

Coastguard visit for sleepy toys



• Anne Coppell (third from right) cuddling Kahurangi and Tabitha, with (from left): Shane holding Scotty, Joe with Eeyore, Lucy holding Gnaomi, Nana Kate with Pink Rabbit and Lego Man, Rachel holding Cinnamon, Iain with RNLI Bear. The rest of the toys are lined up along the deck of the Coastguard's Winstone Rescue craft.

- Photo: Richard Joseph

A visit to Coastguard Kaipara's new marine rescue centre at Parakai was a highlight of Helensville Library's annual Soft Toy Sleepover, held in July.

The library was celebrating 10 years of sleepovers and this year's was "the best ever" says Anne Coppell, Senior Librarian - Children & Youth.

A record tally of 47 soft toys took part (a few courtesy of the adults), visiting the Coastguard and sharing pizza with library staff before spending the night in the library.

"Thank you so much to our community, who braved the weather to drop off their toys - because they didn't want the library staff to be disappointed!" says Anne.

"The toys (and humans) were made very welcome by the Coastguard crew."

Anne says the toys enjoyed the opportunity to

explore various vessels - "and they didn't get in too much trouble."

"The non-swimming toys were wearing carefully fitted buoyancy aids, but the weather wasn't great, so we didn't need to test them out."

After their big adventure, the toys returned to the library for dinner, a dance party, story reading, and various other activities before going to sleep.

"Thank you to all who volunteered their time to make this the best ever soft toy sleepover: the crew at Coastguard Kaipara, our photographer Richard, Nana Kate, and the Helensville library staff - particularly Lucy and Rachel who stayed the night with me and the toys," adds Anne.

Numerous photos of the toys' antics are available on the library's Facebook page.

RSA to commemorate 80th VJ Day anniversary

The Kaipara Memorial RSA will commemorate the 80th anniversary of Victory over Japan (VJ Day) at the Helensville War Memorial Hall cenotaph at 5.30pm on Saturday, August 16.

The ceremony will start with an opening speech, laying a wreath, and reading the names of all the local men who paid the ultimate sacrifice, followed by the Last Post, The Ode of Remembrance, the Reveille, and the Lament.

Former service personnel and members of the public, especially those who had relatives serving in World War Two, are encouraged to attend. Medals should be worn, and if wearing a relative's medals they should be worn on the right side.

This year's commemoration is likely to be the last significant anniversary for anyone who served in the Armed Forces during World War Two.

Off the coast of Japan, HMNZS Gambia was credited with firing the last barrage at mainland Japan on August 9, 1945. It was also credited with shooting down a Japanese warplane on the same day. On board Gambia that day was Able Seaman Peter Dormer (Service Number NZ8682) from Kaukapakapa.

HMNZS Gambia went on to represent New Zealand during the formal signing of the surrender documents in Tokyo Bay.

The KM RSA has the citation commemorating that event in its museum. Donated by the Dormer family on behalf of the late Peter Dormer, it is signed by Commander C.M Jacob of the Royal Navy.

VJ Day was a time of great celebration in America, Australia, and New Zealand. In Helensville a street parade took place down Commercial Road.

The KM RSA has a short video taken at the parade by some American servicemen stationed here at the time. It is in colour and was edited by the late Allan Scott. The video will be shown after the VJ Day commemoration and locals may recognise some of their relatives in it. The KM RSA also has a photo album of the street parade, thanks to Te Awaroa Museum.



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editorial

It has been a month of cancellations for proposed major projects - namely the huge solar farm planned for the south entrance to Helensville, and Auckland Council's proposed new cemetery just north of Waimauku (both articles page 7).

Both projects had their fair share of detractors, though there is no doubt the solar farm caused the most vitriol amongst locals; for every supporter, there must have been a dozen people vehemently against it. There's no question New Zealand needs more electricity generating capacity, but a solar farm right on the doorstep of a middling-sized town did seem like a very odd option.

It's easy for detractors of projects like these to be seen as Nimbys (Not in My Backyard), and I guess in plenty of instances that is the case. However with both these projects, objectors did raise some pretty valid points - and in the end those helped lead to the results they desired.

Interestingly, for both projects a major area of concern was a perceived lack of consultation. That was very much the case regarding the cemetery project, with local iwi calling out Auckland Council for that - something the Council has since acknowledged it handled badly.

In happier news, isn't it fabulous what the team at Helensville Library get up to (front page). I'm pretty sure the annual soft toy sleepover isn't part of Anne Coppell's job description, but holding extra-curricular activities like this just goes to show the love she and her co-workers put into their jobs, and how much they want to engage with the community and, in particular, encourage children to use the library and hopefully become life-long readers.

How many workers do you know who would willingly give up their time - not to mention spend a night sleeping on their hard 'office' floor - for the love of what they do? Helensville Library is a pretty much universally loved local amenity, and Anne and the rest of the team there are to be lauded for the extra efforts they put in.

- Dave Addison, Editor
dave@helensvillenews.co.nz

Plan to create Rodney youth directory

The year-long pilot of the Rodney Youth Project has just come to an end.

A Rodney Local Board initiative, the project aimed to increase youth development activities across the district.

Over the past 12 months the pilot provided free youth activities to more than 1200 young people. They included the creation of nine new weekly classes, funding of five upskilling workshops, and support of five events including the first Rodney Youth Festival held in Wellsford over summer.

In Helensville, free weekly youth fitness classes were provided by Ben Sims, a local professional personal trainer and youth mentor from Collab Training, as well as two terms of the music mentoring programme Magnus Octopus, which also ran two very popular and well received free weekend music workshops.

To wrap up the year, a Rodney-wide survey was held online to gain insights from young people about what they do in their spare time and what they think is missing in their part of Rodney. It followed an initial survey taken at the start of the Rodney Youth Project pilot in 2024.

Responses varied across different parts of Rodney, however the majority concluded there is still a lack of things for young people to do in their area and that most of the activities which are available require travel elsewhere and finances. A lack of transport and

disposable income were the two biggest barriers to extra-curricular activities for respondents.

