

# Karnival coming

The hugely popular Karori Karnival returns to Ben Burn Park in exactly one month.

Run by the Karori Lions Club, the Karori Karnival will run from 10am to 2pm on Sunday 22 February.

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The Wellington Red Hackle Band getting last year's Karori Karnival off to a great start. Photo: Supplied.



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**Frank Neill**

[herald@wsn.co.nz](mailto:herald@wsn.co.nz)

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# The highlight of Karori's calendar

*Continued from page 1.*

The event is the highlight of the Karori calendar and was hugely successful last year.

Around 1,000 people descended on Ben Burn Park for the event, and it raised more than \$10,000 that all goes back into the community.

Among the very good causes the Karori Karnival has helped with funds in the past include Life Flight, Child Cancer and the Lions Skin Cancer Bus, but over the years there have been a great many, including health, youth, vision, environment and disaster relief causes.

"This event has become an important fixture in Karori's calendar," the Karori Lions Communications Director Trevor Anders says.

"It is one of the longest running events of its kind in New Zealand, and just gets more popular every year.

"What makes it special is that the expansive park location enables families to spread out and relax, watching the all-day on-stage entertainment while enjoying some of the delicious choice of foods available.

"Then there's all the craft stalls, the kids' rides and the opportunity to have a look at all sorts of information stalls. It really is a fun family day out, with something for everyone."

"We have many of the popular

old stalls, and some new ones, and the good news is that there's room for more stalls at this time," Club Projects Director Joanne Knight says.

"So get in quickly if you want to have a stall there.

"Complete information and application forms are available on our website [www.karorikarnival.com](http://www.karorikarnival.com)

"The good news for the public is that admission is free!"

Lions will be operating their BBQ trailer, book stall, raffle and white elephant stall, which together with stallholder fees provides the income from the event for the Karori Lions Charitable Trust.

"While we make some money from the event, the main purpose is to provide a fun day for our community, and give other charitable organisations the opportunity to also promote what they are doing," the club's Treasurer Jo Cameron says.

"Every dollar we receive from the public goes back into the community through our charitable trust, supporting, health, youth, the environment, disaster relief and needed community facilities.

"Our members have continued to be busy through the Christmas break, not only preparing for Karnival," Jo says.

"We have packed Christmas treats for residents of rest homes, and some elderly living on their



Three-year-old Lucy Hibbard gets her face painted at last year's Karori Karnival. Photo: Frank Neill.

own, and delivered clothing and other items to the Homeless Women's Trust and to the Men's Shelter.

"The Spirit of Adventure Trust was delighted to hear that we are sending them a record amount of \$37,000 to enable their annual Inspiration Voyage on the tall ship 'Spirit of New Zealand.'

"This was raised from our annual appeal to all Lions clubs in New Zealand, something we have successfully done since 1999.

"The Inspiration Voyage is a life-changing experience for young Kiwis with disabilities, and we

are so proud to have been a part of enabling this and witnessing the hugely positive effects on the young people."

"Karori Lions are a diverse group of men and women of all ages who are community minded and have a simple wish to help others in need and help make a better world," Trevor says.

"If you want the camaraderie and support of like-minded people while you do good things, you are welcome to contact us through Facebook [www.facebook.com/KaroriLionsClubInc](http://www.facebook.com/KaroriLionsClubInc) or text or phone Trevor at 021 454 056."

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A scene from a past BSA International Rally. Photo: Supplied.

## Bonus for motorcycling enthusiasts

Motorcycle racing enthusiasts will have the opportunity to see international action with the 63rd BSA International Rally being held in the Hutt Valley from 13 to 20 February 2026.

Motorcycle riders from around the world have already registered for the event.

BSA (Birmingham Small Arms) was once the world's biggest name in motorcycles before production ceased in 1973 before restarting again in 2021.

New Zealand BSA International Rally spokesperson and NZBSAOC President, Graeme Reilly, says around 130 people and 100 bikes are expected to attend the event.

"We already have bookings from BSA riders in the Netherlands, Australia, United

Kingdom, United States, Belgium, Canada and Germany.

"They are revving their engines and can't wait to get here."

The bikes, with gloriously named models such as Empire Star, A65, Rocket 3, Bantam and the immortal Gold Star, will be on display at Lower Hutt's Dowse Square on Saturday 14 February between 2pm and 3:30pm.

"This is only the third time the BSA International Rally has been held in New Zealand and presents a rare opportunity for classic bike lovers, and those who enjoy fine machinery, to see what all the fuss is about."

Graeme says the 2026 Rally will be based at Upper Hutt's Silverstream Retreat.

New guide

The Wellington Region Emergency Management Office (WREMO) has launched a new emergency preparedness guide adapted by and for disabled people.

The guide is part of a bigger project making sure disabled people have the tools and support they need to plan for and get through emergencies.

It's a New Zealand version on the Person-Centred Emergency Planning (P-CEP) from Australia and has been adapted here in Aotearoa with the help of disabled people from across the region.

Workshops will accompany the guide that focus on practical planning and having the right conversations before an emergency happens.

Whaikaha /Ministry of Disabled People and NEMA have both given their support and are working on a national version and alternate formats.

"It's the first guide of its kind in New Zealand and an exciting step toward a more inclusive, consistent and equitable emergency preparedness system for everyone," WREMO says.



The Chaytor Street retaining wall. Photo: Frank Neill.

# Bigger plan for Karori needed

By Frank Neill

The big old Chaytor Street retaining wall is going to be upgraded.

Wellington City Council has put out tenders for strengthening of the wall, which was constructed in the 1920s and is now nearly 100 years old.

The fact that the Council is moving to strengthen the wall has been welcomed by the Wharangi/Onslow-Western Ward Councillor Diane Calvert.

"The Chaytor Street wall strengthening is good," she says.

"It needs to be done."

At the same time it needs to be part of a much bigger plan for the development of Karori infrastructure.

There is a "nasty intersection" nearby, which needs to be improved

And "we need to start the conversation again about upgrading the Karori tunnel.

"It is 100 years old and it doesn't take double decker buses."

Karori needs either "a bigger tunnel or a new tunnel," Cr Calvert says.

"We need to get the Karori tunnel back on

the agenda, even if it is in the long term."

Also "to have only one road in and out of the suburb is inhibiting the growth of Karori.

"We need to reinvigorate a discussion about Karori infrastructure and whether it is fit for purpose and what we are going to do about it.

"It is about making sure that Karori is properly serviced.

"We should be requesting that there is priority given to Karori," Cr Calvert says, adding that "I will certainly be making noise about it."

