

Abberley Park get together

Friends of Abberley Park came together recently to celebrate the 86th anniversary of its creation.

Nikki Staskiewicz controlled the barbeque sausages that were handed out to visitors at the park, while entertainer Chris Williams sang and played guitar.

Abberley is one of eight heritage parks in Christchurch with a mix of native and introduced trees and shrubs. Long time friend of the park, Patricia Wallace, said she hoped some of the original features in the park would one day be restored, such as



Pam Andrew, Emma Twaddell and Patricia Wallace

the scented garden that benefitted sight-challenged people.

Patricia keeps a close eye on the condition of the trees in the park and is quick to alert council about vandalism or rubbish. Local Predator Free NZ members assist with controlling rodents along the stream, feeding on walnut and fruit trees nearby. Regular functions take place at the park hall and young parents bring their children to the fenced paddling pool while older people chat in one of the separate garden areas. ❧

Cars move, church goes, units coming

by Chris Hutching

It may be a testament to the resilience of a Nissan vehicle that it fired up after nearly 10 years on its 65 Warrington St parking spot as the property is prepared for demolition and apartment redevelopment.

The mould-covered car was resurrected after a repair to a fuel leak and a new battery, and was immediately driven away much to the bemusement of Schroeders Bar patrons across the road who have speculated on the mystery of the cars, many of them losing their wheels over the years.

James Hobcraft recently sold the 1904 property on the Warrington/Flockton St corner, and M Group Properties has been marketing the units that will soon be constructed after demolition of the former church.



Nissan car being driven away after 10 years

James told StAN that he had bought the property more than 10 years ago to house his printing business and he had also wanted to establish a small car yard. However, some neighbours opposed his resource consent application and the city council invoked the district plan rules that stymied his plans. "I offered to maintain the berms but the city council said 'no' so I



continued to keep some of my cars there and let the berms go. I was able to run my printing business in a small part of the building." James said he had sold most of the cars, including a Jaguar without wheels, and the buyers were progressively removing them ahead of redevelopment.

The church was initially used as a suburban Sunday School before becoming an independent church in 1922 until about 1997. St Albans History Group member Jonathan Allan said he had put together a folio of churches in the suburb and was amazed to discover there had been 24 different denominations and about 31 different sites of church buildings, most long gone. The Warrington St church building sold a few months ago for \$805,000.

M Group Properties is marketing nine 83 square metre two and three bedroom, two bathroom units in three blocks with off-street car parking. Lots one to four come with consent for short-term accommodation. ❧

More housing on page 12



Residents cry foul over creek pollution

by Chris Hutching

Environment Canterbury's pollution complaint phone line has been running hot recently responding to Edgware Rd residents' dismay at repeated contamination flowing from associated water works to service a large intensive apartment development.

Sediment has discoloured Dudley Creek after flowing into the Champion St stormwater pipe and into the Edgware stream at the eastern end where it travels towards and under Hills Rd and eventually flows into Dudley Creek. The cloudy grey water was visible in Dudley Creek along Stapletons Rd and flowing towards the Avon.

A compliance officer has visited the Champion St site on several occasions to discuss the problem with workmen. The half-completed development requires a new water pumping station in the middle of the road, and despite settling tanks designed to catch sediment it has overflowed.

Several Edgware residents interviewed by StAN were distressed and angry about the overflows with potential effects on the eels that live in the creek. A Champion St resident questioned whether St Albans had sufficient existing infrastructure to cope with the mushrooming number of new apartments.

The problem was resolved in the latest incident thanks to a wastewater truck arriving on the scene. The spill was one of several affecting the wastewater and creek systems around St Albans in recent months and years due to sediment escaping from new developments.



Funding for SARA

The following organisations fund the activities of the St Albans Residents Association (including St Albans News)



SARA Committee

The next St Albans Residents Assoc committee meeting will be held April 15 at 7.30pm. A Public Forum meeting will be held on March 18 at Kōhinga St Albans Community Centre, 1049 Colombo St.

Advertising in St Albans News

If you would like to advertise in the News, phone Lynne on 972 5534 or email advertising@stalbens.gen.nz. Please ask for a copy of our ratesheet, which specifies sizes, prices and requirements.

St Albans Strategy

Learn about the St Albans Strategy adopted 10 years ago and the 20 projects the community came up with: Contact SARA@stalbens.gen.nz for more information.

St Albans History Group

Next meetings: March 2 (not meeting in April) at 2pm at the St Albans Community Centre. Email: briangspear@hotmail.com

BBQ Trailer for hire

St Albans Community BBQ Trailer is available to hire for corporate events, community gatherings or private celebrations. Enquiries to: BBQ@stalbens.gen.nz

The deadline for the May/June issue of St Albans News is April 13. Please send your articles, letters and notices to: news@stalbens.gen.nz

SARA Website

Check out SARA's website on www.stalbens.gen.nz. Contains digital copies of St Albans News, a calendar of events and occasional blog posts.

StAN on Facebook

St Albans News is published bimonthly. If you wish to comment on stories you read in St Albans News or anything that is happening in the area, you can write a letter to the editor (and wait) or you can go to our Facebook page: [StAlbansNews](https://www.facebook.com/StAlbansNews) and post a message there immediately.

SARA on Neighbourly

SARA also has a presence on Neighbourly, a community asset owned by Stuff. Contains notices, advice, things to buy or sell and topics of interest to the neighbourhood. www.neighbourly.co.nz

Hauora Hui Rehua Marae

Rehua Marae is hosting Kidney Nurse Bec Hayston who will be talking about kidneys.

