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Kia ora,

This month the cover picture is from Ian Dennison and is of a new mural being painted by Sheyne Tuffery.

In this edition of *Tawa News*, you'll find the latest updates from our community board, local MPs, and various community groups.

The *5 minutes with ...* this month is with Carla Bates. If you would like to volunteer for Tawa News, we are looking for someone to coordinate the *sports* section, so get in touch if you are interested in this.

Please keep sending all your news, events, and pictures to newsletter@tawa.org.nz. We love seeing your stories, especially those that celebrate our local residents.

We hope you will enjoy reading about all the good stuff that is happening in our vibrant community.

Have a good weekend from us all at the Tawa Residents' Association. Our next meeting will be the AGM on Monday June, at 7.30 pm at Tawa Squash Club. All welcome.

Monique

Big thanks to WCC for continuous financial support with the Residents' Association administration costs!



See www.tawalink.com/newsletters.html for issues before 2022.

See <https://tawa.org.nz> for recent issues.

NEWS

Kai Kitchen

Volunteer co-ordinator/leaders needed!

Kai Kitchen Free Community Lunches have been held at Linden Community Centre for almost 6 years now. There are several volunteers who prepare and

cook the food, which is donated by Kai Bosh and Kiwi Community Assistance. There are also just a few who take it in turns to coordinate this preparation and allocate tasks to the other volunteers.

During most of 2025 the Centre was closed for major renovations, including a complete kitchen re-fit. During this time, some of our leaders needed to move on so that we now need a few more willing volunteers. Meals are served once a week on Fridays so duties would be once a month at most, depending on how many leaders there are.

Leaders need to be: organized; have a flexible/adaptable approach to menu preparation to use whatever ingredients are available; most especially – want to connect with and build our local community. We serve about 50-60 meals each week.

If you might be interested, come along as a guest one Friday and afterwards talk to one of the leaders and/or the Centre Manager. The meal is served at 12:30pm.

As much assistance as you want will be given for as long as you need it!

Tawa goes to Town

The team are working hard to bring Tawa Goes to Town back again this year, and we hope to fill the Michael Fowler Centre with song, dance, joy and connection, as we have done so many times before. However, costs have risen, and some of our regular funders have not been able to help out this year. We really want to keep ticket prices the same as, or lower than, our 2024 show to ensure it remains an inclusive event.

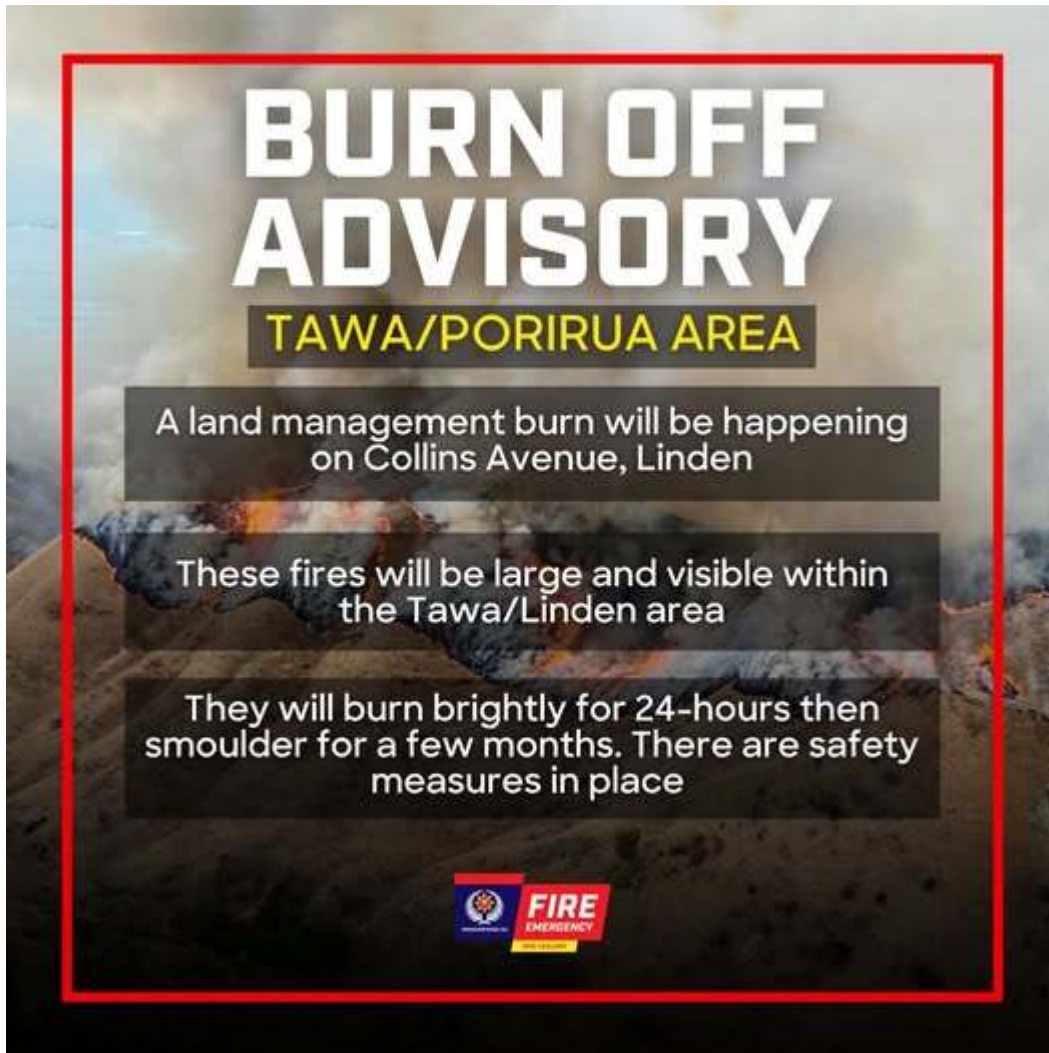
This means we need more financial support to make it happen. If you are a business, family or individual who could help make TGTT2026 happen, we would love to hear from you — all contributions are welcome. There are significant opportunities for advertising and for having your branding visible throughout Tawa and beyond through this event, including to thousands of online viewers.

If this is a way you can help, please contact Jean Hollier at jhollier@tawacollege.school.nz.

If we can confirm the financial viability of the event, rehearsals will begin in June and will involve all the schools in Tawa, along with an all-comers choir for adults. We're really hoping to start singing with you all soon!



Tawa Volunteer Fire Brigade



From the Nurse

"On my way to work this morning, I realised that cold and flu season is well and truly here! But don't worry — it's definitely not too late to get your flu vaccination. Pop into the pharmacy or your doctor's to get protected for winter.

We're also about to head into June, which is Bowel Cancer Awareness Month. If you're aged 58 years or older, you're eligible for the bowel screening programme — including the famous "poop test"! It's quick, simple, and should be completed every two years.

