

Oakura Pharmacy: the end of an era and the start of a new one

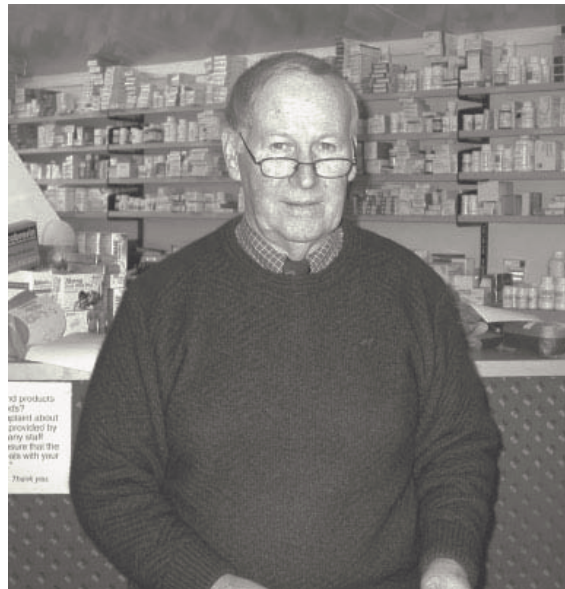
It is with much sadness that Oakura says goodbye to its loyal pharmacist Lionel Nesbit.

At the end of June Lionel retired and sold the Oakura Pharmacy. So after sixteen years of business in Oakura, the pharmacy looks set to stay. But while the pharmacy will continue to serve the community, Lionel won't be.

Lionel began the Oakura Pharmacy from scratch in 1989 after relocating from his Kaponga practise. Kaponga was a place in decline but Lionel could see the potential in Oakura and his vision has proved accurate. The pharmacy is the only one between New Plymouth (Moturoa being the nearest)

and Opunake. Oakura is growing and developing while other small villages are disappearing. Lionel is confident it will continue to grow, especially once the sewerage scheme goes ahead.

For Lionel, working in Oakura (while living in New Plymouth) has been about the people. "You couldn't wish for a nicer place to work. It is a great drive out from New Plymouth but the overriding thing is how friendly all the people are." And it is the community of Oakura that Lionel wants to express his appreciation and support to. He couldn't stop enthusing about the fun and jokes he had shared with many of the locals. "I want to thank the community for their support and I hope everyone gives the same support and friendship to the new owners," said Lionel. Neighbouring businesswoman Pam Street said,



"Lionel's a great one for a joke and has plenty of cheek to give out. He's a good bloke!"

So thank you Lionel, for providing our community with helpful advice and wonderful service over the last sixteen years. Happy retirement.

Oakura local Catherine Keenan, her dad Ian Lobb and Colleen Froude are the proud new owners of Oakura Pharmacy and began business last week. Colleen is the pharmacist running the business during the week and Catherine is working Saturday mornings and one afternoon per week. Colleen is originally from South Africa and has lived in New Zealand since 1999. Sarah Wales is the new shop assistant. The new team is adamant that any changes will only be

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What the Dickens is Sam Mitchell up to?.



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Local ladies making a difference.



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No flash hotels for these intrepid travellers.

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FROM THE TOM ZONE

Editorial

Thank you to all the people who responded to the tennis court issue. There certainly seems plenty of support in the community to warrant the courts being overhauled. You will be kept up to date with progress.

In this month's issue we feature the volunteer ambulance officers living in our area and doesn't it sum up our community where so many people give up their free time to help others? The hysteria and hype surrounding the Lions and the "Barmy Army" has come and gone and it was a bit overrated in my opinion but as a consequence I hear we have a new knight in our realm, Sir Paul Cunningham, who was spotted at the Lions game sitting behind Sir Clive and was a regular feature on TV as the camera panned around. Paul's daughter Hayley even saw him on TV while sitting in a bar in Laos! And we'll also tell you about Hayley's adventures – lizard for breakfast leaves our menus looking a bit drab. Young talented children in the area continue to achieve and we watch with anticipation as the likes of Paige Hareb compete in the world surfing arena and Sam Mitchell performs locally in *OLIVER*!

Articles from local clubs and groups to *TOM* are down this month – please keep your contributions flowing in as they are such an important part of *TOM* and are a great source of info about what's available and happening in the community.

Kim Ferens

tom

TOM is a free, monthly publication, delivered on the second Wednesday of the month to all homes and post-boxes from the city limits to Dover Road.

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Points of view expressed in contributed articles are not necessarily the views of TOM.



from **MAYOR PETE**

NEW PLYMOUTH DISTRICT COUNCIL
newplymouthnz.com



Hi folks!

With the finalisation of Action 05/06 we're all go for a number of exciting projects that will benefit residents in and around Oakura.

The project with the largest price tag is providing a reticulated sewerage system for Oakura, and the necessary upgrade of the New Plymouth Wastewater Treatment Plant to take the increased volume from Oakura, Waitara, Urenui and Onaeroa.

We will also be developing a second water bore in Oakura, completing the town's CBD upgrade, continuing the development of the Coastal Strategy and upgrading Okato Pool's shop/office. In addition, the Council will consider providing funding to improve heating at Okato Pool in the 2006–16 Community Plan (which enters the public consultation phase in September).

All of these projects for the 2005/06 year are vital for sustaining or improving our quality of life. The sewerage, water and coastal planning processes will all improve how we live within our environment and help ensure we can continue to enjoy our existing lifestyle in the long term.

By upgrading Oakura's CBD and developing Okato Pool, we are providing a better environment for Oakura's businesses to operate within and supporting a popular leisure facility in the coastal community.

Developing our community means working on the smaller projects that make our lives more enjoyable, as well as the larger projects that can bring with them a significant improvement to the environment. It's important that when we work on the big picture, we don't lose sight of the things that make our lives fun or living in the community a real pleasure.

I'm very pleased we have got the go-ahead for all of these projects, as they'll bring significant benefits to local residents.

Meanwhile, we as a Council are conscious that the huge increase in property values in some areas are much greater than the district-wide average increase. Those whose properties have risen in value by more than the district average will face paying a greater portion of the Council's total rate bill than previously, while those whose properties that have risen in value by less than the district average will pay a lesser portion.

For this reason, the Council has agreed to review its rating system. At present our rates per capita are in the bottom quartile of councils – that's great, but it's important we find the most equitable system of spreading that rating burden. We'll be asking for your input in that review.

If ever I can be of assistance, or you have ideas for other projects that you'd like to see happening, feel free to give me a call on 759 6060.

Peter Tennent, Mayor

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POLICE REPORT

Hello everybody how are you all? Good I hope.

The local area has had its fair share of crime of late with three New Plymouth people being arrested for the burglary of a residential address last month. A big thank you goes to the very vigilant neighbour who phoned the Police, which lead to the offenders being caught red-handed and two are now serving jail time.

As most of you will be aware, the Oakura Petrol Station was broken into and a large number of cigarettes stolen. Police are continuing inquiries on this. Also at the petrol station, a New Plymouth male was arrested for assault on a customer.

There was also a burglary on Koru Road between 15 and 16 June. Taken from the address were a TV, home entertainment system, microwave, fax machine and a food processor.

I have also had a complaint of tagging. This sort of offending is mindless and if anybody has any information about the possible offenders, it would be much appreciated. I would like nothing more than to have the offenders clean their own mess up and let's face it, it is just a mess – if the offenders had any talent at all, they wouldn't be resorting to scribbling on other people's property. On this occasion, which occurred between 17 and 19 June, the paint of choice was blue, so if you have sold some blue paint, had any stolen or your child, partner or friend came home covered in blue paint, let me know.

Any information relating to any of the above will be gratefully received. Further to that, if you see something suspicious, ring the Police.

