

Nobel peace nomination for Kiwi women

Four New Zealand women are part of a historic nomination for the Nobel Peace Prize of 1000 women working in justice and peace around the world.

Patsy Henderson and Pauline Tangiora attended the press conference announcing the 1000 women included in the collective nomination at Government House in New Zealand. Meanwhile, Marilyn Waring and Marion Hancock were overseas and involved in simultaneous events.

The 1000 Women project team particularly sought women directly and actively working for peace at the grassroots. Many have received little recognition for their work.

Ms Henderson was nominated for her work on violence in the family and community, Ms Tangiora for her work in indigenous rights and cultural understanding, Ms Waring for her work in governance and economic rights and Ms Hancock for peace education.

The nomination is part of a one-off project to recognise the work of the 1000 women but also highlight the quiet and unacknowledged peace building efforts of millions of women around the world.

'Peace is more than the absence of war,' said the project's New Zealand co-ordinator, Nicci Simmonds. 'There is no peace without justice and peace is not an individual act. You cannot make peace alone.'

Selecting a large group of women for a collective nomination was intended to symbolise that peace is achieved not by individuals, but by working together over time.

For the four New Zealanders, the announcement of the 1000 women was an important day and one of the milestones of their lives. For Ms Henderson and Ms Tangiora in Wellington, surrounded by friends and families who had travelled with them from elsewhere in the North Island, it was also an emotional one.

Both women explained how their motivation to continue their work is drawn from their communities and the people they are helping. They spoke about the importance of their families, friends and colleagues in continuing their work and in response, their friends and family sang waiata in support and pride.

The Nobel Committee will announce prize winners in October, but the project does not end there. Academic researchers will analyse the work undertaken by the women to better understand the contribution made by women in achieving peace – an aspect often lost in gender-neutral research. There will also be a touring exhibition, film and book describing each woman's work and vision.

A piece about peace

Since 1901, 80 men, 20 organisations and 12 women have received the Nobel Peace Prize.



Patsy Henderson



Pauline Tangiora



Marilyn Waring



Marion Hancock



What do you think?

At the Ministry of Women's Affairs, we have been discussing ways to be more effective and better link with women in communities and with those with whom we work. I'd like to share some of these discussions and invite you to join the debate.

Are we explaining our role and what we do?

This topic was sparked by conversations with women in the community who referred to the Ministry as an advocacy organisation. This is not quite correct.

The Ministry is a policy agency advising the government. It is one tile in the mosaic of agencies working to improve women's lives. Our role is to bring evidence to public policy development so the government can make decisions that achieve the best for women.

The Ministry values its relationships with women's groups, many of which are advocacy organisations, because women's views enrich our policy advice. We are energetic about reaching better outcomes for women and are assertive, informed and often passionate about our work, but we are not advocates.

If we both understand our different roles, we will all be more powerful in improving the lives of women, and subsequently, the lives of children and

men. If you'd like to talk more how we can work together, please contact me.

How can we ensure gender analysis is done?

The term is simpler to understand than it sounds. Gender analysis is used to identify and assess the differences between the policy impact on men and women to ensure they are taken into account when developing policy advice. It prevents policy inadvertently disadvantaging either men or women.

Gender implication statements have been included in cabinet papers for some years but we can enhance their potential by assessing their contribution. Then the Ministry will take a new approach – if necessary – to show the value of thorough gender analysis and demonstrate how the wider community benefits when women are supported.

We will focus on topics where the biggest differences can be made and our effort is on helping other agencies, not making them comply. Watch our

website to see how we're going.

How should we prepare for the future?

The Ministry has always kept an eye on the future to grab opportunities and hedge the risks. Consider the trends that are likely to benefit women in the future – girls' educational attainments and men taking up greater caring responsibilities. On the flipside, global trends that could roll back advances for women include conflict between different ideologies and the shaky position of women's rights and status in many places.

What do you think? Have you noticed any trends or done any work on future scenarios for women? Share them with us.

Enjoy the warmth and promise of spring, wherever you are.

Shenagh Gleisner
Chief Executive

Contact Shenagh: mwa@mwa.govt.nz

Practical solutions to community violence

Work has begun to prevent and address community violence in public spaces.

The Taskforce for the Reduction of Community Violence has worked on two initiatives to help local authorities make communities safer.

Public streets are the most common places for violence by strangers and acquaintances to occur against both women and men. More than a quarter of violent incidents against women and almost half of incidents against men occur in the street.

