



Harbour City Happenings

RSCDS Wellington Region Newsletter

Vol 29 No 2 – June 2026

Editor: Désirée Patterson – editor@wellingtonscd.org.nz

President's Column

From Joy Tracey, President



Well, the dancing year is well into stride, or should I say, flow.

Early Dances Day – The Early Dances Day, taken by Elaine Laidlaw, was greatly enjoyed by those who made the afternoon. The dances chosen brought back memories from days forgotten. A trip down memory lane and a reminder to visit the early RSCDS

dances to keep tradition alive.

Basics and Intermediate Classes – These are progressing well. Although the Basics numbers are a little lower, at least the Intermediate class was able to go ahead this year. We've also had feedback regarding the early-in-the-year timing of these classes, particularly those for new dancers. These classes are important to supporting dancing in the region, and we're committed to continuing to offer these annually. However, we are open to considering a different scheduling for classes or even half-day classes. Your feedback is welcome. Please email comments to class-coordinator@wellingtonscd.org.nz

Annual Dances – We are now well into the season. The early club dances for Ngaio and Tawa have been well supported, enjoyable and successful. With dances at least fortnightly for the next four months, it will continue to be a busy time. Make sure you check the Wellington Region dance calendar <https://wellingtonscd.org.nz/events/> and support your local clubs.

Update on the Region Ball – 19 September – This will be going ahead. This year is the Region's 65th anniversary. Please save the date. It will be held at Scots College, with further details to follow.

Australian Winter School – The Australian Winter School takes place this year in Melbourne from 28 June to 5 July, and a number of dancers from the Region will be a

attending. The September issue of HCH will share a report and photos.

New Zealand Summer School – This year's New Zealand Summer School is being held in Auckland at the Waipuna Hotel and Conference Centre from 28 December 2026 to 5 January 2027.

The school will cover morning classes tailored to all skill levels, evening ceilidhs, expert instruction, a traditional Scottish Hogmanay celebration, and a President's Ball. For more information go to <https://sites.google.com/view/summerschool26-27>

Advanced classes – A reminder to those of you considering attending the advanced class on 4 July, to register by 27 June. The link is on the Region website <https://wellingtonscd.org.nz/classes/region-classes/>.

Etiquette – It's opportune to remind dancers of some common dance floor etiquette. Some recent observations, experiences and approaches from dancers have prompted this.

- When taking the floor and forming sets, join sets from the bottom – i.e. the end that is open to the bottom of the hall. If the first couple want to swap after the sets are formed, then that's for negotiation in your set.
- Square sets are obviously a little more confusing, but similar consideration is appropriate. Please complete the top of the hall sets first.
- Do not take the floor before the dance is announced. The band and the MC should co-ordinate so that the MC announces the dance and then the band reminds us of the tune. Please also keep the quiet 'mingle' for those who are waiting with a set or a few couples to the side of the hall.
- Refrain from crossing the set to have a 'chin wag' during the dance if you are the standing 1st couple or the finished 4th couple. With the advent of videos and Facebook it's not a great look, and it's happening more often than you would expect. Save the important conversation for the end of the dance.
- Be kind to yourself. If there is a plea for 'one more couple' and you don't know the dance or don't feel

comfortable, you do not have to feel obliged to take the floor.

- Dancing should be enjoyable, fun and social.

I look forward to meeting as many of you as possible as I join you at your club in the coming months. In the meantime, stay warm, stay safe, and carry on dancing.

RSCDS New Logo

Some of you will have seen the new branding from the RSCDS. They have rolled out a major brand refresh alongside a new website. The project updates the society's visual identity to be more engaging and user-friendly for a modern audience.

For those interested to have a look here's the link to the website <https://rscds.org/about/>

and also Facebook <https://www.facebook.com/RSCDS>



following Monday, so we were able to reschedule. Our dancers, many tartan-clad, were still able to enjoy our usual tartan-decorated hall, live music, and super supper for International Dance Day.

Thanks to the band – Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral and Shane Rempala – for being so accommodating; to our tutor Rod Downey for selecting dances for everyone, including our newer dancers, to enjoy; to our visitors; and to our club members and supper team for the excellent supper. And not to forget those who helped decorate the hall. You can see some of their handiwork below, as well as other highlights from the night, captured so well by club photographer Loralee Hyde. An added bonus was [Pat Reesby's video](#) of Rod's new dance *Irish Breakfast Tea*.



