

MARCH 2026

Valley Voice

Te Reo Hapori o Waimapihi – the Aro Valley Community Newsletter



Community Co-ordinator:
Ahmen Mahal 384 8499

48 Aro St,
community@arovalley.org.nz

Office hours: Wednesday
closed;
Monday, Tuesday and Thursday
10am – 2pm; Friday 12 – 4pm

**Aro Valley Community Centre –
managed by the Aro Valley
Community Council**

Contents

Give us your archives!	2
Colouring competition	2
Welcome back Leon*	3
From beef to beer	3
Correcting editorial info	4
Black book jungle sessions	4
Publication info	4
Online issue only:	
Aro Fair poster to colour-in	5

A note from the Editor

Thanks to the advertisers and sponsors of Valley Voice, we can deliver four pages to your letterbox every month. If there is more material offered we publish extra pages in the online version – see below.

We don't have so much material this time – everyone is preparing for the Fair! But we hope to have more in the April issue, including several new events in the Community Centre.

**Note that red text is a late update of the earlier printed Valley Voice.*

Use this QR Code to open the online version of Valley Voice – in colour, and all five pages – or go to:
www.arovalley.org.nz/valley-voice.html



Something for everyone!

Aro Valley Fair 14 March

Join us for a vibrant day of kai, crafts, music, and community in the heart of Aro Valley. The Fair brings neighbors, friends, and visitors together to celebrate creativity, connection, and local spirit. The music line-up is coming soon, refer to the Aro Valley Community Council Facebook page.



The small but mighty team of volunteers (and of course our talented coordinator Ahmen) have been working hard behind the scenes to bring together a fantastic Aro Valley Fair for 2026. It's always a community effort, and this year's crew has poured in plenty of heart and elbow grease to make sure the Fair is shaping up to be something special.

Stalls, stalls, stalls

We're thrilled about the range of stalls joining us this year. Wellington really is bursting with creative talent, and you'll see it on full display across the park and the basketball court. From handmade crafts to quirky curiosities, there's something for everyone – so make sure you wander through and visit them all. We even have local artist Jesse doing portraits on the day – the perfect Fair takeaway.

Make sure you check out the dedicated row of stalls run by our entrepreneurial tamariki. These young makers bring so much energy and imagination to the Fair, and it's always a highlight seeing what they dream up.

Valley care groups on display

The Fair is also a chance to celebrate the groups who care for our valley year-round. Be sure to stop by the valley restoration groups' stall, as well as Kaicycle, to learn more about the incredible mahi happening right here in our backyard. MicroMill will also be joining us – if you haven't heard about their community kaupapa, this is the perfect time to check them out. The hall will be open for some additional music, and our very own Valley Voice editor is hosting a special valley information and history stall, so pop in, say hi, and learn something new about where you live.

Raising some funds

And of course, the Aro Valley Community Council will be running a fundraiser on the day, complete with delicious food, some excellent tombola prizes and a silent auction.

Huge thanks to Rita, Zealandia, and South Coast Collective for their generous contributions – you won't want to miss out.

The countdown is on. We can't wait to see you there and celebrate everything that makes Aro Valley the vibrant, creative community we love.

Follow us on Instagram @arovalley or Facebook @arovalleycommunitycouncil for Fair updates.

Kate Wakefield



Welcome to our new sponsor

Garage Project – the beer that made Aro Street famous – has come on board as a sponsor of the printing of Valley Voice. Further sponsors are welcome, as are our regular advertisers. If you want to be a sponsor, please contact Janette Wong: janette.wong@gmail.com

Aro Valley Fair Kids Colouring Competition!



Love our Fair poster? Give it your own creative spin and win great prizes!

Now's your chance. We're running a children's colouring competition, and everyone is invited to get creative. You can colour in our official Fair poster or design your own masterpiece entirely – whatever inspires you. You can use a print of page 5 of the PDF file of this Valley Voice or **use the blanks left with Te Aro School, the Preschool, in the**

Community Centre foyer or in the hall on the day of the Fair.

Bring your artwork along on Fair Day and put it up in the hall for everyone to enjoy. Let's fill the hall with colour. We've got **two Zealandia family passes up for grabs**, so if you'd like to enter, just make sure you pop your name, age, and phone number on the back of your artwork. **Get colouring, get creating, and we'll see your amazing designs at the Fair.**

Brent rant ...

Give us your archives

It is 48 years since the Aro Valley Community Council was formed.

During our history many – maybe hundreds – of community-minded folk have volunteered to be committee members and officers of the AVCC.

