

# *the* Ōākura Post

FEBRUARY 2026

*update*  
KRCT  
pg 2

Faye Crawford's photo  
of her daughter Kora was  
a category winner.



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## Kaitake Ranges Conservation Trust Update

Happy 2026! 2025 was another great year for the Trust. During 2025, the Trust caught about 1,700 predators up in the Kaitake Ranges, assisted with releasing the 100th kiwi and kept up with monitoring kiwi. We celebrated the year with our annual Christmas party at Butlers in December. As always it was great to hear how the year went and share some kai and beers.

We held a photo contest for the best photos in the Kaitake Ranges over the past year. Trust volunteers submitted heaps of great photos of the bush, native wildlife, and volunteers out doing the mahi and exploring the area. Attendees voted on two categories – best nature photo and best photo of people and nature. The winner of the nature photo was a lovely closeup shot of a kiwi by Toby Shanley. Faye Crawford snapped the best photo in the people and nature category, showing her daughter, Kora, holding a kiwi.

The Trust has been around for a long time, but has been active doing the trapping and working to restore the Kaitake Ranges since 2018. Back at that time, the Trust consisted of a small group of dedicated volunteers doing the mahi. Today there are around 70 or 80 volunteers.

Many of the current volunteers, who are your neighbours and friends, have been spending their free time checking traps and kiwi for many years now. At the Christmas party we recognised and celebrated those volunteers who have been helping out for years and reached significant milestones. Note, these numbers are just the number of predators caught, not the number of traps checked or days spent out in the bush.

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The century club are those volunteers who have caught between 100 and 249: Adrian van't Hof, Rob McGregor, Stacey Bateman, Kelvin Perrie, Toby Dixon, Sarah Campbell, Spencer Lister, John Velvin, Lisa Mingrino, Nina Silcock and Jenny Ellington.

The 250 crew (who've caught between 250 and 500) includes: Dave Ferens, Bruce Ward, Daryl Gibson, Carlos Reid, Mark Danenhauer, John Freeman and Murray Dixon.

The 500 team have all caught more than 500 predators: Marty Moeller, Pete Morgan, Trev Morris, Jackie Keenan and Keith Coughtrey.

Finally, one volunteer has caught over 750 predators, Bryce Vickers!

That is remarkable dedication and passion shown by this group. Thanks everyone!

We also awarded our two annual awards: The Trapper Extraordinaire award, given to the volunteer who did the best job catching predators during the year, went to Bruce Allen Ward. And the Kaitiaki of the Year award, awarded to the volunteer who has gone above and beyond for the Trust during the past year, went to a very deserving Kelvin Perrie.

## TOP Christmas Competition winners were:

\$200 4 Square Voucher - Robyn Burnett correctly answered the Four Square started in NZ in 1924

Gordies Christmas book was won by Jess Childs and Alban for correctly answering that Gordie is a goblin.

Zachary chose Oakura Christmas Concert as his favourite Stories of the Past and won the box of Favourites chocolates.

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## Dotterels at Tapuae.

An observant local noticed a pair of Dotterels nesting at Tapuae beach in January. This from Halema Jamieson Member of the Dotterel Defenders-

"Dotterel/ Tūturīwhatu are small, native shorebirds most commonly encountered along the white sandy beaches along the NE coast of the North Island, but a small population of around 50 birds can be found scattered across the many black sand beaches of Taranaki.

There are only 10-11 known breeding sites for NZ dotterel around the Taranaki coast and we have not had records of breeding pairs from the Tapuae site before. Even more exciting is that one of the parents is a chick born near Waiwhakahiho just over a year ago. It is banded and has a small ID flag with the letters JPA on it. NZ dotterel usually don't start breeding until they are at least two years old, so this one is off to an early start! The chicks can take any where from 5-8 weeks after hatching to fledge (be big enough to fly). Until then they are extremely vulnerable to predation by dogs, black-backed gulls, stoats, cats etc but also can be easily stepped on or run over. Parent dotterels are very protective and will try to lead people and dogs away from their chicks by pretending to be injured. They may fly close to you and call out or run along the beach in an obvious way, sometimes dragging a wing. This is a good sign you are too close to a nest or their chicks.

There are no formal dog access restrictions for that stretch of beach but it is always advisable to be mindful of nesting shorebirds at this time of year (breeding season is approx. Sept-March) and either stay away from areas where nesting birds are or keep your dog under control and close to the water line."

Further info can be found at:  
<https://www.trc.govt.nz/assets/Biodiversity/Biodiversity-factsheet>

Let's all look after these special little Ōākura residents!



