

MATARANGI BEACH PAPER

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MBP192
FEBRUARY 2026



MRRAI AGM has Strong Turnout

Around 120 people attended the Matarangi Ratepayers and Residents Association Inc (MRRAI) Annual General Meeting on 9 January 2026 at The Dunes Golf Club, highlighting strong community interest in local issues and future planning.

Chair Mark Bedford welcomed members and guests, including newly elected Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) councillors Tony Bjillivich and Flemming Rasmussen. Apologies were received from Mayor Peter Revell, Deputy Mayor John Grant, and Community Board members Richard Shelford-Woodcock and Kim Abrahamson, who were unable to attend due to SH25 road closures.

In his Chair's Report, Mark Bedford thanked members for their ongoing support, noting MRRAI membership sits at around 375. He encouraged non-member ratepayers and permanent residents to join, saying subscriptions allow the Association to advocate effectively and support community initiatives.

Bedford acknowledged changes following the recent local body elections and thanked outgoing councillors Deli Connell and Rekha Giri-Percival for their support. He said MRRAI looked forward to continuing a constructive working relationship with councillors, the Community Board, Mayor and council staff over the next three-year term. Key issues facing Matarangi were outlined, including inequities in potable water charges between metered and non-metered properties, potable water supply and storage, wastewater treatment, and ongoing stormwater challenges.

The Association's close collaboration with the Matarangi Community Trust

was highlighted, including joint funding of security cameras at the Matarangi entrance and Village Green, and work on the Bluff Road Connectivity (BRC) Project feasibility study.

Mark Bedford said the BRC project had reached a critical stage, with all technical reports now completed. Although much of the work to date had taken place behind the scenes, he acknowledged the efforts of a small working group involving MRRAI, KRRRA, MCT, TCDC, Ngāti Hei, Ngāti Huarere and DCC Structures Studio. The group will now assess whether the project can proceed, with a strong focus on funding implications.

Speaking at the meeting, Councillor Flemming Rasmussen said that while Council supported the suspension bridge option in principle, significant pressure on TCDC's budget from other infrastructure demands meant it would be very difficult for Council to provide meaningful financial support. He said that, if the project were to go ahead, the cost would likely need to be met largely through fundraising by the Matarangi and Kuaotunu communities themselves.

Mark Bedford noted that the existing Bluff Road track, while officially closed, remains dangerous and continues to be used. He said that if the project does not proceed, full closure of the track may be required — an outcome he believed would not serve either community.

(Continued on Page 3)

Featured: The MRRAI Committee for 2026 with Mercury Bay Ward Councillors

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CONTACTS & DEADLINES

This is your community paper. We welcome all your stories, photos, messages and contributions.

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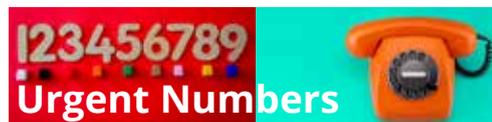
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CONTRIBUTORS:

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MRRAI 2026 AGM Continued

Mr Bedford thanked MRRAI committee members for their volunteer work and encouraged others to consider joining the committee to ensure continuity and succession. He also thanked The Dunes Golf Club for its ongoing support.

In the Treasurer's Report, Jenny Carin outlined major expenditure for the year, including \$7,100 for Village Green security cameras, with ongoing monitoring costs of \$1,080 annually, \$10,750 for the Bluff Road feasibility study, \$3,450 for the MRRAI website rebuild, and community donations including \$1,065 raised for the Threadgold family following a house fire and \$1,500 contributed to the Taste of Matarangi event.

During the Q&A session, Wayne Davis raised concerns on behalf of the fishing club about consultation over the Omara Reserve boat ramp and parking layout. Committee member Tadek Gawor responded that consultation had been adequate and noted the reserve had been gifted to council for wider community benefit.

Maintenance concerns about the harbourside walking track on the spit were also raised, with MRRAI confirming the matter would be followed up with council staff.

Erosion at the Omara Spit was discussed, with Gavin Walker, representing the Matarangi Golf Course owners group, saying erosion had destroyed sections of the public walking track and was now affecting golf course land. Drone surveys are underway to better understand the issue and inform possible mitigation.

The meeting concluded with thanks to attendees and a commitment to keep the community informed as key issues progress.





