

The Rangitoto Observer

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 16 - October 11 2019

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

First child confirmed with measles in Takapuna... p2

Police called as local elections get nasty... p7

Cocaine fuelled art walk up to speed... p19

Bah, humbug! Christmas show cancelled

The popular Christmas by the Lake concert at Milford has been cancelled.

The free event, which featured the Auckland Symphony Orchestra and choirs from five local schools, was attended by around 2000 in 2018.

Organisers warned the Devonport-

Takapuna Local Board last month that the event planned for 24 November this year would not go ahead if it failed to gain more funding. The board declined to increase the \$15,000 it was putting into the event, as it too was strapped for cash.

Milford Business Improvement District

manager Murray Hill told a board workshop the event was hanging in the balance. After the meeting, he mounted a desperate attempt to secure a leading sponsor, but was eventually forced to cancel the event.

"After four fantastic years, it is with dis-

To page 3

Shore teens hit the streets for global climate strike



Direct action... Sian Moloney, Neve Roe, Aislinn Scully, Merette Jounila and Paige Burkett of Westlake Girls High School were among thousands of young people who flooded into central Auckland for a Climate Strike rally on 27 September. Photo: Keeley Watson. More pictures pages 8 and 9.

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Another popular North Shore event canned for lack of funding

News that Christmas by the Lake has been canned after four years is disappointing for all, and adds to a wider concern about the viability of public events on the Shore.

The event, which featured the Auckland Symphony Orchestra and choirs from five local schools, was attended by around 2000 people in 2018.

In summary, Christmas by the Lake was a victim of its own success. Popular and well-loved by the community, it became increasingly expensive to put on – costing around \$70,000. It was around \$13,000 short for 2019.

Over the years, the Milford Business Improvement District has been putting up chunks of cash to keep it going. And despite a last-ditch charge by the ever-enthusiastic manager Murray Hill to find more sponsors Christmas by the Lake was cancelled.

Cast your mind back a decade ago: a similar fate befell the Devonport Food and Wine Festival run by Devonport Rotary. It started as a small community event, but increased in size to such a degree it needed a professional organiser. Council concerns

around drunkenness meant it had to be fenced, patrolled by security and ticketed. The combined costs put Rotary at huge risk of losses when the weather was bad.

The death knell came when the Auckland Council was created and the previous sponsorship from North Shore City was cut, as Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) decided it was not a national or regional event and subsequently not worth funding. A popular event which had run for 20 years was gone.

Christmas by the Lake falls into the same too-hard basket. A great event, but not enough money coming through to guarantee its long-term life. The same is true of a lot of other events on the Shore – cobbled together with a combination of BID money, sponsors, and a grant from the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board, which is never enough.

At the same time, the cost of events and council compliance (traffic management plans, security, toilets, etc.) is rising.

Who can blame the Takapuna, Milford and Devonport business districts for feeling rising frustration that event money is

increasingly spent in the city. The America's Cup is a case in point: millions spent in downtown Auckland, with Devonport, Takapuna and Milford having to scratch around for a few crumbs.

The danger for Shore residents, and those from other places that attend the events here, is the area is becoming increasingly boring – with anything worth going to held on the other side of the bridge.

Rob Drent

The world's our oyster – more than once a year

Residents of Takapuna, Milford and surrounds are among the country's keenest travellers, with an average of more than one overseas trip per person per year.

Residents in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area took an average of 106 overseas trips per 100 people in the year to June 2019, data from Statistics New Zealand show.

That is second only to Orakei Local Board residents with an average of 131 trips per 100 people.

Castor Bay singer Tina Cross aims to travel several times a year with her partner and, occasionally, adult children.

"I think it's important to get out of your normal space when you've been busy, grab some vitamin D, try some new food options (especially where you're not cooking), meet new people and also reconnect with your nearest and dearest. If you're living a fast-paced life, that reconnection is everything."

As a nation, New Zealanders averaged 63 trips per 100 residents.

"Proximity to an international airport plays a part in the ease and affordability of travel," population indicators manager Tehseen Islam said.

Regionally, Aucklanders are the most likely to go overseas, with 80 trips per 100 residents, followed by Wellingtonians with 65. Gisborne residents are least likely to travel, with 31 trips per 100 residents.

Letters to the Editor

Topics should be local.

Noms-de-plume or submissions without a name will not be printed.

Email news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz or post to Rangitoto Observer, PO Box 32 275, Devonport.

Takapuna child contracts measles

A child attending an early childhood centre in Takapuna has been confirmed with the measles.

This is the first case in the past two months, in the area covered by the Observer, which has a higher vaccination rate than the national average. There have been two cases in Devonport, reported a few weeks ago, but none since, an Auckland Regional Public Health Service spokesperson says.

Takapuna has a vaccination rate at 5 years of 84 per cent; Forrest Hill 93 per cent; Sunnynook 89 per cent, Castor Bay 92 per cent and Lake Pupuke 86 per cent, Ministry of Health data show.

