, alerting residents to which

public facilities can and can't be used during various alert levels.

This appears to be visual pollution overkill in a community well-enough versed in restrictions after several previous lockdowns. The most amusing one I have spotted is at the western end of Abbotsford Terrace, warning against using the boat ramp at Alert Levels 3 and 4. My eyesight isn't what it used to be, but there's no boat ramp and the reserve is at least several hundred metres from the Ngataranga Bay mangroves.

With data, statistics and modelling the basis of much of New Zealand's response to Covid, I found it strange to be rebuffed when asking the police how many lockdown-breach notifications had been issued for the Devonport peninsula or for the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area.

The North Shore is often described as the safest area to live in New Zealand, crime-wise. However, police have in the past refused to supply me crime figures to a level where this can be proven. Likewise, I struck out on the breach notifications.

Given the number of clusters playing basketball, and the amount of graffiti, petty vandalism and bottle-smashing going on, perhaps we are not as law-abiding as we would like to believe.

Compared to last year's month-long lockdown, more traffic seems to be buzzing along Lake Rd during this year's iteration. Shops are shut, and residents are expected to stay at home apart from exercise and supermarket visits. Where is everyone going?

It's strange what difference a year makes. Remember all the concern in 2020 about the potential for Covid to be spread through contact with objects? I recall some people were disinfecting each item brought home from the supermarket. Complaints were

made to the Ministry of Health about that 'Angel of Death', the Devonport Flagstaff, being placed in letterboxes. The government said we were doing nothing wrong, but eventually decided it was unsafe for community-newspaper delivery people to be moving around the community under Alert Level 4. In 2021, the government has ruled news organisations can make their own decisions on home delivery: allowable with appropriate safeguards such as masks and gloves for delivery people. Any decision was essentially taken out of our hands by our distribution company Ovato, a national firm, ruling out household circulation under Alert Level 4.

The government was prepared to reassess newspaper deliveries but it seems to have taken a hard line on butcher shops, which are banned from opening, while greengrocers seem to have more leeway. I can't follow the arguments on this. All power to The Village Butcher at Hauraki who, bolstered by substantial community support, stayed open in protest until closed down by police.

Local patronage is vital for businesses in these times, and here at the Flagstaff we've been heartened by the support for the paper. We've decided to continue printing when many other publications have gone online or into hibernation. We've distributed to stands around the community and the Flagstaff has also been available through the supermarket and dairies.

The take-up has been remarkable. Some stands have been filled four times (200 papers each time). In 2022, the Devonport Flagstaff celebrates 30 years of continuous publication – quite an achievement for a small independent. We couldn't have done it without our readers and our advertisers.

Keep your story ideas and news tips coming into news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz and, more than ever, keep supporting our advertisers.



2022 Out-of-Zone Enrolments at Belmont Intermediate School

The Belmont Intermediate School Board has determined that a number of out-of-zone places will be available over both year levels in 2022.

Applications for out-of-zone enrolments for 2022 are open from Friday, 10 September 2021 and will close on **Friday, 24 September at 4.00pm.**

Out-of-zone places will be allocated using our priority order (found on our school website enrolments page). If required, a ballot will be held on **Monday, 27 September 2021.**

Results of the priority placing and ballot (if required) will be made to applicants on **Wednesday, 29 September 2021.**



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DEVONPORT BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Annual General Meeting on Monday 11th October, 2021

Location: And Now Digital (38 Victoria Road, Devonport)

Doors open at 5.30pm for a 6.00pm meeting start

AGM information, Agenda and Board Nomination Form available by emailing Shaulyn van Baaren: manager@devonport.co.nz

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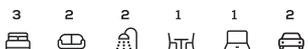
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No room for complacency over intensification push

Councillor Chris Darby omitted crucial facts in his comments (Flagstaff, 27 August) about possible housing intensification in Devonport.

Intensification. Fact: Yes, the council first has to consider areas of the city that are near to main train and bus routes. But then it must look at 'other locations' where intensification can occur – and this includes Devonport.

The National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS UD) directs the council to look at rezoning for intensive housing if these other locations have 'accessibility' to public transport, jobs and schools and show 'demand'.

Devonport easily meets the criteria of accessibility as it is close to ferry and bus transport, schools and shops. Demand for housing must be assessed by land value and with Devonport's high house prices it romps home to meet these criteria as well.

Fact: If an area has both accessibility and demand, council must then work out how best to enable building heights and density there.

Special Character Area review. Fact: Council officers have said the overlays that protect Devonport, like the height-sensitive area and single-house zones, may be reviewed to allow greater intensification. These facts are from the NPS and council planning-committee minutes.

