



# HDC NEWS



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BLAST FROM THE PAST: Swamp Foxes captain Irvine Campbell leads the home side on to the Paeroa Domain field in the 1989 Ranfurly Shield challenge. Picture: the late Graham Watton.

## We're set for home-turf Shield challenge!

A Queen's Birthday Ranfurly challenge at Paeroa Domain will go down in rugby history, when Waikato takes on Thames Valley in its first Shield defence of 2016. Only once before has a challenge for the famous Log o' Wood been played in Paeroa – on August 16, 1989.

"A Ranfurly Shield match is always significant. A game for our union and in Paeroa is very significant indeed," says Councillor Toby Adams. "We at the Council will be right behind it, doing everything we can to make sure the day goes smoothly."

That includes having the renovated Domain No.1 field in first-class condition, and helping facilitate a hoped-for float parade if it gets NZTA approval. So Toby and the Council's Parks and Reserves Manager Steve Clark have been liaising with Thames Valley Rugby Union Chief Executive Edmond Leahy, who says securing the event is "huge".

Waikato Rugby Union General Manager Blair Foote, who played for Thames Valley

against Waikato in the 1994 Ranfurly Shield match before his 17 games for Waikato in the following three years, says it is "great we have the chance to take the Ranfurly Shield on the road for the match in Paeroa. We look forward to sharing the experience with our neighbours."

Waikato will also play Heartland Championship provinces King Country and Wanganui in pre-season Ranfurly Shield challenges later in the year. None of the three provinces have ever managed to lift the trophy – though in 1980 the Swamp Foxes put up a stiff challenge against Waikato before going down 16-7. It remains the Valley's closest shield battle.

This time around, the home-turf game will be all the more memorable for a 27-year wait. "The 1989 match in Paeroa was a major event for the whole district," says Thames Valley Rugby Union historian Kelly Plummer. "It was not often that the Shield holders would play a challenge away from home, but Auckland had generously

agreed to do so."

The visiting side, captained by Sean Fitzpatrick, had many All Blacks to call on, and at the time was halfway through an eight-year tenure of the Ranfurly Shield – which arrived by helicopter prior to kick-off. "The locals responded magnificently, putting on a lively street parade and then packing 7000 eager fans into the Paeroa Domain – the record for any Thames Valley home match," says Kelly.

Under the captaincy of Irvine Campbell, "the Swamp Foxes were very determined and tackled their hearts out, but the bigger Aucklanders just had too much possession and pace for them and won by 58-7. However Thames Valley earned bragging rights with the best try, when Kevin Handley dotted down after a move which started inside Valley's own 22. The home crowd was ecstatic." Glen Dalgety also put the Valley on the scoreboard, kicking a penalty goal.

## Dog fees stay put

Good news for the owners of our District's approximately 4300 dogs – the Council has been able to keep dog registration fees at their current level for the coming year (July 2016 to 30 June 2017). The only change to the fee structure is the introduction of a Responsible Owner Licence transfer fee, for people bringing dogs into Hauraki from another district where they already hold Responsible Owner status with that Council.

For those approved under our Responsible Ownership scheme, the cost of annual dog registration is reduced by \$30, provided certain conditions are met. For instance, an applicant must have a 12-month good record as a responsible dog owner (having had no complaints, offences or infringement notices), pass a simple test on dog care and owners' obligations, and have fencing that keeps dogs securely on the property while still providing visitors with unobstructed access to at least one door.

Another way that dog owners can save money on registration is by having their dogs de-sexed, thus qualifying for a \$15 rebate off the \$82 General Registration fee, or off the \$52 Responsible Owner Registration fee (a veterinary certificate must be supplied). Paying dog registration fees on time, by 31 July, will ensure that late-payment penalty fees are avoided!

We strive to keep registration costs as low as possible, and overall, our fees compare well with those in neighbouring council districts.

Registration fees pay for the administration of an up-to-date dog database; educational and adoption programmes; dog pound facilities including feeding, care, and homing or euthanasia of stray dogs; general advice on dog care; property visits by Council staff; animal control; and a 24-hour call out service.

Registration, together with once-only micro-chipping – which must be done within two months of a dog or puppy first being registered except in the case of working dogs – are requirements of the Dog Control Act 1996, helping us to keep tabs on our significant canine population.



Paeroa-bound riders set out from the Goldfields Railway Station in Waihi. Picture: Dave Evans

## Fun ride gives fund benefits

Thanks – 214 times over! That's the number of people who took part in the March 18 inaugural Hauraki Rail Trail Charity Fun Cycle Ride, organised by the combined Lions Clubs of Paeroa, Thames, Waihi and Te Aroha.

Entrants of all ages pedalled from Kopu, Te Aroha, Waihi or Karangahake to the finish point and event hub provided by the Council at Paeroa's Railway Reserve. Thanks also to the generous sponsors who donated spot prizes, the ride raised \$4450 – recently donated to the Cancer Society's Lions Lodge in Hamilton.

