

Museum keen to take on historic homes

Te Awaroa Museum in Helensville has its sights set on taking ownership of one of the district's premier historic homes - Henley House at Kaukapakapa.

And the museum is also keen to move one of the historic Hunter family cottages from Railway Street in Helensville to its Mill Road property.

Henley House, built in 1887 and situated on a 5ha block of land on Highway 16 just before the south entrance of Kaukapakapa, was 'white stickered' after being flooded on January 29, 2023 in the storm which preceded Cyclone Gabrielle. That meant that while still liveable, it received a Category 3 'Optional buyout' rating from Auckland Council.

Owner Ron Harland was faced with the prospect of being unable to insure the property and little chance of selling it on the open market, so he took up the Council's buyout offer and moved out in mid-February.

Now, the future of the fully restored historic three-storey kauri house, which has a Heritage New Zealand 'Historic Place Category 2' rating, is up in the air.

Auckland Council usually either demolishes 'buyout' buildings, or deconstructs them so their materials can be reused. But with its historic rating that may not be possible in this case.

"If they want to demolish it, we will protest," says Helensville & District Historical Society vice-president Megan Williams. She adds the museum would also be against the building being deconstructed.

The council also has the option of gifting the building - and that's where Te Awaroa Museum comes in. They have put in an expression of interest to take over ownership of Henley House.

Rodney Local Board member Mark



• Above: the Henley family on the porch of their home around the turn of the 20th century, and below: Henley House today



Dennis is behind the proposal, and Rodney Councillor Greg Sayers is being kept in the loop.

"I'm fully supportive of what they are doing," says Mark. "I will be helping as much as I can."

Megan says the museum is looking at two options.

The first would be to move Henley House onto the museum's Mill Road site. However, that would be very costly - money the museum simply doesn't have - with the building probably having to be cut into six separate sections and two brick chimneys dismantled to move it.

It would require buy-in from a house-moving company willing to do the move for free says Megan.

And there are questions whether the three-storey structure could be physically sited on the museum grounds. The whole museum is built on top of Helensville's old rubbish dump, and it's not possible to put down deep foundation piles. All the other buildings on the site sit on concrete pads - but

Megan says at this stage it is unknown whether that's viable for such a tall building as Henley House.

Megan says that is the favoured option - "but it will come with lots of difficulties."

The second option would be to get the Council to agree to leave the building on its current site and for the museum to take over the ownership and maintenance and use it for open days and as a venue for functions such as weddings - something which would bring in much-needed income for the museum.

"There is a lot of value in it staying on its current site. It's part of the village."

The land it sits on would stay owned by the Council, and hopefully available to the museum on a peppercorn rental like the Mill Road museum site.

"To lose such an important part of West Rodney's history is an irreversible outcome, and whilst a huge ask of very limited resources it seems a failure of duty to not make every effort," says Megan. "It will be the coup of the century to pull this off, but 'if you don't ask, you don't get'."

Henley House, a monument to early colonialism, was built for Maurice Clark Henley in 1887 and became the family home for generations of the Henley family.

Having arrived in New Zealand from England in 1862 with two of his brothers, Maurice settled in Kaukapakapa. An educated man with an MA from Wesley College in Sheffield, he was able to speak four languages and had a large collection of books; the house still features his library.

After marrying Eliza Isabel Chaplin, the couple had four children, although daughter Eliza died aged 16. The family donated some of their land for a public hall, and also for the building of the Methodist Church and cemetery now known as 'All Saints' - providing a significant part of the nucleus of the Kaukapakapa village.

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Locals invited to watch free 75th anniversary equestrian event

Locals are invited to watch the Waitematā Hunt's Hunter Trials at the Helensville Showgrounds on Friday, March 21.

The trials are a series of jumping events in which riders navigate natural obstacles, showcasing their horsemanship and skill.

They will be free for locals to watch, and there will be a cash bar and barbeque lunch available for those attending.

The trials are just one day of a five-day long 75th anniversary celebration for the Hunt club, with the club hosting up to 100 riders at each event.

Other events include two traditional hunts over local farms, one at Raphoe Farm on Old North Road and the other across the Bradley and Kidd farms, where the Waitematā Hunt has ridden for all its 75 years.

There will be an anniversary dinner with an auction and 1980s-themed party. Participants, many of whom will camp at the Showgrounds for the duration of the event, will also visit the Parakai Springs hot pools and enjoy a pizza night.

The photograph above taken during the Hunt's first year in 1950 shows local riders who are still part of the community today. Among them are Lee and Peter Kuluz who are now 91 years old and who began riding with the Waitematā Hunt at just 16. Their son, daughter-in-law, and grandchildren actively



• Waitematā Hunt riders in 1950

participate in the Hunt today. Likewise, the Thomson family has played a significant role over the years, allowing the Hunt access to their property in Kanohi Road, Kaukapakapa. Daughter Susan Thomson was also a member of the Hunt committee throughout the 1990s.

Waitematā Hunt, which is based at Makarau, uses an artificial scent which is dragged across the countryside for the hounds to follow - ensuring no animals are harmed.

Anyone wanting to be part of the event as a rider, spectator, or supporter should contact Caitlin Metz at: info@waitematahunt.co.nz.

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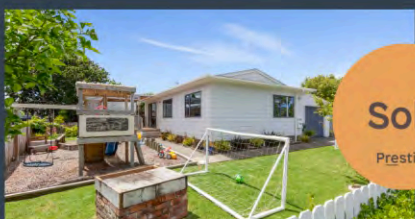
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This could be you!