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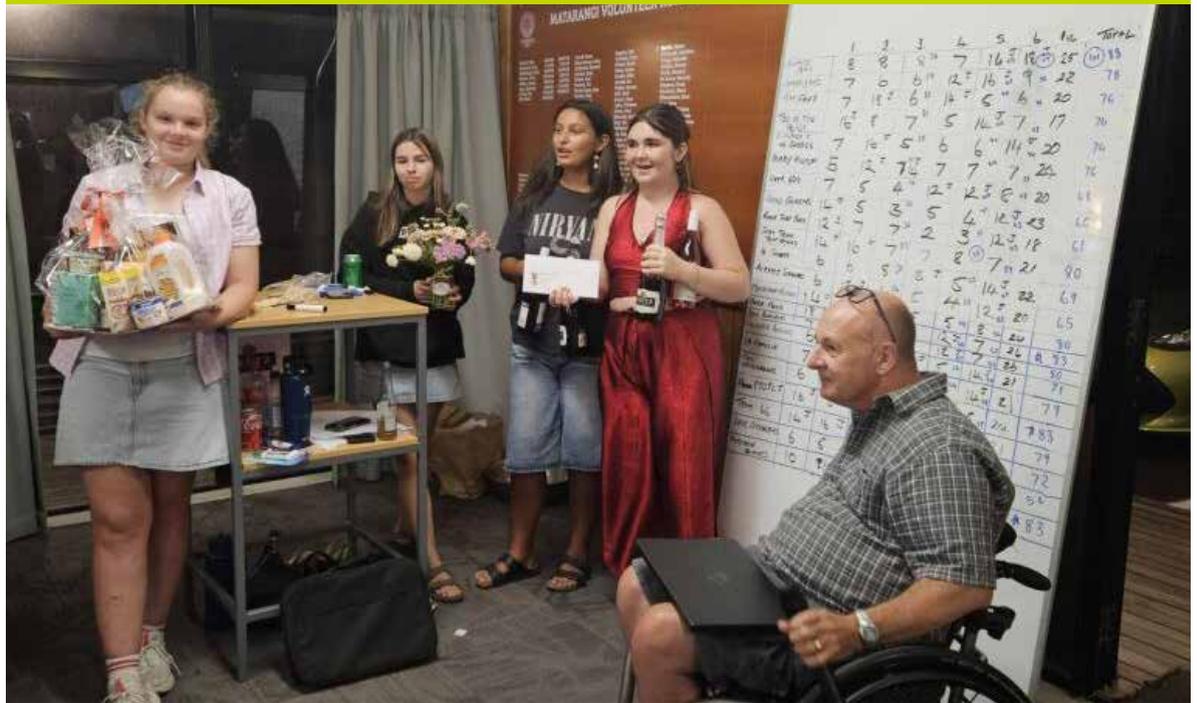
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Four Local Girls Selected for the MBAS 2026 Japan Study Tour.



Four of our local girls - Abby, Lucy, Zoe and Ivy - have been selected for the MBAS 2026 Japan Study Tour.

All have been studying Japanese, and this once in a lifetime trip will build their language skills, independence, and confidence as they step outside their comfort zones, experience another culture, and make new lifelong friends whilst representing our little slice of paradise on the international stage.

The trip is packed with unforgettable experiences. They land in Tokyo; a city of more than 14 million people where ultra-modern life sits alongside deep tradition - a culture shock for anyone coming from Matarangi! Highlights include Shinjuku - the neon-lit major hub, the futuristic Odaiba Island, Tokyo Tower, Sensoji Temple - Tokyo's oldest temple established in 628bc, the Edo Tokyo Museum, experiencing the immersive digital art at TeamLab Borderless, shopping in Shibuya, and a fun day at Tokyo DisneySea.

From Tokyo they'll travel by bullet train (Shinkansen), reaching speeds of up to 320km/h, to Hiroshima to visit Miyajima Island, the Hiroshima Peace Memorial and Museum, and Hiroshima Castle. The journey continues to Gujo Hachiman, a beautiful 16th-century riverside town, where the girls will stay with host families for four days and take part in school visits, tea ceremony, calligraphy, folk dancing and exploring the town which is the birthplace of the Japanese food replicas used throughout Japan in restaurants. They'll also visit the historic towns of Takayama with its preserved historic Samurai district, and Shirakawa-go, a

UNESCO World Heritage site famous for its traditional thatched farmhouses.

To help fund this incredible opportunity, the girls have been working hard with summer jobs, running market stalls, and organizing a Curry and Quiz night during Matarangi Summer Festival. The quiz was a buzzy night bringing the community supporting a great cause, run by our fiendish quiz master Andy Corles. The girls sold raffles, talked to everyone, handed out some wonderful prizes and auctions kindly donated by our amazing local sponsors ... and of course mucked in to clean up afterwards! The Surprise Peas were the winners on the night, romping home in the last 2 rounds - they were thrilled (and surprised), taking a photo of the scoreboard as evidence as their kids would never believe it otherwise! With donations, auctions, and raffles the evening raised around \$7.5k towards their \$26k goal. A huge thank you to Matarangi and surrounds - your support means the world and truly shows what an amazing community we are!! Dōmo arigatō gozaimasu!

We would like to thank our sponsors who have donated either product or time, or both: Castle Rock Fine Foods, Driving Creek, Matarangi Homes, 4 Square Matarangi, Lake Resort Pauanui, Glass Bottom Boat, Whangapoua Store, Gorse Farm Flowers, The Dunes, Marina Park apartments, Puke and Kerre Liquor, Lyn Dawbin, Chrissie Threadgold, Andy Corles, Ann Dixon, Doug Bloxham, and a private donor.

Report and Photo by Jane McLean

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Seagull Centre Spreads Its Wings to Matarangi

The Seagull Centre has officially expanded its footprint to Matarangi, bringing its well-known focus on reuse, sustainability and community engagement to the popular coastal settlement.

Originally established in Thames in 2006, the Seagull Centre has grown into an iconic destination for locals and visitors, diverting thousands of tonnes of reusable and hard-to-recycle items from landfill. Its Thames site, located next to the transfer station, remains the organisation's head office and features a large reuse shop, public drop-off bay, education space, a detailed sorting and pricing operation, and its latest innovation using Black Soldier Flies to reduce waste even further.

The decision to establish a drop-off bay at Matarangi reflects the community's strong environmental values and seasonal population growth.

"Matarangi was a really exciting opportunity for us," said Lucci Scott, Sustainability Coordinator at the Seagull Centre. "There's a clear commitment here to doing the right thing with unwanted goods, and we knew a local drop-off option would make it even easier for people to choose reuse over landfill."

