

AUTUMN 2023

# TIROHANGA OUTLOOK

THE MARRAM COMMUNITY TRUST MAGAZINE



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- Loving your heart may be the best thing you ever do.
- Sustainable holidays – treading softly on our world.
- Like Bali but with wetsuits - Dunedin has it all.
- What happens when the company you work for really cares about you.
- “Kia ora, Lesley speaking,” Meet the person at the other end of the Marram Support Line.

## Editor's Letter

So here we are, three months into 2023 and hopefully making the most of the last days of summer.

Traditionally, Autumn sees us settling in for the colder winter months ahead. Luckily as New Zealanders, we're not confined to our homes, and due to our temperate climate, holidays are still able to be enjoyed in the great outdoors.

The Autumn Outlook features Dunedin as a holiday destination, a city that despite what you may have thought, is a great place to holiday all year round. There's plenty to excite you about this southern city which markets itself as 'Like Bali but with wetsuits'. There's plenty to love about the city they call the Edinburgh of the south. Not to mention Marram's stylish new holiday homes situated near the popular Dunedin beaches.

And as we start to adjust to the cooler weather and our appetites start demanding warmer comfort foods like roasts, casseroles, and sticky date pudding, it's probably a good time to start thinking about our health and wellbeing.

You may be, like me, a little cynical about the enthusiastic uptake of plant-based everything by food producers and even fast-food outlets like McDonald's.

We have an alarmingly high incidence of heart disease in New Zealand and science tells us we need to be ditching some of the meat for good reason. However, I think you're going to love the no-nonsense approach of Heart Foundation Nutrition Advisor, Dave Monro to keeping our hearts healthy on page 3.

For many of us in the Marram community, a lighter carbon footprint is becoming increasingly important as we look to book our holidays, so we've sought advice from those in the business on ways to do that.

There's plenty to read about in this Autumn Outlook magazine.  
Enjoy.

*Sue Burgin*

Content Editor - Etita Kōrero

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Marram Community Trust  
PO Box 24006  
Wellington 6142  
New Zealand  
Ph: 04 801 2920  
Fax: 04 385 3558

**Etita Kōrero - Content Editor:**  
Sue Burgin  
email: sue.burgin@marram.co.nz

**Etita Hoahoa - Design Editor:**  
Destina Munro  
email: destina.munro@marram.co.nz

# Love your heart



**T**he achievable no-nonsense approach to looking after your heart, promoted by the Heart Foundation, is entirely do-able.

No fat shaming, no restrictive diets or exercise programmes, just some simple changes, lots of tasty healthy food, and a whole lot more time spent enjoying food and fun times with family and friends.

Learning to love your heart can be fun as I learned when I sat down recently to chat with the Heart Foundation's Chief Advisor Food and Nutrition, Dave Monro.

## We're more than the sum of our BMI

I'm not sure what I was expecting to hear when, with pen poised, we launched into the discussion about how we can do our bit to turn those shocking statistics around, but I certainly expected to feel guilt about the choices I'd made before I learned to love kale.

We've come a long way since your BMI classified you, your bank account condemned you to bad food choices and the word cholesterol struck fear in our hearts.

Today the Heart Foundation promotes a more reasonable and positive approach to loving our hearts.

"We don't need to resort to extremes, but rather look for small realistic changes that can be sustained," Dave says.

"It's about consistency, not intensity when we're thinking about healthy new habits."

## Prevention is the best medicine

According to Dave, the first step is understanding heart disease risk.

"It's important to bear in mind that heart disease takes years to develop but the process often starts in our 20s and 30s. Therefore, getting things right in our younger years lays the platform for good heart health in future years."

## Risk factors

There are a number of risk factors known to increase the likelihood of developing heart disease.

- Risk factors we can't change, like age and ethnicity, and whether you are male or female.



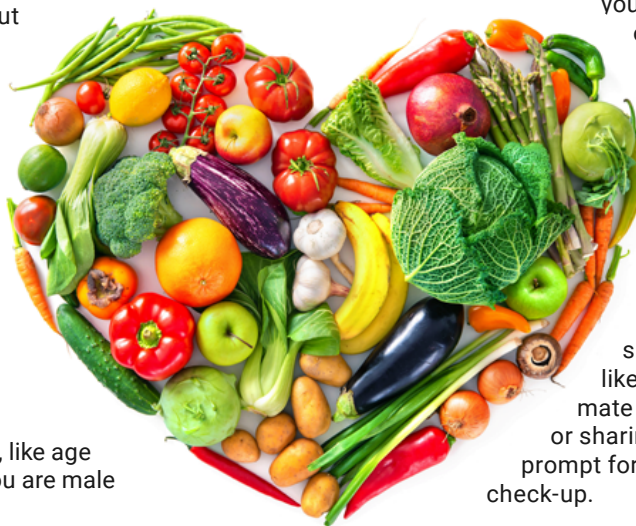
*Chief Advisor Food and Nutrition, Dave Monro (photo supplied)*

- More preventable risk factors that we can change. These include your blood pressure, cholesterol, what you eat and drink, whether you smoke and how much you move.

There's a great free tool on the Heart Foundation website called My Heart Check, designed for people aged 30–75, which assesses overall risk. The My Heart Check tool gives you an idea of your heart age compared to your actual age. It also estimates your risk of having a heart attack or stroke and shares tips on how to reduce the risk.

Dave says understanding your family history can be a great starting point. "Talk with family members about any conditions running in the family, and talk about health with friends."

Dave admits men tend to shy away from conversations like this, but talking with a mate about how their health is, or sharing experiences, could be a prompt for them getting an overdue check-up.



