

# Regional News

Issue 236

January 28, 2025



# News

## A spicy soirée



Spend Valentine’s Day celebrating love, sex, and social justice at Fired Up Stilettos’ (FUS) third *Kick Up a FUS!* strip club takeover – a spicy soirée that sees strippers strutting into Whisky & Wood for a scintillating, stupefying, sensual show on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February at 8pm.

FUS is a stripper-led, grassroots, labour-rights movement that has been storming across Aotearoa since January 2023. Formed in response to years of injustice in the strip club industry, the collective was inspired by one event in particular that saw 19 Calendar Girls dancers fired following the submission of a signed letter expressing concerns over the venue’s new policy to take a higher percentage of earnings. Since then, FUS has vowed to fan the flames of change and advocate for the rights of adult entertainers.

Stripping is an artform that requires a tremendous amount of discipline and skill and is a mode of performance that should be valued beyond its stigma and stereotypes. Expect something akin to a variety show mixed with the atmosphere of a strip club at *Kick Up a FUS!*, with local dancers and guests taking to the stage. With the opportunity to book lap dances and plenty of ways to tip, audience members can rest assured that performers will keep any tips earned with all ticket sales proceeds going to the FUS cause.

“Our strip club takeovers show what clubs can be like when they’re run by the workers, for the workers,” a FUS member says. “They’re also just really fun. So why not spend Valentine’s Day the best way by supporting hot dancers at *Kick Up a FUS!*?”

## Venture into the internet



Photo by Stephen A’Court.

Straddling the realms of contemporary dance and physical theatre, Footnote New Zealand Dance’s first show of the year delves into the intricate web of global internet culture and the evolving complexity of the online world.

*MODERN GOD* provides a unique opportunity to dissect our interactions with the internet – from its absurdity and speed to its utility and potential dangers – through the experiences of six social media influencers. Just as stunts are attempted, records are broken, memes are made, content is consumed, and advertising is sold, lives are ruined and heroes are formed in this online world.

“In 2025, now more than ever it’s so important for us to be looking at online content with a wary and critical eye,” Footnote Dance artistic director Anita Hunziker says. “*MODERN GOD* is funny, it’s tongue-in-cheek, but it’s also a serious social commentary on this large facet of modern life that can be so influential.”

The complex and thought-provoking dance theatre work comes from the mind of choreographer Jeremy Beck, who is joined by dramaturg Hana Miller and a powerhouse design team featuring AV design by creative production studio RDYSTDY, original music composition by Benny Jennings, costumes by Gabrielle Stevenson, and lighting by Tony Black. The cast is composed of Footnote dancers Airu Matsuda, Cecilia Wilcox, Levi Siaosi, and Veronica ChengEn Lyu alongside guest artists Joshua Faleatua and Tyler Carney-Faleatua.

Brand new, high powered, and premiering at Te Whaea National Dance and Drama Centre between the 13<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of February, *MODERN GOD* is an arresting epic of monumental proportions.

Cover: Lunar New Year Festival.

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## Culture, community, cuisine



Wellington's Lunar New Year Festival is back for 2025, with an expanded programme celebrating the Year of the Snake.

Hot off the heels of winning the Arts and Culture Award at the Wellington Airport Regional Community Awards, Asian Events Trust will deliver a bigger and better festival programme between the 29<sup>th</sup> of January and the 16<sup>th</sup> of February. In collaboration with the wider community, Lunar New Year celebrations will span a six-week period thanks to the inclusion of supported events which started with Viet Hub NZ's New Year celebration on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January and will finish with a dumpling-making workshop at Wellington Museum on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of February.

Thanks to the continued support of Lee Kum Kee, the festival's returning principal sponsor, Asian Events Trust chair Linda Lim says, "this year's festival is bigger and better than ever, with more ways to connect people through food, culture, and celebration."

The programme will feature Paint the Town Red, a two-week culinary celebration from the 29<sup>th</sup> of January to the 16<sup>th</sup> of February. Hospitality venues across Wellington's Courtenay Precinct will offer Lunar New Year-inspired dishes and drinks, adding a delicious twist to the festivities.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of February, Courtenay Precinct will come alive with dragon and lion dancers, snake-themed street performers, taiko drummers, and a Shanghai jazz band, culminating in a fireworks display over Wellington's waterfront. Supported by Stonewood Group, the fireworks will light up the night sky in fiery red, warding off evil spirits and welcoming good fortune for the coming year.

Festival Day on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February promises an action-packed lineup. TSB Arena will host cultural performances and craft displays. Frank Kitts Park will be filled with family-friendly interactive activities, including face painting, colouring in, dragon dancing, martial arts, K-pop, and taiko drumming workshops. Shed 6 will be transformed into the Lee Kum Kee Asian Market – a food hall filled with the tastes and aromas of Southeast Asian cuisine. Haizhi (Max) Bu, an Auckland-based master of bian lian or face-changing, headlines the Festival Day stage programme.

Whether you're a long-time fan or a first-time visitor, the 2025 festival is a must-see, must-do celebration of culture, community, and cuisine. For the full festival programme go to [www.lunarnewyearfestival.co.nz](http://www.lunarnewyearfestival.co.nz)

## A good time with Goodfellow



The year is 2013: galaxy leggings are all the rage, the Harlem Shake is taking the world by storm, and Vine – a social media platform for short-form videos – is a hit. That same year, a comedian named Kurtis Conner uploads his first videos to Vine.

More than 10 years later and Vine is long gone, but Kurtis Conner has experienced a meteoric rise. Thanks to his shift to YouTube in 2014, the Canadian comedian has gained a loyal following over the last decade, amassing over five million subscribers. His comedic approach and deadpan delivery has landed him a top spot among YouTube commentator rankings, with his videos typically focusing on current issues and film criticism. He's particularly known for calling out those who wish to marginalise groups, making fun of them while raising awareness of important issues like consent, domestic abuse, and misogyny. In the process, he's donated thousands of dollars to charitable foundations such as [loveisrespect](http://loveisrespect.org).

Today, Conner has become a multi-hyphenate creative powerhouse repping titles like podcaster, comedian, and sell-out performer. In 2023, he was named one of *Variety's* Top 10 Comics to Watch, partnered with the largest international comedy festival in the world – Just For Laughs in Montreal – as a featured artist, and sold out theatres across Australia and New Zealand.

Enter 2025 and Conner is set to return to the Southern Hemisphere along his *Goodfellow World Tour*, sauntering into Wellington's Opera House on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of February with a full hour of brand-new content. Tune in to his prequel *Python* on YouTube to catch the vibe.

## SNIPS

### Farewell Homegrown

This year's Jim Beam Homegrown will be the last in Wellington, where it has been held on the waterfront since its inception in 2008. The iconic festival is set to move cities in 2026, but not without a final Welly hurrah featuring the likes of The Black Seeds, The Beths, Elemeno P, Drax Project, Shapeshifter, Sir Dave Dobbyn, Shihad, and more on the 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> of March.

### ADHD treatment

Te Pātaka Whaioranga – Pharmac is consulting on a joint proposal with Medsafe to increase access to ADHD medicines. The consultation is considering changes to the regulations and funding restrictions for stimulant treatments. Click current consultations at [www.pharmac.govt.nz](http://www.pharmac.govt.nz) to provide feedback until the 11<sup>th</sup> of February.

### Open call

The Academy of Fine Arts invites entries responding to the theme of Autumn for exhibition in Wellington Cathedral from the 22<sup>nd</sup> of March to the 13<sup>th</sup> of April 2025. Entries close on the 3<sup>rd</sup> of February at [www.nzafa.com](http://www.nzafa.com)



# News

## Passionate, problematic glory



Five years ago, Amanda and Elyot divorced after a tempestuous marriage. Imagine their mutual surprise and horror when, on their summer honeymoons with their respective new spouses, they find themselves in adjacent rooms... with one shared balcony. Over cocktails in the moonlight, forgotten passion comes flooding back. But are Amanda and Elyot older and wiser enough to navigate through the pitfalls of their past mistakes? And what of their new flames?

Noël Coward's *Private Lives* is a comedy of manners set and first staged in 1930. Despite its age, the play is surprisingly kinky! Director Janet Noble says that while on the surface it's a silly little comedy about spoiled rich people that was written nearly 100 years ago, the script still feels quite modern.

"It's so wonderfully dense and layered," she says, "and the dialogue is so clever and so much fun."

An actor originally from the western United States, Noble is making her directorial debut with *Private Lives* and says it's been incredible to watch the Stagecraft cast bring these "delightful, complicated, occasionally infuriating characters" to life "in all their messy, passionate, and problematic glory".

"We want to show the weirdness and complications of their private lives", she continues.

Catch Stagecraft's production of *Private Lives*, their first of 2025, at Gryphon Theatre from the 5<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of February.

## An incendiary evening



Stop, drop, and roll into Valhalla for *Bring Back the Riff* – a tribute concert to the glory days when bands were bands and riffs were riffs. Wellington's alt-music hub will be set ablaze when a fatal four-way fire of heavy-hitting, smash-mouth brawlers ignites the stage on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February from 9pm.

The red-hot donnybrook lineup will get Valhalla regulars and freshers hot and heavy with music spanning genres.

Stomping down from Tāmaki Makaurau is Doomscroll with a soundtrack to the end times. If the end is indeed nigh, they figure they may as well have some fun with it. Doomy, sludgy, stonery, metal... Doomscroll is a "don't try to pigeonhole us" type band that will surely stoke your embers.

Infinity Ritual is a Ngāmotu-based three-piece outfit emerging from underneath Mount Taranaki. With a unique blend of stoner, doom, and groove metal, the band's mantra is to play heavy riffs that will make your skull implode.

Pōneke presents two of her own at *Bring Back the Riff*, with Mammuthus and Sidewinder coming in to add fuel to the fire.

A hulking shadow of sound and intimidation upon the senses, Mammuthus describe themselves as the aural equivalent of being trampled by ill-tempered woolly mammoths.

Sidewinder is a wall of riff-heavy psych, with lashings of Delta blues, playing a groove-laden brand of bluesy desert rock with a grungy, southern rock twist. Join the combustible crowd at *Bring Back the Riff*.

Join the combustible crowd at *Bring Back the Riff*.

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## Private Lives

Written by Noël Coward

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## A sonic assault



“One of the greatest Kiwi live bands” (Graham Reid, *Elsewhere*), The D4 will hit Pōneke soil wilder, louder, and more combustible than ever this summer. The Auckland rockers will play Meow on the 21<sup>st</sup> of February in a raging double header with Welly band Head Like a Hole, the self-described “undomesticated animal of New Zealand rock”, born in 1990 in “the bowels of The Empire Warehouse”.

The D4 are running hot from an untamed tour across their spiritual stomping ground of Japan and primed to explode back onto the local stage in celebration of the first-ever vinyl release of their sophomore album *Out Of My Head* (2005), dropping on the 7<sup>th</sup> of February via Warner Music.

Adding rocket fuel to the fire, they’ve unveiled a brand-new single as the record approaches its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

“*Judgement Day* is a hyped-up little rocker we wrote and recorded in 2003”, guitarist Dion Lunadon says. “Engineered and mixed ourselves, live to tape at Arch Hill Studios, *Judgement Day* was part of a bunch of songs that never made it to our second album, *Out Of My Head*. A song that should have perhaps made the cut!”

Lunadon goes on to tease “more never-before-heard songs to follow...”

With a reputation for amps catching on fire and sweat dripping from the ceiling, punk ‘n’ roll fans are not gonna wanna miss this powerhouse show featuring all the classics – from *Sake Bomb* to *Ladies Man* – alongside these sneaky peeks.

## Balm meets blowtorch



Photo by Mrs Redhead.

Over the past two years, Susan O’Neill has shared stages with the likes of Phoebe Bridgers, The Teskey Brothers, and Calxico – to name but a few – and sold out headline shows across her native Ireland, sowing the seeds across all territories for her next chapter to begin. Now, for the first time ever, the rising Irish star will embark on a headline tour across New Zealand, playing San Fran on the 9<sup>th</sup> of February.

The timeless songwriter is on tour in support of her debut solo album *Now in a Minute*, which shot straight to number one on the Irish Independent Album Charts upon its release in September 2024.

“Vulnerable but strong, dark but hopeful” (*The Times*), the “Seductive, beautifully crafted album” (*The Sunday Times*) features profound lyrics like “I am finally here in a moment I’m wading free in the ocean... If I know who I am in the ocean I’ll be alright in the sky” which O’Neill sang whilst paragliding off a mount next to Switzerland’s Matterhorn in the *Everyone’s Blind* music video!

With such monikers as “Superb” (*Clash Magazine*) and “Exquisite” (*The Sunday Times*), O’Neill has previously been nominated for the Radio 1 Best Female Folk Artist and the Vanda & Young Global Songwriting Competition award for her song *These Are the Days* from her massive 2021 collab album with Mick Flannery.

With a voice equal parts balm and blowtorch, she is a born performer you don’t want to miss.

## Get set to sweat



Well *Turn the Dial* and *Drag My Body...* American punk legends Hot Water Music are coming to Wellington! Making their long-awaited return for their first headline shows here in nearly 15 years, Hot Water Music will come crashing into Valhalla on the 11<sup>th</sup> of February along their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary tour.

You read that right: it’s been 30 years (and 10 albums) since this enduring pillar of punk rock first burst onto the scene in 1994. Their pioneering sound has taken them from grungy clubs in their hometown of Gainesville, Florida to massive venues around the world countless times over.

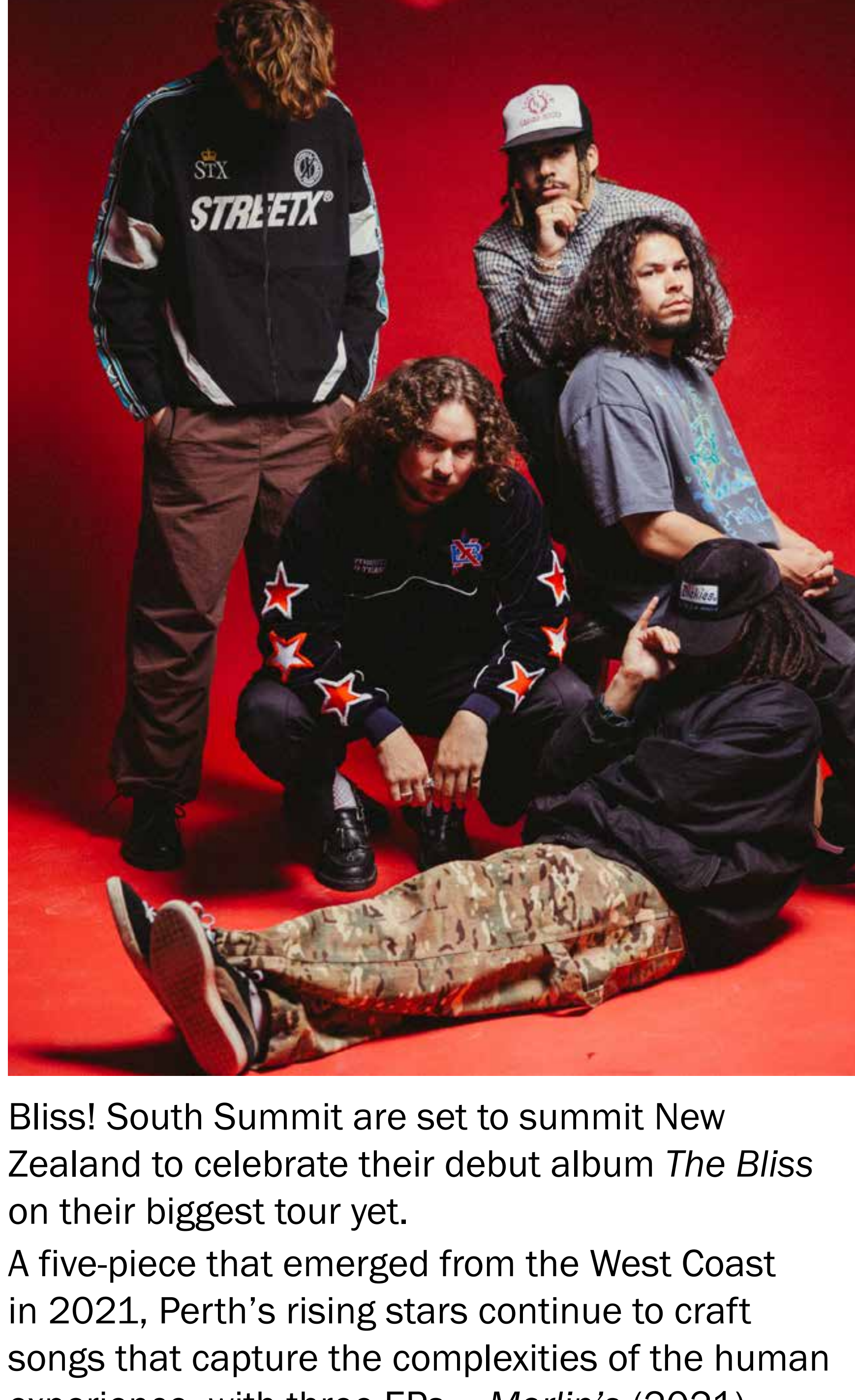
Ripped with *Trusty Chords* and trademark scruffy vocals, their big-hearted anthems – from *Habitual* to *State of Grace*, *Never Going Back* to *Remedy* – continue to soundtrack the lives of hundreds of thousands of fans.

“WE COULD NOT BE MORE STOKED to get back to Australia and New Zealand”, bassist Jason Black shouts. “Sorry for the all caps, but it’s been 14 years since we’ve done any proper club shows down there, so we’re really excited. We promise it won’t be so long between this run and the next one.”

No doubt Wellington fans will hold them to it when they shred the stage with all their treasured old faves and newbies from their latest album *VOWS*, produced by their longtime collaborator Brian McTernan and featuring guests like Dallas Green of City and Colour. Grab ya mates and get ready to get sweaty!

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## Tuneful treats



Bliss! South Summit are set to summit New Zealand to celebrate their debut album *The Bliss* on their biggest tour yet.

A five-piece that emerged from the West Coast in 2021, Perth’s rising stars continue to craft songs that capture the complexities of the human experience, with three EPs – *Merlin’s* (2021), *Creatures* (2023), and *Tales of the Yeti* (2023) – all building momentum towards *The Bliss*.

The 2024 12-track release melds genres and pushes the boundaries of Australian music to offer a fresh perspective on life, infusing South Summit’s signature soundscapes with an elevated songwriting style. The result is a bold exploration of the emotional spectrum: a reflection of a musical evolution that takes stock of what has been even as it steps confidently forward.

Brothers Zaya (lead vocals) and Nemo Reuben (guitar) both whakapapa Māori and together with the band have a special place in their hearts for Aotearoa. They were most recently on our shores supporting another Perth band of Kiwi brothers – Coterie – and can’t wait to get out there and play this headline tour up and down the motu.

“These shows feel a little extra special”, South Summit share. “It’s been a while since we’ve toured the whole country, and showcasing our debut album is something we’ve been looking forward to for a long time.”

Catch their “brand-new live show” plus “plenty more treats” at San Fran on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February.

