

BAY BUZZ

2024
NOVEMBER
+DECEMBER
No.79

Political update
Fuses lit for 2025

Ode to lemons & limes
Plus local Christmas gifting

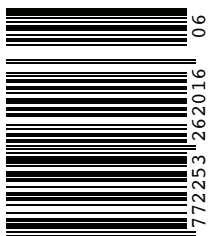
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BayBuzz
November +
December 2024



Great places for summer drinks. What will HB fight about in 2025? Inside look at iconic Bay homes. Cape Sanctuary to the rescue. What does HB import? Knowledge Bank digitises. Our sports codes must play together. Collaboration & partnerships fuel regional recovery. Local 3R has led NZ sustainability efforts. Immigration...who & why? Enjoy your lemons & limes. Gifting for wine-lovers. Eat more?! For fun: croquet and bird watching.

Photo: Florence Charvin



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Cover story

Nearly 20 years on, Cape Sanctuary can count many successes.

Cover photo: Volunteer John Berry
by Florence Charvin

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From the editor
Tom Belford

The November/December window will not see a heap of closure to Hawke's Bay issues ... more a series of doors beginning to open for 2025.

My own *Political update* will preview a number of those. Meantime, our region's cyclone recovery efforts have become almost BAU now, with considerable progress made as described in an article from the HB Regional Recovery Agency.

Impressive collaboration amongst the region's five councils has been a key factor in this progress, as the Recovery Agency notes, but how durable this cooperative approach might be going forward is questioned by a guest column from journalist Jane Wilson, titled *Regional collaboration ... a sad veneer?*

On the business front, in *Climate update* we look at HB's potential for biomass energy and, courtesy of Brenda Newth's *Matters of import*, the challenges of lifting Napier Port's import trade.

Wonky stuff aside, we have plenty to celebrate in this edition.

Mark Sweet returns with Part 2 of his review of the historic Hawke's Bay homes designed by William Gummer, this time taking you to Te Mata and Belmont (having previously visited Tauroa and Arden in our March/April 2023 edition).

Tess Redgrave reports on the achievements and ambitions of Cape Sanctuary, despite some past set-backs. Hastings-based 3R, a hugely important player in shaping NZ's waste-reducing 'circular economy' celebrates its 20 year anniversary. While the Knowledge Bank continues to digitally record and archive HB's rich history, as Simon Shattky describes.

And on the lifestyle front, we report on lemon and limes, croquet, birds, youth sport, gift ideas of the liquid variety and how to eat more and stay healthy!

Enjoy *BayBuzz* ... enjoy your holidays!

Tom Belford



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The BUZZ online
newsletter here**

Tom has been a two-term HB Regional Councillor. His past includes the Carter White House, building Ted Turner's first philanthropic organisation, doing heaps of marketing consulting for major non-profits and corporates.

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To produce the kind of writing and reporting you enjoy in this magazine, not to mention our weekly online reporting via The BUZZ e-newsletter, requires fuel.

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The Buzz
Lizzie Russell

DAY OUT

In this series, we cast a little *BayBuzz* light on local treasures – spots you might need reminding about, places to explore in our own resilient, beautiful backyard. This issue, we visit Heretaunga Croquet Club.

Photos by Florence Charvin

Have you ever wondered what's going on behind that hedge on Napier Road on the outskirts of Havelock North?

When we arrive it's just before the members come for their regular Monday afternoon session. Stalwarts of the club Carrie and Tom Cooke guide us through the newly reburbished clubrooms and introduce us to club captain Helen Reeves.

It's clear that this place is held together through the dedication and hard work of the membership, as one of New Zealand's largest croquet clubs (nine lawns!) all managed and maintained voluntarily.

Some 150 members use this beautifully manicured community asset, with club sessions five times a week, plus extra events and competitions. And the club is available for corporate and private events too.

We've got just enough time before the regulars show up for Tom and Carrie to show us the ropes and offer a lesson. There's a meditative quality to croquet, Tom tells us. And also to this place. The clean greenery. The balls and boxes and mallets. The orderliness of these items against the perfect lawns, under the huge Hawke's Bay sky.

So here we go. Choose your grip, stalk the ball, line it up, swing back like a pendulum and keep your head low. Then there is that satisfying "clonk" of mallet on ball.

For more information on joining the club or making a booking, visit the website www.sporty.co.nz/HeretaungaCroquetClub





Did You Know?

Over 32 years, the Hawke's Bay Wine Auction has raised and donated a whopping \$5,242,500 to Cranford Hospice. The total from the 2024 event was \$335,697. Congratulations and thank you to all involved!



Photo: Florence Charvin

November marks 150 years of Napier as a borough. Keep an ear out for celebratory events such as the one-off *When The Cat's Away* concert following the Harcourts Christmas Parade on Saturday, December 7. See ourplacenapier.nz for all the info.

There are 85 cruise ship visits to Napier Port scheduled this summer season, with a total of around 100,000 passengers.



The Hawke's Bay Trails are made up of over 200 kilometres of cycle tracks. And now is the perfect, sunny time of year to explore them, especially if you have visitors to the Bay over the summer. Go to hbtrails.nz to get the maps or the app.





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CLIMATE UPDATE

Biomass ... a decarbonising prospect for Hawke's Bay?

As Genesis Energy, NZ's largest electricity and natural gas retailer, sees it, for New Zealand to reach its current target of net zero by 2050, 60% of the country's energy needs to come from electricity, up from around 38% today.

At least 95% of that electricity needs to be renewable, up from around 80% today, and it will need to be practically available 100% of the time. This includes winter peaks, periods of low wind, and dry years.

Malcolm Johns, CEO of Genesis Energy treats those goals as “the first principle of our operating context for the next 25 years: 60 - 95 - 100”.

“New Zealand has the opportunity to not only secure dry-year cover using biomass from domestic forests, without disrupting logs for export or construction,

the potential supply is also large enough to ultimately displace coal and gas, securing the electricity system with domestic fuel storage for generations to come.”

At Genesis Energy's Annual Shareholder Meeting in October, he commented further on our recent winter's electricity shortages. “During winter '24, hydro and wind generated 30% less electricity than the year before. The system didn't have this covered and as a result the country was short of stored energy reserves with the result being volatile wholesale electricity prices.”

One casualty of the electricity price spike was the closure of Winstone Pulp, a key exporter passing between 15,000 and 19,000 20-foot-equivalent units (TEU) of pulp and containerized timber through the Port. The Port will lose 7-8% of its export trade earnings.

But Johns says the answer lies in wood. “New Zealand’s largest, cheapest, most sustainable and reliable energy storage for electricity sits in our exotic forests.” Sounds like a great opportunity for forest-rich Hawke’s Bay.

Blue sky aspiration? Genesis appears to be putting its money where its mouth is.

The company has successfully trialled burning wood pellets at its Huntly power station.

With Johns concluding: “Biomass through the Rankine units offers the country as much a 4.5 TWh of stored energy to cover the 1-2 TWh of energy reserves needed to cover years of low hydro and low wind. Biomass used in the Rankine units produces competitive electricity prices ... Under our new strategy Genesis is pursuing biomass at some speed, investing in a dedicated team to deliver real outcomes at volume by financial year 2028.”

And obviously not just more electricity, but clean electricity.

“Until we secure a reliable supply of sustainable biomass, less gas does mean more coal for the Rakines ... FY24 saw us burn a lot more coal, with a resulting increase in emissions of 1.2 million tonnes of CO2 compared to FY23.”

So, what about sustainable supply of biomass ... and where does Hawke’s Bay fit in?

Biomass for heat

As quoted in NBR, a Genesis spokesperson noted at the annual meeting: “One of the options we are pursuing is small modular biomass production units that you can take into where forest-based material is available. That includes the sort of slash that we’ve learned about particularly since Cyclone Gabrielle.”

Here in Hawke’s Bay we certainly have pine trees and slash! And we burn gas, suggesting a different regional opportunity - burning biomass for heat, not electricity.

As we’ve reported online, an investigation carried out with industry input



here in Hawke’s Bay by NZ’s Energy Efficiency and Conservation Authority (EECA), the Regional

Energy Transition Acceleration project (RETA), has looked at 44 commercial sites (each with minimum 500 tonnes/p.a. of emissions) that use 86% of HB’s piped gas, conferring with the businesses involved and inquiring into their energy use and future plans.

The RETA analysis has compared electricity and biomass as alternative power sources and has found that biomass would be the most economical solution in each of the 44 businesses reviewed.

To supply the requisite biomass for all to switch, HB foresters would need to harvest 230,000 ‘green’ tonnes per year. RETA has met with the region’s top forestry companies to arrive at an assessment of the harvest potential over the next several decades. The harvest is projected at 2.5-5Mt per year. And further analysis indicates the ‘residues’ (think slash, chips from current processing) generated from this would easily supply HB’s biomass demand at an affordable price taking into account all recovery and processing costs. And if our region’s low-grade logs were added in (now shipped mainly to China where they are chipped for biomass), the woody biomass supply would double.

So, what are the obstacles to HB converting its industrial gas use to biomass? The need for infrastructure collaboration amongst both users and suppliers.

On the demand/user side there is no single business with the energy demand to support its own biomass set-up, so the solution would be a group of users - e.g. at Awatoto or Whakatu - to aggregate their demand and feed off a shared system.

Likewise on the supply side. Rather than numerous forestry companies operating depots to store and process the wood residues, a central supply hub at scale would be the sensible solution.

Whether used to generate heat or electricity, it seems the ‘powers that be’ in Hawke’s Bay should be exploring biomass for all its virtues - emissions reduction, cost advantage, environmental clean-up and regional energy resilience.

Regional Councillor Xan Harding, Chair of HB’s Joint Action Climate

Here in Hawke’s Bay we certainly have pine trees and slash! And we burn gas, suggesting a different regional opportunity – burning biomass for heat, not electricity.

Committee comments: “Stationary heat represents nearly a third of our regional carbon footprint (ie. excluding methane). The significance of the news from EECA that we could economically transform slash into renewable fuel to eliminate such a significant portion of our regional carbon emissions is monumental and should become a key focus area for our committee.”

Lucy Laitinen, CEO of our Regional Economic Development Agency adds: “REDA has been supporting EECA’s RETA decarbonisation programme for HB. The final report from EECA is due end of November. As part of that process forestry companies in HB are starting to look collectively at the opportunities for the commercialisation of biomass supply and early work on the demand side is also being carried out.

REDA is keen to see this market being explored due to the potential positive economic and environmental implications and will continue to support where we can. We will know better in the next month or two what actions we can support.”

Sounds promising.

Meantime, individual HB companies are making energy-use changes:

- Napier Pine gas boiler to biomass boiler
- AFFCO Wairoa coal boiler to biomass boiler
- Bremworth gas boiler to high temperature heat pump
- Woolworks gas boiler to high temperature heat pump
- Ovation to electric boiler

Stay tuned! ●



BayBuzz energy and climate reporting is sponsored by Unison in support of independent local journalism.



FUSES LIT FOR 2025 BOMBSHELLS

As you are reading this, our region's five councils are pretty much winding down for the year on the policy-making front. I don't foresee any major bombshells exploding. Although fuses are being lit, the explosions won't occur until 2025, as this article will preview.

Which isn't to say councils aren't plenty busy.

Recovery works are in high gear, with councils awash in both rates-generated and government funding, particularly for roads and bridges (the Government has allocated \$91 million for 2024/25), providing the region's essential connectivity. Plus millions more for silt and other flood clean-up, including beleaguered Wairoa.

And with dozens of civil defence improvement recommendations in hand from multiple reviews, a great deal of work over seen by our Civil Defence Emergency Management Joint Committee is going into implementing those (benefitting of course more than weather disasters), while longer-term planning for flood protection proceeds.

Hawke's Bay shareholder-owned Unison has committed \$62 million to electricity infrastructure improvement over the same window. And millions more is being spent by the likes of Pan Pac, Ravensdown, Woolworks and other businesses severely damaged by Cyclone Gabrielle.

So there is plenty of physical activity buzzing away on the ground and carrying into the new year and beyond. If there's a fly in the 'rebuild ointment' it might be in HB's primary production sector, where many farmers and growers are still pushed to the wall by factors both local and global.

But back to councils.

A collection of critical issues needing policy attention - and then funding and implementation - are simmering beneath all that physical buzz and will come to a boil in 2025, which is a local election year to boot.

Rates and local gov't affordability

The rate increases announced in recent long-term plans for 2025/26 were: CHBDC - 14.9%, HDC - 15%, NCC - 11.4%, WDC - 15.5%, and HBRC - 18.3%. In projecting those increases, councils were adamant that they would be reviewing their spending microscopically, both to actually achieve the savings promised for this year (2024/25) and to hopefully lessen the burden of the budgets they will adopt in June 2025.

This chart illustrates what our \$1.22 billion HB local government 'economy' looks like:

2024/25	NCC	HDC	HBRC	CHBDC	WDC	TOTAL
Employees	669	470	349	102	75	1665
Personnel	\$60.6m	\$52.9m	\$43.9m	\$11.9m	\$7.5m	\$176.8m
Operating cost*	\$200.6m	\$266.0m	\$92.5m	\$80.9m	\$46.0m	\$685.9m
Capital cost	\$87.3m	\$284.6m	\$81.4m	\$30.0m	\$51.7m	\$535.0m
Staff per \$1m spend	2.3	0.9	2.0	0.9	0.8	1.4
Staff cost /total cost	21%	10%	25%	11%	16%	14%

*Includes personnel

This is the time of year when councils' planning for their June 2025 budgets has already begun, generally in workshops, some open, some not. Councillors tend to lose their zeal for open discussion when it's time to talk ratepayer money. What they are planning for us won't become clear until April/May.

There's unlikely to be 'Hail Mary' funding in terms of significant new Crown support beyond what's already flagged, so councils will be on their own as they set their numbers. With interest charges a key component of councils' budgets, at least the down trend in interest rates might provide some relief.

That said, much expensive capital-intensive work lies ahead whose costs (beginning now) and long-term funding arrangements are yet to be decided - coastal protection in the face of climate change, flood resilience, and '3 Waters' infrastructure.

A recent study by Local Government NZ on **coastal protection** across NZ put the cost of Hawke's Bay's endangered council assets from climate change at \$1.2 billion (i.e., not including private and central government assets).

LEFT: Stopbank rebuild. Photo: HBRC

'Flood protection' has been re-branded as 'flood resilience', reflecting the reality that no complete protection from extreme weather events like Cyclone Gabrielle can be provided.



The Cape Coast under threat. Photo: Tim Whittaker

Early work (2016) done by Tonkin and Taylor for the Coastal Strategy group investigating how to address our coastal risks 'cell by cell' from Tangoio to Clifton gave high-level estimates between \$130-\$285 million for mitigating projects over the next 100 years. More recently, a high-level cost of nearly \$2 billion has been projected for 'planned retreat' over the life of the strategy.

So finally, after ten years, a draft Coastal Hazards Strategy 2120 is in hand. We need to begin investing in our response, and councils are proposing a scheme wherein 70% of costs would be borne by affected property, 25% by HDC or NCC as relevant, and 5% allocated as 'public good' across the region.

This strategy and its funding plan will go to public consultation in roughly March 2025.

Meantime a recent Parliamentary Report of climate adaption (looking not only at coastal adaptation), receiving Treasury estimates that the recent weather-event damage to all NZ infrastructure is up to \$14.5 billion, has effectively ducked the issue of potential government funding. The Report recommends that "investment in climate adaptation should be paid for by applying a combination of the following principles: beneficiary pays, exacerbator pays, public pays, and ability-to-pay."

Then there's **flood protection**.

Actually, what used to be called planning for 'flood protection' has been re-branded as 'flood resilience'. This reflects the reality that no

complete protection from the impacts of extreme weather events like Cyclone Gabrielle can realistically be provided.

Substantial technical work is underway to devise better resilience in the face of future flooding. This includes methods to channel and reduce storm flows, as well as to mitigate obstacles to flows (like bridges) and improve stopbanks.

But land/water management and engineering options aside, ultimately it is the entire community that will need to come to grips with its risk tolerance and where/how this risk should be spread as we seek to protect lives, neighbourhoods and maraes, ecosystems, businesses, private properties and public assets.

Our planners and engineers can and will no doubt come up with schemes that offer various levels of protection at various (inter-generational) costs. As with life or homeowners' insurance, how much protection, how comprehensive, at what cost?

The community will need to make the call. And do so with the understanding that there will still be 'design-exceeding events'.

A gnarly set of issues on which to seek public understanding, input and consensus. The HBRC leading this process reckons it will take most of 2025 to engage the community in a constructive manner. Regional councillors are grappling with how this might best be done, with clarity on the process hoped for in November ... it would seem this won't be just another 'file your submission online' exercise.