If your test kit never arrived, or you tucked it away somewhere "safe" and can't find it now, it's easy to get another one sent straight to your door. Just give your friendly doctors' clinic a call and ask one of the nurses to organise a FREE replacement, or contact Bowel Screening on 0800924432.

May you and your whānau keep warm this winter"

Variable speed limits around schools

We're implementing lower speed limits during school travel times outside schools across Wellington that meet the requirements of new regulations.

Variable speed limits will apply within 150 metres of school gates. This is to improve safety for all road users, especially students, during school drop off and pick up times.

This change is required under national regulation, which mandates that all councils must implement safe school speed limits by **1 July 2026**. It also reflects our commitment to making school streets safer. Improving the road environment around schools has long been a Council priority and this project supports our broader efforts to enhance safety and wellbeing for our whānau.

We'll use a mix of static and digital speed limit signs. Digital signs are more visible for road users which is useful in busier locations. We'll balance visibility and cost in our sign selection.

To make this project a success, we're working with NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi and engaging with local schools. Together we'll:

- improve safety – lower speeds reduce the risk of accidents and injury severity near schools.
- encourage active travel – safer environments promote walking and cycling to school.
- respond to community aspirations – lower speeds near schools have strong community support.
- deliver on Wellington City Council goals – this work aligns with our strategic priorities around safe, accessible, people-friendly streets.

Work is set to begin in 2025, with signs being installed in phases around the schools until mid-2026.



Are you enrolled?

The 2026 General Election will be held on Saturday 7 November, 2026.

Key changes to previous elections

- You need to be enrolled before voting starts
- Enrolment will close 13 days before election day, on 25 October 2026.
- You must enrol or update your address if you've moved before voting starts on 26 October 2026.
- You won't be able to enrol at a voting place. If you are not enrolled, you won't be able to vote.

This is different to the last two elections when you could enrol and vote at the same time.

Go to the vote nz website for more details <https://vote.nz/>



GOVERNANCE

From the Council

Kia ora Tawa,

It's a busy time at council. Over 2,700 written submissions were received for the Annual Plan (next year's budget) and we also held the oral hearings over four days. Councillors received the consultation report last week. We consulted on an increase of 7.4%, with officers now recommending an increase of 5.8%. Feedback on proposals such as the future of cycleways was mixed, the affordability (or rather unaffordability) of rates and value of council spending were persistent themes and several quality submissions were made on the future of the Ōtāri/Wilton Research Lab. Councillors will make their key decisions in late May.

whattherates.nz and Water Reform

Tiaki Wai (the replacement for Wellington Water) will come into effect on 1 July. Your council rates bill will decrease as existing water charges are transferred across to Tiaki Wai. A website called whattherates.nz has been built by a Wellington Resident and this does a great job of showing you your predicted rates from 1 July noting that final Annual Plan decisions are to come so figures are an estimate at this stage.

As the reality of future water charges becomes known we are hearing the significant concern on costs from the community. The establishment of Tiaki Wai was a decision made in response to the government's Local Water Done

Well reforms, as council we are limited in our ability to address resident concerns considering legislation. We highly encourage residents to engage with politicians across the spectrum ahead of this year's elections.

Amalgamation

A few weeks ago, the government issued an edict that councils across New Zealand must present their plans to government to amalgamate within three months. The Wellington Region had already begun this process, but this expedited timeline raises significant concerns about how we meaningfully engage with our community about what we want from amalgamation and what the future democratic representation looks like for Wellington residents. We will do our best to land a proposal that meets the expectations of Wellingtonians.

Spicer Landfill

On Thursday the [Porirua City Council decided their preferred approach](#) for the future of the Spicer landfill which will close in June 2030. Following a public consultation, they chose to build a Residential Waste Transfer Station so the public can continue to take their household waste (and green waste) to Spicers. A key part of any future solution will not having rubbish held overnight and this should minimise the odour issues that have for so long affected Tawa residents.

Ngā mihi nui,

Have a look at all the Wellington City Council projects and proposals that you can give feedback on. Find them all here: <https://www.letstalk.wellington.govt.nz>

From the Regional Council

Reflections

Eight months into my term as a regional councillor, the question I'm asked most often is: "How are you finding it?" The truth is that it has been one of the most challenging periods local government has faced in decades. Within weeks of being elected, we were confronted with the Government's proposal to "simplify" local government — including the potential abolition of regional councils. While councillors have since been told we will remain in place until the next election, the uncertainty has been real.

At the same time, major reforms have reshaped how we manage natural

resources, planning, and water. The directive to proceed with Tiaki Wai was not optional. It was a Government requirement, driven by decades of under-investment in water infrastructure across the region. The reality is unavoidable: the system is failing, the cost of fixing it is enormous, and the alternative pretending it can be done cheaply is simply unrealistic. All we can do now is set very clear expectations of performance.

Next year's rates cap adds another layer of complexity. Consultation has made one thing painfully clear: everyone wants more, but nobody wants to pay more. People want safe flood protection, reliable buses and trains, thriving biodiversity, clean rivers and a healthy harbour but expect it all to happen without investment.

One thing I value about the regional council is that our core business is clear: public transport, flood protection, environmental management and regulation. But when you sit around the council table weighing up rates options, you quickly see the imbalance between expectations, available funding, and pragmatic decision-making.

Yet there is reason for optimism. We are majority owners of CentrePort, and its success and potential helps subsidise rates. And despite the pressures, I see committed people working hard to deliver for this region. The challenges are real but so is the opportunity to rebuild, refocus, and strengthen the Wellington region for the long term.

Claire Johnstone

From the Tawa Community Board

Tawa Community Board update:

Recent Board Meetings

May has been a busy month for the Community Board, with two meetings held following the weather-related disruption and postponement of our April meeting.

At our meeting on 18 May, the Board approved the distribution of the Annual Tawa Grants Fund, totalling \$15,000. It is always a privilege to make these decisions and to learn more about the many wonderful initiatives taking place across our community. The applications highlight the incredible contribution volunteers make to improving the lives of people in Tawa, and we thank

everyone involved for their dedication and hard work.

Annual Plan Submission

Recently, Board members attended Wellington City Council to present our submission on the Annual Plan. We chose to focus on issues directly relating to Tawa and projects taking place in our community.

In our submission, we acknowledged the challenging financial environment facing both the Council and residents and recognised that rates affordability remains a significant concern for many households. At the same time, we stressed that continued investment in infrastructure is essential for the long-term safety, resilience, and growth of our communities.

We highlighted the importance of retaining — or at the very least deferring rather than cancelling — the budget to improve the cycling and walking connection between Tawa and Johnsonville. Successive Community Boards have advocated for these improvements for many years, as the current route is unsafe for cyclists and pedestrians. During road closures caused by weather events or accidents, cyclists have been left stranded without an alternative route.

The Board also expressed support for the proposed Urban Development Office, which could help unlock opportunities linked to Tawa's proposed Anchor Project — the new combined library and community centre. In addition, we called for continued funding of minor transport works to support practical local safety improvements such as pedestrian crossings, traffic calming measures, and speed reduction initiatives.