On the plus side, the majority were positive about their future and 58 percent felt they were part of their community. When asked what the Rodney Youth Project could help provide, an overwhelming majority supported the idea of more free youth activities, and more youth-friendly spaces such as public pools, skateparks, and youth centres.

The survey highlighted that there are many active programmes and clubs already available, but that young people need help to access them. There were also many comments about needing more practical support with employment and tertiary study.

The Rodney Youth Project is now focusing on updating its website - www.rodneyyouth.co.nz - to become the go-to resource for what's available for young people in Rodney.

The project team is developing an online youth community directory so young people and families can easily find clubs, classes, and events, as well as important information on youth services available near them.

Rodney Youth Project would now like to hear from anyone who is part of a youth-oriented club or a team, or who knows of a useful service that helps teens. They can fill out a form at: www.rodneyyouth.co.nz, or email: info@rodneyyouth.co.nz.



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Jana Mills



54 years of volunteer fire service

After spending most of his lifetime as a volunteer fireman you would think Ian Osborne would miss it since his retirement - but that's no longer the case.

"I think I've got over it, not going to fire calls," he says.

While he only officially retired from the Fire Service in January, he stepped down from active service two years ago. In all he spent 49 years of service with the Helensville Volunteer Fire Brigade, and a further five years at Wellsford Fire Brigade before that.

Ian initially kept a radio going so he could keep track of the calls coming in to the Helensville station, but now, he says he no longer bothers to turn it on.

Ian was formally farewelled from the Helensville Brigade at its midwinter Christmas dinner in July, complete with an honour guard.

Originally from Warkworth, Ian began his apprenticeship as an electrician at the age of 18, working for his next door neighbour's electrical shop in Wellsford. There, one of the managers was in the local fire brigade and asked Ian to go along - the end result being 54 years of volunteer fire service.

"I became fully involved, and made some great friends," say Ian.

The Wellsford and Warkworth brigades held friendly competitions between them, and that led to Ian and other firefighters from the area travelling around the South Island, competing with brigades down there.

Ian became manager at the Wellsford business, and when the business owner asked him if he would like to move to Helensville and take over the branch of Collins Radio here he and wife Sherryl did just that, Ian joining the Helensville Volunteer Fire Brigade straight away in 1976 as a Senior Firefighter.

Election feature

Next issue we will bring you a special local body election feature, with messages from the candidates standing for the new South Kaipara Subdivision of Rodney Local Board, and for Rodney Ward councillor, in the 2025 Auckland Council election.

Our feature will aim to give readers a bit of background on the candidates to make it easier for them to decide who to vote for.

The election date is officially Saturday, October 11, but as it is a postal vote, voting will start on Tuesday, September 9.

Candidates who would like to take part in the feature should email: dave@helensvilleneews.co.nz.

He progressed through the ranks to become deputy chief under Laurence Stokes, then took on that role himself in 2008, heading up the local fire station for 14 years before stepping down in 2022 and seeing out his final year at the brigade as an operational station officer.

During his 49 years here Ian attended at least 2300



• Ian and Sherryl Osborne at Ian's farewell

musters - a callout attendance rate of almost 95 percent.

"I've seen some pretty gruesome things and some pretty humorous ones," he says. After attending his first fatal accident while still at Wellsford he says he didn't sleep for a week, but over the years became immune to that sort of thing.

"It's just what it is," he says, adding that nowadays the volunteers have debriefing sessions after attending serious accidents and fatalities to help them process the situation.

During his time at the Helensville Station Ian has seen the station building expanded and modernised.

His long tenure has seen Ian develop many friendships, and in particular camaraderie with the other brigades in our area.

"They are almost as much a part of life as our own brigade," he says, explaining how Helensville fire fighters supported the establishment of other brigades such as Kaukapakapa and Shelly Beach.

As well as working at Collins Radio and later, after the business had been sold and became Mike Ross Electrical, as a self-employed repair man, and spending huge amounts of time with the fire brigade, Ian still found time to spend three years as the Deputy Mayor of Helensville under Mayor Eric Glavish. It was a role he held for three years until the town council "voted itself out of existence" and amalgamated with the rest of Rodney in 1989.

He also spent a term on the Kaipara College Board of Trustees under then-principal Brian Griffith.

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Mural depicts town's history

By the time you read this, Helensville's huge, colourful new mural should be finished.

The 80sq.m. mural, a gift to the town from former long-time locals Greville and Maureen Walker, depicts important elements of Helensville's history over the period from the 1880s to the 1920s.

The painting on the north wall of the Progressive Building in Commercial Road was due to be finished by late July after around five weeks' of work - apart from some weather-enforced breaks.

While the idea, and funding, for the mural came from Greville, the project itself has involved many participants. After an initial concept was put together using a composite of photographs, local artist Mike Rowland produced preliminary sketch designs. Painter Stephen Templer then further refined those designs.

"I took elements of the original design [and] added more characters, more diversity, more activity," he says. The whole right-hand side of the painting was designed by Stephen.

Greville says Te Awaroa Museum staff were heavily involved in the evolution of the design, as were local Māori. He says he hopes locals seeing the town's history depicted like this will "engender in them a confidence in the town."

Stephen, from Kumeū, hopes the mural will be an energetic and positive image of the town which evokes positive feelings.

"A lot of historical murals are a bit flat. I wanted to show dynamic movement and energy," he says.

Stephen has received lots of comments from passersby while at work on the mural - quite a few of them concerned about what they thought was graffiti, but which in fact was the initial blocking in of mural elements to make sure everything was in proportion.

A large sign beside the mural is being produced by local firm Signvillenz and will explain the history behind the mural. The time period depicted in the mural was chosen by Greville as he believes the arrival of both rail and steam ships heralded Helensville major period of development.

