

the Ōākura Post

OCTOBER 2026



LOOKING SHARP ON THE FIELD.

Page 12.

BBQ at the Beach

Its not quite BBQ weather yet but Ōākura is the proud owner of a purpose built public use BBQ situated at the skate park on the beach front. Thanks to the Kaitake Community Board and the NPDC for their support of this venture. I'm sure it will be well used.

Morning Talk makes generous donation to the NPOB Surf Club

Every Thursday this group meets at the surf club for a relaxed chat and cuppa, with a koha jar for donating to the Surf Club who generously allow venue use at no charge. Recently they were able to donate \$510.00 to the Club. What a great bunch of community spirited people they are. Anyone is welcome to join in and there's no pressure to attend every week. It's a nice way to get in touch with other locals and enjoy each other's company.

La Mer plays at The Centuria Garden Festival

Late October will see the commencement of the garden festivals -Taranaki Fringe Garden Festival, Sustainable Trails, Backyards, Builds and Farms, and the Centuria Garden Festival.

Featuring at three of the gardens this year, La Mer, an ensemble of musicians includes local vocalist and classical/acoustic guitarist -Dominique Blatti, who sings all in French- gypsy style swing classics. The other local in the group is Malcolm Alder on bass. They have been together for around four years and in that time have played at numerous venues around the country. Pack up a picnic and travel to

one of the gardens -you will only need to pay the garden entry fee to enjoy this top notch performance. Malcolm tells me they have a repertoire of 40-50 songs so should be well worth a listen. If you need more information about the garden festivals visit:

www.taranakigardens.co.nz
www.gardenfestnz.co.nz
sustainabletrails.org.nz

or pick up brochures from the I Site or any Puke Ariki library, branch.

Koru on Koru Art Gallery and Garden

Early in the 2020's Fay Looney photographer extended an invitation to local and NZ artists to join her in exhibiting in her home studio and included sculptors to install works in the large historical garden during the Taranaki Garden Festival. This continues to attract great interest, and a feature of many Ōākura and Taranaki Arts trails.

This year work by Nathan Hull and his wife Destine will be included, along with Fay's large works on aluminium suitable for outdoor hanging, Linda McFetridge, and Darcy Nicholas.

Dawn Cafe in the village will also host some works and information.



Taranaki Sustainable Trails

This year Taranaki Sustainable Trails includes six properties in our area. Tucked behind garden gates, up country roads, and overlooking the beach these locals are on a journey to grow more and buy less. From Hurford Road down to Leith Road there is a chance to explore productive gardens, sustainable homes, food-growing systems and farmland restoration, all close to home. You'll get the chance to have a look, have a chat, and pick up ideas to take back to your own whare.

At Glassy Gardener, Richard and Richelle's one-acre coastal property makes the most of its sheltered microclimate, with abundant vegetables, herbs, fruit trees and subtropical plants alongside native planting and recycled-glass sculptures. Their glass studio and gallery will also be open to visitors. It's new to the Backyards Trail — and also features on the Arts Trail.

Returning properties Fernhill and Pouakai Farm show two different approaches to productive lifestyle blocks. At Fernhill, Tom and Sara have developed food forests, veggie gardens, fruit trees and a large subtropical glasshouse.

At Pouakai Farm, Sam and Jenaya have transformed two acres once used for maize cropping into a diverse market-garden style food system, growing food across their beds, recycled material greenhouse and orchard.

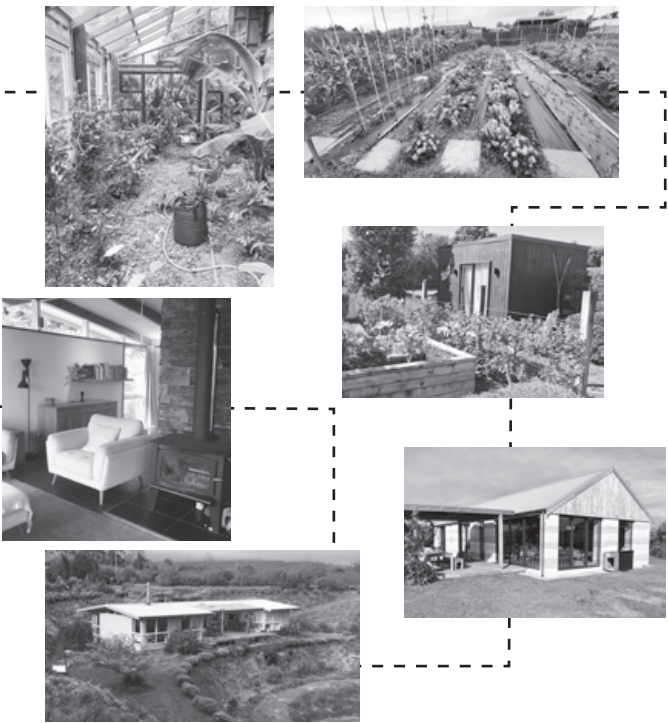
On the Builds Trail, the much-loved AhuAhu returns. Its rammed-earth home demonstrates passive design and energy-efficient building, while the property's two-hectare gully restoration project shows how six years of work from the three families has transformed previously grazed land into native habitat.

New to the Builds Trail, Dan Wooley takes you through the family home, Greenbridge Renovation, which sits in a north-facing thermal belt and uses passive solar design to make the most of its site. The largely self-built home incorporates recycled materials, wool and recycled-polyester insulation, solar panels, rainwater harvesting and an environmental wastewater system.

