

THE LOCAL Karori

NGĀ KARERE HAPORI O KARORI

NEW HOUSING AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT OPENS



A new housing and commercial development now open in Karori will bring a new lease of life to the town centre.

The precinct opened at the end of July, on the corner of Campbell Street and Karori Road, a spot known by some as Campbell Corner.

The housing development, called Aho, has been carried out by Stratum Management and includes 20 townhouses. It includes three commercial units.

The opening comes at a tough time for Karori and the city, with some local retailers struggling.

Read more on page 3. ➤

In this issue:

09 Good
Companions
celebrates 60 years

11 National's
hope for
Wellington North

13 Phil
Wisker the
rat nemesis

15 Zee the
priceless
mall cat

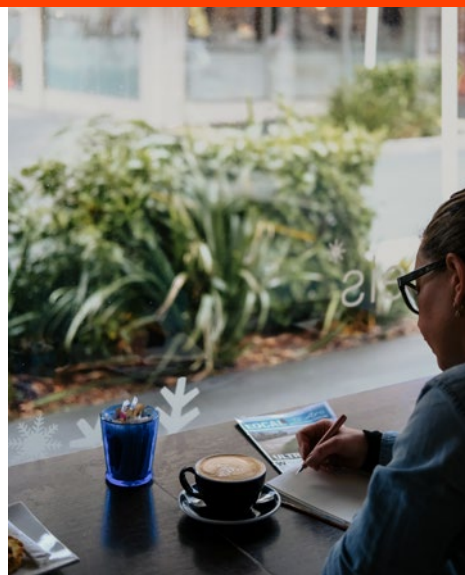
Write your Welly life – writing workshop

Join columnist **Leah McFall** and journalist/Substacker **Dan Keane** for a workshop exploring the joys of writing both the city and the self, and learn some simple techniques to capture your own role in the capital's great drama.

Workshop includes one free drink, and nibbles.

This workshop is brought to you by *The Local*, Wellington's community newspaper and an enthusiastic supporter of emerging writers and journalists, and will be hosted by editor **Jane O'Loughlin**.

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New retail and housing development opens

A new housing and commercial development now open in Karori will bring a new lease of life to the town centre, at a time when the retail sector is struggling. **Rowena Fry** talks to some of the shop owners on our own 'K Road'.

The new housing and commercial property development at 235 Karori Road has now launched. The project, developed by Stratum Management, includes 20 townhouses and three commercial units.

The development at 'Campbell Corner' came about when the Wellington City Council merged the site of the old St John Church with the adjoining property at 6 Campbell Street, in order to "achieve quality urban-design results" as part of the Karori Town Centre Redevelopment Project.

According to the developers, five of the properties have sold already, and two of the commercial tenancies have been secured.

The new opening is a positive sign during a difficult economic time for the community.

Karori retailers *The Local* spoke to told us people are spending less time and money in shops on discretionary items.

Welly Collective branch in Karori Mall is now closing after 10 months. Co-owner and co-founder Libby Dearnley echoes others' experiences due to both the price of fuel and job insecurity. "We received great community support in terms of feedback, kind comments, and appreciation for what we do, but without the sales to match the enthusiasm it was not a sustainable location for us."

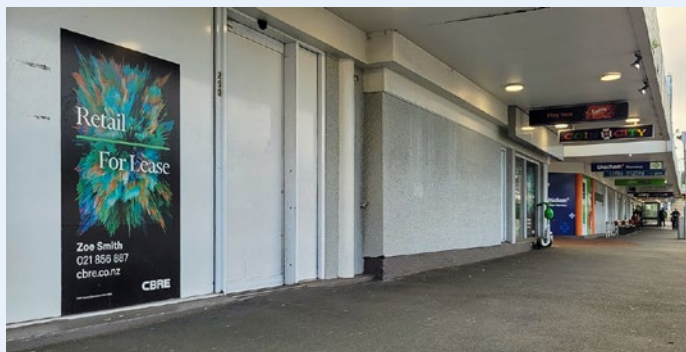
Richele McKenzie who owns Florence Boutique in Marsden Village for 17 years, recently sent out a plea on social media: "Come in and check out our bargains, and save us from our worst trading week this year!"

Nearby, Goblin Games appears to be almost bucking the trend. A staff member suggests that because people have less money to spend on going out, a board game that can be used many times over is gradually becoming the go-to for entertainment. Families especially are choosing to spend quality time together old-school style.

This shift in spending reflects a broader message for Karori's businesses: when residents choose to spend locally, carefully considered purchases can make a meaningful difference.

Bill McDonald, manager of the Karori Business Association, says that while it is always sad to see local favourites like Welly Collective close, there are still plenty of reasons for cautious optimism in Karori. "Our best asset is our community. Karori has a population of over 15,000. If local residents choose to spend more of their weekly budget locally – whether grabbing a meal, shopping for groceries, buying gifts, or using local services – we can protect the heart of our suburb." **TL**

"If local residents choose to spend more of their weekly budget locally...we can protect the heart of our suburb."



Empty shops resulting from a struggling local economy.

Buy local or watch our shops disappear

It's pretty easy in this modern world to be seduced by the marketing that turns up on our phones and tablets, via social media and email.

It's very easy to click away, and order something glamorous or fun looking on the internet, because it looks like all the cool kids have got one, or it's promising to take 10 years off your appearance.

But every dollar we send off overseas – where so many of these offers originate from – is a dollar we are not spending with our local shops and businesses.

Local shops used to thrive because geography made a difference – in many cases we had no alternative to shop nearby because we couldn't practically travel further.

Cheap car travel was the first thing that changed that, but only really at a city level. Now internet access means we can buy from anywhere in the world.

We may think we're buying a bargain but at what

cost? Often, stuff on the internet looks like quality, but when it turns up it's not. The effort to return it is too much, so it goes straight to the bin. Basically we pay to import rubbish, and then we have to make room in our landfills to dispose of it.

The other cost of buying online is to our communities. Most of us appreciate having our local shops, cafes and restaurants. We like to know they are there but we so often take them for granted and assume they will be there come hell or highwater.

Unfortunately that's not true. Retail is doing it hard in this tough economic slump. Shops are closing and those that remain are struggling.

The good news is you can make a difference. Go out and shop in our local shops. As it happens, the Karori Business Association now has a great directory of local businesses to help you. Support those people who are part of our community and who contribute to the colour and character of lives by running cafes and shops. Those people who we see every day or every week, and whose familiar faces create our sense of place.

