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April 8, 2022

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Lead contamination found
at Handley Court site... p2

Heritage 'A-team' readies
for housing battle... p5

Interview: Author
Olivia Spooner... p16

Council secrecy over heritage changes continues

Massive changes to the status of Auckland's heritage areas were discussed in secret by council's planning committee last week – and it is refusing to make its decisions public.

Last week, the Flagstaff sought the decisions and any materials presented to the meeting.

However, council refused to supply them.

A spokesperson said: "The decisions of the Planning Committee are confidential until public consultation begins."

"All information, including maps, will be publicly available once consultation opens on 19 April."

The secrecy has continued despite the Flag-

staff – and later the *New Zealand Herald* – publishing maps presented to a council workshop that highlighted heritage areas at risk of being opened up for intensification.

The Flagstaff has also sought any evaluation reports on the heritage assessments for Devonport's Special Character Area. **To page 4**

Cyclists conquer Cape Reinga-to-Bluff ride



Feet back on the ground... Devonport residents (from left) John 'Clem' McLennan, Mary Lochhead and Tina Frantzen recently completed the 3000km Tour Aotearoa. Story, page 3.

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Briefs**MP catches Covid**

North Shore MP Simon Watts and his family have Covid. A snuffly sounding Watts told the Flagstaff a day after he tested positive last Wednesday that his symptoms were mild and he was able to attend to Parliamentary select committee work remotely. The younger of his two sons was first to succumb on Sunday 27 March. "It took a few days, but we've all got it now," said Watts from the Belmont home he shares with wife Shannon, and the boys, who attend local primary and intermediate schools. He hoped to be back in the community by the middle of next week, when his seven-day isolation period ends.

Tower in council hands

The Wakatere Boating Club tower on Narrow Neck Beach will be looked after by Auckland Council following recent episodes of vandalism. The club has a \$1 per year lease for the council-owned tower, which expires in 2026. It is handing back responsibility for the structure to the council in the new financial year, starting 1 July. The club was unwilling to comment on the handover. The tower was constructed in the summer of 1960-61, with an inscription honouring members who died while on active service. It was restored in 2007 with funds from the boating club and the North Shore Heritage Trust.

Weekend ferry use up following fare cut

Ferry use on the Devonport route jumped 44 per cent on the first weekend of a 50 per cent fare discount, compared with the previous weekend, operator Fullers reported. Patronage was still around 50 per cent down on pre-Covid levels.

Lead contamination at Narrow Neck site

A multimillion-dollar former pensioner-flat site in Narrow Neck has contaminated soil issues, including lead deposits considered a significant risk to human health.

The Handley Court block of pensioner flats was sold to developer Handley Investments in April 2021 for \$6.391 million.

Another company, Handley Capital Ltd, later applied to Auckland Council to develop 16 two-storey town houses on the site.

Now the site is back on the market.

However, resource-consent documents lodged with Auckland Council last October show contamination of around 250 sqm of soil at the site.

Lead concentrations from five samples on the eastern part of the site "were considered to pose a significant risk to human health and the environment," a Cato Bolam Consultants report said. The lead posed threats through inhalation, erosion or soil leaching.

The arsenic and zinc also found in the soil were below human-health risk levels.

The contaminated material should either be capped by one metre of soil or removed for disposal, the Cato Bolam report said.

The toxins in the soil resulted from land-filling at the site prior to 1940, and are found at surface level to just under one metre deep, the report said.

Takarunga scaled 25 times for Ukraine

A Devonport man ran up Takarunga 25 times last weekend to show his support for Ukraine.

Cam Watson (pictured, right) ran 2061 metres – the height of Ukraine's highest mountain, Mt Hoverla – in eight hours fifty one minutes.

"I was aiming for under 10 hours... I did not realise it was 44km, he said. "I ran a marathon by mistake."

He started at 6.30am on Saturday, jog-walking up the mountain, and jogging down. "Until the last 5km, when I was walking up and down."

Watson (54) decided to do the run after he became a grandfather five weeks ago, when daughter Amy gave birth to Ada.

"We are so lucky to live where we live. I was looking at the photos of Ukraine and if they were black and white it could be World War II – it's heartbreaking."

An asthmatic, Watson said he also did the run to encourage healthy living amongst the asthmatic community.

His route was from the bottom of Mays St to the summit. "People through the day were cheering me on and some gave us money."

Watson "pretty much collapsed" at the end.



"I really enjoyed the beer afterwards and a lot of potatoes for dinner."

After the run he donated \$200 to the Red Cross Ukraine appeal.

Simon Watts

MP for North Shore

National Party Spokesperson for Local Government and Associate Finance & Associate Infrastructure

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Accident can't stop cyclist going the Tour Aotearoa

Six months after getting knocked off her bike, Devonport cyclist Mary Lochhead was among local riders who completed a marathon 3000-kilometre ride from Cape Reinga to Bluff.

Lochhead and fellow Devonport residents John ‘Clem’ McLennan and Tina Frantzen finished the Tour Aotearoa (TA), a trail that covers the length of the country, each with different teams, late last month.

In September last year, Lochhead was hit by a car and knocked off her bike, breaking her collarbone.

Car drivers needed to take more care and be more patient with cyclists, she said. “It’s what we enjoy doing. We have to endure abuse from people for no reason whatsoever.

“When a car hits us, we’re pretty vulnerable.”

On the TA, organisers had gone to a lot of trouble to find back roads and trails to get the riders off the main roads, Lochhead said.

With few tourists due to Covid, even most of the main roads were quiet.

For McLennan, the tour was an educational experience. “I found there was a lot of history and geography I wasn’t expecting.”

Frantzen’s team used e-bikes, and had a support vehicle, which meant that everyone in the team of four both rode and drove a little each day.

Teams aim to complete the tour inside 30 days. Each group organises its own accommodation and carries its own supplies.

Some local businesses tracked the riders’ progress online, and were ready to welcome them.

“We went to one place and there were kids at the end of their driveway with iced watermelon,” Lochhead said.

“Some of the local people put up a

sign saying TA is welcome to stay here,” Frantzen said.

Most of the teams had booked their overnight stays in advance, but some were booking two days ahead as they went. “I think it’s great for small-town New Zealand.”

The teams purchased most of their food as they went, buying breakfast at a cafe and taking a scone or a muffin for lunch.

They ate a lot to keep their strength up. “Sausage rolls for breakfast – that was my standard,” McLennan said.

The scenery encompassed the likes of Ninety Mile Beach, tiny rural towns and the heights of the Crown Range between Queenstown and Wanaka.

A camaraderie developed between the different teams of riders, many of whom crossed paths several times, Frantzen said.

The trio reminisced about the characters they met along the way, such as the rider who did the whole thing on his unicycle.



Finish line... Right: Mary Lochhead (far right, with bottle) celebrates reaching Bluff with teammates Pip Davis (left) and Sue Watts.
Left: Tina Frantzen (right) with her teammates (from left) Martha DeLong, Liz Forde and Cynthia Lund.

Budgeting Is Important

For those wanting to apply for a mortgage it has become increasingly important to show some sort of budgeting discipline. Banks now trawl through the applicant’s bank statements to verify their income and to examine their spending behaviours. They will note all direct debits, and automatic payments and then look at several categories, such as food/drink, takeaways, entertainment, clothing, holidays, health, and credit cards etc.

So it’s a good idea for at least three months prior to an application to sort out a sensible budget that applies to both pre and post-purchase as spending habits do change with home ownership and added costs of debt servicing plus rates, insurance and maintenance.

As a general guide, bank servicing models lend about six to seven times gross income. So \$120,000 income allows about \$750,000 loan – at a 5% interest rate that’s monthly repayments of about \$4,000. That’s about 40% of gross income, which is actually quite high but a sign of the larger borrowing amounts these days. Another guide is to see how rent plus savings compares to loan plus rates plus insurance payments! Check with us for any budget advice associated with lending requirements.

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Briefs**Heritage meeting rescheduled**

An Auckland Council heritage-panel meeting has been rescheduled until after public consultation over heritage changes, which begins on 19 April. The panel was to have met last month. The Flagstaff was told it was cancelled after confidential maps on heritage changes were leaked. However, an Auckland Council spokesperson said: "The reason [for the rescheduling] is that the confidential material is first being considered by the Planning Committee. The meeting will be rescheduled to after consultation begins on 19 April, when this information will no longer be confidential and will be publicly available." The heritage panel's views on the council's approach to Special Character Areas will be sought and incorporated into the council's proposed plan change to the Auckland Unitary Plan in August 2022, the spokesperson said.