Speaking of experts, Kath Irvine of Edible Backyard fame, and Bena Denton, co-founder of Greenbridge, will share their experience in Fruit Trees: Bountiful & Healthy. The session covers shaping productive trees, spring training, summer pruning and building healthy orchard soil.

So, whether you're curious about what your neighbours are growing, planning a build or simply looking for ideas to take home, there's plenty to discover around Ōākura this November.

Taranaki Sustainable Trails Backyards, Builds & Farms run from 30 Oct - 8 Nov / 9–15 November. Bookings and details are available through the Sustainable Trails website or visit your local library or iSite.



Ōākura Residents Have Their Say

Cam

Fully support the idea of a 40km speed limit. I suggest gradually dropping the limit 80 - 60 - 40 from the top of the hill New Plymouth side to Corbett Park and through the village. There's so much parking along both sides of the road and pedestrian traffic that a restricted speed zone makes great sense - and improves safety.

A pedestrian crossing by Four Square, at the entrance to the shopping precinct, is a necessity. The indicative crossing is not safe: some drivers and pedestrians treat it as a crosswalk, but it's not clear, nor recognised as such. Painted white lines are definitive - universally recognised.

Ōākura needs an ATM. We're still a cash society and it's frustrating having to go to town to find a cash machine. Four Square is not a bank - never has been. There are quite a few businesses in the village, and I'm sure they'd welcome cash transactions. Surely there's a place in Ōākura where an ATM could be located.

Wendy Schofield

I absolutely agree with lowering the speed limit through the village to Corbett Park, and the idea of a proper pedestrian crossing around Four Square is a much safer option than what is in place now.

Rebecca Le Prou

I strongly support reducing the speed limit through Ōākura to 40 km/h. Slower traffic would make a significant difference to the safety of everyone who lives, works and visits the village, particularly around busy intersections and areas where children are walking or cycling.

I also fully support installing a pedestrian crossing near Four Square. Parked vehicles beside the pharmacy often block the view of approaching traffic, making it difficult to see and be seen when crossing. This is especially dangerous for families with prams, children on bikes and anyone with limited visibility. A clearly marked crossing would make this area much safer.

Finally, I would encourage every effort to bring an ATM back to the village. It's a real inconvenience having to drive into New Plymouth just to withdraw cash or buy petrol. Having access to cash locally is an important service for residents, visitors and local businesses, and I hope a solution can be found.

Mel Saunders

Completely agree with your views on the change in speed limit approaching Ōākura from both sides - these are easy places for confusion and accidents due to the cross

sections, as well as slowing cars upon entry into the village. A pedestrian crossing further back from the corner by Four Square would be great, perhaps outside the Bach, rather than right on the corner due to limited sight lines and cars approaching from multiple directions. I also feel an ATM is an important facility in a village the size of Ōākura, both for residents and the many summer folk who visit during the holiday season.

From text message

About the speed limit for Ōākura intersections, I feel I am going to die every time I cross the Wairau Rd intersection. Cars just do not slow down until they're at the solar speed sign going up the rise. It's scary.

The 50km sign needs to be right back by the substation, with some speed humps before the Wairau intersection.

The pedestrian crossing outside the hall is an issue. Coming out of the hall carpark turning right, you have to watch for pedestrians and traffic each way, and by the time you pull out you are right on the crossing. This is mainly a problem during school start and finish hours.

Cathy Ardern

I support lowering the speed limit to 40km when entering the village through to leaving it.

I'd also like to have an ATM installed again, as we find it very inconvenient without one.

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Community voices shaping what comes after the Rāhui

Over the past five months, people from across the western Taranaki coast have shared a clear vision for the future: healthy reefs, sustainable gathering, abundant kaimoana and a meaningful say in how the coast is cared for.

Through more than 20 meetings, workshops and engagement sessions with coastal communities, marae, pā and hapū, the Western Taranaki Rāhui Steering Committee has been listening to local knowledge, experiences and ideas about the future of our coastline.

People have shared historical knowledge, observations of environmental change and practical ideas for balancing protection with sustainable harvesting. Above all, the strength of participation reflects the deep connection our communities have with the coast.

"The message we've heard time and again is that people want healthy reefs, abundant kaimoana and a strong relationship between future generations and the coast. Community voices are helping shape what comes next."

The focus now turns to bringing these ideas together into a proposed mātaimai application and a broader relationship plan for the coast.



A mātaimai provides a framework for locally responsive management of customary and recreational fishing, giving communities an active role in protecting and sustaining local fisheries. Together with the relationship plan, it offers a community-led pathway for the long-term care and sustainable use of our coastal resources.

The next hui is an important opportunity to hear what has emerged from the engagement process, discuss the proposed direction of the mātaimai and help shape the next stage.

Upcoming Hui
Ōkato Domain, Ōkato
Sunday 8 November,
11.00am–2.00pm

Everyone with a connection to the coast is welcome and encouraged to attend and participate.

The journey that began with the rāhui is now moving into its next stage. Through local knowledge, collaboration and community leadership, we have an opportunity to help protect and sustain our coastline for generations to come.

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Proudly supporting Kaitake Junior Rugby this season is another way we stay connected to the local community and the people behind local business.