Because if you don't, they might disappear. **TL**



Jane O'Loughlin
Editor

THE LOCAL COMMUNITY NEWS

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Subscribe to the electronic edition via our website: **the-local.co.nz**

Design: **homestudio.nz**

Amalgamation feedback

More than 3000 people submitted their views to the Wellington City Council on a proposed amalgamation with neighbouring councils.

The council says it is now reviewing and analysing the feedback, and a summary will inform the Mayor and Councillors to help inform their decision-making as they consider whether to support submitting a Wellington region proposal.

The council also scheduled two public forums on 29 and 30 July for people to speak in person.

The council emphasised that the Government's tight deadline mean formal consultation was not possible.

"If a Wellington region proposal is accepted and progressed through to detailed design, we expect to consult with the community at that next stage."

New water bills on their way

The first separate water bills issued by new water entity Tiaki Wai will start arriving with residents this month.

Tiaki Wai took over responsibility for the delivery of water services from councils on 1 July 2026. Water charges are being removed from council rates bills, and will be billed by Tiaki Wai instead. Bills for Wellington City Council properties are going out from 29 July 2026.

The way water is charged will remain the same in year one, according to the agency.

"This year, Tiaki Wai water services charges are calculated in a similar way to how councils calculated them previously, using a mix of fixed charges and charges based on the capital value of your property.

"Over time, Tiaki Wai plans to move to a single regionwide pricing system, where charges are consistent across the region. There will be public consultation before decisions are made."

According to the calculator on the website, a house valued at \$1m in Wellington City would pay \$2,550 a year for water charges.



Hip hop help

Karori hip hop performers Daniel and Tara are looking for community support to help them win a world dance title.

The duo known as DT Power have qualified for the Hip Hop Unite World Championships, taking place this year in New Zealand.

As well as competition as cadet duo DT Power, they are also part of cadet mega crew Revolution, the crew that placed in the top 8 at HHU World Championships in Prague last year.

They are seeking local sponsorship opportunities ranging from \$100 up to \$500. They have also launched a Givealittle campaign with a goal of \$5,000 to cover costs like travel and uniforms.

Donate now at: givealittle.co.nz/cause/dynamic-dance-duo-dt-power. Follow their journey: Instagram: [@dtpower.nz](https://www.instagram.com/dtpower.nz). Facebook: [facebook.com/share/1B7YU5y7m4](https://www.facebook.com/share/1B7YU5y7m4)

Sick birds

People worried about bird flu are being urged to stay away from sick or dead birds.

The global H5N1 bird flu has been detected in individual wild birds in New Zealand.

The Ministry for Primary Industries advises that if you see three or more sick or dead wild birds, marine mammals or other wildlife, report it via **0800 80 99 66**.

If you own pet birds or poultry you should watch for signs of illness.

Karori Vet Clinic told the public not to bring sick birds in without phoning ahead first for advice. The clinic said that anyone who spotted one or two sick or dead native birds should call the Department of Conservation hotline: **0800 DOC HOT (0800 362 468)**.



Community Networks Wellington

Are you in a community organisation looking for support, advocacy, and connection with others in the sector?

CNW meets monthly with sessions alternating between catch-ups and guest panels focusing on a special topic, while our newsletter offers affordable or free community training and many other resources. The newsletter and network meetings are a great way to keep in the know about local happenings.



Contact Debbie: office@cnw.org.nz
or check out: cnw.org.nz

To join our network go to: cnw.org.nz/organisations



Marsden & Chelsea Clubs



Day Programme for those with dementia, cognitive or other conditions

The Marsden Club in Newcombe Crescent, Karori, (and the Chelsea Club in Lyall Bay) provide high quality, professional day programmes for people with dementia and other cognitive conditions. Funding from Health NZ is usually available.

For more information contact: Angela 027 349 9691 or visit: marsdenclub.org.nz

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Left: Phil Wisker demonstrates how to bait and set a rat trap for Charlie Kettle, who walks a trapline as part of his volunteering work towards a Duke of Edinburgh Bronze Award.

Every trapline counts – can you help?

Predator Free Karori desperately needs more volunteers to check its traplines. As Lee-Anne Duncan reports, it's a pursuit perfect for teens completing their Duke of Edinburgh awards.

Karori has made great gains in the fight against rats, with residents setting backyard traps and dedicated volunteers monitoring traplines. However, that progress is under threat due to a drop-off in volunteers.

"I need about fifteen volunteers to cover the traplines, and at the moment" says Phil Wisker, Predator Free Karori's volunteer coordinator.

Over the past five years, 5000 rats have been caught in backyard traps or traplines. Last year 540 were killed, so there are still plenty of the invasive species out there. However, if a trapline has no assigned volunteer, it's not being cleared and re-baited. That means fewer rats are being removed.

There are few requirements to volunteer for a trapline. People should be comfortable in the bush, although the traplines are close to roads, and they should own stout boots and gloves. Not being too

sensitive to "weird and wonderful sights and smells" is an advantage, Phil says, since releasing dead rats from the snap traps is an essential part of the job. The peanut butter bait is supplied.

Timewise, Phil asks volunteers to walk their assigned trapline once a fortnight, clearing the five to ten traps on each line. "It usually takes about an hour. Some people do it on their way home from work."

Phil says the ideal candidate is a teenager completing the voluntary hours required to achieve a Duke of Edinburgh Award. "I've had four contenders through and they were great. All they have to do is put me down as their reference, come and clock up their hours, then I write them a glowing reference."

Charlie Kettle started trapping when he was in Year 8 and, now in Year 10, is working towards his Bronze Award. "When I started Duke of Edinburgh, volunteering with Predator Free Karori was an easy choice. It's rewarding knowing that even checking a trapline near Birdwood Crescent is making a small difference in protecting our native wildlife for the future."

Phil says the traplines are a vital part of what Predator Free Wellington – for which he is an Eradication Technical Officer – calls the "knock down stage", where locals trap as many rats, stoats and weasels as they can.

Their efforts prepare the way for the eradication programme's "Phase three", where Predator Free Wellington turns its spotlight on the area that includes Karori. That might happen in a couple of years' time, Phil says, and that's when the whole community can play its part.

"We'll have people knocking on doors in Karori, asking if we can put a trap or a bait station in their backyard. We've already given out 1500 traps in Karori, but it's hard to know if people check their traps as they don't always report their rats," Phil says.