Meantime, there's the now

seemingly 'old' issue of how to provide NZ and Hawke's Bay with first world **water infrastructure** - '3 Waters' in the previous government, re-branded 'Local Water Done Well' by the current regime. In both cases, how to provide safe, reliable drinking water, manage storm water and provide effective wastewater treatment.

The Government has signaled clearly that it is expecting regional solutions to this challenge. And it is providing some balance sheet relief to local councils to increase their borrowing capacity (the Government has no interest in footing this bill). As *BayBuzz* has reported, our local leaders, at least our four mayors, have said they agree. After all, they pleaded for a HB regional approach during the Labour regime.

Figuring out the organisational and financial plan for how this water infrastructure could be provided was delegated to the HB Regional Recovery Agency, given its collaborative role and diplomatic skills. But the scutwork has been further delegated to staff at the Napier City Council.

NCC chief executive Louise Miller reports as follows: "From mid-October through to the end of the year we are focusing on making sure councillors across the region have a really good understanding of the options ahead of us ... This includes looking at the financial impact of each model as well as viability and suitability.

"Before the end of the year, councils will make decisions about what model or models to consult the public on. In early 2025 - we're currently looking at February - we will carry out public

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"My fixed cost of energy is 3.8c/kWh from my own solar plant, compared to 34c/kWh for delivered energy from the grid," Mike explains. Mike Casey owns New Zealand's first 100% renewable cherry orchard in Central Otago. With a solar and battery system, Mike's orchard is energy-positive. This means he not only covers all his energy needs but also earns from the surplus power he exports back to the grid. Find out more about Mike's journey and real data research at 'Rewiring Aotearoa' on your social platform or their website.

If your budget does not allow Mike's 'boots n all' electrification journey, your local Freenergy team will work with you to design and install a modular system that can be expanded to suit demand and budget.

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Thanks Adrian. 13 years to be exact, you were one of our early customers for solar water heating in 2011, then adding a grid tie solar power system with the latest 230watt panels in 2013. Your new home in 2017 we installed the latest 265w panels, and your recent addition to the same system with an additional 5 x 400w Panels and battery backup. Thank you for your kind words and your support over the last 13 years.

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"If we hope to solve climate change, we need to eliminate the burning of fossil fuels and use our clean green electricity to the maximum." Sir Stephen Tindall

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While planners and plotters are beavering away on all these issues in their quiet backrooms, our politicians will be focused on their 2025 election plans and prospects.

consultation. Final decisions will be made around the middle of 2025 to meet central government's deadline for Water Service Delivery Plans of September 2025."

Looking to spring to life also in 2025 is what would be HB's biggest water infrastructure project of all, **Ruataniwha Dam 2** ... failed Ruataniwha Dam 1 in a new suit and far more expensive. Because a Supreme Court decision blocking flooding of conservation land put a final stake in the heart of Dam 1 back in July 2017, folks tend to forget that the dam was already falling over on financial grounds.

By that time, despite an intense two-year marketing effort, futures contracts had been signed for less than half the potential stored water, only 42.8 million cubes in contracts, signed by 196 farms from the eligible pool of 400-450. Not nearly enough potential revenue to generate an adequate rate of return against a dam costing \$330 million at last estimate (exclusive of the distribution network and on-farm reticulation costing even more). These days, all of those costs together would easily make for a \$1 billion plus white elephant.

However, Dam 2 has the distinction of being fast-tracked via the Government's pending legislation. Proponents will need to apply officially for a green light when the window opens in late January/early February. This will be nigh automatic given the project will already be on the

legislation-created list, but an expert panel will review and could impose fresh conditions. Assuming no unforeseen hiccups, a fresh business case will need to be prepared and marketing to potential water users and investors will proceed.

BayBuzz and others will have plenty of time to weigh in on Ruataniwha Dam 2 in the coming year.

Local body election & referenda

While planners and plotters are beavering away on all these issues in their quiet backrooms, our politicians will be focused on their 2025 election plans and prospects. Do you think that might affect their stands on any of the above?

Here are the key dates in the election schedule:

Candidate nominations open
4 July

Nominations close
Noon, 1 August

Public notice of candidates
asap, by 6 August

Voting documents delivered
9 through 22 September

Election Day
noon, 11 October

As you see, July will see the fascinating opening of political jockeying as incumbents ponder their resolve (fresh from their budget decisions) and challengers weigh their chances and plot their positions on the vexing issues described above.

Of course there will be one additional issue on our ballots - the question of Māori seats on the CHB, Hastings, Napier and Regional Councils. That contentious matter seems to have gone dormant for the time being. Expect it to come back to life as candidates declare in July. Any candidate with integrity should be expected to declare their position on this core governance question for our region.

Another issue *BayBuzz* will delve into in the new year.

So, council spending, cyclone recovery, flood resilience, coastal protection, water infrastructure, Dam 2, candidates, Māori seats ... and we haven't even mentioned where to build houses, how to fund tourism or [fill in your favourite].

Merry Christmas! ●



Nexia Partner, Michelle Menzies

Nexia expands team in support of region's primary sector.

Nexia Hawke's Bay has demonstrated its commitment to strategic growth in support of the region's primary sector, welcoming new Partner, Michelle Menzies to the firm.

Mark Knofflock, Director of the Hastings-based advisory and accounting firm, says Michelle's appointment aligns with Nexia's strategic approach to building a robust and dynamic team capable of meeting the diverse, and often complex needs of businesses operating within the region's primary sector.

"We are very aware of the value Michelle will bring to the team and we're looking forward to seeing Nexia clients continue to thrive under her specialist support," says Mark.

"Michelle's many years of on-the-ground experience and broad understanding of how the primary

sector operates is an undeniable asset to both Nexia and the businesses we work with - we're lucky to have her."

Having previously held the position of Director at local Hawke's Bay firm BWR, Michelle says that her career success is due to the genuine care she has for her clients.

"I know everyone says it, but I think the best testimony to that is to ask any client I have had the privilege of working with. I am motivated to achieve outcomes for clients, but I respect the limits they have and will only ever do what is asked of me. I will bring ideas and contributions to the table when invited but always acknowledge it is the client's ultimate decision."

She adds that the best thing advisors can do is to listen.

"There is a trick to accurately judging when it is time to educate and expand a client's thinking versus when it is time to support and safely direct someone who has

a very convicted sense of direction."

Michelle says that Nexia's global network was a real drawcard for her and that anyone thinking about using their services should consider it a significant benefit also.

"Being able to access the national knowledge base and relevant international expertise due to the Nexia brand is a real advantage."

"The business model that Nexia operates is very efficient, which brings real value to both compliance and advisory clients. I am excited to be joining an extremely professional and cooperative culture."

Get in touch with Michelle today:
mmenzies@nexiahb.co.nz
06 873 0355
308 Queen Street East, Hastings
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CAPE SANCTUARY

Story by Tess Redgrave

Photos by Florence Charvin

On a remote, sheer hill-face above the sea at the northern end of Cape Sanctuary's Ocean Beach, a little bit of spine-chilling magic is unfolding.

It is Monday 14 October and forty-eight juvenile tuatara that have been transported up from Victoria University of Wellington earlier in the day are about to be released into a newly built mouse-proof one hectare enclosure at the Cape's new seabird site extension.

Liz Lowe, a co-owner, with husband Andy, of Cape Sanctuary, crouches down and helps ease the first fledging reptile, no bigger than the size of her hand, into a prepared area of coastal scrub, rocks and natural lime.

"Conservation in action!" Liz exclaims as the small creature - a remnant of Aotearoa's ancient natural taonga - slips off to its new home. A cheer goes up from an excited crowd of 40-odd watching on, among them Chair of Ngāti Kahungunu Iwi, Bayden Barber, and Todd Dawson, CEO of Napier Port, who has helped fund the new extension, as well as Cape volunteers, members of local hapū, DoC workers and university researchers.

OPPOSITE PAGE: Dawn Hariata Bennett, John Berry and Liz Lowe

It is nearly 20 years since Liz and Andy Lowe, in partnership with the Robertson and Hansen families, set up this 2,500 hectare sanctuary, bounded by a 10.6 kilometre predator fence. It was to be a pioneering project that aimed to combine bird, animal, plant and tree restoration with the demands of a modern working-day farm, with approximately 50% of its land in farming and forestry.

Today the Sanctuary, privately funded by the Robertsons and Lowes, can count many successes - one of them a thriving population of some 200 tuatara. And in fact, the ones released today, are "returning home". Their eggs were laid by adult tuatara at the Sanctuary last October. Five clutches were then carefully dug up and transferred to Wellington for research into incubation conditions.

"The Cape is a very good site for tuatara with compelling evidence they once lived here," says Nicky Nelson, Dean of Science at Victoria University, who led the first successful translocation of tuatara to the Sanctuary in 2012. She has come back regularly with students to weigh, measure and monitor the reptiles and says the Cape's resident population is of special interest to researchers observing how the species responds to climate change at a coastal site.

Branded 'one of HB's best kept secrets', Cape Sanctuary had always been a bit of a mystery to me. I'd heard the stories of the exclusive golf course on the Clifton side and of the rich and famous staying at the Lodge and going on night kiwi tours. And I had read media coverage about kiwi chicks who died back in 2017.

What's more, in 2002 when the Lowes proposed building a village-style community of 900 homes on 75 ha at the southern end of Ocean Beach, I wrote a submission opposing any development at the iconic beach that had played a huge role in my HB childhood.

The village didn't go ahead, but the Sanctuary did. Now providence has delivered me here to get a 'birds-eye' view of Cape Sanctuary today and find out where it's heading.

Several weeks ago I joined Andy and the Sanctuary manager, Rachel Ward, at a 140-year-old restored hut nestled into the Ocean Beach sand dunes.

Just before my visit, a Jobs for Nature crew, Te Ngahere, had finished planting 15,000 natives on one of the steepest slopes towering above Ocean Beach. That makes more than one million natives planted since the Sanctuary began - a mammoth effort I note as I look up to the hillsides of green that were once barren.



Sanctuary manager, Rachel Ward. Photo: Florence Charvin

Dunes

Another visible success at Cape Sanctuary is the complete rebooting of the 240 hectare dune system, much of which we are sitting amidst. An intensive restoration programme has removed stock, wilding pines, blackberry, boxthorn, lupin, pampas and maram grass. In their place native silvery spinifex grass and orangey tufts of pīngao, that Māori call the eyelashes of Tangaroa, are knitting across the dunes and literally bringing them back to life.

“A lot of people thought I was mad,” says Andy. “That it’d be impossible to do this project on coastal land here. There were reports saying the dunes were stuffed - a waste of time restoring.”

Fortunately Geoff Walls, a scientist with DoC, said the dunes needed “intensive care” work but could be saved. Apparently maram grass, in particular, suppresses the dunes’ growth. Without it, they are a dynamic and expanding ecosystem.

I look up at a big wall of golden sand curling upwards like a giant sculpture, its virgin surface smooth and pristine.

These dunes are an exemplar of a NZ dune system in a near natural state and are considered nationally significant.

“The dunes are also the Sanctuary’s history book,” says Andy.

Biological fossil deposits dating back thousands of years reveal what animals and birds lived here once and might again. Among them the bones of Aotearoa’s unique ancient natural taonga - kiwi, moa, and in the case of tuatara dozens of their jawbones - as well as at least 30 bird species, skinks, geckos and bats.

The archaeological information is just as compelling. Hundreds of midden heaps have been found along with evidence of houses, storage pits, gardens, flaking floors, cooking fires and burial sites.

The dunes are wāhi tapu to local Māori and in recent years the Sanctuary’s cultural adviser Dawn Hariata Bennett, a member of the local Ngāti Mihiroa, a hapū of Ngāti Kahungunu iwi, has worked with archaeologists from Otago University unearthing koiwi (ancestral human remains) found sitting upright in

the sand “facing east to see the sunrise”. The koiwi are carbon-dated and interned at an unspecified site in the Sanctuary.

The Māori name for Ocean Beach is Waipuka, meaning plentiful food and water, and it was once home to many of Dawn’s ancestors.

Today the main inhabitants of the Waipuka dunes are endangered dotterels and kiwi who often fossick here at night.

Kiwi

Some 800-900 eastern North Island brown kiwi and approximately 40 kiwi pukupuku (little spotted kiwi) roam free at Cape Sanctuary, many choosing as their favoured habitat the 400 hectares of pine forest.

The Sanctuary is New Zealand’s first Kōhanga Kiwi site for the eastern North Island brown kiwi sub-species, which means it releases out home-grown birds (over 1,000 grams) to other conservation projects via an annual round-up in collaboration with hapū iwi, DoC and Save The Kiwi. The most recent release was this year, when the Royal NZ Air Force donated one of their 18-seater helicopters to translocate 19 birds from the Cape to the northern Ruahine bush.

Retired Havelock North ecologist John McLennan, who has worked with kiwi throughout his 40-year career with Landcare and DSIR, set up and for many years ran the Sanctuary’s kiwi programme. I met him for coffee and asked about the 2017 death of 25 chicks.

“It’s been so unfair,” he said of ongoing negative media coverage. “The Cape had one bad year in a sequence of very good years and drought was the major factor with hungry chicks looking for soil insects and leaving the safety of nocturnal habitat for daylight where they became prey to swamp harriers and getting lost. And in that particular year, myself and then-manager Tamsin Ward Smith had left and there were new staff who were learning.

“But even in their worst year, the survival rate of chicks at the Cape [56%] was better than just about everywhere else.”

“We’ve got the best record for kiwi of everyone in the country bar none,” says Andy, when I mention “the debacle” as he calls it. “In our breeding population we’re getting between 1.6-1.9 chicks per adult male, which is a record. Our population is exploding.”

Other Sanctuary success stories include the kākāriki, and especially 120-odd kākā parrots, that are flourishing under the guidance of Rachel.



Kiwi prints in Ocean Beach dunes. Photo: John Berry

The Sanctuary is also part of the national Takahē Recovery Programme, with a current population of 11 and growing. On the day we release the tuatara juveniles, I encounter one of the distinctive purple/blue red-beaked takahē waddling on grass just metres in front of me. Soon after Rachel and I peer into a burrow and see a young fluffy, grey-faced petrel nesting. Historically thousands of seabirds used to make their home on these hilltops. Now grey-faced petrels, originally translocated from Moutohorā (Whale Island) are the first seabirds to successfully return to burrows after years at sea. With ongoing help from Napier Port, the Cape aims to bring ten endangered seabirds species back to nest over the next ten years - fluttering and flesh-footed shearwaters and Cook's petrel for starters.

The seabird programme is the first of its kind on mainland New Zealand - the only sanctuary combining seabird restoration with forest-birds, animals and plants.

"It's been nearly 20 years, but we're still really in the setup phase here," reflects Andy. "We've broken the back of it, but the Cape is a scientific experiment and we haven't always got it right. We tried to put saddlebacks in the inland Rough Block, for example. It didn't work. We'll try again soon in our coastal forests."

Volunteers

Essential to Cape Sanctuary's work is another species called 'volunteers'. At any one time some 200 people are on the list, doing everything from daily feeding of kākā, biodiversity monitoring, to pest



Andy Lowe at Cape Sanctuary. Photo supplied

"The Cape had one bad year in a sequence of very good years and drought was the major factor with hungry chicks looking for soil insects and leaving the safety of nocturnal habitat for daylight where they became prey to swamp harriers and getting lost."

John McLennan, retired ecologist

and weed control and tree planting.

"I couldn't do this without our volunteers," says Andy. "Volunteer labour is better than financing a workforce. If we pay \$30 bucks an hour each for ten people out working here, seven hours a day, that's \$2,000 a day.

"We really try to value volunteers' time and skills. We try to make it socially appealing for people to volunteer and they have free use of several huts in return. They can come out for the day, spend the night here. Bring grandkids out. As long as people want to volunteer, they're welcome." Even though most of the current volunteers are retired, he assumes he'll have a volunteer labour force in place 30 years from now.

"We're getting a constant flow of people in and out," adds Rachel, who runs the volunteer rosters. "Most people get addicted to this place. It gets under your skin."

One is retired beekeeper John Berry, who has volunteered at the Sanctuary since its beginnings. He's helped with predator control and bird translocations from offshore islands and is currently responsible for regularly checking kākārīki nests, keeping starlings out of them.

John, with his long grey hair, beard and gentle demeanour is a Sanctuary treasure. He knows the place like the back of his hand and will happily spend half the night out here looking for kiwi, spotting glow worms, and telling a good yarn, or two, as a paid tour guide for guests at Cape Kidnappers' lodge.

"I am passionate about birds and the bush and I'm comfortable out here," says John. "I love doing what I'm doing." In exchange for his effort, John keeps about 32 hives at the Sanctuary, selling Cape Sanctuary Honey at the HB Farmer's Market every Sunday.

Dawn Hariata Bennett has volunteered as the Sanctuary's cultural adviser since 2017 and is on site about three times a week. She sources and officially chaperones all species from other places, usually hapū to hapū, to the Cape and vice versa, and is continuing the strong relationship her late mother Hariata Baker and first cousin Paratene Huia began when the Sanctuary was formed in 2006.