Decorating in progress for our April Tartan Night

Correction

The Region Committee would like to draw readers' attention to the following:

The email address for the Class Coordinator in this year's calendar is not correct. It should be class-coordinator@wellingtonscd.org.nz.

There is should be a dash between *class* and *coordinator*. In the calendar, the dash is missing.

Beltane was again celebrated – this time at our annual dinner-dance on 23 May (at least we got the month right, even if not the season, to celebrate a spring festival).

After members and family gathered for a, not very traditional, Beltane meal at Namaste Indian Restaurant in Khandallah, we convened again at our usual dancing location a few doors along. Khandallah Town Hall was resplendent in Kristin Downey's Beltane-themed decorations – the greens of spring, the oranges and reds of the fires, and of course the cows, who would have been driven between these Beltane fires to protect them.

Johnsonville Club

Autumn revelry – As autumn leads into winter, we see an outflow of dancers to the warmer northern hemisphere. But that hasn't diminished the fun of Monday nights or the camaraderie of the club's social events. It's been especially rewarding to see this year's new dancers enjoying club nights, and joining in our autumn celebrations.

Our April Tartan Night, the first for the year, didn't go quite as planned. While the weather wasn't too bad around Johnsonville itself, it soon became apparent that the severe storm on 20 April was causing chaos around the Wellington region, so we made the decision to cancel. Fortunately for us, the band was available the



The *Spring Chick Waltz* turned out to be more challenging than expected



Johnsonville's brightly dressed Beltane dancers

The dancers were also dressed in the colours of spring and fire, and we even had a couple of fetching “cow” costumes to complement the growing collection of cow ornaments.



Two

And thanks to club members Elizabeth Ngan, Elizabeth Judge and Moira Broughton, who provided the delicious and varied dessert we enjoyed during a break in the dancing. Dessert was accompanied by a eulogy from club bard Aline Homes to the hardy Highland cattle that formed such an important part of the ancient celebration of Beltane. And yet again, Rod excelled himself in providing a very entertaining programme of dances – some caused considerable hilarity – all around themes of spring, Beltane, flowers, and cows. You can see more of Lorelee's photos and [read more about the night on the club's website](#).

Upcoming

29 June, Tartan Night, with Lynne Scott, Thomas Nikora and Shane Rempala. Join us at Khandallah Town Hall for a night of easy dances, most walked, new dancers are very welcome to attend. See the programme elsewhere in HCH or [download from the Jville website](#).

22 August, Johnsonville celebrates 60 years of affiliation with the RSCDS – This year's annual dance will again be combined with Capital City, and will also be a celebration of 60 years since Johnsonville SCDC became affiliated with the RSCDS. And, as it happens, we will also be celebrating 30 years with Rod as our tutor – quite a milestone! So please join Johnsonville and Capital City clubs on **Saturday 22 August** at Crofton Downs School Hall for this special celebration. There's lots of space for lots of dancers to enjoy an exciting four-piece band – Lynne Scott, Rebecca Warnes, Heather Elder and Katie Scott – in a specially decorated hall. You can see the programme elsewhere in HCH or download from the Johnsonville website [here](#).

Maureen Sullivan, President, Johnsonville SCD Club

Upper Hutt Fundraising Dance

Ka mihi nui kia koutou katoa.

Upper Hutt Club had its music system stolen in October last year. This was a big blow for us, but we were able to keep going thanks to the work of our tutor Chris Kelly and the generosity of the dancing community.

Chris contacted the Wellington clubs to see if they had any equipment we could borrow, so that we could

continue to dance, and Seatoun club kindly loaned us their spare music system until we could purchase a new one. Thank you Chris for your mahi, and Seatoun Club for your generosity. This meant we could carry on until the end of the year without interruption.

In early March, Chris purchased a new music system and Tom Cole did a lot of work to download music onto Chris's own computer.

We are a small club and could not really afford such an unplanned outlay, so when Lynne suggested that she might be able to get some musicians to play for free for a fundraising dance, the committee agreed and so it began.

When we decided to have a raffle, Upper Hutt members gave generous donations. We had so much that we could fill two baskets and therefore had two draws. The eventual winners were James and Barbara. I hope they enjoyed their prizes.