The Council is strengthening the Chaytor Street retaining wall to improve its performance in natural hazard events, particularly earthquakes, and minimise the consequential disruption to the route and the community at large.

The current wall no longer meets modern safety standards. Strengthening the wall ensures the long-term stability of the road corridor and safety for everyone who uses it.

The project has been a long time coming. Chaytor Street was first assessed in 2011.

In 2019 the Council engaged a consultant to undertake further investigations, develop

design options, and prepare a detailed design for the preferred solution, which was completed in 2020.

Given the Covid 19 pandemic, and associated reduction in NZTA funding, the Chaytor St project was not progressed at that time due to the prioritisation of other projects.

As tenders for the project are now being called, a contract has yet to be awarded and work started.

Once work does start there will be some dispute on what is a busy section of roads while the work is under way.

The bus lane adjacent to the wall will be temporarily closed and shifted to the adjacent traffic lane.

The current parking lane will be used to maintain two-way traffic. There will also be some minor adjustments to kerb alignment and footpath width.

Detailed traffic management plans are still being developed.

The Council is working closely with Metlink, Zealandia and other key stakeholders, and will continue to engage with the community and share updates as plans are confirmed.

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Spokesperson for Courts and Veterans' Affairs  
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### Get in touch

My office is open 9am - 4pm  
Monday to Friday

04 478 3332

[greg.oconnor@parliament.govt.nz](mailto:greg.oconnor@parliament.govt.nz)

2/18 Moorefield Road, Johnsonville, Wellington

[Labour.org.nz/gregocconnor](http://Labour.org.nz/gregocconnor)

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# Keep Wellington Beautiful relaunches



Volunteers at Keep Wellington Beautiful's first clean up day since it was relaunched. Photo: Supplied.

Kelburn resident and sustainability advocate Melissa Lieser has led the recent relaunch of Keep Wellington Beautiful.

Melissa, of Clean Where You Walk, has re-established the initiative to create regular, community-led opportunities for people to care for the city's coastline.

The first event was a community coastal clean-up held along the Evans Bay coastline, bringing together a diverse group of Wellingtonians united by a shared commitment to protecting the local environment.

Volunteers from all walks of life took part, including families with children, university students, government representatives and long-time

local residents.

Together, the group collected more than 100 kilograms of rubbish from the coastline, demonstrating both the scale of the issue and the power of collective action.

The strong turnout reflected a clear appetite within the community to engage in hands-on environmental stewardship and highlighted the important role that local, regular action plays in keeping Aotearoa New Zealand's coastlines clean, healthy and accessible.

Looking ahead, Keep Wellington Beautiful will host monthly community clean-up events at beaches and coastal areas across Wellington City. These family-friendly events will

provide equipment, guidance and a welcoming space for people to come together, care for their local environment and become part of a growing network of kaitiaki for Wellington's coastline.

By re-establishing a consistent presence in the capital the initiative aims to build long-term community engagement, raise awareness about marine litter and contribute to the national mission of making Aotearoa New Zealand clean, green and beautiful.

Those interested in staying up to date with upcoming events are encouraged to follow Keep Wellington Beautiful on Instagram and Facebook.



Cr Ben McNulty, who set in motion the bid to keep motorcycle parking free. Photo: Supplied.

## Motorcycle parking will be free

Motorcycle parking is going to remain free in Wellington city.

This follows a decision by Wellington City Councillors to overturn an earlier decision to charge for the parking.

The Council's Te Taurapa Council Planning and Finance Committee decided on 17 December to revoke the decision by the previous Council's Kōrau Tōtōpū Long-Term Finance and Performance Committee on 22 May 2025 to introduce a \$1 per hour fee on Monday to Friday from 8am to 8pm.

The decision not to charge for motorcycle parking came on the initiative of Deputy Mayor Ben McNulty, who is a Northern Ward Councillor.

He gained the signed support of seven Councillors to put the Notice of Revocation onto the committee agenda, saying the revocation was common sense.

"The economics of charging for motorcycle parking were simply not convincing for me, the Mayor and the majority of Councillors now, and was out of step with public sentiment," Cr McNulty said.

"Wellington was set to be the

only city in New Zealand that charged for motorcycle parking.

"That's not a good look for a city that wants to encourage different and more climate-friendly transport options into the city.

"We were clear that we wanted to take another look at this before Christmas, we've now done that and agreed that the charges should not be implemented.

"Wellingtonians are already struggling with the cost of living, and placing more charges on motorcycles doesn't appear to be the right thing to do at this time.

"We want people to stay as long as possible in town.

"Wellington's retail and hospitality sectors need our support.

"Stopping these charges demonstrates this Council's commitment to encouraging more people into the central city to shop and enjoy the inner city.

"While Council will forego some revenue, I strongly believe that the benefits to the inner city, our businesses and the capital's quality of life will outweigh the marginal financial impacts," Cr McNulty said.

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# KAT auditioning for short plays



Ava Voci with Theo Nettleton in Legend, one of the plays in KAT theatre's 2024 programme of short plays. Photo: Supplied.

Why perform in a short play? This is the question KAT Theatre recently asked Ava Voci, a seasoned actor in both short and full-length plays, who is planning to audition for KAT's upcoming season of short plays.

Anyone else who wants to audition can find out more by reading the details on KAT's website [kat-theatre.org.nz](http://kat-theatre.org.nz) and then emailing [katmembership@gmail.com](mailto:katmembership@gmail.com). Those who email will be sent the link to the scripts and a form to fill in before coming to the auditions on Sunday 1 February.

"For a start, being in a short play is a great way to scratch your theatre itch when you don't have the time to commit to a large play," Ava says.

"But it's more than that. "It's often an opportunity to get to know the work of some of the less well known playwrights, or the less well known work of some of the famous ones.

"And short plays, like short stories, are a different artform from their longer counterparts. They have to pack a punch in a bite-sized chunk of time.

"It's very satisfying to be involved in that kind of creativity.

"I think that's why audiences enjoy a programme of short plays too – they get to experience the telling of several stories all

in one outing." Another who enjoys short plays is Liz Ebrey. She is directing a play which wraps strong social commentary into a tense murder mystery.

"The fun of directing a short play really is that you read a script and get a little germination of an idea and then you build on it with a team of cast and crew, eventually seeing what was originally just a concept in your mind come to life on the stage," Liz says.