## Happy Campers

Ever wondered who comes to stay at the Ōākura campsite over summer? I did a walk through in early January to find out. I hit the jackpot with the first family I encountered, the Green family from Whanganui. The parents had been camping at Ōākura for 50-60 years, and the family had carried on that tradition- never missing a year. Their children had been coming too (for 48 years in one case), then bringing their own children and their children- 4 generations of one family. They loved the fact that they met the same people every year. To prove this, just down the road I encountered another family, this time from Inglewood, who had been coming every year for 18 years, the same two weeks every year. They commented on how good the camp managers were. Another extended family from Wellington had been coming for 18 years, gradually extending their site to incorporate extra children as sites became vacant. They too have a standing booking. Relative newbies from Okato and Stratford had been coming for three years. As farmers they appreciated the fact that they were off the farm but not too far away to pop back if needed. I did meet some first timers - a family from Lower Hutt on their first stay as part of a road trip, and another family from New Plymouth staying three nights with their neighbours for company. Congratulations to the camp managers and staff- you must be doing a fantastic job as people just keep coming back for more!



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# Ōākura Bowling & Social Club



## Club Championships

The Tim Ryan team of Kerry McGovern and Mark Barraclough won a high quality men' triples final over the Pat Walklin skipped duo of Kevin Fleming and Syd Sharpe. The Ryan trio repelled all challenges from the gallant Walklin team and held their nerve to take the title in the closest of finishes 13-12.

The Kim Marsters skipped team of Michelle Wallbank and Norma Nelio will take on Sandra Zittersteijn, Meagan Breedveld and Janice Radich in the women triples championship. Marsters and Zittersteijn have each won one game and the decider will be played late February.

Play has started in the men open singles with Allan Bridgeman, Tim Ryan, Steve Muller, Pat Walklin, Rex Wright and junior bowlers Wayne Gray, Geoff Farrant and Mike Yardley through to post section.

## Interclub

The summer interclub competitions are well under way with Oakura currently holding 1st place in the Avery and mid-field in the Gilmour Cup.

The Oakura Orcas are running 4th in the Saturday Div 1 Pennants and the Oakura Sharks mid-table in Div 2. This is a strong result for the club as the teams face strong opposition each week from Taranaki's best bowlers.

Oakura has entered three teams in the Taranaki Bowls Bowls3five Triples competition played over Wednesday evenings in February and March. The players participating are Wayne Gray, Mark Barraclough, Mike Yardley, Geoff Farrant, Sam Sutherland, Martin Wallbank, Kim Marsters, Michelle Wallbank and Meagan Breedveld. A fantastic effort from the juniors to field 3 teams and matching entries numbers with the larger New Plymouth clubs.

## Club News

The Summit Refrigeration Bowls3five tournament was a great success with a full green of 16 teams. The event was a real melting pot with social bowlers, club bowlers, and a sprinkling of interclub teams all enjoying a great day on the green, the trio of Steve Muller, Aidan Zittersteijn and Rod Smith taking line honours.

The MJ Marine Services sponsored LegAsea Community bowls has concluded with Jim Priest taking out 1st prize, followed by Roy Phillips in 2nd position. Allan Bridgeman and Rex Wright finished equal 3rd with Meagan Breedveld, Wayne Gray and Geoff Farrant finishing equal 4th. Recognition goes to sponsor Barry Watkins and if anyone would like to book a fishing charter, please give Barry a call 02102228808. Support those who support local.



Photo caption: Sandra Zittersteijn, Meagan Breedveld, Norma Nelio, Janice Radich, Michelle Wallbank, Kim Marsters

## Twilight Bowls

On the back of the great success last year the club is continuing with a Twilight Bowls concept/model which will be played over three Friday evenings 20th, 27th February and 6th March 2026 starting at 5.45 pm. The concept is to encourage local businesses and non-bowlers from Ōākura and surrounding communities to enjoy a fast-paced bowls format in a relaxed and social setting. The format will be 2 x 45-minute games each evening with an entry fee of \$5 per person per night. Teams can be made up from businesses, sporting clubs, families or just three mates or friends with one full playing bowler per team. A full bar will be available with a complimentary sausage sizzle each night. Great prizes will be awarded each night, with the champion team and trophy winners announced on the 6th March.

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**2026 Enrolments Now Open**

Green School New Zealand's High School Diploma (Advanced) was recently accepted for University Entrance by Universities New Zealand - Te Pōkai Tara.

www.greenschool.nz @greenschoolnz

The tournament will be sponsored by Team Baas from First National Collective Real Estate and entries are limited to 16 teams, so get in early and start organising your team. For further information or to confirm your entry contact Steve Muller - 0211695863.

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# What's Happening at NPOB Surf Lifesaving Club

## Summer at the Beach

As the summer season rolls on, the NPOB Surf Lifesaving Club is buzzing with activity—both on the sand and back at the clubhouse. Whether you're keen to enjoy the beach safely, connect with friends, or simply unwind on a Sunday afternoon, there's plenty happening for everyone.

## Volunteer Lifeguard Patrols

Our dedicated volunteer lifeguards are on the beach every Saturday and Sunday from 1pm–5pm, continuing right through to 9 March. Weekday regional patrols are also underway, running Monday to Friday from 4pm–7pm until 20 February.

These patrols are an essential part of keeping our coastline safe, and we're grateful for the commitment of every lifeguard who gives their time to protect our community.