## Food and nutrition

Food is a complex area, according to Dave Monro. “It’s relatively new science and the views around what is healthy is often influenced heavily by social media and people looking for quick fixes.”

He says the core principles around food and nutrition haven’t changed for many years. Author Michael Pollan sums it quite nicely when he says “Eat food. Not too much. Mostly plants.”

It’s a statement that tries to keep things simple and is consistent with the Heart Foundation’s advice.

- Try to eat food that is as close to how it is found in nature. Cut down on highly refined, processed products which have lots of additives and are some distance from real foods.
- Base what we eat around plenty of plant foods. That doesn’t mean that we have to go vegan or vegetarian, simply eat more vegetables, whole grains, fruits, nuts, seeds and healthy oils, with a range of other foods. It’s an eating pattern consistent with what we see from many healthy dietary patterns around the world.
- Keep things in balance. We don’t need to resort to extremes.

Dave is keen to emphasise the message: “There’s no best diet. A range of eating patterns can be heart healthy, and your overall diet is more important than getting fixated on single foods.”

## Dave’s advice:

- Keep your diet balanced and don’t resort to extremes.
- Include plenty of plant foods. The world’s healthiest communities have plant-rich diets. Reduce red meat to less than 350g per week and limit processed meat intake.
- Include some beans, seeds and nuts. Use whole grains versus refined grains, and use good oils.

In terms of eating meat, Dave says new recommendations released by the Heart Foundation indicate Kiwis need to start thinking about meat consumption including limiting processed meat.

“They don’t need to be extreme about reducing red meat, just look for balance and variety which means having a range of protein options through the week. The evidence shows there are health benefits when replacing some of the red meat in our diet with other protein sources like beans, seeds and nuts.”

The great thing about nuts is that the evidence shows eating just a small amount (15g a day) of nuts and seeds can reduce your heart risk by 20% compared with eating none at all. Peanut butter counts – best news ever!

## Make your diet work for you

Dave agrees a healthy diet can sometimes come with extra costs.

“New Zealanders are facing a rising cost of living and it can be harder to have health as a key priority when they are trying to make all ends meet.”





“Again it is not a one size fits all when it comes to stretching the food dollar, rather it’s a case of living situation, budget and taste preferences, and cooking skills have a key part to play.”

He recommends checking out the affordable food advice on the Heart Foundation website.

### Make it easier by:

- Buying fruit and vegetables in season.
- When they get expensive, swap from fresh to frozen or canned.
- Add beans and veggies to meat to make it go further.
- Look at ways to extend the food you cook, for example add meat through a dish rather than serving it as a standalone portion.
- Check out a cookbook called Cheap Eats on the Heart Foundation website.

### Get moving

There’s a good reason for getting up out of that chair.

A recent evidence review by the Heart Foundation showed that people who sat the most had a 29% greater risk of heart disease than those who sat the least.

“Anything you can do to sit less and move more each day will benefit your heart,” Dave says.

“We recommend doing at least 150 minutes of physical activity each week, but it doesn’t have to be running long distances or going to the gym. Cleaning, gardening and vacuuming all count too.”

Again, Dave emphasises the best activity is the one you can do, enjoy doing and can sustain.

### What about alcohol, sleep and stress?

These are all other important areas where there is more emerging research Dave says.

“There’s more and more evidence showing alcohol, sleep and stress not only affect our heart health but our overall wellbeing too.”

The Heart Foundation will be looking at the latest evidence on these topics over the coming years and developing new recommendations. He says there are risk factors we can control and minimising our risk is key.

Recently, loneliness and social isolation have emerged as risk factors for heart disease.

The American Heart Association notes a recent study shows a 30% increased risk of heart attack or stroke for those facing loneliness or social isolation.

### Learning from others

The so-called Blue Zone countries (Okinawa, Japan; Ikaria, Greece; Sardinia, Italy; Loma Linda, California; Nicoya, Costa Rica), where the populations are happier and live longer than we do, can teach us plenty, according to Dave.

“They share key characteristics. They put family first, gather more frequently and eat together. They are more traditional cultures, very different to our modern world with its temptations and stresses. They’re physically active and eat a predominantly plant-based diet and smoking rates are low.”

You can read more about them:

<https://www.bluezones.com/2015/04/the-blue-zones-solution-secrets-of-the-worlds-healthiest-people-9-questions-for-dan-buettner/>

### Loving your heart Dave’s way ‘just makes sense’

Don’t resort to extremes.

Look at small realistic changes.

Consistency rather than intensity.

Eat better – more plant-based.

Sleep more, move more and socialise more.

I really enjoyed my chat with the Heart Foundation’s Dave Monro. His sensible, practical take on achieving a healthy heart-friendly lifestyle was not at all scary.

It was forgiving, logical and achievable. It just made sense. Cheers Dave.

For more information on heart health visit

[www.heartfoundation.org.nz](http://www.heartfoundation.org.nz)



# Ōtepoti Dunedin – Like Bali but with wetsuits

**D**unnerstuner, home of the giant Albatross, great beaches, the country's only genuine castle and injectable donuts.

Not to mention the world's steepest street, stunning auroras and the birthplace of Six60.

## Like Bali but with wetsuits!

At least that's how Dunedin positioned itself when we came out of lockdown.

Enterprise Dunedin Manager John Christie thinks it may be time for a brand refresh, but says it's a hard call when a city has as much to offer as Dunedin.

"We get a hard time about the weather," he says. "People think we're under snow for six months of the year, but the reality is we have a settled climate, bright blue skies and really clear nights. The evenings are long and it's not as wet and windy as other places."