The Matarangi site builds on momentum created in 2023, when the Seagull Centre opened additional drop-off bays in Pauanui and Tairua, both located at their local transfer stations. Together, these sites have significantly increased

the volume of good-quality items being diverted from landfill across the eastern Coromandel.

"Every new location helps us keep valuable resources circulating within the community," Scott said. "What might be unwanted by one household can be exactly what another family needs."

Beyond waste diversion, the Seagull Centre prides itself on delivering real community benefits, including providing paid employment for locals, investing in staff training and development, and supporting grassroots initiatives through its annual Community Grants programme.

"Sustainability isn't just about materials — it's about people," Scott said. "We're really proud to create meaningful local jobs and to support community-led projects that make a difference."

Residents are encouraged to talk to the Seagull Centre team before discarding items. Quality goods such as indoor and outdoor furniture, bric-a-brac, electronics, whiteware, building materials, lawnmowers, paint and tools can often be reused or responsibly recycled instead of ending up in landfill.

For more information, visit www.seagullcentre.co.nz or follow the Seagull Centre on social media at @The Seagull Centre.

Where in the WORLD is the Matarangi Beach Paper?



Even Mt Myoko's famous powder couldn't distract Matarangi men Mark Deutsch and Peter Hazael from catching up on the MBP, taking time out from the slopes at Myoko Kogen, Japan, to stay in touch with home.

The Matarangi Fire Report

In the last few years, we have become more of an emergency response brigade than a traditional fire brigade.

Out of 19 call-outs, only one was fire-related—a flare-up from a controlled burn. We managed two landing zones: one for the Coro Classic and another assisting Kuaotunu while they were isolated by a slip.

Operations included one police assist for traffic management of an abandoned car on the causeway, along with 11 medical calls ranging from minor to severe.

Additionally, we responded to three flooding events during record-breaking rainfall. This wasn't a cyclone, but an 'atmospheric river' that dumped 340mm of rain—surpassing the 290mm we saw during Cyclone Gabrielle three years ago.

As the drenched crew can attest, relief only came once the high tide ebbed at 9:55 pm. The key difference this time was the lack of preceding events like Cyclone Hale or other major downpours.

We have an amazing crew ready for whatever comes our way. To reflect what we truly do, we should probably be renamed 'Emergency NZ.' Just saying.

Mark Hall
Chief Brigade Officer
Matarangi Emergency Brigade, NZ



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The School Bell

I am delighted to be back in my role as principal of Te Rerenga School for the start of the new school year and look forward to a successful 2026 for all our learners. I feel really honoured that I was awarded a Primary Principals' Sabbatical which I took in Term 4. This enabled me to have the time to reflect, rejuvenate and undertake some professional learning. My research project investigated what supported a Principal's (Tumuaki) Wellbeing (Hauora) during traumatic events such as loss, pandemic and natural disasters in a rural isolated school in Aotearoa New Zealand. This will now be shared with the Board of Trustees and wider professional community.

A huge thanks must go to the Board and the wonderful staff of Te Rerenga School for supporting this sabbatical and keeping the school moving forward while I was away. Special thanks to Odette Wilson (Associate Principal Senior School) who ably stepped up and acted as principal in my absence and Shelley Corles (Associate Principal, Junior School) who supported Odette in her role.

Our teaching organisation for 2026 is as follows:-

Ruma Moana - New Entrants - Shelley Corles
Ruma Whanga - Year 2 - Fiona Watts
Ruma Awa - Year 3 - Darrell Adshead
Ruma Wairere - Year 4/5 - Jen Commins
Ruma Maunga - Year 6/7 - Odette Wilson
Ruma Rangī - Year 7/8 - Kristin Street & Susan Vause
Learning Support Coordinator - Vicki Devoy
Special Needs and Classroom Release Teacher- Vicky Biltcliff
Music and Classroom Release Teacher - Maria Dove
Te Reo Māori and Classroom Release Teacher - Debby Clark

Ma te huruhuru ka rere te manu
Adorn the bird with feathers to enable it to fly.

Mary Kedzlie Principal

Congratulations Corner

Congratulations to the following Te Rerenga School Students who were the trophy winners at the End of Year 2025 School Prizegiving.

Wendy Denize Excellence in The Arts Award - Hannah Kim-Treang
George Paul Memorial Trophy for Courage - Ava Redfern
Originality Trophy - Mekhi Follas
Swanson Cup for Academic Excellence - Charlie Bay
Anna Yates Leadership Trophy - Hannah Kim-Treang
School Values Award - The Anna Yates Respect and Kindness Trophy - Ava Redfern
Kapa Haka Leadership Award - Charlie Bay
Principal's Cup for Diligence - Charlie Bay
Sporting Excellence Cup - Ella Adlam

THE FISHING REPORT

Matarangi Boat & Fishing Club

As we all know that the weather hasn't been the greatest lately – so roll on February.

Our Small Fry competition was held on 5th January. This event was a hit amongst our junior anglers. Spot prizes, fishing rods, sausage sizzle, ice blocks and lots of fun fishing on the wharf. The book Hooked – Learning To Fish, by Al Brown given out to the winners we well received. It's chocker full of info for our up-and-coming anglers.

Upcoming Events & Tournaments

- NZSFC Nationals 2026: Running from the 21st to the 28th of February. This event is open to all financial Club Members.
- Doris Day Ladies Day Out: Mark your calendars for Saturday, 14th March. Registrations open online on the 12th of February. Dress up theme is "H". Going back to the good old days with prizegiving and a shared meal at the fire station.