"Our hapu are so fortunate to be part of this," says Dawn. "It's a two-way street for us. Our taonga species are being returned here and it doesn't cost us a thing!

"Liz and Andy Lowe don't do anything without advising us. Our tikanga and our kawa (protocols and etiquette and the way they are done) are always considered."

Undoubtedly the "ultimate volunteer" and more, at Cape Sanctuary, is Liz Lowe.

"Andy is the visionary behind the sanctuary," observes Rachel. "Liz is the day-to-day backbone. She is involved in every single facet of the sanctuary

“We need private initiatives like this, there’s not enough money to go around. And the Cape is conservation in an everyday landscape where multiple activities take place and people can enjoy normal lives.”

John McLennan

from predator control and tree planting to going out for hours at night catching kiwi for the Kōhanga Kiwi programme and taking part in every species translocation. She should have an honorary PhD in conservation.”

Future

What next for Cape Sanctuary?

“Could a village of houses still happen out here,” I ask Andy straight off.

“Not in my lifetime,” he says. “I still think a village would’ve been fantastic. But I always had a vision for a conservation project.

“Everyone thought we were trying to do a conservation project as a trade-off for a village. That’s the way the media portrayed it, which was bullshit.”

His current goal is to make Cape Sanctuary financially sustainable in the next few years through tourism. “I’ve got a lot of tourism ideas for this site [Ocean Beach side]. Walking, guided walking. People want to see the dunes, species, iwi history. There’ll probably be more huts.” (There are already three huts with accommodation at Ocean Beach, all available for volunteers use.)

Cape Kidnappers and Ocean Beach fall into a Natural Preservation Zone (NZP) in the Hastings District Council Plan, a move Andy initiated around 2010, although building development within the zone is now more restricted than he may have originally hoped for.

(See *BayBuzz* 2016).

Andy describes himself to me as “a bit all or nothing,” but says you have to be pragmatic. “You do what is possible.” He recently had his large sea-side woolshed renovated, to be used as a base for eco-tours and education. In February he set the wheels in motion establishing a charitable trust, now officially named Te Kauwae Education Trust, drawing on Cape Kidnappers Māori name Te Kauwae o Maui (the jaw bone of Maui).

“We used to have school groups out, but it interfered with our day-to-day work across the site, staff and volunteers were becoming caregivers sort of thing and we’ve got to focus on saving these species.

“The Trust has been set up with hapū, local businessmen, lawyers. The idea is they can use the property for education - for everyone! Grandparents, parents, to kids ... people can learn about growing trees from seed, learn about the environment, learn about sand dune restoration. Someone will say they want to do a school project on birds for example, and they can.”

Environmental planner Stephen Daysh, who worked for the Lowe and Robertson families when the NPZ was being developed, is chair of the Trust and trustees include HBRC councillor Martin Williams, lawyer Philip Hocquard, Māori leader Mike Mohi, as well as other representatives of Heretaunga mana whenua who whakapapa to Ocean Beach.

“We will be underway with the initial education programmes in 2025,” says Daysh. “We will start slowly with a small number of schools with day visits to view the Sanctuary and do volunteer work, with the woolshed run as environmental education centre.”

It’s hard to get any figures out of Andy: what it has cost to run the Sanctuary so far? Financial planning that will secure its future?

“The Robertson and Lowe families will continue to fund the Sanctuary,” he says. “Vermin control has to happen, we’ll always fund that. But other things like species translocations, which are expensive, they can be up to \$60,000 to \$70,000 a time, are nice to have, and we’ll look at those as they turn up.

“Hopefully we won’t need vermin control in 30 years. Technology will’ve taken over. In fact, already companies in NZ like ZIP are starting to revolutionise predator control.

Emeritus Professor of Ecology at Victoria, Charles Daugherty, a trustee on the Hawke’s Bay Biodiversity Trust and a director of ZIP Zero Invasive Predators Ltd (ZIP), suggests Cape Sanctuary’s work is a ‘Call for Action’ for Hawke’s Bay.

“When will the rest of us take advantage of its conservation work and step up and be conscious of and do something about predator control so we can establish a bird corridor into our towns and cities?”

“We don’t want this to be a big expensive zoo,” adds Liz Lowe. “The vision is to create corridors and pathways and engage with HB, get kids trapping in backyards, control our cats and encourage the ‘halo effect’. This means that the Cape’s work and species flow out into wider community.”



Cape Sanctuary artefacts. Photo: Florence Charvin

John McLennan, who continues to consult to the Sanctuary, hopes one day we’ll see kiwi in our HB backyards “and hear them calling at night when we’ve gone to bed”.

McLennan loves Cape Sanctuary for two reasons. “We need private initiatives like this, there’s not enough money to go around. And the Cape is conservation in an everyday landscape where multiple activities take place and people can enjoy normal lives.”

“We’re like a nursery trying to save species for future generations so our grandkids can see them,” says Andy. He and Liz also have a collection of some 500 artefacts found at the sanctuary including fish hooks, species bones and pounamu treasures, all officially recorded with Te Papa, which Liz says they hope one day to incorporate into an onsite museum.

Andy dreams of bringing Fiordland forested penguins up here too. “And one day I’d love to have kākāpō. They would’ve been here once, but whether it’s safe for them?”

But for now, the release of the 48 juvenile tuatara is finished. If all goes well, amazingly most of these creatures could live for up to 200 years! And that is just one small part of the magic unfolding at Cape Sanctuary, which will benefit all of us in Hawke’s Bay, and beyond. ●

For more information and to book a public tour of Cape Sanctuary see: www.capesanctuary.co.nz

OPPOSITE PAGE: The release of 48 juvenile tuatara. Photos supplied.



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Friendly, neighbourhood brewery.

Gemma Smith, co-owner, says "We feel so grateful to be able to do what we do here in Hastings... So many incredibly talented, passionate people doing what they love. We love the authenticity here."

VISIT THEM AT: 205 Queen Street East

Heading out for a summer spin?

We've picked some popular trails for you to explore in Te Matau-a-Māui



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If you're looking to cruise on flat trails with beautiful landscapes, coastal views, and local heritage, you can't go past the Landscapes Ride. The trail offers a range of distances, allowing everyone – from families with young children to experienced cyclists – to enjoy the ride at their own pace. Follow the Pacific coast from Clive to Clifton on well-marked trails.



The Water Ride

A staple in any summer itinerary must be the Water Ride. A good choice for all ages, this 35 kilometre, well-maintained trail provides the perfect blend of seaside scenery and activities. As you navigate the trails, you'll be treated to stunning views of the Pacific Ocean, Ahuriri Estuary, and Tūtaekurī River. You'll also find plenty of cafés, restaurants, and picnic spots, so you can tailor your day to suit your mood. Don't forget to pack your swimwear in case you want to take a dip!



The Wineries Ride

Are wineries more your style? The trails have you covered! The Wineries Ride is perfect for friends, couples, or anyone looking to combine outdoor activity with wine tasting. There are both guided and self-guided options available for this ride, along with convenient bike hire. With unique cellar doors – ranging from boutique wineries to larger estates – offering food and wine along the trail, you can enjoy a day of easy cycling and local cuisine.



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2/6

BACK IN THE DAY

Simon Shattky

Apparently, if you drive north past the airport, and look between the two navigational pylons to where the hills start to grow, you'll see a lone tree. It's called Admiralty Tree, and in another time was used by ship captains as a guide to help them manoeuvre into the harbour.

It's a nugget passed on to me by Grant Ancell, who volunteers at the Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank, and I'll tuck it away in case it ever comes up at quiz night.

The Knowledge Bank, now chaired by Cynthia Bowers, is a digital archive of local history and was started by James Morgan, an editor of the *Hawke's Bay Herald Tribune*, who wanted to make sure the collective memory of Hawke's Bay wasn't lost. Remarkably it's the only such resource in New Zealand. It's also free. There used to be something similar in the Bay of Plenty, but not anymore.

There's a name for the Knowledge Bank concept. It's called *hyperlocal*, a term often and increasingly used in a business or marketing context. Wikipedia describes the concept as 'information centred around a well-defined community: It's our own little time capsule in the cloud.

"Well, not really the cloud," says Linda Bainbridge, who runs the operation at the Stonycroft base, and manages the 82 Knowledge Bank volunteers. She explains an unwritten rule of storing digital data: If you haven't made three copies it doesn't really exist. "We've got our own server," Linda proudly shows me, "but we also keep everything on two others for safety."

'Everything', includes, photos, video, oral histories, diaries, papers, literally thousands of documents and terabytes of data ... all about Hawke's Bay.

Linda came to the Knowledge Bank as a volunteer looking to get a bit of a

There's a name for the Knowledge Bank concept. It's called *hyperlocal* ... 'information centred around a well-defined community.'

confidence boost - after having been out of the workforce for a decade - and never left. With a management degree from EIT, Linda is paying it forward. Knowledge Bank works with MSD, Workbridge and the Disability Resource Centre to give others the chance to polish their skills. "We've got volunteers from all over the place, some retired, some not, and we've got a lovely young high school student who helps us with data entry."

I wonder out loud what sort of person you'd need to be to volunteer at the Knowledge Bank, but Linda is well ahead of me. "You need to be a fan of history, obviously," she says. Well yes, but it's more than that, the volunteers all seem to be bound by a curious nature. They're inquisitive.

It's easy to go down the rabbit hole too. If, for example, you're ever wondering what transpired at the luncheon meetings of the Hastings Rotary Club, I'm sure you'll be pleased to know that on January 25, 1929, Mr WT Harrison gave a chat on Kent, being an account of a recent trip to the old country. Talks about travel were clearly a bit of a feature at these lunches, where, on the 31st of August, this time at the Rialto Tea Rooms, Mr A Kingsford addressed the club on 'Life in Mexico'. Curiosity is contagious too, as I start to wonder, probably far too much, what was served for lunch.

As if to prove the point about curiosity, Linda gets a little too excited about looking through a 1929 issue of a tourist guide to Hastings. "Do you know how many monkeys we had in the zoo back then?" She asks. To be honest I didn't even know we had a zoo, let alone monkeys.

It's here though, in the minutiae of

life, that we get a glimpse of our near past and how we've behaved. But in all the details, you can't help but wonder, why? Who would be interested in all this? "Oh, you'd be surprised," Linda tells me. "We had a detective come in once. He was looking to prove someone was in the Bay at a particular time." Detectives and genealogists aside, the resource has been used to solve all sorts of mysteries, like property disputes for instance.

Claire Donkin, another volunteer, is busy transcribing a farmer's diary. There's 53 of them including 20 or 30 years' worth of shearing tables. It makes for pretty dry reading with entries like 'took the family to Wairoa' and 'finished harrowing turnips in cabbage tree paddock'. The neat incursive writing would be a struggle for anyone under thirty to decipher according to Claire. Again, the question is why? "It's pretty boring to be honest," says Claire. "But over time you get to understand land use and climate patterns and how they change." Even in their parched state, the diaries add colour and nuance that data can't. Nothing boring in that.

Unlike a museum, the Knowledge Bank information is collected without judgement. The criteria for entry is governed more by the budget which is always tight. They capture images, say a magazine page like this, with a digital camera. Each click of the shutter, Linda explains, triggers a process that can take about two or three hours, by several people, as each document is patiently transcribed, cleaned, and uploaded to the website.

It's a time consuming process that always requires more money to capture and store the data, and many more volunteer hours to process it. The Knowledge Bank needs more of both. But it's interesting work for a curious mind. Where else would you be able to discover how many streetlights Hastings had in 1929?

Or the name of that tree on the hill behind the navigation pylons. ●

OPPOSITE: The cover of *Hawke's Bay Photo News*, October 1964. A snapshot from another time preserved by the Knowledge Bank.



Swim meet at Hawke's Bay Regional Aquatic Centre.
Photo: Karl Wairama



Pickleball at Sylvan Road in Hastings.
Photo: Florence Charvin



Basketball court at Petane Domain, Napier. Photo: Supplied



SPORTS CODES PLAYING NICELY?

Are local sport organisations playing ball when it comes to ensuring there's a strong playing field of pathways from the weekend warrior sport enthusiast through to the gold medal Olympian athlete?

Story by Damon Harvey

Photos by Florence Charvin

Sport Hawke's Bay and its mother-ship Sport New Zealand have created participation programmes, boosted funding streams and created a 10 sport code strong regional sport coalition to ensure that youth remain in sport as they progress through their teenage years and into adulthood.

As the saying goes, 'Active for Life' is a mantra that is attempting to be deeply ingrained in schools, in the home and within sport codes, those that have been regarded as the top four - rugby, cricket, netball and football - as well as sports that are growing in popularity.

Growth codes include basketball, futsal and volleyball at a youth level, while if you head down to Windsor Park on any given Saturday, you'll see the pickleball in action. Pickleball featured in *BayBuzz* last summer.

At the same time Sport Hawke's Bay is on the search for new sporting initiatives that grow participation, and the regional sport trust is calling on sport codes, youth trusts and schools to come forward with out of the box ideas.

In 2020 Sport New Zealand established the Tū Manawa Active Aotearoa fund, which is administered by Sport Hawke's Bay locally. Earlier this year SHB announced it had a further \$2.7 million available aimed to increase accessibility to play, sport and active recreation opportunities for youth.

Sport Hawke's Bay chief executive Ryan Hambleton says the fund incentivises partnerships across the region with the emergence of surf schools for girls and boxing and 'get fit' programmes in lower socio-economic suburbs such as Maraenui, Camberley and Flaxmere.

"A decade ago, many of the sport and recreation opportunities would have been aligned to major sports such as rugby and netball, and although they receive funding for innovative projects, so has new emerging opportunities such as Taiao Combat, Disability Sport and Recreation Hawke's Bay and Sense Rugby."

"The fund has had a positive impact, providing opportunities for young people to help develop new opportunities with emphasis placed on ensuring youth voice is an integral part of developing opportunities."

"Two recent examples are the Sea Sisters, a wahine-focussed surf school and Shamrock Boxing, an initiative in Maraenui that uses boxing as a vehicle to get rangatahi being more physically active."

Ryan says the timing of the Sport NZ funding being confirmed for the next four years is on point, as many organisations are facing financial challenges, either due to growth in participation or impacts of the cost of living.

"The financial environment has changed so we all need to look to how we get more tamariki and rangatahi physically active across the region," he says.

"Two recent examples are the Sea Sisters, a wahine-focussed surf school and Shamrock Boxing, an initiative in Maraenui that uses boxing as a vehicle to get rangatahi being more physically active."

Ryan Hambleton, Sport Hawke's Bay chief executive

Basketball Hawke's Bay is one of ten sport organisations that has signed up as a member of the region's sport coalition. The coalition uses a new national-led Sport Pathway Framework as well as a refreshed Balance Is Better programme to ensure young people in the Bay get a quality sport experience, regardless of what sport they are playing.

The 10 regional organisation codes are basketball, rugby, football, cricket, hockey, netball, volleyball, touch, badminton and tennis.

The Sport Pathway Framework outlines 11 commitments including ensuring all young people who play sport receive a quality experience irrespective of the level at which they are involved, raising awareness of the risks of overtraining and overloading, and identifying talent 'later rather than sooner' in young athletes.

It covers the three levels of participation - social, competitive and high



High performance basketball, Kahu Treacher. Photo: Supplied

performance levels.

Ryan says nationwide data shows current active recreation and sport offerings are not meeting the needs of young people and are leading to low participation rates.

“As a sector, we are all committed to getting more young people active.”

Examples of sport codes joining forces on collective programmes include Good Sports, a programme that tackles poor sideline behaviour and Balance is Better, an evidence-based philosophy to support quality sport experiences for all young people, regardless of ability, needs and motivations. It is about young people staying involved in sport for life and realising their potential at the right time.

The Hawke’s Bay Community Fitness Centre Trust based at Mitre10 Park is also actively involved as it has a New Zealand High Performance Sport Hub, and athlete development programmes nurturing the talents of over 130 athletes across athletics, equestrian, canoe racing, swimming, hockey, netball, softball and badminton. Youth learn the fundamentals of strength and conditioning that cater for various age groups

and stages of development. Basketball Hawke’s Bay General Manager Tim Baker says the indoor court sport is the fastest growing in the region with over 3,200 members, of which 2,000 are aged 5-12 years of age.

“The demand is so high that we’ve run out of available courts for our competitions. As a result, we have to limit the number of teams that can enter each grade.

In the last term of 2024 BHB has 170 primary and intermediate teams registered.

However although BHB is signed up to the coalition its biggest risk to participation is affordability of court space. Earlier this year it made the difficult decision to stop using the multi-million dollar new indoor court facility at Pettigrew Green in Taradale. “The rising costs of venue hire is a significant concern for us. We don’t utilise Pettigrew Arena, because its venue fees are prohibitively high compared to council-run facilities.

