

the Ōākura Post

APRIL 2025

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David Macleod MP for New Plymouth

What an incredible few months of events and activity across the region! I'm sure things in the Ōākura village are starting to settle after a busy summer season. According to Niwa, New Plymouth recorded its lowest summer rainfall total on record, and Taranaki ranked highest in sunshine hours for 2025, with 621 hours. While it has been great for holidaymakers and locals enjoying our beaches and outdoors, our farmers suffered the consequences of a very dry summer. It has been eye opening to connect with farmers over the past month to hear about how the drought has impacted them and the support that has been available.

Americarna kicked off a string of local events, bringing hundreds of classic cars and thousands of people to the streets in support of the thundering beasts. I heard from people who thoroughly enjoyed the experience of the Americarna Rest Home Runs – Where residents were able to admire the classic cars and, in some cases, they were able to go for a cruise and reminisce as passengers.

Te Matatini followed, attracting so many people accommodation was booked out across the region and many private homes were made available to the influx of visitors. As Minister Potaka put it, we witnessed the Olympics of kapa haka. As part of Budget 2024, the Government announced \$48.7 million for Te Matatini over three years, backing the ongoing development of kapa haka events including this one for all New Zealanders to enjoy.

WOMAD wrapped up the season, and as always, was a vibrant display of culture, music and dance. It was a privilege to officially open the festival and welcome international performers and visitors to New Plymouth.

New figures confirm what many kiwis have been seeing and feeling - tourism in New Zealand is making a strong comeback.

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Office hours:
Mon–Thu: 9am–3pm
Fri: By appointment



The latest International Visitor Survey shows international visitor spending jumped 23% in 2024, reaching \$12.2 billion. That includes \$3.2 billion spent in just the last three months of the year. There will be more to come. 2025 is our chance to reinforce the value of tourism and showcase everything that makes New Zealand a world-class destination. With more visitors choosing to explore our country, local communities and businesses will continue to reap the rewards.

As always, please reach out if you need information or assistance.
06 759 2580 or david.macleodmp@parliament.govt.nz

Follow facebook.com/davidmacleodmp to see when I'm next in Ōākura and for my regular updates from our electorate.

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Paul Cunningham, David McLeod, Eddie Sera, Graham Chard (L-R) and Bryan Vickery (took photo) met with NP MP David MacLeod on Wednesday, 19 March to seek his support to reduce the speed limit just before Corbett Park and the other end of town before the Wairau intersection. Eddie has started a petition and already has more than 400 signatures (his number is 027134444).

The underlying geology of your region is papa material, a very soft sandstone that dissolves when it gets wet. The region also has very high rainfall, so the sub-base is often very wet and dissolving. Trucks and buses then bounce along the wet road surface, forcing more water into tiny cracks that dissolves the sub-surface of papa causing the thin top layer of pavement to break apart into potholes, shunts and heaves.

Our guys are in a constant race to locate and temporarily fix that damage as a holding process until funding can be requested to complete a dig out and rebuild of a new section of road (known as a rehab), as that is the only permanent solution. However it takes us three years to run through the funding cycle to get funds from central government to fix any damage, and in the meantime the road gets worse and your residents suffer as a result!

Unfortunately, the whole of the central North Island is built on that geology, and areas of high rainfall and 'High Productivity Motor Vehicle' use (trucks over 44 tonne weight limit) severely weaken the sub-base, which leaves the top asphalt layer weakened, which breaks apart allowing more water in.

It becomes a bit like painting the Auckland Harbour Bridge - as soon as the painters finish their job and get to the far end of the bridge, the beginning of the bridge needs to be done again, so they have to go back to the beginning and do it all over again.

Rest assured mate, we really do do our best out there, and we get just as frustrated being wrapped up in, and held back by, the Government funding process.

So, hopefully that explanation enlightens you, as it did me, why our roads are in such a rubbish state!

The next meeting of the Kaitake Community Board will be held at the Kaitake Community Sports Hub in Ōākura, at 5pm on Monday 14 April.

Graham Chard -
Kaitake Community Board Chair
thechardz@gmail.com 027 2204 549

On behalf of Teresa Goodin, Renee Hohaia, Paul Lobb, and Cr Bryan Vickery

Kaitake Community Board

The decisions and directions of the last Minister of Transport to rescind all the previous Government's road speed reductions, and to push for an increase to speeds on all other highways across the country, has done little to assist us in resolving the roading problem areas along our section of State Highway 45.

I have received emails regarding numerous near misses at the pedestrian crossing at the hall and also regarding the speed of drivers at the crossing. At the first Kaitake Community Board meeting of 2025 we heard three public forum presentations highlighting the level of public concern with both speed and driver behaviour in and around the Ōākura township.

Ōākura local, Eddie Sera, delivered a particularly well prepared and researched presentation on the issues and dangers being experienced by many of his fellow locals. Eddie even took things that one step further by requesting and being granted approval to present his concerns to the Taranaki Regional Transport Committee in Stratford, and working with my fellow Community Board member Renee Hohaia to prepare and distribute a petition on the issue.

While we are working with the New Plymouth MP David MacLeod and local Police regarding our roading issues, I have personal concerns that the current central government's lack

of appetite for lowering any speed limits anywhere in the country and the lack of Police resources within our district could mean that we will make little headway until there is another high profile fatality on our stretches of road – a situation that I definitely do not want to live with.

Now you may recall a couple of editions back I made a comment about the "rubbish" state of our roads, and between that article and now have been doing a bit of research to try and determine a 'why?'.