Inner Wheel Quiz Night

The Tawa Community Board recently enjoyed taking part in the Inner Wheel Quiz Night at the Sprig & Fern, joining many others from across the community to help raise funds for the Tawa Volunteer Fire Brigade. We are very grateful to have an active brigade that works voluntarily and tirelessly to help keep our community safe.

A huge thank you to the Inner Wheel team for organising such an enjoyable evening. We are also pleased to report that, with the combined efforts of Board members and family supporters, our team took out first place — a proud achievement and a great team-building exercise!

Grenada North Park Upgrade

Planning continues to progress well for the Grenada North Park Sports Hub upgrade project. The project is currently in the detailed design and consenting phase, with preparatory work already underway on site ahead of construction beginning later this year.

As part of this work, some tree removal is scheduled between 8.00am and 4.00pm from 8 June to 13 June.

For more information on the Grenada North Park Upgrade project, visit the Wellington City Council website.

Find the upcoming meetings of the board here: <https://wellington.govt.nz/your-council/meetings/committees/tawa-community-board>

Contact the board here: tawacommunityboard@wcc.govt.nz

Please report any Spicer Landfill odour complaints on the Porirua Government website, here: https://porirua.govt.nz/services/rubbish-and-recycling/spicer-landfill/spicer-landfill-odour/landfill-odour-complaint-form/?fbclid=IwAR3ferg_NetcTd31beBJd8Er73Uo4qPrb_B-BGIt-O83-QAcjiL0Hdy-Imo

If you see a water leak, please check here to find out if it has been reported yet: <https://www.wellingtonwater.co.nz/resources/maps/job-status-map/>

If it is not visible on the map, you can report the leak here: <https://services.wellington.govt.nz/report/>

COMMUNITY SERVICES

Tawa Business Group

Taste of Tawa International Food Festival

From 4 to 21 June, Tawa will come alive with flavour as the Taste of Tawa International Food Festival showcases 28 local eateries serving up special dishes and signature flavours from around the world. From comforting classics to exciting new tastes, the festival is a chance to discover hidden gems, support local businesses and experience the incredible diversity of food here in our community.

Festival flyers and Passport to Prizes will be available from participating eateries, as well as the library and community centre, so you can start planning your own delicious adventure through Tawa. Collect stamps as you go for the chance to win prizes, while enjoying a fun and family-friendly way to explore the suburb one bite at a time.

[Tawa's International Food Festival 2026 | Tawa Business Group](#)

Job Board

If you're looking for a new job, look no further than our job board. Always up to date with the latest Tawa-based vacancies, it's a great resource if you're looking to work closer to home: [Job Vacancies in Tawa](#)

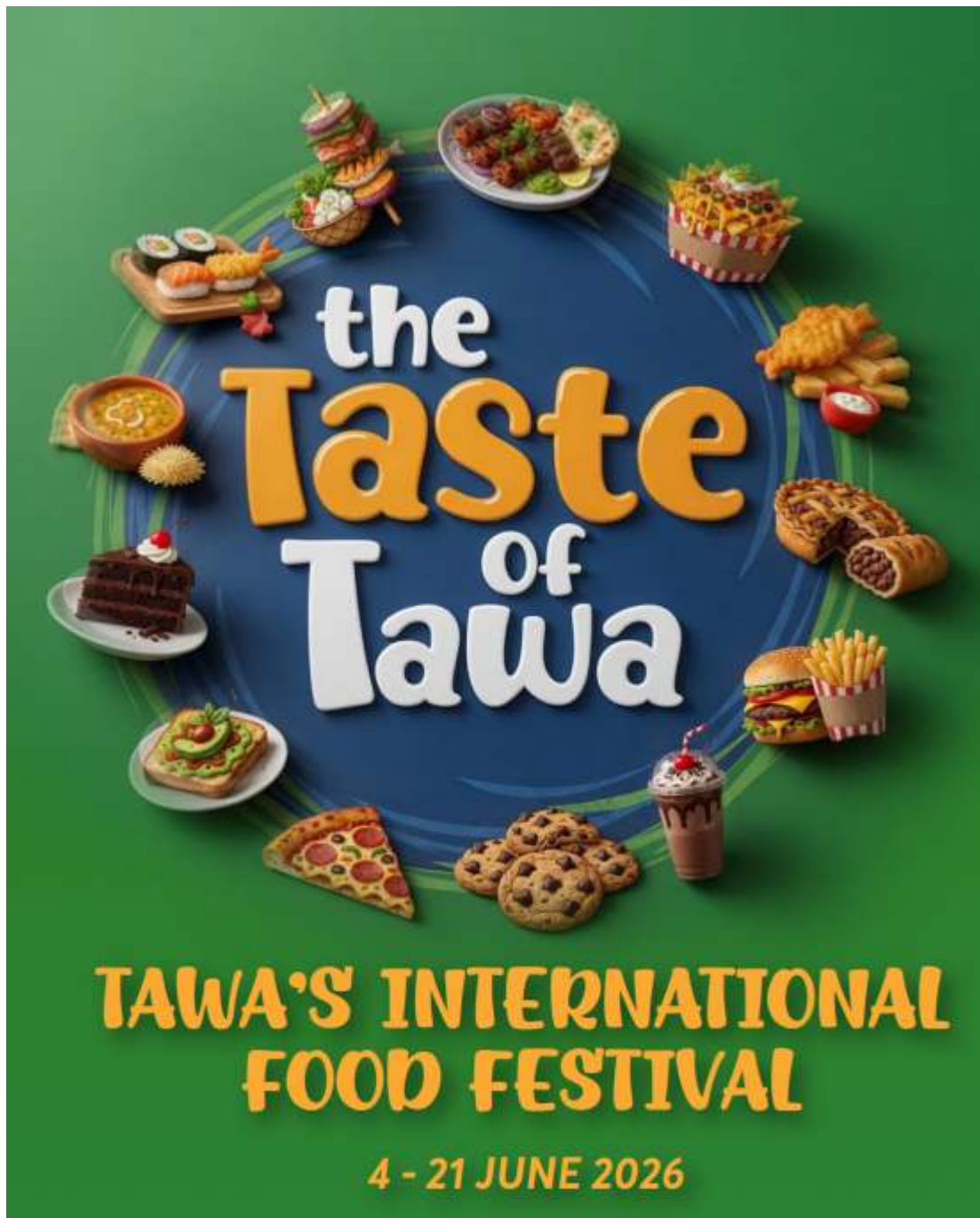
Love Local

Follow us on social media for all the latest news on new businesses and upcoming events:

Facebook: www.facebook.com/tawabusiness/

Instagram: www.instagram.com/tawa_business_group/

LinkedIn: www.linkedin.com/in/tawa-business-improvement-district-bid-87a9a0288/



Citizens Advice Bureau

Keeping Warm This Winter

With colder weather approaching and living costs rising, many households are feeling the strain of higher power bills. If you are struggling to keep warm, there may be help available.

