

The Rangitoto Observer

DELIVERED FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 72 - December 10, 2021

AN INDEPENDENT VOICE

Takapuna market won't be back this year... p3

Wairau Estuary outlet swim warning lifted... p5

Bumper holiday page of tide tables... p23

Towies called in for beach-parking blitz

Boaties and others who are flouting the law by parking on Castor Bay Beach are being targeted in a crackdown by authorities.

Utes, cars and boat trailers – up to 10 at a time – have recently been illegally parking on the relatively small beach.

Auckland Council and Auckland Transport

(AT) planned education and enforcement, Devonport-Takapuna Local Board chair Ruth Jackson said last week.

But that enforcement appeared to have started two weekends ago, when parking wardens and a tow truck were seen at the beach.

It is against the law to park on the sand, as it is

on reserves. “It’s been happening over multiple weekends,” Jackson said.

“It’s just not safe. It’s just a very toxic recipe.”

People legitimately needed to launch their boats, so authorities did not want to block access with bollards, she said.

Jackson was not aware of the **To page 2**

Smells like Christmas spirit



Heaven-scent... Lexi Edwards, 14, left, and sister Mia, 17, run one of the many Christmas-tree pop-ups bringing a festive look – and aroma – to various spots around the North Shore this month. Story, page 7.

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Authorities target 'toxic' beach parking

From page 1

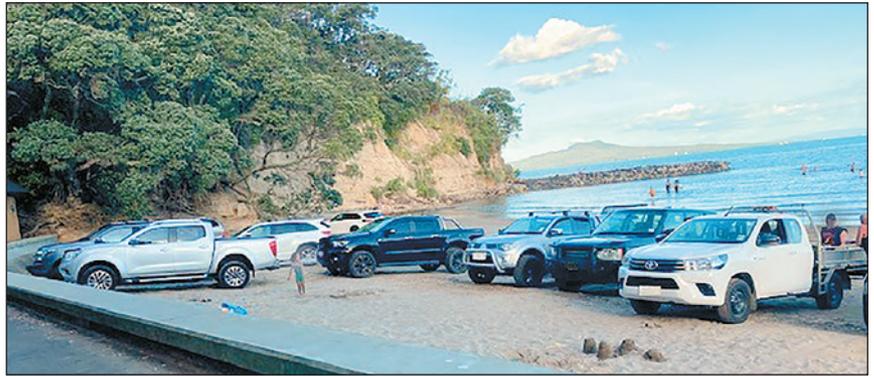
problem arising at Castor Bay previously. She linked the recent traffic to the loosening of lockdown rules, which allowed people to get outside for recreation while many other things remained off-limits, creating high demand for boat ramps. "It seems to be a new thing."

Castor Bay Community Association chair Hamish Anderson said cars had occasionally been seen on the beach previously but the problem had grown

He too blamed the lockdown. "People can't spread out to other beaches outside Auckland and [it's] putting real pressure on beaches on the Shore in particular that have boat ramp access down on the beach."

The parking was tide dependent and worse on weekends, but Anderson had seen four cars on the sand at 7.30pm on a Monday night.

"Beaches are for people and families and they shouldn't have to worry about avoiding



Beach jam... Vehicles on the sand at Castor Bay

Photo: Selwyn Maynard

vehicles. It's a small beach. There's just not enough room for cars and people."

He said signage warning against driving onto the beach was difficult to see. People saw others parking on the sand and followed suit.

Limited parking in the area was also an issue.

In 10 years in the area he had seldom seen parking wardens at the beach, but he said the authorities had had a big presence two weekends ago, including a tow truck. He wants monitoring to continue. "I'm pleased the council and AT and the board have been listening to us."

Season's greetings and happy holidays

To all our readers and advertisers, warmest wishes for Christmas and the New Year from the staff and publishers of the Rangitoto Observer.

Many of you will doubtless be counting down to the end of what has been a tough year. With summer now in full swing, we hope you are able to take time out to look ahead, to enjoy at least a short break in good company and to celebrate some of the special things about living on the North Shore.

To those who are working through, thank you, and to those choosing a staycation, remember our local shops, cafes, restaurants and bars would love to serve you. Try a walk down the new-look Hurstmere Rd or visit one of our other town centres before a beach stroll to enjoy relaxed living at its best.

We are proud to have published throughout 2020 and appreciate your interest and support. We look forward to remaining your independent voice for local news in 2022.

Our office reopens on 12 January. Look out for your first Observer of the new year on 21 January.

Hospitality favourites revealed

Locals have spoken, choosing their favourite hospitality hotspots, ranging from trendy cafes to trusty takeaways.

The Taste of Takapuna People's Choice Awards 2021 invited online voting through the Takapuna Beach Business Association's I Love Takapuna website.

Find out the six category winners and consider sampling something from each of them in a tasty summer of supporting local.

More than 1000 people voted, with three of them winning dining out vouchers. The results are well timed, with restaurants and bars finally reopening their doors this month.

"It was all about celebrating our famous hospitality scene in Takapuna and giving them a much-needed morale boost in tough times," said association chief executive Terence Harpur.

See the winners on page 6

Wishing you a safe and relaxing summer holiday break, my office will reopen Monday 17 January 2022

Simon Watts
MP for North Shore

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news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz
Website: www.rangitoto-observer.co.nz

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NEXT ISSUE: January 21
ADVERTISING DEADLINE: January 14

Takapuna market gives up on rest of year

The popular Takapuna Sunday market will not be back this year.

Co-organiser Trish Keith said the market was too large to operate under the red level of the traffic-light system, which allows outdoor gatherings of up to 100 people.

Thousands stream into the Anzac St car park for the market through multiple entry points, making vaccine pass compliance unviable.

“The only thing red has given us is clarity that we can’t open,” Keith said.

The market is looking towards relaunching in green, but hoping for a relaxing of the vaccine-pass requirements.

A lot of the smaller markets had been able to open, but they only have one or two entrances where people can be scanned in,

Keith said. “We can never do that.”

The market was started more than 30 years ago by Bill Jenner, who launched it as a flea market at Shore City. Keith and her husband joined in partnership with Jenner and his wife, Ess, a couple of years later.

About seven years ago, Trish and Ess lost their husbands and took over running it. It now has around 300 stallholders. “It’s just a happy place. We never have any trouble there.”

Recent times had been frustrating “to put it mildly” and hard for stallholders, Keith said. “For a lot of them it’s their livelihood.”

The car park is owned by Panuku, Auckland Council’s development arm, which has plans to develop part of it in conjunction with building a new town square. No date

has been set for work to start but it is due to commence in early 2022.