Nationally, immunisation rates have fallen in the past three years, from 81 per cent in 2016 to 77 per cent in 2019.



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Singer applauds musical's hard-hitting themes



Up for a challenge... Professional singer Jenn Shelton is taking a musical that tackles depression in her stride, saying it's important to open up a national conversation about mental health

Working with at-risk youth prepared a Takapuna singer for a 'raw and real' musical addressing depression.

Jenn Shelton is rehearsing for the upcoming musical *State Highway 48* at the Bruce Mason Centre, which is about a family facing changes, and has an actor playing the 'black dog' of depression.

"I have worked in this type of theatre before where it's raw and real," Shelton says.

She worked with a theatre company that travelled around high schools, working with at-risk young people.

"It was theatre for change and mental wellbeing," Shelton says.

This current musical, which has some laughs along with the serious themes, will help people because we need to talk about mental health and depression and get it out in the open, Shelton says.

"People will feel feelings they may not otherwise allow themselves to feel and think about things they may not otherwise.

"It's important at this time in New Zealand, because we are losing a lot of people."

Shelton moved to Auckland from Wanaka early this year and has just finished a season of *We Will Rock You* also at the Bruce Mason Centre.

"There's a lot more opportunity in Auck-

land and especially in Takapuna. You don't need to go too far before you get all your needs met," she says.

After 10 years' working as a singing teacher in Wanaka, Shelton now takes on more paid work, from backing vocals to advertising jingles. Teaching is still her passion and she teaches from home, getting satisfaction from helping people get opportunities in their own singing careers.

• *State Highway 48 is at the Bruce Mason Centre from 15 to 19 October.*

Need to talk: free call 1737 to reach a trained counsellor; Depression Helpline 0800 111 757, free text 4202.

from page 1

Lakeside Christmas show won't go on

appointment that we must announce, due to the lack of sufficient funding to provide a free event, the Christmas by the Lake event will not be going ahead for 2019," Hill said in a statement.

"We wish to thank the local community, Devonport and Takapuna Local Board and our sponsors Harcourts Cooper & Co, Mercedes-Benz North Shore, Oceanbridge Shipping and Simpson Western for their support over the past few years. We will now work with our sponsors with the aim of bringing the event back for 2020."

The event included food trucks, face painting, photos with Santa and a toy van.

The community "loved the event" and would be "traumatised" if it didn't go

ahead, Hill told the local-board workshop.

However, it cost around \$70,000 to put on: the stage alone cost \$16,500, and the big screen \$7500, Hill told the board.

Even with funding from sponsors and \$15,000 from the local board, the event was around \$13,000 short for 2019, Hill said.

The Milford Business Association had been making up the difference, but members simply couldn't afford to meet the costs, which were going up each of the four years the festival had run.

In an impassioned plea to the local board for more money, Hill said he was at his "fundraising limit" to entice sponsors and supporters to fund Christmas by the Lake. Hill said it was ridic-

ulous \$1 million was being spent on a new playground in Devonport when a few extra thousand could not be found to support Christmas by the Lake.

Board members said while they supported the festival, financially their hands were tied as increases in spending were frozen.

Chair George Wood said the local board's budget was at the maximum.

• A smaller-scale replacement event for the cancelled Christmas by the Lake spectacular is being investigated by the Milford Business Association. Member Tony Sands said it was disappointed for the public that the event was canned due to a lack of funding. Full details of the new event were being worked on as the Observer went to press.

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North Shore trampolining star hits the heights

Trampolinist Nathan Monkton can bounce to almost three storeys, nearly hitting his head on the rafters of the North Shore Events Centre, where he trains.

This year, the 16-year-old Westlake Boys student has won two gold medals representing New Zealand at the 2019 Australian Gymnastics Championships and been selected for the World Age Group Trampoline Competitions in Japan in November, his fourth worlds event since he took up the sport aged seven.

“I was playing rugby and basketball, and I was quite competitive in team sports and had to rely on a team, so I wanted to go into an individual sport.”

His mother took him to North Shore Trampoline.

“I had a jump and I really enjoyed it.”

Within the first term at the club, Nathan was invited to join the competitive programme.

He went on to win his first gold medal in the Gymnastics New Zealand National Championships in Dunedin at the age of nine.

“That was a good motivator – getting up on the podium drives you to get better.”

Nathan trains with the club at the events centre five nights a week, for one-and-a-half hours a night, and doesn't find it a grind.

“It's just the friends you make – you get to hang out with people you like every day – and self-improvement, learning new skills. It's fun.”

His first worlds were at the age of 12 in 2015, which involved travelling to Denmark, where he won silver in the synchro category with a trampoline partner.

Since then, he has been to the worlds in Bulgaria (2017) and Russia (2018), funded by his parents and some family fundraising activities, such as a quiz night and a sausage sizzle.

There have been a few injuries, but the club



leaders emphasise safety, which has prevented anything too serious.