The next most likely place for violence to occur against women is their home, followed by their workplace.

The taskforce is developing an internet-based toolkit of information that advises

local authorities on the most effective ways to prevent and respond to alcohol-related violence.

To deal with violence in public places, the taskforce is preparing guidelines for better design and layout of buildings, streets, parks and other outdoor spaces. This will remove opportunities for crime and make people feel more comfortable when they are using public spaces. Ultimately, the goal is to reduce crime and fear of crime.

The guidelines will incorporate the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design (CPTED) and used by local authorities and other groups working in environmental and urban design.

About the taskforce

The taskforce is one of the initiatives resulting from the government's Action Plan to Reduce Community Violence and Sexual Violence, released by the Ministry of Justice last June.

The taskforce is chaired by Manukau City Mayor, Sir Barry Curtis, and has members from a range of agencies. The Ministry of Women's Affairs is an advisory member and provides information about how initiatives will affect women.

The taskforce will operate for 18 months with further initiatives to address sexual violence and attitudes towards violence.

Commemoration of historic female protest

The 50th anniversary of an all-female protest will be commemorated during September.

The protest against the closure of the Nelson-Glenhope rail line – although unsuccessful – stirred international attention and made a group of local women national heroes.

Back in 1955, a series of angry rallies were held in Nelson against the closure of the rail line. Five women, ranging in age from 25 to 81 years, travelled to Kiwi on 23 September to occupy the goods shed and sit on the rail tracks to block the demolition crew. Ever practical, they kept busy reading, swapping recipes and one, famously, darned her husband's socks. News of the occupation spread and four more women joined the protest.

A week later, all nine were arrested for trespass and fined. The demolition continued and the rail line was scrapped.

To mark the anniversary, a week of commemorations begins 17 September with a rally at the Nelson church steps. The women's descendants will be guests of honour.

'Those women were so gutsy and courageous in a very conformist era,' said one of the organisers of the commemorations, Mary-Lynn Boyes. 'London newspapers called them "nine Nelson matrons". What they put up with during their peaceful protest was quite remarkable.'

Other activities to mark the anniversary include train rides, a pot luck dinner and a screening of the movie *Bread and Roses* that depicts the life of Sonja Davies, one of the nine protestors, who later became a trade unionist and politician. Just a few weeks before her death this year, Ms Davies gave her blessing to the commemorations.

Events conclude on 25 September with the dedication and unveiling of a plaque and stone at the site of the former Kiwi rail station, which is now farmland. A new rail station will also be opened at Tapawera – the closest settlement to Kiwi.

British workplace equity champion visits NZ

One of the United Kingdom's champions for pay equity visited New Zealand recently.

Julie Mellor, chair of the Equal Opportunities Commission, spoke to a range of employment-related groups during her visit at the invitation of the National Advisory Council on the Employment of Women. She also gave the keynote address at the Council of Trade Unions Biennial Women's Conference in June.

Here are some highlights of an interview Ms Mellor gave to the Ministry of Women's Affairs during her visit.

MWA: What are some of the workplace experiences for mothers?

JM: Half of pregnant women experience pregnancy discrimination in the workplace. This has a big impact on the likelihood of women returning to work for the same employer after having a baby. Forty-seven percent go back to work for the same employer yet 85 percent are back at work within 18 months.

We just don't use the skills and talents of women well enough. It's costly and a waste of talent.

MWA: What is the situation in the United Kingdom for older women?

JM: Just 14 percent of older women are entitled to state pensions. Women are penalised by the current system and this is why poverty among pensioners in the United Kingdom has a female face. New Zealand has a fairer system.

MWA: Is it worthwhile to compare the pay gap of countries when they are so different in size, economy and markets?

JM: We look at the pay and employment reviews for a number of countries. There are similarities for any western country, such as skill shortages, social change, high proportions of women working part-time, child care issues and



▲ Julie Mellor

trade segregation. Achieving pay and employment equity would go a long way to dealing with some of these issues.

MWA: Share an interesting fact about occupational segregation.

JM: Many young people would like the chance to try different types of jobs otherwise career choice is based on what they already know or what their parents do. There was a case where 18 girls were given the chance to try work experience in the engineering field. They loved it and every single one of them pursued engineering studies.

Young people are also blind to the inevitable differences in pay rates – and they are shocked when they find out. I don't think we should make comparisons between a man and a woman doing the same job. Look instead at the value of the work – we pay more for the person who cleans the spark plug in our car than we pay the people who are looking after our parents.