The car park would remain open until then, a Panuku spokesperson said. “We continue to have a commercial agreement with Trish Keith to operate a market on the Anzac car park site.” A new temporary layout was being worked out with her for 2022, at the Anzac St end of the site. “We know how important the Takapuna Sunday Market is to the vibrancy of the town centre and we want this to continue.”

The market has been offered 125 spaces when work gets underway. Keith said they had not yet signed the lease but they were happy with it. “It is good that we have been offered some space. At least it keeps us in Takapuna. It’s an icon for Takapuna.”



Roll on summer... Claire Meredith (left) and Frankie, aged 3, from Castor Bay at the pop-up roller rink on Hurstmere Rd last Sunday. Also rolling around were 11-year-old friends Katia Vivdich (above, left) from Sunnynook and Shelley Coughlan, from Rothesay Bay. The rink is open until Christmas Eve.

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Estuary outlet no-swim warning lifted after 11 years



Improved... Health warnings have applied at the Wairau outlet since 2010

Permanent Don't Swim warnings for the Wairau Estuary outlet to Milford Beach are being removed.

Milford Residents Association and environmental lobbyists have welcomed the news, brought about by years of efforts to clean up pollution flowing into the sea from the Wairau catchment.

Auckland Council's Healthy Waters team announced last week that the area's status will be updated through the Safeswim system. This means swimmers wanting a dip at the northern end of Milford Beach and nearby Castor Bay can check daily conditions online.

"Whilst the water quality at this site has improved sufficiently to remove the long-term warning, it is still considered poor during rain and will exceed guidelines after rainfall," a Healthy Waters relationship adviser, Hannah Brightley, told local-body politicians.

North Shore councillor and chair of the council's Environment Committee Richard Hills said he was extremely happy to report that work to date had enabled the lifting of the warning put in place by the North Shore City Council in 2010.

In the last few years wastewater and storm-water connection issues have been traced and

dealt with and illegal discharges prosecuted.

Pollution monitoring, water sampling and riparian planting will continue.

Wairau Estuary Environmental Protection Society (Weeps) spokesman Guy Armstrong credited the support of a "whole heap of residents creating a ground swell that made the council take notice."

More work was still needed to stop sewage flowing through to the beach, he said. Weeps would stay on the case over improving ageing infrastructure and coping with the added load from housing intensification.

North Shore MP Simon Watts who called a public meeting on water quality issues this year, said he was "super stoked" to hear the news. Devonport-Takapuna board member George Wood also hailed the "major improvement" which he said showed efforts of the board and adjoining Kaipatiki Local Board and their communities had paid off.

"There is still a lot more work to do but the staff of Healthy Waters of Auckland Council and Watercare Services need to be commended for their ongoing support and plans for the future to improve the water in the Wairau Creek and Milford Estuary."

See safeswim.org.nz

Briefs

Suburb still lags on jobs

Takapuna central is half a percentage point away from having 90 per cent of eligible residents fully vaccinated. Data from last week shows that all other suburbs in the Takapuna-Devonport Local Board area are over 90 per cent double-dosed. Forrest Hill East and Stanley Bay are leading the way with 95 per cent. Meanwhile, of 79 Covid cases in hospital earlier this week, one was in ICU at North Shore Hospital. A patient with Covid-19 died at the hospital late last month. Former Pukekohe newspaper editor Rex Warwood, aged 80, of Northcote, was admitted to hospital on 25 November and died two days later.

Wait on fate of No. 2

The future of the council building at Number 2 The Strand in Takapuna will be considered by Auckland Council after the summer holidays. The Devonport-Takapuna Local Board had been told the sale was set to go before the council's finance and performance committee last month, but a council communications staffer says it will now not be discussed until February at the earliest.

No passport, no go

Takapuna Library – like other Auckland Council facilities – requires a vaccine passport be shown by visitors aged 12 or over. The move came into force last week, with the Covid red-light setting. Unvaccinated people can use click-and-collect and online library services. Those with an approved medical exemption may still enter. Libraries are also helping vaccinated people use computers and printers to obtain their vaccine passes. Details online.

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Churches prepare for Christmas despite Covid nerves



Outdoor worship... Pastor Brian Lima and his wife, Jo, at the Milford Baptist Church, which is planning to take services outside

Local churches are negotiating their way through Covid rules – and lingering nervousness about the pandemic – while looking forward to welcoming congregations to Christmas Day services.

Pastor Brian Lima of the Milford Baptist Church has a congregation of about 60-70, most of whom are of retirement age. His church will have a Christmas Day service, but he detects some nerves about Covid-19.

“I just don’t know if they’re keen to do all of the things they typically do during Christmas.

The church is also planning a carol performance in the Milford township for Christmas week, if it is approved, and outdoor services, which would not require vaccine passes.

People must be vaccinated to attend indoor services of more than 25 people, up to a maximum of 100 people.

Reverend Nathan de Senna from St Peter’s Anglican Church in Takapuna said it was waiting for diocese guidelines but it seemed

they would be able to have a Christmas Eve service at 11pm and a Christmas Day service at 9am. There would also be the usual Sunday service the following day.

Takapuna Methodist Church had not finalised plans by the Observer’s deadline. Reverend Peter Norman said it was looking at teaming up with a couple of other churches.

St Joseph’s Takapuna held a Diocesan Christmas quiz via Zoom this month, but plans for Christmas services are still being finalised. Monsignor David Tonks said the usual children’s Mass and Christmas morning tea may not be held, but other Masses would be.

“We can have 100 people in the church and then we can have another 100 in the hall with a video link to them.”

Further separate outdoors bubbles, including up to 25 unvaccinated people in their own area, could be video-linked. At the first Friday Mass after the shift to the red light level, 50 people attended church.

Wax work makes for unique lights

Mitzi O’Brien (right) with one of her candles at the Milford Centre, where her candle-making workshops run until Christmas Eve.

O’Brien, aged 22, was born in Milford and has moved home to complete a masters in architecture after university in Wellington. She returns to candle-making when she can.

People often bring back their empty vessels to make a new candle, she says.

“Last time we were here we had four generations in.”





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Branch managers... Dustin Henderson, 12, brother Charlie, 14, and Noah Barr, 15, on Inga Rd

Tree buyers pine for Xmas normality

Christmas tree sellers on the streets of Milford and Forrest Hill are catching an extra whiff of seasonal spirit in the air this year.

Dexter Brick, 20, and Ben Bowden, 21, at Sam and Pete's Christmas Trees on Kitchener Rd, say there's a hankering for the usual traditions after months of Covid-19 lockdowns. "And Christmas trees are part of that," Dexter said.

Ben said it was nice to give people a sense of returning normality. "Christmas is something that everyone is latching onto this year."