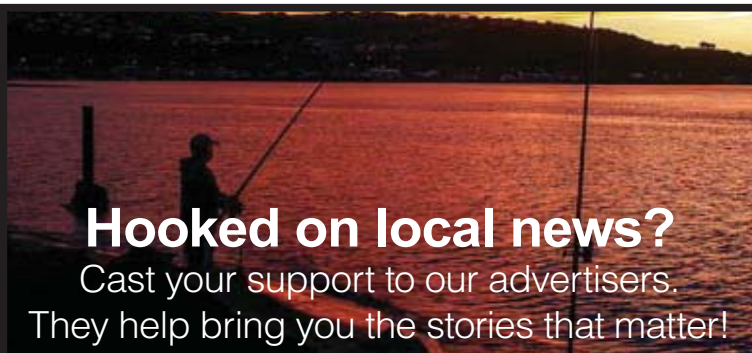
Another of the four plays is Queen B, written by Pip Hall (daughter of Roger Hall, one of New Zealand's most prolific playwrights).

"When I started reading for this production I found quite a few scripts that I liked, but eventually chose Queen B because I like its feminist themes," director Megan Davies says.

"It's set in a dystopian not-too-far-into-the-future world, which I'm sure will also appeal to lots of actors as well as our audiences."

Of the other two plays in this programme one is an exploration of hope in the face of despair and the other is pure comedy.

Between them, the four plays have roles for three men and 11 women, spanning ages from 17 to mid-60s. Actors of all levels of experience are welcome.



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# Z Manu championship returnig this month



A competitor performing a manu. Photo: Supplied.

By Frank Neill

The competition to make the biggest splash is coming to Wellington.

The Wellington Z Manu Super Qualifier will be held at the Wellington Regional Aquatic Centre on Saturday 31 January.

Said to be a Kiwi invention, the Manu is all about making a big splash.

The bomb technique sees competitors' bodies form a distinct V-shape so their bottoms and lower backs hit the water first, while the arms and legs are extended to create both a loud clap and a large splash.

The Wellington Super Qualifier will determine finalists across the Manu and Freestyle divisions, who will go head-to-head in the Z Many World Championships at the Karanga Plaza, Viaduct Harbour, Auckland, on 14 March.

Last year, more than 2,000 Manu enthusiasts of all levels of ability took part across adult, youth and junior divisions in regional qualifiers nationwide.

From these 130 finalists made it to Auckland's Viaduct, where a stunning 7-metre-high x 20-metre-wide Manu tower drew huge crowds and showcased the skill and athleticism of competitors.

"The Z Manu World Champs have captured the hearts and imagination of New Zealanders," the event's organiser Scott Rice says.

"It's been awesome to see our athletes step

up and be celebrated.

"Now, with two years of successful competition behind us, it's even more exciting.

"We've got reigning champs returning to defend their titles, contenders determined to set the record straight and plenty of new faces stepping up.

"This will be the event of summer.

"It's always been our intention to go international, so we're really excited to be expanding to Australia this year, then bringing the finals back to Moana Auckland."

The Gold Coast event, held over Waitangi weekend in partnership with Queensland Diving, marks the competition's first official international qualifier.

Gold Coast Manu exponents will be selected following this event to compete at the Z Manu World Championships in Auckland.

Beyond competition, the Z Manu World Champs is committed to impact.

Through Sport NZ's Push Play programme, it inspires Kiwis to get active and embrace the outdoors, with Water Safety New Zealand as a foundation partner.

"At its core, the Z Manu World Champs is about celebrating New Zealanders' connection to water and encouraging people to stay active," Scott says.

"It's about having fun over summer – safely.

"We're proud to partner with Water Safety New Zealand and Push Play, because participation and safety are at the heart of what we do."



Amy Grace Laura Atkins. Photo: Supplied.

## Interactive theatre for children

Children can explore tiny worlds of imagination with award-winning performer Amy Grace Laura's intimate theatre performances entitled Little Landscapes for tamariki aged from 4 to 6 and their caregivers.

Hosted by Wellington City Libraries, Little Landscapes is a sensory and intimate experience, rooted in the textures and patterns of the natural world which invites audiences into a quiet, playful environment where tiny worlds unfurl and imagination meets memory.

Little Landscapes has a runtime of approximately 27 minutes.

It is intended to be a small show and only has space for five children and five grown-ups at each showing. All adults must be accompanied by a child.

Little Landscapes is showing at the following locations:

- Te Takapū o Patukawenga Mervyn Kemp (Tawa) Library on Saturday 24 January.
- Ngā Puna Waiora Newtown Library on Saturday 31 January.

Each location will host three shows, beginning at 11am, 11.40am, and 12.20pm.

Bookings are not required, but Wellington

Libraries recommend that people arrive slightly before their desired time to secure their spot.

Amy Grace Laura Atkins is an award-winning theatre-maker, clown, puppeteer, poet and event manager based in Te Whanganui-ā-Tara Wellington.

With a passion for live art, puppetry, poetry and theatre, Amy makes an array of playful work for young people and adults.

Amy is an alumna of the John Bolton Theatre School, which is where she started learning the art of bouffon, clown, melodrama and neutral mask.

She has been creating and performing children's theatre since 2012 and embraces the challenge of connecting with tamariki through performance.

Amy has worked with a range of organisations including Tall Poppies Collective, Little Dog Barking, Birdlife Productions and KidzStuff Theatre for Children.

Amy also holds a Bachelor of Arts in English and Theatre Studies from Massey University, and has an Advanced Associate Diploma in the Teaching of Speech and Drama from Speech New Zealand.



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# Summerset Boulcott Open Days

Just a short drive from Wellington, **Summerset Boulcott** is a vibrant retirement village located in the sought-after suburb of Boulcott, in the heart of Lower Hutt. The village offers beautifully appointed villas, apartments, serviced apartments, and a range of care and specialist dementia care living options.\* The village centre features resort-style facilities and a resident bar with picturesque views over the golf course.

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# Group to look at reducing rates rise

By Frank Neill

A working group to look at whether the proposed rates rise can be reduced has been established by Mayor Andrew Little.

Named the Revenue and Finance Working Group it will be chaired by the deputy Mayor Ben McNulty.

Local Councillors Tony Randall, Andrea Compton, Diane Calvert and Rebecca Mathews are also on the group, along with Mayor Little.

The group will be "reviewing what we can do to make some savings," Cr Randall told the "Independent Herald".

"The bad news is that the rates increase is too high."

"The Council have already cut what was

going to be an 11.2% rates increase to a 9.2% rates increase.

"But we need to cut it more," Cr Randall says.

"Some of the things we need to look at are some of the planned projects the previous Council has approved, but this Council could decide that they are not of such a priority that they need to go ahead as urgently as was previous planned."

The Revenue and Finance Working Group is just a working group and it will not be having public meetings, Cr Randall notes.

The "Independent Herald" attempted to contact the group chair, Cr Nulty, who did not respond to messages. Then the paper was told that Cr McNulty was on holiday and unobtainable.