MWA: You have done a lot of work to put the pay gap on the government's and public agenda. Has enough progress been made for now?

JM: We have not got to nirvana or utopia. I feel we have made achievements in putting pay and employment equity into mainstream thinking. People are taking it seriously because they can see the gains for business and productivity.

Footnote: In July, Ms Mellor left her position with the Equal Opportunities Commission to become a partner of PriceWaterhouseCoopers.

Looking back, moving forward

At Queen's Birthday weekend, 500 women crammed themselves into the Wellington Town Hall to attend the Janus Convention, Looking Back, Moving Forward (Titiro Whakamuri Haere Whakamua).

The Convention marked the 30th anniversary of the United Women's Convention held in Wellington and was organised around three themes: changing faces, changing workplaces and sustainability.

Keynote speakers included former Norwegian Prime Minister Dr Gro

Harlem Bruntland and Australian Moira Rayner, who is former Victorian Commissioner for Equal Opportunity.

Many notable New Zealand women also spoke about topics ranging from the nature and distribution of unpaid work, violence against women, sustainable public policy, and how to encourage

and mentor young women in professional and community organisations.

During the three-day conference, participants noted how much progress women had made in New Zealand over the past 30 years. Educational achievement, participation in public life, and legislative protections such as matrimonial property distribution showed particular gains. However, more distressing were areas where little progress had been made, such as domestic violence rates and women and children living in poverty. These were highlighted as issues needing immediate and significant attention.

The Convention was not without controversy or dissent – some were concerned about the perceived lack of representation and participation from groups such as disabled women, refugee and migrant women and those on low incomes. The criticism also highlighted a deeper point – that women in New Zealand are not a homogeneous group with similar wants and needs, or ideas for solutions.

During the Convention, recommendations were drawn together and specific issues were identified. These recommendations – for further action by individuals, communities and by government – will be released in a published report shortly.

The Janus Convention also marked New Zealand's women's movement being passed on to a younger generation. The Janus Young Women's Caucus presented a set of recommendations and demands by calling on all women to work together to create the society they want for themselves and their daughters. They also asked for guidance from the older women and remarked that they were humbled and excited by the baton that had been passed on.

Planning is already underway for a Young Women's Convention in Wellington in late 2006.

Gender stocktake

To mark the 30 years since the 1975 United Women's Convention, the Ministry of Women's Affairs compiled a chart of data comparing women and men across a range of indicators including governance, education, health and pay. Due to changes in the data collected and the way it is collated and analysed, some comparisons are best estimates or relate to the closest data available.

	1975		2005	
	Women	Men	Women	Men
Members of Parliament	5%	95%	29%	71%
Mayors	0.7%	99.3%	19%	81%
Councillors	6%	94%	27%	73%
School principals	8%	92%	40%	60%
Health Boards	30%	70%	42%*	58%*
Average hourly pay	\$2.07	\$2.75	\$18.89	\$21.89
Full-time labour force	176,019	365,846	435,700	620,600
Labour force participation	Data not available		60.8%	74.9%
Unemployment	0.54%	0.65%	4.0%	3.8%
School Certificate/NCEA passes in English	30,388 total (results were not disaggregated)		170,354 standards passed	139,415 standards passed
School Certificate/NCEA passes in maths	22,157 total (results were not disaggregated)		250,108 standards passed	240,331 standards passed
Bachelor degrees	1,382	1,900	15,860	9,675
Average life expectancy	75 years	69 years	81 years	76 years
Deaths from cancer	2,281	2,726	3,500	4,120
Deaths from heart disease and stroke	3,315	4,845	5,166	4,437
Obesity rate	11%	9%	22%	20%
Smoking rate	31%	39%	26%	26%
Daily average prisoners	91	2,530	254	4,742
Incidence of all types of crime	Data not available		81.5 per 100 people	69.7 per 100 people
Incidence of sexual crimes	Data not available		4.5 per 100 people	0.2 per 100 people

*Excludes appointed members

A new overview of women in NZ

Focusing on Women – published by Statistics New Zealand in June – highlights the changes in the position of women in New Zealand society over the past 30 years, most notably in the area of education and family.

For example, in 1971 only 30 percent of students in tertiary education were women; in 2001 this had risen to 53 percent. In 1971 only 1 percent of the female population had a degree or higher qualification; by 2001 this had risen to 11 percent.