Support you may be eligible for:

- Winter Energy Payment: Around \$20–\$30 per week (May–October) for people on benefits, NZ Super, or a Veteran’s Pension.

- Urgent bill help: Grants or loans for power, gas, or water, plus essential items like heaters or bedding.
- Disability Allowance: Help with ongoing energy costs related to health needs.
- Healthy Homes Initiative: Support with insulation, heating, curtains, and advice.
- Warmer Kiwi Homes: Subsidies for insulation (50–90%) and heating (up to \$3,450).
- Power Credits Scheme: Up to \$110 per year (or \$220 with budgeting support) through your power provider.

Contact your energy provider early; they may offer payment plans or support.

Need help?

CAB Johnsonville offers free, confidential information and advice. We can help you apply for the support you are entitled to. Visit us at 1 Frankmoore Avenue, Monday to Friday, 9.30am–3.30pm, or call 04 370 2500 (ext. 2). No appointment needed.

Tawa Community Centre

1) Fabric and Fibrecraft Meetup

Fabric and Fibrecraft Meetup, Saturday 6 June, 9.30am–11.30am, Tawa Community Centre Drop-in Space

Come along for a relaxed and creative morning of sewing, crafting, and inspiration!

Bring your own sewing, quilting, knitting, crochet, or crafty project to work on, or simply come and have a play with the fabric and supplies we already have available. Whether you're experienced or just keen to try something new, everyone is welcome.

We'll have a sewing machine, overlocker, and plenty of fabric to experiment with. Maybe you'd like to add an embellishment to a top, trim some cuffs or a hem, or start creating something completely new — this is the perfect space to have a go and get creative!

Feel free to bring along any spare fabric, craft supplies, or treasures to swap and share too.

Come and enjoy a fun morning of creativity, chatting, and connecting with

others in our community. 🏳️‍🌈

We'd love to see you there.

2) Orange Sky

Orange Sky has come to Tawa.

Every Tuesday from 10.30am–1pm, based just behind the Tawa Library in the car park, you'll notice a bright orange van.

Orange Sky provides a washer and dryer service, as well as shower facilities, for those experiencing genuine hardship or homelessness. Orange Sky volunteers are also great connectors who value kōrero and conversation.

Make sure to pop over, say hi, and have a chat.

[Orange Sky Aotearoa](#)

3) Friday Quiz

Did you know we have a quiz every Friday morning?

Starting at 11am in the Drop-in Space, we work through the quiz questions from the Dom Post newspaper — so consider this your heads-up if that's something you usually do!

The quiz is often accompanied by a small morning tea 😊

Tawa Library

Join us this June at Mervyn Kemp Library as we celebrate Out on the Shelves (OOTS), Aotearoa's rainbow (LGBTQIA+) reading resource and annual awareness campaign for our rainbow and takatāpui rangatahi (teens). From badge-making and rainbow storytime to zine-making, we have exciting opportunities for young people to kōrero and uplift rainbow stories in our community spaces.

Check our website for the full list of events – Calendar of Events for Wellington City Libraries.



COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

Tawa Historical Society

Flats flattened

One of the last vestiges of the Tawa Borough Council (TBC) was destroyed this past month with the demolition of the former council-built flats in Lyndhurst Road. The TBC provided a group of six small individual units for the suburb's pensioners in the 1980s.

Such was the local pride in this development that an image of the flats featured as part of the set of Tawa postcards produced in the 1980s that has been previously covered in this column.

Since the photograph was taken on 1 May 2026 the site has been completely levelled. A multi-story apartment style block is planned for this site with planning work being undertaken by the Wellington City Council Social housing agency.

Are you interested in local history and contributing to its on-going recording and preservation? If so why not join the Tawa Historical Society? People of all ages and with a range of ancient and modern skills are needed to help keep our history alive.

Our membership application form with details of our bank account for internet banking can be found at <https://tawahistory.org.nz/membership.html>.

David Parsons, Chairman Tawa Historical Society



Conservation Tawa (previously know as Pest Free Tawa)

Last weekend some of our trappers finished installing the remaining traps on our new Caribbean Drive line. These 20 traps will complement the ongoing pest control undertaken by Greater Wellington in this area.

This brings our overall total trapping network to 205!! Comprising 119 traps and 86 bait stations. Our pest management network includes the following areas:

- *Redwood Bush*
- *Larsen Cres Reserve*
- *Forest of Tawa*
- *Woodburn Reserve*
- *Willowbank Reserve*
- *Charles Duncan Reserve*
- *Duncan Park*
- *Grasslees Reserve*
- *Pikitanga Reservek*

Also a shout-out our amazing pest management team, we couldn't undertake this important conservation work without their efforts !!! (thanks everyone)

Through this ongoing work we hope that Tawa notices less of these pests and more of our amazing bird life.



Volunteer trappers Andrew Liley and Graeme Chamberlain inspecting one of our new Caribbean Drive traps

Kete Update

It's planting season! KETE has been up in Takapū Valley planting native species such as harakeke, mānuka, koromiko, and many more. These plants help restore the ecosystem in many ways, including acting as a filter to improve the health of Te Kenepuru Stream.

Working together, it's incredible how much of a difference we can make in just one day, and we can already see the efforts from previous years flourishing. On one of our planting days, we went for a short hīkoi to have a closer look near the top of the stream. The water is much cleaner there, which is inspiring, as the long-term goal is for healthy water to flow all the way to Porirua Harbour.

We've also been keeping up with our once-a-term stream monitoring. This time,

the weather was better, so we could get right into the water in our gumboots to catch bugs, which are identified and then released.

We're inviting everyone in the community to come along to our next Planting Day on 7 June. Whether you're keen to get hands-on with tree planting or just want to have a look at the site and see what we do, we'd love to see you there.

10.00am – 2.30pm

470 Takapū Road

For more information, check out our Facebook or Instagram @kete5028.



Inner Wheel

On Sunday 24 May, the Sprig & Fern was buzzing as the Inner Wheel Club of Tawa hosted a quiz night to support the Tawa Volunteer Fire Brigade and raise funds for its new operations van fit-out. Teams included family and friends, local

businesses, Tawa Community Patrol, Salon Savoy, Tawa Books & Post, Rotary, the Tawa Community Board, Linden School, the RSA, and Brigade members.

Local Tawa College teacher Nich Greenwood-Boot was quizmaster and skilfully ensured it was a memorable evening for everyone.

Thanks to New World, Guardian Funeral Home, Naomi Massage, Golden Rose Nails, StreetWise Coffee, and the Sprig & Fern for their generous raffle donations and hospitality.

The funds raised — more than \$2,000 — will help purchase a fitted drawer and flat-tray storage system for the Brigade's van, enabling equipment to be stored safely and accessed quickly.



