

The Rangitoto Observer

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 24 - February 21, 2020

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

Coronavirus fears cancel
Takapuna festival... p2

Bergin and Grant vie to
replace Barry... p2

Top Westlake sculptor
off to meet PM... p3

Pollution anger: 'There's shit in our water...'

A rowdy public meeting has called for Auckland Council to take the highly polluted Wairau Estuary out of the 'too hard' basket and clean it up.

More than 300 people attended the meeting at Milford Cruising Club on 11 February, organised by Dr Guy Armstrong of Milford

Wairau Estuary and Environment Protection Society (Milford Weeps).

"The council has been disengaged forever," Armstrong said, urging the audience to protest.

"There's shit in our water and the kids can't swim," he said to loud applause.

All of the North Shore councillors and local board members campaigned on cleaning up local beaches, he said.

"It's time to move from talking to action now."

To page 4

All ages catered for at Lake House Arts centre



Arty party... One of many toddlers enjoying a play date at Takapuna's Lake House Arts centre - Emilia Bligh (17 months). More photos by Keeley Watson on page 9

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Takapuna Asian food festival canned due to coronavirus fears

Concerns over Covid-19 (coronavirus) have led to the cancellation of the iLove Takapuna Asian Food Festival, due to be held in March.

The Takapuna Beach Business Association said the decision to cancel came after a number of discussions with representatives of the local Chinese community in the last couple of weeks.

“Our local Chinese community has had growing concerns with the timing of the event, with many requesting us not

to proceed with the event this year due to the current outbreak of Covid-19,” TBBA chairperson, Tony Dench says.

“Many in the community don’t feel it is appropriate to celebrate given the ongoing outbreak in China and loss of life there,” Dench says.

“We love and respect our local community and so will not be proceeding with the event this year.

“We would like to thank everyone involved in the event so far and we look

forward to bringing you the event again next year.”

The event, planned for Saturday 9 March in Hurstmere Green, was to feature a lion dance, tai chi, sword and fan tai chi and Chinese folk dancing.

There were also going to be circus and craft workshops, plus numerous food vendors.

The festival started last year, with 2000 attendees, and was set to become an annual event on the Takapuna calendar.

Familiar faces vie to replace Maggie Barry

Past and present local politicians Joseph (Joe) Bergin and Danielle Grant have confirmed they will seek selection as the National Party candidate in the true-blue North Shore seat.

Former National cabinet minister Maggie Barry, who has held the seat since 2011, announced last November that she would retire from politics at this year’s general election. Nominations for the National candidacy were due to close this week as this issue went to press. A candidate-selection meeting will be held on 12 March.

Grant is in her third term on the Kaipatiki Local Board, currently deputy chair and previously chair of the board in a shared term. She also worked as a communications

advisor in Maggie Barry’s North Shore office, supporting people with their issues and liaising with government agencies, such as Housing New Zealand and Inland Revenue.

In her time with Kaipatiki Local Board, she has advocated for better coordination of public transport to solve issues of congestion, driven discretionary funding of \$50,000 per year to work with individual Wairau Valley businesses on plans to stop polluting the creek and Milford Beach, supported pestfree initiatives and had to deal with kauri dieback.

Bergin, a Takapuna resident, was 18 when first elected to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board in 2010 and served two terms.

In that time, Bergin, now 27, served for 18

months as chair, sharing with Mike Cohen.

The Devonport Library and Takapuna Beach playground were built in that time, plus a lease signed for Shore Junction youth innovation hub.

Meanwhile, the council’s bid to develop Takapuna Beach Holiday Park was defeated amid community uproar.

Bergin, who is now working as a lawyer specialising in resource management and large projects for Buddle Findlay, is proud of gains for youth in his tenure, including Shore Junction and the Local Economic Development Action Plan, which addressed youth employment and under-employment.

Bergin is on the Shore Junction steering group and chairs the North Shore Fund.

The Rangitoto
Observer

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Devonport Publishing Ltd Level 1, 6-8 Milford Road
Telephone: 09 445 0060
Email: sales@rangitoto-observer.co.nz
news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz
Website: www.rangitoto-observer.co.nz

MANAGING EDITOR: Rob Drent
PUBLISHER: Peter Wilson
EDITOR: Jodi Yeats
ADVERTISING: Liz Cannon

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2 The Strand: empty for 710 days

The former Takapuna Library building at 2 The Strand has been vacant since an earthquake notice was issued in March 2018. The 1956 heritage-listed public building has now been unoccupied for 710 days. At some point, its future will be determined by Auckland Council.



Demolition by neglect?... Former 1956 library at 2 The Strand

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Sculptor's exam mark earns visit to PM

A former Westlake Girls student will be personally congratulated by the Prime Minister for being the top scholar in the country for sculpture in scholarship exams.

"It's pretty cool," Emma Ormsby, 18, says of the opportunity to meet Jacinda Ardern, as part of an elite group of top achievers in June.

"I felt incredibly lucky and grateful to my amazing art teachers who have helped me on this journey," Ormsby says.

Ormsby, who also gained a scholarship for English, only found her passion for sculpture at the start of last year, after earlier thinking she might pursue politics.

The two disciplines have come together as her work is inspired by her Maori ancestry and looks at the challenges of the country becoming truly bicultural.

"That's what my board [final submission] is about – we have to have an equal society where all cultures are treated equally," Ormsby (Ngāti Maniapoto, Ngāti Porou) says.

"But you start with Maori – that's where we [historically] started. You need to become bicultural before becoming multicultural, because you need to treat the people in our own backyard right."

In particular, Ormsby's work is inspired by her grandfather, who she admired.

"He was a true Maori grandad – kind and softly spoken."

Ormsby was affected by his stories of growing up and being told by his mother he had to get on in a "white man's world".

He was beaten at school in the Waikato for speaking te reo and was not allowed to take books out of the school library, because it was assumed Maori kids would steal them.

This year, Ormsby is a technician in Westlake Girls' art department, as well as studying fine arts and arts, majoring in Maori studies at Auckland University.

As a service prefect in 2019, Ormsby raised \$10,000 for Reclaim Another Woman, or RAW, a charity working with women in prison, founded by fashion designer Annah Stretton.

Ormsby visited women involved in the programme last year and this year has been accepted as the youth ambassador for the charity.

She plans to work with young female prisoners, aged between 12 and 25, visiting them, encouraging them that they can turn their lives around and teaching art.

