

TOMOKATO

AUGUST 2010

Abby brings home the silverware

Local teenager Abby Bridgeman has once again proved that her talent in playing inline hockey is of world standard. Along with her other 10 New Zealand team members Abby has brought home from the USA, two silver cups for getting second in two competitions in the Amateur Athletics Union (AAU) Junior World Olympics. The AAU Junior World Olympics is the biggest amateur sporting event in USA, attracting nearly 20,000 competitors across all sports and 3000 athletes competing in rollersports. New Zealand has been competing in the AAU Olympics since 2005.

You can imagine the competition is very fierce and fast and Abby says it was like nothing else she has ever experienced in her 11 years of playing inline hockey. No competition here in the Southern Hemisphere comes

(Continued on page 2)

Left, Abby with the two team cups for winning silver.

Below, Abby eyeing up the goal in Huntington.



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cover story Abby Bridgeman

is also a local player and coach. Speaking of the coach, Abby says Anna was instrumental in helping the girls achieve silver – adapting the game strategy to suit the opposition. The tactic was to play a defensive game, retain the puck and skate fast! Krystyna Beardman – New Zealand Inline Hockey Association (NZIHA) official said she believes “the ability to play other international teams and teams from the USA strengthens our own player’s skill development and commitment to the sport of inline hockey. We sent a team to New Orleans in 2005, the majority now still play and have participated in World Championships as senior men players in Europe. Some have also returned home and added to their club coaching numbers and shared their experiences and skills with others. In addition we have players who now also commit to coaching our NZ representative teams after competing internationally.

The experience for these athletes when attending the AAU Junior Olympics will stay with these young athletes for a long time. It is an “educational” trip for some who may never have travelled before or only been as far as Australia in the past.”

Abby is justifiably proud of her achievements in Los Angeles and they sit nicely alongside her other outstanding achievements in inline hockey – NZ Rep since 2007; Central Region player since 2005. And all this started at Okato Primary School when Abby joined the school inline team as a seven year old. Abby says she is competitive and loves winning and enjoys playing team sports.

Next year as Abby heads off to University in Wellington to start her nursing degree she will continue to play inline hockey for the Wellington Penguins and pursue her future hockey dreams.

Special thanks go to all the people, clubs and groups who have helped Abby achieve her goals thus far: Her mum and dad – Rob and Di, the Okato Lions, Taranaki Secondary School Sports Association, The Ravens Club, TSB Community Trust and the Lion Foundation.

By Kim Ferens

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Let's get the community healthier!

Okato Pool landscaping

New Plymouth District Council has completed the second stage of its landscape vision at our local pool.

New look for the pool area.



Mike Roberts, Aquatic Operations Manager, informs me that the first stage completed was the sunshade near the toddler's pool (funded by the Lions Foundation), and a landscape spruce up has just been completed.

The bank adjacent to the Bowling Club has been landscaped, with all of the overgrown plant matter removed and replaced with weed mat, bark ground cover and low maintenance plants. This now puts more emphasis on the beautiful native trees surrounding the pool.

The men's changing rooms had several leaks in the roof, which have now been repaired, and a new false ceiling is in place. Future improvements in mind for Okato Pool include opening up the pool to the grassed area by removing sections of a fence, and constructing steps down to the pool.

by Milly Carr

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Community Trust Hall

It is really nice to be able to walk around the village of Okato and see people taking pride in their properties and buildings within our community.

I am not sure that many of you are aware of our local Community Trust Hall, situated on Cumming Street, and the makeover it has received just recently.

Thanks to the wonderful people within our community who work together on the committee and maintain the integrity of this building. The committee have made this possible, with a successful application for a TSB Community Trust grant for \$7,000. I would like to take this opportunity to say a BIG thanks to our local school caretaker Mr Graham Dudley who works tremendously hard to keep Coastal Taranaki School looking beautifully manicured and always very well presented. Thank you Graham.

The new hall roof going on.