So greater height levels to provide more housing is a real possibility for Devonport as well as for the rest of the city.

Council is still working through the enormous task it has been given by government to further intensify the city and nothing has yet been decided. Present protections could be reduced or scrapped.

Auckland Council to decide Fact: The final decisions will come down to a council vote. We could end up with a similar result

to Wellington City Council, which in June voted to reduce its character areas by 70 per cent to allow for greater intensification. This means hundreds of heritage houses there can be demolished.

Councillor Darby has just one vote on council. Several Auckland councillors believe that Special Character Areas and their height restrictions should be scrapped to allow for tall apartment buildings. There is absolutely no room for complacency that Devonport will remain untouched by housing intensification.

Devonport achieved hard-won heritage protections 25 years ago because local people campaigned for them. The only way we will continue to protect Devonport's historic character is if we make our voices heard again.

The next local-body election is just a year away. Make your vote count.

Margot McRae
Devonport Heritage Inc.

Green route brings surprise and delight

It was with disbelief and delight that I read page 22 of the last issue of the Flagstaff (27 August).

As far back as 2001, when I had the dubious pleasure of serving on the Devonport Community Board, I argued fervently for the cycle lane to follow the 'Green Route' rather than constrict the use of Lake Rd.

Alas, others had a different view – and look where that has led us.

But there, on page 22, it was unobtrusively reported that the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board had approved the funding for construction of

the 'Greenway Route'.

Which was odd, because when I spoke to the board recently about removing the cycle lanes from Lake Rd and to look at the alternative, there was no mention that the 'Green Route' was even on their radar.

At that meeting, I might also mention, I told the board I had the previous day sat at the Belmont Intersection from 6 am to 9 am and counted only 34 commuter cyclists passing through.

Why the Flagstaff thought that was not worth a mention is puzzling.

Roger Brittenden

Freedom-camping views

Remarks by Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Toni van Tonder about not wanting to be the "fun police" over freedom camping, as reported in the Flagstaff (27 August), gave the wrong impression about her views on the subject.

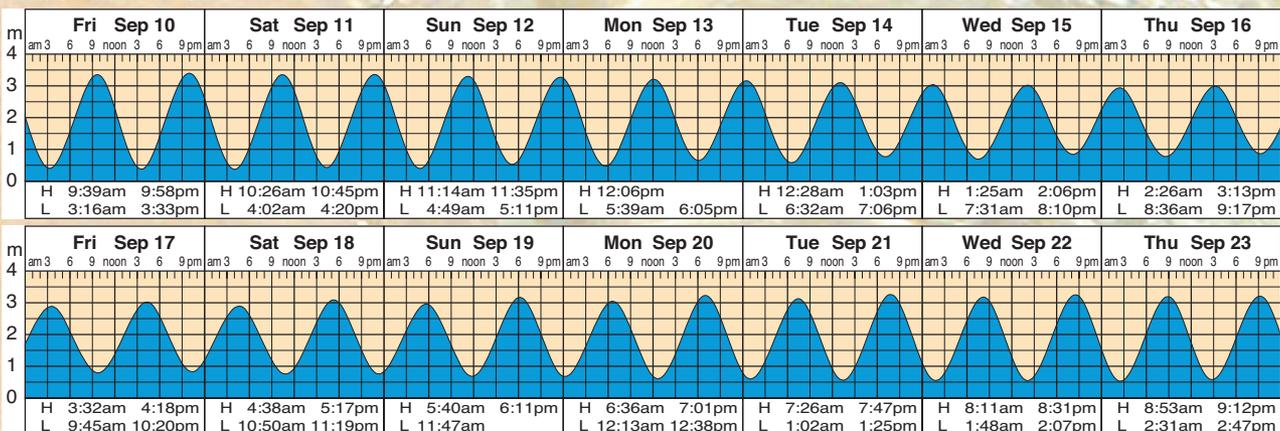
Van Tonder, along with the rest of the board, supported a ban on camping along Queens Pde, near the Devonport ferry terminal.

Her "fun police" comments were conflated in the story, and its heading, with the waterfront. But they related instead to extra conditions the board wanted placed on the times freedom campers could spend in camping at non-banned sites elsewhere. The error is regretted.

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Dobbed-in butcher restricted to deliveries

The Hauraki Corner butcher, told by police last month to close his doors for opening in breach of Covid regulations, has switched to deliveries, but says they are a poor substitute for serving customers direct.

“We’ve had a tremendous amount of community support, even from Devonport,” says Ray Crawley, who owns the Village Butcher.

