

MY HASTINGS

ISSUE 124 • DEC 2023

Happy holidays Hastings!

150 YEARS OF HASTINGS

Explore the stories of
Hastings' past

CHRISTMAS CELEBRATIONS

Festive events aplenty

YEAR IN REVIEW

2023 has been a big year

A
DISTRICT
WITH SPIRIT

HERETAUNGA
HASTINGS

MAYOR'S MESSAGE



2023 has been a year like no other for our community.

In February we were hit by one of the biggest natural disasters our region has ever experienced and it had a huge effect on our community as a whole – but of course especially those who were directly impacted.

Throughout this whole time, what has been a constant has been the amazing, generous, selfless and at times brave support people have provided for those most in need – both voluntary and in the course of their jobs and professions.

We are on the road to recovery, but there are many challenges ahead for the district as a whole as we rebuild and those most impacted get some certainty around moving on with their lives.

While the cyclone response and recovery has been a big focus, there’s been many memorable and exciting moments and achievements for our community.

We opened the wonderful Waiaroha Heretaunga Water Discovery Centre, continued to progress building more homes for our people, opened the upgraded St Leonard’s Park playground, and had record numbers of people attend the Hawke’s Bay Arts Festival.

We held ceremonies for a record number of new citizens to our district over the year – it’s fantastic to see the increasing diversity of our community and learn from the many different cultural backgrounds of those who have chosen to call Hastings home.

Our Civic Honours awards again recognised some wonderful individuals and groups who give back to others – these people, and many more like them, are unsung heroes who voluntarily and tirelessly contribute to the wellbeing of others.

Our outstanding growers and business people were celebrated at various awards events over the year – the depth of talent, resourcefulness and commitment across our district never fails to impress.

Another notable feature of 2023 was it being the 150th year since the town of Hastings was founded and it was amazing to commemorate this milestone with the community – in reflecting on the past it highlighted the resilience and passion the people who came before us have for our place.

As you will see in this edition there are a lot of events coming up ahead of Christmas and through summer.

I hope you and your friends and whānau get the opportunity to take some time out and enjoy some rest and relaxation after a busy and challenging year.

Have a wonderful Christmas and Happy New Year.

Mayor of Hastings
Sandra Hazlehurst



Christmas in the city

The annual Christmas lights in Hastings city centre are up, and from December 15 to 25, the festive season will be in full swing with decorative displays, activities and more.

In Albert Square four tall pyramids will be installed, and pre-cut Christmas-themed stencils as well as paint will be available for people to add decorations to the structures.

There will also be a return of the Santa’s workshop-themed projected light display on the brick wall at the back of the square that will play in the evenings, with moving animations of the elves busy at work.

The folks at Hastings City Business Association are running a Santa’s Scavenger Hunt in the CBD until December 17 with a chance to win a wishlist to the value of \$1,000! Discover more: hastingscity.co.nz/christmas



From December 8 at Toitū Municipal Building, Friday nights will see a range of extremely talented up-and-coming local artists performing in Municipal Lane, outside Santa’s Grotto. Performing a mix of pop, jazz, and soul, artists include Jaz Macdonald and Will Knight, of Uncle Les fame, Te Whānau Puoro, Kenya Boerman, and Liberty, fresh back from a songwriting trip to Los Angeles. Check out Toitū’s Facebook or Instagram for information on who is performing when!

There’ll also be slushies available to buy for tamariki, or cocktails for parents at Cedric’s.



Holiday kerbside collection changes

FOR BOTH RECYCLING & RUBBISH OVER CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR



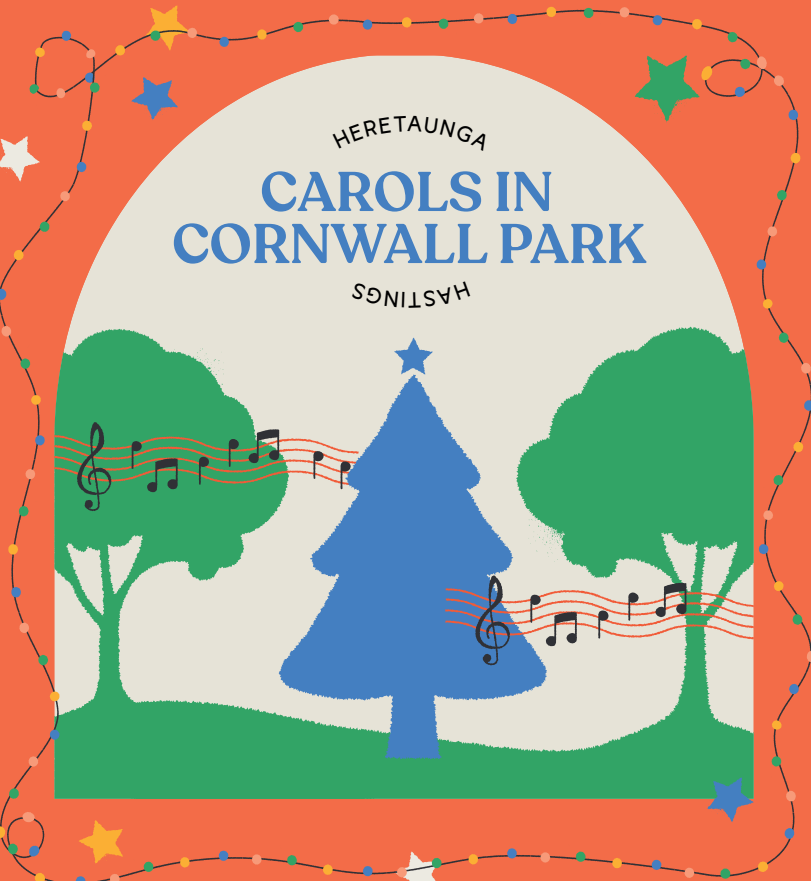
CHRISTMAS 2023		NEW YEAR 2024	
Normal collection day:	Changing to:	Normal collection day:	Changing to:
Monday 25th December	Tuesday 26th December	Monday 1st January	Tuesday 2nd January
Tuesday 26th December	Wednesday 27th December	Tuesday 2nd January	Wednesday 3rd January
Wednesday 27th December	Thursday 28th December	Wednesday 3rd January	Thursday 4th January
Thursday 28th December	Friday 29th December	Thursday 4th January	Friday 5th January
Friday 29th December	Saturday 30th December	Friday 5th January	Saturday 6th January

Check Hastings District Council Facebook page or hastingsdc.govt.nz/waste for more information.

HERETAUNGA HASTINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL



HERETAUNGA CAROLS IN CORNWALL PARK



Grab your picnic blankets, friends and whānau and come to Cornwall Park on December 16 for an evening of carols and entertainment.

This event is an annual favourite, offering a chance to relax in the beautiful surrounds of Cornwall Park and enjoy some musical festivities.

Starting at 4 pm, there will be an exciting line-up of talented performances as well as sing-along carolling. Pack a picnic or grab a bite from the food stalls on-site.

This popular, free event promises to get you right in the mood for Christmas Day.

Property Brokers Christmas at the Park



The biggest free Christmas party in Hawke's Bay – the Property Brokers Christmas at the Park – promises another evening of family fun and entertainment on December 9 this year.

This year's event will be taking place at Park Island in Napier (each year the event alternates between this venue and Hawke's Bay Regional Sports Park), and will be headlined by Cassie Henderson, says event organiser David Trim.

"Cassie's journey into the spotlight began when she captivated hearts as a 14-year-old contender on the inaugural season of New Zealand's X-Factor in 2014. Since then, she's crafted a unique presence in the global music arena, firmly establishing herself as a standout talent."

Local artists to also take to the stage include, Killer Queen, Ampt up, PPV and Christmas Carols Band. Dancers from Starjam will complete the artist line up for the 4.5-hour concert. Santa will make his appearance while on his travels through Hawke's Bay.

Food, coffee, drinks, glow and sparkly merchandise can be purchased at the event and picnics are welcome, and the evening closes at 9.35pm with the Kaisen Charitable Trust's signature and unique fireworks display.