Other high achievers from Westlake Girls were Emma McGuigan, the 2019 Dux, who won four scholarships in biology, chemistry, statistics and history, Priya Patel, who won three scholarships in biology, economics and technology, and Xiaole Zhan, who also won three scholarships in English, biology and music.

Outstanding Scholarships were awarded to Orla Thompson (technology), Sophie Logan (biology) and Irene Wu (English).

More scholarship results on page 19.



Exam ace... Emma Ormsby won top marks in New Zealand for sculpture, with work including this one, showing Tāne breathing life into the first woman

Anzac Day service resumes in Takapuna

Official Auckland Council-organised Anzac Day services will be held in Devonport and Takapuna again this year.

The services were put on hold last year after the Christchurch massacre due to security concerns. A sizeable 'renegade' service was held in Devonport by locals still wanting to remember the fallen.

Council is spending \$31,000 on the services. The Takapuna service may be impacted by road works taking place on Hurstmere Rd, a report to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board said.



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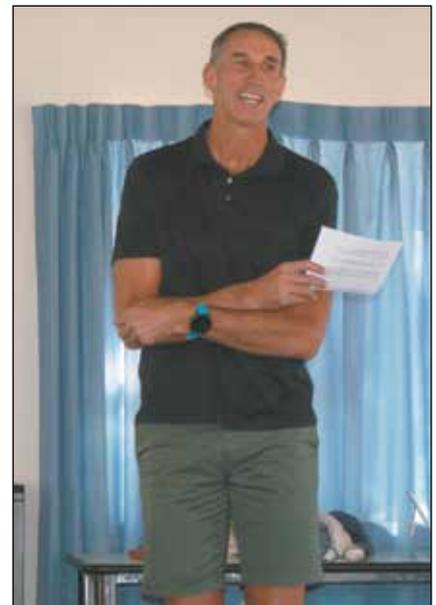
Takapuna

From page 1

Crowd called to protest over pollution



Time for action... Milford Weeps' Dr Guy Armstrong rallied the crowd and guest speaker Professor Jacqueline Beggs set the scene



Former All Black and harbour swimmer Ian Jones was MC

The Wairau Estuary is permanently marked red, or unsafe for swimming, because of faecal contamination, on Auckland Council's Safeswim website.

A key goal for Milford Weeps is for the Wairau Estuary and Milford Beach, which it flows onto, to be safe for swimming 365 days a week by 2025.

It would like the Safeswim rankings for the estuary and Milford Beach to be at an average level for Auckland beaches in two years' time.

It isn't just faecal contamination affecting the beach, but also heavy metals from road run-off and the Wairau industrial area, Armstrong said.

The third issue is sedimentation, which is largely a result of intensification and more impermeable surfaces, leading to soil run-off.

The problem is exacerbated in Milford where creeks were replaced by concrete

channels in the 1970s, in an effort to prevent flooding. These lead directly into the estuary. The consequent lack of absorbent soil in the waterways increases sedimentation.

Sedimentation blocks the light that water-borne organisms need and smothers all life on the ocean floor, Armstrong said, showing a slide of a plume of sediment issuing from the estuary into Milford Beach.

Further, the sedimentation means the Milford Mariners society, which manages the marina, has to dredge every two years.

The sludge is so full of heavy metals and toxins, the society has to pay \$2 million each time to get a landfill to receive the toxic sludge and is experiencing financial hardship as a result, Armstrong said.

Milford Mariners president Rik Roper said he had found no other marina has such toxic slurry or faces those expenses.

Armstrong called on elected local-body members to make cleaning up the estuary

a priority and to obtain funding to do the work.

The targeted water rate is being largely spent on the much more significant problems facing the city, but the next priority after that is water infrastructure work to the east of the city.

"We will be waiting decades before the Shore gets funding," Armstrong said.

There was debate between local-board members at the meeting and councillors about who held the purse strings, with the board saying it had no money and councillors saying the board sets priorities.

Castor Bay Ratepayers and Residents Association president David Green called for local-board members to make cleaning up the Wairau Estuary a priority in its plan.

He called for it to be a 'line item', so the council could see it is a priority for spending.

Guest speaker Professor Jacqueline Beggs opened the evening, talking about species loss, which is now being hastened by climate change, and the need for groups to work together.

This prompted Armstrong to propose all concerned community groups meet with council officers and engineers to come up with an action plan for the estuary.

The Wairau Estuary catchment is the largest in Auckland.

Former All Black and harbour swimmer Ian Jones acted as MC, managing to be both engaging and firm, particularly when it came to closing down hecklers and politicians.

Among the audience, Gavin Sheehan could recall swimming and fishing in the estuary as a boy.



Strong support... Around 300 concerned residents attended a town-hall-style meeting about cleaning up the Wairau Estuary

Sickness link often overlooked

Swimming in water contaminated with faecal matter, as is often the case at Milford Beach, can cause illnesses, but because they take a few days to incubate, swimmers who become sick may not make the connection, a doctor told the public meeting on Wairau Estuary and Milford Beach pollution.

Milford Weeps' Dr Guy Armstrong told the meeting faecal matter contains 50 per cent undigested food and 50 per cent microbes, many of which can make people sick.

But the incubation period makes it unlikely people will link illnesses they're suffering from – including ear and sinus infections, colds, flus and diarrhoea – with having been swimming.

It is known heavy rainfall can flood the stormwater system, so it mingles with the wastewater system and pollutes beaches. However, the estuary and Milford Beach also have dry-weather faecal contamination from illegal plumbing and blockages, often caused by wet wipes, which gather oil and fat into 'fatbergs'.

"When the water is clear, that's no indication it's safe for swimming," Armstrong said.

Another invisible pollutant in the Wairau Estuary is heavy metals from road runoff and industrial waste. Sediment in the Wairau Estuary carries zinc, copper, arsenic, cadmium and chromium at far higher levels than guidelines recommend.

What Weeps wants

- Safeswim testing of stormwater outlets and testing in the Wairau catchment for sources of dry-weather faecal contamination, starting immediately, as has been done in Castor Bay and Takapuna Beach.
- Installation of new high-tech sediment traps into problematic stormwater outlets.
- Local groups and businesses to meet with council to agree on an ecological restoration plan.

