

# 'Arrogant' NZTA stuns community

By Paul Williams

**An 11th-hour bombshell affecting one of the biggest infrastructure projects in the region's history has a community stunned.**

NZTA Waka Kotahi's announcement this week to scale back plans on the long-awaited Ōtaki to north of Levin expressway has been met with widespread anger and frustration.

Horowhenua's mayor has called it crazy. A key business leader has called it "completely unacceptable and arrogant". Residents and business owners are demanding answers.

Once upon a time "bypass" was a dirty word. Now, the region screams for a new expressway to relieve congestion and future-proof it for an impending population tsunami in Horowhenua, tipped to almost double and hit 62,000 by 2041.

After years of lobbying, the expressway finally got a green light in 2018. Since then, consultation with the community had been a cornerstone of the project as route options were considered, modified, and finalised.

Until now. With work proper due to start, the community seems to have little or no chance to object to what is a late deviation from the original plans.

The first whiff the public had of the change came at a meeting at Manakau Hall on Sunday, intended for a small group of community stakeholders. Word soon spread that something was up, and 250 people showed.

Among the proposed changes are the removal of the planned Manakau vehicle

overbridge and a redesign of the Tararua Road interchange to a roundabout configuration.

There are fears that not fulfilling the original plans could have serious consequences for the region, especially given an entire new town called Tara Ika is about to be built east of Levin, and right beside where the Tararua interchange was to be built.

Local MP Tim Costley has also publicly criticised NZTA for the plan change, although it's impossible to ignore the NZTA board is working to a government budget.

With a massive office block already shipped in and diggers chomping at the bit, the government and NZTA can ill-afford to have too many more hold-ups. If we have learnt anything, it's that nothing gets cheaper with time.

The 24km project, now estimated to cost as much as \$1.8 billion, could have been completed for less than half the price a decade ago.

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# Spex bounces back

By Paul Williams

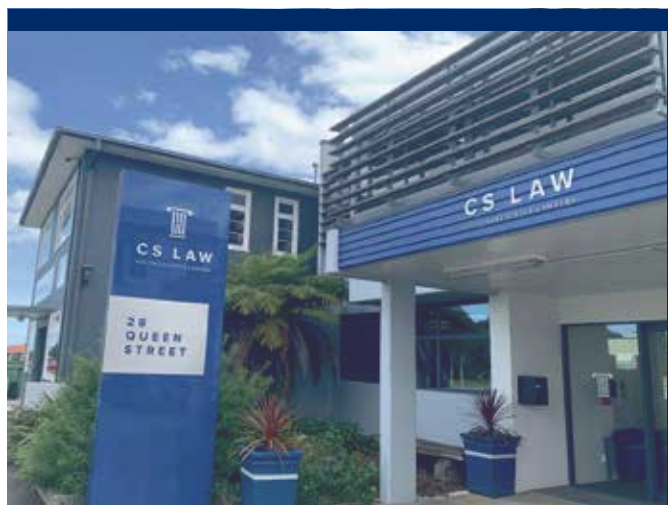
A well-known Levin musician is miraculously back on stage with a touring Bruce Springsteen tribute band after recovering from major brain surgery to remove a life-threatening tumour.

Two years ago Michael "Spex" Bryant was guitarist for The Boss – Bruce Springsteen Experience that was touring New Zealand when a headache came on that he just couldn't shake. It got so bad the band suggested he go home.

"I just didn't feel onto it. It was impeding my cognitive functioning and coordination," he says.

"I was getting bad headaches, and I'd never got headaches."

*continues page 6*



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# Bleak news for Manakau

Manakau residents knew something was afoot. On a rainy Sunday evening, they packed the Manakau Hall for a meeting and heard news as bleak to them as the weather outside.

NZTA Waka Kotahi project director Glen Prince and others from the transport agency spelled out what changes were proposed for the Ō2NL expressway. They started their presentation from the north, where they outlined the changes that would narrow the expressway to two lanes only after a roundabout (not an interchange) at Tararua Road, but that’s not what the residents were there for.

When it finally got to discussion about Manakau, there were audible gasps as they were told Manakau Heights would not be connected to the village by an overbridge, which was in the original plans. Heights residents would have to make their way to what will be old SH1 via South Manakau Road. That road will go under the expressway to link with old SH1; an overpass will be built at North Manakau Road.

There were even more mutterings when residents were told that to get on to the expressway south, they would have to drive along the old highway and through Ōtaki, to join up with the expressway south of the Ōtaki River bridge.

As one resident told the *Star*, the people of Manakau will have years of expressway building still to come, but will get little benefit.

“We’re just going to have to put up with the works, and not be able to use it.”

A clearly angry Mayor Bernie Wanden spoke towards the end of the meeting.

“Every other big project like this in the country has managed to get the money it needs to do it right,” he said. “Why not this one?”

In September 2023, now Transport Minister



Mayor Bernie Wanden speaks at the Manakau meeting, with NZTA project director Glen Prince standing next to him. Photo Horowhenua Star

Simeon Brown was quoted as saying National would build the highway “no matter the cost, even if it goes up to \$3 billion”.

Bernie’s sentiments were expressed later in the week, when the Horowhenua and Kāpiti councils issued a joint statement.

“It’s not the road we were promised,” the statement said. The design changes were driven by short-term budget pressures, rather than long-term needs.

“Make no mistake: this is not the road we were promised. The changes proposed by NZTA Waka Kotahi would give us an expressway significantly more dangerous and less efficient than the version granted resource consent by the Environment Court last year.

“We need a road that works for all Horowhenua and Kāpiti residents, both now and in the future.”

The councils said their communities had engaged in good faith throughout the project, including the Environment Court process.

“The court’s decision was one the community understood and could generally support. For NZTA to now propose significant changes that unwind key commitments made during that process will be very difficult for the community to accept.”

Residents and others were urged to write to the minister and NZTA ([chris.bishop@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:chris.bishop@parliament.govt.nz) and [boardsecretariat@nzta.govt.nz](mailto:boardsecretariat@nzta.govt.nz)).

“With enough public backing we may yet get the expressway we were promised.”

## Build Our Road revival?

By Janine Baalbergen

The Build Our Road logo (below), designed and owned by the Horowhenua NZ Trust, featured in many articles and posts related to the Ō2NL expressway – the good and the sad stories.

The ensuing campaign, which included protest meetings and a march through Levin, was led by then MP for Ōtaki Nathan Guy.



He garnered support from fellow MPs, including Chris Bishop and Simeon Brown, who turned out for events supporting the expressway.

Antony Young, who lost his blueberry farm to the expressway plans, became the spokesperson for the campaign to get the expressway built properly with four lanes, overbridges and a shared cycle/foot pathway.

Victory was declared two years ago, but now the expressway is under threat – again. So it’s time for locals to hit the barricades again and let NZTA and Parliament know we are less than impressed with their revised plans.

A series of articles written on many aspects of the expressway resulted in a finalist place in the 2020 Voyager Media Awards for best editorial campaign or project in a newspaper.

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Ō2NL REACTION

Horowhenua Mayor Bernie Wanden

“From what we understand, a final decision will be made on the proposed changes in the next 6-8 weeks and our strategy at the moment is to impress on those making that decision that this should not occur,” Bernie says.



He says councillors and staff have worked hard to maintain dialogue with NZTA and were briefed on the proposed scale-back in design in late January under strict confidentiality.

“These decisions are being made out of our control.

This is now a government directive that there is not enough money. The fact that it has been delayed so many times . . . if it had been built when it was promised we would be riding the road right now,” he says.

“Our community is being short-changed.”

He says a huge amount of time and money has already been invested. The economy is predicted to be on a better footing by the time the road is completed by 2029-2030, which means the proposed changes would have little effect on total overall funding.

Bernie says there has already been dialogue with Transport Minister Chris Bishop and NZTA chair Simon Bridges.

“Let’s build it as promised,” he says. “It’s crazy really. Six months out and we are still talking about design changes? Just get on with it and build it as intended.”

MP Tim Costley

“I accept NZTA need to stick to budgets . . . but removing a critical interchange for Levin like Tararua Road is short-sighted,” Tim says.

“A key aim of this road is to get traffic both to and through (or past) Levin. I’m concerned

about congestion at Tararua Road at peak daily and holiday times without a full grade-separated interchange. This should be top priority for everyone to be fighting for.”

Other changes proposed by NZTA staff he is concerned about include removing the southbound on-ramp at Taylors Road in Ōtaki and removing the over-bridge at Manakau Heights Drive.

“These should be second and third priorities for us to fight for. I campaigned in 2020/21 for a full interchange at Manakau, and while I accept that ship has sailed, having access to the expressway for locals from Ōhau to Ōtaki is important.



“I understand there are geo-engineering challenges around Taylors Road, making it more expensive to build than in other areas, but we’ve seen the long-term challenges at Peka Peka when we don’t build a full interchange up front.

Residents shouldn’t have to drive through Ōtaki and over the river if they want to head south.”

He says recommendations and changes are made by NZTA staff and it is an NZTA board that approves them.

“The public have a chance to give feedback now before NZTA takes final recommendations to the NZTA board who approve them.

“I’m calling on council and all local residents to get in behind my campaign to build the full Tararua Rd interchange, as well as fighting for Taylors Rd and Manakau Heights improvements.”

Cr Sam Jennings

“Ō2NL was meant to be a Road of National Significance,” Sam says. “What we’re getting instead looks more like a road of compromises, shortcuts, and broken promises.

“Scrapping the Tararua interchange, severing Manakau, and removing the Taylors Road



interchange isn’t progress – it’s a failure to deliver the basics. This isn’t about gold-plating an expressway; it’s about building a safe, functional connection that ensures it isn’t just a road through us, but for us. This is ultimately a budget issue that can be easily solved by the government.

“We’re a community willing to pay our share for this road through tolls. Spread over time and recovered through slightly higher tolls, the cost of delivering on the promised design is cents per car. Let’s not sabotage a once-in-a-generation project just to meet today’s inadequate budget line.

“It makes zero sense to design and consent a project based on a clear scope only to slash it months later because the budget no longer suits.

“The community has two real shots at turning this around: first, convincing the NZTA board not to compromise long-standing commitments just to make short-term savings; and second, urging the minister of transport and cabinet to step in with additional budget needed to deliver what was promised.

“There are practical solutions on the table, such as slightly increased tolls or other innovative funding mechanisms, that could close the budget shortfall. What we need now is leadership, not cost-cutting that leaves this community worse off.”

Antony Young  
Chair, Horowhenua NZ Trust

“This is big. A bad decision is being made here,” Antony says.

“It’s ironic that this is feeling rushed, given how long this community has had to wait for

this road, when the main reason for the cost blow out is delay.

“NZTA have confirmed that it is not a public consultation, that they are informing us of the changes to the proposal . . . all that prior consultation has gone out the window.



“So no consultation, plans fait accompli. This is completely unacceptable and arrogant.

“Supposedly, this is about saving money but they are essentially cutting corners, thinking short term without consideration to what was

promised and what the community think.”

Antony says access in and out of Levin will hamper planned new housing developments, transport and distribution hubs, and potential new commercial opportunities for regional and local businesses.

Any cost savings the scaled-back plans make can be recouped by tolls and are dwarfed by the overall cost of the project, and the long-term financial benefit of not having to revisit it and remedy issues down the line.

“This could really be inhibitive to growth of the region. It defeats a lot of the improved efficiencies the expressway had promised to deliver. This short-term focus on cost is really damaging and going to create a lot of issues.

“It’s going to create congestion, which is exactly what the expressway should be designed to avoid.

“It’s undoing everything it is supposed to deliver to the district and those travelling through. This is not well-conceived and could create safety issues.

“This is an unbelievable example of cutting corners and short termism. You have to do this once and do it right.”

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# All options looked at, says NZTA

**The Star sought clarification from NZTA about some of the changes to the original expressway design.**

In response, project director Glen Prince says the expressway is a critical project to support the future growth of the region, along with improving the safety, resilience and efficiency of the state highway.