Leap Education and the Air Training Cadets will be running the children's arena, where they will have over 20 face painters and a team of cadets putting children through a fun confidence course.

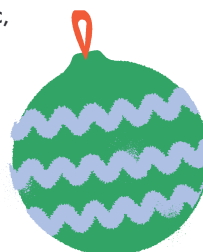
"The free entry event is a great gift to the city from Kaisen Charitable Trust and from all the sponsors, who together contribute to ensure the night becomes a great community experience" says David. Both the Hastings District Council and Napier City Council support this event as it's a significant community event for our region.

The weather forecast is looking fantastic, with day temperatures predicted of 25 degrees.

Gates open at 3pm, with the stage starting at 5pm. Carparks along Clyde Jeffery Drive will be available and street parking around the park.

The night concludes at 9.45pm.

More info at christmasatthepark.org.nz



Christmas and New Year hours

HDC CUSTOMER SERVICE CENTRE

CLOSED 3pm, December 22, 2023 to 8am, January 8, 2024.

The 24-hour call centre will remain open throughout the holiday period, phone (06) 871 5000.

HASTINGS DISTRICT LIBRARIES

(including Hastings, Havelock North and Flaxmere)

December 25 – CLOSED

December 26 – CLOSED

December 27 – December 29 – OPEN 9am–5.30pm

December 30 – OPEN 10am–4pm

December 31 – OPEN 1pm–4pm

January 1 – CLOSED

January 2 – CLOSED

Normal hours resume Wednesday, January 3.

CAMBERLEY COMMUNITY CENTRE

CLOSED from 3pm December 22 2023 to January 9 2024.

FLAXMERE COMMUNITY CENTRE

CLOSED from 3pm December 22 2023 to January 9 2024.

HASTINGS SPORTS CENTRE,

CLOSED from 3pm December 22 2023 to January 9 2024.

TRANSPORT

For public transport queries see www.gobus.co.nz or phone (06) 835 9200.



SAVE THE DATE

Nest Fest

When: Jan 5 and 6, 2024

Where: Tōmoana Showgrounds

New Zealand's leading boutique independent music festival returns to Hastings bringing the summer vibes with multiple musical acts and stages, markets, and art installations.

More info at nestfest.co.nz

Outfield

When: Feb 10, 2024

Where: 35 Gordon Rd, Te Awanga

A one-day family-friendly independent festival with a line-up of musical acts, food and art, nestled in the rolling Te Awanga hills.

More info at outfieldfestival.co.nz

Meet Santa at Toitōi!

Bring your tamariki to visit Santa in the Tama Tūranga Huata room this December!

Post your letters to Santa, pop a gift under the Giving Tree for Women's Refuge, meet the big man – and bring a camera so you can have a photo with him in the Grotto.

There'll be art activities for kids and, on Friday nights, there'll be local live music! You can also buy slushies for tamariki and cocktails for parents at Cedric's.

PUBLIC SESSIONS:

Fridays, Dec 8, 15 and 22:
4 – 7pm

Saturdays, Dec 9 and 16:
10 – 2pm

LOW SENSORY SESSIONS:

Monday, Dec 11:
10am–2pm or 3pm–5pm

Thursdays, Dec 7, 14 and 21:
3pm–5pm

For low sensory sessions, bookings are essential. For more information and to book, please phone 06 871 5289.

**HERETAUNGA
HASTINGS** DISTRICT COUNCIL

toitōi

Commemorating 150 years of Hastings

Hastings turned 150 years old this year – its beginnings sparked when Francis Hicks auctioned 100 acres of his land on July 8, 1873, dividing the town into town and suburban sections.

To mark this 150-year milestone, Hastings District Council, in partnership with other organisations, has held a number of community events this year, beginning with a Commemorative Weekend on July 8–9.

Whilst acknowledging that the history of our rohe and Heretaunga mana whenua extends far beyond 1873, over the following pages, we look further at some of these events and people that have contributed to making Hastings district the unique place that it is today.



What was Heretaunga before Hastings?

By Charles Ropitini, Ngāti Hori

As Hastings commemorates its 150th anniversary, curious minds may ask the recurring question 'what was Heretaunga before Hastings?'

As much of the built landscape has been modified beyond recognition, and the wetland environment, or more specifically the surface aquifer has been lost, the answer as to what was the Māori history and customary practices of this area requires some imagination.

Heretaunga is the historical name for the district from the mountains to the sea. The name for the area before the existence of Hastings is Karamū – the Coprosma Lucida. It is through the name Karamū that one can really open the mind to the past, where there was once a thriving textiles industry famed throughout Aotearoa.

The plains take their name from the former Mākaramū anabranch of the Ngaruroro River where the white karamū grew along its banks, our local equivalent to the mangrove estuaries of Northland. The name Māhora represents the spreading out of the Ngaruroro across the plains with special reference to the Mākaramū and Mākirikiri. These streams shifted through consecutive floods of the late 1800s, and despite the redirection of their source river, they continued to be spring-fed, magically flowing from out of the ground.

All around were wetland lakes and ponds, where both food and industry was extracted. The environment held the resources required to develop a fine weaving tradition in the production of garments and brightly coloured

natural dyes. The iron-rich soils were capable of producing the blackest of black, and the predominant varieties of Coprosma could produce vibrant yellow, deep brown, and rich old gold.

The heyday of the textiles industry was in the mid-late 1700s when Heretaunga was heavily populated by many hapū. The remnants of this industry were still visible in 1914 with at least 21 whare standing within the Hastings borough town boundaries. Plotted on a modern town map the whare make no sense, however with the reinstatement of the streams and lakes their purpose within the original cultural landscape soon brings the story to life: river boat sheds, tool huts, eel weirs, stripped flax production, bird snaring and feather processing, the list goes on.

The industry and its highly proficient weavers were to be significantly impacted by the Musket Wars of the 1820s when Heretaunga came under threat of invasion and subsequent decimation. The people went into exile at Māhia and the weavers were taken captive. All that was left suffered a scorch and burn policy from the invaders, who had hopes of conquering Heretaunga outright.

By the time the first lease of the Heretaunga Block was taken in 1864, mana whenua of Heretaunga were in the throes of re-establishing amidst the changing world of the British Empire. Much of the surrounding land had already been acquired by the Government Land Agent Donald McLean, and Karamū was one of the last remaining blocks still in Māori ownership.

Hastings and its immediate environs are built entirely within this one Māori land block, officially surveyed and designated by the Native Land Court in 1866. The British idea of ownership was granted to 10 Māori identified through whakapapa as chiefly lineage for their hapu. The 10-grantee rule was an instrument of the Native Land Court

to identify owners of land with intention to transition customary ownership into British land law frameworks. In the eyes of the hapū the land was seen as being held in Trust by the grantees, who were expected take their collective position into consideration for future decision making.

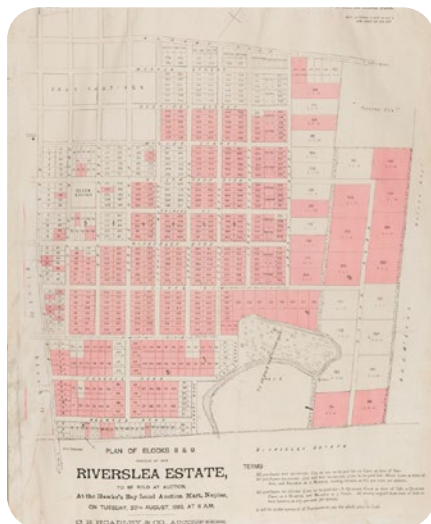
Heretaunga is just one of hundreds of such blocks, although at nearly 20,000 acres it was larger than most and went through a dubious acquisition. The 10-owner rule lasted from 1865 until it was repealed by the Native Land Act 1873 as a result of the Hawke's Bay Land Alienation Commission.

So to answer the question of 'what was Heretaunga before Hastings?' we must take our minds back before the Musket Wars when our people were strong, numerous and industrious. This is where we find the best stories of the Karamū Plains and its famed textiles industry.



