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Outstanding service



By Frank Neill

Johnsonville-based Kiwi Community Assistance (KCA) provides absolutely outstanding service, helping to make sure thousands of people have enough food to eat.

Founded by Tracy Wellington in 2011, the service collects food, clothing and household items so they can be delivered to people in need.

Continued on page 2.

The three Kiwi Community Assistance staff (from left) Terupe Raka, Tracy Wellington and Lissie Hogg. Photo: Frank Neill.

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KCA needs more volunteers

Continued from page 1.

They presented their report to the KCA annual meeting, and this showed that last year they delivered just shy of 340 tonnes of food. That, Tracy says "equates to 23,911 banana boxes."

They also delivered 3,871 boxes of clothing, school supplies and household essentials.

"We assisted 120,565 people last year," Tracy says.

Currently the service has a big need too. It needs volunteers to help with the food rescue operation.

"The food rescue volunteers go out to the various supermarkets, sort the items by best before and use by dates and they box it up.

"They sort through all the fresh produce and make sure it is still fit for human consumption."

The boxes are then transported to KCA's Johnsonville depot.

People can volunteer on the KCA's website, www.kca.org.nz, clicking on "help us" and then clicking on "volunteer with us".

"This week we picked up 612 boxes of food across the greater Wellington region," Tracy said.

"Those 612 boxes would equate to approximately nine tonnes of food that has gone out of the KCA in a week to organisations across the greater Wellington region.

"Then there's the clothing and necessities of life side of things as well."

KCA collects a variety of donated goods, which have been dropped off at various centres in the Wellington region.

The drop off points include the Newlands Community Centre, Auto Super Shoppe Johnsonville, and the Tawa, Johnsonville and Churton Park Community Centres.

As well as clothing, the KCA collects and distributes linen, bedding, prams, cots, portacots



KCA's Lissie Hogg in front of one of the many racks of household items that will be provided for people in need. Photo: Frank Neill.

and a wide range of household items. People wanting to drop off clothing, linen and household items can find the drop off points in the KCA's website, www.kca.org.nz/drop-off-points/.

KCA does not distribute food or any items to the general public.

All the food and the household items are distributed to charities who help people directly, such as food banks, Challenge 2000, and the Salvation Army.

"So if you need food you need to talk to your local food bank," Tracy says.

The outstanding service that Kiwi Community Assistance provides has seen them honoured with more than 20 awards.

Last year Tracy was presented a Pōneke Civic Award for her significant contribution to the

betterment of Wellington city.

Some 15 years after starting KCA in her garage, she was presented the award, her citation said "for her dedication to rescuing and redistributing surplus food and household goods to frontline agencies supporting those in need." In 2022 KCA was the supreme winner in Health and Wellbeing at the 2022 Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards. The first of their many awards came when KCA was just 50 weeks old. KCA has three staff working 2.8 full time equivalents, and 53 volunteers. "We are an independent group of like minded people working together to reduce inequality in our community," KCA's mission statement says. "We will do this by providing household goods, clothing and food for free to our charity partners."

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Greg O'Connor
MP for Ōhāriu

As my time as Ōhāriu MP comes to an end, as it will on 7 November this year, many of the conversations I am having with constituents, many of whom have become good friends, are around my future plans.

Firstly, I do need to dispel one myth: I don't get a Parliamentary Pension! That scheme finished in the 1990's and was replaced with a fairly generous KiwiSaver type scheme. So, I'm not complaining, just correcting!

I am still servicing the electorate, and anyone with issues which need the attention of their MP should continue to contact my office. The details are attached.

That is the aspect of the role I enjoy most, especially in the electorate.

Of course, I also have my Assistant Speaker role in Parliament, and I am the party spokesperson on Veterans and Courts. The

Veterans role sees me attending ceremonies like The Korean War Commemoration, and Anzac Day services representing the Leader of the Opposition.

In my Speaker role I get to understand all the legislation which goes through Parliament. Usually, MPs work exclusively on the specialist topics, so it's good to build up this general knowledge, which I can often apply to assisting constituents.

It also means I build up relationships with politicians from all parties, again an advantage when representing the electorate.

I'll be around for a few months yet, so feel free to approach me. I did play rugby for the Parliamentary rugby team in a charity game over the weekend and am sporting a black eye for my troubles. That's one activity which may not continue when I leave!

You can contact my office on **04 478 3332** or email
Greg.OConnor@parliament.govt.nz.



Wgtn North Community Patrol needs volunteers

By Frank Neill

The Wellington North Community Patrol (WNCP) is actively seeking volunteers so it can provide enhanced coverage of the suburbs it covers.

Community Patrols New Zealand, with some 120 Patrols across the country, aims to help keep neighbourhoods safe in each patrol's area. The Wellington North Patrol is no different.

It does this, WNCP's leader Grant Signal says "by being the eyes and ears of the Police".

The Wellington North patrol covers a big area.

It includes Churton Park, Johnsonville, Broadmeadows, Khandallah, Ngaio, down the Ngaio Gorge Road to Kaiwharawara, along the waterfront to Ngaurangi, up the gorge to Newlands, Woodridge, Paparangi and Grenada.

Volunteers are asked to commit to one evening patrol each month for five hours, or more if they wish. They are able to commit to a date and a time that best suits them.

Patrols generally take place from 7pm to midnight on Fridays and Saturdays.

"We try to cover every Friday and Saturday, but we're not there yet," Grant says.

That, however is the WNCP's aim.

"It beats sitting at home watching MAFS," Grant says.

As well as the patrols WNCP has a meeting for about an hour on the last Tuesday of every month and training is provided at the meeting.

The main aim of community patrols is to deter crime – deterring and preventing things before they happen by having an active, visible presence.

"Criminals are less likely to break into somebody's house if there is an active community patrol out and about," Grant says.

The community patrols provide an "invaluable service" to the community, a Police spokesman says.

The service "works really well as the eyes and ears of the Police, to see what is going on in the community and to work towards making the area safe.

"When something happens they are often in the right place at the right time and can pass the information on to us.



The Wellington North Community Patrollers with their patrol car. Photo: Supplied.



Left: Some of the Wellington North Community Patrollers during their Christmas run last year. Photo: Supplied.

"They are a good source of intelligence and can alert us to something we need to look at. With their intelligence reports and by occasionally ringing us, they help us build a picture of who's out and about.

