

# The Devonport Flagstaff

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

March 11, 2022

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

**'Brazen' carjacking  
in Belmont... p4**

**Court backs Maunga  
Authority critics... p7**

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Bryan Walpert... p18-19**

## Parts of Cheltenham considered for intensification

Properties along Cheltenham Beach and other Devonport waterfront sites have been earmarked for higher-density zoning, the Flagstaff understands.

A map from a confidential Auckland Council workshop indicates that while most Devonport properties will retain their

heritage status, significant pockets will be opened up for three-storey, three-townhouse developments per site, as became law last December. These include Cheltenham beachfront, parts of Stanley Point, some waterfront areas near the ferry terminal, part of Wairoa Rd and the area around Ariho Tce.

The workshops followed an Auckland Council survey of Special Character Areas around Auckland.

Devonport Heritage chair Margot McRae said the fight was "on again" to preserve the whole of Devonport as a heritage suburb. It

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## Street life: summertime music jazzes up main st



**Jamming... Francesca Parussini (left) and Charlotte Barrand with George Brajkovich (rear, on drums) entertain on Victoria Rd last Saturday. Story, page 11.**



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# Density changes to Devonport mooted

From page 1

would be launching a campaign to raise awareness amongst the public, she said.

Another workshop map obtained by the Flagstaff (below) shows Special Character Areas around the town centre reduced.

McRae said: "This really appears to be a move to allow more apartment blocks in the centre of Devonport."

"The only thing holding back the heights will be the volcanic-cone viewshafts and the height-sensitive area restrictions, which hold the height to 9 metres.

"But will this be enough to prevent 15 metre heights?"

If no "the views and the relationship of the sea and the town to the maunga will be gradually lost," she said.

"We don't believe you can divorce the supermarket, Wynyard St, and the Clarence St area from Victoria Rd... 15-metre heights here will loom over the historic elements of Devonport."



Changes mapped out...The red areas are set to become higher density if changes suggested by council planners go ahead (above)



The existing Special Character area with the black line and the proposed reduced area within the yellow line

## New rules allow housing blocks near village but protections likely to remain

Devonport village has been categorised by Auckland Council as a small but highly "accessible" town centre, potentially opening it up for massive development on its fringes.

Apartment buildings of up to five storeys or 15 metres will be allowed within 200 metres of Devonport business district under new planning rules adopted by council's planning committee last week. The Terraced Housing and Apartment Buildings zone will now apply to properties close to the town centre.

And while the area would still be subject to protections – such as volcanic viewshafts and heritage-character overlays how these will fare against a new zoning is open to interpretation.

The changes to zoning are to be introduced to fulfil the government's directive for more housing in Auckland under the housing-supply enabling act passed in December 2021.

Clarence St, Wynyard St, Anne St, Rattray St, Buchanan St, Flagstaff Tce and parts of Victoria Rd, Queens Pde and King Edward Pde are all potentially included in the Terraced Housing and Apartments zone.

Devonport Heritage chair Margot McRae said unless the Special Character Area overlay for the business and residential areas are

maintained, "then Devonport could have five-storey apartment and terrace-housing units (up to 15 metres high) around Victoria Rd and 200 metres beyond the present business centre."

At present, just the business area is zoned for 13 metres or four storeys.

"It is crucial that council endorses the Special Character Areas, business and residential, for Devonport, otherwise the area's heritage will be seriously affected by tall apartment blocks.

"It is also imperative that the Height Sensitive Area and Volcanic Cone Viewshafts remain in place as this further restricts the height buildings can go to."

The situation was "up in the air" for the public as council wouldn't release its plans for Special Character Areas until early April.

"So we just have to wait and keep our fingers crossed that these heritage protections will continue," McRae said.

"Remember, this is all because the council has to enact the government legislation for housing intensification throughout the city.

"The government's short-sighted, blanket approach to housing will wreak havoc on Auckland's urban plans and do nothing to help provide more affordable housing," McRae said.

**The Devonport Flagstaff**  
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Devonport Publishing Ltd First Floor, 9 Wynyard St  
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 news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz  
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**MANAGING EDITOR:** Rob Drent  
**PUBLISHER:** Peter Wilson  
**CHIEF REPORTER:** Janetta Mackay  
**SENIOR REPORTER:** Christina Persico  
**DESIGN:** Brendon De Suza  
**COPY EDITOR:** Jo Hammer

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**Home port... Julie Simpkins says she and her husband, Grant, love life on the Devonport peninsula**

## New Navy base commander a long-time local

Devonport's new Navy base boss Julie Simpkins is a proud local who is often out and about walking or having a go at social cricket down at the domain.

"I'm a convert to cricket," she says, thanks to having a keen teenage son and a sporty husband who both play the game.

Commander Simpkins took over running HMNZS Philomel on 10 March, in a handover ceremony at Torpedo Bay with outgoing Commander Phil Wheadon, who is moving to a new role.

Before getting her feet properly under the desk – which due to Covid is for now located at home in Belmont rather than on base – Simpkins spoke to the Flagstaff about the step up.

"I'm proud of the job and the service and having the opportunity to be the leader and engage with the community," she says.

She hopes the community is equally proud to have the Navy on its doorstep. "We co-exist," she says.

And like family, while there may be frustrations at times, keeping up dialogue is key. With her masters degree based around collaboration, Simpkins says understanding perspectives is something she hopes to bring to the role.

She also brings strong local ties forged during her more than three decades in the Navy and living in the community. Much of her service has been in logistics, including organising missions to East Timor and Afghanistan, and postings to Australia. Her most recent role has been as commander of Naval Speciality Training. But her beginnings were as an ordinary sailor.

The then "Manawatu lass" signed up in 1989, two years out of high school. From land-locked Feilding, the idea of getting out of a small town appealed. Becoming an officer was an option, but she wanted to be at sea rather than training, so it was not until 1995 that she commissioned.

Times have changed since Simpkins was among the early intakes of women sent to sea. Several female base commanders have preceded her and more diverse backgrounds are common. Her own niece, 21, is a bridge-warfare officer.

"She doesn't know anything different," says Simpkins. From her own experience and mentoring young women, she has learned: "It turns out to be our own self that holds us back."

It was in the Navy that she met husband Grant Simpkins, well known as a player

and then coach for North Shore Rugby Club, which he took to the premier title in 2001. Their son Aidan, nearly 15, attends Takapuna Grammar and plays cricket for the school and the North Shore Cricket Club.

Given the hours spent watching it, Simpkins finally caved in and now enjoys a hit in women's 'Tonk' on a Friday evening. Gardening and art are other interests, along with beach walking.

The arrival of Aidan – "I was a quite late-life mother" – saw a transition for the family. His father ended his 20 years' service for the opportunity of a role at TGS, where he runs the international programme.

Apart from a two-year deployment to Perth, they have always been anchored to their home port. "We love the peninsula and everything it has to offer," says Simpkins.

From renting various homes, before buying in Belmont in 2005, they have sampled both sides. Early on, the couple lived in Navy housing in Wakakura Cres, now the site of a retirement village.

"My son says he's going to put us back in Ryman where we started," says Simpkins, 52, who shows no signs of putting her feet up anytime soon.

**Briefs**

**Man dies after chainsaw attack**

A man who attacked a boat with a chainsaw at Bayswater Marina last Friday afternoon, died on the vessel despite police attempts to negotiate a safe outcome. Armed police were called to the marina after reports of a man cutting a boat with a chainsaw. The public was kept at a distance for several hours while police negotiations with the man continued. It is understood the man had had a past relationship with the female owner of the boat.

**Carjacking in Belmont**

A man was attacked and his vehicle carjacked in what police described as a “brazen act” outside the Belmont shops. They made an arrest several hours after the incident, which occurred on Tuesday last week about 10.45pm. The vehicle was spotted shortly after the assault and police gave chase. After a short pursuit, the driver fled on foot, but was apprehended a few hours later. “Understandably the victim is shaken by what has occurred to him and police are ensuring he has support available,” said Inspector Stefan Sagar, Area Commander for Waitemata East “Fortunately he is expected to make a full recovery from his ordeal.” A 31-year-old Takapuna man was arrested and is facing serious charges before the North Shore District Court. Police said no one else was being sought. “Police have no tolerance for this kind of brazen act, or any form of violence in our community,” Inspector Sagar said.

**Volunteers on patrol after Stanley Bay attack**

Police used a volunteer-run patrol to provide a presence around Stanley Bay Park after a woman was assaulted there last month.

Volunteers were asked to “up patrols down there,” Grenville and Sharon Purchase of the North Harbour Community Patrol told members of the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board during a community forum.

The couple were outlining the work the patrol does, which includes using marked cars to keep an eye on activity in the suburbs.

The volunteers work in conjunction with the police, alerting them to suspicious activity and sometimes acting themselves to get people to “move along”, especially around hotspot areas such as bus stops and shopping centres.

Interventions have included telling a drunk man to stop hassling schoolgirls in Belmont two weeks ago.

Grenville Purchase said boy-racer activity appeared to be on the rise on the North Shore.

Volunteers had also noticed that Covid had

generated some underlying stress and anger.

The patrols had a focus on crime prevention and freeing up police, he said. They had also acted to offer reassurance and advice to retailers who had faced abuse about face masks.

Members of the board, which helps sponsor the patrol, praised their work and were interested to hear they had up to 40 patrols – by vehicle and on foot – scheduled for March, both during the day and in evenings later in the week, in areas from Devonport to Long Bay.

Commercial areas such as Barrys Pt Rd, Takapuna, were among those regularly watched.

Purchase, who has been a patroller for 18 years, said the volunteers were a diverse group, speaking a dozen languages. They gathered information for the police and assisted at accident and crime scenes.

• Meanwhile, police told the Flagstaff this week that they did not have an update on their investigations into the Stanley Bay assault.

**Bayswater consent bid on hold**

The application to built 94 terraced townhouses and 27 apartments at the Bayswater Marina reclamation has been suspended.

Bayswater Marina Holdings Limited (BMHL) notified Auckland Council of the suspension on 22 February.

It means the resource-consent hearing scheduled for this month and early April won’t now go ahead. The hearing is now likely to be several months away.

One of the reasons for suspension was “a desire by BMHL to explore in more detail aspects of the layout of the proposed development at its interface with the adjoining

Auckland Transpot land and public boat ramp,” BMHL said in a memo to commissioners.

BMHL also wants to address concerns raised by the Bayswater Community Committee and the Bayswater Marina Berth Holders Association around consent applications lodged in January. The submitters want the commissioners to judge whether these were “new” consents or formed part of the overall application.

The Bayswater Community Committee still went ahead with an information meeting on Monday.



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# Samantha races to gold, silver and bronze



**Top finish... Samantha Korck races in the 800m (above) and with the four medals she won at the New Zealand athletics championships**

Takapuna Grammar year 13 student Samantha Korck collected a full set of medals at the New Zealand athletics champs in Hastings last week.

In the female under-20 races she finished third in both the 800m and 400m; won a silver with the Auckland 4x100 m relay; and gold with the Auckland women's 4 x 400m relay team.

In a busy two days of competition, Sa-

mantha also contested the 100m and 200m sprints – six races in total.

She ran 2:13.69 in the 800m, shaving two seconds off her previous personal best and qualifying her for the Australian nationals.

Samantha (17) said the championships were her “best results – I’ve never been close to the podium before.”

She puts her improvement down to an intense summer of training: “seven days a

week basically...I go for a 45-minute run in the morning and do two hours training in the evening”

She has entered the 800m race at the Australian nationals in Sydney on 29 March, but with the Covid upheavals is still weighing up whether to go.

Her next goal is to trim four seconds from her 800m time, which would qualify her for the world under-20 championships.

## Restructuring Mortgages

With so many fixed-rate mortgages due to reprice over the next year or so, most borrowers will almost certainly be refinancing at a much higher rate – probably now 4.35% plus for anything beyond 2 years fixed (which seems to be the most popular term) versus paying, say, 2.35% previously. This will have quite an impact on cash flow. For example, the monthly principal and interest repayments on a \$1million, 30-year mortgage fixed for 2 years at 2.35% will go up from \$3,874 to \$4,916 (based on the new rollover loan amount of \$954,000, with a 28-year mortgage at 4.35%).

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# Ruling demands greater consultation on maunga

Greater consultation will be required on major Takarunga and Maungauika issues, such as the felling of exotic trees, following a landmark Court of Appeal decision.

The Tūpuna Maunga Authority’s decision to cut down exotic trees on Owairaka, Mt Albert was set aside by the court in a decision handed down last week. It said the authority’s tree-felling plan breached a benchmark requiring public consultation.

The Maunga Authority’s annual operational plan and integrated management plans also ailed to quantify the extent of tree felling on mountains.

Tree removals were dealt with as an oper-

ational matter by the authority and had not been discussed by its board or at workshops, according to evidence presented to the Court of Appeal.

“The failure to state that the Tūpuna Maunga Authority intended to remove all of the exotic trees on Owairaka meant the Authority did not comply with its consultation obligations,” the court said.