However, the increasing number of women gaining degrees has not prevented most New Zealand women from having a lower level of labour force participation and lower level of average income than men. While women's labour force participation rate increased from 39 percent to 60 percent between 1971 and 2001 it is still considerably lower than that of men (74 percent in 2001). Meanwhile the average weekly income for women in full time employment is equivalent to just 82 percent of their male counterparts.

The shape of the New Zealand 'family' has changed markedly. In 1971 the typical family comprised a legally married husband and wife with three children. Women married relatively early, at about 22, and had their first child about 24. In 2001 the picture was quite different. The proportion of married women had decreased to 48 percent, and those that did marry were doing so later. Women are also having fewer children (an average of 1.97 compared to 3.18 in 1971) and having them later – the median age of a first birth is now 30 years for married women.

Focusing on Women provides a one-stop overview of statistics relating to women in NZ. It is available on the Statistics NZ site at: www.stats.govt.nz

Blazing a new career path

A long-term recruitment drive encouraging women into career firefighting is showing signs of success.

The number of career female firefighters has more than doubled in the last three years to 49 throughout New Zealand – about 3 in 100. Women make up roughly 1 in 10 new recruits.

The New Zealand Fire Service has put extra effort into supporting women into paid firefighting roles. Human resources senior adviser Karen Quigan said physical strength is a major requirement but women offer skills such as the ability to communicate and work well with people while under pressure. Māori and Pacific peoples are also encouraged to apply to ensure that brigades reflect the communities they serve.

Initiatives to attract and retain women include regular forums and guidance to prepare for physical entry tests. The test was reviewed by the University of Otago's Human Performance Centre to ensure minimum fitness requirements did not disadvantage women.

Women are also bolstering volunteer ranks with the Fire Service helping set up childcare services.



Recruitment of the next intake of career firefighters is under way. For more information see the Fire Service website: www.fire.org.nz or phone 0800 347 373.

ACTION PLAN

Action Plan for New Zealand Women, Participation in Employment 1.1.3: Increasing women's participation in non-traditional occupations is a focus for the Ministry of Women's Affairs for the upcoming year.

Measuring the global gender gap

The World Economic Forum (WEF) recently released the study: Women's Empowerment: Measuring the Global Gender Gap.

The study assesses the current size of the gender gap in 58 countries by measuring the extent that women have achieved equality with men in five areas: economic participation, economic opportunity, political empowerment, educational attainment and health and well-being.

The WEF notes that even in the light of heightened international awareness of gender issues, no country has yet managed to eliminate the gender gap.

Scandinavian countries have made the greatest gains. New Zealand was ranked sixth, ahead of Canada, the United Kingdom, Germany and Australia.

New Zealand's ranking was achieved by a cumulative score across the five areas – first for women's political empowerment, but only 47th for women's economic opportunity. New Zealand's lower levels of paid parental leave, state-provided childcare and numbers of women in business compared to most other countries contributed to the poorer economic opportunity ranking.

Māori business success

It was a good night to be Māori when the Māori Business Awards were celebrated 2005 at Turangawaewae Marae in Ngaruawahia on 25 June.

Golfing star Michael Campbell had won the US Golf Open. The New Zealand Māori rugby team had defeated the Lions and Māori rugby great Norm Hewitt 'Stormin Norman' had danced his way to victory in the television show Dancing with the Stars. Ka mau te nehi! (Awesome!)

The Māori Business Award for Best Māori Woman in Business went to Rani Rangimoekau, founder of Christchurch Recruitment firm DKW Personnel. Driven by passion she started her business from scratch with no money or funding. Like many Māori women entrepreneurs she had an idea and went for it! Now, just three years after setting up her business she is a winner of two Māori Business Awards including the best regional company.

The Awards were open to men this year for the first time. Best Māori Man in Business was Rikki Rolleston, Rolleston Building Supplies Limited (PlaceMakers, Kaitaia).



▲ Rani Rangimoekau

Another top award went to Gisborne business woman Vanessa Hayes of Torere Macadamias Ltd, who won 'Best Employment Creation' and 'Best Regional Business'.

The hosts of the event, the Māori Women's Development Incorporation (MWDI), launched the first nationwide Māori Business and Professional Association at the ceremony. This initiative gives Māori business people a professional forum to network, seek and give support and market each other's business. Winners received up to \$5000 in prize money, an interest

free loan of up to \$20,000 and a pounamu statuette.

Winner on MWA advisory group

Vanessa Hayes, winner of two Māori Business Awards this year, is a member of the Māori Women's Economic Reference Group, established to advise the joint Ministry of Women's Affairs and Ministry of Economic Development Women in Enterprise project. This project studies the experiences, concerns, and priorities of Māori women in business and found success factors for business growth included positive role models, business mentors and improving business and management capability.