"I think they are a great asset to have out there in the community." To volunteer for the Wellington North Community Patrol, or for more information, email wellingtonnorth@cpnz.org.nz

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Greg O'Connor

MP for Ōhāriu

Spokesperson for Courts and Veterans' Affairs
Assistant Speaker

Get in touch

My office is open 9am - 4pm
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Authorised by Greg O'Connor MP,
Parliament Buildings Wellington.

inbrief news

Fatal crash

Police have named the man who died following a crash on State Highway 1 near Grenada North on Friday 19 June.

He was Gregory David Diggins, 62, from Lower Hutt. Police extend their condolences to Gregory's family and friends during this difficult time.

Enquiries into the circumstances of the crash are ongoing.

City Mission opens J'ville shop

By Frank Neill

The Wellington City Mission opens its new shop in Johnsonville today.

Located at 149 Johnsonville Road, the new store will help provide for people in need.

"The opening of our Johnsonville City Mission Store is about so much more than just retail," Wellington City Missioner Murray Edridge says.

"Every item purchased at the store will help fund the support, care and advocacy we provide to people across our community who are doing it tough.

"The new store will be a place where quality donated goods are given a second life, people can shop affordably, and together we can help build a Wellington where everyone has what they need to thrive," Murray says.

"Our City Mission Stores are powered by the generosity of our community," says Jeremy Neeve, Manager of the City Mission's three Wellington stores.

"We accept quality clothing, household items, furniture and more, and every sale directly supports the Wellington City Mission's work with people who are experiencing hardship.

"We're excited to open in Johnsonville and create another place where people can find great value, donate quality goods, and know that every purchase is making a real difference in someone's life."

The store will open from 10am to 5pm from Monday to Saturday each week, and car parking is available.

People are welcome to make donations to the store, and can telephone 0800 245 542 to have donations collected.

Karori Lions Club has new President

Karori Lions Club welcomed new President Ros Alsford at its recent annual Change of Officers dinner at the Karori Park Sports Club.

Ros shared a vision focused on honouring the club's proud history while building for the future.

She spoke about the importance of balancing the wisdom and experience of long-serving members with fresh ideas and younger voices, ensuring the club remains strong and relevant for generations to come.

Her priorities for the year ahead include strengthening community connections, sharing the stories and community impact more widely and finding new ways to attract and engage members.

Ros is a relatively new member of Karori Lions, brimming with positive ideas, and recently introduced the Winter Wishes initiative, whereby members of the public are invited to nominate someone who has a particular need at the time that Lions may be able to service.

This could include situations where a family has encountered a period of hardship and needs support with home cleaning, cooking or just anything that a friendly pair of hands might be able to provide.

Outgoing President Gina Smith presided over two very successful years, during which the club increased its membership and formed the "Wellington branch" of the club, catering for younger members.

Time-honoured programmes and activities were maintained, and some new ones added, including the Magic Show (presented for the first time at the Lower Hutt Events Centre).

The ever-popular Karori Lions Karnival continued to be the biggest annual public event in Karori, while the Karori Community Book Fair (hosted jointly with Rotary), e-recycle collections, annual fundraising drives for the Inspiration Voyage of the Spirit of Adventure's tall ship and a host of other fundraising activities kept the Lions busy.

All money raised from the public by Lions is returned to the community through initiatives supporting health, youth, education, the environment, disaster relief and improving community assets.



The Karori Lions Club's new President Ros Alsford. Photo: Supplied.

Donations have been made to a wide variety of grateful recipients, including such diverse organisations as Riding for the Disabled, Wellington Free Ambulance, the Polish Association, Camp Quality, The Nest Collective and many more.

Youth have been supported competing in a range of activities including Football tournaments, Underwater Hockey and an international robotics competition.

The club has continued each year to support the Lions International Peace Poster Contest, selecting local winners who have the opportunity to proceed up a ladder of competitions to the ultimate prize – top entry of more than 600,000 entries worldwide.

Past President Gina has run the Karori-level competition for the past few years, and was delighted and honoured in a previous year when our local winner was selected to be in the top 24 worldwide – gaining a prestigious International Merit Award.

For more information about Karori Lions, please see their new website www.karorilions.co.nz and their Facebook page www.facebook.com/KaroriLionsClubInc or text Trevor at 021-454-056.

Upcoming projects include the Karori Community Book Fair at the Karori Baptist Church on 10 and 11 July, and the e-recycle collection at the Karori Community Centre on 25 July.



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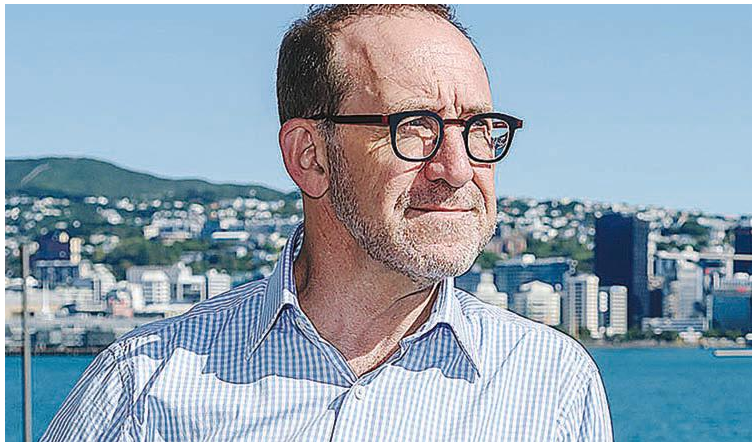
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Wellington's Mayor Andrew Little. Photo: Supplied.

Council consulting on rating system

By Frank Neill

Wellington City Councillors decided on 25 June to consult the public about potential changes to the rating system used by Wellington City, from a Capital Value rating system to a Land Value rating system.

Capital Value (CV) is the estimated price a property would sell for at the time of valuation, including both the land and any improvements such as buildings, structures or other enhancements. It does not include chattels however. It is determined through mass appraisal techniques rather than individual inspections. Land Value (LV) is the estimated price of the bare land alone, without any buildings or improvements.

It represents the intrinsic value of the land based on location, size, zoning and comparable sales.

LV includes any development, such as drainage, excavation, filling, retaining walls, reclamation, grading, levelling, vegetation clearing, soil improvement or protection from erosion or flooding. The Council will also seek views on whether to reduce the commercial rates differential, which is currently 3.7, over the course of the 2027-37 Long-term Plan. "We will seek the public's views on how we levy rates that are fair on residents and businesses, and consider the impacts of our rating system on economic growth and job creation," Mayor Andrew Little says.