New Junior Trophies

We are excited to announce two new Junior Trophies for Catch & Release:

- Hull Family Trophy – Longest Snapper
- Hull Family Trophy – Longest Kingfish

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Nationals 2026, Doris Day Ladies Day out and Junior Trophies are now live on our website www.mbfco.co.nz under Upcoming Events.

We couldn't run these events without our sponsors. We thank you all for your generosity and continued support of the club and making each competition bigger and better. A big shout out to our club members. We value your support.

You can keep up to date with news on our website www.mbfco.co.nz, Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/matarangiboatandfishingclub> and Instagram <https://www.instagram.com/matarangi.boat.fishing.club/>

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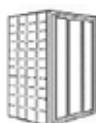
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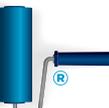
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Our Coromandel

News from Thames-Coromandel District Council

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DISTRICT COUNCIL

February 2026



Council workshops made public

Council workshops will now be open to the public to promote greater transparency.

Previously, these non-decision-making workshops for briefings or exploring issues have been closed to members of the public.



Workshop dates and topics will now be published in advance on our website so that people can attend in-person or online. Notes of what was discussed will be published online afterwards.

Check out our 2026 Council and Community Board meetings at tcdc.govt.nz/meetings



What's happening over Waitangi weekend?



KERBSIDE COLLECTIONS AND TRANSFER STATIONS

For year-round kerbside collection calendars, including summer peak collection dates that run until Waitangi week, check your local schedule at tcdc.govt.nz/bindays or pick up a hard copy at your local Council office.

Our seven refuse and recycling transfer stations are open daily over summer from 8.30am-5.30pm, including Waitangi Day. tcdc.govt.nz/rts



OFFICES | DISTRICT LIBRARIES

Our offices (including AA services) and district libraries will be closed on Waitangi Day, Friday 6 February. You can still reach us 24/7 at 07 868 0200 or customer.services@tcdc.govt.nz



DOG RESTRICTIONS

Many of our beaches have summer restrictions on dogs. Look out for Council's traffic light signage and check the rules in your area at tcdc.govt.nz/dogownerguide



ALCOHOL BANS

Alcohol bans are in place over the Waitangi long weekend. Check out tcdc.govt.nz/alcoholcontrol

Check out our Summer Tips and Info

tcdc.govt.nz/summerinfo

Whitianga pontoon upgrade plans progress

Resource consent has been granted to replace the pontoon at Whitianga



Wharf. Our Council is now seeking a suitable contractor to carry out the work, which is expected to take place - mostly off-site - about June.

Our Council is working with Whitianga Ferry to arrange a temporary berth to main transport links during construction.

Find out more at tcdc.govt.nz/whitiangapontoon

NEWS IN BRIEF

WATER DELIVERY PLAN



Council has approved an updated operating expenditure budget of \$234,000 for the 2025/26 year to help implement our Water Services Delivery Plan under the Local Water Done Well reform. This is \$400,000 less than the initial forecast for going into partnership with nearby councils.

We're progressing an internal business unit to deliver our future water services while continuing to explore partnership opportunities with Tauranga City Council and Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

EVERY DROP COUNTS



Over summer we're asking you to be careful with water use - particularly outside with sprinklers, paddling pools or hoses. Drier weather and more visitors put more pressure on our water supply systems. Keep an eye on our Facebook page for any water restrictions and check out water conservation tips at tcdc.govt.nz/savewater

FIRE RESTRICTIONS



A reminder that we're in a restricted fire season. This means a fire permit is required for any open-air fires across the district. Private fireworks are also banned. Check if it's allowed and apply for a permit at checkitsalright.nz or call 0800 658 628.



tcdc.govt.nz/coromandeltrails

Rediscover the beauty of the Coromandel Peninsula on foot, by bike or with a four-legged friend. Our brand new digital guide makes outdoor adventures easy. Explore the Coromandel through interactive maps grouped by area, or by your choice of sole or journey type.



tcdc.govt.nz/coromandeltrails

OUR NEXT MERCURY BAY COMMUNITY BOARD MEETING WILL BE AT 10AM WEDNESDAY 4 FEBRUARY AT THE MERCURY BAY SERVICE CENTRE 10 MONK ST, WHITIANGA.