The 14m-wide mural shows a steam train, a

steamer boat and a waka on the Kaipara Harbour, local heritage buildings, the timber milling industry, and many locals taking part in various activities. Painted in acrylic, it will have an anti-graffiti coating applied to keep it looking pristine.

Grev (80) and Maureen (78) Walker lived in Helensville for 38 years, moving to Helensville and purchasing the Progressive Building in 1987. They restored the block of shops, while also developing a large clothing and variety store across the road in what is now the WINZ office. That shop was named Screatons, after the town's original 1912 department store.

A few months after arriving in Helensville Grev was elected as chair of the Helensville Business Association. He was a founding trustee of the Helensville District Health Trust and the Birthing Centre, and a member of the Kaipara College Board of Trustees.

He was among the team that initiated the



• Grev and Maureen Walker with artist Stephen Templer

Helensville Riverside Walk, and also spent 10 years trying to bring a supermarket to Helensville - culminating in the arrival of Woolworths, whose carpark the new mural looks over.

Grev became a Rodney District councillor, a role he held until the council was amalgamated with Auckland City in 2010. For the past 20 years he has also been a Justice of the Peace, a role he still actively enjoys.

He and Maureen have supported the local parish and All Saints cemetery at Kaukapakapa. They now live in a Hobsonville Point retirement village, but still call into Helensville regularly.

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Queen of the Kaipara's family share stories

Family members of the late Flora Thirkettle, widely known as the 'Queen of the Kaipara', visited Te Awaroa Museum in July to let museum volunteers document their stories of their mother.

Flora was a pioneering fisherwoman who had to fight for acceptance with doggedness and hard work.

Tragically widowed, Flora was left with a young family of seven and no home or income.

"I had two choices: either go fishing or farming, both of which I knew a little about. I couldn't afford to buy land, so fishing was the option I chose," Flora is recorded as saying.

"I found this house for sale right on the creek [Kaipara River] off the harbour. It came complete with 'Olive' the launch, the dory, a pair of oars, and two nets. I thought if I can get good enough at fishing, I'll be able to keep up with mortgage repayments, which I did."

As the times dictated, Flora always wore a dress - even while fishing.

Flora went on to raise her family, eventually earning the trust and respect of local fishermen. She became the first woman nominated for membership of the Kaipara Cruising Club - causing two men to resign.

In 1963, she earned the distinction of being the only female seagoing member of the Coastguard in the world. It was a role not unfamiliar to Flora; running her 26-foot launch 'Olive' on the treacherous Kaipara Harbour, she answered many calls for assistance.

"Nowadays I don't think any



• Flora's sons John and Reg, her brother Ted, and daughters Cherry and Iris (seated), with Flora's dory

notice would be taken of it. There's lots of woman skippers and deck hands around now."

Many people were involved in preparing for the Thirkettle family's visit to the museum, and special thanks go to Andy Cummings from the Original Kaipara Tavern, and the team from the Helensville Network Group, for helping move Flora's fishing dory from its previous spot in the barn into the museum's 'Kaipara Room', where it will remain.

"It was a mission to get it in there," says the museum's vice-president, Megan Williams. "Not helped by having to move a massive anchor out of the way first."

Thanks also go to Zach Stark from Wylde Creative and Helen Martin for their help.

Flora's fishing boat Olive is still floating on the Kaipara River at the end of Flora's section, and her son Reg has recently got it running again.

Council and Library notes

Ratepayers should receive their first Auckland Council rates invoice for the 2025/2026 rating year in early August, with the first instalment due on Friday, August 29.

Locals can find out on the Auckland Council website if they are eligible for a property rates rebate, or ask at the service centre desk in Helensville. The threshold has changed for SuperGold cardholders.

Helensville Library's regular programmes are: Kids Time: for under 6s and their grown-ups,

Wednesdays, 10am to 10.30am; Minecraft Club: Wednesdays, 3.30pm to 4.30pm; Crafternoon for adults: Thursdays, 3pm to 4.30pm; Crafternoon for kids: Thursdays, 3.30pm to 4.30pm.

The next Book Chat will be held on Thursday, August 28 from 10am to 11am. Take a book you've recently read and loved - or disliked - to share with fellow readers.

The Helensville Library and Service Centre is open 9am to 5pm Monday to Friday, and 9am to 1pm on Saturday.

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New generator, decor for Business / Emergency Hub

The Helensville Business Hub in Mill Road - which double's as the South Kaipara's emergency hub - has received two grants to enable it to purchase a heavy-duty generator for use in emergency situations.

The Harcourts Foundation has provided a grant of \$5000 toward the cost of the generator, with the balance of the \$15,000 total coming from Auckland Council climate response funding.

The generator has already been purchased, and North West Country (NWC) business association manager Danielle Hancock says she is now just waiting on a secure, ventilated housing before it can be installed.

The new generator is "a crucial step in helping local businesses remain operational during times of crisis," says Nicky Horsbrough, director of Harcourts Helensville and a board member of NWC.

"This project isn't just about powering a building - it's about strengthening our entire community. If our local businesses can keep running in an emergency - if they can continue to pay staff, serve customers, and maintain momentum - then we help protect jobs, income, and stability for local families."

"Harcourts Helensville is proud to support the association through the Harcourts Foundation," adds Nicky, explaining that the foundation is funded by contributions from every property sale made by the Harcourts Helensville sales team, as well as from local fundraising efforts such as raffles, sausage sizzles, and markets.

"All funds raised by our office go directly into the Harcourts Foundation and are used to support causes that directly benefit the people and places we live and work in."



• Helensville District Health Trust general manager James Scott with business association manager Danielle Hancock in the revamped meeting room

The emergency hub will provide vital support and coordination for the northwest business community in the event of natural disasters, extended power outages, or major disruptions - ensuring local operators have the tools and resources needed to keep their doors open.

The hub is already stocked with a range of

literature to help businesses plan and prepare for an emergency which may affect their ability to keep running, and NWC has completed an Emergency Plan covering how it will open the Business Hub to local businesses affected by an emergency.

