

TOM *okato*

Jordan Linn and Meisha Davies Star at Squash

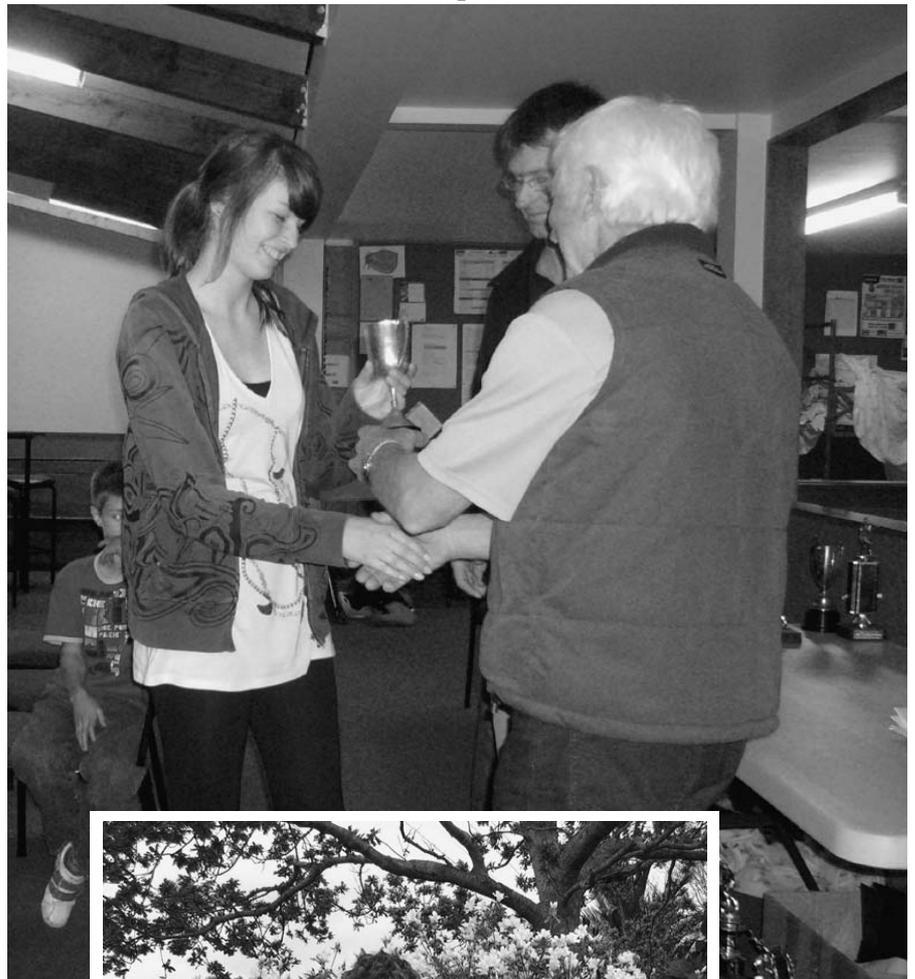
Jordan (JD) Linn is turning heads in the local squash world. At 16, he has a B2 grading and a string of successes behind him. The son of John Linn and Sue Wallis, he says he was pretty much brought up at the Okato Squash Club and has been playing ever since he could hold a racket. He can still be found down there most days, either having a match or hitting the ball around by himself. His natural talent, lots of practice and a cool but determined competition temperament have earned him a B grading to date. However, he believes he can do better yet. He is aiming at an A grading in the next couple of years and plans to go as far in squash as he can without going professional.

JD's success has not come about through his efforts alone; he acknowledges the support he's had from the Club's elders, including Club Captain, Steve Kelly, who has spent many a weekend carting him around to tournaments. At club level, Jordan scooped up four titles this year: Under-19 and Junior Boys' Champion, B Grade Men's Champion and, to top those off, Open Men's Champion. Then, on the evening of the recent Squash Club prizegiving, he played Shaun Cooper (B1) from the Waitara Squash Club for Taranaki's Open Grade Champion of Champions. After a strong start, Jordan had to bow to the stronger player, but in doing so, he won runner-up in the event.

Further afield, he gained seventh placing in the Central District's Prince Series and, in the recent, weeklong National Tournament held at Auckland's North Shore Squash Club, he earned tenth placing in the Boys' Under-17 section. That was a good experience, he says. He'll be returning next year for another go at the title.