But we have not been so good at keeping track of the paper records that have been generated during the AVCC's existence. Many records, particularly from the early days, only remain in the homes of former committee members and other volunteers.

As outlined in November's Valley Voice (p3) the Wellington City Council has

come to our rescue – the WCC Archives is securing our old papers in its new premises in Te Matapihi, the revamped Central Library which is opening on the same day as the Aro Valley Fair.

To play our part, we want to collect up old Aro Valley documents which may still be lying around in private homes, sort them, and entrust them to the WCC's professional archivists.

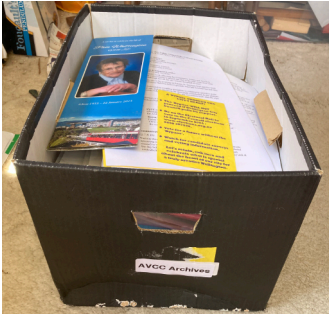
Are you one of those former AVCC volunteers? Do you have:

- old AVCC minutes,

- reports,
- posters,
- photographs,
- leaflets
- early copies of Valley Voice and its predecessors?

Bring them to the Fair, and leave them with me at the AVCC information table in the hall. They will be sorted, catalogued and well looked after!

Brent Efford



Reports, minutes, handbills, even funeral programmes for former Aro Valley notables belong in our archives. If you have any, bring them to the Fair!!

www.massagewellington.nz

Pain relief. Posture. Flexibility

Sue Field 0274667123

CRAIG DALTON
OSTEOPATHY

OSTEOPATHY

A safe & natural approach to better health

SUITABLE FOR ALL AGES

- ✓ Low back & neck pain
- ✓ ACC self-referral
- ✓ Paediatric conditions
- ✓ Pregnancy-related pain
- ✓ Rotator cuff strain
- ✓ Headache & migraine

☎ 022 123 1998
🌐 www.cdtherapy.co.nz
📍 2 Manners St (level 1)

Micro Mill

Mending • Lino Print • Spinning • Weaving
Fish Skin Tanning • Leather work • Natural Dye
Cordage • Chain Maille • Macrame • Clubs

Workshops are on now!

Learn more & sign up on MicroMill.org
Or follow us on instagram @micro_mill_

See us at the Fair!

History snippett ...

From beef to beer – Garage Project site's interesting history

**ARO STREET INVESTMENT:
MODERN SHOP AND VACANT LAND**
 MESSRS. HARCOURT & CO., in conjunction with MESSRS. S. GEORGE & CO., have received instructions to sell by PUBLIC AUCTION at Messrs. Harcourt & Co.'s Auction Room, 43 Panama Street, on
THURSDAY, JUNE 16, 1938, at 2.30 p.m.
THIS SPLENDIDLY SITUATED PROPERTY,
 No. 70 ARO STREET. (Occupied by Messrs. Wairarapa Small Goods.)
 Comprising a Modern Brick Building with Shop, Freezing-room, Machinery-room, etc., downstairs; and 4 living-rooms, bathroom, and kitchenette with modern concrete floor and brick walls, and having 2 extra rooms and conveniences. The land is on the corner of St. John Street, and has a frontage to Aro Street of 87ft 5in, and existing building occupies but a small portion of the land, the corner portion being that this property, situated on a main road in the midst of a populous locality, has great possibilities. Full particulars from—
S. GEORGE NATHAN & CO., 111 Customhouse Quay,
 Or
HARCOURT & CO., 41 Panama Street,
 JOINT AUCTIONEERS.

Evening Post, 16/6/1938

The site of the Garage Project brewery, Valley Voice's new sponsor, has an interesting history.

It was originally, in pre-colonial times, a swampy area on the banks of the Waimapihi Stream. In the 1840 New Zealand Company subdivision of the settlement it was lot 25. Like most of the Aro Valley it was designated NR or Native Reserve, in other words given back to the local iwi for (in theory) profitable resale as land values increased.

That process took place slowly. In sheet 46 of Thomas Ward's big map of 1891 (see the February 2026 Valley Voice review of 'Mr Ward's Map', which will be available to peruse on our information desk at the Fair) the site is largely

unoccupied except for three small dwellings at the north end on St John Street. It was apparently owned by William Seed, and then his widow until her death in 1920. Unfortunately, Mr Ward did not record Waimapihi or any other stream on his maps.

Until the 1920s, the stream was still open as it traversed the Aro St end of lot 25, in a fairly deep gully. A small swing bridge gave pedestrian access to the St John St

steps from Aro St – we hope one day to see a photo of it, maybe in the soon-to-reopen WCC Archives.