Chairperson, Jim Lawn, says, "We are very fortunate to have such a wonderful group of people within the committee and a big thanks to Iris Putt, Wendy Clement and Yvonne Marsh. Also Merv Putt, who is not a committee member, is always happy to perform those extra manual tasks when they present themselves. It would be nice to see some new members on board as a few of the existing committee are 'maturing', and we welcome anyone wishing to present new ideas."

Brian Hill Builders have erected a new Coloursteel roof, and the exterior received a paint job completed by Anton Mora. It really looks great.

The Community Trust Hall, gifted to Okato, has served the community for many years as the original Masonic Lodge. Its purpose is to cater for the older generation in the community and it was set up as a trust, providing lower cost housing within the village. They are grateful for the financial position they are in to be able to own and maintain three flats, of which all three are occupied.

At present the Hall is utilised by the Okato Historical Society and opens its doors occasionally, giving people the opportunity to view the memorabilia. They usually open when the Garden Festivals are open.

by Milly Carr



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Introducing Karen and Graham Chard and their all-new Okato Takeaways

Enthusiastic new owners, a complete refit, a fresh new look, and an exciting new menu signal a new era for Okato Takeaways. Karen and Graham Chard, taking a new direction in their lives, have made it happen.

Graham was born in this area and grew up here. His parents, Cherie and John Chard, worked a dairy farm on Oxford Road, next to the factory. Cherie is part of the Hill family that hails from Puniho Pa and is famous in rugby and basketball circles. John's ancestors, including Robert Frederick Roebuck, a local carrier and pound keeper during the 1880s, also lived here. Frederick's grandson, Frank Roebuck of Kitchen Adventures, is Graham's second cousin.

Karen was born and raised in Waihi, but she has links to the Roebuck family too. Robert's brother, Frank Earnest Roebuck, married a woman who had two daughters. One of those daughters, Willmott Jane, is Karen's great-great-grandmother.

On leaving Spotswood College, Graham joined the Royal New Zealand Air force at Whenuapai Air Base, to train initially as a drill instructor and then as an electrician and avionics technician. After 36 years' service, he has risen to the rank of Warrant Officer. It was at Whenuapai that he met Karen, who was a driving instructor/aviation re-fueller. The couple married eight years ago. They spent a few days here in 2005 during the course of a camping holiday, renewed family ties and fell in love with the area. They bought a house with a few acres on the main road just north of Okato township, and went back to work, dreaming of the day they would return, renovate the house and live under the mountain forever.

Meanwhile, another dream appeared on their horizon. Karen had once taken two years without pay to run a dairy just outside the compound at Whenuapai. She had built it up "from nothing" and had developed a lunch bar business that ran in tandem with it. ("That's where Karen developed her passion for food," Graham tells me, proudly.) So when the local fish and chip shop came

on the market, Karen and Graham recognised in themselves the collective skills, the flair and the drive to make a go of it. More importantly, they believed that the business would complement those already here, and in doing so contribute to a stronger business community. "The development of the village is more important than just our business, because if the village is successful, the shop will be successful too." Graham ventures.

Still, it was a brave move, for it meant that Karen had to resign from the Air Force, where she had worked for 26 years. "The Air Force was my family," Karen reflects, failing to hide the sadness in her voice. Having committed to the project and relocated to Okato, however, she could only hope that she would recapture that sense of family in our small village.

Karen and Graham's new business needed to be rebuilt from the ground up, almost literally. "They say that you have to spend money to make money —we've haemorrhaged money!" Graham exclaims. "And it's been hard work at every step." But the result is impressive. The place is well appointed, clean, cheerful and attractive. Karen and Graham have researched the market and with the advice of distributors, have sourced the best ingredients available for their purposes. "We have chosen a small range of traditional foods and intend to do them to

a very high standard," says Graham. There are all the things you expect to find in a traditional fish and chip shop, including Barron Builders Burgers (Bruce Barron's building team was largely responsible for executing the makeover), and a range of tempting extras including fruit pies and custard tarts.

"We'll have a specials whiteboard to trial new ideas, and we hope to serve coned ice creams eventually too," they add. To slake your thirst, you can brew your own coffee to sip while you wait, or try a brilliantly coloured slushy. Last, but not least, on the menu are smiles, and they are free.