“Ō2NL is not unique in having to find savings where possible,” he says. “This exercise was comprehensive and all options were looked at.

“We acknowledge some of these changes aren’t welcomed by parts of the community. The changes affect 20 percent of the project – the remaining 80 percent of the project remains unchanged.

“We remain committed to providing an

expressway which improves safety on State Highway 1, reduces travel times and increases resilience and reliability.”

He says Ō2NL will be a significantly safer highway than the existing stretch of SH1, and through the changes, the project team is continuing to work to the same high standards for safety.

“This is a significant piece of infrastructure for Horowhenua and Kāpiti, safely and efficiently connecting these regions to Wellington and further north.”

Asked if there would be any on/off slip roads so Ōhau or Manakau residents could access the expressway in either direction, said the RMA concept design included a connection at Tararua Road (Levin) to provide north and

southbound entry and exit from the new road. In the current preferred design, this will be achieved with a large dual-lane roundabout.

At the southern end of the new highway, the current preferred design includes a northbound off-ramp. Southbound traffic on the old SH1 will travel through Ōtaki, before joining the Peka Peka to Ōtaki expressway at Ōtaki Gorge Road, about 4km to the south.

So people in Ōhau and Manakau won’t be using the expressway to get to and from Levin or Ōtaki.

NZTA confirmed the updated design would mean no overbridge connection at Manakau Heights Drive. This would mean access for this area will be via South Manakau Road.

“As a result, there will be a slight increase in

travel times from Manakau Heights to Manakau township,” Glen says. “Once the new highway is open, the current SH1 will see traffic volumes reduce by more than half.”

Regarding increased traffic flows through Ōtaki – given Manakau/Ōhau residents will have to go through Ōtaki to go farther south – NZTA say modelling shows that about 3000 vehicles per day will travel on Taylors Road beneath the Peka Peka to Ōtaki expressway, with the vast majority of these travelling southbound.

“Most of this southbound traffic will turn off rather than travelling through the Ōtaki shops on old SH1, with the traffic volume through the shopping area expected to increase by around 10 percent.”

## Frustration and a spanner in the works: Ō2NL watcher



By Paul Williams

**A woman keeping a close watch on the Ō2NL expressway ever since project plans were first mooted is flabbergasted to see major last-minute design changes being considered.**

Carolyn Leslie (left) set up the Horowhenua Ō2NL Expressway Discussion Group on social media in 2017 as a vehicle for people affected by the new road to talk and share information. She says a support group was formed after a public meeting at the Manakau Hall attracted about 250 people, telling her it was an important issue.

To have major changes in project design

at the 11th hour announced at the weekend, after years of uncertainty and upheaval, is “completely unacceptable”.

“There is incredible frustration, and understandably so . . . this is a real spanner in the works,” she says. “This has not been taken well, so close to construction beginning.

“Make no mistake. This is a cost-cutting exercise. This is not consultation. This is ‘we haven’t got enough money, so this is what we will do.’”

She says there was to be a “soft” release of the news at a meeting between NZTA and a small group it had identified as community representatives in Manakau on Sunday, but hundreds of people turned up.

“We got word that something was going on, and it spread very quickly,” she says. “There was six days notice.”

Carolyn says with changes to plans and scaled-back works, she shuddered to think about people who were uprooted and property purchased that didn’t need to be.

“Imagine if you didn’t have to sell up? People will wonder, did I really need to move?”

Despite moving from Manakau to Paekākāriki in 2021 she has continued to moderate the page.

“I am happy to. It can help people to navigate this and to know they are not on their own. There are others experiencing this and forced into the same situation.”



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LETTERS

Council obligations clarified

I write to clarify a point raised in your recent article (May 16) on Horowhenua District Council’s adoption of a property strategy amendment providing iwi and hapū the first right of refusal over surplus council land. The article quotes me as stating, “Council does not have obligations to honour the treaty...”. This is not a direct quote, rather it paraphrases a broader series of comments. I believe the quote may benefit from further context and clarification. The sentiment of the quote is not “Sam Jennings’ view.” It is a matter of law affirmed by the courts, including most recently in *Hart v Marlborough District Council* [2023] NZHC 3195, which confirms that local councils are not the crown and therefore do not owe direct obligations under the Treaty of Waitangi. That case reaffirmed that while councils may choose to incorporate treaty principles into policy, they are not legally bound to do so unless statute explicitly requires it. Council’s key statutory obligation is found in section 4 of the Local Government Act 2002. That section requires councils to “recognise and respect the crown’s responsibility to take appropriate account of the Treaty of Waitangi principles” and to “maintain and improve opportunities for Māori to contribute to local government decision-making”. This clarification is important because, during the debate, several councillors, including Cr Boyle, erroneously claimed that council has obligations under the treaty – which is legally incorrect. That might be their personal view, but it is not the law. Council can, at its discretion, go beyond its legal obligations – but any such decision should be made with full transparency and clear public support. Your readers deserve to know that the legal position I referenced is grounded in judicial authority – not personal opinion.

Sam Jennings, Horowhenua District Councillor

**Not just Oxford Street**

It’s not only the Oxford Street trees that cause problems (Star, May 16). Queen Street West is lined with deciduous examples, which at this time of year create a real mess. They [leaves] choke the stormwater drains when it rains, the leaves blow everywhere, including private properties, getting into and blocking spouting and downpipes. There is also the ever increasing damage to footpaths, berms and gutters as these trees grow. It’s time our council took a serious look at the situation.

R G Tidman, Levin

Spex bounces back

*from front page*

Following a morning of vomiting after arriving home, wife Jodie noted left-side weakness and called for an ambulance.

“I had a brain scan and it was like ‘that shouldn’t be there,’” he says.

He underwent major brain surgery to remove a meningioma, requiring 32 staples in his head. The operation was a success and he was sent home with orders to rest and recover.

“They said it could take at least two years.”

Brain surgery can affect memory and create fatigue. Michael says it’s “debatable” whether his memory bank has rebooted completely “but I am up and running”.

He was back working at 100% Chainey’s Appliance and Electronics store in Levin when out of the blue he got a call recently from The Boss instigator and bass player Adrian Dittmar, checking up on him. They’d kept a space for him in the band and wanted him back.

“He said ‘are you ready?’ I said ‘yep, I’ll give it a go,’” he says. “It was nice to be asked.”

“I was pretty nervous – a healthy nervous. Getting over the nerves has probably been the biggest thing, but it’s great to be doing it again.”

Adrian says the band all felt Michael’s absence keenly and they were so happy to have him back – alive. He is in awe of Michael’s bravery and praised his musicianship.

“We were on tour and could see something wasn’t right. We said ‘mate, you’re not well and we want you to go home,’” he says. “We weren’t sure how he would take it, but I think he knew ... they found a tumour the size of your fist.”

“I think there’s a lesson for all of us men – when you know something isn’t right, you’ve just got to go and get checked out.”

Michael first joined the nine-piece Bruce Springsteen tribute show six years ago.

He says it’s great to be back on stage again and he’s looking forward to the next show.

He’s full of praise of the show’s frontman, Dean Shaw,



**The Boss – Bruce Springsteen Experience on stage.**

as people often say: “If you close your eyes you’d swear it’s Bruce Springsteen singing,” he says.

Michael first picked up a guitar when he was 14. He’s not the first talented musician to hail from Te Awamutu, famed for spawning Finn brothers Neil and Tim.

“I saw my mate playing an electric guitar, and so started playing. I had a few lessons at school, but that was about it. I just kept playing.”

He played in numerous school bands at Rock Quests before joining The Plant People in the 1990s, moving with that band to Palmerston North.

Michael then joined the musical academy We Came To Play in Levin and played in the band Hokio that went back and forth to Australia. In between times, he’d play on cruise ships, too.

He also played and sang in Levin-based band Homage with local musicians Mario Kerehi and the late Wayne Glover, while also having stints in numerous other bands like Filthy Business and The Full Tin.

The Boss – Bruce Springsteen Experience hits the stage at Regent On Broadway in Palmerston North on Saturday, May 31. The tour coincides with the 50th anniversary of the release of the *Born to Run* album. Tickets are available by visiting ticketek

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# Movie night at Firebird

**Firebird Café in Levin has a built a reputation for hosting musicians and poets in recent times, but this weekend it's turning into a movie cinema for the night.**

Auckland-based filmmaker, cinema-owner and producer Robin Kewell is coming to Levin to present the special one-off screening of *What About Me?* there on Sunday night.

It begged the question. Why? What is the attraction with this film?

He says he's coming to Levin to visit friends, but saw that as a good chance to share and promote *What about Me?*

"Of the thousands of movies over the years, this is one I would take with me wherever I went," he says. "I would show it anywhere. The film's message is amazing."

"It shows us the common language is music. It will fill you with joy."

*What About Me?* is the work of filmmakers Jamie Catto and Duncan Bridgemen, who have created a musical documentary after visiting 50 countries around the world over a period of four years.

They've added different music from around the world to the words of people like Noam Chomsky, Will Young, Maxi Jazz, Ram Dass, Gabrielle Roth, Tim Robbins, Billy Connolly and Michael Stipe to creating a "moving, memorable, must-see masterpiece".

Robin says those conversations reveal how we are all connected, not only through creativity, but our beliefs.

- Firebird Café
- 7pm Sunday, May 25
- Tickets \$15/\$12
- Bookings: 021 363 033



**Filmmaker and producer Robin Kewell, who is bringing What About Me to Levin on Sunday night.** *Photo supplied*



From left, Ōhau School principal Dianne McKee, kuia Yvonne Wehipeihana-Wilson, Stacy Gregg, Te Kenehi Teira and Maria Rahui.

# Author at Ōhau School

**Māori author Stacy Gregg, winner of the 2024 Margaret Mahy Book of the Year Award for her book *Nine Girls*, visited Ōhau School recently to talk about her experiences as an author.**

Stacy has written several children's adventure stories about horses, and *Nine Girls* is one of the novels selected for the Manawātū Book Battle. Organised by Belinda Whyte of the Manawātū Literacy Association, schools from Whanganui, Manawātū and Horowhenua will battle it out to win the Book Battle award, to be held this year at Levin Intermediate School on June 26.

Fellow authors Feana Tu'akoi and Michaela Keeble, who also have books in this year's Book Battle, spoke to students of Koputaroa, Levin East and Parkland schools at Te Takeretanga o Kura-hau-pō. Poroutawhao students accompanied Stacy when she was welcomed at Ōhau School with a powhiri by Te Kenehi Teira and Yvonne Wehipeihana-Wilson.

Stacy spoke candidly about *Nine Girls*, a semi-autobiographical novel that explores topics such as the Land Wars, the Springbok tour, finding your own identity, and whānau. This book is a step away from Stacy's previous work and is uniquely New Zealand.

“Ōhau students have thoroughly enjoyed reading it, making connections to their own lives and country,” says Ōhau teacher Maria Rahui. “Meeting writers in this way is inspiring for students and helps them develop as readers in an authentic way.”



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# Mewington magic in Foxton

**B**ooks dusted with just a little magic to take you to a land far, far away, might just be the secret behind the success of Mewington's Book Shoppe, which recently moved to Foxton's Main Street from the main highway.

Owned by Kate Ellicott and her daughter, Nicola Gruenwald, Mewington's is much more than a place full of books. It's somewhere to sit, relax, test the magic, and explore in a long forgotten corner.

Old sits beside new at Mewington's – furniture, accessories and books. There's an old phone and Imperial typewriter, a wardrobe (remember the *Narnia* tale?), and a hobbit hole is in progress.

There's a corner for board games, and works by local artists adorn the walls.

Kids find plenty to do at Mewington's with themed areas featuring *Narnia*, *Peter Pan*, and *Alice in Wonderland*.

The bookshop sells new books, but has an ever-growing selection of second-hand books. And if you want a real classic, bound in leather and smelling like it's been around forever, they've got them, too.

"We are a 'slow' bookstore," says Kate, "where folk can take their time, have a comfy seat, play the piano, and possibly cuddle one of the shop cats."

