

THE LOCAL Karori

NGĀ KARERE HAPORI O KARORI

DON'T FEED THE BIRDS



PHOTO CREDIT: Ian Thomas.

With the threat of bird flu looming, Zealandia has issued a strong warning to residents, to keep our precious native wildlife safe: don't feed them. Native birds shouldn't eat human food at any

time, but there is an added risk now with the H5 bird flu circulating.

Feeding birds can bring them together and increase the risk of transmission. Zealandia has now stopped supplementary bird feeding.

Read more on page 3. ➤

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Don't feed the birds!

The team at Zealandia has a message for its Karori neighbours, to keep birds safe from bird flu: let the birds be wild.

Being among Zealandia's nearest neighbours, you're very likely seeing kākā, kererū and maybe even korimako/bellbird or even tīeke/North Island saddleback around Karori or even in your garden! If you live close to the mammalian exclusion fence, you may well be hearing kiwi puk-upuku at night.

With this privilege comes a responsibility to ensure the birds that have returned to Te Whanganui-a-Tara are healthy and wild.

That includes not feeding them, be it sugar water, bird seed, fruit and nuts or other 'human food'. While Zealandia has long warned of the dangers of feeding birds in backyards, including the risk of kākā chicks developing bone and bill deformities, the arrival of H5 bird flu means an end to bird feeding is crucial to stop the risk of contamination. Feeding birds can encourage them to congregate and increase the risk of disease transmission between birds, now is the time to remove as many threats to wildlife as we can. We love the birds in Wellington. Don't feed them. Let them be wild.

One of the first things that Zealandia did once the first bird with H5 bird flu was identified in Petone was to

stop supplementary feeding kākā in the sanctuary. Extra food had been supplied since the first 14 kākā arrived back in 2002 to anchor the small population to the sanctuary, where they and their chicks would be safe from mammalian predators. Now, in 2026, there is abundant natural food for kākā and other manu/birds inside and outside the fence, thanks to many years of predator control meaning there are many areas of healthy, regenerating forest.

Wellington is one of the few cities in the world where bird biodiversity is increasing not declining. We don't know what impact H5 bird flu will have on our native species, but overseas experience tells us that at least some will be hit very hard. **TL**

Here's some tips on how you can help keep the birds safe while still enjoying seeing them in your gardens and around Karori:

- Plant native plants and trees: By having native plants and trees in your backyard, birds naturally spread out to feed, keeping them safer!
- Get involved in backyard trapping: Make your backyard a safer place for birds to hang out by trapping.
- Be a responsible pet owner: Cats can get sick if they come into contact with an H5 bird flu infected sick or dead bird. Keep dogs on a lead and cats safe at home.
- Wash your boots and outdoor clothing in between wild places. Keep your gear clean to help reduce the spread between wild spaces.
- Keep an eye out. If you see three or more sick or dead wild birds, marine mammals, or other wildlife, report it to MPI's Exotic Pest and Disease hotline on 0800 80 99 66.

Looking after the things that matter to the community

We can all make a difference, with some well-informed, small actions.

Who can resist the cheeky kākā, who are now finding their way all around the city, thanks to the work of Zealandia in building up the population.

It is certainly tempting to want to put out food for them and attract them to our backyards and decks, but the message from Zealandia is a firm no – let them remain wild and find their own food.

The Karori community is keen on looking after our native flora and fauna – it was pleasing to hear there was an enthusiastic response to the Predator Free story in last month's paper, which included a call for more help trapping. The city is doing so well in eliminating predators but it's an ongoing mission. With the threat of bird flu around, we need to do all we can to keep our wonderful bird life safe.

Nearly added to the endangered species list is local businesses. This month, we have started a series on local businesses, in conjunction with the Karori Business Association. Getting an insight into the retailers, cafes, firms and other service providers can help us understand how they tick, what motivates them and will probably make us more interested in popping in to see them.

Finally on the threatened list is heritage – recently the Government was asked by the Wellington City Council to use its powers to remove heritage status from some buildings and places, including the Karori tunnel and Kelburn viaduct. With a short consultation period, it's unlikely that the implications of this proposed move were fully explored. Maintaining heritage buildings and places often does cost more but they also add to our sense of history and community – we shouldn't rush to get rid of the protection that ensure future generations can appreciate them too. **TL**



Jane O'Loughlin
Editor

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWS

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Karori steps up to trap

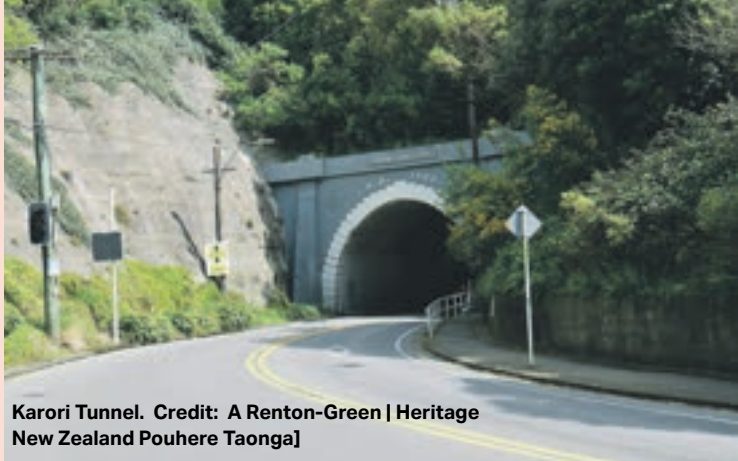
Phil Wisker has been busy handing out traps to Karori residents after *The Local* ran a story last month calling for volunteers to walk unmonitored traplines, and for residents to set traps in their backyards.

