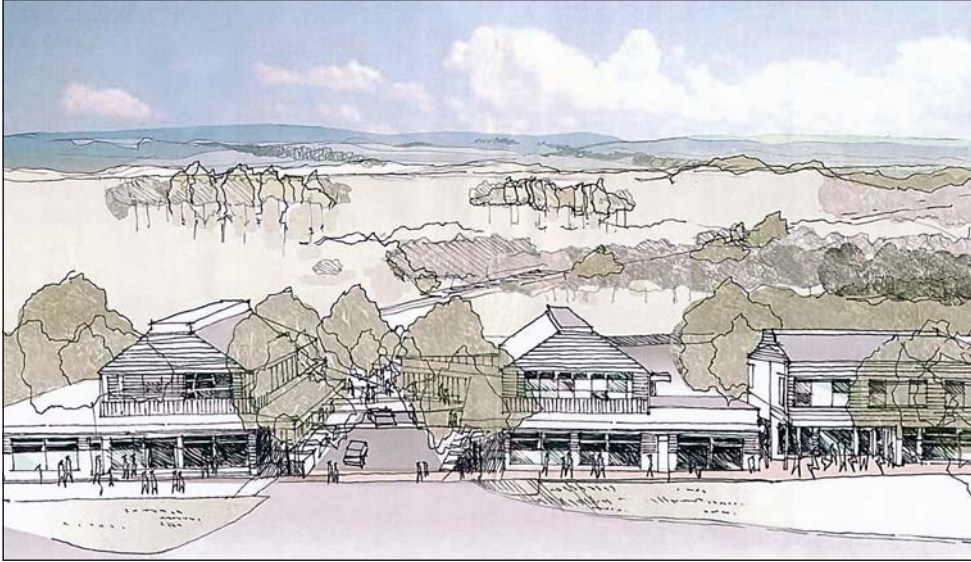


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\$10 million development at Kaukapakapa



This is the new face of Kaukapakapa - a \$10 million retail, commercial and residential project beside the local tavern, on a scale not before seen in the township.

When complete - projected to be in April 2014 - the Kaukapakapa Village Centre complex will include a petrol station, a small supermarket, 12 shops, seven commercial offices, three two-bedroom apartments with shops below, and parking for about 120 cars.

Developer Dave Brown, a Kaukapakapa resident of 10 years and 50/50 partner in the project, says the Gull service station should be open by July this year, restoring to the town an amenity sorely missed since the previous station closed in 2010.

The entire 2900 sq.m. complex is being set well back from the road on the 1.4ha site, with foreground planting to enhance the appearance.

It has been designed by leading architects, Jazmax, and while the buildings will be predominantly precast concrete, timber will feature heavily to retain the rural feel of the area. The buildings will be a mix of single and two-storey to preserve sight-lines through the complex, with varied rooflines to create interest.

As well as the main entrances off State Highway 16, there will be a secondary entry off Downer Access Road.

Dave Brown says four tenants have already been confirmed - a cafe, a bakery, a takeaway, and a liquor store. Interest has

also been shown in setting up an art gallery, plus a combined copy shop, book store and small block resource consent service.

"We've also been talking to a doctor, and that would lead to a pharmacy," says Dave.

He says the aim is to create a similar feel to places such as Matakana, with the town becoming a destination for day trippers rather than just a place people pass through.

All the commercial properties will be for lease, but the three, 74 sq.m. residential units and adjoining shops will be sold.

The first stage of site work in January involved sediment control, with a large silt retention pond being dug coupled to a three-tank chemical treatment system - a requirement of Auckland Council.

Initial earthworks were due to start in late January, and Dave is expecting the building consents to come through by April.

A builder for 30 years who has been involved in a number of large scale construction projects, this is Dave's first foray into being a developer.

He says most of the work will be carried out by local contractors, and expects as many as 50 people on site once construction starts.

He is confident Kaukapakapa can cope with a project of this size, citing the "massive increase" in traffic through the township during the time he has lived there.

Draft annual plan submissions

Submissions on the Auckland Council's draft Annual Plan close on Monday, February 25.

Most locals should have received a submission form in the post, but if you haven't you can submit a form online at www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/annualplan.

Locals can give their opinions on matters such as rates increases, service reductions, changes to council fees and, perhaps most importantly, the spending priorities of the Rodney Local Board, which directly affects this area.

Inside...

- Caltex station opens ... Pg 3
- Hotrod 'Villains' on show ... Pg 4
- World's biggest water slide ... Pg 5
- New childcare facility opens ... Pg 6
- Big upgrade for kindergarten ... Pg 7
- Helensville A&P Show ... Pg 8
- St John to open Op Shop ... Pg 10

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editorial

Happy (belated) New Year everyone. I trust you are all now fully recovered from the excesses of the festive season, and relaxed after a bit of a break. With lots happening family-wise I sort of missed out on a holiday this year, other than one or two days off, so I hope you all fared better!

This issue of *Helensville News* is a bit of a milestone for me, as it marks 10 years since I started working on this paper. I'll admit that 10 years ago, I never suspected I'd still be working on the 'News' - let alone running it single handedly. Roll on the next decade.