The music created a wonderful atmosphere for the event. The musicians were: Keshav Raj, piano; Lynne Scott, fiddle/piano/accordion; Mary McDonald and Heather Elder, fiddles; Rhiannon Bertaud-Gandar, recorders; and Duncan McDonald, drums. The musicians were able to come and go and do some dancing or have a break during the evening. The combination of musicians gave us a very full sound that was fantastic to dance to. I would like to thank them all for giving their time and skill to benefit our club.

Another kindness came from the Wesley Centre who allowed us to have the hall free of charge that evening.

Levin club had something else happening that weekend, so they gave us a koha as they knew their members could not be at our dance. Thank you for your kindness.

A week after the dance we received another donation from the McDonalds' Celtic Dance. Thank you.

The generosity of our dancing community and beyond has been phenomenal and we have covered the cost of the music system and a little more.

One act of selfishness has been negated by kindness and empathy – manaakitanga and arohanui.

Thank you to all who attended our dance to made it a fun night and a great success. Ka nui te mihi ki a koutou katoa mo to koutou atawhai.

Thank you all very much for your generosity.

Michelle Cooper, President, Upper Hutt SCD Club.

Lower Hutt Club Theme Nights

From Anna Verhaegh

On May the 4th ("May the Force"), Lower Hutt hosted a Star Wars-themed dance night, which attracted an

excellent turnout from across the region, including visitors from Johnsonville, Ngaio, Upper Hutt, and Tawa. We were also delighted to welcome NZ Branch Vice President Lesley Nicol, who travelled from Auckland for the occasion. Andy Nicol accompanied Jason for the evening, providing a selection of avant-garde music that added to the unique atmosphere of the event.

Diane, one of the club's tutors this season, designed a thoughtfully balanced programme featuring a mix of familiar favourites and less frequently danced selections, all carefully chosen to reflect the evening's theme.

Many members and visitors embraced the spirit of the occasion by dressing up, with an impressive gathering of Jedi Knights, Yodas, and other Star Wars characters adding to the fun and enjoyment of the night.

King's Birthday Monday brought another successful themed dance evening, with several dances fittingly taking a royal theme. Although there was no live music on this occasion, the recorded music was excellent and greatly appreciated by those attending. Our tutors Diane and Susanna continue to do an outstanding job this year, bringing enthusiasm, creativity, and energy to every programme.

Looking ahead, our Annual Dance in September promises to be another highlight of the year. The programme is packed with old favourites alongside a selection of popular newer dances from both local devisers and those from further afield. It is shaping up to be an event well worth attending. See the programme later in this issue.

See you all on **Saturday, 5 September**, at 7pm at Knox Church Hall in Lower Hutt for dancing, food and phenomenal live music.

Ngaio Club

From Wendy Donald

Ngaio held its Annual Dance on Saturday afternoon, 30 May, from 2:30 to 6pm. So, late morning on the day, many members were decorating the Ngaio Town Hall with vases of flowers, John Gregory's large panels of Luckenbooth brooches, and tartan rugs. Some members were preparing the substantial afternoon tea, including cutting the fruit for the fruit salad, to be served with jellies and whipped cream.

Home for lunch, and to put on our glad rags, ready to dance! Back to welcome our musicians – Jason Morris on accordion, Hilary Ferral on fiddle, and Shane Rempala on keyboard – and then to welcome our guests, some of whom had travelled from Whanganui and Levin to dance with us.

This year, all the club's office holders were unable to attend as they were overseas, and one other committee member was 'on the high seas', assisting delivery of a yacht from Auckland to Wellington. So the remaining member (me) had to write the club's newsletters. But most fortunately, our immediate past president Andrea Lynch stepped in and 'saved the day' for the Annual Dance, with her willingness and competence.

Our tutor Melva Waite had a lovely programme of popular dances for us, so at 2:30pm we were dancing! We were nine sets, which filled the hall. Soon we were whizzing through *Shiftin' Bobbins*, *Pelorus Jack*, *The Luckenbooth Brooch*, and, more sedately, we danced *Triple Happiness* and *City of Belfast*.

