

THE LOCAL



Te Aro

NGĀ KARERE HAPORI O TE ARO



WELLINGTON GETS ITS LIBRARY BACK

The need to strengthen Wellington's central library has turned into an opportunity to renovate it for the 21st century, and this month Wellingtonians get to step back inside a refurbished library that is both familiar and quite different.

After seven years of upgrade and renovation, locals are looking forward to finding out what their popular

public space looks like now.

With more views, more sunlight, new facilities, and a cafe on the ground floor there's lots to love.

But is there a risk the library is losing focus on the core business of housing a collection of books? *The Local* went to find out.

Read more on page 2. [➤](#)

In this issue:

03 Why Oriental Bay is suffering a summer of discontent

06 Expressing yourself through sustainable second-hand style

09 Emergency readiness for people in apartments

10 Music you can get your hands on is having a moment

Wellington gets its library back

Wellington's central library, Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui, is about to reopen, strengthened, stripped back and fully reimaged.

Akasha Sergeant got a sneak preview.

“**W**e’re in a completely new experience if you know the old library,” project lead Gisella Carr says during a media walkthrough. “The concrete’s come off. There is now more sunlight pouring into this end of the library.”

The most visible change is architectural. Where the former interior directed visitors quietly between shelves, the new layout encourages gathering, lingering, and spontaneous interaction. There’s tiered seating for performances. Children and teenagers have been given distinct, purpose-built zones.

The upper floors also house a maker space and media lab. Sewing machines line one wall; nearby sit 3D printers, a weaving loom, and a CNC carving machine. In a green screen studio, school groups will be able to produce filmed content.

Heritage has been fully integrated into the building’s core. The city archives occupy a climate-controlled suite with a specialist reading room designed for focused research.

Behind the scenes, the collection has been carefully reshaped. Roughly 80,000 items, largely duplicates or outdated material, were removed during the closure. “Each item had to fight for its life,” a librarian said, describing a seven-year process of incremental purchasing and rigorous review.

Light boxes by artist Darcy Nicholas glow within the building, referencing creation stories and the importance of women, threading local narrative through contemporary design. Wellington civic space is designed not only for reading, but for performance, preservation, and participation.

What is a Library in the Digital Age?

What exactly is a library supposed to be in an era when so much information lives online? Stephen Clothier, a senior librarian involved with the project, says the answer has been evolving for years. “Libraries used to be primarily about storing knowledge,” he explains. “Now access matters more than ownership. People still come for books, but they also come



for technology, study spaces, creative programmes and community connection. The library has become something much broader.” That shift reflects a global transformation. For centuries, libraries operated on what librarians sometimes call a “just in case” model, with vast collections maintained on the assumption that any book might one day be needed. Today, digital catalogues, shared databases and e-books mean information can often be retrieved instantly rather than stored physically.

Out on the streets of central Wellington, views about the role of a library vary. A retired secondary school teacher said she worries about the loss of depth. “A library is about books,” she says firmly. “That’s what makes it different from a mall. Once you start shrinking the shelves, you change the soul of the place.” A Victoria University student says she used the library for study space and WiFi. “Most of my readings are online anyway. If fewer books mean better spaces to work, that makes sense to me.” Another student described libraries as one of the few truly public spaces left in the city. “You can sit there for hours, and nobody expects you to buy anything,” he says. “That’s pretty rare now.” A mother of two young children said the new creative spaces could help shape how the next generation experiences the library. “If kids grow up thinking the library is exciting and welcoming, they’ll keep coming back,” she says.

For Clothier, the challenge is finding balance. “The core idea hasn’t changed,” he says. “Libraries are still about access to knowledge and opportunity. The difference is that the ways we provide that access are expanding.” **TL**

A longer version of this story is available at tearo.the-local.co.nz



Wellington's summer of discontent

Indy Radcar checks out the mood along Oriental Bay on a gorgeous Wellington day.

It is the last day of summer. The sun is out, the wind is a gentle southerly, and even the UV has lost its mid-summer harshness. By rights, the beach at Oriental Parade should be packed, yet there are fewer than five people in the water. If you suspect the Moa Point failure a few bays over is to blame, you are only half right.

Joan, a regular swimmer, gestures toward the shoreline. "It's deserted," she says. A cursory glance reveals at least thirty people scattered across the beach, but the point stands: there is plenty of gold sand between the towels.