Since the story, Phil – who works for Predator Free Wellington and volunteers for Predator Free Karori – has handed out 15 backyard traps to residents, has filled the area's vacant traplines, and been able to set up two more traplines.

To order a rat trap for your backyard, email pffkarori@gmail.com. A \$10 koha is requested. **TL**

Are you enrolled to vote?

If you haven't received an enrolment pack in the mail, it means your address is out of date, or you're not enrolled, according to the Electoral Commission. Enrolment packs were mailed out between 17 and 22 August. Enrol or update your address online at vote.nz before midnight, Sunday 25 October. **TL**



Karori Tunnel. Credit: A Renton-Green | Heritage New Zealand Pouhere Taonga]

Heritage status may be removed

The Karori Tunnel and the Kelburn Viaduct may have their heritage status revoked. The Ministry for the Environment carried out consultation between 5 and 19 August on whether to modify heritage provisions on five sites in the Wellington District Plan, following a request from the Wellington City Council. A report recommended removing the Karori Tunnel and Kelburn Viaduct from the list of heritage items in order to reduce the costs and complexity associated with ongoing maintenance and enabling potential future upgrades. **TL**

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Play Bridge!

If you're looking for social activity combined with brainwork, consider joining us at the Karori Bridge Club, says club member Anne Goulding.

Often described as “the ultimate card game”, bridge combines strategy, memory, communication and teamwork, providing a mental challenge as well as a rich social experience.

For almost six decades, the Karori Bridge Club has been an important part of the local community, bringing together people of all ages and backgrounds through a shared love of bridge.

Founded in 1969, the club began life in the Karori Community Hall with 158 members. Interest in the game grew quickly and, by 1972, the club had moved to the top floor of the Jackson Building in Marsden Village. Just four years later, a forward-thinking committee took the significant step of purchasing its own premises, buying the former Regal Theatre building. At its peak in the late 1970s, club membership exceeded 500, making it one of the largest bridge clubs in the region. While membership has declined over the years, the club remains vibrant and active, with just under 200 members currently enjoying regular play.

Today, the Karori Bridge Club offers four sessions each week, catering for players from complete beginners through to highly experienced competitors. Monday afternoons are open to players of all skill levels, while Tuesday evenings are designed for the club's most experienced and competitive players. Thursday evenings provide an opportunity for newer and developing players to build their skills in a supportive environment, and Friday afternoons

The club has a strong culture of support, with experienced teachers and mentors available.

offer a relaxed social session focused on enjoyment, friendship and a shared afternoon tea.

Beginner lessons are offered each year, with the next series due to begin in September.

The club has a strong culture of support, with experienced teachers and mentors available to guide new players as they learn the game, develop their skills, and become part of the club community. Anyone interested in learning bridge is encouraged to keep an eye on the club's Facebook page and other local community notices for further details.

Whether you're an experienced player or simply curious about learning a new skill, the Karori Bridge Club offers a welcoming place to meet people, challenge yourself and become part of a long-standing local community organisation. **TL**



Top Left: The club building was originally the Regal Theatre which opened in the late 1920s.

Above: Bridge brings people together at the Karori Bridge Club.

Karori Bridge Club contacts:

- Email: karoribridge@gmail.com
- Website: <https://www.karoribridge.com>
- Facebook: Karori Bridge Club



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Kākā eating kōwhai flowers. Photo by Tom Lynch

Futuna Lecture Series returns with Australian double bill

The Futuna Lecture Series takes place later this month.

Karori's Futuna Chapel Trust has announced the line-up for its 2026 Futuna Lecture Series, bringing two Australian architecture figures to Wellington and around the country as part of the Aotearoa Festival of Architecture.

Documentary maker Catherine Hunter and Sydney architect and author Nick Sissons will jointly present this year's series, both drawing on decades-long working relationships with Glenn Murcutt, the Australian architect who won the Pritzker Architecture Prize — often described as architecture's Nobel — in 2002.

The lecture series is the Futuna Chapel Trust's



Above: Catherine Hunter with Glenn Murcutt.

Left: Nick Sissons.

major annual fundraiser, supporting the conservation and upkeep of the historic Futuna Chapel in Karori. Now in its 15th year since being established in 2011, it has become a fixture on the New Zealand architecture calendar, drawing architects, designers, students and enthusiasts to hear from leading national and international speakers. Registered architects can earn CPD points for attending.

Hunter has worked in the arts as a writer, producer and director for more than 35 years, including two decades documenting the arts for the Nine Network's Sunday programme in Australia. Her work has screened on ABC Arts, Australian Story and Compass. In 2017 she was a finalist in the Walkley Documentary Award for Glenn Murcutt – Spirit of Place, and she has won the Australian Institute of Architects' Adrian Ashton award for architectural journalism three times. She is currently completing a new film on Murcutt, who recently turned 90.

Sissons trained at the University of Technology Sydney before moving to London to join Foster and Partners, later becoming a UK-registered architect and RIBA member. He returned to Australia in 2002 and founded Sissons Architects in 2012, a practice known for large commercial projects including the heritage revitalisation of the Locomotive Workshop in South Eveleigh. His book, Glenn Murcutt – Unbuilt Projects, was published by Thames and Hudson in 2024. Early in his career, in 1997, he assisted Murcutt on the Fletcher Page House in Kangaroo Valley.

The lecture is on in Wellington on Tuesday 22 September, at Old Saint Paul's, 6.30–8.30pm.

This year's series will also include screenings of two of Hunter's documentaries, showing at the Embassy in Wellington on 23 September at 6.30pm.

Tickets for the lectures are on sale now via Humanitix. 



New art show

Toi Marsden: A new art show giving back to students and the community

A new contemporary art exhibition will bring artists from across Aotearoa to Karori, when Samuel Marsden Collegiate School opens its doors for the inaugural Toi Marsden | The Marsden Art Show.