150th Tangata Whenua

Ngā Pou o Heretaunga are tupuna ancestors who connect with their respective marae, upholding the mana of tāngata whenua of Heretaunga in the Hastings CBD. The ancestral stories captured within Ngā Pou span 1000 years from the origins of the sacred waka Takitimu in the forests of Samoa, through to the arrival of the HMS Endeavour, the signing of the Declaration of Independence and the Treaty of Waitangi, and Women's suffrage.



Riverslea Estate sale, plan of blocks to be sold at auction, 1889

borrowing at high interest rates and the ongoing costs of litigation over the Heretaunga Block purchase.

This pressure resulted in the division of another 1,200 acres (485ha) of Riverslea Estate into town, suburban and farm sections. These were sold by Napier stock and station agent Matthew Miller, at an auction in September 1879.

Warren, Hastings, Miller, Willowpark and Riverslea Roads were created parallel to Karamū Road and intersecting the Havelock Road (now Heretaunga Street).

Sites were set aside for a school, town hall and athenaeum (library and a place for men of literature, science or art to give lectures) as well as for industry – such as a beet sugar factory.

The auction went well for town sections, but not for the smaller farms due to the depressed prices.

Bank of New Zealand paid the highest price of £105 (2023: \$22,000) for a town section (its present site).

Thomas Tanner continued to farm Riverslea, but his financial troubles were not over. A further land sale occurred in October 1885, when 1,000 acres (405ha) of some of his best Riverslea land was auctioned – the area of Selwood Road, Ellison Road, Jervois Street and Grove Road. Queen's Square, a four-acre reserve, was to be vested in the purchasers of the surrounding sections as a common recreation ground and gardens.

A park of 44 acres – now Windsor – was reserved.

Unfortunately for Thomas, this latest sale did not rescue him. The unsold sections and a further 2,389 acres (967ha) were put up for a mortgagee sale in 1889.

A syndicate bought the 2,389 acres for £85,000 (\$21 million) and the other sections from the 1879 Riverslea land sale were put up for sale.

Thomas Tanner's financial misfortune contributed to the development of modern Hastings, and what was intended as one man's large estate in 1864 is now a city of some 88,000 people (2020 census).



Matthew Miller, auctioneer for the Riverslea land sale of 1879, and father of Hastings mayor, J A Miller.

Photo: Harding family collection.

The Great Riverslea Sale of 1879

By Michael Fowler

In the 1860s, Thomas Tanner and six other men leased the Heretaunga Block of 17,785 acres (7,197ha) from Māori.

These men were known as the "Apostles" because the land was divided into 12 blocks.

When the Heretaunga Block was purchased from Māori in 1870, Thomas Tanner began to split up his 6,000 acre (2,428ha) share, known as Riverslea, to relieve his financial difficulties.

One 101.5 acre (41ha) section was sold to Francis Hicks, and in 1873 it became the beginning of Hastings township when it was subdivided for sale.

Other small block owners who purchased from Thomas Tanner, such as James Boyle and Michael Groome, soon followed.

Thomas Tanner's financial situation had not eased, due to



Hastings Central Business District in the 1950s. The street's grid system was a product of the various subdivisions, beginning in 1873.

Photo: Hastings District Council.



Flaxmere, was created in response to the need for more housing, shown here in 1974.

Photo: Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank

The Growth of Hastings' Boundaries

By Michael Fowler

When Hastings was formed in 1873, Hawke's Bay Provincial Council and Heretaunga Road Board had political control.

This arrangement was superceded in 1876, when Hawke's Bay County Council was formed.

Hastings, when it became a borough in 1886 and took over land from the County Council, had a territory of 5,740 acres – the largest in New Zealand for any local authority.

When a new Hastings Borough Council rating system was introduced in 1908 – which penalised rural ratepayers more than urban ones – five areas on the outskirts of the borough in 1909 petitioned New Zealand Governor Baron Plunket to allow them to join Hawke's Bay County Council. Rates were cheaper under the County Council.

The Borough Council quickly took steps to "stop the wholesale mutilation" of the borough by loss of its territory.

They sent a canvasser around the districts to gather signatures for a counter-petition to remain in the borough. Mayor J A Miller held a public meeting to put the Council's views to the public, and from this it was resolved to urge the government to set up a commission to inquire into the matter.

In October 1909, the commission sat in Hastings, and found in favour of the severance petitioners. Hastings Borough Council, it said, along with the financial "neglect", had penalised the rural areas with the new rating system based on unimproved land.

In November 1909, therefore, the area governed by Hastings Borough Council went from 5,740 acres (2,323ha) to 4,270 acres (1,728ha).

Worse was to come for the Borough Council in 1910 when Hastings South and Frimley were removed to the County Council, and the area of Hastings shrank to 2,601 acres (1,052ha). An annoyed Borough Council removed its street lamps from the area.

A newspaper report on this stated: "Whilst this kind of movement cannot be prevented, it is regrettable, as it loads the burden onto the few, and necessarily makes for increased cost of living within the boundaries of the borough."

However, by the 1950s the growth of Hastings encroached on the outlying rural lands. Hastings, becoming a city in 1956, reclaimed Frimley in 1957 and grew to 3,210 acres (1,299ha).

Further areas were added from 1957 to 1976, including Camberley (1973), Flaxmere (1964 & 1976) and an addition to Parkvale (1976) giving a total of 1,944 hectares in the new decimal measures.

Local government reform in 1989 created Hastings District Council, taking in Havelock North Borough Council and Hawke's Bay County Council rural areas, such as Clive.

The area of Hastings District Council is now 522,893 hectares and includes the rural wards of Mohaka and Kahuranaki.

With history repeating itself, in 1989 rural ratepayers attempted severance on the same grounds as 80 years previously. They were unsuccessful, although rural community boards and a rating system were created to alleviate their concerns.



The path to diversity – Mayors and Councillors of Hastings

By Michael Fowler

Renowned artist, Freeman White, and Hastings' first female mayor, Sandra Hazlehurst at the unveiling of her mayoral portrait in April 2018.

Photo: Michael Fowler

In 1886 the first Hastings Borough Council elections were held, for nine councillors. Robert Wellwood was the first mayor of the newly formed borough.

There was a two-year electoral cycle until 1934, when a new law extended the parliamentary term to three years, and the same was done for local bodies.

As the mayor and councillors were initially unpaid, and then received only a small allowance in the later part of the 20th century, most of the office holders were successful European professionals, farmers or businessmen – who had the means to serve their community for little financial reward.

When Sybil (Joyce) Ballantyne was elected to Hastings Borough Council in 1953, she became the first woman councillor, serving until 1962. Joyce was the wife of Dr Allan Ballantyne, and she lived at Stoneycroft from 1954 until her death in 2003. (Hastings District Council bought the property in 2005, and it is now the home of Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank.)

Joyce was also a member of Hawke's Bay Hospital Board from 1968 to 1980.

Hastings became a city in 1956 when the population surpassed the 20,000 threshold. The first City Council mayor was Sir Edwin Bate, a Hastings lawyer.

Hastings got its first Māori councillor in 1962, when president of the Whakatū Freezing Works, W T (Bill) Bennett of Kohupatiki was elected. His father was the first Bishop of Aotearoa, Frederick Bennett. Bill served four terms until 1974. He would be followed by Robert Timu in 1980 – who was chairman of the Hastings Labour Party.

As recently as 2001, Māori representation in New Zealand local government was just 20 out of a total of 1,000 elected officials.

Elizabeth Groves was elected as a councillor in 1974, with three more woman councillors in 1980 joining her.

The youth of Hastings needed a voice, protested a 19-year-old in 1974: "After all of these years of oldies on our council, let's have a change and put a bit more youth with young and new ideas to direct our city ... Remember we are in the space age. Get with it Hastings."

Hastings District Council was formed in 1989 after local government reorganisation, and its first mayor was Jeremy Dwyer.

One hundred and thirty-three years after the first Hastings local body elections, Sandra Hazlehurst became the first woman to be elected mayor, in a 2017 by-election.

She had been acting mayor since incumbent Lawrence Yule was elected to parliament. Sandra had become a Hastings District Councillor in 2010, and was re-elected as mayor in 2019 and again, unopposed, in 2022.



Robert Wellwood - the first mayor of Hastings in 1886.