## Sunday Sips

A favourite summer ritual, Sunday Sips continues to draw a relaxed crowd each week. From 4:30pm every Sunday, the bar is open and our

Oceans crew fires up the BBQ—perfect for an easy dinner and a chance to catch up with friends while enjoying the evening sun.

## Stay Connected or Get Involved

Thinking about joining the club or need more information?

For membership or general enquiries, email npobsurfclub@xtra.co.nz.

You can also stay up to date with events, patrols, and club news by following our new Facebook page: "NPOB Surf Lifesaving Club Oakura."

## Celebrating Vaughan

The club warmly invites the community to come together as we remember and celebrate Vaughan, one year on from his passing. Friends, family, club members, and the wider community are all welcome. Sunday, 8 February at 4:30pm.



## Summer is on at the hub!

Cricket is in full swing, athletics will be starting soon and pre-season for our winter codes will soon get underway.

With new shade sails about to be installed on the patio, the Rivermouth Hub is also the place to bring friends and family to enjoy our Sunny Sundays from 4pm – just look for the big blue flag flying at the Corbett Park gates that says the HUB IS OPEN for food and refreshments.

Here is some of what happening with the clubs that are the Rivermouth Hub.

**TIP-OFF TIME COMING SOON!**  
**Kaitake Basketball Club is calling!**

Get ready to lace up those kicks and hit the court! Kaitake Basketball Club is eager to grow and we want YOU to be part of the action! We're a newly formed club under the Kaitake Community Sports Hub, already making waves in the New Plymouth Basketball League with our women's and men's teams.

JOIN THE CLUB!  
Become part of a vibrant community of ballers, playing Tuesday or Wednesday nights during the months April to September, and help us grow the club!

## NO EXPERIENCE NECESSARY!

There is a mix of all skills and ages and grades to suit. Whether you're a seasoned player or a curious newcomer, we want to hear from you!

## REGISTER YOUR INTEREST NOW!

Let us know if you're keen, or kinda keen, and help us gauge the level of interest. No commitment required yet – just email Jennie Jennie@hallofdesign.co.nz or Toby tobyshaney@gmail.com to find out more or register your interest.

## WANT TO FORM YOUR OWN TEAM?

No worries, just get in contact and we will go from there!



## Happy New Year from Kaitake FC!

We're excited to welcome everyone into another great season and can't wait to see our players, supporters, and whānau back on the field! We're also proud to announce our new Club President, Emily Faragasso, who becomes Kaitake FC's first female president. We're thrilled to have Emily leading the club into the future and look forward to a positive and successful season ahead.

Kaitake FC is a positive, inclusive, community-focused football club and welcomes all former and new men's, women's, and juniors (aged 9-15) players.

We hope to enter the following teams into competitions this year:

- Men's Competitive Team
- Men's Reserve Team (Division 3)
- Men's Masters Team (35+)
- Women's Competitive Team (14+)
- Juniors teams (players aged 9-15)
- Girls U13 Central Development League team
- Girls and Boys Central Development League Pre-Academy teams (aged 9-12)

We are on the search for a new men's first team coach and are actively recruiting players for a men's reserve team. We are also on the search for a Junior Co-ordinator to help organise our juniors. Finally, we're always

looking for keen parents to volunteer as coaches, managers, or in other supporting roles. Head over to kaitakefc.co.nz to join the 2026 season! Whether you're experienced or brand new, a player, parent, or volunteer, we want you!

## KEY PRE-SEASON DATES:

- Registrations open - mid-January
- Senior trainings start - from mid-February
- Juniors' casual kick-arounds - February
- Junior Muster - early March
- Junior Development/Skills sessions - March
- Senior Season start date - 11/12th April
- Junior Season start date - 2nd May

Big thanks to our sponsors Cunningham Construction, Webber Building, Webb Roofing, Five D Engineering and Suchy&Co Realty and please support these local businesses when possible.

Finally, make sure you follow us on social media to stay up to date with registrations, draws, training start dates, and club events throughout the season. Additional information can be found on our website at kaitakefc.co.nz or email info@kaitakefc.co.nz for all other queries.



## Join Kaitake Athletics

The club is excited to welcome athletes, families, and supporters for another fantastic season starting in March. Whether you participated last year or are new to the sport, this term promises plenty of opportunities to get active, improve skills and enjoy the vibrant community spirit.

## SEASON DATES:

March 1st - April 5th, 4pm - 5pm at the Hub.

Register at: [forms.gle/dYHEMdT5uVp41Nbx9](https://forms.gle/dYHEMdT5uVp41Nbx9)  
Cost is **\$30.00**

# OBITUARY

## Jennifer and David Jennings

Jennifer (21.09.1936 - 06.05.2019)  
David (06.03.1935 - 25.09.2025)

Mum was born in the Waitara Maternity hospital on 21st September 1936 and lived and grew up with her family on a farm on Princess Street in Waitara. She attended Waitara Primary School and Waitara High before attending Solway College in Masterton for the last three years of her schooling. Mum decided to use her skills to work in an office as a short-hand typist, with her first job being at Newton Kings in New Plymouth,

Dad was born in the New Plymouth nursing home on Morley Street on 6th March 1935. His family lived on a small farm in Marco for the first four or five years of his life. It was a tough time economically.

