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**Buddy the dog goes  
lawnmowing... p3**

**Track stars share rivalry  
and friendship... p5**

**Interview: Cafe owner  
Josie Shi Xu... p22-23**

## Italian job foiled by speedy police swoop on ferry

A bike theft during a Devonport man's visit to the optometrist led to drama on the high seas when the smartly dressed offender was collared on a Fullers ferry by maritime police.

As per his usual habit, Paul Cane left his unlocked bike leaning against a pole outside Devonport Optometrists in Victoria Rd while he was having his glasses adjusted.

But when he turned around to leave he couldn't believe his eyes. "I think my bike's been stolen," he said, before charging up and down Victoria Rd looking for it.

He thought the thief might have headed for the 12.45pm ferry to escape, so ran down to the terminal. He was met by Devonport Optometrists assistant Kimberley Blake, who arrived at the wharf just before him and had seen the stolen bike on the back of the departing ferry.

She told a terminal security guard who informed the ferry skipper by radio. He in turn alerted Maritime Police Unit officers who were doing a training drill on the Deodar III nearby.

Though the ferry was halfway to Auckland, the skipper turned it around and returned to the Devonport terminal, where it was met by police from the Deodar III.

Women were able to exit the vessel but all men on board were told to stay put while police questioned them to find the culprit.

An Australian tourist who saw the thief board the boat with the bike identified the alleged offender, who was taken away by police apparently after a discussion with the man.



**Reunited... Paul Cane with the bicycle returned to him after being stolen from outside Devonport Optometrists and taken onto a city-bound ferry**

Cane said the help he received to recover his bike was "just marvellous".

"Only in Devonport would you turn the ferry around because of a stolen bike," he said.

He described the thief as a "well-dressed man in a suit jacket" with an Italian accent.

He thought it fitting to buy three bottles of Italian wine for Blake, the security

guard and ferry captain to thank them for their efforts.

Following the December theft, Cane has invested in a lock to safeguard his bike during future rides to the village.

A 41-year-old man was charged with theft and first appeared in the North Shore District Court on 9 January. He is next due to appear in court on 19 March.



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## Veteran stoked with New Zealand masters title

Belmont Park Racquets Club player Jill Stoker (pictured, right) won the women's over-65 title at the Tennis New Zealand masters champs held in Auckland over Anniversary Weekend.

Stoker, who beat Michel Galloway of Tauranga 4-6 6-3 6-2 in the final, was back on court training at a group coaching session at her club last Friday morning.

"I did have a break – I haven't played since Tuesday!" she said.

The final took two-and-a-quarter hours in the heat. "I was a bit nervous in the first set and made a lot of mistakes." It was her first singles final, although she had contested round-robin tournaments at the national masters before. She previously won a bronze and two silvers in singles and two bronze medals in 60s-plus New Zealand masters competitions.

Stoker began playing tennis at the Milford Club aged around 10, but gave up after shifting to Wellington at 16. Returning to the North Shore in her late 30s, she took up the sport again at Belmont.

She plays three or so times a week, a mixture of interclub, coaching sessions and occasional social tennis. She has a "nasty" slice backhand but rates her forehand as her best shot.

Stoker has played the masters champs for the past six years and loves "getting to know people and catching up with them every year".

In 2020, she was selected for New Zealand to play in the World Teams Tennis Champs in Florida, but the event was cancelled due to Covid. She would still like to compete in some overseas tournaments but in conjunction with a trip, rather than travelling solely for tennis.

Playing in the masters event, she is inspired by the entrants in the over-80s division. "I hope to be playing in that group in 15 years' time."

"The aim is to keep playing and enjoying it."



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## Folk festival scratched

Folk in the Park at Windsor Reserve has been canned this year.

Cancelled last year due to Cyclone Gabrielle and previously disrupted by Covid lockdowns, the February event, run by the Devonport Folk Club, can no longer rely on support from the Devonport Peninsula Trust, which was defunded by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board last year.

The club says any funding from a cash-strapped local board was probably unlikely but that the festival may make a return in 2025.

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MP for North Shore

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📞 simonwattsmpp

Authorised by Hon Simon Watts, Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.



## One man and his dog, went to mow...



Buddy the dog goes everywhere with wheelchair-bound Greg McQuillan – including on his ride-on lawnmower. The cutting crew (above) were on the job at Roberts Ave, Bayswater last week.

McQuillan, who has lived in Philomel Cres for 10 years, helps out friends and neighbours in the suburb by mowing lawns cheaply or for free.

He has been in a wheelchair for 13 years, after injuring his back

in an accident while serving in the army.

After owning pekingese dogs for 30 years, McQuillan bought löwchen Buddy about 15 months ago, with money raised through a community Givealittle page.

“He goes everywhere with me,” McQuillan says. “Into the supermarket, doctors appointments...”

We’ve covered about 3500 kilometres in the wheelchair over the past year.”



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A photograph of three women and a dog walking on a sandy beach. The woman on the left is wearing a bright blue blazer over a black top and skirt. The woman in the middle is wearing a dark blue button-down shirt and skirt. The woman on the right is wearing a colorful patterned sweater and skirt. A small dog is running in the foreground. In the background, there is a body of water and a small boat.

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# Track stars share rivalry and international goals

Devonport athletes James Ford and Thomas Cowan have been burning up the running track over summer.

With qualifying times already under their belts to put them firmly in contention to represent New Zealand at the World Athletics U20 Championships, the two mates and rivals have reinforced their case with a string of impressive recent results.

The 18-year-olds – who went through Devonport Primary School together and live just blocks apart – finished at their different high schools last year, both being named in the New Zealand secondary schools track and field team at secondary nationals in Christchurch in December.

Ford, who went to King's College, won the 400m and 800m double at the event, where he was named the male schools athlete of the year. Cowan, who went to Westlake Boys High School, took silver in the 800m, his preferred distance, though he too competes in both. "I have a little more speed and he has a little bit more strength, but we're quite similar runners," Ford says.

Their success won the duo the right to compete in the black singlet at two prestigious open meetings last month.

Ford, whose club is Takapuna, won the open 400m at the Cooks Classic in Whanganui, while an improving Cowan, who competes for North Harbour Bays, was third in a personal best. At the Potts classic in Hastings the weekend before, Cowan pipped Ford, taking second against all comers in the 800m.

This weekend, they will be back in action at the Porritt meet in Hamilton, before looking towards New Zealand nationals in March and the Australian champs in April.

They hope to don black together again at the world U20s in Peru in August. Ford has notched up U20 world qualifying times in both distances. Cowan has met the 800m standard. Two spots are available. "It depends if someone else runs quicker," says Ford.



Friends and rivals... Thomas Cowan (left) pipping James Ford in the 800m at a club meeting last year. Right: Despite competing hard on the track, Ford (left) and Cowan remain good training mates.



The pair played rippa and touch together at primary school, but diverged when Cowan went to Belmont Intermediate and Ford headed across the bridge for his schooling.

"I always liked rugby more than running until my first year of high school," Ford says.

At King's – which has its own track – he switched focus. But rugby drew him back last year for a season on the wing for the first XV.

Later this year, he takes up a sports scholarship at the University of Virginia in Charlottesville, where he will study engineering.

Cowan is still choosing between business studies in Auckland or taking up a US scholarship. Although he had always done well at athletics, it wasn't until just over three years ago, when he came fifth in the 800m at secondary nationals for Westlake, that he decided to "do a bit more training".

He can draw on advice from father Nick,

who ran for New Zealand in the 400m at three world championships in the 1990s and mother Jo Harlick, a physiotherapist to the national team at the Athens Olympics.