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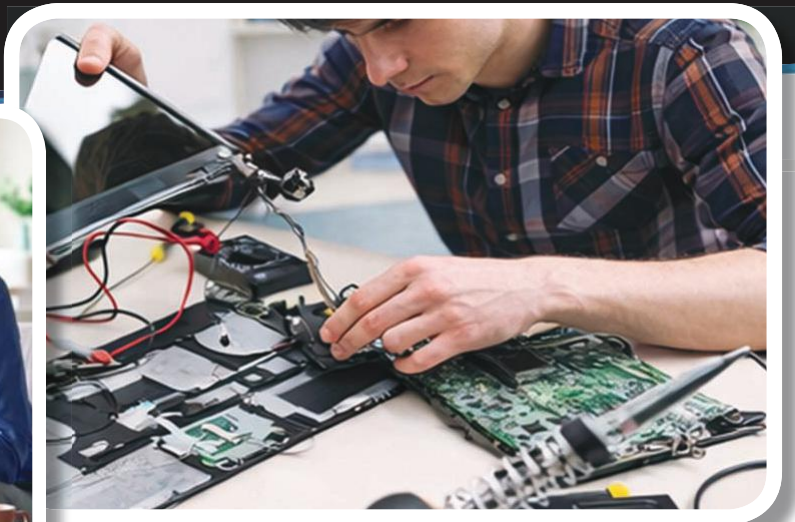
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Technology is evolving fast, and it's completely natural to feel a bit overwhelmed by the rise of Artificial Intelligence (AI). However, despite the sci-fi movie plots, AI isn't something to fear.

At its core, AI is simply a powerful tool designed to make our daily lives easier, safer, and more connected. For seniors, AI is already quietly working behind the scenes. It powers the voice assistants that play your favourite music, drives the spam

filters keeping your email inbox safe from scams, and even helps doctors detect health issues earlier. Think of AI not as a replacement for human connection, but as a personal digital assistant.

Navigating this new tech landscape doesn't mean you have to go it alone. At TechMan, your local IT support experts, we are here to demystify AI and ensure your devices work safely for you. Let us handle the tech, so you can enjoy the benefits.

Sonic Matariki music at Central Library

Listening to the Earth Quake: Sonic Art Presentation will be held on Wednesday 8 July from 5:30pm to 6:30pm at Ngā Pou Ruahine, Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library.

This Matariki season join the library for a free event that will explore how data from the natural world can be turned into music.

French sound artist Aurélien Buiron will take people on a learning journey, exploring how every location on the planet carries its own seismic signature that can be expressed in music.

Taonga Pūoro master Tāmihana Katene and Aurélien will join to perform a sonic interpretation of the Matariki Māori new year, celebrating mātauranga Māori and taiao.

This event is collaboratively organised with Dr Caroline Holden, a French-Kiwi seismologist and director of SeismoCity (seismocity.co.nz).

The Embassy of France in New Zealand provided financial support (French Related Research Projects Grant) towards Aurélien's travel to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Tāmihana Katene is a renowned and accomplished Māori musician and artist.

For 20 years, Tāmihana has been involved in the reinvigoration of Taonga Pūoro within the Wellington region.

Aurélien Buiron, aka 'Ghost In The Loop', is a professional well-respected French artist and an international expert in 'sonification'.

He has performed for many key French events including the UN Ocean conference in Nice, the Kilian Jornet Foundation and Muséum National d'Histoire Naturelle de

Paris.

A music performance and calligraphy workshop will be held on Saturday 4 July from 1:30pm to 3:30pm at Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library.

Wellington Chinese Language School, Yafeng Group and New Zealand Wellington Chinese Language Testing Centre present a traditional string music performance, with poems and songs.

Acclaimed calligraphers and artists from Yafeng Group will also demonstrate stunning calligraphy, painting and paper quilling.

People attending will have the chance to take up a paint brush to try their creation, and no experience is required. All are welcome to this fun-filled cultural immersion.

A Change Is Coming: Journey to Homosexual Law Reform will be held on Sunday 5 July from 11am to noon at Ngā Pou Ruahine, Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui Central Library.

This month New Zealand marks 40 years since the passing of the Homosexual Law Reform Act 1986, a landmark change that decriminalised sex between consenting adult men and helped reshape the lives of rainbow communities across the country.

Join Walk Tours NZ and Wellington City Libraries for this powerful one-hour presentation tracing the long and difficult road to reform.

All events are free and seating is limited. Wellington City Libraries encourages people to arrive early to secure a seat.

Nau mai rā tātou katoa. Everyone is welcome.



At the pre-dawn blessing to mark the start of work on a new Chaytor Street retaining wall. Photo: Supplied.

New retaining wall for Chaytor Street

A new retaining wall is about to be built in front of the existing wall in Chaytor Street.

Work on the \$13.5 million project is due to begin on Monday 6 July and will take about 18 months – finishing at the end of October 2027.

Both the existing wall and the new wall will be secured by the installation of 115 14-18-metre drilled fasteners.

Wellington City Council Transport Infrastructure and Operations Manager Ross Balfour says the Chaytor Street wall is almost 100 years old, has reached its end of serviceable life, and no longer meets modern engineering and safety standards.

Strengthening the wall will improve its performance in an earthquake, support the long-term stability of the road corridor, and help keep everyone who uses Chaytor Street, Raroa Crescent and Northland Tunnel Road safe, he says.

Chaytor Street will remain open throughout construction, but traffic management will be in place.

"We'll keep the existing vehicle lane width for the duration of the works, with reduced speed. Please allow a little extra time when travelling through the area," Mr Balfour says.

Temporary street lighting will be installed to ensure the area remains well-lit and safe at night.

All bus services will continue to run along Chaytor Street. However, some bus stops may be temporarily closed or relocated while work is under way.

At times, the bus lane may be closed due to the movement of heavy construction equipment, and buses will be required to use the general traffic lane during off-peak hours (between 9:30am and 6:30pm).

Parking along the Appleton Park side of Chaytor Street will be unavailable during construction. This applies to the section between the Chaytor Street/Raroa Crescent intersection and the Chaytor Street/Birdwood Street intersection.

For people walking and biking, the shared

path through Appleton Park will remain open. The existing footpath on the Appleton Park side of Chaytor Street will be closed for safety reasons.

There may be occasional short-duration lane closures on nearby roads, including Raroa Crescent and Northland Tunnel Road.

These will take place during off-peak times to allow construction vehicles to access the site safely.

Mana whenua artist collective Te Wai Whenua Design Co has been commissioned to create the new artwork for the Chaytor Street retaining wall under the Council's Tākai Here partnership agreement, with the mahi being led by Len Hetet (Te Āti Awa).