Created by the Marsden Parents & Friends' Group, Toi Marsden will bring together a curated collection of original New Zealand art, alongside a new body of work by 2026 Artist in Residence Fleur Wickes, created during her residency at the school. Works will be available to view and purchase across the exhibition weekend.

Toi Marsden supports Marsden's long-standing Artist in Residence programme, which brings outstanding artists from New Zealand and Australia into the school community to work directly with students. Funds raised through the Art Show will be reinvested into the programme, helping ensure students continue to benefit from meaningful creative learning and exposure to practising artists.

Interest from the artistic community has been significant, with more than 85 artist applications received from across the country. The submissions are now being considered by a highly regarded selection panel comprising James Blackie, Penny Murdoch and Tim Christie, who are working through the entries to shape a diverse and high-quality exhibition.

Following the opening Gala Evening on Friday 30 October, Toi Marsden will open to the public at Samuel Marsden Collegiate School in Karori from 10.00am on Saturday 31 October and Sunday 1 November, with a koha entry supporting Dwell Housing Trust.

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

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



Marsden & Chelsea Clubs



Day Programme for those with dementia, cognitive or other conditions

The Marsden Club in Newcombe Crescent, Karori, (and the Chelsea Club in Lyall Bay) provide high quality, professional day programmes for people with dementia and other cognitive conditions. Funding from Health NZ is usually available.

For more information contact: Angela 027 349 9691 or visit: marsdenclub.org.nz

Ayesha Verrall has been an MP and a Minister but now she's having a go at winning an electorate. **Jane O'Loughlin** reports.

Ayesha Verrall – who has been a list MP since joining Parliament in 2020 – is enjoying her first experience of campaigning for an electorate seat.

“The experience of doing politics differently with more local focus and door knocking and individual engagement. I’m just loving that.”

The job of representing Wellington North comes as the city faces a challenging time of job losses and business closures.

“Right now, the city needs a strong local MP who can get things done. As a senior MP with Cabinet experience, I believe I’m that person.”

She thinks it would make a massive difference to Wellington to have a supportive MP that was also a Minister.

“It’s clear that that’s not happening right now. Not only is the city neglected in terms of infrastructure funding from the government, but Government Ministers take pride in kicking public servants and parts of Wellington City. So, ending that, and making sure that the city has a strong voice who can get things done is an important priority.”

She kicked off the hard work of engaging with the electorate early, with door knocking starting about April this year. Public healthcare is unsurprisingly a topic many are keen to raise with her, but she says a common theme in the conversations with the public is the economy, and more specifically for Wellington, planned public service job cuts which she describes as “destructive and reckless”.

She says the impact on the city already from the prospect of public sector job cuts has been huge.

“Someone said to me, it’s not that the Government has fired 6000 people. They’ve made 60,000 people insecure about their jobs.”

She says she is getting a warm reception for Labour’s campaign promises aimed at bringing the costs of living down – such as three free GP visits, a public transport fare cap, and financing to put in place solar energy.

“When the economic climate is so bad, people just want help with the basics. They don’t want grand promises.”

She is confident she will do well in the newly



formed Wellington North electorate, and garner votes from across the spectrum.

“There’s a number of people who are giving their party vote to National, who recognise [the electorate] as a two horse race and are likely to give their support to me.

“And then, there’s a lot of Left voters who are recognising the economy as the dominant issue and want a party with credibility on those issues.

“And I get a lot of positive feedback about my work in healthcare, particularly from older parts of the community.”

Verrall lives in Brooklyn currently, and has previously lived in Newtown and Hataitai.

In her spare time she likes running, ideally in the green belt.

“If I can get a run in before Parliament, that just makes me feel so happy for the rest of the day’s circus!” she laughs.

A lot of time is spent around her daughter’s sport. She and her partner Alice like to go to shows in Wellington, when they get a chance.

“Being both busy working mums mean we don’t always get to as many things as we want to now.” **TL**

This is the third in a series of political profiles and articles *The Local* is running in the lead up to the general election in November.



Ai generated image

Big Buddy has the mentors, now it needs the boys

Kerry Meadows-Bonner talks to a Wellington mum whose twin sons found lasting friendships through Big Buddy, as the charity calls for more local families to come forward.

For years, Big Buddy has been known for its waiting list, with boys often waiting between nine and 12 months to be matched with a volunteer mentor.

Now, for the first time in Wellington, the situation has flipped.

The New Zealand charity, which matches boys aged 7 to 17 who don't have a dad in their lives with positive male role models, has volunteer mentors ready and waiting. The challenge now is making sure families know the opportunity exists.

Big Buddy offers two programmes: one-to-one mentoring for boys aged seven to 13 and an eight-week group programme for teenagers aged 14 to 17. The aim is simple – to give boys regular one-on-one time with a trusted adult through friendship, encouragement and shared experiences.

For Wellington mum Anna Clare, the programme has changed the lives of her twin sons in the past decade.

The boys joined Big Buddy at seven years old, each matched with their own mentor.

Anna says, “I felt incredibly grateful for the fact that they both got one each. Dave really bent over backwards to keep it as fair and as even as he could. He even took into account the fact that, as twins, everything has to be exactly the same size and it all has to start at the same time.”

One mentor later moved away, but Anna says the transition was seamless.

“I feel like he managed that really well. That need in them not to have inequality was accommodated above and beyond where they needed to go with it. He was just amazing.”

Today, the friendships have morphed into everyday life. Seamus and his Big Buddy, Thomas, catch up for sessions at the gym, movies, video games and brunch, while Flynn and Ryan head out for 5am runs, cook dinner together at Ryan's home, and some paid work for Ryan's business.

She says the support has extended well beyond her sons.

“At the same time, I know for both of these men they see our family as a bit of their family as well. It's never just with the boys or just with me. It's first with the boys and then with the family.”

