

# The Rangitoto Observer

Takapuna, Milford, Castor Bay, Forrest Hill and Sunnynook

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY Issue 52 – March 5, 2021 AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

**Simon Watts**  
MP for North Shore

09 486 0005



Authorised by Simon Watts,  
Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.



**Takapuna Beach up for  
paddle-boarding worlds... p2**

**Waterbourne wins  
liquor licences... p3**

**Local-board meetings  
reopened to public... p6**

## Lockdown hits theatre as alleged theft heads to court

A man has been arrested and charged over the alleged theft of \$50,000 from Shoreside Theatre and is set to appear in court in April.

A police spokesman said, "The 44-year-old man will face charges relating to theft by a person in a special relationship and falsifying accounts."

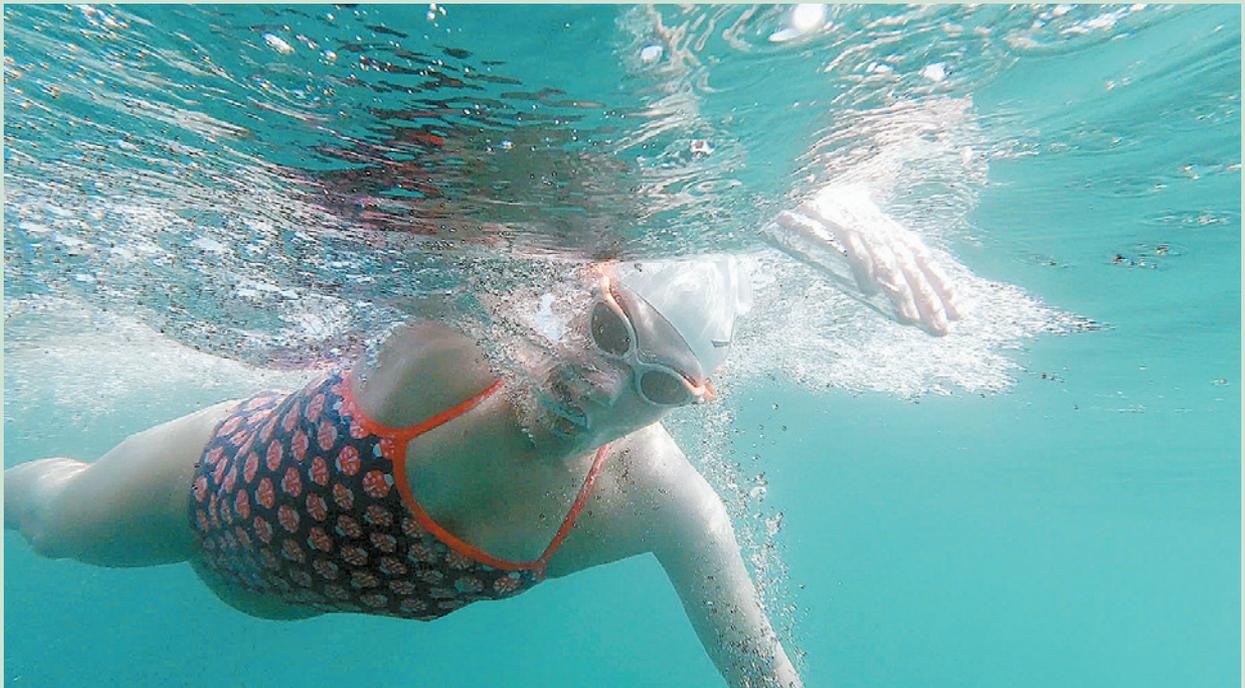
The North Shore-based theatre company, which last year went through a financial crisis due to the alleged theft, took another blow last month when the three-day Auckland lockdown forced it to suddenly cancel its shows.

On Sunday 14 February, it cancelled its 7.30pm performance of Shakespeare's *Much*

*Ado About Nothing* at the PumpHouse outdoor amphitheatre in Takapuna, sending 140 people home ahead of the start of the level-3 lockdown at midnight.

Performances of *Much Ado About Nothing* and *Hamlet* scheduled for the next three nights were also cancelled. **To page 5**

## Strait up: Carmel's swimming queen claims triple crown



**In the swim... Carmel College swimmer Caitlin O'Reilly swam Foveaux Strait last month, making her the youngest person to conquer the big three New Zealand open-water swims. Story, page 9.**



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## Sunnynook residents call for meeting on intensification issues

A community hui to discuss housing development is on the agenda for the Sunnynook Residents' Association.

Intensification allowed under Auckland Council's Unitary Plan was beginning to have an impact locally, two association representatives told the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board's Community Forum last month. "You just need to walk round the park between 5 and 6 and hear conversation about ugly apartments with no parking," Melissa Powell told board members.

Blocks of land in Salamanca Rd and Sycamore Dr where a large number of units were to be built were among significant recent sales, she said.

Member Jan O'Connor noted: "They're just popping up everywhere." With more houses, trees were disappearing from neighbourhoods, observed member Trish Deans.

Deputy chair George Wood asked the residents if they were against the sort of 5-6 unit developments becoming more common on sections right across the board area.

Association Rachael Findlay-Clarke said: "We just really believe in talking to the people who are living with them."

The women said they welcomed the growth and diversity of Sunnynook. "It's exciting if we can have more people moving into our area," said Powell.