While I haven't managed to get too much joy out of the New Zealand Transport Agency Waka Kotahi, in getting any response to approaches regarding our road speed issues, I did finally manage to get an explanation from one of their Service Managers who is involved in projects related to improving the resilience of state highways. He is also a fellow military veteran I served with, proving once more the old adage that it is not what you know!

His response was as follows;
There are only three things that wreck roads - Water, Water and Water, so if we control the water, we can save the road.

Drainage, culverts, swales, surface water channels are what we use to achieve that. However, for these to do their job maintenance has to be kept up to ensure they are cleaned out of dirt and rubbish all the time. Dirty and blocked drains = Water getting into the road = Road gets destroyed.



Bryan Vickery



Renee Hohaia



Paul Lobb



Graham Chard



Teresa Goodin

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Bryan Vickery

Kaitake Ngamōtu Ward Councillor



The Ōākura Super 6 (Touch) Comp was the backdrop for the Kaitake Community Board's first meeting this year. Corbett Park was humming. The Kaitake Sports Hub is a wonderful facility and we had a very successful meeting.

Graham Chard's chairing (as per usual) was masterful, and several members of the public spoke, including Eddie Sera. Mr Sera urgently wants the speed lowered as you drive into Ōākura (just before the bridge and right-hand turn into Corbett Park).

Historically there's been overwhelming local support for lowering the speed for this stretch of road, especially given the popularity of Corbett Park. But frustratingly the speed limit remains at 100km. Lobbying NZTA to alter speed limits on state highways is fraught with obstacles, and progress is glacial. Recently Graham helped Eddie speak at the Regional Transport Committee while Renee has been helping him get the word out to garner public support.

My column is unashamedly pro Ōākura and parochial. However, I want to digress and talk about something I have been working on with councillor Bali Haque. I am very concerned

about the rough sleeper problem in New Plymouth's CBD. There are presently between 20 and 35 rough sleepers in the town centre. This is an existential threat to the vibrancy of the CBD. The Government is not addressing this problem, MSD has no funding, the police (despite doing a great job) only get involved if there's a major altercation.

Meanwhile the YMCA is offering a programme to get rough sleepers off the street. It's a supervised place to sleep and shower, plus lockers for their chattels. Appropriate activities are also offered throughout the day. Currently the NPDC and the Toi Foundation are the only entities with the agility and vision that can fund this, which could cost upwards of \$500,000. But is this an essential expenditure item for the NPDC (even if the money comes out of a housing reserve with no impact on rates)?

Council recently voted to amend its bylaw to ensure that peoples' possessions do not block footpaths and shop entrances. The Council is attempting to mitigate a seemingly impossible problem - supporting (sustainable) wrap-around services for vulnerable people, while trying to make retailers and shoppers feel safer in the CBD.



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Since the start of this year (2025) to March the Council has received 30 calls in relation to rough sleeping and homelessness with nine of these referred to police. The Council is still finalising a process for dealing with any seized property, which under the Local Government Act 2002 must be stored for 14 days before any unclaimed property can be disposed of.

Ōākura Bowling & Social Club



Club News

Ōākura claimed a Bowls Taranaki centre title for the first time in 50 years when Briar Atkinson claimed the women's centre singles final 21-11 against Trish Howard of West End. Atkinson has only recently joined the club and we cannot wait to see her in the Ōākura blue throughout next seasons competitions. The club was also well represented in the centre men singles with Steve Muller making the semi-finals only to be defeated by the eventual winner, young gun Cam Horo. A successful weekend for both competitors.

In the Avery/Gilmour invitation tournament the Ōākura teams had a successful day. The Barry Watkins skipped trio of Rod Smith and Steve

Muller claimed 2nd position and the Wayne Gray led team of Paul Coxhead and Tim Ryan came 3rd in their sections.

The community bowls concept was a fantastic success with a full green of 16 teams enjoying a social game of twilight bowls in the beautiful Ōākura weather. The tournament was played over three Friday evenings in February where teams were made up from local businesses, sporting clubs, families or friends. Thanks to major sponsors, Team Baas from First National Collective and the nightly game sponsors of 4 Square Ōākura, Butlers Reef and Super Liquor New Plymouth. The overall winners were the worthy BLT team playing under the guidance of club life member Alan Bridgeman with his grandsons Chris and Matt Lane. Charlie Brown, Ben Tarrant and Jim Priest, aptly named the The Bell Ends, came in a gallant 2nd. A big thanks to Wayne Robinson for the green prep, Wayne Gray for his great bar service, Mike Yardley for his culinary skills and Steve Muller tournament officer. The club would also like to thank the Ōākura community and all players for their support. It was a hell of a lot of fun and we

will be back bigger and better next year.

The Club would like to thank and acknowledge the Toi Foundation and Aotearoa Gaming Trust for their continued financial support throughout the year. Key projects where funding has been allocated include the upgrade of kitchen appliances like new stoves and fridges and replacement of the pass-through chiller cabinet.

The Oakura Bowling Club once again was selected as headquarters for Bowls Taranaki Centre 5 years and under Hugh Moss tournament played in mid-March. A fantastic reward for the club, confirming the quality of the green and the commitment by all club volunteers in helping to run these events.

Oakura is proud again to partner up with the Okato Bowling Club for their 2-day tournament played on 5th & 6th of April. Greens at both clubs will be used over the weekend with prize giving along with the "best feed" in town held at the Okato clubrooms at the finish of play on Sunday.