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Oakura Bowling and Social Club

Congratulation to the Ōākura bowlers who represented Taranaki in competitions played over the winter months. Craig Murray, Andrea Murray, Jim Quay and Alesha Quay in the junior and development squads, while Adam Collins, Kurt Smith and Tina Atkinson-Watt were selected at senior level.

Ōākura bowler Briar Atkinson has been selected alongside fellow coastal player Cameron Horo to represent New Zealand in the 2026 World Junior Bowls Championships to be held in December in Hong Kong. At the 2025 event held in Northern Ireland, Atkinson took home the silver in the Women's Singles, Horo bronze in the Men's Singles, and the duo won the Mixed Pairs discipline.

It's a silver medal for a trio of Ōākura dual members at the Bowls New Zealand National Champion of Champions Women's Triples. Briar Atkinson, Tina Atkinson-Watt and Jackie Moeahu, representing the green and gold of Paritutu, played great bowls but on the final end lost out to a strong team from Stoke 14-16. It was fantastic to see the ladies do so well.



Craig Murray, Steve Muller, Barry Watkins and Andrea Murray finished a well-deserved and gallant 3rd out of 32 teams in the Wanganui 2-day classic tournament played in August. Battling not only some very talented teams from all around NZ, the Murray foursome had to also contend with the wind, cold and rain and deservedly won 3 from 4 on the Sunday for a top 3 finish.

LegAsea Community Bowls

The Oakura Bowling and Social club is pleased to announce playing dates for the LegAsea community bowls tournament sponsored by Barry Watkins of MJ Marine Services (fishing charters). The dates are October 10, November 7, December 19 and January 9. The tournament is open to all playing members, non-bowlers and members, friends and family and the wider community. The beauty of the competition is that there is no

obligation or commitment to turn up each week. Just register by 12.30pm on the day and drawn teams will be selected.

Club Bowls

As well as the Friday afternoons rollups, the club is trialling a club day on selected Wednesday afternoons for all members who wish to play in an organised but social competition. October 28th will be the initial kick-off with play starting at 1.30pm. Format of the games will be decided on the day and new bowlers are most welcomed.

Women Bowls

On the back of last year's success, the club is eagerly looking forward to consolidating both the women's playing membership and playing programme in the upcoming 2026-2027 season. The club would love to hear from any ladies interested in joining as playing or social members. If anyone is keen to give this great game a go, please call Steve Muller on 0211695863 for further information.

The underarm bowler



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Kaitake FC – Back-to-Back Champions!

Kaitake F.C. Men's Masters team, the Webber Building HBs, won the league on Saturday 29th August, securing back-to-back league titles! The HBs triumphed in a hard-fought battle with NP Rangers 4-2 at the final whistle. We'd like to thank their sponsors Webber Building, The Rent Shop, Oakura Pharmacy, and Surf n Sip Oakura for all the support to make this a successful season!



Kaitake's Men's Champs team has finished its season, and the Ladies are currently in 3rd place with two games remaining in the season. Both the Masters and Women will have played in Cup and Plate Finals at Stadium Taranaki on the weekend of 12-13th September.

Before the Junior season wrapped up, Kaitake FC hosted our first 9th Grade tournament at Corbett Park. The day was a resounding success with 14 teams from Kaitake, NP Rangers, FC Western, Peringa, Waitara, and Moturoa participating. The Kaitake FC Moreporks brought home 1st Place with FC Western finishing as Runners Up after a thrilling win against NP Rangers in penalty kicks in the semi-finals. Thanks to Paul Cunningham and Andrew Lawson for organising and to all the

volunteers, coaches, players, and parents who made it an awesome day. Thanks also to KCSH for hosting the Prizegiving.

Thank you to all the players, parents, and coaches who made the 2026 season a success! For those keen to continue into the Spring, keep a look out for details for Spring sessions run by First Team Coach and Director of Football Billy Charlton.

Tsunami Kaitake Netball Club

Well, that's a wrap for our Winter NP Satellite Competition. Saturday 5th Sept was the last game and Kaitake had some fantastic results with Diamonds winning Section 1, Kererū winning Section 6 and Sparks winning the Youth grade Section 4. All teams had really strong seasons and the vibe amongst all teams and Club is strong. Each team has shown lots of support for their fellow Club teams and there was also lots of support from boyfriends, husbands, children and parents. Thank you to all of you - it really does help to hear positive cheer from the sideline. Final results were:

Senior

Section 1 - 1st Place - Kaitake Diamonds,
4th Place - Kaitake Tūi

Section 2 - 3rd= Place - Kaitake Woohoo

Section 6 - 1st Place = Kaitake Kererū

Youth

Section 1 - 2nd Place - Kaitake Electric

Section 4 - 1st Place - Kaitake Sparks

The closing tournament was held on the 12th Sept and we had three teams entered. This is always a fun day to play freely and without the pressure of competition and placings. Prizegiving was held on Sun 13th Sept at the Hub, leaving only the Taranaki Champs event to go in our 2026 calendar. By winning section 1, the Diamonds earned the right to compete against the winners of the Hawera Satellite competition and the Stratford Satellite competition. The winner of this tournament

enters the Premier grade. Let's hope this year is Kaitake's year.

Oakura Cricket Club – new Div 2 Team

Oakura Cricket Club is putting a new Division 2 team together and we're recruiting now! If you're keen to get back on the field, meet a great bunch of lads, and enjoy socially competitive Saturday cricket, we want you. New and returning players welcome — all skill levels fit in here. Message us on our Facebook Page or email Brett (b_cursons@hotmail.com) to join the squad and be part of the fun this season.

