

Scottish celebration a crowd-puller

Imagine doubling the population of the town of Paeroa, and taking everyone to Paeroa Domain. This month, an estimated turnout of about 8000 people gathered there to enjoy the 22nd annual Highland Games and Tattoo.

In perfect weather, a happy atmosphere was evident and families with young children were numerous, said organising committee chairman Alistair Buchanan. "It was great to see families picnicking together in the late afternoon and early evening, before the Tattoo."

Fun and fashion were a popular mix with Tartan in the Park contestants and spectators, especially with charismatic Silver Fern shooter Maria Tutaia as guest judge. The first-time under 7s class was well supported, and a number of entrants in the strong adult section paraded Celtic wear.

Also resplendent in tartan were the Highland kilned heavyweight field athletes, including three Australians. However Clan New Zealand was victorious in the Anzac Caber Challenge!

Giant screens made it easy to get an up-close and personal view of action such as the heavyweight field events, spectacular massed bands, highland dancing, and stage entertainment, said Councillor and frequent attendee Julie Bubb. This year she also opened the Games and stepped in as a Tartan in the Park compere, which gave her an added appreciation of the hardworking committee



LET THE GAMES BEGIN: Councillor Julie Bubb opening the 2015 Paeroa Highland Games. Picture: Rod Baker-Clemas.

and volunteer crew behind the very successful community event.

Highland Games and woodchopping identities Brian and Jill Trow of Ngatea were not only chieftains for the day – their family was awarded the Gavin Ballantine Memorial Trophy for 2014, at its inaugural presentation for the most outstanding contribution to the occasion. Gavin, who passed away in May 2013, was a key force in the founding and running of the Games and Tattoo.

Our Highland Games a worldwide hit

What's the first place that Paeroa Highland Games-goers are likely to visit?

Answer: the event website. It's being viewed by more and more people – as reflected in rising spectator and participant numbers – and attracted 460,000 hits during 2014, says webmaster Rod Baker-Clemas.

The most popular download page was 'Accommodation', with 1,158 12-page downloads – almost 14,000 pages of information requested nationally and internationally.

The accommodation database was set up in cooperation with Positive Paeroa, and generates huge interest from China. Germany is also strongly represented in the inquiries received from 50 to 100 countries each month.

Rod says the event, which has just celebrated its 22nd year, "is a major publicity lever and offers tremendous opportunities for Paeroa", especially in conjunction with Hauraki's other attractions. Beginning as a small pipe bands competition, it has grown into an acclaimed Highland Games day – and the only one of seven such Scottish gatherings in New Zealand to hold an evening tattoo.



POLICE SMOKE-OUT: The Auckland Police Pipe Band twilight display at this month's Highland Games. Picture: Rod Baker-Clemas.

"Our committee and volunteers are passionate about our town, and I would welcome teamwork opportunities with the Council to promote both the Paeroa Highland Games and the Hauraki District."

How's our Plains water holding?

The former Tetleys Quarry pit raw water reservoir at Waitakaruru had last week dropped to about 70% full, after reaching its 830million-litre capacity three months ago. The stored water should be sufficient to keep locals supplied through the rest of summer, and no restrictions are currently in force for the Hauraki Plains. However, it's still a limited resource that should be used carefully.

Plains residents may notice an unusual earthy taste in their water – an effect of natural algae in the Waitakaruru River. We do need to deal with occurrences of algal bloom, which is caused by high levels of nutrients such as nitrogen and phosphorous in the river, and exacerbated by sunlight and long, hot dry spells like the one we've been experiencing. So it has the greatest impact when we need the water most!

Some people are more sensitive than others to the taste issue, and this is very expensive to treat. Our main focus is on managing the actual problem with non-chemical strategies – for instance by active monitoring, drawing water from below the surface level where algae is most predominant, and aerating the reservoir to reduce the algae's ability to survive. Our aim is to minimise algae growth into the future.

Anzac centenary a special chance to pay tribute

Do you have a departed family member whose life you would like commemorated on the Hauraki Plains Memorial Wall?