The decision to remove around half the mature trees on Owairaka, was “of considerable significance”, the court said.

If a public consultation on the proposed Owairaka tree removal had occurred, the submissions process may have made the

need for legal action redundant, it said.

The court also set aside an Auckland Council resource consent which allowed the Authority to remove the trees at Owairaka.

The ruling has implications for all Auckland maunga, including Takarunga and Maungauika in Devonport, as the Maunga Authority had been waiting on the decision before instigating any other tree-removal decisions across the city’s volcanic cones.

The authority has been criticised for its lack of consultation on key changes to the mountains, such as pedestrianisation on Takarunga.

## Opinion

# Decision welcomed by maunga activists

In a nutshell, the Appeal Court has criticised the Tūpuna Maunga Authority (TMA) for not making its intentions plain before activating a plan to chainsaw 345 exotic trees on Owairaka / Mt Albert. That lack of clarity, the court held, meant that the TMA bypassed the legal need for consultation on the plan – a breach of the Reserves Act – and so the court ‘set it aside’.

The Owairaka case is interesting for Devonport in that the TMA’s modus operandi here seems to reflect almost exactly the TMA’s actions in March 2018, when it slapped a barrier arm across the summit road on Takarunga/Mt Victoria without consultation.

The TMA’s lawyers told the Appeal Court that the TMA’s Integrated Management Plan (IMP) – a document which did undergo a submissions process in 2016 – had referenced managing ‘inappropriate vegetation’ across the TMA’s 15 maunga, and that, and a few

other obscure bits of information in that year’s Operational Plan, was consultation enough for the Owairaka plan. No, said the court, in its judgement, it wasn’t. It gave no chance for people around Owairaka to absorb the fact that the TMA’s management of ‘inappropriate vegetation’ meant almost half the maunga’s mature trees would be gone in one fell swoop.

When faced with the groundswell of protest that occurred in 2018 in Devonport, the TMA similarly defended its action saying the reference to ‘traffic management’ and ‘pedestrianised tihi’ in the IMP was consultation enough. No mention of barrier arms; maybe if someone back then had funded the expensive judicial-review process, we would have had a similar judgement. That the TMA must make its intentions plain, and that in the case of the barrier arms, it had not. That a management plan is not a static thing. That under the Reserves Act, a reserves administra-

tor is required to keep the management plan under review, to signal any major changes within it, and formally consult.

But as to the future: the Appeal Court judgement is clear that the TMA has the legal right to revegetate its maunga with native species. Similarly – my comment, not the court’s – it would surely have the right to keep cars off the local maunga. The authority just does not have the right to do that without first asking people what they think, then formally assessing their submissions. Whether such submissions would change the TMA’s mind, who knows, but at the least, when it comes to our turn for revegetation of local maunga, the court judgement means our significant exotic trees will get a voice. Hooray.

**By Geoff Chapple**, who helped lead the Devonport protest against the TMA’s lack of consultation before it installed a barrier arm on Takarunga.

• *Flagstaff view, page 12.*



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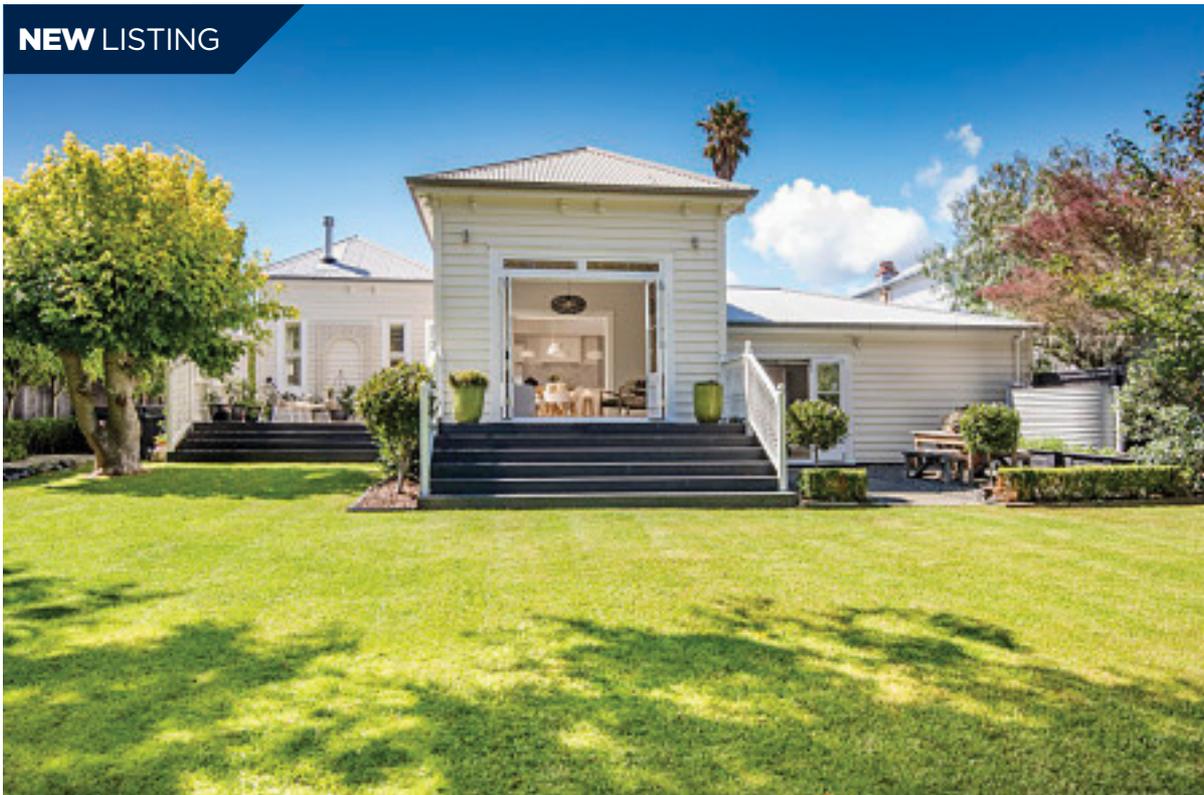
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## Live music strikes a chord as Covid hits hospo



**Helping ease the load... Freight plays on Victoria Rd: from left Ian Kettle, Nigel Bioletti, Marcus Wilson and Lloyd Macomber**

When Ross Kingdom wandered down for dinner in Devonport with wife Julie, he was thrilled to come across a band playing.

"It's a wonderful way to get the community going," the local painter and decorator said.

He knew some restaurants had been forced to close due to being short-staffed, but the couple wanted to go out and do their bit supporting those that were open.

"We strolled down for dinner and all of a sudden there was music and people. What a great idea."

The couple sat outdoors on Victoria Rd to enjoy electric blues from Freight, playing on the grass across the road in what was the first of a series of Saturday evening gigs between 5pm and 7pm.

Band member Nigel Bioletti said: "I just love playing outside and it's really nice to see people wandering past." Kingdom's verdict: "They were outstanding."

The Devonport Business Association musical initiative aims to create a welcoming atmosphere to help counteract the Covid gloom that has seen temporary closings some evenings of restaurants including Vic Rd Kitchen, Manuka, Vondel and Akdeniz.

"If people feel good about the village, it's good for everyone, says association manag-

er Katherine Downs, who hopes the move is at least a drop in the bucket to boost sorely tested hospitality businesses.

"The ones that are close have benefited financially, and others are enjoying the fact that the atmosphere is better."

Staff shortages were their biggest concern currently, she said.

"No two days are normal for them and they're just having to juggle."

Downs said retailers were also finding it tough, with one having reported days in a row with no sales.

"All are struggling and have moments of positivity and moments of feeling like they can't carry on," Downs said.

Supporting local businesses would help keep Devonport attractive, she said.

Devonport could do its bit, by supporting its own.

The musical evenings also help provide an opportunity for musicians, with Jazz quintet The Francesca Parussini & Charlotte Band Project playing last Saturday.

Downs hopes to keep the bands playing throughout March and says a shout-out for interested artists drew a big response. They are paid a small fee and can also busk.

For Bioletti, who has a day job managing the Devonport Peninsula Trust, the oppor-

tunity was welcome.

Freight had already gone down well at the gathering point for the Coastal Challenge event, so when Downs asked them to get the ball rolling on Saturday nights they were only too happy to help out.

The band has featured at the Bay of Island Jazz and Blues Festival and locally at the Patriot and the Devonport Yacht Club.

Two of its members live locally and a third, from Northcote, works in Devonport. "We played quite a lot of boogie stuff – upbeat."

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## By Rob Drent

I don't understand the opposition to Auckland Transport (AT) proposals to slow down speeds around Devonport. AT wants to introduce 30km/h limits around the village and central Devonport, through the tricky Calliope Rd intersection and to include Devonport Primary and St Leo's schools. This seems eminently sensible to me, especially with the rise in the numbers of scooters, e-bikes and cyclists on the roads.

A highly effective Ministry of Transport advertising campaign several years ago centred on the slogan: "The faster you go the bigger the mess."

Much of road-safety messaging emphasises road tolls and deaths. But "the faster you go" mantra was spot on. Any accident involving a car on the road can have serious consequences. Indeed in Devonport cyclists have been knocked off bikes and suffered lingering head injuries, and of course the death of cyclist Warrick Jones on Lake Rd in March last year.

I don't know why AT didn't look at low-

ering the speed for all of Devonport south of the golf course at the same time. The Vauxhall shops area will be considered down the track apparently, but wouldn't it have been better to have one consultation and be done with it?

Forget about the speed or whether the new limits are going to be policed all the time – going slower should be on everyone's minds.

The Court of Appeal ruling that the Tupuna Maunga Authority should have consulted before it decided to chop down trees at Owairaka will set a precedent on how it will operate in the future. Especially on how it works in with the public on major decisions affecting Auckland's mountains.

After a bedding-in period where a few hiccups occurred (failure to appreciate the work of dedicated locals such as the late Roger Giles and institutions like The Bunker on Takarunga), the Maunga Authority has done a pretty good job administering Takarunga and Maungauika. Indeed it has worked in well with local restoration and pest-trapping groups. It came a cropper somewhat over the pedestrianisation of Takarunga. The Flagstaff supported this but tended to agree with many locals that they should have been asked their opinion first.

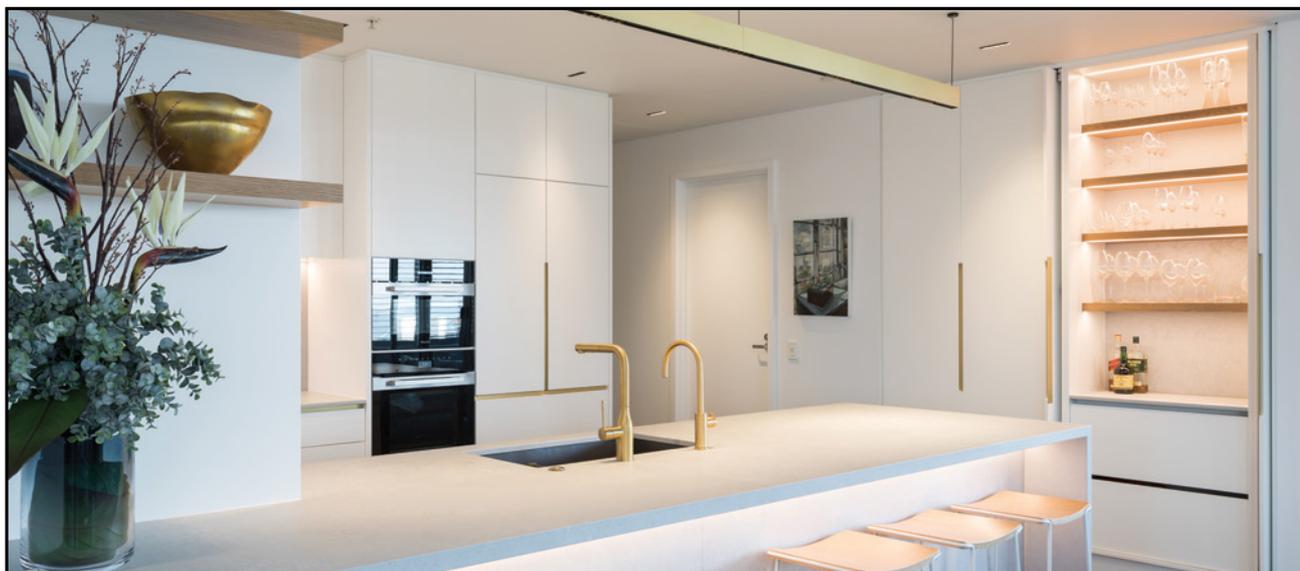
The Court was critical of the authority for failing to consult on major decisions like cutting down exotic trees. Its management plans were too general to give the public full knowledge of the plans. The ruling must have been a slap in the face for Paul Majurey,

chair of the Maunga Authority and a top lawyer, who always maintained the authority was operating within the law with the way it operated and consulted.

