

The Rangitoto Observer

Takapuna, Milford, Castor Bay, Forrest Hill and Sunnynook

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 43 Oct 16, 2020

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

Simon
Watts

North Shore

National

Authorised Simon Watts,
107 Gt South Rd, Akl



Racing fan clocks up
107 years... p3

Hurstmere Rd works
delayed again... p5

North Shore candidates
meeting... p6

Massive development gets green light

One of the largest residential developments proposed for the North Shore has been given zoning permission.

Amendments to the Smales 1 Precinct Zone now allow up to 1380 residential dwellings in

apartment blocks up to 123m high on the 10.8 hectare Smales Farm site.

The changes were approved by Auckland Council's planning committee early this month. Smales Farm was previously zoned solely

as a business park, with no residential development allowed.

Under the changes, buildings towards the eastern side of the site, abutting Taharoto Rd

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Record breaker



Milestone marathon...Takapuna resident, Fabe Downs, set a new record for the Devonport Half Marathon last weekend, winning the 21k race in a time of 1.10.59. Marathon mates, p19.



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Dry September on Shore, as Auckland drought continues

The North Shore recorded its third driest September on record, latest climate statistics show.

Just 47mm was recorded last month, which is 45 per cent of the normal September rainfall, figures from the National Institute of Water and Atmosphere (NIWA) show.

This meant September 2020 had the third

lowest rainfall recorded for that month since records began in 1966, said NIWA.

Rainfall last month was less than half what is normal across the whole top third of the North Island, with temperatures near average.

NIWA said September was characterised by higher than normal mean sea level pressure across the northern North Island and the

Tasman Sea, resulting in a westerly airflow anomaly which had suppressed rainfall.

Other regional features of note recorded in its monthly summary were wind gusts that caused two trucks to topple on the Auckland Harbour Bridge, causing damage on 18 September.

More strong winds on 29 September saw the bridge temporarily closed again.

From page 1 **Massive apartment block development now allowed under Unitary Plan**

and parts of Shakespeare and Northcote Rds, are restricted to 5 m. Higher building heights are allowed on the rest of the site, much of which overlooks the Northern Motorway.

“Further office, commercial and community activities would also be enabled, primarily centred on a pedestrian plaza with direct links to the adjoining Smales Farm bus station,” a council report says.

The tallest building on the North Shore is the Sentinel building in Takapuna at 30 storeys and 150m high.

Smales Farm owner Northcote RD1 Holdings applied to Auckland Council to change the Auckland Unitary Plan to allow the development to go ahead.

The new mixed-use transit zone, to allow residential development fits in with Unitary Plan goals to encourage housing around transport nodes. The North Shore Hospital buildings across the road from Smales Farm are up to 65m in height.

The Observer sought comment from Smales Farm on the status of the project now – when it would start and various time lines. However management did not return calls prior to our deadline.



On the rise... An artist's impression of what the apartment blocks at Smales Farm might look like

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

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NEXT ISSUE: October 30
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2 The Strand: empty for 918 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 918 days. At some point, its future will be determined by Auckland Council.

Love of a flutter undimmed – 107 years down the track

Connie Trewern is the oldest holder of a TAB betting account in New Zealand. At 107 she still takes an active interest in the races.

The Takapuna great-grandmother – who loved dressing up to attend the big cup meetings in Auckland and Christchurch over the decades – is a careful punter.

Trewern, who has had two races named after her, told the Observer on her recent birthday that she watches “all the races” on Trackside.

“I like to back a winner,” she says. A bet on an outsider netted \$260 in her account once, but she notes: “I’ve lost enough.”

With family gathered to cut a cake and for a glass of bubbles, whip-smart and pin-neat Trewern joked that hearing from the Queen was old-hat. “She doesn’t know me and I don’t know her.”

The royal birthday greeting first arrived for her century and then again when she turned 105 and each year thereafter. This year, the Pope joined the wellwishers. As to presents: “I really don’t ask for much.”

World War I had not started when Trewern was born in Guernsey in the Channel Islands on 2 October 1913. The war claimed the life of her father, whom she does not remember. Her mother remarried, to a New Zealand soldier who set sail with his new bride and her two daughters, when Connie was aged 6 or 7.

The family settled in the Christchurch suburb of Riccarton and for half of her life she remained in Canterbury.

“I’ve had a very busy life, but a full one,” she says. “I’ve been married twice and lost both husbands.”

To her first, Walter, she had two daughters, Sandy, whom she lives with, and Robin, who came up from Ashburton with her husband for the birthday afternoon tea, joined by their son who lives in Auckland.

Trewern made the move north with her second husband, Tom, first to Wellington for a few years. His job then brought them to Auckland. That was nearly 50 years ago, with home first being in Northcote, then Milford, before a shift to central Takapuna. She has shared a house with Sandy for 32 years.

“I think I’m going to live forever – I don’t think I’m going to pop off,” is Trewern’s take on her longevity.

She is among the oldest people in New Zealand, with a 108-year-old man and several women having reached 107 before her.

Her competitive sharpness and enjoyment of life is undimmed. Trewern says she has never had headaches and pains. “But my hearing is fading and so are my eyes.” She gets around this with hearing aids and a 65-inch large-screen television. As well as Trackside, she enjoys *The Chase*. Sometimes in the middle of the night she watches billiards and snooker.