I am there on opening day, soon after the raised blinds, opened door and delicious aromas wafting onto the street announce that Okato Takeaways is open for business. The place is already buzzing. Karen is taking orders and dispensing free smiles while Shar Riordan, wearing a neat, new chef's jacket and a hat, tends fish and chips immersed in the bubbling vat. "Shar's wonderful,"



Karen and Graham Chard in their air force uniforms, taken at Okato on ANZAC Day.



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says Karen. "She's the only one who knows about the vat and if we didn't have her, we'd be up the creek without a paddle."

Shar agrees. "I'm their Gordon Ramsay," she says, grinning. "Language on request."

Frank Roebuck is the first to receive his newspaper-wrapped package. "Newspaper is used so that you can read as you eat. That's what you did (when I was young)," Graham explains. "Except if you were at my aunty's house, where the fish and chips were served onto white plates and eaten with knives and forks, while the paper went into the coal range," he adds, mock grimly. "The fish is good!" Frank announces after a couple of mouthfuls. "Crisp to the fish. Just how it's supposed to be."

Meg Cardiff and Wendy Clement's parcel appears next. "It's beautiful fish, beautifully cooked," Meg declares.

"Gurnard," adds Wendy. "Delicious."

Meg thinks aloud that the chips, though hot and crisp, lack salt and Shar quickly rectifies her momentary lapse by handing over one-serve packets of salt and pepper. "We let you add your own," she says, "then you can season them how you like them."

And what about my dining experience? I can personally vouch for the fruit pies and custard tarts, which are generously filled and mouth-watering. As for the rest of the items on the menu, I recommend you try them for yourselves.

Karen and Graham are full of praise for the locals and would like to thank the local community for their friendliness and support since they arrived in the village. "Everybody has bent over backwards to give us a hand," they say. They welcome anyone who wants to pop in for a look or to say hello. Just don't be surprised when their chickens look at you or their two Shihtzus, Kirby and Squigit, greet you excitedly from behind the fence.



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Finally, a word from Karen and Graham themselves:

"We strongly encourage our customers to come forward and talk to us if they are unhappy with anything to do with food being served. (We can be reached on 06-752 4363, or at the shop from 11 in the morning until 7.30-ish in the evening.) We are new to the takeaway game and we can't fix it if we don't know it's broke. That said, if you are happy with what you find here we invite you to tell EVERYONE!"

Story and pictures by Kerry Lilley






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Reunion success

Okato's Hempton Hall was the venue for about 150 descendants and families to celebrate the centennial year of McEldowney settlement in Puniho.

Folk came from many parts of New Zealand as well as Australia, England and Spain to meet up with family, some for the first time.

Joseph McEldowney was 59 and widowed when he brought his four youngest children, John, Mary Jane (Minnie), Ella and Jim, from Londonderry to New Zealand where his five younger brothers and one of their sisters, Susan (Mrs Moffitt), had already settled. Susan's twin, Hannah (Mrs Ellison), accompanied Joseph to visit their siblings and her son, David, already here, but she only stayed about two years. Accompanying the family was Minnie's new husband, Alexander Hamill. The wedding took place just five days before they left Derry for Liverpool to board the SS Cornwall, which sailed from there on 7 January 1910. The Hamills eventually (1918) bought a farm between Pungarehu and Rahotu.

Also on board was William Crockett Caldwell, another "Derry-man" who disembarked in Queensland but came to New Zealand to marry Ella just over a year later, eventually settling in Warea. The family disembarked in Wellington, where brother John had a home and business, before coming to Taranaki and taking up land, some in standing bush on Puniho Road. When Joseph and second wife, Ellen [nee Bredin], retired to Tukapa Street, New Plymouth in 1920, he divided the farm between his sons, Johnny and Jim. Some of that land is still farmed by Jim's grandson, Grayson, and his son, Dale. Joseph's brother, David, also bought 100 acres on Puniho Road in 1917 and another 100 acres on Hoani Road. After his death in 1922 and that of his wife in 1926, all of David's seven Irish-born children left Taranaki. Only Joseph and sister Susan Moffitt's families and Davey Ellison stayed in the Taranaki area.