My heart goes out to Devonport's bars, restaurants and cafes. After two years of lockdowns and two summers without overseas tourists, many were feeling the pinch. Then the double whammy of Omicron has hit – rising cases slashing staff numbers and causing off-and-on closures, plus a wary client base staying at home to avoid catching the virus. For many it would be worse than lockdown. I'm following a policy of buying at least a coffee a day in the village, and three lunches and one evening meal a week to support them. I hope others follow suit.

Indeed 'shop local' should be on everyone's mind. I bought three tubs of lettuce seedlings last Sunday from Devonport Hammer Hardware for just under \$11. They are cheaper – at Kings Plant Barn or Bunnings for example – but not if you factor in the sometimes two-hour round trip to get there and back and petrol at \$3 a litre.

It was great to see a quartet of young jazz musicians in Victoria Rd last Saturday (supported by the Devonport Business Association) providing some free entertainment, much to the delight of passers-by. The sound of music in the streets and a return to normal life can't come soon enough.



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## Devonport

### 16 Albert Road

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**Olivia de Tracy-Gould**  
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**Ian Cunliffe**  
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**Waiheke Island** 1E/3-7 Fourth Avenue

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**Devonport** 19 Roslyn Terrace

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**Diana Murray**  
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**Belmont** 1/4 Moana Avenue

2 1 1 1

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**Maria Stevens**  
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**Marissa Muirhead**  
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Devonport 9/66 Victoria Road

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35 years ownership by same family, harbour views. Cathedral ceiling open plan living, 3 year old kitchen, private entry, magical central location.



**Peter Restall**  
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**For Sale** \$1,395,000  
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Bayswater 3/95 Bayswater Avenue

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Devonport 2/10 Mozeley Avenue

3 2 2 2

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**Tim Young**  
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**Price By Negotiation**  
**View** Sat 1.00 - 1.30pm  
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Devonport 6/40 Lake Road

2 1 1 2

This two bed home has a separate studio room ideally suited to a 'work from home' office. The elevated lounge has a wonderful view of the Sky Tower.



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**Price By Negotiation**  
**View** Sat/Sun 2.00 - 2.30pm  
harcourts.co.nz/DP23849

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Devonport 1/71 Church Street

2 1 1 1

Close to the village, this property is a great opportunity to enjoy the Devonport lifestyle at an affordable price!



**Gary Potter**  
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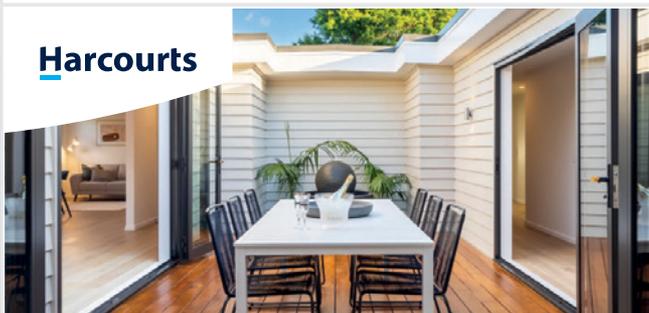


**Ben Potter**  
M 027 953 0210

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**For Sale** \$835,000  
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**Belmont** 59A Northboro Road

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**Jackie Mark**  
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**Jane Hastings**  
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**Bayswater** 154 Bayswater Avenue

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**Price By Negotiation**

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**Jane Hastings**  
M 021 735 263



**Jackie Mark**  
M 021 458 797

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**Belmont** 4/203 Lake Road

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**Devonport** 6 Lake Road

3 🚗 1 🚗 2 🚗 1 🚗

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**Auction** Sold at Auction

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**Narrow Neck** 38 Merani Street

3 🚗 1 🚗 2 🚗 2 🚗

This unique home epitomises mid-century living with clean lines, functional well-proportioned spaces that have plenty of light pouring in.

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**Auction** Sold at Auction

**View** harcourts.co.nz/DP23837



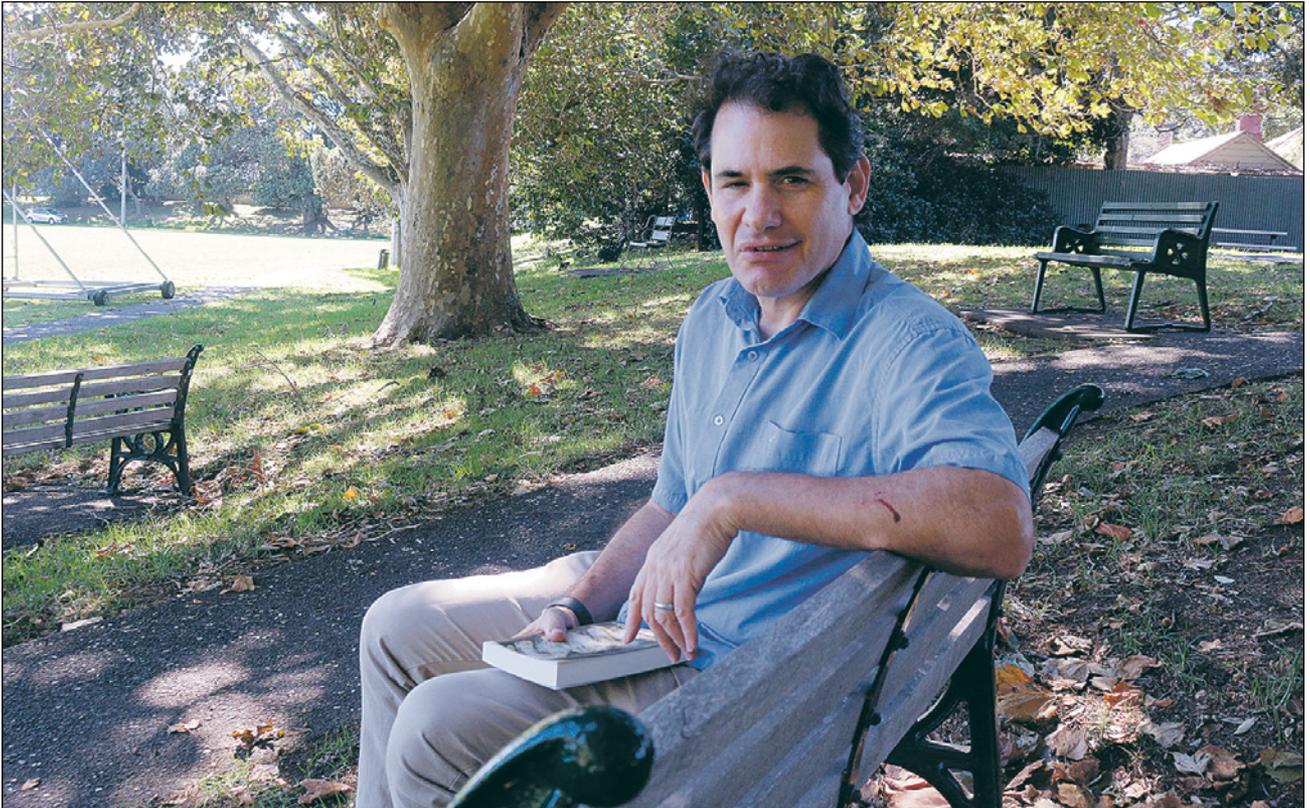
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# Former US newspaperman wins local literary acclaim

Bryan Walpert's *Entanglement* has just been shortlisted as one of four fiction finalists in the Ockham Book Awards. He talks to Helen Vause about his journey in literature.



## Write stuff... As a creative-writing teacher, Bryan Walpert stresses the need to take criticism on board

When he was a gutsy and dogged young reporter bailed up in a phone box by a couple of approaching villains, poetry and novels were a long way from Bryan Walpert's mind. The recent graduate was every bit the young newspaperman, with a lust for nailing a great story and getting it into print fast. Back then, that was the way words worked for him.

Decades and many stories later, American-born-and-educated Walpert is a university professor living in Devonport with a couple of teenagers at Takapuna Grammar School. And now, when the Flagstaff talked

to him, excited and delighted to have his novel *Entanglement* in the shortlist of four in the fiction category of the Ockhams, the country's premier literary awards.

"It's a real honour," says the modest professor who teaches creative writing at Massey University's Albany Campus. "I had no expectation but every writer has a hope."

Walpert's time-travel novel has had enthusiastic reviews since its publication at the start of summer. When the awards shortlist was announced last week, Rob Kidd, convenor of the judges for the category, called the book: "Dazzlingly intelligent

and ambitious in scope."

Walpert's tertiary education began in Rhode Island, at Brown University, where he saw himself preparing for a career in media by studying international relations.

As a young graduate, he first found work in community newspapers and then moved into the more specialised world of business journalism. The reporter's life saw him chasing after good guys and bad, asking the tricky questions in the very competitive quest for good copy. "At the time, I loved it."

But as he crept up the ranks as an editor

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in business media, words were forming in a different pattern elsewhere in his mind, edging out the smell of newsprint: Walpert was discovering poetry.

"I knew I was falling in love with poetry and I was coming to realise that was what I wanted to explore" he recalls of the shift of focus that led him to quit his job for the uncertainty of freelancing and heading back to university.

Far from the fast pace of newsrooms and the giant US markets, he embarked on his masters in fine arts in Maryland, while still freelancing as a business writer then starting to teach writing in many forms.

Although many struggle to put words on paper and dread writing an essay or a report for their bosses, writing is now recognised as an important skill, says Walpert, and students from all fields are lining up to learn how to do it better.

"Writing is a tool for career advancement and there's a lot students can learn to improve their skills. I've never met a student who can't improve their writing."

When Walpert had completed a PhD at the University of Denver, he remembers his family having reservations about his career prospects.

"When my father heard I had my PhD, he said, 'That's neat. Now what are you going to do with that?'"

Finding work as an academic in the US was very challenging. Then a friend spotted a job for teaching creative writing at Massey University. Walpert thought it might be a long shot but arrived to his job in New Zealand in 2004, together with his wife.

He was aware of cultural differences when he first arrived at Massey's Palmerston North campus. He felt he had to first get to grips with Kiwi idiom and interaction with others.

He noticed that his new colleagues tended to present themselves in a more understated way than his peers back home.

"At first I was self-conscious about my way of being, aware that I might be a bit 'louder'. In the US I was used to having to 'toot my horn' just to get anyone to listen. Over there life had been more keyed up, more pressured, the queues were longer. When I go back home now, I notice how I have changed."

But Walpert was learning fast about getting along with the locals. Hard at work in his office one day, he remembers a Massey colleague seemingly empathising, with the quip, 'you must be flat out'. Walpert, who was very busy and far from prone on the sofa at the time, realised he'd just learned another bit of local lingo.

His writing – books, poetry, short stories, essays – has earned Walpert acclaim and awards here and overseas.

And with *Entanglement*, he's spent a couple of years on a work where the stories of his characters – all set in different decades – become entangled in a multi-layered tale of love, desperation and physics.

Those characters are a memory-impaired time traveller wanting to correct a tragic mistake he made in 1976; a novelist in 2011 researching at the Centre for Time in Sydney and living a romance with a female philosopher; and a writer at a retreat in 2019, obsessed with the disintegration of his marriage. The book covers decades and continents, and explores complex questions of physics alongside the human psyche. Reviewers have loved Walpert's fast, engaging style but noted that it demands the reader's full attention to avoid getting lost in the back-and-forth time-travel sequences.

It's a point Walpert is fully aware of. "I never underestimate the intelligence of readers."

And he notes he had his own challenges making the time-travel threads work seamlessly through the stories.

"When it came to putting it all together, there were times when I wished I could

stand over it and look down on the whole book all at once just to be sure that it all worked," he says with a laugh.

He acknowledges the importance of another pair of eyes on the journey to getting pages into a book form: "My editor actually chucked out my favourite piece and she was right to do that. She saw what I hadn't seen and had made an improvement."

As a teacher of creative writing, Walpert stresses the importance of being able to take criticism and being willing to make changes to written work.

"If you want to write you have to be willing to seek honest feedback. With creative writing, it's very useful to be in a roomful of other people who are also immersed in doing the same thing and who are working with an instructor who has been down the same road before them."

But for anyone aspiring to write a book he warns it's not a good idea to look for that honest feedback from family and friends, when personal feelings could influence reactions. He says useful criticism needs to be about the work, not the person.

During his teaching career, he's seen a big growth in people signing up for courses as universities have significantly expanded the range of creative-writing courses on offer.

"There are just so many people who want to write. They feel they have stories they want to tell. It's not uncommon for people to cry when they're writing poetry or sharing something they've written."

Creative-writing students come from all walks of life, at all ages, he says.

"They can be watercolourists or engineers. And it's the scientists and engineers in class who often ask such great questions."

Walpert is carrying on sharing his skills in creative-writing classes, maybe helping to shape the work of a future writing star.

The 2022 Ockham New Zealand Book Awards winners will be announced on 22 May.

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When 'upgrades' get it wrong

I think Alex Witten-Hannah has the right idea in getting the message to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board (Rangitoto Observer, 18 February) regarding the dangerous-to-pedestrians upgrade of Hurstmere Rd.