The family recall that once her life estimate was put at the mid-80s, but she has packed plenty into the decades since. Her



Going strong... Connie Trewern celebrating her 107th birthday

90th birthday was spent at the Ellerslie races, her 95th at Cambridge. The Cambridge club named a race after her and another memorable moment was the running of the Connie Trewern 102nd Birthday Mobile at Alexandra Park.

For her 100th birthday there was a party and housie at the Devonport Senior Citizens Hall. Trewern has her favourite numbers – 2, 5, 8 and 10 – memorised and still tracks horse form and knows trainers.

Sandy says her mother has always taken a meticulous approach to what she does and how she appears. She has never smoked or sunbathed – and her lovely skin shows the benefit.

For her 101st birthday a dressy hat party was held. This reflected her love of dressing up for the races and being well groomed. It harked back also to time spent running a successful fashion business making women’s wear. “I’ve worked all my life, I was a self-taught fashion cutter, I had my own business and a shop in Christchurch.”

This came about when her first husband was in the rag trade and she observed that his pattern cutter seemed to be wasting a lot of fabric, so asked to have a go.

By the 1950s and 60s she had taken on several machinists and had her own label, Konnie Kase, a version of her maiden name, making smart women’s wear.

“I still tell them what I want to wear – I’ve changed once already this morning,” Trewern tells the Observer on her big day. Her petite frame is dressed neatly in pants and a smart blouse, ready for the cutting of her cake and glass of bubbles.

A visit by Monsignor David Tonks of St Joseph’s Catholic Church to give a blessing is also expected.

These days Trewern, who has five grandchildren and 11 great-grandchildren, is largely house-bound. This was the result of a slip while using her walker last Christmas, when she broke a wrist. Now visitors rather than outings are a highlight.

Looking back, she says she is particularly proud of having had her two daughters.

She has made two trips to the United Kingdom, but plane travel has never much appealed and after WWII she found England much changed.

As to the other differences she has noticed in the world over the years, she just says: “It will change again. For better and worse.”



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**Future of Takapuna Library
clearer next month**

A list of "optimisation options" for Takapuna Library, the Takapuna Community Services Building and the Mary Thomas Centre will be presented to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board in November.

Service property optimisation "involves the sale of part of an asset where the funds come back to redevelop the asset", an Auckland Council report to a board workshop said.

Any profit made from any sale will be used to upgrade other facilities in the assessment, the report said.

Building and site information and financial impacts will be provided to the board in the November report.

**Raised crossings
raise eyebrows**

Three raised crossings near the roundabout at the junction of Hurstmere Rd, Anzac Rd and The Strand are in the process of being painted with proper markings.

Eagle-eyed Takapuna residents had questioned through the Observer whether the recent works complied with regulations, but it turns out they are just one-step ahead of Auckland Council completing the work.

A spokesperson said this was because the work had to be done at night to reduce disruption. As an interim measure extra signage indicated to drivers that pedestrians had right of way. Line markings would be completed soon.



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Hurstmere Rd works delay dubbed ‘catastrophic’

Further delays to the disruptive upgrade of Hurstmere Rd have been lashed by the Takapuna Beach Business Association and prospective North Shore MP Simon Watts.

Retailers were left reeling when Auckland Council decided to put the Covid-19 interrupted project on hold again.

“That’s idiotic, it’s catastrophic,” Watts told a public election candidates meeting in Milford last week.

Terence Harpur, chief executive of the business association, said while the upgrade would eventually be absolutely fantastic, it was “very disappointing that Auckland Council is not continuing with its original timeline and [is] taking a very long break from construction from December 2020 to May 2021.”

He is seeking to pursue the matter further with senior council officials.

“We are concerned for the financial wellbeing of our members and presentation of Takapuna,” said Harpur.

Watts said retailers along Takapuna’s main shopping street were being strangled. “These delays are unacceptable.”

North Shore councillor Richard Hills – who fought to keep the project alive when Covid-19 forced council budget cuts of \$500 million – said the latest decision was “the best of a bad situation”. He was disappointed by the delay, but by setting back some of the work, \$6 million of the around \$14 million cost had been pushed into the next financial year. This move meant the project could be completed a few months later, by late 2021, when others across the city were being cancelled, he said.

Shops have faced months of noisy road works, impeded access to their stores and loss of customers since work began five weeks later than planned in April. The road was made a one-way route with fewer parking spaces, to allow for more pedestrian-friendly spaces.

A number of store owners and managers told the Observer that just as they were seeing the light at the end of the tunnel in a very tough year it had been snuffed out. Some fear that with the council’s budget constraints, there is no guarantee that the work will restart next year.

Hills said: “We’ve got the whole budget saved, definitely.”

One store owner said his response to the delay was unprintable. Another said she might shut up shop in favour of trading online. Others wanted to hang on, having gone through so much already this year and believing the upgrade would eventually produce a better environment.

Improved paving and pedestrian and seating areas at the Lake Rd and Anzac St ends of the Hurstmere Rd shopping strip were recently completed. By December, the middle section – improving the connection between the beach across to the planned new Takapuna Square – is meant to be finished. That leaves the bits in between to landscape and pave, with some additional stormwater installation when the project resumes mid next year.

In the meantime, Takapuna will have a Christmas season with disjointed sections



Mixed views... Leaf & Loaf’s Stuart Wright (left) can’t understand why the council isn’t pushing ahead; Scott Donovan, who owns Life for Men, believes taking a break during the America’s Cup makes sense

along its main shopping strip that will still remain in February-March when it plays host to America’s Cup crowds.