Meanwhile, as reported in last month's *Helensville News*, the Business Hub has undergone a facelift.

The conference room features luxurious leather armchairs and special acoustic sound deadening on the walls. The number of hot desks available for local business people to use has been doubled from four to eight and the furniture updated.

Clothing Swap on again

The annual Kumeū Women's Clothing Swap returns on Saturday, August 10.

Now in its ninth year, the event aims to boost the sustainability of women's clothing by letting people swap unwanted items for new used clothes.

Every dollar raised through the swap will go to local charity Parent Aid North West. Over the years the event has supported Women's Refuge, Dress for Success, the Sophie Elliott Foundation, the Mental Health Foundation, and since 2020 Parent Aid North West. Last year the swap raised more than \$22,500, funding more than 700 hours of home-based support services for local families - meaning Parent Aid North West was able to be there when it mattered most.

The swap works on a simple basis. Women pay a \$30 donation and can drop off up to 30 items of lightly used women's clothing, shoes, and accessories in the days leading up to the event. On the day of the swap, they can then choose an equal number of items to replace the ones dropped off - and if they want more, they can be bought for just \$5 per item.

Clothing drop-off days are: Wednesday, August 7 from 11am to 7pm; Thursday, August 8 from 9am to 5pm, and Friday, August 9 from 8am to 3pm.

The Clothing Swap event day is Saturday, August 10th, from 10am to 4pm at the Kumeū Showgrounds. From midday the general public are welcome to buy any remaining clothing for \$5 per item.

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Cemetery proposal dead

Auckland Council has abandoned its plan for a massive new cemetery on State Highway 16 just north of Waimauku.

"After careful consideration, we have concluded there is no viable path forward for this site that meets the needs and expectations of all parties. As a result, we have suspended the process," says Taryn Crewe, the Council's General Manager of Parks and Community Facilities.

The Council had lodged a notice of intent to acquire the 172ha of land under the Public Works Act after earlier negotiations to purchase the land had gone nowhere. The land's owner then lodged an objection to the compulsory purchase with the Environment Court.

"Auckland Council is no longer progressing the acquisition of land at 1080 State Highway 16," says Taryn.

The proposed cemetery also drew the ire of members of the WhitiTe Rā Reweti Marae, who were concerned at the lack of consultation about the project as well as the potential impact on the land, which once belonged to Te Taoū hapū.

"We acknowledge that this proposal raised important concerns for mana whenua," says Taryn. "Their role as kaitiaki in matters relating to tūpāpaku, whenua, and whakapapa is deeply significant. We recognise that our early engagement in this case did not meet the standard we aspire to."

Describing the Council's decision as "a victory for community voice and whenua guardianship", local hapū Te Taoū and landowners have welcomed the Council's formal withdrawal of its intended land acquisition.

"The reversal marks an overdue but important acknowledgment of public concern around the scale, process, and cultural sensitivity of the proposal," says David Mercer, chair of the Whiti Te Rā o Reweti Marae Trust Board.

"Tangata whenua groups, environmental advocates, and wider community representatives who opposed the compulsory taking of land are commending the Council's decision as a necessary step toward restorative partnership and respectful planning."

However, approval of the decision is tempered by concern over what they see as the Council's "cynical attempt" to block transparency.

"This win belongs to the people," says David. "But it raises a bigger question: why is Auckland Council shielding its process from scrutiny? If this decision was sound, it should withstand sunlight."

Taryn says: "We are committed to learning from this experience and continuing to build on our relationship with mana whenua. These lessons will guide our approach to any future work of this nature."

While future cemetery provision for the growing region is a priority for Auckland Council, she says there are no other plans which can yet be shared.

Lights go out for solar farm

Controversial plans to build a \$60 million solar farm on 100ha of farmland just south of Helensville have been abandoned.

Helensville News first broke the story in February 2022, with the proposal drawing the ire of many locals - especially those whose property outlooks and potential values would be affected by the farm. A vocal Facebook group was set up to fight the project.

The proposal was developed by HES Aotearoa Ltd, a joint venture company established by three British solar power firms led by Hive Ethical Project Developments and was one of 11 sites they were looking to develop in New Zealand. HES lodged an application for resource consent in late January 2022, but appeared to have trouble meeting all of Auckland Council's requests for information. That consent application has now been withdrawn.

Helensville News tried to contact HES but their phone number appears to be disconnected, and we received no response to an emailed request for further information.

Free diabetes course

The latest in a series of free one-day courses for people with Type 2 diabetes will be held in Helensville on Saturday, August 16.

It will be held in the church lounge at St Matthews Church in Garfield Road from 9am to 3pm.

Diabetes Self-Management Education (DSME) helps people better understand diabetes, its causes, and how to maintain and improve health.

The course is run in small groups so participants can get the most from it and ask questions in a safe environment.

Presented by a diabetes nurse educator, with support from a nutritionist and a health coach, the course will cover:

- Healthy eating, including label reading, good and bad fats, and food choices;
- How to stop and/or control the effects of diabetes on the body, including heart, eyes, kidneys, nerves, and feet;
- What blood tests mean;
- Goal setting, including action planning, free support, and where to now;
- How to be the best with your health team.

Morning tea will be provided but participants are asked to bring their own lunch. Any food allergies should be advised when making a booking. Participants are welcome to bring a family member or friend to support them.

Registration is essential. For more information, contact Margot McDonald, phone 09 448 0019, phone or text 021 818 568, or email her at: dsme@comprehensivecare.co.nz.



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Dog attacks sheep at Makarau

Mary Pikett's fox terrier alerted her to something being amiss on a recent Sunday night at her Makarau property.

"He woke me up and I immediately knew the sheep were in trouble," she says. "I could hear a much bigger dog barking, and the sheep clearly in distress."

Mary rushed out into the pitch dark paddock and yelled.

