



Artist honoured

By Frank Neill

Churton Park artist Lynn Blann has been selected for the prestigious Chianciano Biennale 2026, one of Europe's most respected international art events.

Held in the town of Chianciano in Tuscany from 15 to 29 August it features around 300 creative talents from more than 50 nations.

"I feel privileged to have my art selected to hang alongside such amazing artists in this historic setting," Lynn says.

"Just getting in was a huge prize for me. You are very lucky to get in the Biennale.

"My work represents the confused messages we receive about our challenged and fragile world and I hope viewers find my art thought provoking," she says.

"I'm an expressionist artist, so I don't paint from reality.

"I don't paint landscapes or seascapes or portraits or anything like that.

"I paint what I feel.

"I'm driven by issues," Lynn says.

"It's not everyone's cup of tea but it has got me a place in the Chianciano Biennale."

Lynn will exhibit "I Don't Understand", an acrylic work exploring our confusion at the information we are drowning in.

Continued on page 2.



ABOVE: Lynn Blann (LEFT), who has been selected for the prestigious Chianciano Biennale. Photo: Supplied.



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Single criterion: artistic excellence and innovation.

Lynn's painting will hang alongside those of 300 fellow artists from every continent and her work and profile will feature in the Biennales official catalogue.

Lynn, who works from her Churton Park studio, uses abstracted forms to create her work with acrylic and charcoal mediums.

She is known for her thought provoking images painted in response to the issues that challenge us and our environment today.

The Biennale is organised by the Chianciano Art Museum and artists are chosen through an international call reviewed by the Museum's international curatorial panel, with a single criterion: artistic excellence and innovation.

The selected works span painting, sculpture, photography, digital art, installation and immersive art, displayed across 3000 square meters of exhibition space across the town.

The Biennale was held on Saturday 15 August with an evening vernissage in the galleries in the Historic centre followed by the Grand Opening Sunday 16 August and it runs until 29 August.

The Chianciano Biennale is open to all artists of all artistic styles with no set theme.

It is known for its high curatorial standards and its celebration of cultural diversity, placing the artists themselves at the centre of the event

Every two years this Etruscan hill town transforms itself into a stage for contemporary art.

For two weeks the town becomes an International Art Hub attracting thousands of visitors from around the world.

Its website is biennalechianciano.org.

PHOTO: Lynn Blann, who has been selected for the prestigious Chianciano Biennale. *Photo: Supplied.*



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Whitby resident launches book

By Frank Neill

Whitby resident Lieutenant Colonel Tony Howell MC, pictured right, launched his new book 'Training for War in Vietnam' on 18 August.

The launch date was selected as 18 August is Vietnam Veterans Day.

It is also the commemoration of the Battle of Long Tan, during which New Zealand's 161 Battery RNZA fired more than 1,800 shells during the battle.

The book tells the story of the ANZAC Training Teams in the Vietnam War, from 1970 to 1972.

The narrative leads readers through the essential political and military decisions which resulted in providing Vietnamese and Cambodian unit training support and New Zealand's involvement in those ambitious objectives.

The book provides a glimpse of the men in action teaching Vietnamese and Cambodians, while reliant on their allies for their security and support as a vicious war rages around them.

The major training bases at Chi Lang, Long Hai and Dong Ba Thin and the team's roles there are explained as is their relationship with the United States, Australia, Vietnamese and Cambodians.