Celebrate with the Slacks

We have scored the Slacks for an END OF SEASON SHINDIG! It's going to be a great night at the Hub so gather your mates and celebrate the End of Winter with the Slacks. Tickets are \$30pp and include hot food. Doors open from 6pm. Limited tickets available and no door sales so GET IN QUICK and secure yours on this link: <https://www.kcsh.co.nz/viewform/527333>

Tee Up for a Great Day – KCSH Golf Day is Back.

KCSH Golf Day is the biggest fundraiser for the Kaitake Community Sports Hub. Every team entry helps keep these facilities in good shape and community sport close to home. Mark 6 November in the diary — KCSH Golf Day is on, and you're invited. It's a relaxed, fun day on the course with good people, a few prizes, and plenty of laughs. Grab your mates, your workmates, or your club crew and get a team together. It's a great day out for a great cause. Spaces are limited so don't leave it too late. Team Entry: \$200 for a team of 4. Hole Sponsorship: \$500 (includes a team entry plus on-course signage). Link: <https://www.sporty.co.nz/viewform/526314>

Cheers from the team at the Rivermouth Hub – your team!



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Kiwi and other native birds are thriving.

Spring is not just in the air, but here now! That means we are (hopefully) getting more of those amazing sunny days than those cold, rainy ones, and that reminds us of how lucky we are to live here. It also means that we are entering a crucial time for our native birds when a lot of them are breeding. Unfortunately, stoats, one of their main predators, are also birthing their young and soon the juveniles will leave the burrow. So, this is your friendly reminder to be sure to rebait and check your traps regularly over the next few months.

The Trust has been busy as usual over the winter months, checking traps and monitoring kiwi. Surprisingly, some volunteers have already started to catch a few stoats in late August/early September, which is earlier than normal.

We held our AGM back in July at Butlers' back bar and listened to several good speakers from DOC, Towards Predator-Free Taranaki, and Taranaki Kiwi Trust, who gave us an overview on what's been happening in the Kaitake Ranges and wider Ōākura community recently. In a nutshell, the Kaitake Ranges are coming back to life – kiwi are thriving, lots of other native birds are seen and heard including rifleman, kaka, and falcon.

Fortunately, and unfortunately, some of the kiwi are starting to spread beyond the bush and so new trap lines have been set in some areas just outside the bush, creating a buffer. More traps and trap lines mean that we needed more volunteers...and we've had over 25 new volunteers join us over the past few months!



Trappers come in all sizes. New trappers, 5 year old Remi Johnson (dressed as Spiderman) and one year old Kilian Johnson, stoked with their latest catch.

There are too many to name, but a huge thanks to all of you.

Our volunteers have done the hard/fun mahi out in the bush but are also busy spreading the word – the what and the why. We've created a few signs that explain our efforts to bring the Kaitake Ranges back to life, which you should see at a trailhead near you soon, and our Facebook page is starting to show new updates and posts (thanks Faye). As always, a huge thanks to all the unsung volunteers helping to bring the Kaitake Ranges back to life and for making our little part of the world something special.

Feedback from Thursday morning Talk group

Glenny and Bev tend to go 40kms because it is a busy town.

Jean agrees with a 40km limit starting at the top of Corbett Park hill- New Plymouth end.

Barb suggests speed humps - perhaps in rubber!

Regarding having a pedestrian crossing by the Four Square, all agree with a pedestrian but would like it moved closer to The Bach.

Hi, I'm Margaret Bryce, the Chiropractor who talks about subluxations.

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Beyond the Label An Introduction to Neurodivergence

Parenting can be hard at the best of times – and parenting a neurodivergent child can bring a particular kind of exhaustion that is difficult to explain unless you have lived it.

There may be constant battles over getting dressed, eating, going to school or bedtime. Emotional outbursts and meltdowns after a child has apparently managed perfectly well all day. Phone calls from school. The worry that you are getting it wrong, and the desperate wish that your child would just do something “normal” like other children. The isolation, guilt and frustration can be very real. And sometimes there is the heartbreaking feeling that you simply cannot reach the child you love so much, and you just don't know what to do.

Then comes the label: ADHD, autism, dyslexia, Tourette's or another form of neurodevelopmental difference.

For many families, diagnosis brings enormous relief. Suddenly there is a framework for understanding what has previously felt bewildering. But what exactly do we mean by neurodivergence?

The term describes people whose brains develop or function differently from what is considered typical. The idea of neurodiversity recognises that there is natural variation in how human brains process information, experience sensation, regulate attention and respond to the world.

But a diagnosis is only part of the story. Two children with the same diagnosis can have completely different strengths, difficulties and needs. And there are also children who experience significant differences in sensitivity, regulation or processing without having a formal diagnosis.

And this is where I want this series to begin: beyond the label.

Rather than asking only, “What is the diagnosis?”, I want to explore what is happening for this particular child? What are they experiencing in their nervous system and body? What happens at school, at home, around food, sleep, relationships and sensory demands? And what can we change in the environment around them that might make an extraordinary difference?

A brain that struggles in one environment isn't necessarily a deficient brain. Sometimes, understanding the child from the inside can change what becomes possible.

Mira Watson (mirawatson.com)

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Oakura Fire Brigade FIRE & SCAREMERCY

Halloween is back at the Ōākura Fire Station!