## "And one day is never enough."

The most common complaint from visitors to the city is that they wished they'd stayed longer, according to John Christie who says a day is never enough to discover the city's intriguing past.

"There's a lot more to Dunedin than most people realise," he says.

The city boasts a population of 135,000 and one in five locals are students bringing an exciting younger vibe to the city.

Should you visit when there's a rugby game on at the stadium, John recommends heading along to witness the hijinx in the student area, called the Zoo, which he says can be just as entertaining as the game itself.

The infamous Castle Street with its student digs is worth visiting too, and if you're a Six60 fan you can pay homage at the gate to the flat at 660 Castle Street where the popular band was formed.



## From gold miners to Robbie Burns

Dunedin has a rich and culturally diverse history, reflected in the names of many of its streets and buildings.

Scottish poet Robbie Burns stands proudly in the Octagon in the heart of the city they call the Edinburgh of the south. Dunedin is the Scottish Gaelic name for Edinburgh.

Robbie's nephew, Thomas Burns was a leading figure in the founding of the Otago Province in 1891.

Then, following a big gold strike in Central Otago in the 1860s, came the Chinese gold miners and for a few short years, Dunedin was the biggest, most affluent city in New Zealand.

The gold dried up, but today the city is still home to a significant population of 4th and 5th generation descendants of the original miners.

## 15 minutes from everywhere

The Enterprise Dunedin boss says it's easy to take the natural beauty of Dunedin for granted when you're a local.

From the city centre, you can be walking on a beach or in the bush within 15 minutes. We literally live amongst the wildlife and nature."

He says the Dunedin City Council is very focused on looking after the city and its natural environment in a sustainable way, working towards achieving zero carbon status by 2025.

"There'll be more cycleways and public transport, electrified buses and rubbish trucks, and we're working with Kāti Huirapa Rūnaka ki Puketeraki and Te Rūnanga o Ōtākou, the local Ngai Tahu iwi to manage Dunedin as a visitor destination."

## Ōtepoti

The Te Reo name for Dunedin is catching on.

"We like it, and see its use widening. There's a real acceptance in the community," he says.

"As much as we value our links to the past, it's what we should be referring to our city as."

Ōtepoti, Dunedin, #dunnerstunner, Bali but with wetsuits – whatever you choose to go with, this southern city has it all according to John Christie, including injectable donuts.

When that craving for something sweet hits, head to Nova in The Octagon. Your brioche donut will arrive, complete with salted caramel or vanilla custard filling and a syringe. The rest is up to you.

Heaven awaits in Ōtepoti Dunedin.

Note: There's a great choice of Marram holiday homes waiting to welcome you, should you decide to visit and see for yourself.

There are two homes across the road from the beach at St Kilda and two three-bedroom homes and a studio unit in Westgate, close to the city and St Clair beach.

*Photo credit: DunedinNZ*



# Annual royal visitors a must see

**If you happen to be in Dunedin and suddenly hear school and church bells ringing out all over the place, it's because some very special royal visitors have arrived in town.**

The largest seabird species in the world, the magnificent Northern Royal Albatross start touching down in late Spring to court and breed in the Taiaroa headlands.

## A rare opportunity to observe the royals

Most of us will never get to see one of these extraordinary pelagic birds because they spend 80% of their lives out in the open sea, resting occasionally on the surface but mostly surfing the skies.

The world's only mainland Northern Royal Albatross breeding colony is here at Taiaroa Heads.

Even after migrating 10 thousand kilometres to Chile after leaving New Zealand, the Albatross don't touch land, preferring to spend their lives at sea.

However, a visit to Dunedin's Royal Albatross Centre in the Taiaroa Nature Reserve will allow you a unique opportunity to observe the giant seabirds as they look for mates, lay their eggs and raise their little fluffy chicks.

## Cautious in the game of love

Assistant Operations Manager at the centre, Laura Findlay says on average around 70 breeding pairs (35 each season, 70 pairs total in the colony so roughly half each year), will descend on the headland and successfully produce around 20 to 25 healthy chicks.

"These Albatross only breed every second year. They tend to mate for life but finding the right mate can take a couple of years. They're very picky."

Eggs are laid in November and incubated until early February. Hatching can take four or five days with the chicks having to break through the hard shells.

The average lifespan is 25 years and the oldest bird they have right now is in its early 40's and still raising chicks.

"The oldest bird ever at Taiaroa was called Grandma and was still breeding at 60," Laura says.

## Why Royal?

It's because they're the one of largest of all the 22 Albatross species according to Laura.

"And with a three meter wingspan, the Northern Royal Albatross is the largest seabird in the world.

These very efficient flying machines are built to handle anything the oceans and weather can throw at them."

## Albatross Tour gets you up close

Laura says the one-hour Albatross tour starts with a short talk and film about the birds and their breeding cycle, and the other wildlife that can be found on the headland.

Then it's a walk up a steep but paved pathway to a viewing observatory where you can watch four or five nesting Albatross.

"It's a busy headland though," she says "There's about 20 different seabird species including the largest and very noisy colony of Red Billed Gulls."

The centre which includes a café and various exhibits is a 45 minute drive from Dunedin, and prices and tour details can be found on the website.

[www.albatross.org.nz](http://www.albatross.org.nz)

*Photos: this page: Dunedin's Taiaroa Head is the only mainland Royal Albatross breeding colony in the world.*

*Next page from top: Albatross tend to mate for life; the world's largest seabird spends at least 85% of their lives at sea. Photo credit. Royal Albatross Centre*





# Indulge your Downton fantasy at Olveston

Imagine this - the Theomins have popped out but will be back any minute.