But he remains frustrated that under Alert Level 4 speciality shops like his – along with greengrocers, bakeries and fishmongers – cannot have customers on the premises. Instead, they are restricted to making contactless deliveries for orders placed by phone or online.

“Why not let the small shops open,” he asks, echoing calls made by his customers on social media and after previous lockdowns.

North Shore MP Simon Watts has also spoken out, saying trading regulations should have been revisited after 2020.

The restrictions, which allow supermarkets and dairies to trade, are designed to limit person-to-person contact.

“It’s disappointing that someone felt the need to dob us in,” says Crawley, who says he was operating in a more socially distanced way than some supermarkets.

Disgruntlement was exacerbated by the two-week closing of the Countdown supermarket next door to Crawley’s butchery. This was to divert workers to bigger supermarkets where staff had been required to isolate after possible Covid-19 exposure. Because of this, locals were being “herded” to the bigger supermarkets to queue, Crawley said. (The Hauraki supermarket reopened on 2 September.)

Crawley’s run-in with the law was on 24 August. He agrees it was a fair cop when police visited him after he had been trading for several days. They asked him to shut his doors, which he did. He was warned against reopening, but not fined.

“We’re trying to look after ourselves and look after everyone else as well,” Crawley told the Flagstaff that day.

His experience of deliveries since then was: “It’s three times as much work for half as much money.”

With seven staff helping him, he worries about the future, saying: “The way things are going there will be no butchers left.”

For now, it’s “absolute chaos”, he says, making homemade small goods while dealing with orders and drop-offs. Luckily, his sister who lives nearby is helping with deliveries. Crawley has not set up an online ordering system, but is taking phone orders.

The Well Hung butchery in Milford has been taking orders via its website. Executive butcher Todd Treadwell said he and his customers would love the store to be able to fully open, or at least offer contactless pick-ups, so people could collect their meat while out getting groceries, which would reduce pressure on the delivery network and be time-efficient.

“If I look around Milford, where we are



No-go area... Frustrated butchers like Ray Crawley (above) of the Village Butcher in Hauraki have been warned they cannot open. Their only option is to deliver phone or online orders.

based, there are a number of supermarkets, greengrocers and minimarts open and serving customers, yet our doors are closed.”

Business online was brisk, said Treadwell, and it was a struggle to match demand and delivery slots.

Police told the Flagstaff they were doing “reassurance patrols” in the community. They said they had told a fruit shop to stop trading on the same day as they warned the Village Butcher.

Police did not supply details of the numbers of infringements. A spokesman said they were acting to ensure adherence to Ministry of Business, Innovation and Enterprise (MBIE) guidelines. The Ministry in turn told the Flagstaff it could not comment on enforcement as this was up to others. But as of the end of August, it had received 285 complaints nationally, with 93 from the Auckland region.

MBIE was unable to answer specific questions relating to individual products or retailers, with a spokesperson saying it was “up to individual businesses to judge whether they meet the definition of an alert-level 4 business or service.”

“MBIE continues to provide guidance to a wide range of businesses on the alert-level 4 settings,” the spokesperson said.

Complaints laid with it would be looked at, with warnings given to businesses if necessary. Serious or repeat offences would then be referred to the relevant agency for enforcement purposes. A breach of the health order is an offence liable to imprisonment for a term not exceeding six months or a fine not exceeding \$4000.

On being asked if changes to the rules had been considered for butchers and greengroceries, the MBIE spokesperson said: “By limiting the overall number of places that are open to only the most essential businesses, we are able to reduce the number of places where contact may occur and minimise the risk of further transmission in the community.”

HOW TO HELP

To support your local stores that cannot open for now, check if your favourites are able to do deliveries, and make an order.

If they are unable to operate under Alert Level 4, consider buying a voucher or gift card for later use.

Inside word on the Navy's Covid HQ in Devonport

The head of the Devonport Naval Base, Commander Phil Wheadon, says he didn't join the service "to have normal".

Instead, in his 10 months as commanding officer of HMNZS Philomel, he admits he has faced stark choices in juggling the Navy's enormous Covid response alongside its usual work.

From a recent Covid alert at the Navy's Narrow Neck accommodation, to getting two vessels, HMNZS Aotearoa and Te Kaha, out to sea for routine exercises this week, the job has been anything but routine.

"We're still a Navy first and foremost," he says. "We're doing what we can to maintain that."

But it is a challenge, with so many personnel committed by the government to work on the Defence Force's Operation Protect: in managed isolation and quarantine (MIQ) facilities, the security around them, and now helping police on road blocks around Auckland, in Alert Level 4, at its northern and southern borders.

