



**TGS running star on track
for Auckland champs... p3**

**Fair on the Hill photo
spread... p12-13**

**Community House manager
Gemma Dickinson... p26-27**

Shake-up at Devonport Business Association

The chair of the Devonport Business Association has resigned suddenly and another member has also stepped down.

Rob Vickery, an outspoken leader who advocated change for the association away from funding public events, resigned at the board's March meeting after only six months as chair. The venture capitalist said the departure of his business from the Devonport Business

Improvement District (BID) made his role on the DBA board untenable.

Prior to the March board meeting, member Alistair Davidson submitted his resignation, saying he lacked the spare time to put work into the voluntary DBA position.

The resignations come after a tumultuous year for the board, which before Vickery became chair faced heavy criticism from some

members over the handling of submissions on Auckland Transport changes to pedestrian crossings, bus stops and car parks on Victoria Rd. The board is also in the throes of developing a new strategic plan.

Board member Michael Moughan, the principal of commercial law firm Devon Lane, has become chair, with another board

To page 2

Well-balanced trio enjoys new playground



Hanging out... Esmeralda Touchaud (left), aged 11, with the Donaldson siblings, Caleb, 8, and Juno, 11, at the opening of the upgraded Allenby Reserve playground. Story, more photos, pages 28-29.



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Local authors think alike for novel plots

Devonport authors Olivia Spooner and Sheryl Beaumont are enjoying parallel success with best-selling novels that are both set in wartime and more recent eras.

Both works were in the Booksellers Aotearoa New Zealand Top 10 at the same time last month. Spooner's *The Girl from London* has been on the list since it launched in November. It is still selling strongly. Beaumont's *The War Photographers*, joined the list soon after publication last month, but with a small print run it dropped out, pending a reprint.

The women, who know each other slightly through having had children at Takapuna Grammar School at the same time, were happy to get together for a Flagstaff photograph.

Beaumont, who is an accountant, said she attended Spooner's book launch and was struck by the similarities of using World War II as a backdrop and placing descendants of key characters in later eras, though their novels were stylistically quite different. "Mine is heavier on crime."

Spooner, a former pharmacist who owns the Booklover store in Milford, said her take on the popular historical-fiction genre had a New Zealand focus. *The Girl from London* tells the story of a young teacher who accompanies children from war-torn England on a perilous journey south, with tragedy striking on her return voyage on MS Rangitane. Her fourth book, due out in November, also has a war-time setting, partly in Egypt, where her grandfather served.

• **Beaumont's parallel careers, page 37.**



Snap... Olivia Spooner (left) and Sheryl Beaumont, with their latest novels

All change at top of Devoprt business group

From page 1

member, software entrepreneur Bruce Grant, taking up a new role as deputy chair.

Moughan said the board had been working towards a refreshment of the DBA's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and was looking forward to engaging with the BID membership soon on some new ideas and plans.

Moughan said Vickery formally resigned as chair and from the board by email on 13 March. Though there was technically scope for a person without a property or business inside the BID to be on the board or chair as an associate member, "it would be quite unusual for the board to be chaired by someone who is no longer a full member and we can understand Rob's decision to step down from the role as he focuses on growing his business internationally."



Gone after six months...Rob Vickery

By the time Vickery became chair, the criticism of works on Victoria Rd had largely abated and the board was refocused on developing a revised strategy, Moughan said.

"Rob was an enthusiastic board member and as chair provided much-needed leadership. Importantly, he placed a renewed emphasis on seeking feedback from the wider

membership, and was responsive to it."

Moughan said he hoped to develop a plan to encourage businesses to relocate or start up in Devonport to meet gaps in community demands. Lobbying for improvements to Lake Rd was also a priority. In the short term, he wanted to identify four or five key board priorities and then develop detailed plans "that have wide support and enable us to deliver results".

Vickery said in a statement that with the growth of his firm in overseas markets, it had decided not to renew the lease on office space in Devonport. "Without a formal base within the BID jurisdiction, it has made my role as a board member and chair untenable.

"During my time as chair, we began to rethink the DBA's strategy and tactics to deliver measurable value to local businesses. I look forward to seeing how this develops."

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TGS runner breaks record ahead of schools champs

Takapuna Grammar School (TGS) runner Asha Edwards is heading into this month's Auckland Secondary School Athletics Championships having broken a regional record at the North Harbour Zone Day.

The 15-year-old won the intermediate girls 3000m at the 6 March zone day at AUT Millennium in 9:57.41, smashing the previous College Sport record of 10:12.29 set in March 2019 and the Auckland Athletics record of 9:59.79.

She was a massive 45 seconds ahead of the second place-getter.

She also won the meet's intermediate girls 1500m, in a time of 4:52.89 seconds.

Asha told the Flagstaff she was aiming for a 10-minute time in the 3000m race and was in "disbelief" when she saw the clock from a distance and saw she was on pace to run under it.

"My original aim was to qualify for Auckland Champs in both the 1500m and the 3000m, but producing the time that I ran felt pretty incredible."

She said her record-breaking performance made the zone day one of the highlights of her athletics season.

Asha's next goal is to finish in the top three in the 3000m and "be in the mix" for the 1500m events at the College Sport Auckland Athletics Championships on 26 March.

"I have been performing well recently, with a couple of PBs, so I am trying to hold this form in preparation for the last couple of events of the track season."

Among other TGS athletes who will be competing with hopes of medals at the championships are Kate Hallie (shot put, discus), Sascha Letica (1500m and 3000m), Connor Brady (shot put, discus, 100m), Samantha Lathwood (long jump, 100m, 200m) and her sister Jessica (long jump, triple jump), all of whom who won at least one event at the Harbour zone day. Last weekend Hallie also won the under 20 shotput at the NZ Athletics national championships in Wellington.

Devonport resident Asha said once the athletics season ends she will focus on cross-country running, with the hope of eventually competing overseas.

"My training mate Sascha Letica is running in Kenya this year and it would be great to one day follow in her footsteps and compete internationally."

Flying high... Takapuna Grammar School's Asha Edwards exceeded her own expectations in smashing a regional 3000m intermediate girls' record at a recent North Harbour Zone Day



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Covid no barrier as mum enjoys Jacko's big win

Nerida Gill managed to see her son Jacko beat rival Tom Walsh to the national shot-put title for the second year in a row last weekend, even though she had Covid.

She and husband Walter travelled to Wellington to support Jacko, along with other athletes they coach, at the New Zealand championships.

Both of them came down with Covid and Walter injured his back, but Nerida was undeterred, heading to the Newtown Park venue and watching her son's performance from outside the stadium.

"I was jumping for joy behind the fence," she told the Flagstaff. "I had a big smile on my face but you couldn't see it through the mask."

Unfortunately, Walter's back was so sore he had to sit in the car nearby.

Although both Walsh and Gill were throwing below their best, the competition "was intense", Nerida said. Gill defended his title with a best throw of 21.57m to finish just six centimetres ahead of Walsh, who two weeks earlier took silver at the world indoor championships in Glasgow.

"It's always amazing to get a win over Tom," Nerida said. "To come out on top by six centimetres shows how close it was."

After the meet, Jacko had headed to Russell as part of a week off, but was looking for a gym so he could still do some training during the break, Nerida said. "He finds if he takes even a week off doing weights, he feels sore coming back to it."

Jacko (29) will travel to Europe for more competitions a couple of months ahead of the Olympics, which start in Paris in late July.

His mother will be in Paris for the shot put final, hopefully in the stands this time, not behind the fence.

Gill's fellow Takapuna Grammar School (TGS) alumnus polevaulter Eliza McCartney jumped 4.70m to clinch another national crown, with another former TGS athlete, Imogen Ayris, coming second. Devonport runners Thomas Cowan and James Ford took first and second place in the under-20 800m, while Bayswater shotputter Kate Hallie (17) came first in the U20 shotput.



Champions... Jacko Gill during the national championships in Wellington last weekend. Inset: Eliza McCartney, who won the women's pole vault



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Relief creator wants rethink on plinth removal

The designer of two topographical plinths on the top of Takarunga is upset at the intention to remove one of them, saying the small and large plinths belong together and are much appreciated by visitors.

Richard Tong, a former Devonport Borough Council deputy town clerk, said he was disappointed the Tūpuna Maunga Authority (TMA) had not contacted him about their significance. It had been his idea to make the bronze reliefs to commemorate the centenary of the borough in 1986, after he had left the council to become an environmental consultant.

The TMA recently gained planning approval for pedestrian enhancements on the tihi, which its application said would include the removal of the smaller plinth. This was to allow better pedestrian movement and because it repeated information on the larger plinth.

"There's no duplication. The big one shows Devonport the size of a thumbnail," Tong said. He hoped the TMA would think again, as the plinths were always envisaged as companion pieces.

The larger is around 2.4m in diameter and outlines geographic features in a 360deg view from the summit, as far as the Coromandel peninsula and Hauraki Gulf islands. The smaller has a representation of Devonport itself, with local features including the Navy Base, Domain and other parks, beaches and public buildings.

A TMA spokesperson told the Flagstaff its intended work on the tihi was given a green light by Auckland Council on 22 February.

"In line with returning the tihi back to as natural a state as possible, removal of one of the plinths reduces the number of built forms on the tihi," she said. The larger plinth would be refurbished, with additional locations in te reo Maori for a more accurate and improved customer experience.

The tihi work is not expected to start for several months and in the meantime the TMA said it will hold talks about relocating the smaller plinth. The local board, Tong, and any other relevant user group would be included. "We are still working through the process for the relocation."

Asked if this might see the plinth retained



Disappointed... Richard Tong came up with the idea of the plinths on Takarunga in the 1980s

on the maunga after all, the spokesman said: "At this stage no decision has been made."