Similar dangers have been created in Devonport with the stone block wall in Marine Square right beside a pedestrian crossing, which is intersected by a road leading to parking spaces. Though driving slowly, I was given a fright by a little child

on a scooter, invisible behind the wall, who suddenly appeared in front of my car.

Another danger spot is on the corner of Clarence St and Victoria Rd, where there is semi-circular seating and a brick wall. A hedge has been cultivated on top of the wall and while those driving higher SUVs may be able to see over the top of the hedge, it is impossible for drivers of normal cars to see cyclists or traffic approaching from the right when exiting Clarence St.

J. Leighton

Let the fountains play

Dams are at 88 per cent full, six per cent above normal levels. It's been a difficult time, some might say depressive, with Omicron and water restrictions.

It's always the little things that matter – if people saw the fountains working, they may feel we are making progress, have a light at the end of the tunnel.

The fountains should have never been switched off anyway, as the water in them

recycles. They were switched off for political reasons during the water crisis.

Auckland Council felt that if the water fountains were still working when everybody was being asked to conserve water it would look bad.

The fountains are the central feature in Devonport. It would be good to see them working again.

Tony White

Bookstop fosters camaraderie

In support of Graham Pettersen's letter (Flagstaff, 25 February), I agree that it is of concern that there are residents who are too lazy to dispose of their unwanted items and consider the Bookstop a convenient place.

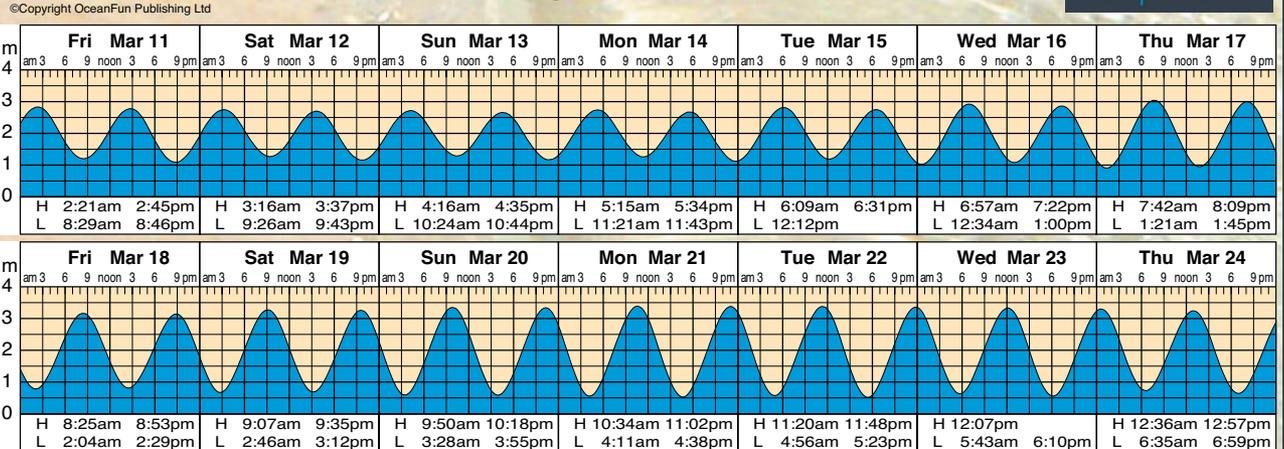
The enjoyment and community camaraderie which the BookStop has fostered is not something to be disregarded lightly. During the pandemic, this was a gathering place for many of the older, and some-

times lonely, residents around the area, as it gave them the opportunity to meet with other people and to have a conversation while adhering to social-distancing and mask-wearing rules. Mental health issues are an ongoing problem of this pandemic and we all need to escape from the realities of life by immersing ourselves in the world found in the pages of a book.

Patricia Hatton

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# Cockle-gatherers breach Cheltenham rahui

Illegal harvesting of cockles at Cheltenham Beach has sparked a call for greater vigilance by locals.

Resident Graeme Selkirk said he approached a group gathering the shellfish at the Maungauika end of the beach on 20 February and told them it was illegal.

A rahui – a ban on collecting shellfish from the beach – has been in place since 1995. Signs warn of a \$10,000 fine.

The group told Selkirk they had not seen any signs. They apologised and dropped the shellfish back at the water's edge, but said that another group, with a sack, had told

them gathering was allowed.

Selkirk said he later came across cockles abandoned in the shower drain at the end of Matai Rd. These were mostly small, with some shells open and others closed.

"People need to be alerted to the fact that it is happening again," he told the Flagstaff.

Cockles numbers had shown some signs of recovery at Cheltenham in recent years.

But Selkirk said the conservation efforts could be jeopardised if people were again gathering them illegally. He wants locals who live by or walk at the beach, to keep an eye out and report any breaches to the

Ministry of Primary Industries (MPI).

Education and enforcement was needed, he said. Signage could perhaps be increased. "MPI needs to be everywhere," but it had few enforcement officers, he said. "The last thing you want is having to confront people."

MPI told the Flagstaff that officers regularly patrolled the Cheltenham Beach area and had dealt with minor offending when people had gathered cockles from the beach illegally.

Complaints about the practice were rare and none had been received recently.

# Covid sweeps through local schools

Covid is surging through Devonport schools as the Omicron outbreak takes hold across Auckland.

Bayswater School, Devonport Primary, Vauxhall School and Hauraki School are among those with confirmed cases.

Vauxhall principal Gary Lawrence said all children and staff have their temperature taken upon entry each day, and breaks, drop-offs and pick-ups are staggered.

As of last week, one staff member and seven children had been confirmed with Covid since the start of the year.

"The frequency of cases is definitely increasing," Lawrence said. "We have a good distance-learning programme in place for those who need it, but we are not planning on closing classes or the school for those who can come in."

Bayswater acting principal Marianne Coldham said the school is using a "hybrid learning" approach, with support for those isolating at home. This includes a virtual meeting each day, school packs and students accessing a selection of apps online.

Devonport Primary principal Beverley Booth said the school had a settled start to the year and is still planning to go ahead with

activities such as camp and education-outside-the-classroom days.

"We have also planned for how we will manage various scenarios, including the possible need for online learning if absence levels require that. We are currently a long way from that. In the meantime, our teachers have work prepared that we quickly send out when a student needs to isolate."

Acting principal of St Leo's Catholic School David Tennent said last week they had been lucky enough to be minimally affected, but then announced a case last Friday. "A part-time teacher who tested positive had to delay starting with us, but this didn't affect us as those sessions could be deferred."

As of last week, Hauraki School had five students who had tested positive and 12 children isolating as household contacts, principal Clarinda Franklin said.

"These children only are provided with online learning. No staff members have Covid. We are not planning to provide online learning for everyone at this stage."

In the 10 days to Monday morning, 475 of 567 schools across Auckland - 84 per cent - had reported positive cases.

Four Whanau Care Hubs, to support those

with Covid who have separate, urgent medical needs, have opened across Auckland, including one on the North Shore.

Northern Region Health Coordination Centre clinical operations lead Dr Sarah Hartnall said the hubs will be staffed by GPs and nurses with experience dealing in urgent care. "The hubs are for people who are managing their Covid-19 okay but may have urgent care needs, like if they have burnt themselves, sprained their ankle, have a urinary infection or lower back pain and require a face-to-face assessment."

The locations have not been disclosed as the centres' services are by appointment only.



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**ENROLMENTS TERM 2, 2022**

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

Applications for 10 out-of-zone places in year 1, 7 in year 2, 7 in year 3, 1 in year 4, 1 in year 5 and 10 in year 6 are now being invited for those students who will become eligible for enrolment during the period 2 May to 8 July 2022.

The deadline for receipt of applications for out-of-zone places is 2 May 2022.

If a ballot for out-of-zone places is required, it will be held on 2 May 2022. Parents will be informed of the outcome of the ballot within three school days of the ballot being held.

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

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

# Camper pitches up at Domain

An illegal camper on Devonport Domain has moved on, after setting up for a few days late last month on the slope overlooking the cricket grounds off King Edward Pde.

North Shore Cricket Club said a council groundsman had confirmed the person had left the area.

Locals expressed concern to the Flagstaff about the tent being pitched, which is in breach of council by-laws. .

Tents spotted on Stanley Bay Park last week also prompted a flurry of comments online, but Stanley Bay School confirmed to the Flagstaff they were there as a part of an education-outside-the-classroom programme.

A parent had set up the tents on the Monday evening, said a school spokesperson, with Year 0 to 2 students using them on last Tuesday for a fun camp day. Older age groups participated off-site in a full camp and activities at Lake Pupuke.



**Camp site... The tent that was pitched at the Devonport Domain for a few days late last month**

## Award-Winning Therapist Starts a New Business

Bayswater resident Fiona Rubie, a registered diversional therapist, has ventured out to create her own business **Go Nails** mobile manicures and pedicures.

Fiona was announced First Place Winner of the Judy Cooper Excellence Award at the annual diversional therapy national conference recently, demonstrating diversity with her new business. The theme for the Judy Cooper Excellence Award is Diversity – the inclusion of people from a range of different backgrounds.

“During my eight years working in the aged-care sector, I could see a niche for home visits whereby clients needn’t leave home, the service comes to them,” Fiona said.

One such client, Devonport resident Sophia Mahoney, a polio survivor, saw Fiona’s advertisement on the local Bayswater Community page and became the subject of Fiona’s submission for the Excellence Award.



Sophia said: “Because of my mobility issue, I phoned Fiona and she came to my home. She gave me a massage and did my toenails, and another time my fingernails, and I found her to be out of this world. I totally recommend Fiona”.

“My clients span from busy professionals through to stroke and dementia patients in care. A pamper session is the perfect gift for a loved one,” Fiona said.



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[fiona@gonails.co.nz](mailto:fiona@gonails.co.nz)

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 Major sponsor for the North Shore Cricket Club

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**AUCTION WEDNESDAY**



**DEVONPORT**  
 42 CHELTENHAM ROAD

- 4
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- 2
- 3
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- 

**WHAKARUA- ICONIC CHELTENHAM HOMESTEAD**

Watched over and protected by Maungauika, Whakarua, (named for its prevailing northeasterly breeze), comes to the market after 40 years - testimony to just how special this home really is. Whilst lovingly maintained, its original integrity remains. High studs, ornate ceilings, native timbers, stunning leadlight windows, and the utter delight of upper-level bedrooms/verandahs that usher in the nights warm, summer sea breeze. A mere stones-throw from the water, this lifestyle, privileged position and rare offering awaits. Vendor request; vaccine pass required.

**AUCTION**  
 12:00pm 9 Mar 2022 at 39 Victoria Road, Devonport (Branch Office) (unless sold prior)

**VIEWING**  
 Sat/Sun 2:00-3:00pm  
[www.barfoot.co.nz/825746](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/825746)

 **Sue Harrison**  
 021 909 549  
 s.harrison@barfoot.co.nz  
 Devonport 09 445 2010

 **Toni Gregory**  
 021 044 3663  
 t.gregory@barfoot.co.nz  
 Devonport 09 445 2010

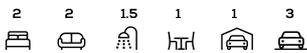


**Devonport 09 445 2010**  
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**OPEN HOME**



**BAYSWATER 1/180 BAYSWATER AVENUE**



**FOR SALE**

Price By Negotiation

**VIEWING**

Saturday 12:00-12:30pm

[www.barfoot.co.nz/825240](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/825240)

**COME & SEE THIS UNIQUE HOME**

What a find we have here! 160m<sup>2</sup> of living space, so more than your usual one level unit. The downstairs here has been fully renovated to offer work from home, teenage retreat, or art studio as it's currently used for complete with a new CCC plus a large garage. Any astute buyer should view this property.



**Trish Fitzgerald**  
021 952 452  
Devonport 09 445 2010



**Tracey Lawrence**  
021 1720 681  
Devonport 09 445 2010

**HAURAKI 1/5 NORTHUMBERLAND AVENUE**



**FOR SALE**

By Negotiation

**VIEWING**

Sat/Sun 1:00-1:30pm

[www.barfoot.co.nz/826532](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/826532)

- Gorgeous, classic, pristine bungalow
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**Tracey Lawrence**  
021 1720 681  
Devonport 09 445 2010

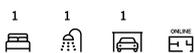


**Trish Fitzgerald**  
021 952 452  
Devonport 09 445 2010

**AUCTION WEDNESDAY**



**DEVONPORT 2/28 WILLIAM BOND STREET**



**AUCTION**

12:00pm 9 Mar 2022 at 39 Victoria Road, Devonport (Branch Office) (unless sold prior)

**VIEWING**

Sat/Sun 1:00-1:30pm

[www.barfoot.co.nz/827465](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/827465)

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Devonport 09 445 2010



**Sue Harrison**  
021 909 549  
Devonport 09 445 2010



**DEVONPORT 8/14A ALBERT ROAD**



**FOR SALE**

By Negotiation

**VIEWING**

Phone For Viewing Times

[www.barfoot.co.nz/822766](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/822766)

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Devonport 09 445 2010

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**BELMONT 14 EGREMONT STREET**



**FOR SALE**  
By Negotiation

**VIEWING**  
Phone For Viewing Times  
[www.barfoot.co.nz/827243](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/827243)

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021 383 149  
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**DEVONPORT 15 HAMANA STREET**



**FOR SALE**  
By Negotiation

**VIEWING**  
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[www.barfoot.co.nz/827122](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/827122)

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-  **Carol Wetzell**  
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Devonport 09 445 2010
-  **Wendy Sadd**  
021 607 366  
09 215 3178  
Greenlane 09 523 1189



**DEVONPORT 2/18A MAYS STREET**



**AUCTION**  
12:00pm 9 Mar 2022 at 39 Victoria Road, Devonport (Branch Office) (unless sold prior)

**VIEWING**  
Sat/Sun 12:00-12:30pm  
[www.barfoot.co.nz/827511](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/827511)

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It doesn't get any better than this. A two bedroom brick and tile unit with a large basement, carport and a peep of the sea looking over to the Eastern Suburbs. The middle unit of three, this perfect starter or down sizer has the winning combination of location and low maintenance.