Currently, Nathan is nursing a back injury, related to repetitive jumping, rather than a crash. He's working with a physiotherapist, hoping to bounce back before the World champs in Tokyo in November.



On the bounce.... Nathan Monkton winning gold in Australia (left) and with other medals he has won (above)



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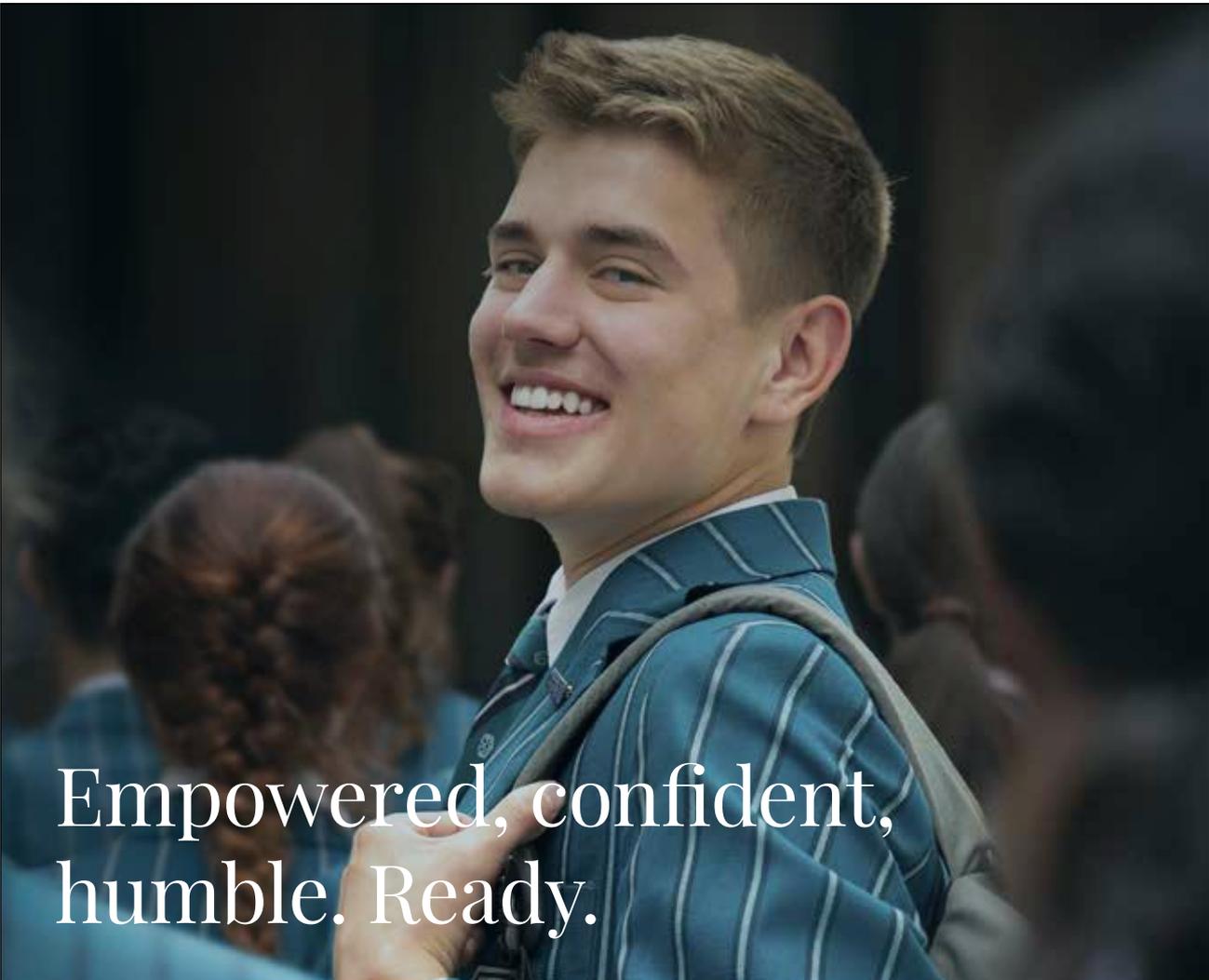
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Low turnout looming?

Initial voting figures in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area suggest a low final turnout is likely in this year's local-body polls, which close at noon tomorrow.

As the *Observer* went to press, 6975 votes or 16.4 per cent had been cast as of 4 October, compared with 7725 or 18.2 per cent at the same point in the 2016 elections.

There are 42,426 eligible voters in the area, compared with 42,350 in 2016.

The turnout for the whole Auckland region was 15.2 per cent compared with 18.3 per cent at the same point in the local elections in Auckland in 2016.

Ballot forms can be dropped at Takapuna Library until noon tomorrow.

Police called in as campaign turns nasty

A man has been warned over harassment and police called in to investigate death threats online and defacement of billboards as the North Shore election race has taken an increasingly nasty turn.