It's a good, positive issue too, as we have articles about three major business investments in our area. There's a piece on Prem Chand's new Caltex station in Commercial Rd on page 3, coverage of the major new shopping and office development at Kaukapakapa on the front page, plus details on page 6 of the new child care facility which has opened at Kaipara House by the SH16 roundabout.

It is extremely pleasing to see businesses willing to invest like this in our area. It shows people have faith in the future of Helensville and the surrounding area, and bodes well for the coming years.

On the community front, February is of course marked by the biggest event on Helensville's annual 'things to do' calendar - our A&P Show on Saturday, February 23, which this year will be the 111th time it's been held. Read all about it on pages 8 and 9 - plus a little piece on page 5.

It might not have such a lengthy pedigree, but the Lions Club's Running of the Roses on Sunday, February 10 is also now firmly ensconced as an annual town event. It's one of the major fund raisers each year for our local Lions, a group which does so much good in our community. You can support the event by purchasing a rose, taking part in the family fun run, or just participating in the activities at the Riverside Reserve.

- Dave Addison, Editor

Business survey brings wish list for area

Beautification, improved public transport and promotion of the area's attractions - those were the main items on the wish list of local businesses from a recent State Highway 16 Business Survey.

A top priority was improvement to local infrastructure, particularly better public transport across the region to make it easier for people in other parts of Auckland to get to our area.

Many of the 331 businesses which responded to the survey believed more promotion of the area's attractions - such as beaches; cafes; wine and food; and outdoor activities - was needed to bring Aucklanders.

Beautification of both towns was seen as important, with suggestions including encouraging building owners to give their premises a facelift; planting trees and greenery, and generally making the towns more attractive and pleasant.

In addition to businesses, almost 50 non-business people were surveyed with a limited selection of questions.

The survey was carried out jointly by the

Helensville and the Kumeu Coast & Country Business Associations. It had four main aims:

- To develop a profile of local businesses;
- To discover the attitudes of local businesses towards their area;
- To find out if the businesses would be interested in joining a network association;
- To determine areas of focus for the business associations, and potential opportunities for them to pursue.

Helensville area businesses accounted for 49 percent of all responses.

KKK snowboarder in US Open

Kaukapakapa snowboarder Christy Prior has received an invitation to compete at the US\$ 250,000 Burton US Open semi finals in Vail, Colorado at the end of the month.

Now Christy, currently based at Breckenridge in Colorado, is hoping she recovers in time from a broken collarbone received late December when she misjudged a flip jump.

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New main road service station

Out with the old, and in with the new.

That's what's happened with Commercial Road service station owner Prem Chand, whose cramped and old fashioned petrol station has been totally rebuilt and enlarged under the Caltex brand.

Around \$1 million has been invested in the redevelopment and rebranding of the site, says Chevron New Zealand's policy, government & public affairs manager, Jeremy Clarke. Chevron operates the Caltex brand in New Zealand.

Work started on the rebuild project last November, and the station reopened on Christmas Eve - albeit in a slightly unfinished state.

Some branding and signage work was still to be completed, as was a concrete block wall for the gas bottle refilling area. That work was expected to be completed as Helensville News went to print at the end of January.

Locals will have seen the major works on the site develop, with the almost total demolition of the old Shell building.

The existing petrol storage tanks have been removed and replaced with new Chevron ones.

A sparkling new concrete forecourt is both longer and considerably wider, which combined with a higher and larger canopy means trucks can easily use the station. It's both easier to use and safer to access, says Jeremy.

New pumps have been installed, and they each now have a diesel nozzle which should further help prevent vehicle congestion on the site.

Drainage has been upgraded to manage storm water discharge, and the retail store has a new exterior and interior fit

out and new toilet facilities.

Rounding out the project is the latest Caltex imagery. The company's rebranding started less than two years ago, and Helensville is one of only about 30 sites from



• The new Commercial Road station lit up at night

more than 250 nationwide to get the new look.

The rebranding consists mainly of flat, rather than angled, panels on the forecourt canopy fascia, and a switch to LED lighting, which makes the forecourt brighter while being more energy efficient.

"Chevron has taken courage and shown commitment to work with us to bring this change into the community," says Prem.

An unusual feature of the new station will be a Repco-branded automotive section inside the shop; Helensville will be one of only a handful of Caltex stations nationwide with its own Repco store.

Staff have had to undergo a learning process for the new Caltex systems, especially the discount fuel offer. Instead of using supermarket discount dockets, all AA members and Smartfuel card holders will automatically receive a 6c per litre discount when they use their card at the station. AA members also receive discount amounts at a wide range of other shops and service outlets in New Zealand, and the discounts can be added up to make large fuel savings.

Caltex Helensville will be open seven days a week from 5:30am to 9pm in winter and 5:30am to 10pm in summer.