A coffee-making corner is coming soon. There are comfortable couches and when the *Star* visited (again – we love books,

too) a group of locals was busy discussing books.

An intriguing feature is the wonderland floor, looking like a whirlpool. Hold on to something when you look at it!

Kate says Nicola spent 72 hours and 22 minutes stencilling the main shop floor.

"We are a mother and daughter team, who have a group of locals lending a helping hand.

"From the beginning the community support has been fantastic. People are truly intrigued by what we're developing."

The pair moved to Foxton six years ago, and always had a plan in the back of their heads to open a bookshop.

The name of the shop is a tribute to a beloved family pet, Meowski Mewington.

"We were stuck on a name until we realised Mewington is a fantastic name. Meowski is the most precious and lovely-natured cat so we were happy to name our store after him. He's also the cat on our logo.

"We wanted to create a wonderland for book lovers, and the shop is still a work in progress."

The shop is now open seven days a week, with a friend, Lilly, in charge on Mondays.

- Mewington's Book Shoppe
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The flax stripping machines at Foxton, one of only two in the country and the only one still working.



Foxton flax on a drying rack.

Photos Janine Baalbergen

# New guides rejuvenate flax museum

By Janine Baalbergen

**Victor and Eileen Taylor have immersed themselves in Foxton's flax industry history, and have stepped up to be guides of the town's Flax Stripper Museum.**

The museum has been closed to the public for some time, largely because of a lack of enthusiastic and knowledgeable guides. Not now, as Victor and Eileen have taken on the role. Both have a passion for history, and Victor grew up on Harbour Street. He can still vividly recall the racket the machines used to make.

"I lived in Foxton until 7th form and then left for Christchurch to train as a teacher," he says. "I liked it so much down there I stayed for 30 years."

Now he's back, leading visitors past the many pictures with fascinating captions, as well as machinery in the museum explaining the importance of flax – *phormium tenax* or harakeke – to the town.

"The flax industry boomed here 100 years ago."

Victor also spent 17 years teaching in Palmerston North and was caretaker of Foxton School after that.

"I had some time on my hands and wondered what to do with it," he says. "Eileen and I use the library a lot and tried to find out what was going on with this museum. We felt it was a shame it wasn't open."

So a couple of months ago they started Saturday afternoon guided tours through both the flax stripper and the nearby wool factory museums.

"Though I lived next door for so long, I never came inside to have a look."

He says flax stripping was very labour intensive.

"They did this by hand, using a sickle. A flax cutter could carry bundles of 35-40 kilos under their arms."

There were several mills and thousands of acres of flax swamps between Foxton and Moutoa.

"When I was young the industry was already in decline," he says.

Foxton's flax benefited from a downturn in the flax industry elsewhere, especially in the Philippines due to cyclones. But

the town's flax was exceptionally strong, making it ideal for high quality twine and rope.

The museum is the proud owner of a flax stripper machine, one of only two left in the country and the only one still working. It's very loud, so Victor doesn't want to turn it on for visitors just yet.

"The hearing of many workers using this machine was severely impaired and in those days there were no health and safety measures, so a few workers also lost fingers to the machine."

He recalls that those using the flax stripper machine worked 12-hour days, pushing the large flax leaves through it.

By 1912 there were 39 mills in Foxton, operating 52 stripping machines.

The factory on Harbour Street later housed the wool and carpet factory that also used flax to make mats, about which the museum also has a lot of information.

A list at the museum shows who worked in the factory over the years.

"To my surprise there are quite a few Taylors on the list, though I knew I had family members working there," says Victor.

He has already found that the visitors to the flax stripper museum are diverse.

"There are engineers interested in the machines, weavers who want to know more about the techniques used, as well as crafts people. And then there are locals who had family members working here, and overseas visitors, too."

While Victor uses his gift of the gab to entertain visitors, wife Eileen hops to the main road to tell people the museum is open and to come and have a look.

Victor and Eileen are there every Saturday afternoon from 1pm-3 pm. You can find the museum behind the library and museum complex – Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom – on Main Street, Foxton, beside the windmill.



Victor Taylor is enjoying life after returning to Foxton and taking on a role – along with wife Eileen – of guiding visitors around the Foxton Flax Museum.

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Work on the Moutoa floodgates, which have been operating since 1962.

Photos supplied

# Upgrade for Moutoa floodgates

By Paul Williams

**A big piece of infrastructure preventing large parts of land near Foxton from flooding is getting a \$2.5 million upgrade to mechanics that are now more than 60 years old.**

The Moutoa floodgates on the Foxton-Shannon Road was originally built in response to the ravaging floods of 1941, and was fully operating by 1962.

Horizons Regional Council catchment manager Jon Roygard says a routine asset inspection recently revealed some of the electrical, mechanical and structural components have exceeded their design life. They are being replaced with components more in line with modern engineering that will enable the gates to be operated off-site.

Project manager Barry Hofmeyr says gearboxes have come from Italy, along with more winch systems.

In heavy rainfall the floodgates divert water from the Manawātū River into a specially designed 10km floodway. The diversion of floodwater protects about 280 square kilometres of land in the lower Manawātū Plain from flood damage.

At full capacity, 2500m<sup>3</sup> of floodwaters rush through every second – the exact size of an Olympic swimming pool.

The floodwaters take a shortcut through a channel that is 600m wide, with stopbanks 5.5m high, allowing it to bypass 30km of meandering river before meeting up with itself again further west at Whirokino on its way out to sea.

The floodgate network has a book value of \$50 million and is by far the largest in the Manawātū catchment.

The curving reinforced concrete structure contains nine steel radial gates, each 15m wide by 4.5m high and weighing 15



The Manawātū River in flood. The floodgates can be opened slowly and strategically from the bottom up to release water from the river into the spillway when water reaches a critical height.

tonnes. The gates are raised by a pulley system attached to the concrete piers and are operated by a series of electric motors.

Each gate can be operated independently, although in extreme weather events all the gates can be opened. Jon says how often the gates are opened can vary from year to year. During the flood of 2004, the gates were opened seven times.

Three-quarters of the project was being funded by Kānoa, the government's Regional Economic Development & Investment Unit, with other funding coming from a cyclone protection fund.

The Manawātū River originates north of Norsewood, west of the Ruahine Range, and drains 6000sq km on its way through the Manawātū Gorge to the sea at Foxton.

Along the way it's fed by several fast-flowing tributaries, including the Mangatainoka, Tiraumea and Mangahao rivers above the Manawātū Gorge, and the Ōroua, Pohangina and Tokomaru rivers below it.

Jon says weather and river levels are monitored intently. It can take 10 hours for floodwater to arrive at the Moutoa floodgates after an upstream alert at Palmerston North, allowing time for landowners in the flood plain to be notified.

The upgrades have allowed a switch-over to a new electrical system, with new Italian-made and Australian-designed winches, while new overhead powerlines have also been installed.

The project is due to be completed some time next month.



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# MAHI MĀRA/Gardening

## Go natural for great roses

**May and June might be slower times in the garden with plants and weeds in a more dormant state, but it's this dormancy that can make gardening a busy time still.**

Over the next few weeks many of the dormant or semi-dormant plants become available in garden centres. This includes roses, strawberries, lillies, garlic, shallots, fruit trees and deciduous ornamentals. Some of these will already be available and others will quickly follow.

We will look at several of these over the next few weeks, but let's start with roses, the most popular garden plant in New Zealand with most gardens having one or many specimens growing as bush, standard or climbers.

For some gardeners they are the only feature plants that are really well cared for. Because of all this attention, gardeners try to have them looking perfect, well shaped, lots of buds and flowers with no blemishes on the foliage.

You can have perfect or near perfect roses if you work with nature, rather than against it.

Natural products will promote healthy roses. Chemical products used as rescue remedies or rose foods will remove the natural balances and cause both insect pests and diseases to run wild.

In the spring when the new season's growths appear, they are perfect and will remain so with a little help from several natural, health promoting products. If on the other hand we apply rose fertilisers or Nitrophoska Blue we knock back the vital soil life (micro organisms and worms) because of these products' acidity.

If we then apply chemical rose sprays, we damage the natural immune systems of the plants, causing greater problems, as well as further harming the soil life.

Our poor roses become targets for both insect pests and diseases as these are the cleaners of nature, taking out the weak plants.

Roses are not easily killed, but will remain sickly looking for the rest of the season.

To have really healthy roses (or any plant for that matter) you need to supply all the minerals and elements that the plant needs, feed the soil life and the micro organisms that live on and inside the plants, control any insect pests that sap the vitality, ensure they have ample moisture and a suitable sunny spot to grow in.

Do this and you will have great roses that everyone will admire.

With new roses it's important that the roots never become dry. There's a great danger that roses bought from chain stores with only their roots wrapped will dry out in the controlled atmosphere of these stores. The roses might have died before you buy them. There's enough sap in the trunk and the branches to actually have them leaf up in the spring, but as the roots are dead there's nothing to sustain that growth.

Unfortunately some gardeners will think its their fault the

rose came to life and then died, and blame themselves. No, they bought a dead rose. Same applies to bare-rooted trees, too.

What to do with your existing roses?

Cut all bush and standard roses back to half and remove any dead wood and spindly canes. Then spray either with potassium permanganate or Wallys Liquid Copper. Leave till about the end of July and then do your proper pruning, and spray the wounds with liquid copper as you go.

Don't prune or cut on damp, cool days as this can let silver leaf disease into the rose. Pick a warm sunny day when the air is drier.

In the spring place Wally's Unlocking your Soil, ocean solids, sheep pellets etc, on top of the soil around the base of the rose and cover with a good compost.

Use natural sprays and products. A good programme would be: Every week or two spray with Wally's Magic Botanic Liquid with mycorrhizae added. Once a month add to this spray Wally's Perfektion for Roses.

I think you will be amazed at the results, and there's a good chance some roses that appear not to have a perfume will do so with that spray programme.

If aphids attack the new leaves and buds, spray just before dusk with Wally's Super Pyrethrum.

If you avoid the use of any chemical fertilisers and sprays as well as any chemical herbicides,

anywhere near the roses and follow the above natural programme, the health of the roses should greatly benefit and you, too, will be healthier for not using the chemicals.

■ Wally has owned plant shops, a garden centre and three nursery sites. He operates an online business called Wally's Garden Enterprises. Phone 0800 466464. For garden information and news go to [gardennews.co.nz](http://gardennews.co.nz)





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# Community Connection

Issue 217 MAY 2025

**Horowhenua**  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



## Message from the Mayor

**Kia ora Horowhenua,**

You probably all know by now about the changes NZTA is proposing to the Ōtaki to North of Levin expressway (Ō2NL). The most damaging of these are deleting the southbound onramp at Taylors Road north of Ōtaki and the Manakau vehicle overbridge and downgrading the Tararua Road interchange to a roundabout.

These changes are completely unacceptable to our community: they would make the road more dangerous and less efficient.

Losing the Taylors Road onramp will divert traffic through Ōtaki – precisely what the new road was designed to avoid. The Manakau vehicle overbridge is not a ‘nice to have,’ it is essential and non-negotiable. Without it, residents will have no safe option but to cross a busy, high-speed highway just to access essential services, and connect with their village.

The proposed downgrade to the Tararua interchange will introduce significant delays and risk into what should be a high-speed corridor.

Council has consistently advocated on behalf of the community for a safe and efficient road and will continue to do so.

I have written to the Minister of Transport and chair of NZTA, requesting an urgent review and additional investment to ensure we get the road we were promised.

Turning to other matters, it’s been a busy time at Council, with a bumper meeting last week. The agenda ran to 484 pages, which may be some sort of record (fortunately it’s available online so everyone didn’t need to print it).

We got through a lot of important work. Council adopted the Annual Plan, which includes some positive news for ratepayers.

The plan confirms a 10.2 percent increase in total rates, which is lower than the 11.6 percent forecast in the Long Term Plan. Rates at a property level will be agreed at the June Council meeting. Increases for residents who aren’t connected to our water and wastewater network will be lower, as most of our cost increases are related to water services.