Anna says as a single mother, she says she has always felt supported rather than judged by Big Buddy.

“I've never felt judged for any of it. I've just felt that the work they do sits alongside the work that mums do, rather than seeking to replace it at a certain age.”

“It feels very much like a partnership, like pulling in more of the community to help raise these boys. It's lovely. They just manage it really well.”

For boys growing up without a father figure, having a consistent, positive male role model can mean regular outings, someone to talk to, encouragement through life's challenges and, as Anna's family has experienced, relationships that turn into family.

With mentors currently available in Wellington, Big Buddy hopes families who could benefit from the programme and encourages those interested to contact them and find out more. **TL**

Links

<https://www.bigbuddy.org.nz/>
info@bigbuddy.org.nz

Of monsters, mice – and kiwi

Author and illustrator **Ruth Paul** has lived in Mākara for 33 years, surrounded by native bush and kiwi that have inspired at least two of her children's books. But, as Lee-Anne Duncan found out, she's almost as often to be found in the children's section of Karori's library.

I think I've read every book here," says Ruth Paul, casting her eye over the picture books carefully shelved in Karori's library. "The librarians are very used to me."

It might be usual for an adult to be a prolific borrower of children's books (often returned late, Ruth confesses), but as the writer and illustrator of some 30 titles herself – many of which are also to be found on these very shelves, and at Marsden Books – it's essentially research and development.

"I read picture books to keep up with the play, to see what's in the market, what kids are reading," says Ruth, picking up a new-looking hardcover picture book. "Oh, this is one I haven't read. I'm melting over the beautiful pictures of the horse and bunnies! They're really old-fashioned. Gorgeous."

Ruth has now been writing and illustrating her own books for 22 years. She can reel off that figure because two years ago her first, *The Animal Undie Ball*, celebrated its 20th anniversary with a revamped edition. Animals of all categories are often the subject of her books – lions, dinosaurs, fish, Hector's dolphins, hens, jellyfish – and most latterly, kiwi.

Inspired by the release of kiwi near her Mākara lifestyle block, which is now mostly replanted and regenerating bush, Ruth wrote two kiwi books simultaneously. One, the picture book *Anahera*, celebrates the true story of the female kiwi matriarch who hatched 60 chicks in captivity before Capital Kiwi released her (with a much younger mate!) near Ruth's home in 2022. The other, *Ghost Kiwi*, is for older children.

"I think I had so many facts about kiwi in my head they had to spill over to a longer work than *Anahera* could afford."



Ruth's kiwi know-how is shared during school visits, too, and when *The Local* meets her she's just finished up at a local school, supported by Read New Zealand's Writers in Schools programme. While in need of a coffee she's energised by her time with the children, "getting them up to do something silly, making up a silly story, then drawing really bad pictures in front of them", she explains.

It's a similar set-up to the play Ruth wrote and performed in – both new endeavours for her – at Circa Theatre in April. While hugely entertaining, "*A Monster Ate My Story*" has a semi-serious subject: what if blocked writers resort to artificial intelligence? Well, chaos ensues, but – spoiler – human creativity wins.

Another win for Ruth was the inspiration for her current creative work. "Like what happens in the play, I had been trying to write a story about a monster and a mouse, which I couldn't make work. After writing the play, I've ended up with a different story that does work. *Zadie Made a Monster* is about a girl who has a tantrum and turns into the monster, then has to bring herself back down. It's interesting, that process where one bit sparks another story, which sparks another idea, and the balls keep rolling."

All without AI – instead, animals, children and nature. **TL**

What I wish every homeowner knew before choosing an agent

Put time into choosing an agent to sell your home, says **Andrea Skews** of **Lowe & Co.**

Many homeowners automatically think of using the agent they bought their home from when it eventually comes time to sell. It makes sense – they're familiar, you already have a relationship, and they know the property.

But I often remind people of something important: you can't choose who you buy a property from, but you can choose who sells it!

So think back to when you bought. How did that agent perform for the seller they were representing? Did they negotiate firmly? Did they create enough competition that you had to stretch? Would you have paid more?

If the answer to that last question is yes, it's worth asking yourself why you didn't have to.

When you're selling, you want an agent firmly focused on achieving the best possible outcome for you.

Which brings me to one of the best pieces of advice I can give anyone considering selling: go to an agent's open home before you choose them.

After 17 years in Wellington real estate, I can remember only one couple who deliberately did this.

Around 2018, they came through one of my open homes and told me they weren't interested in buying the property. They were planning ahead and visiting different open homes specifically to interview agents while they were doing the job.

We hit it off, and that first conversation became a working relationship lasting almost five years. COVID interrupted their plans; renovations took much longer than expected and building costs increased considerably. Along the way, I advised them to rethink parts of their proposed renovation because I didn't believe the original layout would give them the best flow or return when it came time to sell.

“When you're selling, you want an agent firmly focused on achieving the best possible outcome for you.”

They trusted the advice, completed the work and ultimately achieved a result that they were very satisfied with, allowing them to move elsewhere in New Zealand for the slower, semi-retired lifestyle they'd been working towards. I was grateful for the enthusiastic five-star review they gave me online.

I've often reflected on their approach and still admire them for being so clever and considered in their thinking. They planned ahead, did their homework and watched agents actually doing the job before choosing one.

You can do the same.

At an open home, forget the house for a moment and watch the agent. An open home is an agent's stage. It's where the promises made at an appraisal become reality.

Choosing the highest appraisal or lowest commission can be tempting, but quoting a price and achieving it are two very different things.

Almost anyone can present an impressive plan for the first few weeks. I'd want to know what they're going to do in week four if Plan A hasn't worked.