# More predator trapping needed

By Frank Neill

Karori residents have recorded trapping 825 predators during 2025, figures released by Predator Free Karori show.

The catches included 547 rats, 252 mice, 20 hedgehogs and six mustelids (stoats, weasels, ferrets etc).

"Thanks to your amazing backyard trapping efforts," Predator Free Karori says.

"Keep up the great work in 2026.

"Is your trap locked and loaded? Please do it.

"There's a rat highway running through

Karori and we want to nail it."

People can register their catches at <http://tinyurl.com/y9tzeclw>.

There are Predator Free organisations throughout the northern and western suburbs, including Predator Free Ngaio, Khandallah, Johnsonville, Newlands and Otari, Rodent Free Wadestown and the Kelburn Conservation Network.

By trapping predators, the people involved with these organisations are helping preserve New Zealand's native wildlife.

The Predator Free groups are keen for people to make contact with them and then to begin trapping the pests.

# Debit and credit card transport payments coming

Payment by debit or credit card on Metlink trains and buses will be possible in early 2026, with the introduction of contactless payment functionality using Snapper equipment.

Snapper cards will continue to operate as normal and Snapper cardholders do not need to make any changes.

The Snapper systems and devices on-board buses and at train stations will be upgraded to enable full fare paying, adult customers to tag on and off using their credit card, debit cards or mobile devices (for Visa and Mastercard payments).

The addition of contactless payment is intended to encourage an uptake of credit and debit card usage ahead of the full NTS

functionality in 2027 says Metlink senior manager for strategy and investments Tim Shackleton.

"The goal is to make it easier to transition full fare paying, adult customers to a new way to pay, prior to introducing additional functionality such as integrated bus-rail fares and fare capping, which will come with NTS," he says.

Snapper chief executive Miki Szikszai says, "Snapper is pleased to bring contactless payment capability to Wellingtonians in partnership with Metlink."

"This capability will be supported on existing Snapper equipment with the same tag on/tag off experience for PT users."

# Dancing for life



Wendy Dunphy (left) with the President of the Johnsonville Scottish Country Dance Club Maureen Sullivan. Photo: Supplied.

The Johnsonville Scottish Country Dance Club is looking forward to another successful and fun filled year of dancing at Khandallah Town Hall in 2026.

The club is always keen to introduce new people to the joys of Scottish Country Dancing – exercise that feels like fun (there is a lot of laughter), good company and new friends, and a bit of a "mental" challenge also learning something new.

Each year the club runs a series of three beginners' classes so people can come along, give it a go, and find out what Scottish Country Dancing is all about.

The Johnsonville Scottish Country Dance club will offer beginners' classes for three weeks in February – on the 9th, 16th and 23th – before the club year proper begins on 2 March.

Doors open at 7:15pm for dancing from 7:30pm to 9:30pm. Cost is \$5 per class (cash only).

No experience or partner is needed, or maybe you danced years ago and want to take it up again – all are welcome.

Wear flat shoes with soft soles and dress in layers as you would for exercise. You may also want to bring your own water bottle.

In 2024, Khandallah local, Wendy Dunphy, noticed billboards around the neighbourhood advertising Monday night Scottish Country Dancing (SCD) beginners' classes at Khandallah Town Hall.

Although she knew absolutely nothing about SCD, she had been to a ceilidh some time back and absolutely loved it, so was keen to give this a try.

And she was hooked:

"From the very first moment I felt a connection with the music and the dance moves," she says.

"Any reluctance I may have felt as a begin-

ner was quickly overcome as experienced dancers partner with the beginners and guide them through the movements.

"The club is wonderfully welcoming and embraces newcomers with enthusiasm."

Wendy also gives credit to longtime tutor, Rod Downey, who "carefully structures the year so we progress from simple to increasingly complex steps and formations", encouraging beginners to relax and have a good time as they build confidence on the dance floor.

And she enjoys the social side of dancing as well.

"We're a diverse group, many different ages, from many different backgrounds, some with deep Scottish heritage and some with no Scottish connections whatsoever," she says.

"The music and the dancing connect us. We dance with a different partner every dance, so people feel equally comfortable coming as a single or a couple.

"There's an enormous amount of joy in the dances which sometimes explodes into laughter as one of us heads off in the wrong direction." And while we might arrive a bit weary at 7.30 on a Monday night we universally leave feeling rejuvenated and uplifted."

Dances range from lively jigs and reels to more stately and elegant strathspeys, with fantastic Scottish tunes to accompany them.

Suitable for teenagers 13 and up, adults can continue experiencing the joy of SCD well into later life. Come along and add SCD to your life experience in 2026.

To find out more about Scottish Country Dancing visit the club's website [www.johnsonvillescdd.org.nz/](http://www.johnsonvillescdd.org.nz/) or contact Robert on 021 163 9649 or at [johnsonvillescdd@gmail.com](mailto:johnsonvillescdd@gmail.com), or Maureen on 027 447 2312.

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# What's hot in the Wairarapa



## Wairarapa's eventful summer is here

Wairarapa's summer calendar is heating up with a lineup of diverse events mix of events celebrating creativity, heritage, food, wine and community. The Martinborough Fair on 7 February remains a highlight, filling the village square with an outstanding showcase of New Zealand-made crafts, fashion and artisan goods.

On 8 February, the Greytown Heritage Trust House and Garden Tour opens the doors to some of the town's most beautiful private homes and gardens, offering a rare insight into Greytown's architectural

charm and carefully curated landscapes.

Wine lovers gather on 21 February for the Wairarapa Wines Harvest Festival, where local wineries, food producers and live entertainment come together for a relaxed celebration of the region's renowned flavours.

Community spirit takes centre stage at Summer Hummer on 28 February in Masterton's Queen Elizabeth Park. This affordable, family-friendly concert features headline performances from Chaii and Frankie Venter, alongside local talent, with food trucks, picnic vibes and park



activities creating an easygoing summer atmosphere. Entry is \$5.

March brings iconic events including the Golden Shears World Shearing and Woolhandling Championships from 4-7 March and the coastal thrill of the Castlepoint Races on 21 March, rounding out a season rich in Wairarapa character.

Find out more about these events and the region at [www.wairarapanz.com](http://www.wairarapanz.com)

## Private trail and accommodation at Tora

2025 sees the opening of a new private trail, The Last Resort Walk to the Wairarapa's rugged east coast, between Tora and White Rock and back.

Ben and Georgie Lutyens, owners of Riversdale Station, a working cattle station where The Last Resort Walk is based, have a long history in the Wairarapa, with Ben's family connection stretching back six generations. The walk also has a bike and horse trekking option, an addition to their existing opportunities for groups to tailor their visit.

