Kōrero

News and stories from Pukerua Bay

Vol 5, Issue 5
November 2025

Ruru', nā Kate Jacobs. Kate uses oil pencils to create beautifully detailed drawings of New Zealand's native birds.

Ngā mihi o te wā (Season's greetings)

The theme of this issue is neighbourliness – the sense of community felt in a place where people are kind and caring.

Our contributors look at neighbourliness from many different perspectives. Kate Jacobs reminds us of the birdlife that is so innate to our experience of living in Pukerua Bay, and this issue's whakataukī picks up on that theme, emphasising the value of diversity (p.3). Poppy writes from a canine perspective, sharing the importance of "ruvv" and "moonication" for a happy world (pp.8–9).

Jennifer Erceg has identified some of the ways our neighbours spread the seeds of kindness and, on the same page, others have shared their gratitude for their own good neighbours (p.7). Robyn Truman shares her appreciation of the many enduring relationships she has built with her fellow residents on Toenga Road (pp.4–5).

Many of our community groups generate neighbourliness in the things they do and the ways they work. The longest-lived is the Residents' Association, which has its roots in the Ratepayers' Association, founded in 1926 (pp.10–11)! It was fantastic to see lots of people at the recent AGM, with a surge in committee members.

The Litter Intelligence group is part of a network of local groups, all contributing to a national database as part of the Sustainable Coastlines Litter Intelligence Project (p.13). Likewise, Predator Free Pukerua Bay works both locally and as part of a nationwide network of neighbourhoods, all working together to care for natural environment (p.15).

September's Pop-up Parlour was, once again, a stellar success. You can read all about it in the impact report at **pkbhub.org.nz/popup-parlour**

One of the events, a community-building workshop, generated ideas for how community groups can work together more effectively. The Hub has responded with a new digital calendar. To find out what's going on in Pukerua Bay or promote an event, check out the link on page 19.

Massive congratulations to Moira Lawler, longtime resident and now Porirua City councillor! Thank you, whānau, for getting behind her!

The theme for next February's issue is Pukerua Pets. Don't forget that children's contributions are welcome! If you would like to contribute, advertise, provide sponsorship, or offer feedback, see page 18.

Finally, we want to acknowledge Iain, a beloved and integral member of the *Kōrero* editorial team since its inception. Iain is one of several precious people who have passed away over the last year. To all of those who grieve, e ngākau aroha ana – we offer our heartfelt condolences.

Waiho i te toipoto, kaua i te toiroa.

Let us keep close together, not wide apart.

We acknowledge mana whenua of Pukerua Bay, Ngāti Toa Rangatira.
For Ngāti Toa news, see **ngatitoa.iwi.nz**

Neighbourhood characters

My neighbourhood is full of characters. You probably know them, too!

The noisiest of my neighbours are the tūī. Everyone can hear their domestic disputes. They seem to think they own the whole street, often squabbling late into the night.

Mr and Mrs Pīwakawaka are the friendliest of the neighbours. They turn up every time anyone goes outside. In fact, they often come inside without invitation. We don't mind, because they are a happy family, cheering up our days with a peep and a flutter.

The shy guys on the street are the riroriro. You hardly ever see them, but you definitely hear them warbling away as they practise for a recital. Their pretty song tells you they are home.

The tauhou family, aka silvereyes or waxeyes, stick together and target blossoms and fruit in a mob. They make a friendly, chirpy noise and are always on the move. They're always busy, but you know what they say, "If you need something done, ask a busy mum!"

'Tauhou', nā Kate Jacobs

The lonesome guy on our block is the ruru. He calls plaintively long into the night, hoping to find a lady to share his abode. One day, she will answer.

I think the kākāriki only come back to their bach in the summer, arriving around the same time as the eastern rosellas. They brighten up the place, it's true, but honestly, they're a bit flashy.

The birds we see most often are the kererū. You can hear them crashing about the place, and they make quite a mess, if you know what I mean! Still, they've spread the plant seeds that help maintain the biodiversity of the whole neighbourhood.