Heritage donations soar

Donations to Devonport Heritage have reached almost \$10,000 since the latest threat to the suburb's heritage fabric, through the downgrading of its historical housing stock, emerged last month. By Monday this week, \$9225 had been pledged, chair Margot McRae said. More than 35 new members had also signed up to the organisation after it was revealed Auckland Council is considering opening up parts of the area south of the golf course to more intensive development. Many people had been contacting Auckland Councillors as part of the Devonport Heritage campaign, McRae said.



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Heritage petition presented to council

An 1800-signature Devonport Heritage petition calling on Auckland Council to retain protections on heritage homes was presented to council's planning committee last Thursday.

Devonport Heritage chair Margot McRae told the planning committee that many who signed the petition did not live in Devonport but valued its history and its importance as an Auckland destination.

"Some noted that if short-sighted councillors in cities like Prague, Bruges or Vienna decided to replace the historic areas for modern housing, who would bother visiting?"

Devonport Heritage dropped leaflets to parts of Devonport to alert residents to proposed changes, which would be implemented in August this year – when the council plan change to bring in the housing-density requirements will be notified.

"It's truly alarming that if places are deleted from the Special Character Area, then demolition and the building of three-storey houses can begin without resource consent from late August," McRae said.

She added that council had set a very high bar in requiring a property to reach a 75 per cent heritage level to be included as a special-character site.

In response to questions, McRae agreed

with councillor Desley Simpson that as part of the consultation Auckland residents should be offered the status quo as the option for Special Character Areas; the heritage quality criteria could also be dropped to 50 per cent for each house.

Councillor Wayne Walker questioned whether using Google Street View to analyse the quality of heritage properties was a sufficiently comprehensive approach, compared with site visits, which could take in a home's historic context and streetscape factors.

McRae said the heritage assessments done for the Auckland Unitary Plan should be used as a basis for protection.

Asked why 1960s flats and the like could not be removed from Special Character Areas, McRae said that ironically the 1960s flats were the only affordable housing in Devonport and were often owned by older people or rented, sometimes by single parents. If removed from the special-character protections they would be replaced by luxury three-storey town houses, which failed to address the government's push for more affordable homes, McRae said.

North Shore Councillor Chris Darby chaired the meeting. The other North Shore representative, Richard Hills, asked no questions.

Local MP hopes for the best from law his party supported

North Shore National MP Simon Watts says he hopes Auckland Council "will do the right thing" to protect Devonport's heritage status.

He wants local Special Character overlay assessments made in person, rather than by relying on Google Earth.

Watts said he had met with a number of constituents who were concerned about re-classifications to exclude Cheltenham from the overlay.

Devonport, Cheltenham and Stanley Bay had heritage value, he said. "My stance is that if they have that zoning today, they should have it in the future."

The council says it has no choice but to change its Unitary Plan in the face of government directives – which were supported by the National Party – to allow greater housing

intensification.

Watts said he was on the record speaking in favour of heritage protections. National's understanding was that council would have the power to protect heritage zones.

However, the council says it was given the clear message from government that rolling over existing arrangements without a reassessment was not an option.

Transport also factored into the housing equation, said Watts.

He pointed to the loss of the Stanley Bay ferry and the drawn-out upgrading of Lake Rd by council-controlled organisation Auckland Transport.

Watts said he would follow closely the council process handling heritage and other matters.

Council secrecy continues**From page 1**

The spokesperson said: "A month or so ago we shared this response with you: 'Surveys have been completed for all Special Character Areas, including Devonport, however we're still a few of months away from anything being shared publicly. There's still more work to do to assess the findings and how they inform the proposed plan change

required of the council before this work is completed.'

"That is still the case (but we are closer now). The findings of the Special Character assessments will be available when consultation begins," the spokesperson said.

Albany councillor Wayne Walker unsuccessfully petitioned the meeting to have the confidential item discussed in public due to the huge interest in the subject.

Heavyweights join fight to preserve Devonport heritage



Taking up the heritage cudgels... (from left) Dave Serjeant, Richard Reid, Margot McRae and Jeremy Salmond

An ‘A-team’ of leading Devonport professionals has joined Margot McRae and Devonport Heritage to get the best outcome for the area in the face of potentially massive changes to Auckland Council planning rules

The Flagstaff asked each of them why they had stepped forward.

Dave Serjeant, an independent planning and resource-management consultant, said he became involved because the proposed council changes would have a major impact on Auckland and would be “very significant for Devonport”.

The central village area could be particularly affected by the proposed allowable building heights, and lack of design controls.

The government’s housing-supply act prioritised housing “to the detriment of other important values in our urban fabric, like heritage,” Serjeant said.

He wanted to ensure planning rules that would be applied in Devonport protected heritage.

“Significant changes of zoning are under consideration which need careful scrutiny.”

An irony of the current emphasis on freeing up sites for development was that

Auckland Council was actually way ahead of the game in the provision of new housing supply,” Serjeant said.

New housing developments along Lake Rd, and in Belmont, Bayswater and Hauraki were indications of the Auckland Unitary Plan in action.

Jeremy Salmond, a heritage architect who has lived and worked in Devonport for 50 years, said he was very concerned about heritage “being eaten away over time... death by a thousand cuts.”

Social change led to upgrades and renovations, but the heritage fabric could still be protected.

Heritage homes and buildings were not museum pieces, but reflected history over generations with each owner “adding their touches”, Salmond said.

Structures around Devonport were effectively social history in a built form, he said.

Salmond was concerned Auckland Council was “tightening up” on homes that could have heritage protection by applying an “artificial” baseline of 75 per cent against a number of criteria.

This was overly simplistic, and would

exclude some areas of Devonport from protection.

Additionally, any freeing up of land in Devonport for greater development without solving a major issue like Lake Rd congestion, and considering other infrastructure issues, was “a failure to plan over time”, Salmond said.

Richard Reid, an architect and urban designer whose firm Citymakers aims to provide holistic answers to future planning, said an opportunity now exists “to review the place of heritage in Devonport and across Auckland.”

“And to crystallise what makes Devonport special and unique... to start with what is important and clarify that, rather than just a reaction to what council might be proposing.”

Establishing heritage baselines was crucial when New Zealand cities were giving priority to development.

The craft and science of planning were being removed from the system “for expedient gains”.

“It’s not the kind of city or country I want to practise city-making in,” Reid said.



By Rob Drent

It's little wonder voters are disillusioned with the government and Auckland Council, and MPs and councillors alike.

The rapid-fire law changes that are changing the whole fabric of the city through massive intensification are a case in point. The housing-enabling act passed in December 2021 allows a new medium density across Auckland: three, three-storey town houses on most sites.

Now the blame game has started. Auckland Council says it is being forced to implement the new law, while the government and MPs say Auckland Council has flexibility through its rules around Special Character Areas and volcanic view shafts.

How much flexibility – or backbone, to use another term – will Auckland Council show?

It made all the right noises in its submission on the government legislation.

But behind the scenes its planning department was already reviewing all Auckland's heritage housing stock.

This has turned out to have appalling ramifications for heritage areas such as Northcote Pt, Mt Eden, Remuera, Freemans Bay and Herne Bay – and parts of Devonport many thought immune from potential development.

Houses were assessed primarily using council's available data and Google Maps, and given a rating between 1 and 6.

The Cheltenham beachfront and surrounding streets apparently failed to make the grade, so were included in areas which could lose heritage protection – as was revealed in confidential maps leaked to the Flagstaff last month.

Given Auckland Council's habitual lack of transparency, it is perhaps unsurprising that the

same maps were discussed in a confidential section of its planning-committee meeting last week.

A Flagstaff request for the report on house assessments was also refused by council last week.

Some councillors are understood to be dismayed at the process, and the lack of transparency.

Little work seems to have been done on the actual implications for property owners or the community from such radical planning changes.

The process is wrong-headed for many reasons.

The Auckland Unitary Plan already had provision for 900,000 extra homes. Numerous sites on the Devonport peninsula are being developed now, with little overall consideration of impacts on infrastructure such as roading and traffic flows, sewerage and water.

No major changes to public-transport services are in the offing. Auckland Council has various long-term plans but they seem to fall beside the wayside in the face of the relentless development pressure. The overview aiming at the best outcomes in future decades is often lost.