Kaukapakapa girl off to Japan for karate

12-year-old Hannah Towersey is Kaukapakapa's very own karate kid - even if no-one actually calls her that, she says.

Hannah has been doing karate since the age of just four years, achieving her black belt in September last year - and now she is off to Okinawa in Japan in April to show the masters there what she is capable of and to train with them for a couple of hours each day.

She took up the ancient martial art after her father noticed classes being held at the local hall and asked her if she was interested.

"I said yes, because I wanted to be a ninja," laughs Hannah of her four-year-old response.

She has since trained under sensei James Johnston, working her way through the different levels of understanding and proficiency of the art and their associated coloured belts - first white, then yellow, orange, green, blue, purple, brown, and finally black.

The black belt represents the highest level of proficiency and the ability to teach others - however as Hannah points out there are 10 further 'dans' or levels of black belt; reaching the higher levels can take years of experience.

Karate dates back to the 17th century, and Hannah practices the oldest form, the Okinawa Shorin-Ryu fighting style. Okinawa is the home of karate - it's where the martial art originated.

She will be traveling to Japan for two and a half weeks with her mum Nicola, James, and a couple of other adults. She says James felt she would benefit from learning from the masters, along with learning the culture and seeing where karate comes from.

Hannah, who has never been overseas before, has been learning Japanese online with her mother, and with help from one of her best friends, who is Japanese.

She is looking forward to seeing the culture first-hand, and is "very excited" about the food.



• Hannah showing off one of her karate moves

As well as Okinawa Hannah and her mother will be going to Tokyo and Kyoto, riding the bullet train and visiting temples and the Samurai Ninja Museum in Tokyo.

Hannah trains twice a week and loves learning the different techniques.

"The skillset is really fun," she says.

She hasn't taken part in any competitions yet, but plans to observe some either later this year or next year. She intends to continue with her training.

"She has never once complained about going [to training]," says mum Nicola.

The Japan trip has required a lot of fundraising and Nicola says there has been plenty of community support.

To help pay for the trip, she is running a raffle. Anyone wanting a ticket (or who would just like to support her trip) can deposit \$5 into bank account number: 12-3025-0335062-54 using a name and phone number as references.

Prizes include a compound hunting bow worth \$599, a Jumbuck barbecue worth \$159, a raffle basket worth \$130, a family pass to Kaipara Coast Sculpture Garden worth \$40, and a \$20 Country Grind voucher.



• Hannah Towersey

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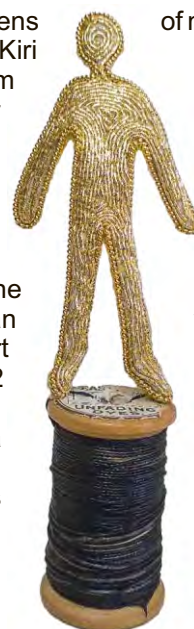
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Focus on 'small' for March exhibition

Helensville Art Centre's entrance gardens have undergone a transformation thanks to Kiri Abraham and a sustainability grant from Auckland Council - the aim being to better equip the centre with sustainable waste management and environmentally-focused outdoor projects. The gardens now feature lush greens, vibrant flowers, and bees.

'Philocaly' is a love of beauty even in the smallest things, and it's the theme for an exhibition of tiny works on show at the Art Centre from February 28 to March 22 (opening night 5pm to 7pm on Friday 28).

The exhibition 'Philocaly' features a group of artists showing a series of small pieces. In addition the Art Centre's children's and youth classes have worked on unique projects that will be included in the show. A 'Tiny Winy' workshop produced stunning works which have been turned into an array



of miniature art.

Jo Dixey, an internationally and nationally recognised embroidery artist who until recently lived in Helensville but now resides in Wellington, is making guest appearance in the 'Philocaly' show with some of her work (like that pictured).

'Gas Bag' continues this year every Wednesday 11am to 1pm in the Art Centre library room. It's for anyone who would like to have a space to work on their creative practice while joining in lively and friendly conversations, led by volunteer Eileen Harper.

The Art Centre's outdoor project is on the move, with ceramic tiles being created by children at Helensville Primary School which will then be displayed at the entrance to the Art Centre.

Tutor Kiri Abraham and ceramicist Kristen Calder will be working in the school on this project, which was made possible by an Everykid grant.

Museum wants historic homes cont...

• From Page 1

Home to subsequent Henley generations, Henley House passed from family ownership in 1974, with Ron and the late Yvonne Harland's family eventually taking possession in 1999. They made significant improvements while retaining the fundamental properties of the house.

"We absolutely loved the house," says Ron, who adds he would be happy to help look after it if the museum is able to take over ownership from Auckland Council.

He was very happy with the buyout offer from the council, pointing out that he wouldn't have been able to sell it any other way, with banks not prepared to lend on a flood-prone property and insurance off-limits as well.

As well as Henley House, Megan says the museum is keen to move one of the two cottages built for the Hunter sisters in Railway Street to Mill Road. The two almost identical cottages have both been red stickered and are uninhabitable.

The museum is going through the same expression of interest with Auckland Council, hoping to be able to choose whichever of the two cottages is most original inside.

While moving one of those onto the museum grounds would be much simpler, with the tiny cottages able to fit on a moving truck in one piece and easily able to sit on a concrete pad, Megan says it would still need a generous moving company to shift one for free.

