

# Eltham Newsletter

**Eltham Business & Professional Association**

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## A Midwinter Christmas Lunch Full of Heart



On a wintry Sunday afternoon, the Eltham Fire Station was transformed into a warm and festive gathering space as the Eltham Lions Club hosted its 17th annual Midwinter Christmas Lunch for elderly members of the community. This tradition began in 2007, sparked by a local Lions couple who saw a need and had a vision - to honour those who spent decades contributing to the life and wellbeing of Eltham.

"It's our way of thanking the elderly people who did all that community work over the years," said Joyce Lawrence from the Lions Club. "We feel privileged to be able to give back to them." This year, 60 guests attended the lunch, enjoying delicious homemade food, laughter, and conversation, many reconnecting with old friends. The entire event was planned, cooked, and served by Lions Club members, with every part of the day, from decorations to dishes, thoughtfully prepared and generously donated.

A true intergenerational effort, the event was made extra special by the help of three young volunteers: Riley, Lucy, and Emelia, who assisted with setting tables, serving meals, and helping clean up afterward. Their kindness and effort did not go unnoticed, with many guests commenting on how lovely it was to see the younger generation so involved.

"They did us proud in every way," said Joyce. "The guests really appreciated all of their efforts and the kindness they showed."

A highlight of the afternoon was a surprise visit from Santa, who brought big smiles and gifts to everyone. Guests were also treated to donated prizes from Four Square and handcrafted cheeseboards by Lions member and woodworker Bruce Schneller, adding thoughtful touches to an already meaningful event.

Planning for the event begins months in advance, but it's clear that the Lions Club's experience and camaraderie shine through, with members simply offering, "I'll cook that," or "I'll bring this," as part of their smooth and heartfelt collaboration.

"It's just one of those nice, warm, fuzzy projects we do," Joyce said. "We love being part of this community, and days like this make you proud to be a Lion."

To everyone who helped create this special day, thank you. You've not only served a beautiful meal, but also reminded us what community, care, and connection truly look like.

Watch the video on Facebook or YouTube:  
Facebook: [Eltham - Take Time Out](#)  
[www.youtube.com/@ElthamBusinessAssociation](https://www.youtube.com/@ElthamBusinessAssociation)



## Bringing Warmth This Winter

As winter's chill set in, a heartwarming act of kindness reached 80 households across Taranaki, thanks to a collaborative effort between the Fonterra Taranaki Doing Good Together committee and local Lions Clubs.

The idea, first launched by Fonterra's Southland Doing Good Together committee last year, was picked up and adapted for Taranaki with support from Lions Clubs in Kaponga, Opunake, Stratford, Eltham and Hawera. Their strong local networks ensured the food boxes reached those most in need.

Each package included basic food items such as meat, potatoes, soup, tea, coffee and dairy products, generously donated by the Fonterra Taranaki Doing Good Together committee. Eltham Lions took the lead in local deliveries, with Jenny even loading up her car to make sure every box reached its destination.



Jenny Mack loading up her car



Janine Jones hands over a package to a recipient

When asked how recipients were identified, Janine explained that there's no formal application process, "we simply rely on local knowledge and community connections to identify who might appreciate the care package."

This marks the second year of the initiative. Fonterra has confirmed that if the need continues, they will look to do it again next winter.

Community groups are also encouraged to apply for project funding through the Fonterra Doing Good Together programme if their initiative aligns with the funding guidelines: <https://doing-good-together.powerappsportals.com>

## Cards, Games, and Fun Arrive in Eltham

A fresh and exciting addition is coming to Eltham, located in the former laundromat - Kanto Corner Collections, a store dedicated to trading cards, board games, pop culture collectibles, and gaming.

Run by local couple Sheldon Rennie and Angel Viola-Rennie, Kanto Corner Collections offers a wide variety of trading cards, board games, plush toys, Funko Pops, and anime figurines, a treasure trove for collectors, gamers, and fans alike.