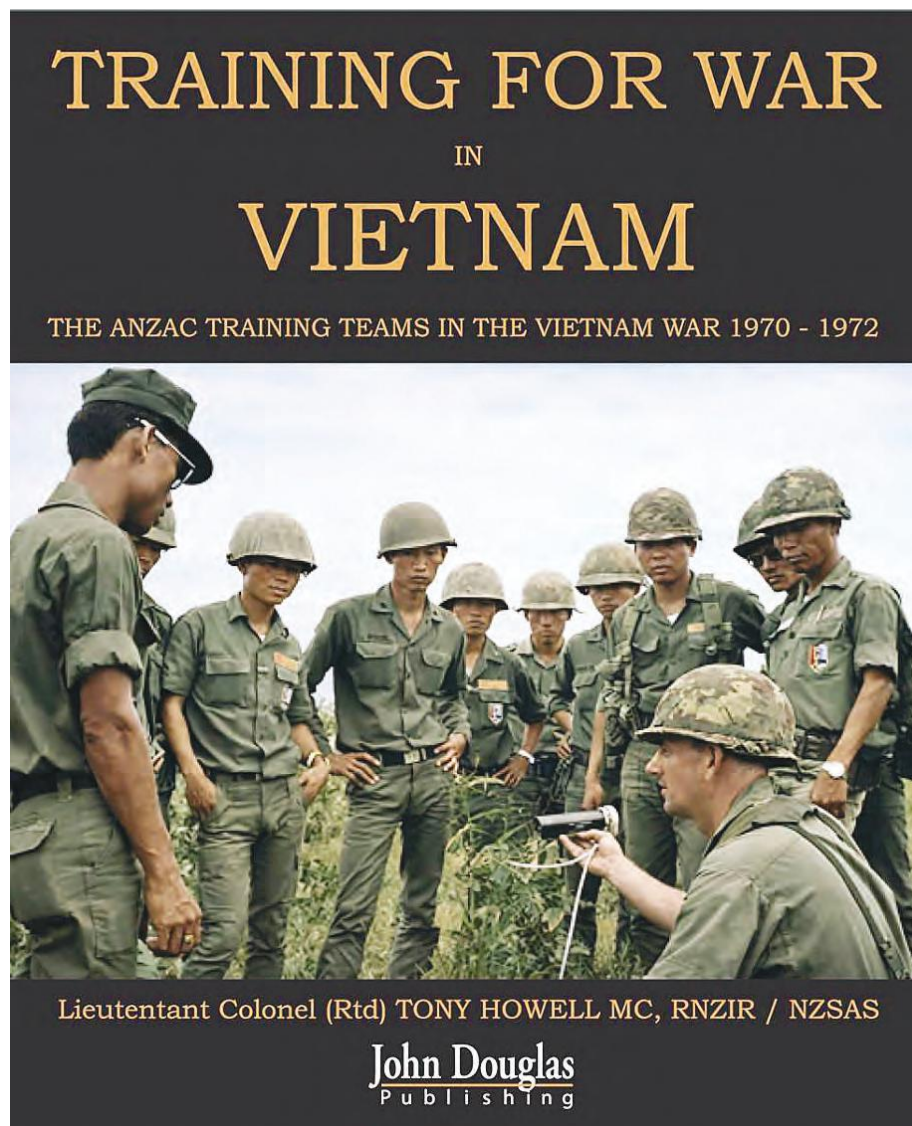
Some of these glimpses are highly entertaining while others are more serious.

Some might see the training teams as a political success from an independent New Zealand foreign policy view point, certainly New Zealand's ANZUS Partners were well supported; some might consider it a hopeless military task.

However New Zealand servicemen played their part to make the Vietnamese and Cambodian training programmes a success.

Tony is best known for his leadership during the Vietnam War, and later as commanding officer of the New Zealand Special Air Service (NZSAS) and his role as a distinguished New Zealand Military Veteran.

He served as the platoon Commander of 4 Platoon in Victor 2 (V2) Company after arriving in South Vietnam on 12 November 1967.



Tony was awarded the Military Cross for outstanding leadership and courage.

He documented two Vietnam operations – Duntroon and Coburg – in his books 'Jungle Green Shadows' (2019) and 'Vietnam ANZACS' (2021).

The now completed 'Training for War in Vietnam' completes the trilogy on Vietnam.

Following his service in Vietnam and a 28-year military career, Tony's final posting in 1982 was as the Commanding

Officer of New Zealand's Special Air Service (NZSAS), a role he served in until 1986.

After retiring from the Army in 1990 he established New Zealand Sea Adventures (NZSA), a Padi 5 Star scuba diving career development centre in Wellington, where he remains a senior instructor and course director.

PHOTO: The cover of 'Training for War in Vietnam'.

inbrief news

Election show

It's in the Ballot in studio election shows are returning in the lead up to November's election.

The Wellington North electorate show will be held at the Khandallah Town Hall and Cornerstone Community Centre on Sunday 11 October.

The Hutt South electorate show will be held on Sunday 18 October at the Epuni Community Hall, 40 Mitchell Street.

The Kenepuru electorate show will be held at the Linden Community Centre on Saturday 17 October.

The doors will open at 6:30pm for all three shows and they will be broadcast between 7pm and 9pm.

It's in the Ballot is based on the format of the popular television show It's in the Bag.

Sam Somers, well known for his role in the organisation of the Johnsonville Sunday Market, is both the producer and host.

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PHOTO: Tawa College choir Blue Notes during this year’s regional Big Sing festival. Photo: Supplied.

Tawa choir in Big Sing finale

Blue Notes from Tawa College will feature in The Big Sing, the national finale featuring 24 standout secondary school choirs.

Earlier this year more than 9,100 students from 269 secondary school choirs took part in regional festivals held across the country.

After careful deliberation, a panel of adjudicators selected the top 24 choirs to represent the very best of New Zealand’s choral talent.

These groups will perform in Christchurch from 27 to 29 August to vie for Gold, Silver and Bronze distinctions.

Eight competitive sessions will run across three days, culminating in a gala concert on

Saturday evening hosted by Christchurch-born celebrity presenter Miriama Kamo.

The adjudication panel for the finale will include US-based, NZ-born composer and conductor David Childs, 2005 Lexus Song Quest winner Madeleine Pierard, and former member of The King’s Singers Tim Wayne-Wright.