Another of Joseph's brothers, Josias (Alex) Alexander's daughter, Elsie, married John Bredin of Warea, and raised her cousin Ella's youngest son, Lial, as their own.

The centennial gathering was a great success, and alot of stories were related and many parts of the family jigsaw fitted together. The interior of the hall was attractively decorated with Irish-themed pictures — leprechauns and shamrocks, streamers and maps of the ancestral areas.

Many hours had gone into collating and printing the family trees and photos, which were pinned for easy viewing to twelve 2.4 metre long boards with four or five generations on each board so that folk could see how they are related to each other.

The main board showed the first four generations going back to Thomas McEldowney of 1785. In some cases there are nine generations down to present day babes. The Moffitt family brought their 3 metre long family tree, which had been hand drawn by one of the Stott family for the Moffitt reunion in 1974.

The commemorative cake with the McEldowney family crest on it (beautifully made and iced by Karen Leggett) was cut by the two eldest family members, Eunice Phipps and Lial Bredin, both of whom are of the first New Zealand-born generation. Eunice's father, Jim, was only 11 years old when he arrived in New Zealand. He later married Doris Elwin of Warea. Lial's mother, Ella, had her nineteenth birthday aboard ship.

Pumpkins grown by Kathryn Moffitt and made into delicious soup by Cherie, complemented the very nice finger-food lunch — catered by

Karen and Graham Chard, who have refurbished and re-opened the Okato Fish Shop.

Without participation and enthusiasm by so many family and friends, this memorable event celebrating our stalwart ancestors could not have happened.

Thank you all.



Joseph McEldowney (1851-1944) brought his family to Puniho in 1910.

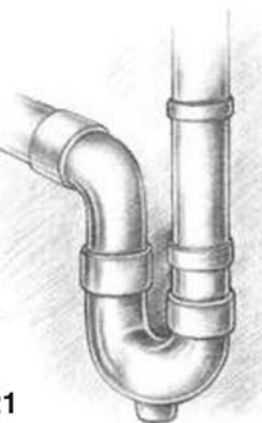
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Playcentre is a totally parent run Early Childhood Education provider. Following Ministry of Education guidelines, our parents work together to create learning programmes with themes that suit our children. Parents can also access free NZQA training to learn about child development etc. – good stuff to know! Monthly business meetings provide the forum for our parent cooperative. In the midst of wine, cake and shared baby poo stories, we shape learning activities and take care of operational requirements. It is this strong element of parents working together that helps newcomers get to know people quickly. So, just follow your kids in the door and get ready for a great social life!

During these wet and wild winter months both Playcentre parents and kids can't wait for our sessions. Talk about boredom busters. We have the usual indoor activities on offer such as craft, woodwork, play dough, clay, books, puzzles, family and dramatic play areas, paint, construction sets, blocks, and baby toys. Also, our covered deck area allows for more physical play with indoor climbing and swinging apparatus and a mini sandpit. Luckily it has often been fine lately, so the kids have usually been able to enjoy our adventure playground and large sandpit outside. The mums have recently been enjoying sampling complimentary Nescafé Café Menu cappuccinos and lattes as part of a Nescafé / Playcentre promotion. It's not all coffee and play, but there is a fair bit of both!

Our centre goal for this term is: Exploration: "The children develop working theories for making sense of the natural, social, physical, and material worlds." We are wrapping this around an animals theme, which is timely with all the spring babies arriving. We have a great line up of activities such as animal dress-ups and face-painting, a trip to Pouakai Zoo, a trip to a calf shed, a lion hunt, a pet day, and going to the 'Gruffalo' show.

Please come and visit a session – 1st three visits are free (usual fees are minimal). For 0 – 6 years. Tuesdays & Thursdays 9.30am – 12.30pm. Just over the Stony River Bridge. Contact Kerry: 752 8095



Chocolate decorating for Mother's Day.



Messy play!



Finishing touches to the tower.

Okato Plunket

Okato Plunket would like to invite all the mums out there. Whether you are new to the community, just had your first baby, or about to and need some time out.