He says with basketball being an indoor sport it faces higher venue costs compared to outdoor grass sports like rugby and football, which typically

“The demand is so high that we’ve run out of available courts for our competitions. As a result, we have to limit the number of teams that can enter each grade.”

Tim Baker, Basketball Hawke’s Bay General Manager

have minimal fees.

Another big concern is the reliance on funding from gaming grants (aka proceeds from Pokies) and sponsors.

“Everyone is competing for the same funding from gaming grants. We require over \$350,000 annually to operate and given that many in the community are currently struggling, this limits our ability to hire more staff or expand the game, despite the demand.”

He adds securing sponsorship to support grassroots growth is also challenging, especially when compared to sports that have semi-professional or professional teams, which offer a more marketable product.

Tim believes that the sport coalition will only be a success if the traditional big sports actively play in the same sand-pit as emerging sports, especially when it comes to competition scheduling.

“The coalition is a promising step forward, but it’s crucial for all sports to be involved in this initiative.

“Rugby recognises that they no longer hold a monopoly over the community and that other sports are experiencing significant growth and higher participation than in previous years.

“Currently, many sports schedules revolve around rugby; for example, rugby clubs and schools typically train on Tuesdays and Thursdays, with games on Saturdays.

“This scheduling limits our ability to host competitions on those nights, as we want to accommodate rugby players as well. Additionally, we can’t schedule games on Friday nights because schools with 1st XV rugby teams often travel for matches that evening.

In 2022 the Aquahawks Swimming Club completed a ground-breaking project using both Balance is Better and Good Sports to ensure the long term future of the club, after the club was facing a decline in junior members.

It followed a national trend of a 46.5%

“It’s around enjoyment and friends and getting a cross-section of skills and everything else that are the key social fabrics of why you play sport.”

Jay Campbell, Hawke’s Bay Rugby Union CEO

decline of youth participation over the last five years and the club initiated a new strategy aimed at increasing membership, retaining membership and to foster a thriving and inclusive club culture.

Swimming as a sport has a culture of high training load and a young performance pathway. The club separately surveyed its young swimmers and parents, with 68% of swimmers saying what they liked most about swimming was the social connection and friendships created from training and competing, followed by including fun activities as part of training at 21%, while

16% liked the fitness gains and improving performance.

Least enjoyable was the training load, which 33% said was too often and difficult, followed by early morning training at 21%, while 19% referenced negative adult behaviour, expectations or pressure.

The young swimmers said they wanted to have a say and to be included in their own sporting journey, and not just swimming up and down a lane and finding some room for fun, as well as competition.

One of the immediate changes the club was to empower the junior members to create the theme for the end of year Christmas event and future club nights based on their desire for more social connection and fun.

Some of the children suggested making use of the basketball court located at Napier Aquatic centre, to be used in their down-time such as in between races at club nights, or before and after training sessions.

Hawke’s Bay Rugby Union CEO Jay Campbell says it is vitally important for the future of their games that they all agree on the key philosophies of the coalition and fostering every young player’s love for playing sport.

“It’s around enjoyment and friends and getting a cross-section of skills and everything else that are the key social fabrics of why you play sport.”

Rugby has already made some key changes with age group representative rugby not starting until U16 levels. “We see that there is no need to have high performance in those younger age groups.

“History has shown, generally speaking, rugby players don’t really come into their own until post that age anyway so playing a variety of sports and making sure that they are very much a holistic person based on what they do inside and outside the classroom, and across a whole lot of codes is better for them in the long run.”

In the end, it’s clear that collaboration across sports codes is not just a necessity but a crucial part of ensuring all athletes, from the casual player to the future star, have the chance to stay in the game for life. ●



Kaweka Hospital is pleased to sponsor BayBuzz coverage of sport and fitness in Hawke’s Bay.

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Kaweka Hospital is changing lives in Hawke’s Bay by delivering surgery in ENT (ear, nose and throat), general surgery, gynaecology, urology and ophthalmology.

Kaweka Hospital, established by Hawke’s Bay clinicians for the people of Hawke’s Bay. Ask your GP for a referral to one of our specialists or visit our website.



www.kawekahospital.nz
209 Canning Road, Hastings



Napier is marking 150 years since it became a borough.

Commemorating this significant milestone is a chance for our community to come together, share stories, and honour the places and people that make Napier special.

Becoming a borough meant having our own mayor and council, and therefore autonomy in decision making. This was an important step for Napier and a reflection of the community's desire to be independent, shape its future and forge its own path.

The push for borough status was a testament to the resilience, determination and passion of Napier's people, who saw a future city where their voices would resonate and be heard.

As we commemorate 150 years, we honour the stories, characters, and moments that have shaped Napier, celebrating its perseverance and ability to thrive through challenges. This year's events reflect our proud history and our bright future.

When we ask people what they love about Napier, it's often the intangibles. Many cherish the city's spirit, its welcoming atmosphere, and the emotional connection they feel to this place.

Others love its stunning landscapes, outdoor activities, and the balance of urban city life by the sea, within easy reach of the great outdoors. For some, Napier is in their hearts because of its rich heritage with family ties that bind them to its history, while newcomers are drawn to its charm, eager to contribute to the community.

What stands out for everyone is the people of Napier. It's the residents who lend a helping hand, drive businesses forward, and foster connections that truly make this city great.



A time to reflect and acknowledge
our city's rich heritage, resilience
and bright future ahead!

Napier Sailing Club Water Expo

17 November, 10am-2pm, Ahuriri

Sailing day at Ahuriri showcasing the rich maritime heritage and vibrant community of Napier Sailing Club.

Official Napier 150th Commemoration Service

28 November, 7am-9am, Marine Parade

Official commemoration event acknowledging 150 years since Napier became a borough, with special guests from the Royal NZ Navy and Napier's Sister Cities in Canada and China.

100 Years of the Fullagar Engine

**29 November, 5pm-9pm,
Faraday Museum of Technology**

Celebrating the 100-year legacy of the humble Fullagar Engine at Napier Faraday Museum of Technology.

Whānau Fest 150

30 November, 10am-3pm, Anderson Park

Bring whānau and friends and join in this event aimed at connecting and celebrating our Napier communities. There will be live entertainment, music, food trucks, coffee carts, cultural displays and more! Proudly supported by Tremains.

Collins St Festival

30 November, Collins Street, Ahuriri

Held in one of Hawke's Bay's coolest little suburbs, this festival showcases the best of what the region has to offer, bringing together the finest in local food, drinks and talent. Purchase tickets at collinsstfestival.co.nz

Napier 150th Christmas Parade and Concert

7 December, 1pm-6pm, Napier CBD

With over 30 displays and floats, plus pipe bands, marching groups, mascots - and of course Mr Claus himself. The parade will be followed by a Christmas Fiesta and special Napier 150th Concert at Napier Soundshell.

For more information visit
ourplacenapier.nz

WELCOME BACK, CRUISE SEASON!



Napier Port's 2024/25 cruise season is officially underway, building on the record-breaking success of last year, with 89 vessels calling the port. With 85 ships scheduled to arrive this season, the port is once again set to be a major hub for cruise tourism, bringing visitors from around the world to Napier and the wider Hawke's Bay region.

During the 2023/24 cruise season, New Zealand's economy saw a substantial boost from cruise tourism, with around 350,000 visitors contributing an estimated \$565 million. This season, we anticipate welcoming over 100,000 passengers to the Hawke's Bay region, further supporting local businesses and communities.

The 2024/25 season kicked off in early October with the first vessel arriving and will run through to March, with many busy multi-vessel days planned throughout. Ships will be hosted across four wharves, including Te Whiti (6 Wharf), our multi-purpose berth that increases the port's capacity and provides more operational flexibility.

This season features a number of exciting highlights, including 11 maiden calls from ships such as Le Jacques Cartier, Norwegian Sun, and Viking Sky as well as two brand new ships – Silver Nova and Scenic Eclipse II. The return of 347m Quantum of the Seas, sister ship to Ovation of the Seas, is another standout, along with

The World, which is making a two-night visit to Napier.

Napier Port works closely with partners such as Hawke's Bay Tourism, the Napier i-SITE Visitor Centre, Napier City Council and local tour operators to ensure that cruise visitors experience the best the region has to offer. New for this season is a 20-meter gangway, designed to improve passenger disembarkation and further enhance their overall experience.

As the season progresses, Napier Port remains committed to delivering a world-class experience for cruise visitors, helping to drive both tourism and economic growth in the region.

85

Scheduled
Cruise Ships

17

Multiple
Vessel Days

100k+

Estimated total
passengers

700

Estimated total passenger
buses on the Port

11

Maiden
Calls

2

Overnight
Stays

**Ovation of
the Seas**

Biggest Cruise Ship (348m)

**National
Geographic Orion**

Smallest Cruise Ship (103m)



Bay Biz

Ravensdown, Awatoto.
Photo: Florence Charvin



MATTERS OF IMPORT

In the previous issue of *BayBuzz*, we profiled non-primary produce exporters. In this article we look at two Hawke's Bay importers, and the import business of Napier Port.



David Kriel, Napier Port's General Manager Commercial, says that Napier Port is an export-focussed port.

"And New Zealand is an export-focussed country."

Part of Kriel's role involves shopping Napier Port to the international shipping lines, to get them to call in at Ahuriri, which is conveniently located just 13 sea miles from the main shipping routes.

Every year he calls on the Asian offices of the shipping companies, because that's where decisions are made for Australasian shipping, to remind them of the strengths and opportunities of including Napier as a port of call. Less frequently he's further afield, touting for business in Europe.

"We do quite a lot of hard work to make Hawke's Bay attractive to the international (shipping) lines, because we have a big seasonal profile."

OUR LOPSIDED PORT

Not surprisingly, the split between the port's exports and imports is around 80:20 by weight, with springtime the slowest time of year. Napier Port has the capacity and landside logistics capability to increase import volumes, relieving pressure from other congested northern New Zealand ports.

Imports through Napier Port include fertiliser, oil products, general cargo, foodstuffs, cement and bitumen.

Because of the trade imbalance, Napier Port has a huge need for refrigerated shipping containers; 'reefers' as they're known in the trade. Shipping companies have to freight the empty containers to Hawke's Bay at their cost. In the year to 30 September 2024, shipping companies transported 80,000 empty TEUs (equivalent to a 20 foot container) into the region.

Traditionally, ports don't really control cargo, Kriel says. "It's controlled by supply and demand. Market conditions for imports in this region - Taupō south - is not very high. The demand is much lower than what it is north of that line."

But that is slowly changing as the population drifts south, and prices, road congestion and capacity constraints in other places make alternative ports with good connections more attractive.

Kriel says the challenge is to attract imports, because it makes the port more sustainable.

"We go and talk to the importers themselves. But often the people buying the product don't control how it gets to New Zealand, they're just buying on a delivered price basis.

"So we go and explain the benefits of bringing freight in through Napier Port. You can potentially lower your ocean freight cost by bringing it into an export dominant port, because the shipping lines know they have to get containers here. At the moment they're bringing them in at their own cost. However, if they could bring it in, and somebody's paying for them, it so much more attractive, so we've spent a lot of time joining those dots."

Although not disclosed by the Port, it would be safe to assume that revenue attributed to its import business is probably proportionate to its export-to-import split.

David Kriel says that Napier Port is focussed on growing all of its business, not just imports.

"We want both. We want to grow our volume, and assist it, and take out any obstacles to growth, and that means trying to attract more imports.

"That plays to the sustainability of the growth."

A balanced port, one where volumes of incoming and outgoing cargo are matched, drives efficiencies and attractiveness of the port to shipping

companies, and makes the business more sustainable.

Getting shipping companies to call is one part of the picture, the other is attracting export and import customers, and that's where Nicolas Ganivet, Supply Chain Manager comes in.

Ganivet's role is to find more customers, that are not necessarily in the region, to ship their goods through Napier Port. His hunting ground is areas outside of Hawke's Bay, such as the lower North Island where the Manawatu inland port, which is 50 percent owned by Napier Port, and Viewpoint, the port's supply chain service both play major roles.

Viewpoint, launched a year ago, connects customers to the port and includes services like warehousing, transport of containers, and logistics. Carterton smallgoods producer, Premier Beehive, is one such customer singing the praises of the Viewpoint service, that sees its Napier-landed imports shipped to Palmerston North via rail, before being trucked to Carterton.

Ganivet says it's the variety of services the port offers.

"We use all the visibility we have across the port movements to create a seamless supply chain solution, and put together whatever the customer needs. We're trying to promote that as a point of difference, and that brings value in removing empty container movements ... all that waste in the supply chain. If you can match an import with an export movement suddenly it makes the whole supply chain just a bit more connected.

"The issue is the imbalance. So the more imports you get through the port, even though they may not end up in Hawke's Bay ... makes the port more desirable, which in turn attracts more services.

"If we get those big importers to change their mindset, suddenly it can change the game," says Ganivet.

“We do quite a lot of hard work to make Hawke’s Bay attractive to the international (shipping) lines, because we have a big seasonal profile.”

David Kriel

BIG SAVE FURNITURE

Big Save Furniture is a household name in New Zealand. The family owned furniture and bedding retailer - one of the country’s largest - celebrated its 50th anniversary last year.

Originating in the Wellington region, the company made the move to Hawke’s Bay 17 years ago, relocating its head office and North Island distribution centre.

In a 2011 media article Big Save director Tom McKimm said lower costs and better logistics was the motivation, and the move had been hugely successful.

Today, Big Save has 27 stores (mostly in the North Island), 250 employees, and its own trucking fleet. In Napier, the company has 64 staff across two retail stores, warehouse and delivery teams with local delivery and linehaul trucks, and head office.

As a private company, Big Save isn’t required to share information about its business operations; details about company revenue or market share are not readily available. However, *BayBuzz* did come across a 2010 media article that said the company had 21 stores and a \$100 million turnover.

Big Save’s range includes everything to furnish a house; lounge and dining furniture - representing about 50% of its range; beds and bedroom furniture - about 30% of its range; home office, outdoor, and a commercial range servicing accommodation and transitional housing customers.

Stock is sourced both from goods made and designed in New Zealand - Sealy is a significant supplier of beds, for example, and from imports from offshore manufacturers, who produce to Big Save’s designs.

The company is very tight on quality control, says Big Save CFO Charlotte Moodie.

“In terms of quality control the directors like to spec the product top to bottom, so nice little mechanisms in



Big Save Furniture’s Charlotte Moodie (CFO), Roydon Simmonds (warehouse manager) and Rowena Miller (COO). Photo: Florence Charvin

your armchairs and things like that.”

With a significant portion of its product range coming from offshore, Big Save works with several suppliers in China and Vietnam, as well as importing from Australia, Malaysia, India and Singapore. Around 40%-45% of its imports land at Napier Port.

“The directors have a really good relationship with the Napier Port since they moved here,” says Chief Operating Officer Rowena Miller.

“It’s our mainstay.”

In addition to importing into Hawke’s Bay, Big Save also lands product in Wellington, and more recently into Christchurch, in a move designed to reduce delivery times for South Island customers.

Perhaps surprisingly, Big Save is also an exporter, but not of finished goods.

In 2021, the company committed to paying farmers a fair price for wool, as part of its sustainability efforts. Wool is a key component of some Big Save beds and furniture. The property arm of

Big Save owners, the McKimm family, bought four sheep and beef farms in the Ākitio, Hawke’s Bay and Tararua regions.

Now Big Save exports New Zealand strong wool from its own farms and others in the area, to its offshore bed and furniture manufacturers for inclusion in Big Save’s range, and its Kiwi suppliers are including it in their designs for the company too.

Moodie says that Big Save sees massive value in wool. “The directors are trying to work within New Zealand to push the wool agenda, because there are just so many smart things we can do with it.”

RAVENSDOWN

The Ravensdown factory at Awatoto is a well-known landmark on the Napier seafront and is the largest of three manufacturing sites for the co-operative. It is New Zealand’s largest superphosphate manufacturing site, producing more than 250,000 tonnes

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FURNITURE & BEDS



annually, with Christchurch and Dunedin rounding out Ravensdown's production facilities.

Currently fertiliser represents around 30% of imports coming into the region, but that has declined from 35% in 2021 to 29% in the year to September 2023 (source Napier Port).

Recently Ravensdown confirmed the closure of its Dunedin plant, scheduled for January 2025, as it faces a contraction of the fertiliser industry. Ravensdown volumes are declining; down by nearly 26% between its 2022 and 2024 financial years.

Ravensdown Hawke's Bay has had more than its fair share of challenges in recent years, with a fire in late 2022, followed by flooding from the cyclone. Tony Gray, Awatoto plant manager, says that the plant had only just resumed operations in late January 2023, before the floodwaters hit.

A new 35 year consent - with conditions around discharges to air and water - and a \$50 million capital

project just completed, increases production capacity and significantly improves environmental performance.