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021 383 149  
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-  **Carol Wetzell**  
027 245 3392  
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**BAYSWATER 1-8/54 BAYSWATER AVENUE**



**FOR SALE**  
By Negotiation

**VIEWING**  
Phone For Viewing Times  
[www.barfoot.co.nz/824923](http://www.barfoot.co.nz/824923)

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-  **Suzy Wang**  
022 199 7808  
Devonport 09 445 2010
-  **Lance Richardson**  
021 796 660  
Devonport 09 445 2010

## ‘Ultra-competitive’ octogenarian lands gold at national Masters

A Narrow Neck bowler has won gold at the Bowls North Harbour NZ Masters held in Orewa.

Beryl Macdonald (80) took out the the 75-plus mixed pairs with Garry Banks – the first time they had played together.

“It just proves that when you’re 80 you can win something,” she says.

In Macdonald’s 24th year in the sport, she says the win is a highlight. Another high point was beating a couple of New Zealand reps with teammate Karen Subritzky in a pairs final two years ago.

Husband Malcolm has also played for the past 16 years – in-home rivalry is a thing of the past as now “I’m way ahead”, Macdonald laughs. “We used to go out to practise and whoever lost had to do the ironing.”

And what keeps her returning to the green? “Because I hate housework,” she laughs. “I’m ultra-competitive and I love the camaraderie. I can’t sit at home all the time. I like being outside, having something to do.” That also crosses over into her gardening.

Macdonald, who has two daughters (a third passed away) and four grandsons, was a nurse for 45 years and says she still enjoys helping people.

She’s also busy at her Takapuna Bowling Club, helping with selecting and marking, and plays around twice a week.

Macdonald previously spent 12 years playing in Blenheim. “I’ve actually been flown all over New Zealand to play and to manage.

“If I couldn’t bowl, I’d probably end up in the kitchen. They’ll probably just have to shovel me out at some stage.”

The Takapuna club came away from the championships last month with two gold medals and three silver, as well as a silver for a pair including a Bay of Plenty bowler. Keith Stevens of Devonport won a silver in the men’s fours.



**Bowled over by winning gold... Beryl Macdonald with bowls partner Garry Banks won the 75-plus mixed-pairs competition at the NZ Masters tournament in Orewa**

## Ewen Alison cook-up leads to call-out

A lunchtime barbecue sparked a house fire at Ewen Alison Ave around 12.30pm last Thursday.

Devonport fire station officer John Ellington said the small fire, which started from a charcoal-fuelled barbecue on the back deck, was extinguished quickly.

Some weatherboards were damaged but no one was injured. The owner had gone inside, thinking the barbecue was out.

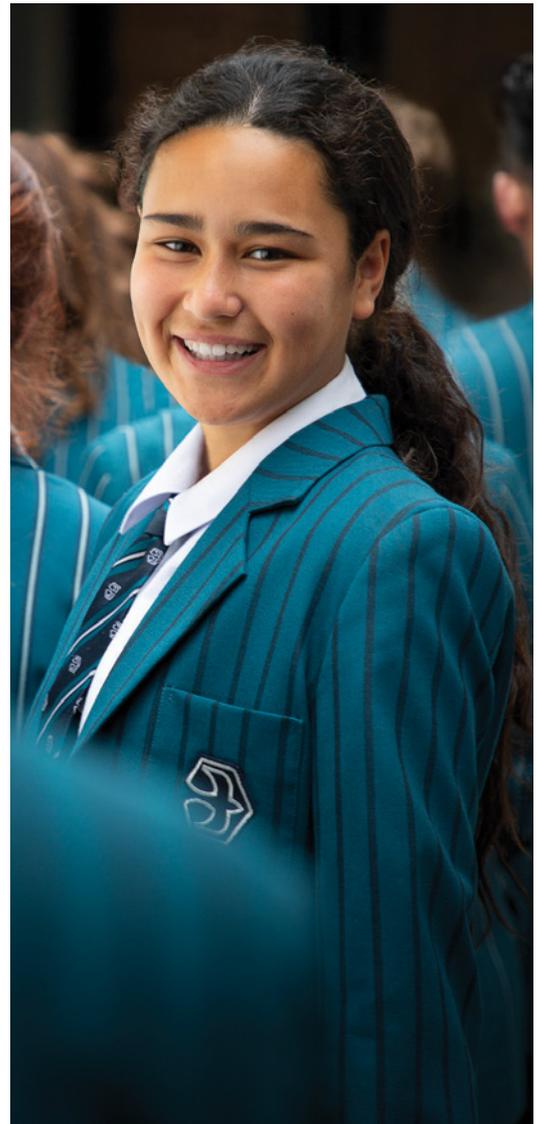
The key to avoiding barbecue fires was to “keep looking while you’re cooking,” and after finishing make sure the barbecue was turned off or the embers had died down, Ellington said.

Fires could start from both gas- and solid-fuel barbecues. Maintenance and cleaning was also important, as fat was flammable, he said.

Fire appliances from Devonport and Takapuna attended the Ewen Alison fire.

**Where there’s smoke...  
Bystanders look on as firefighters tackle the fire at a property in Ewen Alison Ave**





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## 20 years ago from the Flagstaff files

- A North Shore City Council pilot tourism venture into Devonport loses more than \$35,000 in its first four months. North Shore Explorer bus tours take tourists from downtown Auckland to Devonport with several stops along the way. It has been attracting just four customers per day.
- North Shore United premiers take second place in football's premier league.
- A conwoman fleeces two churches of between \$200 and \$500, after seeking help with immigration.
- The Great Gatsby Picnic at Windsor Reserve attracts more than 90 vehicles with drivers and supporters dressed in 1920s garb.
- Stone sculptor Lisabeth Sabol wins the \$5000 Art Award prize at the Devonport Arts Festival.
- Olympic kayaking gold medallist Ian Ferguson is to compete at an outrigger canoeing regatta in Devonport.
- Devonport Community Board members argue over the new beige colour of Devonport Library. Deputy chair Mike Cohen preferred its previous green paint job.
- Foodstuffs, which part-owns the supermarket car park, was not consulted over a proposed two-storey deck on the land, a proposal rejected by the Devonport Community Board.
- Devonport cricketing great Ces Dacre will be remembered forever with the unveiling of the C.C Dacre pavilion at North Shore Cricket Club.
- First-time author Richard Loseby makes the top-10 New Zealand bestseller list with *Blue is the Colour of Heaven*, a story of his journey through Afghanistan.
- Nine houses on the Tamaki land at Narrow Neck are removed, destined for Northland.
- Stanley Bay's Clare Mandeno won the fifth annual Round the Head Classic swim in 38 minutes 52 seconds.
- Around 100 people attend a ceremony at Torpedo Bay to commemorate the 175th anniversary of the landing by the French explorer Dumont D'Urville.
- A bungalow close to the sea on Old Lake Rd is on the market for \$445,000.
- At 21, Sheena, owned by the Fosters of Kiwi Rd, is believed to be Devonport's oldest cat
- Shirley Hardcastle is Devonport Primary's new principal.
- Construction of the new Torpedo Bay wharf will start after Easter.
- A petition against North Shore United junior soccer fees circulates around the community.
- Takapuna Grammar Rowing Club wins four silver medals at the North Island Rowing Champs – a top effort from a co-ed school.
- Flagstaff interview subject, 95-year-old Lola Rae, who still lives in her own home, recalls being caned by every teacher at Stanley Bay School.

## Check for cancellations – AT

Auckland Transport (AT) is warning of short-notice cancellations to services, with Omicron leaving transport operators' staff sick or having to isolate.

While local bus and ferry services are running to regular timetables, AT is advising passengers to regularly check on the status of departures. Some train and bus services elsewhere in Auckland have already been cancelled. Rapid antigen tests are being used by staff, who are doing their best to keep services going, she said. She asked that in stressful times transport staff be treated with respect.

## Not-guilty plea indicated in fatal-crash case

A man involved in a crash that killed a North Shore cyclist has indicated he will plead not guilty to a charge of careless or inconsiderate driving causing death.

Warrick Jones, a Torbay triathlete and father of three, was cycling south on Lake Rd when he was killed in a collision with a vehicle on the corner of Montgomery Ave on 9 March last year.

Jones was a well-known member of the North Harbour Triathlon Club.

The driver of the vehicle, Simej Mose, appeared in the North Shore District Court last month, after multiple delays due to lockdown last year. Through his lawyer, Justin Harder, an intimated plea of not guilty was entered.

Mose is scheduled to reappear in court on 4 April for a case-review hearing.

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## Character Waterfront Home

This character home originates from the late 1800s era and masquerades in an Art Deco facade added in the 1930s. Today, it presents to market for the first time in 40 years in a configuration of three separate flats. 14 King Edward, also christened 'Sans Souci' (meaning 'carefree'), is an iconic home proudly located on Devonport's eminent waterfront parade.

Presiding over the crescent-shaped harbour, views take flight over the waters toward Auckland's inner-city and coastal suburbs; by day and by night, the position creates spectacular viewing to be enjoyed from the rooftop terrace and street-front gardens or inside any of the flats.

Light-filled with a collage of old and new, the three accommodations are complete with two bedrooms,

one bathroom and enjoy significant views of the sea and city. Formal gardens sculpt the terraced frontage with a path up past the double garage and a turfed rooftop courtyard.

Located at the rear of the property is a powered out-building sectioned into five rooms.

A short morning beachside stroll leads you into charming Devonport Village, with a selection of coffee shops, cuisines, boutique stores and the busy pier ferrying city-workers to Auckland's CBD.

Now genuinely for sale, Sans Souci house presents a unique opportunity for discerning buyers to purchase in the heart of this historic beachside neighbourhood.

New Zealand

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Deadline Sale: Closes 4:00 p.m. Wednesday 30th March 2022  
(unless sold prior)

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**The Yacht Master - 2 Marine Terrace Bayswater**

3 2 1 2 3

Unabashedly authentic, desperately romantic, this is one of Bayswater's most admirable homes. The ultimate blend of bungalow architecture with a touch of luxury, this irresistible residence exudes charm and quiet confidence befitting this era. Enviably situated in a prime panoramic water view position, this family sized home, though not at all too generous in scale for a couple, is a property that defines 'lifestyle'. Ample glazing in the main living spaces and kitchen frame individual showcase water views, and the central open plan living brings together well-designed lounge and dining spaces stepping straight out onto an expansive deck where entertainment and relaxation spaces overflow to jaw dropping views towards the Bayswater marina, across the water, to front row seats of the Auckland harbour bridge. Be prepared to be mesmerised by the ever-changing vista during the day, and the twinkling lights and sunsets at dusk. Comprising three generous bedrooms and two well appointed bathrooms, the layout offers easy one level living with the opportunity to further expand upstairs to create a separate master wing with exceptional views, subject to consents. A large double garage partners with ample off-street parking making it ideal for trailer boats and other oversized toys. Marketed by The EK Group.

**Auction**

11:00am, Sunday 10 April  
On Site (unless sold prior)

**View**

Saturday & Sunday  
3:00pm - 4:00pm



**Kim Pausina**  
021 201 7488



**Eden Thomson**  
021 790 552



[theekgroup.co.nz](http://theekgroup.co.nz)

[rwdevonport.co.nz/DVP30013](http://rwdevonport.co.nz/DVP30013)

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Kim Pausina 021 201 7488 | Eden Thomson 021 790 552

# Young BIS flyers bring home the medals

Belmont Intermediate students – Connor Brady, Ariana Vosper and Jacob Howell – have won a clutch of athletics medals this summer.

Ariana was a star at the January North Island Colgate Games, bringing home three gold medals – in the 11-year-old girls 800m, 1500m and 4x100m relay. Late last month, she medalled again at the Auckland junior athletics championships, with gold in the 400m and silver in the 800m. And last week at the Athletics junior Auckland 1500m Championships 10-14 years, Ariana placed second.