"I caught a glimpse of a big dog disappearing, but the mess it left was horrific. It took me nearly two hours to account for all my seven sheep. Two clearly badly injured, one less so, one in the pond wet but otherwise unharmed - the rest scattered, traumatised, but largely intact."

The next day Mary called her mother, Christine Pikett, who has lived and farmed in the valley for most of her life. When vets from Dairy Flat arrived they

acted swiftly and decisively. One lamb with a broken leg and big slashes around its throat was put down. They were initially optimistic for the other badly injured lamb, but closer inspection revealed broken ribs and a fatal puncture to the lung.

Both vets had considerable experience dealing with mauled sheep but were positive about the chances of catching the culprit.

"The police can only help if the dog is identified - and that can usually only happen when the animal is in a trap."

Mary has lost two of her small flock of 'mowers' - some reared by hand and/or rescued. Meanwhile there is a sheep-mauling dog loose and likely to kill. As the vets pointed out: "if they do it once, they'll do it again." Mary has requested a trap from the SPCA.

- Crispin Caldicott

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med centre notes

The Need for Vitamin D

With a mixture of sadness and excitement, we have said goodbye - for a while - to Dr Halima, who is now on maternity leave. We wish her all the best in these new, exciting times. Halima's leaving, paired with the heavy rain we have been experiencing this winter, feels like the sun has well and truly left us. This made me think of the recent recommended changes for vitamin D supplementation.

As many of you know, the human body uses sunlight to make vitamin D. Only minimally sourced through food, vitamin D is essential for healthy body processes, including bone health. The change in recommendation calls for increased use of vitamin D supplementation during pregnancy, for those with naturally dark skin, and those who spend limited time outdoors or who have minimal sun exposure.

There is also some developing evidence (although recommendations have not yet been included for this group) that all pregnant women may benefit from vitamin D supplementation. Particularly in the third trimester, some evidence shows a reduction in gestational diabetes and pre-eclampsia. Good maternal levels of vitamin D during pregnancy provides newborn infants with good stores at birth. Mothers who take supplements during pregnancy should normally continue while breastfeeding.

Once the infant is born, we now recommend daily vitamin D supplementation for all infants who are breastfed or have less than 500ml of formula a day. This is because vitamin D does not travel through breast milk, while formula is already supplemented with vitamin D. Extra supplementation is especially required for those who are born weighing less than 2.5kg, have naturally dark skin, where the mother has a known vitamin D deficiency or was at high risk, or has had a sibling diagnosed with a vitamin D deficiency associated disorder. Supplementation is generally in liquid form, with 400-800 IU (1-2 drops) for mothers and 400 IU (1 drop) for the infants.

For the rest of us, we will generally get enough sun exposure in our daily lives, but the length of time needed will vary depending on the time of year and location in New Zealand. At the height of summer, only six to eight minutes of sun exposure may be sufficient to produce 1000 IU of vitamin D. While during the winter or on an overcast day, it is recommended that a greater length of time is spent outdoors, such as 30 to 50 minutes.

Blood testing of vitamin D is generally unnecessary as the test is both expensive and sometimes inaccurate, whereas taking vitamin D supplements is cheaper and safe. Therefore, we usually recommend vitamin D supplements when concern of low levels is raised.

In the meantime, while we wait for some more sun we again wish Halima all the best with her new family member and encourage any patients who normally book with her to see one of our other providers - myself, Dr Kathryn Elcock or Nurse Practitioners Beth Poi and Sacha Cowell as needed.

- Dr Tomos Longworth, GP

Dresses for girls without

A small local sewing group is sewing dresses for the charity Dress a Girl Around the World, which wants every girl to be able to own at least one new dress. Dresses from New Zealand go to girls in the Pacific Islands.

The group formed early last year under the tutelage of film industry costume sewer Chrissy Mawhinney, but only started making dresses for the charity a few weeks ago. They have already made six dresses and have a couple more under way. They meet at the hub next to Ginger Crunch Café on Fridays.

"We have so much fun and Chrissy is fantastic," says member Bronwen Stade.

Before starting sewing for Dress a Girl, members have sewn clothes for themselves, curtains, covered outdoor chairs, belly dancing costumes for a child, and coats for rescue dogs.

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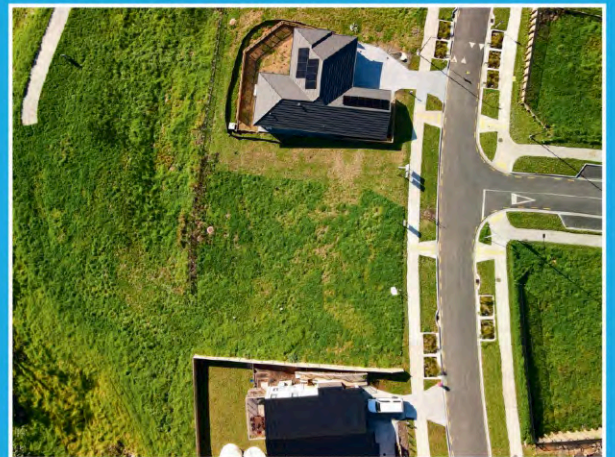
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Art Centre updates

Helensville Art Centre's August exhibition is a show celebrating 'Text' in all its forms.

Local artists will be displaying work with imagery and word, and the exhibition is being held in conjunction with 'We Read Auckland'. The Art Centre has partnered with Helensville Library to make it a special event.

There's a special opening evening on Friday, August 8 from 5pm to 7pm where the Art Centre will be transformed into a 'speakeasy' joint with open mic poetry and book reading. The exhibition runs until Saturday, August 23.



There is still time for artists to register to take part in Helensville's annual Arts in the Ville event - now in its tenth year - to be held over the three days of Labour Weekend in late October.

Last year's newly introduced youth art competition will return, expanded this year to cover two age brackets - five to 12 years, and 13 to 18 years - and with \$375 in prize money up for grabs. More information and entry forms are available at: artsintheville.co.nz or artcentrehelensville.org.nz.

