



Life (slowly) returning to normal

The Ruitermans' flourishing veggie garden is a sign that life is slowly, but surely, returning to normal for this Tāneatua family. Rising floodwaters on the evening of 5 April drove all 12 members of the Ruiterman family to seek higher ground and as the water continued to rise, things were looking, in Luke's words, "not too flash".

"One of the main things I remember is the on-going contact I had with a gentleman called Brian from the Emergency Operations Centre who called regularly throughout the night to check in on us. At one point he called to say he could see stars over Whakatāne, and knowing the cloud had cleared, I actually thought we might get through this after all! I didn't get his last name, and have always wanted to thank him."

After a cold night in their cars waiting until it was safe enough to return home,

the Ruitermans embarked on a massive clean-up operation to remove silt – meaning endless wheelbarrow trips – and repair damaged buildings. Now Luke's granddaughter is expected to be back in residence within a week, and his son should be returning to his home, which suffered extensive water damage, in about a month. And with spring just around the corner, Luke has been taking a break from flood repairs to get his garden in – in raised beds naturally.

And Brian, incidentally, turned out to be Whakatāne District Council's Brian Elliott – who was very happy to hear that Luke and his whanau are getting back to business as usual.

Properties in Tāneatua, Rūātoki and Poroporo accounted for 52 of the 324 homes impacted by the April flood and cyclone events.

Save the date: 2 September



The Rangitāiki Community Board and the Whakatāne District Council Recovery team are inviting residents to have their say in the future of Edgumbe.

No stranger to the Whakatāne District, internationally-renowned community development expert Peter Kenyon will be facilitating a workshop as the first stage of developing a community plan for the town. While Mr Kenyon is based in Australia, he has been to the Whakatāne District a number of times, recently for his work on Whakatāne Ki Mua. He already has a close relationship with the Edgumbe community from his work in 2009.

The workshop is the first step toward thinking about the future Edgumbe community people want to see, as part of the recovery effort.

Mr Kenyon is Director of the Bank of I.D.E.A.S, which has worked with over 1,000 communities in more than 55 countries, including Australia, New Zealand, South Africa and Canada. He is known for inspiring fresh and creative ways to stimulate community and economic renewal and is an advocate of developing communities from the inside out; and of community members investing themselves, their ideas, assets and resources in the process.

Edgumbe War Memorial Hall
Saturday 2 September 2017

3 – 6pm

(Coffee/tea/biscuits from 2.30pm)

Business Wellness

Stress is a normal reaction to abnormal situations and we all have different ways of coping.

Eastern Bay Chamber of Commerce would like to invite the Edgumbe business community to the Cosmopolitan Club from 5.30 – 7.30pm on Wednesday 30 August.

Oloff Arnold and Elsabe Van Wyk of the Bay of Plenty District Health Board will be there to reflect on events and impact. They'll offer some coping strategies and discuss warning signs to look for when you, or someone you care about, might be approaching burnout.

For catering purposes, please RSVP to Chamber Chief Executive Ged Casey, gerard@ebopchamber.co.nz

First relocatable homes arrive

The first two relocatable houses for use by people who were displaced from their homes by the April floods have now been installed at the Whakatāne Holiday Park. A total of 10 portacom homes – six two-bedroom and four one-bedroom units – will be installed, arriving at a rate of two a week through until mid-September. Whakatāne Mayor Tony Bonne and East Coast MP, the Hon. Anne Tolley were on site to witness the first two-bedroom units being lowered onto their foundations last Friday. Service connections and the necessary access requirements are now being installed and the units are expected to be ready for occupation early in September.



The Hon. Anne Tolley and Whakatāne Mayor Tony Bonne with the keys to the first relocatable buildings.



Evolution Networks Business Development Manager Mark Simpson.

Edgecumbe Wi-Fi Update



The announcement of free access to Wi-Fi in Edgecumbe has been well received and the messages on social media are coming through thick and fast – ‘when and how can we get it?’.

Evolution Networks is installing transmitting equipment on Fonterra buildings this week and also negotiating with businesses to host the Hot Spots.

It is hoped the Hot Spots will be available next week, at which point the network name to search for will be revealed!

The project to install the equipment enabling the free Wi-Fi to Edgecumbe and its surrounds for the next 12 months is being funded through the Whakatāne District Council-led Recovery Office; Evolution Networks will also be marketing individual internet plans. Look out for advertising about those offers in local media.

Help Police to help you

Edgecumbe Police are aware of acts of graffiti occurring within the town and are urging people to come forward with information. Police are investigating two incidents of graffiti, both close to the Bluelight building.

Police also urge anyone with any knowledge of wilful damage or theft within Edgecumbe to let them know. This can be done anonymously through the Crimestoppers line on 0800 555 111, or by calling the Edgecumbe Police Station on (07) 304 9004.

The ‘Temporary House Park’ is being developed at a cost of \$1.6 million, with the Whakatāne District Council investing \$900,000 to purchase the ten units and the Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment contributing \$700,000 to cover infrastructure and relocation costs. The temporary housing provided will be available for flood-affected residents and will then be used for tourism accommodation purposes.

Rugby Tickets



There’s been a good response to the Bay of Plenty Rugby Union’s offer of free Steamers tickets for flood-affected families - but there’s still time to get involved in the action.

BOPRU made tickets available for each of the following Bay of Plenty Steamers Fixtures at Rotorua International Stadium:

- **Tonight v Hawke’s Bay, 5.45pm**
- **Thursday 31 August v Wellington, 7.35pm**
- **Wednesday 20 September v Southland, 7.35pm**

Tickets are available weekdays (9am – 4pm) and Saturdays (9am – 1pm) at Te Tari Āwhina – Edgecumbe Library, until all have been allocated.

Tickets are available on a first-in, first-served basis for those in red or yellow flood-affected properties and people need to bring proof of address.