The Sam and Pete's operation has been passed down through several sets of hands over 25 years, starting with the original duo who passed it on to their sister, who gave it to her neighbours – Dexter's siblings.

This year Dexter and Ben are raising money towards university expenses.

On Inga Rd, opposite the Milford Marina,

Charlie and Dustin Henderson and Noah Barr have sold more trees than they expected to.

The customers had all been super-friendly, Noah, 15, said.

This was 14-year-old Charlie's third year selling trees. "We first did it fundraising so I could go to Australia to play rugby," he said.

The trees are priced according to size and shape. The boys' mothers looked after the stall when they had school exams.

The Edwards sisters, Lexi, 14, and Mia, 17, sell trees on Forrest Hill Rd, raising money for future university studies.

Mia doesn't know what she's studying yet but Lexi already has her eyes set on veterinary medicine.

The pair will keep selling and delivering trees until Christmas Eve. They also dispose of the trees in January.

"I love the smell of them," Lexi said. "And it just brings joy."



Hardy annual... Ben Bowden (left) and Dexter Brick run a 25-year-old operation

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North Shore MP given chance to make his mark

North Shore MP Simon Watts is pleased to have been given new shadow portfolios he says are at the heart of big issues facing his electorate and New Zealand.

New National Party leader Christopher Luxon this week named Watts as the party's shadow spokesman for local government and associate spokesman for finance and infrastructure.

"It signals a trajectory of where I will be heading," Watts said.

The local government role was would be a good opportunity to get out and about, working with people around the country and getting his teeth into issues such as the government's controversial Three Waters reforms.

Watts said his associate roles built on his financial background and interest in planning. He would sit on the Finance and Expenditure Select Committee which was "where you want to be".

As deputy to party finance spokesman and No. 3, Simon Bridges, Watts is the sole finance associate, with Luxon having streamlined roles, removing other associate positions.

Watts said he was looking forward to teaming his commercial background with former leader Bridges' political experience, saying the pair get on well.

Watts said Luxon himself he was a "close friend and colleague". The men had

had adjoining Parliamentary offices and were among a handful of new National MPs elected in 2020. They also shared corporate backgrounds and membership of the blue-green caucus.

Luxon, who held the local government role before his ascent, had given Watts the message that the role would be about high-profile participation. "Future position is based on performance and I'm happy about that."

For his electorate, he was glad to have a voice in critical infrastructure issues.

The parliamentary year winds up on 16 December, but Watts expects he will have plenty of reading to take into the break.



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Housing clash unresolved as big changes loom

Councils and MPs remain at odds over Wellington's push for greater intensification of housing, though the National Party seems to be revisiting its initial stance.

At Observer deadline, the final shape of the government's bill forcing greater density – supported by National under former leader Judith Collins – was unclear.

National has recently signaled it wants changes, despite its new deputy, Nicola Willis, having had a key role in the cross-party deal over legislation. North Shore National Party MP Simon Watts said he was "heavily involved behind the scenes in conveying public concerns".



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Hairy hordes keep scissor hands busy



Back in business... Wing Xia, co-owner of Snow salon, Milford, and The Barbershop owner David Osborne

Huge demand for haircuts after lockdown has kept local barbers and hairdressers busy since they were given the chance to reopen ahead of other businesses.

“Everyone wants to get their hair done,” said Dennis Xia, the owner of Snow, on Kitchener Rd in Milford.

With bookings heavy, some clients were having to wait until January despite hoping to have it done prior to Christmas. Nevertheless, they

were nice and understanding, knowing how tough it had been for the business in lockdown.

Xia had found it stressful making arrangements for his long-awaited reopening, and believed there had been a need for more guidelines from the government.

For barbers, the challenge has been to adapt to not welcoming walk-ins, says David Osborne, who owns The Barbershop Co operations in both Milford and Takapuna.

Some fast adaptations were required.

“Our business model is a walk-in, and being a barbershop it’s confused people a little bit,” he said.

He sat at the door, taking details and checking vaccine passes.

Demand had been huge, Osborne said.

“The barbers have worked really hard. They’ll be looking forward to a day off.

“I’m just glad to be back.”

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Letter shows iwi involvement in boardwalk plan

Your article in the 26 November edition has a headline "Iwi leader says it 'never signed off on boardwalk'".

Following is part of a letter dated 4 October 2000 from Bill Kapea of Te Hao o Ngati Whatua to the North Shore City Council.

"We wish to recommend the following: Northern Access to lookout:

Te Hao accepts that wheelchair access is essential and the construction of a short boardwalk that does not impinge on the nearest northern pohutukawa is acceptable.

Southern Access to lookout:

The most practical safe and visual route is important and gradient is also a big part of that safety. So a boardwalk that traverses away from the lookout, over the top of the existing concrete boatshed and from this point in a gentle curve and gradient exiting on the grassed area just short of the first southern pohutukawa tree is the best option for Te Hao. Avoiding a route around

the back of the pohutukawa trees meets our aspiration for protecting the mana of these trees."

Signed by William Kapea.

We have viewed the original documents and resource consents for the construction of the boardwalk in 1999-2000. The documents have a column headed "Iwi consulted", and every box is ticked.

Did any iwi object to construction of the boardwalk? No.

Iwi were invited to add signage giving the history of the Sacred Grove and carvings or other embellishments to the boardwalk.

Over the following 18 years, nothing was done.

Our local elected Devonport-Takapuna Local Board members have voted 5-1 to have the council properly make the trees safe and maintain them, and repair and reopen the boardwalk.

The unelected council officers are deter-

mined to pursue their agenda to remove the boardwalk, for an estimated cost of around \$900,000. An engineer's report was presented to the local-board meeting, stating that the boardwalk need minor repairs, at an estimated cost of between \$25,000-\$40,000.

Surely the wishes of the majority of local-board members, and local residents, over \$2500 of whom signed a petition, should not be overridden by unelected council officers.

Tony and Rachel Lewis

Editor's note: The heading referred to was on a story quoting another iwi, Te Kawerau a Maki, which said it had not signed off on the boardwalk. Kapea's submission was covered in a separate story, telling of his involvement in the boardwalk's early days on behalf of Ngati Whatua. His view was that 20 years ago the iwi had "never opposed it because back then it just happened".

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We welcome letters. Please limit to 300 words on local topics. Nom de plumes or unnamed submissions will not be printed.

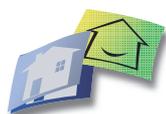
Email news@rangitoto-observer.co.nz or write to Letters, PO Box 32 275, Devonport.

Roger that! Thumbs up for top pix

Congratulations to whoever had the idea of putting up prize-winning photos on various shop windows and pubs on Hurstmere Rd. They are brilliant.

Roger Hall

Editor's note: This is an initiative of the Takapuna Beach Business Association. A display is also planned at the Shore City mall.