What council and local boards have done so far

- Kaipatiki Local Board has funded consultants \$50,000 per year to visit businesses in the Wairau Valley and develop tailored plans to avoid their polluting the estuary.
- Safeswim has started testing stormwater outlets discharging into the estuary, and found one significant source of faecal contamination. It is now using smoke testing and CCTV to trace the problems, so far discovering one private and one public issue, councillor Richard Hills told the meeting.
- The Croftfield Lane Stormwater Wetland was completed four years ago.
- 'Dry detention' work at Sunnynook Park,



Health warning... Wairau Estuary is permanently rated as unsafe for swimming due to faecal contamination

Board asked to demand more water-quality info

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board members have been urged to seek more information on beach and Wairau Creek water quality.

The issue was due to be discussed at a board meeting held as this issue of the Rangitoto Observer went to press.

A motion lodged by board member Ruth Jackson proposed that Healthy Waters staff be asked to attend monthly board meetings to report on progress improving water quality, and any pollution incidents

A series of board workshops was also needed to explain to members the exact issues which affect water quality in the waterways, lakes and beaches in the local board area and the wider Wairau Valley catchment, the motion said.

Safeswim should also provide a monthly report to the board on the water quality, hazards and alerts at beaches in the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board area, it said.

Watercare should also provide a summary of incidents where sewage has leaked or overflowed to stormwater networks or beaches and waterways, Jackson said.

"Our residents are clamouring for council to clean up pollution in our waterways and ensure our beaches are reliably safe to swim at," she said in a supporting letter to her fellow board members.

"This is an issue which has a long and complex history, which does not have a simple or single solution.

"For the board to play an effective role in this issue we must be kept well informed with regular accurate and timely information."

• A request that Auckland Transport and Healthy Waters clean roadside water channels and stormwater catch-pit covers more regularly has been lodged by board member George Wood.

More pollution traps had been installed over the last couple of years but it seemed they were not cleaned every four months as recommended, Wood said.

"Currently, Healthy Waters cleans the catch-pits on arterial roads every six months and the frequency on local roads is 12 months," he said.

Swimmers dismayed at lack of money and action

A group representing harbour swimmers is disappointed there was no money for fixing Auckland's water pollution issues in the government's recent \$12 billion infrastructure splurge.

Mayor Phil Goff has admitted councils have underspent on stormwater and wastewater projects for the past 25 years.

Now a large sum of money, around a billion dollars, is needed to fix the problem of Auckland's polluted beaches, CleanSwim Auckland's Alton Jamieson says.

However, the new funding is going to major transport projects in Auckland, he says.

CleanSwim is frustrated with the lack of progress on cleaning up the city's beaches, saying Goff vowed to achieve 30 years' worth of work on the network in 10 years, but two years have passed with little progress made.

Abandoned boats in Wairau Creek worry residents



Up the creek... Residents fear abandoned boats in the Wairau Estuary and a collapsing jetty could become a hazard and add to pollution

Derelict yachts in the Wairau Estuary are angering residents who want the creek cleaned up.

There are several sunken yachts in such a state that the tide goes in and out of them, says Warwick Gair, who lives along the Wairau Creek.

One of the boats has been there possibly as long as 16 years, he says.

About a month ago, Gair called the Auckland harbour master about one yacht, which had sunk in the middle of the creek, and it was moved nearer the bank. The yacht has tools visible and furled sails.

Gair says he has been trying to clean up the creek for years, so Milford and Takapuna beaches and Castor Bay are more swimmable.

He is pleased by the formation of citizens'

group Milford Weeps.

Milford Cruising Club commodore Tony Sparks says the boats are not the club's responsibility.

They are a safety hazard and should be removed, says Sparks. In heavy rainfall, the creek floods and a boat could wash away and become a dangerous missile.

Removing them can be challenging, as it involves disposing of diesel in the engine and any other toxic compounds.

The Milford Mariners society is responsible for marina moorings, but president Rik Roper says the derelict yachts are in a part of the creek, near the Inga Rd bridge, that is outside the area it is responsible for under a resource consent.

"We think they are an eyesore and would like them gone," Roper says.

Auckland harbourmaster Andrew Hayton says he has added the derelict boats to his list of abandoned vessels, which currently stands at 30 boats.

Hayton says there is no immediate safety concern, so the boats will not be removed immediately.

Removal of boats is governed by a statutory process under the Maritime Transport Act 1994, which includes posting a notice on the boat and taking steps to identify the owner.

If an owner is found, they are responsible for the costs of the boat's removal and receive any proceeds from a sale, if there is one, minus expenses.

Hayton says a collapsing jetty near the derelict yachts is not his responsibility. Auckland Council says the jetties on the creek are privately owned.

Sunnynook Park makeover continues

Improved walking and cycling connections at Sunnynook Park are driving a revamp of the area.

Its sportsfields were recently upgraded but while the Sunnynook Community Centre is busy “its rear outdoor area is currently underutilised,” a council report to a Devonport-Takapuna Local Board workshop said.

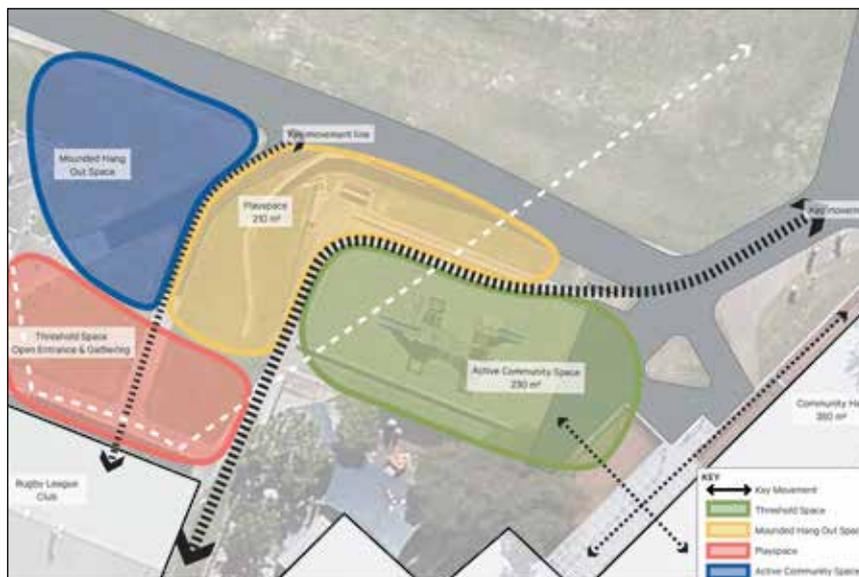
Options for the area included:

- A corkscrew play net
- A pirate tower
- A tetrahedron climbing net
- and a fort tower

Currently the site is: “car dominated ... pedestrian movement is restricted and ‘tight’,” the report said.