There is no time-frame for these potential projects, but Mark Dennis says: "my understanding is nothing will happen in the next 12 months,

"The Council wants [the properties] off their books as soon as possible - but we are talking about Council time."

Anyone with suggestions on how the museum could raise the funds needed to move Henley House or one of the Railway Street cottages and set them up in Mill Road can email Te Awaroa Museum at: info@museum.teawaroa.nz or phone (09) 420 7881.



• The red-stickered Hunter cottages in Railway Street

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14-year-old has book published

Kaukapakapa schoolgirl Pyper Hancock has had a book she wrote as an eight-year-old at Kaukapakapa Primary School published by a UK-based publishing house.

But Pyper, now 14 and a student at Albany Junior High, didn't even know it was happening - it was a surprise for her by her dad Morgan.

Pyper wrote 'How to Make a Friendship Potion' as part of a school project, where the children brainstormed the ingredients that make up a perfect friend. She then chose a selection of those ingredients as the basis for her story.

"I had to make up a fantasy land and characters that give those character traits," she says.

The book, beautifully illustrated by Pyper's cousin Courtney Dwyer who was still at school at the time, features Pyper and her brother Carter as scientist type characters, and her then pet cat, the one-eyed Pirate, as they traverse a fantastical map to gather ingredients to make the potion.

Those ingredients include the likes of 'silliness slobber', 'polite dragonfly dew', 'golden honey honesty', and 'cookies and courage icecream'.

After the story finishes, the book takes a more serious turn, with Pyper listing those qualities of a good friend and explaining what they mean.

After she wrote the book six years ago, Pyper didn't think much more about it. But Morgan was taken by it, and eventually turned it into a draft for publication, getting Courtney on board for the artwork and friend Nicole Drummond to do the lettering and layout work.

He eventually got a 'hybrid' publishing deal arranged with Austin MaCauley Publishers in London, whereby the publisher covers two-thirds of the cost and the author - in this case her dad - the balance.

The book is now available in both softback and ebook formats and can be purchased online through Amazon (and other more UK-centric outlets like Barnes & Noble).

Pyper says she was blown away - "100 percent proud" - when she first saw the printed book. And she



• Pyper with her book 'How to Make a Friendship Potion'

says her friends were "excited and astonished" that their friend was a published author.

She has since returned to Kaukapakapa School to read her book to some of the junior classes: "it was weird being the one reading it," she says.

At this stage Pyper doesn't have any plans for another book, nor to become a writer.

"This was a surprise book. I will see what happens."

Instead, she is keen on drawing and good at science, and at this stage is considering a career in forensics.

Messy time at Playcentre

Things are about to get very messy - quite literally - at Kaukapakapa Playcentre.

During the first week of March, the 20 or so children who attend the Macky Road playcentre will be taking part in 'Messy Play Week', an annual nationwide programme organised by the Wellington-based national Playcentre head office.

Kaukapakapa Playcentre will be open from 9.30am to midday on Tuesday March 4, Wednesday March 5, and Friday March 7.

Under the tagline 'say yes to mess', the children will do things like playing in mud, paint their feet then walk around, and get stuck into things like playdough, sand, clay, slime, and gloop.

"It's a way to showcase the kind of fun you can get

up to at playcentre," says Rhiannon Evans, part of the Kaukapakapa Playcentre operations team.

"It's great for kids to get messy and muddy," she says - pointing out it's a huge advantage for parents for their children to be able to do that at playcentre, rather than make a mess at home.

Rhiannon says it's a "great opportunity to show people what playcentre does, and attract new members."

Anyone from the community is welcome to visit the playcentre during Messy Play Week to learn more about the centre.

Kaukapakapa Playcentre started in 1976 and has families attending from as far afield as Glorit, Waimauku, and Dairy Flat.

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Young Farmer competition

The Northern Regional finals of the 57th Young Farmer of the Year competition were held at the Helensville Showgrounds recently.

Franklin dairy farmer Justin Ruygrok, 28, took out the title of Northern FMG Young Farmer of the Year and will now head to the national finals in Invercargill in July.

Spectators at the showgrounds on Saturday, February 1 were treated to a wide range of practical skills on show.

Contestants compete in three different age groups. Agrikids is for ages 8 to 13 who take part in teams of three. The FMG Junior Farmer contestants are aged 13 to 18 and compete in pairs, while the Young Farmer contest is held on an individual basis for those aged 16 to 31.

Seven regional finals are held around the country.

In the Agrikids category, the teams had to undertake a number of tasks, such as identifying parts of a tractor, covering motorcycle safety, and identifying plants.

Agrikids was won by a team from Te Kamo Intermediate. Another team from the same school came second, while a team made up of Sofia Flores-Jochmann, Madison Lironi-Irvine, and Naomi Varney from Helensville Primary and home-schooled came third.

The Junior Farmers tackled a similar range of tasks including things like tying off fencing wire.

For the Young Farmers the competition was a lot more serious, competing in eight modules, a head-to-head section, and an agrisports section. Probably the biggest task was building a three-section fence incorporating wires and battens, a timber rail section and an electric section. Other tasks included showing off their fine motor skills by picking up a rugby ball with the front end loader on a tractor - and then driving around a tight obstacle course



• Winner Justin Ruygrok competing at the Helensville Showgrounds regional finals

without dropping the ball.