Facilities such as the much-improved Sunnynook Park, a playground planned near the community centre, and well-used bus services were a boon.

They told the board the idea behind holding a housing hui (on a yet to be decided date) was to allow residents to discuss the future of their area.

Deans advised getting a city planner along to talk about the Unitary Plan and how it worked, which the representatives said they were keen to do. The association might also make its views known to the council's Planning Committee about how the plan's implementation was impacting neighbourhoods. The committee needed to hear from concerned citizens, Deans said.

## Paddle-boarding worlds poised to come to Takapuna

The 2023 world paddle-boarding championships are likely to be held off Takapuna Beach.

New Zealand Stand Up Paddle Boarding has been in negotiations with the International Canoe Federation to host the event, with only the final details to be confirmed.

"We have been told we can hold it if we want it," said committee member Bill Dawes, who is spearheading the project.

"We are very keen to have it here, but obviously we want to do it the Kiwi way."

For example, the geography of Auckland allowed racing at various venues, such as the Viaduct and Lake Pupuke as well as Takapuna Beach.

The New Zealand group also wanted to include a schools championship, masters and youth racing.

"We want to make it as inclusive as we can... a bit like what happens every Tuesday [at the Harcourts Beach Series] on Takapuna Beach."

The timing of the world champs, which would attract 500 paddlers, was still to be decided. Takapuna was ideally placed in April – the water was still warm, and it was shoulder tourist season which would offer a boost to businesses. World paddle-boarding champs were normally held in October/November which were often unstable weather months in Auckland.

"We want it to happen, it's just a matter of making it work," Dawes said.

Meanwhile, locals can get a taste of paddle-boarding racing off Takapuna Beach on 12, 13 and 14 March, when the national champs are held as part of the Waterbourne Festival. A field of 150 to 200 is expected.

## Safety concerns around busy bus station

"An accident waiting to happen" is how community representatives describe the area around Sunnynook Bus Station.

The Residents Association detailed its concerns for pedestrians to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board. Drop-offs where passengers converged and a steep ramp were

among issues. The board was receptive, and some members said the station surrounds, in a residential area, posed safety issues that might require changes. They would continue to raise these matters with transport authorities, they said.

The association was thanked for its presentation. This included updates on community work in Lyford Reserve, plans for an art trail, and for fun runs in spring.

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**ADVERTISING DEADLINE:** March 12

### Letters to the Editor

Topics should be local and not overly long. 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.

### 2 The Strand: empty for 1016 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 1016 days.



# Anne Maree Court

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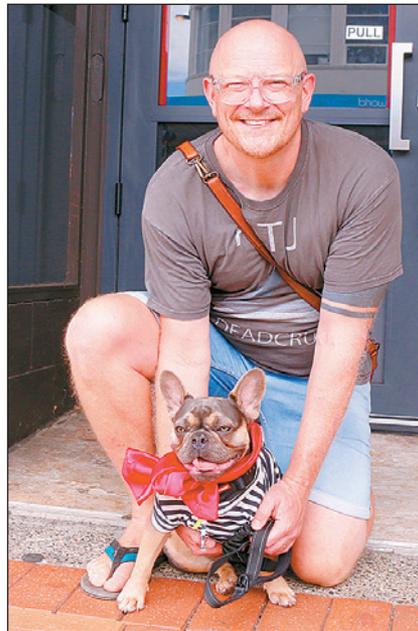
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## Milford's best-dressed pooches



**Canine class...**  
**Former guide dog Iris (above) with Michael Hammond was named best-dressed, with Lina Amelia's Bubble (far right) third. Colin Swain's Lulu (centre) was judged best small dog.**



Milford's main street came alive for Vive La France day last Saturday (27 February), with a highlight of the event being its dog competition.

Appropriately the winner of the best small dog section was a French bulldog, owned by local couple Colin and Marcia Swain. They used their daughter's rash suit and their son's vampire cape to improvise kitting out Lulu in true Gallic style.



"We entered to be part of the Milford community," said Colin.

The popular annual event, organised by the Milford Business Association, pulled in one of its best crowds to date, just ahead of the latest lockdown.

French music and food helped set the scene on a closed-off Kitchener Rd, where family fun extended to snail racing. Market day stalls and sitting in the sun were popular.

## Waterbourne will be wet despite licensing hiccups

Alcohol can be sold at three premier events in this month's Waterbourne festival on Takapuna Beach Reserve after liquor licences were granted at the 11th hour.

Licences were granted by the Auckland District Licensing Authority in the middle of February for the Bendon Lingerie Sunset Sounds event on 5 March, Beached Music

on 13 March and the Dave Dobbyn concert on 19 March.

Strict conditions on the licences, granted to Joylab Ltd, owners of the nearby Regatta and Franks bars, include a requirement for detailed security plans, and limits of four servings per patron until 6pm, and two servings per person thereafter.

The licensing hearing for the festival was held on 9 February, with many parts of the five applications opposed by Police, health authorities and district licensing inspectors.

Licensing authority chair Katia Fraser said the applicant was cutting it fine to get the licences approved in time for the festival.

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# Tenacious tween steps up campaign for water fountains

Hauraki's Lilah McDonald is taking her drinking-fountain campaign to the public this weekend.