The kōtare sit on a wire as often as a branch, scanning the area for a feed and calling, "Kee kee kee kee kee." A sudden flash of blue, and they're off.

So there are some of my neighbours. They're a diverse lot, but we're all the better for it.

Nā Kate Jacob

'Tūī', nā Kate Jacobs

You can see more of Kate's work at Arts on Track in Plimmerton or in her gallery at 2 Sea Vista Road.

More than just a ‘leftover’

The English translation of Toenga is ‘scrap’ or ‘remnant’.

We have lived in Toenga Road for over 38 years and have had the good fortune to be surrounded by good neighbours, many of whom have become lasting friends. Families have come and gone, houses have been bought and sold, children have been born and grown up and left, but the essence of the neighbourhood remains one of connection.

When we moved to Toenga Road, we joined a neighbourhood that already had several young families. We quickly became part of this vibrant network. Our children became best friends and would move effortlessly between our houses. We adults formed our own bonds over our common experience as young parents.

With only 12 houses on our street, a gully on one side of the road, and a major highway at one end and a main trunk line at the other, the bonus was the grassy circle at the top. This became the cricket pitch, rugby field, and the site of our annual Guy Fawkes night gathering.

The Guy Fawkes festivities were a very traditional set-up, with the men organising the fireworks and the women and children up on the Lowes’ upstairs balcony looking on. We loved the darkness and the atmosphere, but it was very chaotic. It’s a miracle nobody was ever hurt!

We have a strong social network. In those early years, regular street events began, with some enduring to this day: the annual street BBQs and hot cross bun bake-offs, the themed pot-luck dinners and casual dinners, card nights, and a walking group.

Our morning street walking group was the best. Donna, at No. 11, came home from living overseas and introduced us to walking. We would join her at 6.30 to walk, talk, and solve our problems, then home by 7.20, ready to start our day. Even Des from No. 13 joined us. Cellphones weren’t necessary, as we had our own system of communication. If your porch light was on, it meant you intended to walk, and the group would wait at your gate till you came out.

The best part of living on Toenga Road for me has been my relationships with my neighbours, both past and present. Although we are older now, and less inclined to party hard, our friendships have remained constant. Having lived on our little scrap of a street for all this time, I know it’s more than a leftover. It’s been the main course.

Nā Robyn Truman

Good neighbours

Mr. Rogers, one of the States' best advocates for good neighbours, said, *Imagine what our real neighbourhoods would be like if each of us offered, as a matter of course, just one kind word to another person.*

Pukerua Bay is a small village with a great big heart, a real Mr. Rogers kind of neighbourhood. The following small actions, seeds of kindness, can be seen anywhere you live across the Bay. What a great community to live in, where our neighbours:

- wheel back the recycling bin when it's blown down the road
- watch out for your missing cat when Mr. Meow or Miss Prissy go missing
- leave fresh baking in the letterbox
- mow your front verge 'by accident' as they mow theirs
- wait, without honking, as you back out from your awkward drive
- smile and say hello as strangers tramp past
- share their dogs with those who need a dog to pat
- lean over the fence and admire that amazing watermelon plant
- work together in the community garden
- share a bucket of compost
- give away their extra tomato seedlings
- pause for a chat at the dairy, the bookstore, the library, the RSA...
- pick up litter
- collect the mail when you're gone on holiday
- support the kids at school events
- trim the branches and blackberries from shared pathways
- admire the flowers and ignore the weeds
- listen to the stories … because everyone has a story worth listening to.

Good neighbours aren't perfect; they are rough around the edges. But they know that a kind word or cup of tea can make a big difference.

Nā Jennifer Erceg

Shout-out to my neighbour

Some of the people attending the Pop-up Parlour shared messages for their neighbours:

A Community Garden neighbour cut and delivered to the garden a great stash of bamboo stakes for the dahlia plot.