It appears that Waimapihi was enclosed in a culvert in the 1920s, probably when the Catholic school on 'Seeds Acre' next door (now Aro Park) was developed, and opened in 1925.

Anyway, by the 1930s a reasonably substantial sausage factory was established on the site – as evidenced by this 1938 advertisement for its sale.

The process of its subsequent transition to Archer and Lupp's garage, and thence, finally, to the Garage Project of today will be another fascinating project for the Aro Valley History Group to write up in a future issue.



Kia ora koutou

Let's talk about our community.

Get in touch about any local issues or if you need support. I'm here to help and would love to hear from you!

Tamatha Paul Green MP for Wgtn Central
wellington.central@parliament.govt.nz | (04) 3891290

Auth by Tamatha Paul, Green MP for WLG Central, Parliament Buildings, Wellington. Funded by Parliamentary Services.





STOP PRESS – welcome back Leon!

The paper version of this Valley Voice carries a plaintive plea for Leon, missing since 22 February, to return home. But Leon turned up at 4 am the morning after Valley Voice went to the printer!

Many thanks to those who looked for Leon – and an example of one of the advantages of online publication: rapid correction and updating.

And a colour photo is much more meaningful, too!


VILDERS
 Dorthe Kristensen



Vilders gallery presents handmade jewellery by Danish goldsmith artist Dorthe Kristensen. Silver and gold pieces with a range of semiprecious gemstones, precious gemstones and pearls.

Bring in your gold and gemstone jewellery to be recycled and upcycled for sustainable, economical, and sentimental reasons.

Friday 12pm–5pm 104 Aro St,
 Saturday 11am–3pm Wellington

or by appointment Shop online
 vildersgallery.co.nz

vilders@xtra.co.nz
 021 615 971 @vildersgallery

Aro Valley Mini Mart
 For your daily needs –
 Groceries, Wine and Beer.
 Open to 9.30 pm
 (liquor sales close 9.00)



Lampshades
 Choose from natural fabrics
 custom sizes available

HOURS
 Tue 9.30 am - 2 pm
 Wed 9.30 am - 4 pm
 Thu 9.30 am - 4 pm
 Fri 9.30 am - 5:30 pm
 Sat 9.30 am - 4 pm
 Sun 10am - 4 pm

93a Aro St 04 972 5612
verdantdesign.co.nz

verdant



On at the hall ...

Black Book Jungle.

Art Book Sessions with King Home Boy.



This March at the Hall on Monday evenings, we introduce "Black Book Jungle". In the world of street art, the "black book" (usually the black bound art books of art students) is the workshop where artists develop their techniques in characters, lettering and colouring before moving on to actual murals.

Black Book Jungle invites artists to gather in the hall and draw in community with others. Headed by King Home Boy, NZ Beatbox champion and Hip Hop multi elemental, if you've ever been interested in learning how to do lettering or character work, further developing your already blooming skills, or even just need a place to draw with friends,

Come visit the Aro Valley Hall from 6-9pm Mondays in March. Koha entry.



Check what's on at our Community Centre this month – go to: www.arovalley.org.nz

Correction ...

Editorial misinformation causes confusion

Mark Beehre's outstanding exhibition of photographs of Aro Valley houses 'Walking in the Valley' has been on display in the Community Centre for some months.

I told Mark that he could leave the photos up until the 14th, and this he announced on posters in local shops.

My info was incorrect.

The walls of the hall will be required for other purposes during the Fair. Mark will therefore take the photos down earlier – probably on **Friday 6 March**.

However, this isn't the last chance you will have to see them – Mark is looking at various options to keep the collection available – more details at the AVCC information table at the Fair.

Brent Efford

Valley Voice is published on behalf of the Aro Valley Community Council Inc, 48 Aro St, Wellington. This issue published on 5/3/26.

All opinions expressed in this newsletter are those of the writers and not of the AVCC unless adopted at a General Meeting.

Photographs and text are by the credited authors or the Editor, Brent Efford.

Contributions wanted

Contributions – councillors' comments, poems, articles, letters, photos, historical snippets, news of events, business news, etc – relevant to the Aro Valley community are very welcome.

Advertising is particularly welcome!

Please email contributions, as emails or attachments in any non-proprietary format to: brent.elford@me.com

The deadline for Valley Voice articles and photos is set to enable distribution of paper copies early in the month.

Our next issue is **April 2026**, the deadline for receiving contributions for that is **Thursday 26 March 2026**.



Aro Valley
Fair



March 14th
Saturday 10am- 4pm

Aro Park

Rainday 15th March

For more information visit
www.arovalley.org.nz



\$ LQA
Forever in our hearts