Meisha Davies, also 16, is Okato Squash Club's other star. The daughter of Brent Davies and Sharon Agnew, she has been playing since she was about

(Continued on page 2)



Above, Meisha receives her Women's Championship cup from Patron, Claude Riordan. President Pete Morgan looks on.

Left, Jordan takes time out.

editorial

FROM THE TOM ZONE

This month the TOM writers have brought us some very inspiring stories to read. It never ceases to amaze me how giving communities are and when you read the shoebox story you can't help being thankful for people who put so much time and effort into helping others.

I love reading about success stories and there are numerous in TOM-Okato this month, with Des and Nola Corbett, the Neilsens and the squash champions – all success stories in their own way. I know there are many, many more success stories just waiting to be told.

So as the year wraps up, I hope you are not feeling too pressured by Christmas and the attendant Christmas functions, maybe we could rename it the 'sensational season' instead of the 'silly season' and enjoy the ride!

Kim

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cover story

12, when she went down to the courts with friends, just to see what the game was all about.

She's played in a few tournaments this year and her success can be measured by her meteoric rise through the grades: this season, she has risen a full grade, from C1 to B1, which well surpassed her goal of improving a half grade each season. Sharon says a big thank you to her chief supporter and sideline coach, her mum. "She knows exactly what I should be doing, even though she can't do it herself," Meisha told me. And she has a friendly warning for JD – it would give her the biggest thrill to pass him on points, so he'd better watch out!

Squash successes for Meisha this year have included Taranaki's C Grade Champion of Champions and Under-19 Girls' Champion of Champions Runner Up, and third placing in Central District's Prince Series. Then in the recent Okato Squash Club Championships, she won the Women's C Grade Division, the Under-19 Girls' Division and the Women's Open event.

When her school days are over, Sharon hopes to study Physical Education at Otago and if that leads to a career in squash she will be delighted. And if not, she will play her heart out anyway.

We shall watch both Jordan and Meisha's progress with interest and we wish them every success.

Story and pictures by Kerry Lilley

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Raewynne and Chum Moffitt, who have been involved with overseas missionary projects for a number of years, once had the opportunity to give out Christmas boxes to school children in Secunderabad, in India as part of an official delegation.

"The children were very quiet and polite," Raewynne told me. "Perhaps they were overawed. But we could see the beams on their faces and could tell that they were so thrilled and so proud. When they came up to be presented with their boxes, you'd think they'd won a Nobel Prize!"

Treishka Morgan, who has been co-ordinating the appeal on behalf of Okato's Newzeal Church this year, says a huge thank you to all who helped in any way with extremely generous gifts of money, items, talent and time.

"It's a fun, worthwhile project," she says, "and we'll do it again next year."

For more information about Operation Christmas Child, look online at www.samaritanspurse.org.nz

Story and pictures by Kerry Lilley






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Des and Nola Corbett

I always enjoy visiting Des and Nola at their home on Oxford Road, Okato.

As I arrive Des is finishing off chores in the garden and putting cabbage tree leaves in the trailer. Must be time to give a hand, eh??



Des and Nola at home.

I want to know what it was like to bring up children in their days in comparison with today's busy lifestyles, schedules and timetables. Des and Nola brought up seven children, five boys and twin girls, on Des' brother's farm five kilometres up Oxford Road and in 1950 they moved to where they still live today. The house was built by Roy Hodder and Des' uncle, Ned Corbett, at a cost of 4,000 pounds!

Their first born, Michael, was born in 1951 and their youngest, twin girls Jan and Mary, were born in 1965. The first three children were delivered at Tamata Ora, a birthing home for mothers in New Plymouth, while the other children were delivered at the Public Maternity Hospital in New Plymouth.

"Life was busy with seven children but it was a different sort of busy to today," says Nola.

Des was in partnership with his brother and they worked the land together, milking 160 cows. Horses were used to plough the hills and also for hay making, cutting and sweeping the fields. The children always had jobs to do, to help out on the farm as well as around the home. If they were needed they would help at the cowshed.

The children attended Okato Primary, where they gained a free education.

In those days most people had a big garden and grew the vegetables to feed their families. Nola preserved pears and peaches, purchasing these by the box when they were in season. She also preserved beetroot, salted beans and even duck eggs. Milk was sourced from the cowshed every day. They basically lived off the land.