After two mega years, we're looking forward to welcoming the community back for some Halloween fun, plenty of treats and a chance to connect with your local brigade in a not so-scary setting. Start your trick-or-treating at the station and come along in your best costume.

There'll be:

A sausage sizzle, Treats, Spooky surprises
Fire trucks, Plenty of Halloween fun
Saturday 31 October, 4:30–6:30pm
At the Ōākura Fire Station!

Bring the kids and come say hello
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You bring the little monsters.

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Reviving the Dead or Endangering the Living?

The hidden consequences of de-extinction

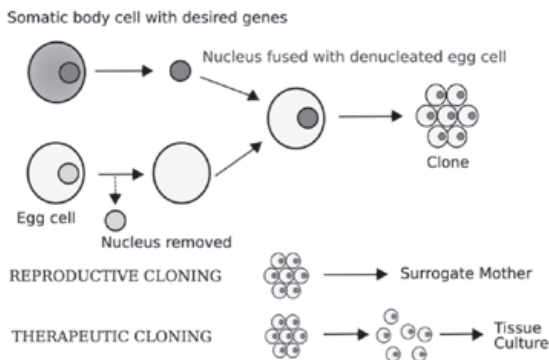
De-extinction for some people is an excellent idea that should definitely be pursued but are we really creating a stable future for the world, if we're putting it at risk. Bringing back species that nobody alive has seen before is not a safe nor a smart option for the generations to come. De-extinction is not an efficient way to help the ecosystem as it could just cause it to become unbalanced and disrupted, possibly even more animals could end up extinct. Shouldn't everyone in the world be more focused on the currently endangered species rather than dwelling on the extinct ones? De-extinction should not be pursued for multiple reasons; it will be detrimental to the ecosystem and is overall a foolish idea.

What is de-extinction and how does it work?

De-extinction, also known as resurrection biology, is a form of science that reverses plants and animals from extinction. It has also been used to clone endangered species in the hope that they won't die out. Many scientists are working on bringing back species that are extinct. Right now to do this you would have to use one of the three methods called cloning, genetic engineering and selective back-breeding.

Cloning (SCNT)

Cloning is the process of creating a new organism by taking DNA from a species to make a duplicate. This is called Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer (SCNT); it makes a very precise genetic copy of the animal. The first step of this process is to retrieve a somatic cell from the species you are trying to clone but if the species was extinct it would be different. You would have to have a perfectly preserved somatic cell which is extremely rare for extinct species. The most common part of the organism to get a perfectly preserved somatic cell is normally the bones or the teeth, preferably the teeth, because teeth are hard; it usually keeps the soft tissue inside safe from damage. The other cell you need for cloning is the egg cell. The egg cell's natural DNA is removed and replaced with extinct animal DNA, the somatic cell is then inserted into the egg cell into the surrogate mother of the species closest living relatives.



Genetic engineering

Genetic engineering is another process you can use to recreate or edit a species. For example, scientists might want to change a horse from brown to white. To do this, scientists will find the DNA that controls the colour of the horse then they will edit it and change it to white. Another way to do genetic engineering is to take segments of the DNA you are wishing to duplicate and to change the species, adding DNA works too. Scientists sometimes add the DNA of the creature's traits that they are trying to replicate.

Back-breeding

Back breeding or selective breeding is a way to alter species over time. Some scientists are trying to bring the aurochs back by the process of back breeding. Aurochs were a European species that looked like a bull. The process of back breeding means choosing two similar living organisms that have the traits and part of the DNA of the animal you are

trying to duplicate, then breeding them and then repeating. Over time you will see the traits and similarity that you were aiming for.

The planet has changed

There are many possible risks in de-extinction. One of the main ones is the disruption it could cause to the ecosystem. Bringing back species that lived thousands of years ago would be a foolish decision because they would not know how to adapt. Say scientists brought back a woolly mammoth. A woolly mammoth ate 200kg per day of grass. Your options would be collecting enough in captivity or releasing it to the wild to roam for food. What would be the solution if the species that the animal ate was also extinct? What would you feed it? Many extinct animals would have a lot to adapt to. For example, climate change. Species like the woolly mammoth that lived around 10 thousand years ago lived in the Northern Hemisphere. Back then the temperature was 4 to 6 degrees cooler than it is now. Woolly mammoths could stand the freezing temperatures of -40 degrees in the Northern Hemisphere, now the average winter temperature is 6 degrees. Many other winter species would have to make these adaptations because of climate change.

Different species live today

Another challenge that might interfere is the fact that these species are new to us, but they are also new to the other and more evolved species on this planet. If they brought back a species that had not been alive for ages and it was surrounded by an entirely new, different group of animals, they would not know how to think and act around others. It would be total chaos, the ecosystem would be unbalanced. These species that scientists are trying to bring back could be dangerous and possibly deadly because we do not know how they act. Imagine if we bring back a species and then that species wipes out another species. The ecosystem becomes unbalanced. Every species could have been keeping another species under control and from getting too big. Bringing back these unknown species could disrupt the whole ecosystem and cause chaos for every one. That is why de-extinction is a very detrimental and foolish idea for our future.