Tawa Rotary

Rotary International Tawa is thrilled to announce the return of our epic Book Fair at the Tawa Scout Hall in Coronation Park, Oxford Street, from **Saturday 11 July to Sunday 19 July**.

This isn't just a book sale; it's a celebration of stories, community spirit, and the power of giving back.

And here's the best part — every single book is fresh stock! All leftover books from previous fairs have already found new homes, which means this year's Book Fair is bursting with new treasures, new adventures, and new discoveries waiting just for you.

Every book you pick up helps fund local community projects, making your next great read part of something bigger — something that strengthens and uplifts the Tawa community.

Come for the books. Stay for the magic. Leave knowing you've made a difference.

See you at the Book Fair!



Tawa RSA

Mid-Winter Christmas Dinner

Mid-Winter Christmas Dinner – Saturday 20 June, 5.00pm start.

\$25 per person, children half price. Bookings and pre-payment are required to assist with catering.

There will also be 10 fabulous raffles, with tickets just \$2 each.

If you would like to purchase tickets for the dinner or the raffles, please email tawa.rsa@xtra.co.nz with your name and the details of your purchase.

Have you served? Or do you know anyone who has? You may be eligible for support from our Poppy Trust. Contact us by emailing tawa.rsa@xtra.co.nz to be put in contact with our support officers.

Follow us on facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RSATawa>

Tawa RSA
Mid Winter Dinner

RAFFLE DRAWS

SPOT PRIZES

SATURDAY 20 JUNE
FROM 5PM, DINNER SERVED AT 6PM GF OPTIONS AVAILABLE

\$25 PER PERSON
* CHILDREN UNDER 12, HALF PRICE

SAVE THE DATE AND PLEASE ATTEND WITH YOUR FAMILY, TO BOOK TICKETS EMAIL TAWA.RSA@XTRA.CO.NZ
BOOKINGS AND PREPAYMENT ESSENTIAL

SPRIG + FERN
TAWA

NW NEW WORLD

Guardian
Funeral Home

INTERESTS

Book Corner

As we arrive in the month of Pipiri, June, and the beginning of Takurua, Winter, it's the perfect time to curl up, get cosy, and enjoy some great reads.

A wonderful place to start could be the recent winners of the Ockham New Zealand Book Awards — congratulations to all the winners, finalists, Judges and those behind the scenes for all their hard mahi.

Personally, Mr Ward's Maps is already on my history shelf and I'm in agreement with the Judge's citation - "Innovative, engaging and inherently human, Mr Ward's Map is a celebration of research, storytelling, and archives. Elizabeth Cox deployed one historic cartographic document as the foundation for a superbly written publication that bridges multiple world views and time periods – highlighting one source and how it resonates in the contemporary moment." As my whānau settled in the Te Whanganui-a-Tara region, I'm hoping to add our own kōrero, so it becomes part of our whānau historical collection.

Pipiri also brings an exciting local event - Taste of Tawa, 4 - 21 June 2026, celebrating the incredible dishes and flavours of our foodie community. Inspired by this, we've gathered a collection of beautiful cookbooks, perfect for trying something new, planning a whānau gathering over Matariki.

From award-winning fiction and fascinating history to comforting winter cookbooks, we hope you find something special to enjoy this season.

Ngā manaakitanga Rowena & the team at Tawa Books & Post

<https://www.tawabooksandpost.co.nz/collections/book-corner>

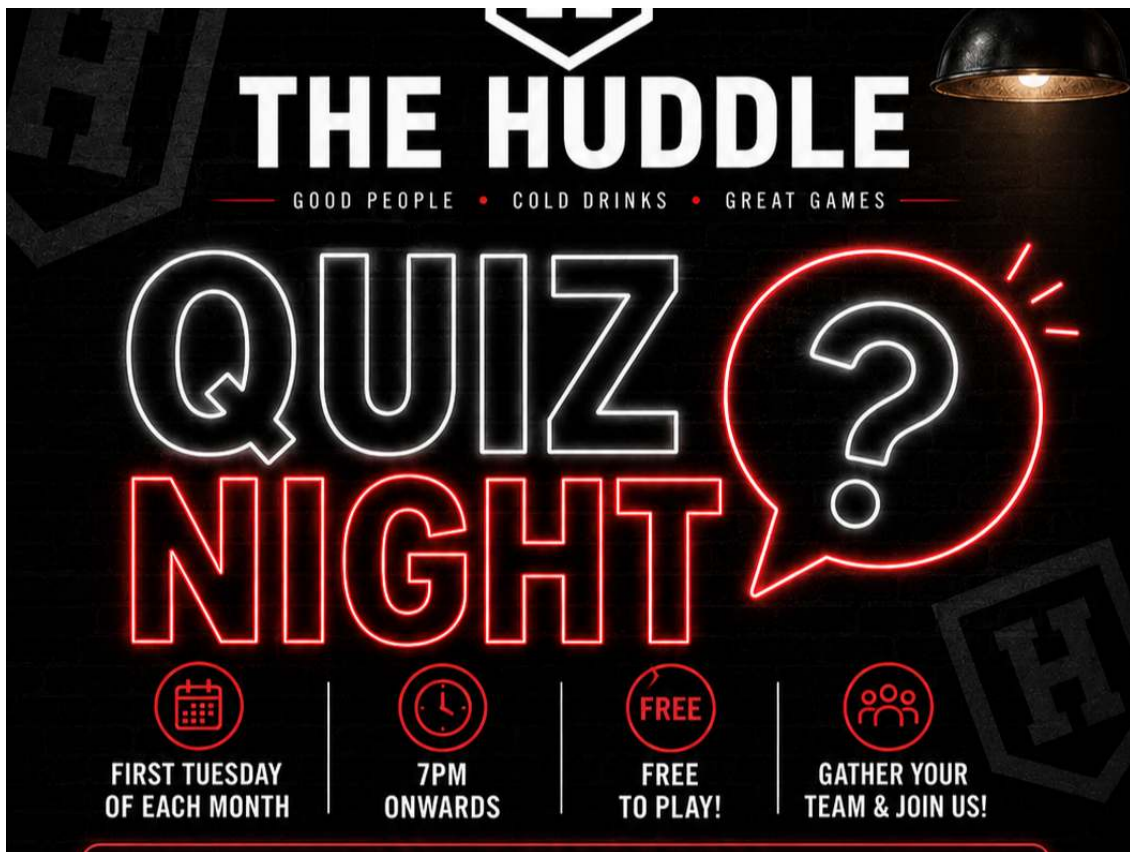


The Huddle

Quiz Night, starting Tuesday, 2nd June, and happening on the first Tuesday of every month

Event Details:

- Quiz Night – First Tuesday of Every Month
- Starting: Tuesday, 2nd June
- Venue: The Huddle Sports Bar Tawa
- Time: 7 PM



JAB Creative

Two upcoming events:

Both to be held at the Salvation Army Hall

Monday 8 June 7pm cost \$10

Watercolour Painting Session "Birth flowers and quotes"

Saturday 18th July 10am-2pm

Mid-winter Makers Market

25 stalls local artisans



Spring into Tawa

Some important information and dates...