The trail is 11km to The Last Resort accommodation, comprising "The Roost" and "The Old Place", returning the following day via a loop track. Visitors can add a 7-10km track heading down to the beach and back, and stay for a second night.

Ben and Georgie wanted to create a different kind of experience, "our land is

rustic and charming, and we wanted to share that. The Walk is mostly through bush. The 360-degree view from the top, or the sunrise from your bedroom makes this quite special" says Ben.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of The Last Resort is that bookings are exclusive, meaning visitors have the trail and accommodation all to themselves, ideal for family get togethers or groups of friends. The Last Resort is self-catered. Ben and Georgie find visitors enjoy cooking together in the fully equipped kitchen "it's a homely way to finish the day" says Ben.

"We like to make visitors feel at home, so when we take their luggage and food up in our Can-Am vehicles, we pop beverages in the fridge, light the fire if it's chilly and turn on the hot tub under the stars" says Georgie.

You can see more about The Last Resort at [www.lastresortwalk.co.nz](http://www.lastresortwalk.co.nz)

## Plenty of fresh fruit flavour in Choice Fruits hampers

What could be nicer than a picnic over summer indulging in fine food and wine from Choice Fruit Products?

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Whilst they are based in the Wairarapa, their online store means you can order from anywhere worldwide, with flat-rate shipping (NZ-wide delivery only) - great for sending gifts from afar!

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# Local history – Karori Tea Gardens

By Felicity Wong

When Wellington was colonised its one acre town sections were accompanied by 100 acre country sections in the outer surrounding areas.

One of those original 100 acre sections was section 36 in the Karori District, an L shaped portion of land between Donald and Campbell Streets, now served by Ellerton and Mansfield Ways.

It was taken up by John Yule of Glasgow in 1839, who did not settle there but sold it by auction in two hectare lots at the end of 1841.

Lot 19 (which fronted Donald Street) came to be owned by Robert Donald.

He was a gardener from Insh, Aberdeenshire, Scotland who had arrived with his wife Jane in 1851.

The Donalds lived in a house built by George Edwards, a teacher who had surrounded it with holly hedges.

“Robert Donald’s Nursery and Tea Garden” was established on the five acre Donald Street lot and soon became an important tree nursery.

He advertised regularly, and the venture flourished.

In 1858 he purchased lot 18 (to the west) for 50 pounds, and then lot 14 (north) in 1859 for 120 pounds.

Eleven and a half acres came from early Karori settler John Campbell.

Donald sold trees to visiting “officials” from the Wellington Botanical Gardens.

An 1871 invoice records a purchase of conifer seedlings from

R Donald for sixpence each and larches for 1/6.

The Donalds, and sons James and Robert, also ran a tea garden, where day trippers could wander around the garden and enjoy refreshments in the Donald’s homestead.

Entrances were from what are now Ellerton and Masfield Ways.

The Cyclopaedia of New Zealand (an early business directory) for 1898 contains a photo of Governor George Grey planting a tree at the gardens in 1868.

Following Donald’s death in 1895, Lucy Young, a widow, and William Young, a nurseryman, leased the whole property of 26.5 acres for three years then purchased it for 1,650 pounds.

Young’s Pleasure Gardens attracted many visitors.

An advertisement for “Special Show Day at the Karori Pleasure Gardens on 18 November 1897” advertised “tennis, boating etc and refreshments” and offered transport: “Young’s brakes will run to the gardens leaving Fitzgerald Corner at 10, 12 and 2. Return fares including admission 1/6, Sundays 2pm 2/2.”

The gardens were popular for staff picnics and church outings.

A plan of the gardens was made by surveyor A W Seaton in 1900 and used for an auction of sections along the Campbell Street frontage of the gardens held in 1901.

Of the two entrances, the Donald Road was the main one (Ellerton Way).

A longer drive went through a farm gate located near the right of

way entrance to (now) 83 and 85 Campbell Street.

Most of the walks on the north side of the gardens were through native bush, and one ran between twin hedges which was popular with amorous young folk.

On the Campbell Street side was a 1.8 metre deep lake dug by hand and two ponds, fed by the stream coming off the hills beyond (now Duthie Street and Messines Road).

Between the driveway and the lake, with its island, were tennis and croquet courts and children’s play areas.

Tea was served in the homestead, a two storey house with a steep gabled roof and a wide verandah.

There were four bedrooms upstairs and a large bay window drawing room downstairs.

Waitresses wore ankle length black dresses and starched white frilled aprons.

A two roomed cottage was used by the gardener, and a conservatory on high ground to the east of the homestead displayed exotic plants.

Tea was also taken in a summer house made of ponga with a frond leafed roof.

In 1904 most of the gardens were sold to John Fortesque Wright Mills and his wife, Dr Daisy Platts, a prominent Wellington medical doctor.

By 1914 the grounds had deteriorated and the house was unoccupied.

In 1928 the Karori Gardens Estate Company subdivided and sold the



Beauchamp Street 1904. Photo: karorihistory.org.nz.



Karori main road 1895. Photo: karorihistory.org.nz.

land.

William Lavelle purchased the property known as “Holly Hedges” in 1934 and preserved the original holly hedges.

The remainder of the land was sold to town planner Reginald Hammond who drained the lake and fish ponds, demolished the

homestead and further subdivided.

In 1975 Cathie Dunning, previous owner of a half hectare remnant at 10 Mansfield Way, had its rare and significant trees protected as a historic area and place of natural beauty. Last year that legal protection was quietly removed under the Wellington District Plan Review.

## Sludge levy undercharge error

Wellington City Council has discovered an error that caused it to undercharge the household and commercial sludge levy in the quarterly rates invoices sent on 1 August 2025 and 1 November 2025.

Households have been undercharged between \$3 and \$100 each, with an average undercharge of \$40 per levy payer.

Commercial levy payers have been undercharged between \$500 and \$5,000, an average of \$1,200 per levy payer.

The Council is the only entity that owes more than \$5,000. It has the highest undercharge of \$63,186 for its properties.

The total undercharged amount is \$3.436 million, which the Council is legally required to collect and pass on to the financial

entity set up to fund Wellington City Council’s (WCC) new Sludge Minimisation Facility, Sludge Finance LP.

As such, the Council cannot selectively waive or absorb levy charges.

Instead, levy payers will see the undercharge added to the two remaining rates invoices to be sent on 1 February and 1 May 2026.

Most of the adjustment (three quarters of the adjustment) will be included in the February invoice, with the remainder applied in the final instalment on 1 May.

The correction does not mean levy payers will pay more than they should. It simply brings everyone to the correct annual levy that applies to their property.