The aim of work on the summit is to create more green space by removing the former main carpark and to add more seating and landscaping. Trees above the remaining small car-park will be removed to open up views to Rangitoto. The fate of an RSA plaque in this vicinity is yet to be decided, with the RSA, like Tong, saying it had hoped the TMA would have got in touch.

Tong said this week that he had contacted the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair, Toni van Tonder, who is a representative on the TMA board. He understood a meeting would be held with her and TMA staff.

Devonport Museum chair Alastair Fletcher said the museum would be happy to take the smaller plinth if it was removed. Devonport Heritage has not specifically considered the plinths to date, but its deputy chair, Trish Deans, said TMA work planned generally on the maunga was nothing like controversial TMA changes at Mt Albert, where tree removal plans had sparked court action by residents. "We're staying out of it. It's not like Mt Albert," she said.

Tong said he had been disappointed to see several of the locator name plates on the larger plinth had been stolen, including those for the Pacific Ocean and Hauraki Gulf.

But he was amused at an addition – bridges added "quite professionally" between landforms to denote the Auckland Harbour Bridge and the Upper Harbour Bridge.

Tong, who has long held an interest in metal casting, designed the plinths and drew on labour from a PEP (project employment programme) worker. The council paid foundry fees. The larger plinth was based on a relief map from the Auckland Regional Council. At one stage Tong had a mock-up of the plinth in the lounge of his Albert Rd home.

The supplied map's orientation was later found by local mathematician Garry Tee to be wrong so a new model was made a decade or so later.

Tong said he was open to changes to the plinths. He had expected the TMA might contact him about translating some of the names. But artists had rights. "The new owner of something can't just decide they don't like something. The main thing they should do is they should consult, and they haven't."



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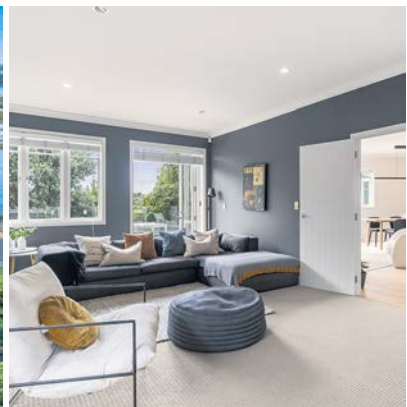
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North Shore bowlers demolish foes' top order

North Shore Cricket Club premiers took seven wickets in an hour against Cornwall last Saturday, putting themselves in a dominant position in their final match of the Hedley Howarth Auckland two-day competition.

Shore batted first at Devonport Domain, posting 161 for 10 in 76.2 overs.

Runs came in small partnerships for Shore, with Simon Keene (32) and Will Clarke (21) the only two batters in the top six to surpass 20.

At 105/7, the lower order were required to step up.

Ben Wall played an intelligent and disciplined innings for 16 runs, but it was the partnership between Rory Bessell and Jordan Gatley that gave Shore some momentum.

The duo put on 46 runs for the 9th wicket: Bessell scored 18 off 85, and Gatley 27 off 51.

With about an hour left in the day, Shore took the field, aiming for a couple of wickets before the day wrapped up. They ended up with seven.

Poles went flying, catches were held in the slip cordon, and a couple of LBWs were in the mix.

All four bowlers picked up wickets: Keene took three for 11, Bessell two for 16, Will Clarke one for six and Gatley one without conceding a run.

Cornwall are 35/7 heading into the sec-



Got him... Simon Keene and Adi Dhadwal celebrate one of Keene's wickets last weekend PHOTO: ROGER BRITTENDEN

ond day, giving Shore a good chance at a big result.

A win would guarantee a good finish for 2023-2024 – an excellent result considering

the club was in the relegation zone before Christmas.

The second day's play starts this Saturday at Devonport Domain from 11am.



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Local spending slashed in 'pay less, get less' option

Spending on local playgrounds, sports facilities, park paths and benches, public toilets, community houses, library repairs and beach pontoons will be slashed if a new council funding proposal goes ahead.

Hopes of progressing a sports hub at Woodall Park would be gone. Better lighting at Windsor Reserve, path upgrades at Northboro Reserve and heritage fixes would be some of the hoped for upgrades also on the line.

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board stands to lose well more than half its capital budget if a "pay less and get less" rating system is adopted after current public consultations on Auckland's Long Term Plan.

Board chair Toni van Tonder said she was shocked by figures supplied by council staff recently from modelling for the 2025-26 financial year.

Projections showed a 58 per cent annual cut, from \$5.1 million to \$2.1m, for the community-facilities works programme.

"That's the budget your local board has available to renew our assets or build any new ones," said van Tonder.

The 'pay less, get less' option is one of three the public can comment on until

28 March. Van Tonder is urging people to reject it.

Setting rates lower than a proposed 7.5 per cent rise would come at a big cost to the community, she said.

Playgrounds could be decommissioned for lack of money to repair them.

Van Tonder said the board knew it faced a 21.5 per cent cut to its capital funding for 2025-26 under the council's 'central' proposal, due to a shift to equity funding that hits asset-rich boards hardest.

But coupled with the lower-rates scenario, the loss was shocking.

Equity funding has been wrapped into a new phrase, 'fairer funding', in questions on the rating scenario.

"Unless the public says no to fairer funding, we will see our assets either sit and degrade, or be shut down completely when we can't afford to fix them," van Tonder said.

Like rubbish bin removal – which was mentioned in council's annual budget consultation last year, but is only now being implemented and sinking in with the public – she cautions the "devil is always in the detail".

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United fit and ready under trainer-turned-coach



Going for it... North Shore United's Andrew Abba taking on a Birkenhead United player during a preseason game. Right: New first-team coach Dave Fahy is confident his side can earn promotion to the Northern League this season.

North Shore United's new first-team coach is confident his side can pick up where they left off last season to earn promotion back to the upper North Island's top division.

Shore finished sixth in the championship last season, but ended the competition strongly, giving the side confidence they can finish in a top-two spot this year to earn promotion to the Northern League, head coach Dave Fahy said.

"We didn't start very well, but if the last 14 games were a league of their own, we were the second-best team."

The 37-year-old said he wants the team to play an "aggressive, high-energy" pressing style out of possession and to keep the ball in possession, moving it through the wide channels to progress play.

"We want to get the ball back as quickly as possible."

Fahy said the side has looked great in

passages during preseason, and that a few "individual errors" leading to conceding goals should be ironed out before the season gets under way.

"That's kind of normal in pre-season where the lads are getting to grips and obviously fitness mightn't have been where it needs to be, so decision-making and concentration can kind of wane a bit."

A personal trainer by trade, Fahy has been utilising his skills during the nine-week pre-season to get the players as fit as possible, ready to maximise an aggressive press during the season.

"We want the lads going in feeling strong, feeling fit."

"We did our re-fitness testing last night and all the boys came in with very good times so it looks like, fitness-wise, we're ready to go."

With half of last season's players having departed, many new faces are included.

"We've brought in some good players so we're confident in the squad we've got and the squad we're building," Fahy said.

The championship has an element of unknown to it this season, with nine of the 12 sides having new coaches, but Fahy predicts it will be a tough and competitive league.

A North Shore player from 2011-2017, Fahy rejoined the club last season, originally as a fitness coach for the first team then becoming the U-23s head coach, and eventually first-team assistant halfway through last season.

The first team coaching role was offered to Fahy after Dylan Burn's departure.

North Shore's first match is at home at Allen Hill Stadium against Metro F.C. this Saturday, 23 March.

Fahy is "quietly confident" his side can win despite the Mt Albert club's attacking threat. Kick-off is at 3pm.



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Young star faces squashed international calendar

Promising Devonport squash player Aggie Griffiths is about to embark on a sports odyssey which could see her play up to 12 matches in 10 days.

She travels across the Tasman on April 7 to play in the Australian Junior Open, Oceania championships and then a junior test series against Australia in Melbourne as part of the New Zealand team.

"Sometimes it's nerve-racking – but it's fun," she says of the programme ahead.

She's played some of the Australians before and expects the competition to be "fierce".

Aggie, who turns 14 just after the test series, found out about her selection as an under-15 rep in the New Zealand team in February.

Since then the B-2 grade player has upped her training programme to include a number of national and regional championships, as well as continuing to work hard with her coaches, Manu and Rafa Yam and Paul Hornsby.

She played in the recent Waitangi Open at North Shore Squash Club – even combining with her father, Nick, to finish as joint winners in the mixed doubles.

Representing New Zealand juniors is the latest sporting highlight for Aggie, following on from playing for the New Zealand secondary schools team in 2023, and coming runner-up in the New Zealand under-15 squash champs last season.

She gets a real thrill out of playing in the New Zealand strip.

For New Zealand secondary schools "we played with matching ribbons in our hair with New Zealand colours. The uniform had the silver fern."

While enjoying the atmosphere and support of playing for the New Zealand team, squash is very much an individual sport, which brings its own challenges.



Black shirt... Thirteen-year-old Aggie Griffiths gets a thrill out of donning New Zealand colours

"It's much easier playing a team sport because if you lose not all the blame is on you," says Aggie.

• Belmont Park player Ella Lash has made

the junior team in the under-19 age-group, while Devonport Squash Club's Justine Pausch is a reserve in the girls under-17 division.



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Fun of the fair... (clockwise from top) Dulice Curren (4) and Will Delaney (5) on the ferris wheel; Nicole (left) and Stephen (right) de Vrij with son and Devonport Primary pupil Finn (10) watching the activities from a grassy bank; and Jayne and Sean McAnally with son and Devonport Primary pupil Xander (8).



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www.devonportrecycle.co.nz**

Devonport Primary's Fair on the Hill



Mixing it up... (clockwise from top left) Devonport Primary pupils Imogen MacDonald, Harriet Upton, and Elva Curren (all 7) after Harriet and Imogen had their hair done at the mermaid-braids stall; Vauxhall School pupil Emilia Dykes (8) flies high on the bungee; Devonport Primary's kapa haka group in action; Devonport resident Marie McNaughton with parents Diane and Bob enjoying a drink in the sun; North Shore Cricket Club players Dominic Reed, Ben Gray, Josh Hanna and Zachary Loveday-Rhodes (all 11) made a post-match visit to the fair; and Mason Gregory (9) sprinting to see what speed he can score on the police officer's speed radar.