Among the trickle of swimmers heading toward the water, the Mayor's now-infamous dip was frequently cited as the necessary green light. Though he emerged from the waves covered in what looked like sewage – later confirmed as seaweed – the gesture was effective: Wellington is safe for swimming.

But the "all clear" hasn't reached everyone. "Even though the water has been tested and the lifeguards are here, people are still just too hesitant," says Sophia, from Sophia's Real Fruit Ice Cream.

Next door at Kosmos, Deonte estimates that foot traffic on Oriental Parade has dropped by 50–60%. He sees the sewage spill as a blip on what was already a downwards trajectory. From his perspective, the summer weather might have been terrible, but if it were the only factor, people would surely have turned out on this beautiful day. Instead, he blames the rising cost of living – specifically higher parking costs and the exodus of residents from the central city.

To get by, Deonte and his crew have extended their opening hours to seven days a week. Although times are tough, he is optimistic: "I do believe this is the year for Wellington and that it's going to get better." He adds: "You can't go wrong with Wellington, especially with how lovely the people are here."

Not everyone is deterred. Joan and her group of eight regulars continue to meet at 6:50 am to "lady breaststroke" around the buoy. They even head out when the harbour is classified as "red" (high risk) – though the 86-year-old in their group understandably opts out. For the others, the pursuit of camaraderie outweighs the slight risk of illness; although on these days their morning ritual now includes a grim, new compromise: "We just don't put our heads under."

Despite everyone's good humour, a theme emerges in conversation. If you begin with Moa Point, the topic inevitably moves on to pollution and crumbling infrastructure, and their inevitable intertwining. "The issue at Moa Point is not just a one-off, it's decades of falling behind," says Matt, a local resident. "It's not as if it is one single thing that we can fix. [Our amenities] need a massive amount of money."

Joan, saddened but unsurprised, agrees. With friends in the ecology sector, she is more aware than most of the degradation of our waterways. And there's a general consensus on scallops that reveals a sad irony: the harbour scallops are safe to eat, but no one is inclined to try them.

If this summer marks a low tide for the capital – laying bare the fragility of its infrastructure and the exhaustion of its wallets – one thing is clear: the city's spirit remains as stubborn as Joan's morning swimmers. **TL**

Getting our library back

Checking out the newly refurbished library was a real treat.

I was lucky enough to get a sneak preview of the refurbished central library, Te Matapihi ki te Ao Nui, before it opens in mid March.

I think it's safe to say the journalists on the tour, though trying to play it cool, were pretty impressed.

With spectacular artworks, a fresh new cafe with outdoor flow, cosy nooks to sit in, and wonderful views of the harbour now revealed, the reimagined library is a fantastic public space.

And that's not to mention some of the modern additions, like the maker room with its 3D printers, and the TV production studio for schools to use.

We've become used to the library being closed for so long we've almost forgotten what an asset it is.

In the old days, the library was the place to go, whether you wanted to meet a friend in a central location, escape the rain, kill some time, do some

study in a pleasant environment, or even read a book.

I have vivid memories of encountering the library for the first time on a visit to Wellington, back in the 90s when it was new. For someone from a small town, this public space with its metal nikau, funky design and the fact it had a café INSIDE THE LIBRARY seemed terribly modern and radical, and a demonstrable sign that Wellington was a city with intelligence and style.

Over time, it did become a bit tired, but now it has been revamped for the 21st century, and is looking spectacular. So much so, I almost don't want to see people walking on its new carpets with muddy shoes, and putting their sticky hands on the gorgeous murals and plush walls.

But a library is for people, and I'm confident it will soon become as well used and beloved as the old version.



The closure of the library has been a massive gap in the heart of Wellington for far too long and it's a relief to see it open again. **TL**

Jane O'Loughlin
Editor

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PARKing Day fun

PARKing day in February invited artists and creative thinkers to display art in spaces such as a parking area usually occupied by cars.

The event was hosted by the Wellington Sculpture Trust in collaboration with the Creative Capital Arts Trust (CCAT) and Wellington City Council as a part of the NZ Fringe Festival.

The Cuba precinct event took place in 30 car park spots between Ghuznee and Vivian Street intersection and stretched as far as the lower part of Garrett Street providing a fun, thought-provoking weekend scene for the city dwellers, city lovers, art and artist cheerleaders and tourists alike. – *Gloria Mathias* **TL**



CubaDupa logistics

The CubaDupa festival is a free, family-friendly event taking place on Saturday 28 March 12pm–12am and Sunday 29 March 11am–6pm, throughout Cuba Street and neighbouring roads. Parking restrictions will be in place from 9pm Friday until 3am Monday within the CubaDupa event footprint.