Some other helpful hints . . . If you are going away for any length of time, let your neighbours know – get them to collect your mail, park their car in your driveway and pull your curtains at night. Let's all make an effort to make it as hard as possible for the groups of people out there that think it is their right to take what they like.

Catch you later and take care.

Rich

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Although our preferred age range is between 21 and 40, much depends upon the assets each applicant brings. Many people have gone to the college in their forties. However, the Department is interested in lowering the average recruit age (30 years) to access the robustness of youth.

Many Police members wear glasses but our current ruling is that applicants eyesight must be no worse than 6/12 unaided in both eyes. This can be achieved through laser surgery. Some previous injuries and health issues can exclude an applicant.

Police applicants are not assisted by the Clean Slate Act and all warnings, youth matters, diversions, court appearances and convictions must be disclosed. Most convictions will prevent an application although circumstances are taken into account for minor matters. No Excess Breath Alcohol convictions proceed, no matter how dated they are.

An applicant needs to be a New Zealand citizen or permanent resident, have a class 1 driver's licence, have very good written and verbal communication skills, and be fit and healthy. We look for motivated people who are good decision-makers, adaptable and believe in fairness, integrity, commitment and loyalty.

Taranaki Police are currently looking for suitable applicants and you can find out more information by ringing Lynne Turner on 06 759 8855 or 06 278 0260 ext 62555.

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MP for New Plymouth



Greetings to all who read this wonderful community newspaper!

By the time you read this, the date for the General Election may possibly have been announced. You could be forgiven for thinking that we have been in election mode for some time already, with news media coverage of the polls taking headline space over far more important issues.

It is often said that an election is won through the pocket – those of you who are fair-minded will not vote over a single issue, you will consider widely how you use your votes.

Unfortunately it is very easy for political “spin” to become hyped up and sometimes myth becomes reality in the public’s perception. An example of this is the reception of the recent budget, which saw such “spin” attempt to establish in the public mind that National supposedly have substantial tax cuts coming soon in contrast to Labour’s future tax cuts some three years away.

This gospel according to National completely ignores the substantial gains most working families will receive under the Working for Families Package. The public should not be fooled again by National promising tax cuts – already they have promised over \$7,000 million of spending and potential tax cuts and they cannot have it both ways. They may well have tax cuts and there will be cuts all right to any or all of health, police, education, superannuation or family income.

Make sure all political candidates tell you how they will keep their promises and spell out what those promises actually mean.

Most of Taranaki’s citizens have experienced the benefits of the marvellous growth that our region has seen and this is as a result of the Labour-led Government’s bold initiatives to enhance New Zealand’s place in the world.

My bid for re-election remains straightforward and honest. I consider that I have done the best job possible and pledge to continue to do my best for New Plymouth and remain dedicated to all things New Plymouth.

I welcome those folk who have put their nominations forward and I look forward to a lively and enjoyable campaign.

Just remember to ensure that you are on the Electoral Roll and that you exercise your democratic right to choose who represents you in Parliament and that you vote for the party that you want to be the responsible Government of New Zealand.

It’s a bright and cold winter’s day as I write this, thank you for reading. Stay warm.

Harry Duyhoven

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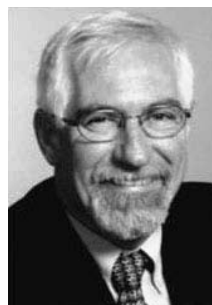
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Development in our coastal environment

As the second round of meetings are completed for the New Plymouth District Council's (NPDC) Coastal Strategy, it is a good time to take a look at what is currently planned for coastal development. Although the readership for *TOM* is mainly within the Oakura community, residents' concern about the coastline reaches far beyond the community boundaries. Development from New Plymouth to Opunake will have an impact on the section of coast used by many residents, whether in the terms of visual impact to the rural landscape, impact on the coastal environment, to foreshore access, to surf breaks or fishing spots.

One interesting point to note is that two different governing bodies regulate planning between New Plymouth and Opunake with two very different sets of planning guidelines. The NPDC consists of a 30-kilometre-wide strip of land along the coast from just south of Mokau to Okato, encompassing New Plymouth and Oakura. The Stony River boundary at Okato around Cape Egmont and south to Waitotara is the South Taranaki District Council (STDC) jurisdiction.

The South Taranaki District Plan for rural subdivision had few restrictions in regards to section size or infrastructure relating to the number of sections in the subdivision, in comparison to the specific rural subdivision regulation in the District Plan of the NPDC.

Between Okato and Opunake several rural subdivisions have been developed over the last two years. The largest in Tai Road, Oaonui of about 30 lots, approximately 12 section subdivision on Porikapa Road and an eight lot subdivision on Puniho Road. This recent interest in rural subdivisions was unexpected and prompted a review of the STDC subdivision plan.

"The subdivision plan was drafted eight or nine years ago and didn't consider land use, impact on roads or the coastal environment," explained Alison Gibson, Planning Manager for STDC. The changes to the plan give the Council an ability to look at all impacts on the environment, coastal access, farm use and productive land issues, and a minimum lot size in the Coastal Protection area of 2000 square metres. Submissions were heard for the plan amendments in June and the changes are expected to be implemented six to eight weeks later.

In the coastal band from New Plymouth to Okato there has also been rural subdivision activity in recent years. In the NPDC proposed District Plan, the minimum size for development is four hectares (a little under 10 acres). Within this area one 1000-square metre lot can be created or two 4000-square metre sites. Each of these lots can have two dwellings. The rules do allow for variance subject to certain conditions, such as design and layout, vehicle access, protection of natural features, provision of public space for recreation, natural hazards, etc. Each development is reviewed by Council planners and is usually subject to several pages of conditions according to Ralph Broad, Manager of Consents for NPDC.

The most recent significant subdivision near Oakura is the farm park, Tapuae Country Estate. Excavation and roads into the Estate have been under construction over the last several months on the Tapuae Hill. On Lower Pitone Road, a rural subdivision with approximately 10 sections is in the planning



Looking north to New Plymouth from Fort St George.



Oakura

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stages, and on Leith Road there is a small subdivision. On the mountain side of Surf Highway 45, a 14 lot subdivision is planned four kilometres up Plymouth Road.

In the New Plymouth District, concern over the future of our coastline by local residents and planners alike, has prompted the NPDC to fund a scoping study to develop a coastal strategy. The idea is to develop a long-term vision for the coast that covers issues like protection, use and development for the next twenty years. The strategy will be used as a guide for managing the coastal environment.

The second round of workshops for the Coastal Strategy were completed from 4 July to 8 July. Information from these meetings and any other feedback sent in by mail, fax or email will be included in the draft New Plymouth Coastal Strategy due out between September and November. Round three of public consultation and submissions will be from December to January 2006, with the final New Plymouth Coastal Strategy scheduled for March 2006.

A discussion document has been produced by the NPDC with ideas for the draft vision, and goals and actions. The challenges identified as facing Oakura have been residential growth, the demands of tourism, infrastructure and services, erosion and protecting areas of significance to Tangata Whenua. The document is available online (see information below) and at the local libraries.

"The challenge must be to reconcile the growth of lifestyle coastal development with inherent use conflicts and still maintain coastal environmental quality for the future. Good planning and development helps the environment, and helps ensure that residents will have a healthy lifestyle, and tourists, holiday makers and other visitors will have continued access to beaches and safe clean recreation areas." *Submission to NPDC by Doug Hislop, Oakura.*

For further information, see the Coastal Strategy online at www.newplymouthnz.com/coastalstrategy/ (click on round two discussions).

To give feedback for the Coastal Strategy Draft (closing date 5 August) write to: NPDC, Freepost 62742, Coastal Strategy, Private Bag 2025, New Plymouth.