While attending The Big Sing Wellington regional festival in June, Education Minister Erica Stanford announced a grant of \$150,000 for The Big Sing across 2026/2027.

Speaking at the gala concert, Minister Stanford said that music “builds strong foundations for learning, confidence, and

can lead to new opportunities both within and outside the classroom”.

NZCF Chief Executive Christine Argyle says the funding is a strong vote of confidence in the programme and the young people it serves.

“The Big Sing is about so much more than performance. It fosters connection, commitment, creativity and a sense of belonging for thousands of rangatahi each year.

“We’re delighted to see its impact recognised at ministerial level and look forward to celebrating the extraordinary talent of our young singers at this year’s Finale.”



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KRA annual meeting next month

The Karori Residents’ Association will hold its annual general meeting at 7pm on Monday 7 September via Zoom.

The Zoom link is on the Karori Residents’ Association website, www.karoriassociation.nz.

The guest speaker this year is

William Woods from Centreport.

William will speak on the upcoming construction work at the Interislander ferry terminal area at Kaiwharawhara.

This work is scheduled to start soon and will continue through to 2029.

The annual meeting will also be informed about what the association has achieved over the past year and will look at what it is working on for 2026-27.

Dogs on Cable Car wanted

Photographs of dogs on the cable car are currently being sought for the 2027 Dogs of the Cable Car Calendar.

The calendar will feature photos of dogs on or near the cable.

People can submit a photo by visiting <https://form.jotform.com/262217209976868> and entries are free.

Photos need to be landscape orientation, ideally with a ratio of 4:3.

Multiple entries can be submitted but each photo must be unique.

All profits from the sale of the calendars go to the Blind Low Vision Guide Dogs programme.

The owners of the photos selected to be in the calendar will be notified by email or direct message before the calendar goes to print.

Entries close at 11:59pm on Sunday 6 September and the calendar will go on sale in October.

The Dogs of the Cable Car Calendar project is now in its third year, having started in 2023.

PHOTO: Photos like this one are wanted for the 2026 Dogs of the Cable Car Calendar.



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Winter Wishes warms up in Karori for Lions

New Karori Lions Club President for the 2026-27 year, Ros Alsford, has wasted no time in bringing new energy and direction to the club.

One of her innovations was the Winter Wishes Programme.

“Sometimes the smallest act of kindness can make the biggest difference,” Ros says.

That was the idea behind the Lions Club of Karori’s Winter Wishes Programme, which recently wrapped up for 2026 after a winter of helping people in the local community.

Winter Wishes was created as a simple way for Karori Lions to provide practical acts of kindness to people who might need a little extra help during the colder months.

Local residents were invited to nominate someone they knew who could benefit from a Special Act of Kindness.

This year Karori Lions members rolled up their sleeves to help with wishes, including home baking and house cleaning for several families, and a garden tidy-up and help with rubbish removal for another.

For the Lions Club, Winter Wishes is about letting



ABOVE The Karori Lions Club’s new President Ros Alsford. Photo: Supplied.

someone know that their community sees them, cares about them and is willing to lend a hand.

“The support of the local community is what makes initiatives like Winter Wishes possible,” the club says.

While nominations have now closed for this year, Winter Wishes will return in May 2027, when Karori Lions will once again be looking for opportunities to bring a little extra warmth and kindness to people in the community.

Ros has been the driving force behind the programme, while also playing a central part in the club’s other recent projects and activities, including a book fair,

electronic goods recycling, collections for the Karori Food Bank, Life Flight, Mary Potter Hospice and the Scouts’ Jamboree.

Coming up in the following few months are a collection to support Girl Guides going to their Jamboree in early January, and fundraisers including a ‘haunted house’ at Halloween and the ‘Magic Show’ in late November. These will be well advertised when dates are finalised.

Bookings have already commenced for stalls at the 56th annual Karori Lions Karnival on Sunday 21 February 2027.

This hugely popular event seems to go from strength to strength every year. Bookings can be made at www.karorikarnival.com.

Karori Lions spokesman Trevor Anders says “We are very keen to invite more community-minded members into our club, who would like to meet and work with like-minded individuals, who simply want to support their community and contribute to making a better world (and have some fun while doing it).”

“Find out more at www.karorilions.co.nz or text Trevor at 021 454 056.”

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Toi Marsden: A new art show

An exciting new contemporary art exhibition will bring artists from across Aotearoa to Karori when Samuel Marsden Collegiate School opens its doors for the inaugural Toi Marsden – The Marsden Art Show in October.

Created by the Marsden Parents and Friends' Group, Toi Marsden will bring together a curated collection of original New Zealand art, alongside a new body of work by 2026 Artist in Residence Fleur Wickes, created during her residency at the school.

Works will be available to view and purchase across the exhibition weekend.

At its heart Toi Marsden supports Marsden's long-standing Artist in Residence programme, which brings outstanding artists from New Zealand and Australia into the school community to work directly with students.