The underarm bowler

Dancers head to Christchurch to learn and to perform:

The biannual Seasoned Symposium for dancers is being held on Easter Weekend in Christchurch. The Symposium is a forum for mature dancers (aged 45+) to share and extend their movement practice.

Eight dancers from the Val Deakin Dance Studio in New Plymouth will be heading down there to dance, teach and attend workshops with several well-known New Zealand dance practitioners including Fleur de Thier, Mary-Jane O'Reilly, Jan Bolwell, Rawiri Hindle and David McMicken.

Dancer and teacher Jane Roseman will be teaching a workshop highlighting the humour, musicality, emotional nuance and expressive storytelling in choreographer Val Deakin's work. Val was awarded the ONZM at New Year for her services to dance and choreography in New Zealand.

Five dancers from the Val Deakin Dance Theatre will also be performing excerpts from two of Val's iconic works – For Roberto (recently seen as part of the Dance Theatre's Connections programme) and Forever Bubbles – Val's fun look at New Zealand women in the home in the 1920s, 30s and 40s. Both these works have had a terrific reception when performed previously in New Plymouth, Eltham, Napier and Arundel (England).

The dancers heading down to Christchurch are Jane Roseman, Shelley Prestney, Davina Moffat, Inge Vink, Catherine Donlon, Karen Lewis, Marie Hermo Jensen and Alison Taylor.

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Kaitake Golf Club

The course at the moment is very dry and our greenkeeper is praying for plenty of rain. Thankfully our greens are looking splendid after weeks of reticulation issues. Everyone is enjoying what we golfers call the 'summer run'.

The steps on the 16th tee have been removed and local builder Colin Woodward is replacing them as they were a hazard to the course.

We had a very successful fundraising day hosted by Port Taranaki playing for the Harry Blyde cup and raising funds for Hospice. It was a pleasure to hold this tournament at Kaitake, where it has been for the last six years, and raise over \$5000 for Hospice.

The Mens pennants are through to the quarter finals, the Ladies midweek, weekend and 9 hole are all doing well, and hopefully will get through to the finals as well.

QUICK SIX

Has started but if you miss out this time please let Nicola know and she can put you down for the next session, which hasn't been confirmed yet. This is a very popular and successful

group which has resulted in new members to the club who are now playing in our weekly competitions and doing very well in the process. Nicola Avery 021311898 or nicola@theglassman.co.nz.

TWILIGHT GOLF

Is now finishing and has been a very successful six weeks and we will continue again. We will be in touch at the beginning of November.

CHIPPERS:

The Chippers has resumed again but there is still time until the end of Term 1 if you wish to come along on Sundays at 3pm. You will be more than welcome; if you require any further information, please contact the office or Jamie on 022 6773663.

TARANAKI VETS GOLF:

All golfers over the ripe old age of 50 may join the Taranaki Vets Golf. Once a month a game is held at a golf club in Taranaki with an entry of \$10. Ladies & Men are all Welcome.




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Another cracker summer of Wāhine Waves

Oakura Boardriders had another summer of Wāhine Waves learn-to-surf events. This year we mixed it up and teenage daughters were invited to attend events with their Mums too, creating special memories and bonding time for attendees. There were Mums cheering on their daughters and vice versa!

Deken Waves provided lessons and the Wāhine Waves female volunteer crew supported the women in the water and got them surfing waves too. After each lesson, the ladies were invited up to the OBC club rooms for drinks and nibbles and attendees received logo'd T-shirts and goodie bags containing treats from our sponsors.

Wāhine Waves had a large range in ages of attendees from early teens to late sixties! Also, one attendee had only given birth three weeks prior and still managed to rustle up the energy to attend. This Wāhine had an awesome time learning to surf, as Dad and bubs watched on from the beach.

This is exactly what Wāhine Waves is about - women taking time for themselves, as well

as learning to surf! A number of busy family orientated attendees said Wāhine Waves was the best activity they have enjoyed in a very long time - and that the events have reminded them of the importance of self-care and happiness.

The support from our sponsors has been incredible and we are very grateful for their generosity enabling the events to happen. Hopefully next year we are able to have another summer of Wāhine Waves!

Thank you to our epic sponsors!

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- Ringcraft Moana
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- Down To Earth Organics.
- Cracker and Graze
- Vertigo Surf Shop



Wahine Waves volunteer Toni Peacock having a play with her daughter Madi Peacock.

Ōākura Surf Day and Senior Club Champs Success

OBC, Parafed Taranaki, and The Halberg Trust continued their 15-plus year partnership to host another amazing Ōākura Surf Day. The sun was shining and the waves were peeling as we welcomed 25 kids and their families to the local break. Children with varying disabilities had the opportunity to shred, while their families enjoyed a fantastic day on the beach, complete with a BBQ and a cold beverage.

A particularly special moment this year was witnessing the parent of a participant who had

suffered an unfortunate accident playing rugby surf his first wave in 30 years—an inspiring reminder of the ocean's ability to bring joy and healing.

A massive thanks to all the OBC volunteers who made this day possible, as well to the New Plymouth Old Boys Surf Club for their incredible support in shuttling wheelchair-bound kids to the break.

Meanwhile, on the same day, OBC pulled off the impossible—running its Senior Club Champs at Stent Road. With 65 entries spanning from the Under-16 Boys division to the Legends (55+), the event showcased incredible talent in some unexpected swell. The point was packed with supporters who came to witness an action-packed day of surfing.