Anyone with a permanent car park within the CubaDupa event footprint will not be allowed to move their vehicle once the roads are closed for the event.

For more information, see cubadupa.co.nz **TL**

Metlink fares to increase

Metlink public transport fares will increase by 3.1% in May, with discounts applied to off peak fares being reduced from 30% to 20%.

From 15 May, the cost of a three zone trip will increase by 14 cents, bringing the peak adult Snapper fare to \$4.67 for those travelling to the CBD from Miramar or Karori.

Metlink Senior Manager of Strategy and Investments, Tim Shackleton, says fare increases were needed to ensure council costs remain financially sustainable.

Metlink is also preparing to introduce new contactless payment options for full fare paying adults, ahead of the region's transition to the national ticketing system Motu Move.

Adults will be able to tap on and off Metlink buses and trains using a debit or credit card, smartphone or smartwatch, through the existing Snapper system from 12 April. Once these additional payment options are available, Metlink will start to phase out the use of cash on board buses and trains over the next 12 months. **TL**

Concern about bikes on the footpath

Living Streets Aotearoa is opposed to a Government proposal that would allow children up to 12 years to ride bikes and e-bikes on the footpath with no speed restriction.

“E-scooters and e-bikes don’t belong on the footpath, because they are so often used in ways that pose a danger to all pedestrians, but especially to elderly pedestrians, parents walking with children, and pedestrians with disabilities,” says Living Streets Aotearoa President Tim Jones.

The organisation favours the status quo which is an age limit of 5, and small-wheeled bikes.

“E-bikes, with their greater weight and much greater speed, should absolutely not be allowed on the footpath.”

Living Streets supports other changes proposed to lane use, including one to allow e-scooters to be legally ridden in cycle lanes. **TL**

Self expression not fast fashion

Felix Clarke met the team at Superfly Vintage, newly opened in Left Bank, and found a story of revitalisation through the power of local business.

It's like Christmas shopping for the family," says Navarre Janse, owner of Superfly, as he chooses which rare t-shirts to display by the front door. He's always loved op-shopping and is a longtime collector of vintage and antique clothing. He ran flea market stalls in Melbourne for ten years.

"I just find cool stuff... I see its potential." He describes Superfly as a kind of natural progression. "I was running a stall with Chemo Finds (Vintage reseller specialising in sports apparel) down on Courtenay Place, and just... decided to do my own thing." He prefers to stock from within New Zealand, but also leverages his contacts in Melbourne to ship over pieces that are difficult to find domestically.

Janse doesn't feel that he's in competition with other vintage stores in the area, but rather that they form a "circle of support" for the budding business. The more prevalent vintage stores are, he reasons, the stronger the associated fashion scene becomes. Something that sets Superfly apart from the rest of the scene is its relationship with stockists. Small designers and upcyclers can 'rent-a-rack', taking on all the risk, but also all the profit, of garments sold off their racks. There are currently six small businesses that augment Janse's own collection: Desu, Earth Projects, Seed and Moss, Exotic, Chemo Finds, and RNJ Collective.

Jacob Lawson, the 'J' in RNJ Collective, spoke on the role Superfly and its stockists play in the local fashion scene, and on the importance of 'slow fashion'.

"We're into people, into second hand, into building taste, into fashion!"

Sitting down for a chat on the red brick stairs of Left Bank, Lawson espoused the kaupapa of his work. Superfly was bringing together the old school and new school of vintage fashion, he said, a process that's revitalising for businesses, local fashion, and the planet.

"I was so traumatized by the fast fashion industry." He recounts a recent trip to the manufacturing district of Guangzhou, China, where a large portion of the garments for retailers like Shein, Zara, and H&M are produced.



“We’re into people, into second hand, into building taste, into fashion!”

“The sheer scale of how much is being produced is awful — and 25% of it goes unsold!” An alternative to this destructive industry is to shop second hand, and it's good for more than just the environment: “It's fashion as an art.”

From Jacob's perspective, vintage shopping is more like art collecting, and wearing the pieces themselves is participating in the artistic process.

“Each item of clothing you wear has a meaning,” he explains. “When you get dressed each morning, you're choosing to express yourself. You're asking yourself a question: what do you mean?”