Of the Royal New Zealand Navy's around 2100 personnel – the majority of whom are based in Devonport – just shy of 900 people are tied up in rotating duty rosters for Operation Protect, or on ships or other national contingency duties. "It's a big operation for us, no doubt," he tells the Flagstaff. "Operation Protect is reaching into pretty much all of the Defence Force."

Wheadon acknowledges that the local community has reason to want to know what is going on, given the number of personnel based in Devonport who are in front-line Covid response roles. A snapshot of those assigned right now, sees around 90 working in MIQ, 70 on security, and 25 to 30 on road-block duty.

Devonport is also the centre of the Northern Group administration of Operation Protect, with around 25 people dedicated to that, he says.

Under Alert Level 4 conditions, a number of base personnel are working from home. Wheadon is among them, juggling his duties from Browns Bay. A skeleton workforce of around 60 people is being kept at Devonport, with approximately 50 at Narrow Neck, including junior officers two months into training.

"The people down there are looking after catering, welfare and management that can't be done remotely," Wheadon says.

A positive Covid-19 wastewater sample was returned on 25 August



Be careful what you wish for... no normal has proved the norm for Navy base commander Phil Wheadon

at the Navy's Narrow Neck site. However, final results from Covid tests on all 56 personnel and eight civilian contractors connected to the site have proved negative. Follow-up wastewater testing was clear too.

The initial water testing was sparked not by concerns at either the training site or the main base, but as a precautionary measure because Devonport was where the first case in the community of the current Delta variant outbreak was reported.

The junior officers at Narrow Neck, along with general personnel and Operation Protection staff who were all accommodated in pre-fabs at the rear of the Vauxhall Rd site, had been put into strict lockdown. They are now back operating at Alert Level 4 conditions. Those on the frontline follow strict PPE and other protocols.

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at the top of the page.

Wheadon says uniformed personnel have had second vaccinations.

Testing at the main base had been conducted due to potential exposure, or staff had been at locations of interest or they had shown possible symptoms. After moving to isolate a few people, "testing has proved it's not Covid", he says.

Across the whole Navy, no positive tests have been returned relating to the current Auckland outbreak.

However the morale of Navy families and base personnel is an issue on his radar. "It's not really what they signed up to do, but they recognise it's a really important job to do," he says.

His attitude is the same. "I'm not going to say it has been fun, but it's been rewarding to be involved in keeping New Zealand safe." Being in the Defence Force was about reacting to emergencies and being able to adapt, he said.

"Operation Protect is our No. 1 priority, the rest is maintenance of current capabilities and the development of new capabilities."

For a commanding officer it means working out where cuts can be made without compromising readiness or eroding the workforce. Wheadon is also working out how to manage a new intake of ratings. "If we stopped our training, then next year our ability to crew ships, our ability to resource Operation Protect would be compromised," he says.

To maintain a sustainable service, some activities are being reviewed. "We have to prioritise; cut our cloth accordingly," he says.

Economising ranges from possible cut backs in parades to easing up on routine administration, with quarterly rather than monthly reporting, or serving an occasional cold breakfast rather than a hot one. Hard decisions will need to be made about the speed of wider organisational change.



Testing at Narrow Neck revealed Covid in the waste water

But essential maintenance continues. HMNZS Manawanui is in the dockyard and HMNZS Wellington is the contingency ship for any call-outs, such as perhaps a Pacific aid mission. Of deployments, Wheadon says there has to always be enough people available. "We just have to make some stark choices of what activities we carry on."

For Wheadon, whose background is in engineering, his sailing days are behind him. But he knows crew need offshore work to look forward to. "Everybody would rather be sitting on a tropical beach with a Mai Tai after a week or two at sea," he says.

For now, he is working to ensure they find their jobs rewarding.

The Englishman, who served 16 years in the Royal Navy before enlisting in the Royal New Zealand Navy in 2004, says opportunities to do interesting tasks still exist.

Sailors from HMNZS Wellington had told him of the satisfaction they had taken in delivering vaccines to Rarotonga, for example.

They probably followed Navy tradition, he jokes, in returning home with exaggerated work stories of life on the high seas.

Lighten Covid load on Navy says MP

North Shore MP Simon Watts says the Navy is facing a huge cost from its commitment to the Covid fight.

"My concern is having such significant numbers of personnel in MIQs reduces our capability in the Defence space," he told the Flagstaff. "We have a number of Naval vessels not operating because of staffing."

Watts said there was also a hidden cost to Defence personnel and their families, from the strains of extended time spent seconded to quarantine facilities.

"The placement of 15 months in MIQ is longer than any deployment on a ship," he said, citing around 1000 personnel tied up in the government's Covid response.