The best Edwardian fine china is laid out on the white damask-covered tables which are groaning with stacks of cucumber sandwiches, cream scones and Victoria Sponge.

It's the first Sunday of the month, and if you're visiting Dunedin, it's an event you won't want to miss.

## A gift that keeps on giving

The Theomins of Olveston won't be back, of course, they died many years ago, but Christine Mehrrens, administration officer at the historic house, says visitors often tell her that's how it feels when you spend time in the Theomin's family home.

These days, the grand Jacobean-style house is open to the public 364 days a year, having been gifted to the city of Dunedin by the last surviving Theomin daughter Dorothy when she died in 1966. Apparently, the council almost didn't accept it, fearing it would cost ratepayers too much to keep running.

*Photos this page: Olveston's Great Hall.*

*Next page from top: Fine dining experience in the Great Hall; the Vestibule; Olveston home exterior.*

*Photo Credit: [www.olvoston.co.nz](http://www.olvoston.co.nz)*

## 'It's like a time capsule'

Olveston was built between 1904 and 1906 for successful Dunedin businessman David Theomin, his wife Marie and two children Edward and Dorothy.

The popular public-spirited philanthropist hired English architect, Sir Ernest George, to design the impressive Jacobean-style family home.

Mr Theomin travelled around the world to collect the many treasures and artworks you will see displayed in the house today, exactly as they were all those years ago.

An impressive collection of armour and weapons adorn the vestibule at the front of the 32-room house.

There were some surprisingly modern efficiencies in the house as well, according to Christine Mehrrens.

"An articulated water system, a coal-fired boiler, an internal phone system and even a heated towel rail. Everything's original, including 230 artworks including three Frances Hodgkins and a 1906 Steinway grand piano still used today for recitals and musical events in the drawing room," she says.

Upstairs you'll find an Olympic-sized billiard table, complete with opening skylights to allow cigar smoke to escape through the roof.





### Make like a Crawley and take tea at Olveston

The Theomins had about seven or eight staff to help run Olveston and the many social and fundraising events they hosted, but today there's a staff of 50 helping maintain the mansion and cater for its many visitors and functions.

As well as daily tours, Olveston hosts very popular high teas in the Great Hall on the first Sunday of the month, small intimate dinners around the original dining table and plays and recitals. Information about upcoming events, tours, prices and opening hours can be found on the website [www.olvoston.co.nz](http://www.olvoston.co.nz)

If you time it right, you'll be able to have your 'Downton Moment' when you next take a Marram break in Dunedin.



# At one with nature in the Orokonui Ecosanctuary

**I**t all began about 30 years ago with a group of visionary nature lovers wanting to create a wildlife attraction in Dunedin, but Orokonui is widely acknowledged today as the South Island's flagship biodiversity project.

Sanctuary Educator Taylor Davies-Colley says the dream started to take shape in 2007 when The Otago Natural History Trust raised the 2.2 million dollars needed to build a predator proof fence around the 307 hectare sanctuary.

Orokonui is northeast of Dunedin city at Waitati and stretches from 350 metres up in an Alpine cloud forest, down to the start of the inlet and almost to the estuary.

Taylor says this means there's an incredibly diverse range of wildlife calling the sanctuary home.

"Not all the species in Orokonui are present in Dunedin. Many, like kākā have been reintroduced, further increasing the sanctuary's biodiversity."

## Meet the locals

As well as kākā the sanctuary boasts two pairs of Takahē, one pair raising two chicks and the other old and taking it easy.

There are numerous other native birds including very high numbers of Korimako/Bellbirds, Tūī, a flock of around 28 Kererū and 38 Kiwi.

Waimarie the Eel calls Orokonui home as well as Tuatara, Jewelled Gecko, Otago Skinks and other Lizards.

Then there's New Zealand's tallest tree, an Australian Mountain Ash that stands over 82 metres high, a cloud forest and a lowland forest and many plant species.

## What to do at Orokonui

An ideal day at the sanctuary starts in the morning according to Taylor.

"That's when the birds are most active. The Takahē are fed at 11 providing a very cool way to interact with an extremely rare bird."

He then recommends coffee and a muffin in the Horopito Café before heading back out where the afternoon sun will have brought the Lizards out to sunbathe on the rocks.

Taylor says weather will dictate how you spend your day at the sanctuary.

"Often the cloud forest with its network of tracks, volcanic boulders, young regenerating and old forest will be the best place to be," he says.



“It’s dominated by large native conifers and can be a cooler option on a hot day because it’s a wet environment filled with life and moss, ferns and lichen.”

### Interacting with the locals

Taylor says some of the locals like interacting with visitors, particularly kākā who he says are very smart but get into a lot of trouble.

“We have New Zealand’s oldest known kākā, Mrs Roto, and she’s a real star.”

The Eel is also a very popular local, especially when he pops his head out of the water.

“Cool stuff happens all the time. People come back with great stories about their engagement with the wildlife.”

### Take care on kākā freeway

Visitors report being alarmed by dive-bombing kākā, but Taylor assures them it’s not personal.

“kākā use the tracks as highways and fly very low, frightening people using the tracks.”

Another alarming experience can be accidentally startling a flock of Kererū demolishing vegetation. They take off and it can be thunderous, he laughs.

“But at the end of the day, it’s about being outside and engaging with nature.”