Andrea Reeves, the Council’s

Chief Strategy and Finance Officer, says: “We want to sincerely apologise for this error.

“It was discovered during a quarterly reporting review, and Council took immediate action to review how the error occurred.

“To prevent this happening again, stronger internal controls have been put in place, including additional review steps.

“We want to reassure Wellingtonians that their February rates notice will include personalised information about the undercharge on their account, and no penalties or interest will be applied for the undercharged sludge levy.”

The Council announced the error on 17 December, after the deadline for the last 2025 issue of the “Independent Herald”.

## Waitangi day theatre coming here

By Frank Neill

The theatre roadshow “He Māori?” is touring three Wellington venues, including the Khandallah Town Hall, on Waitangi Day, Friday 6 February.

It will run from 1:30pm to 3pm at the Khandallah Town Hall.

The show will also play at the Tawa Community Centre from 10am to 11:30am and at the Hannah Playhouse from 4pm to 5:30pm.

“He Māori?” has the tagline “Te Tiriti and Me”.

It asks the question “is 1/16th enough?”

Performed by Ihaka Martyn (Ngāti Tūwharetoa, Te Arawa), the show promises to have people laughing and crying as he weaves

elements of stand-up comedy, waiata and physical performance to explore the confusion, comedy and celebration of reclaiming his Māoritanga from a Pākehā upbringing.

It is a 60 minute journey from total confusion to partial understanding. “He aha? He Māori? Is he? Maybe – it depends.”

“He Māori?” is presented in partnership with Taki Rua Productions, and is suitable for all ages.

There will be a question and answer session after each performance.

Performances are free, but bookings are required.

People can book for the show at [www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/he-maori-te-tiriti-and-me-theatre-roadshow/wellington](http://www.eventfinda.co.nz/2026/he-maori-te-tiriti-and-me-theatre-roadshow/wellington).



NEWS TIPS

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[herald@wsn.co.nz](mailto:herald@wsn.co.nz)

So much to do in

# KAPITI ★

## Frances Hodgkins: British modernist work on show in Waikanae

An exhibition, two years in the making at Kāpiti's Toi MAHARA gallery, positions expatriate Frances Hodgkins with artists who, as fellow members of the prestigious Seven and Five Society, pioneered British modernism.

The Seven and Five Society included artists such as Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth and Ben Nicholson. Hodgkins became a member in 1929.

At the age of 60 in 1929, Frances Hodgkins was

considerably older than these young artists, but she was amongst her peers and received from them understanding and respect for her work, as well as friendship and support.

As well as paintings from its own Field Collection, Toi MAHARA has drawn works from private collections, the Museum of New Zealand, Te Papa Tongarewa, Ngā Puhipuhi o Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington Art Collection and the Parliamentary Collection.

The Seven and Five Society artists featured in the exhibition along with Hodgkins are Cedric Morris, Christopher Wood, John Piper, Ivon Hitchens, David Jones, Claude Flight and Len Lye.

"In the 1920s these artists were creating work more closely aligned with art being



Cut Melons, circa 1931, England, by Frances Hodgkins. Purchased 1980 with Special Projects in the Arts funds. Te Papa (1980-0063-2)

produced in Paris by Pablo Picasso and Henri Matisse than with British traditions," says curator Vicki Robson.

Most of the 24 Hodgkins works in the Field Collection are from early in Hodgkins' career. But there are five from the early 1920s, the decade during which she developed her mature modernist style. "We wanted to showcase the beginning of a radical period in Hodgkins' career and her place within the wider context of British modernism."

Frances Hodgkins was born in Dunedin in 1869. She left for Europe in 1901 to pursue her career as an artist and remained there for the rest of her life, apart from two brief returns to New Zealand in 1903–05 and 1912–13. She is regarded as New Zealand's most celebrated expatriate artist.

## Dinner and music at Finn's Paekakariki!

Every month Finn's have their monthly live music gig so it's a great chance to have a good time.

Finn's is a popular hub at Paekakariki and only a few minutes' walk from the railway station and right on State Highway 59 which means it is very easy for visitors to get to by train from Wellington, or by car, making it the ideal

getaway destination for that weekend away from the pressures of city life and work. It is a boutique hotel of superior studio units with spa baths, king-size beds, microwave, tea and coffee-making facilities so why not book a room for Labour Weekend or the holidays?

Don't forget to check out the nearby Paekakariki Station Museum!

## Try the Trams these holidays!

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## A feast of good music in Waikanae

The Waikanae Music Society's 2026 season boasts a line-up of many of New Zealand's finest musicians, presenting exciting and enterprising programmes in a variety of different ensembles. All concerts are Sunday afternoon at 2.30pm in the Waikanae Memorial Hall.



Michael Houstoun

a season ticket which gives admission to all eight concerts for \$250. For more information visit [www.waikanaemusic.org.nz](http://www.waikanaemusic.org.nz) or phone 04 905 6070.



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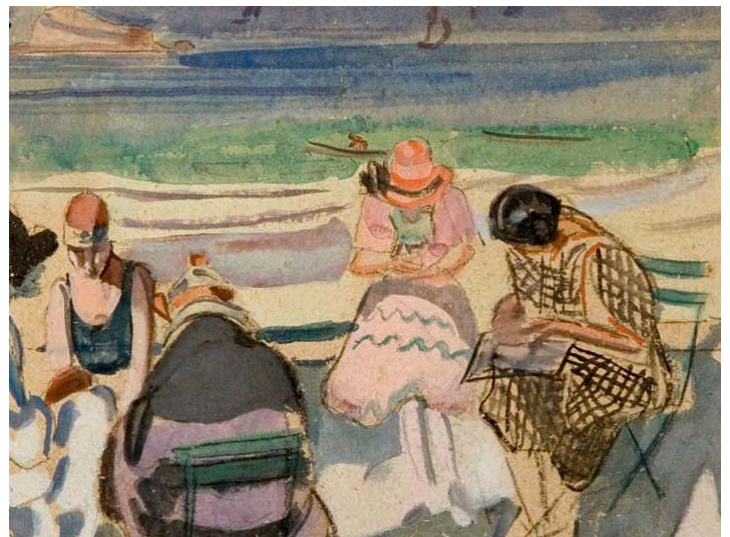
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Frances Hodgkins, Painting class on the beach, 1920

## Further revelation: Frances Hodgkins and British modernism 1920–1935

### Exhibition on now

[toimahara.nz](http://toimahara.nz) | @toi\_mahara



Kāpiti Coast District Gallery

# GARDENING THIS WEEK PLANT DISEASES: TURNING BACK THE CLOCK FOR YOUR HEALTH

Firstly lets go back to the 50's and 60's in New Zealand where most of our vegetables were grown locally by Chinese Market Gardeners, on blocks of land near rivers that were rich in river silt from past flooding.