The attacks have centred around sitting North Shore Ward councillors Richard Hills and Chris Darby.

Hills said he went to police in March after a man started contacting him on the phone and with text messages containing the names of funeral homes "and you'll be next" threats.

The man was called into a police station where he was cautioned and told to cut off all contact with Hills. The councillor was also offered a safety audit of his house.

"It was very nasty, but I didn't want to make a big deal about it. It was the day before Christchurch [the massacre of 51 people] and it paled into insignificance compared to what happened there."

The harassment and online threats began for Hills last year. They included images of the Grim Reaper, sickles and hangman's nooses.

Another recent spate of threats on the Save the Takapuna Car Park website have been referred to police by Hills and Darby.

Now, over the past couple of weeks the pair's election billboards have been defaced by what appears to be the same person.

Hills, who is gay, had "poofter" sprayed on one of his billboards. For Darby it was "creep" and "creepy".

A number plate of the vehicle used by the man believed to be the perpetrator has been passed to police.

Hills said he found all the incidents upsetting for him, friends and family.

The three alleged offenders were all middle-aged males.

While Facebook and online media make it easier for anonymous attacks, Hills is also concerned about the implications for democracy.

"People will be less inclined to stand (for council and the government)."

Darby said initially he downplayed the threats and had "a fairly thick skin". But, when his daughter saw the offending material online, and became scared someone might come around to his home, Darby took the matter more seriously.

A complaint has also been lodged with Auckland electoral officers over a 2040 Takapuna advertisement that ran in the Rangitoto Observer's most recent edition (27 September), criticising Hills' and Darby's performance.

Electoral officer Dale Ofsoske said it had been referred to the police for investigation around incorrectly endorsing candidates.

• see *Editorial*, page 10.

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Signs of the times: North Shore youth join climate strike

We asked Rangitoto Observer contributing photographer Keeley Watson, 18, for her perspective on the ground at the climate strikes.

As a current Westlake Girls' student, I have attended two of Auckland's Climate Strike marches. The purpose of these strikes are to stand up for policy change around climate issues. At the rates we are currently at with our use of resources and contribution to pollution, we are heading towards a future filled with consequences.

My generation and the ones to come will be greatly affected by this. Because we are a young generation many of us do not yet have the opportunity to vote and have our say on environmental policies. So these strikes allow us to have a voice and be heard by the government. Having these protests on a school day (Friday) creates controversy, because our education is important to us and it is highly valued in our society. The significance of this is that it sends a stronger message to the government about how serious we feel about climate change issues and how change is desperately needed for the future of our Earth. The atmosphere at the strikes I attended have had an overwhelming sense of fear, anger and hope. Fear for our future generations, anger towards the lack of attention and action, and hope as we unite together. Even though the strikes are a platform for students, there is great support from all generations. On Friday 27th of September, 3.5% of New Zealand's population (approximately 170,000) protested at their local strike. With these strikes occurring globally, these numbers in New Zealand are inspiring and difficult to ignore.



On the march... Katrina So from Westlake Girls. Photos: Keeley Watson



Fear, anger and hope... emotional marches



Sister act... Opal and Macy Jensen from Carmel College



In this together... Grace Marshall, Sofia Greenhalgh, Georgia Craig, Sophie Dykgraaf and Scarlett Kerse from Westlake Girls

The Facebook effect – the 2019 local body elections

The North Shore race in the 2019 local government elections has been the most absorbing for decades – probably for all the wrong reasons.

Police have been called in after online death threats to North Shore ward councillors Richard Hills and Chris Darby and the defacement of their billboards with inappropriate comments.

A lot of to-and-fro slagging and general political points-scoring has been rife online, particularly on Facebook.

A couple of highly critical adverts of Darby and Hills have also been published.

Another development is the launching or reactivating of pressure groups by candidates in the election voting time frame. Devonport-Taka-

puna Local Board candidate Iain Rea has been involved in the re-establishment of the Takapuna Ratepayers Association. It has applied to the High Court for a judicial review of council decisions on Takapuna Square. The group sent out a press release but the Observer has been loath to cover it as, at deadline, a request to provide the full documents has been refused.

And then last week another candidate, Trish Deans, of Devonport Heritage fame, launched a group for those concerned about developments on Hurstmere Rd, Takapuna.

What will become of these groups post the elections only time will tell. However, critics have been vocal about their relevance and

emergence during the voting cycle.

It's difficult to know how engaged the general public has been with it all but a candidates meeting at the Devonport Community House was attended by more than 200.

I guess the true test will be the numbers who turn out to vote. Remember you only have one chance every three years to decide the local body representation you want.

Rob Drent

Clarification

In the article 'Feathers fly in Sunnynook showdown' (27 September), it incorrectly stated North Shore councillor and planning committee chair Chris Darby 'didn't realise the appeal/judicial review had been completed'.