In their last few years competing in open meetings, the local lads started lining up against each other in earnest. The friendly pair like to warm up together before races, which Cowan says is unusual between competitors in the same events. "We get along really well together. We're good mates and often run together on Sunday, when it fits with our programmes."

With friends, they loop up from Cheltenham to Seacliffe Ave, then along up Lake Rd and back to Devonport. Come competition days, they are the first to congratulate the other.

"We're rivals but there's no bad blood there," says Ford.

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1.30pm, Thu 22 Feb 2024

28 Northcroft Street, Takapuna, Auckland

**View** Sat/Sun 1-1.30pm

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**BAYLEYS****NEW LISTING****Devonport** 1 Saint Leonards Road

## Downsize or start out in Devonport

Ideally located just a 10-minute walk from Devonport village, this character cottage presents the perfect proportions if you are looking to downsize from a larger home, or maybe you are seeking to get on the property ladder in this very sought-after neighbourhood. It is set on a freehold site, with well-established and beautifully landscaped gardens and its endearing street presence disguises just how spacious it is inside. Set on two levels, it offers two bedrooms, two bathrooms and two living areas, with a work-from-home office area too. Its elevation ensures that it is filled with light, and the open-plan living, dining and kitchen, with high ceilings and large sash windows enhance the sense of space. As a bonus, there is lots of under house storage, as well as an enclosed carport.

[bayleys.co.nz/1470654](https://bayleys.co.nz/1470654)

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# Devonport Naval Base targeted by noisy protest



You shall not pass... Police officers stood behind barricades at the Navy base gates in Queens Pde as up to 150 protesters chanted and made speeches



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Devonport was the centre of a noisy protest late last month, with marchers heading down lower Victoria Rd and along Queens Pde to a barricade placed before the main gate to the Navy base.

Organised by Palestinian support groups, the protest called for an immediate cease-fire in Gaza and opposed the New Zealand government's sending of six Defence Force personnel to support US-led attacks on Yemen.

Police put protest numbers at up to 150 people. Many onlookers gathered along the route. Shops stayed open, with the SPCA opportunity shop telling the Flagstaff that their staff thought a few extra people had come inside to escape the noise.

A resident wryly observed of the biggest local event for some time: "It's the most exciting thing to happen in Devonport since the SPCA [shop] opened."

Loud-hailers were deployed to get chants going from around 2pm. One of those leading the calls was a seven-year-old boy.

Many Palestine flags were flown, along with a few from Lebanon and Māori groups.

At the Navy base, protesters were met by plastic barricades erected just past Spring St, behind which 10 police officers stood to ensure no one could gain access to the base.

In total, around 20 uniformed police kept an eye on proceedings, with more police in patrol cars blocking off side streets.

Several inflatable craft were on watch from the water.

Protesters made no attempt to pass the



# against war in Gaza, NZDF Middle East deployment



**Young activist...** A seven-year-old boy was among those leading chants as protesters against the war in Gaza marched along Queens Pde

barricades, instead massing to hear speeches, and recording footage for social-media platforms. They then marched back down Queens Pde and dispersed around 4pm.

Those at the march, organised by the New Zealand Palestine Solidarity Network (PSNA) and Palestinian Youth Aotearoa, mostly comprised regulars from weekly demonstrations the groups have been holding in the city to protest against Israeli military actions in Gaza after Hamas attacks from the territory last year. The choice of

Devonport as a venue was to draw attention to the decision made last month to involve our military in conflict in the Middle East.

A PSNA spokeswoman said dragging New Zealand into a new war was “appalling” when diplomatic efforts should be supported instead. Troops were being committed without a parliamentary mandate or backing from the United Nations for action the United States had launched against Yemen-based Houthi rebels who are attacking shipping. The Houthi claim their

action is aimed at Israeli interests in what is a widening conflict.

Prime Minister Chris Luxon, Defence Minister Judith Collins and Foreign Minister Winston Peters were the target of a number of chants, such as: “Luxon, Luxon you can’t hide, you’re supporting genocide.”

The government says New Zealand is contributing to the defence of shipping in the Middle East in accordance with international law and to protect regional security and economic interests.



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## By Rob Drent

Years ago, when debate over the Lake Rd cycle lanes was raging, I bumped into Cycle Auckland advocate Barbara Cuthbert in the street and she commented that she couldn't work out if I was "with them or against them".

I took it as a backhanded compliment that our coverage of the issue had been relatively balanced. Later she wondered why I wasn't leading by example and out on my bike. We did have a Flagstaff bike for a number of years, which was stolen after being parked (and locked) outside the Devonport library.

But for more than a decade I haven't ridden on the roads for personal reasons. My former partner Cathy Sheehan was knocked off her bike and killed in an accident in Malaysia. I felt I couldn't risk my son having two parents killed on the road. He now has a son of his own and his own family, and as life moves on, my stance has softened. In 2024 I've started using an electric bike.

So far, it's been a revelation. Easy parking (no fines), no sweating up the hill from the village. I also seem to have hit Devonport traffic at its most congested, and while car travel times to Takapuna have been up to an hour due to road works, the same trip is only around 15 minutes on the bike.

On Saturdays, when traffic is often backed up, it's a quick 10 minutes up to tennis inter-club games at Belmont Park in Bayswater.

Other observations: drivers have been generally aware and courteous; it's pretty easy to get up to 30km/h on the bike (the speed limit around schools), but it doesn't seem like you're going that fast; and you

can fit heaps into panniers (on a recent trip: tennis gear; a hose and various odds and sods from Hammer Hardware, a six-pack and a bottle of wine).

A tick then for the electric bike, a mode of transport which will become increasingly common. However, with the government now hitting electric-car users with road charges, I do wonder how long it will be until they attempt to bring in some sort of e-bike tax.

On the subject of transport: In a tennis tournament over Anniversary Weekend, I played a couple of Australians (one from Perth, the other Sydney) who had been regular visitors to New Zealand over the past 20 years. Both were amazed at the lack of advances in Auckland's public transport compared to Australian cities (and the rest of the world for that matter).

Flashback to 1956 – Auckland then had a functioning tram system on the isthmus stretching from the city to Avondale, Mt Roskill, Onehunga, Green Lane and Meadowbank. It was all ripped out to make way for buses and cars. On the North Shore, trams ran from the Bayswater ferry to Milford. My new Australian friends wondered when trams would be introduced back into Auckland. It was a good question.

To extend the tram conversation, Auckland Transport (AT) seems obsessed with road safety, which has led to the proliferation of raised crossings around schools to reduce speeds. Plans to upgrade Lake Rd – initially to move cars, bikes and buses more efficiently along the route – gradually became more centred on road safety.

This is fair enough in some respects, but does it take in the bigger picture? A big increase in public-transport use must decrease the number of car accidents, as it takes vehicles off the road. Very few people die or are

injured using buses, trains or trams.

Trams I have seen operating in Hong Kong, Melbourne, San Francisco and Bordeaux improve safety by slowing traffic down as well as reducing thousands of vehicle movements.

It feels like AT is tinkering around the edges while years go by and major public-transport projects fail to eventuate.

On Lake Rd the congestion will only get worse as apartment blocks and multi-unit site development increase the population.

When I was a reporter at the *Rodney Times* in the mid-1980s, the local council halted cross-leasing on the Whangaparaoa Peninsula until services such as water and sewerage and to some extent roading could catch up with the burgeoning population. With Auckland Council planners favouring extensive development, this is unlikely to happen these days, but I wonder if a similar moratorium is needed for a peninsula like Devonport, which has only one way in and one way out.