Connor won a silver medal in the 12-year-old boys 80m hurdles at the Colgate Games and went on to take three golds and a silver in the under-14 division at the Auckland senior championships last month: first place in the 80m hurdles, 200m hurdles and 400m and second place in the shot put. He also took five medals at the Auckland junior championships in late February: gold in the 80m hurdles; silver in the 400m, discus and shot put, and bronze in the 200m. He has qualified



**In sizzling summer form... from left: Ariana Vosper, Jacob Howell and Connor Brady**

for the Australian junior championships in the 200m hurdles.

Jacob took gold medals in the under-14 division at the Auckland senior championships in the 2000m steeplechase and 3000m.

At the junior champs, Jacob won gold in the 12-year-old boys 800m and a bronze in the 400m.

All three students belong to the Takapuna Athletics club.

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for Children with Disabilities

[www.wilsonhometruster.org.nz](http://www.wilsonhometruster.org.nz)



## Grounds Assistant / School Caretaker

**The Wilson Home Trust and the Wilson school are seeking a grounds assistant / school caretaker. This can be a dual role reporting both to Wilson School and the Wilson Home Trust.**

### The Wilson Trust role – Grounds Assistant

The Wilson Home Trust requires support for the Site Manager with a wide range of general grounds maintenance duties. The role will require a good level of fitness and the ability to work unsupervised at times. This is a casual role and there will be a requirement for flexibility of hours, generally it will require 4 to 8 hours a week but possibly more during busy periods. This position is based in Hauraki.

### The Wilson School role – School Caretaker

This position is available on permanent part-time basis - 12 hours per week (worked flexibly Monday – Friday during school hours) term time only (approx. 40 weeks per year), with the flexibility to complete additional hours during the school holidays as required. This position is predominately located at the Base School in Hauraki and on occasions at Satellite Classes located on the North Shore.

Further information can be provided for each position on request.

Please contact Lizz Sadler, [office@wilson.school.nz](mailto:office@wilson.school.nz) or phone 09 489 5648.

If either or both positions appeal to you, please email a copy of your CV and covering letter to Lizz Sadler at [office@wilson.school.nz](mailto:office@wilson.school.nz).

Please indicate which position you would like to be considered for.

**Closing date Friday 25th March 2022**

**In accordance with the Covid-19 Public Health response Order 2021, all school staff who may have contact with students or are present at the same time as students are required to have had the Covid-19 vaccination.**



## Pre-season match turns into a carnival

Dozens of Covid cases in North Shore rugby teams turned the annual preseason hit-out against Ponsonby last Saturday, at Takapuna Grammar, into a festival-style game rather than a staunch trial match.

Still Shore, the defending North Harbour club champions, showed flashes of brilliance on both attack and defence. Donald Coleman (24) has shifted from flanker to hooker in his bid for higher honours and had been training with the Blues squad. "They've been teaching me how to play the position basically."

North Shore premiers and reserves had 17 forwards out last Saturday for the preseason match due to Covid, said Coleman, who caught the virus recently and recovered after being sick for one day.

"We actually hope all the team will get it and be recovered by the start of the season."

Covid though has brought some upside for Shore. First-five Connor Hill, one of the stars of last season's championship win against Takapuna, had hoped to move to France in the off season before Covid hit. He's now at Shore for back-to-back seasons with a move to Italy or France planned at the end of the year.

"It's good to be able to play some footy in front of a crowd," he said after a 20-minute stint last Saturday.

Hill was optimistic Shore would have a good season in 2022. Although it was missing some experienced players, like James Little, some of the younger recruits were developing well, he said.

• Shore Premiers beat Ponsonby 19-0 and the Under-21s beat Ponsonby 26-0.



**In full flight...Donald Coleman (top) and Raymond Young (above) take it to Ponsonby at Takapuna Grammar last Saturday**

## New kindergarten mooted for Hauraki

A kindergarten in Hauraki has been suggested as a solution to relieve pressure on oversubscribed centres in nearby suburbs.

Devonport Kindergarten has a waiting list of 93 children and Takapuna Kindergarten 110, the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board heard last month.

This meant some were not able to access early-childhood-education until they were four, rather than at two when enrolments were first taken, said chief executive of the Auckland Kindergarten Association, Pauline Winter, in a briefing.

Other centres in the board's area – at Bayswater-Belmont, Milford,

Westlake-Forrest Hill and Sunnynook – were also "always full", she said.

"We would love to open more kindies if we can get help with buildings."

Four of the six local kindergartens are in leased council buildings, with the not-for-profit association responsible for building upkeep.

Board member Toni van Tonder commented: "The wait to get into those kindergartens is a massive challenge we need to support you with."

Member Jan O'Connor suggested the association look to obtain a site in Hauraki to relieve the enrolment pressure and to save residents from having to travel into

Takapuna or down Lake Rd.

A kindergarten behind Hauraki School, amid old Navy houses on Marsden St and across from the Ngati Whatua development off Eversleigh Rd, would be well placed to service the suburb, O'Connor said.

Winter also raised the issue of increasing volumes of traffic from development posing a safety risk outside some centres. Parking could also be tricky, she said.

Winter said the board could assist kindergartens by approving longer leases on the four centres that were sited on council land or in council-owned buildings.

# EXTEND YOUR SUM

Make the most of the beautiful weather and long



The natural scenery and set up of Takapuna makes it easy to keep your summer going - so gather the troops, the friends and family, and come on in to Takapuna for one (or more!) of our favourite things to do.

### Indulge in some spectacular outdoor dining

With beach views, sea breezes and scorching weather, dining in Takapuna could not be more appealing! Takapuna has so many different places to eat and drink, with most of them also offering great outdoor seating – there’s something for every taste in Takapuna!



### Play the day away on one of the best white sand beaches in Auckland

Takapuna Beach has been voted one of Auckland’s favourite beaches – and we definitely agree! With the amazing white sand, sparkling waters and plenty of grass reserve for everyone to enjoy – there couldn’t be a more perfect way to spend a summers’ day, than at Takapuna Beach.



### Treat yourself to some outdoor retail therapy

Takapuna has some of the best boutique shops on Hurstmere Rd and surrounding streets – where else can you enjoy a fresh, salty sea-breeze while perusing some high-end fashion?



### Pack a picnic or enjoy takeaways at Takapuna Beach

There are many different places to get some delicious snacks or meals in Takapuna, so why not grab some to takeaway and enjoy them at the Beach!



i♥TAKAPUNA

# MER IN TAKAPUNA

days, and head to Takapuna for some fun in the sun!

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Takapuna is home to some of the best cafes and ice cream around, so grab whatever you need for your walk, from coffee to juice, to refreshing ice cream or smoothie, and hit the trail! The Lava trail is a stunning seaside walk along the Coast, that forms part of the Te Araroa walkway, and the Takapuna to Milford section runs directly through an ancient, fossilised Kauri Forest!

## Let the kids explore and play at Takapuna Beach

Right on the beach, is one of Auckland’s best playgrounds – the all-abilities Takapuna Beach Playground! Grab a coffee and let the kids free with some active and engaging outdoor play, and finish off with a refreshing walk in the shallows of the beach. There’s also a number of delicious ice-cream and frozen yoghurt places close enough to the beach for all the well-behaved kiddos (and of course their well-behaved caregivers!)

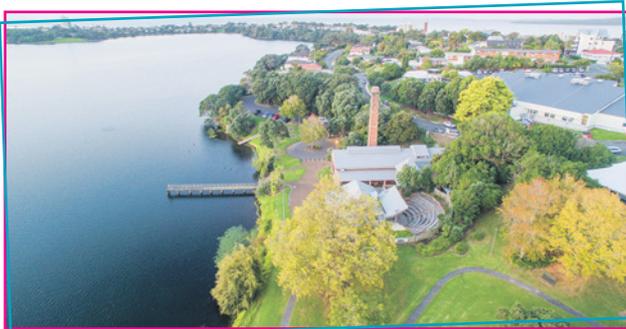
## Head out on an adventure to find Whales and an Owl!

You may have already seen the fantastic Owl sculpture halfway along Hurstmere Rd, but if not – it’s a great thing to have the kids go out and search for! And until mid-April, Takapuna is also home to three giant Whale Tail sculptures, all handpainted by different artists, that are part of the Whale Tale Art Trail 2022. Download the Whale Tale app, find the Tails, scan the QR codes at each location, and unlock some great rewards and specials!



## Catch up with your (four-legged) friends for some beach time

If your children or friends are of the furry and four-legged variety, why not organise a nice walk along Takapuna Beach – the perfect dog-walking beach with calm waters, lots of room and plenty of sticks around! You’ll find that most of the cafés and eateries in Takapuna are dog-friendly too, so finding the perfect brunch spot or dinner venue will be easy for your after-walk treats – you just have to decide which one!



## Feed the ducks and geese at Lake Pupuke

Nestled a little further inland, is the great Lake Pupuke and it’s famous flock of duck and geese, who all love a bit of attention! Take a lovely walk through the reserve and along the lake edge, and bring a long some snacks to feed the locals, like: wheat, oats, rice, bird seed, frozen peas or corn, chopped lettuce or duck pellets (please don’t feed them plain bread!)

For a comprehensive list of all the places to eat, drink, shop, entertain and treat yourself this summer, as well as a further list of ideas of places to go and things to do in Takapuna, head to our website: [www.ilovetakapuna.co.nz](http://www.ilovetakapuna.co.nz).



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## OUT & ABOUT

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

### STREET GET-TOGETHERS

Devonport Peninsula Trust has some funding available to encourage people living in the Devonport peninsula area (Devonport to Hauraki Corner) to get together with their neighbours to develop neighbourhood connections.

**For further info please contact Maria on ph: 445 9533 or email maria@devonportpeninsulatrust.nz**

### KIDS ATHLETICS SERIES

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**Vauxhall Sports Reserve (rugby club grounds)**

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**For more info contact Maria ph: 445 9533 or email: maria@devonportpeninsulatrust.nz**

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**Tuesdays (@ Windsor Reserve)**  
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Raumati/Summer Fun Tamariki (0-5) Play Mornings are a fun time for under-5s to play with big toys, be active and make new friends. This is a Covid-19 safe event\*\* Caregiver supervision is required, and sessions are weather dependent. For more info, visit [www.devonportpeninsulatrust.nz](http://www.devonportpeninsulatrust.nz). Follow us on Facebook to keep up to date with any changes.

\*\*This is a Covid-19 safe event. To enter, all persons over the age of 12 are required to present your "My Vaccine Certificate" to event officials as a condition of taking part in the event. Please wear a face mask and remember to use the NZ Covid Tracer App to keep track of where you have been and turn on Bluetooth tracing. Stay home if you are feeling unwell, wash your hands often with soap and water before and after you leave home.

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

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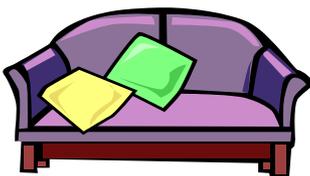
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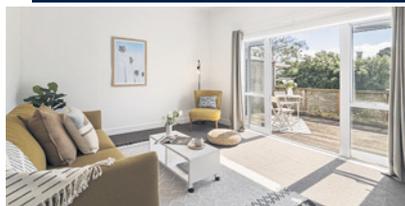
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## Speed proposals: AT rapped over lack of briefing

The failure of Auckland Transport (AT) to give local politicians a timely rundown on changes planned for Devonport and Takapuna town centres left Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair Ruth Jackson fuming last week.

At a board workshop with AT, Jackson said she had expected to be given the detail of the Safe Speeds proposals before they were unveiled for consultation the previous day.

A workshop on the topic had been requested, she said. "I was quite aggrieved that that session wasn't held before public consultation."

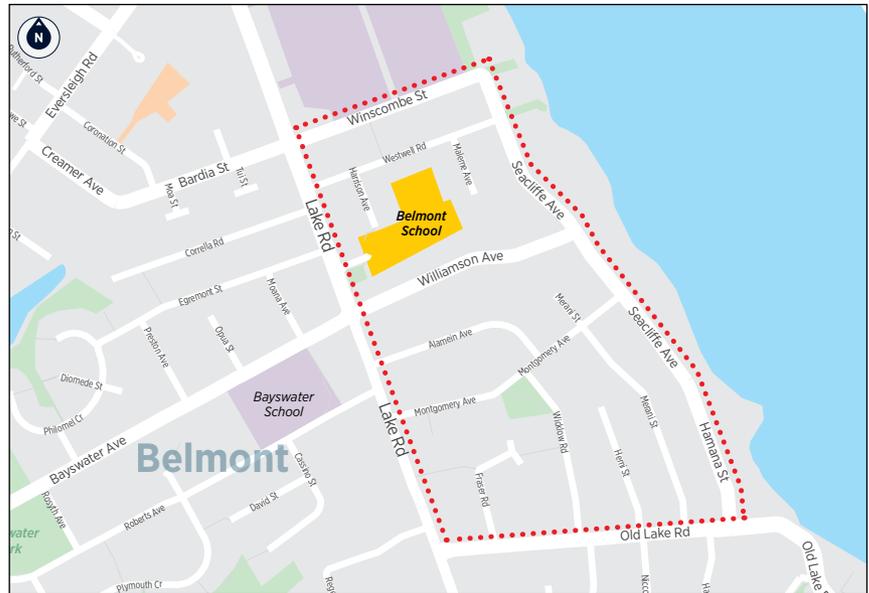
Both the extent of the Devonport 30km/h scheme and zone proposals for Belmont had been news to her. The information provided online was also not very detailed, she said.