Darby says his legal advice is the case is still going through court process, because Takapuna resident Franco Belgiorno-Nettis has requested a further appeal regarding 'the relief' granted in his successful appeal, regarding Takapuna planning decisions, to the Supreme Court.

The Observer accepts Darby did know the status of the case. However, as it has been subject to a publicly available ruling we feel he was able to answer questions on it.

Letters

Your headline (Issue 15, page 31) 'Environment Takapuna blocked from speaking' needs some explanation.

Community groups and interested citizens have been very grateful to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board for allowing the public to attend briefing workshops. They are one of only two boards in the Auckland Council that does this. We hope it will continue with the new board. Workshops are an opportunity for council staff to discuss with and inform members on issues that will come before the board in the business meetings.

Attending members of the public are not allowed to speak.

It was therefore surprising that two groups, the iwi, and residents from the apartments, were given speaking rights at the workshop reporting back on the public consultation for the Sacred Grove. Environment Takapuna

Keep workshops public

Inc had made submissions, on behalf of the many walkers, swimmers and dogs who have used the walkway to escape the high tide, or just to walk through the trees. We have since been persuaded by the arborists that severe pruning would be needed to keep the users of the boardwalk safe, and have agreed that it remain closed.

There was no arboreal explanation for closing the stone lookout.

Board members Jan O'Connor and Mike Cohen did ask that we be allowed to speak. It wouldn't have made any difference. The decision had already been made.

Ruth Eil

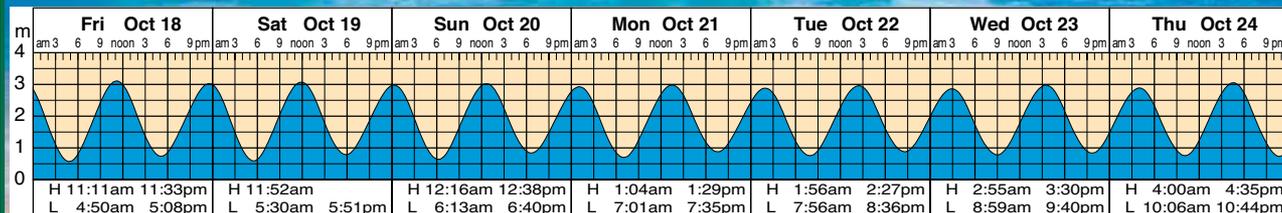
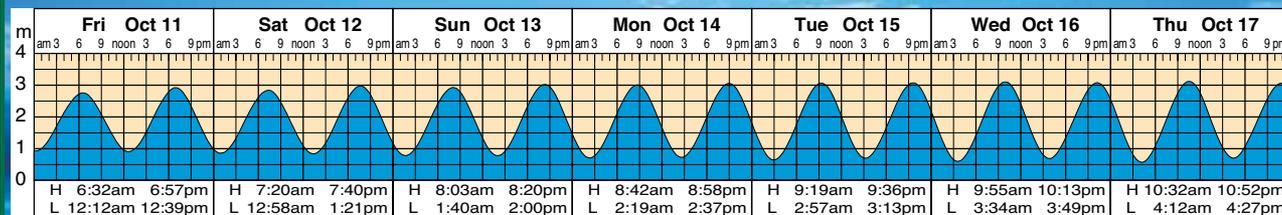
Environment Takapuna Inc.

• Editor's note: a minor point of clarification: no decisions are formally voted on at workshops although strong direction can be given to officers.

Letters to the Editor

Letters are welcome. They should be on topics relating to Milford, Takapuna and nearby suburbs. Noms-de-plume or submissions without a name will not be printed. Length should be under 500 words. Email news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz or post to Rangitoto Observer, PO Box, 32 275, Devonport.

Milford / Takapuna Tides



How did Wairau Estuary get this way?

The Wairau Estuary is one of the dirtiest waterways in Greater Auckland.

It disgorges human faecal contamination, heavy metals, silt and hydrocarbons at Milford Beach.

The faecal matter is the reason Milford Beach is so often red-listed by Safeswim and why the estuary and its beach outlet have a permanent no-swim warning.

The heavy metal contaminants are mainly copper, lead and zinc. The hydrocarbons are carcinogenic, although they are diluted on entering the ocean.

The silt load is the reason Milford Beach has cloudier water than surrounding beaches. As you walk through the shallows on a calm day, the fine silt layer atop the sand clouds up around your feet. Children play in this shallow water. This silt contains hydrocarbons, heavy metals and faecal bugs.

The shellfish concentrate heavy metals and faecal bugs as they attempt to filter and cleanse the water. That is why there is a permanent ban on shellfish gathering.

Five hundred years ago, Rahopara Pa on the Castor Bay headland adjacent to Milford Beach was occupied. Presumably the main hazard to health at that time was from opposing tribes, for the waters in the bay and estuary were sparkling and clean, free from human faecal contamination. The shellfish beds at the mouth of the Wairau Estuary were an abundant source of food. This was a healthy food source, free from contamination. Being free of silt, the water was clear, making it easy to see and catch the schools of schnapper that fed on the shellfish and crustacea on the sandy bottom.