Ravensdown says its new acid converter will result in a 40% reduction in sulphur dioxide emissions and will facilitate quicker hot restarts, reducing the use of diesel and therefore GHG emissions.

We had a 14 week shutdown, with people working around the clock, says Gray.

"It was very successful. We've had some good reinvestment in the plant, and it signifies one, the strength of the co-operative, and two, the commitment. It's great to have a vibrant regional economy there and we see ourselves as a significant part of that in the future."

Sulphur and rock phosphate are the two main raw materials in superphosphate, and Ravensdown imports them in vast quantities through Napier Port.

Sulphur is sourced from Canada, says Gray, shipped from Vancouver.

"The issue is the imbalance. So the more imports you get through the port, even though they may not end up in Hawke's Bay ... makes the port more desirable, which in turn attracts more services."

Nicolas Ganivet

Elemental sulphur is produced all over the world, with the largest production occurring where sour (meaning sulphur-rich) gas and oil is processed and refined, in places like Canada, the USA, the former Soviet Union, and West Asia. Phosphorus is an essential element for plant and animal nutrition, with phosphate rock minerals the only significant global resource of phosphorus.

In 2023, the world's leading

In 2024 Ravensdown undertook a human rights risk assessment across its supply chain, with a focus on rock phosphate. No supplier agreements have been terminated as a result of this work.

phosphate producers, according to [worldpopulationreview.com](https://www.worldpopulationreview.com) included Morocco (holding an estimated 70% of total world reserves), Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, China, Brazil, South Africa and Saudi Arabia. Other countries with phosphate reserves include Australia, the USA, Finland, Jordan and Russia. Certain regions, such as the Western Sahara are technically phosphate-rich but present access issues for many of the stakeholders involved.

Rock phosphate, is imported by Ravensdown from a number of different countries, including Australia, South Africa, Morocco and Togo.

Geopolitical unrest has affected Ravensdown’s raw material supplies, meaning that new sources of rock phosphate were needed. Sourcing so-called ‘conflict rock’ via Morocco has been controversial. In 2024 Ravensdown undertook a human rights risk assessment across its supply chain, with a focus on rock phosphate. No supplier agreements have been terminated as a result of this work.

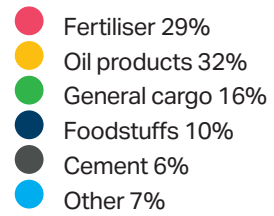
In its latest annual report, Ravensdown said: “Sourcing phosphate rock from new suppliers in South Africa and Australia enabled us to have alternatives.

“Bringing in new sources of phosphate rock ensures we have strong levels of resilience within our supply chain to meet our customer requirements for superphosphate.”

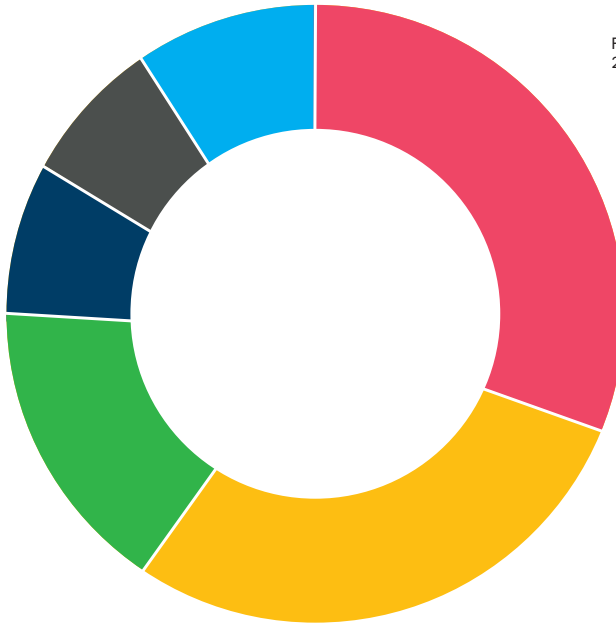
In a media article in August, following the completion of the capital project, Gray said that Ravensdown Awatoto was in a good position to ensure its future.

“We are committed to the region and wouldn’t be making this kind of investment unless we saw confidence in the site.” ●

NAPIER PORT IMPORTS PROFILE



Financial year 2023 by weight



UNUSUAL IMPORTS

Interesting items imported through Napier Port in recent years include wind turbine components for Meridian Energy’s Harapaki wind farm that now stand atop the Maungaharuru Range northwest of Napier.

Napier Port says imports like the wind farm components highlight the shift towards renewable energy and sustainability. These imports, as well as presenting unique logistical challenges, including transporting large-scale components to remote areas, also create future opportunities for growth in this sector.

Planning and collaboration between many partners ensured these components were safely unloaded and transported to their local storage facility until required on site.

Another unique import was a 1913 Rolls-Royce Silver Ghost. The historic vehicle was imported via Napier Port and then devanned at Manawātū Inland Port for its New Zealand owner. The vehicle is a piece of Rolls-Royce history having been driven in the 1913 Alpine Trails know as Austrian Alpenfahrt, a 2650-kilometre journey over 19 major mountain passes.

Turbines off-loaded at the port. Photo: John Cowpland / alphapix



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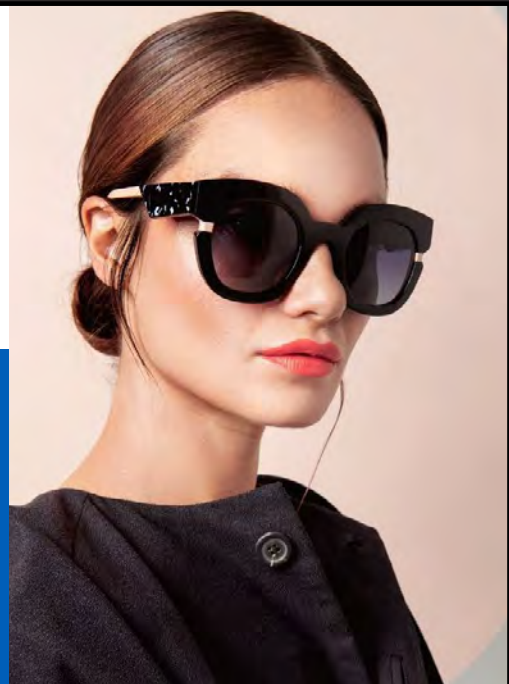
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From luxurious bathroom fixtures to sleek, modern kitchenware and hard-working laundry solutions, O'Briens has become known for providing products that transform homes and projects across Hawke's Bay. In addition to their range of surface products, O'Briens is also proud to supply the essential 'behind-the-wall' items, ensuring every project is built on a solid foundation.

"We're incredibly grateful for the support we've received over the last ten years," says owner Mark Liley. "It's been a pleasure to help our clients and tradespeople bring their visions to life. The relationships we've built with our customers and the community mean everything to us, and we look forward to continuing to do what we love for years to come."

This decade-long journey has seen O'Briens grow not only in reputation but also in reach. With the recent opening of a new location in Napier, the business is expanding its footprint in the region, ensuring even more customers have access to their top-tier products and expert advice.

"As we celebrate ten years in Hastings, we're also excited about our future. The opening of our Napier store is just the beginning of what's to come. It's onwards and upwards from here," owner Alister Poulgrain adds.

O'Briens extends a heartfelt thank you to everyone who has ever shopped with them, supported them, or partnered with them on projects. It is this community that has made the last decade so special, and they are eager to continue serving Hastings, Napier and beyond.

Here's to another ten years and more of helping you build beautiful spaces!



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Regional collaboration ... a sad veneer?

Hawke's Bay leaders, particularly in local government, want you to believe that as a region they're united and working hard advocating for the Bay when in fact they've been elected to represent different constituencies with very different needs.

And while those same leaders talk a big regional game, it begs the question: is Hawke's Bay really one that's united and working together, or just a collection of very different communities competing against one another?

After all, what does it mean to be a region?

Because, like the word 'community' (particularly when local politicians attach the possessive and somewhat patronising 'our' to it), the term 'region' is reductive: it makes assumptions about us based only on the fact that we choose to live here, nothing else.

Achieving progress regionally is extremely difficult largely because of the conga-line of players that need to be congruent with each other; this includes local government, central government, iwi, business, and even, sometimes, residents. Some of those players have much more power than others and exert it accordingly.

History, both recent and ancient, has shown that acting in the interests of a combined 'we' is often at the expense of the many different 'me's'.

For a start, there've been two failed attempts at local government amalgamation, one in 1999 when more than 67% of Hastings people voted in favour of it but 74% of Napier citizens voted against it. Then, more recently, in 2015 when a Local Government Commission proposal to amalgamate the five local councils received a resounding 'no' with 66.18% not wanting it and 33.55% who did.

No doubt our local authorities are now busy sharpening their pens proving that since Cyclone Gabrielle they've worked collaboratively and deserve to be one of the five regions to secure a deal that will see them work with central government on economic growth, infrastructure, and quality housing.

If voters were exasperated at the alarming drop in representation back then there's no reason to believe they'll be assuaged by it now. Hastings District Councillor Damon Harvey has raised the issue again claiming that there's a lot more appetite from Napier folk, who've previously been staunchly against it, but his seems to be a lone voice in the wilderness.

And while amalgamation is still a dirty word in Hawke's Bay, its elected representatives will no doubt protest at this depiction of the region working against its best interests by claiming that they've worked together now more collaboratively than ever before.

The two largest local authorities, Hastings District and Napier City Councils will tell you that they already share joint waste management services, they jointly own the airport and the landfill. Napier City also provides IT services and administers all websites on behalf of all Hawke's Bay councils while they also worked together on geographic information systems (GIS).

If the cause of that collaboration, Cyclone Gabrielle, has brought them together, then the dangling fiscal carrot of the Government's regional deals will ensure they stay there. For the moment at least.

No doubt our local authorities are now busy sharpening their pens proving that since Cyclone Gabrielle they've worked collaboratively and deserve to be one of the five regions

to secure a deal that will see them work with central government on economic growth, infrastructure, and quality housing.

But the question remains; what took you so bloody long?

Because the list of dust ups between authorities is longer than any collaborations they may have had; from the five councils deciding to close Business Hawke's Bay to Hastings District Council grabbing the Business Hub off Napier, to Wairoa Mayor Craig Little going to war with the Hawke's Bay Regional Council in the wake of the June floods, to Hawke's Bay Tourism's uncertain future due to a lack of funding, our councils are less united and more divisive than ever.

The reasons behind this lies in the yawning gap of inequity that lies between each city and town. A quantitative study that economic consultancy Infometrics recently completed for the Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Development Agency highlights the gaps.

When it came to wellbeing, Infometrics used nine markers which included safety, income and consumption, environment, social connections, housing, health, civic engagement and governance, jobs and earnings, and knowledge and skills.

The district outperformed the rest of the country in only two – housing and civic engagement. And while the wellbeing framework tossed up troublesome issues such as a much higher workplace injury rate and crime rate with significantly lower earnings and a higher suicide rate, the disparities between the territorial authorities painted their own unequal picture.

Napier City performed the best amongst them, exceeding the national average for knowledge and skills and civic engagement and is very close for health and housing. Hastings outperformed the national average in housing but fell short in all other areas, particularly safety due to its high crime rate and workplace injury rate.

Central Hawke's Bay performed well in civic engagement and housing but fell well short in social connections, income, safety, jobs and earnings, environment, and skills.

Wairoa has the lowest wellbeing results of all the five authorities, falling short of the national average in most areas. But its high local election turnout does see it do better than the national average in civic engagement and governance.

That disparity is broken down even

more when you compare the GDP per capita that each local authority earns according to Dot Loves Data Community Compass database. Hastings is \$75,400 and is an 0.65% increase on the previous year, Napier City is \$60,500 and a 1.6% decrease annually, while Central Hawke's Bay is \$43,500, a decrease of 5.8% and Wairoa is \$36,300, a 3.3% decrease.

And even within those towns and cities lies increasing disparity where median house prices display the real inequity; from Napier's Bluff Hill with an average sale price of \$760,000 to Maraenui where the median is \$507,000. In Hastings the average price of a home in central Havelock North is \$1.08 million while in Flaxmere West the median sale price is \$439,000. And in Central Hawke's Bay's Waipawa it's \$484,000 while in Wairoa it's \$337,000.

These are very different suburbs with specific needs which are increasingly ignored while regional entity after regional entity comes and goes. If Hawke's Bay's local government leaders were really concerned about them, they'd work together to lower their soaring rates while continuing to provide shared services.

Which makes any blandishment about 'working together as a region' and 'collaboration' simply a sad veneer. ◆

The **Hawke's Bay Regional Economic Development Agency** is hosting a regular column to stimulate conversation about our economy. We will share pieces of work and research that we are involved in and at times will open up this column space for guest writers.

Janet Wilson has been a journalist in print, radio and TV for the past 35 years. For the past 17 years she has run a small communications company which has provided advice to private sector clients and politicians at both local and central government level.



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Partnerships important to Hawke's Bay's recovery

The Hawke's Bay Regional Recovery Agency (HBRRA) was set up by the Matariki Governance Group (representing the region's councils, iwi and post-settlement governance entities and the Chamber of Commerce) post Cyclone Gabrielle.

Tasked with planning and coordinating post-cyclone recovery efforts and working effectively with government to secure the required support and resourcing for the region, the HBRRA, together with councils and PSGEs, has been going at pace for over 18 months now. If one thing stands out from that time, it's the value of effective partnership relationships in driving progress in recovery.

The aftermath of Cyclone Gabrielle presented Hawke's Bay with unprecedented and complex recovery challenges. Impacts were wide-reaching and continue to be felt across whānau and communities, and across our infrastructure, environment and the local economy.

While we acknowledged from the outset that full recovery is a long-term game, a sustained sense of urgency and an emphasis on maintaining momentum across the various workstreams have been critical components of our progress to date. Underpinning all areas of recovery is a focus on ensuring efficiency in the work being undertaken and affordability for our communities, both of which rely on securing external funding assistance to the region – an important part of our role.

As we continue to look to the future, it's timely to reflect on the good progress made by our region to date and how this can inform our ongoing recovery.



Bridge piers being built for the replacement Puketapu Bridge on the Tūtaekuri River. The original bridge was destroyed during Cyclone Gabrielle. The replacement bridge has a more resilient design using modern construction standards.

Progress highlights include:

- Voluntary buyout of more than 150 severely affected residential properties by Napier and Hastings councils.
- Numerous insurance claims settled and private rebuilds undertaken.
- Clearing of over 2.2 million cubic metres of silt and debris from productive land, and the clean-up of over 1.3 million cubic metres of woody debris from beaches, rivers and other areas.
- The first wave of roading repairs to slips, culverts and bridges on both local roads and state highways, along with the commencement of larger bridge replacement and road repair projects.
- Initial repair of damaged stop banks and repairs to other damaged infrastructure.
- Temporary housing solutions provided for those requiring that assistance, and other forms of support provided to those in need.

Alongside these physical works and community support initiatives, much planning and design work has also occurred. Damage and risks to infrastructure have been assessed in areas from electricity and telecommunications to road, rail and stopbanks; plans for repair and resilience devised; and procurement strategies and work programmes put in place for delivery. Thinking has also turned to broader areas of focus such as lessons learnt which can inform climate adaptation, building toward greater housing resilience and addressing water security and resilience.

Partnerships and working collaboratively have been central to the progress made. The region's councils have worked together on recovery initiatives more closely than ever before. They have also collaborated with iwi, Taiwhenua organisations and Post Settlement Governance Entities (PSGEs) on recovery programmes, and to ensure a joined up regional approach to engaging with central government.

There is no question that without the support of and the leadership shown by the Government thus far and the way it has been prepared to engage with the region through a partnership approach, much less recovery progress would have been made, and the path forward would be less clear.

Collaboration has occurred with businesses and community groups and with government agencies and the NGO sector, as whānau, communities, businesses and other organisations have sought to address their own recovery needs. This partnership approach continues to be as relevant today as it was in the initial days following the cyclone.

Our role as the HBRRRA has been to support this joined up regional approach and to provide additional capacity to councils, iwi and PSGEs and others on recovery and resilience issues. Our existence has been made possible by government funding; our ongoing work enabled by constructive government collaboration.

The region's partnership with central government has been critical to what has been achieved to date. From the earliest days of the crisis, funding and welfare support was made available from Government and its agencies to assist the region. Funding was provided to support the removal and management of silt and debris, roading repairs, flood protec-

tion works and property buyouts in Category 3 areas.

A year ago, the region submitted a *Briefing to Incoming Ministers* document to the new government, following the general election. This outlined the critical recovery and resilience needs still facing the region nine months on from the cyclone, and it sought to engage Government in a partnership approach to helping the region succeed in its recovery journey.