Funds raised through the Art Show will be reinvested into the programme, helping ensure students continue to benefit from meaningful creative learning and exposure to practising artists.

Interest from the artistic community has been significant, with more than 85 artist appli-

cations received from across the country.

The submissions are now being considered by a highly regarded selection panel comprising James Blackie, Penny Murdoch and Tim Christie, who are working through the entries to shape a diverse and high-quality exhibition.

Artists already confirmed include Karori locals Veronica Young and Alan Doak, Judith Milner and Kate Horn from Auckland, Morgan Paige Taitoko from Taranaki, Iwen Yong from Wairarapa, Nic Dempster from Otago, and Auckland artists Kylie Rusk and Hannah Radford, alongside featured artists Lizzie Pannell and Penny Murdoch.

The Art Show is an exciting opportunity for Marsden to bring work by artists of this calibre into Karori and make contemporary art easily accessible to the wider Wellington community.

Now in its 27th year, Marsden's Artist in Residence programme gives students a rare opportunity to see an artist's practice up close and understand how ideas and works develop.

Its reach extends beyond Marsden through an annual

Primary Schools Workshop, which invites students from other local schools to work alongside the Artist in Residence.

This year, Fleur Wickes' residency has given students insight into her creative process and reinforced the important place creativity and the arts hold within a Marsden education.

Following the opening Gala Evening on Friday 30 October, Toi Marsden will open to the public for the weekend, making it easy for anyone to come along and experience the exhibition.

The public exhibition will be open at Samuel Marsden Collegiate School in Karori from 10am on Saturday 31 October and Sunday 1 November, with a koha entry supporting Dwell Housing Trust.

"Whether you are an experienced collector, looking for your first piece of original art, or simply interested in seeing an impressive collection of contemporary New Zealand work, Toi Marsden offers a rare opportunity to experience artists from around the country right here in Karori," Toi Marsden's organisers say.

Find out more at www.marsdenartshow.co.nz.



PHOTO: Marsden's Artist in Residence Fleur Wickes. Photo: Supplied.

Cello music at Tawa Library

'Airs, graces ... and a few fair relics of Scotland' will take place at Te Takapu o Patukawenga Mervyn Kemp Tawa Library on Saturday 22 August from 11am to 11:45am.

"Join us for a performance of solo cello music from Italy, France and Germany by librarian and cellist Corrina Connor," Wellington City Libraries says.

"Interspersed with dances from Scotland and Jacobite songs, this music reflects histories of travel, migration and cultural exchange.

'Connecting threads: Quilting 101 for teens' will be held at Waitohi Johnsonville Library on Sunday 23 August from 1:30pm to 3pm.

"Quilting is a perfect encapsulation of all things STEAM, and it's been around since 3,400 BC.

"Hear a brief history of quilting in colonial Aotearoa and try your hand at assembling a quilt block art piece to keep."

The event is for teens aged 11 and older.

Registration is recommended and people can register using the 'Sign Up' button at <https://wellingtoncitylibraries.trumba.com/>.

Youth found poetry



workshop will be held at Te Takapu o Patukawenga Mervyn Kemp Tawa Library on Tuesday 25 August from 3:45pm to 4:45pm.

It will also be held at Waitohi Johnsonville Library on Wednesday 26 August from 3:45pm to 4:45pm and at Korimako, Cummings Park (Ngaio) Library on Thursday 27 August from 3:30pm to 4:30pm.

"To celebrate Aotearoa's National Poetry Day, 28 August, we want to show you that if you get crafty, anyone can be a poet," Wellington City Libraries says.

"Found poetry is the act of creating poems by taking existing texts and rearranging or transforming them into brand new poems.

"In this workshop you'll be provided with damaged library items and some

copies of old correspondence from Wellington City Archives.

"You will take these texts and reshape them, uncovering fresh meaning in unexpected places. These sessions are for young people aged 11 plus."

'Celebremos juntos el Español! Let's celebrate the Spanish Language!' will be held at Wait

In Court for attempted copper theft

A 54-year-old man has been arrested after attempting to steal copper cable from the rail corridor, damaging the safety signals system.

At about 4am on Friday 3 July, Police received a report about a person unlawfully entering the rail corridor at Takapu Road Station in Tawa, Wellington.

A heavy signalling cable was damaged.

However the alleged offender left the scene before Police arrived.

The severed cable caused signalling faults which required train services to be suspended while emergency repairs were undertaken.

Wellington Police's In-

vestigation Support Unit executed a search warrant at an address in Porirua on 18 August, and the man was subsequently arrested.

Kapiti Mana Area Commander Renee Perkins says the cost of the damage to the infrastructure is about \$3,000, but the delay and loss in productivity to early

morning commuters cannot be appropriately quantified.

"It's very disappointing that people are causing damage to public transport services and are willing to put other people's lives at risk."