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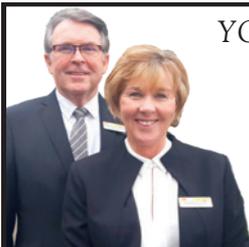
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- 5. Flo & Frankie** - Constance Strappy Cowl Neck Sorbet Floral Silky Sating Mini Dress
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Cycling advocate saddles up for new adventures

Barbara Cuthbert is standing down as Bike Auckland chair, but the North Shore resident is remaining committed to her causes. She talks to Helen Vause.

Barbara Cuthbert's many acquaintances have no expectations of her adopting a slower pace, despite her stepping down from her long-time role as a vigorous and vocal chair and spokesperson for Bike Auckland.

Cuthbert isn't the retiring sort – not when so many new challenges are to be found and new pathways to be forged.

In the last decade, the colourful figure and her e-bike have been a very familiar local sight while operating on a far wider network.

All over the city and beyond, Cuthbert has been a key advocate for promoting cycling in Auckland to where it is today.

She has been a significant voice in favour of cycling projects around the city that have helped encourage swelling numbers of cyclists.

Bike Auckland itself has been invigorated by a new generation of enthusiasts, helping Cuthbert make her decision to move on.

"The organisation is now brimming with all these very confident and capable much-younger people," she says. "That's been one good thing about Covid – the country's young talent hasn't been able to travel and, instead, they're here working for us. This gave me the chance to move on. It has been a very good era and I've ridden a great wave in cycling. I feel that I'm leaving at the best time.

"Of course, I'm still passionate about cycling and there's plenty more work to be done, but there are just so many other things I want to be doing," she says.

One of her favoured activities takes place on Thursdays, these days set aside for her two-year-old grandson Ollie.

Every Thursday morning, Cuthbert and husband Mike Ashmore bike off to Ollie's home in Northcote to bring him over for a day with his grandparents in their Devonport garden – complete with a couple of chooks.

For Ashmore and her, who have been partners in life and in their engineering and planning consultancy for around half a century, grandparenting is a newer adventure, well away from their office.

Their journey together started when they were both students at Otago University, where Ashmore was studying engineering and Cuthbert was qualifying in urban planning. They were married at 20. They moved north, started work and with a two-year-old child began building the house that's still home and a home office on Kerr St.

They did most of the work on the house and property themselves. Right now they're putting in another large vegetable patch.

The property provides a steady supply of fruit and vegetables, as it was intended to do. Creating this haven was, she says, a huge project.

Cuthbert's planning background has involved her in many community and city projects.

She first decided to cut loose a little from



No freewheeling... grandparenting and other activities will keep Barbara Cuthbert busy

her planning work in the home office when the couple's two kids were grown up and gone.

By then she'd fallen in love with cycling and all its possibilities after riding the Otago Central Rail Trail.

"I really discovered the pace and feeling of moving along on a bike."

But she could also see how trails like Otago's were about much more than riding a bike in the countryside. They could bring money and life and jobs to transform rundown little communities. "And this really resonated with me," says Cuthbert. "We get back to Auckland of course from those trips and suddenly we all started to want safe cycling options all over our own city," Cuthbert recalls.

"It's happening in the cities more slowly than we'd like. But just this morning it came to me that surely creating safe cycleways in so many more of our beautiful provincial areas would open up so many benefits."

Cuthbert says she's been inspired to see the effect some of the newer trails are having in more remote corners of the country.

Fired up by cycling, she found a chance to get into cycling advocacy over a decade ago, and to add her formidable energy to the cause when she became chair of Bike Auckland.

Cuthbert says she thought her planning skills would equip her well, but the job also called for wrangling government and city organisations, quelling opposition, chasing funding and getting heard.

The memories bring out hearty laughter, even though the organisation didn't win all its battles – and the Auckland Harbour Bridge remains inaccessible to cyclists for now.

Covid has changed the focus from commuter

pathways to the city to more local biking, due to families being more home-based. "Many more people are biking locally to get to the shops or to get their kids to parks and beaches."

And the biking boom has moved well on from the lycra-clad lovelies in the middle-class areas. "There's much more interest in the south and the west of the region these days."

The city's cycling world hasn't heard the last of Cuthbert, she chuckles.

But for now the long lockdown has given her the time to smell the roses, get into the garden and mull over what's next on the list.

Waiheke is next, at least in the short term, she says. Cuthbert and Ashmore have a house on the island where she says the surrounding bush ensures hearty bird song.

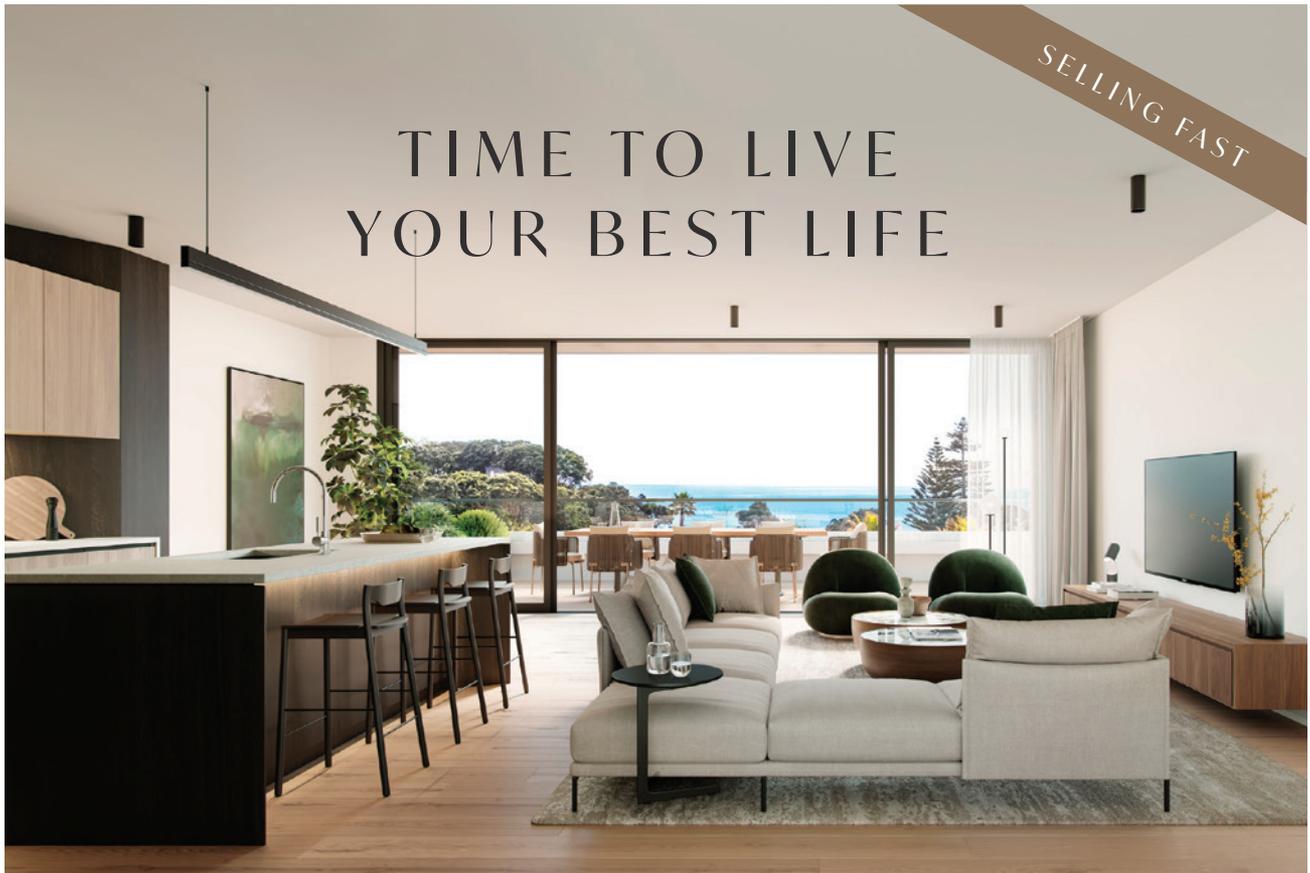
The pair will be working together to protect and enhance the health of the valley, push out the pests and weeds and keep the birds coming.