No affordable homes will be built on the Devonport peninsula, as a result of the intensification crowding new buildings onto expensive sites.

It flies in the face of Auckland Council's lofty environmental goals. Developers prefer clear sites to maximize building sizes, so Devonport's trees and birdlife will be decimated.

The public will have a chance to make submissions, but little tends to change once council planners move down a certain line.

All information should have been made public as soon as it was available to councillors. Discussions on issues that so drastically affect residents' lives and futures should not be held in secret.

Council secrecy has also been in play over the sale of the Anzac St car park in Takapuna to Willis Bond, which plans a \$400 million development of apartments and retail.

Panuku has said the sale is staged and prices can only be revealed once each lot is sold.

Is this a good deal for ratepayers? Usually a developer will buy a block and be forced to carry the cost of the land while resource consents are lodged, the development built and units sold.

In this case it appears council – and by association the ratepayer – will carry the holding cost until the lots are sold.

Big deal, you say: it was only a car park anyway. But what if the land was sold outright? In addition to money going towards the cost of the new Toka Puia car park, proceeds could go to other uses.

In Devonport, these could include the mothballed upgrade of Dacre Park, the home of North Shore United; replacing the dinghy ramp at Queens Pde; or even a new skatepark.

Council seems delighted progress is being made in Takapuna, which it is to a point. But again, looking through a longer lens, wouldn't it have been great if council had required the developer to excavate underground to provide a future-proofed link to a rail system?

Congratulations to local sportsman Jock McKenzie, who last week became the latest Devonport addition to the Super Rugby ranks.

McKenzie learnt his craft as a North Shore junior before starring in the Westlake Boys High first XV. In the senior ranks, he has played for Eastern TEC, and although the last couple of years have been disrupted by Covid 19, he has been training with the Blues in 2022.

Called into the wider Blues squad as first-five cover, he was included in the reserves for the Blues match against Moana Pasifika last Tuesday after All Black Beauden Barrett suffered another head knock. McKenzie made it onto the field in the last five minutes at full-back and got one touch of the ball in the Blues' hard-fought 32-19 win.

Flagstaff readers will know McKenzie is also a talented cricketer, having represented New Zealand at under-19 level and playing for North Shore Cricket Club's premiers.

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TGS rowers strike gold at Maadi Cup

Dynamic Takapuna Grammar School duo Annabelle Knowles and Skye Lang won the under-18 girls double sculls at the 2022 Maadi Cup regatta at Lake Ruataniwha near Twizel last weekend – the second year in a row they have taken gold at the prestigious event.

The pair won gold in the under-16 girls double sculls in 2021.

Annabelle and Skye also won silver this year, in the under-18 girls coxed-quad sculls, with teammates Isabella Foster, Rea Kearns and Karin Kozuka.

Skye also won bronze in the under-17 single sculls – giving her the full set of medals from the cup.

To top off a great regatta, Annabelle was selected to trial for the Rowing New Zealand Juniors (Under 19) squad and Skye will trial for the Rowing New Zealand North vs South (Under 18) squad.

Winning combo...
Annabelle Knowles (left) and Skye Lang with their cup and gold medals (at right) and on crossing the finish line (below)



BAYLEYS**NEW LISTING**

Hauraki 1/67 Jutland Road

Redesigned family retreat

Expertly transformed during a full renovation in 2016, this five-bedroom home originally from the 1970s, is now a super cool 200sqm retreat, with an inground, heated 4m x 8m salt-water pool and spa, metres from Hauraki Primary. Masterfully redesigned, it will now accommodate families big, small, and blended, so too grandparents, teenagers, and home office situations - it is light and bright, and just so easy to live in. The five bedrooms are split over two levels, each with built-in-wardrobes, and the master enjoying its own lounge and semi-ensuite. Hauraki is such a special neighbourhood - everything that makes this suburb so family-friendly is quite literally all within walking distance. Be first and be fast - this property will be sold!

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5 2 2 2

Auction (unless sold prior)

1.30pm, Thu 5 May 2022
28 Northcroft Street, Takapuna

View Sat/Sun 11-11.30am
& Thu 2.15-2.45pm

Kathryn Robertson 021 490 480
kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz

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**Belmont** 27A Alamein Avenue

4 🚧 2 🚧 2 🏡 2 🚧

An attractive contemporary style freehold home with a private outlook, easy care gardens and great outdoor entertaining areas. Great location.

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harcourts.co.nz/DP23885



Ian Cunliffe
M 027 227 9322

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Harcourts**Belmont** 30A Montgomery Avenue

3 🚧 1 🚧 1 🏡 2 🚧

This lovely home sits on a quiet corner section. Capturing all-day sun which filters through to the dining and kitchen area via the welcoming French doors.

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Olivia de Tracy-Gould
M 021 917 038

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Harcourts**Devonport** 24 Shoal Bay Road

3 🚧 2 🚧 2 🏡 2 🚧

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Diana Murray
M 021 911 522

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Bayswater 3 Rosyth Avenue

4 🚧 2 🚧 1 🏡 2 🚧

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Jackie Mark
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Harcourts**Devonport** 49 Stanley Point Road

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Jane Hastings
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Gary Potter
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Maria Stevens
M 021 979 084

Marissa Muirhead
M 021 337 222
 Devonport 19 Roslyn Terrace

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Diana Murray
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Ian Cunliffe
M 027 227 9322
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2 🚙 1 🚕 1 🏠 1 🏠

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Jackie Mark
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 Devonport 6/40 Lake Road

2 🚙 1 🚕 1 🏠 2 🏠

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Price By Negotiation
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**Harcourts****Waiheke Island** 1E/3-7 Fourth Avenue

1 1 1

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Harcourts**Waiheke Island** 44/4 Bay Road

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Harcourts**Belmont** 59A Northboro Road

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**Harcourts****Belmont** 4/203 Lake Road

2 1 1 1

An open plan lounge, dining and kitchen area has large bi-fold doors that leads straight out to the deck and garden, facing north ensures sun.

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Price By Negotiation
View As advertised or by appointment
harcourts.co.nz/DP23739

Marissa Muirhead
M 021 337 222

Maria Stevens
M 021 979 084
Harcourts**Belmont** 1/4 Moana Avenue

2 1 1 1

This beautifully presented single level townhouse is the perfect home for downsizers and young families alike. Set in a peaceful location.

Price By Negotiation
View As advertised or by appointment
harcourts.co.nz/DP23827


AT plans to remove streetside parking on Albert Rd

Eleven car parks could be removed from Albert Rd after cyclists called for safer passage into Devonport.

An Auckland Transport (AT) proposal will prevent parking on the south side of Albert Rd from the Lake Rd roundabout to the pedestrian crossing alongside St Francis Church.

Parking is already prohibited on the northern side of that stretch of the road.

Feedback on the proposal, which includes widening the centre line with a narrow median strip, closes on 11 April.

Bike Devonport's Chris Werry said the existing cycle lane on the footpath along that part of Albert Rd, was strewn with obstacles.

On the road, cyclists travel through the roundabout and have to merge with traffic around the outside of parked vehicles.

Residents had said they no longer used the on-road parking after losing wing mirrors, Werry said.

Safety fears were the main reason people would not commute by bike, he added.

Referring to the death of cyclist Warrick



Cycle-friendly... A broken yellow line indicates where streetside parking on Albert Rd would be removed

Jones at the corner of Lake Rd and Montgomery Ave in March last year, Werry noted there were "30 other corners like that" on Lake Rd.

"You can't have a transport system where, if you choose one mode, there's a chance you will die."

AT has three standards for deciding whether to remove car parking on arterial roads: improving traffic flow, improving reliability and speed of public transport, and improving safety for cyclists.

In the Albert Rd example, "all three of those apply," Werry said.



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Ex-pharmacist finds books the perfect prescription

Olivia Spooner always loved stories and, after a career as a pharmacist and raising a family, immersed herself in writing. She tells Helen Vause about finally getting published – and deciding to buy a bookshop.



Hard copy... Olivia Spooner's *A Way Back to Happy* was first published as an e-book in the UK

When Olivia Spooner's three kids had grown into their teens, that was the prompt for her to revisit her working life.

It was time to start earning again, and doing something that was about her – maybe even buy a small business and try something new.