I attended the funeral of Bob Wattam, a long-time local, late last month, and was taken by the story of his life that emerged. Locally- and family-orientated, he pursued various passions: yachting, skiing and tramping. For a couple of decades, he and his wife Anne owned the North Shore Furniture Company in Clarence St – the last store of its type in the village. I still own a futon couch-bed I bought there, and funeral celebrant Dianne Hale said she still owned furniture bought at the store. It was a different era, when things were built to last. Bob always had a smile and a common decency and politeness about him sometimes lacking today. In the Flagstaff's early years his shop advertised regularly with us; when I dropped in for his ad copy, he would have a cheque waiting for the previous ad, knowing cashflow was tight. Cheques are gone, along with Bob's more gentle era. I was left thinking "Are we better off?"

**COMMEMORATE**

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## Devonport 5F King Edward Parade

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### Auction

Thursday 22nd February at 1.00pm  
In Rooms (Unless Sold Prior)

### View

By appointment only  
[harcourts.co.nz/L24197074](https://harcourts.co.nz/L24197074)

## A Spectacular Devonport Residence

This exquisitely renovated apartment celebrates a prime waterfront position and captures a breathtaking balance of heritage character and modern luxury. It's part of Elizabeth House, one of Devonport's most admired and tightly-held landmark buildings. Spanning a colossal 369sqm over two levels, this is a residence for discerning buyers who love to entertain and that require significant space and storage, yet still wish to enjoy the freedom and ease of apartment living. On the first level, the kitchen overlooks the more informal living and dining space and grand columns and high ceilings offer real wow factor. The front veranda enjoys dazzling and ever-changing vistas of the city, ports and busy harbour. The formal dining area and lounge flow out to the rear veranda, which looks out to Mount Victoria. This property also comes with a double garage and small garden area. The park, beach and village are a few short steps from home, as is the ferry for trips to the CBD for work and play.



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## Devonport 32 Summer Street

4 2 1 1

### Auction

Thursday 29th February at 1.00pm  
In Rooms (Unless Sold Prior)

### View

As advertised or by appointment  
[harcourts.co.nz/L25835858](https://harcourts.co.nz/L25835858)



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## Charm and Character on Summer

Set in the heart of the highly sought-after Summer Street, this beautiful villa offers a blend of timeless elegance and modern convenience. This is a rare chance to secure a character property in this quiet, prestigious street. This elevated four-bedroom, 622sqm freehold property offers two bathrooms, large living spaces, high ceilings and timber floors. Many original features with classic appeal have been complemented and enhanced with essentials for modern living. Bi-fold windows and French doors connect the lounge to the deck which is perfect for dining and entertaining along with a spacious, flat landscaped garden. Quiet and peaceful, private and safe, with a well-renowned family-friendly vibe, Summer Street residents enjoy a real sense of community. The location is close to Stanley Bay school and Devonport village is within walking distance, including beaches, cafes and ferry. This is an outstanding opportunity to make the most of this much-loved home.

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## Devonport 6/66 Victoria Road

2 1 1 1

### Auction

Thursday 29th February at 1.00pm  
In Rooms (Unless Sold Prior)

### View

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[harcourts.co.nz/L24196010](https://harcourts.co.nz/L24196010)



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## Devonport Village On Your Doorstep

This is a rare opportunity to create a carefree lifestyle with a lock up and leave home where you can step out of your property and be immediately in the village. You are so close to the action that you will not be needing the car day to day, walk to the supermarket, cafes, cinema, beaches and the ferry to the CBD. Come home to this lovely sunny and private end apartment. Have a choice of sitting on the front balcony taking in the expansive view over Devonport and the harbour beyond or basking in the Northern sun in the private fully fenced paved courtyard at the rear all exclusively yours to use, a very rare commodity with apartment living. Apartments tend to lack storage, problem solved here, the basement has more than enough room for bikes, furniture and general goods. There is also a separate lock up single car garage that has power to it. The exterior of the whole complex is looking sharp having had a recent repaint! As this is a cross-lease title there isn't an official body corp, just a maintenance fee for maintaining the common grounds and to ensure the insurance is paid as a whole. This apartment is vacant and ready to move into.

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## Devonport 6 Takarunga Road

4 2 2 1

### Auction

Sunday 3rd March at 4.00pm  
On Site (Unless Sold Prior)

### View

Thu 5.30-6.30pm, Sat/Sun 12-12.30pm  
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**Diana Murray**

021 911 522

[diana.murray@harcourts.co.nz](mailto:diana.murray@harcourts.co.nz)



# 'Purple Poppy Day' brings feline sculpture unveiling

The Navy Museum at Torpedo Bay will be the centre of Purple Poppy Day commemorations in Devonport this month, with a sculpture of a cat being unveiled during a short service to recognise the sacrifice of animals in conflicts.

The event is being held on Saturday 24 February at 11am, outside at the front of the museum.

A cat features because of its historic con-

nections with the Navy, given cats were until the 1970s a common feature aboard naval vessels for vermin control and as mascots offering companionship to sailors. Members of the public are welcome to bring pets on leashes or in carriers to the commemoration.

Navy chaplain Jacqui Fuller will give a family-friendly reading before entertainment from a local ukulele group singing animal-related songs. Afterwards, there will be children's activities inside the museum.

Purple Poppy Day was held on Windsor Reserve last year, organised by the Devonport Returned Services Association (RSA).

The RSA is stepping back this year, focusing its resources more on its traditional Anzac and Remembrance Day commemorations, but it is still supporting the Navy event.

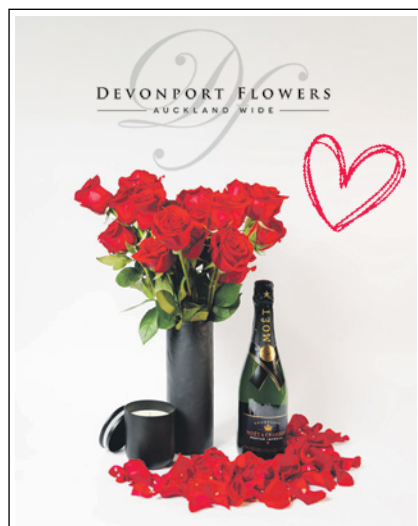
The day began in the United Kingdom in 2006 and has spread to a number of countries across the globe. The loss of horses in World

War I was an early focus, but so too is the toll taken on animals by bombs, land mines and starvation.

The Navy Museum already has a plaque recognising animals in the garden outside its cafe. This was gifted by Nigel Allsopp, chief executive of the Australian War Animal Memorial Organisation (AWAMO).

Allsopp brought the Purple Poppy Day concept to New Zealand. It was formalised when the government in 2018 announced that it would be recognised each 24 February. Allsopp served over 20 years in the New Zealand Defence Force, including time as a military working-dog handler.

A New Zealand arm of AWAMO has representatives throughout the country, who as part of their work have already funded other memorials, including at the Whenuapai Air Force Base and the National Army Museum in Waiouru.



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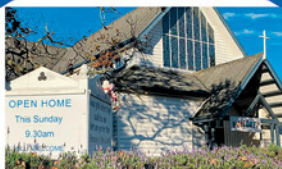
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## Museum shelves weapons to make room for Navy women display

The New Zealand Navy Museum at Torpedo Bay has temporarily removed historic weapons to accommodate a new display focused on the role of women in the Navy.

Its long-term plan is to incorporate the weapons in the redesign of another space within the museum.

The weapons are being stored in the museum's armoury at the naval base.