Fax: 06 759 6072, Email: coastalstrategy@npdc.govt.nz

By Jane Dove Juneau

Kaitake Community Board

Due to school holidays and some of us seeking the sun (or skiing?), the Board meeting has been cancelled for July. Apologies from those of us unable to attend, having a couple of members away, leaving only five (including Heather Dodunski), gives us few options.

At the June meeting held at the Surf Club (nice to have a place with a view and the warmth of the sun) Brenda Rea, Chief-Executive of Hauora Taranaki PHOS, gave us an enthusiastic address on an initiative to introduce a nurse-led mobile service providing access to counselling, lifestyle checks, dietetics, podiatry and other health checks – a valuable service to the community.

Al Rawlinson presented a petition signed by individuals who would like the Council to erect a retaining wall (similar to the one on Messenger Terrace) in front of the camping ground. Don Harvey spoke on this and was not supportive of any further survey work being undertaken.

There was a report on the proposed pump station site for the sewerage system. Further consultation will be taking place on this project.

A report on the study of the erosion on the beach front of the motor camp was delivered by Council managers and the Board resolved that the investigation of the shoreline be considered

as part of the Coastal Management Strategy within the Oakura Structure Plan.

As for the CBD, an exciting plan is underway for this.

Lots of plans aren't there?

I am glad I said everything takes time – this is the result of the need to consult at every level these days and sometimes I wonder just how much consultation costs. I am of the generation that just did it (built a golf course like that) and it seems to be delivering...

The beach is another story for those of us closely involved with access to the information and willing to listen. We have come to a better understanding of the importance of collecting data. Just today after watching Rugby at Corbett Park I noticed the huge change in the sand deposit – we now have a lovely sandy beach on the North side of the river again.

Be patient, the best decision for the Coast can only be made slowly. We need to remember that the Kaitake Board acts for a large portion of the Coast, not just one area.

TRENZ (Tourism Rendevous New Zealand)

I spent four days at TRENZ conference recently. Approximately 450 buyers from overseas were shopping and Taranaki was high on the list. Many came with the Air NZ article on Taranaki clutched in their hand.

Our stand looked great (many said it was the best!) and many



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of the Coastal Tourism Ventures were well discussed. Pukeiti was very busy – its popularity with international visitors was obvious as many were familiar with its treasures and came back for more. Maori Tourism told some great stories to very excited Asian visitors, who are really looking for cultural experiences, as are most. Puke Ariki delivered a very professional image and its the jewel in the crown of our local tourism industry.

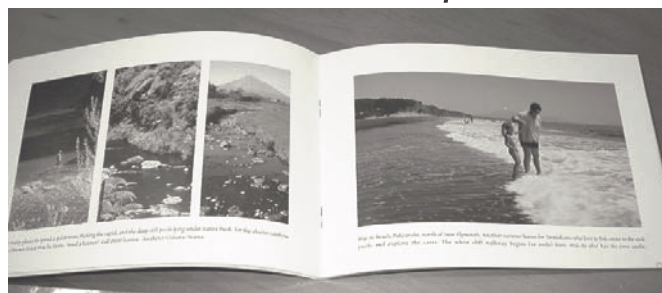
Darryn Muggeridge was super busy selling accommodation and, last but not least, Venture Taranaki Trust were frantically busy. The big screen display of the DVD on Taranaki was breathtakingly gorgeous(it was the first time I had seen it) and many a traveller just stood and took in the stunning mountain to sea vistas and the people who make it such a "surprisingly great experience".

Without a doubt our biggest advantage is just what 99% of tourism buyers are seeking – a wonderful natural environment that can be accessed easily and byall.

Lets just remember that when making decisions that effect the wider community and its economic viability: THINK ABOUT THE BIG PICTURE.

Fay

Taranaki: *Be Here, Be Surprised*



Due to the high demand for my little book, *Taranaki: Be Here, Be Surprised*, I have recently updated and reprinted it with 17 new images. I decided to refresh the book in time for the British Lions' Tour, hence one of my favourite images, Taranaki Rugby Jerseys hanging on the line, on the cover of the new edition. This image is promoted by Tourism New Zealand and has become well known internationally.

The concept has been a huge success. It is a great gift for all occasions and one of the pluses of this book is its size: its easily and cheaply posted overseas (\$3.00). Ex-pat. Taranakians have had no trouble finding it on the internet and my website (www.faylooney.com) has been pretty busy. Consequently, I have sent the book to many corners of the world (I recently I had a request for it from the Orkney Islands!). Many organisations have included it in promotional material to woo conferences and students to our province. A number of our *Last Samurai* friends have been delighted to receive it and it's been fun to hear back from them.

Oakura features prominently in this second volume – there is a shot of our grandson Ben's rugby team playing (and winning) down at Corbett Park, a new image of Okurukuru when the Ferraris visited and a family gathering at Te Koru tepees, among others.

I was incredibly proud to have been asked to photograph Sir Edmund Hillary at Puke Ariki for the opening of his exhibition and although we only had a few minutes to do this, the result was a happy chuckle from this amazing New Zealander and a very precious inclusion in the new volume of *Taranaki: Be Here, Be Surprised*.

Printed by TNL, it truly is a Taranaki product and I look forward to it being around for a while. The Crafty Fox and Four Square have been great supporters and I am indebted to them for their loyalty along with all those of you who often stop me to tell me who you have sent it to recently: it's much appreciated!

Fay Looney

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Sam Mitchell transforms into an orphan for the role of Oliver

Twelve-year-old Sam Mitchell, ex-student of Omata School, now at Devon Intermediate, has embraced the principal role of Oliver in the New Plymouth Operatic Society's performance of *OLIVER!* which opened on the weekend at the TSB Showplace.



Singing and performing are not Sam's only interests. He plays 12th grade rugby and cricket for New Plymouth Old Boys, basketball for Devon Intermediate,

likes to ski, swim and play tennis, play the piano and he has singing lessons with Gabrielle Barr.

Everyone can look forward to a stunning performance from Sam (and everyone else in the cast) and I'm sure this is only the beginning of many more theatrical performances from Sam.

OLIVER! is directed by Viv Baty, the musical director is Jillian Suthon and it is choreographed by Carolyn Murphy. The show has a cast of 65 and a backstage crew of 100. Hundreds of hours have been voluntarily put into

the show to get all the props, costumes and music ready for the performance. This production of *OLIVER!* is the Operatic Society's third performance of the show, the first being in 1971 and the second in 1987. Many of the cast have performed in more than one *OLIVER!* show and the likes of Kevin Landrigan have performed in all three productions.

OLIVER! is a Charles Dickens classic set in 1850 in England and is about an orphan boy who at 13 goes to an undertakers to work but runs away and ends up in the workhouse with a gang of thieves and pick pockets. Unbeknown, Oliver's grandfather is a wealthy man, who becomes Oliver's employer, but Oliver gets accused of stealing and is kidnapped by Fagin, one of the pick pocket gang. Murder occurs before Oliver finds out about his grandfather, although he lives happily with his grandfather in the end.

Sam is a very talented young man who began to show his star qualities at Omata School in 2002 when he had a lead role in the school's musical production *Shake, Ripple and Roll*. His other singing performance was in the *Searchlight Tattoo* held at Yarrows Stadium but *OLIVER!* is his first major acting and singing performance. Sam is the youngest principal in the cast of 65 and is having an absolute blast of a time.