The family then moved into Whangamomona where his parents, Madeline and Ted, ran the Railway Station tearooms. Madeline cooked and prepared all of the food, her pies and ham sandwiches being in great demand. Dad and three of his siblings slept in the sleep-out as the family's living quarters were small. They used candles for light. It was very cold in the winter and very hot in the summer.

Dad started school at Whangamomona Primary School, a two-teacher school, when he was 5 years old.

In 1942, the family departed Whangamomona and moved to New Plymouth and lived in a rental property in Kitchener Terrace before purchasing a 5-acre property in Ngamotu Road. During this time Dad was educated at St. Joseph's school which had strong religious ethics. He enjoyed those days and received a very good education. He also played rugby and cricket.

In 1948 Dad was due to start secondary education at New Plymouth Boys' High School. However, due to a polio epidemic, school did not start until the end of March. He left school in May 1950 and joined the staff of Newton King Ltd commencing on a salary of £150 per annum. His first position was office boy in the Motor Department.

A few months later he was promoted to Office Boy in the main office. It was a very busy office, lots of women working in the ledger and typing rooms.

At the beginning of 1951 Dad was transferred to the Stock Dept. as the Booking Clerk. This was a very challenging job. He spent long hours in the saleyards under hot and dusty conditions.

In September 1953 Dad completed 10½ weeks Compulsory Military Training at Waiouru Military Camp, which he enjoyed.

On his return to Newton King Ltd he was promoted to Stock Agent working the Omata-Okato district. He was only 18 years of age, which



was very young to hold a position of such responsibility. It was a great opportunity for him - he had a car provided. He worked hard and was successful, which resulted in his being promoted to the Waitara district in June 1954.

Dad covered an area from Waitara to Tongaporutu. During the summer months he spent long hours at Sheep Fairs. Evenings were spent on the telephone organising the next day's schedule.

Young Jennifer Joll entered Dad's life at this time, as both Mum and Dad were working from the same Newton King office. In May 1957 they were married at St John's Church in Waitara.

Dad was also a keen sportsman. During his school years he was a very keen rugby player, playing lower grade rugby for the Star Rugby Club. In 1951 he became interested in cycling. He concentrated on road cycling, a sport he really excelled in, winning many events and club titles. He rode in the first 100 mile amateur Round the Mountain Road race and finished in 8th place. Unfortunately, a very promising cycling career was cut short when he contracted yellow jaundice in June 1953.

Once married, they lived with Mum's grandmother, Nana Joll, in Waitara until September of that year when they transferred to Awakino.

Mum and Dad stayed at Awakino for eight years and those were some of the happiest years of their lives. They were kept very busy, Dad with his stock agents' work and Jennifer being homemaker and mother to their three children who were born during this period.

In 1965 Dad and friends helped to resurrect the Tainui Rugby Club and he became coach. The team played in the Maniopotu sub-union of the King Country with reasonable success. Dad also played golf and was secretary for some years.

Dad resigned from Newton King Limited, and on August 1st 1965 we then moved to Ōākura, where he began working for Borthwicks as a Fat Stock Buyer.

Mum and Dad were fully involved in Ōākura life throughout the 60s and 70s with the organisation of and participation in many event such as lots of different fundraisers for the school, scouts/guides and sports



David Jennings outside the recently restored St John's at Omata - TOM Magazine 2003

groups, wine and cheese evenings, dances and balls. Many of these took place in the Hall which at that time was the centre of the Ōākura community. For us kids, the highlight of the year had to be the Fancy Dress Balls culminating in the grand marches. Mum was often responsible for the floral arrangements which adorned the hall for these events.

Mum and Dad attended St James Church in the village, followed by Sunday School for my brothers and me.

Both Mum and Dad were involved in supporting the school and took turns on the school committee. Mum worked in the office and looked after the gardens as well as helping organise many fundraisers.

Outside his work, Dad was involved in supporting the children in their interests. He became President of the Kaitake Rugby Club, where both Stephen and Ross played midget rugby. He coached various rugby teams for a number of years, took an interest in Scouts where he was elected President of the local group.

Dad was also a member of the Rotary Club of New Plymouth West, where he served a term as President.

After eight years with Borthwicks, Dad was offered the position as Real Estate Manager for Newton King Limited covering the North Taranaki area and, although he enjoyed the livestock industry very much, he realised it was time for a change as numerous clients were converting their farms from drystock to dairy. After a lot of soul searching, he decided to accept this challenging position.

Mum and Dad purchased our property in Ōmata and sold the Ōākura property, moving at the end of May 1974.

In 2024 we celebrated 50 years there. Dad farmed the land with beef and sheep and this gave him a lot of enjoyment, as he has always liked being involved with livestock. All of the family were involved in the stock work and caring for the land.