"This is a whole-of-community project. Without the community, all this doesn't work. So, if you have a trap, please check it, clear it, and reset it. The fewer rats, stoats and weasels, the safer our native species are." 

To order a rat trap for your backyard, email pfkarori@gmail.com. A \$10 koha is requested.



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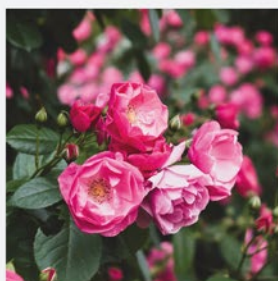
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Long lasting and very good companions

Rowena Fry checks in on long-running social meet-up group, Good Companions, on the run up to its 60th birthday.

On the fourth Tuesday of the month, February to November, a large and loyal gathering of around 40 retirees and locals comes to meet at St Teresa's Church hall for a couple of hours of social connection, quality entertainment, and delicious food.

Although most of the group are Karori locals, the non-denominational event attracts regulars and newbies from all around Pōneke. The monthly events are a solid and unmissable part of many folk's calendar; so much so, that one member, Gloria, (who recently moved to Hawke's Bay) still regularly travels down each month in a car.

Kathie Ross is one of the group's many volunteers, and also the chairperson.

"I remember as a young mum bringing my mother-in-law," she says. Years later, she became a regular, first agreeing to do the flowers for the tables a decade ago, and now also happily slotting in to do whatever job is deemed necessary on the day. This can be preparing food, serving the meals, welcoming new and returning guests, or clearing up at the end of the session.

As well as delivering a delicious lunch for the attendees, entertainment is provided for the group



Many say the best thing about Good Companions is the friendships gained over the years.

who range in age from 60 to 97 years old.

"We've had jazz bands, singers, dancers. It's different each month," says Kathie. "There's quizzes, bingo, speakers, the children singing from St Teresa's, and Marsden. They're wonderful!"

Many arrive courtesy of the Karori Community Bus, car, bus, or by foot, including a couple of van loads of folk from the St John of God residential home on Messines Road. The flat access into the church hall makes light work for those with mobility aids.

The friendly atmosphere greets you as soon as you enter the church hall where your name tag is ready to pick up. Then it's time to meet new people and catch up with friends at the tables before the entertainment begins. Then the food arrives speedily, served by an army of willing volunteers: in winter it's soup, sandwiches, and a slice. Not bad for \$7.

In September Good Companions will celebrate its 60th birthday and this is one of the few times that people must register. The event is catered, the menu different, and the meal generous. Good Companions continues to prove that good food, friendship, and a warm welcome never go out of style. **TL**

Good Companions 60th

Tuesday 22 Sept, 11am – 1pm approx. St Teresa's Hall, 299 Karori Road. Bookings are essential: Kathie Ross **022 157 5653**

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Pitts takes a pop

The ambition to be a politician started at least 20 years ago for National's Wellington North candidate – but an influential person told him to get a career first. Jane O'Loughlin reports.

Johnathan Pitts got to know John Key at an event for Rotary scholars in the early 2000s. He asked the Prime Minister how to get into politics.

"He said, 'Nah, don't go into politics. Get a career first. And then when you've got a career and you've got something to fall back on, then you can go into politics.'"

Pitts took heed, going on to become a lawyer, but retaining an interest in the National Party. Now, the stars have aligned for him to make his move.

Pitts and his team think they have a chance in the newly created electorate of Wellington North, due to the boundary changes.

"We think it's in play. We think it's very much winnable. There's a lot more bluer areas in there."

Priority issues for him start with education and law and order. "We need to get those fixed. That's

going to save a lot of money in the future. And there's also things like getting early access for children with disabilities, increased funding for getting people with neurodiversity issues seen as soon as possible. That's something I'm pretty passionate about as well."

For Wellington, he says getting the second Mt Victoria tunnel done is important for decreasing congestion, improving transport times and reducing fuel use.

Another issue he's heard a lot about from potential voters is parking and the controversial topic of bike lanes – where he's interested in influencing council policy.

"A lot of people I talk to say they are not happy about the lack of parking. I have no issue with bikes, I bike around. I love biking. I rent an e-scooter from time to time, but I feel like the balance [has shifted] too much to bikes and e-scooters. So I think we need to dial it back a bit."

Pitts was born in the UK, and partly educated in Japan due to his father working there. Going to International school with an American curriculum had a lasting impression: he can still recite all the names of US presidents, their vice presidents and who they beat in the in their respective elections.

Family holidays were spent in a camper van in New Zealand where he developed a love for the place. He eventually returned here in 1997, with the aim of being a pilot. While he didn't make the Airforce's officer selection, he stayed anyway, and his parents then followed.

Except for one year back in the UK, he's lived in Wellington since 2005, in a variety of places including Newtown, Mount Victoria and Mount Cook. Currently he lives in Khandallah.

He's a lawyer for Chevron, where his work includes dealing with the fallout from some of the oil transport issues currently affecting the Middle East.

He has two boys, 8 and 10. Helping with school activities keeps him busy as well as some unusual hobbies. He's a keen guitar player, owns seven guitars, and can play guitar behind his head ("I used to be in a punk band when I was at school.")

He's also an avid Lego collector, and keeps an eye out for rare Lego sets. He recently had to invest in a new cabinet to keep his Lego in.

But right now his time is being spent on the campaign trail, finally getting the chance to fulfill his long held aspiration to try his hand at politics. **TL**



A personal commitment to better aged care

Witnessing her mother's decline was the traumatising experience that spurred Sara Harwood into a career in elder care.

The manager of Radius Care Karori, Sara Harwood, is driven by a deep commitment to improving the lives of others – not only the residents who call Radius Karori their home, but also the whānau who love and support them.

She was in the midst of organising her mother's funeral when she says she had a realisation of how poorly some of Aotearoa New Zealand handles end-of-life. "I remember it quite succinctly," she says. "I was on my way to the funeral directors, and it struck me, we, as a society, must do better."

Sara's experience had been trying. At the time, COVID-19 restrictions were in place, so when she was able to travel to see her mum, it became clear that there had been significant changes in her health. A diagnosis of vascular dementia followed.

"Inevitably, she needed high-acuity care," says Sara. "The experience made Sara think deeply about what good, aged care should feel like: personal, respectful, and centred on the individual, with families kept informed and involved."

After her mother's passing, Sara was spurred into aged care training and before long graduated with a qualification in dementia-level care. With this training, and proven passion for aged care, she took up the position of Village Manager at the historic Sprott House.