The plan, which is up for discussion by the local board, says considering the “outdoor room” opens up opportunities for activating the space.

“Improving facilities for walking and cycling as part of the wider network will make it more attractive for reserve users, and open up the accessibility of a ‘rear’ entrance to the centre,” the report said.



New look... Artist's impression of changes around the Sunnynook Community Centre

Walkers still waiting for safety rail

More than a year after consent was granted for construction of a wall up to two metres high on a property bordering the Takapuna-Milford coastal walkway, a handrail that was included in the consent has not been installed.

The November 2018 consent for the 19 Brett Ave property says the handrail would ensure the wall would not “impede public access to the adjoining coastal marine environment or present a safety risk”.

In June 2019, the site manager told the Observer plans for a handrail with a coastal theme were with the council awaiting approval. The wall had been completed a few months earlier. At that time, Auckland Council said it expected the handrail to be installed “shortly”.

Richard Preece, team manager compliance monitoring, says the handrail was “offered by the applicant as an extra to be included in the resource consent, given the public interest in this walkway. A timeframe for installing the handrail was not imposed as part of the agreement, however it will need to be constructed prior to the development being completed. It is important to remember that this walkway and handrail are on private property, and the handrail is a gift to the public that will be paid for and installed by the property owners, not by Auckland Council. The property owners are going to install the handrail. However, we are not holding them to a timeframe, given the resource consent hasn't specified they need to have it completed by a certain date.”

Business association moves to ‘plan B’ for Milford Rd bus stops



Unstoppable... After losing a war against a new bus stop, Milford Business Association's Murray Hill is sprucing up the waiting area

Protests against Milford bus stop changes that removed six 30-minute car parks fell on deaf ears, so the Milford Business Association is moving to Plan B – giving the area a makeover.

Association manager Murray Hill urged Auckland Transport (AT) not to install a new layover bus stop on Milford Rd and make a temporary library-bus stop permanent, fearing the loss of parking would affect local shops. However, those changes went ahead.

“I have conceded defeat,” Hill says.

“If you can't beat them, join them. I have tried to turn a negative into a positive. We are trying to do the area up,” Hill says.

While the business association is organ-

ising a tidier area and plans to install new pot plants, Hill would like AT to come to the party with a new seat and a digital sign for the bus stop.

The existing seat is now next to the bus stop used once a week for a library bus and occasionally for retirement village buses.

Hill would like a seat beside the most popular bus stop.

Hill's initial campaign had a win on the other side of the road, where planned bus-stop changes have not gone ahead.

“We have saved one car park,” he says.

AT said bus patronage at the stops had gone from 350 per month in June 2018 to 4000 in June 2019.

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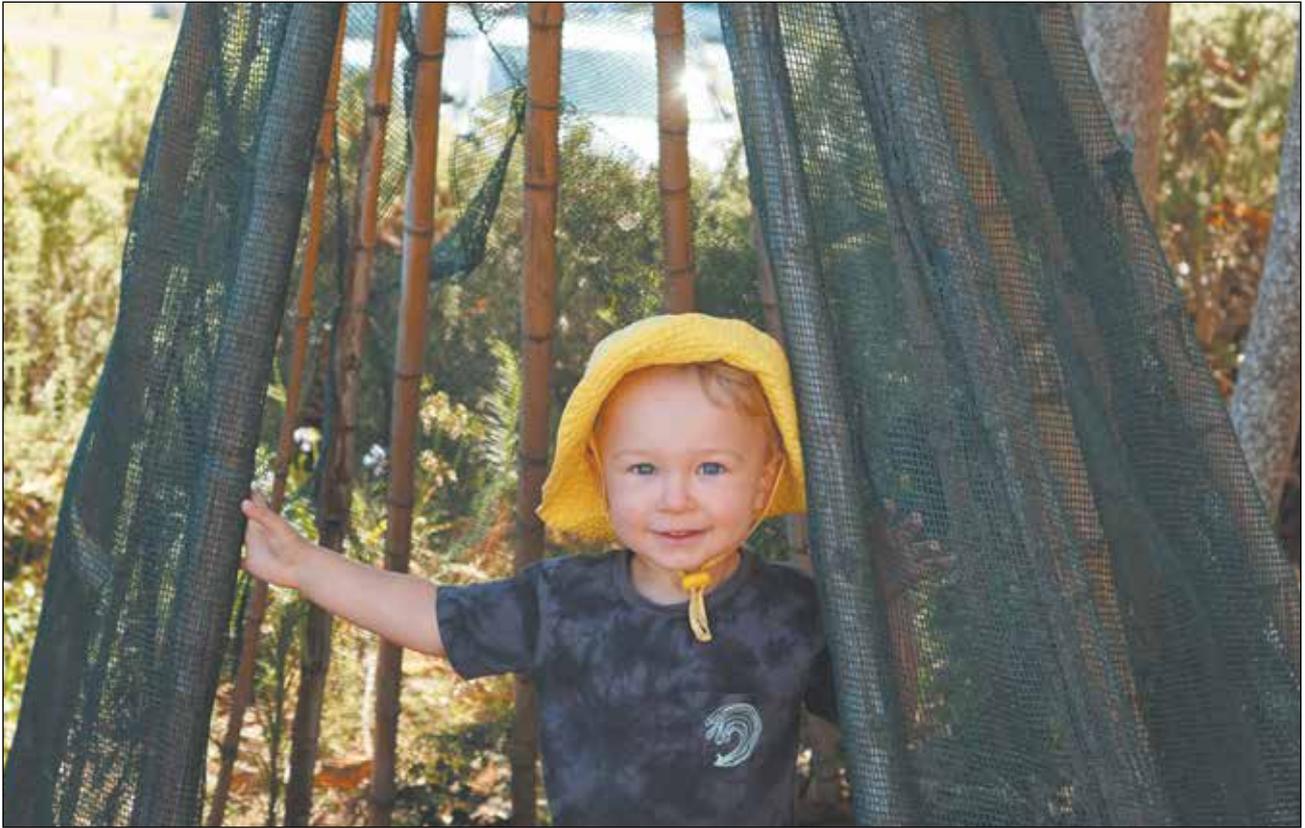


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Tots take to eco-friendly playground



Endless summer... Toddlers enjoying this summer's perfect weather with a Takapuna North Community Trust play day at the Lake House Arts Centre: above Bodhi Tuckey (2); (below left) Blake Munday (18 months) and (below right) Leo McRae (3)



Still no start date for Hurstmere street works

Businesses in Hurstmere Rd are still in limbo over major street works, with no timeline yet in place.