While eateries hope the Cup will bring in welcome extra casual business, other retailers say they rely on regulars, some of whom have already switched to shopping elsewhere. With lease signs already proliferating along Hurstmere Rd, retailers say hopes of attracting new permanent tenants will be dashed by news that the works will long be a work in progress.

Leaf & Loaf owner Stuart Wright said he understood contractors would fix up the road as best they could before signing off for the year, but there would be gaps. “We’re still going to see orange bollards.”

Hills said he had asked for the whole stretch of road to be made to be completely walkable and as attractive as possible.

Wright, who has owned his eatery with wife Jacqui for 11 years, said he would hang in, but he predicted more empty shops.

Scott Donovan who has run Life for Men on the street for 18 years is more positive than most. He has noticed a strong pickup in his sales since the second lockdown. People were walking the street again, which was no longer manic with cars, he said. “People are very chilled, enjoying the experience.”

Donovan believes that Takapuna will benefit from an “amazing” upgrade. Work had been progressing well, especially considering its scope, he said. (This includes rainwater gardens and stormwater replacement to improve water quality flowing to the beaches.)

“I certainly understand why the delay is there and why they [the council] want to push it out with that budget.” Taking a break while the Cup was on also made sense, he said.

But Wright says he cannot understand why the council isn’t getting on with the job. “To

me it’s a little bit of pain now for the gain later – when it’s finished it’s going to be fantastic.” He was not alone in telling the Observer that January would be a good time to be pushing on with the work when trading was quieter.

Wright is also bemused why the council has allowed a Sunday food truck market to set up further along Hurstmere Rd. “Why?” Sunday had been his busiest trading day, but not over the last few weekends, he said. Local businesses needed support now, not outside competition.

Thai Takapuna manager Luis Respall says his lunchtime trade is now “rubbish”. Diners were deterred from visiting the long-established restaurant by heavy equipment operating just outside the front door in the middle of the day. As to the works delay, he says: “I try not to think about it much, otherwise I get very, very upset.”

It was clear from the decision-making, said Respall, that “the council doesn’t trade on the street.”

The head chef at Tucks and Bao, Elliott Carran said takeaway and delivery services had been hit. Drivers didn’t want to venture into central Takapuna for pick-ups. But long-term the upgrade would be good for attracting tourists up from the beach, he added.

Franca Logan, who owns Florienne, said customers had told her they were avoiding coming to Takapuna until parking was sorted. Luckily, she had many who continued to order flowers, but even preparing deliveries was tricky as her store had no back access and out front was a mess. Dust, noise and wind from trees having been removed were all daily problems. She was seriously considering her future.

“I find it absolutely ridiculous. They were getting on with it, but with stopping it adds another year.

“We’re the ones that stuck around and now this,” said Logan.

Candidates meeting: Likely next MP says Shore needs local focus

Calls for better representation for the North Shore were a feature of an election candidates night in Milford last week.

"I've been on the Castor Bay Residents Association for five years now and I've never seen [sitting MP] Maggie Barry once," said an audience member to one of the loudest rounds of applause of the evening.

He wanted to know how the man favoured to take over from the outgoing National MP—who has sat on a big majority for three terms—would stick up for the electorate.

"I'm part of the future, not the past," Simon Watts replied. He said he was committed to the area and would work without baggage to sort out its issues, including water quality and the economy.

"The Shore needs a local MP focussed on local issues," he said.

Judging by the applause, it was a message that resonated.

Watts said he was "hugely frustrated" at buck passing between the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board and Auckland Council, but wanted to work with them. He pledged: "I will deliver locally."

The Act candidate, Nick Kearney, had earlier told the gathering of under 100 people that Watts was all but assured of being the next electorate MP, given that Barry held the seat with a majority of around 14,000 at the 2017 election. But, like other candidates, he emphasised the value of a strategic party vote to deliver a Parliament that represented a range of views. Act would bring rigour to state spending, he said.

TOP candidate Shai Navot, a lawyer and former Carmel College student, called for people to look beyond the "red-blue rewind of the last 30 years". Housing affordability, inequality and child poverty had steadily worsened over the decades. Issues needed fixing, rather than tinkering with, she said, especially in drawing housing into the tax system and stopping the loading of debt onto



MP in waiting... Simon Watts looks set to step into the North Shore seat, given the National party's big majority in previous elections

the younger generation. A universal basic income was another TOP policy.

Labour's Romy Udanga ended nearly all his comments with a call to "party vote Labour". He had welcomed the audience to Covid-19 alert-level 1, saying it was good to have a government that looked after people. At one stage he went out of his way to swap to a red-topped microphone to underline the cause. After a lengthy outline of his credentials, Udanga focused most of his policy talk and answers around national issues.

Another to take up the microphone was a candidate from the Outdoors Party, who had

not signed up in time to join the official line-up on stage at the Milford Baptist Church. She too called for the party vote, saying: "If you want to vote for the same, you get the same."

Mike Brewer, a former chief executive of Radio Rhema, who represents the New Conservatives, said: "Last election I voted for National and it was a wasted vote." He advocated people voting with their hearts, for the party with which they most agreed policy-wise. The New Conservatives believed in citizens-initiated binding referendums on social policies, he said. Fellow

Taking a position, issue by issue

SkyPath: The Harbour Bridge cycle and walkway should be completed, said most of the candidates, but it faces an uphill ride from Simon Watts (National). "It's not the priority right now," he said, pointing to a ballooning cost of \$250 million plus that would overtake spending on an expansion at North Shore Hospital. Further delay would be expensive, said Nick Kearney (Act), who revealed he was a cyclist, meaning (like the Greens) he was keen on connecting cycleways across the city. Mike Brewer (New Conservatives) said a pedestrian path had been suggested when the bridge was built and should have been included then.