Unlike the two younger groups, the Young Farmers also had an evening competition covering both rural and general knowledge questions plus quick-fire rounds, hosted by Te Radar.

The ticketed event featured a buffet dinner followed by the prizegiving.

"I'm stoked to have won, I had no idea what to expect heading into the competition, so to come out on top is pretty unreal," says Justin Ruygrok.

"The whole experience has been awesome, from having a crack at the district contest to now gearing up for the grand final." Justin was talked into entering by Muriwai local Tim Dangen, who won the FMG Young Farmer of the Year in 2022.

"The practical side was heaps of fun, but the theory, and being up in front of a crowd, was definitely more of a challenge," Justin explains. "Some of the answers you know, but you've got to be quick on the buzzer."

The winners of both the Agrikids and Junior Farmer regional finals also go to the national event in Invercargill.

Library Tidbits

Helensville Library spent February sharing stories and songs around farms and farm animals, as part of the build-up to the Helensville Show, through its in-house Kids Time/Storytime sessions and in visits to our local early childhood education centres and years 1 and 2 students at local schools.

After a break of a year or so, the Helensville Library Minecraft Club will return in April. Details will be announced on the Library Facebook page, through OurAuckland, and the Auckland Council Libraries website.

Also coming in April are Digital Classes, currently being developed by the Helensville team. More information next month.

Regular programmes are: Kids Time, for under 6s and their grown-ups, on Wednesdays from 10am to 10.30am; Crafternoons for adults on Thursdays from 3pm to 4.30pm; Crafternoons for kids on Thursdays from 3.30pm to 4.30pm; and Book Chat - next on Thursday, March 27 from 10am to 11am, for people to share recently read books they either liked - or didn't - with fellow readers.

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Snorkelling at Lake Rototoa

Locals have the chance to go snorkelling in South Head's Lake Rototoa, while learning about the lake's marine environment.

Participants at the snorkelling day on Sunday, March 16 will get to explore the lake with experienced volunteer guides from the Mountains to Sea Conservation Trust, which is supporting South Kaipara Landcare to engage the local community about freshwater values on the South Head peninsula through its Wai Connection programme.

The aim is to highlight what makes Lake Rototoa so special and to inform participants about how to protect it.

There will also be freshwater workshops with the Whitebait Connection and other environmental information stalls set up, so even those not keen to go swimming can learn something.

This event is free and funded by the Ministry for the Environment and Water Safety New Zealand in partnership with Wai Connection, South Kaipara Landcare, Auckland Council Biosecurity, and

Aotearoa Lakes. A donation box and eftpos machine will be available on the day for those keen to make a donation.

recommended - <https://tinyurl.com/snorkleday>. Participants should arrive 15 minutes prior to their start time.



• Children learning about kākahi or freshwater mussels at a previous Lake Rototoa snorkeling day

The event will run from 10am to 3pm, with three time slots available for snorkelling - 10am, 11.30am, and 1.30pm. Pre-registration through Eventbrite is

The guided snorkelling is open to anyone four years or older, though children up to the age of 14 must be accompanied in the water activity by an adult. Experienced guides and advanced safety procedures will be in place on the day.

Participants should bring a towel, swim suit, sunblock, and plenty of drinking water. They can also take their own snorkelling gear if they have some, but those without will have free use of masks, snorkels, fins, and wetsuits.

Lake Rototoa is at 23 Donohue Road, South Head, with free parking at South Head Hall.

Established in 2002 in Northland, Mountains to Sea considers education central to all environmental restoration. Its marine and freshwater programmes involve young people, their parents and the wider community. Its Experiencing Marine Reserves and Whitebait Connection programmes reinforce concepts such as the uniqueness of our freshwater and marine biodiversity and provide an active focus on conservation of those environments through education and action.

Skydiving champs at Parakai

The New Zealand Parachute Federation's National Skydiving Championship was held at Skydive Auckland in Greens Road, Parakai, over the weekend of February 22 and 23.

For the first time the event featured speed skydiving. It's the fastest non-motorised sport in the world, with skydivers reaching speeds of more than 520km/h during freefall. The jumpers use GPS to record their speeds over a freefall of 7400 feet (2255m), and are judged on an average of the three fastest seconds.

That discipline was also part of the International Speed Skydiving Association's 2025 World Cup Series, giving it a world-wide audience.

Top Australian speed skydiver Shane Turner ran a skills camp at Skydive Auckland prior to the competition.

Another event at the national championship was wingsuiting. In that, competitors wear purpose-made suits that allow them to maximise their glide time and horizontal distance in the air, judged on flight duration, distance covered, and speed.

One of the world's top wingsuit athletes, Jason Dodunski, coached wingsuiting at the nationals. Originally from Hawke's Bay, Jason recently came second in the World Wingsuit Flying Championships.

Rounding out the New Zealand champs were 4-Way Formations, where teams have to link up in as many formations as possible in 35 seconds, jumping eight to 10 times and performing different sequences each time.

Forty skydivers took part in the championships, including six teams, and training days were held on the Thursday and Friday immediately before the competition.



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Show another huge success



121 Shows and still going strong ... the Helensville Show on Saturday, February 22 drew an crowd of over 6500, with visitors enjoying a vast array of activities, attractions, displays, and food - all in perfect weather.

Spectators were lined four deep watching the return of wood chopping displays throughout the day, while the sheep dog trial demonstrations, circus performances by Zaktakular, and hugely entertaining Fox Terrier race were packed with spectators.