Another decision – after some spirited debate – was to adopt an amendment to our Property Strategy giving local iwi and hapū first right to declare an interest in property identified as ‘non-core’. This was often done on an informal basis previously, and adopting the amendment puts some structure around the process.

Council also adopted the Local Waters Combined Bylaw, which brings rules about drinking water, wastewater, stormwater and trade waste into one place, making it easier for businesses and the public to understand and comply with them.

It may sound dry – for a waters bylaw – but in fact it’s very relevant to many in our community, from businesses to homeowners and rural residents. Have a look if you get the chance.

Speaking of local waters, I find it hard to believe that it’s now six months since we set up our Local Waters team and brought operating and maintaining our drinking water, stormwater and wastewater services in-house.

The work keeps on coming in. In those six months we’ve had 1,634 calls covering everything from burst sewers to water outages, blockages, and enquiries. We have responded to them all – in fact we’ve improved our response rate by almost ten percent.

And by doing the work ourselves instead of paying contractors we’re well on track to saving around \$1.6m in the first year. A great result from a first-rate team.

Here’s another anniversary that’s crept up on us – 25 years since the open-source library management system Koha was launched. It’s now used in more than 19,000 libraries around the world – but the first three were Levin, Shannon and Foxton. That’s right, this freely available, globally acclaimed software programme was developed in Levin, and began life in 1999 when the Horowhenua Library Trust needed to fix a Y2K bug (anyone remember those?).

It just goes to show that smaller communities can produce mighty results. There’s even an international conference celebrating 25 years of Koha being held in Wellington later this year.

Finally, a big thanks to all those who heeded the water conservation measures all around the district, which were lifted earlier this month.

Ngā mihi,

**Mayor Bernie Wanden**

## Council Meetings

**4** **Extraordinary Council Meeting**  
Wednesday, 04 June 2025, 11am to 1.00pm  
Council decides on Future Water Services Delivery Model  
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

**9** **Te Awahou Foxton Community Board Public Forum**  
Monday, 09 June 2025, 5.30pm to 6.00pm  
Foyer, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom, 92 Main Street, Foxton

**9** **Te Awahou Foxton Community Board Meeting**  
Monday, 09 June 2025, 6.00pm to 8.00pm  
Foyer, Te Awahou Nieuwe Stroom, 92 Main Street, Foxton

**10** **Hearings and Regulatory Committee Meeting**  
Hearing of submitters, Dog Control Policy and Bylaw  
Tuesday, 10 June 2025, 10am  
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

**18** **Extraordinary Council Meeting**  
Adoption of the Shannon Community Plan  
Wednesday, 18 June 2025, 3.00pm to 5.00pm  
Shannon Memorial Hall, Grey Street, Shannon

**25** **Council Public Forum**  
Wednesday, 25 June 2025, 10.15am to 10.45am  
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

**25** **Council Meeting**  
Wednesday, 25 June 2025, 11am to 5.00pm  
Council Chambers, Horowhenua District Council, 126 Oxford Street, Levin

Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please refer to [horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings](https://horowhenua.govt.nz/Council/Council-Meetings) for the full meeting schedule, minutes and agendas.

## Enviroschools working for a better environment

**As someone famously said, we do not inherit the Earth from our ancestors, we borrow it from our children.**

Which is why it is so important to involve children and young people in protecting and improving the environment.

Enter Enviroschools, an environmental action-based programme where young people design and lead sustainability projects in their schools and early learning centres, communities and country.

There are 17 Enviroschools in the Horowhenua, from preschools to colleges.

While each of them take a different approach, they all share a commitment to creating change, whether it’s composting, planting trees, monitoring pests, creating community gardens or testing local water sources.

Horowhenua District Council is proud to support the Enviroschools in our district, and to welcome latest members Taitoko and Levin North schools to the programme.



**Please don’t put wet wipes and rags down your toilet.**

They block the pipes, which can lead to some nasty blowback as well as expensive repairs. Please, only pee, poo and paper in the toilet – everything else in the bin!

To learn more about rubbish and recycling visit:  
[horowhenua.govt.nz/WhatGoesWhere](https://horowhenua.govt.nz/WhatGoesWhere)



# In the works

## Work is progressing well at the new roundabout at the intersection of SH57 and Tararua Road.

For several weeks from early June there will be night-time road closures to allow three of the roads joining the roundabout to be connected.

Detours will be in place, and residents within the road closure will have managed access to their properties at all times.

Work will also take place during the day, but there will be no road closures apart from the eastern access to Tararua Road.

Dates are yet to be confirmed, and NZTA will contact affected residents directly.

Meanwhile we're continuing to lay new water and wastewater pipes on MacArthur Street in Levin, and Margaret and Bryce Streets in Shannon.



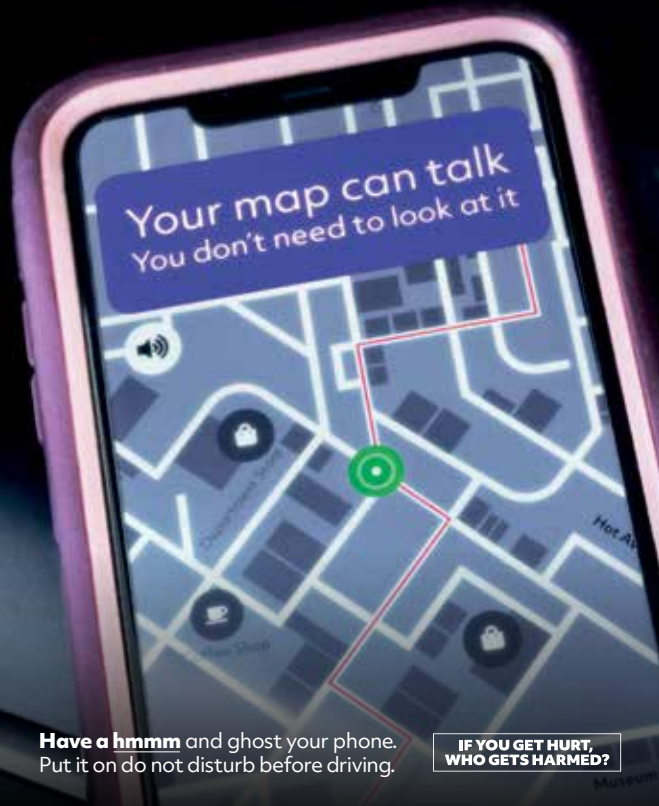
# When ghosting is good

You may have seen some catchy ads lately about not using your cellphone when driving – the strapline is 'If you get hurt who gets harmed?'

Did you know that nearly 40 percent of New Zealanders admit to sending or reading text messages when driving a vehicle, while nearly 20 percent check or reply to social media messages? That's a lot of dangerous distraction, which could easily lead to a tragedy on the road.

We're proud to be putting our weight behind this campaign, along with NZ Police, ACC and NZTA Waka Kotahi. To quote from the campaign, 'have a hmmm and put your phone on do not disturb before driving'.

Thanks Horowhenua – it'll make us all safer on the road.



## Free public talk: What will the next big quake or tsunami look like for Levin?

Join local emergency managers, scientists, and experts for a free community kōrero about what the next big earthquake and tsunami could look like and what you can do to prepare for it.

Understanding your risk isn't about fear: it's about knowing how to look after your family, your home, and your community.

**JUNE 5** Thursday, 5 June, 6pm  
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ON THE BEAT: SAM GILPIN

# Be vigilant in Levin – vehicle-related crime is increasing

**Levin is seeing an increase in vehicle-related crimes involving unlawful takings and thefts from cars.**

Police are urging residents to be vigilant, as offenders appear to be targeting parked and unattended vehicles throughout Levin. Popular vehicles targeted include smaller Japanese models such as Honda Jazz, Mazda Demio, Nissan Tiida and Toyota Vitz, but no make or model of vehicle or location is immune to such offending.

We have seen an increase in cases where vehicles are either being targeted for stealing outright



or broken into, with valuables or registration plates targeted. The majority of these incidents have occurred during the evening and early morning, on vehicles parked in residential driveways or on the road side.

Registration plates are regularly being targeted by offenders in order

to attach to other vehicles they use when they commit other offences.

People are often leaving their vehicles insecure on their own properties and more often than not items such as laptops, phones, cash, credit cards, wallets, handbags and trade tools are being left in open view. Unfortunately, this is creating an easy opportunity for offenders.

We are encouraging vehicle owners to follow a few key steps to help reduce the risk of vehicle-related crime.

• Always lock your vehicle, even when parked in your driveway or outside your home.

- Remove all valuables from your vehicle to remove the opportunity for offenders.
- While it is not always practical to remove trade tools, cover them so they are not easily visible. Also mark your tools with a unique mark on an inconspicuous area and photograph it to identify them at a later date if required.
- Avoid parking in poorly lit areas. Park your vehicle in well-lit, visible public areas where possible, and in view of the Horowhenua Community Camera Trust cameras, especially at night.
- Consider installing security lighting

and a camera overlooking your driveway.

- Install an alarm or immobiliser on your vehicle.
- Consider using a steering wheel lock, and leaving the glovebox open as a visible deterrent to show no valuables are inside your vehicle.

People are encouraged to report any suspicious activity happening at the time to the police immediately on 111.

Anyone who has information about recent vehicle thefts is encouraged to contact police on 105 or anonymously report through Crime Stoppers on 0800 555 111.

■ Sam is senior sergeant at Levin Police

KŌRERO MAI | A KUKU: DR HUHANA SMITH

GREY POWER: TERRY HEMMINGSEN

## A food garden for hard working hands

**Last week I just missed out on an international fund – Food Action Awards 2025 – from Royal College of Arts in London, via an innovative programme, Climavore.**

As relayed by key founders (renowned artistic duo Cooking Sections), my Kuku-based application was well favoured by the



global jury. However, the £25,000 award went to Chilean collective Museo Pelumpen (see [climavore.org/2025-food-action-awards](http://climavore.org/2025-food-action-awards)).

I have known Cooking Sections art/architecture

duo Daniel Fernández Pascual and Alon Schwabe for some years now and have deeply admired them, not only for their globally recognised creative practice, but also for how they advance the work of communities, raising awareness of deep local knowledges of place that revitalises safe food production for better food systems within the changing seasons of our global climate crisis. They support the “building of alternative diets that benefit human and non-human nourishing”.

My proposal was for Ngutu Ta: He Māra Kai mo Ngā Ringaringa Pukumahi/ Ngutu Ta: a Food Garden for Hard Working Hands. It proposed a cultural imprint māra kai (food garden) created on a section of our 6.2-ha small farm/olive grove in Kuku, which since 2007 is regenerating ecologically and organically. The māra kai will provide healing foods to local marae, and return wild foods like kōura (native freshwater crayfish) and kōkopu (native trout) to the Waikōkopu Stream.

The garden relates directly to other farm-based, climate change initiatives supporting Pātaka Kai (food sovereignty); composting pest aquatic weeds from Waikōkopu Stream and coastal wetland project at Kuku Ōhau estuary to enhance soil; burning biochar from olive pruning for carbon sequestration, soil conditioning and water retention; removing blackberry by mulching and composting it; planting pā harakeke (NZ flax plantation) for renewed industry of sustainable apparel-quality fabric; and reforesting the full stream gully and terrace slopes.

As part of this proposal, the lovely Chinese neighbours were keen to revegetate their stream gully to help filter the stream waters from excessive nutrient run-off from market gardens and other upstream activities. The native tree revegetation buffers against increased dry, or flooding events.

Meantime, a convergence of Horowhenua small producers, iwi representatives, council staff, Awahou Foxton loop leaders and key tourist ventures gathered at the council on May 15 to talk about food, art, culture and nature, and what this distinct kei uta (hinterland) of Horowhenua can offer its communities and visitors. It was edifying to link up with others who centre their growing practices around organic food, cultural narratives, and regenerative practices, while enhancing sustainability and natural integrity.

The participants plan to consolidate our relationships to this place where we produce such fine foodstuffs. Meantime, I reseek the funds to realise my healing food garden and stream dream that might even entice local people and visitors.