Companies involved and the money invested

Quite a few companies are invested in de-extinction but the main one is Colossal Biosciences. Colossal Biosciences are recognised for their efforts in resurrecting the woolly mammoth though they are far from achieving it. They are making slow progress. Colossal Biosciences is also working on the Tasmanian tiger, moa and the dodo. A total of \$568 million was raised for the de-extinction project by Colossal Biosciences. Perhaps it's being wasted by focusing on extinct species. Perhaps we should focus more on the endangered one. ("30,000 species per year on average are being driven to extinction. That's 6 per hour and 150 per day") according to Colossal Biosciences lead scientists. Another company taking part in the de-extinction process is Sir Peter Jackson who donated \$15 million dollars to Colossal Biosciences. Then they partnered with the Ngai Tahu Iwi from New Zealand under the agreement that they worked on the moa. Their recent breakthrough was creating an artificial egg. They did this because the moa's egg was too big and the process of surrogacy would not work. (Earth Biogenome Projects have also been doing a very similar thing, their main projects have also been the dodo, Tasmanian tiger and the woolly mammoth. Their plan is to edit the Asian elephant because it is the closest living relative to the woolly mammoth. It shares approximately 99.6% of their DNA. Earth Biogenome Projects his over \$200 million but they are far from their goal as it is \$4.42 billion. The cost of the overall project is humongous and it would take a long time to raise enough money for it. Even if they did raise enough it might not be successful. Would all the time and effort put into it mean nothing?

Endangered species

We used to lose species naturally about one to five times a year. Now we lose them 1,000 to 10,000 times faster. 15% of ocean life is endangered but 80% of the ocean life is unexplored. Over 40% of amphibians are at risk of extinction, 38% of all trees are facing that same issue and 75% to 90% of invertebrates (e.g birds and mammals) are at risk of extinction as well. 69% of New Zealand's species are endangered. Only 31% of New Zealand's species are completely safe. Some of the main endangered species are the Maui dolphin and the Tara Iti (New Zealand Fairy Tern). The Maui dolphin is one of the world's smallest and rarest dolphins, they live in the shallow coastal waters off the west coast of the North

Island. Only 55 to 63 of these dolphins live today. The Maui dolphins main threats are fishing nets, debris, pollution and disease, those are the things that continue to take these dolphins' lives. Tara Iti (New Zealand Fairy Tern) is a critically endangered bird species. There are fewer than 40 left at the moment and if we don't do something quickly they will die out. Tara Iti's main threats are habitat loss (degradation of the sand dunes), predators, environmental events and human activity. If we do not take immediate action to take care of these birds they will die out, and it will be mainly humans' fault. Instead of using de-extinction technology for bringing back animals that died out ages ago, we should focus more on the animals that live today but maybe not for much longer.

Conclusion

Overall de-extinction is a foolish idea that should definitely not be pursued. In de-extinction the cons outweigh the pros. There are just too many problems that cannot be fixed easily. Like the fact that around \$4.42 billion is needed to pursue the de-extinction project and we are in no way close to that or perhaps that the ecosystem is very different today than what it used to be. De-extinction will just leave the ecosystem disrupted and unbalanced. Maybe instead of dwelling on the past, we can start thinking about the future and keeping today's living animals alive.

Every year Ōmata Year 7/8 Students enter the Taranaki Science and Technology fair Scientific Journalism category. This year the topic was 'The argument for de-extinction'. This is Florence Wylde's winning essay.

Kia ora from the Kaitake Golf Club

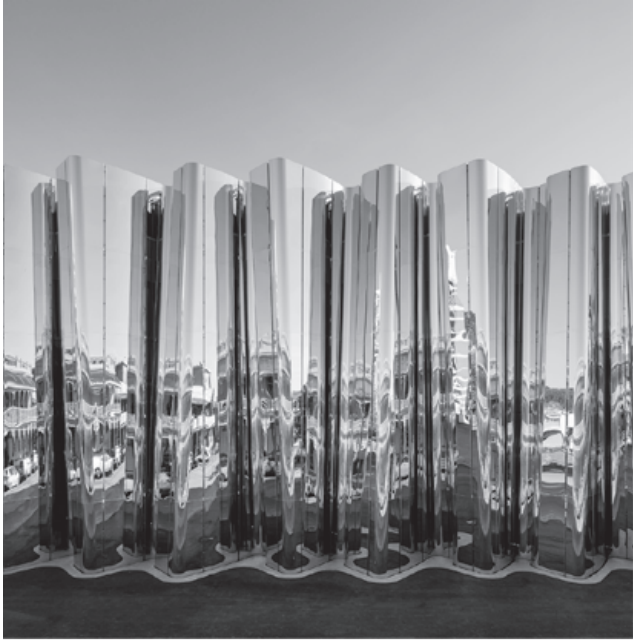
Spring has sprung and daylight saving means more time on the golf course. Longer evenings mean that we will be starting our Twilight Golf series again, around the first week in November. Keep checking our Facebook page for more details as they are released.

Kaitake has a National Champion amongst its members. Earlier in the year our 9hole Ladies players competed for the Home Links "Sue Bunt Salver". The result for that competition round is set against the 9hole players in the rest of the district. The winners from each district are then compared to find a National Champion. We are proud as a club to announce that our very own Jeanette Maw has come out on top as the Golf New Zealand winner. Congratulations Jeanette on this prestigious win.

There have also been a couple of memorable tee shots played recently – congratulations firstly to Julian Lee on his hole-in-one on the 9th hole. Some golfers play golf for many years and do not achieve the thrill of a hole-in-one. Julian is only 14, only started playing golf in 2025 and is already playing off of a 15 handicap, so this is an exciting start to Julian's golf career.