Harbour crossings: Business cases needed to be made for infrastructure spending, said Shai Navot (TOP) and one had not been done for a second harbour crossing. Watts decried the lack

of resilience and long-term planning in the transport system. He also called for smart investment, advocating more ferries, not fewer and switching to electric. He lamented the cancellation of the Stanley Bay service later this year. Brewer said a great city had public transport rich people wanted to use, not just poor people having to. Ryan Nicholls (Greens) said light rail would get more people out of cars.

Super City reform: Good work by the likes of Auckland Council's Healthy Waters team was overlooked, said Romy Udanga (Labour). Local boards would be better empowered if they were bulk-funded, said Kearney. Some fine-tuning to the council could help, but it was basically okay. Ten years wasn't such a long time to bed in a new system, he said. (Act's former leader Rodney Hide, was a driving force in the Super City's creation) Navot said councils

needed access to more money for the public services they provided which was why TOP wanted to ring-fence GST from new developments to help them make up the shortfall.

Education investment: Missing the chocolate fundraisers? Udanga says you have Labour spending boosts to schools to thank for no longer needing to raise money that way. He pointed to the spending of \$60 million at Northcote College (outside the North Shore electorate). Watts said National had set up the \$50 million restoration and refurbishment at Takapuna Grammar School finally opened this year.

Four-year terms: All the candidates wanted a shift to four-year government terms, to break out of the cycle of what one said was a year spent getting up to speed, the second doing things and the third campaigning for re-election.

referendum fans, New Zealand First, were not represented.

This is the third general election for which the Milford and Castor Bay Residents Associations have combined to host a debate at the church. Experienced facilitator Larry Robbins kept the candidates to time during their five-minute set-piece speeches and invited audience questions afterwards. One of his own to Watts – perhaps sparked by several audience comments calling for parties to work together more – was whether Labour and National might consider a “grand coalition”. The reply: “Two ticks blue, party vote National, Simon Watts North Shore.”

The Greens’ Ryan Nicholls from Upper Harbour (filling in for Liz Rawlings, who was unable to attend) said the party would support a Labour Government to ensure climate justice and economic justice were to the fore. The Greens would await the election’s outcome before deciding between a formal coalition with Labour or a confidence-and-supply deal.

Act’s Kearney said his party’s leader, David Seymour, did not seek to be Deputy Prime Minister, as offered by National leader Judith Collins in the hope of forming a centre-right government. Rather, Act wanted debate issue-by-issue and to scrutinise and cut state spending. The “Shane Jones \$3 billion ‘elect me’ fund in Northland” needed to be got rid of and so too Winston Peters’ propping up of the horse-racing industry. “Any other business needs to stand on its own two feet – Government has to too.”

In Auckland, 47 per cent of green-house gas emissions were from transport, Nicholls said. To lower this the Greens would aid the uptake of electric vehicles and back public transport. The Northern Busway was an example of how this could succeed, he said, with one-third of people travelling over the Harbour Bridge doing so on buses.

Watts connected with the audience by mixing talk of national policies with local issues. His stated priorities were investment in hospitals, ridding Shore beaches of sewage, fixing congestion, making the area a hub for technology and business and getting started on a second harbour crossing. He laid out his background in finance, as an ambulance volunteer and a DHB executive, saying he would bring frontline capability and strategic thinking to Parliament.

New Zealanders were taking on loads of debt and felt threatened with a “load of new taxes”, he maintained. He did not specify what these were.

But he did thank locals for the toots when he was out and about in the electorate with his signs.

Party party party... Romy Udanga reliably ended his pitches with “party vote Labour” and at one stage went out of his way to pick up a red-topped microphone



Co-operative approach... Shai Navot of TOP enlisted Ryan Nicholls of the Greens to hold up her housing graph



They said it

On campaigning: “I came into this campaign thinking it was about politics, but it’s about putting up signs,” said Mike Brewer (New Conservatives)

On priorities: To meeting attendees who came along rather than watching *The Press* leaders debate being live-streamed from Christchurch the same evening: “I do appreciate you prioritising us over them” – Simon Watts (National).

On taxing housing: “No other party wants to talk about it” – Shai Navot (TOP).

On volunteering his time as honorary solicitor for the Castor Bay Residents Association: “If you think that’s a good thing, it’s probably worth a party vote” – Nick Kearney (Act)

On Greens MP Chloe Swarbrick: “She’s dangerous... she’s articulate” – an audience member’s overheard aside.

Weathermaster Auckland – creating new liveable spaces both indoor and outdoor

After 15 years at NZ Window Shades, Janene Gillon decided to try corporate life in a large retail group. However, two years later she realised that her passion was face-to-face sales, direct to consumers.

When the opportunity to become the exclusive distributor for Weathermaster Auckland came up in 2018, Janene immediately called the parent company, who said, “Great! We’ve been waiting for your call.”

“The corporate nine-to-five life just wasn’t for me. As the exclusive distributor for Weathermaster products, I am not stuck in an office. I get to travel all over Auckland and further afield to consult, and it also provides a lifestyle where I can spend time with my grandchildren,” she says.

Janene, whose Milford home doubles as a showroom, says she’s more of a design consultant than a transactional sales rep.