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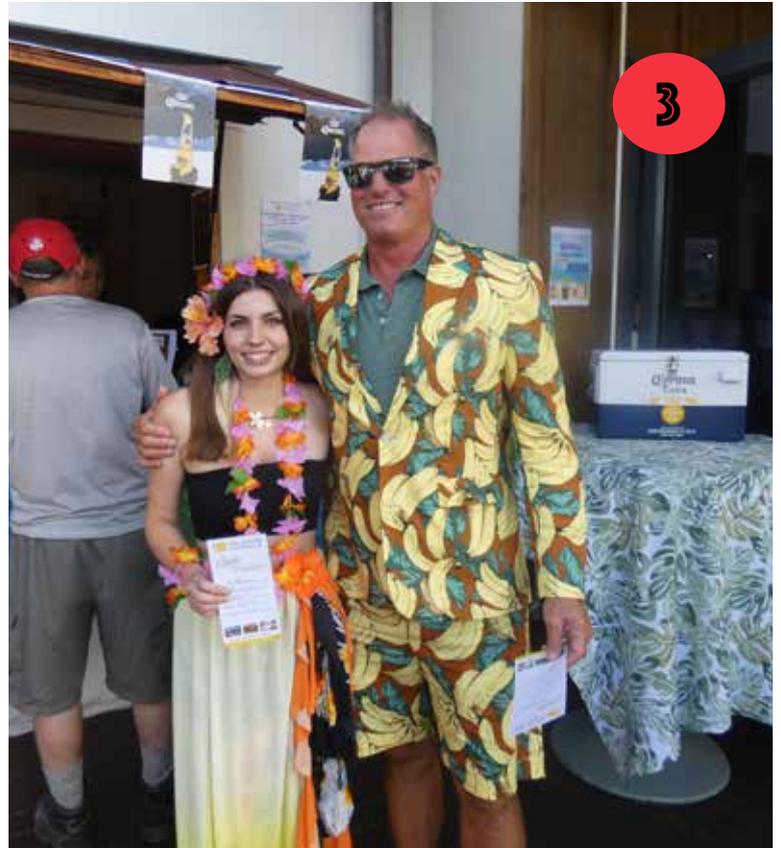
OUT AND ABOUT



1



2



3

1. Robbie Lendrum giving his little sister Katie a few putting tips at the Kids Mini Putt Challenge held last week at The Dunes. 2. Great prizes were up for grabs at the Kids Small Fry Fishing Contest held at the Matarangi jetty. 3. The King and Queen of the Corona Beach Party held at the Dunes were Best Dressed Female - Cailee Dollard and Best Dressed Male - Charlie Chilwell.



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A Tough Week on the Coast — and a Huge Thank You

Our recent wild weather tested communities right across Matarangi, Kuaotunu, Whangapoua and the Opito Peninsula, with heavy rain, flooding and slips turning an ordinary summer week into an

anxious one for many locals.

Around Matarangi, water pooled in familiar trouble spots and the water supply came under pressure. Slips and washouts cut access to Kuaotunu, Whangapoua and Opito, leaving some residents temporarily isolated and making travel difficult for days. With roads closed and conditions changing quickly, many of us were glued to updates and checking in on neighbours.

Our local fire brigades — Matarangi, Kuaotunu and Whangapoua — were right on the job, responding in tough conditions, helping manage hazards, checking properties and supporting wider emergency efforts. Their local knowledge

and willingness to step up made a real difference during a challenging few days.

Alongside them, Police, St John, Civil Defence, council crews, iwi and volunteers worked long hours to keep people safe and informed. Many residents saw that effort firsthand — from emergency vehicles on our roads to door knocks and timely updates when they mattered most.

A heartfelt thank you to the Matarangi, Kuaotunu and Whangapoua fire brigades, all emergency services, and the neighbours who checked in, shared information and lent a hand when it counted. You all are our good sorts for the month and we salute you!

The Dunes Golf Club Report



There is plenty to celebrate at The Dunes Golf this month, with a prestigious scholarship win for a rising turf apprentice and a hole-in-one shot on the 18th green.

The club is incredibly proud to announce that Max Gaskell has been awarded the CNITMA Turf Apprentice Scholarship. A dedicated member of the greens team for over three years, Max is currently completing his Level 4 sports turf qualification. The scholarship will see Max head to Millbrook Resort in Queenstown to join the elite turf management team for the New Zealand Open, running from February 26 to March 1, 2026. Having already prepared The Dunes for the PGA Pro-Am earlier this year, Max is looking forward to the challenge of a championship-level build-up.

Course Superintendent Raymond Fanning described Max as a “top-level apprentice” with a sharp eye for the technical demands of championship turf. Max has played a pivotal role in the recent evolution of the Matarangi course, specifically the construction and “grow-in” of four new greens.”

The club witnessed a moment of pure magic on the course. Mack Waite secured the first Hole-in-One of 2026 at The Dunes. The feat was made even more spectacular by occurring on the 18th hole, providing an unforgettable finish to his round and a high bar for other members to chase this year.

Finally, just before we went to print we heard about 15 year old Cooper Mullins aceing the Par 3 13th hole this past weekend. Well done Cooper!!

The Dunes remains a hub of activity throughout the week with a variety of club days:

- Mondays & Thursdays: 9-Hole Men's sessions.
- Tuesdays & Thursdays: 9-Hole Ladies' sessions.
- Wednesdays & Thursdays: 18-Hole Men's and Ladies' club days.
- Friday Twilight: 9 Holes from 2:30 PM – a local favorite.
- Saturday Mixed Haggie: 18 Holes starting at 10:30 AM.



FEBRUARY HOURS

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MONDAY	12 NOON – 8PM
TUESDAY	12 NOON – 8PM
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FRIDAY	10AM – LATE
SATURDAY	10AM – LATE
SUNDAY	10AM – LATE

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Who Is Responsible for Our Local Roads?

In the aftermath of the recent storm, many residents have been asking a simple but important question: who is actually responsible for repairing and maintaining our roads? There appears to be some confusion about whether this responsibility sits with the Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC) or another agency.

On the Coromandel Peninsula, responsibility for roads is shared between two authorities, depending on the type of road: Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency and Thames-Coromandel District Council (TCDC).

The peninsula's state highways are managed by Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency. These include the major routes around and through the Coromandel, most notably: State Highway 25 (SH25), which forms the main loop around the peninsula, and State Highway 25A (SH25A), the inland route linking Kōpū and Hīkuaī.