Information on guided tours, events, prices and hours can be found on the website

[www.orokonui.nz](http://www.orokonui.nz)



*Photos this page from top, Orokonui is home to 50 Kākā; there are more than 10 km of tracks to explore. Previous page: Two takahē pairs call Orokonui home. Photo credits: orokonui.nz*



# Crossing one off the bucket-list under southern skies

If watching the dancing lights of the Aurora Australis is on your bucket-list, then book now for one of Kylie Ruwhiu Karawana's (Ngapuhi) Southern Skies Stargazing Tours.

The Southern Skies tour is one of several small group tours organized by award-winning Dunedin business Horizon Tours.

Kylie, one of four family members who own and operate the business, says she's been passionate about the night skies since she was a child.

## Catching the Southern Lights

According to Kylie, auroras are happening all the time in the southern skies but being able to see them with the naked eye isn't always possible.

"We don't guarantee you'll see one but over the winter months when it's darker longer, we usually see two or three a month."

In the right conditions, Otago's coastal peninsula is the perfect place to view the Southern Lights.

## A unique mix of astrology and culture

The tour begins by escaping the light pollution of the city with a 20 minute drive out to Hoopers Inlet which Kylie says is the perfect stargazing spot.

There under pitch black skies and facing due south, the guests are given hot water bottles, blankets and zero gravity chairs which allow them to lie flat looking up at the night sky.

There's also a Skywatcher Telescope for those wanting an even closer look.

Kylie draws on her Ngapuhi background to bring a cultural element to the stargazing experience.

"We talk about the science, and the cultural aspects of the night sky, looking at how Maori used the stars to navigate, grow crops and explain creation.

And there's a cheese platter and hot drinks to warm you up on what can be a cold and very late night.

## Emotions run high

"Out there lying in the dark under the Milky Way and millions of stars can be a very emotional experience," Kylie says. "Some have described it as almost biblical and others say they just weren't ready for the feelings it arouses. There are tears and wonder along with disbelief."

She says many people have never seen the starscape beyond the light pollution in the cities and towns and the areas they live in.

## What you need to know

The tour is not recommended for children under 10. Kylie says it's very dark and that can be intimidating.

She recommends wrapping up warmly with layers and taking a good camera if you're wanting to take photos.

Prices and details on all the Horizon tours can be found on the website: [www.horizontours.co.nz](http://www.horizontours.co.nz)

*Photo below: Zero gravity chairs allow for good views of the night sky. Photo credit: DunedinNZ*





# Changing the way we do holidays

**K**iwi holidaymakers are being urged to think about the impact they have on the places they visit.

Sustainable and regenerative are words we're hearing more often these days as we indulge our love of holidays enjoying the best New Zealand has to offer.

But what exactly is a sustainable holiday?

According to GOOD Travel's Director of Regenerative Development, Debbie Clarke (pictured below), holidays should not only leave us with new perspectives, feeling rejuvenated and refreshed but also contribute to the regeneration of the communities we visit.



## Pandemic accelerates change

"As a result of the pandemic and experiencing their places without visitors, communities are feeling empowered now to say how they want to see tourism happen in their areas," Debbie says, "Traditionally the tourism industry has prioritised travellers' needs, but that's changing now."

Travel industry reports suggest Kiwis are increasingly seeking out sustainable travel experiences – for example, Booking.com's 2022 Sustainable Tourism report shows 71% of us want to make more effort over the next year to travel more sustainably.

"We're all now aware of the climate crisis we're in and each of us from individuals to big corporations must take action to reduce our carbon footprint and find ways to regenerate our planet," she says.



Photo credits: [www.good-travel.org/](http://www.good-travel.org/)

## What can we do?

There is no simple answer, but rather a conscious effort to shift our thinking.

"Many are realizing the most pressing issue we have, not only in tourism, but in how we live, is our belief that we are separate from each other, and from nature. Until we restore that relationship and understand ourselves as part of nature, no amount of other action will be enough."

She says holidaymakers can make a real impact by taking time to spend a day with those working to take care of the environment and offering experiences that reconnect holidaymakers with nature.

"These experiences can be truly inspiring and help us begin our own journey," Debbie says.

## Will change come with an extra cost?

Travel's a privilege, according to GOOD Travel's New Zealand Programmes Manager Josie Major (pictured below), who says spending our holiday dollars with businesses who are investing back into their areas can create greater value for whole communities.

"Sustainable travel can come with a higher price tag to reflect the work being done by operators to reduce their negative impacts and increase their contributions to their community. But the environmental and social cost of extractive tourism is much higher."

On the other hand, Josie says many low-cost holiday options can be regenerative, including short-haul domestic travel, or holidaying close to home.



## Looking to the future, what can we expect?

Lots of change is the answer according to Josie who thinks the pandemic was just the first of many disruptions we'll face in the future.

"Already many are choosing not to travel internationally, flying less, and being increasingly critical of the ethics and sustainability of the experiences they choose."

She imagines travelling in the next 5 -10 years will mean less frequent, longer, and slower trips, travelling closer to home, huge technology advances including virtual and extended reality experiences, and growing demand for experiences that give back.

Most importantly Josie Major says we can no longer sit back and accept the myth that one person can't make a difference.

"We must believe that collectively we can make an impact and embrace our role in making the right choices, even when going on holiday."



## Affiliated Organisation Profile

# Downer

**W**hat happens when the company you work for really believes in you.

Well, magic happens according to Megan McNay, Corporate Social Outcomes Manager at Downer.

When it comes to better work stories, Downer has them in truckloads due to the work it does through self-development programmes like 'Mana in Mahi' with its very diverse workforce of 11,000 workers nationwide.