Auckland Council had hoped to finish negotiating tenders with contractors and announce the start date in January. However, the council has now told the Takapuna Beach Business Association it could be a few more weeks, pushing the announcement into March.

Shop owners have complained about difficulties knowing how much stock to order, as they expect the major street upgrade to impact on business, but the timing has been uncertain for around two years.

Public consultation closed in October 2017.

Takapuna Beach Business Association chief executive Terence Harpur is planning a campaign to encourage people to shop locally and support Hurstmere businesses through the road works period.

'Get a real dog' owner told during Milford Beach attack

The owner of a fox-terrier/Chihuahua cross attacked by a doberman at Milford Beach was shocked when told during the incident to 'get a real dog, get your dog put down'.

Sarah Nutt said she was walking seven-month-old Maggie off leash on Milford Beach last Sunday.

The doberman puppy, also believed to be around seven months old, mauled Maggie twice, "grabbing her and throwing her in the air," Nutt said.

"The owner could see I was terrified, I did all I could to save Maggie and I was visibly distressed. I was also severely concerned for my own being as this dog was vicious.

Nutt says she screamed for her "to put her dog on leash three times while it was mauling my puppy. She stood back and did nothing, just laughed at me with her headphones on. She did not care at all and was happy to

watch.

"After we walked away the dog came back again off leash for another attack.

"Her response to me asking to put a leash on was "Get a real dog, get your dog put down, it's a waste of space," Nutt said

She has contacted Auckland Council dog control, worried that the woman's attitude would allow the dog to attack again.

Maggie was shaken by the incident, and will probably now be scared of larger dogs, Nutt says.



Traumatised... Maggie recovers

Cash lined up for America's Cup event

Funding has been approved for an America's Cup event on Takapuna Beach, with details still to be confirmed. Two race courses are located off Takapuna Beach in the competition, which starts March 2021.

Takapuna Beach Business Association says ATEED has guaranteed significant funding for the event. It is now asking the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board for a permit and is seeking business sponsorship.

The event is still in its planning stages, but will include a big screen, public events, live music, stand-up paddle boarding, windsurfing, beach clean-ups, hospitality and family entertainment.

More cleaners on the job

Two extra cleaners are keeping the streets of Takapuna clean and tidy, with support from the council.

The Takapuna Beach Business Association recently succeeded in the area being given the council's 'A' priority for cleanliness, association CEO Terence Harpur says.

The grading came with funding for two part-time employees who are now sweeping and vacuuming the streets.

The Milford Business Association also recently employed a part-timer to keep the centre clean and tidy, as well as keeping street plants alive.



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Takapuna Library well used and supported at current site: survey

Takapuna Library was used in the past year by 90 per cent of people surveyed by Auckland Council in a review of community facilities in the town centre.

Council contractor Mobius conducted a survey on the usage of Mary Thomas Centre, Takapuna Community Services Building, the Takapuna War Memorial Hall and Takapuna Library.

Library users praised the library environment and said the location near the beach was viewed as unique and valued.

“There was strong support for the Takapuna Library – comments centred around it being a good facility to provide valued community service from,” a report on the survey to a Devonport-Takapuna Local

Board workshop said.

“Views regarding the other council facilities were mixed – some users consider the spaces generally ‘fit for purpose’ whereas others saw them in need of updating and refurbishment.”

Some users wanted the co-location of services, the report said.

The site of council buildings was generally seen as central but some said they were too far away from public transport.

The Mary Thomas Centre’s Crosslands Lounge was booked approximately 12 hours per week for mainly church-related, fitness/recreation purposes, while the Channel View Lounge and Takapuna Community Hub were used by churches, Toastmasters,

yoga, a happy institute, a horticultural society, art group, dance therapy and various meetings.

The Takapuna Community services building was used by CAB, Plunket and Age Concern.

The Takapuna War Memorial Hall was used about 19 hours per week, for arts and cultural events, fitness and private events, while the Takapuna Senior Citizens Hall was used by senior citizens twice a week (for 2-3 hours) and events run by another community group.

Auckland Council will finalise its community engagement findings in February/March and present them to the local board in April.

Former club commodore loss to community... and Gulf

A legend of the Milford Cruising Club has been lost with the sudden death of former commodore Lance Jones, 67, earlier this year.

Jones, nicknamed Salty, was a life-long stalwart of the club holding various roles of office, including commodore (2005-2007) and was chairman of the sailing committee when he died, commodore Tony Sparks says.

Jones was also on the executive of the Milford Mariners.

He and his wife, Karen, were always out on the Hauraki Gulf in their Townsend 28, Danceaway, and took part in every yacht race, Sparks says.

“The Gulf without Lance will be missing something.”



Legend... Lance Jones, aka “Salty”, was always out on the Gulf

Milford Cruising Club’s major refit celebrated



All hands on deck... Milford Cruising Club’s deck party marks the culmination of a major renovation project: (left to right): John Cadness (ex commodore), Dick Coughlan (design committee), John Innes, (ex commodore) and Tony Sparks (commodore)

A deck launch party at Milford Cruising Club last week celebrated more than the completion of major renovations, it marked a remarkable reinvigoration of the sailing club’s membership.

The renovations have increased storage capacity for yachts used in the club’s junior sailing programme, which has allowed the programme to grow, in turn increasing membership and bringing the average age down by around half.

The refurbishment, which has been going on for several years, also saw the installation of a lift to improve access to the clubrooms for disabled members.

“Two years ago, there were under 300 members and now there are 460, which is a huge increase in membership and largely driven by the junior sailors,” Tony Sparks says.

The deck, while an asset to the club, is chiefly the roof of the new storage area, Sparks says.

Providing yachts to young sailors, who get training at the club and compete in inter-school races, removes an obstacle to joining. The junior sailors become members, then their families join, Sparks says. Past junior sailors are going on to purchase and race keelers now.

Conflict issue politicised

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board member Trish Deans is playing the man not the ball in trying to claim that Aidan Bennett has a conflict of interest because he lives next door to the Mary Thomas Centre.