"We always had home-killed sheep, not to forget the mint from the creek that went with it," says Des. The free-range turkeys were often seen on the dinner table too! Duck eggs were especially good for Nola's home baking, "And boy she could bake," said Des. The tins were always full and the children were never let down at birthday parties with Nola's baking abilities.

On the odd time they bought the children ice creams, which were called 'penny ice creams' in those days, and also 'penny ice blocks'. The local grocer, either J.S. Fox General Store, which was the drapery and grocer in one (opposite Ray Rooks'



Des and Nola and their family in earlier days.

garage), or Smiths General Store (now Okato Four Square) phoned and asked for your weekly order of groceries. These were delivered the same week. It was mainly flour and sugar that were purchased in bulk. Most other foods were grown at home. Bread was purchased and/or delivered from one of two bakeries, Ian Rogers Bakery (behind J.S. Fox General Store) or the bakery at the Smiths General Store. A loaf of bread could be picked up for approximately four pence, which is less than six cents a loaf. Wow! Cheese was sourced from the Oxford Road Factory. "It was great cheese. We could choose the amount we wished to purchase. It would be sliced from the block at the factory, weighed and then charged accordingly," says Des.

The children's grandmother knitted for all the children and Nola sewed. "The girls loved their dresses, as I would dress them in the same outfits. But as they got older and asserted their independence they no longer wanted to look the same," says Nola.

The children found ways to entertain themselves without a TV or play station!! They kicked a football around the backyard, which was always a favourite, or played tennis on the grass court, which the Corbetts put in. Friends loved to come over to play on their tennis court. "All simple stuff," says Nola, "it was a real bonus putting that court in".

Des sometimes took the boys to the movies, which were held in Hempton Hall once a week. "I think it would have cost approximately 25 cents in today's dollar," says Des. He remembers the cowboy movies, although he wouldn't attend. That was his opportunity to catch up with fellow friends in the village and play cards whilst the children were entertained. In the winter months the boys played rugby at the Rugby Club and the girls played school netball. Nola sometimes took the children along to the Tennis Club in the summer and in the week Nola played for the club. It was a thriving community club. The children spent a lot of time in the stream swimming and they also visited the Okato Pool at the domain. "It was all pretty simple, the children just seemed to entertain themselves and get on with things about the garden/section. I suppose with seven children, they always had someone to play with. We were lucky then as there was no pot or drugs and being in the country made a difference too," recalls Des.

I love the piece Des told me about bringing up their children. "We always had plenty of love, plenty of kisses, no meant NO and you got a prize for being honest." What a wonderful philosophy for all of us to adopt.

By Milly Carr

Food

Walnut and poppy seed cake

Alwin Heiler shares an Austrian recipe: Werner's poppy seed and walnut cake

Most of us who live in and around Okato know Alwin Heiler, who is famous on the coast for introducing café culture to our area. For three years, "The Waiting Room" was an amenable community meeting place, serving great food garnished with cheerful service, and coffee that was as near perfect as you would get anywhere in the world. Perhaps unwittingly, he created something akin to the Café Konditorei he knew back in Austria – a place in the village to enjoy coffee, special cakes and pastries and convivial company, or perhaps just to linger over a newspaper, alone.



Alwin relaxing at home.

Fortunately for Okato, Alwin left the café in capable hands and these days he cooks not so much, preferring, when he's not working, to indulge his passions of surfing and skiing in the great outdoors. I managed to catch him at home one afternoon recently and, over a cup of lemon verbena tea prepared from the freshly picked herb, he reminisced about his homeland and some of his favourite foods.

His earliest memories are inextricably linked to his mother, his grandmother and traditional cooking for

Christmas. Every year, there was great bustle and excitement as the family baked a variety of cookies in preparation for the big event. There might be vanillekipferl (half moon-shaped, almond pastries) and husarenkrampf (hazelnut biscuits), spitzbuben (pastry layered with jam) and zimtsterne (cinnamon stars), lebkuchen (a sort of gingerbread) and maybe even wartberger zwieback - a fruit biscotti, which originated from Alwin's Oma's home region. As soon as they were cooked, had cooled and been decorated if required, the cookies were packed into tins to mature and hidden away - though that didn't prevent the odd one from mysteriously disappearing - until Christmas day. Then, they were brought out and ceremoniously offered after every single meal.