Beyond shopping, the store features a dedicated gaming area with four tables, where visitors can sit down and play board games and trading card games (TCGs) together. The space is designed to encourage social interaction, community building, and shared enjoyment of tabletop and card games.

The shop will also include a PS5 and Nintendo Switch gaming area, giving customers a chance to enjoy their favourite video games in a relaxed and friendly setting.

Another standout feature is the 70-inch screen in the shopfront window, used to promote local businesses, events, and community updates. 20-second advertisements start at \$10 per week, offering a visible way to get the word out, all while supporting a local hobby shop.

Kanto Corner Collections officially opens on Saturday, 12 July, and welcomes everyone to stop by, explore the range, and enjoy a space built for creativity, connection, and fun.





## Uhlenberg Haulage Expands to the South Island

Congratulations to Uhlenberg Haulage on their latest milestone - expanding operations into the South Island! With new trucks now based in both Christchurch and Dunedin, their iconic bright green fleet now covers the entire country, delivering from Kaitaia in the Far North to the Bluff Aluminium Smelter in the deep south.



This exciting growth reflects decades of steady progress by the family-owned business.

Founded 59 years ago and proudly based on Bridge Street in Eltham, Uhlenberg Haulage has been owned and operated by two generations of the Uhlenberg family. Today, they employ a team of 50 and haul a wide range of commodities, from fertiliser and aggregate supplies for the rural community to refrigerated export beef from the local ANZCO Foods plant.

Before expanding south, Uhlenberg's had trucks based in Waikato, New Plymouth, Manawatu, and of course, their main depot on Bridge Street in Eltham. The recent South Island expansion marks a new chapter, enabling weekly deliveries nationwide - from Kaitaia in Northland to Gisborne on the East Coast, and now all the way to Bluff in the far south.

Uhlenberg Haulage has been a strong supporter of the Eltham community and a proud member of the Eltham Business & Professional Association for many decades. Their continued growth is a source of pride for our town, and we look forward to seeing where the road takes them next.

## Floodwaters Rise Across Eltham After Days of Relentless Rain

Over the past week, Eltham was hit with days of heavy, persistent rain and thunderstorms, leading to rising creeks, surface flooding, and overflowing drains throughout the town.

### Bridge Park Disappears Beneath the Water

At Bridge Park, floodwaters surged over the banks and swallowed much of the lower park area. Julee Edwards shared photos and videos, writing: "Never seen it this high... picnic table gone, bridge nearly, and the lake over the other side at the municipal building. It's well over the wall now and halfway up the grass." She later added: "There's no park left, just a big stream going up the steps and almost at that power box thingee, whatever it is."



Photo by Julee Edwards

### Car Submerged at Bridge and Stanners Street

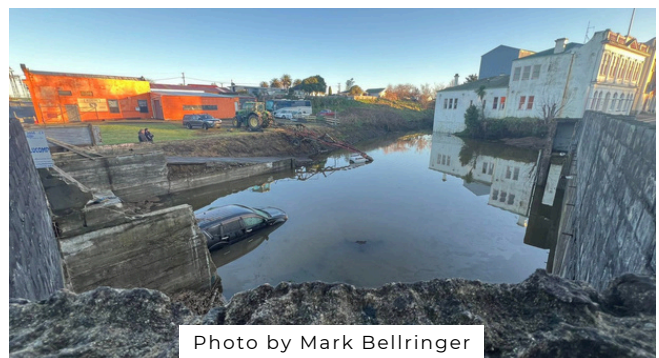


Photo by Mark Bellringer

On the corner of Bridge and Stanners Streets, a deep pool of floodwater formed on an empty lot. A submerged Mitsubishi Outlander, was barely visible under the rising water. City council engineers were called in to pump the site, and the vehicle was eventually revealed as waters receded.