Soon after arriving at Ōmata, Dad devoted his spare time to studying for his Real Estate Licence, which was a shock to the system as he hadn't studied for so long. After he qualified as MREINZ, he opened David Jennings Real Estate in New Plymouth. Dad took an active interest in the Institute affairs, served a term as President of the Taranaki District and was later appointed as the delegate to the Annual Conference of the NZ Institute where he was elected to the Council of the NZ Institute and served for four years.

Mum supported my brothers and me in all of our endeavours. She set up a successful gardening business with her friend Shirley Smith, which was always in great demand due to their horticultural knowledge. Mum also volunteered at Te Rangimarie Hospice for 25 years as a housekeeper.

Dad was involved in coaching the Spotswood College 1st XV for five years. He also served on

the New Plymouth High School Board while we were all at Spotswood College. Both Mum and Dad contributed to the school's PTA.

Late 1990s, Dad sold his business and began playing more golf. He served two terms as President of the Kaitake Golf Club. He also mowed the lawns at St John's Church, Ōmata and arranged for the hedges to be trimmed and general maintenance to be carried out. Mum and Dad both attended St John's at this time.

Another interest of Mum and Dad's was the Probos Club. They both joined the Ōākura Club, were both on the committee and Dad had one term as president.

Once Mum got ill, Dad devoted his time to caring for her. It was admirable how he softened, learned to cook delicious meals and put mum's needs first. It was an impressive example of 'in sickness and in health'.

Many people will know that dad was quite the rugby addict. Rugby has given him a huge amount of pleasure. As Dad's health started to fail, he still thoroughly enjoyed watching every super game, every test and every NPC match. His love of Taranaki Rugby ran very deep.

Dad had an incredible memory. We always knew with his passing vast amounts of knowledge would also depart, particularly his knowledge of people, families and connections. His wealth of knowledge of rural Taranaki families was impressive. Just about any local person he met he could tell them something about their family.

During their 60 years of living in Ōākura/Ōmata, Mum and Dad made many life-long friends and leave a long-lasting imprint on the community due to their many contributions to life in this area over many decades.

By Kim, Stephen, Ross

## TOP TOOTH TIPS: When an Accident Happens.

Hi everyone, I am a Hawera dentist, president of the Taranaki NZ Dental Association.

Welcoming in 2026, as dentists, we see those tips and spills at the skate park and on the surfboard! It can be immensely distressing as a parent to see your child with a broken tooth or blood in their mouth. So triaging as a parent.. head injury first and foremost. If in doubt go to ED. Remember, concussion can be delayed.

Management of teeth that have been traumatised - see your dentist immediately. If the accident happens over the weekend, phone the hospital to see the emergency dentist.

A tooth that has been knocked out of the mouth - this is called avulsion. Hold the tooth by the crown (try to avoid touching the root) and put the tooth into a glass of milk. See your dentist within that golden hour.

A broken tooth - if you can locate the piece then bring it along with you to the dentist. Sometimes the tooth fragment can be glued back on!

Stay safe over Summer!

Dr Julie Martin BDS  
President Taranaki NZ Dental Association

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A winner was selected for the Judge's Choice Prize

Donna Dinsdale for 'Pakanga II - The Quiet That Follows'.

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## Graduating Class of 2025

Best wishes to all our graduating Year 8 students. We will miss you all and look forward to hearing of your future achievements at High School and beyond!

## Congratulations to our 2025 Graduate Cup Winners

From left:

- Home and School Cup for Sporting Excellence - Riley-Jean House and Piper Johnson
- Board of Trustees' Cup for Academic Excellence - Piper Johnson
- Staff Cup for Responsibility - Bella Vincent
- Ōmata School Cup for Environmental Action Kaitiaki Taiao - Myah Fahey
- Community Cup for Arts and Culture - Blake Williams
- Principal's Cup for Leadership - Blake Williams

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## Want to Know More About E-foiling?

Here is one local's experience becoming an e-foiler. Luzia Andrews talked to me about how and why she wanted to give the sport a go, and then did it.

Luzia, what's your description of an e-foil?

An e-foil is an electric hydrofoil surfboard which has an underwater mast, underwater wings and a propeller which is powered by a rechargeable battery. This propeller powers the board to move through the water, controlled by a handheld wireless remote that syncs with the board via Bluetooth. Essentially this wing works like an airplane wing, creating lift as water flows over it.

How did you get interested in e-foils?

I watched a YouTube video on e-foiling and decided it was something I would love to try. I wanted to feel that liberating and exhilarating sensation of flying or gliding silently above the water. Then I realised I needed to make it happen in a hurry, before I get too old.

This was something new, but had you done anything like it before?

Many, many, many years ago, windsurfing at beginners level. I did buy a paddle board a year ago. Initially I was considering wing foiling as I love the feel of wind power, but decided e-foiling at my age would be quicker and easier to learn.

What did you do next?