Christmas cookies are perhaps Austria's best known contribution to the world's cuisine but it is famous for its cakes and pastries too. Sachertorte, a chocolate cake with apricot jam filling eaten with whipped cream is one of the most famous, but there are other delicately layered cakes too. There's gugelhupf, the ring shaped, domed butter cake, which often incorporates dried fruits,

almonds and sometimes kirschwasser (cherry brandy). And, of course, there's apfelstrudel, but there are other types of strudel too, each one different from the other and each carefully sliced to display its neatly assembled fillings. Best of all though, there's the divine walnut and poppy seed cake that I sometimes begged Alwin to bake when he ran his cafe. It was his Dad's speciality, and the first time I tasted it Werner, who was visiting, had ground all of the poppy seeds by hand! Honestly, I thought I'd died and gone to heaven!

Alwin has generously agreed to share this special recipe with you, our TOM readers. Enjoy!

Werner's Walnut and Poppy Seed Cake:

200g butter (at room temperature)

60g icing sugar

8 eggs, separated

180g castor sugar

300g poppy seeds

150g walnuts (ground)

Cinnamon

Vanilla sugar (essence)

Method:

Cream butter with icing sugar, vanilla essence and cinnamon

Beat in the egg yolks

Beat egg whites with castor sugar till creamy and stiff

Grind poppy seeds and nuts and mix together

Fold a third of the beaten eggs whites into the butter mixture, then add a third of the poppy seed/walnut mix. Repeat twice more till all ingredients mixed together.

Bake for 60-70 minutes at 170°C.

Story and picture by Kerry Lilley

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Okato Squash Club Round-up

Okato Squash Club has had another very active and successful season and has been well supported by players and sponsors alike. Events have included a fun tournament in March, the Easter B Grade Tournament, the Farmers' Tournament held in May, the B Grade Tournament in June, Club Champs (August), a fun tournament in October, the Taranaki Secondary Schools Tournament (July) and finally, the Taranaki Champion of Champions Tournament, held in October. Sponsors include New Plymouth Motorcycles, Ecolab, Taranaki Farmers, Merial/Ancare, Riverlands, Okato Four Square, Sinclair Electrical, RD1 FBT, National Bank, M&O Pacific and CB Norwoods.

The juniors, with age groups ranging from 4-6 years to 16-17 years, excelled. Meisha Davies jumped through the ranks and is this year's Taranaki C Grade Women's Champion. Jordan (JD) Linn is currently the tenth best Under-17 Boy in New Zealand, the Secondary School Champ, Taranaki Under-19 Boys' Champion and Taranaki B Grade Champion. He is also a member of the Central Districts' Junior Team. Meanwhile, Jamie Linn has taken out the Taranaki F Grade Women's Championship. Brooke Gray has been moving through the grades and should reach C Grade soon, and the junior 8-12-year-old boys are playing good squash, with Thomas Morgan, Trent Brophy, Lachlan Greensill and Casey Corbett vying for positions. Four men's teams and two women's teams have played interclub squash this year. One of the Men's E Grade teams went to play off in the Superchamps held in Palmerston North and came third in this event.

A highlight this year has been the reintroduction of ladder leagues. At one stage, there were over 50 players, who each played four games a month. This kept the Club buzzing. Ian Gibbon was awarded the Supporter of the Year for getting the leagues up and running and keeping it on track.

Another highlight was a trip to the Ohakune Open Tournament in late August to coincide with a bit of skiing or snowboarding. Unfortunately, it also coincided with calving so a few couldn't go, and a few who went shouldn't have gone!! However, it was a great tournament and a merry time was had by all. Stacker (Paul Tippet) showed great flare for his first time on skis and mastered the snowplough stop! Others scored a few bruises from the slopes to prove they had tried to ski.

There have been four well-attended working bees this year. The interior and exterior walls have benefited from a good scrub



Darryl Gibson (Secretary) receives his award from Patron, Claude (Sparrow) Riordan.



Robert receives his certificate for a victory in the Under-8 Boys from his dad, President Peter Morgan.

or waterblast and painting of the upstairs area is in progress, thanks to a fundraising drive, a \$6,000 grant from TSB Community Trust and local contractors, Pole Shand and Dave Glen. The drainage issue of the third court was also addressed, under the direction of Brian Hill.

