



**TE AWA**  
*Lifecare Village*

# TE AWA PARTYLINE November 2025



## A word from Nikki

We were all eagerly waiting for the long Labour Weekend, and suddenly here we are at the end of November, heading straight into what will no doubt be a very busy Christmas month.

It has been another full and productive few weeks around the village, especially with the ongoing work on our new entranceway and address. It's wonderful to finally see the cones gone from Cambridge Road, making things noticeably safer for our residents and for those using the new walkway that now leads all the way into town.

The Melbourne Cup was a highlight, as always – a fun chance to dust off the high-end fashion and enjoy a bit of friendly competition. It was wonderful to see jockey Jamie Melham become only the second woman in history to win the Melbourne Cup. A memorable moment.

We rounded off the month with the Mosaic Choir, who used us as their rehearsal audience for their Christmas festival performance – a real treat.

A special thank you to our guest speakers: Don from Sanctuary Mountain, who shared updates on their conservation work, and Miriam from Cy-Co Coffee, who gave us a fascinating insight into her travels through Spain.

And finally, don't forget the Te Awa Christmas Party on 19 December. It promises to be a wonderful celebration to finish the year, complete with great company, festive cheer, and a DJ.

Take care, Nikki



## Melbourne Cup magic at The Woolshed

The Woolshed was buzzing with colour, excitement, and elegance as residents gathered for our annual Melbourne Cup celebration. It was the perfect excuse to dust off the finest hats, fascinators, and race-day attire, and the friendly spirit of the day shone through as residents placed their bets – whether on the winning horse or simply the one that caught their eye.

This year's race was certainly one to remember. The winner of the 2025 Melbourne Cup was Half Yours, brilliantly ridden by jockey Jamie Melham. Jamie made her own mark on racing history by achieving two remarkable milestones:

- Becoming the first female jockey to complete the Caulfield-Melbourne Cup double in the same year, riding the same horse, Half Yours.
- Becoming only the second woman ever to win the Melbourne Cup as a jockey, following the groundbreaking win by her friend Michelle Payne a decade earlier.

Back at the Woolshed, the celebrations were in full swing. Residents enjoyed



glasses of bubbles, lively conversations, and even a few stylish arrivals in sports cars, which added extra flair to the afternoon. The atmosphere was filled with laughter, refinement, and plenty of cheers as the race played out on the big screen.

A heartfelt thank-you to everyone who dressed up, joined in, and helped make the event such a memorable occasion. The Melbourne Cup at Te Awa is always a special day – and this year was no exception, bringing together great company, good fun, and a wonderful sense of community.

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## Event snapshot



The lads looking dapper for the Melbourne Cup event at The Woolshed.



Miriam Ellis of Cy-Co The Cycle Coffee Company, cycled out to thank residents for their support of her campaign to Spain to take part in her age group at the World Triathlon 2025 Multisport Championships.



The MOSAIC Choir gave us a special sneak preview of their Christmas performance - always a delight.



Don of Sanctuary Mountain Maungatautari, shared the remarkable story behind this special place right on our doorstep.



## Margaret, the Worm Whisperer

**It's fair to say that Margaret has well and truly made her mark at Te Awa — not just as a friendly neighbour, but as our very own Worm Whisperer.**

Margaret and her husband Lawrence moved to Te Awa from Auckland about four years ago. A retired nurse, she's spent most of her life outside the Waikato, with only two brief stints totalling about six years, three on her parents' Kihikihi farm, and three more during her nurse training at Waikato Hospital.

The move from the bustle of Auckland to the slower rhythm of Cambridge life took some getting used to, but Margaret has since embraced it wholeheartedly. She's joined her local church, attends aquarobics, and is an active member of the Cambridge Garden Club, where she's made many new friends and connections.

Gardening runs deep in her family roots — her great-grandfather, Edward Turner, founded what became Turners and Growers in 1921 after combining his fruit and flower shop with his sons. It's no wonder Margaret has a passion for plants. Her Auckland home was filled with cottage gardens and roses, and while she no longer tends a large garden, she now lovingly cares for her "Pots of Memories." Each pot holds plants grown from cuttings or gifts — including a frangipani and hibiscus from her grandfather's garden, both still thriving today.

Her pride and joy, however, is her Hungry Bin worm farm, which she's kept for over a decade. Her original

Tiger (Red Wrigglers) worms remain hard at work, happily munching on fruit and vegetable peelings, eggshells, coffee grounds, shredded paper, and dry leaves. Margaret is meticulous about what goes in — she's even hung a gifted infographic in the garden shed to remind everyone what the worms should (and shouldn't) eat, ensuring no one gives them an upset tummy!

The worms reward her with their precious "worm juice," a nutrient-rich fertiliser that's available to everyone in the village for use on their gardens and pot plants. It's in such high demand that when Margaret's friends and family visit from Auckland, they always take a bottle or two home — proof that the worms' efforts are truly worth bottling!

Through the Te Awa community, Margaret has also connected with Carol, a Cottage resident and fellow worm-farm enthusiast. The two often swap stories and compare notes about their worm-farming adventures — a shared passion that keeps the conversation (and compost!) flowing.