The artwork will be a permanent feature, etched directly into the concrete surface of the new wall.

The design will reflect both the heritage and present-day identity of the area and will become a significant new piece of public art for Karori.

This approach reflects the Council's commitment to working in partnership with Mana Whenua and to embedding Māori stories and cultural narratives in Wellington's public spaces.

The existing retaining wall mural is 30 years old, painted during the 1990s by established mural artist Doug Ford in collaboration with the local community.

This mural will be obscured by the new retaining wall.

The mural has stood the test of time enlivening the area and reducing graffiti well beyond the average lifespan of a mural, Mr Balfour says.

"We appreciate it will be missed." Council staff, contractors and the Karori Historical Society participated in a pre-dawn blessing, led by mana whenua, on Wednesday 24 June to mark the start of on-site work on the project.

Engineering consultants WSP are working with Council engineers on the project. The main contractor is Construction Techniques Ltd.

Regional Council rates going up 9.7%

Greater Wellington Regional Council rates will increase by 9.7%.

This follows regional councillors approving the 2026/27 Annual Plan on 25 June.

The per annum average regional rates increase for residential rates (including GST) is \$83.83 (\$1.61 per week), for business rates (excluding GST) is \$695.70 (\$13.38 per week), and rural rates (excluding GST) is \$103.25 (\$1.99 per week).

Greater Wellington Chair Daran Ponter says councillors were mindful of upcoming reforms, but the communities' needs guided decision making.

"Reform, in one shape or another, is here to stay, and that was an important consideration," Cr Ponter says.

"Regardless of change, essential services like public transport and environmental restoration will continue to be integral to the wellbeing of our communities."

No stone had been left unturned to keep the rates increase to a minimum, Cr Ponter says.

"Councillors have had to make difficult decisions, balancing affordability and uncertainty with our responsibility to the region.

"We know any rates increase is hard, so we have gone line by line through our activities to keep rates as affordable as possible."

Greater Wellington Chief Executive Nigel Corry said the Annual Plan reflects careful choices about where investment is most needed, particularly in work that strengthens the region's resilience.



Greater Wellington Regional Council Chair Daran Ponter. Photo: Supplied.

"The Wellington region is no stranger to severe weather, and its impacts were seen and felt during recent flooding," he says.

"That is why it's important that we continue practical work that helps protect people, places and infrastructure."

This Annual Plan also reflects changes to assets and debt through the Local Water Done Well reform.

From 1 July 2026 Tiaki Wai will take ownership of Greater Wellington's bulk water supply, which is no longer included in Greater Wellington's 2026/27 Annual Plan and the 2024-34 Long Term Plan.

Raising funds to fix church roof

Ngaio Union Church is running an art exhibition and sale from 11 to 18 July to raise money to repair the church's roof.

The event will open on Saturday 11 July from 1:30pm to 4:30pm and then run throughout the week from noon to 2pm every week day. It will finish after the Ngaio Repair Café on 18 July.

Alyson Howell and Helen Wilson – both members of the church, artists and former presidents of Watercolour New Zealand – decided the “Raise the Roof” campaign needed just the right event to draw the crowds.

“The roof is 50 years old, so it’s having a bit of a mid-life crisis,” Helen jokes.

“Obviously we’re happy to assist in its hour of need.”

“We’re so excited,” Alyson says.

“We’ve corralled over a dozen local artists who will generously donate their work without taking a commission for it.

“We’re blessed that these delightful people of the community are supporting the church, which is a focal point of the community.”

The artists include Helen Wilson, John McDonnell, Fee Thompson, Pavithra Devadhatta, Dawn Wilce, Dawn Shuker, Creatif Kate, Alyson Howell, Robyn Smith, Alan Reid, Muriel Christensen.

“This will be a wonderful opportunity for people to both buy art at an affordable price and experience a variety of artistic styles and media,” Alyson says.

“Art will be priced at a suggested dollar amount, but if purchasers are eager to go over the suggested price in order to help the cause, the team won’t have any hesitation in agreeing to take more.”

The opening event will be a classy affair,



One of the paintings that will feature in the art exhibition and sale at Ngaio Union Church.

with piano music by Ian Broome, afternoon tea served with classic Ngaio Union hospitality, art demonstrations from Helen Wilson and John McDonnell, an art corner for everyone to make their own creations, the opportunity to talk to the artists (and perhaps commission a work from them), and interact with new styles of art.

“The room will be abuzz,” says Alyson, “you really won’t want to miss it.”

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WCC sets 5.9% rates increase

Wellington City Council decided on 25 June to set a rates increase of 5.9% (at the lowest).

This is the smallest rates increase in six years.

The rates were set when the Councillors officially adopted the Council's 2026/27 Annual Plan and budget.

Wellington's rates rise compares with a zero increase for non-water rates adopted by Porirua City Council last week.

The 2026/27 Annual Plan reflects most of what was consulted on between March and April, with some changes to reflect community feedback including a decision not to increase cremation fees by more than inflation.

"The budget for the coming year makes good on the commitment I made to get Wellington City Council's spending under control, while protecting the community services and facilities Wellingtonians rely on," Mayor Andrew Little says.

"Wellingtonians will have the lowest average rates increase in six years at 5.9% because we have identified \$31.7 million in savings.

"This is a significantly lower increase than the 12.6% forecast rates increase I inherited.

"Every Councillor and Pou Iwi has contributed to agreeing the Annual Plan and budget.

"I also acknowledge the efforts of council staff to identify ways to maintain services while seeking savings," the Mayor says.

Councillor Diane Calvert, Chair of the Council's Te Taurapa City Planning and Finance Committee, says this Annual Plan is a clear reset of council's budget, guided by clear feedback from Wellingtonians.

"It is a detailed, achievable plan based on what Councillors hear every day from people across Wellington – the frustrations, the ideas and the strong desire to see our city thrive again," Cr Calvert says.

Adopting the Annual Plan confirms the following decisions:



Cr Diane Calvert. Photo: Supplied.

A new rate for short term accommodation properties, set at 2.6 times the base rate.

Funding has been confirmed for cycleway improvements in Bunny Street and Brooklyn.

Contaminated land and asbestos disposal fees will increase over the next three years to bring them into line with the rest of the region.

Cremation fees will increase by inflation only, following public feedback.