[Back to contents](#)



# Pōneke pinballers



Lights flash, buzzers ding, and silver balls whizz around at top speed. A harlequin neon dreamscape, a starting point for epic adventures, and the home of endless fun, Ye Olde Pinball Shoppe (YOPS) is a retro arcade fitted with modern details and a full bar. It's a whimsical wonderland; a place for pinball wizards, pinheads, multiball maidens, and nostalgia nuts.

Hamish Guthrey opened YOPS during the pandemic. A labour of love, his one-of-a-kind arcade was established with the intention of being a place for Wellington's pinball community to congregate and for the next generation to discover their new favourite pastime.

YOPS has become the go-to hangout for amateurs and aficionados alike to hone their skills and interact with likeminded individuals. Tournaments, socials, and training sessions take place regularly, with many regulars visiting on a daily basis just for fun.

Screens are fitted above each machine, making every game a social and interactive experience. Currently available to play are favourites like The Twilight Zone, Godzilla, Medieval Madness, Labyrinth, and The Lord of the Rings, as well as Rick and Morty, Star Wars, Metallica, The Princess Bride, and so many more.

If you're after a machine of your own or you're keen to have a go, YOPS is open every day of the week. Swing by during one of the monthly freeplay social nights coming up on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February and 6<sup>th</sup> of March, whether you're shaking off the rust or trying it for the first time.

## Oodles of fun



Make haste to Wellington's South Coast! The Island Bay Festival is upon us and there is so much to see and do, you won't want to miss a moment of it. Running from the 9<sup>th</sup> to the 15<sup>th</sup> of February, this 40-year strong party is jam-packed with fun.

"The Island Bay Festival has been running for 40 years," event organiser Dan Wilkinson says. "We've had some magical festivals over that time but it's a celebration of everything Island Bay has to offer".

What started as a grassroots weekend event in 1985 quickly blossomed into a New World-sponsored, multi-day festival. Today, it's a staple of Wellington's busy summer events calendar.

From music to art, cuisine to classes, workshops to competitions, performances to fitness activities, and so much more, the 2025 programme will be one for the books.

"It'll be showcasing films from around Island Bay at Empire this time around. We're also going to be having tangata manu, our bird man again. There will be the blessing of the boats. We've got a record amount of food vendors, including some local community food vendors and stallholders,"

Wilkinson continues. "We're expecting 12,000 people and we'll have entertainment for kids and adults. We've also got tū mātau ora going on – traditional Māori games. And they'll also be opening up at Taputeranga Marine Reserve area the following weekend on the Saturday."

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**Blessing of the boats**  
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**Festival fun**  
11am-5:30pm

**Live Music**  
11:45am-6pm

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[Back to contents](#)



The world in Wellington



Wellington is one of Aotearoa’s most eclectic cities, with ethnicities from across the world calling the capital home. This cultural diversity is what makes Te Whanganui-a-Tara special, vibrant, and bursting with character. The annual Diversity Festival at Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington’s Memorial Theatre on the 15<sup>th</sup> of February will celebrate our city’s cultural landscape with cuisines, traditions, performances, and more.

Shaping up to be bigger and better than ever before in 2025, this year’s event will kick off with a community dinner chocka with culinary delights and traditional recipes spanning continents. The entertainment programme will put a smile on everyone’s faces. Get ready for performances from the Vietnamese, Spanish-speaking, Hawaiian, West African, Indian, and Chinese communities as well as carnival dances, workshops, guest speakers, and so much more. And a haka, of course!

“We believe the Diversity Festival is more than just an event – it’s a platform to connect people, share stories, and foster understanding,” organiser Nathan Diggs says. “Everyone is welcome, and we’re thrilled to showcase the talents and traditions of so many cultures.”

Bringing together people from around the globe, the Diversity Festival is a celebration of ethnic diversity and unity, culture, and community that encourages cross-cultural collaboration and inspires a more interconnected and inclusive Wellington.

Spinning yarns by Alessia Belsito-Riera



Comedian Josh Wolf is relatable, rowdy, and ready and raring to go for his Valentine’s Day show in Wellington. His *High on Life Tour* is both his largest show in New Zealand yet and his most hilarious, so whether you are part of a pair or flying solo at Hannah Playhouse on the 14<sup>th</sup> of February, you’re in for a treat.

Following a sold-out run of his last Aotearoa tour, Wolf announces that his new show is “completely different than the one I came with in 2023, with better stories and more fun. At the end of all my shows, I do like 10 or 15 minutes of funny songs. So, I’m super excited for people to see the new hour.”

The award-winning comedian, bestselling author, television show writer, and actor with millions of followers, clicks, and views says he’s especially excited to bring *High on Life* to Kiwi audiences, who always love a good story. “So I’m telling them,” he beams!

Wolf is one of the most sought-after storytellers in the comedy world, with a career spanning almost three decades and a CV that includes appearances on *Chelsea Lately*, *My Name is Earl*, *Home Improvement*, *Netflix Is A Joke*, and *Last Comic Standing* – not to mention TV and talent deals with 20<sup>th</sup> Century Fox, ABC, NBC, and Happy Madison Productions.

Joining Wolf on stage in Aotearoa is his son Jacob. Together, they offer unique and hilarious takes on current events, pop culture, and generational differences, making sure you’ll leave the venue *High on Life*.

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# The Man Whose Mother Was A Pirate – The Musical

**Written by Nino Raphael**

**Directed by Sara Brodie**

**two/fifty-seven, 22<sup>nd</sup> Jan 2025**

**Reviewed by Zac Fitzgibbon**



Sailing from the Welsh Dragon Bar to two/fifty-seven with a fresh new crew of scallywag actors is the updated *The Man Whose Mother Was A Pirate – The Musical*. Inspired by Margaret Mahy’s beloved children’s book and made with the consent and approval of her estate, this production features new songs with music and lyrics by Nino Raphael and even more audience engagement, including dancing in the playing area.

Each actor plays within the theatre-in-the-round so well, both vocally (musical direction by Hayden Taylor) and physically. Finlay Morris as Sam the Man stuns with his vocal prowess and smooth movement. Jo Hodgson (The Pirate Mother) fully embodies what it means to be both a mother and a pirate, delivering beautiful vocals. Aimée Sullivan keeps the audience in stitches with her many roles as The Rugged Pirate, while Stuart Coats’ expanded portrayal of Mr Fat delights with its depth and humour. Mike McKeon as the Rosy Pirate Captain is a superb narrator and commands the audience with his stage presence. Isobel Lee shines as Jenny, a new addition to the crew of characters, stealing every scene she is in. Every performer adds their own unique energy, and I almost choked with laughter at several moments. The new songs add so much to the show’s charm, combining sea shanty vibes with Raphael’s distinctive style. The technical elements, like the simple yet effective lighting (Scott Maxim), enhance the setting without distracting from the action. The addition of retractable cutlasses and other props (Becka Tiongson) elevates the theatrical experience. This version of *The Man Whose Mother Was A Pirate – The Musical* retains the magic of its Welsh Dragon Bar original, but blows it out of the water with its energy, humour, and creativity. It feels sharper, bigger, better, and is even more of a standout. It’s a fantastic story for all generations about setting sail from the ordinary to explore uncharted waters. I have no doubt that with the creative team behind it, future productions will raise the (rum) bar even higher. For now, I would fight off crews of pirates to watch it again.

## Nosferatu

**132 minutes**

**R16**

★ ★ ☆

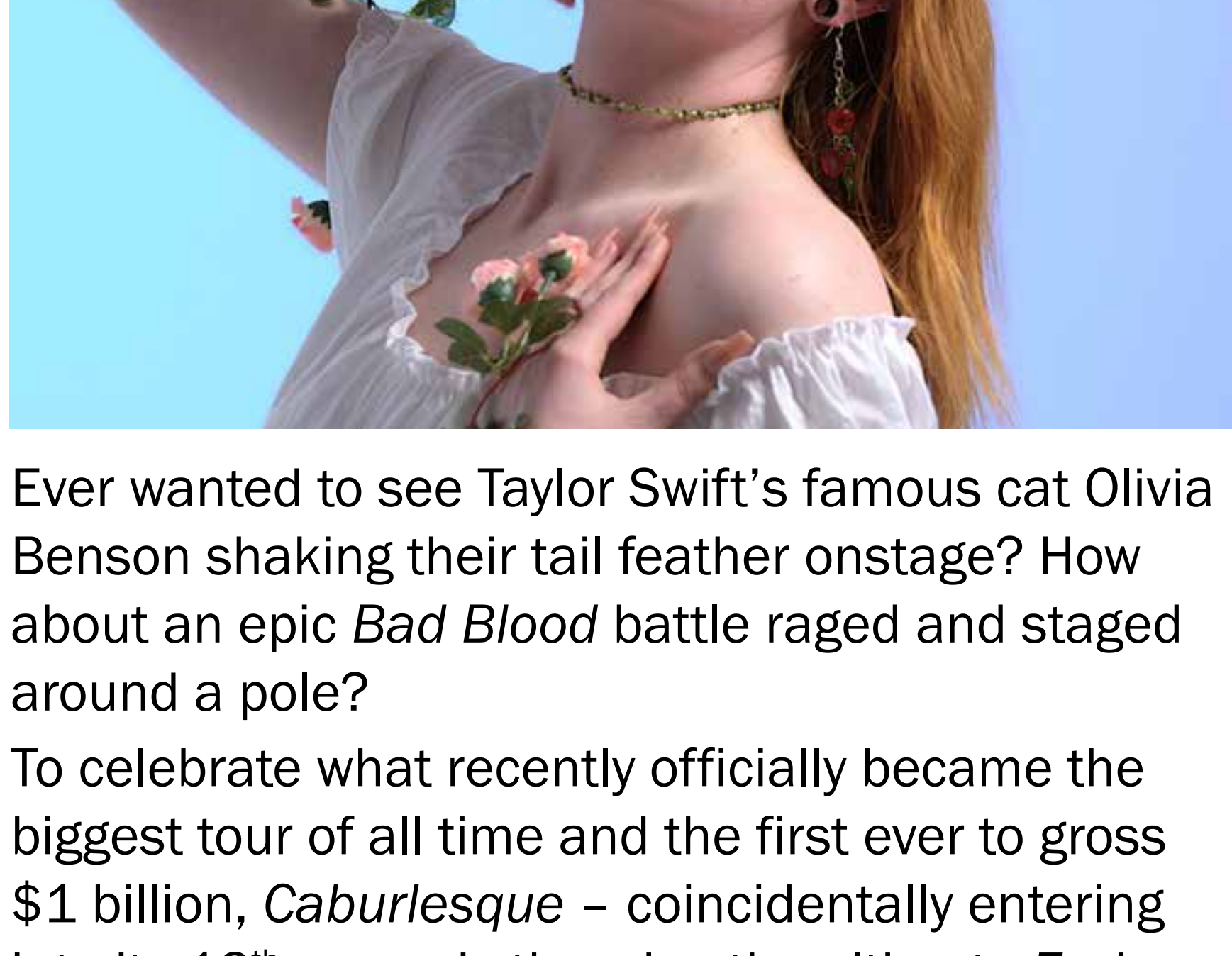
**Reviewed by Alessia Belsito-Riera**

Sailing from the Welsh Dragon Bar to two/fifty-seven with a fresh new crew of scallywag actors is the updated *The Man Whose Mother Was A Pirate – The Musical*. Inspired by Margaret Mahy’s beloved children’s book and made with the consent and approval of her estate, this production features new songs with music and lyrics by Nino Raphael and even more audience engagement, including dancing in the playing area.

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## Enchanted to meet you

**by Madelaine Empson**



Ever wanted to see Taylor Swift’s famous cat Olivia Benson shaking their tail feather onstage? How about an epic *Bad Blood* battle raged and staged around a pole?

To celebrate what recently officially became the biggest tour of all time and the first ever to gross \$1 billion, *Caburlesque* – coincidentally entering into its 13<sup>th</sup> year – is throwing the ultimate *End of an Era(s) Tour* party. New Zealand’s longest-running cabaret-meets-burlesque variety show will swiftly bring the superstar’s hits to The Fringe Bar stage on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February.

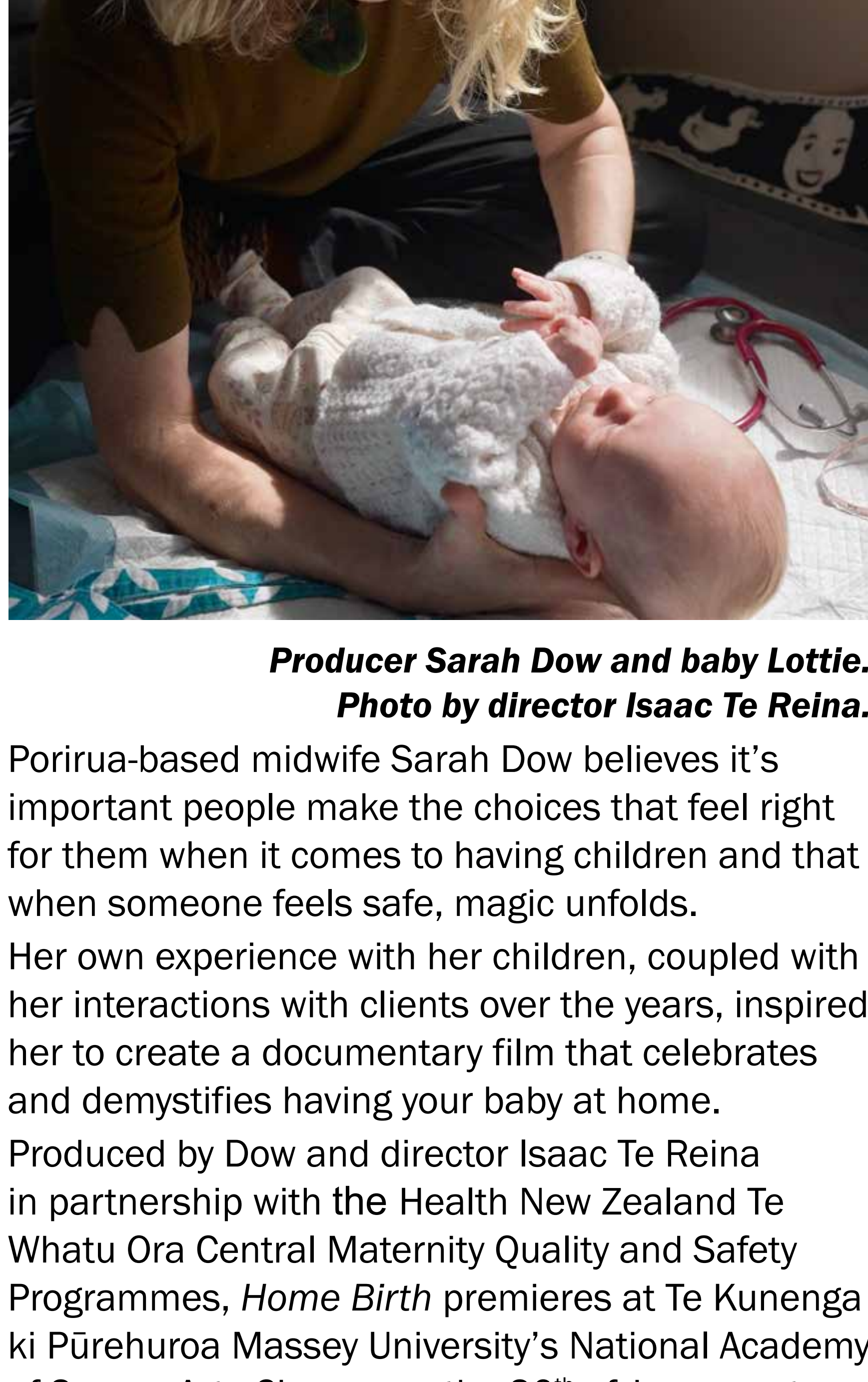
“We at *Caburlesque* love a powerful woman and at this time, they don’t come more powerful than Miss T Swift”, producer Adrienne Lindsay says. “I didn’t realise I was a Swiftie until I did a deep dive into her discography and was completely blown away by her range and diverse style”.

The 14-time GRAMMY®-winner and *TIME*’s 2023 Person of the Year has ventured into practically all genres throughout her illustrious career, from country to indie, rock to synth-pop and back again. To find out which Taylor’s Versions make it onto the stage – courtesy of Lady Rosé, Poison Pussy, Madam Magenta, Miss \$Billz [pictured], Pip E-Lysaah, Lily Catastrophe, Baby G from Melbourne, and Nicole, Gabi & Elisa – you’ll just have to dance with the devil down to *Caburlesque: End of an Era(s) Tour*.

If it’s been a *Cruel Summer* and you need to *Shake It Off*, then join MC Constance Craving and these stellar local, national, and international performers as they live out their *Wildest Dreams*. Together, you can enter your most *Enchanted* era yet!

## What’s right for you

**by Madelaine Empson**



**Producer Sarah Dow and baby Lottie.**

**Photo by director Isaac Te Reina.**

Porirua-based midwife Sarah Dow believes it’s important people make the choices that feel right for them when it comes to having children and that when someone feels safe, magic unfolds.

Her own experience with her children, coupled with her interactions with clients over the years, inspired her to create a documentary film that celebrates and demystifies having your baby at home.

Produced by Dow and director Isaac Te Reina in partnership with the Health New Zealand Te Whatu Ora Central Maternity Quality and Safety Programmes, *Home Birth* premieres at Te Kunenga ki Pūrehuroa Massey University’s National Academy of Screen Arts Cinema on the 30<sup>th</sup> of January at 6pm.

Through candid interviews and breathtaking visuals, *Home Birth* captures the intimate stories of eight families from across the lower North Island. The documentary seeks to shine a light on the stories and experiences of whānau who choose to welcome their babies into the world in the comfort of their own home while underscoring the challenges and joys of the experience.

“Many pregnant people default to hospital birth as they assume it will be safer,” Dow says. “Evidence shows that home birth is as safe as birthing in hospital for someone who has a low risk and uncomplicated pregnancy. The experience of birthing at home can also be more peaceful, comfortable for partners, and encourage whānau involvement.”

Discover magic and explore your options with *Home Birth*.

[Back to contents](#)



# A round of a-paws



If you've got kids, or friends with kids, or even if you simply know a kid... you've probably seen *Bluey*. Created by Joe Brumm, the BAFTA and Emmy Award-winning animated television series follows the lovable and inexhaustible puppy Bluey, who learns about the world on adventures with her family and friends.

Now, a theatrical adaptation of the hit children's show will have its New Zealand premiere after taking the world by storm. Meet Bluey, her little sister Bingo, and her parents Bandit and Chilli in the form of brilliant (60-kilo!) puppets in *Bluey's Big Play*, featuring live actors, great music, and epic sets at TSB Arena on the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of April. I Zoomed with puppetry director Jacob Williams in the lead-up to the stage spectacular, which has proven so popular, there are six shows in Wellington alone!

**Where did your passion for puppetry come from and what made it stick?**

I was a child actor, always involved in theatre, and I ended up living in Hobart in my twenties working as an actor and creating my own theatre. There's a little puppet company down there called Terrapin, and they had no puppeteers, so they ran a workshop and invited me to participate. From there, they employed me to perform in their next show. I was very natural at the puppetry and loved it, and I was sort of at a point in my career where I wasn't really enjoying acting anymore. That was 25-plus years ago, and I was very fortunate to be in the right place at the right time and fall into a career that has taken me all around the world.