The annual flooding of the Nile in Egypt in times gone by, when the biggest flood from rains in Africa, allowed for the biggest crops as more land area was naturally fertilised.

As our rivers dont flood every year to replenish the land with fresh silt then another means of enriching the soil is needed.

Back then NZ was an extensive farming country with cattle and sheep meat supplying the UK tables; Freezing Works provided the killing and freezing of meat for export and local consumption.

The slaughter of hundreds of animals daily meant bi-products of which Blood & Bone was one of.

Blood was dried and bones were powdered and the two mixed together and placed into ton bags as a inexpensive fertiliser for gardeners and the Chinese Market Gardeners.

Locally in Manawatu a company called Hodder & Tolley would buy these ton bags from the local Freezing Works and arrange for a sale day and all the Chinese Market Gardeners in the area would attend.

They purchased the Real Blood

& Bone to fertilise their Market Gardens.

The wives of the Chinese Market gardeners would accompany their husbands as they had the job of selecting which ton bags they would purchase.

This was done by the wives with a taste test where they wet a finger put it into a ton bag and with Real Blood & Bone on their finger they would taste it and say yes or no.

(Dont ask me how they decided; but I know thats what happened as my elder brother told me as he was involved in the sales)

So the Real Blood & Bone back then contained all the elements needed for growing great healthy vegetables, Nitrogen, phosphate and trace elements such as sulphur.

But no potash which is not required to grow cabbages etc only needed to grow fruit.

Thus growing say tomatoes they would have to add potash to the Real Blood & Bone for the flowering, fruiting cycle.

For those living back then will possibly recall that when you cooked a cabbage it would stink the house out! Reason was the sulphur content in the cabbage from the Real Blood & Bone it grew with.

Now our bodies need a small daily amount of sulphur for our continued good health as it aids blood circulation, detoxifies, main-

tains good eye sight, prevents arthritis, boosts metabolism and greatly reduces aging problems.

Back then in the 50's & 60's we got our bodies sulphur requirements through naturally grown produce that was high in nutritional value and chemical free.

(Science has told us we have lost 80% of the nutrition that we had back then) Now days some people take MSM as a sulphur supplement daily to compensate for the lack of sulphur in our food chain.

We growing up in the 50's and 60's were lucky to be so healthy, slim and active with much of the reason being our great food chain, grown with Real Blood & Bone.

Now you the reader will have picked up on my saying Real Blood & Bone instead of saying Blood and Bone? Well it is because most of the blood & bone sold today for gardening is only a shabby version of what Real Blood & Bone is.

I have heard that it is diluted with chalk dust making it a pale colour when compared to Real Blood & Bone which is much darker in colour and has minute flakes of bone.

I came to realise this years ago when the blood & bone I purchased had lost its rich dark colour,

I am not saying it is not good for the garden and plants just that it is no where as good as it used to be when it was real and undiluted.



To prove my point I purchased a bag of blood & bone from my local Mitre 10 and compared it with a photo along side what I now call Wallys Real Blood & Bone.

See <https://0800466464.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2026/01/Real-Blood-Bone.png>

In the picture the top pile is blood & bone that is commonly sold to gardeners, the bottom pile is Wallys Real Blood & Bone. What a difference; I was also really surprised with the comparison.

Likely the old Chinese Wives of long ago would have tasted the difference?

I have found a supplier of Real Blood & Bone; organised my Safety Data Sheet and labels and my ton bag arrived this week so

now we can all benefit health wise like we did back 70 to 80 years ago by using this natural plant fertiliser in your gardens.

Best used for growing vegetables but other preferred plants will benefit greatly also.

If sowing seeds where they are going to grow sprinkle Wallys Real Blood & Bone (WRBB) along with the seeds the spray with Wally Magic Botanic Liquid before covering with soil or compost.

Wallys Real Blood & Bone must be covered or mixed in with soil/compost as it is the microbes that aid the conversion to food that the plant's roots can take up.

WRBB if not covered will bake in the sun and take longer to benefit your plants.



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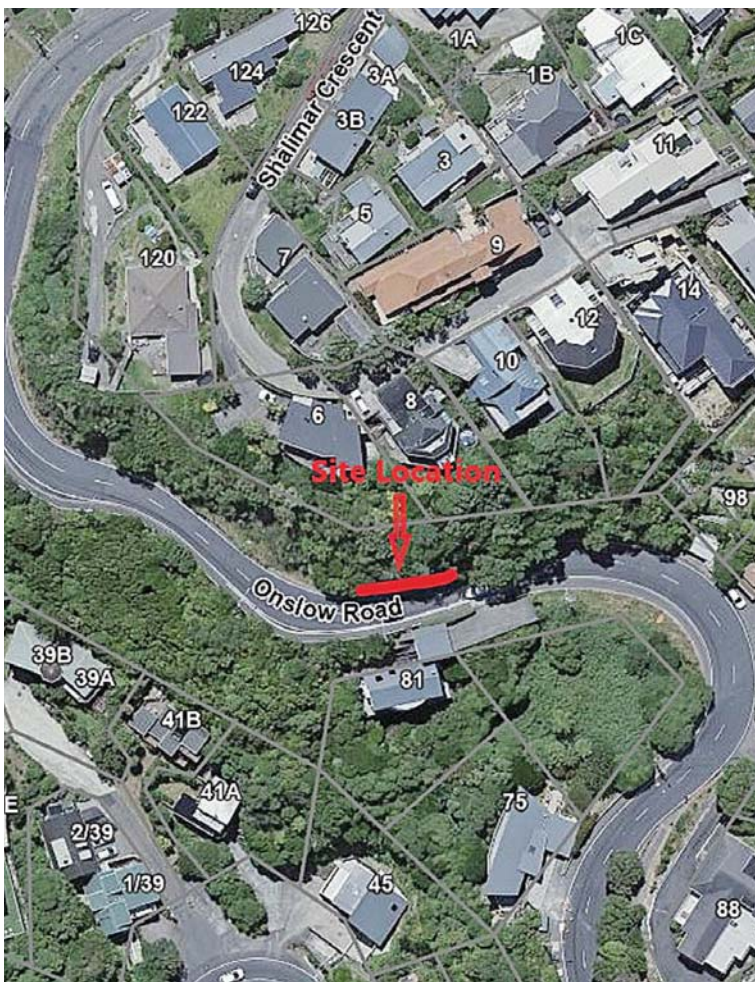
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An aerial view of the Onslow Road slip works. Photo: Wellington City Council.