But what the long-time pharmacist did next might have surprised all but those who were closest to her. She bought a bookshop. Three years on, as the proud owner of The

Booklover in Milford, Spooner is delighted to have also published her own book, with another in progress.

A Way Back to Happy has just hit the bookshelves in this country, after first being released in the UK as an e-book.

For 46-year-old Spooner, the journey to becoming a bookshop owner and published writer has its beginnings way back in her dreamy teens, before she enrolled as a school-leaver to study pharmacy at Otago

University.

All her life, Spooner says, she has been aware of seeing stories around her. She first started putting pen to paper at Belmont Primary School. She grew up believing she'd pursue studies in English and in music at university, but a school guidance counsellor thought pharmacy was a wiser career choice and influenced a late change of direction.

Her family moved away from the Devonport peninsula, but Spooner came back for

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her first job to work as a junior pharmacist in the Victoria Rd business then owned by the late Peter Wigmore. She went on to work at Wellington Hospital and, later on her travels, at the pharmacy of London's Harley Street Clinic, where the rich and famous are among the clientele.

Spooner laughs to remember all the stories and secrets that went with dispensing (in the strictest confidence) to the many well-known names who passed by.

Her interest in storytelling back then didn't escape Spooner's colleagues, who gave her a leather-bound writing folder when she left her London job.

She moved back to Devonport 16 years ago with her husband Peter Spooner, and when her third child was born she parted company with full-time pharmacy life.

"It was never the right career for me and my heart was never really in it. I liked the interaction with people, but I never enjoyed the admin side of the pharmacy or counting out pills."

For years, the demands of family life almost took over her life.

But on many mornings, as Grace, Sophie and George – now 18, 16 and 14 years old – went out the door to school, their mother sat down at her kitchen table in Victoria Rd to retreat into the world of writing.

It was what she'd been dabbling in for years.

Selling books or hopes of publishing her own work were a long way off when Spooner first began signing up for writing courses.

Completing one course after another from that family table, she rattled off many thousands of words in different forms of creative writing, from novel writing to children's books.

Far from being bogged down by hours of hard graft on the keyboard, Spooner says the words came easily.

"I just love the process of writing. Once the characters come to life, I'm away, and I just become the channel for them and what

happens in their stories. Each writing course was different and very valuable but all of it was stimulating. I made the commitment to it and I found I had the discipline to keep at it and just sit down and write."

The feedback from course tutors, says Spooner, was positive.

But the first four books she got into draft form – a novel, a psychological thriller, a collection of stories and an ambitious, sweeping romantic saga set in the South Island – still sit in a drawer at home.

Far from being a disappointment, Spooner sees all those written words as part of her journey in storytelling. And she wasn't about to give up on writing, wherever it led her.

"Once the characters come to life, I'm away, and I just become the channel for them and what happens in their stories."

In 2019, it was serendipitous that The Booklover store came on the market at the same time she'd started looking for a small business.

Spooner, with no experience in the book trade, grabbed the opportunity and threw herself into running her new shop.

"It was a huge learning curve for me and a big adjustment for the whole family. And then we went into lockdowns," she laughs.

It wasn't a good time for a retailer but it was an enforced quiet break for a writer with her debut novel taking shape.

A Way Back to Happy is a contemporary bodice ripper with plenty of sex, swearing and alcohol. It's about a couple of crises in

the life of angst 33-year-old Emma, mother of little Freddie and suddenly separated from her controlling husband.

Emma's a mess, her mother doesn't 'get' anything, and a new lover comes into the mix bringing more chaos but finally fixes everything. It's a light, racy read.

Spooner is first to acknowledge it's not the sort of literature she's surrounded by in her day job, or the sort of book that might easily have found a publisher here.

But she sent it to British publisher Head of Zeus, and after eight months of silence she received an enthusiastic response. With a few changes, they'd publish it. After another six months of silence, her book was out in the world.

She has a two-book contract, and a second book with the same characters is almost ready for publication.

She has another entirely different book in progress, alongside her day job in the bookshop – one she says is closest to her heart.

This one had its beginnings 12 years ago, when Spooner was browsing through shipwreck stories and found a compelling account of the 1940 sinking of the passenger liner RMS Rangitane.

The Rangitane had carried to New Zealand a group of children evacuated from the UK and the adults escorting them to their new lives. Those escorts were on board for the return journey when the ship, not long after leaving port, was attacked by German raiders who shelled and sank her. The escorts were captured and held prisoner.

They were later left on a Papua New Guinea island to await rescue. When help arrived, the sinking and their ordeal was widely reported, their faces front-page everywhere. Now Spooner is revisiting their stories as the basis for a new book.

"I'm following my dreams," she says, kicking off a new week in the bookshop after a gruelling stretch of stocktaking.

"Sometimes it's felt overwhelming but it's what I wanted."



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Special character identified – evidence based assessments needed

Recent articles, ‘Devonport’s special character should be left alone’ and ‘Opposition to heritage changes mounts as petition swells,’ contained numerous misrepresentations which I intend to set right.

The Labour/National Party legislation that has forced council to make changes to the Auckland Unitary Plan did not include ‘Special Character Areas’ as a qualifying matter. If council did not act quickly and decisively, all character protections across the region would be removed.

My council colleagues and I do not want this to happen. It is Auckland Council that is identifying the need to protect special character, where the bipartisan legislation removes it.

The Planning Committee has sought to identify areas where there are high quality character values so that protections can be added into the forthcoming August 2022 government-mandated plan change. We need evidence to back this up, we cannot simply ‘roll over’ our existing special character protections. The Ministry for the Environment has made that very clear in a notice to all affected councils. Deviating from the legislation would leave council open to further government intervention that could remove our character provisions entirely, in favour of increased housing density.

We need an evidence-based approach to this challenge, one that allows us to defend Auckland’s character for coming generations. No systematic assessment of special character areas has been undertaken for more than two decades. This work is being undertaken by council’s heritage

professionals using a blend of desktop and in person site surveys. The properties that front Cheltenham beach, which have been subject to significant concern in this publication, were reviewed with in person site surveys in January 2022.

The maps that appeared in the 11 March issue of this publication represent incomplete work and are misleading. There is still a long way to go before final changes are decided. Council staff’s work on Special Character Areas also cannot be viewed in isolation, as there are many other factors that influence the levels of density permissible in a street. Other ‘qualifying matters’ may also apply such as volcanic viewshafts, height sensitive areas, and natural hazards like coastal erosion and inundation that serve to limit building height and density.

I understand that this is an emotive issue and that many readers, rightly, value the built character of Devonport. I acknowledge all those who took the time to sign Devonport Heritage’s petition that was received by the Planning Committee on 31 March.

The Planning Committee has been in ongoing dialogue with local decision makers.

My Committee has held 10 workshops between September 2020 and March 2022 on council’s response to the National Policy Statement on Urban Development. At my request Local Board Chairs or their appointees were invited to attend nine of ten workshops to help guide the council response.

We also want to hear from Aucklanders whether the work that we have been doing is going in the right direction. Initial con-

sultation on matters that Auckland Council can have influence over, that have not been directly dictated to us by Wellington, will start Tuesday April 19. Council has decided to undertake two-stage engagement with Aucklanders, the first of which goes beyond legislative requirements.

There will be a second opportunity for Aucklanders to provide feedback in August 2022 when Council’s government mandated proposed plan change is publicly notified. This will allow for people’s views to be considered during the statutory decision-making.

The Labour/National legislation is centralised planning that removes council and Aucklanders from much of the decision-making on planning in our city. Mayor Goff and I strongly criticised this direction at our appearance before the Ministry for the Environment Select Committee.

We are now left with making the best of what we can within the tight constraints of the legislation, including identifying special character as a ‘qualifying matter.’ I look forward to seeing local feedback starting 19 April.