If selling might be somewhere in your future – whether that's six months or several years away – start your homework early. If you'd like some advice on what to prepare, what not to spend money on, or simply where to start, I'm always happy to have that conversation well before you're ready to choose an agent.

Good decisions are much easier to make before you're under pressure.

If selling might be somewhere in your future – whether that's six months or several years away – start your homework early. If you'd like some advice on what to prepare, what not to spend money on, or simply where to start, I'm always happy to have that conversation well before you're ready to choose an agent.

Good decisions are much easier to make before you're under pressure. 



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The beautiful game and a gorgeous dog

She weaves, she dribbles, she shoots and it's a goal! Does it matter that she has fur and four legs? **Maggie Tait** tells her story.

Lottie is an 8-year-old kelpie/heading dog cross, who lives with her owner Miles Carter and flat-mates, human and canine, in South Karori, and who delights Karori residents with her love of football, played in various off-lead parks and spaces.

"I had played football with my previous dog but Lottie was mad keen right from the start, says Miles.

"She has always preferred large football-sized balls to small ones, and she gets excited about things that look like footballs, even spherical stone sculptures! There was quite a lot of training involved though, first to not bite the ball, then encouraging her when she passes it back or does something cool.

"She is mostly self-taught just by positive reinforcement from me saying "well done" or "good pass". The last two or three years she has been learning to score goals into the net, and now gets in position for crosses."

The pair watched much of the recent World Cup together, and Lottie gets very excited when Miles cheers a goal. "She does actually watch the TV, anything with dogs or wildlife, especially videos of herself."

Miles and Lottie found each other after his previous dog passed away when an ad on the SPCA website caught his eye: "I was smitten with her from the first time I saw her photos and description. The day I went to first visit her, I found out later, was her first birthday. She had been at the SPCA for seven months before I adopted her."

While some found the idea of such a highly active working breed Miles had experience with his former dog Xhuxha, another kelpie cross.

"She does take tonnes of energy."



The pair have climbed the Remarkables together in the snow. Lottie has level three kiwi avoidance (certification) from the Capital Kiwi Project so she is safe around wildlife.

Another way she blows off steam, apart from soccer, is running alongside Miles as he cycles.

"We started out with me just riding the bike around on the grass and she naturally got excited by the speed and wanting to herd it. From there we started riding with her on the lead and working up to where I can trust her riding pretty much anywhere."

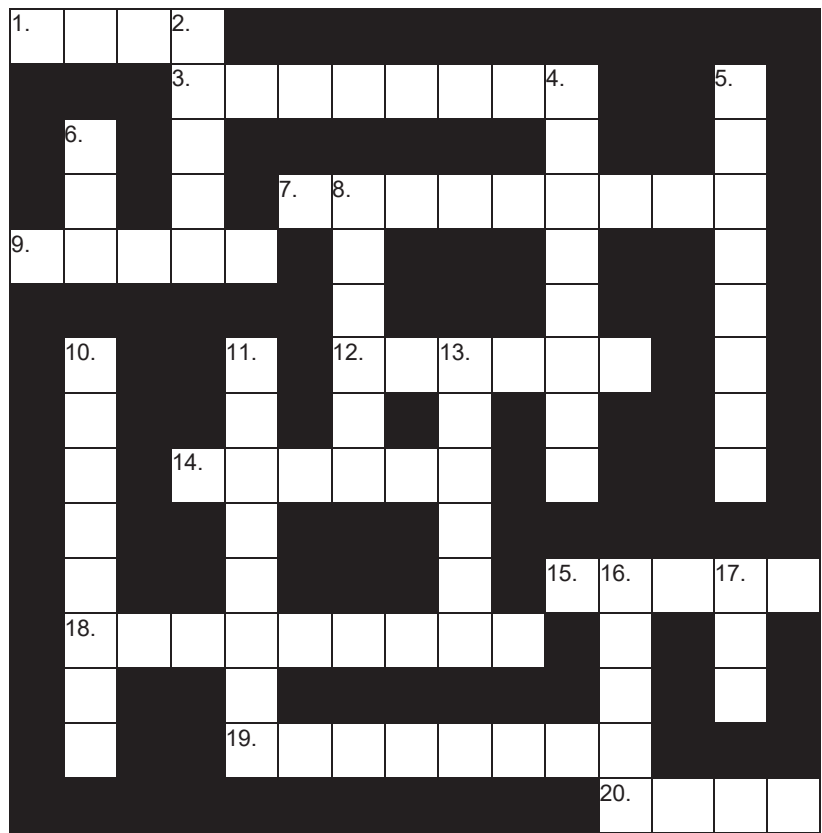
Lottie loves cycling and is excited by the jumps and pump tracks. "When we first started riding on the lead she would take off pulling sled dog style if she saw a friend or a dog she knew, but she soon learned not to do that."

Not everyone knows this, but Lottie is also into skateboarding, but its soccer that people know her for.

"Lots of people have said Lottie should play for the All Whites. I've had a lot of positive reactions from people seeing her play football or on the bike... Tons of people know Lottie's name but not mine. She is very well liked by the vast majority of local dog owners and dog lovers."

Ask Miles to sum Lottie up and there's no hesitation. "She is my best friend." **TL**

Beau's Crossword #11



- Across:**
1. Tea from the east. (4)
3. Poise, dignity. (8)
7. Beam of brightness. (9)
9. Startle, frighten. (5)
12. Perfect world. (6)
14. Feel remorse. (6)
15. A quick look. (5)
18. Trusted person. (9)
19. Succulent. (8)
20. There's one in this clue. (4)
- Down:**
2. Icy hut. (5)
4. Small conflict. (8)
5. Acknowledgement in a written work. (8)
6. Seed, --- at the post. (3)
8. Browse. (6)
10. Guidelines, etiquette. (8)
11. Happy. (8)
13. Gain possession of. (6)
16. An epic mission. (5)
17. Abbreviation often found at the end of a company's name. (3)

For the solution see the-local.co.nz/crosswords

ULO ? Unidentified Local Object

Identify the mystery object – something in Karori – to win a \$20 book voucher.