### Sustainable outcomes for workers and the company

Mana in Mahi is a Work and Income programme matching employers with people who are keen to pursue a career and need extra support to start and then maintain their work and training journey.

It's just one of many programmes and training opportunities Downer offers its employees and potential employees.

In return, the company gets a more engaged workforce according to Megan McNay.

"This is what we do. It's genuine, it's not a tick-box exercise. People want to align their values with a company that shares them," she says.



*"To make a difference it takes passionate and authentic people who are keen to work together to solve the industry's skills and labour shortage" Megan McNay*





## Owning the difference

Downer has recently received Rainbow Tick Accreditation for work the company’s done with its ‘Own Different’ campaign aimed at building awareness, inclusion, and celebration of diversity within the organization.

Maori comprise 24% of the Downer workforce and in recognising that, Downer has developed 11 Maori leadership and development programmes.

They range from helping rangatahi still in school get a class 1 driver’s licence, to helping provide training and transition into work at Downer, gaining qualifications, staying off drugs and accelerating leadership development into senior positions.

There’s Whanake Wahine Toa a programme aimed at strengthening wahine leadership and a new initiative, Te Ara Hou, helping Maori facing employment and reintegration challenges after being released from prison.

There’s also a programme offering non-Maori, a noho marae experience.

## Breaking the cycle

Downer work alongside Te Puni Kokiri, the Ministry of Social Development and Department of Corrections to

help break cycles and assist their people to achieve their potential.

Megan tells the story of a single mother of five children, working her way across three jobs to support them, who saw an advertisement for one of Downer’s Ready-Road programmes and thought, why not?

“She started in our traffic management department and 18 months after graduating, she has become the region’s site traffic management supervisor,” Megan recounts.

“She’s now developing her leadership skills further in our Te Ara Whanake Wahine Toa course. And two of her five children have also started working at Downer.”

## Strong leadership required

It isn’t perfect everywhere, but the industry is starting to see the ripple effect of these initiatives according to Megan.

“It takes strong leadership to say we think things need to change, how can we do that?”

Megan admits there are still challenges ahead but says by putting a diversity lens over everything they do they’re starting to see substantial change.

Looking ahead, she says she hopes these programmes can be adapted and redesigned to address inequities facing Pasifika people in the workforce.

*Photos this page and previous: Downer has developed 11 Māori development and leadership initiatives to provide a growth and opportunity pathway. Photos supplied.*



**Tēnā Koutou Katoa  
Ko Waiapu tōku awa  
Ko Hikurangi tōku maunga  
Ko Horouta tōku waka  
Ko Ngāti Porou tōku iwi  
No Rangitukia āhau  
I tipu ake au ki Tūrangi  
Kei Te Whanganui-a-tara e noho ana ināiane  
Ko Lesley Krosschell tōku ingoa**

*"We're about more than just haka and swinging poi."*

**L**esley Krosschell is a proud Ngāti Porou wahine shaped by her past and with very firm views on the future.

You will know her as the friendly voice at the end of the phone when you ring to book a home, file a healthcare request or need help solving an associated problem.

Lesley has been a member of Marram's Support team for 15 years and make no mistake, she still loves meeting you on the end of the line.

"I really enjoy helping people, talking them through processes, helping them make decisions and advising them about destinations," she says, "I try to bring humour and compassion to the call and value every thank you I get in return."

#### A happy carefree childhood at the bottom of the Lake

Lesley has very happy memories of growing up in Tūrangi, a small town nestled at the bottom of Lake Taupō.

She remembers those early years as carefree and happy.

"The summers were hot and the days were filled with horse riding, rafting, school dances and lots of outdoor stuff."

Winters were filled with skiing, a sport Lesley went on to help coach local school children.

#### Ngāti Porou from Rangitukia

"My father was Dutch, living in Indonesia when he came to New Zealand and fell in love with my mother. We were one big happy family.

Although Lesley is a competent te reo speaker, she says they weren't really brought up using it.

"My mother was punished as a child for using it so while we were allowed to use it, it wasn't really encouraged."

She says back then English was seen as your ticket to the money.

"But Mum made sure we knew we were Māori. We knew the rules of tapu and adhered to Te Ao Māori and definitely knew we were Ngāti Porou from Rangitukia on the East Coast."

Looking back, Lesley says she wishes she'd taken a more active role in Te Reo speaking but says it's always easy to look back through rosy glasses. "It's not a major. I'm simply a product of my time," she laughs.

#### Off to the big smoke

In 1986, Lesley left Tūrangi for the big smoke, heading first to Hamilton for a brief time and then Wellington where she worked for the Department of Justice, ACC and NZQA before arriving at Marram 15 years ago. Prior to working in the office, Lesley was a house volunteer in the Tūrangi holiday home and then the popular Wellington City apartments.



"I'm comfortable here. I have a good employer, love my job and work with lovely people on the other end of the support line."

When she's not on the job, Lesley's spending time with friends and family, or indulging a love of crosswords, cross-stitch, and crochet.

Reading and watching Sci-fi and taking holidays are up there on the list too. Another passion along the way was Sam, a big fat ginger cat who followed commands like a dog.

"He knew if I double-clicked my fingers, it was time to come inside," she says proudly.

Lesley's also pretty proud of getting her BA degree. "It took me 15 years. I did it extra-murally, and I persevered because I hate unfinished business," she says.

#### Always a Greenie

The modern disposable economy really gets on the wick of this wahine whose mantra is 'reuse, recycle and never waste anything.'

"It offends me, pass it on if you don't want it. There are people out there going hungry."

Lesley says she's been a greenie since she was a teenager.