Photo: Hastings District Council



Hastings' first female councillor, Joyce Ballantyne.

Photo: Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank

Hawke’s Bay’s Apple and Pear Industry

By Michael Fowler

New Zealand apples and pears are known as the best in the world. Sixty per cent of our national crop is grown right here in Hawke’s Bay and has been for more than 150 years. As our fruit has grown across Heretaunga Hastings, so too has the apple and pear industry’s part in our community. The annual Hastings’ Blossom Festival, which began in 1950 is a testament to this, celebrating the arrival of fruit tree blossoms in Spring and the anticipation of a bountiful fruit season.

Growing our industry

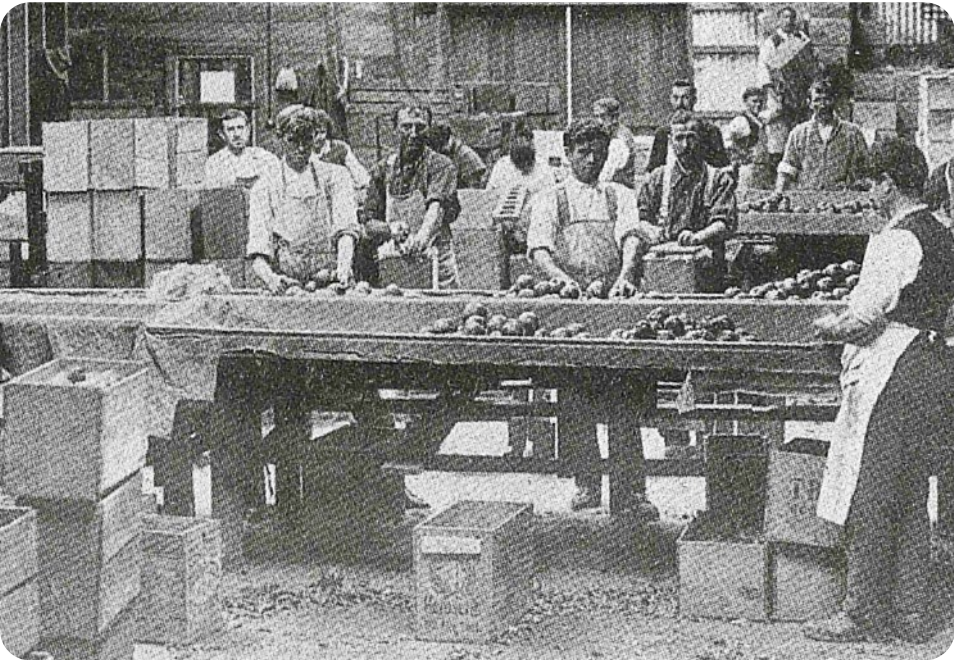
New Zealand’s first fruit tree stock came from Australia, and in 1863 I R Sutton, a nurseryman in Meeanee, Hawke’s Bay, was selling Melbourne-sourced apple and pear trees. The early apple varieties he sold, such as Lord Nelson, Peach Apple, King of Pippin and Golden Harvey, and pears including Vicar of Wakefield, Prince Albert and Beurre de Capparemont, are names truly consigned to fruit growing heritage.

The development of new varieties of pipfruit would become a very important part of the industry, especially for the export trade. To pursue new varieties, the, Arataki government experimental research station operated in Havelock North from 1904 to 1921/22. Hastings orchardist Ralph Paynter stated in 1935 that since the closure, experimental work had been difficult to carry out.

The Department of Scientific Research was later established in Goddards Lane, and evolved into the Plant & Food Research Institute, now in Crosses Road. These organisations were responsible for the introduction of many modern varieties of apples and pears. For example, Royal Gala, introduced in the 1970s, is a mutation of the Gala apple, selected and named by Dr Don McKenzie. The miniature Rockit apple is a more recent development.

An early variety of apple was the Sturmer, (which has survived the test of time), and pioneer orchardist William Guthrie of Havelock North planted seven acres (2.8ha) of these trees in the mid-1880s. With no cool storage, William kept the apples over winter covered in thatch straw surrounded by sheets of corrugated iron driven 15cm into the ground to deter rats.

Research continues to happen locally, with varieties like Rockit, Lemonade and Piqa bred in Hastings, by Prevar a research company owned by New Zealand Apples and Pears, Plant & Food Research and Apples and Pears Australia. New varieties are bred to enhance taste and texture, to be pest and disease resistant.



Getting our fruit to the world

The advent of vessels leaving from New Zealand with cool storage in the late 1880s meant exporting apples to the other side of the world was now possible.

Captain William Russell, MP for Hawke’s Bay, saw the opportunities for the region with this new technology, commenting in 1890 that using "direct steamers and cool chambers we could send to England in their off-season large quantities of apples, pears and quinces".

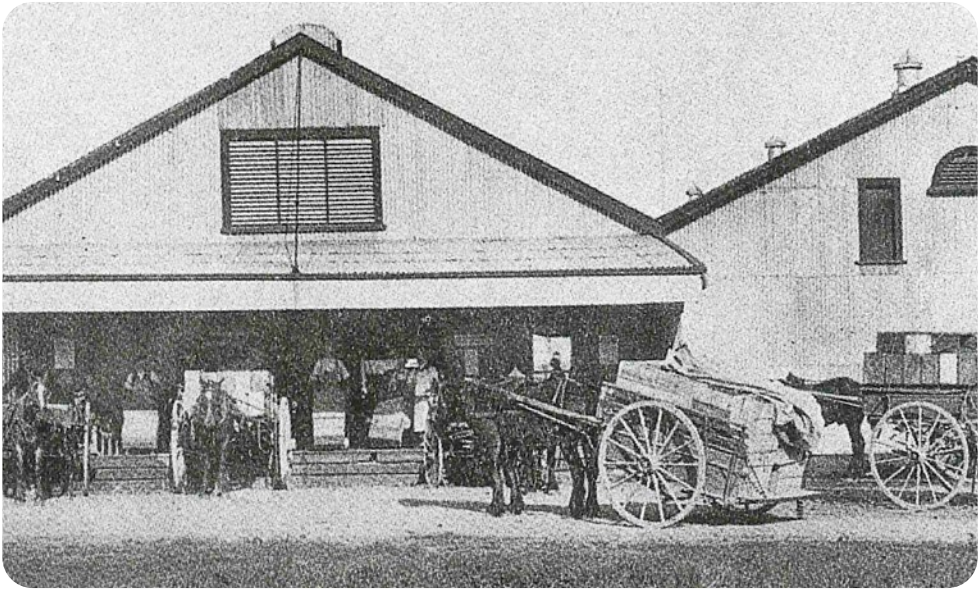
Hawke’s Bay’s turn to export finally came in 1909 when the Hawke’s Bay Fruitgrowers’ Association sent as an experiment four cases of apples (two cases of Munro’s Favourite, and one each of New York Pippin and Jonathan’s) to Melbourne with Hastings nurseryman Thomas Horton, who then sent them on to London.

The apples realised 8 shillings 9 pence per case, but as the freight was more expensive from Melbourne than from New Zealand, the trial shipment lost one shilling overall. The apples also arrived over-ripe in London. Working out the right transit temperatures, packaging methods and timing to pick the fruit would take some trial and error for the pipfruit export trade.

Interestingly, a significant early export market for apples was South America, until exports of another kind – fruit tree stock from New Zealand – helped them create their own extensive industry. Hastings’ Thomas Horton Ltd was a major supplier of fruit trees to South America during the early 1900s.

It wasn’t until 1924 that Hawke’s Bay again began exporting apples and pears – to England and South America – sending 1,100 cases. It was significantly behind the Nelson growers, who exported 186,412 cases that season.

However, just four years later, Hawke’s Bay exports had ballooned to 195,360 cases. Still only a third of Nelson’s shipments, but a move up the ladder from sixth in volume by region to second.



Hawke’s Bay fruit was desired by the South Americans because of the "robustness of the trees", which produced large dessert apples. The yields of fruit per apple and pear tree were the highest in the country. Export markets also liked the colour of New Zealand apples, which made them "superior sellers" over competitors in Tasmania, Australia.