Not that the planner will stop thinking about community and citywide projects while she grubs about in the quiet of the bush.

The lack of a harbour crossing for cyclists still rankles. "Of course I'm upset about the harbour bridge. It's been a long wait for everyone who wants to see this happen. And there's still a lot to be done to make connections on the North Shore."

Cycling does so much to help build and connect communities, she says.

"I am going to have more time now to do more of the many things I want to do. But it doesn't mean I will stop strategising about how we can live better, how we can have better water, a better environment, better ways to get around. Why would you not care about those things?"



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College Sport's top athlete again from Westlake



Speed and silverware... Lewis Bower on his bike and with his trophy

Year 12 Westlake Boys High cyclist Lewis Bower has been named male Young Sportsman of the Year by College Sport Auckland.

His win continues a fine run of achievements by students of the school, who have produced six of the past 12 winners, underlining Westlake's reputation for sporting success.

Bower's achievements did not include being named Sportsman of the Year at his school, with that title going to rising swim star Cameron Gray (see story on facing page), but he has 2022 to aim for.

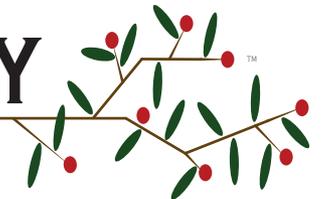
Bower claimed his first New Zealand title racing the criterium event in November 2020. Since then, he has added two more national titles along with a North Island title. As a key member

of Westlake's Premier team time trial squad, he was also part of a third-place result in the Auckland series raced over winter at Pukekohe Park Raceway.

Bower's selection for the UCI World Championships was a 2021 highlight. He travelled to Belgium to represent New Zealand. Despite being one of the younger cyclists, he claimed the 25th fastest result in the Individual Time Trial.

He also raced the 121km road race in his typically aggressive fashion. The talented sportsman displays a work ethic that sets him apart. He is described as uncompromising, determined and driven in chasing his goals.

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Local schools name 2021's top sports achievers



HOLLY WILLIAMS (above) is a sporting jill-of-all-trades at Westlake Girls, making her a very busy school Sportswoman of the Year.

She captained the premier touch team which came runner-up in the national secondary school championships last year, and is also a member of the North Harbour women's and under-18s sides. Williams is also part of the school's premier 12s rugby team, which is the current North Harbour champion.

Before lockdown curtailed competition, she was a member of the Harbour Hibiscus Farah Palmer Cup squad and played for the winning Albany Barbarians Rugby Club. She fits in sevens too.

For Westlake Girls, Williams was also vice-captain of the premier netball team, playing in the Auckland schools competition, as well as being in the premier basketball team. On the side, she coaches in the school's junior touch programme.

Williams has been awarded a College Sport Auckland All-Rounder Award and is a finalist for touch at the Young Sportsperson of the Year Awards for greater Auckland.

CAMERON GRAY (right), captain of the Westlake Boys' High School swim team, has been named the school's overall Sportsman of the Year.

His team won top boys' relay team and top boys' school at the secondary school national championships where Gray picked up five individual gold medals.

He has also broken age-group records for the 100m backstroke and 50m backstroke and won three gold medals at the New Zealand under-18 championships.

Gray has been long-listed for the Commonwealth Games team next year.



CAITLYN O'REILLY (left) has been awarded the Wallace and Webb Cup as Carmel College's Outstanding Sportswoman of the Year.

O'Reilly is the youngest person to complete the New Zealand swimming triple crown: swimming Foveaux Strait, Cook Strait and Lake Taupo.

While training for those swims, she was a competitive rower for both Carmel College and North Shore Rowing Club, and placed in the women's novice coxed eight at the club nationals in 2020.

JORDON THOMAS (right) was named 2021 Sportsman of the Year at Rosmini College, where he was first XI hockey captain.

He was also part of the New Zealand Maori men's team and the under-18 premier boys' North Harbour national tournament team, which was crowned champion.

Thomas was included in the national U18 Boys Performance Network Camp. He also coached the Warkworth men's team which won division one of the North Harbour club competition.



NATALIE SAYES (right), Takapuna Grammar's Sportswoman of the Year, has amassed a list of achievements as a squash player, despite a disrupted year and injuries. She's ranked number one in the junior division nationally, and in the top 10 overall.

She was the 2021 NZ Junior Open champion, won an Auckland under-19 tournament, and was named in both junior and senior Auckland squash teams.

Sayes has been chosen as captain for the New Zealand junior squad, and is in high-performance regional and national teams and in the Commonwealth Games doubles high-performance squad.

HAYDEN MCKAY (left), Takapuna Grammar's Sportsman of the Year, is a member of both the first XI cricket team and the first XV rugby team.

He has been in the top cricket team for three years, playing a total of 58 games and scoring 971 runs and taking 71 wickets. Last year he was also awarded the Hewitson Brothers Trophy.

In rugby, McKay has also been in the top rugby team for three years, being captain this year.

He was also selected for North Harbour's under-18 team.



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We are negotiable on full time or part time hours. The position is for working hours on Monday to Friday between the hours of 7.30am – 5pm.