Our neighbour knows how much we love making compost. When they cut the lawns, they wheelbarrow the clippings to us.

Rachel and Mike, thank you for being such lovely and kind neighbours.

Mike and Leah, you guys are rockstars! We appreciate all you have done in welcoming us to the Bay and supporting our growing whānau.
All our love, Crysta, Jane, and Wombat.

Doggy media

Kia ora

My name is Poppy, and I'm a whippet blue heeler cross. I live in Rāwhiti Road with my Mummy and Daddy, Miaow Miaow, Nora the bird, six chickens, and sometimes my big boy siblings. I ruvv them and they ruvv me. (Maybe Miaow Miaow, who is my Overlord, does not ruvv me.)

Ruvv and moonication matter to doggy, as much as hooman. Ruvv is kisses on the spot between my ears, and scritches, and FOOD, and walkies. The second word is a big one, but I think it means sniffing, woof, and grrrrr.

We all moonicate. On walkies, I scroll through doggy media, read-sniffing all the lamp posts. Making my own 'post' and commenting as well after a loooong sniff. Sometimes I take my time read-sniffing every comment. It takes a bit of trying to guess who left it there and what they are saying. I like to save up enough to say something on every berm and tree. Mummy makes her whining noise, which I think is, "Hurry up". Sometimes I make a really BIG post on the channel and, for impact, kick it around a bit with my back legs. Mummy just says, "Yuck", and picks it up with a bag.

Next minute, disaster! She has met her fren, and she talks for aaaaaages! I don't get it. I try to find out what's happening in the world and she gets impatient.

Then I spy another doggo coming down the street! It is the only other doggo I have ever seen in the whole wide world! I am happy and worry at same time. What if it is enemy doggo? My happy turns to ggghr, then back to happy. It is Winnie Win-Win! Winnie is my fren. In these joyful circumstances, it is ok to sniff bottoms. However, Winnie is a Jack Russell so she can't reach mine. That's too bad. She gives it her best shot. But no. Our brief, albeit one-sided, exchange of botty sniffs is over and now, what is this? Our mummies are standing talking to the other hooman fren. For a whole lifetime. We can't understand why hooman don't do sniffs. So quick and polite. Ah, well.

Sometimes it is hard to moonicate. I sniff posts I don't like and get worked up. On walkies I see other doggies (who are the only other doggies I have ever seen in the whole wide world) and say ggggrrr, without the happy. Mummy says I shouldn't do that. I should sniff less posts and more bottoms while she sticks to hugs and loooong chats. Making new fren means more ruvv. More ruvv is a happy world.

Nā Poppy, with help from her Mummy

Poppy and Winnie share the ruvv

For the love of Pukerua Bay –

behind the scenes with the Residents' Association

To be honest, I never really knew what the Residents' Association (RA) did before I went along as the Community Garden representative. Next thing I knew, I was the secretary. I now know the RA is behind many of the positive changes around our neighbourhood and acts as the go-between for Porirua Council (and other organisations) and you, the community.

Current RA office holders: Jane Comben, Margaret Blair, and Paul Fitzgerald

Community at the centre

Some of the main things the RA aims to do are:

- **Look after the area** – protect and improve the things that make Pukerua Bay a great place to live and visit.
- **Speak up for the community** – the RA is your voice when it comes to the big decisions affecting our community.
- **Connect with others** – we pass on information and work with other community groups on issues that matter.

The community set our vision:

A friendly, caring, and vibrant community in a beautiful, natural setting, supported by good local infrastructure and facilities.

Village planning in action

We've been part of Porirua's Village Planning Programme since its inception, and we lead its implementation in Pukerua Bay. It's a process that helps us identify Pukerua Bay's concerns and aspirations and shape what we do.

Two tangible 'wins' of the village planning process are the Community Garden and Food Forest and He Ara Pukerua (Heritage Group). Other wins include the walkway/cycleway through the village, the skatepark and nearby water fountain, landscaping projects, and artworks.