More than 120 trade stands were kept busy all day, and the indoor hall was packed with near record numbers of entries in the floral, baking, knitting, and crafts sections.



• Above: One of the spectator highlights was the second annual Foxie Race, in which most of the 40-plus little dogs ran in almost every direction other than toward the finish line. The winner for the second year in a row was Betty

• Left: Dame Jools Topp officially opens the 121st Helensville Show

Thanks Helensville!

...for coming to our 121st Show

We're proud to have supported the following community organisations through this year's Helensville Show:

- Kaipara College + Tū Rangatira students
- Lions Club of Helensville
- Helensville Zero Waste
- Waitematā Hunt
- CAB Helensville
- Coastguard Kaipara
- NZ Fire Service
- St John Youth Helensville & Kaukapakapa
- NZ Police
- South Kaipara Good Food

- Rural Women NZ
- L'Arche Mt Tabor Trust
- Rodney Beekeepers Association
- Kaukapakapa Scout Group
- Waimauku Scout Group
- Kumeū Small Landowners Association
- South Kaipara Community Patrol
- Brightside Spinners
- Te Awaroa Museum Helensville
- Helensville Rugby Club

Congratulations to all the Grand Champions and prize winners in our livestock, equestrian, and indoor competitions.

And thanks to our sponsors - we really appreciate your continued support of our community's iconic Helensville Show.

The day wouldn't happen without our countless volunteers. Your efforts before, during, and after the event are what makes Helensville Show such a success. Special thanks to all our judges and stewards, and those who made an extra effort for this year's special 'Dairy' theme.

Helensville A&P Association Executive Committee

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Enjoy the
photos on these
pages from
the Show!

8

Issue 285, March 2025



• Above: Part of the 'dairy' theme for the show, these cows put on an udderly fantastic display



• Above: The return of wood chopping was one of the Show's top attractions with the Puhoi Axemen drawing big crowds



• Above: Highland dancing has been a popular attraction at Helensville Show for years



• Above: Not your average farm gumboots!



• Above: It wouldn't be Helensville Show without children and their pet lambs and calves



• Above: Spent shells fly during a mock World War II battle by the Historical Re-enactment Society - the Kiwis won.

• Below: Allan Oldfield demonstrates the art of hand clipper shearing



• Below: One-man circus Zaktakular wowed the crowds with his tricks, including juggling and fire eating



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Hub is ideal men's centre home

The Helensville Business Hub in Mill Road is proving to be the ideal new home for the South Kaipara Men's Trust.

Mike Bridgman moved into the building, in the upstairs suite of the NorthWest Business Association next door to The Real Bread Project, at the end of last year, after seven years in the old Te Awaroa Youth Club building in Awaroa Road - recently shared with South Kaipara Good Food (SKGF).

When the Men's Trust and SKGF were told they had to move out of that old building, SKGF found a new home in the former Coast Guard building in Mill Road - but there wasn't room for Mike to operate from there as well.

In stepped Danielle Hancock of the NorthWest Business Association, who offered Mike the use of the Business Hub's upstairs boardroom. Now he is enjoying the comfortable, warm new premises - and his clients have remarked how much nicer the new environment is.

The move was timely, too, as Mike says he is doing double the work with men now than in pre-Covid times.

"There's no doubt Covid caused domestic problems," says Mike. "Stresses have been created, and they have got worse over time."

Mike's clients are generally referred to him by partners or other family members, although a few are referred by the CAB, SKGF or the police. He is seeing more men who are working their way through the justice system, and has even accompanied some to court. In a couple of cases, the judge questioned Mike about his clients, with positive outcomes.

"It's common for the men to know what they need to do, such as stopping a bad temper, they just need advice on how to do that."

Mike says he isn't able to help everyone who comes to him: "We lose more than we win, but when we win, we win very well."

He cites a case where he helped a man who had been falsely accused of domestic assault, losing his home and children and going through the courts. Mike worked with him until he was exonerated and back with his children.

"He told me that if not for the Men's Trust his life would have been a broken disaster."

Another man who Mike helped through serious addiction issues told him that without Mike's help he would have been dead.

"I've heard some terrible things, and do feel great concern for my clients," he says. "But I've had some very profound wins, and that keeps you going."

All clients meetings are held in the strictest confidence, and Mike says he never chases his clients up - "they have to want to be here."

Mike quotes the old adage of 'a problem shared is a problem halved'. "Well it's never halved, but it goes down a few percent. It makes a huge difference if someone else is carrying some of the weight."

He adds he is careful "not to meddle" in areas where he doesn't have training, and can refer his



• Mike Bridgman

clients to a wide range of professional services.

Mike says working with his clients can be a bit like being a detective, discovering what the issue is and then working towards solving it - and says empathy is the key.

Business Hub is for everyone

Northwest Business Association manager Danielle Hancock says it's important locals know the Business Hub in Mill Road, Helensville is for anyone to use - not just members of the business association.

Set up 18 months ago, the hub is a shared working space with free wifi for people who need a quiet place to work, such as home-based businesses needing to get some work done while in town, or in circumstances such as undergoing renovations at home and needing a work space with no distractions. It's also a handy place for local business people to collaborate.

The board room, with its local art and giant television screen, is ideal for local organisations and groups to hold meetings, training courses or staff days. It's already a proven success, with Danielle pointing out it's currently booked three or four nights a week.

