

# THE UPPER HUTT CONNECTION



## A LOCAL NEWSPAPER - FOR THE COMMUNITY, BY THE COMMUNITY

The Upper Hutt Connection - Holiday Edition: 7th of January 2026

Website: [uhconnection.co.nz](http://uhconnection.co.nz)  
Facebook: [The Upper Hutt Connection](#)  
Contact the editor at: [editor@uhconnection.co.nz](mailto:editor@uhconnection.co.nz)



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If you have an article that you'd like included in next week's Wednesday edition, please make sure that you've sent it through to me by 12.00 midnight, Monday evening.

1,147 subscribers receive The Upper Hutt Connection Wednesday Edition in their inbox every Wednesday Morning

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Metlink

## Be aware of short and long-term road closures in Lower Hutt due to the commencement of the RiverLink project

We're starting our 2026 construction programme for the State Highway 2 Melling Transport Improvements in Lower Hutt. This week we have some major changes to how you get around Lower Hutt.

From tomorrow night (6 January), we'll be closing several roads as work on the new interchange at Melling and bridge over Te Awa Kairangi/Hutt River progresses.

Queens Drive will close between Rutherford and High Streets, and Pharazyn Street will close from near Marsden Street to Block Road, both until approximately 2029. Block Road and the northern section of the Riverbank car park will be permanently closed.

We'll also have overnight closures in place for approximately six nights on the section of Rutherford Street (between Melling Link and Queens Drive), as well as some overnight lane closures on SH2 at Melling in late January.

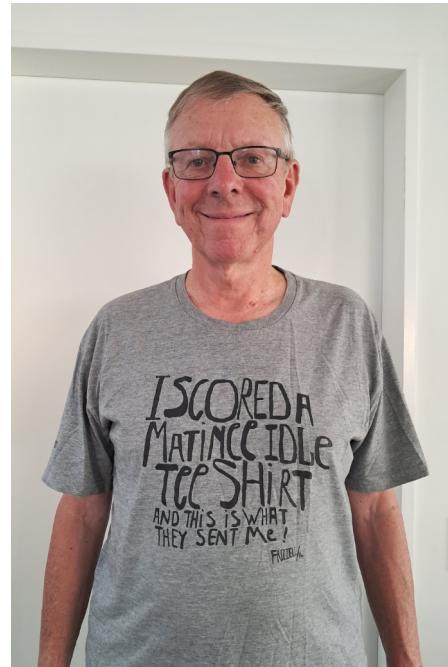
These closures will give us space to move and build the new train station, shift utilities, make improvements to surrounding roads and improve the ground for the new interchange and bridge. It'll also allow us to work as quickly as possible.

We're aware that this'll cause disruptions for some people which is why we're sharing this information with you so you can plan ahead from now.

For full details, visit: <https://teawakairangi.co.nz/our-projects/our-projects/localroadclosures-2026>

Source: NZ Transport Agency Waka Kotahi – Wellington

05/01/25



Paul Lambert with his treasured tee shirt  
– Paul Lambert

## End of an era for Matinee Idle on Radio New Zealand Friday 9 January.

Matinee Idle, a very popular Radio New Zealand National programme comes to end this Friday 9 January after over 20 years on air on public holidays and over the Christmas Holidays. Hosted by Phil O'Brien and Simon Morris this wacky music programme that has developed almost a cult following with its audience will broadcast its final show from midday to 5 pm on Friday.

Upper Hutt resident Paul Lambert says he is disappointed to see it being wound up by Radio New Zealand. However he has one of the sought after Matinee Idol tee shirts designed by artist Dick Frizzell that many listeners tried to 'win or lure' from the programme host years ago.

Lambert says if you have never listened to the programme you can tune in this Wednesday, Thursday or Friday midday to 5 pm. You can give your feedback by texting 2101.

You can listen to previous programmes on this link <https://www.rnz.co.nz/national/programmes/matinneidle/20260105>

A "thank you" to Paul Lambert for sending this article to The Upper Hutt Connection.

06/01/26



Revelle Jackson, circa 1967: Mahara Upper Hutt Community Archive. <https://uhcl.recollect.co.nz/nodes/view/8636>

## Final day for Woolworths Maidstone

Sunday the 4th of January was the final day for Woolworths Maidstone.

Woolworths Maidstone opened in 1966.

*(There are rumours about what business is going to be moving into the site, but this hasn't been confirmed – Once it has been confirmed, and if I'm informed about it, I'll include this as a separate article on The Upper Hutt Connection – Ben Knowles, Editor / Operator @ The Upper Hutt Connection.)*

*A "Thank You" to Cyndy for bringing this to my attention. Surname hasn't been included but I know the contributor personally, and can vouch for the validity of the information provided.*

04/01/26



**Send an article to The Upper Hutt Connection**

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## Send an article to The Upper Hutt Connection

I always welcome to any articles that are related to Upper Hutt.

For example: general news, sports, community events, garage sales, Letters to the Editor, situations vacant, etc

You can either send in articles by filling in the form on the website, or by messaging The Upper Hutt Connection on Facebook.

Filling in the form is the preferred option.