What is now known as Milford Beach was called Onemaewao, after the mythical creatures who came to gather shellfish under cover of night. One time they stayed too long and perished when the rays of the sunrise caught them by surprise. If there are any still around today, maybe they'd use sunscreen and it would be the faeces and heavy metals in the shellfish that would



Our streams runneth over... Sections on Nile Rd, close to Wairau Stream, during a 1953 flood. (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collections T1981)

do them in?

By 1900, most of the Wairau catchment was converted to pasture. With fewer tree roots, more silt washes into the stream with each heavy rainfall.

Silt blocks sunlight and prevents aquatic plants from growing. As it approaches the sea, the stream slows and mixes with saltwater. The silt particles fall, smothering healthy bottom life and inciting mangroves to spread.

After the land was cleared of trees, next came subdivision and this further increased the soil run-off into the stream. More land was made impervious (house roofs, concrete driveways, asphalt roads), meaning larger volume run-off without trees and soil to soak up the rain and allow it to trickle slowly to the stream. This faster flow washed more soil into the streams.

The larger run-off volumes after heavy rain now caused flooding to occur at places like Nile Rd and Wairau Rd. To counter this sequence of our alteration of the natural environment, the council converted the stream into a long concrete channel that coped better with the higher flows (but

destroyed most of the lifeforms therein). The Wairau industrial zone, together with runoff from roads and galvanised roofs, contributes heavy metals and hydrocarbons.

The faecal contamination comes from illegal domestic plumbing connections and old sewer pipes that have become leaky and need relining. Plumbing of stormwater such as down pipes into the sewer system (often via gully traps) causes the sewer system to overflow in heavy rain. The result is the release of raw sewage into the Wairau Estuary.

Today, climate change is gathering momentum and will deliver more storms that are more violent. Together with more housing and impervious surfaces, this means more discharges of raw sewage into the Wairau stream. Contamination is likely to get worse... unless something is done.

The Prime Minister said recently: "Every New Zealander should be able to swim in their river without getting sick." In Auckland, we view swimmable beaches just as much a Kiwi birthright as swimmable rivers, such as the Wairau Estuary.

Continued p13

BELMONT Village

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Mark Cooper
Sales Advisor



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From page 11

How Wairau got this way



Better days... A waterfall on the Wairau Creek in 1889. (Auckland Libraries Heritage Collection NZG-18950810-167-1)

This national-level acknowledgement of the issue will only translate into action when our local body representatives hear from us that swimmable water matters. The politicians need our mandate to fix this problem. This is the sort of legacy we want to leave for our tamariki and mokopuna.

By Guy Armstrong, on behalf of Milford Wairau Estuary Environment Preservation & Swimming (WEEPS), a group that wants all North Shore beaches and the Wairau Estuary swimmable at all times within five years. To support Milford WEEPS, email your details to change@milfordweeps.nz

Hundreds object to 3am closing

Hundreds of residents objected to three bars on Hurstmere Rd in Takapuna extending their closing times to 3am.

A total of 201 submissions objected to the three notified applications, covering Master and Apprentice, Florrie McGreals and the Elephant Wrestler. Twelve letters were submitted in support.

The deadline for submissions was 3 June, but four months later, a hearing date has still not been set.

“As this involves three licensed premises, it is not unusual for it to take longer than a single application,” general manager of Auckland Council democracy services Marguerite Delbet says.

Some Takapuna residents rallied opposition to the applications, on the basis there could be issues with drunken behaviour, safety and rubbish.

Applicant Kevin Schwass told the Observer the bars would not generally stay open until 3am, but the change would give them flexibility for a few stragglers or special events.

Schwass confirmed the application was “still live”.

Schwass said he and fellow bar owner Steve Shute were doing some work “behind the scenes” to refine their submissions.

Ladies’ tea and tennis

A charity tennis event at the Forrest Hill Tennis Centre offers women a chance to upskill and get fit, followed by fine tea.

To raise money for the Breast Cancer Foundation, on 14 October the club is holding free Cardio Tennis, a great tennis fitness workout for existing players, along with Tennis Xpress, a fast-track programme for beginners. Morning tea is at 10am, with a tasting by local company Tea Total. Places are limited, text Alicia Baker 0210 848 9150.

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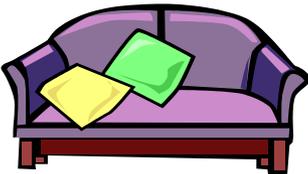
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Send your CV and covering letter to managing editor Rob Drent at news@devonportflagstaff.co.nz.

Rosmini fall short at final hoop

Rosmini College was runner-up in the national secondary schools basketball finals last weekend losing to St Kentigern 77-51.

It was always going to be a tough match for the two-time defending national champions as St Kentigerns had beaten Rosmini three times earlier in 2019.