The 10-year-old has been given a spot to promote her Pledge Me campaign at the Devonport Race Days By the Sea event at Windsor Reserve.

Lilah has launched a social enterprise called Water Us, which plans to raise money for drinking fountains by selling bamboo toilet paper.

When the Observer spoke to Lilah in January, she expressed her concerns about the lack of public drinking water and was eager to have a drinking fountain installed at Takapuna Beach Playground.

She has since presented her ideas to the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board.

She told the board she believed there to be only 16 fountains at parks and playgrounds from Castor Bay to Devonport. Most were



**Thirsty work... Lilah McDonald believes the North Shore needs more drinking fountains**

'bubblers' and did not enable bottle refilling and they were not all wheelchair accessible.

Board chair Aidan Bennett congratulated Lilah on her presentation but said it would be a slow-moving process to achieve progress.

"If we could get more drinking fountains in our parks it would be a good result," he said.

Lilah's mother, Kate O'Leary, told the Observer that water fountains were not clearly signposted and the board area needed twice as many as it has. She said there are currently drinking fountains at Brett Ave, Takapuna Beach Cafe, the Rose Gardens opposite Shore City, Killarney St outside Takapuna Pool, Kennedy Park and Devonport wharf, but none at Takapuna, Narrow Neck and Milford Beaches.

"The next step for us is that the Local Board is organising a meeting with the appropriate council people, to understand what we can and can't do and how to do it," she said.

From page 1

## Theatre seeks help after lockdown takes toll

"This was a huge blow to a promising season of Shakespeare in the Park," said theatre president Catherine Boniface.

"We hoped the ticket sales would replenish our coffers."

She said costs, including venue hire and marketing of the show, have left little profit.

Under level-2 restrictions, audiences for the rescheduled shows last week were limited to

100 people. Ticketholders were being asked to consider donating the purchase price rather than asking for refunds.

"It has been hectic trying to figure out how we would keep our show running," Boniface said.

After discovering the alleged theft, the company launched a Givealittle page to help raise money for its Shakespeare in the Park

season. A target of \$5000 of community donations was met.

"Our initial fundraising campaign helped us pay our immediate debts and keep going long enough to get Shakespeare in the Park up and running," said Boniface.

But the company was now having to reach out to the community for more help for future endeavours, she said.



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# Local Board meetings set to be public again

Devonport-Takapuna Local Board workshops will soon again be open to the public.

Ruth Jackson takes over as board chair from Aidan Bennett from May. The mid-term swap was agreed after their election in 2019, when the Heart of the Shore ticket of Jackson, Jan O'Connor and Trish Deans gained three of the six seats on the board, which Bennett topped the individual vote for.

Jackson gave an overview of what her priorities for the board would be, when she spoke at a meeting of the Devonport Community Trust this month. Open democracy was top of the list, she said, with workshops a great place for people to learn more about the background to decision-making.

At the board's monthly meeting, agenda

items are more often rubber-stamped than explained. Jackson said if the public attended workshops, they would be better able to give timely feedback to board members on matters they may have knowledge about.

"I look at the local board being a collaboration with the community, not us dictating," she said. "It's giving the community the absolutely best chance to know what is going on."

To help with this, workshop topics would be notified publicly in advance.

Media and public access to the workshop meetings was overturned at the start of the board's term, with Bennett using his casting vote to break a 3-3 split. Jackson said she would do the same when her time as chair started if she was not able to persuade Ben-

nett, George Wood and Toni van Tonder to support the move to reopen the meetings.

Other matters Jackson wants to focus on include continuing advocacy for better water quality and cleaner beaches. This was being done in conjunction with the Kaipatiki Local Board to ensure North Shore got "a fair crack" of Auckland Council's targeted water rate.

Better bus services and putting the brakes on the stripping of council assets were other priorities, she said. Jackson told the trust meeting that work currently in the pipeline in the local area included improvements to playgrounds. The development of a community-resilience plan, prompted by Covid-19, was also coming along well, she said.

## Get going on grove – board chairman

Work to reopen the Sacred Grove of pohutukawa at the north end of Takapuna Beach needs to resume, says the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chairman, Aidan Bennett.

"We need to see some progress there," he said of remedial tree work at the enclave. "I'm not keen to see it closed to the public permanently," Bennett noted in his monthly report to the board in late February.

Maintenance of parks and reserves was another area that Auckland Council needed to "drastically improve", said Bennett. His view

that work was not up to scratch was shared by other board chairs from across the city at their latest forum, prompting a joint call for the council to do more, Bennett told the local board.

Other matters Bennett touched on in his report were praise for the new disability access mat on Takapuna Beach (which Bennett got to trial on a mobility scooter when he was recovering from surgery) and for the new Toko Puia carpark in Huron St and the temporary summer tidy-up of Hurstmere Rd, pending construction work resuming mid-year.

Efforts to buy Firth House at 9 Kitchener Rd as a community asset and to guarantee continued public use of the Milford-Takapuna beach walkway where it crossed over the property were something he wished to continue to drive. Feedback to the board's call for this was 90 per cent in favour, he said.

The board wants council development arm Panuku to put money from No. 2 The Strand towards the Firth House purchase. Panuku considers the former library building is surplus to requirements.

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## Water pipes probed

Takapuna and Hauraki homes are being checked for polluting pipes.