**If you have an article that you'd like included in next week's Wednesday edition, please make sure that you've sent it through to me by 12.00 midnight, Monday evening.**

<https://uhconnection.co.nz/send-an-article-to-the-upper-hutt-connection/>

<https://www.facebook.com/TheUHConnection>

To better understand why I encourage the sending of articles and events from members of the public, please visit the link: <https://uhconnection.co.nz/it-takes-the-people-of-upper-hutt-to-make-the-upper-hutt-connection/>

*Cheers, Ben Knowles - Editor / Operator @ The Upper Hutt Connection*

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



Google Maps

### Complaint about Upper Hutt Mall – Bob Tidd

I used to live in Upper Hutt a few times a few years ago.

When we visit the town/city we like to make a point of popping into the mall to support them and see how or if they have improved as aware it had been struggling for years with empty shops etc.

You are probably already aware of the big issue with the mall robbing people to park there now, which is a surprise and I raise the point to is illegal as there is no clear notice shown before entering the parking area, that there is a fee. It has always been very dark and dingy, so no notice is seen clearly that you have to pay to stay there, especially when going in there you have to focus carefully on what cars and people are likely to get in your way and look for a park you can get into.

I received a notice about a fine to pay as I had not paid. There was no barriers etc that are normally in proper fee paying parking areas, so seemed another normal car park and typically free as are all mall car parks, time limited yes, but not charged.

I submitted an appeal, but will probably be ignored, so may have to pay the ridiculous fee.

My appeal noted the attached info and not sure what if any stories you may have done about this stupid system they have, that I believe is illegal.

Unfortunately, we now live in Masterton, so don't see any papers for upper hutt, mind you we don't even see any local Wairarapa papers now anyway, including our local free one that is meant to come to our letterbox, but doesn't.

But I noted to them this as an appeal;

I have parked in this mall for many years from when we lived in Upper Hutt and many years since, we only visit it every now and then, but try to support it when in the town. I have never heard of any shopping mall robbing their customers for parking, as all are free to encourage people to visit and spend money in their shops.

This has been the same for all malls around the country, so had no reason to expect otherwise.

This mall is always very dark and dingy and there was no clear readily seen information telling us if we come into this mall parking space, we had to pay anything at all. therefore, I believe on the grounds there was no reasonably clear notice to warn any visitor they would be made to pay for parking, which is very unreasonable when going to a mall. if this is the attitude of the mall management, then we and many will not bother to visit your mall at all, which has been gradually going downhill anyway over many years, so it is very surprising that the mall would even consider such a silly approach. They should be encouraging visitors to come and spend money in their mall. But no other malls rob their customers to park in their parks, otherwise people don't bother to go there, as will be the case now for this silly mall.

If this is insisted on despite no sufficient legal notification about parking fees etc before entering, then it will be raised and complained to the Upper Hutt politicians, mall managers and the media, where we and others will boycott going to this mall ever again. it has nothing to offer anyway, but now it is even worse as you get ripped off just to park there.

*A "thank you" to Bob Tidd for sending this letter to The Upper Hutt Connection.*

30/12/25

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## SPORTS



Kevin Hooper

### Upper Hutt and Target Shooting

Upper Hutt has been the home of the sport of Target Shooting for more than 125 years. The Seddon Range at Trentham began way back in 1891 when Captain Collins negotiated a lease on McCullochs farm now encompassing the Ranges associated with the NZ Defence Force.

The Nationals Rifle Association and Fullbore shooting is not the only Shooting Sport in the district. Hutt Valley Clay Target Club is just over the hill in Whitemans Valley, Heretaunga Pistol Shooting is adjacent to Seddon Range on the Collins Range, the Greater Wellington Muzzleloading Club and Maidstone Outdoor 50m Club shoot on the Allen Range Off Dante Rd, the Hutt Valley Deerstalkers shoot at Kaitoke and the Upper Hutt Indoor Smallbore Club shoot at Maidstone Park adjacent to Maidstone Max.

The City can be justified in calling itself the Target Shooting Capital of New Zealand.

Next week from 12 -17 January Seddon Range host the NRANZ National Championships. The culmination of the week will be the crowning of the Ballinger Belt winner. New Zealand's oldest active sporting trophy. This Championship began in 1861. This year will see the field including multiple winners of the Ballinger and the 2015 World Champion from Australia, Ben Emms. Champion New Zealanders include Mike Collings, John Snowden, Malcolm Dodson and Upper Hutt's own three time winner John Whiteman.

The Fullbore Nationals now embrace other disciplines that include the amazingly accurate F Classes, 300m 60 shot events and vintage 303 rifle.

The 2026 Championships will see at least 100 competitors. In 2019, the NRANZ hosted the Long Range World Championships where close to 400 competitors attended. The NZ Under21 Team were World Champions. Upper Hutt hosted this championship twice before, in 1979 and 1995.

Visitors who are keen are welcome to attend the Championship Finals commencing at 1pm on Saturday 17 January on the Seddon Range. Follow the sign off Messines Avenue – and the crowd – just over the stop bank to watch the Champion being carried off on the famous chair accompanied by the Scottish Piper. The extensive and historic Trophies will be on display ready for the presentations.