The talk will also cover how diabetes affects your kidneys. Kidney tests will be available.

Tuesday 17 March,
Pōwhiri 9.30 am

RSVP: admin@rehuamarae.org.nz or phone 355 5615 by Tuesday 10 March. 79 Springfield Road.

Tai Chi for Beginners

Discover the gentle art of Tai Chi! A brand-new class for beginners is launching this April.

Class Details

- When: Mondays at 11:30 am (during school term time)
- Where: St Albans Community Centre

Please register your interest by contacting Jan at 027 634 2449.

St Albans events

If you have events you would like announced here, please email: news@stalbens.gen.nz

March 2 10.30 am & April 6 10.30 am: Cafe Chat at Kōhinga/St Albans Community Centre

March 17 9.30 am: Hauora Hui, Rehua Marae, 79 Springfield Road

March 21 10 am–2pm: Sol Gathering: Health & wellness for mind, body and soul, Kōhinga, 1049 Colombo St

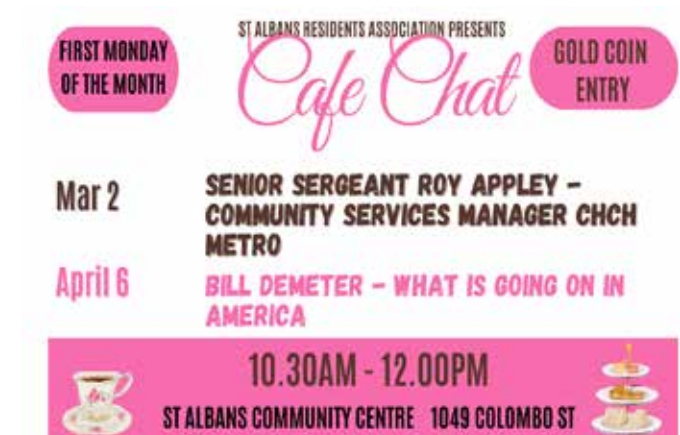
March 29 1-4pm: 30th anniversary Packe St Park



Working bees

Monday and Thursday
from 2 to 4 pm

For more information visit
our FB page:
facebook.com/packestreet



Activities at the community centre

Weekly groups that meet at the community centre.

Monday	10am	Saygo - join waiting list
	11am	Happy Feet
	5pm	Universal Martial Arts
Tuesday	9.30am	Zumba with JB
	10am	NeighbourNet/SeniorNet Mac
	5.30	Pippins
	7pm	Avon Toastmasters
	7pm	Ungu Capoeira
Wednesday	10am	SeniorNet Mac
	10.30am	The Corner, coffee and chat
	7.00pm	Capoeira Angola
Thursday	9.30am	Saygo - join waiting list
	10.45am	Yoga with Tracy Kells
	10am	NeighbourNet
	5.00pm	Universal Martial Arts
	7.15pm	Women in Harmony
Friday	10am	SeniorNet Mac
	10am	Social Square Dancing
Call Centre for details	6pm	Impact Youth

The programme above lists weekly activities run at the centre, 03 972 5534 or communitycentre@stalbens.gen.nz for more information or hire enquiries.

One off or monthly activities/events can be notified for free in community notices, events column or through paid advertising. Please contact advertising@stalbens.gen.nz for information and rates.

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Send your news contributions to:

news@stalbens.gen.nz

<http://www.facebook.com/StAlbansNews>

Letters can be mailed to:

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The opinions expressed in this publication are solely those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the St Albans Residents Association.

Happy 5th birthday Kōhinga!

The magnificent community centre building, Kōhinga, was opened in April 2021 with the St Albans Residents Association handling the the management of the centre. The name was gifted by local iwi Ngāi Tūāhuriri - Kōhinga, meaning "to gather" in English.

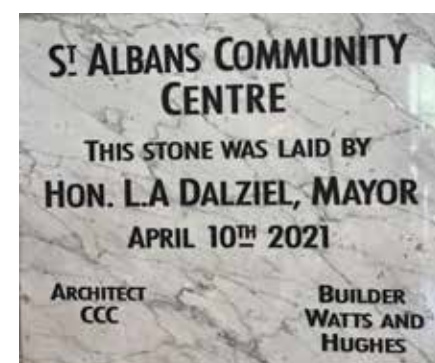
Originally, the site housed the St Albans Public Library, opened on May 28, 1921 by then Mayor, Dr Thacker.

Due to declining usage the city council decided in 1997 to rationalise suburban voluntary libraries but a group of residents lobbied the council to retain the brick building and turn the premises into the St Albans Community Resource Centre.

A few years later the first Christchurch earthquake on September 4, 2010, dealt a mortal blow to the building, which was demolished on July 20, 2011.

In 2012 Lions International offered one of its buildings until 2018 when it was relocated to MacFarlane Park. SARA temporarily moved into the St Albans Tennis Club in Dover St to provide spaces for local community groups until Kōhinga was built.