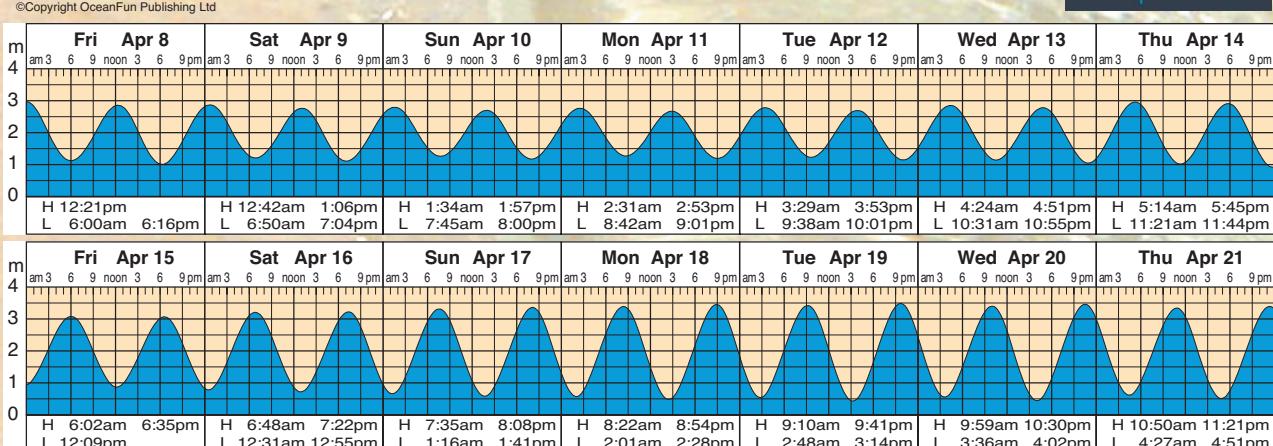
Chris Darby

Auckland Councillor | North Shore ward

- **Editor Rob Drent responds:** if we hadn’t printed the maps local people would not have been informed, perhaps until it was too late in the process. Devonport Heritage’s petition is more than 2000 and growing – an important indication to councillors and council planners of the level of concern in the community – before decisions are made.

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1/26 PATUONE AVENUE



AUCTION

10:00am 27 Apr 2022 at 8-12 The Promenade, Takapuna (unless sold prior)

VIEWING

Sat/Sun 1:30-2:00pm
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 Takapuna 09 489 5084



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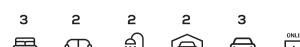
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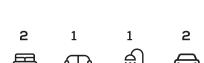


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AUCTION

10:00am 7 April 2022 at 8-12 The Promenade, Takapuna (unless sold prior)

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DEVONPORT 8/14A ALBERT ROAD

1 1 1

FOR SALE

By Negotiation

VIEWING

Phone For Viewing Times
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DEVONPORT 1/31 EWEN ALISON AVENUE

AUCTION

12:00pm 6 Apr 2022 at 39 Victoria
Road, Devonport (Branch Office)
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VIEWING

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Volunteer cooks back to whipping up treats



Many hands... Colleen Jackson (left) and Esme Reynolds assemble dessert, whisking eggs and milk to top a bread-and-butter pudding

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The Pumphouse Theatre

Senior citizens are again enjoying tasty deliveries from charity organisation Kai 4 Communities, which has resumed meal distribution by volunteers.

The group aims to provide one to two meals with dessert, every fortnight. These go to around 70 people – residents of Haumaru housing and clients of the Belmont and Sunnynook CMA companionship groups.

An eager group of helpers gather for meal preparation at the Rose Centre in Belmont on the second and fourth Wednesday mornings of the month.

Among them are volunteers Colleen Jackson, who works as a dietitian in Devonport, and Esme Reynolds, who has a masters degree in nutrition and dietetics.

Both Jackson, who lives in Stanley Point, and Devonport resident Reynolds were keen to give back to the community.

Another helper of a year's standing, Milford woman Chris Lang, was pleased the group's Covid hiatus had ended last month.

She brought along home-made marmalade

to team with a bread-and-butter fruit pudding. Cottage pie and bangers and mash were also on the menu.

Lang sizzled onions in the Kai 4 Communities mobile kitchen, which was parked at the Rose Centre to provide additional cooking space.

The group hopes it will be able to be used for its community meal get-togethers when these too are able to resume.

The senior-citizens meal service will continue as long as there is funding. Support of \$7500 was received for this year from the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

The group is increasingly having to buy more food, rather than rely on goods it has been given. While donations from businesses – including bread from Wild Wheat and sausages from the Hauraki Butcher – have been gratefully received, other donors are dealing with supply issues, and food-rescue groups have been stretched by demand from food banks. Find out more at www.kai4communities.org

Bakers ready to go cross-eyed to meet demand

Belmont bakery Daily Bread has been working around the clock to meet demand since its hot cross buns were named the nation's best.

Locals, mostly students, have been recruited to crew six-strong packing teams working every evening at the Eversleigh Rd premises. Nine staff bakers are now dedicated to fulfilling orders, which have tripled since the company won the Bakery Industry Association's annual Great NZ Hot Cross Bun competition in mid-March.

"It's completely put this place on the map," says operations manager Gary Dalhousie. People were driving from across the North Shore to find out what the fuss was about, buying not just the buns priced at \$4.50 each, but also other baked goods.

"We've basically hustled," said Dalhousie, of the busy times since the win. And there will be no let-up until Easter is over, he says. "We're prepared to go cross-eyed."

Output is up per day from 40 to 50 trays carrying four dozen buns each, to as many as 150 trays. That's 7200 individual buns.

"New Zealanders are psychotic about hot cross buns," says Lorenzo Romano, the Italian baker who refined the company's recipe. Romano – now a New Zealand citizen after arriving here nine years ago as an adventurous 18-year-old – says the secret is in the sourdough.

Romano, who used to make pizzas then trained as a baker, has worked at Daily Bread for two years. He says the fermented-dough starter, called lievito madre (mother yeast), is stiffer than the normal sourdough home-bakers may be familiar with. He also uses it in the fruit-filled Christmas speciality bread, pannetone, keeping it alive, until it is deployed to make hot cross buns from February.

Batches of the dough rest in various stages in large fridges in the kitchen, with trays slotting in and out of ovens.

A distinctive orange glaze gives the buns a shiny top. The glaze, developed by Romano's colleague Sameer Hassan, uses orange from Gisborne. "We wanted the glaze to stay shiny and be as perfect as the bun," says Hassan.



Selling like hot cakes... Lorenzo Romano (left) and workmate Sameer Hassan with trays of the Daily Bread hot cross buns (right) recently judged the nation's best. Output has tripled to as many as 150 trays a day – 7200 \$4.50 buns – since Romano's success in the Baking Industry Association's annual contest.

The process from starter dough through 14 hours of proving and then baking, takes two days, followed by packing.

"Time is the biggest ingredient," says Dalhousie.

The buns are made without artificial additives, or conditioners to keep them soft. Romano says bakeries usually use yeast or a hybrid mix as a starter.

As well as tasting great, a side benefit was that the buns lasted well. "We want to make a product that you can take home to enjoy for a few days."

Dalhousie says Easter is always the busiest time of year for a bakery, but this one had already been exceptional.

Contest organisers had told them to expect a doubling of orders, but instead orders had tripled.

The buns were sold through Daily Bread's own five stores and supplied to

commercial customers, including Farro Fresh.

Daily Bread took over the Belmont premises formerly occupied by Little & Friday. It has another bakery in Point Chevalier that focuses on bread. The Belmont store is the home of its pastry-making, but this has been temporarily shifted across the bridge to allow a sole focus on hot-cross buns. The traditional fruit mix is its most popular variety, with chocolate buns making up just five per cent of sales.

When word was put out that Daily Bread needed extra casual staff, it received around 100 applications, said Dalhousie. It has had four youngsters teamed with two experienced staff working from 4pm to midnight and others packing buns before school.

"They're real hot cakes," Dalhousie says.

Holy Trinity Church Term 1 Holiday Programme

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- DAY 2 - Torpedo Bay Navy Museum
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Shore fourth in one-day comp

North Shore Cricket Club premiers finished fourth in the Jeff Crowe Cup Auckland one-day competition.

In the third-fourth place play-off, Parnell set a target of 245 for eight wickets in its 50 overs. North Shore were all out for 129 in 30 overs, with Amit Dhadwall top scoring at 29.

Post-match, Michael Olsen announced he was stepping down as Shore Captain after seven seasons, but would continue for the premiers as a player.

- Takapuna won the Jeff Crowe Cup, beating Cornwall in the final.

Ramp removal delayed

Plans to remove the boat ramp on Queens Pde near the Navy base gates have been delayed.

The area had been fenced off and signage put up last month, but the barriers were then taken down.

The removal work was postponed due to delays in receiving Auckland Transport (AT) traffic-management approval and concerns from the Navy regarding staff access, deliveries and security, said Auckland Council manager for area operations, Sarah Jones.