We have organised to have a coffee morning with heaps of yummy cakes and coffee at St Lukes Hall, 10am, Friday 27 August. Come along for a chat, to make new friends, talk babies, but more importantly to have an adult conversation. We welcome any new mums who would like to join us in our committee. No pressure though.

Our Plunket nurse, Kristy, will be there to have a chat about any concerns you may have with your newborn or toddlers. We will also have some baby packs and information to give out.

We are a friendly group and we just want to get the Plunket word out into the community. So don't be shy. Bring a friend along who may also be interested.

Something else to note: We have various things available to hire such as high chairs and portacots. We have also just recently purchased a brand new breast pump, which we will have available to those in the community who may need it.

If you would like to come along please call Rebecca Ripia on 06-752 4501 to confirm that you will be there or for any other enquiry you may have.

Look forward to meeting you. See you there.

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Awards given to deserving citizens

Residents from around the district were recently recognised with a Citizens' Award.

"These award winners have given years of dedicated service to their communities, and their stories are inspiring," says Mayor Peter Tennent. "Through their efforts they have helped people throughout the district, and in some cases have set up organisations or facilities that will benefit residents for generations to come. Each one of them shows just how much difference one person can make to the lives of many people."

This year's recipients have been recognised for their work in the fields of health, sports, music, social development, faith services, service groups, local government and education.

Two 2010 Citizens' Awards recipients are from our community:

Kevin Richardson

Kevin joined the Okato section of the St Johns medical team at a young age and for more than 20 years has given invaluable service to the area. He can often be seen at sports and other events in that role.

As a qualified ambulance officer he is on a 24-hour first call basis and often gets involved in accidents and medical callouts, including providing valuable support to the Fire Service. The coastal area around Okato has no resident doctor, and Kevin provides a necessary lifeline.

Kevin is a quiet and very private person and therefore the general public is often unaware of his long community involvement.

Ron Scott

Ron has been a member of the Okato Lions Club since its inception 40 years ago and was one of 10 people worldwide to win the prestigious Top 10 Award in the 1970s.

He has contributed significantly to the success of the Club, chairing the beef scheme since the 1980s and playing a major role in youth affairs. He is a charter member and at the Club's 40th anniversary on 10 May, he became the third life member.

Rob was also chairman on the Okato Vet Club for 19 years, and served on both the primary school committee and the Okato College Board for six years. He was also a director in the dairy industry for 14 years.

Ron served two terms on New Plymouth District Council as a tireless and dedicated representative for the Kaitake Ward, and also played a major role in securing land for New Plymouth's Coastal Walkway as chairman of a subcommittee that negotiated with iwi on the issue.

He is a keen motorcyclist and yachtsman. His time and effort as chairman of the organising committee of the 2010 Fitzroy Yachts Solo Tasman Challenge single-handed yacht race from New Plymouth to Mooloolaba, helped ensure the success of past races and this year's event. He worked tirelessly to organise sponsors, find trophies and the thousand other items that had to be in place on both sides of the Tasman.

The committee was instrumental in setting up a live chart on the Internet to show the race's progress, and introducing temporary moorings at Port Taranaki to ensure visiting yachts were secure during their stay.

Ron's contribution has ensured the event will continue to run from New Plymouth, focusing attention on the city's affinity with the sea, and the extra exposure this race generated helped significantly raise the image of New Plymouth as a town punching well above its weight.



COASTAL TARANAKI SCHOOL

"Go Coastal!!"

Fans will be cheering for the Coastal teams playing rugby and netball in the coastal sports exchange. Games started on Friday, 23 July and will go all the way through to September 8.

These teams will be competing for the Taranaki Trophy for rugby and the Mainland Trophy for netball. These teams will be playing all sorts of different teams from all the way around the mountain.

We also have some kind coaches, coaching our teams. Jay Luckin and Paul Downes coaching the rugby and Noeline Van der Poel coaching the netball. I hope you can come along to cheer us on!

Phillippa Grayling (Year 8)

Science Fair competition

Congratulations to all the Year 7, 8, 9 and 10 students as they have completed their Science Fair projects. They all tried really hard; there were lots of different experiments, smelly and messy. But the results came through and ...