The taller St Kentigern side managed twice as many rebounds as Rosmini, and restricted the North Shore team to only 17 per cent from the three-point line.

This was reflected in the stats of one of Rosmini's stars – Taine Murray (a national Tall Blacks team member in 2019) – who scored only eight points in the final, after averaging around 25 points per game in the previous matches, including 26 against Cashmere High School in the semi-finals.

The Rosmini Team for the final competition was:

Brandon Robb, Cian Emery, Jayden Boucher, Marvin Williams-Dunn, Matt Drury, Pita Maxwell-Topia, Reihana Maxwell-Topia, Sean Murphy, Taine Murray, and Thomas Morgan

Youth innovation hub set in stone

A youth hub in Takapuna has taken a significant step forward that confirms its future.

Brosnan Construction 'broke the ground' on its Shore Junction work on 23 September and is expected to finish in February 2020.

The youth centre will be an 'innovation hub' where young people can develop high-tech skills.

The idea is the innovation hub will keep a relationship with Brosnan that will support young people wanting to work in the construction industry, according to a Shore Junction e-newsletter.

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Children dig theatre-related play date



Actors from Tim Bray Theatre's The Little Yellow Digger, on at the PumpHouse, organise play activities for children at Takapuna's 38 Hurstmere during the recent school holidays



Children at work.... This page, clockwise from above: Benno Hauser (age 3); Haru Sato (age 7); Sadie (6) and Sid (3) Van Tonder; Rebecca Stubbing (helper) with Kaia (3), Noa (6), Ena (6) and Layla Ljubobratovic (8)





In heaven... Surrounded by yellow diggers, Zane Kilroy (3) couldn't be happier.

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Sunnynook's urban art walk will start on 'Cocaine'

Interesting features of Sunnynook, such as the street name sometimes misheard as 'Cocaine Crescent', will be highlighted in an urban art walk project spearheaded by resident Melissa Powell, on behalf of the Sunnynook Community Association.

Included in the 2018 Sunnynook Plan, the aim of the art walk is to beautify the area and celebrate its history, Powell says.

"We have a beautiful reserve, Lyford Reserve. We want to get the art trail as a loop from the bus station up through the reserve and back again," she says. "It will be great for families and kids who will be able to walk or bike it."

The trail will begin winding through Cockayne Cres, a name which can sound like a certain class-A drug. (Powell once misheard her son's teacher as declaring she was "just off cocaine".)

Some residents would apparently prefer to have the crescent renamed to avoid any confusion, but the true name will be marked on the art walk by a bronze of the celebrated New Zealand botanist Leonard Cockayne (1855-1934).

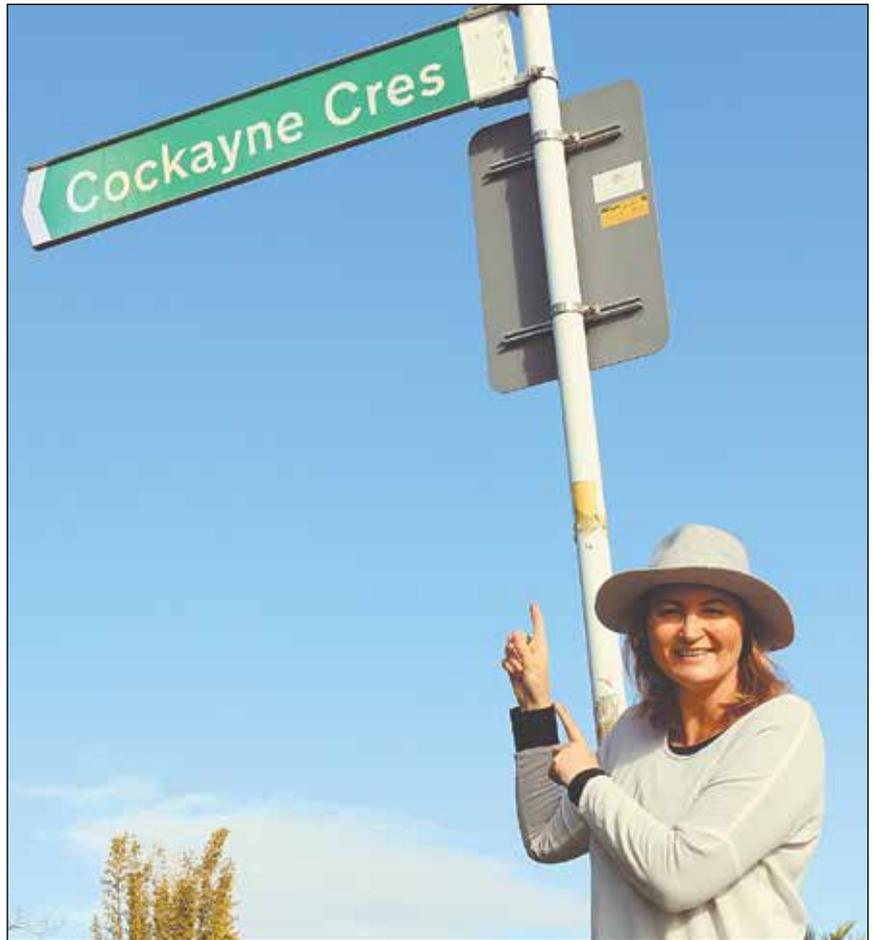
Sunnynook has some 17 streets named after plants, including sycamore, laurina, juniper, aralia and kama, which are thought to tie in with the use of the botanist's name.