■ Huhana (Ngāti Tukorehe) lives at Kuku.

## Blackened quiche not good enough at hospital

**I recently sat with a group of seniors as we discussed to woes of our current world.**

One of the major topics for discussion was the hospital stays many of us or our loved ones have experienced during the past two or three years.

From that discussion came two major topics. The level of clinical care, and the provision of food, particularly at Palmerston North Hospital.

First, the accolades. The clinical and medical services provided to us all, once we had cleared the disaster zone that is the emergency department, was said by all of those present to be outstanding. We were all well monitored and treated with kindness, dignity and respect.

Our assorted ailments were provided for and most of those of us coming home believed we had been exceptionally well looked after.

But as to the meals that were provided, that was at a different level altogether.

Back in the day I trained as a chef and worked at restaurants in Auckland and in London. So, to some extent I know what I am talking about.

Palmerston North Hospital has a fully equipped commercial kitchen capable of



providing meals for all of the patients and staff who come through the facility and much, much more. But oh no! They choose to contract their food services out – to Compass.

In their promotional blurb, Compass say: “In hospitals and senior living environments, food is more than just a part of the operation. It can touch lives, promote healing and transform the experience for both patients and visitors...”

Compass! This is the same company that is providing school lunches and is the subject of constant complaints about the delivery, quality and quantity of food being dished out to our children. And they talk about “touching lives” and “promoting healing”. What a load of verbose garbage. A bit like the food they are serving up.

I offer some examples. Toast provided to patients for breakfast being toasted on only one-side (I kid you not, having seen this),

lunchtime quiche burned so black on the top it was inedible, meat sliced so thinly it was like eating flavourless cardboard, vegetables cooked out to ranges of grey and opaque, and ice-cream and jelly delivered to the wards in the “hot press”. Both the jelly and the ice-cream came in liquid form.

The quality and presentation of the food to the wards at Palmerston North Hospital does not even come close to “touching lives or promoting healing”.

It’s not unusual to see families bringing food in from outside the hospital because what is on offer is just so bad. As patients we should not have to put up with the (often) terrible foods that comes from the Compass kitchens.

As taxpayers and seniors who have paid our taxes over many years, we should expect more than what is provided by an England-based company. Our elected MPs and representatives must demand more (and better) for the sick and injured in our community instead of blindly supporting the status quo for food provision.

Grey Power will continue to ask the hard questions about how we treat our hospital patients.

■ Terry is president of Grey Power Levin

THE ELECTORATE: TIM COSTLEY

## New after-hours health service for Horowhenua

**Health is the biggest issue I hear about as your local MP, aside from the cost of living.**

Economic growth, more options and better living standards, that is our biggest priority as a National government. But health is absolutely second in Horowhenua.

So I’ve been working hard on two things for our electorate: more health services delivered locally, and easier transport links to hospital when you need them. I recently secured funding for a new health shuttle trial in Kāpiti, but this week I have great news for Horowhenua: a new after-hours service for Horowhenua, based in Levin. This is something [Rangitikei MP] Suze Redmayne and I have been fighting hard for.

Currently, if you need urgent care (for example a bad cut, infection, or sprained ankle on a Friday night) you have to either drive to Palmerston North, or wait until Monday. When my daughter broke her arm in



Levin she had to drive to Palmerston North as we weren’t willing to wait until Monday. That is all about to change.

In yesterday’s budget we announced \$164 million over four years to expand after-hours and urgent care services across the country. This will mean that 98 percent of Kiwis will be able to receive in-person urgent care within one hour’s drive of their homes. In Horowhenua it’s even better; the service will be right here in Levin.

Currently in Levin you can see a GP or nurse on weekdays only, and between 8am and 5pm. With National’s new funding this will mean you can come to an after-hours any

time between 8am and 8pm on weekdays, and 9am and 5pm on weekends.

Of course it’s not just Horowhenua that benefits; this budget announcement will create a more consistent standard for urgent care access across the country, ensuring all Kiwis have access to timely, quality healthcare.

Under Labour, the number of people getting seen within six hours at the ED dropped from 90 percent to 70 percent. Expanding community-based urgent care will help ease pressure on hospitals and keep emergency departments wait times down for those with the most serious conditions.

We’ve also announced a new 24/7 facility in Palmerston North, just in case you need help in the middle of the night, but it’s not bad enough for an ambulance or the ED.

This is all part of our plan to rebuild our health system and give you all the world-class public services you deserve.

■ Tim is MP for the Ōtaki Electorate



# Budget reaction a pointer to election capability

Labour’s reaction to the budget will tell us a good deal about the capability the party is assembling for its bid next year to regain the Treasury benches.

A consistent dose of negativity without clear lines of difference in approach to that of the Greens will leave it saddled with an uphill grind toward Election ’26.

The Greens vision is virtually unequivocal: In broad terms, if it moves, tax it. The money received will go to fund a range of free social services and education. The government would in effect assume full responsibility for the well-being of individual New Zealanders. The policy is full-strength socialism. It will have its adherents.

But for mainstream New Zealand, the reality is that the country has consistently rejected the proponents of such a widespread re-ordering of political priorities. The preferred option has been a pinkish tinged mix of free-market and socialist policies, the shade of pink veering to the left or right according to whether the dominant ruling party is of a blue or red hue.

The question with which Labour has to grapple at this stage of the electoral cycle is how it can lift the performance of state social services without promoting new tax policies likely to earn voter rejection. There’s a fine line in this area. A policy that overreaches could cause voters to question why they should fund certain services, while insufficient tax reform may draw criticism from supporters who believe the wealthy should contribute more.

Hovering also over this issue is the state of the economy and the spending options available without sparking an increase in the country’s

interest bill on its \$190 billion of debt. Labour has a political juggle on its hands.

It is one that can be glimpsed in the approach of health spokesperson Dr Ayesha Verrall to the announcement by Health Minister Simeon Brown that \$164 million would be committed in the budget to provide new or enhanced urgent care services. These include five new 24-hour urgent care services in Palmerston North, Counties Manukau, Whangarei, Tauranga and Dunedin; new daytime services in places like Levin, Lower Hutt, Invercargill and Timaru; and extended after-hour services in places like Dargaville, Gisborne, Taupo, Masterton, Ashburton, and Oamaru. Rural New Zealand is to get 24 hour on-call support to deliver enhanced care.

Verrall said the funding boost would not make any fundamental difference Her statement drew a heading in Wellington’s daily newspaper: “\$164m for urgent care ‘pocket change’ – Labour.” The question taxpayers might well ask is that if \$164 million can’t make a fundamental difference to the provision of such services in those towns and cities, what can?

As Verrall went on to say, the place with the greatest need is general practitioners and primary care. She might perhaps have better focused on that as a preferred spending target, rather than urgent care services. To do so, however, would have outlined a policy position on which the people in the affected areas, in particular, could make a judgement.



Facing off over health funding – Dr Ayesha Verrall and Simeon Brown.

POLITICS

BRUCE KOHN

Such policy positioning will become essential for Labour as this parliamentary term proceeds. It may well, for example, have to soon consider whether it supports a change to law relating to the Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC) that will get it out of a potentially huge ongoing cost outlay.

The sticky political point is that the change would nullify a 2023 Court of Appeal ruling that victims of sexual abuse were entitled to compensation from ACC for loss of potential earnings from the time they were abused, not simply from the time they sought treatment as had been the case.

The ACC last year budgeted \$3.6 billion to cover current and future cost of claims made possible because of the court’s ruling. A law change to restore the position as interpreted prior to the court’s ruling would stop an unexpected and uncontrollable explosion in ACC costs with ramifications for the scale of levies required to support the scheme.

The nub of the issue is that people who are the victims of sexual abuse can get compensation through the benefit system of the Ministry for Social Development. But there is a possibility that lawyers representing claimants could obtain higher payments by arguing a case to ACC and possibly the courts.

The Cabinet has yet to decide on this matter, according to Commerce Minister Scott Simpson. Should it go ahead with a change there is certain to be an outpouring of criticism that it is again, as claimed in the pay equity issue, discriminating against women who will probably make up a majority of claimants.

The coalition will argue for prudence in administering the public purse. Should Labour favour the position of the court, taxpayers might well ask where it expects the ACC to find the funds it needs for the extra outgoings.

■ Bruce has been an economics and business editor, and a foreign correspondent in Washington, London and Hong Kong.



## AFFORDABLE HOUSING WORKSHOP SERIES FOR PRACTITIONERS AND WHĀNAU

# Creative ways to get onto the property ladder

Chris Garwood Bennett talks about new ways to achieve home ownership, including rent to own, shared ownership, Kiwibuy, progressive home ownership, and tips and tricks to accelerate savings for a deposit.



Te Whare Oranga  
Venn St, Shannon,  
Thursday 5 June, 6pm to 7.30pm





» 30A Perth Street **LEVIN**

**BEO \$409,000**



### NEST OR INVEST

Tucked away on a rear section this three bedroom home is a gem! Currently tenanted on a fixed term tenancy this is the perfect investment with a great return. The tenant keeps the house like its their own!  
The kitchen and dining area flows seamlessly to the lounge area which opens through a ranchslider to a private rear yard with a single garage. There is a wood burner for winter warmth and a heatpump. With excellent flooring throughout, this home is super tidy. The bathroom boasts a shower over bath and there is a separate toilet and laundry room. There are two double bedrooms and a smaller third. Situated close by is a park for children to play, and schools are just a short walk away.

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1873](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1873)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11AM-11.30AM**

**Adriana Wilton**  
0297766902  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)

» 60 Easton Way **LEVIN**

**BY NEGOTIATION**



### EXECUTIVE EXCELLENCE

For the discerning buyer who values privacy, quality, and space, this immaculately presented four-bedroom residence is the perfect match. Nestled in a quiet, established neighbourhood, this home offers refined living in one of Levin's most desirable locations.  
From the moment you step inside, the attention to detail and thoughtful design is evident. A formal lounge provides a quiet retreat, while the open-plan kitchen, living area and dining area all seamlessly flows to a secluded patio featuring an outdoor fireplace - ideal for entertaining or relaxing in style. The kitchen is the heart of the home, complete with an island bench, generous storage, and a clever servery window

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1908](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1908)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 2PM-2.30PM**

**Adriana Wilton**  
0297766902  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)

» 36 Salisbury Street **LEVIN**

**BY NEGOTIATION**



### FOUR BEDROOMS AND STYLISH

This beautifully modernised 119m2 home combines the best of contemporary living with the character of yesteryear. Perfectly positioned close to town, schools, and the supermarket, convenience is just another highlight of this fantastic property.  
Set on a private, fully fenced 457m2 easy-care section, this home offers a wonderful sense of security and low-maintenance living - ideal for busy families. Step inside and be greeted by gorgeous polished timber floors that add warmth and character, perfectly complemented by a light, modern interior and the bonus of high ceilings that enhance the sense of space.  
The kitchen is a dream, boasting modern appliances.

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1889](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1889)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 1.30PM-2PM**

**Adriana Wilton**  
0297766902  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)

» 47 Highbury Drive **LEVIN**

**BEO \$1,180,000**



### TIMELESS ELEGANCE

From the moment you arrive, you'll sense the distinction of this remarkable five bedroom home. Nestled behind a private brick fence, the welcoming entrance leads through grand double doors into a beautifully light-filled interior.  
At the heart of the home, the designer kitchen is a dream for any chef, boasting premium finishes, a six-burner gas stove, and a walk-in pantry.  
Thoughtfully designed for seamless living, it flows effortlessly into both the formal dining room and the outdoor patio. Set on a private 1,412m2 section, the beautifully landscaped grounds create a serene sanctuary.

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1842](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1842)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11.45AM-12.15PM**

**Adriana Wilton**  
0297766902  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)

» 39 Winchester Street **LEVIN**

**BY NEGOTIATION**



### FANTASTIC FIRST HOME, EXCELLENT GARAGING

If you're searching for the perfect first step onto the property ladder, this well-presented three-bedroom home is a standout! Set on a 726m2 corner section with dual access, it offers space and sunshine. Inside, the open plan kitchen, dining, and lounge area creates a welcoming hub and flows out to a covered deck - ideal for entertaining or enjoying a quiet morning coffee. The kitchen has been freshened with new cupboard doors, there is a pantry and stove with gas hobs. New carpet throughout gives the home a fresh and inviting feel and a heat pump ensures year-round comfort. The main bedroom opens out to a deck.