Andy Lyon, KiwiRail's General Manager Wellington Metro, says anyone interfering with rail equipment is

putting themselves and others at risk of serious harm.

"Copper theft from the rail corridor is extremely serious. As well as posing a significant safety risk, this type of offending can cause delays, additional costs and disruption to the community.

"We are grateful to Police for their swift action in

making an arrest and will continue to work closely with them on offences of this nature."

The 54-year-old man will appear in Porirua District Court on 2 September on a charge of endangering transport.

Daffodil DAY

Friday 28th August



Daffodil DAY

Friday 28th August



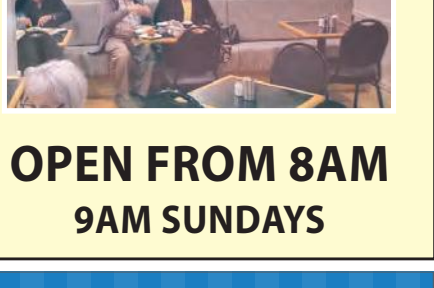
Daffodil DAY

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Major reform needed to secure NZ’s aged care future

The Aged Care Ministerial Advisory Group has today released its independent report, A place to grow old: Securing the future of aged care. The report recommends major structural reform to provide a better, more integrated care system for older New Zealanders and their families, the Group’s Chair Hon David Cunliffe said today.

‘Every New Zealander deserves to age well – with dignity and choice – but that won’t happen unless we fix the existing system, which is fragmented, hard to access, and underfunded,’ Mr Cunliffe says.

‘While many older people receive good care, pressures have been building for years: we now have a system that is outdated and unaffordable. The cracks are starting to show in bed shortages, some services closing their doors, and some carers unable to cope. As our population ages, those pressures will only multiply, and costs are expected to nearly double in the next 20 years.

‘These shortages would mean older people suffer and families struggle, general practices are strained and hospitals are overcrowded, leading to longer waitlists and poorer health outcomes across the country. This is not the future New Zealanders want,’ Mr Cunliffe says.

‘The Government set up this independent Ministerial Advisory Group to find solutions to build an aged care system that it is stronger, fairer and more affordable. This report sets out a package of practical and integrated reforms to support older people to live and age well so they receive the right care, in the right place, at the right time.

‘This includes a more integrated care pathway, greater support to help more people live at home for longer, a new approach to how people contribute toward their care costs, and targeted funding to help build more standard residential beds.

‘The Advisory Group’s analysis estimates these changes would improve health and wellbeing outcomes and avoid unnecessary growth in taxpayers’ costs by just over \$830 million per year by 2037/38,’ Mr Cunliffe says.

Source: MoH



Yoga in Daily Life – physical and spiritual

The Yoga in Daily Life Society has been serving the Wellington community since 1992. What began with classes held in the teacher’s lounge has grown over the years through various rented venues, culminating in the establishment of its permanent spacious home at 23 Jessie Street, Te Aro, in 2004.

Classes are based on the traditional teachings of Vishwaguruji Swami Maheshwarananda, founder of the international Yoga in Daily Life movement, and have been thoughtfully adapted for Western students. Programmes cater to everyone from complete beginners to experienced practitioners.

In addition to regular classes, the Society hosts an immersive three-night, four-day retreat at the Tauhara Centre in Taupō each Labour Weekend, offering participants an opportunity to deepen their practice in a supportive and peaceful environment.

Every class incorporates conscious breathing, body awareness, relaxation techniques, and asanas (postures) and sequences. These practices are designed to support people of all ages and fitness levels in improving their physical health, cultivating mental and emotional balance, and enhancing overall wellbeing.

While many students are drawn to the physical benefits of yoga, the teachings also provide opportunities to explore the deeper spiritual dimensions of the practice. As one recent student observed, the teaching is “unpretentious and authentic,” reflecting the welcoming and genuine approach that has characterised Yoga in Daily Life Wellington for more than three decades.

Kiwis helping other Kiwis beat prostate cancer

The Prostate Cancer Foundation of New Zealand - Te Kāhui Mate Pukupuku Repe Tātea o Aotearoa Manatōpū, (PCFNZ) provides vital support, education and information to individuals, their families and whānau across Aotearoa New Zealand affected by prostate cancer.

PCFNZ provides a comprehensive portfolio of free in-person and remote support services to help those living with prostate cancer, at any stage of diagnosis, treatment and survivorship.

PCFNZ is also dedicated to reducing the impact of prostate cancer through raising awareness, funding NZ-based research and advocating for improved standards of care and investing in research that raises the understanding of prostate cancer and its effects on men, their families and our communities.

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Blues, Soul, Boogie and Swing!

Laura Collins and the Big Blues Band will be returning to Paekākāriki on Saturday 12 September at the St Peter's Village Hall bringing blues, soul, boogie and swing with the dynamic energy turned up to 10!