*A "thank you" to Ross Mason for sending this article to The Upper Hutt Connection.*

05/01/25

**COMMUNITY EVENTS:** To view all upcoming and regularly occurring community events, please visit <https://uhconnection.co.nz/community-events/>

## Pumpkin Growing Competition

21 – 29 March 2026



**UPPER HUTT FOOD WEEK**

Pumpkins and squashes are popping up everywhere in Upper Hutt this summer. 500 seedlings have been given away to growers for the pumpkin competition.

Head to Upper Hutt Food Week on FB for tips and tricks....

**Grow**  
Atlantic Giant  
Queensland Blue Tromboncino

**Judge**  
Tiniest  
Largest  
Ugliest  
Prettiest  
Most Spectacular shape  
Rookie of the Year (under 16yrs)  
Best Patch Photo (Individual growers)  
Best Group Patch Photo

**Register now!**

Local Kai  
Local People  
Local Places

My Upper Hutt

U Te Mana Rau Awa Kalanga ki Hutt  
Upper Hutt City Council

4ABC  
For A Better City  
HUTT VALLEY

LIONS CLUB  
OF RIMUTAKA INC.

**My Upper Hutt**

### Pumpkin Growing Competition: 21st – 29th of March, 2026

Save the date, Upper Hutt! A bunch of awesome locals is serving up something special in March 2026

Introducing your first-ever Upper Hutt Food Week – all about celebrating local food growers, community gardens, seedling producers, businesses, restaurants, and good food grown right here.

Things are kicking off with a Pumpkin Growing Competition judged by Greenstone Doors and run by Heritage Nursery. So, gardening gloves and soil at the ready!

- 21-29 March 2026
- various locations around Upper Hutt

For competition details, gardening tips, and event updates, follow [Upper Hutt Food Week](#) on Facebook.

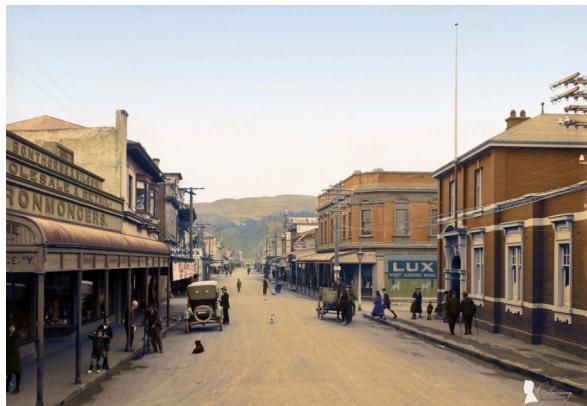
*This article has been republished on request of Sallie Anne Calvert / Source: My Upper Hutt*

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## BEYOND UPPER HUTT



Brendan Graham – Colourising New Zealand



Jackson Street Programme

### Historic Jackson Street – Scavenger Hunt: 1st of January 2026 – 1st of February 2026

Grab the family or friends for this fun interactive scavenger hunt and learn about our history at the same time.

Did you know that Petone (Pito-one, “end of the sandy beach”) was New Zealand’s first European settlement in 1840, established by the New Zealand Company.

Competition runs from the 1st Jan – 1st Feb 2026 / Winners will be drawn on Monday the 2nd of February and will be notified via email.

When you finished pop your entry in to the box outside the Heritage Police Station at 274B Jackson Street to go into the drawn to win!

Find the entry form here: <https://jacksonstreet.co.nz/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/Scavenger-Hunt-booklet.png>

A “thank you” to Jackson Street Programme for sending this article to The Upper Hutt Connection.

31/12/25

### Minecraft Heritage Building Competition: 1st of January 2026 – 1st of February 2026

Are you bored and looking for something to do these holidays!!

**How about entering our building competition. Fun for all ages.**

Build one of the iconic Heritage Building in the link below or chose one of your own buildings in Petone! The building can be done on either Minecraft Java or Bedrock Edition. No Mods, Add-ons, or texture Packs can be used. Can be built in Creative or Survival Mode.

Be in to win **one of the two \$200 prizes** up for grabs.

We have two categories:

- 5yrs- 12 years
- 13 years and beyond.

Competition runs from the 1st Jan – 1st Feb 2026

Prizes will be drawn on Monday the 2nd of February and will be notified.

Email your builds to the Jackson Street Programme – [info@jacksonstreet.co.nz](mailto:info@jacksonstreet.co.nz)

**DISCLAIMER: THIS PROMOTION IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH, ENDORSED BY, OR SPONSORED BY MOJANG STUDIOS, MICROSOFT, OR MINECRAFT.**

**ALL TRADEMARKS, LOGOS, CHARACTERS, AND BRAND ELEMENTS ARE THE PROPERTY OF THEIR RESPECTIVE OWNERS.**

For more information, please view: <https://jacksonstreet.co.nz/minecraft-heritage-building-competition>

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**Wellington Regional Stamp,  
Coin and Postcard Fair:  
Saturday 24th of January 2026,  
10.00 am – 4.00 pm**

*A “thank you” to Andrew McNiven for sending  
this article to The Upper Hutt Connection.*

30/12/25