Grant Gillon is right in saying the issue is being politicised. A current local board member was successful in advocating for a local park which would have improved the amenity value of her neighbourhood, and rightfully did not claim a conflict of interest (and may well have benefited from improved property values).

A new library in the new town centre adjacent to Shore City is a visionary idea.

It is adjacent to the transport hub and only 90 seconds away from the new carpark. The current library has poor parking, which may well be impacting on usage – let's be positive and keep Takapuna moving forward.

Fay Freeman ONZM

Bodylines – with Guy Body

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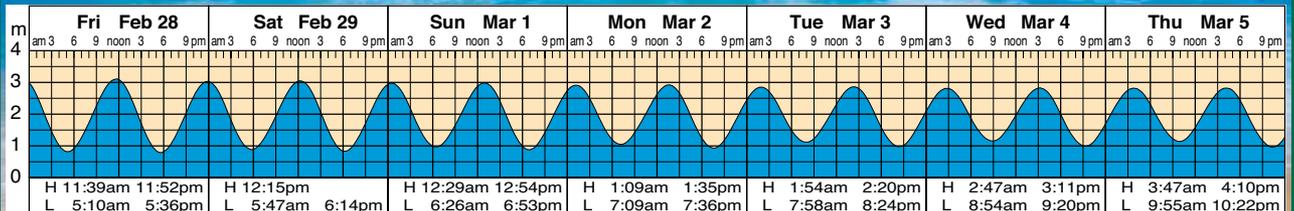
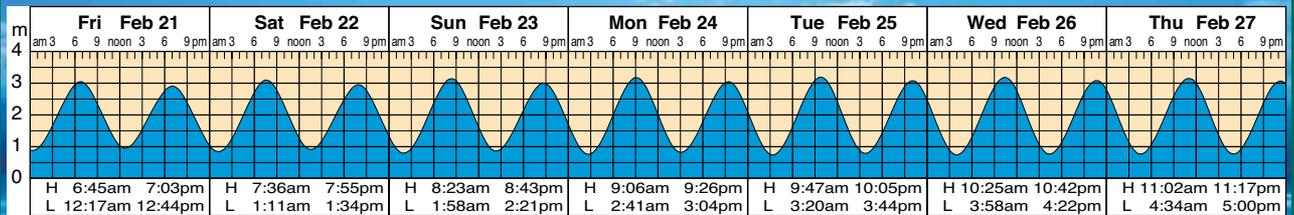
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Letters to the Editor

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.

Milford / Takapuna Tides



Local derby pivotal game for Takapuna and North Shore cricketers

A premier cricket clash between Takapuna and North Shore this weekend is shaping as a pivotal match for both team's seasons.

Takapuna has been flying high in 2019/20, winning the 20/20 competition and has been near the top of the table Auckland's one-day and two-day competitions.

However, it lost to Parnell last week, dropping from second to third on the table.

North Shore, by comparison, if not exactly struggling hasn't been setting the competition on fire. Until possibly now.

It beat last year's champions – Howick-Pakuranga – to move up to fifth on the table and almost out of the relegation zone.

Takapuna coach Ryan Scivier said: "A game against North Shore is always going to be a tough match."

Takapuna has everything to play for, still having a chance to win the championship.

"We need to win our last three matches... We're aiming to keep playing positive cricket," Scivier said.

Top players Robbie O'Donnell and Craig Cachopa were confirmed to play, he said.

Meanwhile, North Shore is likely to have all its top players available including Graeme Beghin and Ronnie Hira.

Shore coach Chris Reid was delighted with last weekend's win and said the side

was hitting its straps just at the right time.

"We are very much the new kid on the block, we haven't been in the top grade for eight years... to beat the defending champions last weekend was a great result for us."

With three games to play, Shore was aiming to consolidate its position and possibly move up a couple of places, Reid said.

Such is the nature of cricket that Shore could still theoretically win the championship.

• The North Shore vs Takapuna two-day match starts at Onewa Domain this Saturday, February 22, at 11 am.

Waka ama draws crowds from around Pacific

About 1250 paddlers from Aotearoa and around the world took to the waters off Takapuna Beach for the premier distance waka ama event – the Takapuna Beach Cup 2020 (14 to 16 February). Saturday was the main race day with 36 crews tackling the 42km change-over race around Rangitoto. This year was the first time 21km Iron races were held, with 70 teams registered. Other events were a 21km race, a 24km relay and 10km for the junior and novice paddlers.

Residents in dark about plans for larger Takapuna fire station development

Takapuna residents who asked to be notified of changes to the consent for developing the former Takapuna fire station were not advised when the developer applied to vary the consent last year.

McConnell Clearmont was planning to build a retirement village with hospital care on the site overlooking Lake Pupuke.

The company applied to Auckland Council to increase the number of units and car parks and change the profile of the block, then subsequently put the consent on hold as it went to the market to try to sell the property.

Auckland Council says neighbours and others were not notified because the consent was put on hold.

The council will make a decision on whether the consent will be publicly notified when it begins processing the consent again, Anna Wallace, manager premium consents, says.

The council expects further advice on the status of the application in April.

Meanwhile, owner McConnell Clearmont has not yet announced a buyer for the site, with reports a potential buyer is going through a 'due diligence' process.

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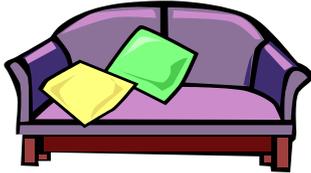
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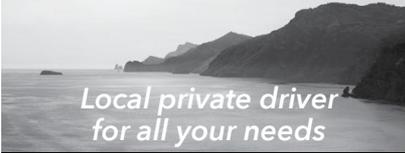


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Charlie's Play Date returns to support an inclusive Takapuna community

Charlie's Play Date is coming up at Takapuna Beach Playground on 14 March. Charlie's Play date is an inclusive event to celebrate playgrounds being for everyone.

The event started three years ago when Charlie's mum, Kirstin, took him to Takapuna Beach playground and had two other parents approach her to say that she should leave because Charlie, who has cerebral palsy, was scaring their children.

Kristen reached out to the community with her experience and the result was the annual Charlie's Play Date.

There will be face painting, teens dressed up as super-heroes and other characters and giant bubble entertainment.