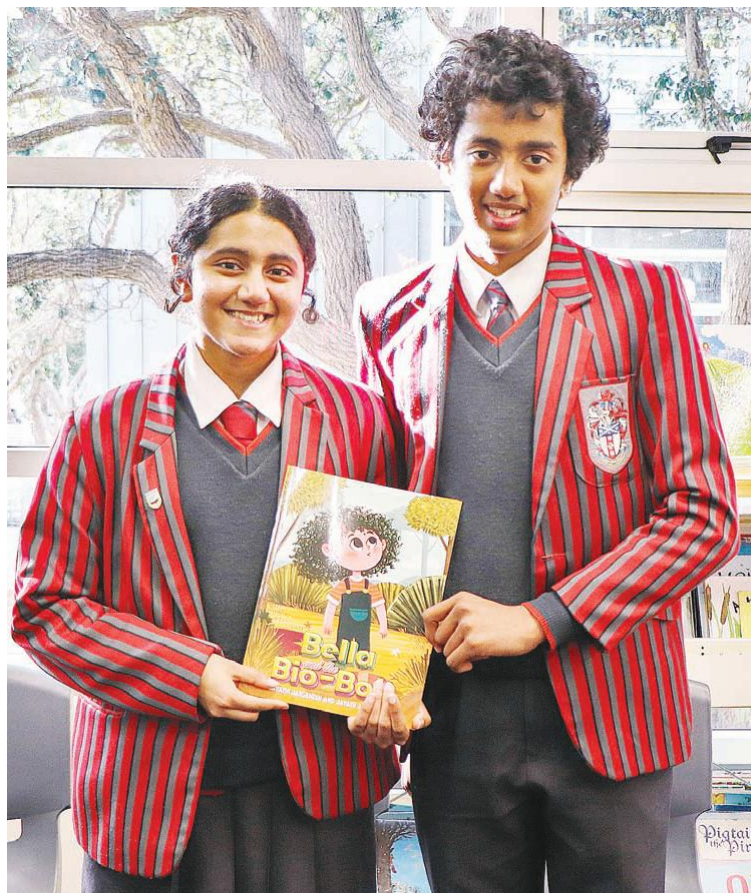
Maintaining current fees for casual swimming pool entry for children.

Following the adoption of the Annual Plan, changes to fees and user charges have also been implemented.

Most fees and user charges have increased, effective 1 July.

There are several variables that impact on how fees and charges are set. These vary from activity to activity, and can relate to inflation, rising costs, market rates, policy alignment or the provision of new services.

The full schedule of fees and charges is available at wellington.govt.nz.



Jayathi and Jayath Jaiganesh with their debut book. Photo: Supplied.

Karori initiative an awards finalist

By Frank Neill

Karori siblings Jayathi and Jayath Jaiganesh's youth-led STEM story telling initiative, *Bella & Bio-Bot*, has been named a finalist in the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards.

It is one of the finalists in the Wellington City section of the awards. The winners and runners-up will be announced at an awards function in late July.

Bella & Bio-Bot was developed to inspire younger children to explore reading, science, engineering, curiosity and environmental awareness through storytelling and interactive STEM learning experiences.

It has also recently been invited to present interactive workshops at MakerFest Tauranga 2026, where they will be engaging children and families through stories, science and

creativity.

The MakerFest runs on 12 and 13 September.

Jayathi and Jayath Jaiganesh released their debut book, "*Bella and Bio Bot*", in September last year.

"*Bella and Bio Bot*" takes readers on an imaginative journey full of curiosity, adventure and discovery, showcasing the creativity and insight of these talented young authors.

Jayathi and Jayath hope their story will inspire children and young readers in New Zealand and around the world to explore the joy of reading and embrace creativity.

People can order a copy of the book by visiting Amazon and searching for "*Bella and Bio Bot* Jayathi Jaiganesh" or using the direct link <https://www.amazon.com/Bella-Bio-Bot-Jayathi-Jaiganesh/dp/1035862255>.

Caught in a tight spot

Caption this clever cat!



Police urge caution following overdoses

Wellington Police attended five incidents on 26 June where individuals are believed to have overdosed on a substance that is thought to be GHB, commonly known as fantasy or liquid ecstasy.

Sadly, one person died in relation to this matter.

Three others were admitted to hospital, and one other person has been treated and discharged from medical care.

These incidents have occurred across the district, from Johnsonville, Miramar, Brooklyn and Upper Hutt.

A further suspected GHB/GBL overdose was detected in Wainuiomata overnight on 28-29 June.

An investigation is under way and Police are treating the matter as a priority given the risk to the public.

Police are urging the public to exercise caution, and anyone who may have this type of substance is urged not to consume it.

"If you, or someone you know, are feeling unwell, please go to your nearest healthcare provider urgently," the Police say.

People are able to get support by calling free and confidential services, such as:

Alcohol and Drug Helpline: 0800 787 797; Narcotics Anonymous: NZ 0800 628 632; 1737 - free text/phone to speak with a trained counsellor; or Youthline: 0800 376 633.



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A collage of the work that features in the Matariki exhibition at Waitohi. Photo: Supplied.

Big art display by local tamariki

Matariki art created by tamariki from Waitohi Kindergarten, Johnsonville West Kindergarten, Daisies Early Education & Care Centre, and Early Impressions Childcare is on display at Waitohi.

The Matariki exhibition opened on 30 June and runs to 14 August at the Waitohi Hub link space in Johnsonville.

The Daisies Early Education & Care Centre's Ngā Herenga Waka were created by small groups of ngā tamariki to represent some of the Pacific Nations that look to the Matariki star cluster.

Waitohi Kindergarten created Te Waka o te Pō – A night waka.

The tamariki placed stars on the night waka and spoke of loved ones that had

passed. Each child created a paddle reflecting Ko wai au? (who am I?) acknowledging their individuality within the collective journey.

Johnsonville West Kindergarten's creation, Our Mahi Toi for this Matariki, is reflective of the theme for this year 'Matariki Herenga Waka, (the mooring place of many)'.

This art celebrates inclusion, connection and the gathering of communities.

Early Impressions Childcare's creation, celebrating the theme 'Matariki Herenga Waka', emphasises inclusion and celebration across Aotearoa's diverse communities, highlighting it is also a time to reflect, celebrate, remember loved ones, give thanks and look ahead.



A group of Big Buddy mentors kayaking. Photo: Supplied.

Big Buddy mentors now available

The Big Buddy Mentoring Trust finds itself in an unusual position in Wellington.

Rather than boys having to wait to be matched with a mentor, it has mentors available and ready to be matched with boys.

This is "thanks to the incredible ground swell of our recruitment campaigns and the 'giving back' nature of the men in the Wellington region," the trust's Co-CEO, Partnerships and Development Christie Stuart says.