Post Covid and public sector layoffs, Te Aro's local economy has taken a hit. Many beloved local businesses are gone. Innovative new businesses like Superfly, that foster community engagement and upskilling of local professionals, are the first hopeful step towards revitalisation. **TL**

What's on in Wellington

Kerry Meadows-Bonner looks at some of the highlights of Wellington's arts and entertainment calendar in March and April.

LIVE THEATRE, MUSIC & VISUAL ARTS

ULTRA New Zealand

Wellington Waterfront, April 10

Influential global electronic dance music festival comes to Aotearoa for the first time. ULTRA New Zealand marks the debut of the ULTRA Music Festival brand on Wellington's waterfront, with world-class electronic music and production.

The one-day event will include multiple world-class stages – including a dedicated local drum and bass stage.

Confirmed Phase One artists include The Chainsmokers, DJ Snake, Zedd, Darren Styles, Nico Moreno, Oliver Heldens, Marlo and Miss Monique, with more to be announced

THEATRE

Speed Is Emotional – Jo Randerson

Circa Theatre, Waterfront, March 11-28

Fast, funny and fiercely human, Speed Is Emotional sees Jo Randerson unpack life through the lens of ADHD – blending punk poetry, sharp comedy and raw honesty. Part memoir, part theatrical whirlwind, the show moves through neurodivergent parenting, restless minds and emotional overloads.

LIVE MUSIC

The Datsuns

San Fran, Cuba Street, March 20

Loud, raw and unapologetic. Our very own, The Datsuns return to San Fran for a night of full-throttle energy. Known for their electric live shows, the band brings decades of swagger to one of Wellington's most intimate venues. Expect loud drums and a sweaty, high-voltage night of pure rock n roll.



The Pogues

Michael Fowler Centre, April 8

Celtic punk legends The Pogues hit the stage with their wild blend of traditional Irish music and punk.

Led by frontman Spider Stacy – carrying the torch of the late Shane MacGowan – the band will deliver classics like Dirty Old Town, Fairytale of New York and Streams of Whiskey. Expect anthemic sing-alongs and high energy that blurs the lines between folk and punk.

Bic Runga with the NZSO

Michael Fowler Centre, April 5


One of Aotearoa's most iconic voices joins the New Zealand Symphony Orchestra for a one-night-only orchestral performance.

Bic Runga's catalogue – from the haunting pull of Sway to her later, layered releases – is reimagined with full symphonic backing, bringing depth and scale to her intimate songwriting.

VISUAL ARTS

The Fab Four – The Ultimate Tribute

The Opera House, March 26

Step back into the golden era of rock as The Fab Four – The Ultimate Tribute brings The Beatles' legendary catalogue to life in a high-energy stage show. From early Beatlemania to the later studio years, the performance recreates the look, sound and spirit of one of music's most influential bands. 

Being better with batteries

Reporter **Emily McCarthy** went to Te Aro Zero Waste to find out where used batteries should go if not the bin.

Rubbish truck fires have become increasingly common across the motu, with highly volatile lithium batteries the most likely culprit. Just last month, batteries collected by a Rotorua rubbish truck doing the kerbside rounds sparked and caught alight. Julia Rowling, who recently finished her Master of Sustainable Development Goals and works at Te Aro Zero Waste and the Sustainability Trust in Forresters Lane, shared her knowledge about this problem.

Fire hazards aside, Rowling's preference is that "nothing goes in the bin." She believes that with a mindset shift and a little creativity, it's possible to find useful pathways for old batteries and other products that we assume have reached the end of their lives.

"Batteries are made of minerals that are really valuable," Rowling says. "To then just throw away rather than reuse is wasteful, unnecessary, and increases the taxation on our environment."

Used batteries can be brought to Te Aro Zero Waste to be sorted, collected by Echotech Wellington for processing, and exported by Phoenix Recycling Group for shipping to South Korea and Japan. There, they are reprocessed so their valuable components can be reused. Phoenix Recycling is accredited by the Environmental Protection Authority, which provides confidence that the batteries are being properly recycled and residues disposed of when they reach their offshore destination.

Rowling also notes that waste can be reduced by buying well. Buying rechargeable batteries and quality brands reduces the number of batteries we consume.

