

Residents' News

JANUARY 2026



Hello everyone,

A big **HAPPY NEW YEAR** to you all!! We trust you all had a lovely Christmas and holiday season - this is a part-month newsletter, to keep you informed for the remaining three weeks of the month. We will keep it short and snappy!

Congratulations to the Committee and helpers who decorated and took part in the santa parade entry last month – a trophy was won again! A different category this year – Sport & Recreation – well done to you all!!! The trophy is currently at the engravers but we will have it back again soon.

Don't forget to come along to the sausage sizzle this Friday from 4:30pm – only \$2 for a sausage cooked for you on our BBQ here at the Community Lodge. A nice way to spend the end of a summer's day!

The movie afternoon is this Saturday at the usual time, 1:30pm, in our main lounge, just turn up, plenty of seats for all.

Well that's about it. We are back in full force now as you know and the holiday season was managed smoothly via our trusty skeleton crew and our 24hr answerphone. We had a few sales enquiries too and came in for those at various times during the break.

Our February newsletter will be delivered by the 27th January to give everyone plenty of time to get names in for the Valentines event that the Committee are organising for the 14th.

From Stephanie, Amy, and all staff at Richmond Villas 😊



▶ **Friday Mix n Mingle Happy Hour: 4:30pm start.** Raffles: The weekly Raffle is drawn on Friday night @ 5:30pm. Tickets are \$1 for 2 draws; the **jackpot** is running – the winner must be present to collect the jackpot.

Come along at 4.30pm grab your Raffle Ticket and join in the fun. If you want a lift – phone Graeme Woodward: 868-6252 (or phone Gary Pye, or the office), and the village buggy will pick you up!

▶ **Events this month: -**

- **Mix n Mingle & Sausage Sizzle: Friday 16th January 4.30pm.**
Bring along \$2



▶ **Coming Up, February: -**

- Valentines Day; Saturday 14th Feb – details to come, Feb newsletter
- Outing - Lavendar Farm, Waihi – details to come, Feb newsletter

Happy Birthday to those born in JANUARY!!



😊 06 Alison Lee 😊 08 Bob Perry 😊 09 Murray Kemp 😊 10 Judy Barkley
😊 11 Terry Woodward 😊 13 Audrey Anderson 😊 15 Dennis Matthews
😊 19 Elaine May 😊 29 Lyn Maxwell

A Birthday Afternoon Tea will be held in April in celebration of those who had birthdays in January, February, March & April (everybody welcome!)

Regular Activities


▶ Visitors entering the Community Lodge are required to sign in under our health and safety policy.

▶ **VILLAGE BUGGY: Phone Graham Woodward to arrange pick-up / drop-off, to / from any events or activities in the village**

❖ **Spec Savers:** Next visit will be in February – date TBC. 9:45am.
Call in for a free clean / minor adjustment of your glasses!

❖ **Thames BLIND & LOW VISION Support Group: Thursday 5th February at 10:00am.** (no meeting in January). Every FIRST THURSDAY of the month. This group is open to the public and is for anyone affected by low vision, including support people, e.g. partners and friends. Extend an invite to anyone you may know who can benefit.

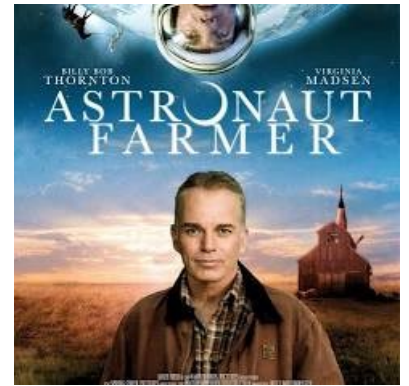
▶ Any queries, contact **Michelle Mackie**, Community & Volunteer Coordinator at Blind Low Vision NZ. Ph: **022-010-3254** or email: mmackie@blindlowvision.org.nz

- ❖ **SWIMMING POOL CLEANING** – Every Thursday from 1pm – 4pm the pool is closed for cleaning
- ❖ **TAI CHI** – **Fridays at 10:30am** – try out the relaxing and uplifting benefits of Tai Chi. Done via You Tube on our new projector screen. Come and try it out - a wonderful way to enhance your day! *Note: start time will change to 9:30am when the Friday Forum is on.*
- ❖ **BOLIVIA** – **Every Wednesday at 12:45pm.** Do you enjoy playing cards? If interested in learning and playing Bolivia, come along and try it out. Played in groups of four, with partners. *Contact Jilly Warburton 027 314 2582.*
- ❖ **INDOOR BOWLS**- **Every Wednesday at 10:00am** in the Main Hall, Community Lodge
- ❖ **CHESS CLUB** – **Are you interested in playing Chess?** Please contact Dennis Matthews on 027 292 1376. Held on Level 2 in the small lounge (“Tea Room”) of the apartment block on Tuesdays at 10.00am, beginners are welcome.
- ❖ **CHOIR: 2.00pm Every Tuesday in the Community Lodge Main Hall. Starts back up in February – first or second week – see Feb newsletter** 
- ❖ **Exercises with Judy:** classes are held at the Community Lodge, Main Hall 10-11am Mondays. Starting back up 9th February
- ❖ **Exercise Class with Jenny Brett: 11:00 am Mondays – exercise for strength and balance, can be done sitting or standing.** Come along and give it a go, or come and get back in to it (as the saying goes: use it, don’t lose it!) – a very beneficial class for maintaining strength and balance. Small charge of \$3 per class paid to Jenny, class is open to the public. **Starting back up Monday 2nd February.**
- ❖ **500 Card Group:** Mondays at 1:30pm: All welcome to join, we are happy to teach new players.
- ❖ **Rummikub – Learn To Play:** Tuesdays, Wednesday & Thursdays, Learn to play every Wednesday at 2.00pm.
- ❖ **Mahjong – 1pm Tuesdays – New people welcome!**
- ❖ **Scrabble: Fridays at 1.30 pm.** anyone interested in playing scrabble or giving it a go please come along, currently a small group - *more players very welcome.* Held in the Community Lodge dining room.
- ❖ **Needlework Craft Mornings 10.00am:** The Wednesday morning needle craft group is meeting in the Apartment Block ground floor lounge at 10:00am. *All welcome to come along.*
- ❖ **Crafts: Thursday’s 10.00am** held in the Community Lodge craft room. **Starting back up 5th February.**