Understanding family violence

A big step towards understanding the complex topic of family violence was made last month with the opening of a dedicated national research centre.

The New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse will collate information and research from a range of sources and spread it to interested groups as well as the general public. The website will become the main information source, containing newsletters and fact sheets on specific topics, discussion papers and information about relevant training and events. Staff will also link different agencies and projects that could help and inform each other.

'The Clearinghouse will be a great source of knowledge for us,' said Ministry of Women's Affairs Policy

Manager Rowena Phair. 'Better understanding and knowledge of the causes and nature of family violence will lead to more effective prevention strategies and policy development.'

To build up its stock of research material, the Clearinghouse is seeking out any published or unpublished articles, books, reports, theses, papers, conference presentations, evaluations or literature reviews related to family violence. All material will be added to a bibliography of New Zealand research that will be accessible, from early next year, to those working to prevent violence in families, said Clearinghouse Outreach Co-ordinator Sheryl Hann.

Any gaps will also be identified to guide further research.

Want to know more?

The New Zealand Family Violence Clearinghouse is funded by the Ministry of Social Development and based at Te Awatea Violence Research Centre in Christchurch. Visit their website: www.nzfv.org.nz or phone: 03 364 2296.

✓ ACTION PLAN

Action Plan for New Zealand Women, 3.2.1 Te Rito: New Zealand Family Violence Prevention Strategy: Improve the safety and well-being of women, particularly in relation to spouse/partner abuse, child abuse/neglect and elder abuse/neglect, through Te Rito and the Opportunity For All plan.

Being energised

Marina Sciascia was appointed to the Te Waka Toi Board. Te Waka Toi is the Māori Arts Board of Creative New Zealand, one of three funding boards. Ms Sciascia is currently acting manager of the Te Herenga Marae at Victoria University and has tribal affiliations to Ngāi Kahungunu.

Dame Catherine Tizard will chair the newly established Cancer Control Council with **Helen Glasgow** and **Dr Beverley Lawton** appointed as members. The nine-member council will provide an independent and sustainable focus for cancer control and has a specific role in the Cancer Control Strategy

Mary Watson was appointed as one of six trustees to the National Provident Fund Board. The board is trustee of 16 superannuation schemes and manages investments held on the behalf of the schemes.

Anita Mazzoleni was appointed as associate member of the Commerce Commission. The Commission enforces legislation that promotes market competition, prohibits misleading and deceptive trading and enforces laws specific to telecommunications, dairy and electricity industries.

Kate Joblin was appointed to the Whanganui District Health Board. Ms Joblin is a chartered accountant and one of four appointed members who join seven elected representatives.

Dr Paddy Austin was appointed as deputy presiding member of the New Zealand Lotteries Commission Board in June. The Board distributes proceeds of state lotteries to the community through Lottery Grants, Creative New Zealand, Sport and Recreation New Zealand and the New Zealand Film Commission.

Dr Austin is currently serving on a range of boards and chairs Christchurch City Holdings Ltd, the holding company for the city's trading assets.

Associate Professor Janis Swan has been appointed associate dean of engineering at Waikato University – the first woman to head the development of engineering studies at a New Zealand university. The appointment is the second career milestone for Professor Swan this year – she was elected a fellow of the Institution of Professional Engineers New Zealand in March.

Julie Craig, Suze Wilson and Iona Holstead were three of four new Deputy Commissioners appointed in the State Services Commission to join a new senior management team. The team will drive a new development programme and refocus the Commission.

Genesis Power Ltd

New Zealand's largest energy retailer, Genesis, is a state-owned enterprise that generates electricity and supplies gas and electricity to around 690,000 customers as well as electricity to many of the country's largest industrial companies. It operates seven power stations in the North Island and has ongoing projects to secure energy supply into the future.

Total operating revenue:	\$1,387 million
Total assets:	\$1,268 million
Board Chair:	Brian Corban
Deputy Chair:	Keith Smith

Members:

Geraldine Baumann, Annabel Cotton, Nicki Crauford, Ian Kusabs, Denis McNamara, Mike Williams.

Board member requirements:

Specific knowledge or experience in some aspect of electricity, gas or wholesale energy markets; ability to deal with complex issues; demonstrated governance and financial expertise.

Dr Nicki Crauford's 25 years' experience in engineering and business makes her well-qualified for her appointment to the board of Genesis Power.