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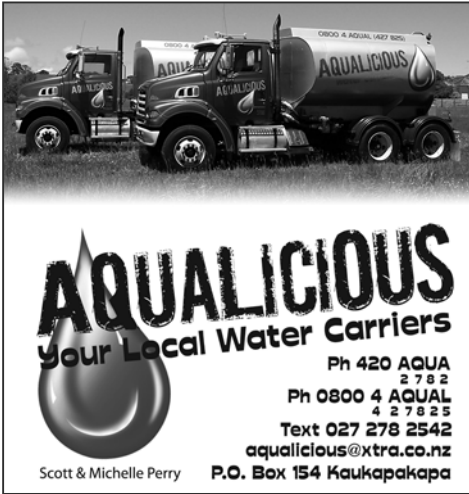
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• Mick with his 1969 Pontiac Firebird

American car buff Mick Smith, of Parakai, has spent the past four years painstakingly restoring his 1969 Pontiac Firebird convertible - replacing or renovating every single part of the classic car.

He had the car proudly on show as part of a display by the Villains Social Club at the Kumeu Hot Rod Show on January 19.

Mick founded the Villains about 10 years ago as a more relaxed, social alternative to existing, formally-organised car clubs. Starting with around a dozen American muscle car fans, the club now has about 30 members owning 40 to 50 cars between them.

And while Mick is known within club circles as 'Muv' - short for 'Most Ultimate Villain' - there is really nothing sinister about the club's name: it sprang from the fact the club was formed in 'The Ville'.

The club's motto - 'Buy American or Die' - shows the passion with which the members love their muscle cars.

Mick, quoting the famous Beach Boys

song, bought his Firebird "literally from a little old lady in Pasadena". The one owner Californian car had only travelled 36,000 miles from new.

Never-the-less, the car has been stripped down to every last nut and bolt, the body panels taken back to bare metal, and everything rebuilt to like-new condition. A few concessions have been made to modern use, such as electronic ignition and power-booster brakes, but otherwise the car is all original - right down to the metallic Vedoro Green paintwork and pearlescent white vinyl interior.

Mick's particular model Firebird was only made for a single year, and with only 11,000 produced is a fairly rare vehicle.

His next project is a similar, total rebuild of the 1966 Mustang convertible he bought for his wife, local physiotherapist Kath Long, at the same time as the Firebird.

This was the 19th year the hot rod show has been held at Kumeu, a two-day event which draws crowds of around 40,000

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World's largest water slides being set up in Helensville

Three gigantic water slides, billed as the largest in the world, are being set up in Helensville for a charity fundraiser over the weekend of February 23-24.

All proceeds from the two-day event, the first day of which coincides with the Helensville A&P Show, will go to the Live More Awesome charity, which was set up by Jimi Hunt and Daniel Drupsteen to raise awareness of the problems associated with depression and to create initiatives that help people overcome depression without drugs.

The event will be held on private land in Helensville, the location of which is currently a secret to protect the landowners.

Three slides will be excavated from the ground and lined with industrial plastic. Setup is expected to take a couple of weeks.

A large supply of water is available on the property.

The longest slide, at 650m twice as long as Auckland's Sky Tower is high, will careen down a large hill. The second, 90m slide will have a jump at the bottom to launch riders through the air into a pool. A third slide, described by the organisers as a 'grandma slip 'n' slide', will travel 60m down a gentle slope.



• Jimi Hunt (top) and Daniel Drupsteen

Charity co-founder Jimi Hunt doesn't believe the first day of the event will clash with the Helensville A&P Show.

"I think that it will make Helensville the place to be on the 23rd!" he says.

The weekend of slides will feature a range of other entertainment, including as yet un-named top New Zealand musical acts and DJs organised in conjunction with the George FM radio station, plus a 50m x 25m inflatable 'Soap Soccer' pitch from sponsor Skinny Mobile. Red Bull will be on hand, and there will be a wide range of food, drink and ice cream vendors.

The event will run from 11am to 7pm both days, and will be alcohol-free and restricted to those 16 and over.

Tickets will range in cost from \$45 for an entry-only ticket, with rides on the slides available for \$5 a time, or \$75 for a full-day pass with unlimited rides on all slides. Numbers are limited, and they are only available for purchase online at www.indiegogo.com/worldsbigg

estwaterslide. Tickets will not be sold on the day at the venue.

All ticket holders will receive a goody bag on entry.

Local groups get free trade stands at A&P Show

At the Helensville A&P Show on Saturday, February 23, six lucky local community groups have been given free trade spaces to get their message across to the public.

Local groups were asked last November to apply for the spaces, and the following were selected earlier this year as the successful recipients: the Helensville Citizen's Advice Bureau; the Community Patrol Car; Helensville Playcentre; Kaipara Netball; Parent Aid North West and Scouts Waitoru (Kaukapakapa Scouts).

Each group will have a 3m by 3m, unpowered trade stand located in the main trade area, near the Pony Club rides.

Show manager Marion Stutz says if the free stand initiative is successful, the A&P Association will look at repeating them next year. A full rundown on this year's show is on pages 8 and 9.

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Respect, dignity focus for

A focus on respect and dignity and a strong Christian ethos are the hallmarks of a new early learning centre that has just opened in Helensville.