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Comic tackles hot potatoes in fringe show



Not your usual comedian... Hauraki resident Sacha Jones has previously been a ballet dancer and an academic

A local comedian is out to prove feminism can be funny through her stand-up comedy gig coming up at the PumpHouse.

Part of Auckland Fringe Festival, Sacha Jones' show *Joke She Wrote: the Egg and*

Sperm Race II takes on themes from her own life, including fertility, motherhood, her husband and issues of social justice.

Her husband can take it, she says, because "he's a cool guy" and she tries to get the tone right.

"You are trying to say something and break stereotypes and make people feel better about life," Jones says.

"If there are jokes about men, or my husband, I am trying to respect them."

Jones points out she is unusual in comedy as a long-time happily married woman with grown-up children.

The 53-year-old feels women's voices need to be heard in comedy.

Jones is familiar with being on stage after starting out as a ballet dancer. Following an injury and marrying a "Shore boy", she moved to New Zealand from Sydney 30 years ago, and spent the past 27 in Hauraki.

Jones had 20 years at Auckland University, writing a PhD thesis on violence against women and teaching in the politics department.

In that time, she was unusual in the politics department as a working mother, who spent nine years actively involved in

Takapuna Play Centre.

Jones taught in the department but struggled to find work teaching about social justice. She took a creative writing course and felt that was her next passion, publishing a memoir with Finch Publishing in Australia in 2016 about growing up in Sydney, *The Grass Is Always Browner*. People had always told her she was funny and she found, without it being her intention, her writing was humorous, too.

Jones taught modern dance for a few years in Devonport.

At the age of 50, she tried standup and got positive feedback from her first performance at the Classic comedy club, which encouraged her to continue.

The upcoming shows on 5 and 6 March are a sequel to her 2018 show, *The Egg and Sperm Race*, that was performed at the PumpHouse and the Vic Theatre Lounge over three nights, selling out all three shows.

Jones hopes making people laugh could be a more effective way to challenge thinking about feminism than talking about it.

"Comedy may be a way to break down the resistance – in men and some women – who can see the truth in the humour."



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The Auckland Sinfonietta under the direction of Swiss conductor Stéphane Décor perform works by Handel, Charpentier, Marcello, Broschi, Porpora and Vivaldi.

Guest performances by soprano Laura Ansaldi (Italy) and oboist Yehyun Kim (Korea).

Tickets: \$25 Seniors/Students: \$15.00
Reserved: \$50

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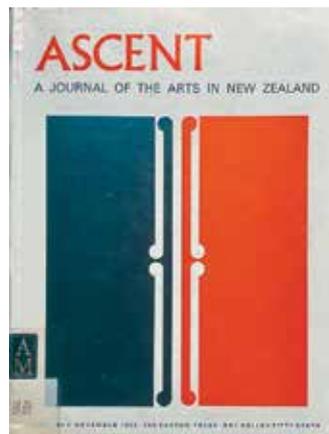
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WHAT'S ON @ Takapuna Library

AUTHOR TALK: MERVYN WHITLEY

Takapuna Library, Level 1, Thursday, 27 February @ 11am

Takapuna Library would like to present a reading by author Mervyn Whitley on his book *They of Star*. An innovative take on how books are written, his book is partly in poetry and partly in song and will be read while accompanied by music. Don't miss out as it will surely be an experience to remember!



EXHIBITION: THE TANTALIZING LANGUAGE OF THE ARTS

Angela Morton Room: Te Pātaka Toi Art Library, Level 1, Takapuna Library Until 1 May, Open Daily

Gordon Walters created the cover art for this 1969 copy of *Ascent: A Journal of the Arts in New Zealand* - part of an exhibition of Aotearoa arts journals - 1928-2000.

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NEW MOVIES	RELEASE
The Call of the Wild (PG) 100 min	20 FEB
The Professor and the Madman (M) 125 min	20 FEB
The Rocky Horror Picture Show (M) with Hot & Flustered Shadowcast	21 FEB
Ginger Rogers & Fred Astaire in 'Shall We Dance' (G) 116 min	27 FEB
The Legend of Baron To'a (RP13) 106 min	27 FEB
The Invisible Man (TBA)	27 FEB
The Current War (M) 102 min	27 FEB
Dark Waters (M) 127 min	5 MAR

LIVE SHOWS & SPECIAL EVENTS

20 & 21 FEB THE UNFOLDING OF BENJAMIN'S MISERY - 7.30PM
Japanese artist Hideto Ambiguous returns to The Vic to perform his one-man tragicomedy. (Winner of Best Words and Ideas Award at the Melbourne Fringe Festival 2019). Tickets \$15 from www.thevic.co.nz

FRI 21 FEB THE ROCKY HORROR PICTURE SHOW - 8.30PM
Hot & Flustered Shadowcast present The Rocky Horror Picture Show, who perform the cult classic live on stage while the movie plays behind them onscreen. **Book now!**

TUE 3 MAR SEAWEEK SPECIAL - FREE ENTRY - 10.30AM & 12.30PM
The Shark Feeders and Aotearoa: Land of Ice and Fire plus other short films to celebrate the oceans, with Q&A by filmmaker Robin Kewell. Free entry. Reservations recommended.

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Takapuna Beach living inspires artist



Life is beachy... Takapuna painter Catherine Farquhar is inspired by sea views from her newish home, after moving from the South Island

Moving from the South Island to Takapuna has brought a sea change to an artist's work, introducing bolder colours and a more vibrant light.

Catherine Farquhar is one of four Lake House Arts resident artists, meaning they have studio space in the centre, currently exhibiting.

Farquhar looks out towards the Coromandel from her home and in one of her typically abstract expressionist works, Pauanui, is inspired by the vibrancy of the view, as well as her holiday home.

"I wanted to capture the light and colour and the movement of the water," Farquhar says.

In contrast, a painting from her former home, Timaru, looking across Caroline Bay

to cliffs, was a more muted palette, as does another work depicting Lake Wanaka.

"I love the sea and I'm grateful I live near the sea and I get so much inspiration from it."

Farquhar has a diploma in fine arts from Aoraki Polytechnic and has always painted while also working as a nurse.

Farquhar hopes to do some nursing this year but to move towards a greater focus on painting.

Having studio space offers Farquhar and the three other women time and space to explore their ideas this year.

Also exhibiting in *Place Making: New Residents' Show* until 28 February are Jeanine Friedrich, Tania Parrott and Alice Cuillin.