Courtesy St Albans History Group booklet St Albans Community centre 1867-2021



Above, Cutting the ribbon: Emma Norris, Pauline Cotter, Lianne Dalziel, Simon Britten, Lynne O'Keefe and Mike Davidson

Left: new foundation stone

Below: the old community centre in 2010



Wednesday Coffee and Conversation Group

Regulars and new members are welcome every

Wednesday from 10.30am—12.30pm

Come in for a cuppa, chat, and company

Saturday Nibble and Refreshments 4—5.30 pm, 2nd Saturday of month

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Kohinga/St Albans Community Centre

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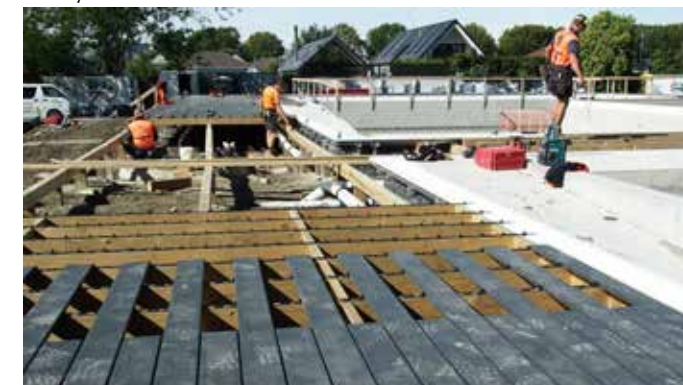
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Pool rebuild nearly there

by Lynne O'Keefe

Rebuilding of Edgware Pool represents the community's determination to restore a shared space that brings families, young people, and older residents together. The active involvement of residents shows a shared belief that community spaces and local voices matter, and that collective effort can create positive, lasting outcomes for everyone.



While work is continuing at a good pace, the opening has been delayed due to several unavoidable holdups. However, the tenacity of the group and its commitment to the vision of reopening a community pool will see this project completed in the coming months.

The group is now seeking people who feel they have skills, experience, or enthusiasm to contribute to the ongoing viability and success of the complex and who want to get involved.



Decking is well under way pool trustee Lynne O'Keefe says

Join us and be part of the final push and contribute to this lasting legacy. The pool will be a vibrant hub for families, schools, clubs, and local businesses. The group needs your support to help us provide subsidised swim lessons for families, create summer employment opportunities for local teens, and maintain affordable admission fees so the facility remains accessible to all.

There are many ways you can help – from sponsoring a specific item to becoming a valued project partner. Visit our website to explore the options and tailor your contribution to a level that suits you. We extend our sincere gratitude to everyone who has generously contributed to this effort.

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E: swim@edgwarepool.co.nz ph: 03 355 5868

Thank you to our sponsors who have helped make this all possible (+ many more!)

30th Anniversary Garden Party

Join us for an afternoon filled with laughter, sunshine, and good company among the blooms.

Sunday
29
1 - 4PM

125 Pache Street, Edgware

Postponement date 12th April

Pache Street Park and Community Garden

Edgeware Croquet Club to host top shop tournament

Edgeware Croquet club on Forfar St is hosting a special tournament for local businesses.

Club President Stu Rich said there will be a trophy, plus a plaque stating the winners are the top business for the village for that year.

"It will be fun to bring everyone together for an evening as most businesses owners and their staff don't get a chance to mix with each other."

Those businesses that can't provide a full team of four players will be encouraged to join others in the same position. Teams of four allow everyone to play and there is more interaction than just pairs.

Mallets will be provided, and club members will be



on hand to coach and explain the rules. The tournament is scheduled for Thursday March 19 starting at 5.30pm, with supporters welcome.

St Albans News has already got its team sorted and there are rumours that some secret practising is underway.

"We would be very happy to have contestants join us for one or more of our club days which are Thursday

and Saturday afternoons."

There are two types of Croquet played - Association Croquet which is the original game, and Golf Croquet which the tournament for the 19th.

Further details, Jan 021 303 3843.



Party at Packe Street

by Helen Kidd, co-ordinator Packe Street Park

Packe Street Park & Community Garden will celebrate its 30th anniversary on Sunday March 29 with a community Garden Party.

Throughout its 30 years, the park has offered a welcoming relaxing green space in St Albans with opportunities for food sharing, social connections, book exchange, children's playground, community pantry, and community events.

The Garden Party on Sunday March 29 will be from 1pm to 4pm.

A fence mural is planned with everyone given a chance to contribute. The mosaic path is being renewed, and people will be able to create a mosaic piece to be included. A coffee cart will be on site, and refreshments available plus live music, performers, games and a treasure hunt. Check the Packe St



Facebook page in March for details, and let people with a connection to the park know about the party.

Thirty years of tree planting, thirty years of growth, deaths, births, earthquakes, harvests, snowfall, intensified development and fires - a lot has happened to St Albans neighbourhoods over the last 30 years.

It all began in 1995 when two adjacent houses went up for sale in Packe St at the same time. The process

to get the land for a pocket park took a year. Locals, with the support of the St Albans Residents Association took the request to the Shirley/Papanui Community Board who, under the guidance of Cr Garry Moore, took it to the CCC Parks and Recreation Committee. The proposal was debated thoroughly and finally it was decided the council would buy it as a reserve.

There was no budget so Packe Reserve became the first reserve to become a Community Garden under the CCC Adopt-a-Park scheme.

Development and maintenance of the park has always been carried out by a team of passionate volunteers, with support from the Christchurch City Council and Community Board, and financial assistance from funders including the Lotteries Grants Board, COGS, and Rata Foundation among others.

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History group

The Aclands at Chippenham Lodge

by Brian Spear

Chippenham Lodge in Browns Road has had a number of owners since it was built for the Goldney Brothers in 1862. Dr Hugh Acland purchased the property from James Maling in 1924 and he with his wife Evelyn, and housekeeper, Janet McDonald were to live there for over 30 years.

Hugh Thomas Dyke Acland was born on 10th September 1874 at the family estate, Mount Peel, and boarded at Christ's College. He trained as a doctor in London and served with the Allied troops during the Boer war in South Africa. After the war he continued his training in England and there met and married Evelyn Mary Ovans. She had trained as a nurse and even had a required meeting with Florence Nightingale of Crimean War nursing fame.