I started researching online as to where I could buy this equipment or have a lesson or two. I discovered Adrenaline Valley in Raglan. Upon arriving at Raglan the instructor assured my husband that he would have me foiling within the hour and sure enough that did happen. I did get one serious reprimand though, "That is NOT Raglan style" when I was tiring of climbing back onto the board and sort of knee boarded for a bit. Adrenaline Valley has the exact board and set up for sale on which the lessons are performed. This made it very easy to decide that the fit was right.

I had a look at their Facebook Page. It says, "Ever dreamed of floating above the water with total control? That's e-foiling! this is the most futuristic way to ride."

It also says, "Once you try it, you'll be hooked." Do you agree?

I absolutely agree! And it would be so cool to see a few more people, and especially more women, out there joining in with this form of exercise and fun.

By Elayne Kessler

## Wishing you all a happy and prosperous 2026.

Kerry, Mike, Teresa, Paul and Ewen (the Kaitake Community Board)

After a couple of weeks enjoying family catchups at the beach, the weather had us all rushing home to deal with the clean up after the storms. That lightning storm was certainly something to experience - I hope everyone managed to get through without too much damage.

Ewen Darling is our newest elected member, and his input is highly valued. His profile will be included in next month's Ōākura Post.

As a wrap up of last year, several projects have now been finalised with good results. Some of these include: the installation of the traffic safety mirror on Dover Road; identification of the preferred site for the Shearer Reserve community accessible BBQ area; the Wairau Road footpath build and upgrade; the opening of the Whenuariki bridge and headland walkway at Ahu Ahu Road; the upgrade and maintenance work in Matekai Park; grading and metalling of Weld Road beach carpark prior to Christmas; and a final response and action regarding the yellow "no parking" lines 6 metres from Hau Lane on Dixon Street at the SH 45 intersection; and several others.

As the year starts to ramp up, so too does the NPDC. Mayor Max has encouraged all community boards to talk, listen and report back to Council on what the community is saying and needing. I encourage you to have your say - contact us directly, make a submission or come along at the monthly meeting.

To have your say at the meeting, please contact us prior to the meeting so we can schedule you in. It is helpful if you can bullet-point your discussion as we try to keep to a five minute per speaker timeframe.

The next Kaitake Community Board meeting is scheduled for 11am, 9th February 2026 at the Corbett Park Sports Hub. We already have a couple of items on the table, including a request for funding of a dog proof fence at Corbett Park to protect the native grey faced petrel / Ōi / titi from dog attacks. Dr Emily Roberts has asked to speak at the meeting. She will explain the submission and be available for questions after her talk.

I look forward to working with community, Council and the Kaitake Community Board team over this next term. I'm confident that, together, we can continue to provide the Kaitake community with positive, inclusive, democratic representation to local government.

Democracy works best when power remains close enough to be argued with.

Mike Anderson - KCB Chair



Kerry Vosseler



Mike Anderson



Paul Lobb



Teresa Goodin



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## It's been a busy start to the season for the Ōākura Juniors.

Representing the club in Friday Night Interclub, we have had one team in Youth A grade, two teams in Youth B grade and one Green Grade team for the younger ones. We haven't had four teams for a while so this shows great depth in the club and its coaching programme with Monika and Blitz. I think a few mums and dads have put the mahi in too during the off season! Well done to the 20 odd players who are regularly involved. We look like we may have enough for another team for term one so if anybody is interested, please reach out to our Junior Convenors Gavin Stanley and Rachel Volcani to find out what's involved and to see where you best fit.

At the end of October, a select group of club members, Noah Stanley, Fraser Brown, Charlie Le Prou and Mathew Moore, all represented Ōākura School in the Taranaki Primary and Intermediate Champs. Congratulations to both Noah Stanley (intermediate) and Fraser Brown (primary) who battled through their draws to reach their respective finals, only to fall at the last hurdle. As runner ups in the region they both had the honour of representing Taranaki at the Central Schools event in Palmerston North. This event was unfortunately then rained off (twice) in what seemed to be the only tennis rained off so far this season....

In December our Juniors were well represented in a Taranaki vs Manawatu regional fixture (minus the rain) in Palmerston North. In the end Manawatu won comfortably, but congratulations to Ana Shlosberg, Noah Stanley, Fraser Brown, Charlie Le Prou and Julie Shlosberg for having the chance to represent the province.

Finally, to finish the year a number of our juniors participated in the 2025 Tier 3 Taranaki Open Junior and Senior- CMK NZ Lawn Tennis Championships on the grass in Hawera. A unique, fun and often challenging event on the grass, it was awesome to see all the Ōākura players there together and performing well. Congrats to Noah Stanley who won the Under 12 Doubles, Fraser Brown who was runner up in the Under 10 Boys Singles and Ana Shlosberg who was runner up in the U14 Girls. Noah and Ana also combined in the Adults Social Mixed doubles, winning that division against some combos with very strong players. It's great to see some of our junior interclub doubles combinations stepping up in other competitions.