“I sell with a consultative approach, listening to my customers’ needs and then coming up with a unique solution for them. Sometimes my solution is slightly different to what they originally had in mind, but it’s a solution that helps create that new space – either indoor or outdoor.”

“Everyone likes to enjoy a glass of wine or coffee outside, including me, and the Weathermaster products help make that space useable, protected and private,” says Janene, who has lived on the shore for 30 years.

But it’s not only the outdoor spaces that are important.

As summer approaches, indoor products like shutters and automated blinds provide UV protection and shade that makes using the internal spaces more pleasant.

“Our indoor blinds can be hardwired to the mains during a build process or installed at any time with a rechargeable battery which requires charging once a year, based



on two operations a day.

“Motorisation is currently the most sought-after feature of our products,” she says. “The ability to open and close blinds or awnings at set times in the day is hugely popular as it facilitates UV protection, privacy, temperature control, and making a house look lived in, which is important if you’re away from home or away from your bach.

“We also have motion sensors that automatically retract your awnings depending on wind velocity. So if you leave them extended while you’re out and the wind picks up, they will retract depending on your settings,” she says.

Janene says that it’s not unusual for her to be working in Auckland one day then

travelling up to places like Omaha the next, installing products at the same customer’s bach. She enjoys being able to offer high-quality products, built to last and incorporating the latest technology.

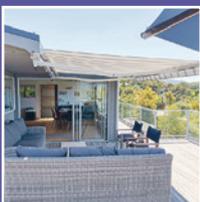
Weathermaster Auckland products are all made to measure and manufactured at parent-company NZ Window Shades’ East Tamaki plant in Auckland, an operation that has been going for 65 years.

“We can design, build and install any of our products within 10-15 working days,” she says.

Janene won distributor of the year in 2019, putting her success down to a personable and professional approach with her customers. “I treat my customers the way I would expect to be treated.”

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Wheelchair opens up a new world for Wilson Centre



Beach boys... Johnny Herring (left) and Finlay Butcher enjoying Takapuna Beach, thanks to their all-terrain wheelchairs. Finlay, who has his own chair, kicked off fundraising for another one for children at the Wilson Centre.

After years without seeing the sand and the ocean up close, 13-year-old Johnny Herring, who suffers from cerebral palsy, can now enjoy a day out at Takapuna Beach.

Johnny, previously confined to an old-style wheelchair, can hit the beach thanks to com-

munity donations towards the purchase of a new Hippocampe all-terrain wheelchair for the Wilson Centre.

More than \$10,000 was raised in an effort that began with 15-year-old Finlay Butcher, who has himself benefited from the Wilson Centre rehabilitation services.

Finlay suffers from low bone density due to his cerebral palsy. His condition contributed to two severe leg fractures in the last couple of years. He needed to build up his strength in his legs and to do that he uses a standing frame.

Last year he took on a 30-Day-Challenge standing in a frame for a minimum of 30 minutes a day leading up to Christmas. He invited people to support his fundraising efforts to make local beaches accessible to all children at the Wilson Centre.

Finlay's mother, Kimberly Graham, said: "Finlay has always loved the beach and knows how it can help recovery, general health and well being."

The Wilson Centre is a temporary home

to children who need ongoing rehabilitation. They can spend weeks or months receiving intensive rehabilitation therapy after surgeries, medical treatments or accidents.

During their stay, the children can be dependent on wheelchairs and hospital beds. "You can often see the children being pushed by parents, grandparents or caregivers along the main road to just get out and look around," said Graham.

A beach wheelchair can cost anywhere from \$6000 to \$7000, and specialised adaptations come at an extra cost.

The Hippocampe wheelchair comes with balloon tyres for use on soft sand and a postural seating system for extra comfort.

"We wanted the children and families who spend time at the Wilson Centre to feel full inclusion whilst spending time in our neighbourhood," said Graham.

The funds raised were channelled through the Well Foundation, the official fundraising charity for the Wilson Centre and District Health Board.

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Nothing holds a candle to this holiday entertainment



Wax work... Candlemaker Niki O'Brien helps Blake Bolton (4) create a candle during a workshop at Milford mall, while her brother Beau Bolton (7) looks on.

More than 80 children took part in a free make your own soy candle workshop at Milford mall last week.

Flame in Vintage candlemaker Niki O'Brien supplied small vintage crystal glasses, coco-soy candle wax and wicks for the children to use.

"The kids have really enjoyed the workshop and we were happy to do something good for our community," said O'Brien.

Nine-year-old Aston Hirst made a candle he planned to give to his grandmother after the workshop. "I really love making candles to give to my family," he said.

Four-year-old Blake Bolton and seven-year-old Beau Bolton made their soy candles in little vintage French wine glasses.

Letters to the Editor

Topics should be local.

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Sign vandals hammer New Conservative candidate's campaign

Electoral sign vandalism has hit North Shore New Conservative candidate Mike Brewer harder than most.

He plans to write to the Electoral Commission asking for a crackdown on damage in future campaigns.

Brewer said the party's signs were being disproportionately hit nationwide. "We're being directly targeted."

While some damage was to be expected to the hoardings of all parties, he thought things had got out of hand. This included his being labelled a racist and having homophobic and other offensive slurs painted across his posters.

Signs had also been smashed and knocked over. On one occasion, this looked like it had

been done with a sledgehammer.

Damage to his signs was widespread, but worst in Devonport. In Forrest Hill last week he was able to salvage four signs by cleaning off paint.