Behind the scenes…

We've worked hard on the less glamorous but equally important stuff – like getting the "No Engine Braking" sign installed to reduce noise through our village, maintaining walkway signage, jumping on issues like the PKB sign damage, and hosting candidate meetings so you can hear directly from people wanting to represent us.

Right now, we're working with Council on new signage to help dog walkers and little penguins share our beaches safely – helping to protect our precious kororā while everyone enjoys the coastline.

Pou Tangaroa, photo by Anne Johnston

Muri Station before its closure. The RA didn't manage to keep the station operational but did manage to save the buildings and keep them in use for our village.

Partnership and support

In 1996, we started working with Ngāti Toa on protecting local marine life, finally winning protective regulations in 2009. The Pou Tangaroa represents that enduring relationship.

We're the support crew for some amazing local groups. The RA handles 'the books' for He Ara Pukerua, the Community Garden and Food Forest, Climate Action Rōpū (including Crop Swap and Recycling), Surfers' Seat, and Kōrero, so the people involved can focus on the fun stuff. We support our friends at PKB HUB and the RSA & Community Club, and we maintain the community website **pukeruabay.org.nz**

Can you help?

Here's the thing, though – we're a small group of volunteers and we need fresh ideas and help to improve our impact on your community. Let's face it, many local volunteers span a few organisations.

You don't need special skills or loads of time. Maybe you're passionate about protecting our environment, interested in local planning or simply want to stay informed. Check out a meeting, share your ideas, or get involved in a project that interests you. We meet at 7.30pm on the second Tuesday of the month at the RSA.

Want to know more?

Email **pukeruabayresidents@gmail.com**, visit our Facebook page **facebook.com/pukerua.bay.residents.association**, or check out **pukeruabay.org.nz**

Nā Jane Comben

Litter Intel

You might have seen a group of hi-viz clad "citizen scientists" collecting rubbish in a particular 100m strip, just past the pou. It happens every three months as part of the Sustainable Coastlines Litter Intelligence Project.

What's the project about?

Beaches all around New Zealand have teams contributing data by clearing and counting pieces of litter, categorising and weighing it all, and entering the information into the national database. The data is used by the likes of the Ministry for the Environment and Statistics New Zealand to understand the level of plastic pollution on our beaches and where it originates from. The data contributes to decisions like banning single-use plastic bags.

Local projects can effect local change, too – school children in Taranaki found large numbers of shotgun wads and discovered the likely source was a clay shooting club, who were quickly convinced to switch to biodegradable shotgun wads.

What do we notice in Pukerua Bay?

Many locals pick up litter when they walk along the beach, so it will be no surprise to know we get lots of bits of plastic, some tiny, some more recognisable. Some that has been ingested by birds, which is never great to contemplate. The volume is not as high as locations like Petone Beach and the Paremata Bridge. But unsurprisingly, we still find plenty. Some arrives via our local streams or from rivers like the Waikanae River, some is washed up or blown in from even further away. But some is just left by beachgoers, like plastic fishing line and lures, clothing, lollipop sticks, and drink-bottle caps. You can find the data at **litterintelligence.org/data/survey?id=3613**

What can we do as a community?

If you're keen to help out on the survey team, sing out! But otherwise, just keep using the rubbish bins and encouraging others to, as well!

Email **gmcandler@gmail.com** if you want to join.

Nā Gillian Candler

Why trapping predators is neighbourly behaviour in Pukerua Bay

Here in Pukerua Bay, we are lucky to be surrounded by native bush, stunning coastline, and loads of wildlife. With this privilege comes a shared responsibility to care for the land, the birds, and each other. One of the most practical and impactful ways we can do this is by trapping predators. It might not seem like much, but it's a very neighbourly thing to do.

Rats, mice, stoats, weasels, ferrets, hedgehogs, and possums prey on eggs, chicks, and adult birds and destroy habitat by eating native plants and insects. These predators can wreak havoc on the creatures and plants in and around our gardens, reducing biodiversity and making it harder for native species to recover and thrive.