Coming up in Feb we also expect strong Ōākura representation in the annual quadrangular versus Manawatu, Eastern and Wairarapa. Look out for those results in the next issue.

Happy hitting!



**KAITAKE NETBALL CLUB- AGM**

Sunday, 1 February 2026  
3:00pm  
Oakura Tennis Club

Join us as we look ahead to another great year of netball in our community. We would love to see you there.

**ALL WELCOME.**

**Morning Talk Coffee Group**  
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## David Macleod MP for New Plymouth

Welcome to February 2026, Ōākura. After what I hope was a restful holiday period with plenty of swims at that warm beach of yours, we're back to work, back to school, and back to Parliament for me.

It's promising to be a big year by all accounts, and I'm going to be especially busy. Along with my role as the Chairperson of the Māori Affairs Select Committee, I have been appointed to the Environment Select Committee which will soon hear submissions on the Planning Bill and the Natural Environment Bill set to replace the RMA. I'm also excited to have been asked to be the Second Spokesperson for Simon Watts on his Energy portfolio, which is a complex and fast-moving area, and one that I am particularly interested in given Taranaki's role in the industry and my knowledge of it.

Of course, it's also the third year of this National government, and an election year. When Prime Minister Christopher Luxon gave his State of the Nation speech last month, it was clear to me that his intention is to stay the course the government has spent the last two years setting. We've been focused on getting the fundamentals right: rebuilding the economy by stopping wasteful spending; fixing the basics in education by banning cellphones in classrooms, mandating an hour a day each of English and maths, and scrapping NCEA; overhauling and replacing the RMA to cut the red tape that gets in the way of progress; banning gang patches, harsher sentencing for criminals and more police on the beat; and upping Kiwisaver contributions for employees and employers to 4 per cent by 2028.

david.macleodmp@parliament.govt.nz  
(06) 759 2580  
37 Gill Street, New Plymouth

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



Authorised by David MacLeod, Parliament Buildings, Wgtn.



These are not small changes, and all take time to implement and pay off. But we're starting to see it work. Inflation has fallen, interest rates are far below where they were two years ago, new entrants are doing better at school, there is less violent crime and growing business confidence. By the time the election rolls around on November 7, I think we'll be seeing even more solid proof these policies are working and getting New Zealand truly back on track.

Cheers, David







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# Stories of the Past

## OMATA SCHOOL MEMORIES 1972-1984.

### Heather Jury, former teacher and parent.

In 1972 the school had four classrooms with three teachers, Mrs Margaret Pepper - infants, me with standards one and two, Mr Pat Anderson with standards three and four. Mrs Marion Paynter replaced Mrs Pepper in 1975. Later, Principals were Mrs Madge Cathro followed by Mr Rory O'Rourke. Jocelyn Wood was an important member of the staff as School Secretary/Teacher Aid.

The 'middle' room was extended into an activities room, making space for the initial library. Mrs Paynter, Mrs Wood and many mothers spent hours preparing and cataloguing books. Mrs Worn, Mrs Chilcott and helpers came for half an hour each week for religious studies. Mrs Worn retired after many years teaching two generations of Omata children.

Keeping the school rooms swept and clean was carefully done by Maurice and May Heatley. I remember the children were very impressed by May who would let Wetas walk up her hands and arms to show the children not to be scared of them!

The school was very much the focal point for the community. The Omata Store was in business opposite the entrance, later to cease following a fire in August 1973. The Omata Butchery (Reg. Mace) had already closed. The Hurford Road Dairy Factory was still functioning.

I came to the school after teaching in Pungarehu, Te Kiri, Omata (earlier) and Bell Block and was immediately impressed by the support and involvement of Omata parents and community. People were readily recruited for the Home and School Committees. Attendance for functions and meetings was almost 100%. This support made it a pleasure to be part of the 'team'.

The children came to my room well on the way to becoming independent readers. My function was to further these skills and develop written language, and interest them in their local environment, including the people who help us within our community. To do this, programmes were based on topics/visits/visitors, following which children were motivated to practice the 3 R's of reading, writing and arithmetic.

Over the years we walked to Jean Woods, Haywards and Coxheads to see houses built, Brenda Ryans to see the new baby (Dion), and John Matthews to learn about hang gliders and

his collections of art and sculptures. We visited Hermans poultry farm, the Omata Sawmill, and the Sprangers to see goats milked.

We learned First Aid from Chris Withers, and about early history of Omata, fossils and fire engines from Willie and Jocelyn Wood.

Pools, creeks, trees and the Maori Pa were visited on Keith and Annette Sanger's farm. Aileen Benton visited to show us the skills of



swinging a Poi and Stick games. A walk was made to Lorraine and Milton Benton's farm to see where Parson Brown's house in 1860 was situated and hear related history of early times. Visits further afield included the airport, McKechnies factory at Bell Block, and Fun Ho Toy Factory in Inglewood, where the children were allowed to select a toy. At Hurford Rd Dairy Factory they were each given a butter wrapper. An unusual visit was to Max and Carole Soles's farm at Warea to learn about eel farming. I remember the tremendous support from parents, particularly mothers during these trips.