• To Back Page

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KAIPĀTIKI

from our MP

As I write this column, the Helensville Show is just days away! For those reading my words following the weekend, I hope you had a great time there!

I've decided to focus my remarks for this edition of *Helensville News* on something very important to Helensville and the surrounding areas: the Kaipara River.

Many of you will probably feel that it is not just a body of water running through our region - important as that would still be - but the lifeblood of our community, in a few important ways.

Its waters have supported generations of families, farmers, and other local industries, while its wetlands, forests, and shores are home to a diverse range of wildlife. The Kaipara River also enables the wonderful work of local Coast Guard volunteers to reach mariners on the harbour beyond.

However, like many natural resources, the Kaipara River faces challenges from pollution and land use pressures. That's why it's so heartening to see the ongoing efforts of the Kaipara Moana Remediation Project.

This initiative is a vital step towards ensuring the long-term health of the Kaipara Moana catchment and the river system that sustains it.

Through a collaborative approach involving local iwi, landowners, community groups, and government agencies, Kaipara Moana Remediation is focused on reducing nutrient runoff, restoring wetlands, and improving water quality. All this is aimed at returning the Kaipara River and surrounding ecosystems to their former vitality.

This commitment to protecting the Kaipara Moana catchment not only strengthens our environment but also supports local agriculture, fisheries, and tourism, reinforcing the connection between a healthy ecosystem and a thriving community.

Much-needed economic growth and the environment need not be considered mutually exclusive. In fact they are mutually reinforcing!

The Kaipara River is a symbol of everything that many hold dear in the Helensville area. Please join me in acknowledging the valuable efforts of volunteers who are actively working to protect it.

- Chris Penk
MP for Kaipara ki Mahurangi
chris.penkmp@parliament.govt.nz



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med centre notes

Our team were thrilled to be at the Helensville Show. What a wonderful opportunity for us to get back into the community and spread the word about the exciting changes at the Centre over the past year. We provided blood pressure checks and blood sugar testing on the day, and updated locals about the services available at Kaipara Medical Centre.

To learn more, pop in and speak to one of our receptionists or see our website. And yes, we are open to new enrolments.

Our daily walk-in clinic, running Monday to Friday from 8.30am to 3pm, continues to be a huge success, providing timely and affordable healthcare for enrolled patients when they need it without the need to travel too far. Thank you to the community for the positive feedback on this. It is at times a very busy clinic and we thank you for your patience when there is a wait to be seen.

In other news:

- We bid farewell to Pettina Coates, our Practice Manager, She has now left and we wish her well in her next endeavours. We are currently interviewing for a new Practice Manager and will hopefully have updates soon.
- A reminder about the patient portal - MyIndici. If you are a patient at Kaipara Medical Centre but not already signed up for this, then please consider signing up! This will make it easier for you to make repeat prescription requests, book appointments online, and review your test results. See our website for more details and speak to our reception staff to sign up for this service.
- Next time you are in to see us, please remember to check your contact details with us - ensure we have the correct phone number, email address, and next of kin details on your file so we can contact you with important updates when we need to.



For more, visit:
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- Dr Kathryn Elcock
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March is the month of making your business safe. We have John King from Thinking Limited providing a free workshop on the Wednesday, March 5 at the Helensville Business Hub on how to safeguard your business from hackers and malware.

Learn about: protecting against spam, phishing, malware, and compromised accounts; verifying that email is legitimate; how to check for email blacklisting and exposure to public breaches; dealing with photocopiers, printers, other software, and similar products; reporting for visibility.

John has introduced monitoring software into the North West Country email account and has been tracking malware and impersonators and will reveal all at the workshop. You'll be amazed how easy it is for someone to copy your email account and impersonate you. Spaces are limited so register online at:

www.northwestcountry.co.nz/whats-on.

Make sure you get down to the Kumeu Show on the weekend of March 8 and 9 and connect with a range of local businesses - and pop into our tent and chat about how we can support your business, as well as look at local products and services.

Don't forget, please come to me with any questions, ideas, issues, or support that you might need. I am here to help.

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



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councillor comment

Sometimes I'm asked what the difference is between the role of a Local Board member compared to that of a Councillor.

Local Boards are elected to provide governance at a local level. They enable democratic decision making by, and on behalf of, communities within their local board area.

The role of the Councillor differs, requiring a focus on Auckland-wide strategic decisions, and working to make the most of the council's ability to deliver across Auckland.

The Rodney district has nine elected Local Board members (part-time roles) and one Councillor (full-time role).

All are elected to work and serve the best interests of the ratepayers who elected them, rather than for the best interests of Auckland Council. That frequently requires them to challenge the bureaucracy.

Local Boards have always had decision-making responsibility over local reserves and parks. Along with that responsibility comes accountability.

Another example of what the Rodney Local Board does is supporting community groups, landowners, volunteers, and schools to manage pest plants, animals, and pathogens. The Local Board helps to carry out native planting and stream restoration work in our parks, reserves, and public land.

Local Boards also support people to work together for a better way of life, provide local community facilities, forward plan township growth, ensure transport networks are accessible, as well as help local groups protect the environment. They spend local rates locally.

I have been working closely with the Mayor to drive changes to allow Local Boards to spend even more of the rates collected locally. As a result Rodney Local Board did recently receive a significant increase in its budget to invest back into building local community facilities. This was a great win for our area.