"We are currently working through these and are hopeful we will be able to continue with the removal once they are resolved."

Maunga Authority appeals trees test-case to Supreme Court

A ruling with ramifications for trees on two of Devonport's maunga is being taken to the Supreme Court.

The Tūpuna Maunga Authority (TMA) has sought leave to appeal against a Court of Appeal ruling in a case over its vegetation management at Owairaka / Mt Albert.

The case, known as Norman v Tūpuna Maunga Authority, resulted in the Court of Appeal ruling in February that the scale of the authority's plan to remove exotic trees required community consultation. The TMA put on hold removal plans for 345 exotic trees, which were to be replaced over time with 13,000 natives trees and plants.

But the TMA chair, Paul Majurey, said it had decided to appeal. "It is vital for the Authority to have a decision from the highest court in the land to provide clarity surrounding its co-governance

decision-making powers to manage the Tūpuna Maunga. This is the first time that the courts have been able to consider the powers of a co-governance entity created through a Te Tiriti o Waitangi settlement."

The authority co-governs Auckland's main maunga – including Takarunga and Maungauika – with Auckland Council. Its announcement in November 2019 that it intended removing established trees on Owairaka sparked protests from some residents, leading to the court case.

Averil and Warwick Norman said the plan breached the Reserves Act and had not been appropriately consulted on with the public. The High Court did not accept this, but the Court of Appeal ruled that the TMA had erred in treating the removal as an operational matter and not following its obligations to consult.

Community pantry on the move

Repeated dumping of rubbish at a community food pantry has contributed to a decision to move it from outside the Devonport Community House.

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Toni van Tonder said people were using the pantry as a dumping ground for housewares they no longer wanted.

In addition, the 'Uglies' produce stand nearby catered for the sharing of fruit and vegetables. "So the need to have [the pantry] outside the community house was lessening," van Tonder said.

The pantry is set for a new lease of life

outside the Rose Centre in Belmont. Manager Geoff Allen said after discussion with the centre's board, the idea of using the structure as a community library was raised.

But Allen wanted to test the demand for a community pantry. The centre is planning to repaint the pantry and stock it with canned food, toiletries and similar items.

"If you're in need in a rich area, do you just keep quiet because you don't want to stand out?" he asked.

"People do tell me people are struggling in this area," he said. "It's a bit of an experiment."

20 years ago from the Flagstaff files

- A 49-year-old man is charged with 22 counts of fraud in connection with nearly \$7000 missing from the Devonport Arts Festival coffers.
- A working party is formed to decide the future of the remaining buildings on the Tamaki Land at Narrow Neck. Nine houses have been removed but other buildings remain.
- Devonport swimmer Dix Ozier claims two gold and three bronze medals, and a swag of New Zealand records at the World Masters Champs in Christchurch. Competing in the 45-49 division, Ozier breaks the world 50-metre backstroke record twice – during a medley relay and in individual competition.
- Negotiations continue over the sale of the historic Kestrel ferry, after the 98-year-old vessel was taken off the Devonport to Auckland run.
- The Ngataringa Bay Society joins the Bayswater Marina Liaison group at the invitation of the Devonport Community Board. Bayswater Marina Ltd boss Philip Wardale is disappointed at the move, labelling Ngataringa Bay Society's attitude as unconstructive.
- North Shore United football premiers eye a semi-final spot in the national league.
- Babcock New Zealand reduces the size of a floating dock proposal by 50 per cent – down from 100 metres long, 30 metres wide and 30 metres high – after it had an earlier resource consent application knocked back by Auckland Regional Council.
- Skateboarding artist Guy Bellerby has an exhibition at the Depot.
- A two-bedroom unit on Ngataringa Rd is on the market for \$190,000.
- Devonport sailors Max Andrews and Kate Ellingham both place third at the national Optimist champs held at Wakatere Boating Club at Narrow Neck.
- Residents organise a petition to oppose a toilet block near homes in Torpedo Bay.
- A group of Takapuna Grammar School (TGS) old boys who served together in World War II will meet up again for the first time in 57 years at the school's 75th jubilee celebrations. Bryan Mahon, John Reynolds, Phil Seaton, Duncan McLean, Reg Jones and Clive Nettleton attended TGS in the late 1930s and next met by coincidence in 1945, 1000 miles north of Rome, while attending the Army School of Education in Chianciano.
- Navy's senior rugby side recruits civilians to bolster its fortunes, having regularly finished last in the North Harbour rugby championship.
- North Shore Rugby premiers take on Takapuna for the first time since Shore's 2001 championship win over the blue and golds.
- The Flagstaff interview subject is Navy Chaplain Pauline Law.

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Lake Rd parking could be lost under new AT

Shopping zones from Devonport to Takapuna could lose streetside parking in the latest Auckland Transport (AT) plans to streamline the city's roads.

The Bayswater marina area and Lake Rd – including at Belmont and Hauraki and around Takapuna Grammar and Belmont Intermediate schools – are also lined up, with the town centres, for “proactive parking management” in AT’s far-reaching Draft Auckland Parking Strategy.

The strategy, issued for public consultation last week, designates the areas eyed for initiatives ranging from the removal of parking spaces to help encourage people out of cars onto public transport, bikes or the footpath, to charging more for parking or time limits to encourage vehicle turnover.

Local changes may not be limited to the identified zones, with Lake Rd (from Albert Rd to Esmonde Rd) also designated as part of the city’s Strategic Traffic Network; along with Esmonde Rd and, more surprisingly, quieter Bayswater Ave. AT recently secured funding to design and build a dual-direction cycle lane on Bayswater Ave’s southern side, where parking will be removed.

For Lake Rd, the network designation means the few other areas where parking is still allowed may come up for review: along Memorial Drive opposite the Waitemata Golf Course; by the Kings Store shops opposite Old Lake Rd; and in front of shops facing redevel-

opment at the Corrella Rd corner.

The stated aim of AT’s strategic network is to prioritise efficient transport ahead of parking, which may be replaced by bus, transit (T2/T3) and cycle lanes. Although the draft strategy will become a staged 10-year plan to cope with growth, climate targets, and housing-policy changes, Auckland Council Planning Committee chair and North Shore councillor Chris Darby wants it rolled out with urgency.

He took aim this week at Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair, Ruth Jackson, for raising fears of losing more Lake Rd parking, saying she was misleading the public.

Citing the \$48 million Lake Rd upgrade – including separated cycleways – already in the pipeline, he said its detailed business case (with design yet to be finalised) showed street parking at Belmont and Kings Store.

Jackson responded that she was glad to hear him backing the retention of parking, but pointed out the parking strategy was not the business case. The strategy states parking on the strategic network would go except in exceptional circumstances. Clarity was needed over whether this trumped earlier plans for Lake Rd.

Board members at an overview session last month were agreed managing vehicle use and encouraging alternative travel modes made sense, but said the needs of residents and businesses must be listened to. Communicating changes well was vital, they told AT officials.

“The devil is in the detail,” Jackson said.

Board member Aidan Bennett said businesses had to be consulted. Member Toni van Tonder echoed this view, citing Kings Store and Belmont.

She said the parking needs of older people and others with special requirements also had to be considered. “Is this going to be one of those instances when we consult but AT is going to go ahead anyway?” she asked.

Since then, councillors have signed off, 13-10, on the strategy consultation proceeding, with Darby and fellow North Shore representative Richard Hills, in favour. Mayor Phil Goff backed it too, though he last year slammed AT’s initial plans to remove network parking without consulting residents or boards as “arrogant”.

The council is grappling with government directives, backed by the National Party, to remove the need to provide off-street parking for new housing under its Unitary Plan, which will add to the squeeze on streets.

The AT strategy is open for public feedback throughout April. It also includes charging for parking at park-and-ride bus stations, initially \$2 to \$4.

After the feedback is collated, AT will share it with local boards, which will give their own feedback. The strategy will then be finalised to be put into action from later this year. Changes in localised areas will then require their own plans and consultation.

• To make a submission or find out more go to AT’s website: AT.govt.nz/parkingstrategy.



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Clothes pile up for inaugural swap event

A clothes swap event at the Devonport Community House has prompted plenty of locals to clear out their closets.

House marketing manager Justine Kinsella, who came up with the idea of the Swap Shop, says her Clarence St office is overflowing with items.

This Saturday, they will be spread out on clothes racks and trestle tables from 1pm to 4pm.