The Messines Road home was first established in 1898 to provide care for what was referred to at the time as, 'delinquent' girls. In 1951 the label was removed and it became a residential aged care home in 1951. In May of this year, Radius Care acquired the facilities from Metlifecare.

When Sara came into the role two years ago, she notes that the 90-bed rest home had a strong sense of community and this is something that she has continued to nurture. Visits from the local schools, as well as mums and babies from Plunket prove to be popular events for the residents. Leading up to Matariki, pupils from Karori West School came to help folk create star decorations. The Karori Community Bus also stops by once a week to take residents for outings.

Sara says she understands what an emotional event it can be to leave a family home and move into a rest home, both for the resident but also the supporting family. "Nobody comes into care and thinks, 'Yay, I'm here,'" she says. "It is all about that admission process, how we support and welcome people, and make them an extension of the family. And at the end of the day, we're pretty privileged to work in their home."

Radius Care Karori has 90 beds, and 24 of them are for residents with dementia. The remaining rooms can provide either rest home or hospital-level care. This flexibility allows a rest home resident who suddenly needs a higher level of care, the ability to stay in their room, and not have to move to another.

For Sara, it all comes back to creating a genuine sense of belonging. By bringing residents, whānau and staff together, Radius Karori is a place where people feel known, supported and truly at home. **TL**

Keeper turned catcher

If Karori residents have noticed more birds, butterflies and skinks, **Lee-Anne Duncan** has met the Karori man currently leading the fight to eradicate invasive species in order to preserve our native taonga.

A lifelong love of nature? Certainly. Nominative determinism? Maybe. Either way, the brilliantly named-for-a-rat-catcher Phil Wisker knew from his early years that his life was to be spent with animals.

A native of North London, Phil studied archaeology, in particular animal extinction. “But I preferred live animals and preserving the environment, so I wanted to be a zookeeper.” Told to “get experience”, young Phil spent a year in Zambia and Congo, counting animal populations and working with chimpanzees respectively. Back in the UK, he easily got work on a safari park in Bedfordshire.

“I was there for five years, and it was great. I got paid not a lot, but the zookeepers were a great bunch of people. Then I saw a job advert for a primate keeper at Wellington Zoo. Three weeks later, I was in here,” Phil says, smiling through his own set of whiskers.

That was 2004, and since then Phil has also worked at the Pūkaha National Wildlife Centre at Mt Bruce, breeding kākā, kiwi, ruru and kororā – skills honed at Wellington Zoo’s native bird breeding programme.

Obviously, Phil loves birds and hates anything that endangers them. So, after a stint “for experience” at Rentokil, five years ago he started work as an Eradication Technical Officer at Predator Free Wellington. That’s his paid job, but he also volunteers as Predator Free Karori’s volunteer coordinator.

His work desk is surrounded by maps of Wellington, divided into coloured segments. He proudly points to the Miramar Peninsula, now officially predator free but still requiring constant monitoring to spot incursions.

“Since the rats and stoats and weasels have gone, the native bird population in Miramar has shot up by 500 percent. We know this by doing ‘call counts’, where we count bird calls in the same places every year.”



“On my 50th birthday, I heard kiwi down my end of my road, which was amazing.”

And it’s not just birds, he says. Locals report more geckos, skinks and wētā in their back yards. “It’s the plant life, too, as the rats aren’t chewing all the native fruit, which also means the birds can eat the fruit. Conservation is my passion. Yes, I’m killing something, but rats are a destructive invasive species that can’t coexist with our native fauna and flora.”

Karori should see similar results, he says, in time. Phil is already seeing improvements in his own backyard on the South Karori bush line, after years of trapping efforts from Predator Free Karori, as well as Catch 22 and Capital Kiwi.

“On my 50th birthday, I heard kiwi down my end of my road, which was amazing. I see kārearea, and kākā, of course. And ruru – I always hear them. I’ve also noticed lots more butterflies because the rats aren’t eating them. I get a lot out of knowing that’s from all our efforts eradicating pests.

“I’ve also noticed more and more people – especially school children – getting interested in conservation, so I encourage everyone to set their traps!” **TL**

To find out how you can help Karori become predator free, see our story calling for more volunteers on page 7.

Staying the course

It's tough out there but don't give up hope, says **Andrea Skews** from **Lowe & Co.**

If you've been watching the property market, you'll know Wellington continues to face a unique set of challenges. In economist Tony Alexander's June column he noted that buyer confidence is slowly returning nationally, but our region is still feeling the effects of public sector restructuring, and with the election just months away, many buyers remain in a "wait and see" frame of mind. (source: tonyalexander.nz)

One of the hardest conversations I have with homeowners isn't about price. It's about time.

"Why hasn't our home sold yet?"

It's an understandable question. For several years, homes regularly sold within days, with buyers competing for limited stock. Today's market tells a different story – and that doesn't mean there's something wrong with your home. More often, it simply reflects the environment we're operating in, and it calls for patience rather than panic.

A recent sale reminded me of that. I had a property on the market for around six months with genuine interest but no offer. Eventually we withdrew it. Three weeks later, it sold – to buyers who'd loved the home months earlier but were waiting on funds from overseas. Their timing, not the home itself, had delayed the sale.

The longer I do this work, the more I notice that lesson isn't unique to real estate. It shows up anywhere something worthwhile takes longer than we'd like – including in a cause close to my heart that has nothing to do with property at all.

For the past five years, since 2021, I've served as an ambassador for the Gillies McIndoe Research Institute.

For the past five years, since 2021, I've served as an ambassador for the Gillies McIndoe Research Institute (gmri.org.nz), a Wellington-based biomedical research centre founded by

reconstructive plastic surgeon Dr Swee Tan, working on cancer, scarring and tissue regeneration. It's slow, painstaking science, but it's already producing amazing students and results that show real promise – the same patience I ask sellers to have every week, except the stakes are measured in lives rather than listings

I wanted to bring that connection into Karori because so much of what makes this community strong is the same quiet persistence – people showing up for causes bigger than themselves, long after the initial enthusiasm fades.

It's also why a portion of my commission from every home I sell goes directly to the Institute. Let's face it, do we really need that extra pair of shoes, or do we need hope for the future of our health and the health of generations to come?

I'd encourage you to look into the Institute's work at gmri.org.nz if it's new to you. It's a cause built on the same principle that gets a home sold in a slow market: not one big moment, but people who keep going.