Hugh returned to New Zealand with his wife in 1903 and stayed briefly at Mt Peel with his parents before moving to Christchurch and living initially at 130 Bealey Ave and later at Ironside House



Dr Hugh Acland

381 Montreal St.

Hugh gave up his general practice and became Christchurch Hospital's first fulltime surgeon.

On the outbreak of the Great War, Hugh was appointed as a Major to New Zealand's Medical Service and sailed for Europe on the ill-fated troopship "S.S. Marquette". He survived

the sinking of that vessel and once in England was appointed to a military hospital at Walton-on-Thames.

After the Armistice, Hugh returned to New Zealand as was promoted to Lieutenant Colonel.

The Aclands moved into their new home, Chippenham, in Browns Rd in 1924 with their children, Colin who was 18, Elizabeth 11, and Michael 13.

In 1933 Hugh became Sir Hugh when he received a knighthood and in 1935, he unsuccessfully stood for the Mayorality of the city. However, he served as a City Councillor from 1936 to 1941.

Hugh finally retired in 1940 and spent his time gathering up his family history at Mt Peel Station or tending the gardens at Chippenham. He died there on 15 April 1956 and was buried in the Mt Peek churchyard in South Canterbury.

Chippenham Lodge still stands on a back section in Browns Rd surrounded by recently built homes and apartments.

Sex doesn't always happen with consent

Maybe it was with someone you didn't want to have sex with, or in a way you didn't agree to.

Sexual assault can happen to anyone. If this happened to you, it's a good idea to get in contact with the Cambridge Clinic as soon as possible.

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Dickies Dairy going

Dickies Dairy on the Canon/Barbadoes St corner is due for demolition and the current owners of the business have moved to the strip of shops on the nearby Barbadoes/Edgeware St corner.

The shop has been owned by several different operators over the years. According to historical records in the Christchurch Library it appears to have been established by Clara and Frank Coles who came to New Zealand in the 1880s from England and were married in 1893. They owned two shops, one in Sydenham and the one in St Albans. A death notice for



Clara shows she died aged 84 in 1938; husband Frank died earlier.

A surviving 1905 photo shows Clara with her friend Emily Treleaven. The signs outside the shop advertise pickles, linseed, sauces, jams, eggs, butter, milk and cream, cigars and cigarettes. In the window are selections of kitchenware such as cups, jugs, glasses and the like.

The more modern name of the dairy comes from Ivan and Margaret Dickie who owned it during the 1990s and 2000s, also providing fish and chips. They were strong supporters of the Packe St garden. ☞

Rat trap evening

Predator Free St Albans will be holding a rat trap and tunnel handout evening at the St Albans Community Centre on Wednesday April 8 from 4:45 to 6:30 pm.

"If you are having rat problems, come and see us for the gear you need. We would appreciate a cash contribution to cover the cost of materials: \$20 for a Victor trap and tunnel, or \$25 for a TRex

trap and tunnel. Please bring along your Smart Phone so we can register you as a trapper on trap.nz. Over the last 2 years we have distributed over 160 traps and the St Albans community has recorded over 150 catches.

For more information contact us via our Facebook page (Predator Free St Albans) or phone 021 064 8861." ☞

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•••

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Canterbury Museum

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March/April 2026

Political News

Grassroots to select new member

Meetings where the Labour Party selects its next candidate are one of my favourite kind of political event. You don't get much more grassroots than a meeting of local members choosing who they want to enter the ring and vie to be the next Member of Parliament. I am especially looking forward to the meeting coming up to select the next Christchurch Central candidate on March 7.

I like to think that the fact there are six people vying for my job means not only that the Christchurch Central electorate is one of the best in the country, but also that I have done ok as the local MP (or maybe I just make it look easy!)

Selecting candidates is one of the most important parts of political party membership – and the most rewarding. In the Labour Party the selection comes down to a single day when a meeting is held. Candidates speak to assembled members and make their pitch for why they would make the best MP – the

meeting gets to show its preference by a vote, and a special selection panel (on which both local members and the wider party are represented) then retire to make their decision.

It can be anything from a few minutes to many hours while the hopeful nominees and members wait in anticipation for the final decision. Like much of democracy these meetings can be noisy and even a little unruly, but it's a great way to have an open process that members can have real influence over.

Of course even when selected they can take nothing for granted – their job is only beginning. That job is to persuade the people of Christchurch that they are the best person to represent them in Wellington, and of course that the Labour Party deserves to lead the next government.

Of course, I'm still your local MP for most of the year and here to help. If you would like me to come and talk to your group about my time

in Parliament, get in touch with my office. Likewise it is business as usual for my staff who are here to assist with any constituent enquiries.

Ngā mihi

Hon Dr Duncan Webb

MP for Christchurch Central

☞

Council news with Cr Pauline Cotter

Kia Ora,

With the recent extreme weather across the country and severe storms on Banks Peninsula this February, now is a good time to check your household readiness. St Albans is particularly vulnerable to flooding when a low-pressure system offshore, a high tide, and heavy, prolonged rain happen at the same time—and these risks will increase with a full moon.

At the recent St Albans Residents' Association meeting we discussed Civil Defence preparedness and agreed to start public discussions and local planning to educate residents and recruit volunteers. Watch this space for events and

ways to get involved.

City Council update: the draft Annual Plan is out for consultation. Two notable cost-saving ideas on the table are a 5% cut to grants, and re-timing the \$300K Environmental Partnership fund increase. There's also a proposal to pause the 0.25% rate increase for the Climate Resilience Fund—continuing it would grow the fund to \$115M by 2034, while pausing it would reduce that by about \$22.9M.