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# '24

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## Progress slow on giving local parks dual names

Coming up with te reo names for local parks is proving slow going, but a process has been agreed with iwi on 11 of 19 sites selected for Auckland Council's Te Kete Rukuruku project.

This provides for parks to be given a dual name when signage is due to be updated, with one reserve to be chosen for a more in-depth interpretation of its history and importance.

A workshop update to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board outlined the background to the scheme launched locally in 2020-21. Council staff said engagement with six iwi was undertaken, with four participating to date, reaching agreement between themselves as to who should name which park.

"There's been a lot of discussion, a lot of hui," said the council's project lead, Dawn Bardsley. Eight sites were still under discussion.

Staff recommended a deadline be set for

removing from the list any of those eight sites still under discussion as at February 2024. They will then be transferred to a planned second stage of the project, when further parks will be nominated by the board for consideration.

"It would be great to get some formally adopted and shared with the community," said board member Peter Allen.

Bardsley said although this was a slow process, experience elsewhere in Auckland showed this was not unusual to achieve an agreed outcome.

Council then needed to check names for duplication before they were returned to the board for final sign-off.

Board members asked about budgets and were told iwi had not been paid to date. Initially, \$20,000 was set aside for the project, including naming ceremonies when it is completed, but due to council cuts just \$4000 has rolled over.

Bardsley said the money was enough for the current shared interest phase of the project, which included payments for each iwi involved in naming parks.

Further budget of \$4500 would then be needed in the next financial year for a project designed to build relationships between mana whenua and local government by celebrating Māori identity in Tāmaki Makaurau and enabling te reo Māori to be showcased.

Iwi groups involved in Te Kete Rukuruku in Devonport-Takapuna are Ngāti Paoa Trust Board, Ngāti Paoa Iwi Trust, Ngāi Tai ki Tāmaki, Ngāti Whanaunga and Ngāti Maru. Ngāti Manuhiri Settlement Trust expressed an interest in this area but are not actively naming here.

Staff said there were strong iwi interests in the area, which was one reason consensus took time.

This had been exacerbated in some cases by ongoing resourcing challenges.

## Local junior-athletics programme still on track

A Devonport tradition will return this month with the running of Kids Athletics at the Vauxhall Rd sports grounds on Tuesday afternoons from February 20.

The event's future had been up in the air, after the Devonport Peninsula Trust (DPT) lost its local board funding, but trust chair Iain Rea said with community support and sponsorship the trust was acting as the umbrella group to keep the popular event going.

Students from Takapuna Grammar School, and for the first time, from Westlake Girls High, are helping out as marshals during the five-week non-competitive programme, which is designed as a fun introduction to track and field for children aged from four through to intermediate-school age.

A former trust worker, Maddy Crawford, is co-ordinating the season. Participation is free, with registration at the venue required before the 4pm start. Activities wind up at 6pm.

Crawford said the programme was a great way for younger children to try a variety of athletics in a relaxed environment. Activities include running races, long jump, high jump, agility games and ball skills.

• **Trust continues, p28**

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NEW LISTING

### DEVONPORT

16 HASTINGS PARADE

3-4 2-3 2 1  
ONLINE

#### TENDER

Closes 27th Feb at 2pm, 39  
Victoria Rd Devonport (unless  
sold prior)

barfoot.co.nz/859498

#### VIEWING

Open Homes  
Sat/Sun 1:00-1:30pm

### A Rare Gem

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Tracey Lawrence  
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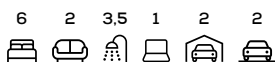
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**NEW LISTING**

## BAYSWATER

2 DAVID STREET



### AUCTION

12:00pm 28 Feb 2024  
39 Victoria Rd Devonport  
(unless sold prior)

[barfoot.co.nz/860131](http://barfoot.co.nz/860131)

### VIEWING

Sat/Sun 2:00 to 2:30pm  
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**Sue Evans**

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[s.evans@barfoot.co.nz](mailto:s.evans@barfoot.co.nz)



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NEW LISTING

## DEVONPORT

107 VAUXHALL ROAD

4 2 2 1 1

### TENDER

2:00pm 28 Feb 2024 at 39  
Victoria Rd Devonport  
(unless sold prior)

### VIEWING

Sat/Sun 11:00-11:30am

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NEW LISTING

## DEVONPORT

2/42 KAWERAU AVENUE

2 1 1 1 3

### TENDER

3:00pm 28 Feb 2024 at 39  
Victoria Road, Devonport.  
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### VIEWING

Sat & Sun 1:00-1:30pm

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[barfoot.co.nz/860233](https://barfoot.co.nz/860233)



CLOSING THIS WEEK

## BAYSWATER

1/54 NORWOOD ROAD

4 2 3 1 2

### TENDER

4:00pm 8 Feb 2024 at 39  
Victoria Rd Devonport  
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### VIEWING

Sat/Sun 2:00-2:30pm

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TENDER

## DEVONPORT

15 DUDERS AVENUE

3 2 2 1 1

### TENDER

2:00pm 21 Feb 2024 at 39  
Victoria Rd Devonport  
(unless sold prior)

### VIEWING

Sat/Sun 2:00-2:30pm

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NEW LISTING

## DEVONPORT

1/92 VICTORIA ROAD

3 2 1

### TENDER

2:00pm 22 Feb 2024 at 39  
Victoria Road, Devonport  
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### VIEWING

Sat/Sun 1.00-1.45pm

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Patricia Hinchey  
027 222 3367



NEW LISTING

## BIRKENHEAD

1/17 PARIS PLACE

2 2 1 1

### AUCTION

10:00am 29 Feb 2024, 8-12  
The Promenade, Takapuna  
(unless sold prior)

### VIEWING

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workspace

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FOR SALE

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### VIEWING

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021 448 977

# Caring cafe owner serves wider community

Narrow Neck Beach Cafe has become more than a spot to pick up a coffee and pie. Under the ownership of Josie Shi Xu, a community hub has emerged. She spoke to Helen Vause.

A cafe owner who gives away meals sounds like a recipe for business disaster. But that is exactly what Josie Shi Xu has been doing for the past two years.

Shi Xu (pictured above) and partner Daniel bought Narrow Neck Beach Cafe in 2017 and amid the social impact of Covid lockdowns soon became aware of people in the community – some sleeping in their cars – who would appreciate free or cheap leftover food or drinks at the end of the business day.

More recently, with some funding support from Devonport Rotary, Shi Xu has been cooking up to 25 meals a week to be delivered free to grateful recipients.

“Knowing people love to get these meals is all the motivation I need,” she says.

“Believe me, there are people in need out there from all walks of life for all sorts of reasons.”

Feeling embraced by the local community reinforced the 33-year-old’s own desire to help those in need.

“This community reached out to me and I found myself wanting to reciprocate. And besides, why wouldn’t I help people out where the need arose if I could?”

Her personal background helps explain her entry into a hospitality business with a philosophy of making much more than coffee and food.

An only child, Shi Xu arrived in New Zealand with her parents in 1997, aged seven, immigrants from the city of Shenyang (population more than 8 million) in north-east China. They couldn’t speak English, but had contacts in Rotorua, where they’d chosen to start a new life.

Josie was the name chosen for her when she left China.

At Rotorua’s Glenholme Primary School, she thinks she was the only Chinese child. Though she may have been a bit lonely, she remembers being happy enough, in “my own space, doing my own thing” and having the support of a tightly-knit family.

“Looking back it must have been a blessing for my migrant parents at a time that can’t have been easy for them, that I was a good kid. They’d made this huge change for us and certainly for me and the future they wanted for me.