Art Kaipara's September members' exhibition is titled 'Cups'. Artist wanting to enter the show can find forms and details under 'Exhibitions to Enter' at: artcentrehelensville.org.nz.

A new Raranga Flax Weaving class with Katriona Main runs for four weeks every Friday from 11am to 1pm. The cost is \$40 for four weeks or \$75 for eight weeks. Email: manager@artcentrehelensville.org.nz to book.

The 'Street Maori' te reo group runs every Tuesday during school term from 6pm to 7:30pm. It's aimed at beginners who want to give te reo a go in a safe and friendly environment, and more advanced speakers who would like to meet with like minded people and enjoy using their te reo with others. Koha donation.

Mike Rowland's six-week 'Painting and Drawing' course is still very popular. To book into the next course email: manager@artcentrehelensville.org.nz. Details are on the Art Centre website and Facebook page.

the business

Business Awards Launched

North West Country Business Association is proud to announce the launch of the 2025 North West Business Awards, a celebration of the outstanding businesses, passionate entrepreneurs, and vibrant communities that make our region thrive.

We're calling on locals to nominate their favourite businesses - those that go the extra mile, deliver exceptional service, and make the North West a better place to live, work, and explore. Whether it's your go-to café, a trusted tradie, or a boutique that always delights, now's the time to give them the recognition they deserve.

Business owners are also encouraged to enter the awards and showcase their achievements, innovation, and commitment to excellence. This is your chance to stand out, connect with the community, and be celebrated for the hard work you put in every day.

This year, we have three special awards that honour exceptional contributions:

- People's Choice Award - voted by the public, this award celebrates the most loved local business.
- Customer Service Award - recognising businesses that consistently deliver outstanding service.
- High Performance Award - celebrating businesses that demonstrate excellence in leadership, planning, and understanding their business.

Nominations and entries are now open and close on Monday, September 1. Visit www.northwestcountry.co.nz to submit your nomination or enter your business.

Spotlight on Destination Tourism

As we celebrate business excellence, we're also turning our focus to destination tourism - showcasing the North West as a must-visit region. From thrilling adventure locations and top-notch eateries to pristine beaches and harbours and unique regional events, the North West offers unforgettable experiences for locals and visitors alike.

We're proud to be working with Tātaki Auckland Unlimited to develop a Destination Management Plan that will put the North West firmly on the map. Together, we're building a future where our region is recognised not just for its business brilliance, but also for its natural beauty, cultural richness, and tourism potential.



- Danielle Hancock
Manager, North West Country Business Assn
manager@northwestcountry.co.nz

New Show president

Sophie Holst was voted in as the new president of the Helensville A&P Association at it's recent annual meeting. She takes over from Dave van Dam who led the Helensville Show team for four years. Dave remains on the committee where his previous experience as both president and show manager will be invaluable.

Sophie brings to the role broad knowledge of the agricultural sector from her years working for PGG Wrightson, plus experience on the board of the Royal Agricultural Society, the parent organisation of all A&P Shows. She has attended and helped at A&P Shows all over the country during her time as both an RAS Rural Ambassador and RAS Board Executive Member. Sophie is one of three members of the Holst family currently holding positions at the Helensville Show - her grandfather Trevor is the current Show Patron, and her mother Anne is a committee member and chief livestock steward. Her father Andy is also a valued member of the grounds team and announcer on Show day.

John Hildreth also joined the executive committee as a new member at the AGM, while Laura Glasson stepped down after serving for 15 years; she will still be part of the team at Show time.

Planning is well underway for next year's 122nd Helensville Show on Saturday, February 28.

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Health Trust Welcomes Three New Trustees

The Helensville District Health Trust is pleased to welcome three new Trustees to the board: Cath Mayo, Guy Wishart, and Kylie Ormrod.

Cath Mayo is a chartered accountant who brings strong financial expertise and a thoughtful, community-minded approach. Although relatively new to Helensville, she has lived in the wider area for several years, previously residing in Kumeū.



James Scott

Guy Wishart is a well-known local musician and a dedicated supporter of numerous community organisations, offering a valuable creative and grassroots perspective.

Kylie Ormrod joins the board as the newly appointed Health New Zealand representative, providing a vital connection to the national health system.

They join a committed and experienced group of existing Trustees, further bolstering an already strong and diverse skill set around the table. Together, the board is well-placed to guide the Trust's ongoing work in facilitating high-quality health and well-being services for our community.

For more information, please contact:

James Scott, General Manager, Helensville District Health Trust
manager@hdht.org.nz

RSA hits membership milestone

The Kaipara Memorial RSA reached a milestone of 500 members in July. KMRSA President Rex Keane says that following the 22 month closure for seismic strengthening there were just 115 members left when they re-opened in September last year.

"Our target was 500 members by Christmas 2025, which has now been revised to 600 members," says Rex.

Annual membership is just \$30 per person and anyone can join, not just former service personnel - though Rex says: "we also desperately want our veterans to join too."

Meanwhile, locals donated more than \$5500 at this year's Poppy Appeal, which KMRSA has transferred to Ranfurly's Poppy Foundation Trust (PFT).

Since January the PFT has granted \$2428 to local former service personnel for medical expenses. The KMRSA also donated \$500 to the crew of HMNZS Manawanui, and \$500 to New Zealand Defense Force personnel going to the Invictus Games.

councillor comment

Good news for our community - Auckland Council has removed troublesome river weeds north of Helensville and approved the use of local contractors to carry out essential flood maintenance work around the Kumeū district.

This decision comes after strong feedback from residents who asked for more proactive care of the Kumeū River and stormwater systems. You've spoken, and Council has listened.

A full-scale dam or a tunnel to the Waitematā Harbour was ruled out earlier this year as too expensive and unworkable. However, the clear message from locals at a public meeting earlier this year was: "we want better maintenance of our river". In response, Council will now be putting local rates to work - unclogging culverts, clearing swales, removing debris, unblocking the river, and making targeted repairs to infrastructure in flood-prone areas.