The desire to be in an Operatic Show began when he himself went along to the Society's previous performances and he thought he'd like to give people some enjoyment too. He is enjoying meeting new people and learning from some of the other experienced performers. "It's just a lot of fun!" says Sam. "One of my favourite parts is being tossed in a coffin but the singing is the bit I enjoy the most." Director Viv Baty commented that Sam had an obvious intelligence, maturity and enthusiasm that lent itself to the role of Oliver. She did mention that she was having a hard job trying to get Sam to stop smiling when he should be looking very sorry for himself; such is his enjoyment in the production. The long hours (practices began in February) of rehearsing didn't seem to faze Sam either. Sam sings in nearly a dozen songs and has one solo singing performance, for all of which he knows his lines and everyone else's lines as well!

Other Oakura locals in the production are Barry Brett as Fagin, Anneke Brouwers as one of the company, Jessy Wadeson as Nancy and Kieran Callaghan as the Dodger. So get along to the remaining performances if you haven't been already and support our youngsters and the Operatic Society in their entertaining show of *OLIVER!*

By Kim Ferens

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Firstly, thank you to all those who responded to last month's TOM article requesting feedback on interest in a book group and storytime sessions at the Library. A book group will be launched on Wednesday, 3 August at 5.30pm and will then meet monthly on the first Wednesday evening of each month after that. At this stage I am hoping to have a special guest to share a little about the books they have been reading. More details will be available at the Library closer to the time. Once the book group is in full swing I will then get the ball rolling for regular storytime sessions.

In the meantime the school holiday programme will be up and running with a "Snowy" event for preschoolers and young primary children on Thursday 14 July at 10.30am. The following Thursday at the same time there will be activities for primary age children with a "Chilly" theme. We will also learn about and make Tibetan prayer flags. This ties in with the fabulous Sir Edmund Hillary, Everest and Beyond exhibition currently showing at Puke Ariki. It all involves lots of free fun for the children. Please book if you would like to bring your children to either of these events or for further information call Oakura Library on 759 6060.

To keep the adults busy there has been a lot of new fiction arriving at the Library, including the new Bryce Courtenay title, *Brother Fish*. This novel tells the story of three people from very different backgrounds, although with a common bond of having a tough start to life. Their lives become entwined and together they manage to find wealth, not necessarily legitimately, from the sea. Their story covers eighty years, four continents and more than eight hundred pages. In typical Courtenay style, this saga highlights the power of friendship and love. A must read for all fans of the author of incredibly popular books such as *The Power of One*, *Tandia* and many others.

There's lots to read and lots to do at the Library in the coming months – hope to see you there.

Happy reading.

Brenda

A taste of WOMAD for the Taranaki Festival of the Arts

The Taranaki Festival of the Arts today announced a change to its programme for the "Beat Suite 05", the Festival's all-night party, which takes place on Friday 12 August. Batucada Sound Machine will now feature as part of the event; returning to Taranaki following their hugely successful performances at WOMAD 2005. The sound of this 15-piece band can only be described as massive and had many a WOMAD-goer dancing to a wicked blend of samba-reggae and Brazilian beats fused with funk, hip hop and drum & bass. Festival organiser, Roger King said, "We were highly impressed with their performances at WOMAD and I'm sure that Taranaki will welcome their return." Batucada Sound Machine have replaced punk-ska band The WBC, who have had to withdraw from the event due to contractual obligations. Festival organisers are, however, buoyant about the programme change. "Experiencing Batucada Sound Machine indoors will be an entirely different and more intense experience to their performances at WOMAD," said Roger.

Also featuring as part of this event are Pitch Black, Kora and Pacific Heights along with a whole host of DJs from the Beat Suite sponsor, The Most FM. Tickets for the Beat Suite 05 are available in advance from Ticketek at just \$15 plus booking fee (or \$20 on the door). The full programme is available online at www.artsfest.co.nz



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LANETTE

MUSIC REVIEW by DON JUAN

Doctors, Professors, Kings and Queens:

The Big Ol' Box Of New Orleans

Various (Shout! Factory/Sony BMG).

Doctors, Professors, Kings and Queens is, without any doubt, one of the most impressively packaged box sets that I have ever seen! This deluxe four-CD set appears at a glance to be a hardback book. Look inside and right before your eyes is a plush, purple book (complete with delightfully kitsch gold lettering), which, when opened, not only lists the personnel details for each piece, but also provides track-by-track background information, then goes on to reveal tourist attractions, gorgeous photos, uncover interesting facts and trivia and generally show just why "The Crescent City" is the one American city that should not be missed on a globe-trotting expedition by any music buff. Of course, none of this would mean a damn thing if the music was dull, after all, as the old adage says, "It's what's in the grooves that counts."

So, it's good to be able to report that *The Big Ol' Box Of New Orleans* is also absolutely chock-full of gems, some well-known and others being almost deliciously obscure! Eschewing any chronological order, the set also jumbles styles, delivering a kaleidoscopic, but highly

entertaining musical flow, rather than any form of stylistic sequencing. Ranging between classic "Twenties" jazz by Louis Armstrong and The Hot Seven (Potato Head Blues) and Jelly Roll Morton (I Thought I Heard Buddy Bolden Say) through to Coolbone's hip-hop inflected version of "The Saints", as you would expect, this marvellous set also encompasses classic N'Orleans soul, R & B, blues, Cajun, zydeco, gospel, brass bands, Dixieland jazz and 'fonk'.

Then there are some genuine surprises too, such as the string-band sound of The Red Stick Ramblers (Main Street Blues), Crescent City yiddish sounds by The New Orleans Klezmer All Stars (Not Too Eggy) and even the Latin music of Fredy Omar Con Su Banda (La Negra Tomasa). Hey, there's even a decent show tune (Down In Honky Tonk Town)!

From "Piano Professors" (Champion Jack Dupree, Professor Longhair, James Booker, etc) to "Red Hot Mamas" (Charmaine Neville, Irma Thomas), *Doctors, Professors, Kings and Queens* also includes seminal tracks by Aaron Neville (Tell It Like It Is), Clifton Chenier (Jambalaya), Allen Toussaint (Southern Nights), Fats Domino (I'm Walkin'), Dr. John (Iko Iko), Snooks Eaglin (Red Beans), Ernie K-Doe (Mother-In-Law) and many, many, many more!

A four-CD, 85-track box set doesn't come cheap, but why not pretend that it's Christmas? Go on, treat yourself, you know that you deserve it!

... continued from front page

Oakura Pharmacy: the end of an era and the start of a new one



superficial: the shop décor, lighting and a new computer system being the obvious changes. What won't change is the continuation of the personal service and advice for each and every customer. There are plans to develop this even further with the possibility of home deliveries and an internet service as well as regular product specials.

Colleen has a particular interest in nutrition so the pharmacy will be the ideal place to visit for advice on health and well-being and to purchase nutritional supplements. She has worked at Westown Pharmacy for the past three years and although she is sad to leave the many friends she has made there, she couldn't wait to get out to Oakura to meet the people, face new challenges and make new friends. Catherine comes from a background of pharmacies and already manages the very busy practise of Vivian Pharmacy. Ian Lobb is a well known pharmacist from New Plymouth. We look forward to the Oakura Pharmacy continuing in our community so pop in and say hello to our new pharmacist and her assistant.

By Kim Ferens

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“Right to Roam” legislation slammed

A community meeting to discuss the contentious issue of the “right to roam” was held at the Omata Community Hall last month with Act MP and retired farmer Gerry Eckhoff delivering an informative and interesting account of the potential effects of the Government's proposed bill. The forum was attended by more than thirty concerned community members of the Omata and Oakura districts.

Dubbed by opponents as the “Right to roam” or the “Wander at will” bill, the intention is to better facilitate public access across private property to significant waterways, in recognition that public enjoyment of the natural environment is becoming increasingly closed off due to private development.