With the imminent restructuring of Auckland Transport coming back under the direct control of Auckland Council, the goal is to devolve specific transport functions to Local Boards. That includes giving Local Boards - and thus also local communities - greater say over transport issues such as local parking policies, setting of local speed limits, and approval of interventions on the roads such as speed bumps and pedestrian crossings.

If elected members get any of these decisions wrong they can be elected out of office and held accountable by the ratepayer. On the other hand, at the moment the Auckland Transport Board of Directors cannot be held accountable by the ratepayer and removed from their job if they get it wrong.

With these greater future responsibilities will also come greater accountability - which democratically will be a significant improvement upon how the Supercity has been running to date.

- Greg Sayers, Rodney Ward Councillor
greg.sayers@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz
Ph: 021 285 9900

Annual Plan drop-in session

The Rodney Local Board team will be holding a drop-in session at the Helensville Showgrounds to give locals the change to ask questions or leave feedback about Auckland Council's proposed 2025/2026 annual plan.

It will be on Sunday, March 16, from 8.30am to 1pm in conjunction with the Village Market.

Report a problem

To report a problem with any Council property that may need repair, visit this page on the Auckland Council website: <https://tinyurl.com/councilproblem>. You can also phone Auckland Council 24/7 on 09 301 0101 or visit the Helensville Service Centre. Hours are: Monday to Friday: 9am to 5pm; Saturday: 9am to 1pm.

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local board matters

Flood Mitigation for Kumeū

I have written about the flood risk facing Kumeū in particular, and the whole Northwest catchment, previously. It's fair to say my views are not popular. That said they are well-considered and informed by expert advice. I am prepared to defend my view in civil dialogue and mutual understanding of differing views.

What we are presently experiencing is the 'blamestorming' that follows the release of unwelcome news - this is entirely natural and to be expected. The stage we are about to embark on will be negotiation. This will be the public exploration of alternatives and mitigations of various sorts by interested and impacted parties.

There will be some pretty passionate and vocal participants in this, and over time the strengths and weaknesses of each will be apparent. This is where the past and present Rodney Local Board advocacy for a moratorium on further urban sprawl will come into conflict with some of these alternatives.

To date, and I am talking decades here, urban sprawl has exacerbated the issues Rodney residents have faced with under-investment in transport infrastructure, public transport services, community facilities, and other services like reticulated water, septic, and stormwater provision.

While we have accommodated housing for new residents this has come at the cost of reduced utility and amenity for those already living here. Oddly, the shouty clamour for better planning for services further exacerbates the problem, with out-of-sequence development and peppercorn subdivisions in rural areas, leaning heavily on the prospect for better planning for delivery of these community investments that are totally unfunded.

In my view both central government and Auckland Council are aware of this and are comfortable with the trade-off resulting in steadily reducing amenity and utility for Rodney residents. They get their affordable

housing, and we get the short end of the stick.

In my view managed retreat from the flood plains is the only sustainable course of action. That does not mean we cannot utilise these spaces in some way, but whatever does get built will need to be resilient to extreme weather. There are plenty of international examples we can copy.

One we could consider would be to redevelop the Kumeū Town Centre and a Park and Ride with retail, hospitality, and residential above. This would be supported by the Rapid Transport Network proposed by NZTA and the council for the Northwest. This may in fact offer an attractive opportunity for landowners to divest some of the distressed property in the flood plain east of SH16.

There will be a fair few haircuts between where we are and where we will end up, but let's be civil in this debate. We are all in this together and there are a couple of other stages in the processing of grief to get through yet.

The Transport Conundrum

There exists a view that the transport network is of greater significance nationally than the interests and concerns of the communities that this network serves. Further, there is a view that the only important road users are heavy transport, cars, and motorcycles. This is simply untrue. Pedestrians, cyclists, and equestrians are also road users. It's important that these road users can safely use the transport network as well. One way to do this is management of speed. If the differential between the speeds of these different user types can be reduced it is safer for the most vulnerable.

The hysterical adoption of separate networks for different user types is expensive and conflicts with the transport function of the network. I am of the view that the network can be safely shared, and the provision of off-road networks should be primarily for recreation rather than transport. We only need to look at Holland to get a feel for this.

As for the communities that the transport network passes through, surely they should have the last say about the speed limits and pedestrian safety solutions adopted locally.

Run for the Local Board

If these are things you care about, then please consider running for the Local Board in the election next year. Talk with existing board members if you want to learn more.



- Brent Bailey

Chair, Rodney Local Board

brent.bailey@aucklandcouncil.govt.nz



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Free movie night

There will be a free screening of the Disney movie *Raya and the Last Dragon* at Kaipātiki Reserve in Parakai on Friday, March 21, from 7pm. Locals should bring a picnic, blanket and chairs. The family-friendly evening is alcohol-free, and there will be coffee and food available from Waimauku-based Ruka Janes Treats and J & J Catering & Coffee.

The screening is part of Auckland Council's free Movies in Parks programme.



HELENSVILLE NEWS - PUBLICATION INFORMATION

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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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CAR BOOT SALE

The next Helensville Car Boot Sale will be held on Saturday, March 8 from 8.30am to 12.30pm at 40 Commercial Road, beside the WINZ building (weather permitting). Stalls are \$15, book at FIGG, 44 Commercial Road. For more information phone Holly on 021 488 427 or email: holly@figg.co.nz.