### Axel the Dog Rescued from the Flood

Amid the chaos, a black dog named Axel was found stranded on a ledge above the flooded car. The Eltham Volunteer Fire Brigade responded quickly, rescued Axel, and contacted the pound. He has since been safely returned to his owner.



## Wastewater Overflow Triggers Safety Alerts

The downpour also overwhelmed the Eltham Wastewater Treatment Plant, where stormwater and effluent caused the collapse of a riverside bank at the overflow pond.

About 70% of the pond's contents emptied into a tributary of the Mangawhero Stream, prompting a rapid response from the council and Taranaki Regional Council. Warning signs were placed at Castle Street Bridge and Ōhawe Beach, urging the public to avoid contact with

the water or collecting shellfish and plants until it is deemed safe.

## A Community That Responds

Some residents experienced flooding in basements and around their homes, but quick action by the Eltham Volunteer Fire Brigade helped keep things under control.

With more rain expected, now's a good time to check your gutters, stay alert on the roads, and be ready for rising streams. Stay safe, Eltham.

## Eltham Cheese Bar Wins Big at International Awards



image from ICDA Awards

Eltham is on the global cheese map! The talented team at Bridge Street's cheese bar has made an impressive mark at the 2025 International Cheese and Dairy Awards, bringing home multiple

awards and proudly representing Taranaki on the world stage.

Among their standout wins:

- 🏆 Kāpiti Ash Rind – Reefer 90s Trophy for Overall Best NZ Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Rarama – Vegetarian Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Ash Rind – NZ Cheese
- 🥈 Spring Sheep Southern Lights Havarti – Soft/Semi-Soft Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Smoked Havarti – Smoked Flavour Added Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Bridge St Blue – NZ Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Ash Rind – Ash Rind Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Awa Blue – Blue Vein Cheese
- 🥈 Kāpiti Kahurangi Creamy Blue – Vegetarian Cheese

The team shared their excitement and pride in representing Taranaki internationally, thanking their supporters and customers for being part of the journey. Congratulations to the Bridge St crew for showcasing excellence and putting Eltham's name in the spotlight!

## Etham-Kaponga Community Board Funds Door Replacement

A small but meaningful upgrade is making a big difference at Eltham's Secondthreads Op Shop. Thanks to a recent grant from the Eltham-Kaponga Community Board, the shop has replaced its old door.

The team at Eltham Community Care Group, which runs the op shop and local food bank, shared their appreciation: "We are grateful for the support. It is an asset for the shop. The new door is easy to open, and customers have already commented on the improvement."

Manned entirely by a dedicated team of volunteers, the Secondthreads Op Shop

plays a vital role in the community. Providing affordable clothing and household goods, a portion of the shop's sales supports the Eltham Food Bank and other local community projects. The shop also welcomes donations of clothing and essentials, which help maintain its charitable efforts.



Karen Cave - chairperson of the board; photo from Community Care group



Over the past 3 years, the op shop has received additional support from the Taranaki Electricity Trust and Toi Foundation, enabling a series of upgrades that have improved the space for both volunteers and customers.

The Eltham-Kaponga Community Board noted that the organisation applied through the Local Discretionary Fund, which is open to non-profit and charitable groups looking to improve local facilities, services, or programmes.

"We chose to support this application because the need was clear, and we recognise the valuable role Eltham Community Care plays locally," Karen Cave shared. "Their work with the Food Bank and Secondhand Shop has a direct impact on many people in our community."

## Support Local Art & a Worthy Cause – Sponsor a Prize!

The Eltham Lions Club is calling on local businesses and organisations to get behind their Bra Art Competition, a fun and



creative initiative with a powerful purpose. All entry fees will go directly to Breast Cancer Foundation NZ, supporting awareness, research, and care.

By sponsoring a prize or making a donation, you'll help celebrate local creativity while contributing to an

important cause.

All sponsors will be acknowledged on Eltham Lions' social media and posters – a great way to show your community spirit.