These roads are part of New Zealand's national highway network and are owned, funded, maintained and managed by Waka Kotahi on behalf of central government. This responsibility covers planning, repairs, surface maintenance, traffic management and major rebuilds.

All other public roads on the peninsula — including town streets, rural roads and many gravel or local access roads — are district roads and fall under the responsibility of TCDC.

TCDC is responsible for maintaining and repairing these roads, planning improvements and routine works, and managing local traffic issues and bylaws. Funding for district roads is typically co-funded, with contributions from both TCDC and Waka Kotahi through government subsidy arrangements.

Examples of TCDC-managed roads include: Blackjack Road (off SH25 near Kuaotunu), Whangapoua Road (from SH25 down to the settlement), Matarangi Road (from SH25 to the township), and Grays Beach / Ring's Beach Road, also accessed from SH25.

In simple terms, damage to SH25, including recent storm damage on Whangapoua Hill and near Kuaotunu, is the responsibility of Waka Kotahi, not TCDC.

Every other local public road in the district is the responsibility of TCDC.

Knowing which agency is responsible helps ensure concerns are raised with the right organisation. Issues relating to local road conditions, flooding, potholes, beach access, speed limits or routine maintenance should be directed to TCDC. Concerns about the condition of SH25 or SH25A should be directed to Waka Kotahi NZ Transport Agency.

Understanding this distinction can help the community better advocate for timely repairs and clearer communication following major weather events.

Stargazer Sights

The two gas giants Jupiter and Saturn are on view this month but Saturn is rapidly sinking low in the west after sunset and will soon be lost from view. Venus, Mars and Mercury remain too close to the Sun to be easily visible for another month. Jupiter is fascinating to watch as its four largest moons can be seen moving from night to night. All that is needed to enjoy this celestial dance is a good set of binoculars or a small telescope. Anyone lucky enough to be in Antarctica, the very southern tip of South America or Africa will see a partial eclipse of the Sun on February 17. Those of us in New Zealand will have to wait until 2028!

There will be some Chinese Tiangong and several International Space Station (ISS) passes to enjoy this month but, as usual, timings may change especially towards the end of the month if they have to be moved to avoid space junk. Always best to check the website heavens-above.com for updated timings.

- February 1 – The Moon now lies well to the right and below bright Jupiter in the late evening and from 5:52am in the SW there will be a very low ISS pass.
- February 2 – Jupiter sits well to the left and above the Moon after dusk.
- February 3 – The Moon rises about three hours after bright Jupiter has appeared in the western dusk sky.
- February 5 – Full Moon tonight with a bright ISS pass from 9:18pm in the north passing just below bright Jupiter.
- February 6 – From 10:09pm in the west we will have a bright ISS pass moving just below the Southern Cross.
- February 7 – From 9:22pm in the west we have another very bright ISS pass.
- February 8 – From 10:12pm in the west we have a low ISS pass.
- February 9 – We will have an ISS pass from 9:25pm low in the west.
- February 10 – From 10:16pm very low in the SW there will be a long ISS pass.
- February 11 – We have another very low ISS pass in the SW from 9:29pm tonight.
- February 12 – From 8:42pm low in the west we have a long ISS pass moving right beside Alpha Centauri, the closest star to us apart from the Sun, which is one of the pointers to the Southern Cross.
- February 14 – From 8:44pm there will be an extremely low ISS pass in the SW.
- February 16 – There will be a bright Tiangong pass in the NW from 6:02am.
- February 19 – From 6:12am there will be a Tiangong pass in the west.
- February 20 – A very thin crescent Moon lies just to the right of Saturn very low in the west just after sunset.
- February 21 – The thin crescent Moon now sits much further to the right of Saturn right after sunset low in the west.
- February 23 – Bright Jupiter lies far to the right of the crescent Moon after dusk.
- February 24 – Jupiter is the brightest object low in the east and lies well to the right of the Moon.
- February 25 – First Quarter Moon tonight and it sits well to the left of bright Jupiter.
- February 26 – Jupiter can be located directly to the right of the Moon.
- February 27 – Jupiter can be seen directly above the Moon after dusk as the sky darkens.
- February 28 – The Moon now sits just below and to the right of Jupiter as the sky darkens.
- March 1 – The Moon now rises well after Jupiter in the east.
- March 2 – Jupiter is the brightest thing in the sky apart from the Moon and lies well to the left of it in Gemini

The Editor's Desk



As of the end of 2025, there had been 18 orbital launches from Rocket Lab's launch site on the Māhia Peninsula, making it the seventh-busiest launch site in the world, with only sites in the United States and China recording more activity. For such a small and remote nation, this is a remarkable achievement — and one that has its roots much closer to home than many might realise.

The story begins not at Māhia, but on Great Mercury Island (Ahuahu), off our Coromandel coast. It was here, on 30 November 2009, that a slender six-metre rocket rose briefly into the sky, marking the moment New Zealand quietly entered the space age. The flight lasted only minutes and carried a modest scientific payload, yet its significance would echo far beyond that day.

The rocket was called Ātea-1, named for the Māori word for space. It was also known as Manu Karere — “the bird messenger” — a fitting name for a pioneering craft launched from a place long shaped by navigation, exploration, and connection to the wider world. Launched from a temporary site on Ahuahu, Ātea-1 was a suborbital sounding rocket, designed to reach the edge of space rather than orbit. Rocket Lab later confirmed that it had exceeded the 100-kilometre Kármán line, making it the first privately developed rocket from the Southern Hemisphere to reach space.