Importantly, the Council is now prioritising local contractors - those based right here in Kumeū, Huapai, Taupaki, Waimauku, or Riverhead. This makes sense. Local contractors know the land, the flood-prone spots, and the seasonal issues better than anyone. They'll take pride in their work and deliver better value for money.

Proactive river care used to happen before the Super City was formed, and I've been advocating hard to get it reinstated. I'm very pleased to see that hard work paying off.

The tender for this work is open until Friday, August 15 and will be advertised on the GETS (Government Electronic Tendering Service) system and in local newspapers, with work expected to start in November. To apply, contractors will need to show experience in carrying out flood resilience related work and meet the required council criteria. Council will organise resource consents in advance for any required earthworks. Interested local contractors can email: procurement@aklc.govt.nz or phone 09 301 0101 until August 15 for more information.

Auckland Council also continues to work with farmers and landowners from Huapai to Helensville to manage weed growth along the riverbanks. These weeds can break loose during storms, form massive floating mats, and jam up on bridge piles, causing flooding and restricting the river's ability to drain out to the Kaipara Harbour.

It's important to remember that no flood protection system is perfect. If we get more than 100mm of rain in under seven hours, the river will breach and serious flooding will still occur. Even a heavy rain event may still cause the low lying flood plains and flood prone areas to flood. But by keeping the river clear the contractors and Council can help delay the river's stop banks being breached in a major storm, as well as allowing surrounding properties to drain better during heavy rain events.

Rural landowners can help prevent localised flooding by ensuring the culverts beneath their driveways remain unblocked and free-flowing. Maintaining these culverts is the responsibility of the private landowner - not the Council or Auckland Transport. When driveway culverts become blocked, they restrict water flow and can choke the wider drainage network. Keeping them clear is essential for effective stormwater management and for protecting the road from damage.

Lastly, I'm urging the Council and Government to stop granting building consents on known floodplains. Right now, the law and private property rights allows consents to be granted if a building is 'engineered' to be safe. That's not good enough when lives are at risk. Council is pushing to close this legal loophole in the Unitary Plan so they can legitimately reject applications to build in floodplains without being prosecuted, but that change depends on central Government's new Resource Management Act laws, which they say will be passed by Parliament before the 2026 election.

This shift to locally-led solutions is a positive step forward. It shows that when the community speaks up, and the Council is prepared to listen, we can make real, practical progress.

Let's keep working together to make our area safer and more flood-resilient for the future.

- Greg Sayers, Rodney Ward Councillor



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local board matters

As we head towards the end of a three-year term for the local board, it is a good time to look back on what the board has been able to do for us recently.

The Rodney Local Board is one of 21 local boards focusing on the local needs of Aucklanders - but unlike the other 20 boards our boundaries cover 48 percent of Auckland, from Kumeū all the way to Wellsford, so unfortunately it can sometimes be hard to appreciate everything that our board is doing and the investments being made.

For example, we are currently repairing one of the main wharves on Kawau Island, and while this is a very large investment and extremely important to those living there, it is unlikely to be noticed by families living in our part of Rodney. None-the-less, we need to look after the entirety of Rodney.

So, what has the local board done for us 'locally'? Here's a small snapshot from this term.

- Lots and lots of footpath upgrades and repairs, and new ones in the pipeline;

Reprieve for phone directory

The Helensville Lions Club has made the decision to continue publishing its annual local telephone directory.

In the May issue of *Helensville News* we reported that the future of the publication was in doubt because of falling advertising revenue. However the introduction of colour advertising in this year's phone book has started to turn things around, with around half of advertisers going for that option. Despite a trend for many businesses to concentrate on online advertising, a review by the Lions Club found there was still plenty of interest and support for keeping the local directory going, with many appreciating the traditional paper advertising.

The directory has been published by the Helensville Lions for more than 30 years and is distributed to homes and businesses in the local area free of charge. Advertisers are both local and from outside the district, and the white pages section of telephone number listings covers the '420' telephone district. Listings in the white pages are free and can include both landline and cell phone numbers as well as email addresses if wanted.

Income from the directory goes to the local Lions charity fund. Over the years many local charities and individuals have received financial benefit from this.

Lion Dennis Cummings is in charge of distributing the 4500 directories each year with a team of volunteers which includes rural delivery contractors.

To advertise and for free telephone listings in the 2026 directory contact Lynne Morton, email: lynne@mortonmedia.co.nz or phone: 0274 483 596.

- Watercare has invested \$17 million in upgrades to our wastewater treatment plant;
- Full renewal of the Rautawhiri Park Lions Lounge/Tennis Club building;
- Full renewal of the War Memorial Hall, Art Centre, and Kaipara RSA;
- Street lighting installed in the Rautawhiri Park carpark;
- Renewal of the Riverhead War Memorial Park hard courts;
- Financial support for Helensville Zero Waste (recycling centre);
- Two new playgrounds for Shelly Beach - one next to the beach and one at the top of the hill next to the fire station;
- Funding to keep our public rubbish bins (as the rest of Auckland removed bins to save money);
- Continued funding for volunteer pest control groups;
- Snip 'n' Chip funding to help prevent more stray cats;
- Asbestos removal and upgrades to South Head Hall;
- Nearly 100 semi-mature trees planted in Parakai to provide street beautification and to replace some of the aging and dying street trees;
- \$130,000 invested into upgrading the Kumeū Arts Centre;
- Supporting Coastguard Kaipara to get their new marine rescue centre open;
- The Recreation Facilities Investment Fund has provided \$188,239 towards upgrades of the Helensville Rugby Club showers and changing rooms;
- Upgrades and major repairs to the Helensville River Walkway;
- Free family events at our local parks;
- Regular meetings with our local MP;
- Electronic speed signs on Rautawhiri Road;
- Approval of dozens of community leases.

This is on top of the everyday operations like mowing, cleaning, and repairs which keep our parks, beaches, and facilities open for us all to enjoy.