Reach Forward Early Learn Centre has just opened its doors at the historic Kaipara House on the State Highway 16-Parkhurst Road roundabout.

Linda Ward and her husband Evan have spent almost a year converting the old homestead and its modern 'summer house' counterpart - both previously a private home and bed and breakfast - into stunning new facility for local pre-schoolers.

While they own a house in Albany, where the other branch of their business is located, they has been living since April last year in a converted shed at the back of the house while overseeing the conversion.

When Helensville News interviewed Linda they already had several children enrolled, even though the centre wasn't yet open. Ultimately it will cater for around 12 under-two-year-olds and about 30 over-tuos.

But that's not all she loves to do. Linda also has a passion for training teachers to be effective and gifted professionals.

While Reach Forward is Christian-based, Linda says they welcome children regardless of faith or church affiliation, pointing out her Albany centre has Hindu, Muslim, Jewish and non-religious children enrolled alongside Christian ones.

She says the centre's very structured programme and clear discipline combined with a very interesting education programme has proved popular with parents and children alike at the Albany branch.

Wandering around the new Helensville facility it's hard to imagine any child not enjoying themselves with the beautifully

equipped rooms, large outdoor play areas, and the summer house specially set up for under-tuos.

Reach Forward works within the national early childhood curriculum, Te Whariki, with a structured programme covering five core elements - Create, Create; Language Lab; Numeracy; Marvellous Music; and Super Science.

Advanced communication skills - listening, speaking, reading, writing and numeracy - are seen as vital. Linda says the programme is more structured than at a playcentre, but the children have plenty of freedom within the group, project and



• Linda Ward outside the under-two's 'summer house'

investigative work.

"We want children to be equipped with good manners," she says.

Initially the centre is employing three teachers - a Waitoki local who has just graduated with her Bachelor of Education degree; a mature mother of two; and a mother of two teenagers from Wellington who has more than 20 years teaching experience.

Linda hails from Auckland's East Coast Bays, but Evan, born in Hamilton, was raised in a remote river village in Borneo on the age of 10 to 20 by his missionary parents.

Linda knew from an early age she would be involved in teaching. For the first 11 years of her working life she taught primary school children both in New Zealand and overseas,

• To page 7



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new local childcare

• From page 6

followed by a further 11 years working in a church developing their children's enterprises. Those experiences led to becoming a business woman owning and running her own childcare centres.

Travel features high on Linda's goals in life. She has already travelled to more than 28 countries in Europe, Africa, America and Asia but she still longs to see more.

Along with Evan Linda supports many mission ventures, and daily disciplines such as bible reading and prayer, and the pleasure received from belonging to a local church, keep her life in balance.

Evan is the "practical work horse" at Reach Forward, his days full with maintenance work, building, carpentry and technology. His other passion is his own business 'EWA Audio Visual', an audio visual

company specialising in recording conferences and productions.

Linda chose Helensville for her second Reach Forward centre because the area is growing and there weren't too many other early childhood centres for the population.

"And the house is amazing - a perfect situation, very visible, good parking and wonderful grounds," she enthuses.

She describes Helensville as a "lovely community" and says she and Evan would love to live here full time. The Kaipara River is a particular draw for Evan, following his upbringing by a river in Borneo.

Linda says she has a "progressive vision" and that it would be great to add a new centre to the Reach Forward family about every three years - although at this stage, with her concentration on getting Helensville Reach Forward under way, there are no definite plans.

Major upgrade for kindy

River Valley Kindergarten in Fordyce Road, Parakai is undergoing a \$200,000 transformation.

The renovation and extension work includes relocating the administration office to the front of the building, adding a children's cloakroom, a resource storage room with Lundia mobile shelving, and a new office space for the teachers.

A large staff room is also being added, which will be available for community use as a whanau/family space.

It's the first major building renovation at the kindergarten since it opened in the early 1990s.

The \$200,000 project is being funded by the Northern Auckland Kindergarten Association, says a ssociation development manager Joanne Matthews, with support from the River Valley Kindergarten

committee.

"The committee have been fabulous and worked hard during 2012 fundraising towards the project," says Joanne.

Work on the project will continue into March, but the kindy opened for business as usual on January 29.

"Anyone wishing to make to donation towards the project is welcome to do so by visiting the kindergarten," adds Joanne.



• Builders from Q Construction work on the foundations for the extension



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New thrills at 111th A&P Show

The Helensville A&P Show may have reached the venerable age of 111, but it still has some exciting new tricks up its sleeve for this year - especially for the teenage set.

Mobile Laser Skirmish will be making its debut at the show and is sure to be a hit with anyone from about 8 years of age and up.

Being set up in the trade area, it's a high-tech cross between paintball and indoor laser strike games.

Participants carry a 'laser' gun - which doesn't actually use a laser at all, but rather an infrared emitter similar to those used in most remote controls - to tag other participants in various battlefield scenarios.

The tagging guns use an infrared light to emit a coded signal, which is picked up by three sensors worn on the head and the sensor of the competitor's tagger. The information goes through an on-board computer to register a hit. The tagger says "ouch" and the 4 sensors flash to indicate when a player is hit, and a 'life' is deducted.