HELENSVILLE VILLAGE MARKET

At Helensville Showgrounds on Sunday, March 16 from 8.30am to 1pm. Live music from Ralphe, free hair plaiting, pony rides. A wide selection of stalls including local crafts and art, skin and health care, pet health care, jewellery, candles, soaps, preserves, hand knits and spinning, plants, fruit and vegetables, flowers, and eggs. Plus food, coffee, donuts, and icecream. No dogs except assistance dogs. Gold coin donation for parking. Email: sarah@riversidecrafts.co.nz

Business Hub cont...

• From Page 10

She adds that it is being used each Monday and Tuesday by the South Kaipara Men's Trust: "we're happy to support Mike and other organisations like that" (see article on page 10).

Hot desks in the hub cost just \$25 per day, and people who book for four days get a fifth day free. The meeting room can be booked in four-hour time slots. Both are available seven days a week.

Both the hot desks and meeting room can be booked online and paid for through the northwestcountry.co.nz website. Once the booking is complete a security code is provided to access the premises.

The Business Hub is also a designated emergency business hub with backup power being installed and available for anyone to use in an emergency.

During Arts in the Ville last year the Business Hub became a pop-up gallery, and Danielle says more than 200 people visited, generating \$5000 in sales for the artists there.

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Special community edition

For our June issue this year, we will be repeating our special *Helensville News* issue listing voluntary organisations, community groups, and local clubs in our area. This is FREE, and was very well received last year and in the previous times we produced it over the past decade.

It will follow the same format as before with organisations and clubs grouped in three main categories:

- Community & Service Groups
- Clubs & General Interest Groups
- Sports & Fitness Clubs/Groups.

Now we need you to tell us about your group. It's a great chance to boost the profile of your club or group, and maybe increase your membership.

Most organisations will already have been listed in our 2024 issue, so the first visit: www.helensville.co.nz/helensvillenews/groups. There's a link to a PDF of that issue at the top of the page so you can check if you already have a listing. We will also try to contact directly all previously listed groups. If you do have a listing but it needs updating, email your changes to: dave@helensvillenews.co.nz. If you want a new listing, please email us as much of the information listed on the web page as possible. We can also email you a form if you prefer. The absolute **deadline is Friday, April 18** - sooner is much better.

Please provide as much information as possible - things like what the organisation/club does, membership numbers, how long it's been running, and when meetings or events are held. If your organisation has a logo, email that to us too. The more information you provide us with, the better your listing will be. If email isn't an option, feel free to phone us on 021 178 5568.

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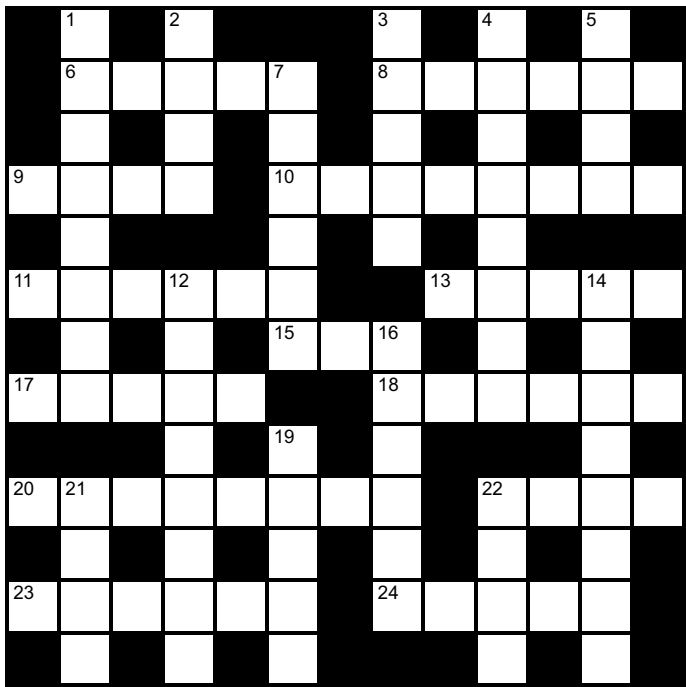
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crossword



- Across
- 6. Type of male (5)
 - 8. Scattered rubbish (6)
 - 9. Inhabitant of e.g. Helsinki (4)
 - 10. Insensitive (8)
 - 11. Biased (6)
 - 13. Morsels (5)
 - 15. Exclamation of contempt (3)
 - 17. Renown (5)
 - 18. General escape (6)
 - 20. Elongate (8)
 - 22. Religious practice (4)
 - 23. Seventh planet (6)
 - 24. Proof of being elsewhere (5)

- Down
- 1. Reasonable (8)
 - 2. Atop (4)
 - 3. Not in silence (5)
 - 4. Short dagger (8)
 - 5. Long fish (4)
 - 7. Soak up (6)
 - 12. Self-important (8)
 - 14. Peak (8)
 - 16. Rupture (6)
 - 19. That group (5)
 - 21. Lugs (4)
 - 22. Restraint (4)

February's Answers
Across: 5. Throttle 7. Dish 9. Impressionism 10. Aside 11. Usually 14. Quarter 16. Skint 19. Tablespoonful 21. Asps 22. Operates.
Down: 1. Thames 2. Corridor 3. Eerie 4. Eden 6 Tusk 8. Sisal 12. Arkansas 13. Teashop 15. Urals 17. Nausea 18. Lose 20. Lisp.

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