And no stranger to the podium – congratulations to Kurt Hikaka on also hitting an accurate tee shot on the 9th hole to get that hole-in-one. You may remember Kurt from the cover of The Ōākura Post August as the mixed Ambrose winner – 2026 a good golfing year for Kurt.

Club competitions have been continuing with Mike Hareb taking out the President's Trophy in July. In August and September the men are playing the Top Dog (and Underdog – won by Ian Johnston and Roger Cloke). In Ladies competitions, Denise Howe won the Silver Club Champs, beating Kim Woodward over a 36 hole match. Ladies Weekend Top Dog was won by Janice Farrant and Julie Yardley.



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Do you know our man Dom?

Many of you may have heard the title – Greenkeeper. But the name behind the title isDomenico Squatriti – and many of you will not know Dom from greenkeeping but rather from his passion – football. So meet the man Dom.

Dom was born in Italy and arrived in New Zealand with his parents when he was 3 years old. He said that his first job when he got here was to learn to speak English – and then teach his parents to speak English. The family settled in Levin and after high school Dom moved into working with fibre glass, working on such things as boats and camper vans. But after seven years Dom decided that it was not the best profession for his health (remember that there were not the HSS regulations in those days that there are now when working with fibre glass) and he wanted to become a greenkeeper.

For the next few years Dom did his training and apprenticeship on-the-job at Levin Golf Club before applying for the greenkeeper position at Kaitake - Dom's wife Louise is a Naki girl – so it was time to come home. Originally, he was going to be here for five years, but in January 2027 Dom will have been with us for 30 years – no mean feat. He has seen many changes to the course and is proud to have played a part in those changes.

Dom loves a good round of golf and can even brag that he has had a couple of holes-in-one, but his passion has always been football. When his children got into football, Dom took up coaching. He studied and gained all the coaching badges while not only coaching and coordinating the Oakura School junior soccer, but also while being a player/coach for many men's teams as well. One of those teams was a Taranaki Reps team.

So a man with many sporting hats – our Dom – our Greenkeeper.



Taranaki Business Breakfast 2026

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TE KURA O OAKURA
OAKURA SCHOOL



Thanks to a very generous TOI Foundation grant, Oakura School was recently able to rebrand their entire sports kit, including basketball, netball, touch, rippa, rugby and football. Jackets were also purchased that students wear to various other activities, including the Literacy, Science and Technology fairs and chess tournaments.

The new brand reflects the new school values of Manawanui (determination), Whānaungatanga (Community and Belonging) and Kaitiakitanga (Guardianship). The brand also reflects the

stories of the Ōākura area as shared by Ngāti Tairi, stories of the Wairau stream, Patuhā peak, Koru Pā and Matekai park.

The design of the new sports kit is made up of multiple threads woven together to represent traditional patterns of Tukutuku panels telling the stories that connect with Taranaki Maunga. Within the weaving the school values are woven into patterns. These patterns symbolise whakapapa, stories, histories and traditions passed down over time. The line down the middle of the design represents reflection, considering the past, present and future.

The colours used on the logo are reflective of the house colours. They each have a primary

and secondary colour that interconnects with the other threads to symbolise collaboration, teamwork, unity and support. Celebrating the concept of Whiria te Tāngata - weaving people together.

Without the grant from TOI Foundation, it would not have been possible to reflect the new branding in the sports kits because of the cost.

Ngā mihi nui to the TOI Foundation for their generous support.

Julie Salisbury

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Suzan Kostanich
14th Sept - 9th Nov

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Stories of the Past

Royal New Zealand Air Force Bomber crashes at Omata.

Stephenson Percy Smith.

January 25th, 1943, World War Two: Training flight. Very thick fog covers Omata.

The Royal New Zealand Air force bomber readied for take-off. Taking off from an unidentified North island air station. Taking off on a training flight.



A Lockheed Hudson Mk V bomber

.....
8am - Weather forecasts and weather distribution maps had been delivered. This was the vital information for the Squadron and flight commanders of the bomber operational training squadron. Scattered patches of fog could be expected throughout the proposed flight. Warning that visibility within fog would be poor.

.....
8.25am - Checks were made to the wireless telegraphy station. Frequency was correct. Signals strength at 5 was at the maximum.

.....
9.05am - further signals check made from the bomber.

.....
9.49am - message received by ground station.

.....
11.00am - another message received.

.....
11.40am - another message received by ground station.

.....
11.50am - message starts, abruptly stops.

.....
Ground Station asked the aircraft to repeat. There was no reply.

.....
The ground station continued to call – no reply.

.....
12.45pm - word of the crash was received.

.....
No distress signal or any message for assistance had been received at any time.

The coroner's report noted at another air station an aircraft passed overhead about 12 noon. The height of 60 – 75 metres travelling in the direction of New Plymouth. Visibility about 2000 metres.

Mr Herb Simmons (home about 80 metres north of Okurukuru Gateway) commented that vehicles on the road (SH45*) 50 yards (about 45 metres) away from his house were difficult to see, the fog was the thickest he had ever seen in the Ōmata District.

Andrew Peter Williams, farmer at Ōmata, said that about noon, he was working in a paddock on his farm when he heard the engine of a plane about 200 metres away.

He then heard the explosion.