What's so wonderful about puppetry is that the focus is always on the puppet, but it has all the elements of theatre that I love. Puppetry involves the audience to invest a little more themselves. Faces have multi-muscles in them to convey emotion and tell stories, whereas a puppet might have only three moving parts. Once you've hooked in the audience, they're placing so much meaning and imagination in the show itself, so it's a real dialogue. There's something about puppets – people place and extract humanity from inanimate objects, so it does work on a deeper level. Also, the variety of roles you can play in puppetry is phenomenal. That first show I played, I was a ballerina's shadow, which broke away from the ballerina, morphed into a monster, ripped the limbs off her, and ate her! It was a dark piece [laughs], it wasn't a children's show for sure. But it just showed where puppetry can go. Shadows, giant gorillas, and directing phenomenal, successful dogs onstage.

**Yes! How did you get involved in the world of Bluey?**

It's funny, I'd never heard of *Bluey*. I was working in New York and came back to Melbourne and got a phone call out of the blue saying, 'Could you be the puppetry director for *Bluey*?' Of course, I said yes. I thought it would be a nice summer job... That was about four and a half years ago!

After that phone call, I just started seeing, everywhere around me, people talking about *Bluey*, *Bluey* in the shops, and I did a bit of Googling and thought, oh wow, this is really big. I've worked on big shows, but nothing that has the same reach as *Bluey*. Working on it is a once-in-a-generation experience. A month ago, we were in Abu Dhabi. Before that, Singapore, America, all through Europe. It just relates to so many people, and shows that the core values of humanity and togetherness still have something that hooks us in.

**The show continues to have such a resounding impact on audiences. Do you get to experience that feedback first-hand?**

I was in Chicago in the foyer watching audiences come in before the show, and what struck me was just how excited they were. Not just the kids, but the parents, the grandparents, even people who didn't have children with them but knew the show from the kids of their friends. It was just this visceral feeling in the foyer of this excitement and this community. That's been the case all around the world. You see the feedback through the excitement of the audience. I've watched the show more times that I can remember. It's because of the audience, what they bring and their enthusiasm, that I'm not sick of sitting there, watching, and being a part of it.

**Do you feel like each show changes based on the energy in the room and how audiences respond?**

Yeah, and because it's gone for four years, we've had the luxury of being able to really hone the puppetry, change the choreography so it's more efficient, and find new, subtle changes to really bring the performance to a higher level. We created this show during COVID lockdowns. We did that on an Australian tour, then had six months off, then we went to America, and between that period we were allowed to have some more audience interaction, because in COVID times you couldn't do that. We were able to then refigure some aspects of the show to make it a little more playful with the audience. The kids and the families end up leaving the theatre feeling like they've played games and been part of the action and part of the show.

**Even with such a hit series behind you, could you fathom the kind of global success the stage show would have?**

We created it alongside Joe Brumm, Ludo [Studio], and Joff Bush [the primary composer]. One of the biggest challenges that myself and Rosemary Myers, the director, faced was being faithful to *Bluey*, because it had such significance to people. Having producers in the room, it felt like we were being very faithful in honouring it. So what became really exciting was putting it in front of the audience and just sharing all our hard work with them. We opened in Brisbane, and I think it was the first production in the world to open after lockdown. Joe Brumm was sitting in the audience. I spoke to him afterwards, and he just said, 'I can't believe people made puppets of my show, and put them on stage. That was great!'

**What are you most looking forward to about the New Zealand premiere season of Bluey's Big Play?**

It's a chance to share this live experience of *Bluey* with a new audience in a new country. I like New Zealand, it's got a funky vibe to it. I'm looking forward to coming back and seeing other parts of the country. We're playing big venues, so big seats as well – feeling that energy will be fantastic.



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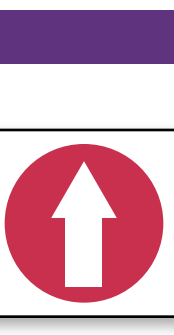
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Where: Te Papakura Gallery in the Beehive  
The name of this exhibition has been gifted by Ngā Ratonga Ao Māori at New Zealand Parliament, and reflects the warmth and joy the summer months bring.  
Links to information about the exhibition and opening times for tours of Parliament can be found at [nzafa.com/exhibitions/Toi-i-te-Waru](http://nzafa.com/exhibitions/Toi-i-te-Waru)

Contemporary New Zealand art

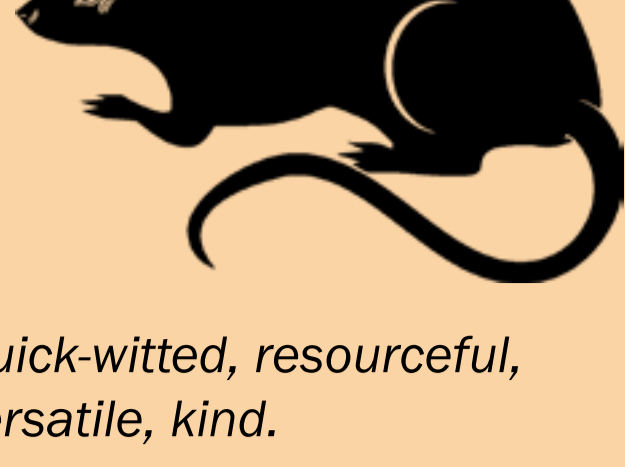
Back to contents



# Lunar New Year

## Rat

...1948, 1960, 1972, 1984, 1996, 2008, 2020...



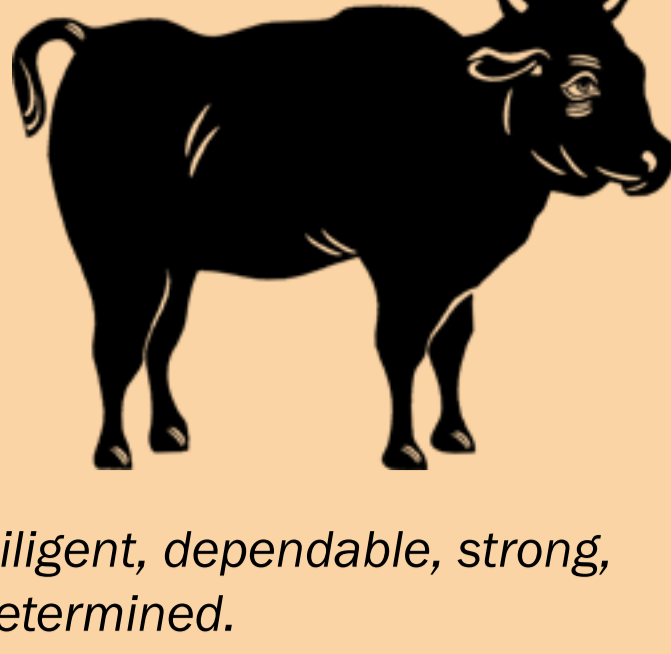
*Quick-witted, resourceful, versatile, kind.*

**Lucky numbers:** 2, 3

**Lucky colours:** blue, gold, green

## Ox

...1949, 1961, 1973, 1985, 1997, 2009, 2021...



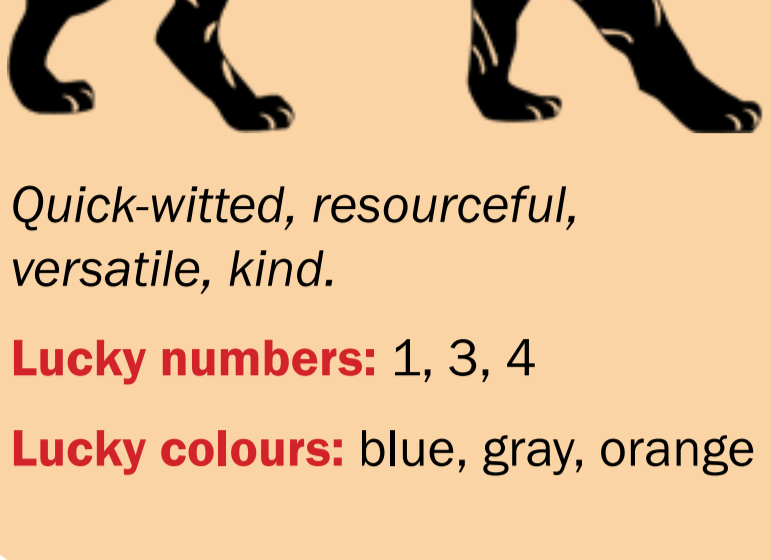
*Diligent, dependable, strong, determined.*

**Lucky numbers:** 1, 4

**Lucky colours:** white, yellow, green

## Tiger

...1950, 1962, 1974, 1986, 1998, 2010, 2022...



*Quick-witted, resourceful, versatile, kind.*

**Lucky numbers:** 1, 3, 4

**Lucky colours:** blue, gray, orange

## Rabbit

...1951, 1963, 1975, 1987, 1999, 2011, 2023...



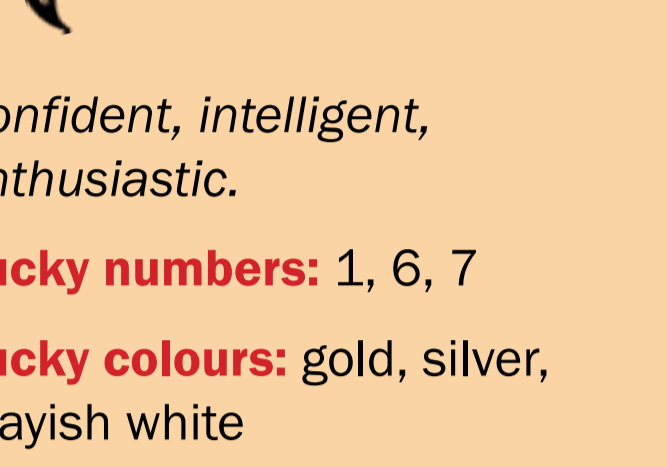
*Quiet, elegant, kind, responsible.*

**Lucky numbers:** 3, 4, 6

**Lucky colours:** red, pink, purple, blue

## Dragon

...1952, 1964, 1976, 1988, 2000, 2012, 2024...



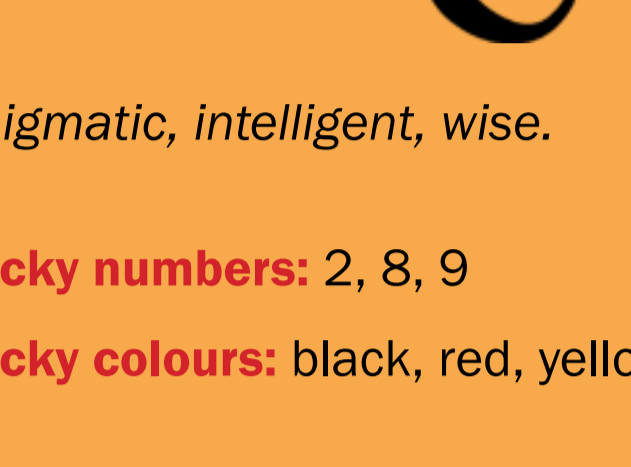
*Confident, intelligent, enthusiastic.*

**Lucky numbers:** 1, 6, 7

**Lucky colours:** gold, silver, grayish white

## Snake

...1953, 1965, 1977, 1989, 2001, 2013, 2025...



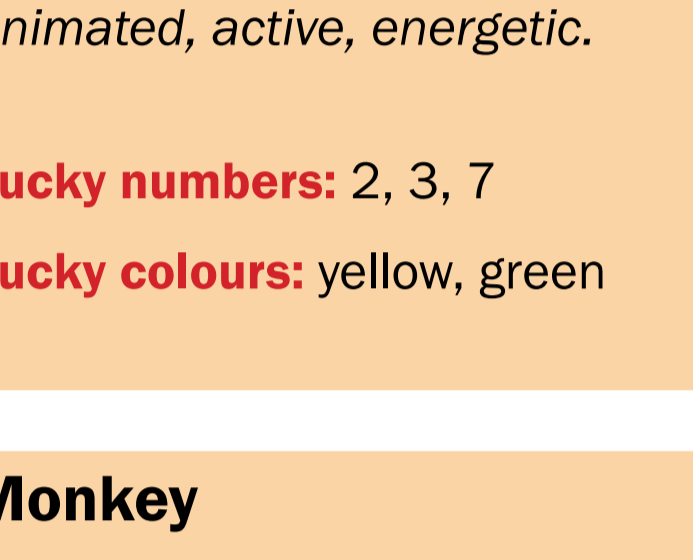
*Enigmatic, intelligent, wise.*

**Lucky numbers:** 2, 8, 9

**Lucky colours:** black, red, yellow

## Horse

...1954, 1966, 1978, 1990, 2002, 2014, 2026...



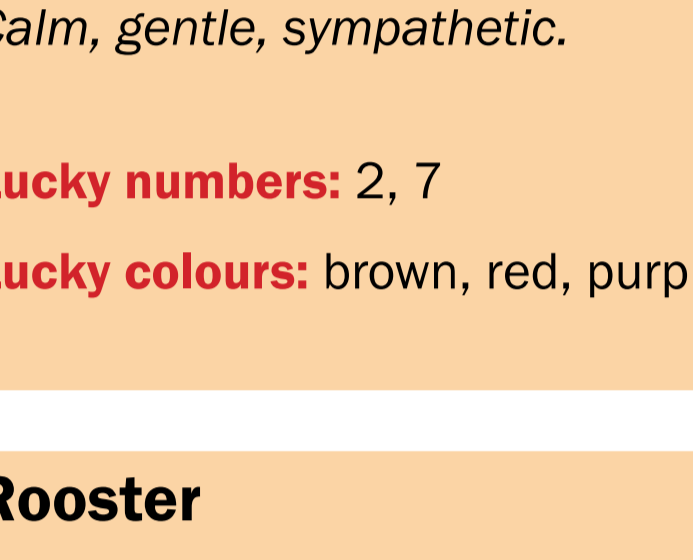
*Animated, active, energetic.*

**Lucky numbers:** 2, 3, 7

**Lucky colours:** yellow, green

## Goat

...1955, 1967, 1979, 1991, 2003, 2015, 2027...



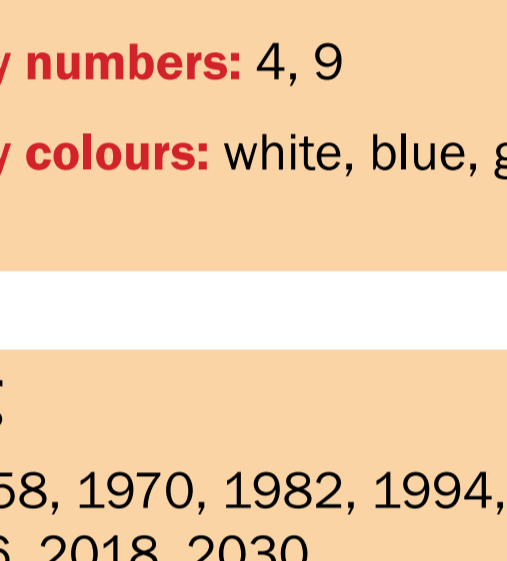
*Calm, gentle, sympathetic.*

**Lucky numbers:** 2, 7

**Lucky colours:** brown, red, purple

## Monkey

...1956, 1968, 1980, 1992, 2004, 2016, 2028...



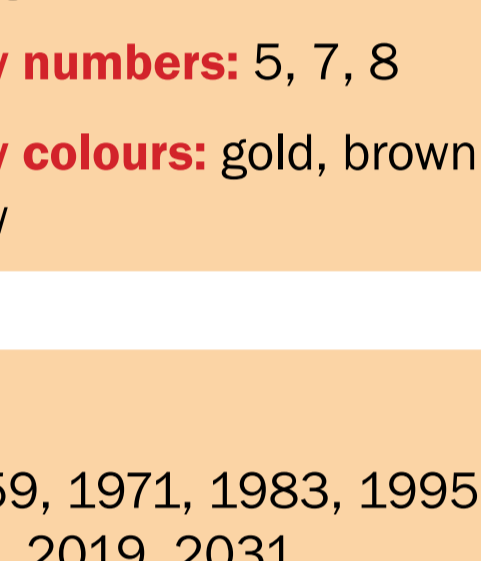
*Sharp, smart, curious.*

**Lucky numbers:** 4, 9

**Lucky colours:** white, blue, gold

## Rooster

...1957, 1969, 1981, 1993, 2005, 2017, 2029...



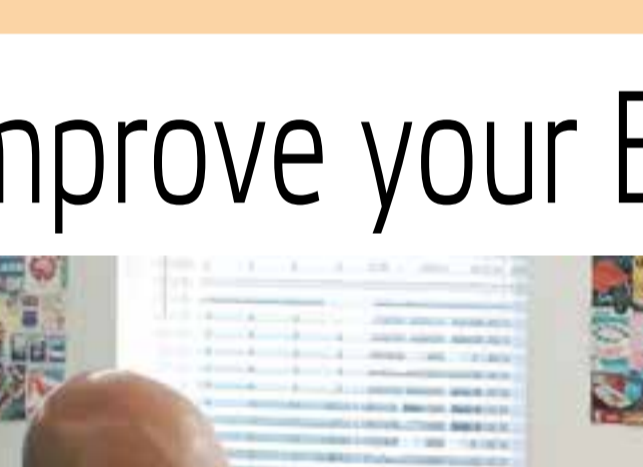
*Observant, hardworking, courageous.*

**Lucky numbers:** 5, 7, 8

**Lucky colours:** gold, brown, yellow

## Dog

...1958, 1970, 1982, 1994, 2006, 2018, 2030...



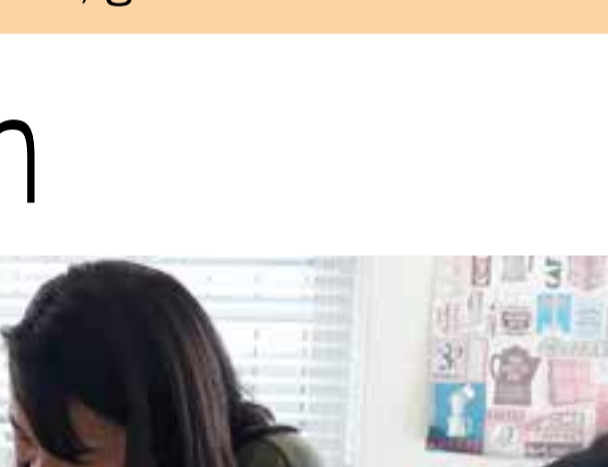
*Lovely, honest, prudent.*

**Lucky numbers:** 3, 4, 9

**Lucky colours:** red, green, purple

## Pig

...1959, 1971, 1983, 1995, 2007, 2019, 2031...



*Compassionate, generous, diligent.*

**Lucky numbers:** 2, 5, 8

**Lucky colours:** yellow, gray, brown, gold

# Improve your English



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# Lunar New Year Transported to Asia



Stepping into TSB Arena on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February will have the same effect as hopping on a plane to a different part of the globe... but without the jet lag! For Wellington's Lunar New Year celebration, TSB Arena and Shed 6 will be filled with the sights, sounds, and smells of Asia in honour of the Year of the Snake.