Year 7: 1st Shaun Moffitt and Lisa Appert, 2nd Atalya Fakavamoeanga.

Year 8: 1st Stephan Gibson and Beni Kalin, 2nd Sheldon Brown and Trent Brophy, 3rd Clare Henderson and Phillippa Grayling.

Year 9: 1st Siobhan Manuel, Billie Cameron and Shearyn Adlam, 2nd Ashlin Dobbin and Ella Beaumont.

Year 10: 1st Dylan Burrows and Daniel Downes, 2nd Heather Fraser, Claudia Van der Heyden and Jordan Hart.

Congratulations to all those students in the Science Fair. All of these projects will be sent in to the Taranaki Science Fair.

Lisa Appert (Year 7)

Tournament for indoor bowls

After training with Mrs Honeyfield, Year 7 and 8 teams went down to Hempton Hall for an indoor bowls tournament. Coastal Taranaki School (CTS) waited for one hour until the other teams got there.

It was a fun day for everyone because we got out of school for the day. The overall winner was Oakura School. We'd like to thank Mrs Honeyfield for making the day happen. All the teams did well in the tournament. GO COASTAL!!!!!! for next year.

Holly Van der Poel (Year 8)

Trade Fair

Even though the weather was nasty, the crowds still flocked to Coastal Taranaki School's hall to purchase the various crafts, secondhand and antique ornaments there. Not to mention the assortment of sweets, hot drinks, burgers and drinks on sale. It was a great success, raising plenty for the trip to Australia. It was also a fun event for the whole family.

CTS Trade Fair is a fundraiser for the Year 9 and 10 trip to Australia. Students make a business plan and work hard to set up their stalls. This year the Year 9 and 10 students worked under the guidance of Mr Oldfield and Miss O'Connor.

Cole Ure (Year 7)



babies

TOM Baby

This month we introduce Luccas Marsh Ripia.

Luccas made a speedy arrival into the world on March 4, 2010 at Taranaki Base Hospital. He resides with his parents, Rebecca and Simon Ripia, and big brothers, Strandyn, who is four years old, and Jaxin, who has recently turned five and attends Coastal Taranaki School.

Rebecca and Simon like the name Luccas as they find it to be a strong name. His middle name, Marsh, is shared with his father, Simon.

Simon works as a supervisor for the company, Kaefer, and Rebecca is enjoying the role of fulltime mum. Luccas is very fortunate to have his grandparents live locally and spends lots of time with them. At present he loves his Jolly Jumper, rolling across the floor, and his sleep. Rebecca adds, he loves to play games with Granddad, or is that the other way round!

by Milly Carr



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Arthouse Cinema News and Reviews

Thanks to generous sponsorship from Boon Goldsmith Bhaskar Brebner Team Architecture we are \$9,000 closer to a heat pump and roofing insulation for Arthouse at The Mayfair. The total cost is estimated at \$15,000 so we are very close to warming up our Arthouse!

For an annual cost of just \$100 you can become a Friend of Arthouse! As a Friend you will pay a discounted price of only \$12 for all normal sessions, receive annual complimentary tickets to a gala film premiere, and get first dibs on event tickets. All Friends' subscriptions go directly to the Heat Pump Fund.

Wanaka Mountain Film Festival has allowed us to screen five outdoor, conservation, sea kayak to Greenland, caving and mountain films for SCHOOLS ONLY (gold coin entry) on the mornings of 16, 18 and 19 August. Over 90 minutes of adrenalin! Seats are limited so book now on 06-757 3650 or francois@arthousecinema.co.nz.

Kiwi Outdoors Wanaka Mountain Film Festival 2010 (August 21-29)

Nice week for ice! Nineteen films screened in 90-minute ice-cold chunks! Tickets cost \$10 a session for adults, \$8 senior/student, \$5 child or buy a Mountain Film Festival Pass for only \$25 for five sessions. Effectively 19 outdoor films with 18 different sessions to choose from. Tickets available now at Arthouse Cinema.