The Act Party, together with Federated Farmers, have slammed the Bill saying that not only is the proposed legislation a radical solution to the question of access, it is also an abuse of the property rights of individual landowners. The planned legislation proposes that any person may cross within 50 meters of any house but carry no weapons, have no dogs and no use of four-wheel drives – yet it has not addressed important issues such as safety and how to ensure against accidents, says Mr Eckhoff. He claims that this will invariably have far reaching implications in respect of changing the dynamics of protecting oneself on private property and the liability of landowners, and that the guidelines with respect to dogs, guns and walking perimeters will not be adhered to.



Mr Eckhoff argued that rural New Zealand is not a playground and that if such legislation is passed, it will almost certainly spill over to eventually include the revoking of property rights for all New Zealanders. “If the Government can take from rural people, it will inevitably take from others also,” he said, likening the potential situation to that of the Mugabe regime in Zimbabwe. He urged rural landowners to take a strong stance in respect of this matter, saying that “we need to breed more jersey bulls for Parliament, as they are good at holding their ground.” Mr Eckhoff also reminded attendees that silence is regarded as apathy and acceptance in Parliament, and that it is extremely important to exercise one's rights in the democratic process.

Since the meeting, Mr Sutton has abandoned any plan to introduce the bill before the election, acknowledging that the proposal did not have enough public support and that more consultation is needed. A recent poll showed that 60.3% did not think that the public should be allowed access to rivers and lakes across private farm land. He has also indicated that the access plan may eventually be introduced incrementally and in a diluted form, with the least controversial parts being introduced first.

Mr Sutton has also refuted claims such as Mr Eckhoff's that the plan was to introduce rights to roam anywhere on private land. Instead, he says access paths across private land would be created only after negotiation and a fund was proposed to be established to compensate landowners.

The Adventures of KOREAN KELLY

My return to Korea after a two-month hiatus means a brief trip to the local immigration office in a neighbouring district. The summer weather brings with it a thick tropical heat – a major contrast to the icy dryness of winter and a shock to my senses after enjoying the cool Taranaki autumn. As I walk to the bus stop a constant stream of traffic and accompanying horn-blaring flows past me. I recently read that an average of 21 people per day die on the roads here and realise the beeping is actually to warn other drivers not to hit them, as opposed to a sign of recognition or anger as in New Zealand.

The bus is air-conditioned and I happily pay my four dollars to escape the sticky heat – a warning of the impending monsoon season. The bus weaves its way past hundreds of fifteen-storey skyscrapers, thousands of restaurants and assorted stores displaying wares from pets to light shades and bathrooms. They seem empty of customers – I don't know how they survive.

My new abode is a small satellite city northwest of Seoul, called Ilsan. It's one of the closest major settlements to North Korea, yet the public are seemingly unaware of any approaching danger, confident in their government and in the possibility of future reunification with their northern cousins.

We drive into a district of rice paddies, market gardens and hundreds of plastic wrapped tunnel houses. The spring weather has brought about an explosion of growth and the green foliage is bright against the dusty soil and old building supplies scattered among the small houses. I see an assortment of large stone carvings along the roadside: happy Buddha, water feature, ferocious tiger. Next to them is an old crop dusting airplane with no wings. This definitely makes me scratch my head.


Finally I arrive at my destination. Its name, pronounceable only by stretching of the lips in an impersonation of some weird species of wide-mouthed frog, would have been completely foreign to my New Zealand English-speaking tongue only a year earlier. I speak in Korean to the immigration official, much to his delight, and he agrees to fast-track my visa application so I can make my coming rugby trip to Mongolia.

I stop at a food trolley parked on the side of the footpath and order a cup of dokboki, the long rice cakes, rubbery fish cake and spicy sauce filling the hole in my stomach. I wash it down with a cup of steamy fermented soybean soup. Delicious.

I head into my third year here with a lot more confidence. It's almost beginning to feel like home...

Annyonghi keseyo

Kelly Ryan




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The toilet is blocked and we cannot bath the children until it is cleared.

My lavatory seat is cracked, where do I stand?



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Volunteer ambulance officers:

MAKING A DIFFERENCE

Three local women give up much of their free time to serve the community in the role of Volunteer Ambulance Officers working for the Taranaki District Health Board Ambulance Service, where they do not get paid for their work. But all three are adamant they get more benefits from the job than they sacrifice. Jay Paterson of Omata has been an ambulance officer for eight years. Jo Scott of Oakura has been an ambulance officer for 18 months and Di Carswell of Omata for ten months. The Taranaki Ambulance Service has 26 permanent staff (12 in New Plymouth) and 120 volunteers.

What do Volunteer Ambulance Officers do and how do you become one?

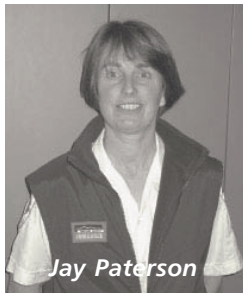
Volunteers (or vollies for short) need not have any previous first aid training but it is helpful if they do. There are no special skills necessary, but the ideal officer would be someone with a reasonable level of physical fitness, who has had varied life experiences and likes to help people. Vollies are trained both on the job and through classroom courses. They work alongside permanent ambulance officers at the New Plymouth Station, where they assist in providing patient care and driving. A new volly begins "triple crewing" for a short period and then undertakes an induction training weekend that covers basic life support skills.

After a settling in period they undertake the Pre-Hospital Emergency Care Course, which includes defibrillation, oxygen therapy skills and enhanced first aid care. A driver training course is also provided. After each shift, debriefs are held and analysis is made of the procedures carried out, which is also another way of learning how to do the job better. Actual ambulance call-outs can involve routine trips to and from the airport with patients, transporting patients with medical conditions to hospital or full-on accidents and medical emergencies, although there has been a drop in road accident call outs over recent years.

If you would like to find out more about being a volunteer ambulance officer phone 0800 735 466.

Jay Paterson became an ambulance officer because she wanted to help people. Her love of the outdoors and experience on ski patrols meant she already had experience in first aid but she wanted to continue that training further. Jay enjoys "making a difference" in the community and to the outcome for her patients – even the small things she does can mean the difference between a good result and a bad one.

Ambulance work is something Jay can fit in around her family. Her husband Don is a mountain guide and the children, Erin and Liam, attend schools in New Plymouth. Jay also teaches first aid courses for Marine and Offshore, often up to 20 hours per week on top of the weekly day shift and night shift for the Ambulance Service. A day shift is 10 hours and a night shift is 14 hours. Sometimes it has been difficult juggling her paid work and family life, but friends and neighbours have helped out. Jay also works as a paid casual ambulance officer when the Service is short of staff. Apart from the immense satisfaction she gets out doing ambulance work, Jay has gained many skills she would



Jay Paterson



Jo Scott

otherwise not have had or would not have been able to afford to get. Some of the courses cost hundreds of dollars, but all training provided by the Service is free for volunteers. Immunisations are also provided for free and a meal is provided for each shift.


Jo Scott also became an ambulance officer because she enjoys helping people, and because she enjoys being part of a team that makes a positive difference to others, especially in an emergency situation. Plus it is wonderful gaining new skills at the same time. In the 18 months Jo has been an ambulance officer she has never found the job dull and boring, and there aren't many jobs that don't become tedious. It can be just a little bit frightening sometimes, with all the things to learn, but each new shift is different and exciting, with the unexpected usually happening. You can never assume a call out to a chest pain sufferer will be a heart attack. Jo is about to start her National Certificate in Ambulance (Patient Care and Transport) – Part A, having already completed her Certificate in Ambulance (Primary Care). She also participates in monthly training days. Jo sets aside every

Wednesday for a 10 hour shift from 8am to 6pm. Her husband Craig is Oakura's Fire Chief and Jo is also the Secretary/Treasurer for the Fire Brigade. Jamie and Liam, their children, attend Oakura School.