**DEVONPORT
PRIMARY SCHOOL**

ENROLMENTS FOR TERM 2 2024

Devonport Primary operates an enrolment scheme, details are available from the school office.

Application for out-of-zone places, across all ages, are invited for admission from 29 April with a deadline of 28 April. If required, a ballot will be held, and parents notified on 29 April. Multiple out-of-zone enrolment ballots may be held throughout 2024.

If planning to enrol later in 2024, please contact the school as soon as possible to assist our planning.



**By Rob
Drent**

It's not every day a simple journalism assignment turns into a marriage. But that's what happened to Devonport Flagstaff/Rangitoto Observer reporter Anneka Brown.

When sent in 2020 to talk to ASB bank customers about the pending closure of the Devonport branch, Anneka interviewed

builder Jesse Widgery who was working on a local job. In the office later, Anneka admitted she was quite taken by young Jesse, but had fumbled the business cards in her pocket and was unable to give him one.

Undeterred, she tracked him down on Facebook. Finding he seemed single, she messaged him her number in case he wanted to chat further. It transpired Jesse was quite taken with the young reporter as well. After a first coffee date, he cut short a planned holiday road trip to see her again sooner.

Anneka, who was with us for a year, went on to complete a Bachelor of Communications at AUT.

Anneka and Jesse's wedding was earlier this month. All the best to the happy couple.

A \$1 million-a-year saving from reducing bins across Auckland isn't much considering the downside

Is the 'Keep New Zealand Beautiful' approach, drummed into my generation at school, no longer considered worthwhile at Auckland Council?

As with the recent changes to what can and can't be recycled, residents are being asked to do a lot of extra work to be good citizens.

How often do you see an 80-year-old leap onto a chair then onto the stage at a gig?

Geoff Chapple did just that at his 80th birthday party at Harmony Hall a couple of weeks ago, with all the confidence and ease of a teenager.

The star of the night – alongside Chapple himself – was the music.

We enjoyed a great set from Don McGlashan, who played with Chapple in From Scratch many years ago. Chapple played banjo on a song with Clifton Gap, a band he was part of in the 1960s.

Many of the musicians came from the ranks of those who play regularly at Harmony Hall. Chapple, who has had an incredible life as a journalist, writer, musician and pioneer of the Te Araroa trail, has been a regular attendee at the Friday open-mic nights at the venue. Any budding musicians would be well advised to consider heading along to a session.

David Smart Co. Financial Advice



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Phone: 027 543 4455

www.davidsmart.co

Copies of Disclosure Statements on website.

The huge public reaction to the removal of public rubbish bins on the Devonport Peninsula is totally understandable. I can see the logic of removing them in certain settings: the DoC estate and remote Auckland beaches like Anawhata and Karekare, where a pack-in, pack-out policy regarding litter seems to work well. But in an urban tourist destination like Devonport, removing the bins doesn't make practical sense. I can't see people taking their fish-and-chip papers home after a picnic by the beach. The remaining bins will be filled and brimming over, creating new problems for the council.

Likewise, for dog droppings. Will owners really take them home if no bin is handy?

Welcome Dr. Nawar Mansoor to Devonport & Belmont

We are delighted to introduce Dr. Nawar Mansoor, a General Practitioner dedicated to providing empathetic and efficient patient-centred care. With an MBChB from the University of Auckland, Dr. Mansoor brings over three years of medical experience, characterised by a genuine passion for empowering patients to make informed health decisions.

Dr. Mansoor believes in the power of collaboration between doctor and patient to achieve the best health outcomes.

When not caring for his patients, Dr. Mansoor is a fervent football fan, and enjoys keeping active, as well as spending time with family and friends.

Embrace a healthcare journey that goes beyond treatment, focusing on holistic well-being with Dr. Mansoor. Let's give him a warm welcome to our community!

Schedule a visit with Dr Mansoor today at either Devonport Family Medicine or Belmont Medical Centre and take a step towards empowered health.



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+ Medical Centre

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belmont park
RACQUETS

Save this date

THURSDAY 4 APRIL

BELMONT PARK RACQUETS CLUB
GOLF CLASSIC

1PM SHOTGUN START
WAITEMATA GOLF CLUB



This fun event is to fundraise towards additional tennis courts for our popular club. The project site has been cleared, quotations and funding are being sought – exciting times ahead!

- Male and female golfers
- Handicap or non-handicap
- Anyone can play – member of our club or not
- \$100 per player
- \$690 incl GST to sponsor a hole (this includes a team of 4)

Ambrose Format

Teams of 4 or enter as an individual and we will place you in a team

We would love your support to ensure a fantastic turnout and success

CONTACT REX: rex_grey@me.com or 021 029 37884

www.belmontracquets.co.nz

Harcourts Cooper & Co

Welcome to the
Devonport team
Grant & Monika

Grant Speedy

M 0274 511 800

Monika Bak

M 021 857 765



NO.1 HARDCOURTS
WORLDWIDE
AGENCY
OF THE YEAR
MEDIUM ALL
DISCIPLINES
AWARDS '23

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PROPERTY
SALES



Devonport

Harcourts Devonport (Cooper & Co Real Estate Ltd)

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Davey".

Michael Davey
Chief Executive Officer

ratemyagent.com.nz is New Zealand's leading real estate agent review website; helping sellers make informed, confident decisions about choosing the right real estate agent to sell their property. Held on a national scale, The Agent of the Year Awards identify the leading real estate professionals in the country using customer reviews and transaction results as leading measures of success.

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Harcourts Cooper & Co

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Proud Sponsor Of
North Shore Rugby Club



Devonport 32 Summer Street

4 **2** **1** **1**

For Sale

\$2,750,000

View

As advertised or by appointment
harcourts.net/L25835858



Cooper & Co Real Estate Ltd. Licensed Agent REAA 2008

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 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. 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.

Maria Stevens

021 979 084

maria.stevens@harcourts.co.nz

Marissa Muirhead

021 337 222

marissa.muirhead@harcourts.co.nz



Devonport 32 Hanlon Cresnet

2 **2** **1** **1**

Auction

Thursday 11th April at 12.00pm
In Rooms (Unless Sold Prior)

View

As advertised or by appointment
harcourts.net/L24196236



Cooper & Co Real Estate Ltd. Licensed Agent REAA 2008

Perfect Blend of Comfort and Outdoor Living

Meticulously renovated for the owners' pleasure, this residence exudes a perfect blend of comfort and outdoor living. Featuring two spacious double bedrooms, one of which boasts an ensuite and a walk-in wardrobe. The heart of the home is an open-plan kitchen, dining, and lounge area, bi-fold doors open up this space to the outside seamlessly. As you step outside, be greeted by a very private north-facing deck and garden - the ideal spot for al fresco dining and relaxation. A large garage with a workshop provides ample space for storage and creative endeavours. For those who appreciate outdoor activities, take a leisurely stroll down to the nearby golf course or pristine Narrow Neck beach. Embrace the coastal lifestyle and create lasting memories with friends and family.

Maria Stevens

021 979 084


maria.stevens@harcourts.co.nz

Marissa Muirhead

021 337 222

marissa.muirhead@harcourts.co.nz

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Electric-ferry chargers in doubt due to fuel-tax axing

Electric ferry infrastructure hangs in the balance following the dropping of the Regional Fuel Tax.

Charging infrastructure for new electric ferries was previously to be funded by the RFT, Auckland Transport (AT) chief executive Dean Kimpton told Auckland Council's Transport and Infrastructure Committee on 7 March.

"It is not provided for in the change legislation," Kimpton said.

When the government repealed the tax, it stipulated that the remaining \$360 million

of funding from it could only be spent on three directives – with electric ferry costs not part of the mix.

Kimpton said contracts had already been signed with the tax in mind.

With the RFT's removal of the RFT, AT is proposing a complete reprioritisation of its capital budget.

Kimpton said \$20 million would need to be allocated from other projects for ferry-charging infrastructure.

– Laura Kvigstad, Auckland Council reporter funded by New Zealand on Air

Sam's ukulele: A musical mystery

Well-known Devonport New World employee Sam Welsh (pictured) had his ukulele taken and mysteriously returned last week.

Welsh left the instrument behind after using the Devonport Library bathroom on 13 March.

Walking down Victoria Rd he realised he'd left it behind so returned to retrieve it, but the ukulele was nowhere to be found.

He contacted friend and former Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Trish Deans who posted on social media, asking



if anyone had a replacement instrument for him.

Many ukuleles were offered, but turned out not to be needed.

When Welsh returned home that night, the instrument was sitting on his doorstep.

Where it disappeared to remains a mystery, but Welsh said he was "re-

lieved" it's found its way back to him.

He plays the instrument with the ukulele group that gathers once a week at the Devonport Community House.

Unlocking investment opportunities in commercial real estate using ESG frameworks to deliver sustainable returns.

More than two-thirds of New Zealanders prefer their money to be invested ethically and responsibly*.

While many recognise the stable, long-term returns commercial property investment can provide, not everyone realises its potential to positively impact the environment, making it appealing to investors seeking benefits beyond profit.

With a diverse commercial portfolio of premium office, industrial and retail assets valued at approximately \$1.9 billion, Oyster Property Group is one of New Zealand's leading unlisted commercial property fund managers, well-positioned to make a difference by shaping more sustainable cities in New Zealand.

ESG is an integral part of Oyster's strategy. Its sustainability plan is designed to create long-term value for its stakeholders through sustainable growth and by taking steps to reduce both its own carbon footprint and those of its tenants.