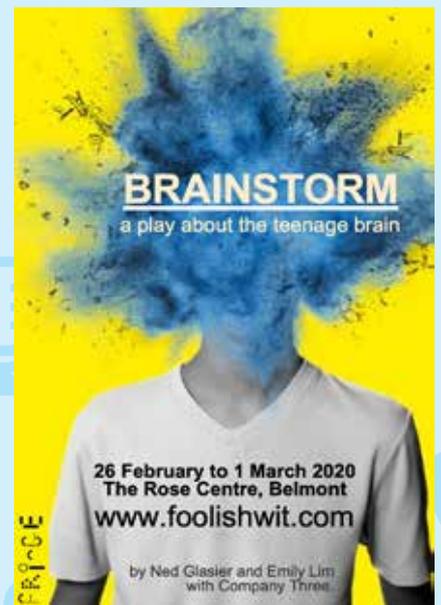
Youth bands to take the stage at Takachella mini festival

Local bands will perform at Takachella, a youth music festival to be held at 38 Hurstmere Rd.

The event will also feature a pop-up youth market on Sunday, 23 February, from 1 to 6pm.

The mini-festival is organised by the Converge youth group with support from Fresh Concept, Depot Sound and Takapuna Beach Business Association.

Following the performances by local youth bands, the music will continue and include performances by soul/r'n'b singer Lily Jackson, Keith and seven-piece pop band, Half Moon Baby.



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Carmel Dux top chemistry scholar

Carmel College's 2019 Dux, Josephine Situ is the top scholar in New Zealand for chemistry.

She gained four scholarships, two of them outstanding.

In total, Carmel had 15 students who gained scholarships in a range of subjects in 2019.

Carmel achieved a total of 22 scholarships, five of them 'outstanding' (meaning the student was in the top five per cent

in New Zealand).

Mia Boothroyd, 2019 Proxime Accessit, won three scholarships, two of them outstanding.

Elyse Ridling gained an outstanding scholarship in technology.

Meanwhile, Rosmini College's Thomas Cszimadia obtained five scholarships including one outstanding grade in calculus.

Thomas also gained two scholarships the year before as a year 12.

Westlake Boys celebrates stellar scholarship results

Westlake Boys is on a high after winning the highest number of 'outstanding' scholarships in the country with 29.



Scholarship examinations are the highest level of exams that senior students can take in New Zealand schools.

Outstanding scholarships are worth \$5000 a year for the first three years of university.

Westlake Boys' results were the best the school has ever achieved.

It won 182 scholarships, which was the second-highest number in the country.

Five students gained five or more scholarships. One of these students, **Manaal Mehamood (pictured)**, was in year 12 when he earned them (and he passed three scholarship papers while still in Year 11).

Subjects with a high proportion of scholarships include art history (with 27 per cent of all scholarships in New Zealand), earth space science (24 per cent) and media studies (18 per cent).



Top chemistry scholar... Carmel College Dux Josephine Situ



Five scholarships... Rosmini College's Thomas Cszimadia



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Double the fun at play date in the park



Park life... Drew and Madeline (16 months) Carrick-Anderson enjoy a preschoolers play date in Milford Reserve thanks to Takapuna North Community Trust. Photos: Keeley Watson.



Men at work... Daniel and Artyom Potter (both 4) intent on building work at the play day in Milford Reserve, one of many running through summer



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Changing of the guard... After holding the Senior 8 Head of Harbour trophy for two years, Westlake Boys were disappointed to hand it over to Auckland Grammar head boy Michael Hiddleston

A man wearing a blue and white patterned shower cap is shown from the chest up, holding a showerhead. He has a pained or frustrated expression on his face, with his mouth open as if shouting. The background is a solid blue color.

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Record crews for college rowing regatta on Pupuke



A record number of crews from schools across Auckland competed in the Head of Harbour Regatta on Saturday, 15 February. A new overhead cable at the start helped to get boats in line in the very windy conditions.

“Westlake Boys came in top for points scored across all age groups,” Westlake Boys Rowing’s Simone Home says.

Across age groups Westlake Boys won a total of four division one golds, three silver and three bronze, and had six division two wins and one division three win.

The grand finale was the Senior 8 Head of Harbour race, which was won by Auckland Grammar.

The trophy was handed over by the 2019 winning, school Westlake Boys, by rowing captain and head boy Bowen de Gouw. Westlake were second.

In other outstanding results, Carmel College had one division one gold and two bronzes, and two division two golds; Rosmini won double sculls; Westlake Girls had two division one gold, five silvers and six bronzes and three division two wins.



Keeping score... Westlake Boys' head of rowing Jo Shotter



Founded in 1905, Waitemata Golf Club is a beautiful 18-hole course with a flat contour that allows easy walking through beautiful park-like surroundings with well-established trees, shrubs and water features.

Nestled between Mt. Victoria and Narrow Neck Beach, the course is one of Devonport’s iconic attractions. Originally the home of the Takapuna Jockey Club, the contours of the infamous ‘Back Straight’ are still discernible when playing the par 5 13th. The course was originally nine holes within the perimeter of a horse-racing track. Motorbike racing, horse racing, greyhound and professional foot racing shared Alison

Park until 1934. The first full season of the Waitemata Golf Club on Alison Park took place in 1906, with annual subs of one guinea for men, and ten shillings and sixpence for women. Players were to use caddies and pay them sixpence for the afternoon and one penny for each ball found.

Waitemata Golf Club is committed to growing the game among young people and has seen a large growth in junior membership, offering support for both new and experienced golfers. Junior membership is open to all those under 19 years old, with competition days on Sundays. It includes free term-time coaching every Friday after school.

The recently renovated club rooms offer the ideal ‘19th’ of your round. Our relaxing lounge bar and comfortable dining area are complemented by spacious outdoor decking providing panoramic views of the course. The Waitemata Cafe and Bar menu is extensive and very reasonably priced.

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This is a very popular course and bookings are essential.

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Exclusive one level living in the northern prime position at The Rocks, on famous Takapuna Beach. Two/ three bedroom apartment, (152sqm) in this boutique building. The action packed vista enjoys Hauraki Gulf and tree framed beach views. An 'always on holiday' lifestyle, with gym, sauna, pool, 3 car garaging/storage. A truly unique opportunity!

VIEW | SUN 2 - 2.45 PM OR BY APPOINTMENT

EXPRESSIONS OF INTEREST | 4 MARCH 2020

AT 4 PM UNLESS SOLD PRIOR

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