Police were directed to Gray's farm. They found the aircraft had smashed into a steep hill, about 200 to 250 metres high, rising directly up from the coast. The bomber was burning fiercely. From deep gouges in the hillside, it was obvious the plane was travelling in a north to south direction and that the left-wing tip had contacted the hillside slewing the nose of the plane into the hillside. The plane was completely destroyed.

Cause: Controlled flight into terrain after pilot descended below safe altitudes trying to find clear air amidst deteriorating weather conditions.

Four airmen lost their lives: Flight Lieutenant John Humphrey Deans (captain), Pilot Officer James Derrick Philson (navigator), Sergeant Hugh Winton Steel (gunner), and Sergeant John Andrews Power (wireless operator). John Andrews Power's parents lived in Ōkato, and he is buried in Ōkato Cemetery. One of the other airmen's ashes were scattered at sea. Deans was assessed as above average in instrument flying, and the aircraft was fully equipped for blind flying.

Sgt. John Andrews Power of Ōkato.

In an excerpt from a newspaper report, "... flew into a cliff ... in an operational training flight. Sgt Power was the elder son of Mr. and Mrs J. L. Power, very old residents of Ōkato. Aged 23 years, he was educated at the Ōkato primary and New Plymouth Boys' High Schools. He joined the Postal and Telegraph Department, entering the Ōkato post office as a boy and serving later at Kaponga, Piopio and Wellington. More than 2 years ago he joined the air force, and after preliminary training in New Zealand went to Canada, before going to England. He had returned to New Zealand for duty."

The plane was a Lockheed Hudson Mk V bomber and had recently completed 240 hours flying inspection. The pilot had spent 57 hours on the Link trainer and had full authority to deviate from a direct course, according to the weather. The RNZAF had six of these bombers. They were American built light bombers designed for naval patrol, reconnaissance, light bombing and were the

first RNZAF bombers to see combat in the Pacific. The exact cost to New Zealand is unknown but UK paid £17,000 for each. If New Zealand paid the same amount today this amount adjusted for inflation is a staggering \$2,298,384 NZ dollars each!

The Lockheed bomber was initially a passenger plane. In 1938 with the potential of war, they were adapted by cutting out a bomb bay and a turret was bolted on top of the fuselage. It should not have worked as well as it did. The bomber had

exceptional manoeuvrability capabilities. It was notable for the achievement of extremely tight turns. An Australian LH Mark V bomber was attacked by nine Japanese Zero fighter planes. The Australian crew used all their skills to avoid and also attack the Nine. The dogfight lasted ten minutes. After the war the Japanese Commander who had led the attack was so impressed with the skill of the airmen, he travelled to Australia to recommend that each of the crew should receive the highest Australian military honour.

The position of the Ōmata crash is now known!

Bill Donald (Ōmata) had a cover of a condenser from one of the engines. Unfortunately, it was lost inside a shed in Cyclone Bola. Rex Donald, Bill's uncle on the Donald farm at that time of the crash, pointed out the locality of the smash. The position of the crash had not been previously recorded.

My thanks to Bill for his assistance with this article. David Morris's father and my father never ever spoke of the crash yet lived in very close proximity. Both were in the Home Guard at the time.

Most of this article is based on the Coroner's Inquest report. Why? A number of the newspaper reports record the plane smashing into the cliffs at Ōmata. Note: the Gray farm was not the farm of the Grey brothers at the end of Sutton Rd, Ōmata.

(Travellers recently will be well aware of the very thick fog they can encounter travelling on the SH45 between Ōmata and Ōakura. This year the fog was so thick, visibility was down to about 10 metres. At the same time New Plymouth Airport maintained full flight schedules without interruption - LJ).

A Hudson Bomber.

References: *Taranaki Daily News* 3 April 1943: *Inquest on crew killed in air smash at Omata.*

Thanks to Mr. Mike Gooch, Research Centre, Puke Ariki for Coroner's Inquest and report and Newspaper reports. Royal New Zealand Air force and RNZAF histories. Lockheed Hudson Mark V internet articles.

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.

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. Contact Heather 021617894

Dancing in the Dark
Glenys Farrant 027 753 0120

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 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 Diana drdianarae@gmail.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 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 - Ōākura Bowling club, 3rd Friday of the month 10-11.30am. Contact Brenda Ryan 757 3537 or 027 748 9698

TempoFit Kids Run Club - run club, Friday 8am 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 8.45-10.15am at Ōākura Hall. Judi 027 268 2601. Just come along or contact: taranakitaichichuan@gmail.com

Val Deakin Dance School - Children's ballet class.Tuesday 3:45 to 4:30pm. For ages 5 -9. Contact janeroseman@xtra.co.nz

5Rhythms Dance Class
SUNDAY 10.30-12 fortnightly - Oakura Hall. Beginners welcome. A fun somatic practice without steps... Mira 02108090172/ Dance5R@mirawatson.com

Kaitake Golf Club - Wednesday Open Casual Haggie Competition. \$10 non-members \$5 members. 8am to 1pm open to everyone. Phone Penny 7527665

Tataraimaka Hall

5 Elements Fitness Sessions
5pm -6pm everyday. Barney 027 752 7076 barney@5efitness.com or visit www.5efitness.com

Starts Term 2 - 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

Playcentre 37 Carthew St. Mon and Thurs 9am-1pm during school terms. okatoplaycentre.org.nz

TOP Information

The Ōākura Post

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