#### Looking to the future

This self-described cynical optimist hasn't given up hope things will get better, saying she sees signs we're becoming more tolerant, especially in the te reo Māori space.

She's also buoyed by work being done to clean up our waterways.

"It's appalling there are Kiwis who don't have fresh water," she says.

"I want our country to be better. We all have to do our part because people are doing it tough out there. Be nice and remember everything is easier with a smile. Ngā mihi. Ki a koutou."

# What's Your Life Worth?

**L**ike so many of us, Marram beneficiary, Shirley Rush often thought about getting a skin check but the cost put her off and she opted instead to keep an eye out for any changes herself.

However, when Marram partnered with Molemap last year to offer discounted skin checks, she decided to take advantage of the offer and booked an appointment.

The decision she made that day probably saved her life.

## A typical 60's kid

"I ran around outside all day and sunscreen definitely wasn't a thing. In our teens, we smothered ourselves in baby oil and fried in the midday sun. In later years, I protected my face but still don't use sunscreen," Shirley says, admitting she's always been a 'sun bunny'.

She feels the damage was done years ago so she won't be avoiding the sun as a result of her diagnosis – although is expecting her surgeon may have something to say about that.

## The diagnosis

As a result of the Molemap skin check, three moles were identified as requiring further investigation. After receiving the Molemap report, Shirley's doctor followed their advice and placed her on a hospital waiting list for treatment.

Biopsies confirmed a malignant Melanoma and two Melanoma in situ, both caught early.

"I am so grateful to Marram who came up with an offer that pushed me into doing something I needed to do," she says.



## "Mildly embarrassing but just do it"

Cost isn't the only thing that can delay people getting these lifesaving skin checks.

Shirley agrees they can be mildly embarrassing if you're a little shy.

"There you are stripped down to your underwear with someone taking very close-up photos of your body. You feel exposed, but just shut your eyes and pretend they're not there," she advises.

After the check, you get a comprehensive report or you can log into My Molemap, telling you what needs further attention and what steps to take.

## Staying positive

Shirley's had all three surgeries now and is awaiting confirmation that margins are clear and no further surgeries are needed.

She says because they were caught early, the surgeon is confident the surgery already done will be enough.

"It took a while to sink in after first hearing those words malignant melanoma," she says, "but I have a positive outlook on life and I'm trusting they're giving me the best advice. My prognosis is good. Yay for Molemap."

## Just have the check

Shirley's a great advocate of full-body skin checks following this experience and says she'll be having them regularly from now on.

"This promotion pushed me into doing something I needed to do and I wasn't good at. My message to the Marram community is get checked, even if you think nothing's wrong, get checked. It might be embarrassing for some but again what's your life worth?"

*Photos: Top: Shirley Rush feels fortunate to have benefitted from Marram's partnership with Molemap. Left: Shirley with her mum and grandson. Photos supplied.*

# Discounted healthcare a great way to start the new year

**T**he hugely successful MoleMap promotion has returned.

The popular skin check discount is on offer from the 1st of March.

Nearly 700 of you took advantage of the promotions last year and lives were potentially saved.

Eight Melanoma's were diagnosed as a result of the skin checks carried out, 74 people learned they had Basal Cell Carcinomas, and 12 were diagnosed with Squamous Cell Carcinomas.

## Don't wait until it's too late

MoleMap's Stephanie Larkin says regular skin checks by a professional are a good thing to do at any time of the year, not just in summer.

"Don't wait until it's too late to get checked for any unwelcome changes."

She says the response to last year's promotions was amazing, and doing it again this year will allow all those who took up the offer last year to have another annual check-up this year.

## Book now

You simply use the code **MCHECK23** when you make your booking.

This lets MoleMap know to apply the discount at time of payment. You can then use your receipt to apply for a 60% of the cost through Marram.

MoleMap's offering full body mapping and less expensive skin checks at the discounted price.

**BOOK NOW - 0800 665 362**

[molemap.co.nz](http://molemap.co.nz)

**molemap**  
BY DERMATOLOGISTS



# YOUR WEEKEND WATCH

## MOSQUITO COAST - APPLE TV



Reviewed by Sue Burgin

Some of the best series I've watched on TV have involved Dads who go rogue, and Allie Fox the likable eco-terrorist at the centre of Mosquito Coast on Apple TV is no exception.

Think Marty Byrde in Ozark and Walter White in Breaking Bad.

These mild-mannered, laid-back Dads all set out to do well by their families but end up taking them all deep into a deceitful world of drugs and violence keeping you trapped in front of the TV in a binge-watching stupor.

But don't get me wrong, all three managed to get me onside very early on. There's something very attractive about these cool characters who simply want to look after their families.

Mosquito Coast on Apple TV is based on the Paul Theroux novel of the same name.

The series was created by New Zealand-based script-writer Neil Cross of Luther fame, who also co-wrote some of the episodes.

It's easy to spot his flair for spinning fantastical stories and if your threshold for the unpleasant is low, you might be best to avoid this series.

Mosquito Coast Dad, Allie Fox (Justin Theroux) drops out of Harvard to become an inventor. He's a proud American but hates what his country stands for and ends up an eco-terrorist on the run from the US government.

There's plenty of action with rescues, chases, run-ins with cartels and border militia and even a prison break. However, it's hard to know exactly what he's done wrong

as he takes his wife and two kids across the border to Mexico and eventually to the jungles of the Amazon and the coast that gives the series its name.

As far as I'm concerned, this series has it all. Great characters, stunning scenery, plenty going on and high production standards.

One reviewer found irony in the fact that the hero of the show was so anti-technology when it's being aired on a platform owned by the biggest tech company on the planet.