After the annual club dinner on Saturday, 17 October, Club Patron Claude (Sparrow) Riordan presented the trophies for 2009. Recipients were:

Men's Champion	Jordan Linn
Men's B Grade	Jordan Linn
Men's C Grade	Steven Kelly
Men's D Grade	Bryan Simpson
Men's E Grade	Brooke Gray
Men's F Grade	Chris Brophy
Men's Ungraded	Craig Scott
Most Improved and Sportsmanship (Men)	
Women's Champion	James Crighton
Women's B Grade	Meisha Davies
Women's C Grade	Amy Simpson
Women's D Grade	Meisha Davies
Women's E Grade	Not played
Women's F Grade	Shelly Hooker
Women's Ungraded	Jamie Linn
Most Improved and Sportsmanship (Women)	Not played
Teams Trophy	Julie Neilson
Supporter of the Year	E Grade Eliminations
Les Putt Masters	Ian Gibbon
Most Dedicated and Improved Junior Boy	Yet to be played
Most Dedicated and Improved Junior Girl	Brooke Gray
Most Improved New Player	Meisha Davies
Most Dedicated Junior	Tom Gawler
Boys' J Grade	Chris Brophy
Girls' J Grade	Nick Greensill
Under-19 Boys	Grace Greensill
Under-16 Boys	Jordan Linn
Under-19 Girls	Brooke Gray
Under-16 Girls	Meisha Davies
Primary School Boys	Jamie Linn
Primary School Girls	Thomas Morgan
	Grace Greensill

Story and pictures by Kerry Lilley

Okato Tennis Club

Tennis has started again for this summer and to date, when required, the weather has cleared and enabled us to make a good start to the season with only wins and draws so far to date. Congratulations to you all.

After two long years we are finally finished the new courts and the fencing around them. These projects have cost us over \$60,000 and I'm pleased to report that we have most of this paid for with only a small deficit to now fund, and we need your help with this.

We invite you to come along to Quiz Night on Friday, 20 November to be held at the Okato Squash Club from 7.30pm, \$10 per person, teams of 4-6 members. Make up your own team or put one together on the night. Mainly easy local questions with a few for those looking to test their IQ. Supper and prizes will be provided. Phone Jackie Honeyfield on 752 4097 or Angela Phillips on 752 4451 to register your team, or register on the night.

You are also all invited to an Open Day that we are going to have on Sunday, 29 November, 11am onwards to thank you all for your support and especially all the Charitable Trusts and others that have made the upgrade possible. Come along and see what we have done down at the courts close up. Bring your rackets to see if you are the next Wimbledon Champion, and some small change for a sausage sizzle and raffle on the day.

Just a reminder that Wednesday morning tennis from 10am onwards has started for anyone interested in tennis. Come and join in, all abilities catered for.

Also our Twilight Tennis Competition has begun. This is initially on Wednesday nights for five to six weeks leading up to Christmas. Bowl along and cheer them on and see what it's all about, then enter a team in the next round, which will start after Christmas.

Our Social Membership subs for this year are \$40 Senior and \$20 Junior. Casual players \$2 per person, per day. Come on, join up! We need your support to ensure the Club continues to grow and further improvements can be made.

Any questions about any of the above give Raewynne Lawn a call on 752 4466 or Maree Moffitt on 752 8107.

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Caterers on the Coast: Cherrill and Copper Neilsen

Colin began life on Stent Rd, Warea, where his parents, Frank and Ivy, worked on Myers' farm. A red-head, he soon acquired the nickname, "Copper". When he was eight, he and his family moved to Huey and Connie Paul's farm on Hampton Rd. In 1963, Copper married Cherrill Mancer, who lived on a Mangorei Rd farmlet. Cherrill's mum, Lola, catered for Colin and Cherrill's wedding breakfast of 140 guests. Subsequently, she ran the Pukekura Park Kiosk for seven years and catered for the Taranaki Women's Club. Meanwhile, for about four years, Cherrill waitressed part time for Leuthart's catering.

After they were married, Cherrill and Copper, together with Colin's brother Ashley and Jim Grantham, shared a sharemilking job on the Hampton Rd farm. When their first child, Danny, was born, Cherrill joined the local Plunket committee which, in 1965, decided to run a fund raising cabaret (with Ray Columbus and the Invaders for entertainment). With her background in catering, Cherrill volunteered to organize supper. Next, Cherrill and Copper catered for Peg and Howard Haylock's daughter, Lesley's wedding. After that, in 1973, they decided to try catering full time.



Cherrill and Colin (Copper) Neilsen.