The Hastings community realised in 1928 the economic importance of the pipfruit industry:

The people of Hastings realise that to have fringed about the boundaries an industry earning £120,000 [2023: \$14.2 million] net income in one year, with definite prospects of large annual increases, is of no small benefit to the town.

Today, New Zealand exports apples and pears to nearly 70 countries around the world – with the national export value of apples and pears valued at \$900 million annually. Two-thirds of our exports head to Asia, approximately 191,137 tonnes, compared to nearly 60,000 tonnes to UK, Ireland and Europe.



Keeping our fruit free of pests and disease

One of the many threats to healthy fruit was the codling moth, and early orchardist William Guthrie put a band of old flannel around the base of his trees, adding an arsenic mixture to attract and eradicate the pest.

The first shipment of apples to London in 1892 was infested with "maggots or worms caused by this destructive pest ... crawling about the cases".

The ecological impact of arsenate lead sprays used to control pests soon became a concern both within and outside of the industry. Hastings beekeepers in November 1945 protested at the spraying of trees which had still significant blossom coverage, because the hives of bees placed in orchards for pollination were killed by arsenate poisoning. Strict rules were soon brought in around spraying near hives, flowering crops, weeds, and budding and flowering plants. DDT began to replace arsenate lead sprays from the 1950s.

Organic practices in orchards – that is abstaining from the use of certain chemicals and fertilisers –became prevalent in the 1980s.

Today, the industry is working to reduce pesticide application by 50% by 2030 using targeted and smart technology such as remote sensing for detecting pests and diseases in real time enabling early intervention without spraying.

An example of this is the use of a simple piece of string hanging from trees in an orchard. The string is dipped in a pheromone to attract the male moth. The smell, akin to that of a female moth, attracts the male, but he can’t find her, gets confused, and lost, and the reproductive cycle of the damaging pest is disrupted.

Weathering through the storms

Besides pests, another danger – and much more uncontrollable – was the weather.

Frosts, gales, and hailstorms have from the earliest times of the industry regularly ruined crops and trees. For example, in 1922 and 1926 hailstorms ruined entire orchard crops. A hailstorm that lasted just 10 minutes on 2 March 1994 caused nearly \$11 million (2023: \$22 million) of damage.

And in early 2023, when Cyclone Gabrielle tore through the region, pip fruit growers were hit hard. Fifty per cent of growers were hit by the cyclone, resulting in a reduction of the national crop by 21%, a loss of over \$200 million in export revenue, and damage to orchards and infrastructure is estimated to be in the hundreds of millions. Like everyone affected by the cyclone, growers showed incredible bravery and resilience, many out in their orchards in the days following the storm digging silt by hand and tractor to save their trees.

With the perfect growing conditions for apples and pears – long hot summers, cool winters and fertile alluvial soils, Hawke’s Bay will continue to be home to world-class apples and pears, and the research and development that goes into it.



The Hawke's Bay Agricultural and Pastoral show at the Hastings racecourse in 1905

Photo: Michael Fowler Collection

The intertwined history of the Hastings racecourse and showgrounds

By Michael Fowler

Although they appeared to be quite different, the Hawke's Bay Jockey Club (Jockey Club), which managed horse racing, and the Hawke's Bay Agricultural and Pastoral Society (A&P Society), which furthered agricultural pursuits, had, surprisingly, a lot in common.

Many members belonged to both organisations and, more importantly, they shared premises.

The first organised horse races were held at Waipureku (East Clive) in February 1856 on land between what is now Lawn Road and the Tukituki River. And it wasn't just European settlers who took part – Māori were also involved as riders and spectators.

The A&P Society held its first show in 1863 at Havelock (North) in Danvers' paddock, and in 1874 established their own showgrounds in Hastings (near Hastings police station today).

Also desirous of having their own premises was the Jockey Club, and it found an ally in the A&P Society.

An early map of Hastings reveals an area set aside and labelled as a racecourse (at the present location). This would have been across Thomas Tanner's Riverslea Estate and James Williams' Frimley Estate.

After consultation with the Jockey Club in 1878, the A&P Society went ahead and purchased 80 acres (32ha) for the racecourse for £4,800 (2023: \$878,000). Thomas Tanner sold 53 acres (21ha), and it is assumed the other 27 acres (11ha) was from James Nelson Williams.

The A&P Society sold their old showgrounds and arranged a 14-year lease with the Jockey Club for 27 acres (11ha) at £250 (\$45,700) per annum.

William Russell was president of both organisations at the time.

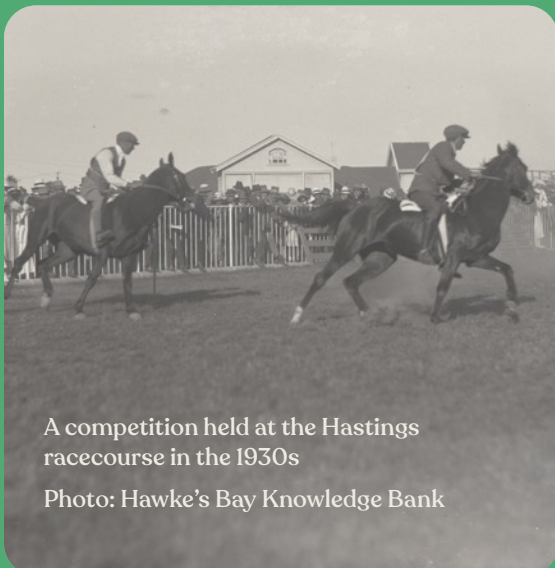
To get ready for the 20 and 21 March 1879 race days, a 500-seat grandstand was built. It was well equipped, with a luncheon room, two bars, a ladies' room and a committee room.

The Jockey Club approached the A&P Society in February 1884 with an offer to purchase half of the property. The lease arrangement was causing frustrations as the buildings and fences were unsatisfactory, and the A&P Society grazing sheep on the land interfered with horse training.

After much deliberation, the Jockey Club purchased the whole 80 acres. In recognition of the favourable terms, the A&P Society was guaranteed free access to the entire grounds for 10 days each year for holding shows.

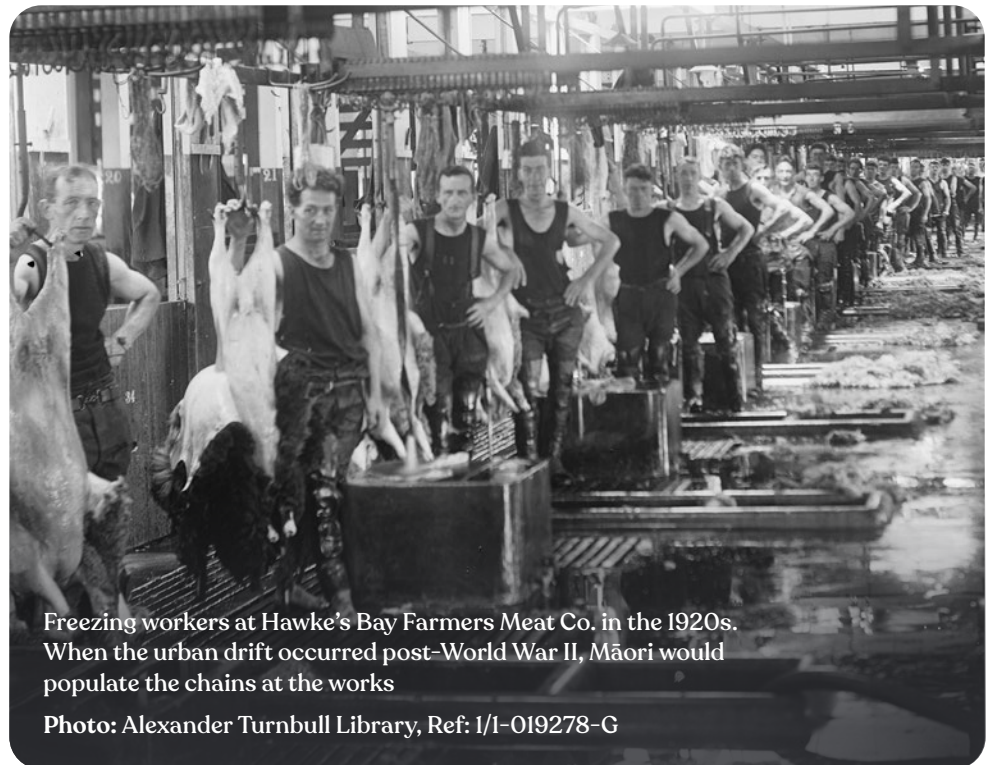
In 1911, the A&P Society purchased an area of 25ha from William Nelson, which would be called Tōmoana Showgrounds (and this area would be added to in the coming years). However, they continued using the racecourse for their shows until 1925.