Previous experience in a medical centre would be desirable but is not essential. Full training will be given; however, you will need to be a fast learner, have great computer, and communication skills, be well presented and not be afraid of hard work.

Applications close on Monday 20th December 2021.

For a confidential discussion about this position, please contact the Practice Manager, Katherine Williams, on 09 489 2011, or practicemanager@medplus.co.nz.



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More family-harm support needed on Shore, board told

The North Shore is not a “land of milk and honey” immune to family violence, the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board has been told.

Auckland North Community and Development (Ancad), which covers the wider North Shore, made a presentation to the board about its work during the Covid pandemic and how people are coping in lockdown.

Family violence had led to an increase in calls to police in lockdown, North Shore Family Violence Prevention and Safer Whanau project coordinator Deb Humphries said.

Family violence incidents reported in the Waitemata police district, which covers North Shore, rose from 2781 in the year to February 2020 to 3578 the following year.

There was also more parent-child conflict – stemming from parents trying to get teenagers to follow the rules in many cases – and more need for mental-health support, she said.

More support was needed for family-violence victims, she said. “The North Shore is not the land of milk and honey.

“There are a lot of new families coming to police and social services.”

And that was likely the tip of the iceberg, Humphries said.

“If you go by statistics it’s probably 20 per cent of what’s actually happening,” she said.

The majority of calls came from concerned neighbours. “It’s a lot harder to support and engage families when they haven’t reached out for help themselves.”

The Ancad report said some in the community who have become reliant on visits from support workers (such as the Family Violence Prevention services and emergency personnel) have been left in home situations where their physical safety could be and is being compromised.

“It seems some police teams may have been redeployed to other Covid-related operations.”

Ancad had also surveyed multiple people in the community, across Auckland but most from north of the bridge, about lockdown and its impacts.

Mental health and loneliness were major issues, as well as practical things such as using Zoom, which some people found no problem with, but others struggled to master.

Volunteers and property owners helping families in need

A Forrest Hill landlord is among people helping pave the way to more secure futures for North Shore families needing transitional accommodation.

Accommodation provider De Paul House said it had been approached this year by a man who wanted his two-bedroom unit to be rented out less for profit and more for good. De Paul House has used it to house a working family.

The anonymous example – along with several others where homes from deceased estates had been made available – was one way individuals were helping with the real problem of homelessness, said a De Paul House spokesperson.

The Northcote-based not-for-profit organisation with 44 homes across the Shore says there is a real need for its stepping stone in shifting people from emergency circumstances.

Its homes locally include one in Dominion Rd, Takapuna, along with a new 11-unit state-housing facility on Lake Rd, Belmont, which it manages for Kainga Ora.

The organisation’s general manager, Jan Rutledge, said: “We want to acknowledge how amazingly generous our local community has been.”

Community volunteers, businesses and service groups were all among those helping. This included setting up the new Belmont property, which Takapuna Rotary had assisted in preparing for its new occupants to move into last month.

Even during the challenge of lockdown, individuals, organisations and businesses had been reaching out to ask if they could help, said Rutledge.

Its community and volunteer liaison



Helping hand... Sesalina Setu, tenancy manager at De Paul House, and volunteer Kathleen Petrie with donated food

officer, Lesley Farmer, said its 60-plus volunteers were eager to get back to its Onewa Rd headquarters to sort goods for those in need when Covid conditions allowed. This includes students from Carmel College and Takapuna Grammar School.

As well as providing accommodation, De Paul House also offers its tenants social services, a play group and educational courses. It also has a small food bank. Social workers are part of the support services.

Recent donations to the group have included boxes of groceries from church groups and retirement villages. The Warehouse was among businesses that had given unsold new clothes and footwear and household goods.

Farmer said the aim of De Paul House was to better equip families for when they moved into stable accommodation. It did

not take much, she said, for people to be put on the back foot in the first place. Their rental being sold, job loss, sickness, relationship break-up, or a missed payment were all reasons people ended up with housing issues. The return of people from overseas was seeing more private homes taken out of the rental pool.

Transitional housing is a longer-term temporary set-up where families stay for three or more months, while they wait for social housing, or if their circumstances improve move to the private rental market. Some people De Paul House had supported had even managed the step into home ownership, using KiwiSaver schemes.

A particular issue in helping North Shore families was the relatively few social houses available in the area and the high cost of rents, said Farmer. This could mean more upheavals if transitioning families had to move out of the area to find something cheaper.

This was disruptive to children’s education and for those with local family ties.

De Paul House has been involved with community work since its founding in 1986. It had its origins through Catholic orders and set up in the old St Dominic’s girls school. From starting with nine units there, it now has homes as far north as Warkworth and is registered as a Community Housing Provider.

Farmer is looking forward to the return of volunteers, saying they make a huge difference. One inspiring schoolgirl had for instance brokered a deal with a big company to provide surplus new bedding which later expanded to supplying clothing as well. “Our volunteers are really committed.”

More volunteers are always welcome, as are Christmas donations. See depaulhouse.org.nz

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WATCHING CONNECTIONS BEING MADE AT WILLIAM SANDERS

After an unusual lockdown start to their jobs as the new sales advisors at William Sanders Retirement Village, Scott Bremner and Dell Smythe have now been based at the village for several weeks.

The aesthetics and the strong sense of community in the Ryman Healthcare village have blown them both away.

"It's so nice to be in the village, and getting to know all the team. The sun is out, people are getting out and about a bit more with the outside part of the village café open now, and everyone is smiling!" says Dell.

Scott agrees: "The love and dedication of the team, in every area of the village, everyone really goes the extra mile."

"It's really neat seeing Jo, our Activity and Lifestyle Coordinator, getting everyone line dancing and the music going, or people meeting for outdoor book club - there's life and vibrancy happening," says Dell.

"It's a warm and inviting place and the community spirit is really there, we can feel it every day."



Sales advisors Scott and Dell feel the love in the village

Being able to show people around the available apartments now feels like the icing on the cake.

"The apartments are just lovely, they're beautiful. Everyone is really blown away by the quality," says Dell.

"People are really impressed with the stunning views or the spacious apartments and then they find out that they actually know someone in the village and it becomes more of a connective thing and being part of a community, so that's really nice."

Dell compares some of the connections she's seen to like watching emotional reunions at the airport.

"I think because there has been so much isolation and now people are so grateful to be able to connect again."

A particular highlight was helping her first resident to move into his new apartment.

"It was a privilege to get him settled and I can see that things are going to be great for him here.

The next exciting milestones will be the amenities such as the swimming pool opening up again and showing people the apartments in the brand new Prize block.

"We're aiming for viewings in early December. The first residents are moving in now," says Scott.