The external work to properties is to determine if stormwater and wastewater pipes are incorrectly connected or damaged which could cause water quality issues on Takapuna Beach.

Testing by Citycare Water, a contractor for the joint council and Watercare project, will continue this month. If problems are found in pipes, gully traps or manholes, follow-up drainage investigations may be needed. Last month a bubbling-over manhole was spotted by a local resident who alerted council workers. This had enabled a faulty connection to be traced, said the Safeswim programme manager, Nick Vigar.

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# Call for motel overview wins support

Concern about motels being used for welfare accommodation in the Takapuna area has prompted the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board to call for a clearer picture on the extent of the practice.

Up to 3000 people are housed by the government in motels at any one time and the board wants to know how many of them are in Takapuna. The issue, raised earlier by deputy chair George Wood by way of a notice of motion, was debated at the board's February meeting.

Wood said more facts and figures from relevant government and social agencies would help guide the board – "whatever we can get". The board's strategic broker has been asked to help organise a briefing for members to gain more understanding of the issues and the role the board might play.

Families being housed in premises unsuitable for long-term stays and the impact on the wider community prompted the call. The Takapuna Business Association is also worried that visitors seeking accommodation in the area may not be able to find it.

"If there's going to have to be temporary accommodation in motels, there has to be better social services wrapped around people and more policing," Wood told the meeting.

Crime was up in the area, he believed, and local policing had been reduced.

Member Jan O'Connor said moteliers were being paid millions when government money

might be better put into building more social housing in suitable locations. "It's something we need to discuss as a community."

Board chair Aidan Bennett said it was not the board's role to come up with solutions for national problems, but Wood pointed out a 2019 change to the Local Government Act tasked councils with considering the social and cultural well-being of citizens. The board could act as an informed advocate on the matter, he said. All members agreed a fuller understanding of the issues was needed, although Bennett did not want council staff tied up doing reports and research.

He recommended member Ruth Jackson, who will take over as chair in late April, should attend a meeting on the topic called by the business association.

Member Trish Deans questioned whether the association was the right body to be coordinating future action.

Jackson said gaining a better understanding of the issues would be the board's best way to determine next steps. She said the plight of children – who through no fault of their own were homeless – needed considering, as their education and health could suffer without suitable accommodation. "These kids, simply by being in homes that aren't stable, just fall through the gaps in the system." Tapping into groups such as Auckland North Community and Development Inc (ANCAD) and welfare-accommodation providers would be useful.

## News Briefs

### Anzac back to Strand

Anzac Day commemorations will return to The Strand in Takapuna this year. The 25 April parade was moved from its usual route to the war memorial in 2019, due to construction work. Covid-19 led to its cancellation last year.

### Beach clean-up

The stream from Wairau Estuary to Milford Beach will be the focus of another clean-up organised by Conservation Volunteers New Zealand. The project, partnering with the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board, involves collecting rubbish and planting the estuary edges over winter. Join in tomorrow, Saturday 6 March, from 10am to noon, with a barbecue to follow. Meet at 10am at Milford Shopping Centre carpark on Omana Rd.

### Bakers donate

North Shore Hospital's maternity ward will get a chair for new mothers and their visitors thanks to fundraising by the Milford Bakers Delight, which raised \$1800 over two weeks last month. Owners Anshul and Natalie Sharma, who wanted to recognise health workers, worked with the hospital charity, Well Foundation.

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# Westlake Boys trio take off in the Airforce

Three former students of Westlake Boys High School had an unexpected reunion when they trained together to become Royal New Zealand Air Force pilots.

Flying Officers Denzel Williams and Aaron Kurte, both aged 24, and Flying Officer Tyler Waters, 25, graduated last month.

Kurte and Williams were in the same year at Westlake and played hockey together, with Waters in the year above them. They took different paths after school, before joining the RNZAF in 2018, with a shared ambition to fly.

Kurte made coffee as a barista while he saved for private flying training and did some travelling. Williams did odd jobs for a few years and also travelled with Kurte before signing up for the Airforce. Waters studied for a mechanical engineering degree at Auckland University, where he graduated with honours.

“We didn’t coordinate it,” said Waters of ending up on the same course together. “Flying was always something I dreamed about, but I joined [the RNZAF] as an engineer originally. Then I decided to change direction,” he said.

Kurte missed out on his first application into the RNZAF to become a pilot, but after some travelling and learning to fly he decided to reapply and was successful. “I think the additional maturity helped,” he said.

Williams assessed himself as not being ready to join when he left school. He waited for a couple of years and then began to study computer science at university in tandem with applying to



**Flight club... Flying Officers Denzel Williams, Tyler Waters and Aaron Kurte are all Westlake Boys High School old boys**

the RNZAF for pilot training. “Then I got the call that I had been accepted and that was it, I was out the door.”

All three said that while the intense course schedule challenged them, the instructors were an integral part of their success. “They supported us all through the tough times and really worked hard to help us succeed,” said Waters.

The new pilots graduated a little later than expected due to the Covid-19 lockdowns of 2020, when they were unable to fly for several weeks during the course.

“Coming back in, picking up from where you left off and getting back into the mode of flying was hard, but the instructors were great at getting us all back on track,” Williams said.