“Everything was just so very different from what we had come from and even at that age I understood some of the challenges for my parents. The reality was that in China we would have been regarded as being quite well off. Dad had worked in finance and Mum had worked in a health authority.”

Josie’s mother found work as a waitress and her father made himself indispensable in

whole family and take the chance they took? And of course I wonder how our lives would be if we had never left China.”

Within a couple of years, the family moved to Auckland, gained New Zealand citizenship and settled in Mt Roskill.

Shi Xu discovered she was a good student, and at Mt Roskill Grammar became a handy interpreter and one-girl welcoming committee for those teens from China who found themselves lobbed into school just like she had been, without friends or much English.

“By then of course I’d turned into a real Kiwi kid, even if we did still eat Chinese food at home,” she chuckles.

“But someone had to help those kids turning up from China and that was me.”

Her impulse to help others had become firmly ingrained, partly through her early life experience, when need and the possibility of social isolation were familiar issues.

She dated Kiwi boys in her teens, but at the University of Auckland she met Daniel, fresh from China.

He needed lots of help finding his feet, she remembers, but stood out from the others she had helped. Before they were much older, she married him.

By then she was on the way to a career in bio-medical science, having specialised in genetics.

At 22, however, Shi Xu became pregnant with the couple’s son Clovis. She admits parenthood turned her world upside down, bringing chaos where there had been focus and order.

“I had a baby and I knew I didn’t want a life in biosciences.”

Instead, she took a job at Work and Income and with it a close-up view of how life was for people having a tough time.

This experience also contributed to her community-minded attitude since the couple took over their cafe seven years ago.

Finding her feet in the business, she realised a few things about herself. She liked

*“This community  
reached out to me and  
I found myself wanting  
to reciprocate.”*

a local souvenir shop, where he could speak easily with Chinese tourists.

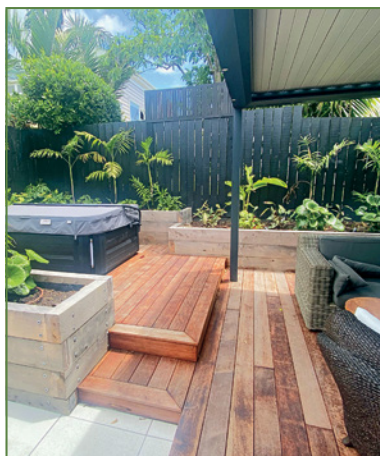
Their young daughter picked up English quickly, as children do, and started to mix more with her new local friends of other cultures, as she moved through primary school.

“It was our new world and we were making the best of it. Remember, there was no internet then, so Rotorua was our world, far away from what we’d left.”

Establishing themselves in a new country, the family had to always be looking out for bargains.

“I learned early that we could get cheap food from the bakeries around closing time. And we were always being given lots of hand-me-down stuff.”

Shi Xu wonders if she could have done what her parents did. “Could I just uproot my



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**Counter culture...** Cafe owner Josie Shi Xu has painted “pawtraits” (below) of many of the dogs whose owners regularly visit her business, displaying her artwork mounted on timber cuts on the counter

people, she liked giving and she felt an overwhelming urge to respond to need however she could, whenever she could.

No pie can ever be thrown away, no dog left to wander, no customer stranded in a downpour. If something needs to be done, or someone needs help, Shi Xu can keep the food and coffee coming, and also help at the keyboard to get balls rolling.

Social media is one of the ways she engages with the community and the cafe regulars who are like family in what has become a second home.

Her actual home is handier now, too. Having previously commuted across the Harbour Bridge, Josie and family moved to Hauraki in time for Clovis to start school at Belmont Intermediate.

Along with her support for needy members of the community, Shi Xu also has a soft spot for cats – rescuing and rehoming them, and arranging vet care, as a volunteer for a rescue group.

Dogs also get special attention at the cafe, being welcomed by name, and becoming the subjects of paintings by the proprietor. A line-up of her paintings of furry faces on discs hang on the cafe counter. There's also a “hitching post” for tying them up outside.

Shi Xu has also fund-raised for various good causes and initiated beach clean-ups,



at one stage giving ice creams to kids for collecting buckets of rubbish..

How did she become so well enmeshed in a community? She shrugs.

“The community embraced me, us. They reached out. It just sort of happened. And I invited people in who shared my values.”



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and click on 'Become a supporter'



# Live, Love Shop Local

Support Devonport businesses to keep our community alive

This issue we relaunch the Devonport Flagstaff's 'shop local' pages, which encourage readers to support retailers in our area. We ran a regular feature 20 years ago when a wider range of shops graced the village, including a shoe shop, furniture store, video outlet, lingerie shop and antique stores. It would regularly spread across two pages.

We hope readers will continue to support the local retail businesses that help keep our village buzzing.



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# HELLO VOUS

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**SALE STARTS SATURDAY 10 FEBRUARY**

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10 Victoria Road, Devonport

Hours: Tue - Sun 9:30am - 3:00pm



## Staff change at Community House

The Devonport Community House has restructured its staff to further its goals of increasing community involvement, particularly among young people

Gemma Dickinson has taken on the role of community house manager while continuing with the marketing, events, and bookings responsibilities she had previously.

Nigel Bioletti, the former house manager will become facilities manager, looking after maintenance, administration, and day-to-day operations before he leaves the organisation mid-year. Dickinson told the Flagstaff it made sense for her to take on the role knowing Bioletti was departing.

As part of the vision for the house to be more of a community hub, it will soon be opening a youth space with art and study

areas as well as a lounge for “hanging out”.

Dickinson plans to eventually set up a committee of youth that will be able to make suggestions to the house staff about any ideas they have for the area.

She wants youth to “have some ownership over the space”

Another goal is to increase the house’s outreach to the elderly.

Dickinson also plans to add an extra weekly afternoon play-group session in the winter.

The house is also adding a community directory and a calendar to its website.

The new Devonport peninsula community ‘activator’, Jess Jacobs, will be based at the house while carrying out her community development role, which is funded by the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

## Local buyout demand still unknown

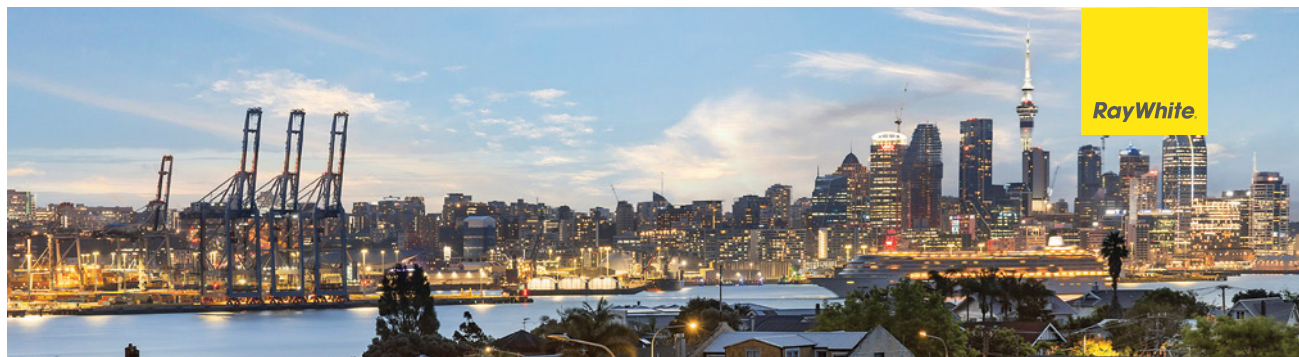
The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area accounts for around a tenth of applications for flood-buyout property assessments across Auckland.