The tagger guns, accurate up to 200m, emit both sci-fi noises and a range of real military sounds. Every time a player shoots, reloads, gets hit or deactivates the tagger, it speaks to them.

Also new at the show, being held at the Helensville Showgrounds on Saturday, February 23, will be the Zipline Flying Fox. Organisers had planned to have it at last year's show but it was unavailable at the

time.

It will be one of the highlights of the Cookie Bear Roadshow, which will also feature a large edge slide (for older children), a 'Skate Board' slide (for the smaller children), mini hot rods, a ferris wheel, pirate ship, boot camp obstacle course and laughing clowns.

One of the biggest crowd-pleasers from the past couple of shows, 'Grand Sheepchase' sheep racing, will be back again, and show visitors will be able to 'bet' on the outcome of races featuring sheep being ridden by soft-toy horse 'jockeys'.

Also returning from last year will be the popular 'Water Walkers' Zorbs, in which locals will be able to run, roll, flip and spin on a 100sq.m pool with out getting wet.

For adults, one of the most notable changes this year will be to the bar area. For the first time this will be run by Party Hoppers, who will be bringing one of their mobile bars in the shape of a gigantic beer can and stocking it with discounted liquor from show sponsor Parakai Liquor.

Relish the Taste is now a permanent fixture at the show, providing locals with a mini 'expo' showcasing locally produced food and wine.



• Wood chopping is always a popular A&P Show attraction

Entertainment on the main stage will include popular band The Groove Diggers.

More excitement for children will come in the form of the Tribal Fire Stilt Walkers, who will be wandering the Show grounds during the day, the return of popular Carmel's face painting, and the McDonald's Travelling Farmyard, where children can touch and feed sheep, pigs and goats.

There will be Clydesdale cart rides around the grounds, and pony rides for the children.

Ever-popular attractions for both young and old will include highland dancing

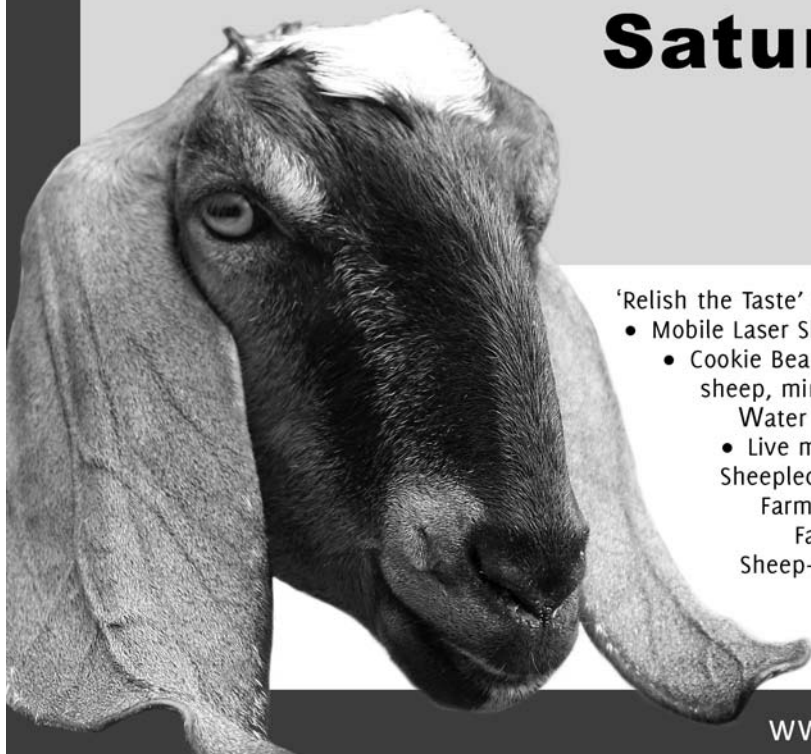
• To page 12

HELENSVILLE A&P SHOW

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'Relish the Taste' - food & wine from our area