The trail will pass through a carved wharenui entrance on Kapatī Cres, and past whanau carvings in Lyford Reserve, art installations in Sunnynook Park and murals on the community centre.

In the 1960s, a number of Maori families were helped into housing in Sunnynook by the Maori Affairs Department, and many family members still live in the area.

Some descendants will next month start learning carving from master carver Natana Hira at the Lake House Art Centre, with a goal of installing carvings in Lyford Reserve during Matariki 2020.

In Powell's quest to learn about the area she



No drugs here... Sunnynook Urban art walk leader Melissa Powell points to a street name often pronounced 'Cocaine Crescent'

moved to in 2004, with her husband and two children, she has recorded oral histories, and created a history of the area.

Powell is still interested in interviewing more

residents, and would appreciate any further information about the Cockayne connection. She can be contacted via Sunnynook Community Centre.

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Kids' activity rotates around solar system

Stellar activity... High school students lead a solar-system-inspired activity as part of the Sunnynook Community Centre's school holiday programme. Clockwise from below: Rangitoto student Rio Nakamura is running the session as part of her IB community project; Westlake Girls' Tessa Munday hangs up the children's solar systems to dry; Reya Vashani (9) paints her 3D solar system.

Photos: Keeley Watson



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Junior scientists... Sisters Jaime (6) and Cassie (5) Burns are deep in concentration while making model rockets

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Superbugs remain an issue at North Shore Hospital

From January to July, 76 patients picked up a super bug often associated with urinary tract infections after admission to North Shore Hospital.

That compares with 22 Waitakere Hospital patients who have been infected with the antibiotic-resistant bacteria, extended spectrum Beta lactase-producing bacteria (ESBL), in the same period.

The number at Waitakere Hospital is up from 16 in the first six months of the year, following an outbreak in one ward, where five patients contracted the bug.

Specialist shortage blamed for delays

A workforce shortage is blamed for lengthy delays in seeing a North Shore Hospital specialist regarding ear, nose and throat issues, such as, sleep apnoea, hearing loss and sinusitis.

In the year to July 2019, almost 600 patients waited more than four months for a first appointment with an ear, nose and throat specialist, while almost 1500 were seen within that timeframe, according to a report to a Waitemata DHB committee.

There is a national shortage of these specialists, and training to become a specialist is lengthy, which makes it difficult to correct a

shortage, hospital advisory committee chair James Le Fevre told a September committee meeting.

Once patients were given a commitment to surgical treatment, things looked up in this specialty this year, with almost 500 patients treated within four months and almost 40 waiting longer.

However, there were delays for treatment in gynaecology with 530 patients treated within four months and 75 waiting longer, and in orthopaedic surgery with 1000 patients treated within four months and 143 waiting longer.

Takapuna Beach festival postponed

A major watersports event and festival planned for Takapuna Beach in November has been put on hold but will resurface during the America's Cup in 2021.

Professional athletes from more than 20 countries were set to compete in kite-surfing, paddle-boarding and windsurfing competitions at the Waterbourne event.

Organiser Laurence Carey said a key sponsor could not be found for the November date. A decision was made to focus on a larger festival to run in February 2021, coinciding with the America's Cup.

Watersports events and musical performances would still take place at the expanded festival, which would also include more input from local businesses and the arts community.

After the launch to coincide with the America's Cup it would become an annual event.

"At the first event it is important to have the highest possible standard to guarantee success," Carey said.

DHB's \$250K pay debt

Unused leave among hospital staff means Waitemata District Health Board is carrying more than \$250,000 worth of debt.

This includes both unused annual leave and other staff entitlements, such as for continuing medical education, a report to the DHB's 2 October meeting said.

This level of debt is typical across the country's DHBs and is not expected to be drawn on in its entirety at any one moment, with claims offsetting entitlements over time, chief financial officer Robert Paine said.

Cancer treatment delays

Hospital treatment for North Shore patients suspected of having cancer fell short of government guidelines in the first five months of the year.

The target set by the Ministry of Health is treatment within 62 days for 90 per cent of patients assessed as highly likely to have cancer. Up until June, Waitemata DHB's result was 83 per cent of patients seen within 62 days, according to a report to the hospital advisory committee. However, thanks to "intensive work and monitoring", the DHB met the target in June and expected to keep it up, the report said.

What's On

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