In 2022, Hastings District Council purchased the showgrounds of 40ha from the A&P Society for \$7.5 million, protecting it as a reserve for the community, and took ownership on 1 April 2023.



A competition held at the Hastings racecourse in the 1930s

Photo: Hawke's Bay Knowledge Bank



Freezing workers at Hawke's Bay Farmers Meat Co. in the 1920s. When the urban drift occurred post-World War II, Māori would populate the chains at the works

Photo: Alexander Turnbull Library, Ref: 1/1-019278-G

Freezing works – Hastings' former economic power house

By Michael Fowler

Agriculture was the first primary industry to be attempted in Hawke's Bay, but the only early saleable product was wool – and fluctuating prices meant the market was unstable.

Sheep were often driven off cliffs into the sea in the earliest days of farming as there was an oversupply of mutton.

Nelson Brothers Freezing Works began in 1881 as boiling-down works at Tōmoana. They used a high-pressure steaming process to extract tallow and gravy from mutton. The gravy was tinned and sent to England for use in soups, and the tallow was used in a variety of products, including soap.



Nelson Brothers Tōmoana freezing works in the 1920s

Photo: Michael Fowler Collection

William Nelson and his brother Fred, along with their brother-in-law John Williams, owned the works at Tōmoana. The other partners were three Nelson brothers in England.

The advent of refrigeration was watched closely by manager William Nelson, as the first shipment of frozen meat left Dunedin in 1882.

Hawke's Bay farmers who were keen to follow the trend put pressure on William to convert his boiling-down works to a freezing works – otherwise they would set up their own.

William, however, was cautious, as the trade was in its infancy – and the process was expensive.

A group of sheep farmers then formed the Hawke's Bay Meat Export Company in November 1882, with Fred and William Nelson taking a third of the shares. The idea was to purchase Tōmoana and convert it to a freezing works, but the Nelson brothers in England refused to support the plan. The company collapsed and was voluntarily wound up in February 1883.

Conversion of Tōmoana to a freezing works began later in 1883 and became operational on 12 February 1884. The works were a boon for local employment – although interestingly they were then described as being some distance from Hastings.

Not unexpectedly, the innovative process of freezing received much attention, with many reports compiled by curious newspaper journalists.

Nine thousand frozen sheep carcasses and 10 bullock carcasses were loaded on board the Turakina, which left the Port of Napier on 31 March 1884 for England. The Weka, fitted with a cooling chamber, was used to transfer the cargo from the port to the Turakina in the harbour.

The meat arrived in London in late July 1884 "in splendid condition".

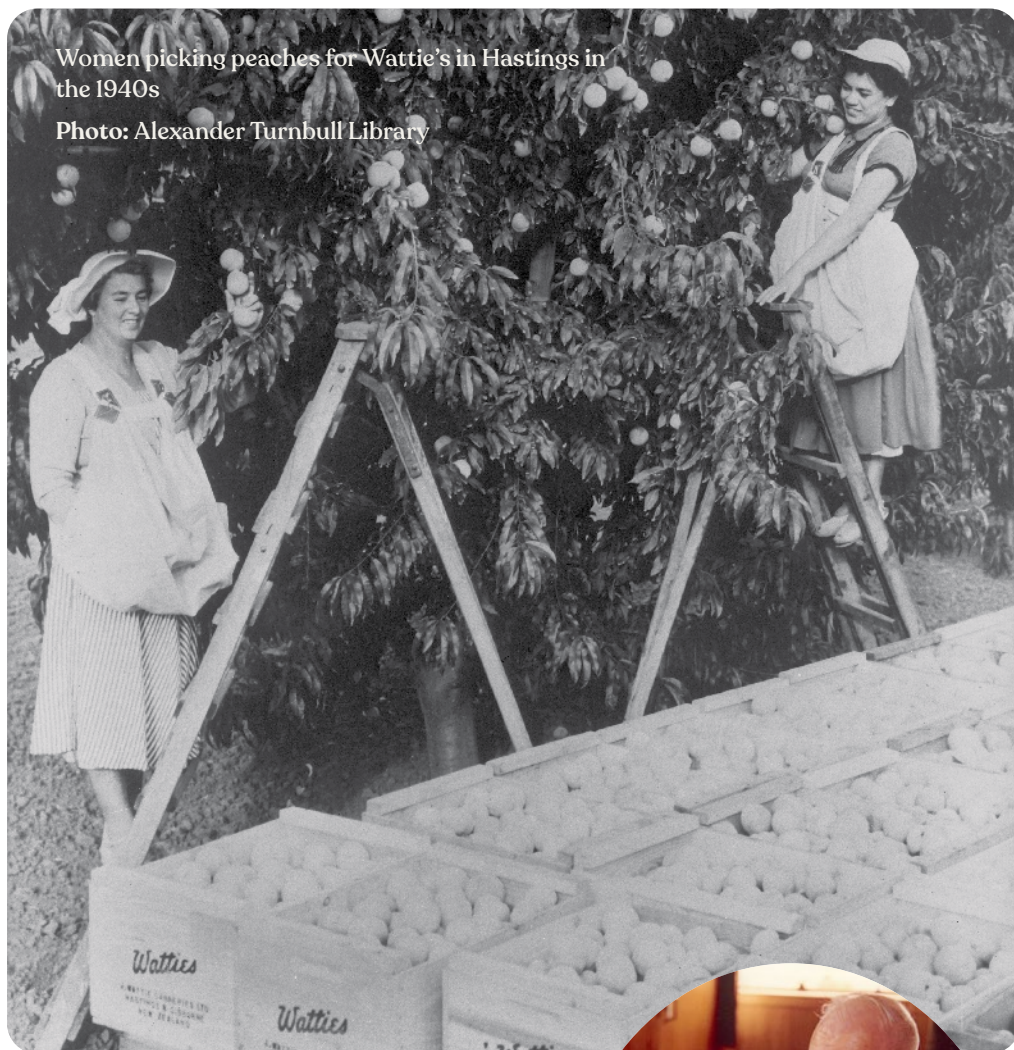
Not all frozen shipments in those early days were successful. In the same month, the cargo of two other ships from New Zealand was found to be unsatisfactory upon examination.

While the social and economic impact of the Tōmoana freezing works when they began in 1884 – when Hastings was nearly 11 years old – was favourable, the opposite occurred 110 years later with their 1994 closure.

On the back of the Whakatū Hawke's Bay Farmer's Meat Company freezing works closing in 1986, the impact of the Tōmoana closure affected thousands of people for many years, with some never recovering.

Women picking peaches for Wattie's in Hastings in the 1940s

Photo: Alexander Turnbull Library



It must be Wattie's!

By Michael Fowler

A good kiwi barbeque or fish 'n' chips, to many, is not complete without Wattie's tomato sauce –made right here in Hastings.

Founder James (Jim) Wattie, who would become one of New Zealand's great industrialists of the 20th century, started his working life in the clerical field, later becoming an accountant for Roach's department store. In 1928 he became secretary, and later manager, of Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers Limited.

Jim and his friend Harold Carr, a Hastings chartered accountant, would often discuss the wastage of fruit rotting on orchard properties each year. All the two men needed was an opportunity.

This came when Harold was attending a meeting of creditors to discuss a grocer client who was bankrupted during the difficult conditions of the Great Depression.

At the meeting was a sales representative, Mr W J Cowley, from Whittome Stevenson, sauce manufacturers in Auckland. Mr Cowley casually mentioned to Harold that they were planning to import fruit pulp from Australia.