Laura Collins, known for her soulful vocal delivery and upfront entertainment brings a show with a 'whole lot of brass'. Expect blues, soul, boogie and swing, you'll hear Etta James, Aretha Franklin, Fats Domino, Ray Charles and more. Laura says "the emphasis is on having a hugely good time, with the brass enabling the dynamic energy to be turned up to 10!"

Laura is joined by some of her long-time Wellington based musical companions, Wayne Mason, Kiwi music icon, being utilised here in his capacity as a master

of boogie keys, John O'Connor on sublime lead guitar, George Barris and Richard Te One bringing a powerhouse rhythm section. Adding that soulful uplift, the brass /horn section are Manawatu locals, James Tait Jamieson (saxophone), Craig Collis (trombone) and Neville Lauridsen (trumpet).

Laura's been singing professionally for over 30 years. She's journeyed through a few genres but always come back to the blues, touring nationally over the last 12 years with her previous band 'Laura Collins and the Back Porch Blues Band'. Laura is an entertainer who enjoys connecting with the audience equally using both heart and humour.

Laura's band have a large musical legacy, probably most so - Wayne Mason, best known for the Fourmyula

with whom he wrote 'Nature' amongst many others.

The horn section are Manawatu based, all playing in the Swamp City Big Band and Superset. Nev and James also teach and lead in the big band community. James Tait-Jamieson, works with many different line-ups including Andrew London and The Swing Voters.

"I like to say there's at least 300 years of musical history on the stage, this is a group of 'old hands' who have been making music a long time, absolutely revelling in the playing".

Laura Collins and the Big Blues Band will be at the St Peter's Village Hall on Saturday 12 September. Get your bling on and join them. Tickets through Eventfinda and on the door, doors 7.00pm, show 7.30pm.



September 12th, St Peter's Hall, Paekākāriki

Doors open 7.00pm, show from 7.30pm

Tickets - presales on eventfinda • what remains on the door \$30 (cash only)

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Cello and Piano Concert in Waikanae

Two of New Zealand's finest musicians join forces to present a much-anticipated cello and piano recital in Waikanae on Sunday 13 September.

Andrew Joyce (Principal Cellist of the NZSO) and Jian Liu (Head of Piano Studies at the NZ School of Music) will perform a variety of works, from the Baroque delights of Frescobaldi and Boccherini to the exotic and rhythmic Spanish folk-songs of Manuel de Falla.

The main work on the programme is a deeply expressive late Cello Sonata by Prokofiev, surrounded by two very popular and well-known works - Rachmaninoff's Vocalise and Arvo Part's Spiegel im Spiegel.



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different from leaving a window open 24/7. Others are only single glazed or just plastic. By upgrading to double glazing you can retain up to 70% more of your heat. A lot of skylights we come across is simply a piece of glass glued to the roof structure of your home – This is by far inadequate for many reasons including thermal properties and condensation issues, as the moisture has no where to go but get absorbed by the structure of your home. We will assess the entire skylight including the flashings (roof flashings

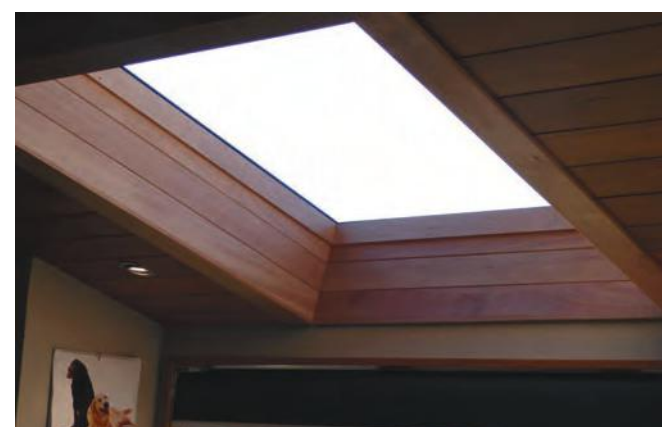
are what connects the skylight to your roof and keeps all watertight). This will cover if you have adequate condensation channels, drainage, seals, condition of flashings, thermal properties and of course longevity of the skylight/s and the surrounding areas.

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Plane Sense progressing it's appeal

By Frank Neill

Plane Sense Wellington will push ahead with its appeal on flight paths following a meeting in Khandallah on 16 August. It has filed an appeal to the Court of Appeal following the High Court dismissing its judicial review of the flight path changes made in 2022. “There are very solid ground for the appeal to the Court of Appeal,” Broadmeadows resident Kim

Murray, who is a lawyer, told the meeting. Kim is one of the legal team working on Plane Sense’s case. “The effect of the [High Court] judgment is that in New Zealand residents that suffer harm due to overflights are outside the aviation system and have no right to be consulted.” However “we have a real battle on our hands,” he says. To ensure the appeal goes ahead Plane Sense will

need to raise more than \$30,000. The Court of Appeal has advised that they will require a security for costs payment of \$29,100. If that money is not paid, the appeal will be terminated. “We are trying to get that stayed,” Mr Murray says. “There is a procedure to apply to dispense with security for costs, so we have applied to the Registrar to dispense with security. “All three respondents