Danny's teacher at that time was Moira Day and Danny confided to her that he didn't know how they were going to survive! So far, Cherrill and Copper had catered only for small functions; Now they needed to be more adventurous. Most caterers (such as Yarrows of Manaia and Nelsons of Inglewood) were sideline businesses attached to bakeries and as such, were equipped with all the necessary equipment, including large ovens. The Neilsen's lacked this advantage and the first wedding breakfast they served - a standard affair for 200 people - was prepared in Hempton Hall.

People those days just wanted basic food and plenty of it and a typical wedding breakfast included two cold meats and lettuce salad served onto plates, accompanied by hot potatoes and peas presented in bowls along the length of the tables, and sandwiches and savouries. Dessert consisted of trifles, pavlovas and fruit salad, and brandy snaps, chocolate éclairs, lollies and peanuts. Soup and entrees could also be ordered at extra cost. Drinks included large bottles of beer and sherry and small bottles of soft drink. Cups of tea were served to guests at the tables, individually.

In those early days, weddings on the coast were almost always winter affairs, to fit in with farmers' least busy time of year. Along with other family and community events, they were held community halls, each equipped with one small stove. It took a van load of gear to cook the food and keep it hot - gas



Staff at the Post Office Sports Tournament held in New Plymouth, 1986. From Left to Right - Front row: Bernadette Appert, Marie Loveridge, Lucia Andrews (nee Appert), Felicity Neilson, Helen Horner, Sue Smith, Robyn Karauria. Middle row: Brenda Brunning, Linda Hill, Sue Pepperell, Cherrill Neilsen, Betty Pepperell, Beth Andrews,, Judith Moffitt. Back row: Lyn Putt, Kath Warren, Julie Moffitt, Shelley Neilson, Greg Neilsen, Colin Neilsen, Elizabeth Adams, Linda Moffitt, Bev Moffitt, Cathy Appert.

cylinders and gas rings, a barbeque and the ubiquitous pie warmers. Gladwrap was yet to be invented, so all the windows would be shut, the venue would be sprayed with fly spray and meals would be plated at the last possible moment.

Cabarets were popular and suppers would consist of sandwiches and savouries, savoury eggs, cocktail potatoes, pickled onions, cheerios, sliced ham and pork, brandy snaps and chocolate éclairs, all for 50cents a head. Curry and rice could be ordered as an extra. When night clubs came into vogue around the mid-nineties, the cabarets died out. At about the same time, smorgasbords took the place of set meals. At first there were cold meats, hot potatoes and peas and a variety of salads, followed by sweets. Later, hot pot smorgasbords became popular, followed by roast meal smorgasbords.

For eighteen months, the Neilsens served smorgasbords at Butler's Reef Hotel on Sunday nights. This allowed the establishment to remain open on Sundays. Jack used to put his takings in a paper bag in the pot cupboard and would take it with him when he left each night. Cherrill and Copper were always last to leave and were responsible for locking up. One night when they were on their way home, they found Jack's paper bag containing the day's takings on the footpath near the motel room where he slept. They were never sure whether or not it had been an intentional test of their honesty.

The Neilsens catered for a wide range of events but in later years, funerals became the main source of work. Women, who had traditionally brought a plate, were more and more involved in paid employment and a variety of other activities, so the catering was handed over to the professionals.

For most of their catering years, Cherrill and Copper were unable to offer full, hot meals because they didn't have the facilities to either cook the food or to keep it hot. In the early days, food was cooked and presented in black enamel dishes and candles were placed underneath to keep the food hot. Gradually, these gave way to proper bain maries. Then, in 1980, members of Cape Egmont Boat Club who had attended the auction of the Tasman Hotel which was being converted to Tasman Towers luxury apartments, reported that there were four gas ovens still for sale. Copper and Cherrill bought them



Okato Caterers' copper-painted vehicle fleet in 1983.

for \$100.00 each and paid \$2,000.00 to have gas laid on. Finally, they were able to provide hot meals.

Catering was a demanding occupation, which involved application and dedication by employer and employee alike. "Our staff were all loyal and never let us down," Copper reports. In the beginning, they were all married women. Some brought along their daughters, who brought along their friends, who, in turn, brought along their mothers. And so the staff pool grew. While Cherrill and Copper worked 15 to 18 hours in a catering day (and then spent the next day cleaning up), their staff had to look after homes and families and then turn up for work, fit or not. They would work anything from 5 to 11 hours at a stretch preparing and cooking food, lifting heavy containers and equipment and carrying it from the vans in all weathers, often up stairs and for long distances. Then, they were expected to walk out into the venue, looking tidy and relaxed and to wait on the tables, pleasantly.