Kicking off the entertainment programme on the TSB Arena stage at 11:30am is *Echoes of '65 – The Year of the Wood Snake*, which honours the year 1965 (the previous Year of the Wood Snake) through music, dance, and performance. Following suit from 12pm to 5pm is a rich and vibrant lineup of local community groups and artists. Audiences can expect everything from classical dance to martial arts, contemporary and hip-hop dance to guzheng instrumentalists, percussionists to pop singers, Chinese opera performers, and everyone in between.

Starting from 11am, the Lee Kum Kee Asian Market in Shed 6 brings delicious food from across Southeast Asia to the capital. From sizzling stir-fries and savoury dumplings to sweet treats and more, this culinary smorgasbord will be the trip of a lifetime for your tastebuds. The celebration is a conduit for family reunion, where you can share not just delicious dishes but cultural traditions and the warmth of precious time together. Opening up at the same time in TSB Arena is the art and craft market, where a kaleidoscope of stalls from local groups and organisations display all kinds of special wares.

## Make lasting memories




Slither to Frank Kitts Park on Sunday the 16<sup>th</sup> of February for a sensational session of Lunar New Year activities in honour of the incoming Year of the Snake. Fun in the Park, supported by Four Winds Foundation, will bring laughter and joy to the whole whānau from 11:30am to 4:30pm.

The Lunar New Year is a time for families to spend time in each other's company. Whether you're hoping to keep traditions alive, or you want to find some new ones, you'll make lasting memories at Fun in the Park. Here, kids and parents can have fun and spend precious time all together, or parents can take a breather while tamariki engage in all kinds of exciting, engaging, and educational activities.

Little and big kids alike will love the bouncy castle – and it's a perfect way to use up some energy – while the merry-go-round is a timeless classic that will delight visitors of all ages. Face painting is always a hit amongst tamariki, while snake-themed art, crafts, and games are fun for the young and young at heart. Don't forget to snag your very own balloon animal so you can take a little bit of magic back home with you.

Accompanying all the interactive activities is a performance programme, which visitors will have the opportunity to participate in. Watch the professionals before jumping in and trying anything from Chinese dragon dancing to Vietnamese folk dancing, kung fu to K-pop, Muay Thai to taiko drumming!



**29 JAN – 16 FEB**

## Lunar New Year FESTIVAL

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<b>Paint the Town Red</b>		
<b>29 JAN – 16 FEB</b>	<b>SSSIP &amp; SSSAVOR</b> <small>see website for participating restaurants and bars</small>	Courtenay Precinct
<b>SAT 1 FEB</b> 6:00pm – 9:00pm	<b>SSSIDEWALK SSSIDESHOW</b> <small>(Postponement date: 8 Feb or 15 Feb if further postponed)</small>	Courtenay Precinct
<b>SAT 1 FEB</b>		
<b>Festival Fireworks</b>		
9:30pm	<b>FIREWORKS DISPLAY</b> <small>supported by Stonewood Group</small>	Wellington Waterfront
<small>(Postponement date: 8 Feb or 15 Feb if further postponed)</small>		
<b>SUN 16 FEB</b>		
<b>Festival Day</b>		
11:00am – 5:00pm	<b>LEE KUM KEE ASIAN MARKET</b> Food and Craft Stalls	Shed 6 & TSB Arena
11:30am – 12:00pm	<b>ECHOES OF '65</b> The year of the wooden snake Stage show	TSB Arena
11:30am – 4:30pm	<b>FUN IN THE PARK</b> Kids activities <small>supported by Four Winds Foundation</small>	Frank Kitts Park
12:00pm – 5:00pm	<b>CULTURAL ENTERTAINMENT</b> Community performances	TSB Arena

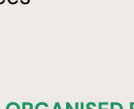
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[Back to contents](#)



# Ready to rumble by **Alessia Belsito-Riera**



Just like *Regional News*, *King vs Queen* is celebrating 10 years in the biz! It's the longest-running drag show to ever grace Aotearoa stages, and to toast to its 10<sup>th</sup> year of life, host Maria Richman [pictured] has planned an extra special *Royal Rumble* bracket beginning at Ivy Bar and Cabaret on the 31<sup>st</sup> of January.

"I've decided to make it a knockout competition to really raise the stakes with the ultimate winner taking home an extra cash prize, a crown, and bragging rights a decade in the making," Maria Richman says. Throughout 2025, performers will go up against their peers for the chance to move onto the next stage of the competition. The finale will take place on the last Friday in November.

"Between rounds we'll have iconic performers settling one-off *King vs Queens* as normal to break it up and give our *Royal Rumble* competitors some recovery time."

The full competitive cast includes Amoeba Geezer, Veronica Heart, Just Beth, Saliva Steal, Petra Fyde, Rocky Rhodes, Diana Whoreablecarcrash, and Pita Pocket, plus a lineup of local legends who will partake in the show matches throughout the year between *Royal Rumble* rounds.

"This show is special because it allows complete creative freedom, so the audience really gets a peek into the minds and hearts of these performers", Maria Richman says, adding that it also gives performance opportunities to emerging and established drag artists alike while enabling them to push the "limits of creativity, craftsmanship, and conceptuality".

## Sequins, sparkles, splendid



*Pip E-Lysaah. Photo by Darin Young.*

A one, two, three, four, and the lights are down. A five, six, seven, eight, and the curtains are drawn. Giving audiences the old razzle dazzle, Studio L'amour is back with its first show of the year on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February, a performance that's so splendiferous with lots of flash in it: *Burlesque Baby*.

The perfect evening out for all kinds of folks, *Burlesque Baby* is a live burlesque, cabaret, and variety show in the heart of Wellington City at The Fringe Bar. It showcases some of the greatest new talents Pōneke has to offer and provides a space for emerging performers to find their feet and their flair.

February's show will be hosted by Velma Cherry, who is known for her bubbling personality, cheeky charm, and incredible versatility. In fact, you may have seen her before performing any number of acts from drag to burlesque, pole to cabaret!

The very first showcase of 2025 stars an exquisite lineup of both emerging and established local talent that includes Arty Miss, Rangimahuta, burlesque baby Violet Thrills, draglesque diva and burlesque aerialist Johnny Raven, gothic performer Maxxine Goth, Cloud Valentine, the sassy and flirtatious Madam Magenta, local legend Pip E-Lysaah and The Red Queens, and award-winning international cabaret artist, burlesque star, and stand-up comedian Lily Catastrophe.

Be stunned and staggered, razzled and dazzled at the first *Burlesque Baby* variety cabaret of 2025.

## Drag legacy



The holidays are well and truly over for most of us, unless you find yourself at Ivy Bar and Cabaret on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February where drag icon Bunny Holiday will host *Haus Party*, a celebration of Wellington's drag royalty.

Haus of Holiday is one of Pōneke's longest-standing drag dynasties with none other than it girl, Mx Capital 2022, and former reality TV star Bunny Holiday at the helm. As the world's first-ever Playboy Bunny drag queen, Bunny Holiday is known for her larger-than-life performances, undeniable charisma, and trailblazing influence. With her upcoming show, she plans to bring her Haus back into the spotlight with a showcase of artistry and excellence, glitz and glamour, back chat and blonde ambition.

Joining Bunny on stage are two of her drag daughters from the Haus of Holiday.

Pelham is the ultimate fashion and runway maven. A founding member of The Ashleys, she turns every stage into her personal catwalk. As a ballroom rising star, party princess, and Wellington drag icon, she brings unmatched style and attitude to the stage.

Blink Bogan is a regular on the Pōneke drag scene. Your reigning Drag Performer of the Year, she serves electrifying energy, otherworldly beauty, and glittering performances that leave audiences spellbound.

Get back into the holiday spirit and shimmy on down to *Haus Party*.

## Join the journey



Direct from stages across Aotearoa and the world, Kiwi thrash metal band Alien Weaponry is coming to a screen near you this Waitangi Day in their upcoming documentary film *Alien Weaponry: Kua Tupu Te Ara*.

The band's new cinematic release directed by Kent Belcher and produced by Nigel McCulloch debuted at Tribeca Film Festival and New Zealand Film Festival in 2024. An intimate, behind-the-scenes dive into the chart-topping, award-winning metal outfit's early years, *Alien Weaponry: Kua Tupu Te Ara* is a deeply personal portrait of the band and the two brothers at its core.

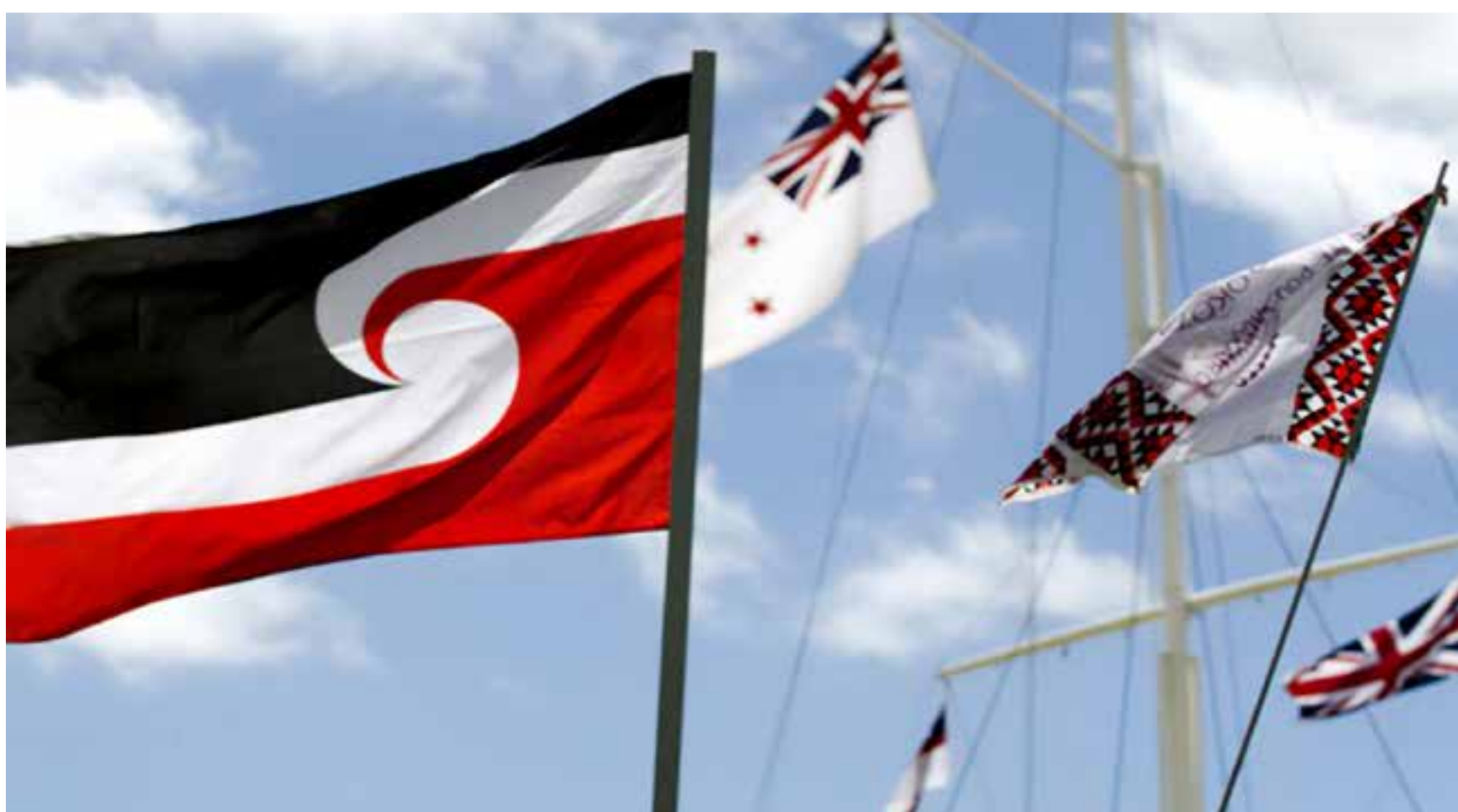
"We are so excited for *Alien Weaponry: Kua Tupu Te Ara* to be coming to Aotearoa cinemas and to share this film with all our fans," the band says.

"The film captures our journey navigating the world of music, showing the highlights, the hardships, and everything in between."

From the release of their debut album *Tū* and following world tour, the documentary was shot with an all-access pass to provide an intimate snapshot of Alien Weaponry's first six years. Journey backstage, experience life on the road, and get to know the down-to-earth Kiwi family as they navigate the ups and downs of constant touring, teenage angst, and making music.

Comprising Henry Te Reiwhati de Jong (drums), Lewis Raharuhi de Jong (guitar, vocals), and newest member Tūranga Porowini Morgan-Edmonds (guitar), Alien Weaponry crafts raw and powerful music in both English and te reo Māori. Listen to their new single *Mau Moko* ahead of the release of their upcoming album *Te Rā* and their epic film to cinemas.

# Summer in New Zealand



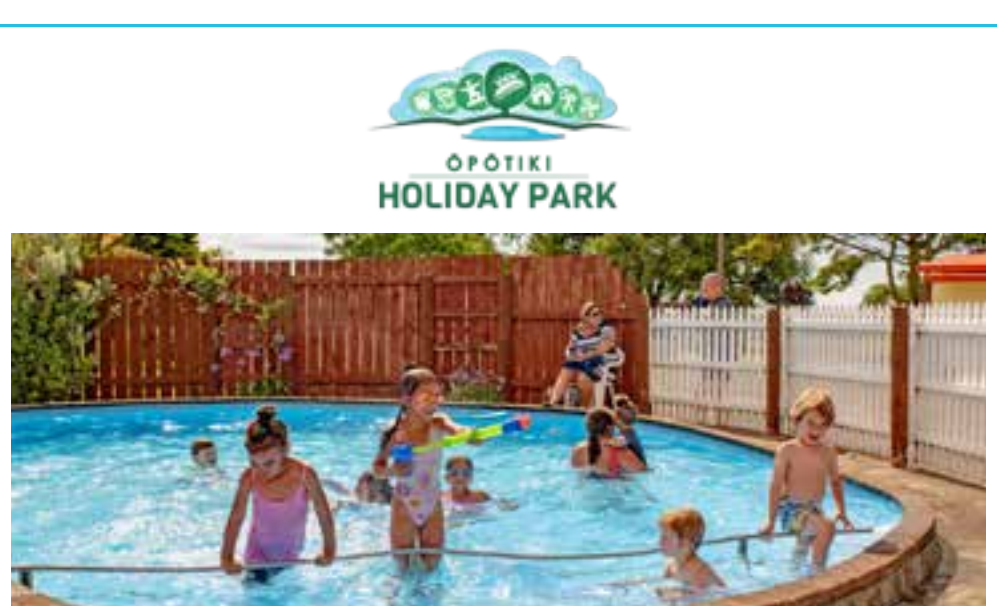
## Medieval Market

Celebrating 30 years of the  
Medieval Market

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> February 2025 9AM - 4PM

Levin Showgrounds, 33 Victoria St, Levin

ADULTS \$5 | KIDS \$2 | PRE-SCHOOLERS FREE  
ALL DAY PARKING \$2 | SORRY, NO DOGS



We are located on the banks of the Waioeka River adjacent to the town wharf and boat ramp. The nearby Waiotahi and Hukawai beaches are popular for fishing, swimming and surfing. Relax in a rural setting, only 200m from the Ōpōtiki town centre with a range of cafes, restaurants and shops. Enjoy a dip in our swimming pool, kayak along the river, fish from the wharf or enjoy a native bush walk. Our accommodation ranges from park motel to cabins to suit every budget, along with plenty of spacious power and tent sites.

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E: opotiki.holidays@xtra.co.nz | www.opotikiholidaypark.co.nz

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next to Les Mills Gym

**\$15 (\$17 multiple entry) Early Bird before 10am till 8pm**  
**\$24 Max per weekday, \$7 Overnight**  
**\$3.00 weekends first hour, then \$2 per hour, max \$7**  
Monthly rates available 0508 447 275

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For opening times and dates please see the website

Open: for self-guided tours, Weekends and public holidays.  
Private tours at any time by arrangement. Or you can book directly through the booking system.

**Open 10am to 4pm**  
Jan open 7 days | Feb to Dec open Wed - Sun, Including public holidays  
Closed: Dec 24,25,26. See website for other potential closed dates

**Phone (06) 377 1600 | www.stonehenge-aotearoa.nz**

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www.taranakifestival.co.nz / 027-6939233

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**WAITARA WAR MEMORIAL HALL**  
**PLENTY OF MOTORHOME PARKING**  
**\$55pp for the 3 days OR day prices**

<b>\$25</b>	Friday - Open Mic	1.30pm - 4.45pm
	Friday - Showcase	6.00pm - 10.00pm
<b>\$35</b>	Saturday - Open Mic	9.00am - 11.45am
	Invited Artist	12.30pm - 5.30pm
	Showcase	7.00pm - 10.30pm
<b>\$10</b>	Sunday - Open Mic	9.30am - 3.00pm

**DANNEVIRKE & DISTRICTS A & P ASSOCIATION INC**

**2025 DANNEVIRKE A&P SHOW**  
**1st - 2nd February**  
**Saturday and Sunday**

- Horse events • Side shows • Petting Zoo
- Speed shears • Home Industries • Terrier Racing • Market stalls • Coffee Cart
- Food stalls and much more!

**Dannevirke Showgrounds**  
310 High Street, Dannevirke  
dannevirke-district-apshow.com

**Gates open 10am-3pm**  
**Entry prices: 12 & under Free**  
**13-18 \$3 | 18+ \$5**

# Waitangi Day – Summer in New Zealand Celebrating our cultures



**Photo by Wellington City Council.**

Two special events in February will round out the Wellington City Council's events programme this summer.

Visit Te Rā o Waitangi, a free whānau-friendly event on Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> of February from 12pm to 6pm at Waitangi Park to commemorate the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi and Aotearoa's national day. Enjoy live multicultural performances, Māori culture, and kai. The Kids' Zone includes a taonga tākaro Māori run by Hiwa Kapa Haka from 1pm to 3pm and a kite-making workshop by artists Tina Rae Carter and Keri-Mei Zagrobelna from 1:30pm to 4pm. See the completed artwork by the same artists on the stage, visit the arts and craft stalls, and check out Barbarian Productions' recording booth The EggFruit. The day also features Te Tiriti and Me, a travelling discussion panel. Visit [www.wellington.govt.nz/Waitangi](http://www.wellington.govt.nz/Waitangi) for more.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of February, Pasifika Festival celebrates our unique Pacific communities with live music and performances, a Kids' Zone, workshops, Pacific Media Network 531pi FM and Āti Awa Toa radio and the Hurricanes activations, food and market stalls, and a festival-wide activation based on the card game Lalaga, designed by Torisse Lalau. This year's theme is Journey, which will be represented through onstage performances, a stone carving that is being created over three years of the festival, a new incubator youth performance programme, and a festival passport for kids to collect stamps. Visit [www.wellington.govt.nz/pasifika](http://www.wellington.govt.nz/pasifika) to find out more.

## Aim for Wrights Hill



Manoeuvre your way through 620 metres of underground tunnels, several operations rooms, and three gun emplacements at the Wrights Hill Fortress in Karori. Open to the public and offering guided tours on select days, this historic bunker is fascinating and fun for all ages.