"We would normally have a wait list of boys, some waiting 9 to 12 months to be matched.

"So, we're keen to ensure families who might need this support are aware that this opportunity exists," Christie says.

"There may be boys in the region who could benefit from having a consistent, positive male role model, but simply don't

know about the service we provide.

"There may be mums and caregivers who would appreciate knowing this opportunity exists.

"We have two programmes available.

"Our One-to-One Matching is available for boys 7 to 13 years of age, and our 8 week Group Programme for teenage boys 14 to 17 years of age is currently running right now in Wellington.

"Having a Big Buddy offers a boy regular one-on-one time, friendship and encouragement, whether that's getting outdoors, trying new activities, or simply having a trusted adult to talk to.

"For boys growing up without a dad, this can make a meaningful and lasting difference," Christie says.

For more information visit www.bigbuddy.org.nz.



Michael Stewart, Director of Music at Wellington Cathedral of St Paul. Photo: Nick George for Aotearoa NZ Festival of the Arts.

Pulling Out All the Stops

Michael Stewart, Director of Music at Wellington Cathedral of St Paul, has been a leading figure in New Zealand's church music for many years.

His career began when he was a young chorister at Nelson Cathedral, and he's been at the forefront of New Zealand's church music ever since.

As deputy conductor of the award-winning New Zealand Youth Choir and conductor of Wellington's acclaimed Tudor Consort, Michael has experienced significant changes in church music over recent years.

Not surprisingly, he has much to say about

these developments and can also reveal some interesting stories about former directors of Cathedral music since Old St Paul's closed in 1964.

People are invited to hear Michael's talk, 'Pulling Out All the Stops' – the next event in the Friends of Wellington Cathedral's series to Celebrate the Art – on Wednesday 22 July at 5:30 pm.

The talk will last about an hour with light refreshments to follow.

A generous koha to support the work of the Friends will be welcomed.

Views on council amalgamation wanted

Wellington City Council is asking residents to join the conversation on council amalgamation – whether the Council should merge with other councils in the region.

In response to Central Government's upcoming local government reforms, Wellington City Council is working with other councils to create a proposal for what local government in the Wellington region should look like in the future.

"The Central Government has been clear – change is coming, and we can either lead our own reform, or have it done to us," Mayor Andrew Little says.

"For me, the bottom line is this: local people should decide the future of their local governments."

People can share their views by completing the survey on the Council's Let's Talk website by 19 July.

Feedback will be given to the Mayor and Councillors to inform their decision-making as they consider whether to submit a proposal.

Public forums are planned for late July.

Given the Central Government's tight timelines, this is not formal consultation on a detailed proposal.

If a Wellington region proposal is accepted and progressed through to detailed design,

the Council expects to consult with the community at that next stage.

"The Central Government has given us a 10-week deadline," Mayor Little says.

"While I don't believe we can have this conversation properly in 10 weeks, we're taking the deadline seriously – treating it as an opportunity, even.

"If change to Wellington's local government is unavoidable, then Wellingtonians should be deciding what that change looks like.

"I strongly encourage people to join the conversation – fill out the survey, come along to a forum, and keep an eye out for future opportunities to help shape our city and our region."

In November 2025, the Central Government announced it would reform local government by removing regional councils and looking at how other councils can be merged.

In May it invited councils to form groups and submit their own proposals for how they could reorganise by 9 August.

If councils don't make a successful proposal for change, the Government says it will make the decision on how councils in that region will be structured.

These changes would take effect after the 2028 Local Government Election.

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Housie is a midweek favourite – easy, social and full of laughs. Held first and third Wednesdays, tickets from 7:00pm, eyes down 7:30pm.

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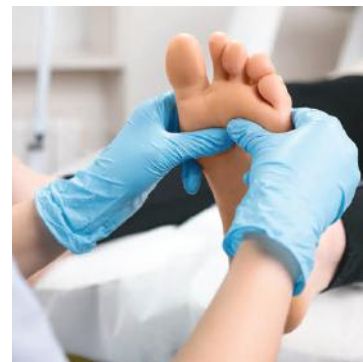
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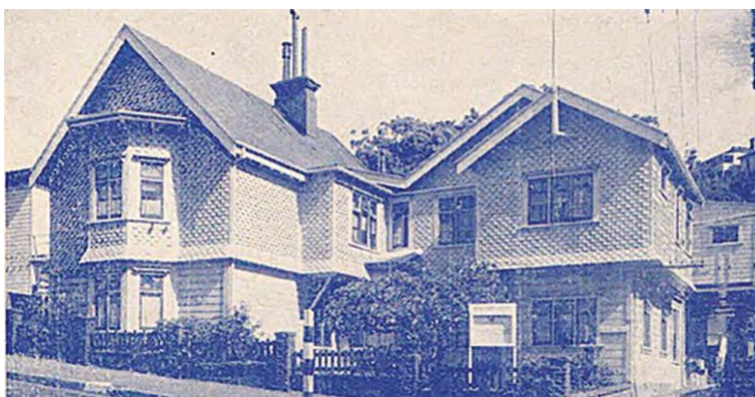


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at Ngaio Medical Centre, Active Feet Podiatry is committed to providing modern, effective podiatry services for every stage of life.



Wakefield House, 90 The Terrace. Photo: Supplied.

Local history – Wakefield House

By Felicity Wong

Kumototo Stream runs in a pipe nearby, while fake bubbling and bird song is piped into the walkway under the Terrace, leading to Woodward Street.

Next to the perpetually damp tunnel is Wakefield House.

The nine storey office block was built after the demolition in 1972 of a former grand house.

The story takes shape with Colonel William Wakefield (1801-1848) “Agent for the New Zealand Company” arriving in Port Nicholson/Poneke in 1839.

He led the establishment of the earliest New Zealand colonial settlement.

William arranged a Deed of Sale of land for Wellington that allocated one-tenth of purchased land to the signatory chiefs and their families (Tenths Trust).

160 years later, the Waitangi Tribunal found that not all the rightful owners had signed and those that had signed, may not have understood they were expected to move on.

William built a villa in 1840 where the Beehive now stands.

Meanwhile, his brother Arthur Wakefield (1799-1843) led the colonisation of Nelson.

He left the British Navy after being involved in suppression of the North African slave trade, and in British opposition to American independence.

By 1843, Arthur had arranged for 18 ships carrying 3000 settlers to arrive in Nelson.

The New Zealand Company had promised settlers one town acre, 50 suburban acres and 100 rural acres.

Exceeding expectations, there were far more settlers than arable land available.