Read the consultation document on the Council website and please send us your feedback—on these items or any other budget, planning, or rates issues. Your voice matters! ☞

Davidson juggles two posts

Former Christchurch city councillor and recently appointed Green Party list Member of Parliament Mike Davidson will take over Green Party list MP Celia Wade-Brown's local government portfolio following her decision to stand down at the next election. Mike also remains a member of the Waipapa Papanui-Innes-Central Community Board. ☞

Duncan bows out and shares insights

by Chris Hutching

The Christchurch Central retiring Member of Parliament, Duncan Webb, is stepping down after nine years and new contenders are pitching for selection as Labour's candidate.

He told a recent monthly Cafe Chat meeting that it was his decision to resign. "I still enjoy it [politics] but to be honest I asked how I would feel if I got another three years. I'm going to have a pause. Since my 30s and 40s it's been flat out. After that I'll make trouble and be helpful in other ways."

Serving as party whip under former Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern had been a privilege. When she took over leadership from Andrew Little the political tone had changed, she had a different way of doing things, he said. This was evident in the response to the mosque shooting when her message was not vengeance but love towards the victims and families, he said.

Duncan was shocked when Ardern told him of her decision to resign in 2023. "But I could see the toll the job had taken, just the day to day stress. One thing our women politicians face is vitriol at police level. It's the constant barrage of complaints about behaviour or how she looked."

Parliament was representative of New Zealand society and as long as everyone respected it there would be a



strong democracy, he said. "I believe in looking after everyone...we have to accommodate other views."

One of the biggest challenges was social cohesion and how people communicated. Duncan recounted how since the 1980s the landline telephone and mail had been replaced by cellphones and the internet. "I don't think the answer is to try and roll it back but it's important to keep communications open and

have respectful conversations. It's easier to have healthy relationships when speaking face to face."

He favoured compulsory voting but doubted it would happen. He also favoured a four-year political term to provide more continuity and less electioneering in decision-making.

Duncan reflected on his early education and demeanour as a youngster, acknowledging youthful arrogance, however as a 23-year old he was strongly influenced by a law teacher who gave him pause for thought. Prison might be a necessity in some cases but prevention was preferable. The prison population was currently at a high of 11,000 and it cost \$200,000 a year per prisoner but only a fraction of this amount was spent on rehabilitation. "The approach doesn't necessarily always have to be talked about as kindness, it can simply be about harm reduction." ☞

Rugby season kicks off for 2026

by John Sherratt

Pre-season training is well under way at the Christchurch Football Club which sees both male and female players in action. General manager John Sherratt welcomes people to come along and join in the fun.

Training is held every Tuesday and Thursday from 6pm onwards at Christchurch Park, 250 Westminster St between Mahars Rd and Ferguson Ave.

John said it was one of the oldest rugby clubs in Christchurch, founded in 1863, producing 35 All Blacks, five test captains and 14 Black Ferns. It will have five senior rugby teams (male and female) and at least 27 junior teams in 2026, with the Senior competition kicking off on April 11, and the Junior competition kicking off on May 9.



"We are pleased to confirm that our Colts Team will be returning to Fendalton Park, and we appreciate all those that worked on renovating the training sheds to allow the return," John said.

The club is very fortunate to have a Netball Club which has several junior and senior teams of whom we are all proud.

"A lot of people, including neighbours, are not aware



of the extent of our activities. We have a 250-people function room, and a new caterer has just been appointed. Our motel units are available to all guests as well as visiting sportspeople and teams both nationally and internationally. We'll be holding a Food Truck Night on the last Thursday night of each month until May, starting on February 26 to showcase what we have to offer."

John is overseeing the club move to a more professional level with emphasis on open communications, stronger risk and compliance measures, and ensuring greater control over the financial performance of the club. The club has its financial accounts prepared independently by Oxford Edge and is audited annually by Smith + Jack. A new constitution will be adopted at a special annual meeting on March 17 as the club must reregister under the new Incorporated Societies Act 2022. ☞

Easter is coming to WHIMSY & WONDER



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Housing

Ecological value of renovating heritage villas

by Chris Hutching

An old villa in Eversleigh St has been moved to the front of the section while new foundations are built at the rear ahead of renovations.

It marks a departure from the frequent demolitions of heritage buildings in St Albans to make way for intensive apartment development.

The renovation market is alive and well according to builder Harry Risk of Built By who has carried out numerous projects in St Albans and Christchurch. Recently he completed a second bathroom upgrade for the 40-years long owners of a 1911 villa in Hendon St who over the years have maintained the paint work, replaced the roof, enlarged the kitchen area, and installed heat pumps and modern burners.

"A big issue with demolition and modern construction is that it accounts for 40% of what goes to landfill, so there's far less waste if you fix up an existing home," Harry said.

"Satisfaction is what I get when fixing old houses. It's finding people who are willing to spend the money on

old things, it's never cheap. There are some replica villa-style new houses but they don't really look the same. Older houses often have a lot of good quality heart rimu framing that will outlast pine.

"It's hard to compare old and new homes because construction methods and materials are so different. Older homes tend to



Eversleigh St villa



Lovingly maintained 1911 villa

breathe more, and this can be an issue when people want to wrap them up with modern insulation methods because they might lose the ability to dry out as much," Harry said.

Demolitions in St Albans continue apace despite reports of a glut of new townhouses. They include sites on Warrington St, Hendon St and others cleared in Cleveland St and Trafalgar St. ❧



Bathroom restored by Harry Risk

More apartments likely for Madras St block

Mike Greer Homes says it wants to focus on developing standalone homes rather than intensive apartment-style houses and is therefore selling a vacant 1.1ha site on the former Orion site bounded by Madras, Canon and Packe streets.