The views from the Prize block are 'something else', he says.

"You can see across the city and harbour, then there's over towards Rangitoto and Mt Victoria. There are five left on sale and the great thing

is there really is something for everyone.”

Scott and Dell are looking forward to opening up the serviced apartments for viewing again too.

Until that time they have enjoyed sampling some of the menu delights that the residents get to enjoy.

“We have been having lunch in the village and it is absolutely amazing, particularly the coconut curry we had yesterday,” says Scott.

“I can highly recommend the food - our Senior Lead Chef Scott and his team are doing a great job in the kitchen!

Both Scott and Dell have greater appreciation for the decision-making process involved with moving into a retirement village, having helped several people along the way now.

“It’s a big decision and it’s so complex. It involves the family, you’re letting go of

some things and taking on new things,” says Scott.

“But afterwards you can almost sense the relief of not having to worry, and having less stress.”

Adds Dell: “So often we’ll hear people say they wish they’d done it earlier and when we’re showing people around our residents will say to them ‘don’t leave it too late!’

“It’s so worthwhile once that decision is made.”

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PumpHouse pillars given life membership



Two stalwarts of the PumpHouse, Ruth Ell and Peter Baird (above), have been recognised at the Takapuna theatre's annual meeting. They were made life members for their contributions, in a socially-distanced gathering at the venue's outdoor amphitheatre late last month.

"It was the first time in many months that some people had seen each other," said theatre manager James Bell.

Ell has been a long-time supporter of the PumpHouse and was a committee member

when it opened in the 1970s, helping with everything from fundraising to advertising. She is also involved with the Friends of Takapuna Library.

Baird trod the boards as a dashing young dancer and chorus member for North Shore Operatic in the theatre's early days, and returned as a trust board member about five years ago. His contribution has helped secure funding for the theatre's project to erect a canopy, which is due to be put up in the New Year.

Covid silences carols and rains on Weather

Carols at the PumpHouse in Takapuna have been cancelled this year. So too, what would have been the 16th annual Christmas morning reading from The End of the Golden Weather on Takapuna Beach. Takapuna resident and playwright Sir Roger Hall began the tradition, with actor Stephen Lovatt entertaining hundreds of people each year, beneath the pohutukawa described in Bruce Mason's classic story. Organisers hope when numbers gathering are not an issue the event will be back in 2022. The same call was made on carolling.

Bray play on screen

Tim Bray Theatre's annual Christmas play at the PumpHouse has been replaced this year by a fun film of its 2017 season of The Santa Claus Show. The children's theatre company will screen this daily from 11-18 December (except Mondays). Elves will be on hand to deliver Santa notes to the North Pole. Tickets are \$15.

Family friendly fun

A 40-minute original show, Era and the Kaitiaki, by local theatre and music talents, will be staged at the Lake House, Takapuna, from 18 December.

Bringing back the Bard

Two Shakespearean events will be held at the PumpHouse in January, the first a youth-theatre course and the second the return of the popular Shakespeare in the Park annual production. Shoreside Theatre will perform The Merchant Of Venice and Two Gentlemen of Verona in the amphitheatre from 22 January to 19 February. Details for both are on the PumpHouse website.

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The Santa Claus Show '17: Revisited