"The stuff we have been given is amazing quality," says Kinsella, who is hoping for a big turnout. She is keen to do seasonal repeats.

Kinsella says such swap sales are popular in pubs and community centres in the UK.

One reason for trialling the idea here is to encourage more people into the Community House, so she is thrilled with the reception to date.

People who bring in lightly worn, clean garments are 'paid' per item with a token that they can then redeem on a purchase. To ensure there is plenty of choice for all, a 10-token limit applies per person. Although people are welcome to donate more items than they receive credit for, and some have already done this.

Reducing fashion waste by encouraging garment reuse, is a growing concept worldwide.

Female garments predominated in the clothes gathered by last week, some in new condition, complete with tags.

Several bags of male clothing have been contributed, and there is a growing collection of children's and babies' items and some school uniforms, but Kinsella would like more of all of these. Accessories and shoes will also be available.

For sorting purposes, she was keen to have the bulk of contributions in advance, with a final drop-off time of 9.30–10.30am on Thursday 7 April, though some items will be accepted on Swap Sale day.

A gold-coin entry fee will be charged on the day and a sausage sizzle running. For those without a token, \$5 (cash only) will be charged per purchase. Unused tokens can be donated back to the community house or kept for future events. Masks must be worn.

Speed-limit cut confirmed for Hauraki

From mid-year, speed limits on streets around Hauraki School will drop to 30km/h after Auckland Transport last week gave final approval for the reduction.

The zone is the first to be introduced for schools on the peninsula, with others in the pipeline. Roads covered include Jutland Rd (west of Francis St), Charles St, Sydney St, Herbert St, Walter St, Pine Ridge Tce, Waitemata Rd and Marsden St.

Calls have already been made to extend the zone to include other streets, as well as the full length of Jutland Rd.



In the bag... Devonport Community House marketing manager Justine Kinsella sorting through contributions for this Saturday's 'Swap Shop'

Council has \$45K for skatepark plan

Money is available to consider whether the Ngatarina Skatepark should be rebuilt on the current site or elsewhere – but it will be years before any construction will start.

At a workshop last month, Auckland Council staff proposed \$5000 of Devonport-Takapuna Local Board funding for the project in the next financial year followed by \$40,000 in 2024/25.

This money would be allocated only for the purposes of investigating whether to replicate the skatepark in its current location, not for any construction work.

The board still needs to sign off its work programme in June, Auckland Council operations manager Sarah Jones said. "It's too early to say right now when work could start or when it might be completed."

"We could potentially put some construction money in the third year [2024/25] and more in

years five and six."

The management of the skatepark has long been a sore point with local skaters.

Trenches cut in the concrete for drainage repairs are the latest concern.

Devonport father Dave Casey said skaters were consulted by council staff about better drainage in September last year. But no further feedback was sought after the repair plans changed, which led to the trenches being cut.

Casey said the project team was now engaging with the community. "Regardless, [the trenches] will shorten the life of the park, make it less safe and more costly to maintain."

One allocation of \$100,000 was made for skatepark repairs in November 2021, and \$55,000 the year before, Casey said.



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Takapuna

SCHOOL NEWS



Grammar

APR 8, 2022



Maggie Squire Wins Big in the Pool Again

Two years ago, as a 14-year-old, Maggie Squire was selected to the New Zealand National Diving Team and competed in her first non-age-group international events in the Gold Coast and Malaysian Grand Prix Diving Championships. She had a strong first showing in the senior diving world, making a semi-final amongst seasoned Commonwealth and Olympic divers.

On an upward trajectory, Covid hit and crushed all opportunities to compete internationally. With lockdowns and pool closures stifling local training, the team resorted to diving off the Murray's Bay pier when the tides allowed!

Maggie recently competed at the Auckland Diving Championships held in Henderson over two weekends. In all six events she entered, Maggie won gold, including the Open Women's 1-metre springboard and Open Women's 3-metre springboard and exceeded the qualifying mark by 20 points for the 2022 FINA World Diving Championships in Budapest, scheduled for July.

Maggie has just been awarded a prestigious International FINA Development Scholarship to pay for training costs and travel over the coming year, which should prove helpful now that international competitions are finally back on the cards.

TGS Athletes Win 4 Gold Medals at the Auckland Athletics Champs



Sascha Letica



Ruben Vogel



Samantha Korck



Katie Hallie

Congratulations to the following athletes who finished with top 10 results at the recent Auckland athletics champs held at Mt Smart Stadium over three very competitive days in March.

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| Katie Hallie | 1st Intermediate Girls Shot Put | Samantha Korck | 2nd Senior Girls 200m |
| Jodie Nash | 1st Intermediate Girls Discus | Anna Tucker | 3rd Senior Girls 400m |
| Asha Edwards | 1st Intermediate Girls 1500m | | 6th Senior Girls 200m |
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| | 7th Junior Girls 1500m | | |

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DEVONPORT PENINSULA TRUST NEWS

Holly Houston has just had her one year anniversary as Promotions Coordinator at Devonport Peninsula Trust (DPT). She is the dynamo behind the production of the monthly Peninsula eNews, and she manages the DPT's social media accounts and website. With many of the DPT's services having to be delivered online during the extended lockdown of 2021, Holly's expertise and flair really carried the DPT through this difficult time. In the coming months, Holly will be behind a major refresh of the DPT's website and we look forward to having her creative input to our event planning.

COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT

Devonport Spinners, Weavers and Knitters

Devonport Spinners, Weavers and Knitters are meeting on Wednesdays from 10:00am to noon at the Scout Hall, Allenby Avenue. They are members of Creative Fibre. **New members with any skill level are welcome.** Cost is \$45.00 per year, plus \$4.00 per attendance. Phone Sue 021 508243 for more information sue.jen.ellen@gmail.com

STREET GET-TOGETHERS

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

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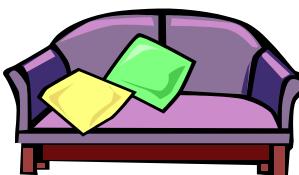
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References available

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PUBLIC NOTICE

A Special General Meeting of the Devonport Senior Citizens Association will be held at 10am on Thursday, 28 April at Harmony Hall, 4 Wynyard Street, Devonport and via Zoom. Sole agenda will be to approve the Association's updated constitution. Members should email Devonport-SeniorCitizensAssoc@gmail.com for the proposed constitution and if needed, Zoom details. A copy is also available to view at the hall. Please also indicate your preferred meeting venue.

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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.

If this position sounds like you
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CV and covering letter to the

Trust Manager – Christine Jones at
christinejones@wilsonhometrust.org.nz
before Friday 29 April 2022.

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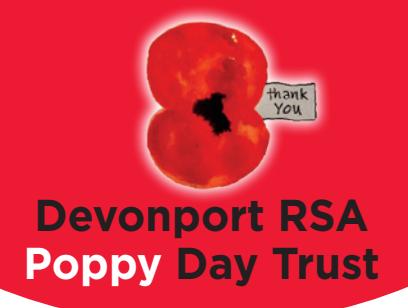
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**Poppy Day Appeal 2022**

Devonport/Takapuna
Friday 22–Sunday 24 April

**"The RSA IS OLD,
NOT EVERY VETERAN
WE SUPPORT IS"**

Please help us as a
Poppy Day collector

Many of our usual collectors are vulnerable and minimising social contact. With our pool of volunteers being severely limited, we are reaching out to the local community to help where possible as collectors this coming Poppy Day(s).

If you are willing to volunteer please contact our office on 027 271 2211 or manager@devonportrsa.co.nz and we will be delighted to have you help us out.

While today's servicemen and servicewomen face different challenges, our support to them and their whanau continues.

Proceeds from Poppy Day collections go towards funding medical care, transport, mobility assistance, and emotional support including trauma counselling and help with treatment for post-traumatic stress, by way of examples. Locally, the RSA also provides friendship, support, and advocacy services to veterans and ex-service personnel and their families.