# Onslow Road slip being repaired

By Frank Neill

Work is currently under way on remediating the slip that took place opposite 81 Onslow Road.

The work includes both slope stabilising works and a mixed anchored shotcrete and steel mesh retaining wall.

This work, Wellington City Council says "will ensure that Onslow Road is safer and more resilient to road users and pedestrians."

The Council has contracted Retaining and Civil Construction Ltd to complete the retaining wall work.

Work began on the project on 12 January and is scheduled to finish next month.

Traffic management is in place.

Onslow Road will have one lane closed in the area and traffic will be controlled by traffic lights for the duration of the project and there will be a reduced speed limit.

The road will remain open for resident access to properties, including vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians at all times.

In the event of unsuitable weather or unforeseen circumstances the work may be delayed.

The Council is asking residents to stay back from the work site, follow the directions of workers, warn children about the potential dangers and keep their pets away from the work site.

It is also warning people to take extra care when walking in the area so they can avoid potential trip hazards, particularly when it is dark.

# Plant sale at Begonia House

A plant sale will be held at the Begonia House from 4pm to 6:30pm on Tuesday 3 February.

The plant sale is a fundraiser, which has been organised by the Friends of the Wellington Botanic Garden.

All the proceeds from the sale will go towards the upgrades of the Begonia House.

"We've kept the plants we need for propagation, but we have many healthy plants left over that we can't fit into our nursery," the Friends of the Wellington Botanic Garden say.

"That's where you come in.

"Take home one of our plants and help the

Friends fundraise to go beyond the basics with amazing new features like exterior landscaping and internal fixtures for the renewed Begonia House.

"These plants are from the display end and thrive in indoor conditions (they are coming from a glasshouse after all). They should do just fine in your house.

"Have too many house plants? Wrong. You can definitely fit just one more. It's for charity after all.

"We'll have some available for loose change and others for a minimum donation that won't break the bank. Payment by cash or bank transfer only (no EFTPOS)."

# Newlands foodbank reopens

The Newlands Community House Foodbank reopened for food parcels yesterday, 21 January.

The Friday food parcels will be available for pick up at 11am.

From 26 January food parcels will be available on Mondays at 4pm, Wednes-

days at 1pm and Fridays at 4pm.

The foodbank is low on the following items: coffee, sugar, noodles and pasta.

People can drop off food for the foodbank either at the centre or in the foodbank bin at Newlands New World.

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Independent Herald



# Onslow Cricketers win again

By Frank Neill

Onslow's premier Cricketers continued their winning ways with a victory over Taita in the Wellington division one competition on 17 January.

Batting first on Endeavour Park, Taita was all out for 138.

Onslow overtook that total, losing eight wickets on their way to 139.

Things looked anything but promising early in Onslow's innings, with the loss of five early wickets.

Their first wicket fell when they had only three runs on the board.

Five runs later, they lost their second wicket and the third wicket fell with just 14 runs scored.

Just six runs later they lost their fourth wicket, and Onslow had scored only 30 runs when the fifth wicket fell, giving them a steep hill to climb.

Micah Conroy then anchored the innings, scoring 39 runs, notching up his 3,000th run for the premiers.

Later in the innings the Captain, Sam French helped them to victory when he scored 40 not out.

Ryan Tsourgas also batted very well, notching up 33 runs.

As well as starring with the bat, Micah also bowled outstandingly, taking four wickets at a cost of only 29 runs in his 10 overs.

Elliot Seddon also bowled very well, taking three wickets for 22 runs

from his nine overs.

Yash Vagadia took one wicket for 22 runs and Matthew Scoble took one wicket for 30 runs.

The next match had not been confirmed when the "Independent Herald" went to print.

The Karori premiers did not have such a good day on 17 January when they were defeated by Petone Riverside in their division one match.

Batting first on Fraser Park, Petone Riverside reached 267 for the loss of nine wickets in their 50 overs.

They then bowled Karori out for 186.

Aniruth TP was the best of the Karori bowlers, taking three wickets for 68.

Shivang Choudhary took two wickets for 50 and Oscar Wilson took two wickets for 51.

Yashraj Kalsi took one wicket for 38 and Wilkie Proudfoot took one wicket for 51.

Karori's Captain, Kevin Weerasundara, batted outstandingly, scoring 72 runs from the 74 deliveries he faced.

Shivang followed up his good bowling by scoring 38 with the bat.

The Johnsonville premiers scored a comfortable victory over Wellington Collegians Cricket Express in their division two match on 17 January.

Batting first on Miramar Park, the Wellington Collegians reached 276 for the loss of four wickets in their

50 overs.

Johnsonville took just 34 overs and five balls to reach the winning score, ending with 277 for the loss of only two wickets.

Three Johnsonville bowlers each took a wicket.

Ben Stephen made a major contribution to Johnsonville's victory, scoring a century and going on to make 137 not out from just 124 deliveries.

Will Martin notched up a half century before he was out for 51, scored off only 26 balls, and Lewis Jeffreys scored 46.

Connor Lusty took one for 39, Maximus Petrie one for 54 and Ben Stephen one for 62.

Johnsonville's next match is against Wainuiomata at Bryan Heath Park on 24 January, starting at 10:30am.

The Johnsonville premier women's team played two matches on 17 January, losing both.

They lost to Petone Riverside and then to North City.

Petone Riverside scored 114 for the loss of six wickets in their 20 overs and then restricted Johnsonville to 95 for nine.

Batting first against North City, Johnsonville reached 95 for eight. North City lost just one wicket in reaching the winning score of 96.

Johnsonville's next match is against Collegians at Alex Moore Park on 24 January, starting at 9am.



Micah Conroy, who starred with both the bat and the ball in Onslow's victory over Taita on 12 January. Photo: Supplied.



Alexander Kutts, wearing his gold medals, with top New Zealand sprinter Tiaan Whelpton (on the right). Photo: Supplied.

## Three golds for Newlands athlete

Newlands athlete Alexander Kutts won three gold medals at the recent Special Olympics New Zealand National Summer Games, held in Christchurch from 10 to 14 December.

He won both his sprint events, finishing first in the final of the 100 metres with a time of 12.52 seconds

and clocking 25.75 seconds in winning the final of the 200 metres.

Alexander's third gold medal came in the long jump, with a winning leap of 4 metres 79 centimetres.

His victories augur well for a future competing at the higher level Special Olympic and Paralympic

events in the future.

Alexander is a member of the Kiwi Athletic Club and is coached by Andrew Mutsuoka-Weber.

Andrew began coaching Alexander three seasons ago and although he has now moved to Australia, he continues the coaching through phone calls and emails.

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