"In the short term, we can manage this," he said, but it was high time for a strategy to set in place a sustainable plan for MIQ facilities. This should include the government fleshing out proposals for vaccinated people entering New Zealand from lower-risk places to isolate at home. That would reduce the burden on state-run MIQ facilities and Navy staff.

If the current situation dragged on, Watts feared there might be an impact on retention rates in the Navy.

"They trained to be in the Navy, not to be in MIQ." Some might look to work elsewhere, including switching to the service in Australia or Britain, he said.

Food-bank demand surges

Devonport's Holy Trinity food bank is facing an increase in demand compared to last year's lockdowns.

"I would say we're probably doing three times as many food parcels," parish administrator and food-bank manager Andie Levell said.

"This time around, it's far busier than it was last year."

Holy Trinity's is thought to be the only food bank between Takapuna and Devonport. "There aren't a lot of food banks on the Shore for a start," said Levell. "But we're actually this time receiving requests from all over Auckland. We're actually delivering parcels over the bridge this time."

Levell said it's not just families who are in need – single people and couples are also reaching out.

The food bank is supported by donations from parishioners, and usually supplemented by food from local eateries, but they are

closed in lockdown.

A \$2000 donation to the church was made by Devonport Rotary. Rotary president Ian Cunliffe said it was as a result of a unanimous vote at the club's Zoom meeting last week. "Basically, because we are not having our weekly meetings at the Waitemata Golf Club, our members will get a \$20 per week credit on their Rotary account for the money that the meal would cost. Members decided that they would each donate two weeks' meal money – \$40 per member – to the Holy Trinity food-bank initiative rather than credit their Rotary account."

Meanwhile, other support services are reporting a quieter lockdown. One man who volunteered to pick up groceries, William Neale from Connect Church Devonport, said he hadn't been called on in the first two weeks. "I'm really pleased to see that people are very much aware of others who can't get out and who are in need at this time."

Jacki Fortune, from the Devonport Self-Isolation Support Group, also reported fewer requests for help. "I've probably only had maybe three or four. My guess is that more people have got their support systems in place this time around. And maybe the fact that the most high-risk people are vaccinated makes them less anxious."

People also preferred to call on someone they know ahead of contacting a stranger, she said.

"I think, on the whole, people are pretty stoic. I've noticed, compared to the last lockdown, things like playgrounds are not being used; people are wearing masks."

• Items for the Holy Trinity food bank can be left on the porch at the church office and a text sent to let the vicar know (the number is on the door). Donations can also be made online: holytrinity.gen.nz. Click the donations tab and use reference 'food bank'.



OUT & ABOUT

Maria Teape Community Coordinator
445 9533 | maria@devonportpeninsulatrust.nz

HÔTOKE/WINTER FUN PRESCHOOL PLAY & INTERGEN MEET-UPS

Devonport Peninsula Trust's regular programmes, Hôtoke/Winter Fun Preschool Play and Intergen Meet-ups, continue to be on hold until Alert Level 2. For activity ideas and ways to stay connected during lockdown: www.devonportpeninsulatrust.nz www.facebook.com/DevonportPeninsulaTrust

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@devonport-methodist.org.nz.

COMPOST COLLECTIVE ONLINE WORKSHOPS

Saturdays until 25th September, 2pm-4pm Devonport Library, 2 Victoria Road, Devonport White Auckland is in Alert Level 4, Compost Collective will be moving scheduled free workshops to Zoom.

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to learn how to join one of the workshops: www.compostcollective.org.nz/events-calendar/

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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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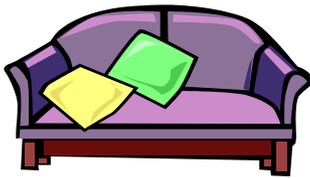
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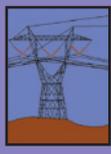
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SCHOOL NEWS



Grammar

SEP 10, 2021

Poetry Club Continues in Lockdown!

Although Auckland has found itself in another extended Level 4 lockdown, many facets of Takapuna Grammar School life have continued remotely.

The school's Poetry Club – led by Ms Shelley, Mr Tricklebank and librarian Erin – has continued in an online form throughout each lockdown, and the last few weeks have been no exception!

The group gets together once a week to write and share poetry, often based on specific rules and challenges.

Here are some samples of the work that has been produced recently. Students wrote poems which had to contain these words: sit, afternoon, watch, cicada, sun, safety.

Watch Face

In the sun of her watch face sits the afternoon soon turned dusk in smudged gesture dash — turned moon. I watch her watch the sun.

A cicada suns herself on the window sill on another second day of Spring and I forgot the tradition I started at seven.

She sings her body like broken harmonica, whispers Summer and safety.