Copper and Cherrill's children were involved in the business too. As pre-schoolers, they would fold serviettes. Then, throughout their school years and in university holidays, they would join the catering team at work. Cherrill and Copper's younger son, Greg, did three months' training at the Cordon Bleu College in Auckland, where he gained thorough grounding in the principles of good cooking, and completed courses at NewPlymouth Polytechnic too. He worked full time for Cherrill and Copper for 13 years.

Yes, it was hard work, but there were (in retrospect) funny incidents too. In the days of big, winter weddings, Copper and Cherrill had to be very careful about the amount of power they used at one time. The guests were not necessarily aware of this, and on a number of occasions the first to arrive, anxious to make the venue comfortably warm, turned on all the heaters, blew the pole fuse and then came rushing in to tell Cherrill and Copper (out of power themselves) what had happened! At one wedding, held in Rahotu, the grand dad, who was "the life of the party" dropped dead on the dance floor. And once, a staff member rang to say they didn't have enough pork. Copper, very busy at home, raced down to Rahotu to find she was short of six forks! At Auroa Hall one evening, the trestle legs collapsed. That was caught on "Television's Funniest Moments". And on another occasion at Butler's Reef Hotel, Copper put Sunlight Liquid in the dishwasher by mistake and couldn't stop bubbles from spewing out both the top and the bottom of the machine.

In March, 2007, after forty-two years, the Cherrill and Copper Neilsen retired. They sincerely thank everyone who supported them down through the years, especially their more than 150 staff. In turn, we thank them for the cheerful, consistent and high quality service they have given to our community and wish them good health and happiness for their future.

*Cherrill and Copper's story, told by Kerry Lilley
Pictures supplied by Cherrill and Copper Neilsen.*

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playcentre

Okato Playcentre

Playcentre is not just for the kids. What do the mums and dads really love about Playcentre?

"You can mingle in with the adults and let the children play."

"Just getting out of the house!"

"Thinking 'thank God I'm not the only one' when dealing with toddlers' stages. You talk to others and realise you're in the same boat."

"The home baking – well, other people's home baking, and birthday cakes!"

"The social side that carries on from Playcentre – we text and meet up on the beach or at the pools through summer. Even the monthly meetings are a good night out!"

"I think it's a great way of meeting families in the community, because I didn't know anyone when I came. It's quite good because your kids end up knowing someone when they start school."

"Getting to know other mums and their kids, especially when you transition to school."

"My child gets to spend time with other kids and mingle – and me with adults."

"I like the fellowship. I just like the way that it's parents and families all supporting each other – a sense of community."

"It's a great place for my kids to have messy play, like painting, play dough, and craft."

"The messy play – better here than home!"

"Getting messy. Having the space for the kids to get messy. Making friends."

"My husband says Playcentre is great because he has a quiet house to himself on Thursday mornings." (Thanks Bruce)

Well the consensus is pretty clear. It's social, helpful and messy. Plus the odd bit of home baking is well received!

A nice custom we have at Playcentre is giving kids a special send off when they turn five and are heading off to school. We have a special morning tea with birthday cake and a gift of a book to see them on their way. Don't go nutty at home, all welcome to join us. Open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9.30am–12.30pm. For 0–6 years.

Wild Magic – Tamora Pierce

Wild Magic is book one in a series called 'The Immortals' Quartet' (the series is in the library).

Daine is an orphan who has the ability to talk with animals. She is an outcast until her powers are found to be useful. Daine is enlisted to help battle immortal creatures that have recently begun to attack the Kingdom of Torall. Using her unusual ability with animals, her form of wild magic, she can make a difference, gets accepted and makes new friends.

I really enjoyed this story and the whole series; I would recommend them to anyone who likes fantasy and animals.

CTS Student - Tegan Brown – Year 12



Celebrating Sean Fleming's 5th birthday, Playcentre style.

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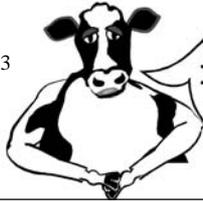
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Oakura Medical Centre

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New Doctors Joining the Practice

We extend a warm welcome to our new doctors. We are very lucky to secure these doctors, two of whom will be joining our team long term. Both live in Taranaki with their families and have extensive experience in medical practice, particularly women's health.