Fabio Pagano, Oyster's General Manager - Property, says they are seeing increased demand from tenants for landlords who'll collaborate with them to achieve their

sustainability goals.

"New Zealand's largest companies are now required to make climate-related disclosures across their operations, and many organisations mandate sustainability credentials as part of their leasing and procurement policies.

"Ensuring Oyster's assets contribute to a more sustainable New Zealand is not only environmentally responsible, it unlocks value for tenants and investors."

"Ensuring our assets contribute to a more sustainable New Zealand is not only environmentally responsible, it unlocks value for tenants and investors."

Oyster's ESG commitment is clear: 19 of its office properties achieved 4-star or higher NABERSNZ ratings.

"We understand the influence we can have by prioritising ESG to make our business economically robust and socially and environmentally responsible," Fabio explains.

"Installing smart meters across our portfolio

improves monitoring of electricity and water consumption, reducing costs for our tenants and lifting value for our investors.

"Having partnered with Ecotricity, New Zealand's first and only Toitū climate positive certified electricity provider, we now supply 100% renewable electricity to most of our tenants."

Last August, Oyster Management Limited became Toitū Envirocare "carbonreduce" certified, establishing a baseline for carbon emissions reduction.

Oyster's ESG strategy lays out clear, attainable goals, establishing it as a preferred landlord and assuring investors that their investment contributes to a sustainable future.

Scan the QR code or visit www.oysterproperty.co.nz/sustainability to read our latest sustainability report



OYSTER®

*Source: A recent Financial Markets Authority survey.

Achilles Reserve playground upgrade gets nod

The playground at Achilles Reserve is in line for upgrades likely to cost between \$135,000 and \$200,000.

Installation is a year or more away, but Devonport-Takapuna Local Board members told council staff they are in favour of plans proceeding before budget cuts bite further into council spending on parks renewals.

The cost will depend on the design option chosen, but board members at a workshop this month told staff they favoured simple choices, with accessible paths to the equipment. Existing bench seating will be retained.

Deputy board chair Terence Harpur asked if the play equipment could be repaired, rather than totally replaced, but the council's northern operations manager, Sarah Jones, said it had started rotting underground.

Members also gave the go-ahead for an up-

grade estimated at \$90,000 for the small Belle Verde Reserve playground in Sunnynook.

"We've consulted on these, and there's community expectation we will proceed with these two," said board chair Toni van Tonder.

Staff will return with finalised designs for sign-off. She cautioned that looming council cutbacks meant libraries, leisure centres and sports fields were likely to take priority over playgrounds in future.

"Things like playgrounds we will just keep going as best we can," she said.

Van Tonder acknowledged the Devonport peninsula was lucky to have several upgraded playgrounds already, including the just remodelled Allenby Reserve which officially opened this week, Montgomery Reserve in Belmont with its pirate ship and Windsor Reserve on the waterfront.

She told staff it would be useful to have a playground overview, highlighting areas where gaps existed.

Members also quizzed staff on why playground fencing was not more routine, along with provision of water fountains, as is the case in Australia.

Jones said fencing was decided on a site-specific basis.

"People need to supervise children in reserves, because there are multiple hazards," she said.

These included proximity to the sea, dogs and other risks, not just roads, she said.

Lake Town Green on a corner of Jutland Rd in Hauraki, had been fenced because it retained the look of the residential property it once was and was a playground targeted at younger children, Jones said.

Barbecue ready to be fired up

Devonport firefighters have a new barbecue for cooking up a storm after attending call-outs.

Devonport Hammer Hardware's Matt Senior said the company donated the \$1000 barbecue after hearing staff member and volunteer firefighter Rob Whybrow talk about the harrowing incidents the crew attend, including cardiac arrests and accidents along with fire call-outs. "Our community is very lucky to have them [its own dedicated fire crew]," Senior said.

Heating up... Hammer Hardware's Trevor Dean (left) and Matt Senior (right) with volunteer firefighters Gavin Busch and Rob Whybrow



Devonport 09 445 2010

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for the North Shore Cricket Club

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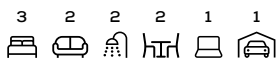
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NEW LISTING

BAYSWATER

17 BERESFORD STREET



TENDER

Closes 2:00pm 4 Apr 2024,
39 Victoria Road, Devonport
(unless sold prior)

barfoot.co.nz/863466

VIEWING

Saturday-Sunday
2:00-2:45pm

GOOD BONES - Just needs a little Botox!

Located close to the marina in the tightly held heritage circle of Bayswater Point, 'Balfon' is a striking, 1920's two-storey bungalow. Now, after 20 years, our vendors are selling. An exciting opportunity to purchase below CV and work with the home's original features to complete this masterpiece and inject your own vision!



Sue Harrison
021 909 549
s.harrison@barfoot.co.nz



Toni Gregory
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t.gregory@barfoot.co.nz

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NEW LISTING

DEVONPORT
2/5 HANLON CRESCENT

**AUCTION**

10:00am 18 Apr 2024 at The Promenade, Takapuna
(unless sold prior)

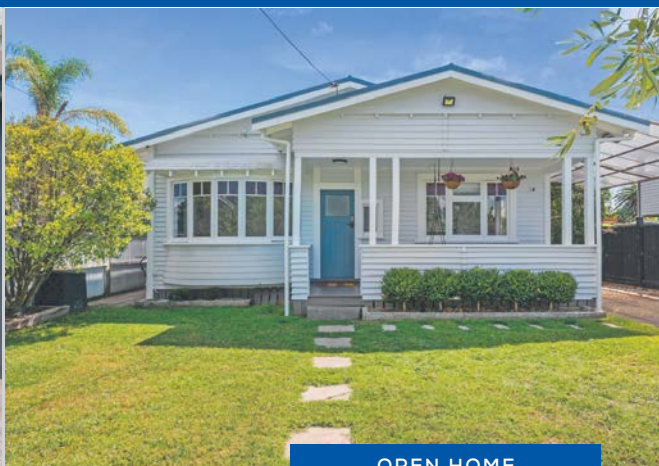
VIEWING

Sat/Sun 2:30 to 3:00pm

Stylish large brick and tile townhouse. Tucked away, so private. One of two with separation by way of internal access garages.

barfoot.co.nz/863242

Sue Evans
021 448 977



OPEN HOME

DEVONPORT
78 NGATARINGA ROAD

**AUCTION**

12:00pm 27 Mar 2024 at 39 Victoria Road, Devonport
(unless sold prior)

VIEWING

Sat/Sun 11:00-11:30am

This charming 1920s bungalow boasts a brand new roof and modern amenities – and is now seeking a loving new family to call it home.

barfoot.co.nz/862947

Cathy Fiebig
021 383 149



FOR SALE

DEVONPORT
17C FRASER ROAD

**FOR SALE**

By Negotiation

VIEWING

Sat/Sun: 11:00-11:45am

- Spacious 3-bedroom family home plus self-contained sleepout.
- The owners need to sell fast thus creating this amazing opportunity.

barfoot.co.nz/862721

Ron Sadler BCom
021 613 546
Samuel Tang
021 688 364



CLOSING THIS WEEK

BELMONT
4B MOANA AVENUE

**TENDER**

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

VIEWING

Sat/Sun 12:00-12:45pm

The UPSides to this downsize are many... Exclusive use title, quiet location, single level, and internal access garaging to name just a few!

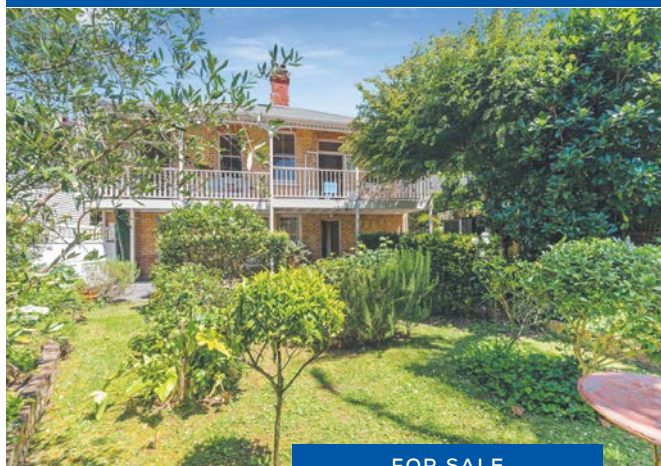
barfoot.co.nz/861067

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Toni Gregory
021 044 3663

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for the North Shore Cricket Club



FOR SALE

DEVONPORT

16 HASTINGS PARADE

4 2 2 1
ONLINE

FOR SALE

By Negotiation

VIEWING

Sat/Sun 1:00-1:30pm

Nestled at 16 Hastings Parade, this sunny 1910 brick villa exudes timeless charm across its two levels.

barfoot.co.nz/859498

Trish Fitzgerald
021 952 452
Tracey Lawrence
021 1720 681



NEW LISTING

DEVONPORT

9 HASTINGS PARADE

3 2 2 1 2

AUCTION

12:00pm 10 Apr 2024 at 39
Victoria Road, Devonport
(unless sold prior)