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1912](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1912)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 2.15PM-2.45PM**

**Adriana Wilton**      **David Campbell**  
0297766902      0224127700  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)      [david@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:david@wiltonandco.nz)

» 79 Kawi Road **LEVIN**

**ASKING \$625,000**



### SPACIOUS AND SO WELL SITUATED

Set on an expansive 814m2 section in one of Levin's most sought-after streets, this impressive 210m2 home offers a superb blend of character, comfort, and space, both inside and out.  
Step inside to discover gleaming native timber floors that enrich the open-plan living area, paired with plush new carpet in the three well-sized bedrooms for added comfort. The updated modern kitchen is a standout, offering contemporary finishes and great functionality at the heart of the home. Enjoy effortless indoor - outdoor flow with access from the living room to both the private rear courtyard and lawn, as well as the front balcony.

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1878](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1878)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12PM-12.30PM**

**Adriana Wilton**  
0297766902  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)

» 14 Awatea Street **LEVIN**

**BEO \$445,000 | DEADLINE SALE**



### FIRST HOME OR SMART INVESTMENT

Step onto the property ladder in style with this freshly refurbished gem, ideal for first home buyers or savvy investors. Inside, you'll find gleaming polished timber floors and a fresh modern colour palette that instantly feels like home. The kitchen is sleek and contemporary, offering both style and functionality, while the home has been freshly painted throughout, giving it a bright and welcoming atmosphere. All three bedrooms are generous in size with built-in wardrobes, providing comfortable spaces for rest or study.

**Deadline Sale (Unless Sold Prior) Closes 1pm, 27 May 2025, Wilton & Co, 530 Queen Street East, Levin**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1888](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1888)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12.45PM-1.15PM**

**Lynaire Cottle**  
0272224017  
[lynaire@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:lynaire@wiltonandco.nz)

» 6 Elizabeth Street **LEVIN**

**BEO \$585,000**



### HOME + SLEEPOUT + GARAGE

If you've been searching for a home that offers flexibility and space, this well-presented property is a must-see. Featuring three good size bedrooms all with double wardrobes, and multiple living zones, it's ideal for families, extended living, or those who love to entertain.  
The open-plan kitchen and dining area flows effortlessly into the lounge and a large, light-filled sunroom - perfect for year-round enjoyment with direct access to the private rear yard. New carpet in the lounge, a heat pump, and aluminium joinery add comfort and convenience.  
A standout feature is the sleepout attached to the double garage, complete with its own bathroom - ideal for guests and teenagers.

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1884](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1884)

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12.45PM-1.15PM**

**Adriana Wilton**  
0297766902  
[adriana@wiltonandco.nz](mailto:adriana@wiltonandco.nz)





» 197A Tiro Tiro Road **LEVIN**

🏠 2 🚗 1 🏠 1

### Endless Possibilities on 1884m2

Sitting proudly on a generous 1884m2 section, this spacious 154m2 home has been utilised for commercial purposes for almost 20 years. With residential zoning still in place, the opportunity is wide open, continue as a commercial venture (consent required), reimagine as a unique residential home, or create a work-from-home setup with serious space.

**ASKING \$599,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11AM-11.30AM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1885](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1885)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 21A Chester Street **LEVIN**

🏠 2 🚗 1 🏠 1 🏠 1

### Cracker on Chester

Welcome to this delightful two-bedroom home, offering a perfect balance of comfort and convenience in a sought-after neighborhood. A spacious verandah welcomes you at the entrance, providing the ideal spot to relax with your morning coffee or unwind in the evening. A light-filled open-plan living and dining area, creating a warm and inviting atmosphere. Outside there is a studio room.

**PRICE BY NEGOTIATION**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11.45AM-12.15PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1859](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1859)

Tracey Fraser 0210779062



» 69 Stafford Street **SHANNON**

🏠 4 🚗 2 🏠 2 🏠 2

### Lifestyle starter with shed

Looking for a lifestyle property that ticks all the boxes? This four-bedroom home is ideal for families or anyone looking to embrace country living without sacrificing convenience. Be welcomed by the impressive tiled floor entrance foyer with its high ceiling. The heart of the home is the light-filled open-plan kitchen, dining, and living space, designed with entertaining in mind.

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$798,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11AM-11.30AM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1890](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1890)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 66 Macarthur Street **LEVIN**

🏠 3 🚗 2 🏠 2 🏠 1

### Magic on MacArthur

This eye-catching home delivers instant street appeal with its modernised roughcast exterior over the original brick, offers a fresh, contemporary feel. Step inside to discover three beautifully presented bedrooms, including a master retreat with a walk-in wardrobe and ensuite. A second bathroom caters to the rest of the household with ease. The modern kitchen features a breakfast bar and flows effortlessly into the spacious dining area

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$689,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12.30PM-1PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1897](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1897)

Ryan Watson 0223554790



» 23 Quinn Road **LEVIN**

🏠 3 🚗 2 🏠 1 🏠 1

### Comfort, style and security

Nestled in a peaceful, tree-lined street, this beautifully presented home offers the ideal blend of comfort, convenience, and modern style. Whether you're looking for your first home, forever home, or a low-maintenance base to lock up and leave, this property ticks all the boxes. Step inside and be welcomed by a light-filled, open-plan living space designed for effortless living and entertaining.

**ASKING \$650,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 1.15PM-1.45PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1838](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1838)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 174 Bath Street **LEVIN**

🏠 2 🚗 2 🏠 1 🏠 1

### NEW PRICE!

Welcome to this fabulous low maintenance two bedroom home designed for comfort and convenience. Step inside the entrance that leads to an inviting living / dining area, where warmth is guaranteed thanks to a log burner, heat pump and HRV system. Whether its a chilly winters night or a relaxing weekend this home has you covered. The well appointed kitchen offers a practical layout, has lots of bench space, a wall oven, dish drawer

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$599,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11AM-11.30AM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1865](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1865)

Tracey Fraser 0210779062



» 24 Grey Street **SHANNON**

🏠 2 🚗 1 🏠 1 🏠 1

### Cosy starter on a large section

Here's your chance to step onto the property ladder with this two bedroom home situated on a generous 1000m2 (more or less) section, there's plenty of room for kids to run, play, and explore. Th galley-style kitchen has been updated, and a warm, welcoming living area is equipped with both a log burner and heat pump for year-round comfort. Whether you're a first-home buyer, or have a flair for DIY, this property is for you.

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$390,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11.45AM-12.15PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1881](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1881)

Lynaire Cottle 0272224017



» 11 Matipo Street **LEVIN**

🏠 5 🚗 2 🏠 1 🏠 2

### A whole lotta house

This generous five-bedroom home is thoughtfully designed for growing families, offering multiple living zones and fantastic functionality. A tiled dining area flows seamlessly into a well-equipped kitchen and through to the laundry with access to the sunny rear deck. There's also a separate hobby or craft room with its own access.

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$639,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11.45AM-12.15PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1893](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1893)

Ryan Watson 0223554790



» 14 Easton Way **LEVIN**

🏠 4 🚗 2 🏠 2 🏠 2

### Spacious and perfectly positioned

Set on a generous 947m section in one of Levin's most desirable streets, this beautifully designed 230m2 brick home delivers the ideal blend of space, comfort, and functionality for modern family living. Thoughtfully laid out to provide multiple living zones, the heart of the home is the well-appointed kitchen which flows effortlessly to the dining area, formal lounge, and a sun-soaked conservatory.

**ASKING \$775,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 1.15PM-1.45PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1899](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1899)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 27 Weraroa Road **LEVIN**

🏠 3 🚗 1 🏠 1 🏠 1

### Step beyond the fence!

You will find a stylish three bedroom home, featuring modern updates and a spacious layout thats perfect for comfortable living. Step inside, and you are greeted by a large lounge with impressive sloping ceilings, giving the space an airy and open feel. The fresh paint inside gives a clean, modern look, and the fairly new carpet adds a cosy touch, as does the gas heating.

**ASKING \$495,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12.30PM-1PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1875](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1875)

Tracey Fraser 0210779062



» 57 Weraroa Road **LEVIN**

🏠 2 🚗 1 🏠 1 🏠 1

### Solid brick unit, walk to town!

Whether you're downsizing, investing, or stepping onto the property ladder, this tidy brick unit is an ideal choice. Perfectly positioned just a short walk to town, it offers comfort, convenience, and low-maintenance living. Freshly updated with new carpet, curtains, and a modern paint palette, the home feels light, bright, and welcoming. The kitchen has been partially modernised, featuring a brand-new stove and fresh flooring.

**BEO \$410,000 | FOR SALE BY DEADLINE SALE**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 1.30PM-2PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1903](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1903)

Lynaire Cottle 0272224017



» 14 Twin Peaks Grove **KOPUTAROA**

🏠 3 🚗 3 🏠 3 🏠 1

### IGNORE the RV of \$1,390,000

Our Motivated Vendor Says SELL! An extraordinary 26% under RV -thats serious value you cant afford to miss. This is your golden opportunity to secure a truly unique lifestyle property at an unbeatable price. The vendor is ready to meet the market - act now before someone else snaps it up!

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$1,059,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 11AM-11.30AM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1857](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1857)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 15 Homewood Avenue **LEVIN**

🏠 4 🚗 2 🏠 2 🏠 2

### Architectural elegance

Tucked away at the end of a quiet cul-de-sac, this architecturally designed home is a true standout - understated from the street, yet breathtaking once you arrive. Set on a generous and private section, this striking property has been crafted with style, light, and modern living in mind.

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$898,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 12.30PM-1PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1895](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1895)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 12A Stuckey Street **LEVIN**

🏠 3 🚗 1 🏠 6 🏠 1

### Lots of garaging plus super tidy home

Welcome to this charming three bedroom home just a short distance from town. Boasting two garages - a double garage provides ample space for your vehicles, with additional room for storage, plus there is also a four car garage, perfect for those with multiple vehicles or for someone working from home. A lovely open plan lounge and dining area boasts a heat pump and wood burner. Call today to view.

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$499,000**

**OPEN HOME SUNDAY 1.15PM-1.45PM**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1839](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1839)

Tracey Fraser 0210779062



» 224B Cambridge Street **LEVIN**

🏠 2 🚗 1 🏠 1 🏠 1

### For the creative minds

Tucked away in a quiet, private position, this delightfully different home is brimming with charm and personality - the perfect sanctuary for an artist, writer, or anyone who appreciates unique design. Inside you will be inspired by the soaring high ceilings, incredible natural light, and generous living spaces that invite creativity and calm. A whimsical, storybook-style staircase adds a touch of magic, leading to two bedrooms.

**BUYER ENQUIRY OVER \$499,000**

**VIEW BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1835](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1835)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902



» 61 and 71 Stafford Street **SHANNON**

### Two generous sections

61 Stafford Street - 3324m2 - \$230,000  
 71 Stafford Street - 3097m2 - \$230,000  
 Discover the perfect blend of space and convenience with these two generously sized sections (\$230,000 each) , ideally located on the edge of Shannon township. With a semi-rural outlook and a welcoming community atmosphere, these properties offer an enviable lifestyle with room to breathe.

**ASKING \$230,000**

**VIEW BY APPOINTMENT ONLY**

Ref : [www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1870](http://www.wiltonandco.nz/WILO1870)

Adriana Wilton 0297766902





### 9 Railway Terrace, Ohau, Horowhenua.

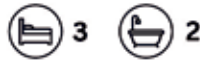


TENDER

#### Your Dream Home Awaits!

Discover the perfect blend of peacefulness and modern living with this brand new, spacious 3-bedroom property. Nestled in the serene surroundings of Ohau, this home offers the ultimate lifestyle living without the hassle of maintenance.