The three and six coursemates who graduated at the same time will now either be posted to the RNZAF rotary wing fleet and learn to fly the Augusta A109 Light Utility Helicopter or train at No. 42 Squadron on the Beechcraft B200 King Air. The helicopter pilots will then go on to fly the NH-90 or Seasprite helicopters at No. 3 or No. 6 Squadron respectively, while the multi-engine pilots will go on to fly either the Hercules or Boeing 757 at No. 40 Squadron, or the Orion at No. 5 Squadron.

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From page 1

## Carmel student swims Foveaux Strait to claim 'triple crown'

Carmel College swimmer Caitlin O'Reilly conquered Foveaux Strait last month, making her the youngest person to achieve the New Zealand 'triple crown' of open-water swims.

She had previously swum Cook Strait and across Lake Taupo.

Foveaux Strait, between Stewart Island and Bluff, was no easy feat for the 16-year-old, who spent 10 hours and 21 minutes covering 31km in 15-degree water – without a wetsuit.

"The hardest part was the last 10km," Caitlin said. "I looked up to see Bluff and I wasn't getting any closer. The sun was going down. I started panicking."

She began the 17 February swim at 10.40am from Saddle Point on Stewart Island and reached the mainland by 9pm.

Caitlin is the ninth person to swim Foveaux without a wetsuit and the sixth person to achieve the triple crown without a wetsuit.

"During the first hour of the swim I was okay, but then negative thoughts started going through my head. I was cold. I was thinking about sharks and really out of focus," said Caitlin.

She said it was her most challenging swim yet. "The water was flat, but the swim was mentally draining," she said.

She won't be swimming Foveaux again. "I think it's hard to be in the right mindset and I could have swum it faster. But I think being the youngest person to complete the triple crown is really cool," said Caitlin.

Her training included swimming 40km each week in the pool, with a few open water swims leading up to the Foveaux attempt.

Caitlyn swam Cook Strait in 2017, as 12-year-old, in 7 hours and 19 minutes. She was the youngest female to make the 30km swim. In 2019, she swam 40km across Lake Taupo in 13 hours and 26 minutes.

Now she is preparing to attempt the Oceans Seven marathon swimming challenge of seven open-water swims around the world.

It includes the North Channel between Northern Ireland and Portpatrick in Scotland, Molokai Channel in Hawaii, the English Channel between France and England, the Catalina Channel in California, the Tsugaru Strait in Northern Japan, the Strait of Gibraltar – and Cook Strait.

She won't be travelling soon due to Covid-19 restrictions but hopes there will be a chance for her to complete at least one of the swims this year.

## Local director takes on tale of grief

When Harriett Maire was asked to direct an intensely personal play about grief, she was out of her comfort zone.

But the Takapuna Grammar School old girl worked closely with its writer and actor Clare Marcie to turn the story of Marcie's loss of her twin sister at the age of four months into what she describes as a gentle, thoughtful story that she hopes will resonate widely.

*Twinless* explores "unfamiliar grief", encompassing Marcie's story of finding her way through the fog of loss.

For 25-year-old Maire, who did not have a close bereavement experience to draw upon, it was a challenge to be asked to direct the play.

She drew on theatre and production skills first developed at school, honed by then directing two plays and holding a day job making television commercials.

Being a type-one diabetic also gave her an inkling of the awkwardness with which people who revealed something personal could be regarded.

Strangers told about a loss could react uncomfortably and she too had experienced "pitied glances" over her condition.

"When Clare described the uncomfortable reactions she gets from people when they find out her twin sister died, I felt that in my bones."



Harriett Maire

Maire and Marcie dealt with the play's tricky topic by checking in with each other regularly.

Its debut at the Basement Theatre next week will be a significant event, being the first public sharing of the *Twinless* story. They and co-producer Claire Turner hope to tour it to Wellington and Whangarei.

The women got to know each other through Auckland creative circles.

Maire recalls that before being asked to direct the play, Marcie told her: "I just feel like

the right person will turn up in my life". So she was especially flattered to go on to be the one asked to do the job.

For now, Maire is happy juggling theatre and film work. "I like to do personal projects to stretch my creative brain. At this stage of my life it's lovely to wear lots of hats."

She credits her TGS performing-arts and media-studies teachers with being early influences, before she studied television and screen production at AUT. "I loved TGS – they were such formative years."

After the last three years flatting in Takapuna, Maire is this year enjoying being back in her childhood home in Bayswater. Her parents have moved out and she shares the house with flatmates, and says with a laugh: "I'm not sleeping in my old bedroom."



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# Westlake Boys rowers make a splash ahead of Maadi

Westlake Boys High School rowers have high expectations as they prepare for the Maadi Cup later this month.

Westlake Boys took two of the four trophies home from the Head of Harbour regatta last month, tying with Auckland Grammar as top boys school and top school overall.

The College Sport Auckland regatta drew 26 schools and 876 competitors to Lake Pupuke on Saturday 13 February.

“We were delighted to have such a strong display of rowing from all of our young men,” said Westlake Boys coach Natalie Marriott.

Westlake’s Under 17 coxed eight, Under 16 coxed eight and Under 15 coxed four crews all won gold medals, the Under 18 eight finished third, behind Grammar and Sacred Heart, and the Under 18 novices picked up silver and bronze medals.

This was the first regatta of the season where the boys wore their school colours having earlier raced regattas under their affiliated club, the North Shore Rowing Club.