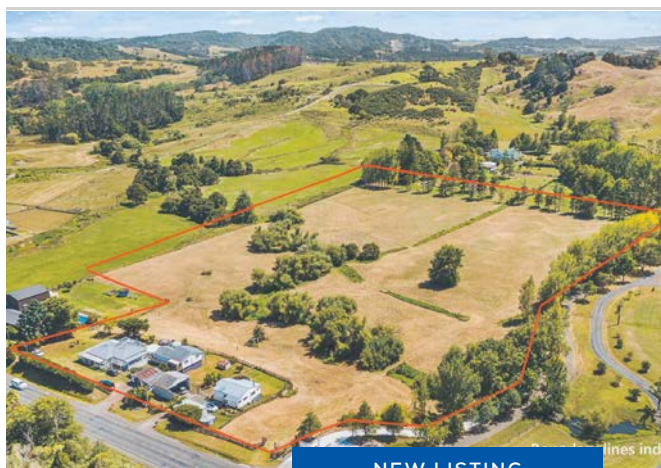
VIEWING

Sat/Sun 1-1:30pm

Step inside and prepare to be surprised, for there's so much more to this cottage than first meets the eye. Short walk to the village. View Thurs 5-6pm

barfoot.co.nz/863780

Tracey Lawrence
021 1720 681
Trish Fitzgerald
021 952 452



NEW LISTING

WAITOKI

638 KAHIKATEA FLAT ROAD

6 3 2
ONLINE

TENDER

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

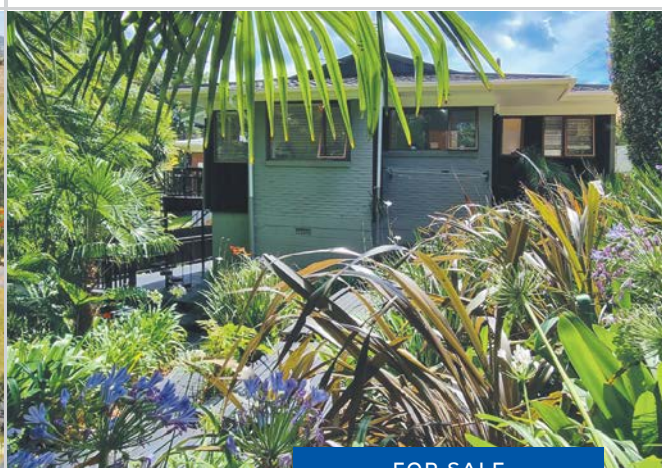
VIEWING

Phone For Viewing Times

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barfoot.co.nz/862911

Lance Richardson
021 796 660
Drue Matich
021 024 90448



FOR SALE

BIRKENHEAD

1/17 PARIS PLACE

2 2 1 1

FOR SALE

\$890,000

VIEWING

Phone for Viewing Times

- Wake up to birdsong
- Stand alone property
- Lush tropical gardens
- Holiday-like vibe
- Two good bedrooms
- Separate studio

barfoot.co.nz/860527

Kurt Piper
021 137 6450

Blood flows at rugby-club collection events

Two blood drives at North Shore Rugby Club in late February and early March were a success, prompting the New Zealand Blood Service to plan a return to take more blood at the venue in June and October.

The 29 February and 4 March events clocked up 89 donations in total, in excess of the Blood Service target of 40 donations a day.

"A huge thank you to the community," said donor relations team leader Scott Sinclair.

"So lovely to see all those people coming out to do a wonderful, selfless act by donating blood."

The Blood Service has booked its mobile donation units to visit the club again on 17 and 18 June, with 21 October also confirmed for a return.

The recent drives were set up to coincide with the end of the donor ban on anyone who lived in the United Kingdom, Ireland or France between 1980 and 1996, when the UK had an outbreak of bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE, also known as "mad cow disease"), and its human equivalent variant Creutzfeldt-Jakob disease (vCJD).

"We knew there was a good contingent of people (in Devonport) that could not donate due to the mad-cow-disease restriction but really wanted to," Sinclair said.

The rugby-club collections were to "give those keen an opportunity to give blood straight away," said Sinclair.

The rugby club ticked all of the Blood Service boxes as it was large enough to house all of

the equipment, well known to the community and available to host regular drives.

A drive held at the Sunnynook Community Centre on 21 February received only 26 donations, but Sinclair is hopeful those numbers will grow as the community becomes more aware of the drives.

"I think we lucked out with these locations. They have been very accommodating and welcoming to our staff and donors."

Sinclair said that while blood donations are needed regularly, the service is also struggling to meet demand for plasma so is looking for more donors.

For information on how to donate blood or plasma visit nzblood.co.nz/become-a-donor or call 0800 448 325.



Finn Delaney
Roofing Consultant

☎ 021 384 482
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✉ finn@roofbuddy.co.nz
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We help organise a custom built scope of works with you using our proprietary roof report generator. That report is then sent to eligible vetted roofing companies based here on the North Shore and we collect competitive, comparable quotes for you.



Letters to the Editor

We welcome letters on local issues that are not overly long.

Noms-de-plume or unnamed submissions will not be printed.

Email to
news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz



**Best letter wins
two Movie tickets
to the Vic Theatre.**

THE NAVY COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER

SAILOR FINDS HER PROBLEM-SOLVING NICHE WITH NAVY

Able Marine Technician (Electrical) Dana Costello wanted to join the Navy since she was 12. Her father was also in the Navy in the same trade, and she wanted to be like him when she grew up.

"I have a passion for problem solving, getting my hands dirty, pulling things apart and fixing them. Growing up, I had a great split of tomboy and 'girly' hobbies – motorcross racing, pony club and ballet in my teens. Today I'm always out with my partner surfing and fishing and we have a self-contained van that we travel all over New Zealand in."

She joined the Navy in 2020 and after her trade training was posted to HMNZS Canterbury for a year. Her absolute favourite deployment was to the sub-Antarctic Islands in support of scientific research.

Since May 2023 she has been posted to



HMNZS Manawanui, the Navy's Dive, Hydrographic and Salvage vessel.

"I handle the electrical part of the ship, where we cover our planned and breakdown equipment maintenance jobs, making sure all our machinery is safe and

well maintained. I've had a lot of proud moments in my Navy career, including helping Fiji with disaster relief last year after a cyclone. I got to meet so many special people, it was a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity."

Devonport Naval Base security reminder – for the safety of the community please take care and remain outside the 60-metre perimeter of the Naval Base at all times. This includes when swimming, diving, kayaking, fishing and sailing.

**Congratulations? Thanks?
Problems? Complaints?**

DEVONPORT NAVAL BASE TEL 445 5002



**TE TAUA MOANA
NAVY**

Rice scores for Blues U-20s



Hunter Rice (pictured above) scored a try in the Auckland Blues under-20 team's 42-26 win over their Moana Pasifika counterparts in Taupo last Saturday.

Rice, came to the selectors' attention after an excellent season as fullback in North Shore Rugby Club's 2024 premiership-winning side.

He played on the wing against Moana Pasifika in the first round of an under-20s series.

As this issue of the Flagstaff went to press, the Blues region side was due to play a Barbarians team which includes another promising North Shore player, prop Tom Bradford.

Loosie should make quick return

Star North Shore Rugby Club flanker Donald Coleman suffered a strained groin against Hamilton Marist in a pre-season match last Saturday, but should be fit for Shore's first match of the North Harbour season.

Shore took more than 50 players – premiers, reserves and under-21s – to Hamilton to play six-20 minute spells in what was essentially a trial match.

The club's final pre-season match against Ponsonby this weekend will have more edge, in what is Ponsonby's 150th year.

The sides will compete for the Jack Cox Memorial Cup.

Shore premiers coach James Hinchco said the side was shaping well, with most of the premiership winning team back from last year, but with a few additions including outside back Tima Fainga'anuku, who is a brother former All Black Leicester Fainga'anuku.

Shore has a bye in the first round of the North Harbour competition, then plays Kumeu away on 13 April. Its first home game is against Helensville on 20 April.

"It's not ideal – this weekend against Ponsonby is our last preseason game, then it's Easter and then a bye so we have a two-week gap," Hinchco said.

Kumeu may pose stronger opposition than in recent years, with a number of fringe Moana Pasifika players in its squad and also several transfers from Massey, he said.



On the burst... Donald Coleman in action for North Shore last season

Marist had dropped out of the competition in 2024, but traditional rivals Northcote, Takapuna, and Massey were all "pretty strong", Hinchco said.

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**Citizens
Brokerage
Limited**

Many steps to come before decision on storm-damaged stairs' future

Decisions on replacing the washed-out cliff stairs opposite the end of Westwell Rd in Belmont remain up in the air.

An update by council staff to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board said geotech assessments on replacing the stairs damaged by storms over a year ago were still awaited, as was what storm-recovery funding might be available.

Staff sought feedback from board members at a workshop this month on their preferred options for both Westwell and the stairs left dangling at Kennedy Park in Castor Bay. Options ranged from not replacing the stairs to putting in a viewing platform instead, to full replacements.

For those at Westwell Rd Reserve, which have been fenced off since being damaged, replacement was estimated to cost \$800,000.

The project would be subject to resource obtaining consents, board members were told.

A viewing platform was ruled out by board members as unnecessary. They wanted to see geotech reports before making decisions, but indicated they saw more community demand to replace the better-used stairs at Kennedy Park, than those at Westwell.

But they were concerned that the Kennedy Park stairs had been washed out previously, which was not the case at Westwell.

Staff said the Westwell collapse, which led to the stairs being closed, was because of a land slip triggered by the storms, rather than from wave action, as at Kennedy Park.

Among other issues board members were curious about was the expected extent of future coastal recession. Gavin Busch queried if the estimate was realistic.

Staff said input from the council's coastal team would be part of the project's risk assessment. Structural assessments were also yet to be done. An update is expected mid-year, before decisions will be made.

Chicks crafted for fundraiser



Knitters across the North Shore are working on an Easter project in aid of Harbour Hospice.

Knitted chicks like those pictured above will go on sale in hospice shops, including in Devonport, in the lead-up to Easter, which falls at the end of the month. Each \$8 chick will have a chocolate Easter egg inside.

The idea for the fundraiser came from the neighbour of hospice's retail services manager Maria Baird, when the pair were out walking. She told Baird that when living in England she had knitted chicks for her local hospice there.

A pattern was obtained and the call put out for knitters by volunteers services manager Vicki Parker. More than a dozen people offered to cast on for the project last year.

Hospice would like the fundraiser to grow in future years. Anyone keen to join in and start a stockpile for Easter 2025 can email Vicki at volunteer@harbourhospice.