Dr Lindy Fookes, who has worked at Oakura in the past, started with us on 2nd November 2009.

Dr Nova Robinson, will be starting with us in early December.

Dr Kerrie McLemore (from Texas), who replaced **Diane**, joined our team in August. She is with us for one year.

Dr Brent Anderson is still working full time between Opuanke and Oakura Medical Centres.

Doctor Shortage

We would like to thank all our patients for their patience and co-operation during the past few difficult months while we were short staffed on doctors. It is an on going issue in the New Zealand health system, so we are fortunate to be fully staffed again.

The Future of General Practice

We are entering an exciting era in General Practice. The Government is strongly committed to improving primary care in New Zealand. Already moving towards a more extensive holistic health care approach, we have started more extensive screening and preventative healthcare measures for our patients. This, and other initiatives that are being developed, will keep us busy and our community healthy.

Dr Anderson also has a special interest in *cosmetic* and *vein* medicine; also an exciting and developing area. Interestingly we now have some innovative and unique ways of treating some medical problems, such as using *botox* for migraines, tension headaches and excessive sweating, etc.

We welcome new patients and as our practice grows so will our services.

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OKATO CLUBS & GROUPS

Playcentre

Main Road, Okato (over the Stony Bridge). Tuesday and Thursday, 9.30 - 12.30pm. Contact Rachel 752 4463.

Playgroup

St Luke's Hall, Main Road Okato. Wednesday morning, 10am - 12 noon. Contact Vanessa 752 4431 or Danelle 752 4916.

Plunket

Meet bi-monthly at Jaclyn Fisher's home. Contact Jaclyn 752 4872.

Okato Fire Brigade

Weekly. Monday night trainings, 7pm - 9pm. Contact Barry Harvey 752 4568.

Historical Society

Meets quarterly in the Community Trust Hall. Contact Iris Putt 752 4182.

St Patrick's Church, Okato

Daily mass 8.30am. Saturday evening mass 7pm. Inquiries to Steak Goodin 752 8160 or Nora Fox 752 4062.

St Paul's Church

10am services. Congregate first and third Sunday of the month. Contact Jan Putt 752 4188.

New Zeal Church

Service 10.30am, Sundays at St Luke's Hall. Contact Angela and Kevin McFetridge 752 4993.

Okato Co-operating Parish Women's Fellowship

Meet bi-monthly, first Wednesday of the month in St Luke's lounge, 1pm. Contact Lorraine Whittle 752 4359

Care and Craft

Get together Thursday fortnight at St Luke's lounge. 10.30am - 2.30pm. Contact Thea Fisher 752 4290

Highway 45 Craft

Meet weekly on Monday mornings 10am - 12noon. At members houses. Contact Iris Putt 752 4182

Tumahu Rural Women

Meet every second Wednesday of the month, 1pm at alternate members houses. Contact Joyce Downes 753 4122

JKA Karate, Okato

Monday and Wednesday 6pm - 7.30pm in Coastal Taranaki School Gymnasium. Contact Nicci 752 4529 or 027 259 6223

Squash Club

Monday evening club night. Contact Steve Kelly 027 2333 229

Tennis Club

Contact Maree Moffitt 752 8107 or Raewyn Lawn 752 4466

Okato Bowling Club

Club day held every Sunday at 9.30am onwards
President Bruce Peacock 752 4538, Secretary Fiona Liddall 752 4509, Convenor Cheryl Neilson 752 4218

Okato Pool

Learn to Swim - Tuesday and Thursday nights from 5.15 - 6pm.
Swim Club: Swimming Training - 6 till 7 - 7.30 on Tuesdays and Thursdays. For more inquiries contact Fiona Lacey 752 4535.

St Peter's Guild

Meet fourth Friday of each month. Contact Angela Montgomery 752 7738.

Probus

Meet every third Friday at the Oakura Golf Club. Contact Margaret Hodges 752 1371.

Coastal Garden Circle

Meet every third Monday of the month. Contact Ray Hooker 752 4086.

Pony Club

Contact Carey Brophy, 752 4458.

Apologies for any clubs or groups that have been missed out. Please contact Milly 752 4425 for any additional listings or amendments.