Di Carswell had always liked the idea of doing volunteer service abroad, but with young children (Suzy and Johnathon) she felt that that was unrealistic. Helping out in the Volunteer Ambulance Service is a way she can still help others and it is right on her doorstep. In the ten months Di has been an ambulance officer, she has had many great experiences and wishes she had put her hand up years ago. The work is interesting and each day you never know what is going to happen. No two shifts are ever the same. Di enjoys meeting new people and has met some really lovely patients and their families. "The training given is excellent and it is a real pleasure working with some terrific, highly skilled professionals, who are very giving, caring and supportive," says Di.

"Volunteers are a crucial part of our provincial service," says Ian May, Taranaki District Health Board Regional Ambulance

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Di Carswell

Manager. "We have a tremendous group of volunteers, who are very dedicated and enthusiastic. Seeing them develop the skills and confidence to deal with many crisis situations is a great thing to watch and be part of. We deal with over 13,000 patients in Taranaki every year, and volunteers would be involved in a significant number of those cases. I have absolute admiration for the work they do," says Mr May.

By Kim Ferens

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OAKURA PLUNKET

The coffee mornings continue through term time on a Friday morning from 9am to 10.30am at the St James Church hall on the corner of Donnelly Street and Surf Highway 45. It has been great to see so many new faces this term as well as our regular attendees. The home baking has been especially spectacular so make sure you get along for a cuppa, cake and a chat – it's a great way to meet other parents and young children.

Look forward to seeing you and your young ones on Fridays. The last one for this term will be on 8 July and we'll be starting up again next term on 29 July. All welcome.

Catherine Keenan

Oakura Plunket Committee

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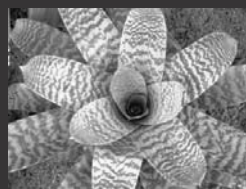
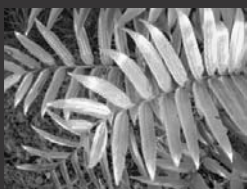
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OAKURA school news

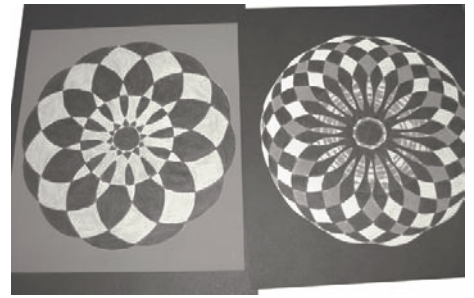
Junior school project

Early in term 2, the Year 1 and 2 children in Rooms 1 and 2, studied Oakura Village as a social studies project.

The children walked to the shops and businesses to talk about what shops there are, what can be bought at them and why we would go to each of the businesses, then they visited two locations. Room 1 pupil, Sam Raumati (age 5) told me her class visited the Oakura Four Square. The children were each given the chance to put a price sticker on a bar of chocolate then after a tour of the shop, they were all treated to a mandarin from the fruit section.

Room 2 pupil Daniel Barron (age 6) recalls that his class went to Vertigo and saw work being done on a surfboard. He described how a fan blew the fibreglass dust away.

Back in the classroom, each class made a map of the village. Room 1 children cut out the shapes of each building and glued them on a drawing of the street while the Room 2 children drew an aerial view map of the area (pictured above and right).



Harrison West. "2-D Circle Work 2005."



Connor anderson. "Tessalation of Afro Guy."

Methanex Maths Fair 2005

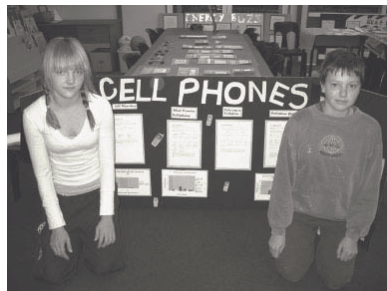
Our Year 7 and 8 pupils spent several weeks in term 2 working on their entries for this year's Maths Fair. They either created two and three-dimensional artworks based on mathematical concepts and shapes, or conducted an investigation and displayed their findings on display boards.

Results from the Maths Fair will be published in the August issue of *TOM*.

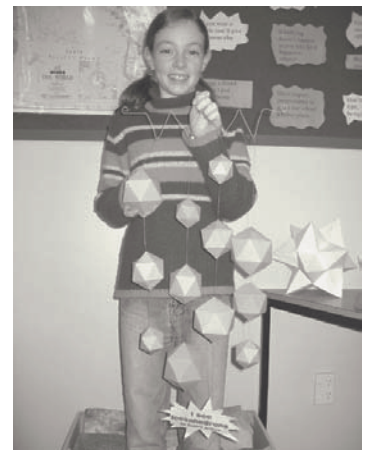
These photos are examples of some of their work.



Casey Ussher. "2-D dissected Phi."



Sasha Barleyman and Anne-Marie Petty. We conducted a statistical investigation on cell phones, asking year 7 & 8 pupils and the teachers about how much they spent on their cellphone. The average is \$20 per month.



Sophie Ardern. "I constructed a mobile out of icosahedrons shapes."

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Casey Stevens and Zoe Laing-Aiken (absent). "Our statistical investigation was about which energy drink was the best and worst to buy. We concluded that V was the worst and Powerade was the best."



Melissa Muggeridge. 3-D artwork called Plastic Fantastic."

Nicole Sturgess. "3-D triangle Fish."



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KAITAKE KINDERGARTEN

During the winter months lots of arts and crafts are on offer for the children at Kaitake Kindergarten. The children have been following a "scarecrow" theme lately and most have cut out the shape from cloth, sewn on buttons for the face, sewn around the outside shape and then filled the scarecrow with stuffing. The finished results have been pretty spectacular as you can see from Brianna McCready's scarecrow in the photo below.

Our breakfast at the kindergarten, in true "Goldilocks and the Three Bears" fashion, was lots of fun for the children, who came along in their pyjamas and enjoyed a healthy breakfast together. The teachers then acted out the story of Goldilocks and the Three Bears, much to the delight of the children.



The committee at Kaitake Kindergarten is putting on a Craft Workshop day for children aged up to 10 years on Wednesday, 20 July at the Oakura Community Hall (put it in on your calendar NOW). This is a fundraising event for the kindergarten and there will be heaps of different crafts for the children to try such as mask making, flax weaving, picture painting, sand trays, flag making, painting, "ugly creature" making and more.

The costs will be:

3 to 5 year olds – \$5

6 to 10 year olds – \$10

Family pass – \$20

(Children must be under the supervision of an adult at all times, they cannot be left.)

You can pre-register or come and pay on the day. If you would like to register, please phone Margaret Crighton on 752 7844 or Robyn Lander on 752 7016. Lunch and snacks will be available to purchase and there will be storytelling for younger ones as well as a dance display from Raeleen and her crew from Dance Highway 45. The event will run from 10am to 2pm and we look forward to lots of support from the community for this fundraiser.

Catherine Keenan

Kaitake Kindergarten Committee

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Oakura PLAYCENTRE

It has been a very busy month with lots of new families joining. We have recently employed a supervisor to help with our Wednesday sessions and it is Sharon's job to help extend the children's play and learning. One of the activities she has introduced this term has been group baking, including making pizza with toppings from savoury to sweet – a few varied combinations were created! Other activities have been painting on different textures – from painting with sand to painting big boxes (inside and out, although I think more went on the children!) and egg cartons – and flax weaving or "Harekeke", which was a big hit with the girls. Sharon is currently getting to know the children and will be helping with our Planning and Evaluation meetings and programme.

All families are welcome at Playcentre and if you would like to know more either come along and see us on a Monday or Wednesday between 9 am and 12 noon or phone Melissa on 752 1056.