Padel court prospect presented

The possibility of a padel court at Woodall Park has been put to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

Pacific Padel CEO Julian Brown presented to the board as the Flagstaff was going to press on Tuesday. Padel, a combination of tennis and squash, is one of the fastest growing

sports in the world. "I'm introducing myself to the local board and introducing the sport of padel so that they can consider potential future cooperation on possible sites including Woodall Park.

"There aren't any specifics to discuss right now. [It is] purely conceptual," he said.



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 9.30am Contemporary Service

Maundy Thursday - 28th March
 7pm Communion Service

Good Friday - 29th March
 2pm Devotions on the Cross

Easter Sunday - 31st March
 6.30am Sunrise Service
 at Balmain Reserve
 8.00am Traditional Eucharist
 9.30am All Age Communion Service

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Palm Sunday - 24th March
 10.00am Worship Service
 4.30pm Messy Church

Good Friday - 29th March
 9.00-9.30am Devotional Service

Easter Sunday - 31st March
 10am Family Easter Celebration
 Easter Egg Hunt included

ST FRANCIS de SALES & ALL SOULS CATHOLIC CHURCH

2A Albert Rd, Devonport 445-0078

Palm Sunday - 24th March
 7.00pm Reconciliation Rite 2

Holy Thursday - 28th March
 7.00pm Mass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday - 29th March
 7.00pm Easter Vigil

Holy Saturday - 30th March
 7.00pm Easter Vigil

Easter Sunday - 31st March
 9.30am Easter Mass

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7 - 9am & 4 - 8pm Thursday 29th March

Easter Sunday - 31st March

Sunrise Communion

7.30am at Narrow Neck Beach

9.30am Celebration Service

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Good Friday - 29th March
 9.00 - 9.30am Devotional Service

Easter Sunday - 31st March
 10.00am Easter Communion Service



Radio and refugees helped shape new house head

New Devonport Community House manager Gemma Dickinson tells Helen Vause about her plans to attract more young users – and her experiences working with displaced people in Berlin.

Things are buzzing at the Devonport Community House with new classes pulling strong attendance, more activities scheduled and new blood at the helm.

Gemma Dickinson is delighted to be the new community house manager, having taken up the role in January, and she's rolling up her sleeves to take on its challenges.

She says in a sector beleaguered by shrinking funding, spaces like the community house are needed more than ever before.

While Dickinson is quick to say she is very open to suggestions and ideas to help shape the way forward, she has plenty of new projects planned already.

One is working to have more to offer local youth, and to fine-tune the offerings that will bring more of them across the doorstep.

Young people are a hard group for well-intentioned services to attract.

Dickinson has reached out to groups in that demographic and asked them to help to identify and provide whatever might help bring more young people to the space.

Over summer, the facility's upstairs space dedicated to youth activities has been painted by a team of volunteers, and a programme for Tuesday and Thursday afternoons and early evenings will be launched next term.

A donation of \$7000 has been available to help put her plans in place.

"There are ideas in discussion for this space but we know for example from feedback that a dedicated study time and space would have appeal to young people. If they want to study in pairs and groups, they can do that here."

The house has already had increased engagement with another demographic – young women, including parents in Dickinson's own age group, who are now coming to the classes on offer.

She says this is largely due to the calibre and profile of the exercise classes now available and their presenters, two of whom have an established following among women.

One of those drawcards is Sarah Ostergaard, a highly regarded trainer who developed the high intensity RPM (Spin) programme for Les Mills gyms with her husband, Glen. A local parent, Ostergaard started her exercise classes at the community house last year and word of her expertise has spread with local women of all ages.

Another world-class athlete and trainer, Kauan Gracie, has also come through the door with her skills in recent years. Gracie is a member of a Brazilian family with a

"We have been really lucky to get such skilled people here."

formidable name in the jui jitsu world internationally.

She arrived in Devonport during Covid and began offering community-house classes that have developed a big following of kids and their parents.

"We have been really lucky to get such skilled people here," says Dickinson. "Their networks and reputations have helped to build awareness of what we have here, and of course they're bringing the community in."

Music sessions for pre-schoolers are also a popular new initiative, says Dickinson, while digital sessions for seniors established last year have clicked with growing numbers of retirees.

Roller skating is another new offering that's pulling strong numbers. "That has been so, so successful that I'm hoping we can add more skating days this year."

For Dickinson, mother of Freda (7) and Una (4), this is a dream job for this time of her life.

The former Takapuna Grammar School student has a background in communications, marketing and events, here and overseas.

Before she married and had children, she nurtured her passion for music by hosting radio shows in community radio over about seven years and for a time on the popular George FM Auckland station.

Her focus was on New Zealand music and during those years in radio she met her musician husband Roddy Kirkcaldy.

When the couple moved to Berlin for Kirkcaldy to further his career there, Dickinson looked to change her career, discovering a passion for not-for-profit organisations.

Having her first daughter in a foreign city and being unable to speak German, she found herself very dependent on a local family centre, where she was impressed by the warmth of the welcome and the extensive range of services and programmes available for families and mothers just like her.

"I was a foreigner there with a new baby and I was so warmly taken care of. Through the family centres there was just so much more on offer for people than there is here."

The couple stayed on in Berlin for seven years, during which Dickinson unexpectedly found her own willingness to help others in hot demand. In the winter of 2015/2016, more than a million refugees from Syria streamed into Germany, fleeing war in their home country and having endured terrifying sea passages or long journeys on foot.

"It was the saddest thing I have ever seen,"



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Open to suggestions... Gemma Dickinson is ready to trial new ideas for the Devonport Community House

says Dickinson. "But as I got closer to many of them I was struck by their incredible determination. They were determined to survive, they'd got to Germany and they were resourceful, clever people. They were very quick to help themselves just as soon as they could, finding work, getting their children to schools. It was pretty humbling to watch the way they would go about doing what they needed to do to start over with nothing in a new country. I met so many lovely people and could not help be impressed by them."

Committed to helping the migrants in the freezing-cold winter, Dickinson started volunteering in a clothing supply room.

Her voluntary work continued for two years, trying to fill huge gaps in support. She

helped supply food, clothing and found drivers to work with her, helping move support and supplies to wherever they were needed.

"Sometimes there were just thousands of people waiting. You couldn't help but be touched by their spirit."

In 2018, she returned to New Zealand, where Una was born. Attracted by the potential of the community house, right in her home town, Dickinson first took a job there in marketing and communications. She's proud of progress that's been made there.

The number of volunteers has swelled from just three at the end of 2022 to more than 20, giving her and her team a significant boost in resource.

Funding is an ongoing issue, but she's

hopeful more users will help generate more resources to work with.

Alongside her job, Dickinson is doing part-time study, some of it in the field of 'UX' – user experience.

As she works to identify more of what local people would like to do at the community house, she welcomes suggestions.

And she is very grateful for the recent generous donation that has fast-tracked plans for youth. "Obviously more of that would be wonderful."

She is very open to putting new ideas into practice. "If something sounds viable we would be willing to trial it here and see if it's what people want. This place is for the whole community."



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Social climbers, scouts and sausages... (this page, clockwise from top left) Jerry Lu, 8, navigates a suspended rope tunnel; Wolfgang Sielewicz, 8, is king of the castle, holding onto poles decorated in Scout colours; and sausage sizzlers from 1st Devonport Scouts (from left) James Farrell, Isabella Albrecht and Nicolas Busch, all aged 11, were busy on the assembly line.

Opposite page (clockwise from top left): Caelan Neilson, 9, was among those giving the new accessible roundabout a try; Jasmine Grobbelaar, 11, samples a sausage; Charlie Upton, 5, enjoys shimmying along the ropes; and Thomas Reaves Riddle, 11, plays Spiderman.





Upgraded playground proves a hit

Local families gave a thumbs-up to the upgraded Allenby Reserve playground in Devonport last week, turning out in force for an opening evening made tastier with sausages cooked up by the 1st Devonport Scouts Group.

Years in the planning, the \$150,000 playground is around four times larger than it was and features a wider range of climbing equipment. It has been relocated away from the road and boggy ground.

"It's much more adventurous and covers a different age group," said scout leader Cliff Brown. The scouts, who have their den on the reserve, were asked for ideas from Auckland Council early on, he said.

Reserve neighbour Melanie Kingston, who has children aged four and eight, said: "I think it's great because it caters for older children – they usually miss out."

Another parent, Iain Butler, said kids were thrilled with the reserve, which he visited often due to having two boys at Cubs and Scouts.

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair Toni van Tonder said the playground used a lot of timber, rather than plastics, for natural play features and it had a section with a permeable surface that allowed wheelchair access to a roundabout and to bucket swings.

She hoped the upgrade might encourage people to consider booking the Scout den for children's parties.



Briefs

Bunny hunt returns

The Devonport Kids' Easter Bunny Hunt will run from Friday 15 March until 2 April. Staged by the Devonport Business Association, the hunt challenge is for children up to 12 years old (along with their caregivers). It involves finding the dozen Easter bunnies 'hiding' in the ground-floor windows of various shops and businesses around central Devonport. DBA manager Richard Thorne says the retail promotion has been a huge hit with kids, parents and grandparents in the last few years, and although Easter doesn't coincide with the school holidays this year he's expecting it will be every bit as popular in 2024. Entry forms can be collected from the Devonport Library, with 12 bunny prizes to be won, along with a basket of Easter eggs for the winners.

Duo offers netball camp

Two Devonport schoolgirls are running a children's netball-skills programme at Stanley Bay Primary this school holidays. Isadora Dellabarca and friend Mia Riddington, year 9 students at Takapuna Grammar School and Westlake Girls High School, have launched the primary-school netball camp for Devonport peninsula children between years 2 and 6. Their programme aims to fill a gap in the netball-development sphere and provides children with an introduction to the sport, as well as improving skills. To register, email goalsnetball@gmail.com.