The vast bulk of 226 applications in the area are from Milford, where 177 property owners have applied. Suburb-by-suburb breakdowns for applications across the Devonport peninsula – which makes up the southern half of the local-board area – are not yet available, Auckland Council said.

Stanley Bay, Bayswater, Belmont and Hauraki were among areas where flooding

and slips followed massive rainfall in January and February last year. A handful of applications are understood to have been lodged for Devonport itself. A council spokesperson said it would likely be March before assessments were completed, although for complex cases it might be mid-year.

Around 600 Auckland properties are expected to meet the criteria for buyouts from more than 2200 assessments. Buyouts apply to Category 3 properties, which carry a danger to life in future weather events, with no feasible way to mitigate risk.



**FOR SALE | 86 Victoria Road, Devonport**

4 2 3 3 2 4

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### Auction

23 February 2024, 12pm, ON-SITE at 86 Victoria Road, Devonport (unless sold prior).

### View

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**Jayne Kiely**

021 352 007

[jayne.kiely@raywhite.com](mailto:jayne.kiely@raywhite.com)



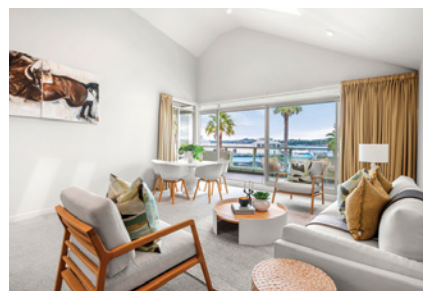
**Ricky Cave**

027 222 5419

[ricky.cave@raywhite.com](mailto:ricky.cave@raywhite.com)

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## 15/2 Queens Parade Devonport

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## Yachties celebrate centenary of esteemed trophy

Craft of all sizes and vintages will contest the 100th Duder Cup this weekend, in what promises to be a spectacle of sailing hosted by the Devonport Yacht Club.

From classic yachts to Pied Pipers, different boat classes will line up in staggered starts from 10am to 10.20am on Saturday, 10 February, as the centrepiece event of the Duder regatta.

The club is welcoming members of the community along to enjoy the day-time festivities as it celebrates an important aspect of Devonport's history and Auckland's yachting heritage. Club members will gather in the evening for a sold-out 1920s-themed centenary ball.

Vice Commodore Mark Sigglekow said: "Big yacht races are important community events, especially for a seafaring settlement like Devonport."

The Duder Cup is a prized trophy for Auckland yachties, with some big names and local identities having won it over the years, including leading boat designer Bert Woolacott who took three in a row in the 1930s.

Among those on the water this weekend will be members of the Duder family, whose forebears donated the cup for what became the club's premier race.

The Duder name lives on also in Duder's Beach, near the club on King Edward Pde and an ideal viewing spot for the start and finish of the race. A perch on North Head will allow the race to be tracked as it follows a course from inside the harbour, up to Narrow Neck and back round to the finish line in around two-and-a-half hours, wind willing.

Karen Webster, a Duder descendant who was first of the family to win the cup skippering Lambretta in 2022 and was aboard the 1992 winner, is not contesting it this year, but a second cousin, John Duder, is. He hopes to add another family name on the cup, and will compete in his father Nelson's classic yacht Spray II, with his own teenage grandson Mukai Duder-Hura one of the crew.

The early settler Duders arrived in Devonport as mariners, with Webster's great-great-grandfather becoming signalman and his descendants founding Duder's brickworks. Her great-great-uncle Thomas John Duder donated the money for the cup.

"We've always been sailors, both women and men," says Webster.

Sigglekow says the club – of which



**Race-ready... Duder descendant and 2022 Duder Cup winner Karen Webster (left) with Devonport Yacht Club Vice Commodore Mark Sigglekow**

yachting great Bayswater-bred Sir Peter Blake was a member – exemplifies local inter-generational community connections with the sea. These sorts of link go a long way to explaining the strength and international reputation of Kiwi sailors, he reckons.

He points also to nearby Wakatere Boating Club at Narrow Neck ushering through the next generation.

For himself, he remembers the 50th anniversary of the Duder Cup, sailing in a yacht his mate skippered. "We were delayed getting to Otago University," he chuckles. Crews then wore whites and the 50th had a big turnout.

For the 100th sailing, 22 entries are expected, most from the club, but others from the likes of the Royal New Zealand Yacht Squadron and Akarana.

Current holder Rhys Cole, who won on Heartlight in driving rain last year, will be back to defend his title. The overall regatta is expected to draw 40 yachts.

Rear Commodore Howard Walsh says: "We want to try to create a carnival atmosphere."

To this end, regatta sponsor, Harcourts, for whom he works, is helping out with coffee and cones from a cart in the morning. Visitors will also be able to have a look around the clubrooms. A vintage Austin car will be parked out front and there will be a competition to guess the number of balloons on show.

A celebratory cake in the shape of the cup is being made for the formal celebrations – which meant the cup itself was out of the trophy cabinet and with the cake-maker when the Flagstaff visited. But Sigglekow proudly showed off the Regatta Trophy, which dates back to the 1880s – well before the club was founded in 1905 – and is considered to be the oldest sporting trophy on the North Shore.

Devonport now boasts around 500 members. "We punch above our weight," says Sigglekow.

## Trust wants to keep community events going

Though effectively in recess, the Devonport Peninsula Trust (DPT) is not winding up, says chair Iain Rea.

Trust members wanted to ensure popular peninsula events such as the junior athletics programme (story, p18) continued, following the organisation's defunding by a cash-strapped Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

"There's also people in the community who feel very strongly about these."

The Devonport mid-winter swim was an example, Rea said.

While a dip would doubtless take place, support for this on Windsor Reserve was needed.

The Halloween trail in Bayswater was another event the community had grown to love.

"It's hugely successful," Rea said.

Indications were the new community

'activator' being funded by the local board would not be as events-focused as the DPT, which wanted to do what it could to keep valued events going, but didn't want to "get in the way" of the new set-up.

Play sessions were among other events the DPT used to run. The trust still had its van and play equipment and was talking to a couple of community organisations about the future of the sessions.



# Mural celebrates Sunnynook community a year after floods

A celebratory new public mural at the Woolworths Sunnynook in Wairau Valley has now been completed to commemorate the floods that devastated the area in early 2023.

The project was coordinated by Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Melissa Powell, with the aim of delivering a tribute to the Sunnynook residents who helped each other during the floods.

The Sunnynook Flood Response Team, a group of community volunteers who helped in the aftermath, approved the design for the mural, which is themed around living in harmony with our natural environment and was created by local mural artist Regan Hill-Male.

"Essentially, it's a response to the damage from the flood, and the emotional load of that because Wairau was hit hardest in the floods. So, I wanted to create something that would lift people up and make the space nicer to be in," Hill-Male says.

Community response to the mural has been overwhelmingly positive so far.



"I've had so many people walking past, tell me how much they love it, buying me coffees and asking to do business with me. And the opening celebration day in December was just like the cherry on top because we had Sunnynook Primary and Wairau Intermediate students drop through and I talked to them about my process."

You can view a video from the celebration day courtesy of Woolworths NZ at [tinyurl.com/mural-wairau](https://tinyurl.com/mural-wairau)

Funding for the project came from local charity the Milestone Foundation and Woolworths Sunnynook who were approached by Powell to support the project.

"I've really only done half of the work here" explains Hill-Male. "Mel has done all the other stuff, meeting with the key sponsors, the landlord and council to make sure everything has been compliant, and I respect her so much because she really cares about this and has pushed to make it happen."

Powell says that a key factor informing her work on the project was a desire to use her connections as a board member to support an emerging young local artist.