Congratulations to Our Winners:

- Under-16 & Under-18 – Occy Tapara
- Open Men's – Tom Butland (defending his title as a four-time champion)
- Open Women's – Jackie Keenan
- Legends (55+ years) – Jason Coxhead
- Masters – Dan Fanthorpe
- Grand Masters – Paul McFetridge

A huge thank you to everyone who participated, supported, and volunteered—your dedication makes these events possible and keeps the OBC spirit alive. See you in the water!

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from out of the blue studio gallery: A Wonderland for Fibre Works

'from out of the blue studio gallery' has been bringing fibre art in all its wonderful manifestations to South Taranaki for the past five and a bit years. In that time we have seen our wonderful community of makers, explorers and appreciators grow steadily. The gallery is a boutique space that is ideal for up close and personal, intimate viewing of fibre works.

We have been honoured to exhibit works from The Hague, Australia, The United Arab Emirates as well as Aotearoa New Zealand. Types of art we have shown ranged from handmade felts, fabric collages, hand-spinning, hand-weaving, quilting of all variations, handmade paper and artist books, botanical dyed hangings and fabrics, garments both functional and sculptural, embroidered tree bark and other plant fibre assemblages, basketry, expressive stitching - the list goes on. Our exhibition space has a new collection of works every six weeks which means we are always offering a chance for a different exploration into the world of fibre and textile.

Underpinning the gallery is the textile studio, used very actively for workshops and self-directed learning. It houses looms, spinning wheels, paper making equipment, a dye kitchen and a storage facility of dried basketry and

cordage supplies. This is a resource available for the members of the wider fibre community to use and enjoy. Regular workshops of many different kinds are held using both local and out of region teachers.

The crowning offer of the studio gallery complex that is set in an acre of organic garden, is the opportunity for fibre artist to stay as Artists in Residence. This is used extensively, bringing fresh creativity into the region.

'from out of the blue studio gallery' is a vibrant textile focused community centre, with a welcoming, inclusive vibe. If you love fabric and being creative with fibres of any kind we would love you to join us on our journey through the wonderland of fibre.

viv davy, artist, gallerist and owner, opens the gallery Thursdays through Mondays (a long weekend) 1-5 pm or by appointment. Phone 021 407 424 for an appointment. We are located at 18 Halse Place, Ōpunakē. 4616.

Our website is kept current with upcoming and current exhibition news, artist profiles, workshop opportunities and calls for entry. Follow us on Instagram or Facebook to stay up to date. We look forward to seeing you soon.




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SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES:

Wednesday 16 April 2-3pm join us for an Autumn leaf printing craft

Wednesday 23 April 2-3pm join us for an ANZAC craft activity.

BOOK RECOMMENDATIONS:

Understanding Te Tiriti: A handbook of basic facts about Te Tiriti of Waitangi by Roimata Smail. A very readable synopsis and a simple guide to understanding Te Tiriti and its relevance today.

The latest instalment in the Orphan X series is available.

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Free Strength and Balance class

With winter approaching I thought I would try out some of the indoor exercise options available in the Village. Jane Roseman volunteers to lead this class every Monday at 10.30 a.m. in the Ōākura Hall supper room. The class comes under the umbrella of Sport Taranaki and focuses on a series of simple strengthening exercises aimed at increasing balance and coordination. Jane's experience as a ballerina and ballet teacher is obvious- her posture is excellent and she provides individual encouragement to class members to improve technique and do the exercises properly. Her enjoyment of music is apparent as she led us through 45 minutes of gentle repetitive (but not boring) movements set to music. All the class members were so welcoming and friendly, the time flew by. Give it a try - classes don't run on public or school holidays .

Tai Chi

In the Hall supper room on Monday's at 9am is Tai Chi. This class has been run by Judi Lee for many years, but on the day I visited she was on holiday and the class was ably lead by Beth and Del, two of the class attendees. Everyone was so friendly and welcoming and included me in an invitation to coffee after class.

Judi is one of the founding members of the Taranaki Tai Chi Chuan Association, which celebrates its 40 year anniversary this year. Classes in Ōākura have been running since 2016/ 2017 and Judi says the class



time is popular as it gives people a great start to the week. She was attracted to Tai Chi because it's a kind of moving meditation, focused on breathing and relaxation and the Meridians for health and wellbeing. She has been teaching since 1985 and there are other regular classes around the district.

Judi says "The practice of Tai Chi and Qigong is great for strengthening the body and for balance, for calming and balancing the mind and body, gentle on joints, tendons and ligaments, and muscles. It is great for breathing techniques and for getting a great sleep at night."

Taranaki Kayak Fishing Classic

Since 2009 this popular event has been based at Butlers Reef Hotel, its 16th year of competition. Ian Hislop, one of the organisers, told me that there were 151 entrants this year, many from Taranaki but also visitors from as far away as Greymouth. The emphasis is on fun and participation and there are also prizes to be won. This year seven junior boys and one girl also entered.

The sea was a bit choppy over the two days but the winner caught a 18kg Kingfish. A 9.82 kg Snapper caught and a 3.5 kg Kahawai were some of the other bigger fish reeled in.

There are some big name sponsors but great to see local businesses Koru Plumbing, Oakura Motor Camp and Butlers Reef on the sponsorship list. Special shout out to Will from Butlers Reef for being so helpful and supportive during the event .