When Māori reasonably objected to European attempts to survey disputed/unsold land in the Wairau Valley, Ngāti Toa killed Arthur and 21 others.

British authority investigated and a strict policy followed whereby land could only be sold to the Crown.

Back in Wellington, William encountered similar problems with the company’s land and employment promises falling well short.

That caused widespread despair and after several strokes he died in 1848.

Chief Honiana Te Puni Kokopu was a pall-bearer at his large funeral and William’s house was used by the Governor when he visited from Auckland, the then capital.

After the capital shifted to Wellington in 1865, the present “Government House” was built near Mt Victoria, (the former site of Wellington’s “Lunatic Asylum”)

The whole colonisation project was, however, conceived by eldest brother Edward Gibbon

Wakefield during his three year prison term (for abduction).

He didn’t arrive until 1853 after the deaths of his younger brothers.

Edward’s “Wakefield Scheme” for the colonisation of South Australia, Canada and New Zealand involved populating areas with a workable combination of labourers, tradespersons, artisans and capital.

The scheme was to be financed by the sale of land at a “sufficient price” to the capitalists who would then support the other immigrants but the problems in its delivery were also apparent in Canterbury.

Edward had a rocky political career in Wellington but was also an influential Member of Parliament (1853-55) committed to the establishment of Parliamentary democracy in the colony.

In 1854 Wellington held a “Founders Festival” attended by 300 settlers and 60 Māori at which Edward Gibbon Wakefield was toasted.

In late 1855 he fell ill, however, and retired to live a secluded life for seven years.

In 1861 Edward transferred the grand home at 90 The Terrace where he lived with her and her young daughter Alice, to his sister-in-law Angela (widow of his brother Daniel).

Edward died soon after and the house was eventually leased with a series of family transactions of the property culminating in a perpetually renewable lease being granted in 1949 to the New Zealand Founders Society.

That reflected the Wakefield family’s desire, expressed in a couple of “entailed” wills of Edward’s nephew’s British heirs, for the property to remain in the Wakefield family.

In the 1970s the Founders Society demolished the house and built the 1970s building on the site.

Since the “Founders Society” invites new members from among those who can prove to have ancestors here before 1865, all Māori and and a great proportion of New Zealand’s population will presumably be welcome to join.

A plaque on the low wall at street level of the 1970s Wakefield House records the death at the site of “man of vision” Edward Gibbon Wakefield (1796-1862).

It refers to him as the “principal founder of planned settlement in New Zealand, MP for Hutt.”

He had a checkered history and his project was imperfectly delivered and possibly misconceived from the start, but his legacy plainly surrounds us in this place called home.

More information about the house where Edward died is at https://www.nzfounders.org.nz/site_files/44445/upload_files/blog/Bulletin2April1954.pdf?dl=1

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World Cup Fever inspires young Footballers

As the FIFA World Cup captures the imagination of Football fans around the world, kids in Wellington have the chance to get involved through a range of football opportunities run by Local Football Business SportZone.

Families are invited to attend Little Dribblers FC free Have a Go Days on 27 June and 4 July, where kids aged 1 to 7 years can be introduced to football in a relaxed and inclusive environment.

The excitement continues during the school

holidays with the KIFA World Cup Tournament.

Players and teams aged 6 to 10 years can wear the colours of World Cup nations, receive their own team kit, play four matches each day over four days, and compete for exciting prizes.

This tournament will run from 6 to 16 July at the Hutt Recreation Ground.

Beyond the World Cup, Little DribblersFC is also leading the Making Friends with Football Project – an ambitious initiative aiming to

deliver 1,000 free school football tournaments across New Zealand.

The programme can give Year 1 and 2 children their first meaningful experience of sport while developing leadership skills in senior primary students who referee and manage the teams.

More information is on the following Facebook pages: Little Dribblers Football Club, Making Friends with Football and KIFA World Cup.

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Weekly activities and weekend trips are regularly organised.

ETC's Speaking Club offers speaking practice outside of class hours in a relaxed environment. ETC Wellington is an official TOEIC Testing Centre.

The Lower Hutt campus is a smaller, community focussed, school with small classes

which mean that all students get the teacher's attention when they need it.

The campus facilities include eight classrooms with the latest multimedia facilities, a computer lab and a student kitchen. Free Wi-Fi is available for students at any time during school hours.

ETC Lower Hutt is centrally located in the central shopping area next to the Queensgate Shopping Mall.

A regular train service allows for easy access to the Wellington CBD within 30 minutes.

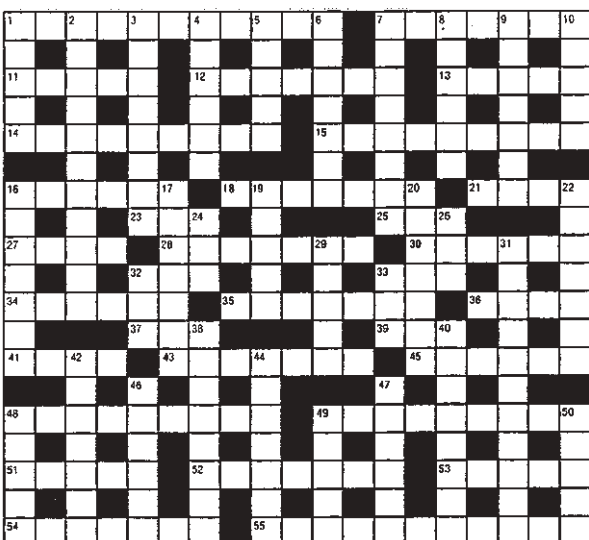
ETC offers classes to international students, migrants and former refugees to develop their English level.

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ETC offers New Zealand qualifications alongside communication and specialised academic classes.

For people who have Permanent Residence or who are a New Zealand Citizen, ETC has some free classes available.