"I've learnt from my time working in youth mentoring from the legends Huia O'Sullivan, Bill Grayson, Dave Robertson, and Dr John Newman that every young person needs a supportive adult in their corner. I think this also applies to young people starting out in their career and I'm really pleased that Regan has received other work opportunities from the promotion of this mural."

You can see the completed mural at the Woolworths Sunnynook on the Sycamore Drive.

To see more work by Regan or to contact him about a project visit [www.reganhillmale.com](https://www.reganhillmale.com)

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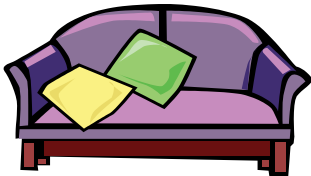
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# Takapuna Grammar

SCHOOL NEWS

FEBRUARY 9, 2024



## Year 9 Pōwhiri Welcome



The 2024 year began by our new Year 9 students being welcomed onto the school grounds with a pōwhiri. The pōwhiri was led by Matua William Catterall, Whaea Tina Peters

and our Tū Tangata students who performed waiata and the school haka *Te Karanga Pakanga* with pride. Principal, Mary Nixon addressed the cohort and extended a warm

welcome to parents and whānau.

We wish all the students the very best for the coming year and look forward to seeing them embrace all that TGS has to offer.

## Peer Support Programme off to a Positive Start



The Takapuna Grammar School Peer Support Programme provides Year 9 students an introduction to school under the guidance of Year 13 students who are trained as leaders by our House Leaders, Deans and senior staff.

The Peer Support programme is designed to help students achieve success by developing their relationship skills, their self-esteem and sense of belonging within the school. Often the transition from intermediate to high

school can be daunting, however Peer Support aims to support this social and educational adjustment for our new students!

An amazing group of 125 Year 13 leaders welcomed our new Year 9 students to the school and helped foster a positive and caring experience with the support of our school counsellors.

The sessions were student-led with an emphasis on The Five Ways to Wellbeing and

*Hauora-Te Whare Tapa Wha* in a way that was fun and immersive. Through educational and connective activities, relationships were formed between students, fostering a connected inter-year group culture that has remained throughout the year.

It is a pleasure to see the growth and leadership of our senior students and also the wonderful inclusion and welcome of our Year 9 students.



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## Congestion is worst in 50 years

With the current road works at Hauraki Corner, the traffic from Devonport to Hauraki Corner is gridlocked virtually all day. Is it too obvious to do this work at night or will the neighbours moan? What amazed me is that this morning (31 January) at 6.30 am the traffic was nose to tail in the other direction from Hauraki Corner to the Belmont lights.

This is the worst traffic congestion I have seen in Devonport in 50 years. More and more Devonport feeder roads are being blocked by permanently parked large trailer boats and yachts, abandoned vehicles, caravans, storage boxes on trailers, large trucks, trailers, tractors and motor homes. Added to this, with the current apartment building boom large numbers of building-material and concrete trucks and trades vehicles are adding to the traffic woes.

Northboro Rd at Belmont continues as the premier "panelbeaters dream road" in Australasia.

For emergency vehicles including ambulances, fire engines and police vehicles, every road and street in Devonport, Bayswater, Belmont and Takapuna should have no-parking yellow lines on at least one side of the road and on both sides of the historically very narrow thoroughfares.

Perhaps, the self-appointed "Mr Fix It", Auckland's Mayor Wayne Brown, should be invited over the bridge to experience the situation first-hand and come up with some practical solutions.

He did not perform too well leading the Auckland City Council response to last January's Auckland weather bomb. Let's hope he has learnt some valuable lessons and he is better prepared when the next weather bomb, tsunami or earthquake hits the Devonport peninsula. It is to be hoped that he is not just another in a long line of talkers with no concrete action discernible?

Bruce Tubb

## Cheaper rate on green-waste wasn't offered

My letter regarding green-waste charges at Resource Recovery Devonport (Flagstaff 26 January) was responded to by Richard Linthwaite who confirms that the flat rate was introduced almost a year ago when the flat rate was a minimum of \$15. I have been charged \$15 in the past and have been okay with that.

When I mentioned to the staff that I had been charged \$9 in the past, maybe \$15, they told me those charges were over a year ago and no longer apply. I wish to refute Mr Linthwaite's claim that I was offered a \$15 dollar rate "once our staff realised the vehicle only contained a small amount of material" but declined to pay that amount.

I do not know how Mr Linthwaite came by such information which is absolutely not the case. I protested with the two staff about the small amount I had which they clearly saw, but they stuck to the \$35 flat rate.

There was never an offer of \$15. If there had been I would have happily got rid of my green waste.

I feel it unfair that Mr Linthwaite has made it appear as though I was being petulant in not accepting an offer that was never made.

I finally said that I could not bring myself to pay \$35, the staff had nothing more to say and I left.

The North Shore Transfer Station at Rose-dale currently charges a flat rate of \$20 for up to 30kg.

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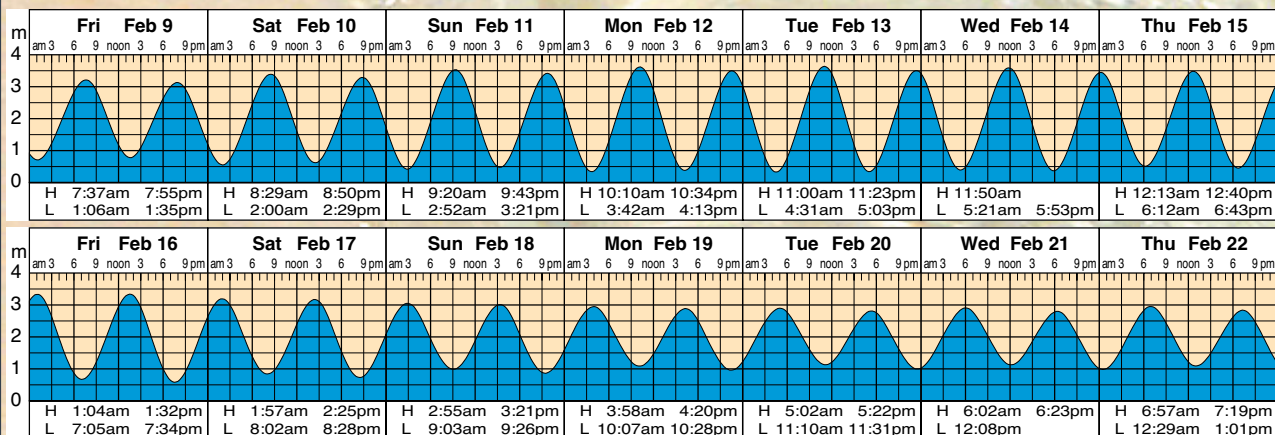
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## Fascination with birds inspires artist's new works

Natasha Somervell says exhibiting her paintings at a Devonport gallery has rekindled her love of working as an artist.

The Devonport resident's delicate studies of native birds have been attracting strong interest at the Satellite 2 gallery on Victoria Rd, fitting in with an overall theme of Habitat in the gallery's current group selection of works.

"This is my first exhibition in nearly 20 years," says Somervell, who studied and practised fine arts before motherhood became a primary focus.

Of late she has been taken with the juxtaposition of seeing native birds in exotic trees around the area. From photographs, she then uses her favoured gouache painting medium to depict them.

"I have a fascination with birds," admits the petite woman who has a small finely etched bird tattoo on each shoulder. One is in remembrance of her mother and one is for her son, now a 16-year-old studying at Takapuna Grammar.