Not panic. Not perfection. Persistence. TL



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Andrea Skews is a licensed salesperson with Lowe & Co Realty, Real Estate Authority Board member and Karori Residents' Association Chairperson. The views expressed are her own and not made in any official capacity.



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Zee the mall cat

Zee is a daily presence around the Karori Mall, but, as **Lee-Anne Duncan** discovered, just because she's not always at home, she does have a home.

As soon as the Salvation Army Family Store opens, Zee is in the door. With a flick of her tail, she's chosen a chair and settled down, ready to receive attention and treats.

"She's been coming here every day for about two years," says Serena Perin, the store's manager. "We tried to discourage her but nothing worked. She's here pretty much until we shoo her outside at 5pm."

With the work day done, does Zee embark on the short walk home to Friend Street? Nope. Up she pops to the Welly Collective.

"I had to close for a toilet stop one day at 5:15," says Hiro Ogata, who was minding the store the day *The Local* visited. "When I came back, she was at the door waiting."

Now the Welly Collective store has just closed, Zee will have to find another spot for her post-5pm rests, and for her Sundays when the Salvation Army store is shut. That could be anywhere, really, and Serena lists the other spots Zee frequents – the supermarkets, the liquor store, curled on the cooling bonnet of a parked car, or up in the supermarket's roof, where the pigeon population is no doubt delighted to have a cat among them.

She may even be found at the Pickle Jar, where I meet Zee's official owner, Duncan Robin. Duncan tells me Zee is one of three cats – siblings – he and his partner had from kittens, that she is 12 years old, and that she used to be very much a home cat.

"Until Covid, if we walked to the mall Zee and the other cats would follow for a while, meowing like they were warning us not to go," he says. "But with less traffic around during Covid, Zee got used to following us further away from home, including to the mall."

Clearly she liked it, and Zee started spending her days there. "To get her home, we'd have to go down



She's not for sale, even though she hangs out in a shop. "People do want to buy her, but she's priceless," says Serena.

and bring her back. But she'd leave again, so we've done this less and less," Duncan says.

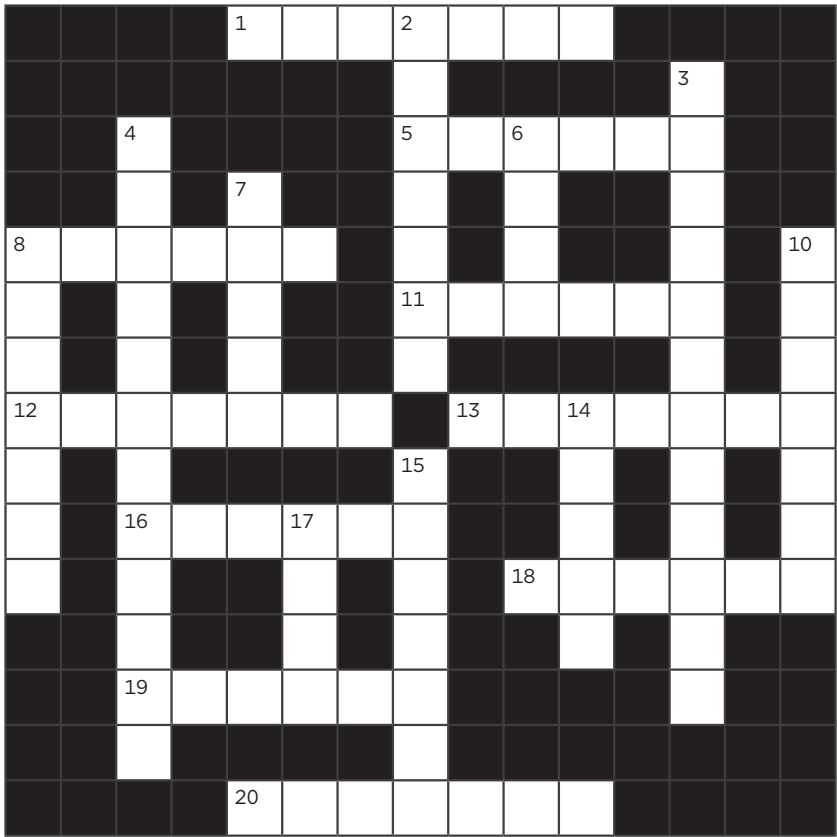
"She comes home, maybe, once a month? It's not often. She did stroll back in a couple of weeks ago, stayed for a bit and then was off again." The family would like her home, he says, but Zee is clearly comfy where she is.

"I do keep an eye on her, and she often pops up on the I Love Karori Facebook page! We do make an effort to see her, and it's great to see her so loved by the Karori community," Duncan says.

So, Zee the mall cat is not unloved, and she's not homeless. She's also not for sale, even though she hangs out in a shop.

"People do want to buy her, but she's priceless," says Serena. **TL**

Beau's Crossword #10



Across:

- 1. Person who is skilled and experienced. (7)
- 5. Crept forward. (6)
- 8. Provides stability in turbulent waters. (6)
- 11. Answer to #19. (anag)
- 12. A regal type of penguin. (7)
- 13. Protection. (7)
- 16. Unconfirmed statement/idea. (6)
- 18. Enraged spiel. (6)
- 19. Yellow fruits. (6)
- 20. Mogul. (7)

Down:

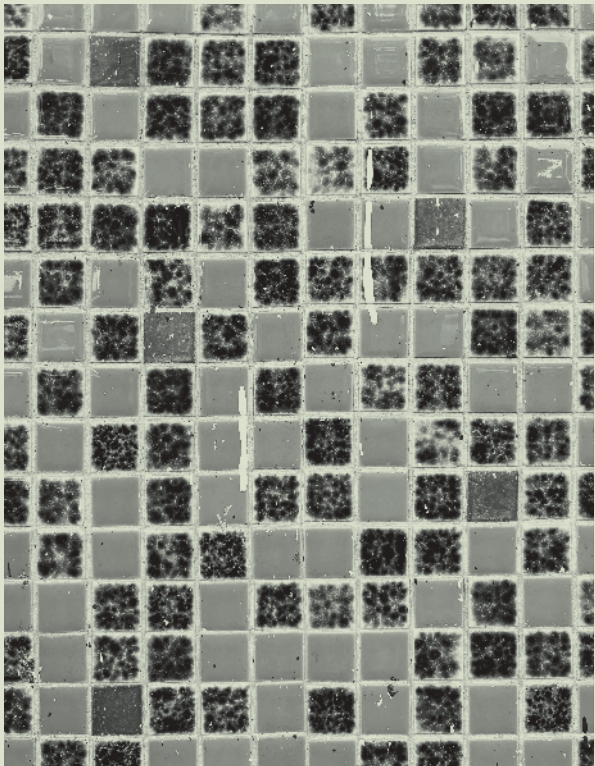
- 2. Completely embodies a quality. (7)
- 3. Quirk. (12)
- 4. Infinitely unique. (12)
- 6. Ring. (4)
- 7. ----- bear, ----- opposites. (5)
- 8. Greek goddess of the hunt. (7)
- 10. Payback. (7)
- 14. Smooth, graceful. (5)
- 15. Craftsperson. (7)
- 17. A preposition. (4)

For the solution see the-local.co.nz/crosswords

ULO ? Unidentified Local Object

Identify the mystery object – something in Karori – to win a \$20 book voucher.