RSA member Sergeant
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Devonport RSA
PO Box 32-187,
Devonport 0744
Phone 445 8938
devonportrsa@xtra.co.nz

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**PLEASE NOTE THERE WILL BE NO
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Holy Trinity Anglican Church

20 Church St, Devonport 445-0328

Palm Sunday—10th April

8.00am Traditional Eucharist
9.30am Contemporary Service



Maundy Thursday—14th April
7.00pm Holy Communion and
Tenebrae Service

Good Friday—15th April

2.00pm Devotions on the Cross

Easter Sunday—17th April

6.30am Sunrise Service
at **Balmain Reserve, Cheltenham**

8.00am Traditional Eucharist
9.30am All Age Communion
with Easter Egg hunt

Good Friday and Easter Sunday services will be
live streamed via our website:
www.holytrinity.gen.nz

The Light Devonport Church

90A Victoria Rd, Devonport 445-1580

Easter Sunday

10.00am Easter Celebration

Devonport Methodist Church

Cnr Lake Rd & Owens Rd 445-6801

Palm Sunday - 10th April

10.00am Worship Service

Good Friday—15th April

10.00am Short Devotional Service

Easter Sunday—17th April

10.00am Easter Celebration



St Margaret's Presbyterian Church

151 Lake Rd, Belmont 445-0018

Good Friday

9.00am Devotional Service

Easter Sunday

10.00am Easter Service

St Francis de Sales & All Souls Catholic Church

2A Albert Rd, Devonport 445-0078

Palm Sunday 10th April

7.00pm Reconciliation Rite 2

Holy Thursday—14th April

7.30pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday—15th April

3.00pm Passion & Veneration
of the Cross

Holy Saturday—16th April

7.30pm Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday—17th April

9.30am Easter Mass

Belmont Baptist Church

168 Lake Rd, Belmont

Easter Sunday

9.30am Easter Celebration

<http://www.belmontbaptistnz.org/>

Chopper-pad fears aired

The spectre of helicopters disruptively shuttling people to properties in Devonport and Takapuna has been raised by local politicians.

"Our local area is very desirable for people who might look into putting in helipads," said Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Toni van Tonder, who raised the issue at the board's monthly meeting last week.

Van Tonder noted regulations governing helipads were due to be discussed at a meeting of Auckland Council's Planning Committee.

This follows public concerns over the proliferation of private helipads on Waiheke and Great Barrier Islands as well as several high-profile applications elsewhere, including Westmere, where former All Black Ali Williams and his partner, Zuru toy company co-founder Ana Mowbray, want a helipad on the property they are redeveloping.

The Waiheke, Waitemata and Orakei local boards had signalled they wanted private helipads made a prohibited activity, said van

Tonder, and those boards would be putting their case to the planning committee.

While it was too late to join them in formally speaking at the meeting, van Tonder called on Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair Ruth Jackson to write a letter in support of tightening regulations.

"It will raise its head here too," van Tonder warned.

Member Trish Deans noted this had happened already.

"We have had two applications we've fought off," she said. One is understood to have been at a property on Stanley Point.

Member Jan O'Connor, who said there had been a helipad at the bottom of O'Neills Ave in Takapuna for some years, queried how much of a problem helicopters were, especially modern, quieter models.

Jackson took a harder line.

"I don't think there's any reason for anyone to be landing a helicopter on residential property in a built-up area," she said.

Lions Club lease finally being renewed

A new council lease is being negotiated for the Devonport Lions Club premises in Empire Rd, which the club is keen to see used more by others in the community.

The club's original lease on the property, dating back to 1994, expired in 2014, and has since been rolled over on a monthly basis.

Auckland Council leasing manager Yusuf Khan blamed resourcing and programming changes for delaying the process of renewing the lease.

Bruce Wetherall from the Lions Club said the group was down to around a dozen members.

It was still having regular meetings, but was keen to see its clubrooms more widely used by the community, he said. The club would also like to get a Lionesses

group started.

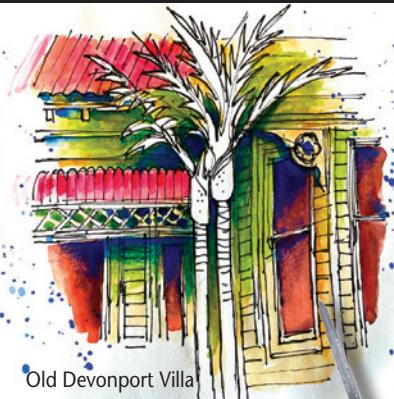
The council is also in the process of renewing leases for community gardens, sports clubs and other organisations based on council-owned land around Devonport.

Leases planned for the 2022/23 financial year, which starts on 1 July, were presented to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board at a workshop last month.

Community gardens at Mount Cambria and Ngatarina Park, a pest-free nursery for environmental group Restoring Takarunga Hauraki at Dacre Park and the Claystore on Lake Rd, are among community groups due to be given new leases.

Several sports clubs, including Devonport Squash at Woodall Park, North Shore Rugby Football Club at Vauxhall Rd, and Ngatarina ga Tennis Club, are also on the list.

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New artwork adorns environment group's shed



Box of birds... Artist Wendy Petterson (centre) and TGS students Alfie Murray (left) and Isla Forrest with their mural on Restoring Takarunga Hauraki's container

A local artist and two Takapuna Grammar School (TGS) students have spent weeks creating a mural on the side of a storage container used by environmental group Restoring Takarunga Hauraki (RTH).

Artist Wendy Petterson and TGS students Alfie Murray, 14, and Isla Forrest, 17, have been working since January on painting the tui imagery on to the container in the Allen Hill Stadium car park.

Alfie said the process was "good for building confidence up for art and painting".

The lack of shade in the car park made for a hot job at times, reinforcing the importance of RTH's work planting trees, Petterson said. "What RTH is doing is absolutely crucial."

The mural was welcomed last month by RTH coordinator Lance Cablk and tīkanga and kaupapa Māori coordinator Zane Catterall.

"We're so grateful to have this wonderful adornment on the side of our tool shed," Catterall said.

Mural remains black and white

Plans to colour in the new mural on construction hoardings outside Devonport's Holy Trinity Church have been scrapped. Artist Nicki Heenan's illustrations, which portray different aspects of the life of the church, will instead remain in black and white while the church hall undergoes renovations. The original plan was to have parishioners out with their paint brushes to add colour to the work, but vicar Charmaine Braatvedt said that was off the table. "Nicki has done such an amazing job that the consensus is that we leave it as it is."

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Doco follows painstaking Mays St restoration

A documentary on the restoration of a historic Mays St mansion is screening at The Vic cinema as a fundraiser for Devonport Heritage.

Unmaintained for more than 20 years, the former Flagstaff House, at the corner of Mays and Kerr Sts, became derelict and overgrown.

It was bought in 2013 by a Russian businessman whose team of builders and craftsmen worked on the project over seven years.

The 50-minute film *Saved – a Ruin Restored* traces the restoration through the eyes of the people who worked on it, a diverse group from around the world.

The documentary – made by Devonport Heritage chair Margot McRae – tells the history of the house from its early ambitious beginnings through to its sad disintegration and then its magnificent rebirth.

"It encapsulates the story of Devonport really. Starting in the 1890s glory days, through the tough 1960s and 70s, to its eventual resurgence over last few years.

"It was not a job for the faint-hearted as there was a lot of decay, but its grandeur was still intact," McRae said.

It was a most fascinating project to film because of the level of craftsmanship involved. "The grand, distinctive chimneys were in a dangerous state and there was the most painstaking effort to copy and rebuild them."

Russians, Ukrainians and others from eastern Europe worked well together on the project. "They were just a great team – they all understood each other and it was a very happy place."

The Russian owners have lived here for many years and are New Zealand citizens, she said.

Saved – a Ruin Restored, at the Victoria Theatre, Thursday 5 May, 8pm. Tickets \$30.

Bookings essential at www.thevic.co.nz



Before and after... The Mays St house featured in *Saved – a Ruin Restored*, as it was (above) and is today (below)



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| <i>Morbius</i> (M) 104min | NEW |
| <i>Napoleon: In the Name of Art</i> (E) 101min | NEW |
| <i>Sonic the Hedgehog 2</i> (PG) 122min | NEW |
| <i>The Lost City</i> (M) 112min | Preview Screenings 8-10 APR |

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|--|---------------------------|
| <i>The Bad Guys</i> (PG) 100min | 14 APR |
| <i>The Last Bus</i> (M) 86min | 14 APR |
| <i>The Lost City</i> (M) 112min | 14 APR |
| <i>The Unbearable Weight of Massive Talent</i> (M) 98min | Preview Screenings 16 APR |
| <i>The Dutch Film Festival: My Father is an Airplane</i> (TBA) | 23 APR |

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