Somervell has herself just begun working at the school's special education unit, after a time helping at Wilson Home.

But she says the opportunity to exhibit again, after an early arts career that began in sculpture and then veered to silver-smithing and teaching, is taking her back to her love of exploring creative expression.

"This has entrenched what I am."

The exhibition came about when Somervell stopped by the gallery to chat with owners Linda Blincko and Lynn Lawton, whom she first met when they ran the Depot Artspace.

She then showed them a few of her small paintings and they asked her to join their roster of artists, with a rotating display chosen from around a dozen works now on the walls.



**Feathered friends...** Natasha Somervell says she has been taken by the juxtaposition of native birds in introduced trees on the Devonport peninsula

Somervell says her art work has been conceptual, but she sees the bird paintings more as botanical studies.

"I used to do quite large installations and now I'm down to small things," she explains. This includes having a few hand-thrown espresso cups at the gallery.

Her sculpture was once on an enormous scale. But a tutor pointed her towards silver-smithing, because he noticed she also had a love of detail.

She recalls once crafting a wire bird's nest

that was feather-lined and carried the names of birds that had become extinct.

Somervell was born in Feilding and spent her early childhood in Auckland before her family moved to Melbourne. She went on to study art at RMIT University.

Having spent most of her life in Australia, she considers herself more Australian than Kiwi, though living in Devonport surrounded by nature since 2018 has rebalanced those trans-Tasman loyalties a little.

"I love all the birds here," she says.

## Depot group show tackles regeneration

A group of young women who went through art school together are collaborating on a themed group exhibition about bodily regeneration, opening at the Depot Artspace this weekend.

Among them is Kiara Schaumkell (pictured at right), who lives in Devonport. The 21-year-old says her take on the topic for the abstract show, *Biomorphic Beings*, is conceptual.

She has two pieces about two-metres square going on display, using wax and paint on calico to create sheen and colour in an echo of flesh and fluids. "The whole show is just experiences in our bodies," she says.

Despite an undue focus on girls' bodies from an early age, one way to look at dealing with bodily matters is to remember bodies are just a bunch of cells, she adds.

Her own interest in science fiction and evolution has influenced her thinking and her art. "It lets me play with the body, in a less

representative way," she says.

Schaumkell, who majored in sculpture for her BA in Fine Arts from Whitecliffe College of Art and Design last year, used her father's garage to work in, leading into the show. She gets her surname from his part Samoan-German heritage.

Along with friends she is keen to find a collective studio space to work in. Being a barista helps pay her rent, but in time she would like to cut her shifts back to concentrate more on developing her art practice.

The Depot show is a step forward, with the group excited their proposal won acceptance from the gallery's curator. "We're all women and we're all pretty young," says Schaumkell.

About 15 works will be on show. The other artists involved are Rose Lasham, Saskia Van Dijk and Sasha Ellis.

• *Biomorphic Beings* opens on Saturday afternoon, 10 February, and runs until 16 February at the Depot Artspace, 2 Clarence St.







## Artist 'takes over' hotel for immersive show

A Hauraki artist is taking a different approach to an exhibition this month, with one of Auckland's waterfront hotels being turned into an immersive showcase for her work.

Rachel Rush will be taking pieces in her two distinctive art styles to the SO Hotel later this month for the biggest exhibition of her career.

The title of the exhibition, *Alter Egos*, reflects Rush's use of two different styles, one influenced by graffiti art, the other with a focus on contemporary colour.

"One is more a rebellious side. I hate to be told what to do and I hate being confined – it just doesn't work for me. So the graffiti side, I get to have a voice.

"But then, I'm not a complete rebel. I'm a mum, have my business and that type of thing, so the abstract side is more of that fine-art, grown-up side that I really love."

Rush's works will be displayed on the walls of the hotel's lobby, restaurant and cafe, while other parts of the hotel on the corner of Customs St East and Gore St, such as the elevator doors and support beams in the lobby, will be wrapped in designs that feature elements of the artwork.

Themed drinks at the hotel's rooftop bar and a themed menu with dishes that the chef puts together at the table are also part of the showcase to further immersion in the art.

Rush told the Flagstaff she wanted something different from the standard exhibition

and that the hotel was perfect because of its dark marble interior, quirky furniture and overall feel.

"The hotel is beautiful as it is but it doesn't have art in there. I think to combine that with the aesthetics that the hotel has is going to enhance my work and the hotel.

"There's tables and chairs, objects and things I wouldn't normally do, but because of the hotel environment it's a really good chance just to have fun and just take over the whole environment really."

*"It's a really good chance just to have fun and just take over the whole environment..."*

Inspired by the street art of Melbourne and New York City, her graffiti works include multimedia elements such as stickers and posters.

The contemporary works are inspired by colour, how different colours interact and the spur-of-the-moment feeling of creation, Rush said. "They happen in the moment, you can't reproduce them."

Rush separates her two styles by crediting them to different names – her contemporary

pieces under her full name and the graffiti work under RUSH. She feels each has to stand on its own merits.

A lifelong Devonport peninsula resident, Rush is a self-taught artist whose styles developed naturally as a departure from the oil landscapes she first painted as a teenager.

"They've kind of just evolved over time – just painting what I felt like painting."

She has been a practising artist for 15 years, with her works sold through Devonport's Flagstaff Gallery.

Her works have proven popular as she is "consistently one of the best-selling artists" at the annual Art in the Park, said event director, Sofija Matich.

Rush has also broken into the international market, exhibiting her works at art fairs in Sydney and Melbourne.

Works in *Alter Egos* are the first in which Rush has applied her colourful contemporary style onto glass, an idea she had nursed for two years before employing it. The exhibition venue influenced the outcome, with colours of the glass and resin chosen to fit the space.

The 'takeover' will be open to the public on 10 February, with a two-day exhibition in the hotel's 'Vault' space.

The exhibition will then be scaled down, with works spread around different areas of the hotel until it finishes on 18 February. Free tickets are available at [artpromotions.co.nz/rachel-rush-alter-ego](http://artpromotions.co.nz/rachel-rush-alter-ego).

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Two sides... Hauraki artist Rachel Rush works in two distinctive styles, with abstract colour to the fore in some works, such as the one pictured to her right above, while others are influenced by graffiti and street art

## Acoustic fins among tweaks at the Depot

Gigs are on the agenda for the Depot Artspace this year as part of a revamp which over the holiday period included the installation of acoustic fins in the main gallery space.

The fins would make the high-ceiling open area more useful both for musical performances and functions generally, director Amy Saunders said.

The Depot Sound team would also look to use the gallery for live recordings of some of the artists it worked with, she said.

The gallery has also been repainted and, from March, the small side gallery at the front of Clarence St building will become a shop as well as display space.

"The idea is to have ceramics, jewellery, textiles and cards and prints that local people can buy," Saunders said.

# VICTORIA THEATRE DEVONPORT



### NOW SHOWING

Charcoal (R13) 108min	NEW
Argyle (M) 139min	NEW
Priscilla (M) 114min	NEW
Riceboy Sleeps (M) 118min	NEW
Oppenheimer (M) 180min	RE-RELEASE
Bob Marley: One Love (M) 104min	VALENTINE'S DAY

Madame Web (TBA)	VALENTINE'S DAY
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### COMING SOON

May December (M) 118min	15 FEB
The Trust Fall: Julian Assange (TBA) 128min	15 FEB
How to Have Sex (R16) 91min	Previews 15 FEB
Kombi Man (E) 87min	16 FEB
The Rocky Horror Picture Show with H&F Shadowcast (M)	16 FEB

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