Email your answers to us at karori@the-local.co.nz. If there's more than one correct answer, the winner will be selected at random. Congratulations to Chris Mori who correctly identified July's ULO as part of the roof from the Futuna Chapel. 



Early detection saves lives

New Zealand's national cancer screening programmes



By **Dr Ros Wall.**
Specialist GP

Cancer touches almost every family in Aotearoa. It remains a leading cause of death in New Zealand, with around 26,000 people diagnosed every year. However, when cancer is found early, outcomes are better and, in many cases, screening can detect changes before cancer even develops.

"Can I just get a blood test?"

As a GP, one of the most common requests I hear is: "Can I have a cancer check-up?" – followed quickly by "Can I just get a blood test for it?"

I wish I could say yes. The honest answer, though, is no – and it is worth explaining why.

Different cancers develop in different ways, affect different parts of the body, often producing no symptoms in their earliest and most treatable stages. There is no single blood test that can reliably screen for cancer across the board. What we do have, however, are three proven, national screening programmes – specifically for the cancers where early detection genuinely changes outcomes.

Screening saves lives

It is important to understand that these screening programmes are designed for people who feel completely well and have no symptoms. Their purpose is to find cancer – or changes that could become cancer – before you are even aware anything is wrong, often when treatment is most effective.

Bowel Screening is available to people aged 58 to 74 (lowering to 56 from September 2026). Every two years, a free FIT kit is posted to you. You collect a small stool sample at home and return it by mail. The FIT detects tiny amounts of blood that may indicate



polyps or cancer – and importantly, identifying and removing polyps can prevent bowel cancer from developing at all. Freephone: **0800 924 432**

Breast Screening through BreastScreen Aotearoa offers free mammograms every two years for women aged 45 to 69 – extending to 74 by 2029. Mammograms detect cancers too small to feel, when treatment is least extensive and outcomes are best. Those with a family history of breast cancer or other risk factors may need additional assessment – please talk to us. Freephone: **0800 270 200**

Cervical Screening is for anyone with a cervix aged 25 to 69, every five years. The HPV test is a highly accurate way of identifying those at risk of developing cervical cancer. Most tests are now done using a self-collected vaginal swab – simple, acceptable, and proven to increase participation. Cervical screening is available right here at Karori Medical Centre. Freephone: **0800 729 729**

Worried about something outside these programmes?

The national screening programmes cover three cancers – If you have concerns about other types of cancer, new or unexplained symptoms, or something that doesn't seem right, don't wait. Book an appointment to discuss your symptoms and concerns with a Doctor or Nurse.

Act on screening invitations

When a screening invitation arrives – by letter, text, or email – act on it! If cost, transport, or language is a barrier then Screening Support Services can help. The most meaningful thing you can do is take that step – for yourself and for those you love. **TL**

Karori Medical Centre is proudly supporting the Cancer Society of New Zealand this Daffodil Day, 28 August.

Going on patrol



Have you got one or two evenings free each month? Those few hours could help make Karori a safer place to live.

The Karori Community Patrol is looking for more local volunteers to join our friendly team. Working alongside New Zealand Police, our patrol provides an extra set of eyes and ears throughout the suburb, helping deter crime, reporting suspicious activity and providing a reassuring presence in the community.

One of the biggest misconceptions about Community Patrol is that you need special skills or previous experience. You don't.

Community Patrol volunteers are everyday people from all walks of life who simply want to make a positive contribution to where they live. Whether you're working, retired, studying or just looking for a meaningful way to give back, we'd love to hear from you.

Volunteers always patrol in pairs, so you're never on your own, and comprehensive training is provided. You'll learn how to observe and report effectively, work safely, communicate with Police and become part of a supportive team making a real difference in our community.

Volunteers always patrol in pairs, so you're never on your own, and comprehensive training is provided.

For those considering a future career with New Zealand Police, Community Patrols New Zealand also offers the **Pathway to Police (P2P)** programme. This national initiative provides volunteers with additional training, mentoring and practical experience to help prepare for the Police recruitment process. It's a fantastic opportunity to build confidence, develop valuable skills and gain real community experience before applying to join Police.

Of course, most of our volunteers aren't planning a policing career – they simply enjoy meeting great people, getting to know their community better and knowing they've played a part in helping keep Karori safe.

The Karori Residents Association is proud to support the many volunteers who quietly make our suburb a wonderful place to live. Community Patrol is just one of the many organisations that relies on local people giving a little of their time to benefit everyone.

If you've ever thought about getting involved in your community, why not start with Community Patrol? Just one or two evenings a month can make a genuine difference.

To find out more, or simply come along for an informal chat with no obligation, contact the Karori Community Patrol via email karori@cpnz.org.nz

You might just discover it's one of the most rewarding things you do this year. **TL**

Get involved

Do you have an idea, a skill, or a passion for your community? We'd love to hear from you – whether you're ready to lead a project or just want to explore what's possible.

@ chair@karoriassociation.nz

📍 karoriassociation.nz

📘 facebook.com/karorires



New KBA website

We've got a brand new website launching in August – check it out!

When you go to the KBA website this month, you'll see a new, updated look. Our website is a valuable resource about our community, to tell the rest of the world what is on offer right here in Karori.

One of the most powerful updates going live is the directory. It lists local businesses, community organisations, and facilities across area. Have a browse. See who's there.

If you run a business or community group in Karori, find your listing and make sure the details are right. Wrong address? Old phone number? Outdated description? Whatever it is, there's a button on the site to let us know and we'll sort it.