CROSSWORD Puzzle



ACROSS

- Verbatim(4,3,4)
- Mourns (7)
- Declare invalid (5)
- Quibble (3-4)
- Majestic (5)
- Lie(9)
- Reduce in level of importance (9)
- Scarcity(6)
- Gun(7)
- James Dean starred in 'East of ...'(4)
- Dolt(3)
- Son of (Scoff)(3)
- 'Roots' author; ... Haley(4)
- Circular building(7)
- Steers(6)
- Stingy person(3)
- Charge(3)
- Dwell(6)
- In the middle of(7)
- Stimulus(4)
- Telepathic power(abbr)(3)
- Compass heading(abbr)(3)
- Be gloomy(4)
- Windpipe(7)
- Of the air(6)
- Tower of London warder(9)

DOWN

- Harbour platform(5)
- Instigators of illegal activities (11)
- Artificially high voice(8)
- Large sum of money; 'king's ...' (6)
- Series of eight(5)
- Decline(7)
- Tepid(8)
- Illusion(6)
- Stingy person(7)
- Healing ointment(5)
- Plan(7)
- Most difficult(7)
- Accustom(to hardship)(5)
- Deep red colour(7)
- Part of the nose(7)
- Enemy(3)
- At the right time, on ... (3)
- Use divining rod(5)
- Deceitful(11)

- Lytic poem(3)
- Swamp(3)
- Diplomatic etiquette(8)
- Up to this place, point or time (8)
- Foretell(7)
- Lacking integrity(7)
- Celestial body(6)
- Lyrical(6)
- Affray(5)
- Gloss(5)
- Attempt(5)

Solution
Last Week: 25 June 2026

OVERSIGHT STAGGERED
PATRICKS OBER
TIGER ADDRESS BRACE
ILO CYPUBCA
CLEANSED STIMULATED
AUGHPIEEEN
LURK OSTRICH ADAGIO
EWETIOELU
GRADE RANCOUR GOING
ALLELEA CABDUOSH
TWIRL INERTIA OCTET
ESBT ATRKE
CAINAP RATIONSGANW
RLC VIANE
AGGRAVATES CAPTURED
SITNRB MPTOD
HAVOC BRAVADO ENNU
EE OGRNSDN
RESIDENCE NIGHTLONG

North Wellington excels in the weather

By Hamish Wareham

With just 10 points separating first to eighth on the men's Central League two ladder, every point is going to be vital with only seven rounds remaining in this year's competition.

Heading into the round, high flyers Palmerston North United travelled to Alex Moore Park to take on TFS North Wellington who were out for a form of revenge having been beaten by Palmerston

4-1 in round two.

Wet and windy conditions scuppered chances for a flowing game of football.

Two first half goals to Jared Cunniff took him to five goals for the season so far, and was enough to wrap up the three points for North Wellington in 2-0 victory.

Norths kept a clean sheet for the fourth time this season.

This win boosts them up to fifth on the ladder, overtaking Seatoun who have a game in hand.

With five of their last seven games to come against teams below them on the ladder, maximum points will be vital on match days ahead of the run home with three of the seven being home fixtures with four on the road.

Waterside Karori's men's side presumed things might be looking up, their last two results being a 4-0 victory over Island Bay and a scoreless draw with albeit a hapless Phoenix Reserves side at Fraser Park.

Default settings couldn't have returned in a more abrupt way at Maidstone Park on Saturday.

Wharfies shipped five first half goals to fifth placed Upper Hutt, conceding three of them in a six minute period.

A worldie of a freekick in the 58th minute resigned Waterside Karori to a 6-0 defeat, their eighth of the Central League season from 12 games. They are now sitting ninth on eight points and boasting two wins and two draws.

There was no outing for Waterside Karori's women's team, as they prepare for their Kate Sheppard Cup quarterfinal fixture this Sunday against Phoenix Reserves.

After Wellington United dropped points on Saturday, Karori maintained their second spot on the women's Central League table.

Petone extended their lead at the top to four points although both Karori and Wellington United have a game in hand.



Fiona Brooker who will give the next talk for the Wellington Branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists. Photo: Supplied.

The time travelling genealogist

Fiona Brooker will give the next talk for the Wellington Branch of the NZ Society of Genealogists.

Fiona is a professional genealogist, speaker and founder of Memories in Time (www.memoriesintime.co.nz).

She presents workshops internationally and currently serves on the Board of the Association of Professional Genealogists.

Fiona has also worked as a researcher on the television series 'My Family Mystery'.

Her presentation will look at the black holes we may be creating for future historians.

In the past, everyday life often left a paper trail through letters, certificates, documents, photographs and family papers.

Today, much of our lives is lived digitally, scattered across platforms, hidden behind passwords, stored in devices, or simply never

recorded in a lasting way.

The result is a growing risk that individuals, families and communities may become far less visible to the future than we expect.

This talk is a practical and thought-provoking presentation about the records we are leaving behind, the gaps modern life is creating, and why future historians may struggle to find us and our stories.

It explores digital fragility, personal archives and simple ways to create a stronger record for future generations.

There will be no in-person Wellington Branch meeting this month. This talk will be presented on Zoom on Wednesday, 15 July, at 7:30 pm. To obtain the link, contact wellington@genealogy.org.nz.

For more information on the society, visit its website www.wellingtongenealogy.org.

Johnsonville victorious in Rugby

By Frank Neill

The Johnsonville premier Rugby team completed their Swindale Shield campaign with a surprise 14-10 victory over Marist St Pat's at Helston Park on 27 June.

It was their captain, fullback Finlay Sharp who saw them overhaul Marist St Pat's 10-7 lead when he scored a try late in the game.

The very evenly contested encounter saw each team score two tries, with flanker Tyler Hall also dotting down for the Hawks.

Johnsonville converted both its tries, and this was the difference between the two teams.

Connor Fitzsimons converted Tyler's try and Niall Delahunty converted Finlay's try.

Marist St Pat's headed into the match with a chance to qualify for the Jubilee Cup if they won, as they were favoured to achieve, but it was not to be.

Following their victory, both the Hawks and Marist St Pat's will now head into the second tier competition, having missed out on qualifying for the Jubilee Cup.

The Hawks will start their Hardham VC Memorial Cup campaign by playing Poneke at Helston Park on 4 July. Johnsonville finished tenth in the Swindale Shield competition, while Poneke finished 13th.

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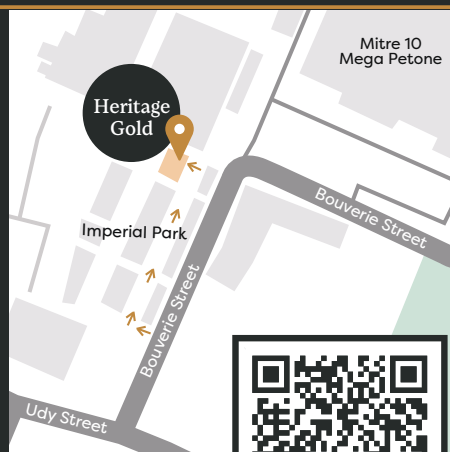
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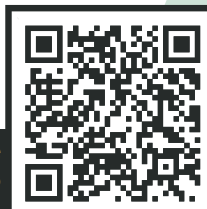
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