At the time, New Zealand had no formal space industry, no launch infrastructure, and no regulatory framework for private spaceflight. Rocket Lab, founded in 2006 by New Zealand engineer Peter Beck, was a small and ambitious venture driven by the belief that access to space could be made simpler, faster, and more affordable

— especially for small satellites. The Ātea-1 mission was therefore as much about proving what was possible as it was about the flight itself.

While the payload did not transmit live data and was not recovered, the mission was nonetheless a success. Critical flight data was retrieved from the booster, allowing engineers to validate propulsion, guidance, and structural performance. More importantly, the launch demonstrated to investors, policymakers, and the wider public that advanced rocketry could be designed, built, and launched from New Zealand.

In the years that followed, the significance of that moment became increasingly clear. Ātea-1 helped unlock investment and confidence, paving the way for Rocket Lab's Electron rocket and the development of permanent launch facilities. This, in turn, led to the establishment of the New Zealand Space Agency and the creation of Launch Complex 1 on the Māhia Peninsula — now a key piece of national infrastructure.

Sixteen years on, Rocket Lab has grown into a globally significant aerospace company, with Electron now among the most frequently launched small-satellite rockets in the world. The company is also preparing for the next chapter, with Neutron, a larger, partially reusable rocket expected to fly in 2026. Around it has grown a broader space ecosystem of researchers, startups, and international partnerships.

What began with a single experimental launch from a quiet island off the Coromandel coast has become a nationally important industry, now contributing more than \$2.5 billion to New Zealand's economy. Ātea-1 did not just reach the edge of space — it marked the moment New Zealand looked upward with intent.

For Great Mercury Island (Ahuahu), and for the communities of the Northern Mercury Bay, that brief launch in 2009 has earned its place in history as the birthplace of the Kiwi race to space.

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January 2016 in the MBP recorded a vibrant and memorable month for the Matarangi and wider Northern Mercury Bay community, marked by family celebrations, summer events and strong community spirit.

A highlight of the month was the Simpson family reunion, held over Auckland Anniversary Weekend. Multiple generations of the Simpson family gathered from across New Zealand and overseas for a special celebration, made even more meaningful by George Simpson's 86th birthday. His sisters, Mary (92) and Betty (88), travelled from the Far North on a chartered flight from Kerikeri to Whitianga — a journey they cheerfully described as “a piece of cake.” The reunion was a resounding success and a testament to strong family ties.

January also delivered a double dose of beauty pageants in Matarangi. On January 8, Miss Matarangi 2016 was held at The Dunes, with Lydia Smit (18, Morrinsville) crowned winner and Aleesha Wilshire (18, Clevedon) named runner-up. Winners were also announced in the Yummy Mummy and Miss Mini Matarangi categories, showcasing participants of all ages.



The celebrations continued on January 9 with Miss Coromandel Peninsula 2016, held at the Matarangi Fire Station. The engine bay was transformed into a dressing and styling area with help from local firefighters and Hair @ Matarangi. Jazmin Tohaia of Whangamata took out the title and was also awarded People's Choice, with Alyse Kerridge runner-up and Lydia Smit placing third.

Scott Seeks 5th Term as MP for Coromandel



The National Party has confirmed Scott Simpson as its Coromandel candidate for the 2026 General Election.

“I am delighted to have been re-selected as National's candidate for the Coromandel electorate for the 2026 General Election.”

“Our electorate is home to many towns and communities, each with their own opportunities and challenges. It is without a doubt the best place to live, work and play, and representing the people who call it home is an immense privilege.”

The 2026 election will see Scott stand for the 5th time as MP for Coromandel. He currently has a majority of over 17000 votes.

“As the Local Member of Parliament since 2011, this isn't a role or responsibility that I take lightly, and I look forward to earning the trust of the electorate once again.”

“The Government was elected on the promise to get the country back on track, and we remain focused on growing the economy and managing the country's books responsibly. We have cut wasteful spending, inflation is under control, and our trade balance is in surplus after four years of deficits.”

“There's still plenty of work to be done, but I am proud to be part of a Government which is committed to fixing the basics and building a future where New Zealand and New Zealanders can thrive.”

Scott spent his brief summer break over the New Year period at his Kuaotunu bach, taking time to relax and recharge after a busy year as Minister of ACC and Commerce, a role that kept him largely desk-bound in Wellington.

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Monday

Ladies' Pilates

Matarangi Fire Station
9-10 am Christiane 0273 122 584

Kuaotunu Craft & Social Club

Kuaotunu Hall
1-4 pm Lia 07 866 2054

Books & Banter (Book club)

7-9 pm 1st Mon each month Pauline
dickinsonpauline@gmail.com

Contract Bridge

St John's Room, 355 Tiki Rd, Coromandel
Tadek 027 235 6335 or Tadekgawor@gmail.com

Tuesday

Croquet

Coromandel Croquet Assoc, Woolams Ave
9.15 am-12 pm 07 866 8066

Bridge for Beginners

The Dunes 3-5 pm
Bronwyn 021 0231 1130

Menz Shed

Matarangi Drive 8 am-12 pm
(open at all times to members)
Phil 021 0272 5230

Wednesday

Men on Mats (Men's Pilates)

Matarangi fire station 9-10 am
Christiane 0273 122 584

Pickleball – social play

Matai Place Courts - 9 am start during summer
Kay 020 41200975
Jenni 021 1700869

Kuaotunu Steiner Playgroup

9am-12pm Phone: 07 866 0094

Mah Jong

The Dunes 12.30-3 pm
Lesley, 021 280 0780.