The Government was highly receptive to this and has embraced this approach with the region, providing renewed support across a range of recovery needs and welcoming the opportunity to work with a joined-up region. Ministers from the prime minister down have engaged extensively with regional leaders on what the region's needs were and have responded positively with tangible action and support. Additional funding was provided to support the clearance of more silt and debris from productive land, rivers and beaches. The Budget contained specific funding for local road recovery works (\$91 million earmarked for Hawke's Bay in year one), additional support for severely affected marae communities through the Kaupapa Māori pathway and funding to provide extra capacity for cash strapped councils, to help speed up recovery projects.

Promised help to reduce red-tape and regulation has seen Orders in Council passed to streamline and confirm the consenting pathway for flood protection works and to make recovery works on rural land a permit-

ted activity again. Ministers have also been agile in responding to emerging needs in the region: at the behest of the region, when Wairoa was again hit by a severe weather event in June, ministers reallocated \$3 million, initially provided for cyclone-related silt and debris, to help with the clean-up of household waste in flood-affected Wairoa properties.

There is no question that without the support of and the leadership shown by the Government thus far and the way it has been prepared to engage with the region through a partnership approach, much less recovery progress would have been made, and the path forward would be less clear. Gratitude must be expressed to the government, and a range of ministers who have engaged constructively and taken decisions in Hawke's Bay's best interest, as well as the officials who have supported them. It is also important to acknowledge our local MPs who have very ably and enthusiastically facilitated the government response.

As the region seeks further support in its recovery journey, and as its leaders contemplate opportunities such as those presented by the Regional Infrastructure Fund and Regional Deals, there is a sense of optimism about what is possible for the region. ●

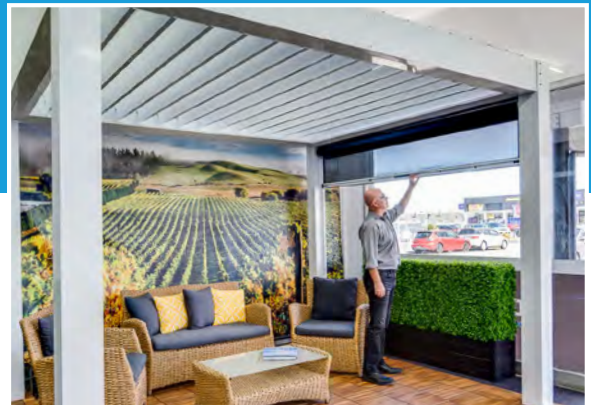
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Sustainability success story 20 years in the making



In a region best known for being the home of some of the biggest food producing companies in Aotearoa New Zealand, 3R Group is showing Hawke's Bay can also lead and grow in the burgeoning sustainability space.

We're celebrating our 20th anniversary this year. It's a notable achievement for any business but especially for one which has made things like the circular economy and product stewardship our bread and butter.

Sustainability has long been considered a 'nice to do' – quickly dropped when times get tough – so being a company which leads the charge and relies on businesses joining us on the sustainability journey, poses challenges.

It wasn't the promise of easy business success which drove 3R's founders to open shop two decades ago.

At its core, 3R is about the power of collaboration, relationships and circular-economy thinking, to tackle big, difficult challenges in a way which is beneficial to the environment, the community, and the bottom line.

Changing the sustainability landscape in Aotearoa

When 3R began in 2004 the view of sustainability was very different. Few Kiwis took notice of climate change, there was no Waste Minimisation Act, New Zealand's emissions were at their peak, and the 'circular economy' and 'product stewardship' were mostly academic phrases.

Despite this, the early days saw us work alongside Resene to create the Resene PaintWise product stewardship scheme. It gives the public a way to return unused paint and its packaging for recycling and reuse rather than

send it straight to landfill. This work has since grown to include take-back programmes for other major brands like Dulux and Watty, expanding widely across the motu.

The agrichemical industry is another area of focus from the early years of our work. This led to the co-design of Agrecovery – the product stewardship scheme for agrichemicals and their containers.

3R's foundational work left Agrecovery in good shape to continue their programmes, and their Green Farms Product Stewardship scheme has recently become officially accredited under the Waste Minimisation Act 2008.

Tyres have been a big part of our work for over a decade. The Tyrewise product stewardship scheme launched this year, bringing an entire industry under one scheme to ensure tyres are properly dealt with at end of life.

At its core, 3R is about the power of collaboration, relationships and circular economy thinking, to tackle big, difficult challenges in a way which is beneficial to the environment, the community, and the bottom line.

It's the first of its kind in New Zealand, so leading the work from inception through to operational launch has been one of our proudest achievements. This is not only because of the hugely positive environmental impact it will have, but how it's showcased the ability of a large, competitive industry to collaborate on a shared sustainability goal.

We also tackle 'less obvious' waste, like recycling child car seats through our SeatSmart programme, operate a chemical collection service, Chem-Collect, and ran The Great DDT Muster to collect and properly dispose of banned chemicals from the New Zealand countryside.

We manage the Glass Packaging Forum's voluntary product stewardship scheme for glass bottles and jars and have offered our expertise to various businesses and councils to reduce their waste in favour of sustainable solutions.

The common thread with all this work is the importance of relationships, collaboration and thinking about waste in a different light.

E wana ake

The theme for our anniversary, e wana ake – strong roots, flourishing shoots – reflects how viable sustainability solutions require proper development to lay the groundwork for their future success.

We've taken a similar approach to helping the next generation of sustainability experts by hosting university student interns each summer. This year we created our first year-long Product Stewardship Intern role, which gives a unique opportunity to gain hands-on experience designing circular businesses solutions.

He tangata, he tangata, he tangata It's the people, it's the people, it's the people

We're a business, but creating sustainability-focused solutions goes beyond keeping our doors open. Our aim is outcomes which will have benefits which go far beyond the next quarter or the next year and well into the future.

We take the same approach with things like donations and sponsorships. As part of our 20th anniversary, we donated to Wharariki Trust and the regenerative planting project for Hikanui Pā. We also support The House of Science, by sponsoring the 'A Load of Rubbish/ He Putunga Para' kit, which introduces school children to the circular economy and the waste hierarchy.

We also partner with social enterprises wherever possible, whether it be contracting them to work with us, or offering work experience opportunities at our sites.

I don't say all this just to blow our own trumpet – although I am proud of 3R's community focus – but to show that being a business in the modern era can and should have multiple markers for success.


The future

We've grown from small beginnings to around 30 full-time staff, with sites in Hastings, Auckland, and Christchurch, working alongside major national industry players and government to change the way New Zealand deals with its waste.

We've had our share of challenges, up and downs and have had to adapt and innovate to stay ahead. The business landscape is always changing, but when you measure your success by financial sustainability and positive impact on the environment and the community, your success is even more meaningful and satisfying.

3R design, implement and manage product stewardship schemes for individual businesses or industry-wide groups. They also help businesses take a fresh look at their waste to first minimise and then recover what would otherwise be wasted. ●

3R design, implement and manage product stewardship schemes for individual businesses or industry-wide groups. They also help businesses take a fresh look at their waste to first minimise and then recover what would otherwise be wasted.



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Wanted ... more Canadian doctors and nurses

Run this thought experiment for me.

You're trapped on a desert island and can choose just one person to be marooned with. Who would they be? If it's a make-believe person, what is their age, gender, nationality, etc?

I've asked a few people and a reassuring number have chosen their spouse. My wife rolled her eyes when I declared my interest in Kate Beckinsale, but I've seen her in movies and she's tough and resourceful.

Other answers include, "the Samoan bloke down the road because he's amazing at catching fish", a boatbuilder and Bear Grylls.

Absolutely no one chose a 79-year-old grandmother from Tajikistan. I don't think this is because they're racist, ageist or sexist. People choose companions who are a good fit in terms of culture, language, age, moral beliefs or whatever. If you have plenty in common, it's a good foundation on which you can take on the challenges of life.

Such an approach is discriminatory, but not in the malicious sense. Only the most deluded idealist would say, "I will not discriminate on the basis of culture, creed, vocation, disability, or age. My society embraces all." If they did I'd send them Donald Trump along with a reality TV film crew.

Liberal delusions also extend to immigration and they envisage a multicultural utopia. I've been to parts of Europe and the UK where this seems not to be working so well. What all nations need from their immigrants is people that make a useful contribution, that assimilate well and, somewhere down the list, people whose culture provides some richness and culture to society.

I'm a huge fan of immigration. All our forebears were immigrants, I married an immigrant and have employed won-

It's impossible not to conclude we're making a mess of immigration, given the desperate shortage of doctors and nurses that persists. These are internationally transferrable skills and there is no excuse for the crisis we currently face.

derful people from all over the world. In some cases we've even paid for immigration lawyers to assist exceptional people on their immigration journey.

Immigrants making a valuable contribution in many sectors. A while back I encountered a series of doctors various family members received treatment from – they were respectively Indian, Iranian, South African and Zimbabwean. When a New Zealander finally broke the trend, they were Māori.

None of these met my 'by pakeha, for pakeha' cultural needs but medicine is an international practice so we made the best of it. I admit to being a little nervous about the Iranian as I've never been to Iran and they get some bad press. It turns out he was probably the best of a thoroughly competent bunch. There just aren't enough of these foreign doctors or nurses.

Over the past decade we have welcomed about a million immigrants. That startling number is on the increase with 173,000 immigrants arriving in the year to September 2023. Offsetting this were the 47,000 citizens that decided they'd had enough and left.

It's impossible not to conclude we're making a mess of immigration, given the desperate shortage of doctors and nurses that persists. These are internationally transferrable skills and there is no excuse for the crisis we currently face. I know some aged

people who haven't seen their GP for four years. They've given up because it's so hard to get an appointment.

The frustrations medical professional immigrants have experienced are threefold. The first are the impediments to gaining registration in NZ. While a conservative approach does protect the interests of patients, it also creates a 'die while you wait for treatment' problem.

Secondly, many immigrant nurses don't find employment, despite the shortages. There's a lack of honesty about this situation. They are unemployable as their English is hard to understand and employers don't think they'd be a good cultural fit. I don't think it's racism as there are a raft of Indian and Filipino nurses I've observed. There is an unscrupulous element that resides in immigration consultancy space, that is complicit in this situation.

Thirdly, I've encountered several foreign doctors who have used their skills to gain residency in NZ, but have subsequently left; not finding the country or the state of medical system to their liking.

The skills shortage pathway is one that few could oppose. We need smart young people to help grow this economy and to pay the taxes needed to fund the superannuation and health-care for the wave of baby boomers exiting the workforce. This is a problem across the developed world as birth rates are below population replacement levels in all countries except Israel. We all want first world services but haven't worked out how to deliver them. The business and investment pathways to immigration are mostly positive and for similar reasons.

Perhaps the most problematic immigration pathway is that which flows

from education. There are currently around 69,000 foreign students in NZ, well down the from the 131,00 in pre-Covid days. A good deal of these students don't come to NZ in pursuit of the deteriorating standards of education we offer. They pay handsomely for their education here, to provide them a pathway to immigration. Thereafter they often bring in other family members to join them.

I don't oppose this pathway or question the quality of the students. Provided they are gaining an education that is aligned with our skills shortages, I'd like them to stay. Regrettably, the two most common areas of undergraduate study are listed as 'Society and Culture' and 'Management and Commerce'. The former doesn't include many jobs on the skill shortages list and the latter is a commonsense pseudoscience. I have the degree to prove it. Unless you are seeking a career in accounting or finance, such courses aren't sufficiently compelling.

Around 50% of foreign students seek subsequent work visas or residency and perhaps those with degrees in Communications, Political Science and Anthropology should be

sent back home.

All this returns me to the issues of cultural fit and integration. Immigration NZ is interested in immigrants' ability to speak English and to be of good character. I'd go further and suggest we want immigrants that are committed to tolerance, freedom of religion and speech, democracy, equal opportunity and at least respect the Judeo-Christian underpinnings of our society. There is an unwritten social contract that exists and I'd like new citizens that are happy to sign up to it.

Of all 'races', I think Canadians assimilate the best. They are liberal, democratic and have our quirky sense of humour.

There are many foreign cultural norms which I'd rather not cultivate in NZ. I have spoken to Russians who don't seem to understand democracy and don't much fancy it. I understand that perspective as Russia has no credible democratic history and our leaders can look weak next to Putin. I have known Chinese who engage in supplementary cash payments in business transactions, which is commonplace in many communist or formerly communist countries. I know of Muslims that think we'd have a

better society with Sharia law.

I welcome these political, cultural and religious views to NZ, but in numbers that ensure their ideas don't take hold and we are more likely to 'corrupt' their children to our way of thinking. To ensure cultural integration, I'd rather 2,000 immigrants from each of 50 countries, rather than 50,000 immigrants from just two countries. I'd also like a cap on immigrant numbers so as not to create an excessive strain on housing or infrastructure.

The sensitive part of immigration is that we need to be selective about who and how many we want in this country. We need to have a public conversation about immigration and no government has yet been interested in doing so. Our shyness about these discussions is that they may unearth some racism and bigotry that lies dormant in our society, or even in us personally.

I'm not afraid of any of that if it results in the enrichment NZ could enjoy through well-managed immigration. ●

Paul Paynter is our resident iconoclast and cider maker. Weather permitting, he grows stuff at Yummyfruit.

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Life

Exploring two iconic HB homes. Sipping in the sun, gifting the best of the Bay, and making the most of all that citrus. Plus, eating for strength and seeking out the birds this summer.



A TALE OF
TWO HOUSES
PART 2

Life Mark Sweet

Architect William Gummer (1884-1966) designed four houses of outstanding architectural merit in Hawke's Bay. Tauroa and Arden were featured in *BayBuzz* May/June 2023 issue. The others are Belmont and Te Mata, built 17 years apart, and illustrate the contrast in Gummer's stylistic range.

Story by Mark Sweet

Photos by Florence Charvin



BELMOUNT

Before Belmont there was Craggy Range. Story is, when Mathilda Agnes van Asch saw the huge rugged hill on the southern boundary of the 3,700 acre farm purchased by husband William in 1913, she suggested they name their estate Craggy Range.

One of the first van Asch endeavours was to capture water flow from a small stream running to the Tukituki River and hydro-generate around five kilowatts of electricity, enough to power the house and milking shed.

Encouraging the project was neighbour, Mokepeka station owner, John Chambers Jnr. Twenty years earlier he had built a hydroelectric power station beside the Maraetotara stream.

John Chambers was brother to Thomas Mason, who in 1914 commissioned William Gummer to design a new house after the original Tauroa homestead was destroyed by fire.

Tauroa took two years to build, and choosing Gummer to design Craggy Range seems a consequence of the van Asch and Chambers relationship.

Craggy Range was completed in

1918, construction being the same as Tauroa: steel reinforced concrete frame with double cavity brick walls. Bricks were from the same supplier, Samuel Eves, in Havelock North. Builders were Abbot and Crane from Hastings.

There are hints of Tauroa in details like window joinery and timber panelling, but Craggy Range is a different house altogether, being a bold advance in modern architecture for its time.

The Historic Places Trust description says, "Few vestiges of historicism survive in this house." Translation: the design includes few architectural styles from the past; Tudor, Victorian, Georgian or even Beaux Arts, an underlying design theme of Tauroa. As the Trust explains, Craggy Range was "uncompromisingly modern and represents probably the first such attempt at domestic design in the modern idiom in New Zealand." And, "The flat roofs, balconies and verandahs were a conscious response to the Hawke's Bay climate."

The no frills, geometric-block look of the exterior foreshadows the Bauhaus

movement (1919-1933), where "design is often abstract, angular, and geometric, with little ornamentation."

To my eye the subtle buttresses supporting concrete pillars evoke a no-frills medieval church design.

Formal entrance to the house opens to a timber-lined lobby. A guest bathroom is discretely located to one side, the other side opens to a generous hallway from which dining, sitting, and billiard rooms are accessed. The billiard room was originally partially open to the outside and lined in exposed brick which caused considerable trouble with efflorescence.

A passage runs past a cosy study with fireplace and library to the large farm kitchen unchanged except for modern appliances replacing the old.

A staircase with several turns leads to upstairs bedrooms and is flooded with light from a north-facing window at the top.

Throughout the house are surprise views of gardens framed by windows, along with wide vistas of surrounding countryside. Te Mata looms large to the west, especially from the first floor



master bedroom, and behind the house towers Craggy Range, recently milled of pine trees, currently being partially reshaped into multiple house sites.

Criticism of Gummer's design is warranted regarding water penetration by employing flat roofs which are notoriously difficult to make weather tight and have been an ongoing problem.

After the death of William van Asch in 1930, Craggy Range was run as a family farm by sons Gerrit, Ivan, and Derek. Their brother Piet was an aviation pioneer in the field of aerial photography. He built a darkroom in the house for processing photographs when he first founded NZ Aerial Mapping in 1937.

By 1946 Craggy Range had been subdivided into five blocks, Gerrit and Ivan taking one each, and three being sold.