"We had a budget for signs of approximately \$2000 which we were responsible for raising in the local electorate. Fortunately the donations in our electorate covered this and we originally ordered 30 signs and then another 12."

With just over a week to go, he had only a few left to cover 12 sites.

To combat the damage he had suffered in Devonport, Brewer said he had come up with a new sign design that he has dubbed the "Devonport Fortress of Freedom". It is

taller than his usual signs, setting it out of easy reach of taggers. It is anchored with three posts, instead of the usual one.

A "smile, you're on camera" message on it might also prove a deterrent, he hopes.

Brewer said he would like to see people who damaged signs liable. Candidates were required by the commission to take them down on election eve (16 October), or face stiff penalties, yet little was done to combat vandalism. Parties should be afforded some protection. "Would this still happen if there was a \$5000 fine for people caught doing this?"

Brewer, who has lived on the Shore for eight years with his family, is a former chief executive at Radio Rhema.



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Traditional New Zealand (NZ) solutions for leaking basement areas involved either excavation and re-waterproofing (very costly, often impossible and just replacing what has already failed) or internal coatings that can't be guaranteed and can't be penetrated, severely limiting options to fit-out and decorate the areas.

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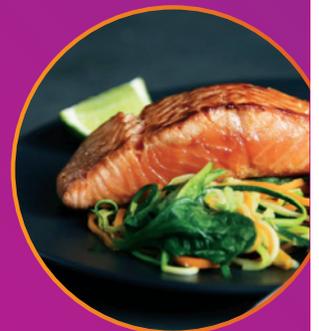
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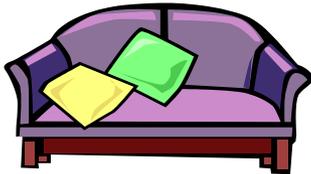
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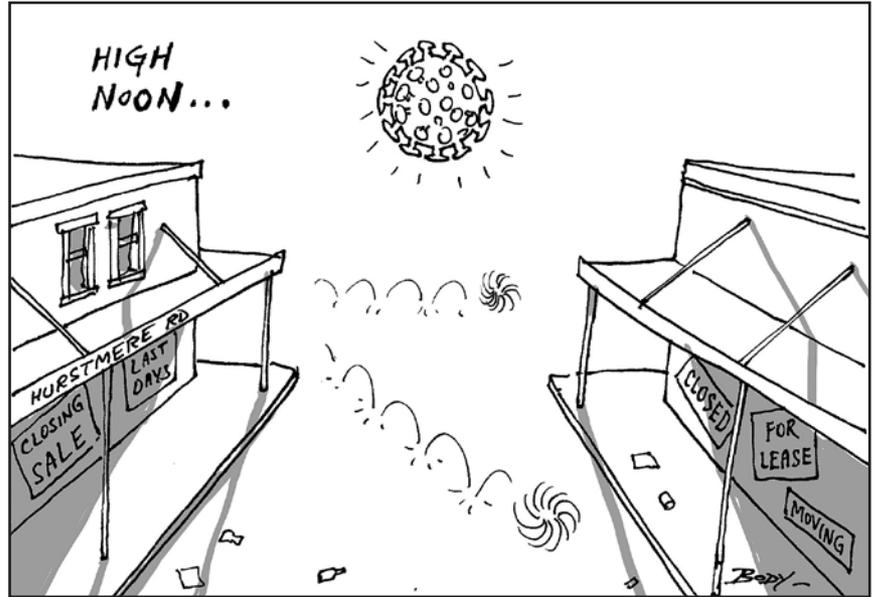
Wrestler drops appeal

Residents are thrilled a Takapuna bar has given up on its efforts to obtain a liquor licence to trade until 3am. An application by Hurstmere Pubs Ltd & Darby Hospitality (trading as the Elephant Wrestler) was turned down by the Auckland District Licensing Committee in March. The bar had appealed, but has now discontinued this.

“Obviously we’re really pleased they’ve dropped the case,” said a local resident. The committee ruled in March that approval would have had more than a minor impact in the area. In all, 66 letters objecting to an extension had been submitted, with four in support. Police opposed it too.

The original decision would make it harder for people to get late licences, said the resident, which was good because late-night drinking caused “unbelievable” issues in the neighbourhood, including vomiting and violence. In the interests of working with the bar in the future and supporting local businesses, the resident wanted to remain anonymous.

Bodyline by Guy Body



Letters

Wairau Creek polluted by sewage after heavy rain

Phil Goff has said previously that our beaches are amongst the jewels in the crown of Auckland. Regrettably the jewel that is Milford Beach is losing its shine.

As far back as June, the Rangitoto Observer wrote about the large rocks illegally dumped on the beach infuriating beach users making their walk along the beach at close to high tide virtually impossible. The council judiciously vetoed this unconsented work and issued the property owners with abatement notices, and here we are nearly

four months later, and whilst most of these rocks have been moved there are many that still hinder an easy path past them up to two hours before and after high tide.