The other half of the local board's role is to attend community events and meetings, keep the public involved and informed, and advocate to the governing body and Mayor on what our communities want.

Hopefully you have seen and felt some of the value that Rodney Local Board has provided the community, and if you feel we need more or the investment should go elsewhere, then make sure you are heard.

- Mark Dennis
Rodney Local Board
mark.dennis@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



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HELENSVILLE NEWS - PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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■ Free Subscriptions to Online Edition:

Email: subscribe@helensvillenews.co.nz

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■ **Letters to the Editor:** Should be kept to around 250 words and may be edited as space dictates.



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town talk

EQUESTRIAN MARKET DAY

Helensville Pony Club's winter Equestrian Market Day is on at the Helensville Showgrounds on Saturday, August 9 from 11am to 2pm. Stalls will sell a range of mostly used riding gear, plus promoting equestrian businesses.

Bookings are open now. Indoor tables cost \$20, 3m by 3m stalls \$50, and outdoor stalls \$30. Book online at: <https://forms.gle/Kuxbs2xrHx1KaD8B6>.

HELENSVILLE MARKET

The next Helensville Village Market is on Sunday, August 17 from 8.30am to 1pm.

With more than 50 stalls booked there should be something for everyone - be it a garden barn, preserves to top up the pantry, fresh fruit and vegetables, artworks, or personal treats. Plus there will be food at the market café, fresh coffee, and the Lions sausage sizzle.

Live music courtesy of singer/songwriter/DJ

Ralphe will be playing while shoppers browse. No dogs please except for assistance dogs. A gold coin donation as asked for parking with proceeds going to the Helensville/Kaukapakapa Scouts and St John Youth.

Email: sarah@riversidecrafts.co.nz for more information.

COUNTRY MUSIC 40TH BIRTHDAY

The Helensville River Valley Country Music Club will celebrate 40 years on Sunday, August 17 with an event at the Helensville War Memorial Hall from 10.30am to 4pm.

Country music will be playing, with walk-up singers and special guests throughout the day. Morning tea, lunch, and afternoon tea will be provided by the club and there will be a 'Cutting of the Cake'. Entry is just \$5.

For more information phone club president Glynis Renata: 027 334 7130.

making the difference

Is there someone special who has done something that's made a difference for you, your family or our town? To nominate someone, write to: Nicky Horsbrough, Harcourts Helensville, 92 Commercial Road, Helensville 0800 or fill out the form online at: nickyhorsbrough.harcourts.co.nz. The lucky recipient will receive a \$100 voucher for a local business of their choice.

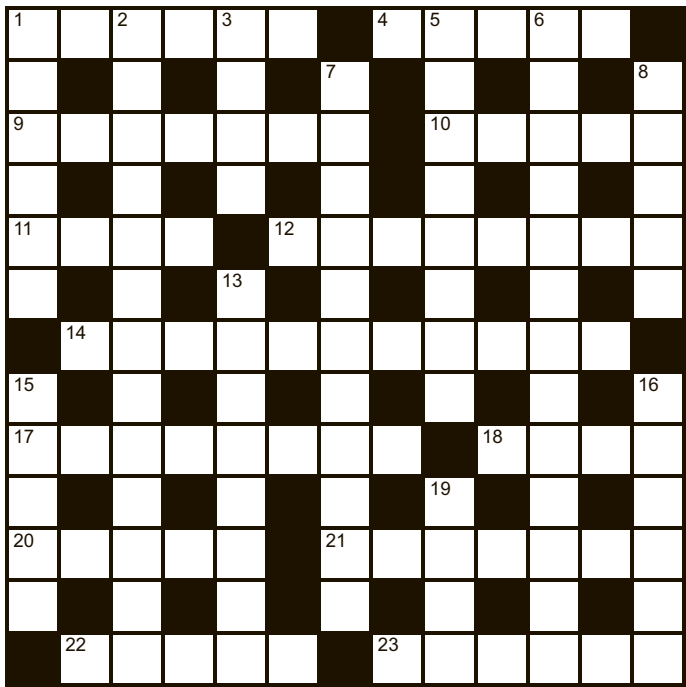
August's recipient is Mina Lelo. Voucher chosen: Eleventh Hour.

Mina was nominated by Brooke Mcaulay who says: "I would like to shine light on local youth worker Mina Lelo. She works at our local Out West Youth Centre and at Kaipara College. She is dedicated to the young people of our community. She is so selfless with her time dedicated to her job, the hours she spent studying her degree in social work, and with the compassion she shows her young people and all those around her. She loves and treats them as her own, and has earned a lot of respect from the young people in our community. She is changing lives everyday, and lifting those up who need it the most. I'm also lucky enough to call her my best friend."



• Mina (left) with Nicky Horsbrough

crossword



Across

1. Profited (6)
4. Body of salt water (5)
9. US state on the Gulf Coast (7)
10. Red cosmetic (5)
11. Bites (4)
12. And so forth (2,6)
14. Using obscene language (4-7)
17. Inspector (8)
18. Celebrity (4)
20. Depart (5)
21. "What should they know of - who only - now?" (Kipling) (7)
22. Untidy (5)
23. Less strong (6)

Down

1. Insecure knot (6)
2. Unfitting (13)
3. Yellow cheese coated with red wax (4)
5. Removes errors (8)
6. Recreational area (9,4)
7. Patron Saint of tanners (11)
8. Started (5)
13. Railway track supports (8)
15. Sacred song (5)
16. Merchant (6)
19. Inhuman person (4)

July's Answers

Across: 1. Kirsch 5. Betray 8. Supermarket 9. Nepalese 10. Ouch 11. Below 13. Study 17. Crop 19. Mattress 21. Loudspeaker 22. Agrees 23. Anyone.

Down: 2. Issue 3. Soprano 4. Harden 5. Beaten 6. Tokyo 7. Antacid 12. Earplug 14. Turnkey 15. Amuses 16. Athena 18. Prune 20. Siren.

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