The last block to sell was the home- stead and 1,200 acres. This was purchased by Felix Campbell who named his new farm, Belmont, after a family estate in Ireland.

Felix worked as a farming cadet on Tirohia Station, Fernhill, from 1938 until joining the Royal NZ Airforce stationed in the Pacific. On returning he married Patricia Reid of Hastings whom he had met before the war.

There is a record of Felix Campbell employing landscape designer, Trevor Buxton, to plan the grounds which

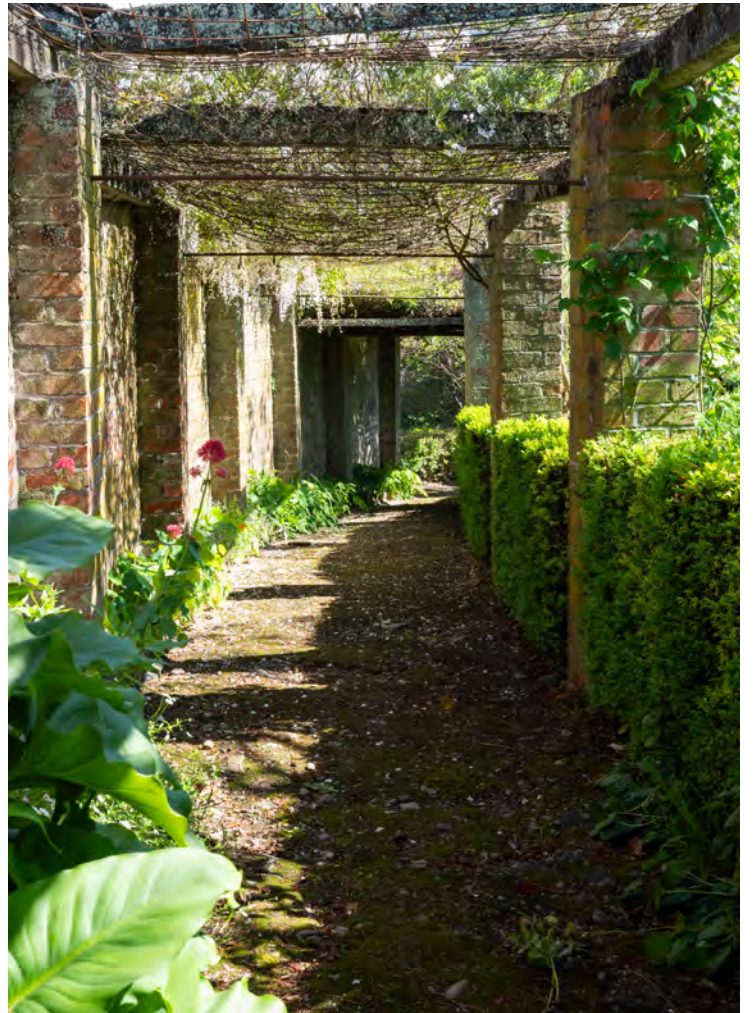
“included driveway with a cattle stop at its entrance, a turning yard and courtyard, several areas of landscaped garden, and a tennis court.”

Buxton was popular in Hawke's Bay having designed gardens for families Lyons in Bridge Pā, Duncan in Taihape, Bibby in Onga Onga, and Plummer in Waipawa.

Maintaining the garden at Belmont is a labour of love for Christine Campbell. She and Michael, Felix and Pat's younger son, took over Belmont after Felix died in 2009.

Brother Patrick is the renowned race horse owner/trainer based in Hastings. Two of his retired champions are grazing a paddock at the garden's edge.







TE MATA

When the founder of Te Mata winery, Bernard Chambers, sold the business in 1918, he also parted with 2,853 acres and the original Te Mata homestead built by his father John.

Bernard retained 129 acres of hillside across the road and he engaged architect William Rush to design a new Te Mata.

William Rush was the prominent Havelock North architect of this time. His work included Woodford House, Iona College, Hereworth School, and St Luke's church and hall, and many houses. He designed a shepherd's cottage for Bernard in 1909, today run as tourist accommodation by Black Barn.

Chambers' family occupation of their large two-story home was short lived. In March 1922 they moved in,

then on 3rd of February 1931, the house was so badly damaged by the 7.8 Napier earthquake it was rendered uninhabitable and had to be demolished. Bernard suffered a stroke in May the same year and died.

Commissioning a new house was undertaken by Lizzie, Bernard's widow (nee Georgina Elizabeth Lowry). Her decision to choose William Gummer as architect was surely influenced by the fact that Tauroa (1915) Craggy Range (1918) and Arden (1926) survived the earthquake with only minor damage, testament to the structural soundness of Gummer designed buildings.

By 1935 William Gummer was well established in partnership with Charles Ford based in Auckland. Most of their work was commercial and included monumental builds like Auckland

Railway Station, Dominion Museum, and the National War Memorial. Other than the four houses, in Hawke's Bay Gummer (and Ford) designed only the State Insurance building at 58 Tennyson Street, Napier (1934).

Lizzie Chambers and her daughter Hazel moved into their new house in 1936. Builders were C.S Palmer of Hastings, and supervising was architect Eric Phillips (1897-1980) who designed many fine houses, among them Long Acre for Leonard and Jan Williams and Horseshoe Bend for Mason Chambers, son of Arden's Maurice and Miriama.

In contrast to Belmont's harsh modernism, Te Mata is a romantic evocation of the English country home, obviously influenced by the time Gummer spent working for Edwin Lutyens in London,



who was master of the ‘picturesque cottage’ on a grand scale.

A long driveway climbs the hill to Te Mata, offering fleeting views of the building before coming to the rear south side of the house. Under a porte cochere, the main entrance is through double walnut doors, salvaged from the original house.

A timber-lined lobby leads to a generous hallway. On one side, a staircase bathed in southern light through metal framed windows leads to the bedrooms floor. On the northern side, wide doors open to a covered veranda

from which are superb views over the Heretaunga Plains, Napier, Hastings, mountain ranges, and Hawke Bay.

Lizzie Chambers died in 1945, after which Te Mata was occupied by daughter Hazel and her husband Peter Foxley. Their only child died soon after birth.

By 1985 Hazel had transferred ownership of Te Mata to her niece Bea Aitken, and she built a cottage nearby in which she and her housekeeper companion of 60 years, Miss Marjorie McLeod, lived until Hazel’s death in 1992.

Te Mata went to auction and was purchased by Clare Gordon, who was

pregnant at the time. Bea Aitken offered that Clare move in before settlement date, so as to give birth in her new home.

Major internal work to the kitchen and services part of the house, designed by Auckland architect, Terry Hitchcock, transformed spaces suitable to a past era of domestic servants to open modern living.

Today, Te Mata is maintained with care, and has an atmosphere of warmth and light, where spaces flow seamlessly and modern art perfectly honours this timeless masterpiece of William Gummer. ●



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SUMMER SUNDOWNERS

Like all of you, we here at *BayBuzz* are **READY** for summer. And what better way to enjoy it than to relax at the end of a day with something refreshing.

Here, we share our picks for delighting in the region's world-class hospitality, sipping on something delicious while soaking up summery vibes and splendid views.



G&T Hastings Distillers in the Hastings CBD

How refreshing, a cold G&T on a hot late afternoon. But here's a twist on that idea... step out of the heat of the bright early evening and into the cool, sophisticated atmosphere of this chic testing room and bar on Heretaunga Street's 200 Block. The G&T made with Albertine gin is our pick. Unless you're a negroni fan, or prefer a martini, or you'd rather a gin mule; you get the idea.

Life Lizzie Russell



Champagne at Madame Social in Ahuriri

Throughout the tough winter of 2024, this new spot on Custom Quay has been pumping. The buzz of the new might ease up a little, and it might get easier to score a walk-up table over time, but the view isn't going to change, and neither is the loveliness of sipping on Mumm at one of the outdoor tables, a gentle sea breeze cooling you off as you gaze over the shimmering water, fishing boats coming and going. If you're after something non-alcoholic, there's a solid mocktails list here too.

Hugo Spritz at Casa in Ahuriri

This Italian restaurant in what was the Speights Ale House on West Quay is the perfect spot for dinner or lunch, but it's also open for snacks and drinks in the afternoon if you're after something a little more

casual. My suggestion here is the Hugo Spritz – a classic summery combination of prosecco and elderflower, and a nice alternative to the more popular Aperol Spritz. (They do a pretty lush one of those at Casa, too!)



Cocktail at Teresa Bar in Napier CBD

From December, the team can set up tables out in the rear laneway on Friday and Saturday evenings, so Teresa Bar is an even better urban spot for a cocktail. The theatricality of the drinks, the delicious Italian bites to accompany them, and now the lighting installation in the previously underutilised alley all combine to give you an impressive evening in the city.



Chilled red at Matisse in the Napier CBD

Nadia and the team change the wine list here so often that it's hard to publish a favourite to recommend, so instead, check out the blackboard for even more special specials, and go for a chilled red on a warm afternoon or evening. There are also a couple of really tasty alcohol-free wines on the permanent list too – even a rosé!



Tap beer at Brave in the Hastings CBD

Pop in and see Rosie and co. behind the bar and discover what's new on tap. Then it's out into the sunny courtyard to devour a burger, soak up the warmth and run into every Hastings-dweller you've ever met, and even some Napierites who've made the pilgrimage over to this ever-popular urban brewery. If you're barefoot and beach-bound, pop in and get your beery supplies for the weekend.

Tasting at Clearview Estate

One classic local version of afternoon drinks is a cellar-door wine tasting, which makes its way to a glass of something special in the winery garden. At Clearview, you can smell the sea as you approach the winery, the familiar red shed an icon of the Hawke's Bay wine scene. While we think of chardonnay when we think of Clearview, a tasting is the perfect way to remind ourselves of all the other fantastic wines they offer – including summer-friendly aromatics like pinot gris and Gewürztraminer, and the less common semillon. If reading this is reminding you to head to Clearview for summer lunch sometime soon, be sure to book!



NZPA at Giant in Havelock North

A beer or two at Giant is all about the catch-up, isn't it? The classic idea of a local pub, with a modern twist. It's where tall stories are told over tall pints, and where you can always be assured of a quality meal or snack from the fine folks of Good Company Catering. The NZ Pale Ale is our seasonal suggestion for an afternoon gathering, but how good are all the Giant beers when served in a big glass jug on a hot day?

Chardonnay at Jarks Cityside in Hastings

This Stortford Lodge stalwart celebrated a decade in business earlier this year and seems to go from strength to strength, even in tough times. Hastings' favourite local is the spot for after-work drinks at that end of town, and often features live music and entertainment. Our favourite on the wine list – Tony Bish's classic Fat & Sassy Chardonnay, out on the deck in the afternoon sun.



Your pick from the fridge selection at Vinci's in the Napier CBD

While we all know and love it for the pizza (and more recently, the focaccia), Vinci's is also a top spot for a beverage, perfect for accompanying a slice or two. There's always two or three interesting, usually natural wines on glass pour, plus the bottled cocktails and the refreshing Karma soft drinks range. But really, can you go past perching at a footpath table in the sun, watching the world go by, a slice of Five Cheese in one hand, a can of Gisborne Gold in the other?

Holy Hop Green IPA at GodsOwn Brewery in Maraekakaho

Keen on a weekend roadie to the countryside? Our recommendation is Godzone Brewery in Maraekakaho. Here's a chance to sip on something super local right amidst the hops. The vibe is super friendly, welcoming to families, relaxed and joyful, with a retro caravan bar and a safari tent to set the scene. Woodfired pizzas and a range of beverages for all ages and preferences complete the recipe for the ultimate rural afternoon in the sun.

Bach Life at Three Wise Birds Garden Bar in Hastings

Is there any more quintessentially Hawke's Bay scene than a family-and-friends crew parked up across a couple of snack-laden picnic tables, with the apple trees in the background, the kids playing on the lawn? A crisp, dry Granny Smith cider is just the thing to complete the picture-perfect sunny situation.

Have a great summer, everyone. Imbibe responsibly, thank the drivers, and support local as much as you can. Cheers!



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TAKE CITRUS

Story by Prue Barton, Mister D Dining
Photos by Stephen Robinson



My 'zest quest' is on to explore the abundance of citrus grown here in Hawke's Bay and how citrus infiltrates our cuisine. Citrus is the backbone of so many recipes and is often the unsung hero in many dishes.

Lemons are so versatile. They can be used for their juice and zest in everything from cooking to cocktails, their citric acid gives dishes a perfect tart twist. Lemons are generally available all year round which again makes them useful in so many recipes. The zest has the aromatic perfume while the juice carries the flavour.

Limoncello is the famous Italian liqueur made with the zest of lemons. Locally the National Distillery in Ahuriri makes a superb one with 100% Hawke's Bay Meyer lemons sourced from Kevin, an orchard grower in Clive. They have extended this range to incorporate a new Oranagecello one too.

Limoncello is relatively easy to make at home, but the National Distillery have some liquid secrets to achieve their quality product. Premium vodka is essential and they use an aqua source from the volcanic plateau which accomplishes a smooth and pure product. They peel 100kg of lemons a week and now have an automatic peeling machine which takes some of the back-break out of it. Their Art Deco Gin is a true celebration of Hawke's Bay citrus using lemons, limes



LEFT TO RIGHT: Gretta Carney with pressed juices at Hapi Organic Café. Judy and Wayne Bradshaw picking finger limes (see inset below for a close up). Sean at National Distillery with their Limoncello and Orangecello.

and oranges and their motto ‘Make gin not war’ made me giggle.

Originating in Asia, the lime is older than the lemon and is more widely used in tropical countries than the lemon. Limes are packed full of vitamin C and Captain James Cook warded off scurvy on board the Endeavour by issuing his crew with lime juice.

Without lime juice the classic margarita cocktail would not be possible. The lime juice gives it a tart, refreshing kick and if you use a touch of sweet orange liqueur the two balance nicely. So many cocktails use citrus - a negroni would not be complete without the zing of an orange and a classic punch uses lemons and oranges. A blood orange will add “je ne sais quoi” to any cocktail.

If you want to raise the home-bar stakes try using the margarita sour mix from St Andrew’s Limes. All you need then is to have some Triple Sec and tequila to finish the cocktail. Established in 2002 this iconic brand is family owned by Matt and Tracy Day. With a stand at the Hawke’s Bay Farmers Market on Sunday you can purchase some of their zesty, sassy local lime and lemon products.

Talking to Gretta at Hapi Organic Café on Hastings Street, we agreed that citrus is the forgotten resource. But not at Hapi as her Zummo juice machine takes squeezing to the next level. It has three settings to juice small mandarins and limes and then can also squeeze large grapefruit. One of their most popular tonics is the ‘Cleanse’ which uses fresh organic oranges, lemons and turmeric root which are cold pressed into a rich juice and potentised with cayenne pepper and milk thistle tincture.

Chefs are always hunting for new flavour profiles and there are so many unusual citrus varieties that can be incorporated into recipes. If you are lucky enough to be able to find finger limes or caviar limes, as they are sometimes referred to, their little seed pearls will garnish seafood and fresh oysters to the next level. Finger limes are the smallest lime variety in the world and are so named because of their tiny (2 to 5 cm) size.

On the hunt for local citrus orchards I was drawn into the Bradshaw’s property on Te Mata Road. Their 3,000 tree orchard, 10 acre plot is home to lemons, limes, finger limes, key limes,

oranges and pomegranates. They are sold on site and Judy and Wayne’s plan is to provide locals with sustainable produce. I had never seen a finger lime shrub before and Judy mentioned it is essential to use gloves when picking these little beasts due to their spikes.

The kaffir lime is an essential flavouring in Thai cooking. The kaffir lime tree takes years to fruit and it is the leaves that provide an exquisitely fragrant citrus addition to recipes. Short on preparation but big on flavour try a fresh fish ceviche using shredded kaffir lime leaves and grated lime rind.

So, when life gives you lemons, take a high five and keep squeezing.

Lemon meringue pie

Always popular, the classic lemon meringue pie is a great dessert and can be fancied up with bowls of fresh berries and cream for festive parties. Try our pastry chef Andi’s special recipe. Apparently she is banned from making it at her home now due to months of experimentation and expanding waistlines.

Recipe over page...



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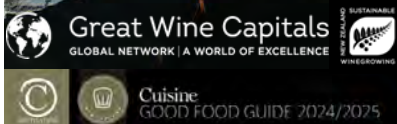
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LEMON MERINGUE PIE

Almond pastry

250 g unsalted cold butter,
cut into small cubes
125g caster sugar
150g ground almonds
350g flour
4 egg yolks

In a food processor, blitz the butter, sugar, almonds and flour until a sandy texture.

Add the egg yolks and mix until it just comes together.

Tip onto bench and bring into a ball. Wrap in plastic wrap and chill for several hours.

Roll the chill pastry between two sheets of baking paper until 2-3mm thick.

Line the tin with the pastry. Chill the pastry case in the freezer until completely frozen, at least 2 hours.