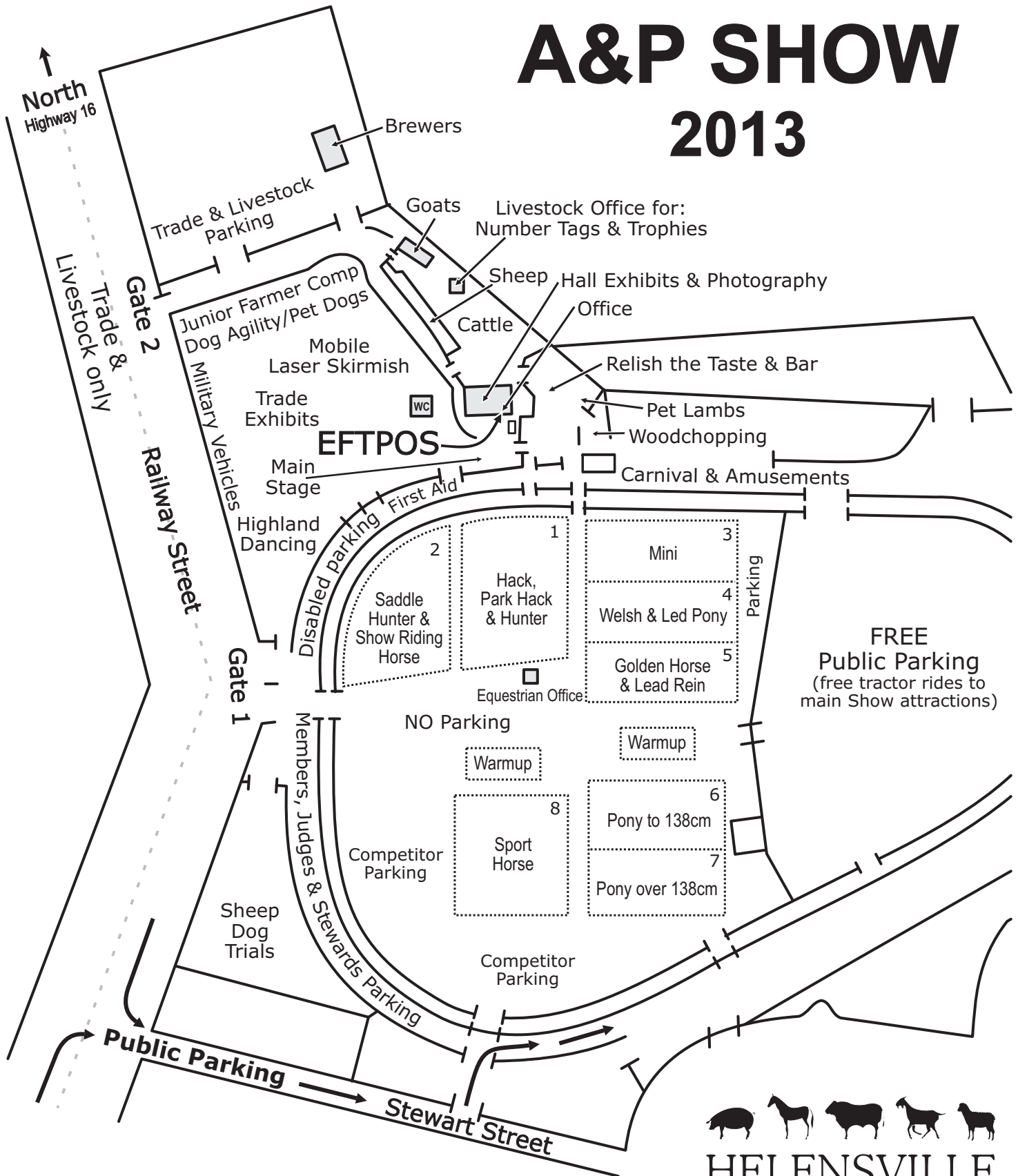
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St John opening Op Shop

Helensville St John is opening an Op Shop at 90 Commercial Road, opposite the Kaipara Medical Centre.

The shop will open in a few weeks' time, in the former Healing Heart of Helensville building. The premises first need to be painted and fitted out, and will feature official St John signage.

Once initial set up costs have been recouped, all profits from the shop will be used locally, providing, among other things, support for the local cadet units in Helensville and Kumeu, purchase of additional equipment, and possibly in the longer term paying for things like extra manpower at the Helensville station.

The Helensville Op Shop will also be a 'one stop shop' for all things relating to St John services, such as LifeLink alarms, booking staff for events and first aid courses.

To help the shop get underway, the Helensville St John area committee is calling on locals to lend a hand in one of three ways:

- Donations of time or materials to help with the initial shop setup;
- Volunteers to work in the shop once it is open, either on the till or sorting donations;
- Donations of goods for sale in the shop.

Phone committee secretary Nancy Head on 420 7200 if you can help. She can also advise on the arrangements for donated goods prior to the opening; goods won't be able to be accepted at the Commercial Road shop before it opens.

Waioneke School golf tournament

Waioneke School holds its annual fund raising golf tournament on Friday, April 5 at South Head Golf Course. As well as playing golf, teams can compete in putting, longest drive and closest to the pin challenges. There will be prizes for the best dressed-up team and the best 'pimped' trundler or cart, plus spot prizes.

The cost for a team of four is \$280, and businesses can sponsor holes on the course for \$200. Contact organiser Anne Holst on 420 2505, mobile 0274 439 474 or email a.holst@clear.net.nz.

Applications now open for community arts funding

Auckland Council Creative Communities Scheme

Are you working on a community arts project and looking for funding?

Auckland Council invites applications for funding under the Creative Communities Scheme.

The Creative Communities Scheme supports projects that promote diversity, engage young people in the arts or create opportunities for local communities to participate in the arts.

Applications close Friday 5pm, 22 February 2013.

Need help applying?

To find out if your project qualifies and for application assistance attend one of our information sessions.

For a guide and a list of information sessions in your local area please visit www.aucklandcouncil.govt.nz/funding or phone 09 301 0101.