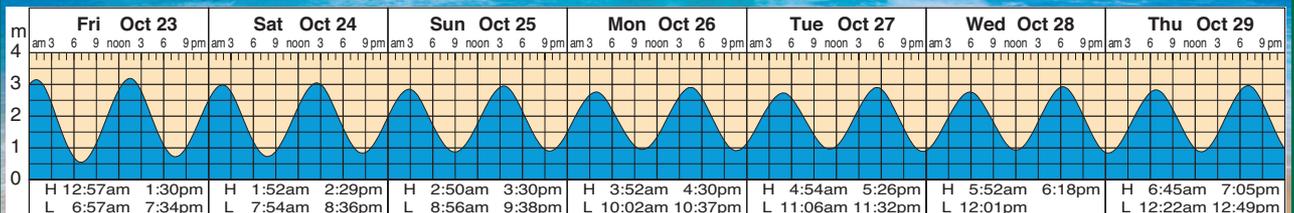
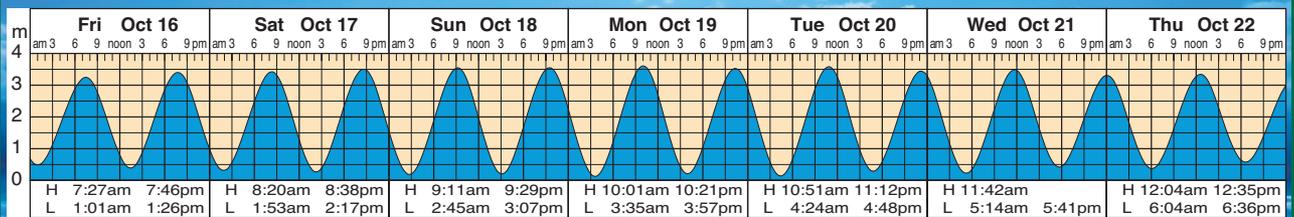
Recently after a night of rain, the calm crystal-clear sea water was spoiled by a large plume of polluted water arising from Wairau Estuary. The most worrying toxin is the raw human sewage. Council GIS maps mark the Wairau Estuary and Creek as stormwater drains. Watercare intentionally allow “engineered overflows” of raw sewage into the

creek. This happens multiple times each year after heavy rain, and worryingly Watercare does not actually monitor how often this happens or how much is released.

Milford WEEPS (Wairau Estuary Environment Protection Society) has been campaigning for the estuary to be cleaned up and to be swimmable 365 days a year by 2025. Wairau Creek has been used as a sewage overflow drain for too long and the dilution of the pollution is not the solution.

Ruth Newcombe

Milford / Takapuna Tides



Town square takes shape



Latest design... how the Takapuna Square looks after the latest tweaks

Increased planting, more seating and bike and scooter stands have been added to the Takapuna Square design after public consultation. A large water feature has also been redesigned so it can increase in scale in summer and go smaller during winter, times of water shortage and when events are held.

The square has also been refined to align better with the Shore City shopping centre and Hurstmere Rd, and the entrance to Potters Park has been widened.

Panuku says the square is capable of accommodating a crowd of more than 3000 people for events.

A total of 115 submissions were received. The final concept design will go to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board in October for approval.

The community appeared split over the proposed relocation of the Anzac memorial into the square.

A project team of staff from Panuku, council civic events and members of the RSA will investigate potential options and report back to the board.

The Takapuna Sunday market will be provided space and is set to continue, but on a smaller scale.

Rocks rolling slowly from Milford Beach

All but one of the four Milford properties with rocks on the beach have now moved them to the satisfaction of council. Auckland Council's manager of regulatory compliance, Steve Pearce, described this as a "really positive result." The rocks, piled on the beach without council permission in early June to reinforce the residents' existing sea

walls, have impeded walkers at high tide causing local consternation. The council which initially issued abatement notices and threatened fines, then pursued a negotiated solution.

Pearce said the owners of 7a Holiday Rd had lodged a consent application for placement of the rocks. "We are currently waiting for this decision," he said.

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Corporate crew tackle weeds in reserves

Raffy Laguda was one of the first corporate volunteers to work with the North Shore Birdsong project on clearing weeds at Smiths Bush, Takapuna.

“It’s so great that we get to help our community especially since our office is based in Takapuna and most of us live on the Shore,” said Laguda, one of eight Reckitt Benckiser employees who took a paid day off work last week to help out at their favourite local reserves, including Smiths Bush and Brian Byrnes Reserve in Milford.

Takapuna North Community Trust Environmental Coordinator Fiona Martin said getting more corporate volunteers taking a couple days out of the year to do their part in maintaining reserves and parks was a priority for the trust.

She is encouraging more businesses to engage volunteers for community environmental work, which strengthens community ties and benefits everyone.

Anyone interested in getting involved in local pest-free and restoration projects can contact Martin via her email enviro@takapunatrust.org.nz



Getting stuck in... Raffy Laguda enjoyed a day out of the office at Smith’s Bush

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Heritage treasures draw the crowds

Two hidden gems of Castor Bay were highlighted during Heritage Week.

Military fortifications and a historic pa site a short way south along the cliff-top pathway were the subject of walking tours by Auckland Council's Parks Department in conjunction with the Kennedy Park World War II Installations Preservation Trust.

Family groups making the most of the school holidays joined the informative free tours last week, walking through the tunnels and learning about archaeological features of early Maori settlement.

Others in groups of around 15 people were led by park ranger Anna Baine and the trust's John Pringle. Among them was a woman who had travelled by public transport from Newmarket just to learn more about the North Shore, and a Dutch visitor who had filled his time in Auckland this year making the most of opportunities to walk and explore.

Pringle, a former serviceman who lives locally, explained how Castor Bay got its name. The bay was used by the military, which had owned the land above, for drop-offs to a shed, he said. Much-used castor oil was stored there and the name stuck. Kennedy Park's importance grew in WWII when the threat of seaborne invasion by the Japanese prompted the building of an observation post and two gun emplacements, accessed through tunnels where 45kg cartridges were stored.