A long-range coastal battery built to protect Wellington from possible enemy attacks in World War II, Wrights Hill Fortress once held two huge 9.2-inch guns that could fire a 172-kilogram shell up to 30 kilometres across the Cook Strait! When first fired, the guns broke many of the fortress windows. After the war, the battery was used for training purposes and the guns were sold as scrap metal. Years of neglect followed, but in 1988, the Karori Lions Club began the restoration process, opening the doors to the public to give thousands a glimpse into the past. The Wrights Hill Fortress Restoration Society was formed a few years later to preserve the fortress as a historical monument for the benefit of the community.

Wrights Hill Fortress is typically open for public viewing four times per year, with the next opportunity coming up on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February for Waitangi Day, followed by Anzac Day, King's Birthday, and Labour Day.

Otherwise, visitors can arrange a private tour or function or lend a hand at one of the working bees, where members of the Wrights Hill Fortress Restoration Society do general maintenance and restoration on this fascinating historical site.

**Kōkiri Marae is your community based hub for essential community services.**

**Supporting our Whānau from Tamariki to Kaumātua**

Essential community social services have been offered from Kōkiri Marae from early in its inception until present day. The earliest services offered targeted those most at risk within the Māori community using tikanga Māori such as manaakitanga, whānaukatanga and whakapapa.

In order to provide our comprehensive range of Health and Social Services we need staff. We are looking to employ Nurses stop smoking, quit coaches, youth workers and community health workers.

Only requirements: fully vaccinated, non smokers, and valid drivers license. We will provide all the training required.

**We provide:**

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- Outreach diabetes • Nursing services
- Caregiving for tamariki • Kaiti te Tukino
- Family violence programs womens refuge

**Social Services**

- Homeless Prevention Services
- Financial Literacy Services
- Whānau Ora Navigation Services
- Pataka Kai

Please check our website for further details: [www.kokirimarae.org.nz](http://www.kokirimarae.org.nz)  
Contact us on 0800 926 257

**WRIGHTS HILL FORTRESS KARORI**

**Open Days - 10am - 4pm**

**Waitangi Day**  
Thursday 6<sup>th</sup> February 2025

**ANZAC Day**  
Friday 25<sup>th</sup> April 2025

**King's Birthday**  
Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> June 2025

**Labour Day**  
Monday 27<sup>th</sup> October 2025

ENQUIRIES: Mike Lee: (04) 476 8593  
Family Pass: \$20 (2 Adults+3 children under 15),  
Adults: \$10, Children under 15: \$5  
(Sorry no EFTPOS, cash only)  
[www.wrightshillfortress.org.nz](http://www.wrightshillfortress.org.nz)

WELLINGTON CITY COUNCIL PRESENTS

**TE RĀ O WAITANGI**

Thursday 6 February

**WELLINGTON PASIFIKA FESTIVAL**

Saturday 8 February

12 noon–6pm • Waitangi Park

[wellington.govt.nz/events](http://wellington.govt.nz/events)

Absolutely Positively  
Wellington City Council  
Me Heke Ki Pōneke

# Waitangi Day – Summer in New Zealand

## The place to be on Waitangi Day



Waitangi Day in Porirua gets bigger each year. This year's event at Te Rauparaha Park on Thursday the 6<sup>th</sup> of February from midday to 5pm will feature live music performances from homegrown talent Pere and Kings. Also hitting the stage will be Swiss, *The Voice Australia*'s Roland Williams, Ella Monnery, Hoseah Partsch, and Lisa Tomlins.

Don't miss cultural performances by Ngāti Toa and Aotea College kapa haka groups, and a special performance by visiting Canadian indigenous group Kumugwe Cultural Society.

The fun continues inside Te Rauparaha Arena and Pātaka Art + Museum, with lots of free activities for tamariki and art and history to discover. Visitors can peruse the many stalls set up on Te Rauparaha Park, as well as choose from the many different kai options on offer from food trucks.

The popular free waka tours are also returning for the day, giving people the chance to paddle around Te Awarua-o-Porirua Harbour, thanks to TOA Waka Ama.

“Last year we welcomed more than 30,000 people into our city centre for Waitangi Day, with many coming from outside of Porirua,” Porirua Mayor Anita Baker says. “The range of musicians, performers, activities, stalls, and kai on offer means there will be something for everyone.”

There are plenty of ways to get to Te Rauparaha Park for Waitangi Day. Walk, scoot, or bike to the city centre or catch the train and walk to the action.

## Reflect and remember



Reflect on our shared history and the foundational document that underpins our country's unique identity at Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki and Kapiti District Council's Waitangi Day celebration. Setting up at Taumanuka, the old Children's Health Camp, in Ōtaki on the 6<sup>th</sup> of February, the festival will be chocka with all kinds of activities and opportunities to celebrate Aotearoa.

The day will begin at 9am with a formal pōwhiri to welcome everyone onto the grounds. This year's theme is Ngā Taonga Tukuiho (ancestral treasures), which acknowledges Ngāti Raukawa and hapū, their history, and their historical involvement with Te Tiriti.

“This will be a space for celebration and to share historical knowledge of Taumanuka, being one of the sites where Te Tiriti was signed, we want to highlight this and the significance of the land,” Ngā Hapū o Ōtaki general manager Kim Tahiwī says.

“The day will provide a great opportunity for uri (descendants) of the original owners of the Ngārara whenua (land) and others to learn about the tūpuna (ancestors), as well as the local contribution and environment at the time of Te Tiriti signing.”

A wide range of activities for all ages will be open from 10am until 3pm. Get excited for family-friendly games, bouncy castles, face painting, DIY zones, basketball shootouts, and more. The entertainment programme sees performances from local and regional talents as well as a kapa haka display and a woodchopping event. Bring your own picnic or grab some kai from the onsite hāngī and food trucks.

# Waitangi Day

**12–5pm**  
**Thursday**  
**6 February**

**Te Rauparaha**  
**Park**  
**Porirua**

FREE ENTRY

[poriruacity.govt.nz](http://poriruacity.govt.nz)

TE RUNANGA O  
TOA RANGATIRA

# Summer in New Zealand



**Par2 Minigolf**

Bay while you compete on one of two courses: Pacific Pro-Am or Deco Drive. The former is a quintessential minigolf course, full of wacky angles, tricky water hazards, and tree obstacles. Deco Drive is a complex course with organic curves and harsh slopes.



**MTG Hawke's Bay**

collections tell historic stories of the region and beyond, including the 1931 earthquake that devastated the region and the legacy of art deco architecture that is still celebrated today. Their fabulous shop also sells a range of beautiful cards, gifts, books, and mementos.



**Faraday Museum of Technology**

engines to energy sources and games, there's so much to see and uncover. A magical place where history comes to life anew, the Faraday Museum of Technology offers an experience you won't forget that's perfect for families and anyone with a curious mind!



**The National Aquarium of NZ**

that exist in Hawke's Bay, including stingrays, kingfish, hāpuku, snapper, and more. Watch the famous little penguins feed and play in the Penguin Cove, and connect with native wildlife like tuatara and kiwi. **Photo by Molly Rose Nilsson.**

## Let your journey to Napier start with our experts.

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 Napier Viewing Platform



Call 0800 84 74 88 or visit [napiernz.com](http://napiernz.com)

**i site** Visitor Information

**NAPIER**

# Summer in New Zealand



**Kennedy Park**

Located near the heart of Napier, Kennedy Park is an accommodation option that's fun for the whole whānau. There is so much to do onsite that you'll be tempted to spend entire days on the premises. Kids and adults will love the heated swimming complex, basketball half court, and giant outdoor chess board. Stroll the gardens or relax at the café while the tamariki let loose at the adventure playground and on the colourful jumping pillow. Spend time in the games room playing pool, table-top games, or air hockey together as a family.



**Hawke's Bay Farmyard Zoo**

Known for its unique atmosphere, Hawke's Bay Farmyard Zoo provides a safe, clean environment with informative signage, limestone walkways, and a picnic area to accommodate large groups such as birthday parties and work functions. The animals at the zoo include pigs, sheep and calves, ostriches, alpacas, turtles, peacocks, and many more, and kids will have the opportunity to get up close and feed some of them. With a playground, train rides, and pony rides available, the hardest part will be getting the family back into the car.



**Napier Aquatic Centre**

You don't have to wait for hot summer days to enjoy a day in the water. Napier Aquatic Centre is open year-round for water-based exercise and fun. Three pools means everyone can jump in – choose from the five-lane 25-metre lap pool for walking and lane swimming, the disability-friendly six-lane Ivan Wilson Pool, or the learners' pool complete with toddler pool and mini waterfall. The complex also features waterslides, a spray park open from October to March, a beautiful outdoor area, and relaxing spas. Jump in and have fun!



**Ocean Spa**

Ocean Spa is Napier's premier heated pool and fitness complex located on Marine Parade. Boasting open-air, heated, and chlorinated pools and spas with panoramic ocean views, visitors can enjoy a range of options from the toddler pool to therapeutic pools with water fountains and pool jets. Visitors can unwind in spacious outdoor spa pools and refuel with a coffee or bite to eat at Bach Café. Centrally located, Ocean Spa is the perfect spot to relax and re-energise, rain or shine.

**PUTT, PLAY AND ENJOY THE VIEW!**

Challenge your **FAMILY AND FRIENDS** **GIVE IT A GO!**

**PAR<sup>2</sup> MINIGOLF MARINE PARADE**

Open 7 days | 9:30am - 4.00pm  
[www.par2golf.co.nz](http://www.par2golf.co.nz) | 06 834 0248

By the Soundshell, by the sea | Marine Parade, Napier

[Back to contents](#)



# Summer in New Zealand

## A sanctuary for giants



Spend summer on the Otago Peninsula – one of Aotearoa's most diverse and abundant wildlife hotspots. Here, you can encounter albatross and delve deep underground to uncover some interesting human history as well.

The Royal Albatross Centre gives visitors viewing access to the world's only mainland breeding colony of northern royal albatross. Located at Taiaroa Head Nature Reserve, albatrosses find a sanctuary to raise their young. Now is the best time of year to glimpse freshly hatched chicks!

Royal albatrosses, toroa, are one of the biggest sea birds. A graceful giant, their wingspan exceeds three metres. Their breeding season takes an entire year, so there is always something to see at the colony. Though they fly an estimated 19,000 kilometres per year and spend over 85 percent of their life out at sea, the northern royal albatross is endemic to New Zealand.

At the Royal Albatross Centre, visitors can view the colony from the observatory and learn all about them on guided tours. Your guide will take you through the birds' fascinating history before leading you on a short walk uphill to the observatory to see them rearing their young.

Hidden underneath the colony is a military fort established in the 1880s in response to fear of Russian invasion. Optionally added onto the albatross tour, your guide will walk you through the tunnels to see the Armstrong Disappearing Gun and learn about the headland's human history.

## Good time guaranteed




Wal's Fun Land is just a 15-minute drive from Dunedin and home to all kinds of exciting, family-friendly activities, plus Wal's Plant Land, which has one of the largest ranges in New Zealand.

Open seven days a week, Wal's Fun Land is an entertainment destination for little and big Kiwis alike. The 18-hole mini-golf course is perfect for a sunny afternoon. Six indoor and six outdoor stalls make the driving range accessible no matter the weather. Challenge your friends and family in the huge living maze.

Otago Miniature Road and Rail Society operate mini trains at Wal's Fun Land. The one-kilometre track sees them depart from the Saddle Hill Railway station, toot past the café, travel across the bridges and ponds, and scoot along the mini golf course. Don't forget to sample the treats and eats at the Topiary Cafe, open for both breakfast and lunch. Grab a real fruit ice cream or a vegan Dole Soft Serve as a well-deserved snack.

Wal's Plant Land is well worth a perusal while visiting the grounds too. From natives to exotics, grasses to trees, perennials to seasonals, vegetables and fruits to flowers and bulbs, plus all the supplies and advice you could need, you'll be able to craft your dream garden.

Whether you're coming for a fun family day out or looking for inspiration for your garden, Wal's Plant and Fun Land makes the most of summer. Come for the fun, stay for the plants, and make memories that will last a lifetime!



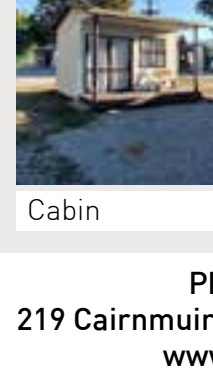
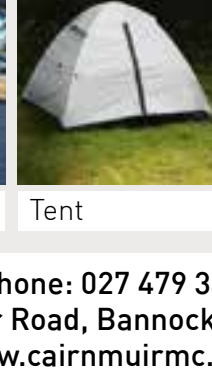
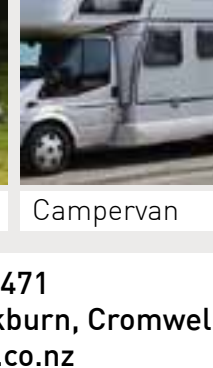
Visit the only mainland breeding colony of Northern Royal Albatross!

**ROYAL ALBATROSS CENTRE**

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See the underground Fort Taiaroa and its fully restored Armstrong Disappearing Gun from 1886

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**It's worth the drive to Wal's!**

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- Experience a mini-train ride on Sundays 11am-3pm
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[www.walsplantland.co.nz](http://www.walsplantland.co.nz)

**109 Bush Rd, Mosgiel (15 minute drive from Dunedin)**

# Summer in New Zealand

## Fairytale summer



Geraldine is filled with bright and beautiful days in the summertime. This quaint little town bursts into life in the sunshine – like something from a movie, it's picture perfect and chocka with all kinds of fun activities to help you make the most of the season. Nestled in the foothills of the Southern Alps, Geraldine is tucked between three rivers and surrounded by three beautiful nature areas: Talbot Forest Scenic Reserve, Geraldine Domain, and Riddells Reserve. Stroll or bike the endless tracks that are perfect for making the most of the sunny days and admiring the local flora and fauna. The more adventurous can try rafting, horse trekking, canyoning, scenic flights, and more.

The jewel of South Canterbury is arty and relaxed, with a wonderful selection of cafés, galleries, boutiques, museums, and eateries. While away an afternoon in the village centre enjoying the slower pace of life and taking in the lush and vibrant summer atmosphere.

## A Motueka meander



**Motueka Sunday Market. Photo by Oliver Weber.**

Motueka, or Mot to the locals, is fun come rain or shine. With a vibrant community, cosmopolitan feel, and a fun creative streak, this South Island township is eclectic and eccentric in equal measure.

Downtown is filled to the brim with boutiques and artist studios of all kinds. Unique stores sell many curiosities while pre-loved shops promote recycling and sustainability. There are a couple of iconic locations in Motueka too, such as the Gecko Theatre – a funky cinema with couches, blankets, and snacks.

Motueka is also known for its cuisine. Eateries are dotted along the main street, serving up delicious homegrown produce and organic ingredients. A foodie tour comes highly recommended, whether self-guided or with one of the friendly locals. Check out the Sunday Market too, which has been running for 40 years. Find everything from local food products to handmade crafts, fun keepsakes to unique trinkets.

## Be curious



The petrified forest at Curio Bay is 170 million years in the making, but what makes this corner of the Catlins even more special is the nearby Tumu Toka Living Forest. This is thought to be the only place in the world where a direct descendent of a forest lies so close to its petrified counterpart.

Tumu Toka Curioscape serves as the perfect base for all your Curio Bay adventures. On the ground, visitors will find a campground, souvenir store, café, various exhibits, and the southernmost Thai restaurant in New Zealand.

Nestled alongside the swimming beach of Porpoise Bay, the campground is blessed with panoramas of the unique coastal environment – glimpse rare Hector's dolphins, native penguins, and more from your tent!

The Gateway Experience is a world-class interactive centre designed to share the unique stories of the area. Delve into the past to make the most of your time in this special place on the edge of time.

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Photo: Kim Falconer

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# Summer in New Zealand

## Home and away: the best of both

by **Madelaine Empson, travel writer**



You know how they say a place can feel ‘a world away, and yet’? I think they were talking about EcoFarmstayNZ, a country cottage nestled into vistas of verdant green hills, where tangerine sunsets softly cede to silver-stitched canopies of stars that you’d be lucky to see the sky through... all a mere 30-minute drive from my house in Wellington.

Dan and I set out for a two-day midweek, midsummer escape to this charming cottage farmstay in Judgeford, Porirua that suited both of us perfectly. While Dan loves camping and getting down and dirty in nature, I’m keen to ‘look but not touch’, so to speak. Absolutely, I want to see all the pretty trees, smell the smoke of the crackling fire and taste the gooey marshmallows melting on it, hear the trickle of the serene stream, and stargaze until the farm’s resident geese come home. But at the end of the day, I still want to sleep in a plush bed instead of – you know, on the ground in the mud. When I tell you I did all that, *plus* satisfied the bougie part of my soul that I pretend doesn’t exist by sipping cognac in a piping-hot outdoor bath during dusk? Then had a nap curled up on the comfiest outdoor furniture (made from recycled pallets, neat!) as the moon rose, illuminating the Weber BBQ where Dan stood grilling a perfect scotch fillet and charring veggies? Then wrapped up warm to wash it all down with a chilled sparkling plum wine, made by our hosts, under a sky filled with the most stars I’ve ever seen in Wellington? Add the fact that Dan got to scramble through the bush and visit an onsite waterfall the next day while I dozed with a book on the outdoor hammock in the sun, and it’s hard to see how the criteria for ‘the best of both words’ could’ve been better met.

All of this to say, the cottage is a gorgeous place to stay, decked out with all the amenities you could possibly need *and* want, from the gumboots provided to explore the Solla Sollew farm to the coffee machine that sent Maddi to heaven in the morning.

With eco in the name, the environment is considered in each and every aspect of EcoFarmstayNZ. Guests can pick fresh herbs and seasonal fruit, wash their hands with beef tallow soap handcrafted onsite, marvel at the composting toilet (it’s completely odourless) (how?), and take comfort in the fact that a tree is planted every time they stay. I’m barely scratching the surface here.

Everywhere you turn, in every corner of the pastel-pink and lime-green cottage, you’ll find a thoughtful touch or two from hosts who go above and beyond for their guests. Of course, I’m talking about the two animals we met during our stay: the snuggly, ‘lazy farmdog’ Remi and the semi-feral cat Loki, aka ‘Hissy McSpittyface’.

So described Jackie, our hilarious host who peppered our informative tour with jokes I’m still chuckling at. I assume she also wrote the compendium, which was the first I’ve enjoyed reading cover to cover, laughing all the way.

I could not recommend or speak more highly of EcoFarmstayNZ.

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# Summer in NZ – run – walk – ride

## The Otago trails



*Lake Dunstan Trail. Photo by Geoff Marks.*

Otago's five Ngā Haerenga Great Rides offer some of New Zealand's best walking and cycling experiences. The purpose-built trails span an inter-connected network of over 500 kilometres, traversing landscapes from Queenstown, through Central Otago to Dunedin.