At a Lions meeting which again brought members of the four clubs together, Paeroa Lions Club president Philip Hughes presented a cheque to Catriona Finlay, the fundraising manager for Waikato/Bay of Plenty Division of the Cancer Society of New Zealand.

As a result the Lions Lodge will support more cancer patients – many of whom come from our District – by providing them with free accommodation and meals while they receive treatment at the nearby Waikato Regional Cancer Centre.

Hauraki Mayor John Tregidga personally got behind the cause by biking from Waihi to Paeroa; and Thames Coromandel and Matamata Piako Deputy Mayors Peter French and James Thomas rose to the challenge by pedalling from their home turf.

"We had a great response from the community, and have already had requests to repeat the event," says organising committee coordinator Russell Player. "We hope the charity ride will now become an annual occasion."

## Situation Vacant

Please see the situation vacant section of this newspaper for the position advertised for a **Parks and Reserves Manager** - or view it online at [www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/jobs](http://www.hauraki-dc.govt.nz/jobs).

## TREE STRATEGY goes back to our roots

Walking through our parks or reserves, you could easily assume the mature trees pretty much look after themselves – apart from a bit of periodic pruning or dealing with storm damage.

But that's not the reality, and a foot tour of Paeroa Domain by Council reserves staff last year showed that we need much more than a tree maintenance programme there. A close-up look at the almost 180 specimen trees – reflecting plantings started by Paeroa Domain Board superintendent William Hamilton in the first decade of the 1900s – spotlighted their individual condition and the attention they require.

We already knew from a 2003 arboricultural survey that in tree terms, the mature trees are essentially "single aged", with many expected to reach the end of their lives at a similar time. So we wanted to have a plan in place to guide care and replanting, ensuring the Domain keeps its heritage tree character.

This prompted the formation of a Council working party, and approval by Paeroa ward councillors to engage well qualified independent consulting arborist John Wakeling to provide a long-term tree management strategy. The resulting ward-funded Paeroa Domain Tree Strategy recently adopted by councillors gives an assessment of the health, life expectancy, suitability and location of the current specimen trees, and a number of recommendations extending from immediate work to future planting.

While preservation is the focus, in line with our brief, we've straight away actioned one high-priority recommendation: the felling of a large bunya bunya bordering Arney Street. It was dying, shedding hefty pieces of bark (and sometimes prickly football shaped cones), and posed safety risks to passers-by on the footpath and road.

Councillor Julie Bubb welcomes the tree strategy from such a highly respected arborist, and its implementation. "While I personally have a reputation for being a 'tree hugger', I absolutely recognise the need to remove trees such as the bunya bunya if they've become diseased or unsafe."

A resource consent will be sought for the staged removal of about 25 trees over the next four years. These will be replaced with recommended species in conjunction with companion shrub planting. As the new trees grow, a comprehensive programme of formative pruning will ensure both their aesthetic appeal and stability.

The succession planting will provide opportunity to introduce more native species, which are unusually absent in such a park. The strategy notes that the heritage treescape could be developed and complemented with carefully located and chosen natives, capable of reaching significant proportions.

As well as maintaining an overall landscape plan and a detailed numbered tree schedule, a further recommendation is that a comprehensive policy of naming and labelling every specimen tree be established. The Council working party wants to take that a step further, by installing signage containing historic information and some individual tree history where it's known.

Even the trees that need to be removed will continue to be of asset. Wood chip mulch derived from felling work will be kept for use in the Domain, and we'll be looking at whether some timber could be used for community projects.

## Wanted - public help to stop toilet vandals

Vandals targeted our public toilets again on Anzac Day – lighting a fire in one of the men's cubicles at Rocket Park in Waihi. Volunteer firefighters were quickly on the job with two engines, but not in time to prevent significant damage to the cubicle wall and floor which has closed the men's facilities until repairs can be made. Meanwhile, we've provided portaloos.

Police also responded to the fire, but despite the park being very busy on the public holiday in the middle of school holidays, no one there came forward with any information.

The Council strives to keep our public toilets in attractive and well-

maintained condition for residents, visitors and travellers passing through – the Rocket Park facilities were renovated in late 2014, as were Paeroa's Bottle Park toilets, and the Karangahake Reserve toilets have just reopened after refurbishments. But vandalism, particularly during school holidays, is a continual challenge to our efforts.

Although the facilities are locked at night, only six months ago a fire in the disability toilet at Paeroa Domain forced its closure; and an arson attack in 2013 put the Domain toilets out of use for two months while extensive repairs were made. Around the District, fittings in the

toilets have also frequently been damaged, and toilet paper regularly stolen.

The amenities are there for everyone, and any closure is not only inconvenient for everyone but can result in ratepayers footing the bill for avoidable repairs. So as well as asking people to leave the toilets in the condition they themselves would like to find them, please say something immediately if you are aware of damage being caused or see any suspicious behaviour! Your help can make a difference.

Information can be given to the police, or contact details for the Council are included on signage at the toilets.