Through her gentle care, humour, and love of the earth, Margaret reminds us that even the smallest creatures can make the biggest difference. Life — and soil — at Te Awa has never been richer.



## A reminder about your mail delivery

We're pleased to share that NZ Post and DX are now delivering directly to your mailbox here at Te Awa. To help make their job easier — and to ensure your letters and parcels reach you without delay — we kindly ask that you update your address with family, friends, banks, power companies, and any other providers.

Please make sure your address **includes the word 'Villa' + number**. This small change makes a big difference, as mail without a Villa number will be left at Reception, and our lovely internal mail team will then deliver it to your mailbox. While they're always happy to help, including your Villa number keeps things smooth

and efficient for everyone. We understand that change can sometimes feel inconvenient — and occasionally a bit annoying — but the good news is you only need to update your details once, and everything will flow much more easily from there. Thanks for helping us keep the mail moving!

## Festive season staffing update

As we head into the festive season, please note that Reception will operate on reduced hours, open from 10am–2pm each day. Our Care Centre, however, will continue to run as usual with full staffing, ensuring our residents receive the same high level of care and support throughout the holiday period.

All services and Reception hours will return to normal on Monday, 5 January 2026. We appreciate your understanding during this time and hope the adjusted hours help our team enjoy some well-earned rest with their families.

## A little build update

You may have noticed a few changes around the village recently. The concrete pad for RD5 has now been laid while access was easy, although there's no confirmed start date for the build just yet. If you're driving past, you'll spot it tucked behind the green mesh.

You'll also see a mound of dirt where the old entranceway once was. Over the coming month it will be levelled and planted with grass seed — and no doubt we'll all enjoy watching the birds having an absolute feast!



## Friday 19 December

Put this date in your diary - it's the Te Awa Lifecare Christmas Party in the Woolshed - see you there!

INTRODUCING

## Grace Samuels

Receptionist



**It's been just three months since Grace Samuels joined the Te Awa reception team, but she has already become a familiar and welcoming face to residents, visitors, and staff alike. Grace recently relocated to Matamata from South Head on the Kaipara Harbour, where she lived with her parents, Tony and Kirsten. The family has now settled on a lifestyle block, where they are in the process of renovating a cottage — a new adventure they're all enjoying together.**

Before joining Te Awa, Grace worked in retail at Farmers, her first full-time role. She credits that experience with giving her a strong foundation in customer service, communication, and people skills, all of which she now brings to her role at reception.

A passionate horse rider, Grace has been riding for five to six years and dreams of one day owning her own horse — though she jokes that this may require her parents to upgrade to a slightly bigger lifestyle block! She's also absolutely loving being based in such a horsey region, with both Matamata and Cambridge offering equine events, beautiful riding country, and a community that shares her passion.

Since coming to Te Awa, Grace has loved getting to know the residents, learning their stories, and being part of a community that feels “wholesome and welcoming” — a refreshing change from the pace of the “big smoke.” She has also quickly become a helpful go-to person for residents with technology troubles, especially when it comes to mobile phones.

Recently earning her full driver's licence, Grace is enjoying the freedom of exploring the region and visiting extended family who live nearby.

Grace will be holding the fort at Reception over Christmas and Boxing Day, spreading festive cheer — and she promises there will definitely be a Santa hat involved, and perhaps a candy cane or two to share.

## From our Care Centre



## A month full of fun, friendship and festive beginnings

It has been a wonderfully busy and energetic month in the Care Centre, filled with activity, laughter, and more than a little healthy competition. Residents have enjoyed lively table tennis matches, enthusiastic boxing sessions, friendly bowls, and the ongoing excitement of the tomato plant-growing competition, with each wing proudly tending to their "Big Red" contenders.

Creativity has also been flowing, especially around the Melbourne Cup, where residents designed and decorated stylish headbands to wear on race day. We were also treated to a fascinating talk from Joyce of the Care Cottages, who shared incredible stories of her time in the Congo with the Ladies Chat group.

Movie lovers were spoilt too, with a couple of classic films in the mix – Hello Dolly (1969) and The Beatles (1964) – both proving to be absolute hits.

All of this has happened alongside our much-loved weekly activities, including Jeopardy, Board Games, Pet Therapy, Country Drives, Sing Along with Jill and the Team, Knitter Knatters Knitting and the Crochet group, plus regular exercise and physio sessions that keep everyone moving.

Now, as we head into the festive season, the fun continues. Residents are looking forward to Christmas wreath making, crafting, and baking – and we know the Christmas mince pies will be delicious! More classic films

are lined up too, including Anna and the King, Amelia, Mary Poppins (1964), and The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe.

We also have several special events ahead: the Floral Garden Collection pop-up shop on 8 December, a K&S Dance demonstration in the Woolshed, a festive sing-along with Alan Sayers, and the Cambridge Brass Band performing Christmas carols in the Care Courtyard.

And before we know it... Christmas will be here!



Scan the QR code for Care Centre calendar