The land for sale is likely to be developed into high intensive housing, although there have been recent indications based on prices and rents of a glut of smaller units. Part of the block has already been developed into 17 two-level units, and a

large part is destined to be developed with a \$50m Woolworths supermarket.

According to real estate information compiled by agencies and TradeMe, there are more than 100 houses for sale in St Albans. Asking prices vary between about \$600,000 and \$800,000 with a few going for more than \$1m. The population of St Albans is estimated at 12,643, with 42% of them renters. Over the past year about 400 homes sold in the area. ❧

Letter to the Editor

"Huge St Albans development site for sale as Mike Greer Homes shifts focus" *The Press* February 4, 2026.

So, the redevelopment of the land – a sizable chunk of the Old Orion Site on Madras Street – is once again a refreshed opportunity! Over the years people have scoffed at that site as an ex industrial, contaminated swamp, but I have never taken that view. I have always registered its attributes – good location in a strong community, close to amenities and with great views of the Port Hills. Under the original Wakefield Mews design the residential portion of the Orion Site was to have terrace housing round the perimeter and a multi storey block in the middle. Then the earthquakes intervened and that plan did not go ahead. However, the piecemeal residential building that has gone ahead still allows for a particular kind of grand development mid-site – the kind badly needed in the Edgware area.

On my next big birthday I will be ninety. Two years ago, having been laid low with covid, I decided that I would downsize to a two bedroom home somewhere within walking distance of Edgware Village and Kōhinga, the St Albans Community Centre. I began to prepare my house for market and began to look for somewhere suitable to buy – a single storey unit or an apartment on one level served by an elevator. To my surprise and dismay I could find nothing to suit my long held ambition – to age at home. All the new builds had narrow flights of stairs and not enough room to make a bedroom, bathroom, kitchen cum living on the ground floor. Actually I could find nothing that seemed to be built with my demographic in mind. So, having recovered from covid, I gave up, and decided to stay in my too big cottage.

My idea for the Mike Greer Homes parcel of land on Madras Street is for an over 60s complex, built on such a

scale as to make it profitable to install one or two elevators, built to such an orientation that each apartment has the benefit of Port Hills views and western sun, or east and north facing aspects. It should have a beautiful community garden but with no grass to cut, a BBQ area, a book fridge, a community pantry and possibly even a common room for socialising. It should also have some provision for parking.

This sort of complex is hard to site in a suburban street – it would overwhelm the neighbours. On the Madras Street site it would be in proportion to the supermarket next door. And the residents could keep an eye on the new commercial premises and make sure the activities there do not annoy the neighbourhood!

If such apartments were to be built, I would think seriously again about putting my cottage on the market,

Ngā mihi nui,

Peggy Kelly

❧

Health

A matter of life and death

by Dr Caroline Christie

The simple act of a GP knowing you and your family/whanau over an extended period has long term benefits for you. There are many proven benefits which include: being on fewer medications, keeping you out of hospital and even preventing death. In many situations, your doctor is better for you than any pill.

We live in a fast-paced world where people are often looking for a quick fix from any health professional. The fact we have good IT systems is not a substitute however for good care. This is because continuity of data is not the same as continuity of care. Simply having a linked-up data set where more people have access to your information is not the same as one person caring for you.

Visits to an afterhours clinic may not always be helpful either as the doctor or nurse does not know



you and must make decisions based on limited information in a limited space of time. Most conditions can wait until the next day when you can see your own doctor. The emergency department should be left for emergencies only. This includes car accidents, broken hips or strokes and heart attacks.

There are studies that suggest seeing the same nurse is also good for you, as well as integrated care where doctors, nurses and other health professionals are in good communication. We are lucky that this is still the case in Christchurch.

Edgware Health at 701 Barbadoes St is a new GP clinic, and we are currently taking new enrolments. We are a friendly team with short wait times.

We are open 8.30 am to 5 pm Monday to Friday. Please phone us on 03 385 1701 or visit our website on www.edgwarehealth.co.nz. ❧

Community Notices

Are you a model boat enthusiast?

Interested in sharing and comparing your models with others? Contact SARA@stalbens.gen.nz to connect with others.

Canterbury Embroiderers' Guild:

Hammersley Community Centre, Amos Pl. Mon, Tues, Wed & Fri. Contact Pauline 021 188 7727. Email CEGstitchers@gmail.com.

Chch Senior Citizens:

The card section meet on Monday at 12.30. The indoor bowls section meet Tuesday 12.45 – 3 pm. Activities group have outings for meals, social days, visit places of interest and bus trips. For further information call Veronica 383 4682 or 021 1187 360 or Beth 388 2375 or 027 261 0493

Citizens Advice Bureau:

Need help? Ask us. Free service. Fendalton Library, 4 Jefferies Rd 0800 367 222 www.cab.org.nz

Coffee and conversation:

every Wednesday 10.30 am – 12.30 pm at Kōhinga. All welcome. Koha for coffee appreciated. All welcome.

Coffee with friends:

Meet new people, make new friends. Join us for a cup of coffee or tea and home baking at. Reformed Church Hall, 63 Cornwall St every Fri at 10:30am.

Community Bible Study:

Small non denominational class. Phone Veronica 021 0229 2613

Computer aided, touch typing

for students 9 or older with difficulties reading, writing and spelling. Seabrook McKenzie Centre, London St. Mon, Tues 4-5pm.