[Airways Corporation Limited and Airways International Limited, Wellington International Airport Limited, and the Director of Civil Aviation] have written to the the Registrar saying ‘we oppose dispensation of security for costs’. “They are really worried that the appeal might succeed,” Mr Murray says. “They are trying to stop it. “If the Court does not provide dispensation

for security of costs, we are going to have to find \$30,000 to carry on”. Plane Sense will also have to pay the Court of Appeal a hearing fee of \$3,750. Plane Sense Wellington is currently asking for donations so the appeal can go ahead. People can donate by paying into Plane Sense’s bank account – 38-9024-0832857-00 – referencing a family or organisation or individual name.

Plane Sense has also written to the Minister of Transport seeking a Ministerial enquiry into the implementation of the DMAPs flight path, the consultation, governance, transparency and accountability. DMAPs is the acronym for the Divergent Missed Approach Protection System. This system was initiated and developed by Airways and resulted in changes to flight paths in December 2022.

Local scenic reserves planned

By Frank Neill

Wellington City Council’s consultation on a plan to classify seven areas of reserve land in the city’s outer green belt as scenic reserves under the Reserves Act 1977 closes in three days – at midnight on 23 August. All seven are in suburbs covered by the “Independent Herald”. These seven areas are Huntleigh Park in Ngaio; Kakariki Reserve, 174 Westchester Drive and 268 Ohariu Valley Road in Churton Park, 185 Ohariu Valley Road in Johnsonville, Awarua Street Reserve in Ngaio and Otari Farms Reserve in Karori. There are seven different classifications under the Act.

Wellington City Council generally uses recreation, historic, scenic or local purpose classifications for its reserves, but only scenic reserve classification is proposed for the land in this consultation. Most of the land in the Outer Green Belt is classified scenic reserve. Scenic reserves protect areas of scenic interest, beauty, natural features or landscape for public benefit, use and enjoyment. For more information visit www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/outer-green-belt-reserve-classifications.

RIGHT: Huntleigh Park in Ngaio. Photo: Melanie Newfield.



Free Botanic Garden kids events

A series of free events for children will take place at the Wellington Botanic Gardens as part of the Verb 2026 Readers and Writers Festival, which runs from 23 to 27 September. Called The Wild Ones, the free children’s events will take place at the Discovery Garden Te Kaapuia o Te Waoku on Sunday 27 September from 10am to noon. There will be three events: In Search of Beast from 10am to 10:30am, Taniwha Tales from 10:45am to 11:15am and The Great Garden Trail from 11:30am to noon. Through joyful readings, games and hands-on activities, Claire Mabey, Giselle Clarkson and Isabel Joy Te-Aho White will bring their stories off the page and into the hands of young readers. The Verb Readers and Writers Festival will feature an outstanding line-up of literary powerhouses and exciting new voices from Aotearoa New Zealand, Australia and Ireland. This year’s festival presents 26



ABOVE: Former Governor-General Dame Silvia Cartwright who will feature at this year’s Verb Festival. Photo: Stephen Tilley.

gather with audiences from across Aotearoa to celebrate books, ideas and unforgettable conversations.” Verb is excited to welcome one of Australia’s most acclaimed and decorated authors, Michelle de Kretser, described by Ali Smith as “one of the finest writers alive”. She will discuss her multi-award-winning book, Theory & Practice, with Kate Duignan, lead a workshop on first drafts for keen writers and partake in Verb’s book club event, Your Reading List. Audiences can also experience a fascinating conversation between Doireann Ní Ghríofa and Noelle McCarthy. Their recently published books, Said the Dead and Stakes, both feature Cork’s former mental asylum, Our Lady’s, uncovering the stories and ghosts that linger within its walls. Festival goers will also have the opportunity to hear from authors Witi Ihimaera Smiler, Elizabeth Knox and Tusiata Avia as they reflect on their soul stirring memoirs. Elizabeth and Whiti will also join the Verb Showcase event, If This

Finds You, hosted by writer and award-winning podcast maker, Melody Thomas, which invites six artists to write a letter to a future reader. Acclaimed musician Jon Too-good will share songs and stories from his memoir while renowned High Court Judge and former Governor-General Dame Sylvia Cartwright discusses her remarkable life. Bestselling investigative journalist and lawyer Asher Emanuel, author of The Valley, joins Aaron Smale, the 2026 Te Kohu Kairangi Award winner for Best Reporting of Maori Affairs, to discuss the art of capturing true stories with Mani Dunlop. Don’t Worry, Tech Will Save Us sees team captains Chloe Swarbrick and Toby Manhire lead a fierce clash of ideas on technology and the future. In From the Floor, Lucy O’Hagan, Carwyn Jones, Trish Harris and Kaeden Watts present maiden speeches exploring their hopes for the future.