The Lake Dunstan Trail traverses the spectacular Cromwell Gorge to connect to the Otago Central Rail Trail – New Zealand's original Great Ride – and then onto the Roxburgh Gorge Trail. The Roxburgh Gorge and Clutha Gold Trails offer spectacular journeys along the banks of the mighty Clutha River, through dramatic gorges, and past historic goldfields. In Queenstown, a network of 135 kilometres of off-road trails meander along the shores of Lake Wakatipu connecting Queenstown to the Gibbston Valley via historic Arrowtown.

Other picturesque trails include Kawarau Gorge to connect Queenstown to Cromwell, a Wanaka to Cromwell trail with panoramas aplenty, and the Dunedin Tunnels Trail. Explore the mountains and lakes at your own pace, venture into the wilderness and forge your own path, or go big with a multi-day journey along New Zealand's Great Rides with your friends or whānau.

Otago cycle trails cater to cyclists of all levels, with well-maintained paths and support services, including bike hire, accommodation, and shuttle services. Whether you're a leisure cyclist seeking a scenic escape or a seasoned adventurer, the Otago trails promise an unforgettable two-wheeled adventure!

## Wonderful Wellington waterways



Wellington is a vast and varied region: from bustling urban centres to tranquil natural landscapes, there are strokes for all kinds of folks. If you're hankering for something a little bit different, cruise down the river with Wellington Rafting.

Based in the Hutt Valley, they offer a range of wilderness white water rafting experiences on Te Awa Kairangi (the Hutt River) and the Waiohine River. With expert staff onboard, every trip is made safe, challenging, and fun, whether you're an adrenaline junkie or a leisure-lover. What's more is that anyone can join in on the fun, no matter your size, age, or ability.

There are multiple excursions available through Wellington Rafting. Guided inflatable duckie tours are perfect for pairs, canyoning is for families, colleagues, groups, or parties, and there are even multiple levels for the more experienced adventurers.

On the Akatarawa Forest Canyoning Trip, guests will hike 20 minutes into the bush, exploring caves, jumping off rocks, and abseiling down waterfalls.

The Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River Grade 2 Scenic Duckie Tour is tailor-made for first timers – sit back and relax while you enjoy spectacular views. The Grade 3 Wilderness Duckie Tour is suited for those who prefer an added dose of thrill.

For a once-in-a-lifetime experience, opt for the helicopter journey into the Tararua Ranges. From here, you can paddle back down to base traversing 10 kilometres of the Waiohine River.

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Photo by Will Nelson

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# Summer in NZ – dance

## Exquisite elegance



Twirling into Te Raukura ki Kāpiti is the tantalising, terrific, tremendous *Tutus on Tour*. The Royal New Zealand Ballet (RNZB) will mark the beginning of their 2025 performance programme with two shows and a matinee in Paraparaumu this 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> of February.

*Tutus on Tour* 2025 will include two exquisite pas de deux: the elegant and sophisticated *Grand Pas Classique* and the charming wedding pas de deux from Act III of *Coppélia*. Each performance will also include the exciting stage premiere of *Limerence*, a work for four dancers to Schubert's music by former RNZB dancer Annaliese Macdonald, brought to life digitally in 2022 and reworked for 2025.

Completing the lineup will be *The Way Alone*, a neoclassical work by Australian choreographer Stephen Baynes to music by Tchaikovsky, created for Hong Kong Ballet in 2006 and now seen in New Zealand for the first time.

"*Tutus on Tour* represents Royal New Zealand Ballet's continued commitment, as we have done throughout our 72-year history, to bring ballet to the people of New Zealand," RNZB artistic director Ty King-Wall says. "It is a wonderful opportunity for us as a company to connect with our regional audiences".

With contemporary and classical pieces, intricate costumes and world-class technique, the Ryman Healthcare season of *Tutus on Tour* will delight little and big Kiwis alike.

## Love dancing



Dance into 2025 with Tarrant Dance Studios.

With classes for all levels and a busy performance schedule, you can dance your way through 2025.

As part of Wellington's Lunar New Year celebrations, Tarrant Dance will be performing in *Paint the Town Red* on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February. The company will also take to the TSB Arena stage at 10:30am on the 16<sup>th</sup> of February for more Lunar New Year festivities as part of the *East Meets West* showcase with a performance honouring ballerina Sylvie Guillem, who was born in the previous Year of the Snake.

Next on the Tarrant dancers' performance calendar is an appearance at the Newtown Festival, New Zealand's largest and most fabulous street celebration, on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March.

Student classes begin at Te Auaha Creative Centre on the 8<sup>th</sup> of February and include Royal Academy of Dance children's graded levels as well as Royal Academy of Dance vocational syllabi for senior scholars. Courses are available for all kinds of styles, focusing on performance and providing opportunities for students to choreograph their own compositions.

Last year's end of 2024 show, *A Christmas Cavalcade*, was a magical day for every dancer, from the smallest Sugar Plum Fairy in *The Night Before Christmas* to the senior scholars in Rossini's *Nocturne*. The show also included contemporary and jazz choreographies from dancers Sylvie Smith and Sofia Holloway.

Spend 2025 with Tarrant Dance Studios and fall in love with dance!



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Back to contents



# Celebrating 10 years of Regional News

2015

2025



## Madelaine Empson

10 years ago, I came on board with *Regional News* as 'Girl Friday'. I dabbled in just about everything – from making the coffee and purchasing the stationery to copywriting for clients and filling up the cookie jar in the staff meeting room. Emptying it out, too, when no one was looking.

I was studying theatre at Victoria University of Wellington – Te Herenga Waka at the time, so when I started writing about theatre for *Regional News* in my third year here, it was a real dream come true. Hundreds of thousands of words later and here we are. I want to thank all the readers and people who have supported us over the years, as well as the writers I've had the pleasure of working with as the editor. Shoutout to our fabulous team of reviewers, and to our senior journalist Alessia Belsito-Riera, who fills these pages with some of the most eloquent, clever, and creative words I've ever encountered in the biz. I couldn't do this without you!

2015

2025



## Shelly Morrell-Manava

### **What have been some of the highlights and challenges of your decade at Regional News?**

I think the biggest highlight is that *Regional News* is still here and thriving. There have been challenges navigating COVID and the state of the economy since, but due to great management, we've been able to keep going strong.

### **What do you most like about working here?**

Without a doubt, the people! We're not a huge team, but we all buckle down and work so well together.

### **What do you get up to outside of work?**

My life currently revolves around my three kids (plus a few bonus kids I've picked up along the way) so you would often find me Ubering kids to dancing and sports. I've also recently become a very unwilling fishermum thanks to my boys who are obsessed with fishing and diving.

### **Anything you would like to add?**

A big thank you to all our readers and advertisers who make our paper possible.

2015

2025



## Todd Hatten

I started working at *Regional News* with my Dad, Peter, at the very beginning and even designed some logo concepts which never saw the light of day.

I started off part-time, mainly designing the advertisements, but this quickly grew to a full-time role within a year, and eventually sharing the responsibility of laying out the publication. When Dad retired I took over the role of desktop design manager and have been in charge of the department ever since.

I enjoy visual problem-solving and discovering new, more efficient ways to work – the advent of artificial intelligence has transformed the way we work with photographs and unlocked new possibilities. I am still constantly learning, even after having been here for a decade!

Outside of work I love playing basketball, catching Pokémon, and eating burgers. Bring on Burger Wellington 2025!

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# Celebrating 10 years of Regional News

2015

2025



## Frances King

What started as a small project with my husband to celebrate what a fantastic city and country we live in, *Regional News* and its sister publication *Destinationz* have grown into magnificent, colorful publications that all who work here are proud of. I would like to thank our fantastic advertisers who market their products and services with us. Without you, we would not be here. A shout out to Eco Doors & Windows, Just Blinds, Zealandia, and Mr Waterbed NZ (to name a few) who have been in regularly since our very first issue. I'd also like to thank our amazing team, whose loyalty would be hard to match in any workplace. We are a true *Regional News* family and support each other through the good and bad times. This includes our stand delivery team, who are out there rain, hail, or shine – and one who's been here from the start! Without you all, we would not be seen.

We plan to be here for another 10 years and beyond. To do this, we need to be smart and use our resources wisely. To focus on getting our publications to those who most enjoy them, we are reducing our home delivery and increasing our pick-up points. We will monitor this closely to ensure our readers always have access to our content. Onwards and upwards for 2025 – see you on our pages. Cheers!

## 10 years and counting



**From left to right: Andy Nguyen, Sarah Collins, Frances King, Todd Hatten, Shelly Morrell-Manava, Cade Ogden, Madelaine Empson, Alessia Belsito-Riera.**

This January is our birthday – the big 1-0. We wouldn't be here without our readers and the people who have supported us over the years, so we wanted to take this opportunity to thank you all.

Over to the left, we hope you enjoy meeting the staff who have been with us from the very beginning. While they're celebrating a decade of working at *Regional News*, every person in the office has been here for years, which feels like a testament to the fact that we value each other and what we make together. It's a cliché for a reason: we really are like a family here!

It's always eye-opening looking back on how far you've come. *Regional News* started out at 20 pages and quickly found out that we'd filled a gap in the market for a free arts and entertainment, lifestyle and leisure newspaper in Wellington. The warm welcome we received enabled us to double in size – both in page and staff numbers – and to move offices in our seventh year to accommodate our growing team. We now sit at a comfy 40 pages each fortnight and put out a biannual travel magazine, too. In fact, we just celebrated our 20<sup>th</sup> edition of *Destinationz*. Big milestones all round!

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# New beginnings for 2025

## Choose community



With the arrival of 2025 come fresh beginnings and new opportunities. Rosebank Lifecare embraces the new year, providing residents with the support they need to build the life they want. The goal at Rosebank Lifecare is for all residents to retain their independence while living life to the fullest, regardless of their health or condition. Named Aged Advisor People's Choice Awards for Best Small Retirement or Lifestyle Village in 2019, Rosebank ensures everyone is treated with dignity and respect.

Rosebank residents enjoy a sense of community, with the freedom to choose their level of involvement in village life. A centrally located hub provides a space for family members to gather, and for residents to meet and enjoy each other's company. With access to a hospital, rest home facility, and more independent arrangements, as well as palliative, rehabilitative, and convalescent services, there are options available to suit all kinds of circumstances.

27 two and three-bedroom villas and 22 serviced apartments are also available. These studios and one-bedroom suites offer extra support without compromising freedom. Here, residents can live privately while receiving the added benefits of daily meals, laundry, house-keeping assistance, and care options. The villas are large, spacious, and the best of both worlds – independence, with companionship and help just seconds away. Seize the new year and make it the best one yet with Rosebank Lifecare.

## Making the right choice for 2025



Wakefield Homestead aims to make a positive difference in people's lives. A family working with families, this beautiful rest home is nestled into Wakefield Village, just a 20-minute drive from the bustling and creative hub of Nelson. Welcoming, comfortable, safe, well connected, community minded, and caring, Wakefield Homestead is a lovely place to call home.

There are 23 beds at Wakefield Homestead, split between single and couples' rooms, with vacancies opening soon. Catering to a wide range of age groups, Wakefield offers respite, palliative, and primary health funded short-term care, plus day stays and carer support. The team comprises three registered nurses, healthcare assistants, an activities coordinator, a physiotherapist, social worker, podiatrist, dietician, spiritual advisor, kaumatua, hairdresser, and a pool of kind volunteers.

Residents living at Wakefield Homestead are encouraged to make themselves at home. The team suggests bringing personal furniture and special items to decorate the space, and sometimes even a pet can be brought along. Meals are homecooked, healthy, and delicious. There are shared lounges for socialising, shops around the corner, a beautiful park next door, and a busy activities and social calendar. Residents can go on group outings every week, get involved in a hobby, learn new skills, play music, dance, participate in games, and so much more.

Wakefield Homestead truly feels like home.





*"We understand that moving anywhere can be a big decision". Let me answer your questions and show you around Rosebank. Our friendly community is just what you have been waiting for. - Sue Prowse, General Manager*

We offer residential care, independent living units, and now also full care in our spacious serviced apartments. Our friendly, caring community has been developing for 30 years. We are still growing and welcoming new members to share our common bonds of independence, friendship, and the simple pleasures in life.

**P: (03) 308 0111 | E: [manager@rosebanklifecare.co.nz](mailto:manager@rosebanklifecare.co.nz) | 77 Walnut Ave, Ashburton | [www.rosebanklifecare.co.nz](http://www.rosebanklifecare.co.nz)**



## Wakefield Homestead

***Make 2025 the year to look after you***

Our aim is to make a positive difference in people's lives.

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*We want this to feel like home and encourage you to bring your own furniture and special items.*

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# New beginnings for 2025

## A change of pace



Spend your days relaxing rather than stressing and enjoying rather than worrying by joining Acacia Cove, a country-style retirement village that promotes care, community, and connection. Settled comfortably into the Wattle Downs Peninsula, a golf and country club to the east and an estuary teeming with wildlife to the west, Acacia Cove is an idyllic place to call home. Acacia Cove features 217 villas and 15 fully self-contained apartments that offer both independence and access to a vibrant and active community. All architecturally crafted by professional designers, interior decorators, and landscapers, each villa has its own private courtyard, spacious living area, and one to three bedrooms. The two and three-bedroom apartments enjoy a paved courtyard or a spacious deck. What's more, the gardens are fully maintained, even if you choose to add your own personal touches.

The lodge-like community centre is framed by magical sunset views and features plenty of amenities, including a billiard table, gym, spa bath, hairdressing salon, library with computers, nurse's station, and an open fireplace. The purpose-built meeting room is the hub for all kinds of activities – from walking groups to the garden club, there are over 31 weekly activities on the schedule.

On the grounds are also a bowling green, BBQ area, heated indoor pool, and restaurant, which is the perfect place to enjoy the sun and the estuary views in the company of neighbours, friends, and whānau.

## Warm and welcoming



Glenwood Masonic Hospital is here to look after you or your loved one. Based in the heart of Masterton, they offer residents the very best care within a warm and welcoming community.

The staff are compassionate, understanding, highly trained, and dedicated to providing everyone with the best care possible. They recognise that each person in their care has their own unique needs and requirements. They take time to get to know you personally so they can provide tailored care that will truly help.

Glenwood Masonic Hospital has 48 rooms, with a large variety of care options depending on what you or your loved one requires. They offer rest home care, hospital care, respite care, palliative care, ACC patient care, and care for disabled youth. There are also seven suites designed for couples available to purchase on an Occupation Right Agreement. Each suite is beautifully decorated and fitted with a personal ensuite, kitchenette, armchairs, and heating.

Along with the wide range of care options, the facilities at the hospital are truly top class. There's a library, chapel, activity room, four day rooms, two nurse stations, and even a hair salon. There's an onsite diversional therapist and an extensive meals on wheels service.

Residents of Glenwood Masonic Hospital can enjoy an independent lifestyle while receiving compassionate and skilful care you can trust. The staff have a flawless reputation for their level of understanding and dedication.



### CARE, COMMUNITY, AND CONNECTION

Acacia Cove, a country-style village situated on the beautiful Wattle Downs Peninsula has 31 weekly activities.

For those who appreciate the tranquility of an estuary setting Acacia Cove has it all, as well as its own restaurant, heated indoor pool, library, bowling green and gym.

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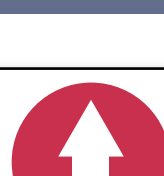
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by Alessia Belsito-Riera

## Stories of resilience



***Boro, Timeworn Textiles of Japan.***

***Photo by Mark Tantrum.***

The traditional art of Japanese mending is as much about sewing as it is about storytelling. Called boro, the practice employs a style of repair stitch (sashiko 刺し子, which literally translates to ‘little stabs’) that is intentionally made visible. In this way, the patch is celebrated rather than hidden, and the story behind it commemorated and added to the history of the garment.

An exhibition showcasing the artistry of boro fills Pātaka Art + Museum until the 9<sup>th</sup> of March. “Some of the pieces are like a forensic puzzle where elements of family crests, firemen’s jackets, or small treasured scraps of special woven fabrics give a fascinating glimpse as to where and maybe who brought all the pieces together and what their lives may have been like,” Pātaka exhibitions and collections manager Gary Collins says.

*Boro – Timeworn Textiles of Japan* features Japanese textiles and garments drawn from the substantial collection of New Zealand artist Pip Steel and displays all kinds of items ranging from futon covers to 19<sup>th</sup>-century silk dolls, dusting cloths to aprons, work jackets to mittens, sake or rice straining bags to braided rope, traditional wrappings to fabric sample books, and everything in between.

The exhibition aims to “highlight the beauty of these largely utilitarian garments and bags, that through their constant repair and reuse are elevated to objects greatly prized by collectors,” Collins says. “Also to acknowledge the anonymous makers and menders of these fascinating pieced-together narratives.”

Typically made by women living in rural conditions from hand-spun and naturally dyed textiles, the practice was particularly popular during the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> centuries at a time in history when cloth was a precious commodity. Boro was mostly practised by “women who when they were not working in the fields were creating beauty in every woven cloth, stitch, and application of cloth fragments”, Collins continues. Many of the items on display have been passed down and cherished for generations.

Japanese collector, social historian, and research scholar Tatsuichi Horikiri looks fondly upon the practice, expressing that in “seeing and holding these tattered garments used by farmers and villagers in times past, I cannot help but feel that they still exude the warmth and vigour of the bodies they once protected, and these scraps are trying to tell us their stories, provided that we only listen closely and with open hearts.”

As for the exhibition at Pātaka, Collins hopes that visitors will see the items as treasured and cared for rather than tattered and repaired. His intention is that viewers will leave with an appreciation of what goes into the production of cloth and garments.

“Hopefully they appreciate the beauty created by the accretion of all of the layers of fabric,” he says, adding that he would like visitors to gain an understanding of the many differing techniques used for weaving, dyeing, and reusing the hemp and cotton fabrics. “These garments are each a story of resilience”.

## Kerbside encounters



***Keri Pratt and two friends, platform shoes, Exchange Lane, opposite Fort St, 1975.***

Writer David Herkt describes Auckland-based photographer Murray Cammick’s images as “joyous and generous, admitting a later viewer into a lost world where boundaries were being blurred, where an individual’s personal image was a statement”. He captures private worlds in public spaces, Herkt says.

Cammick’s latest exhibition *Gender ‘70s* at Photospace Gallery until the 1<sup>st</sup> of March aligns with this vision, showcasing a collection of 15 never-before-seen images alongside 20 more that appeared in the 2019 show *Queens St* at Auckland Festival of Photography.

“We have added more images that ruminate on gender – glam pop, theatre queens, show queens, and more street queens – they all enlivened our living in the 70s,” Cammick says.

The works on display were captured as kerbside encounters in Auckland’s city centre in the 1970s. Here he met Keri and Violet, who feature prominently in the collection. He recalls the pair standing out from the crowd in their high heels and high fashion. “In the late 70s there was a mix of subcultures in inner-city Auckland,” he says. “I am pleased that I captured their dream of being fabulous models. Their beauty was real.”

Recording a unique moment in history in Aotearoa, Cammick’s photos depict an era when gender stereotypes were being challenged – politically, socially, and culturally – and visible change was occurring.

“The exhibition has a variety of gender depictions from tough young teens, androgynous pop culture, to guys who want to live transgender lives,” Cammick adds. “Teen culture exploded in the 1960s and my photos suggest that New Zealand may have been more tolerant of genderbending in the 1970s than now.”