20 years ago from the Flagstaff files

- Three men on the way home from the Masonic Tavern are attacked by a gang of eight youths.
- Security guards are stationed at Takapuna Grammar School, primarily to monitor student car parking.
- Mountain biking is prohibited on Mt Victoria after complaints.
- The Devonport Peace and Plenty Inn is given a prestigious five-star Qualmark rating. It is the only North Shore bed-and-breakfast to attain one.
- Prime Minister Helen Clark detonates a charge to fire Devonport's historic Armstrong disappearing gun on North Head (Maungauika). Hundreds of people flock to witness the first firing of the gun in almost 90 years. Clark also reopens the former barracks building on the maunga, which has been restored.
- Devonport brothers Finn and Oliver Cameron place first and second in the grommets division of the national longboarding champs at Mangawhai.
- Rosie Prickett, a prominent community worker who had a various roles at the Devonport Community House, leaves the area.
- Fairies, monsters and dragon-slayers parade down Victoria Rd to help celebrate Devonport Library's 50th birthday.
- Crusading journalist Warren Berryman dies from pancreatic cancer.
- A *Great Gatsby* picnic will be held in Devonport, with vintage cars and period costumes.
- Beef sirloin cutlets are on sale at Devonport New World for \$9.99 a kilogram.
- Signage for the Devonport peninsula section of the national Te Araroa Walkway is approved.
- Jane Redfearn, Devonport's first recycling officer, retires after 25 years.
- A charity cycle race is canned after complaints from locals about road closures along King Edward Pde and Buchanan St.
- Grant Simpkins joins North Shore Rugby Club premiers coach Stu Mather as his assistant.

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SCHOOL NEWS



Grammar

MARCH 22, 2024

We Will Rock You is coming!

Early in March, our Performing Arts Department had a fantastic time making a promotional video for the school's forthcoming show *We Will Rock You*. Filmed at the Bruce Mason Centre and at Fort Takapuna, with sound recorded at the Radio New Zealand studios, the project has inspired a whole new level of excitement for the show amongst our school community. It's been a great learning opportunity with our students gaining behind-the-scenes insight into marketing and film production processes.

Many thanks to former student Rueben Brunton who, together with his team at Motioncraft, did an amazing job capturing the energy and talents of our lead actors, musicians and dancers. And a special thank you to Andre Upston who made it possible for our band and singers to record in the impressive RNZ sound studios.

The video is available to watch now on YouTube. Head to the TGS Performing Arts Facebook page to find the video link and other show information. *We Will Rock You* hits the stage at the Bruce Mason Centre 6-8 May - tickets are available on Ticketmaster now. They're selling fast so get in quick!



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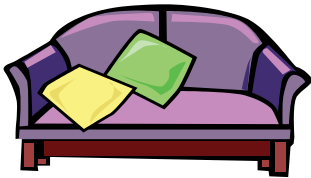


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Fishing Report for Mid March '24



Local hoodlum that fell victim to a well placed live bait

Howdy Fello Fishos,

It's been a bit like ground hog day out there lately. There are plenty of snapper around but mostly in the 30 to 35cm range and smaller. Easy enough to get a decent feed but quite hard to catch any bigger ones. However, with this slight drop in temperature we will see the fishing improve. The snapper will be fattening up to get through the winter so the bite will come on within the next month or so.

Out wide there are the odd scattered work-up but nothing worth burning too much gas for. The usual spots like around Anchorite rock, off the tip of Coromandel and East of Kawai have seen quick work-ups turn on then off so you really need to be Johnny on the spot.

We've been having plenty of fun catching large kahawai and even the odd kingfish in the harbour. The other day we threw a live bait at one of the marker buoys and it got instantly smashed by a decent kingi....awesome sight to see, a live bait jumping out of the hungry mouth of the kingi only to be hunted and finally engulfed.

We cooked up some fresh kahawai the other night and it was as good as snapper, it really is an overlooked fish for the table. We've had it raw, in curries and pan fried with butter. As long as it's fresh and you cut out the red flesh, I highly recommend trying one.

Righto that's it from us, I hope you guys have been out there getting some action, please send in pics to us at devonport@hammerhardware.co.nz

Cheers

Matt & Trev



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Bin-free spots are already trash-strewn

Regarding the proposal to remove a number of rubbish bins from the Devonport area: I trust the bins being removed are not well used. If not, we will either end up with accumulated dumped rubbish and consequent removal cost to the council, or potential health hazards and environmental pollution.

In fact there are already locations without a rubbish bin where discarded trash accumulates. A prime example is the footpath down the hill to the New World supermarket from the junction of Victoria Rd and Calliope Rd.

Partly because the sculpted dragon bench is a gathering place for snackers and drinkers, the adjacent area has become a depository for bottles, cans and other discarded trash. I suggest one of the removed bins be placed next to the dragon seat to cut down on the discarded trash among what was an attractive pathside planting area

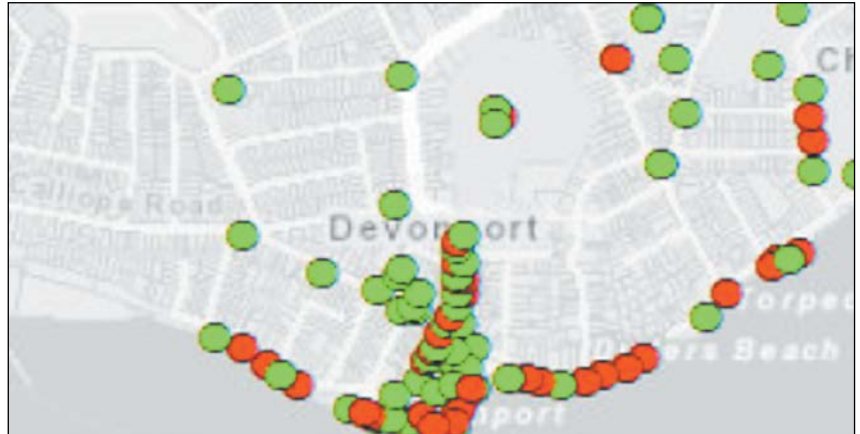
Marshall Piercy

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair Toni van Tonder responds:

The removal of bins is of huge concern to us and we're watching the impacts of that decision. You're right, they have removed the bins that are meant to be underutilised.

The local board uses its operational budget to provide an enhanced level of town-centre maintenance. It is a priority location for us, so we have contractors who come daily to collect loose litter. No bin should ever be full (or smelly or leaching) in the business district and this includes Bartley Square and Victoria Rd up to Calliope Rd.

Waterfront bins disappear



Canned... An Auckland Council map showing the former location of removed bins on the Devonport waterfront in red and those remaining in green

Remaining rubbish bins fill up

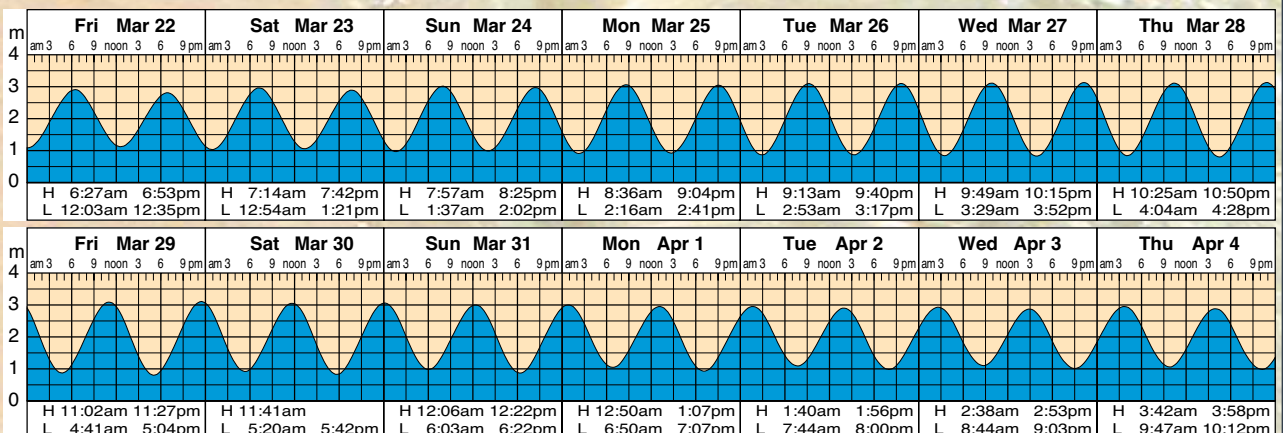


Three pictures (above, from left): One near Queens Pde, now down to two bins on a 500m-long reserve; one at the skateboard park (we need kids to use bins and they are!); and one at Windsor Reserve beach, on ground by the boardwalk where a bin AND a recycling bin used to be.
– Annemarie Thomas

Harcourts Devonport Tides

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Sculpture show made record sum for charity

Sculpture OnShore at Fort Takapuna raised a record amount of \$350,000 for Women's Refuge last November.

The event had the biggest turnout of its 27-year history, attracting 22,000 visitors in its two-week run.

Friends of Women's Refuges Trust announced the size of the donation at a gathering at the Navy Museum at Torpedo Bay, Devonport, last week.

Since 1996, the trust has raised \$2.6 million through what has grown to be the country's largest outdoor sculpture event.

Women's Refuge chief executive Dr Ang Jury said without the trust and the event Women's Refuge would be unable to provide the care it did for women and children affected by domestic violence.

"Working to achieve safety within the lives of them and their children is hard, and support like this means we can make this all just a little bit easier."

Trust chair Rachel Brebner said 370 volunteers helped stage the show, which had exceeded all targets and expectations.

It showcased work by 100-plus artists and 16 schools and attracted visitors from around New Zealand.

More than 1500 school children were among those who explored 130 works exhibited primarily outdoors, but also in Fort Takapuna's military heritage buildings.