In addition to highlighting the waste of valuable minerals, Rowling notes the harms caused by batteries sent to landfill. Like all landfilled products, batteries contribute to the generation of methane and leachate. But with batteries, she notes, "the chemistry, the heavy metals" produce particularly toxic leachate. Batteries that are too damaged to be recycled can be disposed of for free as hazardous waste at the Southern Landfill.



Other local spots where batteries can be taken for recycling include the Karori and Kilbirnie libraries, several community centres, and the Southern Landfill's Tip Shop. Recognising that they retail a wide range of battery-powered products, all Bunnings stores collect batteries for recycling. When dropping off lithium batteries, you can help keep those who handle them safe by putting plastic tape over the batteries' top and bottom faces to reduce the risk of ignition.

Building on the example set by Bunnings, there are opportunities for retailers and battery producers to take greater responsibility. Rowling mentions the recent Government decision to include a mandatory product stewardship fee in the cost of tyres. Every tyre sold since 1 March 2024 in New Zealand has had a \$6.65 fee baked into its cost, which is used to pay for tyre collection services, reprocessing and recycling, and research and development. Consumers don't have to pay to dispose of old tyres anymore: the cost is factored in at the point of sale. Rowling is a fan. "I'm always into producer responsibility solutions," she says.

Until that happens with batteries, it's up to us to act responsibly, and dispose of them safely. **TL**

Like all landfilled products, batteries contribute to the generation of methane and leachate.

Emergency readiness – 5 things your apartment building can do

Imagine this: You live in a high-rise apartment building. There's been a city-wide emergency event and the power has gone out. The emergency services are saying you'll need to 'shelter at home' for 7-10 days while the city's services and broken roads are being sorted out. Ready? Limited space, no storage, reliance on lifts, shared systems, and close living conditions all make emergency readiness more complicated for our 'vertical streets'.

But getting started can happen now. Here are five building blocks that apartment buildings can try immediately.

1. Start the conversation

Preparedness begins with awareness. Many residents assume someone else – the body corporate, landlord, or property manager – has a plan. But do they? Simply raising the topic in a residents' group chat, building noticeboard, or informal meeting can break the ice. Ask basic questions: What would happen if lifts stopped? How would we communicate? Who might need extra help?

These conversations can feel awkward at first, but they are the most important first step.

2. Identify a friendly contact person

Having at least one person willing to share information and help connect neighbours can make a big difference. This doesn't need to be a formal role or a heavy responsibility. A friendly contact can circulate updates, welcome new residents, and act as a link between floors. Ideally, buildings will eventually have contacts on each level, but beginning with one person is a good start.

3. Get to know your neighbours

In emergencies, the people located nearest to you might be the ones who can help you the most. Introduce yourself to neighbours on your floor. Exchange phone numbers or create a simple contact list. Knowing who lives nearby – including anyone who may need assistance – can make a critical difference if normal communication systems fail. Even a brief hallway conversation can get the ball rolling.



4. Map skills and needs

Every building already contains valuable resources – people with medical training, practical skills, tools, or experience in emergencies. At the same time, some residents may need extra support, such as those with mobility challenges, health conditions, or young children.


Running a voluntary skills-and-needs residents survey could help you discover people with special skills.

5. Identify practical building issues

Walk through the building with fresh eyes. Consider how it would function without power or water. How would you lock the building's front door? Would toilets work? What happens to the building's boiler and system? It's air-conditioning? And how would residents receive information? Are there suitable communal areas for gathering if needed?

Discovering what you know and don't know about your building is a great start.

Preparedness is about connection, communication, and cooperation. A building where residents know one another and have discussed basic plans, is far more resilient than one where everyone is isolated behind closed doors

ICW's 'Lifeboat Buildings' is all about community-based readiness, because in a crisis your neighbours may be your most important resource. 

Find out more here: innercitywellington.nz/lifeboat-buildings. Or email us: innercitywellington@gmail.com.



Why tangible music still matters

Kerry Meadows-Bonner checks out the return of music you can hold in your hand.

Before algorithms decided what we should hear next, music lived in shoeboxes, beer crates, glove compartments and carefully labelled plastic cases.

Although the advent of digital music appeared to kill vinyl, CDs and cassettes, they are making a determined comeback.

Benjamin James, who runs Herb's mobile vinyl truck, sees how that nostalgia plays out. "I definitely think (TV shows like) *Stranger Things* make kids want to get cassettes," he said.

"But even I'm guilty of it."

"I never thought I'd have a cassette player, but then I bought a Walkman just so I could go for walks and have like only five albums with me and listen to them in their entirety."