Double Shifts for our Recruits

Our recruits head off to their 7 day Firefighter training course in the coming months. This is their first professional training. Once they successfully pass, it allows them to actively respond to incidents. The station officers and recruits have been putting in extra training to ensure Ōākura's reputation for having well prepared recruits lives on. Best of luck to Noah, Jannes and Bruce - Just remember the wet stuff goes on the hot stuff and you'll be fine.

Left to right: Bruce Tait, Jannes Reinders (obscured) S.O. Roger Duncan and Noah Chappell



Interview with Local Artist Carmel Boone



Oakura Indoor Bowls Ōākura Tennis Club

The 2025 season is off to a fabulous start with lots of familiar faces returning for another year and good to see a few new members enjoying the game for the first time. We started on 17th March with a couple of club nights, including 'bring a friend' and 'coach and learn'. This is an excellent way to introduce new players to the game and allows some of the more experienced bowlers to pass on their knowledge around bowl delivery and use of the mat.

There are a number of exciting events this year, such as our club championships and various social visits to other clubs, so plenty to look forward to.

It is not too late to come and try indoor bowls, the season runs from March to September every Monday night at 7-30pm in the Oakura Community Hall. If you have any questions feel free to contact the president, Marvin Clough Ph: 021 516 279

Congratulations to the A2 team qualifying in the top 2 guaranteeing a home semifinal.

Soffe are hanging on by the skin of their teeth with one round to go before top 4 playoff. The team welcomes back Taylor Mitchell from overseas just in time to help their chances and play senior reps.

Congratulations to all the Ōākura club members selected for junior and senior reps lately. For Junior reps we had Angus Thorp U12, Noah Stanley U12, Luke Barrett U14, Ana Shlosberg U14, and Miller and Cooper Ferguson U16.

Seniors Sue Oldfield played eastern reps, Jackie and Taylor Mitchell are playing Manawatu reps and Taylor the hexangular in Wellington in April. Good luck to all teams and players.





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New Zealand Electrical Association of NZ

Local artist Carmel Boone has been invited to exhibit at The NZ Art Show this Kings Birthday weekend.

The NZ Art Show is New Zealand's largest and most celebrated art event, dedicated to showcasing and supporting NZ artists. Hailing from all regions across the country, artists unite in this unique Wellington show, giving you the opportunity to engage with their works and connect with its creators.

Mira Watson sat down with Carmel.

I chatted with Carmel in her kitchen over coffee, surrounded by many of her beautiful, luminous abstract paintings. It was like being in a well-lit contemporary garden-gallery.

I was curious about Carmel's upcoming exhibition in Wellington and wondered how she got to be selected. "I applied the previous year and didn't get accepted, but they told me to re-apply. So I did and I got in, which surprised me because that was in 2024 and I only started painting in 2022."

Carmel started painting in the month when her son and his father travelled to the USA without

her, to help her handle being so far from her young child. She purchased a huge canvas which came home on the roof of her car, and so her painting began. I noticed that first canvas as I entered the house - a rich compelling spiral that makes you look again and again.

I was curious about whether she starts with an image or colour in mind, or maybe a theme or feeling? "I start with black and white, and just one or two colours, and then it often turns into something else. I often have a feeling of a colour. I paint feelings, but I'm not sure they are always mine. There's no theme through anything I'm doing - it's abstract. Each piece is its own conversation with the canvas but I don't know what's coming before I start it."

Carmel has no formal art training - apart from learning how to use different media - and so has immense freedom to express and experiment. I could see that permission in the spaciousness of the work. Looking around the room I can definitely see a common thread - it's like an otherworldly sound, each painting transmitting something different. They make me feel things. Some are more challenging for me to stand in front of, others are welcoming and inspiring.

"It's not just the frequency they transmit, but how they interact with the viewer - each person gets something different depending on what they need," says the artist. I find this a beautiful concept - healing or transformational art.

I wonder out loud about how painting in the moment without preconception can allow exactly what is 'now' in the Zeitgeist to come through and affect people as needed and there is certainly a need in these chaotic times. "It's so satisfying to see a painting in its new home where it transmits an energy to the whole house", Carmel says. And to have her paintings travel South to Wellington taking their unique imprint with them to affect new places and spaces motivates and energises Carmel. "I'm not attached. I want them to sell and go to new homes, that way I can make more," she comments.

by Mira Watson

Exhibition:
The NZ ART SHOW, TSB Stadium.
Friday 30th May-Sunday 1st June
www.CarmelBoone.Art



The group with their winning lego block creation.



Here is a photo of the Triathlon starting, Senior buddies waiting at the end of the pool to support the younger tamariki.

Ōākura School Beach Clean Up 2025

Our annual beach cleanup is a fun and productive activity that allows our students to protect the environment and the oceans alike. This year, all students competed in a series of games, competing for house points and bragging rights.

For the first challenge, each house went up against the sand in a race to build the biggest sandcastle they could. The largest sandcastle measured in this competition was taller than the average male. Students used rocks, buckets, sticks and teamwork to make these as big as they possibly could. Congratulations to Koru for bringing home a sandy win in that competition!

The second challenge required students to use a variety of tools to fill a bucket with water as fast as they could. The tools included a tiny container, a sieve, a sponge and a cup. The fastest team only took 3 minutes and 38 seconds to complete the challenge. This game got so intense that students would fill their school bucket hats with water to help speed up the process. Congratulations to none other than Koru for that wet and wild victory!