KBA members get a standard listing, providing contact and address information including a description of services, trading hours and photo or logo. Free basic listings give pared down information, letting website users know where to find you.

If you are a business registered in Karori, and not currently listed, you can request a free basic listing from the website. Want to showcase your business with more information? If you're located outside the BID area, become an Associate Member to get a standard listing, along with a range of other membership benefits. It's a great way to give customers a clearer picture of what you offer while connecting with the wider Karori business community.

Over the coming weeks I'll be emailing everyone in the directory asking them to confirm their info is accurate; if we don't hear back from you, your listing may be removed. Head to karori.org.nz and take a look!

Let us know any business news or events you would like KBA to highlight in our monthly column. Contact KBA comms: connect@karori.org.nz

Meet the KBA Board



Will Calder

Will Calder has been a member of the Karori Business Association since 2020 and currently serves as Treasurer. A lifelong Karori local, he was born and raised in the suburb and now calls it home with his own family. As Sales Manager at Ray White Karori, Will has spent 26 years helping people buy and sell homes across the Passionate about the future of Karori, Will is committed to helping the suburb flourish as a vibrant destination where families, local businesses, and the wider community can thrive.



Navleen Bindra

With more than a decade of experience in accounting, business management, and company leadership, Navleen Bindra brings a strong commercial perspective to the Karori Business Association Board. She is a director of several businesses across the Wellington region, including Mobil Karori and NZ Post Karori Central, and has been actively involved with the KBA for the past five years. Navleen is passionate about championing local enterprise, encouraging collaboration, and helping shape a thriving, connected community.

KBA Associate Membership

Not a member of KBA and want to join? Get a standard listing on our website, invitations to networking events and meetings, exclusive offers and more. Membership is open to Karori businesses. Fees: annual \$300+GST or monthly \$30+GST. Email members@karori.org.nz for more information and terms/conditions.

KBA Calendar

- **KBA Board meeting:** 6–8pm, Monday 17 August at Karori Community Centre, 7 Beauchamp St. Open to KBA members. RSVP by 13 August to members@karori.org.nz.

KBA contacts

- BID Manager: manager@karori.org.nz
- Marketing/comms: connect@karori.org.nz
- Membership enquiries: members@karori.org.nz
- Website inquiries: connect@karori.org.nz
- Website: karori.org.nz

LISTINGS

The Listings section is an affordable way to let people know about your service. Advertise in *The Local* for as little as \$60.

Antiques wanted

GOLD, SILVER & COSTUME jewellery wanted & coins, scrap and alluvial. Small to large lots. Highest ever NZ prices paid. 0800 559922 for free no obligation appraisal.

WATCHES wanted, wrist and pocket style going or not, modern & old any considered 0800 559922

MASONIC LODGE items wanted badges, aprons, jewels and regalia all items considered 0800 559922

CAMERAS wanted, film type modern & old, Any considered Ph Ben 0800 559922

COINS & Banknotes wanted. Pennies, threepences NZ & foreign. All types. ph Ben 0800 559922

FOUNTAIN PENS Wanted. Conway Stewart & Parker Style. Any considered. Ph 0800 559922

MEDALS wanted. Military and sports medals. Any medals & badges considered. ph 0800 559922

MILITARY Items wanted. Books, badges, buttons & uniform. Ph 0800 559922

NZR New Zealand Railways items wanted. Badges, signs, uniforms. Ph 0800 559922

RUGBY Programs & badges wanted. Single items or whole collections. Ph 0800 559922

STAMPS First Day Covers, postcards & albums wanted. Any considered. Ph 0800 559922

RECORDS Wanted. 33s, 12s, 45s. Modern & old. Any considered. Ph 0800 559922

BOOKS Books Books Wanted. Fiction & Non-Fiction. Modern & old. Small – Estate Lots Ph 0800 559922

BOTTLES wanted, glass, marble, codd, stone & soda syphon types, NZ & Overseas Ph 0800 559922

BAYONETS swords and pocket knives wanted. Modern and old. Any considered ph 0800 559922

SCOUTS & Boys Brigade Memorabilia wanted Patches, blankets & uniform all items considered Ph 0800 559922

TYPEWRITERS wanted. Modern or old any considered. Ph Benjamin 0800 559922

TAXIDERMY wanted NZ – Exotic skins, heads, birds & mounted animals any considered ph 0800 559922

MINISTRY OF TRANSPORT & Police Memorabilia wanted. Badges, uniform & equipment – any items considered. ph 0800 559922

FIRE SERVICE /Brigade items wanted. Badges, patches uniforms & equipment all items considered 0800 559922

SHEET MUSIC wanted modern & old small to estate lots Ph Ben 0800 559922

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SMASH Club holiday programme



Choose SMASH for afterschool care! Children enjoy exciting daily activities including crafts, softplay, active games, Science Club for seniors and popular Mid-Term Themed Week. Our staff are passionate about children and fully trained, creating structured afternoons where children have fun and grow in a caring space; our Christian programmes strengthen family and community values. We do pick-ups from KNS, KWNS, and Marsden and provide an afternoon tea. Enrol at thesmashclub.org.nz

Choose SMASH for afterschool care! Children enjoy exciting daily activities including crafts, softplay, active games, Science Club for seniors and popular Mid-Term

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COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

**Community notices are free for local groups and not-for-profits.
Get in touch if you would like to include your listing in *The Local*.**

Counselling services

Te Kororia offers affordable, accessible support for people in the Karori community who may be experiencing stress, anxiety, grief, relationship challenges, life transitions, or emotional overwhelm. Email counselling@tekororia.org.nz. 170 Karori Road. tekororia.org.nz

Friends of Karori Cemetery: upcoming tours

Friends of Karori Cemetery have a tour called Our Fair Ladies happening at 10:30am on Sunday the 6th of September. To find out more: friendsofkaroricemetery.co.nz/tours/. Look out for a new tour being released in October (along with three other tours) which will be part of Wellington Heritage Festival.

Karori Floral Design Club

Do you love flowers, creativity, and good company? We meet every second Wednesday of the month at 7:30pm at St Ninian's Church, Karori Rd. For further information contact Cheryl at 021 268 9377.

Karori Foodbank

The Karori Foodbank is located in the Karori Community Centre (KCC) and distributes parcels twice a week. You can donate non-perishable items in the big blue wheelie bin at the KCC. Potential clients needing a food parcel need to ring the phone line on 04 476 3455 and leave a message or fill out the form at the KCC.