"It just kind of felt more special." he said.

Cassette was king during the 1980s and early 1990s. Its appeal lay in its portability, affordability and recordability. Music lovers established their creds with carefully curated mixtapes.

Vinyl was the original of course, and sleeve covers allowed lots of real estate for artwork and lyrics.

But vinyl declined, and the arrival of the compact disc in the late 1980s reshaped music. With clarity, durability and convenience, CDs surpassed both vinyl and cassette, becoming the preferred format through the 1990s and early 2000s.

Then the digital shift changed everything. MP3 downloads, followed by streaming, transformed music into instant access. By the 2000s, cassette had almost disappeared from mainstream retail, vinyl had fallen, and CD sales entered steady decline.

Yet physical music never fully vanished. Vinyl's revival began globally in the late 2000s among collectors and audiophiles before moving into the mainstream

and reestablishing itself in 2013 as a commercial physical format.

Cassette tapes, once obsolete, resurfaced around 2015 in collector and independent music circles. Even the compact disc, once thought dead and buried, still lingers.

Today, cassette exists more as a cult object than a mass format. Tape culture sits outside commercial scale – niche and community-driven. Independent labels, Bandcamp releases and limited artist merchandise sustain interest, with collectors drawn to scarcity and the physical connection digital listening cannot replace.

At Flying Nun Records, Charlotte Astair doesn't own a cassette player, but she does buy vinyl.

"I like to buy vinyl and physical media just to give back to the artist as well. And of course, go to gigs as well to support them." she said.

She said physical media offers security in an era of musical platforms and disappearing catalogues. Buying vinyl, she said, is also a nice way of discovering new music and paying homage to the artists who put their whole life work into creating this amazing piece of work."

In 2025, Kiwis streamed 12.4 billion songs, according to Recorded Music NZ figures. Compared to this, physical formats account for only a small share of total recorded music revenue.

However the numbers show recent strong growth. Physical album sales grew 13 percent in 2025 compared with 2024, compared to 10 percent for combined physical and digital album sales.

If streaming is about access, physical music is about intention.

Physical formats involve ritual and ownership. Cassette and vinyl still exist as relics of intentional listening. They are merchandise, storytelling and fan connection in a music world that's becoming harder to touch long after the algorithm moves on. **TL**

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Email your answers to us at editor@the-local.co.nz.
If there's more than one correct answer, the winner
will be selected at random. Congratulations to Alastair
Watchman who identified the February ULO as the
monument in Te Aro park. 



COMMUNITY NOTICEBOARD

Do you have a regular or one-off event, class or service you would like to promote? 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*.

March Community Clean-up

Join the Sustainability Trust for our monthly community street clean in Wellington! Let's unite to kick trash to the curb and beautify our streets. We'll spend roughly an hour on the streets and water-front with our litter pickers making our community a waste-free zone. You're welcome to join us for as little or as long as you like, just pop along to Te Aro Zero Waste and do your bit to help make Welly waste-free. Wednesday, 18 March 2026, 12pm-1pm, Te Aro Zero Waste Centre (Sustainability Trust) 2 Forresters Lane, Wellington.

DCM Wellington

We work at the sharp end of things and are the leading social service working with people who are experiencing homelessness in Wellington. Our services range from free dentistry through to Housing First. If you know of someone rough sleeping who may need support, contact 04 499 4444. To learn more: dcm.org.nz.

Free yoga with Lauren

Free vinyasa yoga for all levels. BYO yoga mat. Tuesday & Thursday, 7-8 am. Upstairs Hall at Thistle Hall. Everyone is welcome. laurenstrpko.com for more information and online bookings.

Antarctic Film Festival

A curated selection of captivating short films from the coldest place on Earth, presented by the New Zealand Antarctic Society. The event includes a presentation by Alexander Hillary, the General Manager of the Himalayan Trust and a passionate advocate for people, mountains, and remote environments. A lifelong adventurer and environmentalist, Alexander continues the legacy of his grandfather, Sir Edmund Hillary, through work that connects communities, landscapes, and stories across the globe. Monday 23 March, 6:30pm-8:30pm. Lecture theatre 1, Rutherford House, 33 Bunny St, Wellington. Buy tickets: antarcticsociety.org.nz/events/antarctic-film-festival-wellington.