Egg, moon, sun, bird. Shell. The afternoon an upturned bell. I sit and something settles something swells.

Metamorphosis

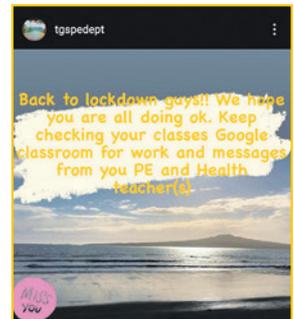
Time sits heavy and gelatinous in the afternoon air
Melts into the evening and boils over
The hands of a watch carve circles into its glass face
Thousands of cicada skins bake in the sun
Clinging to safety on the bark of trees.

One quiet summer day

An afternoon breeze
Whispers in your ear
Cicada voice screech
As the glorious sun shines above
Sit underneath the tree
Watch the time passing by
Safety surrounds you giving hope.

Takapuna Grammar School Social Media Accounts Adapt to Lockdown

Even though we can't be at school, the school social-media accounts make sure that the fun never stops! From tips and advice, to sporty challenges, to literary quizzes, teachers, staff members and student leaders are ensuring that the school's thriving community continues virtually, even when we can't meet face-to-face.



Mumma you're locked down – but we love you!



Julie Gannaway isn't a publicity seeker but her birthday announcement on a Devonport road gave passers-by some good cheer during the latest lockdown. Daughters Lisa and Adelle planned the message in Wynyard St, where mum Julie and husband Mike live in an apartment. Lisa chucked the 3 September birthday greeting after picking up her groceries in Devonport. Mike Gannaway said the message was a huge surprise which was "very much appreciated." "We've been very careful not to mix with their bubbles."

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Shore's rubbish-charging system could be dumped

Rubbish-collection charging could change in the Devonport-Takapuna area as Auckland Council considers a one-size-fits-all approach across the city.

Currently, residents of the North Shore and West Auckland use a pay-as-you-throw system under which they use a bin tag each time they put their wheelie bin out. Tags cost from \$2.70 to \$5.70 per pickup, depending on the size of the bin.

The rest of Auckland pays a targeted rate for rubbish collection, currently \$150.06 a year (around \$2.88 a week). The council is now considering whether to make one of those two models the citywide system or to keep the status quo.

Around half of North Shore properties are serviced by private waste-collection providers, with the other half using the council-run service, Devonport-Takapuna Local Board members were told at a conference-call workshop recently.

Data showing that pay-as-you-throw resulted in reduced waste was skewed, because of the number of people using private collection, the meeting was told.

But nearly two-thirds of rubbish collected in the local-board area could be redirected – such as via food composting or recycling.

Households generating the largest volumes of rubbish tended to be those with those with young children, due to nappies, or the very elderly, due to waste from incontinence and medical products. In Devonport-Takapuna, five per cent of households have occupants aged under-5 and seven per cent have over-85s.

Board chair Ruth Jackson said there was no evidence that the pay-as-you-throw model reduced waste. “It’s not having a huge, really clear impact on the amount of stuff we chuck.”

Board member Toni van Tonder raised concerns about people making the adjustment. Whatever was done should be the best option in the greater scheme of waste minimisation. “I think communities often don’t like change,” she said.

Member Jan O’Connor said she did not want any more bins. “I could end up in my house with having four plastic bins in my yard. We’ll be having footpaths covered in bins.”

Feedback will be gathered and the proposal eventually considered for the 2022/23 annual plan. Food-scraps collection is set for early 2023, having been delayed by Covid-related supply issues.

RSA seeks kids' creativity to help mark Armistice Day

The Devonport Returned Services Association (RSA) is running competitions for children ahead of Armistice Day this November.

Entrants can submit creative work in the form of poetry, a story or art for the competition, which is open to local primary and intermediate pupils

“The aim of the competition is to raise awareness of the impact on the Devonport community of the casualties of war,” the RSA said.

Prizes will be based on the number and type of entries, but could include book vouchers or a private art lesson. Entries close at 5pm on 10 October, and should be emailed to manager@devonportrsa.co.nz.

• The RSA is also running a speech competition for school years 9-13. Entries must be three-four minutes in length and focus on the topic: ‘How best can we honour their sacrifice even today?’

The winning entry will be read at the Devonport Remembrance Day service on 7 November, and \$1000 in prize money will be awarded according to the amount and quality of entries.

Local Board supports move to Māori wards

Auckland Council has taken another step towards Māori wards, and the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board is supportive in principle.

The council’s current stance suggests using the same formula that decides the number of Māori seats in Parliament – the number of Māori on the Māori electoral roll would decide the number of extra seats.