The third and final challenge was to represent your house using a bucket of giant lego blocks. Every house had their own unique ideas, some groups built one object, whilst others built many. The winning group used the blocks to represent the peak in the Kaitake ranges that their house is named after. They made each layer of blocks a different colour to represent the other houses, and they put their house colour at the top. Congratulations to Patuha for building their win in such a creative way!

Beach cleanup is done and dusted for another year, but students will continue to compete in activities, games, challenges and events to win house points, prizes and bragging rights for their house. Next our Momona team will be taking part in a junior triathlon hosted by our senior sports leaders, while our year 5-8 students will be competing in our annual swimming sports at the Ōkato pool. House leaders and art leaders are coming together to design and paint new flags for each of our houses to fly at school events, so watch this space.

Written by Jesse Tscheuschler and Heath Luis-Reyes-Lam

Images by Jude Brown

Ōmata Triathlon 2025 – Fun, Fitness, and Slip 'n' Slide Finishes!

By Charlotte Connolly
and Mckayla Munro



The sun was shining, the energy was high, and the cheers were loud as the Ōmata School Triathlon took over the school grounds on Friday, February 28th. From the youngest athletes in Kiwi, Pukeko, and Piwakawaka to the more experienced racers in Tui, Kotare, Korimako, and Ruru, every student gave it their all, supported by enthusiastic buddies and plenty of school spirit.

“It was fun having a buddy! A great chance to show leadership and help them out,” said Myah Fahey, reflecting on the event's team spirit.

The triathlon kicked off with a splash—each class had their own set swim lengths before racing to the transition zone for the next challenge. “Swimming was tough, knowing I had to bike and run straight after. It all happened so fast!” said Ramina Antill, who gave it her all in the water.

The younger students tackled a bike course around the tennis court, while the older students took on the rugby field. “Biking was a real challenge, especially on the grass. It made it tough for everyone,” said Sloan Hancock.

Then came the final test of endurance: running two full laps around the soccer field before reaching the grand finale—the legendary Slip 'n' Slide finish! “The best part was the big sprint to the Slip 'n' Slide at the end!” said Lewis Vincent.

For some, the biggest challenge was keeping up their energy throughout all three events. “Running was hard after swimming and biking, but I loved pushing myself to the finish for the Slip 'n' Slide and the ice block,” said Kaito Harris.

The triathlon wasn't just about racing—it was about teamwork and encouragement. “Having a buddy cheering me on made all the difference! Knowing someone had my back gave me confidence,” said Penny Gargan, who appreciated the support from her older buddy.

Of course, the final highlight was the legendary Slip 'n' Slide, where students made a splash—literally. “Striking a pose at the end and cooling off with an ice block was awesome,” said Tavish Thomas.

The Ōmata School Triathlon wasn't just about fitness—it was about fun, teamwork, and taking on new challenges. Whether students were racing their friends or just giving it a go, the day captured what Ōmata School is all about: taking opportunities and pushing ourselves to try new things.

And now... bring on Cross Country!

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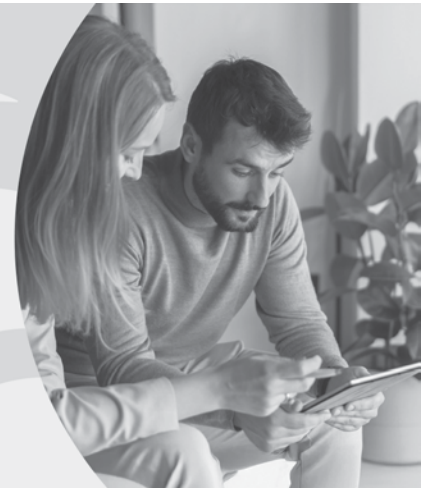
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NPOB Surf Life Saving Club

So that's a wrap for the 2024-25 lifeguard season – our volunteer lifeguards packed up the flags on Taranaki Anniversary Weekend. If you're out swimming now, please always check the conditions first, and parents, please ensure you're watching your children. A big thank you to our lifeguards who have generously given up their time over the summer; it's always appreciated.

We had 26 of our Oceans team (under 11 – under 14 years) travel to Mount Maunganui

to compete in the four-day competition. The team competed hard and performed well among a large group of talented athletes from all over New Zealand. They achieved fantastic results, with several athletes just missing out on podium finishes.

A special mention to two teams who took home gold – a stellar effort!

1st – U13-14 Male - Board Relay:

Rafferty O'Sullivan, James MacDonald,
Josh La Franchie

1st – U11-14 Mixed – 2km Beach Relay:

Rafferty O'Sullivan, Josh La Franchie,
Ruby Peacock, Lyla Termath

After Oceans, Anthony Ander headed over to Gisborne to compete in the massive, messy

surf at the 2025 Aon New Zealand Masters Surf Lifesaving Championships. Anthony earned great results with a podium finish before the surf conditions unfortunately changed the schedule. 2nd – 40-44 Masters Male Surf Race

Although our season is nearly over, we're hoping that summer sticks around a little longer. Please stay safe in the water and make smart decisions.

Keep an eye on our Facebook page for updates on what's happening over the winter months.

Finally, another massive thank you to our active volunteer lifeguards – we wouldn't be a club without you!



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Stories of the Past

As shared by Len Jury

THE OLD SCHOOL BUS.