A final race with top schools Sacred Heart College and Auckland Grammar saw Westlake Boys gain the final points they needed to share the major trophy.

“Our crews have all been performing really well throughout the season, with many wins at previous regattas, particularly in sweep oar events,” Marriot said.

In 2019, the school won the Under 18 eights and last year it was the top boys



**Joint victors... Westlake’s Greg Severin (right) and Auckland Grammar’s Ben Shortt accept the Head of Harbour top boys school trophy. They also received the overall points shield. Photo: Clare Logan**

school, before Covid-19 brought the season to an end and the national event, the Maadi Cup, was cancelled.

“Our boys are all training incredibly hard at the moment, as I’m sure young rowers all around the country are doing. We are on water between four and eight times a week as well as multiple fitness, strength

and conditioning sessions,” Marriott said.

The club has also reached its goal to raise \$10,000 through community donations to buy a new four skiff, matching a \$10,000 New Zealand Community Trust grant.

The skiff has been named ‘Natalie Marriott’, to honour her eight years of coaching the school’s rowers.

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## Takapuna's title hopes dented by loss

The Takapuna premier cricket side's hopes of winning the Hedley Howarth two-day title took a dent last weekend with a 94-run loss to neighbours North Shore.

Takapuna was demolished by Ronnie Hira. He took 14 wickets for 78 runs in 43 overs. In his second innings, Hira scored a stunning 73 not out off 22 balls, including seven fours and seven sixes. His 50 was off 12 balls.

Shore is now second on the table behind Suburbs New Lynn, with Takapuna having slipped to fourth with two rounds to play. Takapuna's match against Suburbs this weekend was delayed due to lockdown.



**Good start... Takapuna wicketkeeper Quinn Sunde (left) congratulates Jayden Quensell after he caught North Shore opener Ronnie Hira on the first day of competition. Shore gradually gained the ascendancy to comfortably win the two-day championship match.**


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as well as group activities to suit individual likes and pastimes, from cooking and Art classes to guest entertainers and outings. We also enjoy a good party! Including multi-cultural days and Karaoke.

Please feel free to make an appointment with our manager Sharon Hansen to visit and view the facility  
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June, our oldest resident, says she loves her privacy and her personalized room that overlooks the lovely garden trees,

**"I feel at home here, I love to participate in all the activities and outdoor fun."**

Johnnie who is a regular visitor to June also likes to take part in the many activities too and is always made to feel welcome.

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[bayleys.co.nz/1470427](http://bayleys.co.nz/1470427)

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**Kathryn Robertson** 021 490 480

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[bayleys.co.nz/1451287](http://bayleys.co.nz/1451287)

4 1 3 2

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[kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz](mailto:kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz)  
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**Phone for viewing times**  
 Kathryn Robertson 021 490 480  
[kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz](mailto:kathryn.robertson@bayleys.co.nz)

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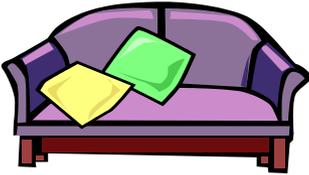
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# Nurse's legacy to be remembered at hospice

The contributions of a plucky Takapuna nurse will be remembered at the new Harbour Hospice development.

The Norah Hamblin Memorial Trust has made a sizable donation to the expansion of the facility, where a remembrance of Hamblin, who died in 2013, aged 99, will be sited at a nurses' station.

Hamblin made a lasting contribution to the hospice as a volunteer, donor and bequestor. Her trust has continued the connection with what hospice described as a "significant gift".

"The trustees requested a dedication in the nurses' station because they knew that Norah, who was a nurse for 45 years, understood the value of palliative care and felt strongly about helping nurses develop their clinical skills," a spokesperson said.

Hamblin began nursing in 1934 and became a skilled midwife. When she tried to join the war effort, she was turned down



**Life-long nurse remembered... Norah Hamblin during her army years (left) and later in life**

twice because her skills were considered essential to services at home. In 1945 she finally asked her father to intervene and her matron was overruled, allowing her to join the New Zealand Army Nursing Service.

World War II was officially over when Hamblin reached England aboard the hospital ship Maunganui, but on the voyage, the

ship picked up prisoners of war and families imprisoned during the war. In 1946 Hamblin travelled to Japan where she nursed the J Force Battalion. During her service she attained the rank of captain.

She subsequently spent a year as a missionary midwife in India and made more than 10 visits to Africa. When working in London, she once rode by pushbike to Edinburgh.

Back home in New Zealand, Hamblin continued nursing until the late 1970s, including time at St Helens Hospital in Auckland and as matron of Wakefield Hospital for seven years.

She had a long-standing relationship with Hospice on the North Shore, which was just around the corner from her Takapuna apartment.

Work on the \$20 million hospice expansion on its Shea Tee site is set to begin, with completion due in late 2022. Fundraising continues.

## Rotary gives garden a makeover

Milford Rotary volunteers have transformed an overgrown garden at the entrance of Milford Rd as part of a beautification programme. Volunteers last month removed all of the ivy and rocks from the garden on the corner of Fenwick Ave and Shakespeare Rd at the Milford Rd end.

"We wanted to clean up the entrance to Milford Village," said Milford community service coordinator Alison Waugh.