Instead of finding out which local streets and schools would be in lower speed zones planned to take effect mid-year, the board was given an overview from AT on what it had in store for 2023–26 in its yet to be developed citywide Speed Management Plan.

AT programme director Nathan Cammock responded to Jackson that it had "never been the intention to keep the board in the dark" regarding Safe Speeds.

Local Board adviser Tristan Coulson chimed in to say members had had all information provided by AT to date passed on to them.

Cammock acknowledged, however, that work on Belmont had been more under the radar than that on Devonport and Takapuna town centres, where local consultation groups provided input to AT. "The working groups focused on town centres," he said. Key



**Slow zone... the area around Belmont Primary School, where a 30 km/h zone is proposed by AT, to take effect in 2023**

stakeholders, such as Panuku had also been consulted to "work through kinks", he said.

Along with invited business and community representatives, the Devonport group included board member Trish Deans, with members Aidan Bennett and George Wood on the Takapuna group. Bennett said the collaborative model was a good one that should be repeated.

Jackson said the board in its entirety should be kept in the loop. This recognised the role of local representatives who were approached

by the community and it allowed members to give AT useful early feedback. She expressed a wish to hear back on Safe Speeds after AT gathered and analysed public feedback to the speed-zone plans, due by 3 April.

Cammock earlier said the Speed Management Plan would offer an opportunity for local boards to put forward other areas they would like AT to place a safety focus on.

Deans said: "I want to put in a bid for Vauxhall Rd to be in the next tranche."

## Push continues for extended slow-zone controls in Hauraki

Extending planned school-zone speed limits and other safety measures on Jutland Rd are back on the agenda for Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Toni van Tonder.

She will put the case for further measures to Auckland Transport (AT) after Hauraki residents last week raised fresh concerns, especially about traffic to and from Northboro Rd and Stone St. They want traffic-slowing measures and a zebra crossing considered.

Van Tonder, who in December unsuccessfully urged the board to push for a larger zone than AT plans to introduce around Hauraki School mid-year, said community reaction meant she would try again.

"We just need to get AT to take another really good look at the area," she said. "So many parents are talking about near misses."

While it was for traffic engineers to determine if a crossing was a good idea, she said it would be timely for AT to review the hotspot and the zone size, as it progressively rolls out its Safe Speeds programme citywide.

AT is calling for feedback on further larger zones around schools in Devonport and Belmont. Van Tonder says the new proposals are partly what is driving more awareness

in Hauraki. In just two days last week, a social-media post about the Northboro-Jutland Rds corner, drew 44 responses. Most of the residents agreed more needed to be done to combat speed and rat-running to make it safer for children and other pedestrians.

The reaction was significantly more than the minimal response to AT when feedback on the Hauraki zone closed last November.

More people working from home and connecting to community issues was also driving awareness, she said.

Parents who might have once driven their children to school, were now encouraging them to make their way on foot, bike, or by scooting and skating. Accompanying parents were seeing the risk traffic posed.

"We have just got to slow down," van Tonder said. "We need to change driver behaviour."

Congestion would only worsen with housing intensification in Hauraki, she added. The Oneoneo development on Eversleigh Rd, Belmont, would also bring more people into the area, increasing traffic on Northboro Rd.

The board backed AT's proposed zone for Hauraki at its December meeting. This

only follows Jutland Rd eastwards as far as Francis St, meaning the stretch to Lake Rd stays at 50km/h. The zone takes in seven side streets close to the school: Charles, Walter, Sydney and Herbert Sts and Pine Ridge Tce to the north of Jutland Rd; and Waitemata Rd and Marsden St to the south.

At the meeting, van Tonder unsuccessfully pushed to have the zone extend the length of Jutland Rd. She also wanted the section of Francis St between Jutland Rd and Hart Rd included, along with Hart Rd itself, Norman Rd and Stone St.

In its feedback to AT, the board also called for a speed limit of 40km/h rather than 30km/h, saying this was more likely to be palatable to the public. Members van Tonder and Aidan Bennett voted against. "Just because I get voted down, I don't stop trying, van Tonder said.

The speed-limit preference is likely to come up for the board again – certainly for Sunnynook, where member George Wood says the community has indicated it prefers 40km/h, and possibly in the Devonport and Belmont feedback, which remains open until 3 April. Details on these two new peninsula proposals are at [AT.govt.nz/haveyoursay](https://at.govt.nz/haveyoursay).

# Covid caution reduces half-marathon field

Covid and a lockdown delay contributed to hundreds of no-shows for the Devonport Half Marathon.

Of the 784 entrants in the 27 February event, just 437 completed the course.

The half-marathon was rescheduled from October, causing a high level of attrition, race director Rob Docherty said.

“Of course we are right in the middle of the Omicron outbreak and some people are just more cautious than others about going out, even though [the event] is perfectly safe.”

Putting on the race under the red Covid setting introduced challenges, including the need to set up segregated start pens.

Mt Roskill’s James Marsh won in a time of 1:16.50, ten seconds ahead of second-placed Matt Kerr, who finished third in October 2020.

Defending champion Shae Patten-Wise came third in 1:20.34.

The first female home was Katherine Morgan in 24th overall, with a time of 1:31.31.

Marsh, who is originally from the UK, runs for the Owairaka Athletics Club in Mt Roskill.

He won the 10km run in the Devonport Half Marathon event in October 2020, and said he enjoyed the Devonport courses.

“I’ve done it for the last three years but in different variations,” he said. This was his first half-marathon victory.

“I just really hope that the event continues.”

Marsh’s first sport was football but he says he wasn’t very good. His parents wanted to get him out and off video games so they took him to a running club at 16.

Moving to New Zealand a few years ago, the climate encouraged him to start running every day.

Now 30, his goal is to run a half in under 70 minutes. “Mainly I just want to compete at a higher level.”



**Clacking off... Devonport Half Marathon winner James Marsh crosses the finishing line**

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# Takapuna

SCHOOL NEWS



# Grammar

MAR 11, 2022

## L2 Science & Biology Field Trips – St Leonards Beach & Smiths Bush



The Science department has been making the most of the settled weather to run a number of field trips in week 5. The L2 Biology students spent a few hours on the rocky shore at St Leonards Beach gathering information and making observations related to the pattern of zonation. The information gathered will help students to complete their first internal assessment for the year. Then the L2 General Science students visited Smiths Bush, Northcote. This small patch of forest is dominated by large kahikatea trees that would have been a feature of our local area before human arrival. Although the surrounding area has been cleared of mature forest, Smiths Bush remains relatively untouched and clearly demonstrates the pattern of stratification which students were there to investigate as part of their first unit of work.

## L1 Biology Field Trip to Arataki



In week 3 four L1 Biology students spent a day visiting the Arataki Visitor Centre and the surrounding Waitakeres forest area. Students were there to investigate the impacts of pest control on our native forest. They were shown the various traps and bait stations that are used to control the wide range of pests affecting New Zealand's biodiversity; they took part in surveys to measure numbers of plants, insects and birds; and they learnt just how far-reaching the impacts of pests can be. The field trip gave students practical experience of the ideas covered in their first topic of the year and will hopefully encourage them to get involved in local environmental projects.

## Performing Arts Twelfth Night Production



Takapuna Grammar School's Twelfth Night was performed 20-23 February and was a huge success! Our cast of students from all years of TGS showed extreme resilience and perseverance to put on a play in such a short amount of time and under all of the Covid restrictions. Much of the music for Twelfth Night was composed and performed by the students themselves. The sound and lighting crew also had a huge hand in the success of the play by managing the lights, cameras and all the other live-streaming equipment so that we could reach people watching at home as well.

## Whanau Head of House & Deputies



**L-R = Ankia van Zyl, Daniel James, Maia Hemopo, Jasper Moy, Gaby Dellabarca, Nidhish Chandra, Emma Taylor, Tori Johnson**  
**Absent = Oliver Ng, Jack Chen**

The school congratulates the above Head and Deputy Head of Whanau Houses and also the following House Leaders on their appointments for 2022.

IHI	KAHA	MAIA	MANA	WEHI
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Annabelle Knowles	Sophie Langley	Phoebe Rennie	Kira Sharrock	Katie Young
Malia Faulalo	Tate Agnew	Kayla McHugh	Rei Muramoto	Amalja Fernando
Neve Mann Benn	Fletcher Watts	Jack Chen	Jackson Harvey	Jasmine Perry
Hayley Macduff	Ana Kuoch	Julia Jung	Ella Choi	Victoria Tenitskaya
Joe McKibbin	Brooke Cooper	Daniel McClune	Alexis Abrazaldo	Ryota Kawata
Sam Miles	Maia Scott	Issy Smith	Briar Cook	Sasha Macdonald
Elliott Armstrong	Clara Hart	Lila Slade	Aira Li	Olivia Priddy
Amelia-Fleur Murch	Maia Hemopo	Daisy Butcher	Sianna Palmeri	Brook Thomas
Aleks Miernik	Lyri Posimani	Osborn Xing	John Perkinson	Lovisa Camburn
Charlotte Rong	Monique Bullians	Jess Archer	Connor Walter	Mira Menon
Katie McLean	Utkarsh Sharma	Kiara Ibararan	Nidhish Chandra	Olivia Free
Felix Standley	Bee Forest	Hetz	Ariel Hopkins	Brynlee Smith
Marian Gorayeb	Ceyda Sarikaya	Yuna Park	Sofia Drew	Nicholas Mansell
Eden Fitzgerald	Ella Twiss	Minseo Kim	Anna Rodygina	Sofia Pino
Callum McMillan	Evan Herwardi	Bella Lovison	Hyerim Park	Alexandra Perkins
	Ruby Wilson	Haeun Lim	Holly Bellett	Holly Matthews
	Aaliyah Tauroa	Cara Bouwer	Phoebe Smith	Kurtis Mawson
	Hailey Chen	Nancy Nan	Laura Bolton	Lachie Cambell
				Hugo Sweetman
				Jeremiah
				Thomas-Smith
				Vinnie Yee Werry

## BOT Student Representative – Lily Murphy



Congratulations to Lily Murphy who was elected as the 2022 Student Trustee Representative to the TGS Board of Trustees.

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Artist's impression

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# Improv show books in foolery for April 1st



**Roll with it... Rose Centre operations manager Geoff Allen (left) with Steven Lyons of *The Dice Show***

Forced to cancel its latest comedy show last Friday, The Rose Centre in Belmont has thrown the dice, rescheduling it for next month.

Due to the rise of Omicron in the community, *The Dice Show* is now set to start on 1 April.

The production brings comedian and show co-founder Steven Lyons back to a venue where he last performed as a teenager in *Living with Lady Macbeth*.

Lyons, who now lives in Kingsland but spent much of his childhood in Devonport, describes *The Dice Show* as “part stand-up and part panel show”.

Six performers will hit the stage with no idea what’s in store.

A large inflatable dice is rolled – to the sound of lightning – and the number that pops up, is how many minutes the comedian has to improvise for, on a random topic called out from the audience.

The show is four years old. In 2019, the New Zealand Comedy Guild nominated it for Best Live Show and Lyons for Best MC.

“I kind of got addicted to improv because it’s such a bonding experience,” Lyons said. “For me, [stand-up is] never me versus the audience and it’s the same with improv.

“We’re all there together and we’re creating

this thing in the moment.”

It’s hard to train for what you don’t know – it’s “all preparation and no preparation”, Lyons said.

And the outcome remains an unknown. “An improv show without an element of risk, it’s not as exciting to watch.”

Topics can be rejected, but the audience will play a part in what the comedians will tackle. ‘Vibrators’ was one of the more risqué topics put to the comedians at a past show: “You could feel the audience going ‘go on’,” he said. “It ended up being this beautiful sex-positive set.”

Lyons has performed and trained in many different countries, and was based in Chicago for several years before coming home six years ago. He also has a TV portfolio, including a stint on *Shortland Street*.

He is confident theatre will survive Covid. “It’s already evolving and it was evolving before Covid hit and it will keep evolving long after we’re all gone.”

Rose Centre operations manager Geoff Allen said the April show will definitely go ahead.

The centre wants to be a North Shore arts hub and has already been approached by performers who had found other facilities unavailable due to the pandemic.

“There’s an upside to this whole thing that we’re going to meet some new people,” said Allen.

Tickets for *The Dice Show* are \$20 from Eventfinda.



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# Depot Artspace needs to lift profile

A strategic review of the Depot Artspace will help guide its future direction, but general manager Amy Saunders says raising its profile in the local community is a must.

“I don’t think a lot of people know we are there. The audience base is older,” she told Devonport-Takapuna Local Board members in a recent update on Depot operations.