📍 Mexted Motors Spring into Tawa will be held on Saturday 17 October, 10am - 3pm

📍 The event will be held on the Main Road in Tawa, between Oxford Street and Surrey Street, and including side streets - Elena Place, Cambridge Street (between Main Road and Oxford Street) and Essex Street

📱 All the information that you'll need is on our website - www.springintotawa.nz

📅 14 Stallholder applications will open on 14 June

📱 All applications will need to be made through [StallHub - Market Management Platform NZ](https://stallhub.nz).

📱 You can prepare by setting up your free profile on StallHub now - this will also mean you get a notification when applications open in June www.stallhub.nz

📅 14 The initial stallholder intake closes on 12 July

✔ Successful Stallholders will be notified by 24 July - we curate our stallholder offering to ensure a focus on community, quality local made and variety

📅 We will operate a waitlist if needed and if you're initially not able to be accommodated - and we'll let you know as soon as we can if we can include you in our event



Kowhai Therapeutic Services

We have been moving around Tawa over the last few weeks talking about our counselling services with our neighbours. It has been a reminder that Tawa is a place where things are made — light and heavy industry supported by predominantly male workforces. Shift work, physical demands, and tight-knit but sometimes stoic workplace cultures can make it harder for men to notice or name what they are carrying emotionally.

This has made us think about the particular mental health needs of men, and the ideas about masculinity that can still get in the way of seeking support. We hope those ideas are gradually fading, because we feel genuinely proud of the number of men who reach out for counselling — and of the men training to become counsellors themselves.

Happily, there are more places than ever to turn. Organisations like MATES in Construction New Zealand and MenzShed New Zealand put men's health and wellbeing at their centre, offering resources, fellowship, group support and confidential guidance. Websites like Tough Talk and MensGroup are also worth exploring.

And if you are looking for one-on-one counselling, at Kōwhai Therapeutic Services on Main Road in Tawa you'll find professional, caring counsellors — men and women — who can help you make sense of what's going on for you. Visit [Kōwhai Therapeutic Services](http://www.kowhaiwellbeinggroup.com) to read more about us and book a free initial chat. You don't have to figure it out alone.



Kōwhai
STEPHANIE O'BRIEN - CEO
Well-being Consultant, Facilitator and Counsellor

📞 027 415 4715
🌐 www.kowhaiwellbeinggroup.com
📍 Level 1, 84 Main Road, Tawa Business Park, Tawa



www.kowhaiwellbeinggroup.com

Tawa Scottish Country Dance Club

Scottish Country Dancing in Tawa

Now that winter is setting in, this is a good time to learn a new indoor activity that will keep you fit, both physically and mentally.

Come and join the Tawa Scottish Country Dance Club for an introduction to Scottish social dancing. Friendly people, lively toe-tapping music, and a lot of fun.

In July, the Tawa SCD Club will be offering a series of five introductory classes from 7.30 pm to 8.30 pm as part of our weekly club nights, starting on Thursday 2 July. This is an opportunity for people to learn the basics of Scottish country dancing, and then join club nights on a regular basis if they wish.

The Tawa Scottish Country Dance Club meets every Thursday night at 7.30 pm at the Tawa Bowling Club, 13 Davies Street, Tawa.

Scottish country dancing is the traditional social dancing of Scotland and is suitable for people of all ages — from teenagers to well beyond retirement age.

It is danced in groups of six or eight people (as opposed to Highland dancing, which is individual and high-energy). Anyone with a reasonable level of mobility can dance. A sense of rhythm would be an advantage.

The club consists of about 40 members, and we are always keen to encourage new dancers to join us. Our lovely tutor, Catherine McCutcheon, is a certificated teacher with the world-wide Royal Scottish Country Dance Society.

To find out more about Scottish country dancing and the club, check out our website, tawascd.org.nz. If you are interested in coming along to our beginners' classes, please contact club secretary Désirée at tawa@dancescottish.org.nz or call 021 118 4202.



Big brothers, big sisters of Wellington

Some of our Tawa College school-based teen mentors recently had the chance to experience the excitement of live basketball thanks to our growing partnership with the Mills Albert Wellington Saints.

Reuben, Aniska, Shylah and Isaac attended the Saints home game at TSB Arena, where they not only enjoyed the atmosphere of top-level basketball, but also had the opportunity to meet Saints player Sam Gold after the game. For the students, seeing someone who once attended Tawa College now playing professionally made the experience even more meaningful and relatable.

Vanessa Martin, Mentor Coordinator for the Tawa School-Based Teen Programme, said the opportunity was a special way to recognise the commitment these young people bring to mentoring.

“Our teen mentors give up part of their lunch break every week to spend time with younger students, building trust, connection and confidence. Opportunities like this are a small way of giving something back to them and acknowledging the care, leadership and consistency they bring to the programme. In the short time they have been mentoring, we can already see the positive impact they

are having.”

Research shows that one of the strongest protective factors for young people is having a positive, consistent role model in their life outside of their immediate family circle. Studies highlight that rangatahi who feel connected to caring and capable people in their school and wider community are more likely to experience positive wellbeing, stronger resilience and better social and emotional outcomes. Many young people face challenges that can impact confidence, learning and mental health, but supportive relationships can help build the sense of belonging, trust and encouragement they need to thrive. Through our school-based teen mentoring programme, younger students have someone in their corner at school each week. Someone who listens, shows up consistently and helps them feel seen and valued. At the same time, our teen mentors develop leadership, empathy and confidence of their own, creating positive connections that strengthen the whole school community.

The partnership between Big Brothers Big Sisters Wellington and the Mills Albert Wellington Saints is about far more than basketball tickets. It reflects a shared commitment to supporting local tamariki and rangatahi and creating opportunities for young people to feel inspired, connected and valued. Experiences like this reinforce to our young people that their contribution matters and that their community is backing them.

At [Big Brothers Big Sisters of Wellington](#), we believe every young person should have someone in their corner. Community partnerships play an essential role in helping us create positive experiences, strengthen belonging and open doors for the young people we support. Partnerships like this not only enrich the lives of our tamariki and rangatahi, but also help build a stronger, more connected community for everyone.

We are incredibly grateful to the Mills Albert Wellington Saints for supporting our mentoring community and helping create experiences our young people will remember for years to come.

If your business or organisation is interested in partnering with Big Brothers Big Sisters Wellington to support local young people, we would love to hear from you.



Left to right - Aniska, Reuben, Shylah, Sam Gold (Saints), friend, friend and Isaac.

Carolyn's Garden Corner

As we approach the halfway mark of the year, our gardens can begin to look a little gloomy.

The last of the late summer perennials have been cut down, and most of the brilliant sunset shades of autumn foliage have fallen and been swept away (hopefully into perforated black bags to rest for 12 months, resulting in the black gold that is fresh leaf mould).