Karori Repair Cafe

Our next Repair cafe will be on Sunday 9 August 10am-1pm at the Karori Community Centre. Bring your item needing repair – we have blade sharpening, computers, sewing, electrical, jewellery repair and more. For more information talk to Julia 021 045 8767. karorirepaircafe@gmail.com

SMASH Afterschool and Holiday Programmes

Vibrant, child-focused spaces where daily activities are tailored to the children attending. SMASH also offers Christian programmes as part of our community-focused outreach. Visit thesmashclub.org.nz or email office@thesmashclub.org.nz for more.

Playgroup at Karori Baptist Church

Caregivers with their babies and pre-school children welcome. Every Wednesday between 9:30-11:30am during school terms. Morning tea provided for adults; children bring their own. 163 Karori Road, Marsden Village, Karori. \$3.00 per family. Contact Annette on 022 107 2751.

Stroke Survivors Groups

The Karori/Western Suburbs Stroke Survivors Group meet on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 10:30am, Huntleigh Home, 219-221 Karori Road, Karori. Stroke survivors (and carers) are most welcome. For further information email: wgtnwsss@yahoo.com.

Trail Mixers

We meet on the last Saturday morning of the month to walk for about 1½ – 2 hours (approx 7km) on trails and always have a social afterwards in a local cafe. Friendly dogs on leads also welcome! Contact office@karorianglican.org.nz for more information.

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Dogs of Karori

Leah McFall explains that if you know the dog, you will know the owner.

I've a poodle-mix named Otto. Yes, he and I have the same permed look, especially around the ears. And yes, owning a poodle-mix is completely predictable, making us a Karori cliché. Otto isn't even the only poodle-mix named Otto in Karori.

But our years of trotting the streets and doing laps of the park have paid off because, if you walk a dog in this suburb and talk to enough fellow dog-walkers, you develop profiling skills worthy of the FBI. Allow me to save you years of study by introducing your neighbours through the medium of their dogs.

Cavoodle Somebody in this family has eczema and needed a non-shedding dog. Somebody in this family is probably blonde. If the dog is wearing a coat, this owner probably lives on Hatton, Homewood or Friend Streets. If it's Friend, this person is generally happy with their choices until the final week of October, when they regret everything and wish to move house.

Miniature Dachshund This owner is probably friendly and keen to talk, but who would know? Their dog is smaller than literally everything and furious about it, zigzagging angrily at the lead and trying to close its jaws around your calf.

Pug Has pet insurance.

Labrador Happy to plod and always up for a chat. This will turn to their dog's daily regime: prescription pills for ear infections, hydrotherapy for hip dysplasia and a low-cal Hill's Science Diet. The dog will have kind eyes and inevitably, so will this owner.

Farm Dog This owner is as active and motivated as their dog. Often seen in technical thermals and a Garmin watch, jogging or mountain-biking the local tracks. Stop and talk if you're interested in drivetrains and suspension forks, otherwise avoid. Which is a pity, because they've probably just seen a kiwi in the Mākara Peak Mountain Bike Park.



Otto isn't even the only poodle-mix named Otto in Karori.

If you walk a dog in this suburb and talk to enough fellow dog-walkers, you develop profiling skills worthy of the FBI.

Samoyed There's no longer room on this owner's fridge for all the Best in Show rosettes, won by their perfect white puffball. They don't have time to stand around and yap; they've got to get home, wash the dog, blow-dry the dog, use a slicker brush and a pin brush to groom its double coat, and then pack for the next national club meet.

Maltese Also, Shih Tzu. These owners are most likely to be wearing the same coat as their dog (Burberry check).

Ghost Dog These are the people who have loved and lost a dog. They'll smile fondly at yours and offer their hand for a sniff. They'll scratch your dog's head or chin, mention their old boy by name and continue their walk to the shops, an outline of their faithful friend trotting by their side. **TL**

Karori's first Zealandia

Conserving flora and fauna goes back a long way in Karori, as **Gordon Tait** explains.

Zealandia is well known as a bird and botanical sanctuary, but what is less well known is that it was not the first one in Karori. That honour goes to Johnston's Hill. (Originally known as "Johnstons' Peak")

Johnston's Hill is the prominent and distinctive hill looking north. Karori was previously covered in tall forest, which had been cleared, generally by fire. By the late 1930's, a number of local citizens expressed concern, and suggested that a bird and plant sanctuary be established to preserve what remained for future generations. At that time, one Mr Pulley was considering developing a housing subdivision on land he had acquired on the slopes of Johnstons Hill. The Karori Progressive Association and the Wellington Beautifying Society approached the Wellington City Council who undertook to finance half of the land for a bird sanctuary, if the local residents could raise the other half within six months.

While it took longer than six months, the land was purchased in 1942 and "set aside for public use, and to encourage birds and plants for future generations".

The hill itself has not been without controversy – with action taken in the 1960s against some individuals setting opossum traps but catching family pets. The hill was subject to a number of bush fires (as it was mainly covered in gorse) that lead to firebreaks having to be put in. These breaks are still visible as pine trees have now taken them over.

In 1963 a child was drowned in a disused reservoir and this led to reservoirs on Johnston's Hill being destroyed to prevent other tragedies. (The remains of one such reservoir are located at the path end of Fletchers look out, about 70 metres into the bush.)

In 1948 the Karori RSA, the Karori Progressive Association and the Wellington Beautifying Society planted a Memorial Grove on Johnston's Hill to honour those who lost their lives in World War 2. The planting was done by relatives of those killed. The media reported:

"Every tree in this grove will be a living testimony to a Karori sacrifice. They will remain as a reminder to future generations."

The ceremony was witnessed by a number of Karori schoolchildren whose fathers were killed during the war. Regrettably, the exact location of the grove is unknown. (Although from doing a survey, I suspect it is next to the road to the lookout on the left-hand side. There are no markers visible.)

Johnstons Hill provides a number of excellent walking tracks and connects to the Skyline walkway. On a good day, the views from the summit are magnificent, and the Kaikoura mountains are visible – especially if there is snow on them. Closer is the Makara wind farm, the whole Karori Valley, and harbour.

Everyone should "conquer" Johnstons Hill – it's a great walk in Karori's backyard – set up by forward thinking locals who wanted to leave a bird and plant sanctuary for future generations. **TL**

On a good day, the views from the summit are magnificent, and the Kaikoura mountains are visible – especially if there is snow on them.



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Andrea Skews



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