Community Centre Talk:

Ian France, Ferrymead Heritage Park – An historical look back of 60 years. Monday 2 March, 1.30-2.30pm at the Mary Potter Community Centre, 442 Durham St North. All ages welcome. Cuppa to follow. Donation/koha requested to help cover costs. Enquiries ph 372 9224.

Greater Company of Mary Associates and Affiliates Mass

will be held on Saturday 7 March, 10.30am at the Mary Potter Community Centre, 442 Durham Street North. All welcome, morning tea after. Rsvp by Monday 2 March, ph 372 9224 or visit lcmchristchurch.org.nz

Cranford Pippins

for 5 and 6 year olds meets Tuesdays during school terms, 5:30 6:30pm. Contact: info@girlguidingnz.org.nz

Edgware Croquet Club:

Forfar Street in St Albans Park. Assoc Croquet Thur and Sat 9.30-12 and Golf Croquet 12.45 -3pm. We welcome visitors and new members. Contact Jan 021 30 3843

Elizabeth Bridge Club:

Wednesdays 12.50 (for 1.00pm start) to 4.00pm at the Christchurch Bridge club rooms, 21 Nova

Place. Visitors welcome. No partner, contact Maureen on 021 646 123.

Family Drug Support Aotearoa New Zealand:

Ph 03 21818740
Free Kindergarten Enrolments: Not for profit Kidsfirst Sunbeam Kindergarten welcomes queries and new enrolments. 13 Cornwall Street, (03) 366 7157.

Free insulation: Community Energy Action (CEA) can assess your house and if eligible organise free insulation for above ceilings and under floors. Curtain bank offering free recycled curtains (including fitting). More information, visit cea.co.nz

Gambling Harm? Salvation Army Oasis: free counselling and support for anyone affected by gambling harm, whether it's their gambling or someone else's. Ph (03) 365 9659 or call in to 126 Bealey Ave. Website: oasis@salvationarmy.org.nz

HOUSIE: Mary Potter Community Centre, 442 Durham St North, every Thursday at 12.30 - 2.15pm. \$2 per card. Afternoon tea to follow. All welcome. Numbers limited. Gold coin donation. Enquiries ph 372 9224. Visit website: www.lcmchristchurch.org.nz.

Justice of the Peace available at Kōhinga Saturdays 10.30 - 12.30.

Knit & Knatter Shirley: Can anyone help with free wool for these ladies. Contact Mary 027 733 9666 or 980 0811

More Than Music. For families with preschoolers 9.30 every Wed during term time at Rutland St Church. Contact church office 3554101 or text Nicola on 0272831905

Predator Free St Albans: Interested in trapping rats? Contact: FB page, Predator Free St Albans or ph 021 0648861

Saygo Falls Prevention: Mondays 10 –11am (class full) and Thursdays 9.30 – 10.30 am. \$2 entry. Kōhinga St Albans Community Centre.

Support The Respiratory Relief Society Canterbury Inc. runs weekly exercise classes Tuesdays from 1-00-2-15pm at St. Albans Uniting Church Nancy Ave for people with respiratory, cardiac and vascular conditions. Contact David Chamberlain 332 4471 or Donella Kyle, 0210 282 1565.

Scottish Country Dance club, Scottish Society hall cnr Edgware/ Caledonian Rds, Tuesdays at 7.30pm. Fun, fitness and friendship. Contact: Margaret Birse, ph 327 0193.

Seniornet Mac: Help with Apple devices at the St Albans Community Centre on Wednesdays and Fridays 10am- noon.

Shirley International Playgroup:

a fun playgroup for mothers and under fives from any cultural background. Fridays during school term time. 9:30am 11:30am at the Shirley Hub, 69B Briggs Road, Mairehau. \$2 per session or \$10 for the term. Call Shauna at Delta Trust on 03 389 0219 for more information.

Shirley Rugby League: Need players to join our family club, girls and boys welcome, ages 4 to Masters age 35 yrs. Contact Rochelle 021 133 5437.

St Albans Preschool: Community not for profit preschool based at 3 Thames Street offers care for children aged 2 to 5 years. 20 hours free from 2 years old. Contact Suzy on 027 355 9396 for more information.

Shirley Ladies Friendship Club meets 2nd Wednesday of the month 10.00am at All Saints Church 305 New Brighton Road. Interesting speakers, walking group and trips are arranged. Please phone Dale 385 1133 for more information.

St Albans Laughter Club:

Laughter yoga teaches you to breathe to release tension and stress. Sundays 11am-12pm. Scottish Society Hall, cnr Caledonian and Edgware Rds. \$3. email: hannah@lotustrust.org.nz, FB: Christchurchlaughteryoga

St Albans History Group wants old photos or articles about St Albans. Contact: Brian: briangspear@hotmail.com

St Albans Shirley Football Club. Ages 4-40+ Phone 021 0204 2300 for team details.

St Albans Uniting Church, 36 Nancy Ave. Services Sundays at 10am.

Social Square Dancing Group welcomes dancers who have danced Mainstream. No partner required. Contact: George Murray 0212942669 or email masakomizusawa@hotmail.com

U3A St Albans: meet at St Albans Uniting Church. Monthly 4th Thursday 9.45am, morning tea followed by speaker. Many more activities. Visitors warmly welcomed. Call Jenny 021 149 7990.

Weekend Group: Second Saturday of the month 4 – 5.30 pm at Kōhinga. Meet for friendship and company. Refreshments provided. Koha appreciated (\$5).