It doesn't need to be too depressing though. Sometimes you just need to change your perspective and look a little closer on your wanderings around the garden. The pared-back landscape uncovers small treasures that have been hidden away during the bounteous months. Primroses that have sat in the background for months may be starting to bloom, early bulbs such as the "summer" snowflake, *Leucojum aestivum*, began blooming a couple of weeks ago, Algerian iris sports new flowers every day, and some later chrysanthemums are still yet to wow us with their wonderful blooms.

One way to brighten your day is to plant front porch pots with instant colour spots. They bring a smile to your face on opening the front door and welcome you home with cheery colour at the end of a tiring workday. Colour spots, also known as instant colour, are generally flowering annuals that have been brought on early to produce blooms ahead of the main season. They are more expensive than your usual punnet of annuals, at around \$3 per plant, but as the name implies they make an immediate impact.

They are great to use on top of pots that have been planted with spring bulbs. The bulb leaves and flower stems will ultimately take over the flowers, but by then the colour spots will have done the job they were intended to do, bridging the gap between main flowering seasons.

If you have large-flowered clematis that bloom in summer, now is the time to cut the thin woody stems down to two or three buds from the base. In spring you will be rewarded with stems that branch out to create a fuller display. These new stems can be left to scramble through shrubs that will have finished flowering before the clematis starts, or they can be tied onto fence panels to be a feature in their own right. Some clematis suffer badly from mildew. If you spray, you can include clematis in your usual rose routine to combat this.

If the birds aren't keeping up with the snail population in your garden, and you are witnessing unacceptable damage, start up evening hunts and provide a feast for nearby chickens. Some damage is tolerable once precious plants are large enough to withstand it; however, when small, one night's attack can see an entire bed decimated.

The shortest day, around 22 June, is the traditional time to plant garlic. More recent thinking and experimentation have shown that getting the cloves in the ground a little earlier can make a difference to the size of your harvest. If you haven't planted yet, waste no time in doing so.

If rhubarb crowns are old and congested, now is the time to divide and replant them into enriched soil. Growth is slow in cold temperatures, so there is no need to waste money on liquid feeding.

I don't tend to plant vegetables in June as our garden doesn't get enough sun during winter. This results in plants sitting in damp soil and bolting straight to seed once the weather warms up — a waste of money, despite the punnets of fresh vegetables tempting me from garden centre shelves.

If you also share such an environment, and you haven't got established plants growing, cover the bed with compost and bide your time. Spring and warmer temperatures will arrive soon enough.

If you are lucky enough to enjoy good sun on your vegetable beds, you can continue to plant Asian greens, brassicas, spinach and peas during these colder weeks.

It is a good time to prepare soil for planting. Soon it will be time to plant bare-root fruit trees, roses and deciduous shrubs.

Flowers seem more tolerant, so I am continuing to plant pansies, primulas, polyanthus, violas, alyssum, wallflowers and poppies wherever there is space. Seeds sown at the start of autumn are ready to grow on now, so there is plenty

of work to do in potting sheds and glasshouses if you are lucky enough to have them. A bench in the garage does just as well if not.

A dear friend is moving away and, as a result, I have inherited her potted lily collection — minus the pots.

I really didn't plan on adding more lilies to my garden, but what was I to do? I couldn't bear the thought of them going to landfill, which is where they were headed. Even more poignant is that I had a long-standing history with some of those bulbs — I planted them for her mother many years ago, and my friend had inherited them from her.

In the same manner, I have a Hippeastrum bulb that has been passed down to me from my great-grandmother. When it lived in my grandparents' glasshouse it had a beautiful large red flower every year but never seemed to multiply. When it passed to me it flowered in the first year but never since (it lives outside here). It has, however, multiplied generously, so I will be able to hand them on to my children and possibly grandchildren one day.

Plants are great like that. They are often around for longer than we are, so they can be passed from generation to generation. Such a wonderful way to remember those gone before us.

As always, take time to enjoy your garden as it is, but keep thinking ahead to how you would like it to be next season.

One of the greatest joys in gardening is how you can change it to look completely different from year to year. Imagine, plan and make it happen.

Happy gardening.

Find Carolyn's garden on Facebook here: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100067872369384>



SPORTS GROUPS

Badminton Club

Wellington North Badminton are incredibly proud to announce that two of our teams have qualified for the prestigious Slazenger Cup, New Zealand's premier badminton event.

We are the only teams from the lower North Island to earn qualification for this elite competition, taking place in early June 2026.

Adding to this success, we are also thrilled to have seven junior teams heading to the New Zealand Junior Team Championships during the upcoming school holidays.

These teams feature players ranging in age from 11 through to 18 years, showcasing the strength and depth of our development pathway. It's inspiring to see so many of our athletes representing Wellington North on the national stage — from emerging juniors to high-performance senior players.