I guess there's lots about Mosquito Coast that remains a mystery but I'm still recommending it as one to watch. Enjoy.



## SLOW HORSES - APPLE TV

Reviewed by Victoria Battyanyi

It is always great when you find a series that you can binge when you are on holiday and my holiday series was *Slow Horses*. It is a spy thriller series about disgraced M15 agents who have stuffed up their spying careers but avoided getting fired. The disgraced agents are now working in a rundown building in London doing mundane pointless office tasks while working under a miserable boss who expects them to quit out of boredom or frustration. The team still manages to stumble into national security crisis and try to save the country while bickering amongst themselves. It is a combination of spy conspiracy and office comedy, a mixture that just works that only the British could pull off. The series is based on spy novels by Mick Herron.

The cast includes Gary Oldman who plays Jackson Lamb, the boss of the disgusted agents and he's brilliant



at playing the ill-tempered, acid-tongued Lamb character with some great lines and flatulence issues.

It hooks you in and before you know it you have watched a couple of episodes. If you want excitement and laughs, add this series to your list.

## THE AMAZING RACE AUSTRALIA 6 - TVNZ+ ON DEMAND

Reviewed by Jo Weir

With international travel opening up again, it's the perfect time to become hooked on watching teams race around the world competing in a series of both physical and mental challenges. While I'm not usually a reality TV fan, my family and I all love to travel so this makes for fun viewing for us to enjoy together.

The *Amazing Race Australia 6* is the sixth season of the Australian reality television game show *The Amazing Race Australia*, an Australian spin-off of the American series *The Amazing Race*. Beau Ryan (a former NRL player) is the host of *The Amazing Race Australia*. His good sense of humour and laid-back manner makes him a good fit, although without giving away too much he does need a replacement host for part of the series!

This season introduced a new twist involving two groups of ten teams starting *The Amazing Race Australia* separately and oblivious to the existence of the other, one in Sydney and one in Melbourne, and racing separately before converging in the next leg - that's a lot of teams competing for the final grand prize of A\$250,000 and two new vehicles! Following a series of clues and challenges,



competitors need their wits about them, along with patience and humour, in an attempt to be the first to the Pit Stop of each leg. Teams always consist of two members but the relationship between the two varies: married couples, friends, cousins, siblings, parent/child etc. Watching different personalities cope under the pressure of interacting with locals and customs in new countries where they often don't speak the language, and under the stress of a race, is always interesting and you can't help but form favourites.

The challenges for teams are as diverse as the countries they find themselves in. This current series seems to not contain the challenging U-turns but there are plenty of detours and roadblocks. On a detour, teams are provided with a choice between two tasks that they both must participate in. They can choose which task they do and it's okay to swap if it's proving too tricky (not everyone can spin a Turkish Fez on their head for 30 seconds,) but of course, this adds precious time and the aim is to NOT be the last team to arrive at the pit stop, as that generally means elimination. For a roadblock, only one member of each team may compete. This can be a tricky decision as you are basing it on minimal clues as to what the challenge actually is . . . beat or heat for example, beat involves learning a complex rhythmic beat whereas heat means eating 25 small but hot spicy pies! Speed bumps also feature, adding another hurdle. A speed bump means a penalty may be given to a team who arrived last at the previous Pit Stop but wasn't eliminated. They may need to complete an extra challenge before they receive their first clue at the next Pit Start.

Overall, *The Amazing Race Australia* is light entertainment that can quickly become a bit addictive!

# Referral

Starts 24th February to 13th March, 5 pm  
**GOOD MATES SHARE GOOD NEWS!**



With increasing pressure on the household budget, Marram is able to help financially with day to day healthcare expenses and holiday accommodation in 150 holiday homes (many pet friendly) throughout New Zealand at below market rates.

*You know how well this works for you so Marram ask you to share that opportunity with as many of your colleagues as possible, rewarding you both in the process.*

## **SPREAD THE WORD WITH YOUR MATES:**

If they sign up mentioning your name, you'll both receive a gift voucher of your choice. How about \$50 to spend on the next family shop or fuelling up; or \$60 towards your next fantastic family holiday.



## **DON'T FORGET TO TELL THEM:**

- Partner and children are automatically included;
- \$50 birthday gift towards a Marram holiday - every year;
- Healthcare benefits of over \$6,400 per year;
- Works with your health insurance;
- Includes pre-existing health issues;
- And more...

### *\*Terms and Conditions*

Please make sure to tell your workmate that they will need to choose "Referred by Marram Contributor" when asked how they heard about Marram during sign-up. Standard Marram T's & C's apply

**Go to [marram.co.nz](http://marram.co.nz) and sign up today!**



10%  
OFF!

# Marram Interislander deal

Not only can Marram help reduce the costs of your next family holiday but we can help you to get there cheaper too!

The fantastic **10% discount** offer with Interislander and Scenic Journeys runs from **1 February to 15 December 2023**, meaning you have even more opportunity to get a deal on your next trip.

- Reservations must be made via [www.greatjourneysofnz.co.nz](http://www.greatjourneysofnz.co.nz)
- You must be over 18 to claim this discount
- Marram ID must be shown at check-in
- Use code **XMAR1** when asked to apply your discount
- Normal booking conditions apply - eg, Easy Change is 100% refundable if cancelled
- Regular rates apply to bookings made through call centre/groups desk



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A Great Journey of New Zealand



TRANZALPINE  
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NORTHERN EXPLORER  
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Marram Community Trust  
PO Box 24006, Wellington 6142, New Zealand

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