Bake blind the chilled pastry case at 170°C for 8 minutes and then remove baking beads and cook for another 8-10 minutes until golden.

Leave the pastry to cool whilst making the lemon curd.

Lemon curd

380g lemon juice
12 egg yolks
6 whole eggs
300g caster sugar
250g unsalted cold butter, cut in cubes

In a roomy pot, bring the lemon juice to a boil.

In a large bowl, whisk together the egg yolks, whole eggs and sugar.

Once the juice has reached boil, slow-

ly stream the hot juice into the egg mix whilst whisking continuously. Pour the mix back into the juice pot and on a medium heat, bring it to a boil, stirring with a spatula all the time.

Once its boiled, pour the curd through a sieve into a clean bowl, to remove any lumps.

In two parts, put the curd into a blender and blitz, adding the cold butter one cube at a time until all incorporated. As soon as all the butter is added, pour the finished curd straight into the cooked case. It will start to set straight away. Chill in the pie whilst making the meringue top. The longer it's in the fridge, the better, ideally overnight.

Swiss meringue

4 egg whites
200g caster sugar
Pinch of salt
2 tsp vanilla paste

Combine the egg whites, sugar and salt in a metal bowl and give a little stir to mix together.

Over a pot of simmering water, gently heat the egg whites until the sugar has dissolved, stirring occasionally. Pour into the bowl of a stand mixer and whisk until the meringue is whippy and glossy, and the outside of the bowl doesn't feel warm to the touch.

Assembly

Scoop the meringue onto the top of the pie, spreading into whippy peaks. Using a blow torch, burn the top of the meringue a little, till golden.

Farewells can be tough, but who said funerals can't be fun?

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CHRISTMAS GIFTING & SUMMER MUST-SIPS

I'm a giver. I love buying presents for people I care about (and people I'm trying to get on the good side of) so when I see a convenient, creative, gift-guide I'm all over it like snakes on a plane. Hence why I thought "Hark!" and "Forsooth!" Why don't I offer one to *BayBuzz* readers? And thusly, it doth occur ...

Have a fabulously festive and sunny silly season folks, you deserve it.



Your Christmas wines sorted

Does the thought of venturing to the super-market wine department in the lead-up to Christmas make you want to scoop your own eyeballs out with a spoon? Fret not. The famous WineFriend Christmas Cases are here to save your sanity. Designed to pair perfectly with the dishes on your tinsel-tastic table, you can choose your own 3, 6 or 12 packs from this awesome list OR do what most do and purchase one of the pre-selected packs available for \$109 (3pk) \$189 (6pk) or \$349 (12pk). winefriend.co.nz



Shedding the past

On February 14th 2023 winemaker Kel Dixon and his team at Shed 530 on Dartmoor Road were confronted with a vineyard that'd been washed away and a winery and cellar door destroyed and sitting under mud and silt. Then a year and a bit later they're celebrating two huge international awards. Their Mutu Reserve Chardonnay 2021 took out a prestigious and rare Global Decanter Platinum Award at the Decanter World Wine Awards and their Mutu Reserve Merlot Cabernet 2020 has recently won the IWSC Wine Trophy 2024 at the International Wine & Spirit Competition. Amazing! Both wines are \$60.

premiumliquor.co.nz



Life Wine / Yvonne Lorkin

Damson in de-stress

Napier's National Distillery have released a relaxing collaboration with the largest damson plum orchard in the whenua and it's a smooth, floral, dry gin with a slip of marzipan, that classic astringent sweet snap of this unique plum and a sharp yet sweet twang on the finish (\$85).

nationaldistillery.nz

Take it to the bridge

Who wouldn't want a gifted ticket to the 11th Annual Bridge Pā Wine Festival? On Saturday January 18th, ten wineries in the Bridge Pā Triangle Wine District will be connected by shuttles, allowing festies to visit multiple wineries and enjoy a smorgasbord of superb experiences. Including Abbey Estate, Alpha Domus, Bostock Wines, Ash Ridge Winery, Oak Estate, Paritua Winery, Radburn Wines, Sileni Wines, Red Metal Vineyards and Zaria Wines, each winery has different offerings of wine, food, and music to massage you throughout the day. Tickets from \$60. events.humanitix.com



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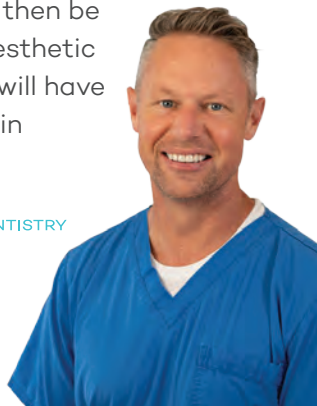
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A sticky situation

Gotta sweet-tooth in your life? Shimmy on down to dessert wine town and surprise them with the luxuriously indulgent One Off Super Sticky Late Harvest Hawke's Bay Gewurztraminer 2019, 375ml (\$35). Laden with exotically sweet lychee, honey, citrus toffee and ginger-dusted deliciousness, it's rich and apricot-edged and yet zesty-fresh to finish. A superstar.

teawangaestate.co.nz



Save my wine!

Cans of WinesavePro (\$35) have been a gamechanger in my wine-tasting work. When I've poured a little from the bottle to write my notes on, I can squirt a dash of food-grade, tasteless, odourless, argon gas into it then pop the cap on or push the cork back in and wine inside stays fresh for weeks! The gas settles on top of the wine preventing oxygen from damaging what's left in the bottle. The large cans will protect 150 bottles and now WinesavePro is available in a handy dandy 'mini' size (\$10), which will protect up to 25 precious bottles and fits easy peasy into your purse or pocket so you can save your wine anywhere.

Hoo-rah! winesave.co.nz



Im-port-ant announcement

People tend to develop an extra special thirst for port at Christmastime, so go local with a bottle of the legendary Trinity Hill Touriga (\$50). Blended from multiple vintages including complex, concentrated barrel-aged material, the oldest of which comes from 2004! It's stacked with spiced plum and dark chocolate deliciousness.

trinityhill.com



Yvonne Lorkin is a wine writer, the co-founder and CTO of WineFriend (NZ's No.1 personalised wine subscription service) and she's a proud, born and bred Hawkesbaylien. winefriend.co.nz or yvonnelorkin.com



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Well fed

Want to create a stronger, leaner body this summer? You might need to eat more.

Eat enough!

Many women believe that achieving fitness or weight loss goals requires strict food restriction. The assumption is that discipline equals success, and we imagine ourselves counting calories, following rigid diets, and being perpetually hungry. Perhaps you've even tried diets in the past that left you feeling miserable, only to find yourself regaining weight or failing to sustain the results over time.

It's true that losing weight requires a calorie deficit, but if you're not eating enough to fuel your body's needs - especially if you're active - the results may be the opposite of what you hope for. Instead of building muscle, you may break it down, leading to fatigue and slower progress. Worse yet, undereating can disrupt hormones, which can promote fat storage, impair recovery, disturb your sleep, and make you constantly hungry.

Moreover, dieting without exercise isn't ideal. When we lose weight without moving, up to 50% of that weight loss can come from muscle loss. Since muscle drives your metabolism, losing it slows down your ability to burn calories, making further weight loss harder. And if you regain the weight, it often comes back as fat rather than muscle.

The key to fat loss: Increase muscle, lose fat

A more sustainable approach is to increase muscle while losing fat. By mastering your metabolism, you can eat well without gaining weight - or if you need to lose weight, you can do so slowly and steadily. Muscle not only boosts your metabolism but also makes it easier to maintain a healthy weight over time.



Janine's pick at St Martha's, Havelock North, is a nutrient-packed green smoothie alongside the stunning whole-food, fibre-filled Nourish Bowl - packed with quinoa, greens, raw beetroot, avocado, hummus and crunchy chickpeas. Add on some crispy mushrooms and a poached egg for the protein boost.

Photo: Florence Charvin

Timing matters

Proper fuelling around exercise is crucial. Eating even a small snack before working out signals to your body that it can burn fat rather than store it. Having fuel on board also helps you perform better during exercise, making it easier to build muscle, which will continue to rev up your metabolism.

After your workout, eating a meal rich in protein helps your body recover and build muscle while you rest. This virtuous cycle - eat, fuel, build muscle, burn fat - sets you on a path toward your goals without feeling deprived.

Working with your body's natural rhythms also supports metabolic health. Try eating most of your calories earlier in the day when you're more active, allowing your body to rest and digest in the evening. Gradually reducing food intake after dinner may even help improve sleep, as your body's hormonal rhythms shift to work in your favour.

What should you eat?

As we age, it becomes even more important to focus on food quality rather than quantity. Counting nutrients instead of calories is key, especially when it comes to two essential components: protein and fibre.

1. Protein: In your 40s and beyond, you need around 30 grams of protein per meal to support muscle protein synthesis. Focus on getting this amount at every meal, along with 10 grams of protein in your snacks. Not only will this build muscle, but it will also help you feel fuller for longer.

2. Fibre: Fibre is vital for gut health, which plays a significant role in overall wellbeing. A healthy gut microbiome helps prevent inflammation - a factor linked to nearly every age-related disease, from diabetes to dementia. Since fibre only comes from plants, aim to load your

plate with whole, unprocessed foods. Ultra-processed foods, stripped of their fibre, are easy to overeat because they don't fill you up. Fibre provides "free" fullness without extra calories, allowing you to eat more and feel satisfied.

Food is to be enjoyed

As the holiday season approaches and you're surrounded by delicious food, especially in a food-centric place like Hawke's Bay, remember that you can enjoy food while nourishing your body and moving toward your goals. It's not about restriction, but about balance. Be kind to yourself, recognize the hard work your body does, and celebrate with family and friends. After all, food is meant to be enjoyed. ●

Janine Couchman is a personal trainer and fitness coach specialising in strength training women of all ages and stages. As well as private coaching, she delivers an eight-week group programme at Peak Fitness and Health. She can be found at janinecouchman.com and [@JaninecouchmanPT](https://www.instagram.com/JaninecouchmanPT)

Actionable steps for a stronger, leaner body

- 1. Prioritize protein:** Aim for 30-40 grams of protein at each meal and at least 10 grams in snacks. This will help build muscle and keep you satiated.
- 2. Fuel around exercise:** Eat a small snack before working out to enhance performance and a protein-rich meal after to support recovery and muscle growth.
- 3. Follow your circadian rhythm:** Eat the majority of your calories earlier in the day and avoid heavy meals late at night to improve sleep and metabolism.
- 4. Increase fibre intake:** Choose whole, plant-based foods rich in fibre to support gut health and keep you feeling full longer.
- 5. Enjoy your food:** Don't deprive yourself! Allow room for indulgence, especially during special occasions, while staying mindful of balance.

Janine's favourite spots for eating out in the Bay

Eating well doesn't mean missing out – enjoy the best of Hawke's Bay while nourishing your body!

- **Hapi Organic Café & Maara (Napier):**
A raw food café offering high-quality, health-conscious options.
- **Goodness Café (Hastings):**
Famous for its gluten-free OMG bread and healthy menu.
- **St Martha's (Havelock North):**
Offers fresh smoothies, juices, and a garden-to-plate-inspired menu.



Royston Hospital is pleased to sponsor robust examination of health issues in Hawke's Bay. This reporting is prepared by BayBuzz. Any editorial views expressed are those of the BayBuzz team.

Nimble thinking nursing



At Royston Hospital, we couldn't be prouder of our exceptionally talented team – and the backbone of that team is our wonderful nurses.

Like us, they are committed to continuing excellence in the health and wellbeing of the people in our care. That's why we'd like to introduce you to Rochelle "Rocky" Holder, the operating-theatre coordinator at Royston Hospital, who shares how she balances her nursing duties in such a high-pressure environment.

"Thinking outside the box is a massive part of my role as Theatre Coordinator – operating schedules and patient conditions don't always go to plan, so it's up to me to adapt and accommodate things to ensure patients get their surgery when they need it."

Rochelle Holder
Royston Hospital Nurse



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Bird nerd

Everybody's flocking back to Hawke's Bay for summer. They're here to recharge on a surfeit of long hot days, kaimoana and not much to do.

Some were born here - endemic to the area, you might say - a few are foreign. Many have had quite a journey to make it Down Under. No doubt they spend their stretch here wittering on about their travels, skiting about their long-haul trip, non-stop, how they shagged about in Alaska, but now they've landed all they want to do is chillax.

The godwits started it, arriving in October to a hero's welcome. They're like smarmy jetsetters who humble-brag on the socials with their tales of far-flung exotica and exhaustion. They don't really do much, other than fly. They're dull brown, a bit skinny, matchstick legs and a beak like a toothpick. Not like the royal spoonbill. Now there's a bird worth watching!

Where I'm from, ornithology means knowing the difference between red-billed and black-backed gulls. Auckland has sparrows and pigeons (Latin binomial: *Avius rodentia*), and mushed up pukeko on the sides of roads.

Here in Hawke's Bay, there's so much to see for a birdwatcher we should all take it up as a hobby. Make it the regional pastime. Hold symposia. Invite the international clutch of birdwatchers to descend on Hawke's Bay and birdwatch en masse.

There's oodles of tourism opportunity too. From gannets at the Cape to kororā on the shoreline, we're a guano-covered goldmine, a winged Who's-Who. We've even got our own colony of 2021 Bird Of The Year (a questionable contender) pekapeka tou roa - long-tailed bats - in a farm shed in Waipawa.

In my garden I've got barbery doves, blackbirds, tūi, fantails and of course chickens. Backyard birdwatching is popular: nearly 8,000 people filled out the annual NZ Garden Bird Survey this year. Birds in general are popular: 52,000 people voted in this year's Bird

of the Year competition. That's more people than voted for the TOP party in the last general election!

So, don your tilley hat, borrow Grandpa's binoculars and set off across the motu. Pack a knapsack with sandwiches and a thermos, a Rite in the Rain waterproof notebook, a Blackwing pencil and the *Collins Hand Guide to the Birds of New Zealand*. Take a shooting stick so you can perch anywhere. You'll spy stilts and plovers, terns, egrets and wrybills, shags, knots and oyster-catchers. Local bird legend, Bernie 'Birdman' Kelly, has a Hawke's Bay list of 114 species, but the Hawke's Bay 'high score' is 139. There are over 70 in the Ahuriri Estuary alone.

Birdwatching can be competitive, but it's also contemplative. It's a healthy mix between meditation and voyeurism, guaranteed to bring out the anchorite (or the stalker) in all of us.

Birdwatchers - or birders as they're also called - are sometimes twitchers. (Every twitcher's a birder but not all birders are twitchers). Twitchers treat birdwatching like a sport, ticking off as many species as possible, playing their own version of birdlife bingo.

Taking it to extremes is a Big Year, whereby twitchers aim to get as many birds as possible on their 'list' in a single year. The record is 6,852, which is over half of all bird species on Earth.

Birders are always looking for rarities, or birds who may've ended up here by accident. Keen eyes with good 'bins' won't be looking at a flock of godwits; they'll be looking *within* the flock for the outliers, those interlopers who have joined a flock and headed here without meaning to. In that way twitchers can add to their list without leaving the area.

There was great excitement among the Bay's birders a few years ago when a Wilson's phalarope showed up in the Estuary, because one hadn't been seen in New Zealand before. The phalarope - "...unusual for their reversed sexual dimorphism and aberrant breeding systems..." - could be mistaken for a

sandpiper and certainly got the birders all a twitter, racing to get it on their list before it flew off again. More recently, a Nankeen night heron turned up in Porangahau. There's only a few of these in the country and they all live out the back of a cafe near Whanganui, so it was a real treat for the local twitchers to have one closer to home.

Start with Cornwall Park or Anderson Park if you're looking for action close to our urban centres. Both have plenty of ducks, geese and swans, perfect gateway birds for juvenile twitchers keen to start out in the game. (Don't feed them bread though. Despite children's stories telling us otherwise, park fowl don't do well on refined wheat).

Personally, I'm dotty over Dots: the banded dotterel who nest along the foreshore of beaches and rivers. They're so camouflaged they're impossible to see. Their eggs, the size and colour of pebbles, even more so. If you spot a dot it's a big tick in your fledgling twitcher list! Be careful where you step if you go looking and keep dogs and quads well away, dot nests are fragile.

From Pekapeka wetlands to Waitangi Reserve to the mouth of the Tukituki, our feathered friends are everywhere. There's lots of ways to get into birding including volunteering with local groups who look after habitats. Joining one of Forest & Bird's three Hawke's Bay branches. Or you could just begin by being a bit more curious during a morning walk along the river bank. From there it'll take off and you'll be a fully fledged bird nerd in no time.

Best tools for birders: Audubon.org is an excellent website for tips and tricks. Ebird is the must-have twitching app. Look out for *Birdwatching in Hawke's Bay* by PW Twydale in second-hand bookshops, it's a real treat. ●



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