The Milford Business Association helped to fund the project. Topsoil was delivered at the end of last month and Kings Plant Barn in Forrest Hill delivered new plants.

"We placed a paving wall around the garden which has improved the look considerably," said Waugh. Volunteers will add bark to the area on Wednesday 10 March at 9am, Covid-19 alert levels permitting.

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1. Strutt, et al (2019). Hearing Loss & Dementia Incidence in Australia Findings from the Sydney Memory and Ageing Study

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## ADVERTISEMENT

**“WE’VE GOT A GREAT GANG HERE”**

Suellen Wilkins is open about the fact that if it weren't for her husband Phil's 'double whammy' diagnosis of Parkinson's and dementia, retirement living would not have been on her radar.

Barely into her 70s and busy with their five grandchildren, she had a completely different future imagined with Phil, who she first met when she was just 14.

“It's not what you expect to happen at this time of your life. I thought we were too young to move somewhere like this. But you just have to get on with it,” she says, holding back the emotion.

Suellen and Phil met in 1963 - they were both competitive swimmers representing their countries - New Guinea for Suellen and Fiji for Phil - at the South Pacific Games.

They married in 1971 in Sydney where Suellen had gone to boarding school before moving back to Fiji, or 'paradise' as she refers to it.



**Suellen and Phil rediscover life at William Sanders Village**

They had a wonderful life, with Phil working for a large family company in Suva as the director of finance and Suellen as secretary to the finance director for WR Carpenters in Fiji and then Carlton Brewery as secretary to the manager in Suva.

When it came time for their two children to go to secondary school in 1984 they moved to New Zealand, settling in Brown's Bay for the next 35 years.

Phil's diagnosis came when he was just 58 - Suellen had noticed he had been struggling when doing their accounts.

“He was getting frustrated because, being an accountant, he was normally quite good at doing our tax returns,” says Suellen, who noticed that he also developed a shuffling gait.

“He handed everything over to me, including the driving about four years ago.”

With Phil's condition deteriorating rapidly in the past couple of years, waking constantly in the middle of the night, and needing help with the basics of self-care, Suellen's family and friends were getting worried about the huge toll it was taking on her.

"My son and daughter were getting worried as they could see I was suffering from depression and my sister Margie, who works in social welfare, told me I can't let Phil's dementia take both of us, which it would have if I hadn't made the decision to move in here."

As difficult as it was, Suellen realised it would be best for Phil to move

into the care centre where she could be close to him in an apartment in the neighbouring block. With her son just down the road in Devonport and her daughter in Sandringham it was the perfect location.

"It's only now that the fog is starting to lift and I feel like I'm starting to get my life back and I can work out my day to include him in the best way," she says, four months after the big move.

"I've been able to go shopping or meet friends for lunch, I use the pool here and I've just started going for walks again, all things I couldn't do before because I couldn't leave Phil, so that's been lovely.

Knowing that Phil is in safe hands has been hugely reassuring.

"The team here is just wonderful, they are very good at redirecting him and keeping him calm and happy.

"I'll often take him to the café downstairs or I'll join the special care residents for a game of bingo or something."

One of the highlights of village life has been the wonderful friends she has already made and while the future looks different, it's becoming brighter already.

"We've got a great gang here in this block, I'm having a few of them up here tonight for dinner."



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### Bartender / Barista - Devonport

Signal Hill, a NEW restaurant in Devonport opening early March 2021, is looking for talented Bartenders/Baristas. You will need to be able to create both classic and innovative drinks exceeding customer needs and expectations. Must have 2 years exp, able to work as a team member with the ability to multitask. MUST have valid working VISA or permanent residency.

If you have a "can-do" attitude and a genuine passion for food and people, then this fantastic opportunity is for you.

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### Cheltenham Milk Bar is looking for a Cafe Assistant

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### Waiter/Waitress - Devonport

Signal Hill is on the hunt for waitstaff to join our NEW restaurant in Devonport opening early March 2021. You will be working in a fun, fast-paced dynamic team, providing excellent customer service and food delivery as well as being part of an upbeat restaurant. Available to work nights and weekends, be cool under pressure with the ability to multitask and use your initiative, willingness to work as part of a team. Must have immigration rights to work in NZ.

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Our new **Head Chef** to run our refurbished kitchen and F&B menu at Waitemata Golf Club found out about us via the ShoreJobs partner network. The ShoreJobs service was efficient and excellent value for the service provided.

**Hayden McCallum** General Manager **Waitemata Golf Club**

We were able to hire an experienced **Medical Receptionist** within weeks of listing with ShoreJobs. She saw the job in the Rangitoto Observer and applied directly to us via ShoreJobs.

**Monique Nyemecz** Practice Manager **Devonport Family Practice**

Thanks to the Shore Jobs team for helping us hire our most recent staff member. Soon after listing our job with ShoreJobs we received a shortlist of great candidates. One person in particular was a stand out. We interviewed him immediately and he joined our retail sales team the following week. Thanks Shore Jobs!