Harold rang Jim Wattie and told him of these plans – to which he replied, "We'll do something about this, Harold."

Whittome Stevenson approached Jim's employer, Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers, with a proposal to pulp fruit, but with a profit of only £23.21 the previous year they decided against taking on a new venture.

Desperate to take advantage of this, Harold and Jim walked the streets of Hastings' and Napier's business districts with a prospectus seeking funds to purchase machinery to pulp fruit. Their trump card was a firm order for three years' supply from Whittome Stevenson of 82 tonnes of pulped fruit. Despite the difficult economic times, they were successful in raising the money.

Working their way down Heretaunga Street, Hastings, they gathered investors – Len Harvey of Harvey's, Arthur Giorgi of Millar and Giorgi, menswear; Hugh Baird, draper; Andy Dysart of Ross, Dysart and McLean, motor garage; Reg Hunt, draper; Jack Ritchie, plumber; Percy Loach, of Loach and Price plumbers; as well as newspaper owner W A Whitlock in Karamū Road. There were 28 original shareholders, including, of course, Jim Wattie and Harold Carr.

When it came to a name for the new company, it was decided a personal touch would work best, as Harold explained: "Far better the name of a man than the name of a district because the latter has no soul." J Wattie Canneries Ltd was born – and at age 32, Jim began what would be his life's work.

They rented a building belonging to Hawke's Bay Fruitgrowers in King Street, Hastings, and would shortly take over the staff and buildings of this company.

Fruit pulp production began in 1934, and canning of pears and peaches in 1935.

The growth of J Wattie Canneries Ltd was nothing less than spectacular in the coming years.

Jim Wattie passed away in 1974 – still in the role of managing director. Harold remained a director for 50 years, resigning in 1984. He died the following year aged 79.

Despite Jim's success, he remained a humble man – treated by his staff as a friend rather than a boss. He classed as one of his greatest achievements his racehorse Even Stevens winning the Melbourne Cup in 1962.

Today Wattie's is owned by American multinational food company Kraft Heinz.



Sir James Wattie

Photo: Heinz Wattie's Limited

Since July a number of events have been held, giving the community the chance to commemorate the 150th anniversary



The Big 150th Family Day Out

On July 9, rain did not deter people from heading to Civic Square to take in live music, dance performances, magic, crafts, games, vintage vehicles, storytelling and the Wattie's family zone.



More 150th commemoration Events



Ballroom Dance

The Assembly Ballroom in the Toitoti Municipal Building was the venue for a special dance event.



Tree planting ceremony

Descendants of Hastings founder Francis Hicks joined an official tree planting and plaque reveal ceremony on July 8. A time capsule full of letters from local schools was also buried during the event.



Knowledge Bank Gala Day

Many people enjoyed the surrounds of Stoneycroft Homestead for a fundraising gala day.



History talks

Historian Michael Fowler has given a number of talks on the history of Hastings over the past few months.



The year that was

...

2023 has been a year like no other. Since Cyclone Gabrielle hit, many people have been involved in the response and recovery effort and major progress has been made in cleaning up and restoring access – but there's a still long way to go.

Notwithstanding the enormous impact the cyclone had on the district, there's been a lot of positive activity underway to advance council's Long Term Plan work programme, as consulted on with the community.

Cyclone Gabrielle

Since the event 10 temporary bridges have been built and planning is well underway for permanent replacements.

More than 1.3m cubic metres of silt has been collected and as of October this year our council, along with Napier City Council, started the voluntary Category 3 property buy-out process. We have also been working with our communities on resilience planning for the future.

Our communities have been a huge support for each other throughout the event – from conducting rescues to establishing community hubs, cooking meals and cleaning up silt.



The economic powerhouse

The event took its toll on the local economy, but there have been positives with continued high activity in the industrial, commercial and residential sectors – and tourism and retail spend in Hastings continues to rise.

A new Quest hotel opened in Hastings city centre and this year council took ownership of Tōmoana Showgrounds to protect this as a much-valued green space and also enhance it as an event venue.



Homes for our people

Providing homes for our People is one of council's top priorities and we have made huge progress on the civil works for three sites in Flaxmere where 150 affordable homes will be built by our development partners.

Hundreds of market homes continue to be built around the district, multiple consents for papakainga have been received and Kainga Ora has continued with its building programme in Hastings.



Hastings revitalisation

Work began building the new Hawke's Bay Museum, Research and Archives Centre at 307 Queen St East – a collaboration between Hastings District and Napier City councils, the Hawke's Bay Museums Trust and Ngāti Kahungunu that will provide secure, appropriate, permanent storage for the future care and protection of the extensive collection.

This year we marked Hastings 150th birthday with a number of events ranging from tree planting to family days, to a special 150th Blossom Parade.



Safeguarding our water

Our other major priority is ensuring people have access to safe drinking water and this year saw the opening of the Waiaroha Heretaunga Water Discovery Centre – the final element of the five-year programme to upgrade the drinking water network.

Waiaroha is both a water storage and treatment facility and a centre of learning to help this and future generations respect and protect our water.

Along with Waiaroha, the water treatment and storage facility at Frimley Park has been completed, along with seven small community upgrades, meaning we are close to commissioning our fully upgraded, safe and resilient water network.



Enhancing where we live

Over at Cornwall Park, the former tea kiosk was reopened as a community centre for use by local groups, and the popular bird aviary was upgraded. We also celebrated the opening of the upgrade St Leonard's Park

More Recreation Aotearoa awards have been picked up by Flaxmere Park and the skate plaza Te Pae Whīra o Pā Harakeke.

Flaxmere Park was named Outstanding Park of the Year in the national awards, while Te Pae Whīra o Pā Harakeke skate park won the Outstanding Recreation Facility category.

Also this year, Flaxmere Park, Cornwall Park and Havelock North Village Green all had their international Green Flag parks management and maintenance status renewed, and for the first time Frimley Park was also given a Green Flag.





Splash into summer

It's time to get cool in the pools.

Splash Planet is open and this month, as of December 3, the outdoor Havelock North Village and Frimley Pools are open as well.

With a limit of 3000 people per day, and to avoid the long queues, a system of online ticket bookings has been introduced at Splash Planet.

People can pre-book through the website to guarantee their access and get the best prices.

Go to splashplanet.co.nz to get all the information and pre-book tickets.



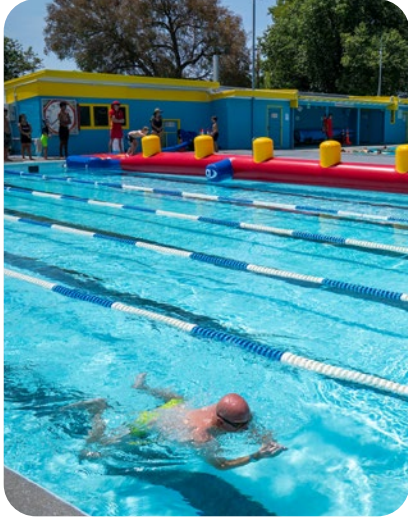
At the Village Pool people are able to enjoy recreational swimming, dedicated lanes for lap swimming, giant inflatables and barbecues for hire.

There's a toddlers pool and a learners pool, shaded areas and a grassed area to picnic and play games.

At Frimley Pool, people can enjoy Hawke's Bay's only 50m pool with grandstand, as well as a learner and a toddler pool.

Bring the chilly bin and make a family day of it with covered barbecue and seated area as well as plenty of grass for basking in the sun.

Check the website aquaticshastings.co.nz to find out more about opening hours and prices.



Hastings self-guided walking tours

Over the coming summer holiday, a great free outing for locals as well as visitors is to take a walking tour around Hastings' wonderful heritage buildings.

After the 1931 earthquake, many buildings were rebuilt in the popular designs of the time: Stripped Classical, Spanish Mission and what we now know as Art Deco.

Hastings has dozens of heritage buildings that are easily accessible on foot across the central city area.



If you'd like to explore and find out more, pop into the Hastings or Havelock North sites and pick up the handy Hastings Art Deco Self Guided Walking Tours brochure that will show you where they are and give a bit of history about the more significant examples of stunning architecture.