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Complete Schedule

MOVIES (grouped in sessions)	LENGTH (mins)	STYLE
<i>Base Jump</i>	9	Base jump
<i>Snow Tramp</i> (Best Short Film)	6	Ski
<i>The Remarkables: 146 years of Climbing</i>	16	Climbing
<i>Magic Moments</i>	58	Ski
Total Length	89	
<i>Insomnia</i>	6	All
<i>Shortcut</i>	10	Trail bike
<i>Australis: An Antarctic Ski Odyssey</i>	25	Ski
<i>Nature Propelled</i> (Winner Best Mountain Culture & the Environment)	43	All
Total Length	84	—
<i>Trad — Playing with the Elements</i>	9	Base jump
<i>Waikaia — Life Blood</i>	12	Kayak
<i>Unfinished Business</i>	23	Mountain
<i>REV: A Buried Treasure</i> (Best Snow Sports Film)	40	Ski
Total Length	84	
<i>Rush Hour Dream</i>	5	Paraglide
<i>Realm</i>	35	Kayak
<i>Take a Seat</i> (Best Film on Adventurous Sports & Lifestyles)	48	Bike
Total Length	88	—
<i>Welsh Connection — Pembroke</i>	12	Climbing
<i>Into Darkness</i>	15	Caves
<i>Into Perpetual Ice</i> (Winner Best NZ Made)	21	Kayak
<i>Core Festival Cut</i>	30	Climbing
Total Length	78	

For a complete timetable see
www.arthousecinema.co.nz



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Some thoughts about Organics

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The existing diet in all developed nations is now filled with processed, refined and adulterated foods. This includes chemicals in and on fruits, vegetables, grains, personal care and cleaning products. They have thousands of additives that are potential toxins in our body. There are growth hormones and antibiotics in our meats, eggs and dairy products. The more processed the food the more the nutritional qualities are diminished.

Eating organic foods is a way of shifting to a healthier way of being in the world. Choosing organic/natural products provides safe alternatives that are great for everyone in the family.

Jacqui

Seed Coastal Organics

Carol and Errol Ward's precocious tomatoes

Carol and Errol Ward contacted me recently to invite me to look at the tomatoes Carol had bought from a New Plymouth supermarket. Practically all of the seeds inside two of the four fruit had germinated (see photo). Carol was concerned that this might have been caused by human intervention gone wrong. One of my friends told me that she, too, has seen this phenomenon, but only in a rotting tomato. I decided to contact Abbie Jury for an answer, and to do a search of the Web.

A Web search reveals that 'precocious germination' has to do with a genetic mutation, which results in seeds failing to remain dormant during the time the fruit remains whole. As a consequence, the hard seed walls become weak and loosen, and the radical emerges within the intact tomato.

Abbie is reassuring. Firstly, she reminds me that genetic mutation or variation is perfectly normal within anything living. "The one thing that may happen is that modern growing practices may keep a selection with weakened seed cases going whereas left to its own devices in the wild, such mutations may die out."

Secondly, she ventures that she can think of no reason why anyone would genetically engineer such a trait in tomatoes.

So, it seems there's nothing to worry about, Carol, but what an interesting phenomenon, and thank you for bringing it to our attention.

Bon appétit!

References:

Bassel, G.W., Mullen, R.T., and Bewley, J.D., 2006. AB13 expression ceases following, but not during, germination of tomato and Arabidopsis seeds. *Journal of Experimental Botany*, 57(6): 1291-1297. <http://pboxfordjournals.org/C91/content/full/57/6/1291>

Bewley, J.D., 1997. Seed germination and dormancy. *The Plant Cell*, 9: 1055-1066. <http://www.plantcell.org/cgi/reprint/9/7/1055.pdf>

Story and picture by Kerry Lilley



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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 Julie Moore 752 4277 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.

Tumahu Golf Club

Roly Harvey 752 4314. Sunday: Mens golf day, Tuesday: womens golf day. Every 2nd Wednesday of the month: mixed golf.

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 Lions

Contact Merv Hooker, ph 752 4086.

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 Rae Hooker 752 4086.

Pony Club

Contact Carey Brophy, 752 4458.

Please contact Milly 752 4425 for any additional listings or amendments.