**Hayden Collier** Manager **iStore Takapuna**

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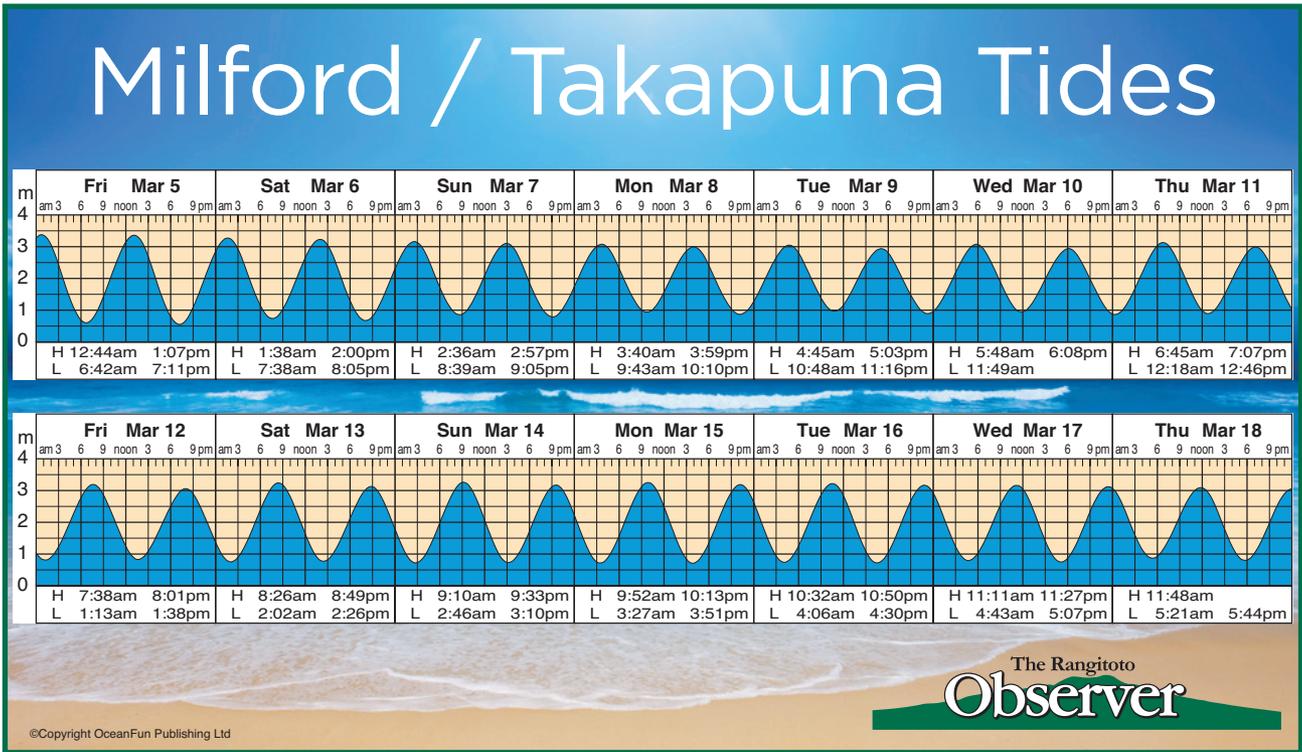


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# Sunnynook mural may be the first of many



**Street art... Melissa Powell with Jesse Jensen's mural of botanist Leonard Cockayne**

A second mural is being planned for Sunnynook to reduce graffiti tagging near the Countdown supermarket.

The concrete wall next to Countdown on Sycamore Dr, across from the Sunnynook Community Centre, is regularly tagged and then painted over by Auckland Council.

After the successful completion of Sunnynook Community Centre's mural of New Zealand botanist Leonard Cockayne (for whom a Sunnynook crescent is named) in January, a concept for a new mural is being discussed by the Sunnynook Community Association.

The mural was painted to be the first artwork on a Sunnynook Art Trail from the Sunnynook Bus Station to Lyford Reserve.

The project is the brainchild of Sunnynook Residents Association member Melissa Powell. "Sunnynook has the busiest community centre on the North Shore," she says. "There has been a really positive reaction from the community."

She says the mural has sparked a lot of curiosity in the community.

Powell is also interested in putting murals on fences if residents would like to offer their fences for the Sunnynook Art Trail.

"Murals are great conversation starters and by getting involved in these projects, I have been surprised at the contribution we have made to the community," she says.

The mural was painted by graffiti artist Jesse Jensen, who is also known as Ares Artifex.

## Gallery on the move

Long-standing Devonport business Art by the Sea will reopen in Takapuna next month.

The dealer gallery is moving to Hurstmere Rd opposite the Bruce Mason Centre, in the former premises of GPK restaurant, because the corner building it has occupied on King Edward Pde for 29 years needed earthquake strengthening.

Owners Mike and Linda Geers were unable to find well-priced temporary accommodation in Devonport. Being less reliant on tourists than some local businesses they hope to retain strong North Shore support in the new location.

## What's On

### Face Masks 12-14 March

A hilarious, relevant story about Covid-19 presented by i-Start Chinese Theatre.

### The RVMES 19 March

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Raya and The Last Dragon (PG) 107min	NEW
Botticelli, Florence and the Medici (E) 90min	NEW
The Food Club (M) 99min	NEW
The Marksman (R13) 108min	NEW
Supernova (M) 94min	NEW
Blackbird (M) 97min	Preview Screenings 5-7 MAR
The Rocky Horror Picture Show with Hot & Flustered Shadowcast (M)	5 MAR

### COMING SOON

Seaweek 2021	10 MAR
Blackbird (M) 97min	11 MAR
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