## Putting down roots



***Margaret Abee Johns. Photo by Dianna Thomson.***

Celebrating the multicultural community of Upper Hutt, *Home: One City Many Cultures* tells the stories of 10 families who have travelled from across the world to put down roots in Aotearoa. The photographic exhibition from Dianna Thomson at Whirinaki Whare Taonga is on display until the 12<sup>th</sup> of May and offers a glimpse into each family’s personal journeys, challenges, and triumphs. Curator Chriss McGregor pulls back the curtain to offer a peek inside the exhibition.

***What are some of the characteristics these families share?***

They exhibit courage in the face of adversity, whether through fleeing conflict, seeking opportunities, or starting fresh in a new country. Despite the diversity of their backgrounds, they are united by their love for their families and their pursuit of safety, stability, and opportunity.

***What insights does the exhibition offer on Upper Hutt’s community?***

The exhibition highlights the multicultural nature of Upper Hutt. Through the stories of these families, visitors can see how Upper Hutt is a place where people from different backgrounds can build new lives and contribute to the city’s vibrancy. The exhibition shows the importance of belonging, acceptance, and connection in creating a harmonious community.

***What do you hope visitors take away from the exhibition?***

The exhibition aims to foster empathy, understanding, and appreciation for the experiences of immigrants and refugees. It is our hope that visitors reflect on the challenges and triumphs of these families, recognising the strength it takes to leave behind one’s home and start anew in a different country. Ultimately, we hope visitors leave with a deeper sense of respect for cultural diversity and the shared human experiences that bind us together.

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# Regional News has landed in Kapiti

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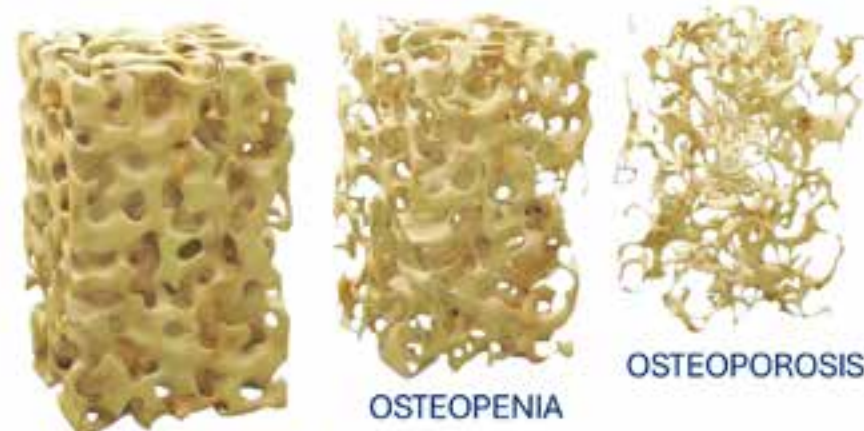


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# Regional News has landed in Kapiti

## Your very own galaxy



Inspired by the far reaches of the infinite universe, alienNZ have touched down in Wellington.

The mesmerisingly hued, intricately designed, and meticulously handcrafted three-dimensional alien heads originate from the mind of Kapiti-based creative Russell Woodley, who describes them as “cyborg things – part biological, part mechanical”.

“Integrating components of both technology and biology – and utilising everyday objects – no two are identical. Each head stands alone as a truly fascinating one-off bespoke piece,” he says.

Woodley came up with the idea here on Earth when he happened across a skull that he wasn’t able to identify.

“I had the idea to add some clay to it to see what it could be, but I never got round to doing that,” he says. “However, it did inspire me. I thought ‘Let’sa make an alien! It could be an alien skull’. I knew it wasn’t, of course, but it did inspire me to start these things. It has become something of an obsession!”

Now, he has brought more than 60 to life in vivid colours that are sure to delight any sci-fi fan or eccentric art aficionado. With no moulds used in the process, every creation is unique and named after a different galaxy.

“It takes about two days to make each one. I make them from the inside out. The last thing to go on is the paint. I put the eyes on when I’m covering with the clay,” Woodley explains. “The clay that I use you can paint straight away; you don’t have to wait for it to dry. And then you get the whole complete thing in one colour, basically. I do use other colours as well but getting the paint on them is what I can’t wait to do. I use really good paint and tiny brushes because I really want to be part of it. I don’t use sprays or anything. I go to the little shops at rubbish tips and look at objects that basically don’t mean anything much to anybody and just put them on the heads.”

Woodley says that his target audience is young people first and foremost, though his alienNZ would appeal to anyone searching for an interesting conversation piece for their desk, lounge, office, or anywhere indoors.

“They’re shocking and funny and not meant to be beautiful. I don’t think they’re pretty by any means,” Woodley laughs.

With the alienNZ website still under construction, the best way to get your hands on one of these Kapiti-made creatures is by contacting Woodley directly at [alienz2025@outlook.com](mailto:alienz2025@outlook.com).

“It’s just a passion, I love it,” the artist beams. “An alien probably doesn’t look like that, but it’s what I would imagine. Funnily enough, I’ve never seen an alien, never seen a UFO, even though I’ve looked... but I do believe in them.”

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## Tailored to you



Self-made and hardworking, the Hawken Concrete Services team have an outstanding reputation for quality workmanship and tailored solutions.

Established in 2021 by Jeremy Hawken, the business has grown from strength to strength over the last few years. Starting off on his own with nearly two decades of experience under his belt, Jeremy now helms a highly skilled full-time team. “I fell into it in 2004 and have just been doing it ever since,” Jeremy says. “I enjoy the satisfaction of the finished product and the physical labour.” He and the team pride themselves on crafting long-lasting, aesthetically pleasing structures that are the perfect balance of form and function.

Hawken Concrete Services provide a range of solutions across residential, commercial, and public sector projects. By adopting a customised approach to every job, Jeremy and the crew can tailor their services to meet the vision you have in mind. Precise and practised, they navigate even the most complex jobs with a professionalism that delivers optimal results.

From driveways to patios, paths to exposed areas, and everything in between, the team are happy to offer their expert knowledge to help bring your ideas to life. Hawken Concrete Services work with premium quality materials and can recommend which product is best suited for your project. They can advise on the optimal strength or help you choose the right colour. For any concrete services from Wellington to Palmerston North, get in touch with Jeremy for tailor-made results.

## A place unto itself



Have you heard the good news? *Regional News* will now be doing home delivery along the Kapiti Coast. That means folks in Waikanae, Paraparaumu, and Raumati will be receiving the region’s latest free arts, entertainment, and lifestyle publication right in their letterboxes!

There is a lot to love about life on the Kapiti Coast. Long, sandy beaches, cute cafés, creative spaces and boutiques, and an abundance of wildlife and natural beauty all come together to shape a lifestyle that champions quality over quantity and enjoyment of the simple things.

There is a little bit of everything dotted throughout the seaside towns. Each village is distinct and chocka with character, charm, and its own little community. From museums to galleries, retail to eateries, exciting outdoor activities to welcoming indoor spaces, every business brings its own unique personality to the table.

It’s clear from their enthusiasm and genuine passion that locals love living in this coastal paradise. They take pride in what they do and how they contribute to their community, almost always lending a helping hand to make sure their little slice of heaven is looked after, growing, and thriving. This makes it a great and welcoming place to call home.

Kapiti is within easy reach of Wellington City too, yet it still has everything you’d need right on your doorstep. It’s worth celebrating for that, and for the one-of-a-kind experiences and unique lifestyle that set it apart. We’re so excited to be here!

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# Kapiti Island experience

## Momentary magic

by **Alessia Belsito-Riera**, travel writer



How to capture Kapiti Island's misty mountains, intricate forests, and sun-drenched shores? How to detail the vitality and abundance of life bursting forth from every seam? How to recall its essence, its mythical whisperings?

Together with my colleague Maddi and her friend Toulā, my fiancé Jas and I were lucky enough to spend a night on Kapiti Island. A mere 15-minute boat ride from the mainland, it seemed like a distant world of ancient secrets and untold stories. Our guide led us through Rangatira Point's grass and wetlands, signalling bird calls and spotting geckos along the way before relinquishing us to the forest. We felt a new sense of vigour wash over us. Up, up, above the clouds we scrambled along the Trig Track. As we passed trees born an age before ourselves, we began to step in tune with the bush. Slowly, the curious birds revealed themselves—hīhī/stitchbird, kakariki/parakeet, toutouwai/robin, kākā – each one allowing us to enter their tiny world for a moment. Having been blessed with a hot, clear day, the views at the summit were breathtaking. And following an amble down the Wilkinson Track, the crystalline water called. As the sky turned hues of primrose, periwinkle, and powder pink, we settled into our cabins in Waiorua Bay. As guests of Kapiti Island Nature Tours, we were served decadent kai and ambrosian wine. When the curtain of night fell, we crept through the undergrowth, spotting kororā/little blue penguin and ruru/morepork soundtracked by wētā and illusive kiwi. Stretching out across the dew-drenched grass, admiring the heavens dotted across the velveteen sky, we couldn't help but feel blessed to have explored this magical corner of this whenua we get to call home.

## Regional News

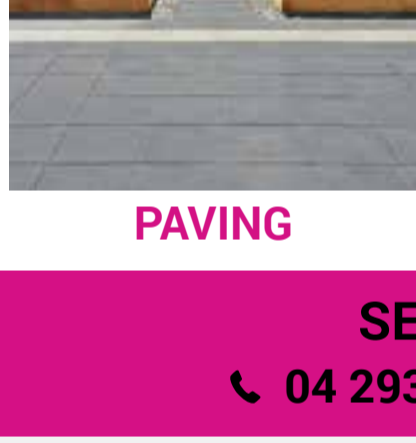
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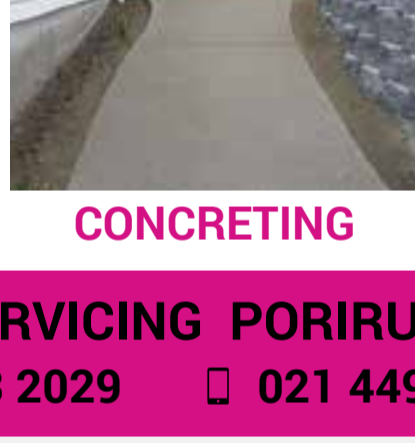
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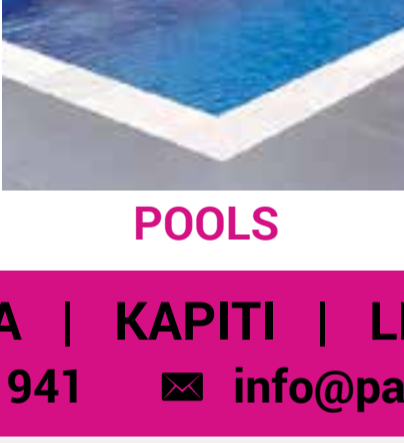
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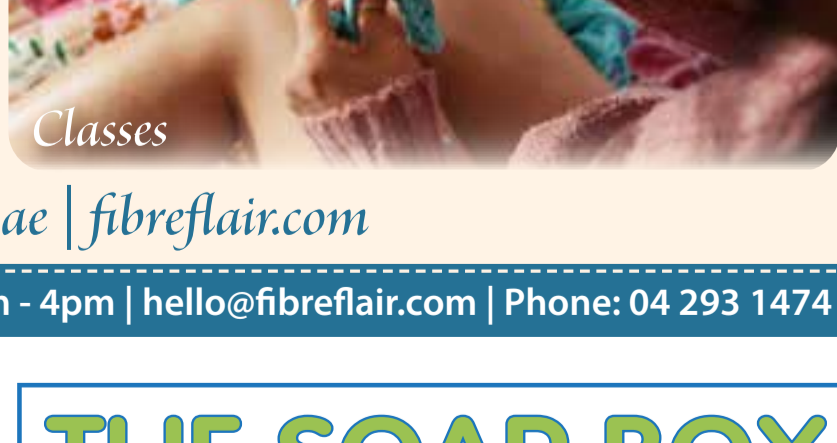
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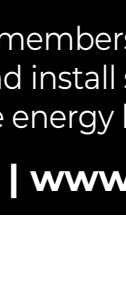
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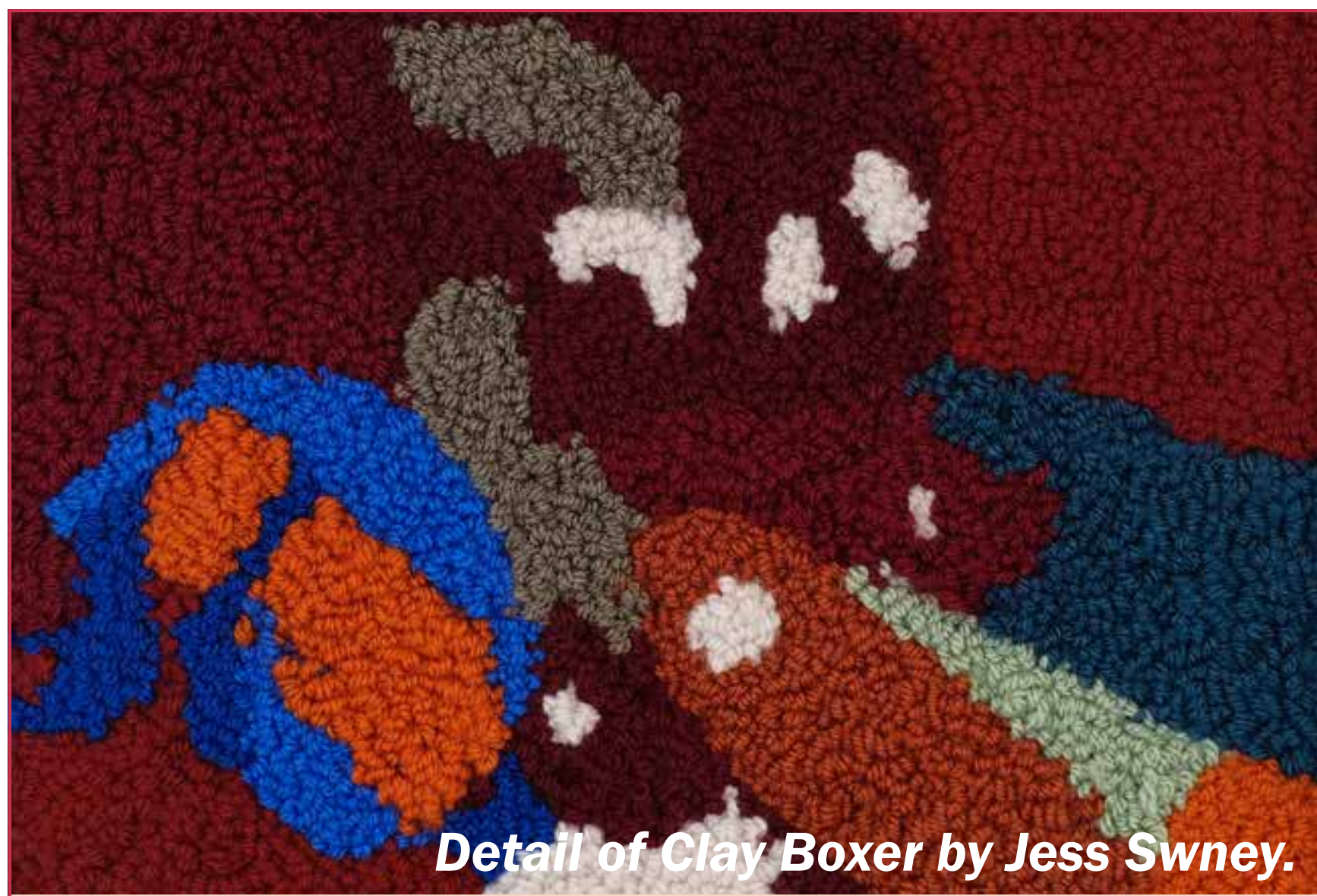
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# What's on



## 29<sup>th</sup> Jan. The Room Next Door Movie

**Fundraiser for Latin Cuirs:** *Light House Cuba, Wigan Street, Te Aro* – 8:30pm. In Spanish auteur Pedro Almodóvar's English-language feature debut, former friends Ingrid (Julianne Moore) and Martha (Tilda Swinton) followed different paths. After years of being out of touch, they meet again in an extreme but strangely sweet situation.



*Detail of Clay Boxer by Jess Swney.*

**Until 15<sup>th</sup> Feb. Playground:** *Twentysix Gallery, Constable Street, Newtown.* In its first exhibition of 2025, Twentysix Gallery presents a group show that explores nature, dreams, and lived experiences from across Aotearoa. Jess Swney, CJ Ghatt, Rosa Allison, Gabriella Voogt, and Lewis Cosgrave use textile, paint, and mixed media to reflect on how we remember, experience, and reimagine the world around us.



**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. KITA Presents: Chasing Summer Music Video Release Tour:** *Raumati Social Club, Poplar Avenue, Raumati South* – 8pm. KITA singer Nikita 雅涵 Tu-Bryant and An Ogre have been collaborating on a special single and music video titled *Chasing Summer*. Out now, the song is inspired by chasing only the good times and yearning for what's new rather than sticking around for the long haul. **KITA. Photo by Lara Gilks.**



**6<sup>th</sup> Feb. Isuzu UTE A-League – Wellington Phoenix v Brisbane Roar FC:** *Sky Stadium, Waterloo Quay, Te Aro* – 5pm. Spend your Waitangi Day at the Phoenix men's football match versus Brisbane Roar. Cheer our city's soccer team on as they battle it out in a game that promises to be as heart-stopping as it is exhilarating. **Wellington Phoenix at Sky Stadium.**



**13<sup>th</sup> Feb. Bitchin' Bingo with Mistress Viv:** *The Bond Store, Birmingham Street, Paraparaumu* – 7:30pm. Mistress Viv [pictured] is coming to town with all her mischief and mayhem in tow. A night of mini-games, naughty bingo calls, throwback jams, and a whole lotta prizes to be won, leave the kids and the grandparents at home because this bingo night is about to get spicy.



**29<sup>th</sup> Jan. Zoe Scott:** *Moon, Riddiford Street, Newtown* – 5pm. Fresh to Pōneke after a stint of the transient troubadour lifestyle, Zoe Scott weaves vulnerable stories of love, loss, and female rage with a powerful yet effortless voice to create music that continues to captivate audiences. Expect to be left in a puddle of tears or cursing the patriarchy – catch her new set this new year. **Photo by Alimuddin Taufiq.**

# What's on

## Wairarapa

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Martinborough Fair:** *Martinborough Square, Martinborough, Wairarapa* – 8am.

Going strong for nigh on 5 decades, the Rotary Martinborough Fair is one of the most anticipated events of the year. Enjoy shopping, dining, activities, and more.

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Waimeha Summer Party 2025:**

*Waimeha Camping Village, Cape Palliser Road, Martinborough* – 4pm. Dance all night long at this beautiful festival featuring beats, booze, and good vibes.

## Kapiti

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Capital Pro Wrestling Presents: G & T**

**Throwdown:** *The Bond Store, Birmingham Street, Paraparaumu* – 2pm, 6pm. Witness the very best of New Zealand pro wrestling as champions battle it out.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Back to School Water Fight:** *Waikanae Pools, Ngarara Road, Waikanae* – 1pm. Fun, fast, and furious, this water fight will be epic. Bring your water pistols or use the wet sponges to get soaked!