In the absence of a local cemetery due to unsuitable ground conditions, the Council opened the wall in Hugh Hayward Domain in 2003. Together with the Ngatea Ashes Wall, this provides a visual tribute to Plains residents. Names are engraved each year on the Memorial Wall's granite plaques and unveiled on Anzac Day, after the local civic service.

This year's Anzac celebrations are especially significant – marking the 100th anniversary of the day that Australian and New Zealand Army Corps soldiers landed at Gallipoli as part of an Allied mission to capture the peninsula. Their courage and sacrifices on April 25, 1915 and in the ensuing eight-month campaign left a profound impact; and a century later, Anzac Day also commemorates the service of Australians and New Zealanders in World War II and other military operations.

However, locals remembered on the Memorial Wall needn't have any armed services connections. The only criteria is that the deceased must have been a resident of the Hauraki Plains for at least six months – which is verified along with the person's details. The inclusion of as many inscriptions as possible makes the annual occasion very meaningful for the community.

Applications for 2015 inscriptions will be accepted until Wednesday, March 18. The single-line tributes cost \$51 and can include your loved one's surname, first name, middle initials, age at death, and year of death.

Application forms are available from our service centres or can be downloaded from the Council website - www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz.

Anyone wanting further information can phone Robyn Kirby at our Paeroa office, on 07 862 8609 or 0800 734 834 (from within the District).

SITUATION VACANT

ACCOUNTING TEAM LEADER

If you have a positive can-do attitude and attributes that reflect our values of respect, communication and commitment, then we would love to hear from you.

As the Accounting Team Leader you will be responsible for maintaining the integrity of Council's financial systems and processes including controlling financial accruals, looking after all monthly ledger reconciliations, completing statutory returns, overseeing debtors and creditors and assisting with all internal audit compliance work.

Supervising a small accounting team is also part of this role so staff management experience is preferred. You will want to be a team player with a highly organised work ethic and be competent with Excel and Accounting systems.

To take this opportunity of enhancing your career apply electronically on www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz, or contact Sue Greenville on 027-231-8826, or Julie Sweeney on 021-786-238.

Applications close on Monday 9th March 2015.

"At Hauraki District Council ...
 It's More than Just a Job!"

PUBLIC NOTICES

WATER RESTRICTIONS

From 16 February 2015

Notice to all residents of the Hauraki District

River levels have continued to fall, making it necessary to restrict the use of water, in accordance with Council's Water Supply Management Plan relating to its consents to take water from rivers and streams.

For Waihi, Waikino, Mackaytown and Karangahake until further notice a ban is placed on the use of lawn and garden sprinklers. Only hand held hoses may be used until the situation improves.

If you see water leaks or excessive usage or wastage of water in your area, please report this to Council.

Information regarding ways residents can conserve water can be found on the Hauraki District Council website at www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz.

Click on the SmartWaterUse logo. 

It may be necessary to increase the level of restriction if the dry weather period is extended. Your cooperation and efforts to conserve water now contribute to ensuring that water is available for essential and emergency needs.

For further inquiries please phone (07) 862 8609 or 0800 734 834 (from within the Hauraki District, no cell phones).

Ken Thompson
 District Engineer
 Hauraki District Council

COUNCIL & COMMITTEE METINGS

Pursuant to Section 46 of the Local Government Official Information and Meetings Act 1987, public notice is hereby given that the following meetings will be held in the Council Office, William Street, Paeroa during the month of March 2015.

Consultative Water & Waste Committee
 Tuesday, 3 March 2015, 1.00pm

Ward Committee Meetings - Tuesday, 10 March 2015
 Plains Ward – 9.00am
 Paeroa Ward – 12.30pm
 Waihi Ward – 2.30pm

Extraordinary Meeting of Council
 Wednesday, 11 March 2015, 9.00am

Operations Committee
 Wednesday, 11 March 2015, 9.30am

Judicial Committee
 Monday, 9 March 2015 2014, 9.00am
 Monday, 23 March 2015, 9.00am

Ordinary Meeting of Council
 Wednesday, 25 March 2015, 9.00am

Western Plains District Drainage Committee
 Tuesday, 31 March 2015, 10.30am

Paeroa Rural District Drainage Committee
 Tuesday, 31 March 2015, 1.30pm

L D Cavers
 Chief Executive
 Hauraki District Council