Email your answers to us at karori@the-local.co.nz
If there's more than one correct answer, the winner will be selected at random.

Congratulations to Peter Donelan who correctly identified August's ULO as the tiles on the Gipps St Butchery. 



Guys, we need to talk?

Men's Health and Blue September



By **Dr Fadi Elyas**
Specialist GP

I'll be honest, we can do better. Most of us men are pretty good at putting things off. We service the car, fix the fence and make sure everyone else is sorted — but when it comes to our own health, we often wait until something is obviously wrong.

Blue September is a reminder that we need to do better, especially when it comes to prostate health. Prostate cancer is the most commonly diagnosed cancer in New Zealand men. Around 4,000 men are diagnosed each year, more than 700 die from it, and about 1 in 8 men will develop prostate cancer in their lifetime. If your father or brother has had it, your risk is higher.

The hard part is that early prostate cancer often has no symptoms. When symptoms do appear, which may include needing to pee more often or urgently, trouble starting or keeping the flow going, discomfort when passing urine, or pain in the lower back, hips or upper thighs. These symptoms can have other causes too, but they are still worth talking about with your GP.

In New Zealand, there is no national prostate screening programme, so the conversation usually starts with us. A PSA blood test may help assess prostate health, but it is not a perfect cancer test. A



raised PSA can happen for several reasons, including an enlarged prostate, infection or inflammation. Your GP can help weigh up your age, family history, symptoms and overall risk, then talk through whether testing makes sense for you. The physical test improves the odds of picking some cancers, but it is not mandatory.

The recommend age to start checking is around 50, however if there is a history of prostate cancer in a first degree relative, then 40 is the starting point. This is not about panic; it is about being practical. We do not ignore warning lights on the dashboard, and we should not ignore our own bodies either.

This Blue September is a suggestion to make that step. Simple game plan: Pick the time that suits you. Talk to your GP if you are over 50, over 40 with family history, or if you have symptoms. Ask about PSA testing. Encourage your mates and whānau to do the same.

Guys, we need to talk because talking early can lead to checking early, and checking early can save lives. **TL**

www.blueseptember.org

BLUE SEPTEMBER
Tackle prostate cancer together



Preparations are underway for the upcoming election candidate meeting.

Every local and general election cycle, the Karori Residents Association holds a Meet the Candidates evening for our community.

On the night, it hopefully looks pretty simple: candidates arrive, people take their seats, questions are asked, answers are given and, a couple of hours later, everyone heads home.

Behind the scenes, however, it's a slightly different story!

Planning starts well in advance. We need to find and book a venue, identify and contact all the candidates, work around campaign schedules, organise the format and timing, promote the evening, arrange volunteers and equipment, and make sure every candidate has a fair opportunity to be heard.

Then there are the questions. We want to know what you want to ask, while also making sure we cover the big issues affecting Karori and Wellington. Those questions need to be collected, sorted and condensed — because invariably there are far more than we could ever get through on the night.

And this is where we need your help. Please send us your questions for the candidates well ahead of the evening. We won't be taking questions from the floor on the night. This helps us keep things running to time, avoid repetition, and make sure the questions of greatest interest and importance to our community get priority.

And then somebody has to keep a room full of politicians to time!

It's a lot of work for one evening, but we think it's worth it. KRA is proudly non-partisan, and Meet the Candidates is about giving our community the opportunity to hear directly from the people asking for their vote, compare their answers and make up their own minds.

We're working on our 2026 Meet the Candidates evening now, but you can save the date Tuesday October 27th arrive 6:45pm for a 7pm start.

Send us your question for candidates well ahead of time by going to our website www.karoriassociation.nz. 

KRA AGM – Monday 7 September, 7pm

Zoom into our online AGM to hear what we've achieved over the past year and what we're working on for 2026/27.

Our guest speaker is William Woods from CentrePort, talking about upcoming construction around the Interislander ferry terminal at Kaiwharawhara. Work starts soon and will continue through to 2029.

Monday 7 September, 7pm – online via Zoom

Zoom link and event details are on our website www.karoriassociation.nz

Goings On

To keep up to date with current Wellington City Council public engagement, sign up for their Let's Talk newsletter: <https://www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz/letstalk-newsletter>

Karori items of interest:

Chaytor Street retaining wall: <https://wellington.govt.nz/your-council/projects/chaytor-street-retaining-wall>

Current road works and road closures: <https://wellington.govt.nz/parking-roads-and-transport/roads/road-works/current-road-works-and-closures>

Tiaki Wai water rates: <https://wellington.govt.nz/climate-change-sustainability-environment/water/tiaki-wai>

Always plenty at Penny's

Penny's is approaching its 15th birthday, but Penny Hocking has been feeding Wellington for twice as long, using skills – and cookware – handed down from her mother and grandmother. **Lee-Anne Duncan** paid a visit.

Walking past Penny's on Karori Road is nigh impossible. The aromas wafting through its doors tempt one inside, even if just to see what Penny Hocking has on offer today.

When *The Local* visits, Penny Hocking is elbow-deep in zesting a pile of limes, while the filling for her pork and fennel lasagna putters on the stove, alongside crab apples quietly transforming into jam, both in vast vats once owned by her grandmother.

The limes are to become Penny's Marvellous Margarita Mamalade, one of her ever-changing range of relishes, chutneys, hot sauces and spreads, all made on the premises and arranged for sale along a wall at the Karori Road café.