Holy Week and Easter Services

St Peter's Anglican Parish Church, 211 Willis Street, Te Aro

stpeteronwillis.org.nz • 04 382 8486

29 March PALM SUNDAY

8am & 10am

2 April MAUNDY THURSDAY

7pm: Foot washing and Eucharist

3 April GOOD FRIDAY

10am: Stations of the Cross

4pm: Liturgy anointing Jesus for burial

4 April HOLY SATURDAY

9.15am: Prayers at the Tomb

9pm: Lighting of the New Easter Fire

5 April EASTER SUNDAY

8am & 10am

**Everyone is welcome
at St Peter's!**



Felix Clarke and Kitty Muir-Woodley hit the streets of Te Aro to photograph and interview people about their personal style.

Mazzy

says they used to be 'Trad-Goth' but moved on to bright hair and more versatility. They source their clothes simply – second hand, or the Warehouse for plain basics.



Lula and Shae

are into bright colours and creative silhouettes. They combine vintage clothing from Wellington with newly manufactured pieces they brought over from China.



Holly and Taz of "The Closet Crew" celebrating on Cuba Street, wearing "whatever they feel like". They're dancing in the sun, using clothing wildly to express themselves.



Paige

describes her style as an "Alt-Accountant". She wants to bring back practical woolen skirts, showcased here with black leather boots and blazer shoulders adorned with metal spikes.

My night out is a monthly series where we feature contributions from readers. Do you have a story to tell? The best accounts will be published and win a \$50 prize. See the-local.co.nz for more information.

Bogan band adventure

Isabelle Ellingham became an entertainment guide for an Aussie band.

It started on a Friday night. Australian band Lazy Ghost were frantically energizing the atmosphere of Lyall Bay's Parrot Dog with their cool, wavy, psychedelic surfer rock. Flannel shirts, dented guitars, and a drum set that looks as though it has been through the wringer. Drinks are flowing, speakers are blaring, I am dancing. Musicians are drawn to this city not so much to tick a box of obligation on a map, but to experience people who truly want to engage with their art form in all the magnificence of its visceral nature. That is most certainly why I was there, wine in hand, ears peeled. I mindlessly tagged the band in a photo on Instagram, adhering to the prescribed social behaviours of my generation, of course. Next thing I know, the bogan Aussie band has responded to my tag! "Hey! Glad you enjoyed our set dude - where can we go to drink? Wanna come with?"

Of course I did. When the gig finishes we arrange to meet, and I head into the city.

There is a delicate and vibrant texture to this city as it descends into night, from the crimson streaked skies of Princess Bay back to the feral chaos that can be found in the depths of Te Aro. In the city, the earlier crowd are walking haphazardly in an oddly choreographed way past me, stumbling, peals of unburdened laughter ringing out into the humid summer air.

I have to admit I am well versed in what bars to frequent in the nether hours of night. Buzzing, I meet the band, promising an unequivocally Wellingtonian evening of meandering through the Cuba Street mosaic of late night dive bars, essentially the experience any first-year student has during O-week. Rogue & Vagabond, Dirty Little Secret, Havana Bar and of



course, who could possibly pass up a questionably smeary glass of Guinness at J.J Murphy & Co? I sat, laughing and talking absolute nonsense with Lazy Ghost, my debit card taking the unfortunate blow of being a typical groupie - "all rounds are on me!"

Somehow it's 4am and we stumble from bar to bar, smelling purely at this point, of beer and sweat. I am given the inebriated promise of a photograph, with the addendum of a pinky promise for free tickets to their next gig (I am still waiting on those).

While it may be somewhat true that Welly cannot be beaten on a good day, the city reveals its tone, its texture and a bit of bite at night. Find the rhythm and it can take you just about anywhere. **TL**

Somehow it's 4am and we stumble from bar to bar, smelling purely at this point, of beer and sweat.

Te Aro park

In the last issue of *The Local*, (February 2026), readers were invited to identify the mystery object in the Te Aro area. **Roger Blakeley** wrote in to provide background on this important site – and a personal connection.

Te Aro Park (Te Waimapihi) in Wellington, a former site of Te Aro Pā settled by Te Atiawa, features a 1939 stone memorial commemorating an 1839 Methodist mission service. The site was redesigned in 1992 as a sculptural art park by Shona Rapira Davies, incorporating 30,000 tiles and a waka to symbolize the area's history, water (Te Waimapihi stream), and Māori heritage.