**Open:** Sun, 25 May 2:45 pm - 3:15 pm



To be sold by tender (closes on June 12th)  
**David Thompson**  
M 022 550 6066  
E david.t@wbg.co.nz

### 31 Muhunoa East Road, Ohau, Horowhenua.



TENDER

#### Oasis In Ohau!

Step into this impressive, brand new 3-bedroom home, where contemporary design meets the peacefulness of Ohau. This property offers the perfect lifestyle living experience, minus the high maintenance worries.

**Open:** Sun, 25 May 2:00 pm - 2:30 pm



To be sold by tender (closes on June 10th)  
**David Thompson**  
M 022 550 6066  
E david.t@wbg.co.nz

### 1 Cypress Way, Levin, Horowhenua.

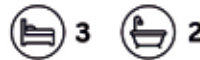


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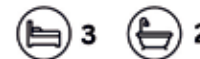


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MANAKAU 1946

Compiled by Debbi Carson

This aerial view of Manakau from 1946 is looking towards the east across the railway line.

It shows the Manakau Hotel in the centre, with what appears to be a shop, and then the post office to the north (left of the picture). A steam train, which appears to be pulling coal trucks, is in the foreground. Note the little station building next to the engine.

In 1886, Manakau became the first place to have a railway station on the newly completed Wellington-Manawatu railway line. The line is now part of the North Island main trunk line, and the station was closed long ago.

The name Manakau comes from the words mana (prestige, authority) and kau (alone, sole). The name refers to an invasion of the district by Ngāti Toa chief Te Rauparaha, who subdued the area on the strength of his prestige alone, with the local residents putting up no resistance. The streets are named after Māori members of Parliament.

Manakau has two marae affiliated with hapū of Ngāti Raukawa. Tūkorehe Marae and its meeting house are affiliated with Ngāti Tūkorehe; Wehi Wehi Marae and its meeting house are affiliated with Ngāti Wehi Wehi.

Photo: Kete Horowhenua



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JUNE

5

Heartland Services  
9 Lady’s Mile, Foxton  
Thursday 5 June 2025, 9.30am–12pm

JUNE

6

Te Puāwaitanga o Hanana  
66 Plimmer Terrace, Shannon  
Friday 6 June 2025, 9.30am–12pm

JUNE

12

Age Concern,  
526 Queen Street East, Levin  
Thursday 12 June 2025, 9.30am–12pm





# Images tell the Ō2NL story

The NZTA images on this page illustrate the key aspects of the just released changed layout for the Ō2NL expressway.

Above right is the proposed roundabout at Tararua Road, Levin, (previously intended as a full interchange). NZTA says the roundabout is a cost-effective option that will provide full connectivity, allowing traffic to enter and exit at Levin, as well as maintaining the east-west connection for locals and access to the future Tara-Ika growth area.

Others are not convinced, saying a roundabout will slow through traffic and create safety hazards.

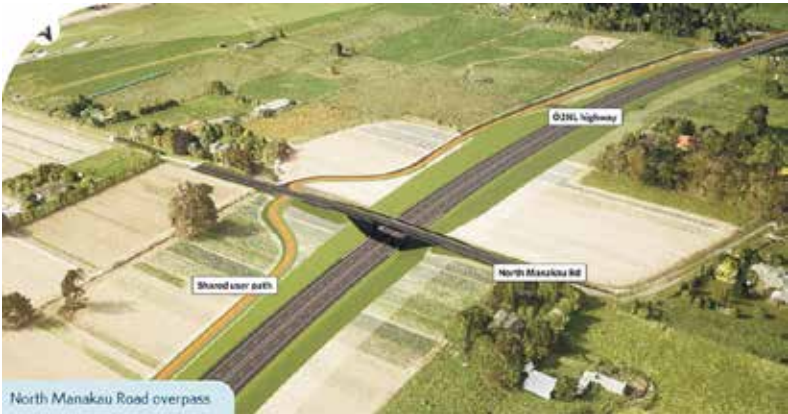
Above far right is the equally contentious Taylors Road at the other end of the Ō2NL expressway, just north of Ōtaki. It's where the current Kāpiti expressway will join up with Ō2NL.

Anyone coming from the towns south of Levin will need to use Taylors Road to go through Ōtaki and on to Ōtaki Gorge Road to connect with the current expressway south (or go north at The Ramp just north of the Ōtaki shopping area).

There is a north-bound off-ramp



The proposed roundabout on the expressway (middle right), with a Tararua Road roundabout (under construction) middle left.



North Manakau Road, showing the east-west bridge over the expressway.

from the expressway, which will be an option for residents on the north Ōtaki Plateau, and an exit for people at Manakau, Kuku etc. The current Taylors Road will connect directly to old SH1 (currently blocked).

The two bottom maps show the proposed overbridge straddling the

expressway on North Manakau Road. Next to that is the South Manakau Road underpass, which will go under the expressway.

Manakau Heights residents had believed they would have an overbridge that would connect them to Manakau village and beyond –



Taylors Road just north of Ōtaki. Residents of towns north will use the reconfigured road to go through Ōtaki and access the expressway south. There is a north-bound off-ramp.



South Manakau Road, showing the east-west bridge under the expressway. It's this road residents of Manakau Heights will have to use to get to the old State Highway 1.

that's all changed after NZTA advised the Manakau community at a meeting on Sunday that the bridge concept was gone, the victim of cost-cutting. They will now have to drive to Manakau South Road and out to what will be old State Highway 1 to get to the village.

■ For the full information from NZTA, see [nzta.govt.nz/projects/wellington-northern-corridor/o2nl-proposed-new-highway/](https://nzta.govt.nz/projects/wellington-northern-corridor/o2nl-proposed-new-highway/)



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# Affordable home maintenance and repairs

Habitat for Humanity COO Nathan Collins, talks about the work Habitat for Humanity do to help whānau fix up their homes to make them more liveable, safe and warm.



Heartland Services  
9 Ladys Mile, Foxton,  
Wednesday 3 June, 10am to 12.00pm



# Wanderers don special autism jersey

By Paul Williams

Levin Wanderers players will wear special jerseys supporting a special cause in their senior club rugby match against Foxton for the Jack Graham Memorial trophy at Levin Domain tomorrow.

A one-off jersey has been printed to raise money and awareness for children with autism, with jerseys to be auctioned.

It's a worthy cause that's close to home for some of the Wanderers players. Lock Sheen Lomax and flanker Hokio Henare both have children with autism and will be wearing the jerseys with pride for their children, LeRaen, Te Ariki and Kaewa. The jerseys have three handprints that represent their children, symbolising that just as no two handprints are the same, no two people with autism are the same.

"That's the awareness we want to bring," Sheen says.

He says it can be hard on parents and caregivers sometimes when they see their child get a "side eye" of judgement for behaviour looked on as "naughty". That's why it is so important to create awareness around autism.

Sheen, the older brother of All Black Tyrel Lomax, moved back to Levin from Australia last year with wife LeBrock and children Iylah, LeRaen, Remi-Lee and Kaewa.

LeRaen, now 11, has autism and had benefited hugely from the help he received in Australia.

"As a parent you feel rewarded when your child has their first step or their first word. But sometimes, for the child with autism, they might not say that first word until they are six-years or older," Sheen says.

"Those moments are incredible. So, when you finally find something that helps, something that works. . ."

He shed a tear seeing LeRaen perform with the kapa haka group at Levin East School, up on stage with the support of his fellow pupils. Therapy helps, and can lead to tangible improvements in the life of children with autism.

*"As a parent you feel rewarded when your child has their first step or their first word. But sometimes, for the child with autism, they might not say that first word until they are six-years or older."*

– Sheen Lomax

But since moving back to New Zealand, the whānau found there was a lot less support here. They've gone from seeing an occupational therapist three times a week to a session once a month.

Now their youngest child, Kaewa, 2, has also been diagnosed with autism, they want to try and get access to as much help and support as they can for her, too. There's an option to seek therapy privately, but sessions can cost up to \$500.

"That's the whole thing, As a protector you don't know what the future holds and how they are going to fit in. That's the hard thing, so you want to do all you can," he says.

The jerseys also feature puzzle pieces, which symbolise that "every piece of a jigsaw puzzle has its own shape and purpose.

"Every person, whether you have autism or not, has something to contribute to the world," Sheen says.

Funds raised would directly support families in the Horowhenua autism community to help cover costs relating to specialist appointments for their children, and helping with development opportunities through autism New Zealand courses.

"We want to help remove those barriers and make sure every kid has a chance to access more support."

■ To support the jersey auction see the Levin Wanderers Facebook page



Wanderers lock Sheen Lomax (second left) and flanker Hokio Henare, pictured with youngsters from left, Kaewa, LeRaen and Te Ariki, with their flash new jerseys. Wanderers play Foxton at Levin Domain tomorrow. Photo Paul Williams

## Good results for Foxton bowlers

Foxton and Beach Bowling Club is celebrating some remarkable end-of-season results.

Doug Pitcher and Chris Avery scored a decisive win in the Bowls Manawātū champion-of-champions 65- and-over pairs final, Tracey Macrae won the champion-of champions women's singles title, and the men's triple team of Ross Ellery, Doug Pitcher and Alan Richardson won another centre title beating a team from Bowls Palmerston North.

Tracey beat Takaro's Kirsty Hill in a gripping final. Kirsty had moved out to a 13-8 lead after 13 ends, then 15-10 before Tracey tied at 15-15. She went ahead 17-15, then 19-16 before Kirsty came back to 19-17. Macrae grabbed a single, 20-17, Hill responded with three singles, and it was 20-20.

Tracey won the final end to book a ticket to the nationals in Auckland in July and cap off a great season, her last year as a junior. A month earlier she had combined with Anne Smith to win the Manawātū champion-of-champions 1-8 women's pairs.

Ross, Doug and Alan had to beat a strong Bowls Palmerston North trio in the final of the champion-of- champions men's triples at North End. The win was especially pleasing for Ross as it marked his 20th centre title. He and Doug had famously combined with Rohan Teaz to win the national title in 2022.

Rowan had to withdraw from this team earlier in the season due to illness and was replaced by Alan. They also head to Auckland seeking another national title.



### Entrance tides May 23-30

<https://www.metservice.com/marine/regions/whanganui-manawatu/tides/locations/foxton>

<https://www.metservice.com/marine/regions/kapiti-wellington/tides/locations/waitarere-beach>

Please note: The actual timing of high and low tide might differ from that provided here. Times are extrapolated from the nearest primary port for this location, so please take care.

#### MANAWATU RIVER FOXTON

		HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
FRI 23 MAY	-	00:19	06:14	12:53	18:50	
SAT 24 MAY	-	01:20	07:10	13:49	19:47	
SUN 25 MAY	-	02:17	08:04	14:43	20:41	
MON 26 MAY	-	03:10	08:57	15:35	21:32	
TUE 27 MAY	-	04:02	09:49	16:26	22:22	
WED 28 MAY	-	04:53	10:42	17:16	23:12	
THU 29 MAY	-	05:44	11:34	18:06	-	
FRI 30 MAY	00:01	06:36	12:27	18:55		

#### WAITARERE BEACH

		HIGH	LOW	HIGH	LOW	HIGH
FRI 23 MAY	05:29	11:50	18:05	-	-	
SAT 24 MAY	-	00:18	06:25	12:47	19:02	
SUN 25 MAY	-	01:15	07:19	13:41	19:56	
MON 26 MAY	-	02:08	08:12	14:33	20:47	
TUE 27 MAY	-	03:00	09:04	15:24	21:37	
WED 28 MAY	-	03:51	09:57	16:14	22:27	
THU 29 MAY	-	04:42	10:49	17:04	23:16	
FRI 30 MAY	-	05:34	11:42	17:53	-	

## RESULTS & DRAWS

### RUGBY

Tomorrow's draw (May 24): Ramsbotham Cup, 2.45pm start. Shannon v Rahui at Shannon Domain. Wanderers v Foxton at Levin Domain. Waikanae v Paraparaumu at Waikanae Park. Mill Muir Cup. Athletic v Rāhui at Playford Park (12.30pm). Wanderers v Foxton at Levin Domain (1pm). Waikanae v Paraparaumu at Waikanae Park (1pm).