Sculpture OnShore chair Sally Dewar, who lives locally, said she was delighted by the numbers who attended, and also by record arts sales which contributed to the amount raised.

She thanked participating artists and sponsors and patrons.

Jury said the money donated would continue to support refuge programmes, including providing crisis accommodation, essential personal-care items, and counselling and advocacy support.



Art of successful fundraising... Sculpture OnShore trust board chair Sally Dewar (left), of Stanley Point, with Women's Refuge chief Ang Jury at the Navy Museum last week, when the record sum raised by the event this year was revealed. They pair stand in front of a sculpture of raised hands by Devonport artist Helen Pollock, who has been involved in the outdoor exhibition from its inception.

New Zealand had the highest rate of domestic violence in the OECD, said Jury, with one in three women experiencing some form of abuse in their lifetime.

"This is money that does things we can't do otherwise."

It went straight into services, with none sliced off the top for administration.

"Every dollar that is raised is going straight into making women's lives better."

New linen for refuges would help women and children who came there feel valued, Jury said.

Legal representation was another area that would be further supported, with many women, such as those on partner visas, ineligible for state assistance.

Some were in safe houses with their children for up to a year, unable to work and needing support, she said.

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TORPEDO BAY
NAVY MUSEUM



Accountant's eye for detail adds up in writing sideline

Devonport accountant and author Sheryl Beaumont has successfully found a way to combine her passion for research and love of travel, with the exacting craft of writing.

This has recently resulted in the publication of her 10th book, *The War Photographers*, which she describes as “a crime novel disguised as historical fiction”.

After its launch at the Devonport RSA last month, it found a place on Booksellers Aotearoa New Zealand's Top-10 list before selling out. A second print run is arriving in stores now.

The book tells a story set both in Britain during World War II and Berlin in the 1980s. It centres on a woman who worked in code-cracking at Bletchley Park, an unsolved crime, and the quest for answers to that takes her granddaughter to Germany. A New Zealand war photographer features, with the novel's opening set in Oamaru.

Beaumont – who writes as SL Beaumont, joking that using initials rather than her first name worked for Harry Potter creator JK Rowling – is now working on another novel, the third in a series based on the work of a forensic accountant, Kat Munro.

Munro assists police with inquiries into matters such as money laundering, drug trafficking and cyber crime.

Beaumont sees parallels between the problem-solving nature of her day job as a director of Axiome Chartered Accountants and the creation of stories that unravel complex cases.

Despite her track record of having books published – including a young-adult series with art crimes and Nazi looting at its heart – she has no intention of giving up her accountancy work to focus solely on writing.

For more than a decade she has juggled writing around bringing up her three now-adult children and her career.

It was when her children were still at school and she was working part-time that she wrote her first book, the first of the art series, *The*



Dual career... Sheryl Beaumont outside the Devonport RSA where her 10th book, set partly during World War II, launched.

Carlswick Mysteries.

Beaumont, who grew up in Alexandra and attended Otago University, says she has always been a big reader, but back then “a career as a writer was something I never considered.”

She moved to Auckland with her husband. “We flatted here [in Devonport] before we went overseas. It has changed so much.”

She spent seven years working in banking in the United Kingdom, before the couple headed back to Devonport 20 years ago, still charmed by its location and easy access to the CBD.

The lure of London, her favourite city, is still strong, however. She returned there for research on *The War Photographer*. “I'd been to Bletchley Park a number of times, but I also went to the Imperial War Museum, Churchill's war room and the London Transport Museum.”

In Berlin, she visited the museum near Checkpoint Charlie, where the wall once divided the east and west of the city.

The days of the Stasi secret police holding sway in communist East Germany features in the novel's story.

Research and developing scenarios are things she greatly enjoys in her approach as an author.

The trickiest part, she says, is coming up with a first draft. Then it's polishing and a sometimes-drawn-out process of editing prior to production.

The War Photographers took her around a year to write before submitting it to her publisher, and a further year before publication.

Painstaking attention to detail is also part of her accountancy work, and while that may not involve tracking down Nazi war criminals it does offer the quiet satisfaction of helping a diverse range of clients solve tax problems and the like. “Accountancy always has a result,” she says. And for the rest of her time: “The stories keep coming.”

• *The War Photographers* is available at Paradox bookstore in Victoria Rd.

NUNUKU'S LIGHT



Miriam Cameron

10am-2pm Wed-Sun

FROM THE LAND: FOR THE LAND



THE RUA PANELS

23 March-17 April

satellite2

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DEPOT Te Whare Toi

Tēnā koutou,

As summer draws to a close and we head into autumn we're very excited to be opening our gallery shop! Supporting local artists and artists from across Aotearoa, we will be selling handcrafted items, including ceramics, cards, jewellery, prints, glassware, Toi Māori, homewares, art and art publications.

The gallery shop will be open to the public from **Friday 5 April**, so be sure to visit and support our local makers.

DEPOT Artspace's second exhibition of 2024, "New Principles" is a collection of contemporary furniture from emerging and established makers based in Tāmaki Makaurau. The exhibition includes the work of Emile Drescher, Jeremy Evison, Alex Guthrie, Josephine Jelich, Raimana Jones and Ted Synnott. This exhibition brings furniture into the public eye not as accessories to a room, but as a highlight and objects of fine art.

DEPOT Sound is proud to present two exciting initiatives in April, including a collaborative and hands-on **Songwriting Workshop** for emerging songwriters, and an **Audio Production Workshop** for female and non-binary musos. With access to DEPOT Sound's recording studios and feedback from industry professionals, you'll expand your skills, confidence, and networks. Check out depot.org.nz/sound for full info on both workshops and to register today

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Ngā mihi nui,
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Delayed reaction: Exhibition



Peacemaker... Nunuku, who forbade war, cannibalism and murder in the Chatham Islands, depicted in one of the works painter Miriam Cameron is exhibiting at Satellite2 Gallery in Devonport from 24 March. Cameron, who visited the Chathams in 1999, has also drawn inspiration from rock carvings she saw there.



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draws on artist's 1999 visit to Chatham Islands

A trip to the Chatham Islands/Rekohu nearly 25 years ago has led a Belmont artist to her latest exhibition, partly inspired by the story of a pacifist Moriori chief from the 1500s.

Painter Miriam Cameron – who was herself active in the 1980s anti-nuclear movement – says: “We need to honour the peacemakers... if we don't honour the peacemakers what have we got?”

Her exhibition, *Nunuku's Light*, opening at Satellite2 gallery in Devonport on Sunday 24 March, also draws on symbols from distinctive petroglyphs she saw on the trip, including at Nunuku-whenua's cave.

These memories and a fascination with what she describes as “a little unique culture living in the middle of the Pacific” stuck with her through the years.

She drew on memories, photographs and notes as source material to complete 15 works in several bursts, starting around 10 years ago, although most were painted recently.

Cameron travelled with a small group of artists to do work commissioned in the lead-up to an expected tourist boom to welcome in the new millennium. Among them was well-known painter Nigel Brown, who like Cameron was a member of Visual Artists Against Nuclear Arms (VANU). The group is responsible for a peace mural that is still on a wall at the corner of Ponsonby and Karangahape Rds.

The visiting artists spent three weeks on the Chathams in October 1999. They were put up at the hotel in the main town, Waitangi, in exchange for some art works which remain there.

“I knew nothing about the Chathams until then,” Cameron told the Flagstaff. “It was quite intense, the whole stay there, the weather was intense.”

She fondly recalls its wild terrain and the seafood bounty – joining locals in shucking pua and cooking scallops.

A trip to Pitt Island, where the “first light” of the 2000s was to fall, was quite an ordeal, however.

“They're a tough breed. We went over in a little boat and I hung on to the captain's Fair Isle jumper.” Once the rough trip was over, she says: “We threw ourselves down on the rocks.”

Learning about Nunuku was a highlight. He established Nunuku's Law, forbidding war, cannibalism and murder. This was strictly obeyed by the Moriori, but in 1835 hundreds of Maori came from the mainland and eventually killed many Moriori.

Cameron says it was fascinating how Nunuku's people lived in wild terrain under a covenant of peace. “What impressed us as artists for peace was that these people managed to stick with it, and live there for centuries.”

They and their descendants left behind

dendroglyphs, the name given to carvings on trees, as well as the rock art, known as petroglyphs, which she says are like nothing she had seen before. Symbols depict birds, seals and waves, which are echoed in her expressionist paintings.



The dendroglyphs show carved human forms. “What moved us as artists is the softness and gentleness of it – the happy faces on those trees.”

She recommends historian Michael King's book *A People Rediscovered* and Barry Barclay's film *Feathers of Peace* for those interested in learning more about the history of the Moriori. Having the Michael King Writers' Centre nearby in Devonport chimed with her as one of the many connections with her own life that led her to offer her own take

on the Chathams and its heritage of peace.

Cameron is looking forward to what is her first exhibition to be held locally, after 15 years living on the peninsula. Previously represented by a city gallery, her talent has already been recognised locally, however, in a ‘Cultural Icon’ interview she did with the Depot Artspace for its archives sometime ago under its former creative director Linda Blincko who now runs Satellite2 with partner Lynn Lawton.

An earlier Cameron connection with the area is from the beginning of the 2000s, when she taught some community art courses at Takapuna Grammar School. She eschewed art school herself, saying she was probably rebelling against it because her painter mother was an Elam graduate.

In her younger days she made political posters, but these days she is not actively involved.

Cameron would like to go back to the Chathams, saying the images of its trees remain vivid in her mind. Some landscapes feature in her show, but mostly she says it is to honour a peacemaker, without getting into the politics of a complex history.

“I'm going to give light back to Nunuku,” she says.

• *Nunuku's Light* is at Satellite2 gallery, 61a Victoria Rd, Devonport, until 17 April.

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