Lil Logan



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OMATA school news

New playground

With support from the TSB Community Trust a new obstacle course style playground has been built, along with a BMX track at the end of the field. Children loved the action on the existing skateboard park but they were getting bigger, faster and more skilful with their bikes so Brian O'Keeffe, a parent and Board of Trustees member, had a brainwave and all of a sudden the pile of dirt at the back of his place became a BMX track and the talk of the school. The skateboard park is still popular with skateboards, roller blades and scooters but at present it is the BMX track that is the favourite at playtimes. The new playground features a climbing wall, rope ladder, 12-metre long flying fox and a rope swing, all arranged so pairs of children can run through the course together. Children helped with the design and parents had working bees to construct it. Brian says, "The idea was to keep it looking natural with all the timber and to make it into a challenging obstacle course that can be extended further down the field in the future."

Creative Incubator

No, not a place to hatch imaginative chicks, but a place to hatch great ideas. At last year's Principals' Conference in Melbourne, I caught up with the latest developments in creative thinking and special abilities programmes. One of the things mentioned by Professor Di Fleming in her address, "Generating Genius, Creating Cultures of Creativity", was a special lab she had set up in Melbourne for secondary students, which sounded fascinating. The concept promoted was that all schools should have a space for long-term creative processes to take place. Professor Fleming mentioned having a shed or a tent, but with the new classroom turning into a reality for Omata, I thought that this was the perfect opportunity to develop a special space in the school to help Omata students realise their creative potential.

So was born the Creative Incubator, a flexible space designed to allow children the time to turn their ideas into a finished product. Staff have developed a set of responsibilities for the students that use the incubator so that they become focussed, considerate users of the space. Persistence is the key to creativity and by giving students a place to leave their projects and carry on with them again and again, we expect them to develop more complex, imaginative and original solutions. It is also a wonderful place to take groups of students for special lessons. At present we have an extension writing group and Spanish lessons taking place in there as well as a rather elaborate bridge under construction. Already we are wondering how we managed without it!

Open Day

Open Day on 24 June was an amazing success. We managed to find a window of fine weather to hold our outdoor activities and the opening of the new classroom. Mayor Peter Tennent did the official opening along with our newest new entrant Lachlan Barrett and Ben Taylor, who has been at Omata the longest.

It was an amazing day. We had vehicles of all descriptions on the field, a decorated bike competition and garages (vertical group activities) as well as a human treasure hunt. This all tied up our "Safe Journeys" rich topic for the term and was an excellent way to end the week. What a buzz.

Karen Brisco



Mayor, Peter Tennant officially opens the new classroom.



Entries in the decorated bike competition.



William Jones' grin says it all at the recent Vertical Horizon school camp.



Kirstie McLean of Omata School battles it out on the netball court against Norfolk.

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Intrepid travels



Hayley and Stuart cool off with the locals.

Travellers Hayley Cunningham of Oakura and fiancé Stuart Bennett take a break from Mynamar and travel to Laos and Cambodia. *TOM* featured Hayley last year as she was about to head to Mynamar on a teaching holiday. Stuart has written a highly entertaining account of their trip, one I'm sure they'll never forget!

From Stuart...

We are currently in Vientiane, pampering ourselves with nice accommodation and café breakfasts – the last two weeks have involved mainly rice and \$3 a night rooms!

We left Yangon on 29 May, laden down with antiques and cheap bottles of Myanmar whiskey (50 cents a bottle!). It took a bit of persuading and Hayley's charm to get everything through customs, but I'm pleased to say we finally got it all out. I just wish I'd had the camera when they stopped Hayley, searched her cabin bag and discovered a 5 kg antique iron – there she was trying to explain to the customs official what it was by pretending to iron her shirt!

From Bangkok we bused up to Chaing Khong, near where the borders of Myanmar, Laos and Cambodia meet. We arrived there in the morning, took a boat across the Mekong River to Huay Xai, Laos. At this stage we rather naively decided to carry on and catch the bus to Luang Nam Tha – what was supposed to be a 7-hour journey turned into a 12-hour nightmare, with a combination of dirt roads, monsoons and mechanical failures throughout the day. We arrived in Luang Nam Tha at 11 pm, relieved, but sore and tired. Just to rub salt in our wounds, when they finally threw our backpacks down from the roof of the bus, we discovered that they, and their contents, were soaking wet!



Hayley enjoying the company of village children.

We spent a few days there, exploring the countryside on motorbikes and generally recuperating from our journey. From there it was onto Luang Prabang, a beautiful town on the banks of the Mekong River. UNESCO has described Luang Prabang as "the best preserved city in South East Asia", a reputation it truly lives up to. We hired a local guide for a two-day trek into the bush, getting to see some of the more remote villages and some really amazing scenery. Our first day was six hours of slashing and cutting our way through some of the thickest jungle I have ever seen. (Well, if I'm to be truthful, it was more a case of Hayley and me following while our guide did the slashing and cutting!) We spent the night in a small village, enjoying the local hospitality (especially our guide, who disappeared for much of the night with a local lass!). The next day was a lot easier and involved a few hours walking before catching a canoe down river and back to town.

We then bused down to Vang Vieng, a groovy little backpacker town filled with cushioned cafés and dodgy little opium dens. We explored a few caves on the outskirts of town, did some washing and generally hung around for a couple of days.

From there we did a two-day rafting trip down the Nam Ngum to Vientiane. We rafted for about four hours on the first day, before arriving at a camp on the banks of the river. We spent that night eating fresh river fish and drinking Laos whiskey with the local fisherman. The next morning one of the fishermen caught a huge lizard, so we got to eat that for breakfast – I think I still prefer my weetbix though! That day we rafted for about another four hours over some of the biggest rapids I have ever experienced: grade 5+. We had an American couple and an Austrian girl on the raft with us and I'm pleased to say "Team New Zealand" held the fort, while the other nationalities went flying overboard at every second rapid! Unfortunately one of them injured herself quite badly towards the end of the day.

We are in Vientiane as I write and have half-made the decision to fly from here to Phom Phenn in a couple of days. I don't know if we're getting a little soft in our old age, but the thought of another 3-4 days of Laos bus trips to the Cambodian border really just doesn't appeal!

Stuart



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St James Church Oakura:
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454 Plymouth Rd, phone Joanna Smith-Holley 752 1016.

Kick Boxing & Self Defence:
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Thursdays at Oakura Hall 6.00-7.00pm.
Contact Jim Hoskin 752 7337.

Senior Citizens:
Meet tuesdays in St James Church lounge for cards and bowls. All welcome, phone 752 7864 for enquiries.

Twilight Bowls:
Thursdays 5pm at the Oakura Bowling and Social Club.
All Welcome.

Dee Luckin in the Lions' cage

Initially my role was to be the official time-keeper for the Taranaki/Lions match. That would have seen me sitting in the T.M.O box with Paddy O'Brien and possibly even helping Paddy in deciding if a try had been scored.

On the morning of the match, my role was changed to manager of the Blood Bin injuries. My job would have involved: ensuring that an injury was a Blood Bin issue, some time-keeping as Blood Bins are only allowed to be off the field for 15 minutes, communicating with team managers on the time left before the player had to be back on the field, and ensuring the player's wound was appropriately cleaned and covered and that they had no blood on themselves or their clothing. Fortunately (or unfortunately, depending on your view) there were no Blood Bins that were required to leave the field and I had a relatively quiet night watching the game from the sideline.

Privileges of the job saw me mixing with the players and professional referees prior to the game. After the game I got to meet Sir Clive Woodward and learn some interesting things about the Lions team like that they have a new warm up kit and tracksuit for every game. They receive two sets of full playing gear per game with the labels cut off so they don't rub against the skin. All of this is ironed and folded neatly in the team's changing room ready for them on their arrival at the ground.