As a teenager growing up in a family of stockbrokers and lawyers in England, she decided she wanted to break with tradition and become a chemical engineer. 'Chemistry was my best subject and I was fascinated how a chemical reaction in a lab can be turned into an industrial process and how we can use that knowledge,' she said.

She gained a doctorate in engineering (fluid mechanics and combustion), worked in Cambridge and London for a period before travelling to Australia and New Zealand. On returning to England, she discovered the job market was extremely tight – 100 job applications resulted in just one

interview. She applied for residency in New Zealand, intending to stay for only a year or two, and eventually married a New Zealander. She has been here 12 years.

During her career in the UK and New Zealand, she has worked in a variety of roles in oil, gas, electricity and banking. She was appointed Chief Executive of the Institute of Directors 18 months ago. This work fulfils an interest in developing the most from people and she is closely involved with the Institute's director accreditation scheme. She is the first woman to become the Institute's chief executive.

Dr Crauford and her husband, Steve Martin, decided that she would work full time and he would care for their two young children. The arrangement allows her to further develop her executive career while enabling Mr Martin to study for a degree in computer science.

'Some jobs just cannot be done part-time and you can't do everything. My advice for women, or anyone, is to arrange your expectations to suit what you are able to do.

'Make decisions based on your skills and the needs of your family. Sometimes the cards you are dealt are not perfect, but play the cards you have to your best advantage and don't waste time thinking they could have been better. You succeed by just getting on with it.'



▲ Dr Nicki Crauford

Women get vote for the first time

Women of Palmerston North Bowling Club can vote for the first time in the club's 116-year history.

Since the bowling club was founded in 1889, only men have had the vote and the right to serve on the club's executive. But it was recently unanimously decided to extend full membership to women.

Women have always had restricted membership to the club but have paid lower fees to reflect the value of catering duties they undertook. However, this is also about to change, said club President Colin Griggs. The bowling club is merging with Squash Palmerston and the Cosmopolitan Club and will sport new dining and bar facilities in the clubhouse.

Kiwi families are changing

The number of couples living alone without children will soon outnumber two-parent families with children. Changes to New Zealand households are related to a slowing birth rate and ageing of the baby boom generation.

Sole parent families and individuals living alone will also increase, reports Statistics New Zealand. The birth rate is now an average of two births per woman. This is too low for the country's population to be able to replace itself without migration.

Women aged over 30 years are having more children than in the past. The most common age range for women to have children is between 30 and 34 years. The median age for women giving birth is now 30 years. This means that half were aged more than 30 years and half were aged less than 30 years. The median age is rising – in 1995, it was 29 years and in 1975, it was 25 years.

Working together to protect young lives

A partnership between Māori Women's Welfare League and health agencies is helping protect children from the epidemic strain of meningococcal disease.

Distributing consent forms to homes, visiting kohanga reo and raising community awareness of locations for vaccinations are among the tasks the League is carrying out with Wairarapa District Health Board (WDHB).

The programme has also created a link between mothers and the league. 'It's been a delightful project for getting to know the new generation of mothers who we haven't come across before,' said Wairarapa League Chairwoman Frances Reiri-Smith.

She emphasises that children under five years are most at risk from meningococcal disease and Māori are more at risk than other New Zealanders. One in every 117 Māori children get meningococcal disease by the time they turn five.

WDHB Project Manager Debi Lodge-Schnellenberg describes the League's work in the Wairarapa as amazing and enthusiastic. 'You can't fault them, they go a million miles an hour. Everywhere they go, even Matariki celebrations, they take their displays with them.'

Several other district health boards, including Canterbury, Auckland and Tairāwhiti, have contracted the Māori Women's Welfare League for similar community work and are achieving positive results.

Boys outnumber girls

More boys than girls were born in the past year.

There were 57,990 live births registered in New Zealand, of which 28,270 were girls and 29,720 were boys.

These children can expect to live longer than earlier generations. Newborn girls can expect to live 81.3 years and newborn boys 77 years. This is a gain of 5.8 years for females and 8 years for males since 1975–1977 (roughly when their parents were born).

Double degree student wins national Zonta scholarship

Auckland University student Rachael Germann has claimed Zonta New Zealand's Jane M Klausman Women in Business Scholarship.

Ms Germann has claimed a number of awards during her studies and works part-time as an assistant analyst at a securities company. She is also a volunteer Youthline counsellor. Her ambition is to graduate with a double degree in commerce and law and become a chartered financial analyst.