<https://www.northcitycricketclub.co.nz>

Bowling Club

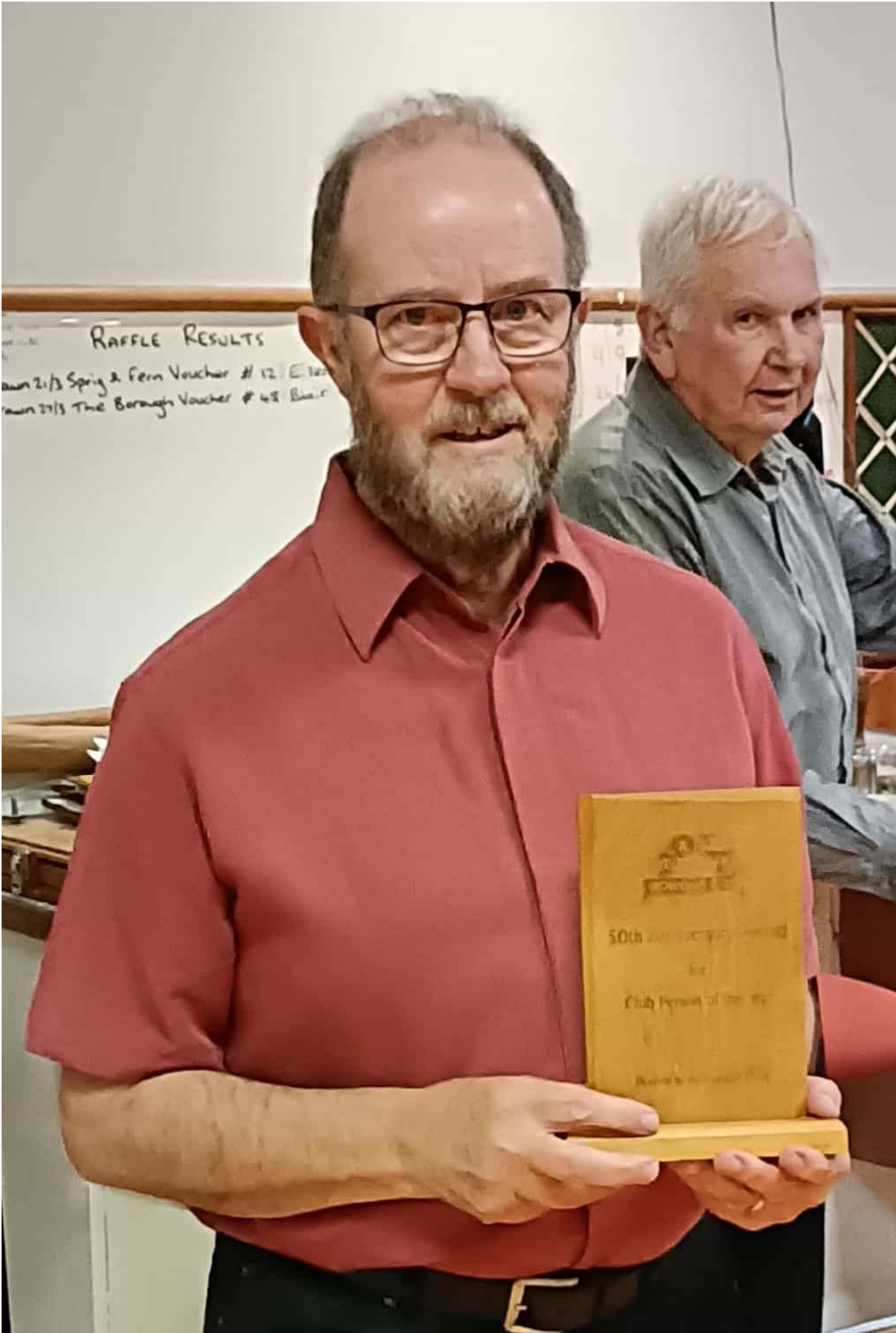
Taw Bowling Club Prize Giving

Friday May 1st saw the Bowling Club's Closing dinner and Prizegiving night.

This was well attended and an enjoyable night was had by all.

Pictured below is the Club Person of the Year which was awarded to Peter van

Oossanen for the work he does producing the Wrong Bias, creating event flyers, maintaining the Club's Sporty website, compiling the programme, maintaining the membership list, publishing the Club Handbook and Board documents like the new Constitution and Health & Safety Manual, phew.



Squash Club

CURRENT PROGRAMMES

Mondays from 7pm – Have a Go club nights for Senior players (over 19yrs). Just \$5 (free for 1st session or for club members)

Friday from 5pm – Junior Club Night for 5yrs – 18 yrs. Beginners at 5pm, advanced at 5:45. Run by Matt Green, award winning Coach.

Thursday 4pm – Squash Stars for 5 – 12 year olds – a Squash NZ developed initiative run by trained activators, 6 week programme just \$60.

Monday 4pm – Junior Squash Coaching – entry level from 4pm, advanced from 4:45. 8 weeks at \$115/term. Run by Matt Green

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5 MINUTES WITH



Five minutes with Carla Bates

Where were you born?

I was born in Essex, just northeast of London in the UK.

Where did you grow up?

I spent the first 18 years of my life including my schooling in Essex where I was born.

In what towns/cities have you lived over the years?

Romford, Essex where I grew up, Nottingham (for university), Glasgow and Wellington.

How long have you lived in Tawa?

13 years, we moved here after arriving in Wellington In 2010

What about family?

I live with my partner and our two children who go to local schools. My mother-in-law also moved to Tawa recently which has been great. All the rest of our immediate family live In the UK and Europe.

Work experience over the years:

I have spent most of my career in the environmental field, using my training as an environmental scientist. I started out in contaminated land, then found out that environmental advisory roles meant I could help manage a broad range of environmental, cultural and community impacts which I loved. I have worked in construction, rail and now electricity infrastructure. I have also been doing part-time board roles over the last few years. I am about to start a secondment focusing on climate adaptation and have been working more in this space. The community resilience aspect is something that is very close to my heart.

What do you like about Tawa?

Not sure there is enough space in this section to write the full list! I love the good community vibe we have here, the stunning hills, the range of bush and wildlife, all the business and facilities we have on our doorstep (it's been great with a young family), being able to commute to the CBD on the train in 10 mins and being able to walk to everything.

What would you like to see improved in Tawa?

I walk the suburb a lot with our dog and to do school drop off, etc and often find it hard to cross roads safely especially with my children in tow. Given how close all our services are, how many schools we have and all the housing Intensification, I would like to see pedestrian-safe access given more priority. I also feel strongly that we need to build climate resilience for our suburb, and that is something that needs to be community-centric as well as driven within the community.

What are your interests and hobbies?

I don't have a huge amount of spare time between family life, working full-time and my Tawa Community board role – but my garden is my happy place. I

spend time in it most weekends and love growing kai in our greenhouse from seed where I can. We also have a dog and I am the main dog walker in the household which does not feel like a chore as I love the views around Tawa and bumping into locals on my walks. I love baking on wet weather weekends too. My partner also runs a lot in events around the country for fun, and a perk of being support crew is getting to join for the road trips.

What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?

I would have to say Kaiteriteri, near Nelson. I have many fond memories there and I love the sound of the birds at dusk as well as the scenery. Other favourite places to visit are Greytown and Whanganui.

What accomplishments/ achievements in your life give you the most satisfaction/ pride?

My small humans make me proud every day. I also love that we moved to Aotearoa and feel very blessed to call this place home. I wake up on workdays with a sense a purpose because I have chosen to focus on a career that protects the environment and the needs of communities, and that has been a very deliberate action for me.

What are two or three interesting things about you that local people may not know?

I spent two months living on a beach in Madagascar, as part of a marine scientific expedition and my OE. That's also where I met my partner for the first time!

I also almost ended up in the British Navy, but had a change of heart.

What are two or three things you would like to do in the next 10-20 years?

I would love to take my family to Japan – it's been on the bucket list for a while! Towards the latter part of that time I aspire to move to part-time work and have more time to volunteer for community groups.

Why did you want to become a community board member and what do you hope to achieve in that role during your term?

My key passions are having a healthy environment, climate resilience and youth empowerment. I had been doing board roles but I wanted to focus on things closer to home, and as it happens I had presented to the prior community board on climate resilience and they suggested I should put my hat in the ring! I hope to raise awareness of the need to adapt to more frequent severe weather events, and galvanise some further community action in this space. I see this topic connects closely with my other two passions.

NEXT TRA MEETING

The Tawa Residents' Association's monthly meetings are open to the public. Feel free to come along. We are always open to new people joining the committee, helping out, or sharing ideas.

We meet upstairs at the Tawa Squash Club on the second Monday every other month, at 7.30 p.m. The next meeting is AGM on Monday 8th June.

We look forward to meeting you!



Monique
The Tawa Residents' Association

This email was sent to chris@owdjim.gen.nz

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