When you set and monitor a trap in your garden, you're not just helping the wildlife on your property, you are contributing to a wider network of predator control activities that benefit the entire community. Birds and wildlife don't respect property boundaries. If predators breed in one area, they quickly spread, undoing the work of your neighbours.

Pukerua Bay is part of the Predator Free movement, and many locals are already involved in backyard trapping and supporting community trap lines. Trapping is an act of teamwork and helps us all to care for our village. By joining, you're taking part in a wider effort to protect our biodiversity.

It's also a great way to teach children about conservation and responsibility.

Predator Free Pukerua Bay provides resources, traps on a 'pay-it-forward' basis, and advice to help you get started. We use humane traps and encourage people to check traps regularly. At its core, trapping pests is about being a good neighbour—not just to the people next door, but to the birds in the trees and the insects in the soil. Together, trap by trap, we can make Pukerua Bay a safer, healthier place for all.

Nā Nick Vincent for Predator Free Pukerua Bay

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Next issue

The theme for the next issue is '**Pukerua Pets**'. We welcome your contributions of stories, photos, poems, articles, or community notices.

Kōrero relies upon its advertisers and sponsors to keep going. Please get in touch if you're interested.

The copy deadline for the next issue is **14 January**.

Our email address is:
newsletter@pukeruabay.org.nz

You can download a PDF of *Kōrero* from the website at: **pkb.nz/korero**

Our team

Kōrero is brought to you by Kate Dreaver, Gill England, Jen Erceg, Carla Guy, Jonathan Harker, Anne Johnston, Moira Lawler, Kelly McClean, Fiona Sutton, and Nikky Winchester." It is supported by the Pukerua Bay Residents' Association and by all our valued contributors, sponsors, and advertisers.

Advertising and sponsorship

Kōrero comes out approximately every eight weeks. We need your support to keep it going. Please consider donating or placing paid advertising.

Advertising rates for **five issues** start at just $50 for a local listing (see opposite); $80 for a card-sized ad; $160 for a half-page ad; and $220 for a full-page ad.

Advertising rates for **one issue** are $20 for a card-sized ad, $40 for a half-page ad, and $60 for a full-page ad.

You can **sponsor** an entire issue for $300.

Community notices are very welcome, but please consider a koha.

Christmas on the Field is back!

This year's celebration will feature musicians Antü Mārama, AMAHRE, and Will McClean. There will be carols and the festive movies, *Stickman* and *The Snowy Day*.

A massive thanks to our sponsors, New World Paremata and Jennian Homes Wellington, for supporting this much-loved community event.

Pukerua Bay Community website and directory

The Pukerua Bay community website **pukeruabay.org.nz** holds lots of useful information, including a local business directory.

You can download a PDF of *Kōrero* from the website at: **pkb.nz/korero** or via this QR code.

Please support our supporters!

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Ian Leigh	**Coastal Floor Sanding**	027 7772639 **ian@coastalfloorsanding.co.nz**

Events calendar

22 November	Crop swap and recycling hub, 3–4pm, RSA, Wairaka Rd
26 November	Plimmerton Climate Café, 7.30pm, St Andrews Church, Steyne Ave, Plimmerton
6 December	Christmas on the Field, 3–7pm, Pukerua Bay School, Rāwhiti Road
9 December	Residents' Association meeting, 7.30–9pm, RSA, Wairaka Rd
25 December	Meri Kirihimete!
1 January	Ngā mihi o te tau hou!
11 February	Residents' Association meeting, 7.30–9pm, RSA, Wairaka Rd

To find out more about what's going on in Pukerua Bay or to promote an event, go to pkbhub.org.nz/whatson or pukeruabay.org.nz

To list an event in the November issue, email by 14 January newsletter@pukeruabay.org.nz


PUKERUA BAY
HUB
Christmas
ON THE
field
3-7PM
SATURDAY
6 DECEMBER
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