Dance Floor Romance, FEVER: A Poetry Gala invites six poets to respond



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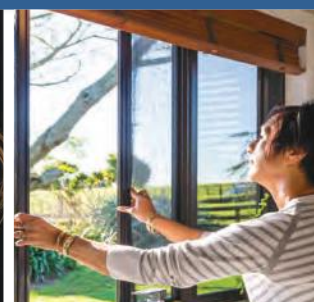
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Seven Onslow students in spelling semi

Seven Onslow College students have qualified for the semi finals of the national Spelling Bee competition.

Mira Menon, Raphael Shindo, James Curran, Eva Clear, Aiden Mekonnen, Elsa Johnston and Twyla Oliver are the seven who will represent their school.

They are among the top 350 spellers to advance to this next stage of the competition.

Spelling Bee Aotearoa New Zealand is celebrating

its 20th anniversary this year.

This milestone anniversary cements Spelling Bee as a key fixture in the calendar of schools around the motu, Spelling Bee says.

Nearly a hundred schools are taking part in the 2026 Spelling Bee, with 99 schools registering for the event.

The seven Onslow College students will compete in the semi final which will take place in Wellington on 10

September.

The 2026 Aotearoa New Zealand Spelling Bee final will be held in Wellington on 30 and 31 October.

The Spelling Bee Champion wins the 2026 Spelling Bee Trophy and \$5,000 for the advancement of their academic studies.

The programme is available to Years 9 and 10 students who are either in secondary schools or home schooled, and is a free event.

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Strong local MP needed

More than 100 supporters packed Prefab Hall in the city to see Labour MP Ayesha Verrall launch her campaign for Wellington North on 15 August.

A Labour list MP for the past six years, Ms Verrall told supporters that Wellington was facing serious challenges.

“Our public services have been gutted, our health system is in crisis and local businesses are struggling.

“To turn this around, Wellington needs a strong local MP who can get things done,” she said.

Ms Verrall said that National had promised to solve the cost of living but had made it worse.

She highlighted recent Labour policy commitments such as three free GP visits, a \$20 weekly fare cap on public transport and a small business package including requiring 15% of the government’s annual contracts to go to small business.

“I want Wellington to have a thriving economy, good quality public services and a government that backs our city, not one that runs it down.

“I’m the candidate who will stand up for Wellington and get things done,” she said.

A longtime Wellington resident, Ms Verrall trained and worked as a doctor at Wellington Hospital before being elected to Parliament in 2020.

She went straight into Cabinet, where she delivered historic pay equity settlements, led world-leading Smokefree reforms and developed proposals to strengthen Wellington’s science institutions.

“I don’t want to be the MP for one part of Wellington North.

“I want to be the MP for all of it, homeowners and renters, business owners and beneficiaries, workers and students, the people who’ve been here for decades and the people who have just



PHOTO: Part of the big crowd at Ayesha Verrall’s campaign launch. Photo: Supplied.

moved in,” she said.

“My promise to Wellington North is to be a hard working, pragmatic MP, committed to making progress for you – someone who knows how government works, and who will use that experience to get things done for Wellington North.”

Following boundary changes the new Wellington North electorate comprises parts of the former Wellington Central electorate with the southern end of the former Ohariu electorate including Broadmeadows, Khandallah and Ngaio.

Traffic resolutions consultation

Wellington City Council is currently consulting on five proposed new traffic resolutions in the ‘Independent Herald’ area.

They are in Birdwood Street, Karori; One School Global Wellington Campus; part of Stewart Drive, Newlands; Bancroft Terrace, Newlands; and part of Moana Road Kelburn.

The consultation will close at

5pm on 24 August.

Submissions can be made at www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/traffic-resolutions-october-2026.

The Council is proposing removing the shared path on Birdwood Street from a point 50 metres west of its intersection with Chaytor Street and extending to its intersection with Braithwaite Street.

“We have received safety con-

cerns from pedestrians using this path that some cyclists use the Birdwood Street uphill only shared path for downhill travel,” the Council says.

“Removing the shared path designation will remove conflict between fast downhill cyclists and pedestrians.”

The Council is proposing changing the speed limit at One School

Global in Aruba Grove, Grenada.

It plans to change the posted speed limit on school days from 50km/h to 30km/h during morning drop off and afternoon school pick up times – 8am to 9pm and 2:40pm to 3:40pm, except on Wednesdays when the pick up time will be 2pm to 3pm.

The Council is proposing formalising a new bus stop between 63

and 71 Stewart Drive, Newlands.

This would involve installing new road markings and installing “No Stopping At All Times” road markings around the bend.

The Council is proposing installing “No Stopping At All Times”, with broken yellow lines, between 21 and 37 Bancroft Terrace, New

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