Reaching out to more to schools, young families and businesses was vital, especially at a time when visitor numbers are down due to Covid-19, she said.

“I think Devonport used to be more of a destination.”

Saunders, who took over at the Depot early last year, said online shows and sales and an upgraded website were now part of the necessary new ‘hybrid’ model of operating, but the live experience remained important for art.

“People want to be with each other, to network.”

Normal operations were probably still several months away, with the gallery closed on Sundays due to lack of foot traffic in Devonport.

Saunders said the review, made possible with funding from Creative New Zealand, would be completed by mid-year.

“The community and the landscape have

changed and we have to evolve with it,”

The Clarence St centre had dual roles as a gallery and also as a training hub, she emphasised.

It provided courses and facilities to support people to enter or operate well in the creative sector, delivering programmes for the Ministries of Social Development, and Culture and Heritage.

“We are the largest provider of creative-career development programmes in New Zealand,” said Saunders.

Yet a lot of people thought the Depot was just a local art gallery. While it was proud of this, it could also do more to promote its visibility, its training and its two sound studios, she said.

Her aim locally was to make the Depot a more fun and accessible venue.

“People are staying at home more now, so it’s how to create a bit more of buzz down that end of Clarence St.”

Asked by board members if she was working with other arts and community organisations, Saunders said outreaches had been made, including with the Devonport Community House. During Covid, conversations about common issues had been held with Lake House in Takapuna and other groups, but more could be done with schools and iwi.

Covid had shown that being “walls to rent” was not fair on artists, she said. “From the end of the year, we will be a much more accessible wall space.” Going online had also helped bring barriers down.

Broadening the Depot’s income base was important and Saunders wanted to work more with businesses and with tertiary and creative trainers. The Depot could offer help with digital content and had videographers and photographers it worked with.

Saunders said the Depot’s positioning as a “very well established and leading community arts organisation in New Zealand” was down to her predecessors. “I’ve inherited this wonderful legacy of Lynn [Lawton] and Linda [Blincko], who have been steering this for the last 25 years.”

Lawton, the centre’s former manager who had stayed on part-time to run the training programmes, and creative director Blincko, departed the Depot several months ago.

Saunders said her new team had settled in, although sound engineer Neil Baldock had moved on after 18 months. He pioneered a song-writing competition with schools that the Depot would continue, she said.

“Covid has thrown us lots of challenges but also lots of opportunities.”

## Community House chill-out zone makes for warmer welcome

A mezzanine chill-out zone has been created at the Devonport Community House as part of efforts to create a welcoming environment for locals.

The tired landing area of the Clarence St building, which hosts community classes and meetings, has been refreshed, with comfortable bright sofas and access to free tea and coffee.

For now, the area is in use only by booking (free of charge) or by people already attending the centre. But the post-Covid plan is for it function as a drop-in community lounge.

House events and marketing leader Justine Kinsella said new management has used recent quieter times to work on the mezzanine area and other ideas to make the house’s offering more inviting to more people.

Some regular classes had chosen to move outdoors during the Omicron outbreak, she said. “But the house is definitely coming back to life.”

Kinsella is counting down to the day it becomes easier to run events to re-energise the facility.

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# When Larry met Frank and other reinventions

Narrow Neck author Graeme Lay has woven local literary figures and plenty of cultural detail into a fictional love story centred on a real-life celebrity tour of the 1940s

A story of burgeoning love paralleled by the complicated relationship of two of the most famous names of their time has kept Devonport author Graeme Lay busy for nearly two years.

His new book, *Larry & Viv*, centres on the 1948 tour to New Zealand of Sir Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh. The stars of stage and screen led the Old Vic Theatre Company on a seven-month Australasian visit, as a British thank you for support during World War II.

"It's history now," says Lay. Few people remain who can remember the tour well. Travelling by boat, the company visited Australia first, before seasons in the four main centres in New Zealand.

"It took the country by storm," says Lay. "To have the two most famous people in the world here – as far as actors went – the public couldn't get enough of them." Crowds greeted their arrival in each city and shows sold out.

The tour transported international celebritydom, long before television arrived here. It transported Lay's imagination too, with his research helping create a number of "what if" scenarios, blending fact with fiction.

He has Olivier visiting leading New Zealand author Frank Sargeson, the incognito actor travelling by ferry to Devonport and on by bus to Takapuna. He walks the last block to Sargeson's still-standing home on the quiet cul de sac that Esmonde Rd once was.

"I thought it would be nice for Frank Sargeson to meet Laurence Olivier because he was a great admirer, so I contrived a meeting," explains Lay. Sargeson's letters told of him looking forward to seeing Oliver play Richard III.

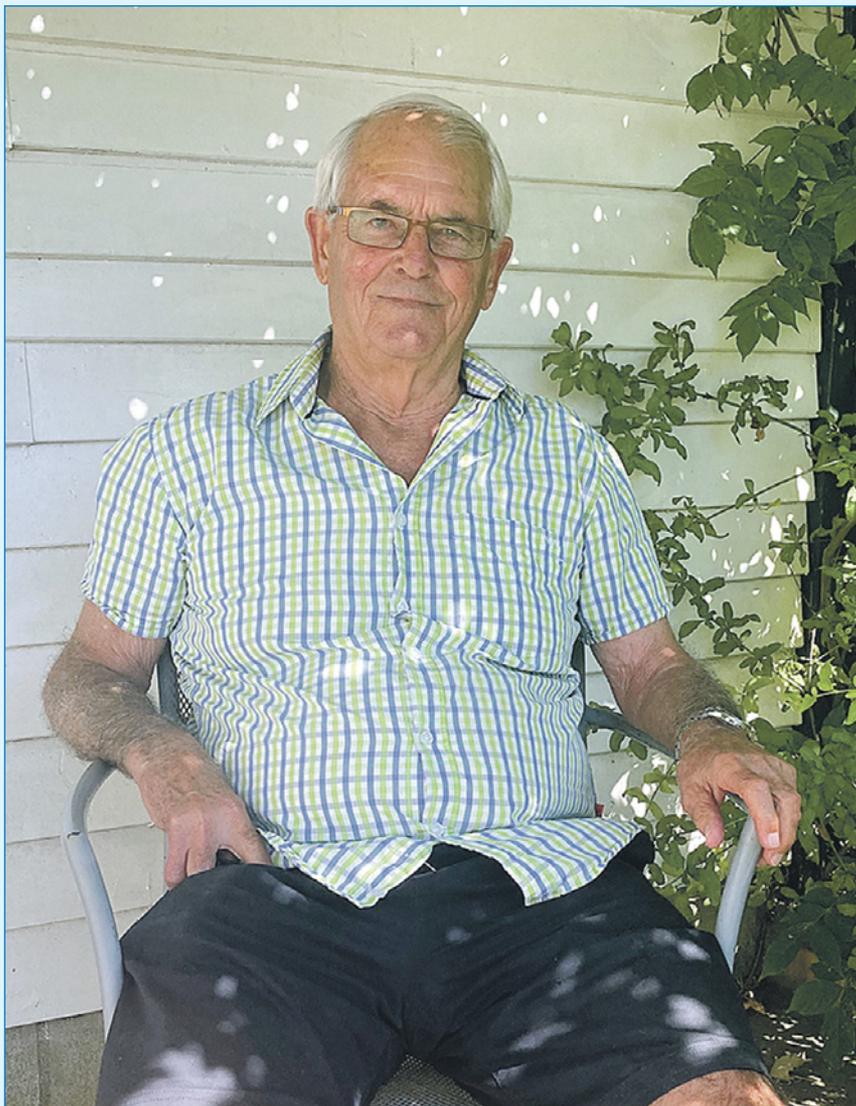
Olivier and Leigh were then at the height of their fame. He was considered the greatest Shakespearean actor of his generation and she had won world renown as the captivating Scarlett O'Hara in *Gone with the Wind*, released nine years earlier.

Their attractiveness and continued top billing and awards in film and theatre made them mesmerising stars, including, in Lay's story, to young Jed, a conscientious objector turned stagehand and wannabe writer.

Lay uses Jed as a bridge to a host of other characters. Some, like Sargeson, are firmly based on fact, as are various of the diaspora of Jewish refugees who made their way here.

"There was a little group who lived on the North Shore. They formed a little enclave here," says Lay. They knew and socialised with Sargeson and poet A.R.D. Fairburn.

Hungarian refugee Frank Haydn was one of these. He built Sargeson's modest house in the year of the tour, and his name lives on in North Shore construction firm Haydn & Rollett. Another was poet Karl Wolf Scehl who lived for a time in nearby Burns Ave, Takapuna.



**Lay lines... The author at home in Narrow Neck, where he has lived for four decades**

Jed's path crosses with another refugee, Natalia, with Takapuna Beach as a backdrop. Natalia's character is based on a pioneering woman architect, Renata Prince, who for a time took shelter in an old army hut at the back of Sargeson's property.

Jed and Natalia's story contrasts with the tumultuous relationship of Olivier and Leigh. "Everyone loves a good love story," says Lay. "I enjoyed tying them together. The counterpoint is the hate story, with Larry and Vivien getting further apart."

In writing fiction, Lay says research is vital for authenticity. "But you have to depend on characters you draw, not just events, in fiction."

Olivier was hampered with an injured knee that required surgery in Wellington before the journey home, and heavy smoker Leigh had a

bad cough and a wandering eye. They finally divorced in 1960. "Laurence said later on he lost Vivien on that tour – they saw too much of each other," notes Lay.

The idea for *Larry & Viv* came after Lay was asked to review a biography of Olivier for a magazine. He had seen him in films and says: "He had a great stage presence and was an interesting man. Vivien was beautiful, a fabulous actress."

Other books he read about conscientious objectors – including by Ian Hamilton who lived in Ngataranga Rd and wrote *Till Human Voices Wake Us* – and the Jewish influence on cultural life here came into play. So too his archive dive and own observations that it was an unsophisticated time. "It was all very backward and provincial then; the great changes were yet to come in the 1960s, it was



a quiet and insular society.”

Local landscapes are lovingly described, with Rangitoto looming. Lay found some of his historical assumptions were challenged, including that Takarunga had plenty of trees on it – “the ones there were planted later on” – and that the Takapuna beachfront was lined with old baches.

“But my friend Kevin Ireland who can remember – he was about 15 at the time of the tour – said it wasn’t baches, it was very grand houses and the baches were further back.”

Lay asked Ireland and fellow old mate and Takapuna playwright Sir Roger Hall to read his draft. He was happy to take their advice to focus more immediately on the tour. He reworked the book, so as not to “frontload” it with so much detail about Jed’s wartime incarceration. This made for a better, more personal story, he says. So too, did changing the title from *The Tour to Larry & Viv*.

But he concedes to artistic licence rather than accuracy there. “Nobody called them Larry and Viv, they were always Sir Laurence and Lady Olivier. It was only behind the scenes they dared called them that.”

At age 78, Lay is happy to keep honing his craft, and says he – like Jed in *Larry & Viv* – owes Sargeson a debt of gratitude. He once sought out the master New Zealand writer for advice, after failing to attract interest in his first short stories.

“I wrote to Frank Sargeson about 1976-77. We were living nearby in Tennyson Ave. I saw him in Takapuna. He was a very distinctive figure – beret, a little goatee and pulling a little shopping cart because he didn’t drive.”

He received a letter of constructive criticism in reply. Soon after, *Thursday* magazine was the first to run one of Lay’s stories, starting a prolific career that has produced internationally published books on Captain Cook and Captain Bligh of the *Bounty*, and a slew of travel titles.

He also got to meet and began visiting



**Perfectly Frank... Sargeson’s home on Esmonde Rd, which Lay helped preserve through his involvement with the Sargeson Trust**

Sargeson, who died in 1982. “He always had a couple of old friends around,” recalls Lay. Later he was involved with the Sargeson Trust for more than 20 years, protecting Sargeson’s house and promoting the Sargeson fellowship.

Lay will be back on the high seas with his next novel, *The Collector*, about botanist Joseph Banks. He hopes it will appeal to English publishers and that *Larry & Viv* might too. He finished *Larry & Viv* in August, but

copies have been slow arriving.

Lay is not sure what comes next, but he likes to keep busy. In the meantime he is keeping up his swimming at Narrow Neck and enjoying the house and garden he shares with his green-fingered wife, Gillian. “We had our 40th anniversary in this house last year. I will stay as long as I’m able,” he says.

***Larry & Viv* by Graeme Lay, Renaissance Publishing, \$35, at booksellers, including Paradox in Devonport.**



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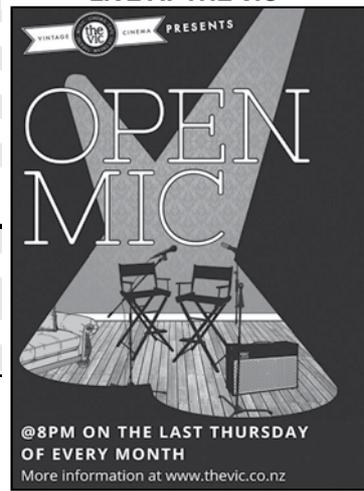
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