I was amused when I arrived at school the next day (without having had the chance to tell the children my role at the game had been changed and that I wasn't in the T.M.O box) and I got bailed up by a passionate Year 8 girl swearing that one of the tries scored by the Lions during the game wasn't actually a try. She was relieved to find out that I hadn't played a role in awarding the try against Taranaki!

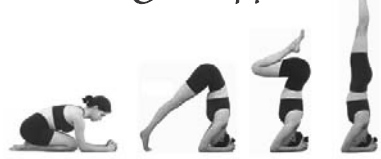
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Winter Solstice inspires candlelit yoga

They say you should regularly try something you've never done before so recently I went along to Sarsha Hood's Winter Solstice yoga class. I didn't know anything about yoga except that it had something to do with "dogs" and relaxation, and the girls at the gym said they slept well after their yoga sessions. What did I have to lose? So after a hectic day I went along to the Oakura Hall, set up my mat (supplied), lit my little candle and settled back to relax in the soothing candlelit atmosphere.

The heaters had warmed up the hall and it was nice and toasty, so the yoga began. I found out about "dogs" all right: "downward dogs" and "upward dogs" but no "sleeping dogs"! It was all very calming and gentle with lots of deep breathing and stretching.

The Winter Solstice yoga was about the rejuvenating, re-energising, re-balancing and restoring of the body's systems. A quiet (apart from the snoring!) and meditative relaxation exercise at the end was a nice finish to the evening's yoga. I was off home to sleep like a "dead dog"! The next day I awoke to a few aches and pains in places I didn't know I had! But I'm off to yoga again to fix those aches and do away with them for good. Plus it was such a wonderful way to relax after a busy day.

Yoga is 5,000 years old and it certainly felt like you were taking part in an ancient ritual that revered the body and they say yoga makes you look younger, so now I'm well and truly hooked!

Yoga instructor Sarsha Hood has been practising yoga for eight years and teaching for three years. Classes are held at Oakura Hall on Tuesdays 7pm to 8.30pm, with beginners' class on Thursdays at 8.30pm. In August Sarsha is also starting a Saturday morning class from 9am. Private lessons are also available. Sarsha recently became qualified in yoga teaching with a Diploma from IYTA (International Yoga Teachers Association). According to Sarsha, the benefits of yoga are that it helps you cope better with life's ups and downs; it is a holistic type of exercise that works on every level: physiological, hormonal, emotional and physical. It massages your internal organs and gives you a sustained energy and, because you are lifting your own body weight, it develops strength, flexibility and endurance. It is also a lot of fun so come along and give it a go.

By Kim Ferens



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Omata Community Hall



The Omata Community Hall has a long history. Old school records of 1897 tell of Euchre parties and the community ball being held in the school's classroom as no hall existed then. Using the classroom as a hall compromised the school as records also tell of the school committee getting fed up with the vandalism caused by 'enthusiastic' party goers, so the committee screwed the school desks to the floor so they could not be moved for dancing. So it was time for a hall so one was built on Mr Clemow's land, opposite the Omata Stockade on South Road. The Omata Public Hall Society was set up in June 1917. The hall had a large 4 foot wide fireplace. Local residents would drop off logs for the fire as they passed by. The stage was small. An unlined supper room doubled as a dressing room for concerts. Two people walked along pulling the curtain on its wire to operate the stage curtain, ensuring it met in the middle. Roy and Rob Penwarden prepared the hall for functions by polishing the floor with candle grease. It was often too slippery and had to be sprinkled with talcum powder. Hydrangeas and ponga ferns were used as inexpensive decorations. Alcohol was prohibited within a quarter of a mile of the hall. The local boys would hide their beer under a hedge just outside this boundary. Patrons of the hall parked their cars in Mr Penwardens paddock. World War Two servicemen were welcomed home with a party in the hall. 21st birthdays, weddings, euchre evenings, concerts, fancy dress balls, bridal showers, WDFE, Farmers Union Meetings, Polling, Annual meetings of the Royal Oak Dairy Factory, table tennis, home guard training were just some of the events held in the Omata Hall. In 1956, South Road was widened and the Omata Hall was demolished. The closest hall for the community to use was now the Hurford Road Hall. This hall was first opened in 1891 by Mr Richard Morgan and cost ?146. The land was donated by the Dawes family and is now owned by the Robinsons. The hall was destroyed by fire and was rebuilt by volunteers in 1932. Farmers donated bobby calves to purchase materials. Hurford Road hall's fate was sealed in 1988 when Cyclone Bola lifted it off its piles and was beyond repair. A new community hall was built beside Omata School and was officially opened by The Mayor - Claire Stewart in 1994. It cost \$105000 and took 2 ½ years to construct. Donations were made by the Lotteries Commission, New Plymouth District Council, community donations and voluntary labour. Since its construction the hall has been used on two separate occasions as a classroom because of increases in the school roll, ironic in a way since hall users were banned from using the classroom for functions.

By Kim Ferens

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TOM KID PROFILE

NAME: Alex Reid

AGE: 9

SCHOOL: Oakura School

YEAR: 5

TEACHER: Mrs Zieltes

MY FAVOURITE THINGS:

FOOD: Fish and chips

ACTIVITY: Hanging out with my friends

GAME/SPORT: Netball

MOVIE: Garfield

BOOK: Magic Pony

BEST FRIENDS: Ellie, Jess, Renee, Miriam, Lauren, Eloise, Milla, Amelia, Grace and Lucy

★

SPECIAL THINGS ABOUT ME: I have a good sense of humour and am kind.

WHEN I GROW UP I AM GOING TO: be a vet.

What has a bottom at its top?

A leg.

What do you call a deer with no eyes?

No idea.

What do you call a deer with no eyes and no legs?

Still no idea.

What do you get when two dinosaurs crash?

Tyrannasaurus wrecks!

I enjoy dancing because . . .

. . . I've been dancing for 6 years and absolutely love it. It's great fitness.

Annette Brouwers

. . . Great fun with an awesome teacher and enjoyable.

Loren Greensill

. . . I like doing Hip Hop. Hip to the hop.

Danni Fletcher

Jodie

. . . cool moves to use in competitions and impromptu and you are an awesome teacher. Thanks.

Milla

. . . I enjoy the adult class! Great way to keep fit and have a good laugh at the same time.

. . . the cool, nice moves. You're cool, very cool, Raeleen!

Rosa

. . . it's fun and I like doing the arm bits.

Rebecca

. . . I like doing the hip dance. Swinging my hips.

Penny Johnson

. . . the dances Raeleen teaches are really cool and fun.

Sophie Ardern

. . . I like watching the big girls after us.

Emily Waite

. . . I like the dance teacher and I like how she does the dance moves.

Molly Lumb

. . . of the funky music and learning new moves. You rock Raeleen!!!

Olivia Thame

. . . you get lots of exercise out of it and Raeleen's a really fun, enjoyable teacher. I love Hip Hop, it's not like other types of dancing, it's funky.

Hannah

. . . we learn new things and get to do exams and perform in front of people.

Amy Barron

. . . I learn funky new moves.

Eva Reid



Dance highway 45 has been captivating the energy and enthusiasm of children and adults for 13 years. At the age of 16, dance tutor Raeleen Luckin established her dance school here in Oakura, leaving after two years to complete her Primary Teacher Training in Palmerston North. Returning to teach at various primary schools around Taranaki, she has built up her dance school to become a very positive and enjoyable environment for everyone. The focus for this year has been on the fun and relaxed style known as Hip Hop, which is popular with all ages. Classes are held in the Oakura Hall for children 4 years and up - including an adult class. Phone 752 7761 to enrol.

. . . I like twirling around.

Samantha

. . . keep fit.

Paige Burrows



Anne Wilson

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