"I'm a bit behind on preserving," she says, "as we catered for a woman's three-day 90th party at the weekend. Oh yes, along with the sandwiches, quiches, pies, cakes, sweets, frozen meals – and the preserves – Penny caters.

And, of course, makes coffee. Coffee seekers of all ages and job descriptions stop by for a pick-me-up, with many greeted cheerfully by name. Having a steady stream of regulars "is fantastic," says Penny.

Beside the till lies sweet temptation. Surely they'd like a little something with their coffee? "I always wait to finalise the payment if I sense any hesitation," says Shanea Hartley, who's been with Penny for seven years.

Which is about half the time the café has been open. Penny always knew she wanted to "do something" for herself, so opened her café after her youngest of three children turned 14. That's when Penny felt confident she could dedicate the 60 hours-plus a week required to make the business work.

And, while the menu changes daily, Penny's offer-



Penny Hocking, owner of Penny's in Karori Road, with long-time staff members Shanea Hartley and Riley Stace. Photo credit: Lee-Anne Duncan.

ing is about the same as when the doors opened. "I thought I'd start doing cabinet food and home-cooked meals and soups and desserts and preserves and see what was popular. Well, I haven't been able to cut it down – it's all popular," she says with – er – relish...

"For many years I've catered for food preferences and allergies, so we've always got gluten-free, dairy-free, vegetarian and vegan. There's something for everyone."

And that "something" is uniquely Penny's. While it may start from a recipe – likely her mother's, who, at 90, grows Penny's herbs – Penny will have tweaked it. "I like to play with flavours," she says, explaining her enduring love of cooking. "So, I'll make a tomato relish, but I'll smoke the tomatoes. Or I'll confit the garlic for a pickle, or roast pineapple or feijoas for hot sauce. Some of my best creations come from things that haven't worked.

Penny's is closed on Sundays, but its kitchen remains busy, with Penny's grandchildren lining up beside her for an apprenticeship in the knowledge handed down to this fifth generations of cooks. **TL**



**Karori
Business
Association**

Website: karori.org.nz

Manager - Bill McDonald manager@karori.org.nz

Membership - Minori Holmes members@karori.org.nz

Marketing, website, newsletter - Diana Sue connect@karori.org.nz

Board members - KBABoard@karori.org.nz

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Nota Bene presents Carmen

Nota Bene proudly presents Bizet's Carmen this September.

Whether you are a long-time opera enthusiast or experiencing Carmen for the first time, this accessible and engaging abridged production is not to be missed. Friday, 11 September, 7:30–9:30pm and Sunday, 13 September, 1–3 pm, the Auditorium, Samuel Marsden Collegiate, Marsden Avenue, Karori. \$50 Full, \$45 Concession.

Book at Humanitix (<https://events.humanitix.com/carmen-by-georges-bizet>)

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Climate Action Karori

Climate Change Community Workshop

6 SEPTEMBER

2 PM - 4.30 PM

KARORI COMMUNITY CENTRE

Our climate is changing now, and we need to change too.

In this friendly community workshop, we will explore and discuss climate change, what it is, what causes it, what the impacts are globally and locally and what we can do. Everyone welcome.

We'll carry out simple household carbon footprint calculations and make personal plans for action.

Everyday actions for a better climate future, together.

Please register at:
<https://events.humanitix.com/climate-change-community-workshop>
or search on Facebook for 'Climate Action Karori'



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

**Community notices are free for local groups and not-for-profits.
Get in touch if you would like to include your listing in *The Local*.**

Futuna Chapel Trust

Futuna Chapel Trust will be holding an Open Sunday on Sunday 6 September from 11am–3pm. Visitors are warmly invited to view the Chapel free of charge (koha appreciated).

Karori Community Patrol

Karori Community Patrol are looking for volunteers willing to patrol one or two evenings a month to keep our community safe. We're also looking for committee members if you've got a committee background. Estimate a couple of hours admin a month. Email karori@cpnz.org.nz

Friends of Karori Cemetery Our Fair Ladies Tour

Friends of Karori Cemetery

Our Fair Ladies Tour

Sun 6 Sep – Discover the remarkable stories of Wellington women buried at Karori Cemetery, from pioneering professionals to women who made their mark in early Wellington. A fascinating look at resilience, creativity and the changing role of women in society.

Working Bees

Every Tuesday morning and one Sunday afternoon each month

Help care for Karori Cemetery at a regular working bee. Volunteers work together to clear vegetation, sweep plots and pull weeds, with a current focus on Gum Gully. Drop-ins are welcome and there is no on-going commitment required. All weather permitting. To find out more or get involved, email workingbees@friendsofkaroricemetery.co.nz.

Marsden Club respite care

Marsden Club in Karori provides socially stimulating respite day care for people living in the community with mild dementia, Alzheimer's and Parkinson's. This also provides carers with an essential break to attend to other duties, appointments, their own physical and mental wellbeing, sustaining their caring role for longer. For more information or an appointment to visit please phone Angela 027 349 9691.

Karori Arts & Crafts Centre

Karori Arts & Crafts Centre invites the community to its 2026 Annual Art Exhibition, showcasing work from around 30 local artists. See each artist's best work from the past two years. The exhibition will feature paintings, lino prints, hand-made books, calligraphy, and textile works. Join us opening night, Friday 11 September 6:30 pm to 8:00 pm, or during the day Saturday 12 and Sunday 13 September, 10am–4pm. All are welcome.

7 Beauchamp Street, Karori – www.KACC.org.nz

What should we do about the Super age?