A council report says there are 114,900 voters on the Māori roll and 1.6 million on the general roll in Auckland, which would equate to one seat on a 21 or 22-seat council or two of 23 seats.

Cabinet is set to remove the 20-seat limit for the Super City council.

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board asked that recommendations made in the Auckland Governance Report 2009 be re-examined in relation to Māori representation on Auckland Council.

The board also endorsed the proposals for a Māori ward to affect only governing-body representation, not local boards.

20 years ago from the Flagstaff files

- The Devonport Wharf walkway is closed due to safety concerns. Claims that the Devonport ferry is damaging the wharf are rubbish by Fullers.
- Marianella Maso wins the Devonport Arts Festival poster competition and a \$500 prize.
- Promising North Shore United soccer players Daniel Ellensohn (16), Michael Gwyther (14) and Robbie Lee (15) are selected to travel to England for experience with London clubs Queens Park Rangers, Millwall and Charlton.
- Around \$16 million has been spent repairing Devonport’s sewers but residents won’t know for 18 months how successful the work has been.
- Author Graeme Lay’s latest book, *Return to One Foot Island*, is a story of first love, friendship and family, set in the Cook Islands.
- Devonport identities Carol Donaldson and Lyndsay Brock win North Shore City Civic Awards. Donaldson was involved in Waterwise since its inception. More than 800 children pass through Devon-

port waterwise every year. Brock was instrumental in helping restructure the Devonport Community House and also prominent as a guardian of Ngataranga and Barry’s Point reserves.

- Nicola Thomas wins \$2200 after placing first in the 2001 Edible Art Competition held at the Aotea Centre.
- 1950s Devonport is recreated in a Devonport Primary School play, *The Fun Doctor*, written and directed by teacher Keith Passmore.
- Joel Cayford, Gayle Leybourne, Alan McCulloch and George Wood are the North Shore mayoral candidates in the 2001 local-body elections.
- John Casey and Fletcher Gilbert competed in New Zealand’s under-16 water polo team at an international tournament in Honolulu.
- A settlers cottage at 28 Church St is on the market for \$459,000
- Alan Richards, former sports broadcaster and a life member of the North Shore soccer and cricket clubs, is the Flagstaff interview subject.

Govt housing plan leaves no area 'safe'

"Nothing is safe" from a government drive to intensify housing, a heritage advocate has told the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

The government has directed councils nationwide to follow its pro-intensification National Policy Statement on Urban Development (NPS UD), which is set to produce more buildings of six storeys or higher.

Margot McRae, of Devonport Heritage and the citywide Character Coalition, spoke to a community forum of the local board via conference call last month, warning against complacency.

"If there's enough of a kickback from people in Auckland, they will listen," she said. "A lot of people think they'll be all right, and there's just no certainty. Nothing is safe; everything is up in the air."

Replacing character areas was not the answer to the housing crisis, she said.

"You can't lose so much for very little gain and it certainly won't be for affordable housing.

"We all know that the price of houses and land in these special-character areas is very high.

"You'd think Devonport would be safer, but there's no room for complacency at all."

Board member Toni van Tonder said the board wanted to see the protection of character buildings in Devonport.

"What you're describing in terms of the threat to Devonport is quite terrifying," she said.

Member Jan O'Connor said it would be "very, very sad" to lose character buildings. "I don't think we realise that in 30 years' time nobody will even want to come to Auckland. It will be just all a jungle.

"I believe we're destroying the whole character of our city."

North Shore councillor and chair of Auckland Council's planning committee Chris Darby has said Devonport Heritage is wrong in suggesting Devonport is at risk of six-storey-and-above buildings. "This is just a total fallacy," he told the local board last month.

Darby said only places within 800 metres walkable catchments of bus and train stops on the Rapid Transit Network (which includes the Northern Busway stations) and 1000-metre zones from the edges of the city's 10 designated metropolitan centres (which include Takapuna) would be impacted by this part of the government directive, though he acknowledged some changes were in store for all areas.

Tax role for Watts

North Shore MP Simon Watts has picked up a new role focusing on tax.

He has been appointed the Opposition's Associate Spokesperson for Revenue (tax), following a recent minor reshuffle of responsibilities within the National Party by its leader Judith Collins.

Watts is already shadow ACC spokesperson and holds the Associate Health role as well. These align with his finance and health-management background.

"I am proud to be given the Associate Revenue (Tax) portfolio responsibility that includes the overall working of the New Zealand tax system, including Kiwi Saver, student loans, GST and income tax," he said.