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Harvest Moon – Summertime Feast**

**Under the Bougainvillea:** *The Winemakers Daughter, State Highway 1, Te Horo* – 12pm.

Wellington's Americana and country music band Harvest Moon will serenade audiences at this laidback summer festival experience featuring food, drinks, and scenic views.

## Events

**28<sup>th</sup> Jan. Big Bubble:** *Anzac Lawn, War Memorial Riddiford Gardens, Lower Hutt* – 10am. Have some wholesome fun blowing bubbles with your friends and whānau.

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Enchanted Park:** *Wainuiomata Regional Park, Witcher Grove, Lower Hutt* – 10am. Create unforgettable memories with your whānau building a fairy garden, playing in the forest, painting rocks, and enjoying a picnic.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Brewtown Summer Craft Market:**

*Brewtown, Blenheim Street, Upper Hutt* – 9am. A fun, vibrant atmosphere accompanies a showcase of stalls selling artisan, craft, and handmade local goods, foods, and beverages.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. American Vehicle Day 2025:** *Trentham Racecourse, Racecourse Road, Upper Hutt* –

10am. Spend a day in the USA! More than a car show, get stoked for live music, kids' rides, and stalls, plus hotdog-eating and pin-up competitions.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. The Rose Garden Market:** *Lady Norwood Rose Garden, Glenmore Street, Kelburn* – 11am.

Find local handmade treasures at this outdoor market set amongst the roses.

**6<sup>th</sup> Feb. Alien Weaponry: Kua Tupu Te Ara:** *Various locations and times in Wellington Region.* Kiwi thrash metal band Alien Weaponry releases their intimate documentary film this Waitangi Day.

**8<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> Feb. Hutt Valley Horticultural Society, Wellington Begonia Society, and Wellington**

**Fuchsia Society Present: Summer Flower Show:**

*Walter Nash Centre, Tocker Street, Taita* – various times. Begonias, fuchsias, orchids, and more fill the events centre accompanied by raffles, crafts, and plants for purchase.

**9<sup>th</sup> Feb. British and European Car Day 2025:**

*Trentham Memorial Park, Barton Road, Upper Hutt* – 10am. This car show has been going strong for over 35 years. Pack a picnic and get your engine revving for music, food carts, and all kinds of rare vehicles.

## Music

**30<sup>th</sup> Jan. PAPER CITY, Grip-Tape, and The Rainfall:**

*Valhalla, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm. From sad pop to pop punk and rock, this concert has a little bit of everything.

**31<sup>st</sup> Jan. HERESIARCH, Decimation Hammer, and Insidious Retch:** *Valhalla, Vivian Street, Te Aro* –

8:30pm. Black and death metal bands collide at Valhalla as HERESIARCH returns to Aotearoa for the first time since 2019 to perform alongside Decimation Hammer and Insidious Retch.

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Bring Back the Riff:** *Valhalla, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 8pm.

Ever yearn for the glory days of heavy riffs? Doomscroll, Infinity Ritual, Mammuthus, and Sidewinder are here to bring it back.

**9<sup>th</sup> Feb. Susan O'Neill:** *San Fran, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm.

Irish singer-songwriter Susan O'Neill brings her timeless voice that is equal parts balm and blowtorch to Wellington along her *Now in a Minute Tour*.

**11<sup>th</sup> Feb. Hot Water Music:** *Valhalla, Vivian Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Legendary American punks Hot Water Music are ready to get Wellington heaving and pumping on their 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary tour.

**14<sup>th</sup> Feb. South Summit:** *San Fran, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. Coming to Wellington along *The Bliss Album Tour*, South Summit explores a kaleidoscope of emotions against a fusion of rock, reggae, and hip-hop inspired soundscapes.

**21<sup>st</sup> Feb. The D4 and Head Like A Hole:** *Meow, Edward Street, Te Aro* – 8pm.

Louder, wilder, and more combustible than ever, NZ's finest punk 'n' rollers stomp into Wellington to celebrate their sophomore album's vinyl release alongside Head Like A Hole.

## Performance

**Until 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. Hope:** *Circa Theatre, Taranaki Street, Wellington Waterfront* – various times.

In a near future, a controversial government bill bars people with terminal illnesses from receiving anything but pain management in their final year of life.

**31<sup>st</sup> Jan. King vs Queen:** *Ivy Bar and Cabaret, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 9:30pm.

New Zealand's longest running drag show celebrates a decade in the biz! Get hyped for this royal rumble knock-out competition.

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Caburlesque: The End of An Era(s) Tour:**

*The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 8pm. To pay tribute to the end of Taylor Swift's *Eras Tour*, Caburlesque and Lady Tramp Designs present a diverse variety show featuring the superstar's iconic music.

**1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Haus of Holiday Presents: Haus Party:** *Ivy Bar and Cabaret, Cuba Street, Te Aro* – 9:30pm.

Step into the world of glamour, sparkles, back chat, and blonde hair as one of Wellington's longest-standing drag dynasties takes to the stage. Catch Bunny Holiday, Pelham, and Blink Bogan going berserk.

**2<sup>nd</sup> Feb. Kurtis Conner:** *The Opera House, Manners Street, Te Aro* – 5pm.

The sell-out performer, podcaster, and global YouTube sensation brings his comedy to the stage with *The Goodfellow World Tour*.

**5<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Feb. Stagecraft Presents: Private Lives:**

*Gryphon Theatre, Ghuznee Street, Te Aro* – various times. Noël Coward's 1930s comedy is brought to life on stage. Forgotten passions reignite and shenanigans transpire in a clever, complicated conundrum.

**8<sup>th</sup> Feb. Burlesque Baby:** *The Fringe Bar, Allen Street, Te Aro* – 7:30pm.

Get hyped for fresh talents at Burlesque Baby's beloved variety showcase.

**12<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Feb. Footnote New Zealand Dance**

**Presents: MODERN GOD:** *Te Whaea National Dance & Drama Centre, Hutchison Road, Newtown* – various times.

Straddling the realms of contemporary dance and physical theatre, this high-powered show delves into the intricate web of global internet culture and the evolving complexity of the virtual world.

**13<sup>th</sup> Feb. Alien Comedy:** *Moon, Riddiford Street, Newtown* – 8pm.

MC Jundas Capone hosts an evening of out-of-this-world comedy from Welly locals and visitors.

**14<sup>th</sup> Feb. Josh Wolf:** *Hannah Playhouse, Cambridge Terrace, Te Aro* – 7:30pm.

Swinging into Wellington along his *High On Life Tour*, American comedian Josh Wolf will have you giggling your Valentine's Day away.

**14<sup>th</sup> Feb. Fired Up Stilettos Presents: Kick Up a**

**FUSI:** *Whisky & Wood, Cambridge Terrace, Te Aro* – 8pm.

Spend your Valentine's Day at a sexy and sensual performance supporting improved working conditions in the adult entertainment industry.

## Sports

**2<sup>nd</sup>, 23<sup>rd</sup> Feb. Wellington Cup:** *Hataitai Velodrome, Ruahine Street, Hataitai* – 10am.

Catch the last two rounds of Wellington's annual track racing cycle league.

**8<sup>th</sup> Feb. Ninja A-League – Wellington Phoenix v Melbourne Victory:** *Trust Porirua Park, Mungavin Avenue, Porirua* – 3pm.

The Phoenix women's football team faces off against Melbourne Victory in a high-intensity crucial game.

**8<sup>th</sup> Feb. Valiant Pro Wrestling:** *The 162, Gracefield Road, Lower Hutt* – 5:30pm.

An epic evening awaits as New Zealand All Star Wrestling champion Jade Priest defends his title and Wellington Heritage champion Big Frank makes his mark.

## Galleries

**Until 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Undercurrent:** *Solander Gallery, Willis Street, Te Aro.*

Featuring abstracted works on paper by Belinda Griffiths and John Pusateri, *Undercurrent* transforms perception into a journey, where the act of looking becomes a meditation on infinity and interconnectedness.

**Until 1<sup>st</sup> Feb. Gender '70s:** *Photospace Gallery, Courtenay Place, Te Aro.*

Murray Cammick's third exhibition at Photospace Gallery features street photography from the 1970s.

**Until 9<sup>th</sup> March. Boro – Timeworn Textiles of**

**Japan:** *Pātaka Art + Museum, Parumoana Street, Porirua.* Showcasing the traditional art of Japanese mending, this collection of textiles and garments is vast and varied.

**Until 27<sup>th</sup> Apr. Vivienne Westwood & Jewellery:**

*Museum of New Zealand Te Papa Tongarewa, Cable Street, Wellington Waterfront.* Explore over 550 pieces of jewellery and 15 complete archival ensembles by acclaimed British fashion designer, punk icon, and activist Vivienne Westwood.

**Until 12<sup>th</sup> May. Home: One City Many Cultures:**

*Whirinaki Whare Taonga, Fergusson Street, Upper Hutt.* This photographic exhibition tells the stories of 10 families who have travelled from other countries to make Upper Hutt their home.

## Festivals

**29<sup>th</sup> Jan-16<sup>th</sup> Feb. Lunar New Year Festival:**

*Various locations and times in Wellington.*

Welcome in the Year of the Wood Snake at family-friendly events taking place across the capital.

**6<sup>th</sup> Feb. Te Rā o Waitangi:** *Waitangi Park, Cable Street, Te Aro* – 12pm.

An epic festival to celebrate the beauty and cultural richness of Aotearoa, Wellington's Waitangi Day festival features performances, music, food stalls, art installations, activities, and more.

**6<sup>th</sup> Feb. Waitangi Day:** *Te Rauparaha Park, Norrie Street, Porirua* – 12pm.

Celebrate New Zealand's national day with mana whenua Ngāti Toa at one of the country's largest celebrations.

**8<sup>th</sup> Feb. Wellington Pasifika Festival:** *Waitangi Park, Cable Street, Te Aro* – 12pm.

From art and language to performance and food, the Pasifika Festival is all about acknowledging the richness of Pacific cultures.

**9<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup> Feb. Island Bay Festival:** *Various locations and times in Island Bay.* Writers, entertainers, performers, artists, chefs, and more come together to celebrate the diversity of Island Bay.

**15<sup>th</sup> Feb. Diversity Festival:** *Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington Memorial Theatre, Kelburn Parade, Wellington* – 5pm.

Celebrate diversity and inclusivity at this eclectic cultural festival featuring delicious treats and exceptional performances.

[Back to contents](#)



# What's on

**For your inclusion in the what's on listings email: [whatson@regionalnews.kiwi](mailto:whatson@regionalnews.kiwi). Close off for the next issue's listings is noon Tuesday 4 February.**

**To the best of our knowledge, the information provided to us regarding the above events was correct at the time of press. Our company accepts no liability for events postponed, cancelled, sold out, or otherwise adapted.**

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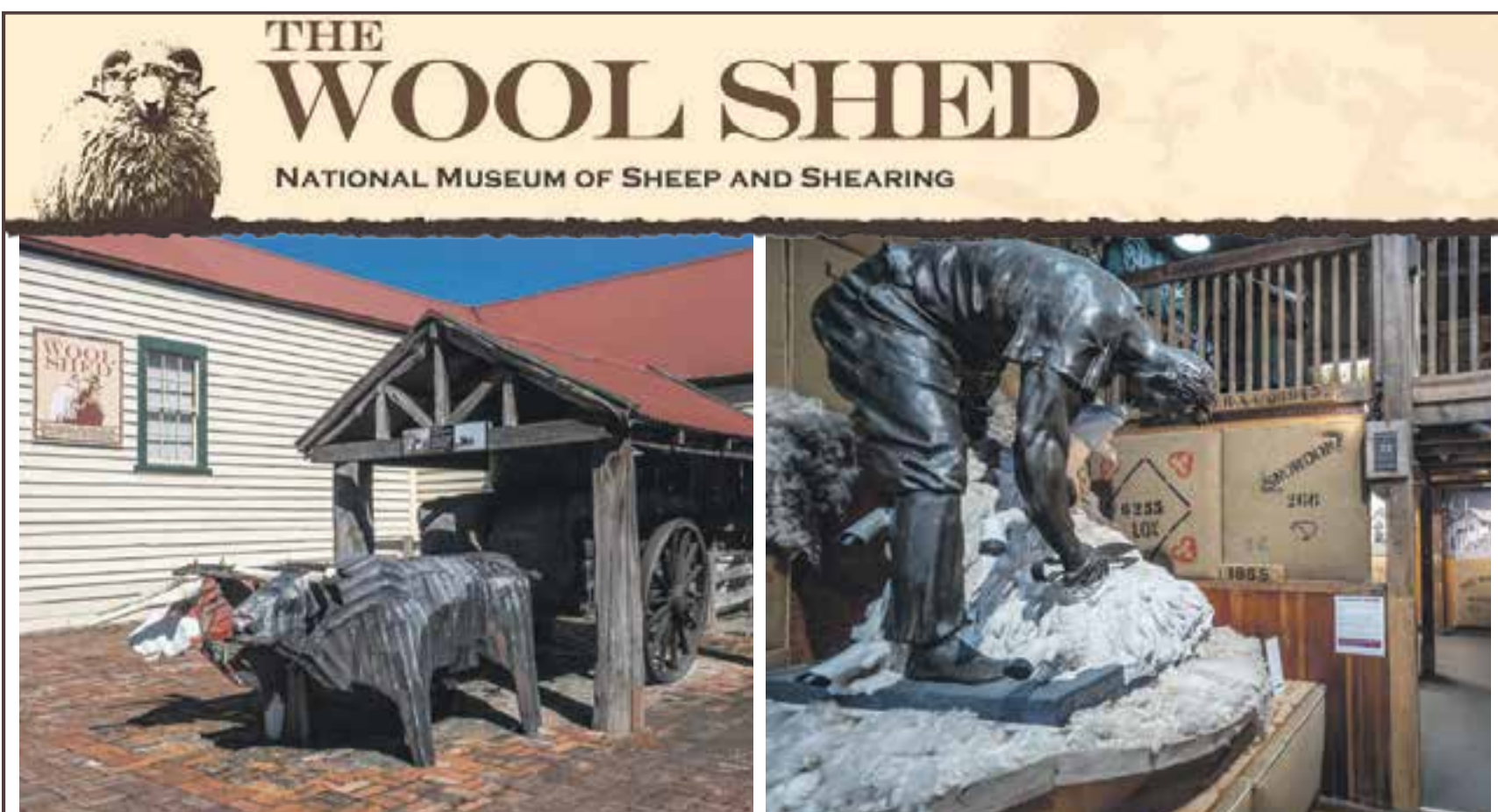
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# Regional News

## Eyes on Wellington

## We are expanding our readership!

### Pick us up from over 100 locations!

From January 2025 we will be doing limited home delivery.

We are environmentally conscious here at *Regional News* and while we do already print with vegetable ink on newsprint paper – both recyclable and sustainable – we are finding that more and more people are choosing to read us online and fewer want printed material in their letterboxes. We have decided to meet the needs of our readers and advertisers by creating a subscription model and increasing our pick-up points across Greater Wellington and beyond.

You can now pick *Regional News* up from more than 100 locations, which is a 25 percent increase on what we were previously able to offer. In the past, we couldn't keep up with the demand, with thousands of papers flying out of the

stands each fortnight. We used to run out of copies to refill these stands with and would hear from readers who were disappointed to have missed out. Now, we're diverting our stock where it's most wanted to ensure that every copy picked up is read and enjoyed.

Additionally, we have reworked our website to make *Regional News* much easier to read on your smartphone. Head to [www.regionalnews.kiwi](http://www.regionalnews.kiwi) to give it a go! Here, you can now subscribe to get the paper direct to your inbox free, or sign up to have each issue mailed to you for just the cost of postage.

We are so excited about these changes and hope to be gracing your emails soon – pick us up at a hotspot today or subscribe and we'll see you there!

### Available from pick-up points at:



**Four Square:** Kelburn, Seatoun, Raumati, Paraparaumu, Waikanae, Bulls



**New World:** **Wellington** – Newtown, Thorndon, Chaffers, Karori, Newlands, Churton Park, Tawa, Whitby, **Hutt** – Lower Hutt, Silverstream, **Kapiti** – Paraparaumu, Waikanae, **Wairarapa** – Carterton, Masterton, **Manawatū** – Feilding

**Libraries:** **Wellington** – Brooklyn Library, Miramar Library, Ruth Gotlieb (Kilbirnie) Library, Newtown Library, Johnsonville Library, Mervyn Kemp (Tawa) Library, Porirua City Centre Library, **Hutt** – Petone Library, Lower Hutt Library, Upper Hutt Library, **Wairarapa** – Carterton Library, Masterton District Library, **Manawatū** – Palmerston North City Library, Manawatū Community Hub Libraries

**Wellington Central:** FreshChoice Cuba Street, **Wellington Sea Market Cuba Street**, Unichem Cuba Mall Pharmacy, J & M Fastfood, Wellington Museum of City and Sea, Holey Moley Golf Club (Willis Lane), Wellington Railway Station, **ETC Willis Street**

**Karori:** Karori Park Store, **Marsden Books (Marsden Village)**

**Kelburn:** Paradise Seafoods, Cable Car Museum

**Northland:** Zhou's Kitchen

**Brooklyn:** Nanking Takeaways, Penthouse Cinema and Café

**Island Bay:** Bay's Takeaway, Empire Cinema and Eatery, Island Bay Video

**Kilbirnie:** Hey George Café, Baycourt, Buba Café, Forever Young Hairdressing

**Lyall Bay:** Chipmunks Playland and Café

**Miramar:** Strathmore Bakery & Café, **Mr Bun Bakery and Coffee Shop**

**Petone:** Bob Scott Retirement Village, Bin Inn, Peaches and Cream

**Lower Hutt:** ETC Lower Hutt, Easy Go Dairy

**Upper Hutt:** Muffin Break (Upper Hutt Mall)

**Johnsonville:** Twiglands Garden Centre, Johnsonville Shopping Centre

**Porirua:** Te Rauparaha Arena and Aquatic Centre

**Aotea:** Sushil's Muslechef Kitchen and Café

**Paremata:** The Bottle-O Mana

**Plimmerton:** Plimmerton Village Grocery

**Kapiti:** Coastlands Aquatic Centre, Kapiti Jewellery Design and Manufacturers, The Bookshelf

**Featherston:** FreshChoice Featherston, Loco Coffee and Books, C'est Cheese, Pioneer Bakery and Coffee 2 go

**Greytown:** FreshChoice Greytown, Corner Café, The French Baker, The Lolly Jar, Greyfriars Motel, ASURE Oak Estate Motor Lodge, FreshChoice Greytown

**Martinborough:** Martinborough isite Visitor Information Centre, Scotty's Meats

**Carterton:** Wild Oats Bakery Deli and Café, Almo's Café, Kāinga Eatery, Carterton Holiday Park

**Masterton:** Café Strada, Hospital Food Market, Noodle Canteen, Entice Café, Iberia Café, Masterton Railway Station, Wairarapa Masonic Village, BK's Chardonnay Motor Lodge, Kandahar Retirement Village, Ultimate Care Lansdowne Court, Lyndale Care, Masterton isite Visitor Information Centre

**Manawatū:** Ohakea Café Manawatū, Bulls BP