It was a truck converted and built by Mr. George Duke Snr. There were no windows, just canvas sides pulled down over the wooden frame in winter and on wet days. Down each side a long wooden bench seat, girls sat on one side, boys on the other. As a 5 year old boy on my first day to school, the two older Joyce girls from across the road looked after me. I felt rather special to be with Rae and Joan. It didn't really occur to me, being an "afterthought", that boys were different to girls. A week later my world was shattered when I was in no uncertain terms made to sit on the other side.

Remember this was just after World War II. Virtually everything was still unavailable or rationed. It was the same for cars and trucks. No new, just repairs to keep the vehicle moving. I had another puzzling experience on that first day at school. Remember I was only five and I was unceremoniously directed to the other end of the toilets. I had never ever been to a boys only toilet. Everything was so different to home.

On Fridays all the farmers went to town to buy farming equipment, nails, nuts and bolts and all those sorts of things. Their wives did the shopping. These were the days when most men wore suits, everyone dressed up in their better clothes. As a youngster before 5 years old, with Mum, for seemingly like hours and hours, you were dragged from shop to shop. Photographers Mr Henry McGee and Mr. Crago took photos of people on Devon Street. Photos were quite a novelty then. Inevitably Mum would stop and talk with a neighbour, friend or cousin. It was the great social occasion as news, latest stories of disasters and scandals were swapped.

My father and his farmer friends would meet upstairs at the billiard rooms on Currie Street. Boys were barred from such places. All the men smoked. If I behaved and sat on the bench and didn't make a noise, wasn't naughty and didn't wriggle, Dad would sneak me up to the billiard room. Two other boys, the Hanovers, were already there. In those couple or so years I never ever saw a policeman. It was an exciting place as you watched the ivory billiard balls smash into each other with their distinctive clash.

For the farmers (not in suits) there was another venue, the stock yards. Here pigs of all ages I remember clearly, and probably hens, chickens and the odd rooster, calves, lambs, sheep, dogs and puppies were sold, even goats. It was an exciting place with all the loud noise. Pigs squealing, dogs barking and perhaps the rooster claiming his space. I was always fascinated at how fast the auctioneers could speak. After each Friday Sale Day, Mr. Duke and his truck delivered all to their new homes.

Maisie Berridge who later married Geo. Duke Jnr. recalls in the late 1920's being taken to 'Tech' in Lemon Street. 'We all just sat down on the tray of Mr. Duke's truck. No seats, no Health and Safety inspectors those days'. The girls had sewing lessons, boys woodwork.

A new bus was purchased by Mr. Duke, I think, in the late 1940s. The bus travelled up Plymouth Rd to the Tapuae Bridge and onwards to

where Kiriha Road met Koru Road, and then down the Koru Road to Ōākura School. Then came the day when inevitably the old Plymouth Road bridge needed rebuilding and the road was closed. Mr. Duke would reverse into an old metal pit. I remember Mr. Duke as very quiet and never flustered. In all his driving he was extremely careful. I have no memory of even near misses in the eight years I went to Oakura School. I do remember the controversy about the Plymouth Road bridge being only one way though. "That is all that is needed" was the voice of officialdom. I think of this, one-eyed, one way, every time I travel Plymouth Road. Now I wonder if it has become one way to slow traffic down? In 1938 Mr. G.H.Duke was awarded the school bus contract to carry 30 children from Hurford, Pheney and Barrett Roads to Ōmata School at 1 pound 13/- per day. This was extended the next year to carry children from Koru to Ōākura School. As this bus passed our gateways, Donald, Joyce families and I went to Ōākura school. For this convenience I had to be waiting for the bus at twenty to eight each morning. Early enough to jump on the ice over the puddles. Yes, there was ice on the puddles a few days of each winter. Of course, the world population was only 2.5 billion then compared to 8 billion today (UN Statistics). A lot more hot air!

The carrying business started on 1 September 1919 when a contract was obtained to collect milk for two years and deliver to the Royal Oak dairy factory, now a gracious two storey with the character of the building retained. Mr. Duke had first started collecting milk in 1911. In the late 40s - early 50s, cream for butter making at the Hurford Road dairy factory was collected from down Pioneer Road and from a farm near Blagdon up till the 1950s (Spotswood College is there now), then all the way down to Ahu Ahu Road, and all roads in between, even Pitcairn St. [now Donnelly St -ed], the road to the Ōākura School. Mr and Mrs Smith had a farm at the very end. The farm extended down to the Ōākura River. We had swimming lessons in the river, but the water was NOT pristine. A Māori lass, unwittingly, terrorised us by catching eels and holding them in the air. All of us pākeha kids made a mad scramble out of the river. On Pioneer Road there were 'billy can' farms. The farms were so small only a few litres of cream were produced, only enough to go into a 'billy'. Pioneer Road did not become part of the city until 1960.

Philip Duke remembers riding with his father picking up farm supplies and machinery from the Railway Station, Farmers Co-op, Harry Rowe, Newton King Ltd and of course from the fertiliser works at Waiwhakaiho. The fertiliser was placed into large sacks for cartage. Three of the drivers were Keith Krutz, Dave Schrider and my brother Noel, nicknamed Nip. He had a little fox terrier that rode with him, appropriately named Nipper!

The business was sold to Heydon Priest Ltd in 1964.

(Ref. used in this article, Maisie Duke and Sylvia Haldane memories in Ōmata School reunion booklets. Phillip Duke supplied more memories, most dates, records and a number of photos for this article.