- ❖ **Pool - every Tuesday & Friday 1.30pm** – More players wanted - come and join the Pool session!! This is a call-out for more people to come along and try it out – whether a beginner, a shark, a woman, a man - *all are welcome to join this fun activity!*
- ❖ **Housie: Every Sunday from 1.30pm, for a 2pm start, followed with Afternoon Tea at 3pm. Started back Sunday 11th January.**

Movie Afternoon: “ASTRONAUT FARMER” Saturday 24th January at 1.30pm: based on a true story.

American DRAMA (2006) Starring Billy Bob Thornton and Virginia Madsen. The movie is fictional but mirrors the inspirational true story of Jose Hernandez, a real-life migrant farmworker who became a NASA astronaut. Unable to continue his astronaut training due to saving the family ranch, the Texas rancher attempts to construct a rocket in his barn and launch himself into outer space.



- ❖ **Shopping Main Street: Every Thursday** – Depart using the *Thames Connector at 09.47am* (from community lodge foyer) and the *Village Van will pick you up at 11.00am outside the Civic Centre.*



Shopping Pak n Save: Every Friday – 9.30am The Village Van will drop you off at Pak n Save and pick you up at **10.30am.**

- ❖ **Hairdresser Appointments: With Carina, Tuesdays & Fridays.** Appointments can be made via Reception.

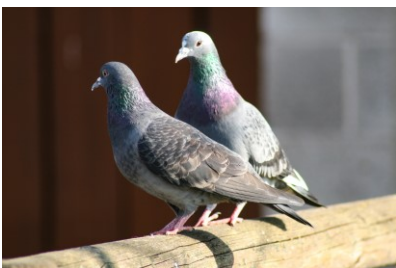
- ❖ **VILLAGE PHYSIOTHERAPIST:**

TUESDAY Afternoons from 12pm & WEDNESDAY Mornings from 9am

Half hour appointments. Phone/txt **Julie: 027 281 4980** to book your appointment.

Reminder: GREENWASTE pick-ups every Monday and Friday mornings – except Public Holidays. Please put your green waste out regularly to keep the load light, for Linda to lift on to the truck. Use a second bin if necessary. Also, please leave it out the night before pick-up, or by 7:45am on Monday/Friday.

General:



Please refrain from feeding birds in the village. There is plenty of food around for birds at this time of year, and it is healthier for our feathered friends to eat naturally foraged food, rather than our scraps, even feeding them bird seed can still lead to clean washing on the line being spoiled!

We have recently had Pigeons trying to nest in to the village, and in particular, on the Apartment Building. They are proving to have a remarkable resilience to stick around, once they decide on a 'home'! We certainly do not want to encourage them, cute as they may be. Thanks!

BOOK REVIEW:

AUTHOR, Maggie O'Farrell; HAMNET

This is a great read. Maggie O'Farrell is an Irish author who now resides in Scotland. She is a member of the Royal Society of Literature.



Hamnet is an amazing book that deserves the awards it has received for its writing style, historical immersion, and creative storytelling.

The novel is built around William Shakespeare's young son named Hamnet. The truth is, history tells us very little about Shakespeare, so the known facts are these: he married a woman named Anne (or Annis or Agnes, according to O'Farrell). They had a daughter, Susanna, and then twins, Judith and Hamnet. Hamnet died as a child age 11, of what – is unknown. Shakespeare then wrote the play *Hamlet* a few years later. According to the author's research, "Hamlet" and "Hamnet" are the same name.

The story in this novel is pretty much complete fiction, but is based on intrepid research and so is historical in a non-Shakespeare-centric way.

In the novel, the story centres around Agnes, the mother of the doomed Hamnet, but perspective does change frequently between several of the characters, including the children and the husband. We know from the start that poor Hamnet – an energetic, sweet child – is going to die, but the book is still constructed of tension, filled with flashbacks to Agnes' and the tutor's courtship and earlier marriage. The tagline on the cover is "a novel of the plague," and that's another question O'Farrell had: why did Shakespeare never mention the plague in any of his writings, even though it was a prominent feature of the times? The plague is essentially another character, present from the first pages, moving into the background and back into the forefront, repeatedly. But the novel is really about Motherhood, grief, and mafic/nature, as well as family and the turn of the 17th century in England.

Shakespeare's name is not mentioned in the book not even once. Not even a nickname. Which is kind of an impressive trick – to write an entire novel and never mention one of the character's names, technically impressive but I found it distracting. I mean, I *know* it is a novel. It's not true to whoever Shakespeare really was (except perhaps by some massive coincidence). But it is clearly based on Shakespeare, and I don't think calling him "William" would have distracted from Agnes' story.

- ▶ **Carsons Bookshop had copies of this book at the time this review was prepared.**
- ▶ **A movie version was due for release in the middle of January, including at The Left Bank Theatre in Thames.**

This review has been compiled from online reviews, on line.