Contract bridge

Mercury Bay Bowling Club, Whitianga 1 pm
Tadek 027 235 6335 or Tadekgawor@gamil.com

Kuaotunu Garden Group

2nd Weds of the month
Kuaotunugardenclub@gmail.com

Ladies Coffee morning

The Dunes, 10 am first Weds of the month

Kuaotunu Dune Care Group

3rd Weds of the month
Jenny 021 566 6035

Thursday

Pickleball – competitive play

Matai Place Courts 3.30-5.30 pm
Grant 022 383 6351

Walking Group

Meet at the Dunes 9.00 am
Briar 021 361 944

Craft Group

The Dunes, 12.30 fortnightly
Lesley 021 280 0780

Recreational Darts

The Dunes, 6.00 pm every other Thursday
The Dunes 07 866 5394

Friday

Lawn Bowls

The Dunes, 2.15-4.15 pm
Wayne Davis 027 458 9544

Croquet

Woolams Ave, Coromandel 9.15 am-12 pm
07 866 8066

Saturday

Pickleball for all

Matai Place Courts, 8.30-10.30 am
Grant 022 383 6351

Hash House Harriers

3 pm winter and 4 pm summer
Bronwyn 0210 231 1130

Brew Crew (Home brewing)

Fire Station Matarangi
Phil Mosen 027 4761734

Sunday

Sunday Market

Matarangi Drive (in front of shops), 10 am-1pm
Long weekends summer to Labour weekend
Lesley 021 280 0780

Golf

The Dunes Golf Club Days - Affiliated Visitors
Welcome

Mens 9 Hole Monday [Back 9] and Thursday
[Front 9] - 9.20am

Ladies 9 Hole Tuesday [Front 9] and Thursday
[Back 9] - 9.30am

Mens 18 Hole Wednesday - 10am

Ladies 18 Hole Thursday - 10am

Twilight 9 Holes Friday - 2.30pm-3pm

Mixed Hagggle 18 Holes Saturday - 10.30am-
11.30am

February 2026 TIDES

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February Tides 2026

	High	Low	High	Low	High
4		03:12:00	09:29:00	15:46:00	21:53:00
5		03:59:00	10:14:00	16:32:00	22:39:00
6		04:44:00	10:59:00	17:16:00	23:24:00
7		05:28:00	11:42:00	17:59:00	
8	00:08:00	06:12:00	12:25:00	18:41:00	
9	00:53:00	06:58:00	13:08:00	19:25:00	
10	01:40:00	07:46:00	13:54:00	20:12:00	
11	02:32:00	08:39:00	14:43:00	21:03:00	
12	03:29:00	09:35:00	15:37:00	21:59:00	
13	04:27:00	10:33:00	16:34:00	22:57:00	
14	05:24:00	11:30:00	17:31:00	23:53:00	
15	06:16:00	12:23:00	18:26:00		
16		00:43:00	07:03:00	13:12:00	19:16:00
17		01:29:00	07:47:00	13:57:00	20:02:00
18		02:13:00	08:29:00	14:41:00	20:46:00
19		02:54:00	09:10:00	15:23:00	21:29:00
20		03:36:00	09:52:00	16:06:00	22:12:00
21		04:19:00	10:34:00	16:49:00	22:57:00
22		05:04:00	11:19:00	17:34:00	23:43:00
23		05:52:00	12:06:00	18:22:00	
24	00:34:00	06:44:00	12:57:00	19:13:00	
25	01:29:00	07:42:00	13:52:00	20:09:00	
26	02:30:00	08:44:00	14:53:00	21:11:00	
27	03:35:00	09:50:00	15:58:00	22:16:00	
28	04:41:00	10:56:00	17:04:00	23:21:00	
1	05:43:00	11:59:00	18:08:00		
4		03:12:00	09:29:00	15:46:00	21:53:00
5		03:59:00	10:14:00	16:32:00	22:39:00
6		04:44:00	10:59:00	17:16:00	23:24:00
7		05:28:00	11:42:00	17:59:00	
8	00:08:00	06:12:00	12:25:00	18:41:00	

Source: LINZ

BB: An adventure, activity, and values based ministry for boys aged 5-15 years old. For info contact: Robyn 020 409 39674 or email: robyn.balfour2@hotmail.com



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P. McNeill, 2025 (repeat customer)

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R. Preston, 2025

"The boys were marvellous. Couldn't fault them!"

T. and L. True, 2025

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2014 m2
3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 cars
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Glamping Close to the Beach
662 Matarangi Dr, Matarangi

748 m2
1 bedroom
Negotiation
Peter Sharp
021 388 833
richardsons.co.nz/RM4415



Owners Purchased - Make an Offer
5 Riria Way, Matarangi

767 m2
3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 2 cars
Negotiation
Simone Parr
027 657 2980
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Rare Large Elevated Section
35B Cuvier Cres, Kuaotunu

3518 m2
Negotiation
Helly Mobberley
021 669 595
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4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms

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Belinda Sammons
M: 027 272 7728 | B: 07 866 0098
belinda.sammons@bayleys.co.nz



Kylie Pullen
M: 021 163 6514 | B: 07 866 0098
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Immaculate Beachside Living **PBN**

162 KOWHAI AVENUE | MATARANGI 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, 1 car 635m2

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PRICE REDUCED \$1,029,000 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 651m2



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