A panel discussion hosted by IDEA (Institute for Democratic and Economic Analysis) featuring Cameron Bagrie, Susan St John, and Dr Bill Rosenberg. The Ballroom – Foxglove Bar and Kitchen, 33 Queens Wharf, Wellington. 6pm, Monday 21st September. Please RSVP for this free even by Monday 14th September at <https://events.humanitix.com/what-should-we-do-about-the-super-age>

Karori Foodbank

The Karori Foodbank is located in the Karori Community Centre (KCC) and distributes parcels twice a week. You can donate non-perishable items in the big blue wheelie bin at the KCC. Potential clients needing a food parcel need to ring the phone line on 476 3455 and leave a message or fill out the form at the KCC.

Karori Floral Design Club

Do you love flowers, creativity, and good company? We meet every second Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm at St Ninian's Church, Karori Rd. For further information contact Cheryl at 021 268 9377.

Playgroup at Karori Baptist Church

Caregivers with their babies and pre-school children welcome. Every Wednesday between 9:30–11:30am during school terms. Morning tea provided for adults; children bring their own. 163 Karori Road, Marsden Village, Karori. \$3.00 per family. Contact Annette on 022 107 2751.

Collecting craziness

Leah McFall falls victim to another supermarket promotion.

If we ever met at a Karori thing or party, standing awkwardly without much to say, I could always break the ice by asking you what you'd save if your house was on fire. But I won't say a word, because I already know your answer.

It's "The Ooshies".

Good grief, what a promotion! Everybody lost their minds! How long has it gone on? Weeks, months or years of standing in the queue at Woolworths as the cashier asks the shopper ahead of you, "Are you collecting the Ooshies?"

Of course they're collecting the Ooshies! Look at them! Every parent with a kid under ten has been staggering about with crazed hair and boggled eyes, vibrating at the till with the stress of it all! They nod without speaking, hold out their palms for the blind bags, and scuttle off in all directions — west, north to Mākara, up to the hills or down to the flat, or to city-end Karori in the Volvo. None are safe from the collectables craze: the Ooshie has its squidgy foot on all our necks.

For ages, I didn't know what Ooshies even were, passing mine along to somebody else. Once I did this for a parent so grateful that she sent her two children over to thank me, which they did in perfect unison, arriving in lockstep like *The Shining*. It gave me the absolute trots.

I've since investigated Ooshies and honestly, I still don't get it. They're not as wholesome as the tiny seed boxes New World once gave out; not as useful or deadly as Smeg knives. They're made of squeezable rubber, are sized to top a pencil, and



I've since investigated Ooshies and honestly, I still don't get it.



cross-promote various movie franchises, although one seems to be a random frog with an iPad in its mouth.

Your average family Labrador could probably swallow twenty of them without needing the vet. You could cork half a bottle of Lindauer with Darth Vader and if you're mowing the lawn anytime soon, you could jam two Hulks in your ears.

The complete set is going for \$250 online — small change compared to, say, a Tiaki Wai water bill. While the official promotion is over, the haggling continues, with desperate posts begging for swaps on the I Love Karori Facebook page. The little rubber guys have taken our sanity and dignity, and are undermining our system of currency, sowing distrust between neighbours. Just what is their evil end-game?

Back to that house fire we were talking about. Could it be that the Ooshies lit the match? 



Elephants and crocodiles in Karori (and other animals)

History buff **Gordon Tait** recalls Karori's wildlife, including some of the more unusual animals to visit.

Elephants in Karori? Well, yes. Mid last century circuses were extremely popular, visiting cities and towns up and down the country. The most popular animals were the elephants. Crowds gathered to watch the circus parades (led by elephants) as well as "elephant races", elephant rides, elephant autographs and of course the circus. And when the circus came to Wellington where were the elephants kept? The elephants (and other circus equipment) were housed on the vacant ground that later became the Training College on Campbell Street. (In the 1950's and 1960's this was barren, with broom and gorse on the Donald Street side, with a small stream – the remnants of which can still be seen behind the RSA building.) The circus equipment and animals were lined up along the Scarpa Terrace boundary and were undoubtedly visited by numerous locals.

The variety of animals that have (and in some cases still are) around Karori can be ascertained by the different types catalogued by Zealandia when creating the predator proof sanctuary. Animals removed from the sanctuary included deer, goats, opossums, pigs, rats, rabbits hares and hedgehogs. The trapping programme for possums caught 1000 in eight weeks. Wild pigs were quite common in South Karori until comparatively recently. Goats are still seen on

the hills, and there remains a small population of possums. (Up to the 1980s many Karori gardeners complained about the possum damage to their gardens, particularly the roses. The Predator Free group has largely reduced numbers of rats and hedgehogs, and the occasional hedgehog.

Keen walkers can still see rabbits on the Skyline walkway, sometimes in large numbers (until numbers require the Council to act.) Rabbit hunting in Karori was a popular past time in yesteryear. There are many accounts of people having a "good days' hunting" and photos of early Karori settlers holding shotguns and rifles. If the early newspaper reports are anything to go by, firearm safety was not a high priority with a number of "accidents and fatalities" reported rabbit hunting. (As well as the occasional drowning while trout fishing in the South Karori Stream.)

One animal of note is the peripatus – a small caterpillar like creature (known as the velvet worm). That is rare worldwide but was common in Karori when the bush was rotting. The creature is from the dim past, and fossil remains date from 520 million years ago. In the early part of the 20th century enterprising boys made money selling these creatures to overseas universities.

And of crocodiles?

Residents of Karori up to about 1990, and certainly Marsden Collegiate Old Girls will know about crocodiles.

A crocodile was a long, orderly line of girls walking two by two, usually supervised by a teacher at the front and another at the back. Girls wore their green uniform and Panama hats, hands behind their backs, usually in silence. Every Sunday, rain hail or snow, the "crocodile" of girls boarding at Marsden were sent out for an excursion – to the city, to Wrights Hill or community events. Crocodiles also were formed to go to Chapel, assembly or some classes. **TL**

Photo of circus in Karori where the dog park is next to the cycle track (about 2012).



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