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Kids fish up a storm on Kaipara

Few things beat the thrill of catching your first fish, as Allan Green (right) of Helensville found out in early January when he took part in the Kaipara Cruising Club's annual children's fishing competition.

Allan's pictured here with his catch aboard the Serene, on which he, his father and several other families spent the day.

Sixty local children aged from just four years up to 16 took part in the competition, catching good numbers of snapper, kahawai, gurnard and trevally.

The child with the best catch in each category won a fishing rod and reel, with the second and third place getters receiving well-equipped tackle boxes.

In all \$1200 worth of prizes were given out, including a spot prize to every entrant. Prize money for the event was raised through the club's regular Friday raffle.

Kaipara Cruising Club held its annual regatta at Shelly Beach on Saturday, February 2.

There were 13 races for both runabouts and launches, using a handicap system so all boats competed on an equal basis.

The club's annual fishing competition is on Saturday, March 9.



A&P Show continued

• From page 8

competitions, sheepdog trials, and wood chopping with the Puhoi Woodchoppers back in action on the 23rd.

A regular feature at the show in recent years have been beautifully coloured and decorated cardboard-cutout works of art by local school children; this year look out for some colourful ponies on display.

Being a true agricultural and pastoral show, the 2013 Helensville Show will do what it does best, highlighting the farming aspect of our community through displays and competitions of animals, including cattle, sheep, miniature donkeys, horses, poultry and working dogs. Many of the 150-plus trade stands will be farming-themed, plus there will again be a Young Farmer competition for local school children.

Other regular features will include butter making and photography displays by Historical Society members, demonstrations by Brightside Spinners, and the River Valley Amateur Winemakers & Brewers Guild annual display and competition.

The layout of the show layout will be mostly the same as last year.

As usual there will be free tractor rides from the public carpark, accessed through Stewart Street, and an EFTPOS cash out facility will be available at the show office.

Entry to the show is by cash only - EFTPOS will not be available at the gate. Entry: adults \$10, school children \$5, pre-schoolers free, family pass (two adults and up to four children) \$25.

Prime Minister and local MP John Key will be at the show from 10am to midday and will perform the official opening.

Show visitors may also like to keep a look out for the Topp Twins, who will be wandering around the grounds during the day, meeting locals as part of a possible future television programme.

Show manager Marion Stutz thanks the show's sponsors and supporters for helping make what will be a fun-filled day for local families - and the many 'townies' who make a special trip to our town for what is the largest one-day A&P Show in the Northern District.

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'Post office' opens at museum

The Helensville and District Historical Society has opened a new 'post office' in the old courthouse building at the museum in Mill Rd.

The room was put together representing features of both former Helensville and Kaukapakapa post offices.

Work on the room was done by a team of Historical Society workers, aided by a donation from Ken and Lois Pavish. Ken used to be a P&T (postal and telegraph) worker in Helensville, and Lois was called on to perform the official opening in front of a crowd of about 50.

Several people spoke at the opening, recalling stories from the early days of both Helensville and Kaukapakapa post offices, and the days when up to eight locals shared a single 'party' telephone line.

Julie Coleville described how "in days gone by [the post office] was the most important building in town."

The post office is located in the room to the left of the courthouse entrance, facing the current archives room.

Once the new archives building is finished, society president John Smith says the old archives room will be converted into a replica of an old chemist shop.



• Lois Pavish cuts the ribbon to open the Post Office

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A part-time course in Organic Horticulture, offered by Agriculture New Zealand is scheduled to start in February 2013. This course explores the latest trends in sustainable farming both internationally and in New Zealand. "The overall aim", says tutor Micky Cunningham, "is to build ecosystems, promote biodiversity, increase soil and plant health, and avoid the use of artificial fertilisers and sprays."

A science-based approach is used to separate myth from fact, while exploring a wide range of organic techniques and systems. Topics covered include organic principles and philosophies, certification, soil management, soil food-webs, composting, companion planting, crop rotation, green manures, organic weed, pest and disease management, plant knowledge and an introduction to permaculture.

This knowledge can be applied not only to food crops, but in the cultivation of any plants - from suburban gardens to pastures, orchards, shelterbelts or woodlots. This course will therefore appeal to growers, farmers, orchardists, lifestyle-block owners, and gardening enthusiasts of all ages. Organic philosophies also embrace principles of kaitiakitanga, which may interest Tangata whenua involved with land management.

The course is based on NZQA unit standards. In addition to attending tutorials, workshops or fieldtrips once a week, students will need to complete practical and theory

assignments in their own time. Having some prior knowledge of horticulture and growing plants is recommended, although keen beginners are invited to apply.



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Summer sun captured in a jar

When we grow fruit and vegetables and store them away as preserved sauces and pickles we are in fact storing the energy from the sun. During the summer the trees and vegetables have happily rolled out their leaf shaped solar panels, soaked up the sun then used the energy to convert starches into edible plant matter. That energy stays ready for action until we open the jar and consume the goods inside.

At home there are several foods that we store every year - tomatoes being the main crop which we turn into jars of pasta sauce. We also collect tomatillas and preserve them, not to mention the bottled fruit and the winter stored vegetables such as squash, potatoes, and garlic.