In his maiden speech to Parliament, Watts spoke of the importance of building an economy that empowers individuals and "shares the opportunities it's creating"

His background includes being a chartered accountant, with experience working at the Inland Revenue Department and Deloitte Tax, as well as investment banking internationally. "This gives me confidence that we can look beyond what we've always done, and act," he said.

THE NAVY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

STAYING SAFE AND MEETING TARGETS

When New Zealand's COVID Alert Level 4 lockdown began at 11.59, on 17 August, it meant some safety adjustments for two of our ships working at sea.

While everyone else stayed at home, HMNZ Ships Te Kaha and Aotearoa worked in the Hauraki Gulf. For Aotearoa, our newest ship, the priority was the realisation of her aviation capabilities, which included the first embarkation of a Seasprite SH2-G(I) helicopter and the first flying serials from her flight deck. Te Kaha, with her newly upgraded systems, was undergoing sea trials.

When the vessels sailed, all crew were full vaccinated and there was no indication of close contacts with the COVID-affected persons being on board. However, as the Ministry of Health updated their locations of interest in Devonport and wider Auckland, and pushed the date of original infection further back, the crew realised there could be potential close contacts among them, even if no-one was displaying any symptoms.



It was decided that any person who had been a recent close contact of a positive COVID case, or had been to a place of interest, would be immediately isolated and tested.

The ships began a range of health protocols such as mask-wearing, enhanced cleaning, social distancing where possible, and a one-way system

for moving around the ships to prevent any un-intended contact.

Both ships returned to Devonport Naval Base in the last week of August. Every crew member was tested and with results coming back negative for the entire ship's company, they were permitted to disembark and rejoin their community – albeit in lockdown.

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.

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DEVONPORT NAVAL BASE TEL 445 5002



NAVY
TE TAUA MOANA O AOTEAROA

McPherson quits North Shore United

Top-performing North Shore United football coach Malcolm McPherson is leaving the club after three seasons, but says the nucleus of its premier team has the makings of “a great side”.

During McPherson’s tenure, North Shore won the Northern Premier League in 2019, for the first time in decades, and this year made it to the Chatham Cup semi-finals.

McPherson said for the last five seasons he had been coaching in both the winter and summer leagues and wanted to spend “a bit more time with the family and pursue some other opportunities”.

“It’s a personal decision. The club, its management and sponsors have been fantastic,” he said.

“It’s been a great three years – I’ve really enjoyed it.”

It was the first time Devonport resident McPherson had ever lived and coached in the same suburb.

If the new coach retained most of the premier squad, “I reckon it is three to four players away from having a great side,” he said.

North Shore finished mid-table this year but was unlucky to have injuries and player unavailability at key times, McPherson said.

The club was scheduled to play Miramar



Moving on... Malcolm McPherson

in the Chatham Cup semi-final on 21 August, but the match was postponed after New Zealand went into Covid lockdown.

“We had full player availability for that match and I rated our chances,” McPherson said.

The match has been rescheduled for 2 or 3 October, depending on Covid alert levels.

New Zealand Football chiefs decided Chatham Cup semi-finalists needed to have had at least a week and a weekend to prepare for the Covid-delayed matches.

However, the longer the delay went on the more it would play into Miramar’s hands, McPherson said.

Miramar had made it into the national league play-offs and had nine matches left this season, which gives its players higher motivation to keep training.

Wellington is also likely to go into Alert Level 2 earlier than Auckland, which meant additional preparation time for the capital-based club, McPherson said.

“We’ve been doing (training) sessions on Zoom, but it’s not the same.”

While he’s leaving North Shore for a break from coaching, McPherson doubts he will be out of the game forever.

“Football will come calling at some stage – it’s been a big part of my life for 30 years,” he said.

He also intends to stay in Devonport, where he is renovating a house.

North Shore United chair Steve Browning said McPherson’s achievements could not be overstated in what has progressively become a more competitive league.

“The quality of the teams in this year’s league has been the strongest in years.”

Navy houses affected by subsidence

Five Navy houses on the Devonport peninsula are undergoing work to make them habitable after subsidence.

Four houses have had pinning done to their piles, a Navy spokesman told the Flagstaff, without detailing locations.

Further work was needed to prepare them for re-occupation, he said. This was

programmed for this financial year.

For a fifth house, options for fixing the piles were still being looked at. The estimated costs for foundation repairs ranged between \$30,000 to \$160,000.

Subsidence was first identified for four of the houses in late 2017, and in the fifth last year.

Responding to a Flagstaff question, the spokesperson said to the best of the New Zealand Defence Force’s knowledge, none of the houses were on land previously used as landfill.

In all, 281 Defence houses are in use on the North Shore, with current occupancy at approximately 90 per cent

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