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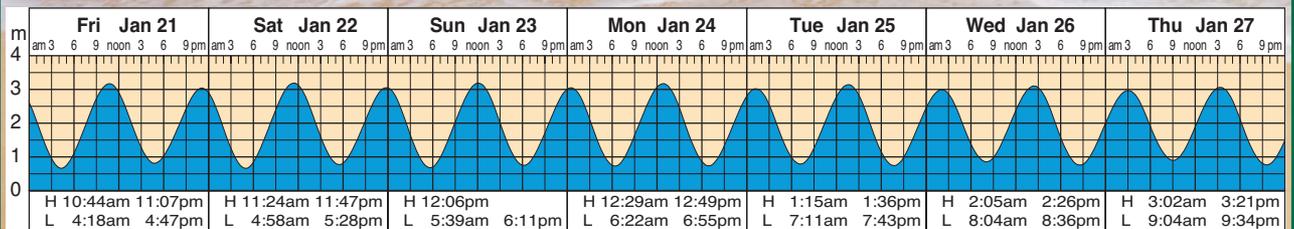
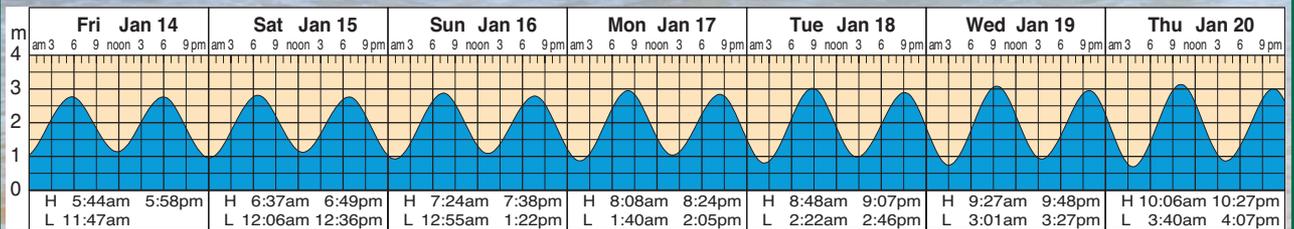
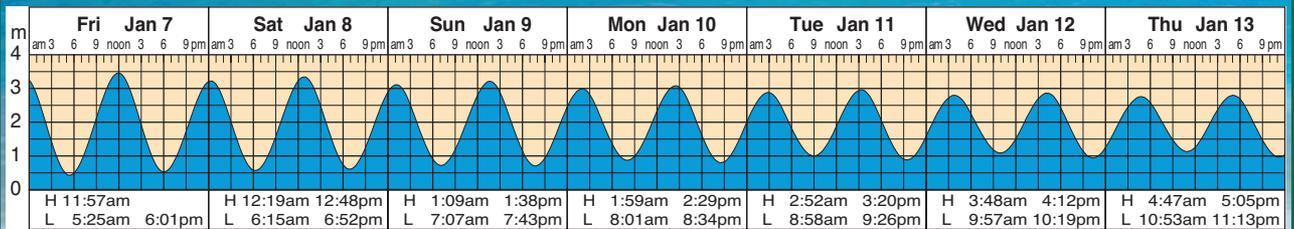
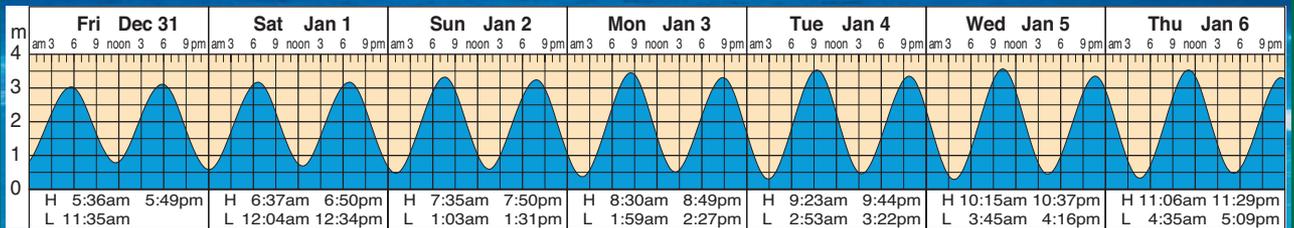
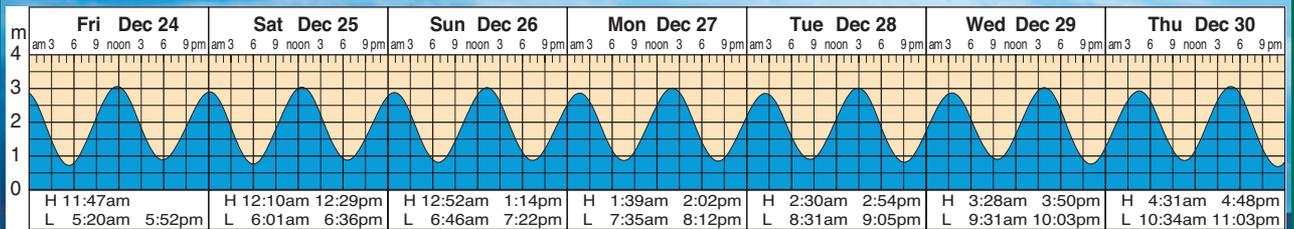
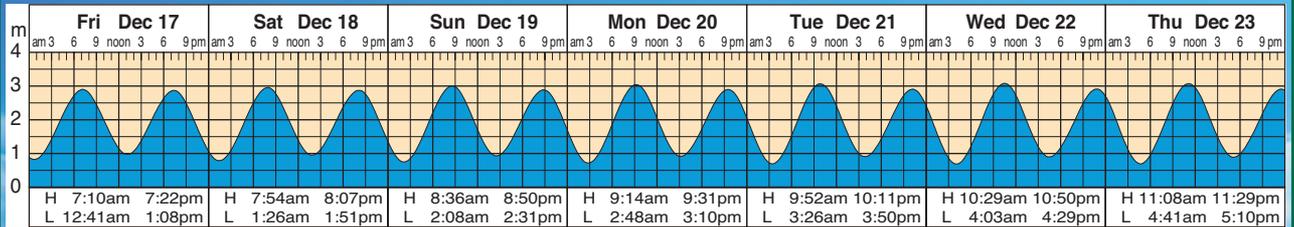
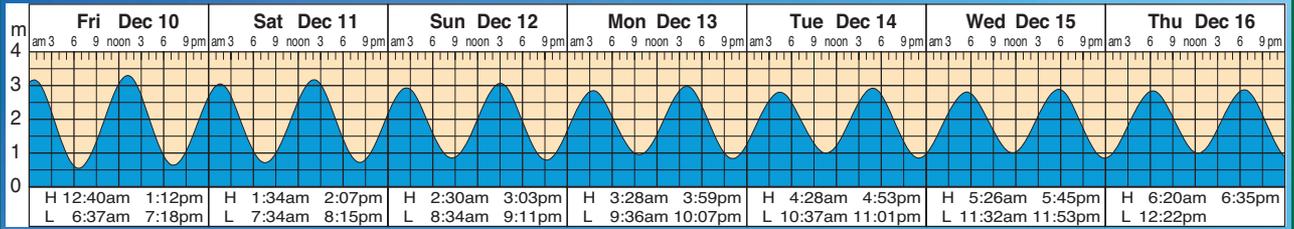
Shakespeare in a Week!

10 - 14 January

A fun 5-day summer holiday programme for 12-18 year olds.

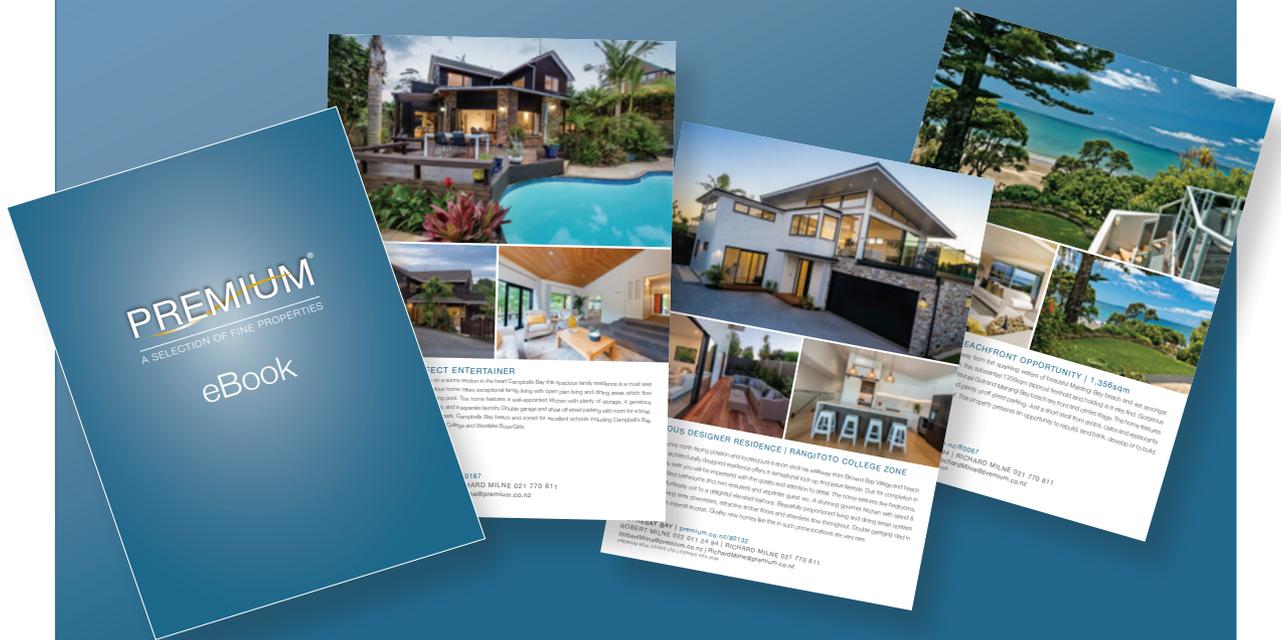
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