Women in Harmony community choir: Thursdays in school terms from 7.30-9.30pm at Kōhinga St Albans Community Centre. World and popular music in 3 part harmony. Please Email: women.in.harmony.nz@gmail.com; facebook.com/womeninharmonychristchurch

St Albans News Classifieds

SERVICES

Having difficulty making family, work, relationship or legal decisions? We can help you make practical decisions. Call Bill Demeter 027 379 3873. Can meet St Albans Community Centre. No charge for this service

Italian language classes: all levels at St Albans Community Centre. Info on our website: www.dantechch.com

Music Lessons: Tuition at your tempo!

Music lessons for all ages and stages with In Tune Music Studios NZ (027 606 4023 or nicola.intune@gmail.com)

Guitar Lessons: Jonathon Harper (weebly website) Mairehau 027 413 6299 Learn with a long time professional concert artist, composer, singer, and band leader (AMIGOS).

Stone Guitars: For all your guitar repairs and maintenance. Experienced touring technician with repair shop based locally. Contact David on 027 4237688 or stone_

guitars@outlook.co.nz

Yoga Class: Thursday 10:45am-12pm at Kōhinga St Albans Community Centre. All abilities and ages welcome. Tracy 022 048 6949

Yoga: Monday 5:45-7pm. Mary Potter Centre, 442 Durham Street North. Join anytime. Enquiries: Kerry 027-2118519

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Pegasus Landscapes: All aspects of landscaping, design. We do everything on the outside including planting, paving, driveways, lawns, lawn renovation, irrigation, raised timber planters, all timber work, brick and block work, full garden maintenance service. Established in St Albans in 1992. Please contact Andy Cox, ph 0274337629, email: pegasus.landscapes@gmail.com

Roofing repairs: leaks and maintenance. Phone Richie 021 342 852

Laundry Assistant wanted for a small commercial Laundry, city location. Experience not required training is available, must have a reasonable level of Fitness. Full Licence would be a bonus. Call Deb 0275145586

Support Services

There are a number of places that offer free help, handy when you are having mental health or violence issues:

Aviva, live free from violence: Free Canterbury-based 24h support line: +64 800 2848 2669

Emergency Services: call 111

Allies online mentoring offered by young Muslim adults to Muslim teens run by Youthline. Free text 234 or phone 0800 376 633

After hours counselling: Call on 027 694 5275 or email at:

murray@afterhours counselling.co.nz

Are You OK? Family violence helpline 0800 456 450.

Comcare Trust: For health or addiction issues. Tel: (03) 377 7020, Fax: (03) 961 0794, Email: enquiries@comcare.org.nz

Counsellors available via text: 1737

Depression: 0800 111 757 or text 4302

Eating Disorder Recovery Support: Contact: 021 195 6766.

Elder Abuse Response Service: 0800 EA NOT OK/0800 32 668 65 (available 24/7) Email: support@elderabuse.nz or text 5032

Family Violence Information Line: 0800 456 450 (available 9.00am -11.00pm daily)

Family Drug Support Aotearoa New Zealand. Tel: 03 2818 740. www.fds.org.nz

Hey Bro helpline: 0800 HeyBro/0800 439 276. Supporting men to be free from violence

Kidslines: For under 18s, 0800 54 37 54 (speak to a Kidslines Buddy 4pm-9pm weekdays)

OUTLine NZ: provides confidential telephone support for matters of gender or sexuality, 0800 688 5463

Rape Crisis National Call Line: 0800 88 33 00

Sexual Assault Support Service Canterbury (SASSC): 03 377 5402 for recent and historic cases

Shakti Crisis Line: for migrant or refugee women living with family violence with multi-lingual staff. 0800 742 584

Suicidal? Phone 0508 828 865

Worried about a child: 0508 FAMILY/0508 326 459 (available 24/7) - Oranga Tamariki - Ministry for Children, formerly Child, Youth & Family

Youthline: 0800 376 633 (Free TXT 234)



Board Members Wanted
Our community-based preschool has supported local families for 40 years. As a not-for-profit, we rely on volunteer board members and are seeking new members. No ECE experience required. Meetings: 2nd Tuesday, 7pm, 3 Thames Street. Safety checks required.
Enquiries:
suzy@stalbenspreschool.co.nz



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For updates or to register, please email us.

Council plans cutting parking from St Albans streets

The St Albans Waipapa Papanui-Innes-Central Community Board has agreed to changes to the Springfield/Edgware/Abberley intersection despite concerns about the loss of 21 carparks.

The changes include a new pedestrian island on Springfield Rd, outside the dairy. For vehicles it will include a right turn bay and flush median on Springfield Rd. The existing bus stop outside the dairy on Springfield Rd to the south side of Edgware Rd would be relocated to the north side of the road.

Local resident and former community board member Ali Jones described the changes as “a total waste of \$133,000 of ratepayer money”. “The crash statistics for the past five years show very clearly that the issue is vehicles and visibility. All but one of four reported crashes at or close to this intersection have involved vehicles hitting other



The Abberley Crescent/Springfield/Edgware Rd intersection layout is confusing.

vehicles, with one minor injury accident involving a vehicle colliding with a scooter crossing Abberley Crescent.”

Changes are also in the offing for Courtenay St to replace the deep dish kerbing and renew the road and footpath. Speed bumps are also likely. Some community board members had reservations about how traffic calming would work in practice, and the effect of removing car parks on one side of the street.

“We are unsure of the impacts this will have. Removing parking on Courtenay St will make the road safer, but we have concerns for residents in new homes that might not have access to on-property parking,” according to the community board report. “The nature of parking also acts as a natural form of traffic management. Removing this could encourage faster speeds if council is not careful about design.”

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MP for Christchurch Central

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www.labour.org.nz

Authorised by Duncan Webb MP, Parliament Buildings, Wellington