These military features were carefully disguised as civilian buildings. A parade ground was painted to look like a tennis court to fool any airborne spies. This is now used as a petanque terrain.

Efforts to preserve the tunnels and the observation post that masqueraded as an ice-cream parlour and a barracks building that looks like a state house prompted the formation of the trust around five years ago.

Kennedy Park, now in council ownership, was considered one of the best intact examples worldwide of a disguised military post, said Pringle. The need for more restoration work there was a "heritage issue", he said.

The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board is understood to be assessing the fortifications this month, as further funding is considered.

The expanse of Kennedy Park stretching south from its carpark off Beach Rd had once been a large pa, said Baine. The area was settled from the 1400s, with Te Kawerau Maki the main iwi. They established the smaller Rahapora Pa, of which there are still visible signs, including defence ditches, kumara pits, a whare site and a midden. "It's the only pa site on this stretch of coast where you can still see features," said Baine.

The pa is beyond the pathway gate on land that looks out to Rangitoto and back to Milford. It was occupied until 1750, when an attack by an inter-tribal group from Waiheke led to its abandonment.



Exploration team... From left, Chloe Lemon, Mum Stacey Strang and Sophie Lemon



Going underground... Aleeshia Ferguson and her daughter Georgia Davies enjoyed a tour through the Kennedy Park tunnels last week.

The area would once have been covered in coastal broadleaf forest, said Baine, with the iwi having burned off growth to clear space for the pa. Pohutukawa had sprung up since, and in recent years planting had helped re-establish other native trees.

• Kennedy Park's tunnels are open for guided tours on the second Sunday of each month, between 11am and 2pm. Entry is by gold coin donation.

Learn more at www.kennedypark.org.nz

Level one half marathon draws the crowds



Marathon mates... The Active Asians team from Forrest Hill, Coatesville and Omaha competed in the 21k Devonport Half Marathon last weekend. Around 750 entrants took part in various events including 2km, 5km, 10km and 15 km races, with more than 500 finishers in the half marathon.

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Lake House makes an exhibition of itself



Blast from the past... original Lake House Arts Centre exhibitors and supporters at the launch of the Legacy of an Era exhibition

Lake House Arts Centre welcomes the return of its original exhibiting artists with a new *Legacy of an Era* exhibition.

The exhibition includes artwork by Tony Ogle, who played a part in saving the house as a historic icon in Takapuna in 1995, along with 25 other artists.

He organised an *End of Era* exhibition at the time to raise awareness of the significance of the building as it faced destruction by a property developer.

After the house was saved, *The New Era* exhibition was hosted.

As part of the new exhibition, New Zealand artist Betty Curnow's 'Wind Blown Colours'

will be up for auction.

In collaboration with the Auckland Heritage Festival, Lake House Arts Centre is searching for more stories related to the house. These could involve video footage, artefacts, invitations or photos.

From the 1890s to the 1990s, Lake House stood at the northern end of Takapuna Beach. It functioned as a family home and seaside boarding house. The land on which it was built was purchased by Mr John Gordon in 1896.

In 1905 the property was sold to Newson and Clara Sheppard who added the top storey in 1909, bringing the number of bedrooms to 17.

After brief use as a hospital during the 1918-

19 influenza epidemic, the house was sold to members of the Winstone and Arthur families who divided it into flats and used it as a holiday home for a number of years.

In 1946 it was sold to the Gray family and in 1984 it was purchased by Mr Bob Green. In 1996 it was relocated to its site on Barrys Point Reserve so that an apartment complex could be built on the beach front.

A charitable trust, originally The Coach House Trust later renamed The Lake House Trust, was formed to restore the building.

The *Legacy of an Era* exhibition will be open at the Lake House Arts Centre Becroft gallery until 23 October.

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Lake House Life Member recipient Alex Witten-Hannah and Genevieve Becroft at the *Legacy of an Era* exhibition launch

Rock'n'revs

Be ready for a wheely good time next weekend, with the return of Repco Takapuna Rocks. The day of family fun on Saturday 24 October brings together classic cars entered from across the country, rock'n'roll and vintage markets. The community fundraising event in support of Yes Disability for Shore Junction and Make-A-Wish NZ is being held in Takapuna for the second time. Find it, with plenty of food on offer, along The Strand.

Accessibility award

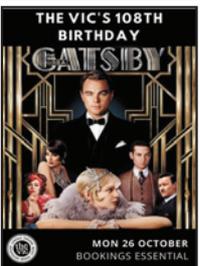
The Tim Bray Theatre Company has been recognised for its pioneering work in making shows more accessible to more children. The popular children's theatre company which regularly performs at Takapuna's Pump House Theatre received the Arts Access Creative New Zealand Arts for All Award this week. The company has a scheme where patrons can donate a ticket to be allocated to a child in need. It also runs special shows catering for those with vision, hearing or sensory challenges. After a Covid-19 disrupted year, which hit revenues, the award was a "great honour" said Bray. Extra performances of a touring season of Joy Cowley's *Greedy Cat* have been added at the Pump House from 20-22 October.

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SOLD



34A SALTBURN ROAD

JELENA FREEMAN 021 65 65 63
JIM MAYS 021 937 766

SOLD



HART ROAD

RICHARD & ROBERT MILNE
022 011 2494

SOLD



501/16 HURON STREET

ALISON PARKER
021 983 533

SOLD

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