**Results, Saturday May 17** Ramsbotham Cup (Premier) Shannon 41, Levin COB 21. Shannon: Tries to M Halls, A Walker, I Vonomatairatu, S Burnell, J.Woodmass, S Pape. S Pape 4 conv, pen. COB: Tries to C Salu, J Angove, L Miller. C Salu 3 conv. Rāhui 24, Waikanae 12. Rāhui: Tries to R Verney, J Ashford, T Raureti, L

Tooman. P Connor-Phillips 2 conv. Waikanae: Tries to S Fotu, I Ioka. C Bond conv. Paraparaumu 31, Wandereres 21. Paraparaumu: Tries to Dale McNamara 2, C Sowerby, D Smith. T Barnsley conv, 3, pen. Wanderers: Tries to M Masoe, D McAdam, P Takuira-Picchi. A Taiapa 3 conv. Bill Muir Cup (Senior Reserve) Levin Athletic 24, Levin COB 22. Athletic: Tries to I Ulutoa, S Sagalala-Iose, A Saulala, H Kahu. A Saulala 2 conv. Levin COB: Tries to J Masoe, J Settle, S Ma'asi. J Tevita conv, pen, K Ng conv. Rāhui 45, Waikanae 24. Rāhui: Tries to M Rikihana, J Lewis, N Fleming, C Vanderwiell 2, T Marsh-Williams, R Chapman. J Lewis 5 conv. Waikanae: Tries to E Banuve, S Kuru, D Murray pen try. J Hinds conv.

Paraparaumu 45, Wanderers 29. Paraparaumu: Tries to T Van Shaik 3, C Williams 2, J Thomson, A Thomson. J Reddin 2 conv, J Thomson 3 conv. Wanderers: Tries to T Matakatea 2, W Heihei, T Wilton, W Tauhore. O Hirini 2 conv. **GOLF** **Foxton** 9 Hole May 21 Nett: Mahes Naran 37, Geoff McBrydie 37, Sylvia Young 38, Kevin Young 38, Charlie Matenga 40, Ruth Williams 41, Steve Kupa 44, Neil Thompson 44, Marilyn Hayvice 46, Serena Hunt 48. **Levin** – week ending May 18 **Monday** – Speldhurst 9 Hole Stableford: Steve Tustin 18, Stu Bryant 18, Tom Royden 17; **Tuesday** – Men Stableford: Phil

Beale 36, Sam Bartosh 36, Ray Harvey 34. **Wednesday** – 9 Hole Mixed Stableford: Ray Ferguson 22, Mike Dalley 21, Marilyn McCormick 20. **Thursday** – Early Men Irish Stableford: Paddy Blackman 78, Kevin Campbell 75, Ian King 72. Twos: Colin Finlayson, Vili Tia; Late Men Net: John Wehipeihana 73, Ray Harvey 73, Chris Allum 74. Twos: John Wehipeihana. **Friday** – 9 Hole Mixed Net: Kuresa Faleseuga 32, David Douglas 33, Marilyn McCormick 33; Speldhurst 9 Hole Stableford: Dick Hayward 19, Brian Lange 18, Steve Tustin 17. **Saturday** – Early Men Stableford: Geoff Pate 37, Brian O'Donnell 36, Tony Newling 35. Twos: Ivan Franklin; Ladies Net: Anita Davidson 75, Leanne Ward 76, Frances Allen 81; Late Men Stableford: Brian Wicker 38, Rod Batchelar 37, Pete Grieg 35.

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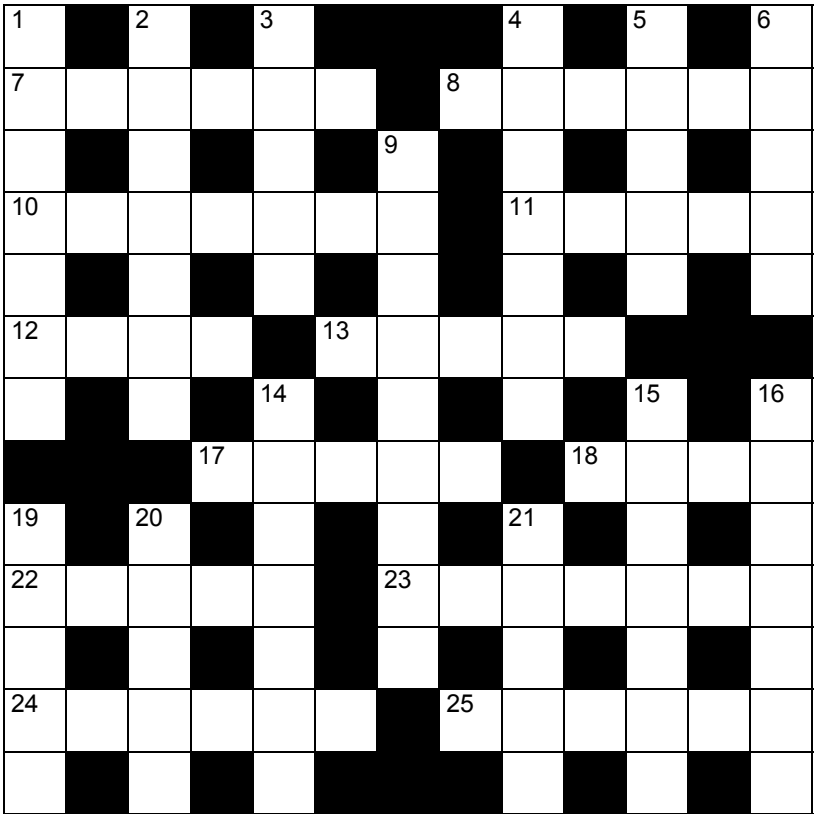
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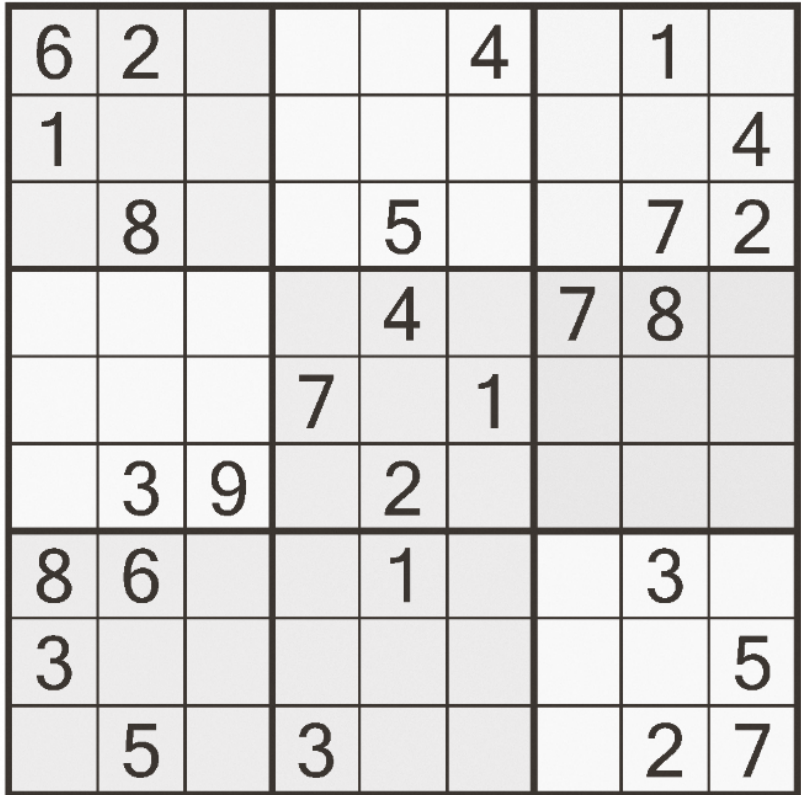
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THE CROSSWORD #NZ1920D (answers page 23)



**SUDOKU PUZZLES** [thepuzzlecompany.co.nz](http://thepuzzlecompany.co.nz)  
EASY #64E Use logic and process of elimination to fill in the blank cells using the numbers 1 through 9. Each number can appear only once in each row, column and 3x3 block. Puzzle solution page 23...



**OLD TV TRIVIA QUIZ ANSWERS:** 1. Peter Read. 2. Barry Dorking, Jacqui Hay Rawiri Paratene, Winsome Dacker, Eilish Wahren, Kerry McCammon, Russell Smith or Theresa Healey. 3. Close To Home. 4. Roger Gascoigne. 5. On The Mat. 6. It's in the Bag. 7. March 1966, making it New Zealand's longest-running television series. 8. 58 years, since March 1966. 9. 1960. 10. Gliding On (1981-1985).

- ACROSS**

7. Song written for important events (Māori) (6)

8. Collect (6)

10. Wool product (7)

11. Great Barrier Island (5)

12. Compass direction (4)

13. Farmer (inf) (5)

17. House (5)

18. Blue duck (Māori) (4)

22. Influence (5)

23. Inhabitant of Westland (7)

24. Yearly (6)

25. Expose falseness (6)

**DOWN**

1. Be uncomfortably hot (7)

2. Bystander (7)

3. Mururoa \_\_\_, where PM Norman Kirk dispatched
- an “honourable” mission to witness France’s nuclear tests in 1973 (5)

4. In mythology, home to Māori before they sailed to New Zealand (7)

5. Whakaari/\_\_\_ Island (5)

6. Northland bay named after a fish by Captain Cook (5)

9. Wrong (9)

14. One of NZ’s best known hotels, The \_\_\_, which closed in February 2023 (7)

15. Double-barrelled smoothbore firearm (7)

16. Beach famous for its boulders (7)

19. Small piece of material (5)

20. Tied up (5)

21. Speleologist (5)

**OLD TV TRIVIA QUIZ**

Think you know a bit about Kiwi music? Answers below.

1. Nightly magazine-style show *Town and Around* played on New Zealand screens during the second half of the 60s. Who hosted it?

2. *Play School* (1972-1990) was an iconic educational show for pre-school children. Name one presenter.

3. What was the pioneering soap opera that first screened in May 1975?

4. In the early 80s *Ready to Roll* was NZ’s premier TV pop show. Who was the first host?

5. Professional wrestling first appeared on New Zealand television as *Big Time Wrestling* in 1973. It lasted less than a year. What was the name of the wrestling show on TV2 that came after this?

6. Name the travelling television quiz show fronted by Selwyn Toogood.

7. How long has *Country Calendar* been running?

8. When was television first introduced in New Zealand as a state-run service?

9. In an age before Rogernomics, and well before *The Office*, there was the afternoon tea fund, Golden Kiwi, and four o’clock closing: welcome to the early 80s world of the New Zealand public service. What was the first locally made sitcom to become a bona-fide classic?

10. 1960s pop show *C’Mon* hosted by Peter Sinclair had regular guest singers. Name two of them.

**FACEBOOK**

51. **Oxter** – armpit

52. **Pandiculation** – stretching oneself and yawning

53. **Panjandrum** – a person who has or claims to have great authority

54. **Persnickety** – overly particular about minor details

55. **Petrichor** – the pleasant

**ENGLISH GRAMMAR’S 100 WORDS YOU DIDN’T KNOW YOU NEEDED**

56. **Piffle** – trivial nonsense

57. **Pogonotrophy** – the act of cultivating a beard

58. **Poppycrack** – nonsense or foolish talk

59. **Quire** – two dozen sheets of paper

60. **Rigmarole** – complicated procedure or nonsense

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2	1	6	5	4	9	7	8	3
5	4	8	7	3	1	2	9	6
7	3	9	6	2	8	5	4	1
8	6	7	2	1	5	4	3	9
3	9	2	4	8	7	1	6	5
4	5	1	3	9	6	8	2	7

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11. Aotea 12. East 13. Cocky 17. Whare  
18. Whio 22. Clout 23. Coaster 24. Annual  
25. Debunk. **DOWN:** 1. Swelter 2. Witness  
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