The introduction of teaching aids such as tape recorder stations with headphones, videos and computers brought a new age of learning. These added much to enrich teaching each student and provide group experiences.

I sometimes brought a pair of breeding budgies to school and there was always excitement with the children learning about pets, and having tasks to look after the needs of the budgies -feeding them, cleaning their house and watching the arrival of eggs and then the development of the chicks. I remember one lad in his excitement to tell me the budgie had hatched, tripping on the steps, cutting his chin and requiring stitches!

Memorable school functions included the Pet Days where Ian Kurth, Keith Robertson, Ron Frances, and other Committee members would

act as judges. The final test for the lambs and dogs was to come when called. Moments of pleasure and frustration would follow, much to the amusement of the onlookers.

One Halloween night function, Mrs Cathro and the class had rigged a 'Mystery House'(Polythene over the climbing frame) decorated inside with symbols and all sorts of interesting slippery objects dangling. It was highly successful in the dark, with the children lining up and screaming with joy when emerging the other side to line up again.

Special school functions included a Fancy Dress evening with folk dancing and a concert every year. In earlier years it was held in the Hurford Road hall, and later years in the Ngamotu Road hall. I had taught a number of children to play the ukulele to accompany our songs so that was also memorable.

Another memorable occasion was the whole school doing aerobics, teachers also, with Principal Rory O'Rourke as leader and suitable music blaring forth.

In the latter years, particularly under the leadership of Madge Cathro and Rory O'Rourke, the whole school often worked on a theme, combining talents, and learning and sharing experiences. Rory, and his class competed in a National TV Video competition with great success. Exciting and memorable times for the children at that time. Rory had even greater success at Oakura School.

During a storm we had a large gum tree fall in the playground, and the men arranged it to act as a base for the Adventure Playground. It provided fun for many years. The bush was out of bounds generally but was used on special occasions for Nature Studies after the fathers had made a safe track to keep bush and children safe.

These are just some of the special memories of a very special school.

Heather Jury

### 1972 SCHOOL PHOTO

**Back Row:** Heather Jury, Jennifer Buckley, Christine King, Maria Tanner, Gaywyne Benton, Kerryn Ryan, Stephen Berridge, Geoffrey Nairn, David Mabbott, Mark Sanger. **Middle Row:** Wendy Foster, David Shotter, Andrew Hume, Kevin Foster, Errol Nairn, Stephen Robertson, Shane Benton, Debra Tanner, Sheryl Jury. **Bottom Row:** Shona Hayes, Sharon Heatley, Robert Burnett?, Martin Kurtz, Brendon Benton, Tony Saywell, John Pardington, Jocelyn Horsfal.

## TOP Activities

### Ōākura

**Ōākura Hall Bookings**  
Vicky Jury 027 215 2465

**Adult Ballet Class** - Friday 8:45am - 10 am. Register your interest for adult tap class. Jane 027 6940933 or janeroseman@xtra.co.nz. (also classes at Dance Centre, New Plymouth - all ages and levels in ballet, tap, contemporary, jazz, ballroom).

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

**Oakura Bowling Club Mahjong Group**  
We meet each Monday from 1pm at the club. All welcome including beginners. For more information contact Heather 021617894

**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

**Gym Classes** - Fun & friendly community circuit training sessions at The Well Nest gym Tue 5:20pm & Fri 9:30am. Tempofit.org/gym Hayden - 0274835942

**Indoor Bowls**  
Enquiries to Marvin Clough 752 7531

**JKA Karate** - Tues 5.30-7pm, Thurs 6-7.30pm. Jim Hoskin 022 601 3070.

**Justice of the Peace** - Lynn, Anne, John, Krys. Ōākura Library Thurs 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 Classe** - 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 - Tues & Thurs 9-11am, Wed 7.30-9pm, 10am-12pm most Saturdays. 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 10am, Every week. Sunday School Every 2nd and 4th Sunday 9am Breakfast club & 10am Sunday School. stjamesoakura@gmail.com

**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

**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: taranakitachichuan@gmail.com

### 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 Bowling Club** - Friday Twilight Bowls during Daylight Saving, all welcome. Club opens 5:30pm, starts 6pm. Supper \$6. Sandra 0274662129

**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.

**St. Patrick's Catholic Church** - Saturday Vigil Mass @ 6pm. 36 Cumming Street.

**St. Paul's** - Sunday Service 10am 1st and 2nd Worship Service. 3rd Sunday 10am - Communion Service, 4th Sunday at 7.00pm. Open church for silent reflection - Pew for You, 3rd Wednesday of each month

**Te Ruru Market** - Okato Community Market - Crafters, Growers, Makers. Every Wed. Hempton Hall Okato 4-5:30pm.

**Ōkato Tennis Club** okatotennis@gmail.com

## TOP Information

### The Ōākura Post

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