Hastings isite: Ground floor, Toitū Municipal Building, Heretaunga St East.

Havelock North isite: 1 Te Aute Rd

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What's on... December 2023

Hastings District Libraries

FLAXMERE LIBRARY – Swansea Road
HAVELOCK NORTH LIBRARY – Te Mata Road
HASTINGS LIBRARY – Cnr Eastbourne and Warren Streets
hastingslibraries.co.nz

Summer Sparks

HASTINGS, HAVELOCK NORTH AND
FLAXMERE LIBRARIES PLUS VIRTUAL
4 DECEMBER – 28 JANUARY 2024

Tūhuria, ākona, hangaia, kia ngahau! Discover, learn, create and have fun!

Work on the different challenges over the summer, tell us all about it by either reporting in virtually or coming to see us at the library. Me whai wāhi mai kia toa ai! Be in to win awesome prizes!

Get started with Summer Sparks by registering online at hastingslibraries.co.nz

Meh.

HASTINGS, HAVELOCK NORTH AND
FLAXMERE LIBRARIES PLUS VIRTUAL
4 DECEMBER – 28 JANUARY 2024

A library thing for teenagers. Challenge yourself this summer and win stuff. Hikina te mānuka hai tēnei raumati ka whai taonga ai.

Register online at hastingslibraries.co.nz

Pick up a Summer at Your Library booklet to see more great programmes and activities available for all ages.

Toitōi – Hawke's Bay Arts & Events Centre

101 Hastings Street South
P. (06) 871 5289 or E. info@toitoivenues.co.nz

Please refer to the Toitōi website for information on upcoming programmes and events: toitoivenues.co.nz. Tickets can be purchased at the Hastings or Havelock North isites or at toitoivenues.co.nz.

The Sweet Caroline Tour: A Tribute to Neil Diamond

THURSDAY 7 DECEMBER | 8PM |
TOITOI – OPERA HOUSE

Take a step back into the glory days of music and musicianship with this beautiful tribute concert to Neil Diamond, which will put all his well-loved classics back in the spotlight, showcased by a world-class international band. Tickets from \$54.69.

Santa's Grotto 2023

DATES AND TIMES VARY IN DECEMBER |
TOITOI – TAMA TŪRANGA HUATA ROOM

Bring your tamariki to visit Santa at Toitōi this December! Post your letters to Santa, pop a gift under the Giving Tree for Women's Refuge, and most importantly, meet the big man himself! Santa will also be welcoming tamariki to his low-sensory grotto on specific days. Visit our website to find a session which suits.

Festive Fridays at Cedric's

FRIDAY 8, 15 & 22 DECEMBER | 4PM-7.30PM |
TOITOI – CEDRIC'S

For three Fridays this festive season, luxurious locale, Cedric's will be open. Talented rangatahi musicians will create the perfect ambience for you to sip cocktails to, while next-door in the Tama Tūranga Huata Room, your tamariki can meet the jolly man, Santa himself.

Arts Inc. Heretaunga

106 Russell Street South | FREE ENTRY
artsinc.co.nz

Christmas Bazaar

NOW – 24 DECEMBER

Our popular annual month-long Christmas bazaar featuring affordable crafts and gift ideas from local artisans and craftspeople. Something for everyone.

Emma Stannard – 'Dreamscapes'

3-20 JANUARY 2024

A curated collection of fine art photography, unveiling the natural beauty of Hawke's Bay through a unique visual perspective.

Elizabeth Humphreys – Cole – 'Lines and Hues'

8 – 20 JANUARY 2024

A collection of abstract paintings with a focus on lines, colours and the visual experience they create together.

Keith 'Cookie' Cook – 'The Awakening'

E 8 – 20 JANUARY 2024

Debut exhibition of paintings based on Poutama Tukutuku panel designs, with colour schematics and title ideas from his daughters. A true whanau collaboration that connects to time, place and tradition.

Leonard Lambert – Recent works

22 JANUARY – 2 FEBRUARY 2024

A solo show by this beloved local painter and poet that fuses elements of surrealism, abstraction and place.

Hastings City Art Gallery

201 Eastbourne Street East, Hastings | FREE ENTRY
P. (06) 871 5095 or E. hastingsartgallery@hdc.govt.nz
hastingscityartgallery.co.nz

He Whare Ātaahua: Jade Townsend

9 DECEMBER – 1 APRIL 2024

He Whare Ātaahua is an installation by Jade Townsend which combines different traditions of painting, adornment, and decoration. The exhibition title, meaning 'a beautiful house', speaks to Townsend's interest in layering cultural ideas of aesthetic beauty and finding meaning within our environment.

Vital Machinery: Conor Clarke, Selina Ershadi, Janet Lilo, Louise Menzies, and Meg Porteous

NOW – 25 FEBRUARY 2024

Vital Machinery explores intersections in the practices of five Aotearoa women artists working across photography and moving image. In this exhibition, the camera has been engaged as a technology and an extension of the body and thought process.

Artist Talks: Jade Townsend and Matthew Galloway

SATURDAY 9 DECEMBER | 11 AM

Join Jade Townsend and Matthew Galloway, the artists behind two new exhibitions, He Whare Ātaahua and Empty Vessels, at the Gallery. The artists will share insights about their work in a joint floor talk, followed by refreshments. Free, no booking required.

Flaxmere Community Centre

30 Swansea Road, Flaxmere | FREE ENTRY
hastingsdc.govt.nz/flaxmere-community-centre

Fun and fitness for all ages and abilities at regular weekly classes.

Camberley Community Centre

703 Kiwi Street, Camberley | FREE ENTRY
hastingsdc.govt.nz/camberley-community-centre

Check out a wide range of fun classes to exercise the body and stimulate creativity.

Nourished for Nil

MONDAYS | 3PM-4PM

Hastings Sports Centre

503 Railway Road | P. (06) 878 0051
hastingsdc.govt.nz/hsc

For information on programmes and classes please see Hastings Sports Centre and Sports Hawkes Bays websites or contact the Hastings Sports Centre on 06 878 0051.

Kiwi Seniors

TUESDAY 12 DECEMBER | FINAL SESSION FOR 2023

Tai Chi

THURSDAY 14 DECEMBER | FINAL SESSION FOR 2023

Events & Activities in the Hastings District

Santa's Scavenger Hunt

27 NOVEMBER – 17 DECEMBER | HASTINGS CBD

Join Santa's Scavenger Hunt in Hastings City and go in the draw to win your Wishlist! Find the 10 items hidden in shop windows that Santa needs for Christmas, tell us what they are and you're in the draw to win your Wishlist to the value of \$1,000!

Discover more at hastingscity.co.nz/christmas

Carols in Cornwall

SATURDAY 16 DECEMBER | 4PM |
CORNWALL PARK

Grab your picnic blankets, friends and whānau for an evening of carols and entertainment.

This annual favourite offers a chance to relax in the beautiful surrounds of Cornwall Park and enjoy some musical festivities. There will be an exciting line-up of talented performances as well as sing-along carolling. A special message from Father Christmas, and fun activities for the kids.

Bumper Boats

17 – 20 JANUARY 2024 | HASTINGS CBD MALL BY
THE CLOCK TOWER

Get the kids ready to board a bumper boat this Summer in Hastings City! That's right; for a short time only, we're bringing bumper boats back to the CBD. Bring the kids to splash about and join in on the fun with friends. Discover more at hastingscity.co.nz/bumperboats \$5/child for a 5-minute ride.

Shop and WIN

NOW – 31 JANUARY 2024 | HASTINGS CBD

Spend \$30 or more at any participating store in Hastings CBD between 1 November 2023 – 31 January 2024, and you could be the lucky winner of a dream holiday for two to Bali. For participating businesses and full information, visit hastingscity.co.nz/shop-and-win

Special Days this Month

7-15 December | Hanukkah
25 December | Christmas Day
31 December | New Years Eve
4 January | World Braille Day
15 January | Martin Luther King Jr. Day
18 January | Bodhi Day
27 January | Holocaust Remembrance Day