The area was the location of Te Aro Pā, which was inhabited by Te Atiawa until the 1890s. In 1845, the Wesleyan Church established a mission house and chapel there.

The wording on the plinth is:

CLOSE TO THIS SPOT AT TE ARO PA ON SUNDAY
9th JUNE 1839 A CHRISTIAN SERVICE WITH THE
MAORIS WAS CONDUCTED BY REVEREND S H
BUMBY AND REVEREND J HOBBS MISSIONARIES
OF THE METHODIST CHURCH.

MINARAPA RANGIHATUAKE O NGATI HAUPOTO
KI TARANAKI TE MINITA TUATAHI O TE HAH
WETERIANA TE ARO PA 1839

NANA TE PURAPURA O TE RONGO PA11
WHAKATO, NA TE IWI I WHAKA

MAKUKU, NA O RATOU MAHI HOKI I TU AI
TE WHAREKARAKIA TUATAHI KI TE
WHANGANUI-A-TARA

I KIIA HOKI RATOU HE HUNGA PONO.

The two people were named on the plinth were prominent 19th-century Wesleyan Methodist missionaries who played pivotal roles in establishing the Methodist Church in New Zealand, particularly in the Hokianga district.

Rev John Hobbs (1800–1883) was an artisan-missionary (carpenter/blacksmith) from England who first arrived in New Zealand in 1823. He was known for his fluency in Te Reo Māori, aiding in translation (including the Book of Job), serving as




an interpreter for Governor Hobson at the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, and acting as a mediator in tribal disputes. His signature is on the Treaty document as a witness for Māori Chiefs who signed their agreement with a cross. He was also my great, great, great grandfather!

Rev. John Hewgil Bumby (1808–1840) was an English-born Wesleyan missionary who arrived in New Zealand in March 1839. His time in New Zealand was short; he drowned in the Waitemata Harbour on June 26, 1840, when a canoe capsized.

Both were instrumental in establishing the Wesley Methodist Church which opened in 1880 in Taranaki Street, about 50 metres along from Te Aro Park.

As well as being a descendent of Rev John Hobbs, I have an association with Wesley Church. I am the Co-Chair of Wesley Community Action, the Community Development arm of the church. My fellow Co-Chair is Eugene Ryder, a State abuse survivor and advocate, and social worker. Our Board has agreed a Treaty-based framework of Rangatiratanga, Āhurutanga, Manaakitanga, and Kaitiakitanga. We are a creative change organisation that works in communities with whānau across all ages and stages, within the wider Wellington Region. Our programmes include Family Start, Social Workers in Schools, Strengthening Families, Connected Ageing, Safe Elders' Service, Whanau Ora, and innovative programmes like New Zealand P-Pull to support whanau seriously affected by Meth addiction, and warm, safe and dry housing.

Roger Blakeley was a Councillor on Greater Wellington Regional Council for 6 years. He is currently Chair of the Wellington Heritage Festival Trust. 

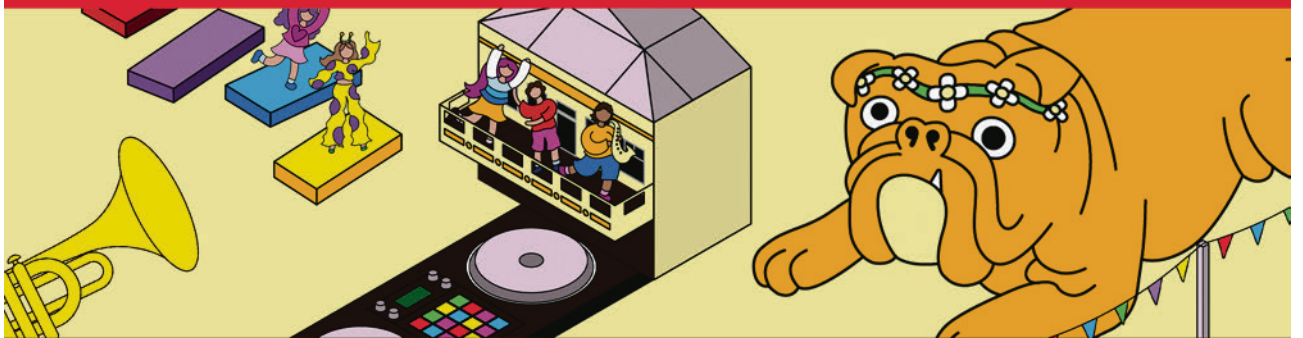


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