TOP Activities

Ōākura

Ōākura Hall Bookings
Vicky Jury 027 215 2465

Art Classes - 1-12 yrs

Messy + sensory playgroups, after-school art classes, workshops. Process over product, always. Booking essential. Contact Franzl at imagineplayinspire@gmail.com

Bowling and Social Club

Bowling tournaments September through to April. Both mid-week and weekend games. Steve Muller 021 169 5863

Dancing in the Dark

Glenys Farrant 027 753 0120

Golf - Practice net

Non members welcome. Clubs and balls can be supplied. \$5.00 WEDNESDAYS. Casual competition for non-members. 8am to 1pm open to everyone. Denise 752 7665

Indoor Bowls

Enquiries to Marvin Clough 752 7531

JKA Karate - Jim Hoskin 752 7337

Justice of the Peace

Lynn, Anne, John, Krys.
Ōākura Library Thursdays 10am-12.30pm.

Kaitake Ranges Conservation Trust

Pete Morgan 027 372 5182
morgpt@xtra.co.nz

Kaitake Social Netball

Sundays 3pm during Term 2 & 3 Oakura School Netball Courts Contact Jenna 027 489 4929.

Morning Talk - coffee group

Thursdays 10-11am at NPOB Surf Club. Free tea/coffee. Tracey Lusk 752 7875

'Move it or Lose it' - Strength and Balance Fitness Classes

Ōākura Hall, Wednesdays and Fridays 9.30am. Contact Gloria Zimmerman 027 284 9111

Mini Groovers - Music Group

All parents welcome with babies/under 5's. Every Tues during term time 10-11am at the Ōākura Hall. Visit their Facebook page: Mini Groovers - Ōākura.

Ōākura Maimoa Club - after school care

Monday to Thursday 3pm to 5.30pm
Bookings essential through Facebook @oakuramaimoaclub or by text to 022 323 7210

Ōākura Crop Swap - 3rd Saturday 3-4pm

Ōākura Village Hall. Contact Adam Harris adam@frankandfearless.com

Ōākura Walking Talking Group

Every Monday 10am. Meet in the carpark next to the skatepark on Messenger Tce. Phone Mae 027 314 2995 or just turn up.

Pickleball Ōākura

Ōākura Hall - Wed 7.30pm, Thurs 9.15am. All skill levels welcome and equipment is provided. Elayne 027 937 7173 or Vincenza 027 739 6574

Playcentre

14 Donnelly St. Sessions run Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays 9am - noon during school terms. oakura@playcentre.org.nz

Pony Club Tracey Mackenzie 027 319 0238 traceymackkyle@gmail.com

Pool Club - Meets every Wednesday night 7pm over winter commencing April at Butlers Reef. All welcome. For more info call Margaret 027 232 1899

Probus Club - Meets once a month at Ōākura Bowling club rooms on the 3rd Friday of every month 10-11.30am. Contact Brenda Ryan 757 3537 or 027 748 9698

Running for Kids - TempoFit Kids breakfast run club every Friday 8am before school at Ōākura Hall, 8-13yrs. Hayden Shearman 027 483 5942 tempofit.org

St James Church - Sunday Service every 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month, 10am

Strength & Balance - Ōākura Hall, in the supper room (school term only). Monday 10:30. Jane 06 752 7743

Sunday School - St James Church

Every 2nd and 4th Sunday 10am. stjamesoakura@gmail.com

Surf Lessons - Deken Waves Surf Coaching. Group & Private sessions available. Contact Simon: 021 122 9525 dekenwaves@gmail.com

Te Reo Māori Lessons

Toni 021 661 912 thowison@hotmail.com

Tennis Club - Coaching for all ages and levels. Enquiries - Jackie 027 673 2900

The Coastal Dippers - Mon-Fri 7.00am, Sat & Sun 8.00am. Turn up in front of the Surf Club for a quick sea dip. Facebook or Kama 027 769 1101

Tai Chi Classes

Every Monday 9-10am at Ōākura Hall. Judi 027 268 2601. Just come along or contact: taranakitaichichuan@gmail.com

Val Deakin Dance School - Ōākura Hall

There are no longer classes on a Tuesday afternoon but there will be an adult ballet class on a Friday morning at 10:30am val@valdeakindance.org.nz 752 7743 or text 027 694 0933

Tataraimaka Hall

5 Elements Fitness Bootcamps and Kickboxing Fitness classes

Monday to Thursday 5-6 pm, Barney 027 752 7076 barney@5efitness.com or visit www.5efitness.com

Gymnastics Group for children - 5-7 yrs

Tuesdays after school at the Tataraimaka Hall for basic level gymnastics sessions. Rose at rosem@realfoodnutrition.co.nz

Okato

Okato Community Church meeting

At Hempton Hall on Sunday mornings 10.30am - all welcome. Contact Nicky 027 497 3764

Okato and District Historical Society

Meg Cardiff 752 4566

Okato Lions Club - Contact Colin Tyler 027 5421853 - Meet at Hempton Hall first Wed of the month.

Okato Squash Club - Monday nights from 6.30pm. All welcome. Ladies morning begins Term 2 - Wednesdays 10.00 - 11am. Rachel 020 4092 5243

Okato St. Paul's - Sunday Service every 1st and 3rd Sunday of each month, 10.00am

Mid-week open church - Pew for You, every 3rd Wednesday of each month, 4.30pm-6.00pm, okatocp@gmail.com

Te Ruru Market - crafters, growers and makers. Wednesdays, Hempton Hall, Okato, 3-4:30pm

Ōkato Tennis Club okatotennis@gmail.com

TOP Information

The Ōākura Post

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