This year we have added blue corn to our storing crops; this we will dry then grind into meal to make tortillas. Borlotti beans - these beautiful beans grow on small bushes and create lovely red and white bean pods, they dry easily on the plant and store happily, podded, in a jar in the pantry. In the middle of winter they are delightful when casseroled with meats or with squash and sweet potato.

We grow mainly Roma tomatoes because they are great fresh eating tomatoes and they cook into bright thick sauces. They also produce a lot of fruit and as long as they're given enough space, they are reasonably resistant to disease.

Next year I hope to have a new strain of Roma tomatoes as a friend of mine has recently told me about her grandmother growing Romas as well. However, her tomatoes come from seeds that were bought back from Italy at the end of the war by a distant cousin. She has grown them every year since 1946 by keeping her own seeds for the following year! I am in the queue for a tomato or two so that I can save the seeds for next year myself.

■ Basic tomato sauce for pasta

- 2 medium onions diced
- 8 cloves of garlic, crushed
- 4 table spoons of oil
- 1 table spoon of capers
- 1 teaspoon mixed herbs
- 4 table spoons cider or white wine vinegar
- 3 table spoons raw sugar
- salt and pepper to taste
- 2-3 kgs of ripe tomatoes. (halved)
- Approx 1 cup water, add more during cooking if needed



Set a large pot onto a medium heat and add the oil, onions, garlic and capers. Sauté for 2 minutes.

Add the sugar, vinegar and herbs, stir into the onions and cook for another minute.

Add the tomatoes and the water and bring to the boil.

Allow to simmer for 20 minutes stirring occasionally. Using tongs, pick out the tomato skins as they come to the surface and discard.

Cook for at least an hour then adjust the taste with salt and pepper.

At this stage you can add other flavours such as fresh chopped basil leaves, roasted garlic cloves, fresh oregano, olives etc.

Sterilise jars and lids by first washing and then placing into a 120 degree oven for 10 minutes. Carefully add the boiling hot tomato sauce to the jars and seal immediately.

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■ RUNNING OF THE ROSES

The Helensville Lions Club's annual Running of the Roses fundraiser is on Sunday, February 10 at the Riverside Reserve in Mill Road. The Running of the Roses will take place on the Kaipara River, where roses will be released around 1.30pm, depending on the tide. The first five roses retrieved at the finish line will win major prizes including a trip for two to Wellington with two nights accommodation; a 32" LCD television; a mobile phone account; and a one night stay at Sky City.

The event starts at 10am with market stalls, a sausage sizzle, live music, children's activities, and entertainment. A fun run will begin at 11.30am from Springs Road in Parakai. The day's activities will finish at 3pm.

Roses to enter cost \$5 and can be purchased from participating retailers in Helensville. All proceeds go to local charities and community organisations.

For more information phone Matt Hampton on 027 221 3226 or Pauline O'Neill on 420 6208.

■ HELENSVILLE AGLOW

The next meeting of Helensville Aglow is on Friday, February 15 at 7.30pm at the Lions Lounge, Rautawhiri Park, Helensville. The speaker will be Judy Marshall, who helps her husband pastor a church in West Auckland. She will share an amazing testimony of God turning her life around; she had led a life similar to those depicted in the film 'Once Were Warriors'. Enquiries to Marilyn Gray, phone 420 4346.

■ KAUKAPAKAPA MARKET

The next Kaukapakapa Village Market is on Sunday, February 17. There will be more than 40 stalls, the Lions sausage sizzle, raffles and live music. For stall holder bookings and enquiries contact Sarah on sarah1@maxnet.co.nz, phone 0274 831 542 or Kim, phone 09 425 6023.

■ JUNIOR RUGBY REGISTRATION

Helensville Rugby Club will be taking registrations for the coming season at its stand at the Helensville A&P Show on Saturday, February 23, and at the clubrooms at Rautawhiri Park on Wednesday, February 27 from 4pm to 6pm.

Junior rugby season fees are \$60 per child which includes a mouthguard and team photo. Eftpos is available. All paid registrations on those two days go into prize draws.

The club will also hold an open day on Sunday, March 3 from 10am to 2pm; it's suggested participants bring a towel and change of clothes.

For further information phone Roxanne Mulvaney on 420 4458.

■ CHILDREN'S DAY OUT

The Helensville Women & Family Centre's annual Children's Day Out is on

Sunday, March 3, from 10am to 2pm at the Helensville War Memorial Hall. The free event is held in conjunction with National Children's Day celebrations promoting key positive messages. For children up to 12 years old and their families, activities will include face painting, cookie decorating, arts and crafts, nail painting, Zumba, Mainly Music as well as bouncy castles and food stalls. There will be free raffles, spot prizes and competitions. For more information email: Mihi Shaw, mihi@hwfc.co.nz.

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Editorial Enquiries, Letters to the Editor and Advertising:

Dave Addison - Ph: 420 7215 • Mobile: 021 178 5568 • Email: dave@helensvillenews.co.nz

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