Interested in supporting? Get in touch with Janine Frost-Jones at [jonesat314@gmail.com](mailto:jonesat314@gmail.com)

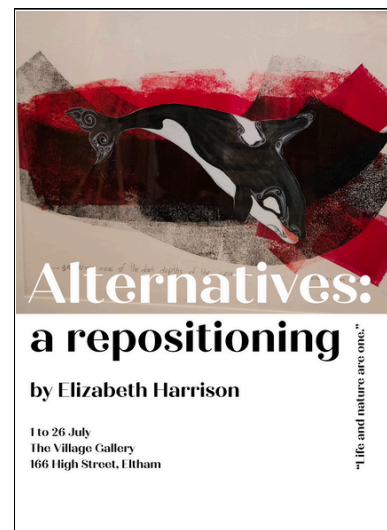
## Exhibition at The Village Gallery – Alternatives: a repositioning

This month, The Village Gallery presents Alternatives: a repositioning, a reflective exhibition by Elizabeth Harrison.

Elizabeth's work reflects on our deep connection to nature, and what happens when that connection is lost. Using materials often gathered from her garden, she creates mixed media pieces that combine collage, printmaking, and carefully chosen words.

"Without nature there is no life, without life there is no nature," Elizabeth says, a quote that sums up the heart of this exhibition.

Many of her artworks have striking titles like The Burning Economy, Ko au te Whenua, and ...we were told there would be no more war.... They speak to themes of environmental change, human impact, and the fragile balance between life and the natural world. Her thoughtful use of language and symbolism gives each piece a story and a question for the viewer.







Elizabeth describes her process as “reconstruction, like participating in possibilities.” She hopes visitors will not only enjoy the visual experience but also take a moment to consider their role in protecting the world we share.

The exhibition runs until 26 July, everyone is welcome. Entry is free.

Open Tuesday to Saturday, 10am–3pm.

## New Basketball Court Coming to Soldiers Park

Exciting changes are underway at Soldiers Park, with work beginning on a brand-new 3x3 basketball court, a project sparked by the voices of Eltham’s own youth.

The idea was first raised during community consultation sessions as part of Eltham’s wider town revitalisation plan. Young people shared their hopes for more active, social spaces, and this new court is a direct result of those conversations.

Supported by the Eltham co-design group, the project reflects a shared commitment to creating inclusive spaces that support youth wellbeing and active lifestyles. Thanks to the support of Basketball New Zealand, the court will be fitted with a donated basketball hoop.

Construction is expected to begin around August or September, with completion set for just in time for summer fun.

This project is a great example of how local ideas can turn into real action, and how investing in youth benefits the whole community. Watch this space!

Photo from South Taranaki District Council

## Crime Occurrences (18th June to 5th July 2025)

1st July from 10.04am to 3rd July at 8.08am  
RAILWAY ROAD  
Property entered and items stolen

18th June 2025 at 6.08pm  
HIGH STREET  
Petrol drive off

29th June at 10am  
ELTHAM ROAD  
Property entered and items stolen

16th June from 5.12pm to 18th June at 6.07pm  
HIGH STREET  
commercial property entered and items stolen

## Seen Around Eltham



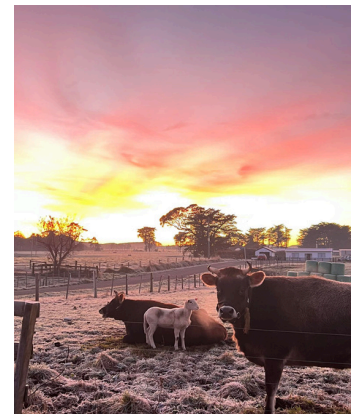
Very special visitor to the garden, this is Kārearea, NZ falcon. Roughly the size of a magpie but flies like a rocket! by Jenny Oakley



I went for an early morning walk, just in time to see the sunrise. by Suzy Bevins



Hagrid smiling  
by Gail Simons



Said hi to the neighbours as I took the rubbish out this morning  
by Elizabeth MacIver