After ten dances we were ready for afternoon tea. Five tables, well loaded, were carried out, and with much laughter and chatting, we were soon well replenished. Then we were back to dancing – another eight dances. We danced two good rants, *Montgomeries'* and *Robertson*, and enjoyed the five-couple dance, *Farewell to Balfour Road*.

Later, Jason handed his accordion to Shane, donned his green German hat and lifted his large B flat bass tuba, and we danced *Trip to Bavaria*, while enjoying the real Bavarian oompah sound. Then the last dance was the fast and lively *Mairi's Wedding*.



Jason and his tuba provide the 'oompah' for *Trip to Bavaria*

Ngaio Club started off the Region's Annual Dances for 2026 with a memorable afternoon dance. The club intends to continue having its annual dance in the afternoon, as it enables those from further away to attend, and we can have eight or nine sets of dancers enjoying dancing, right to the end!

Ceol Alba - the Music of Scotland

A monthly social music club where we play tunes from Scotland: jigs, reels, strathspeys, marches, waltzes, airs, polkas ... This is our 20th year! Our sessions are informal and user-friendly, and you get to pick what you'd like to play or just listen to.

We meet at Lynne's music studio:

11 Edwin St., Belmont Domain, Lower Hutt, 7:30 - 9:30pm, normally on the fourth Friday of each month (but do check, it sometimes changes). There is no subscription fee, just a gold coin as you arrive, to help prepare the club's books of music. Most instruments are welcome, it's not restricted to fiddles and flutes: accordions, guitars, pianists, cello, bass, percussion ... just not bagpipes – sorry!



Check out some of our music on the website: www.ceol-alba.org.nz. Our next meetings are Friday 26 June and Friday 24 July. We're looking forward to meeting you!

Lynne Scott

Lynne@scott.gen.nz , 021 846596

Linden SCD Club

Linden SCD Club celebrated King's Birthday on 1 June with a lively royal-themed evening. Union Jack bunting was hung above the stage, and dancers arrived dressed for the occasion in crowns, tiaras, royal colours and tartan.



Some of the Linden Club members dressed for the royal theme (Photo: Andrew Oliver)

Our club tutor Ann Oliver put together a fun programme of dances featuring the word "royal". These included *The Royal Visit*, *The Royal Wedding*, *The Royal Deeside Railway* and *The Reel of the Royal Scots*. As you can see, plenty to fit the theme!

The evening wrapped up with a delicious supper of homemade treats.

Patricia Fisk, Secretary, Linden SCD Club

Tawa SCD Club

Tawa held its Annual Dance on 13 June, in Ngaio Town Hall. Six sets of dancers – three sets of our own members and three sets from other clubs – had a wonderful time dancing to the lively music by Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral and Shane Rempala. We were delighted that Branch President Debbie Roxburgh and her husband Paul travelled from Whanganui to join us.

The stage was looking splendid – the front of it hung with the tartan drapes made a few years ago by our tutor Catherine, and the top decorated with greenery and camellias from a member's garden and festooned with fairy lights.

Our tutor Catherine McCutcheon had devised a varied programme consisting of many favourites, such as *Orpington Caledonians*, *Pelorus Jack*, *The Gentleman*, and *Best Set in the Hall*, to name but a few, and some not quite so well-known dances, like *Flight to Melbourne* and *The Golden Years*.



The Gentleman (Photo: Joy Tracey)

An excellent supper, with goodies provided by members, and including the traditional fruit salad, jellies and cream, was served at 'half time' by Jo and her helpers. A trio of kilted men skilfully handled the brooms to sweep the floor before dancing resumed.



Jo, Patricia and Anne were on hand to pour cups of tea and coffee (Photo: Désirée Patterson)

The dance finished exactly on time, and in the twenty minutes left before the 'witching hour' of 11pm – the time by which we had to get out of the hall – it was great to see everyone pitching in to pack up and tidy up.

It had been a fabulous evening, and we all went home feeling tired and footsore, but thoroughly satisfied.

Désirée Patterson, Secretary, Tawa SCD Club



Colin, Duncan and Lee (Photo: Désirée Patterson)

Diary of upcoming events (to late Sep)

Flyers and programmes of many of these events are listed further down.

- Sat 27 June – Linden Club Annual Dance
- Tue 30 June – Final Region Basics class
- Sat 4 July – Region Advanced class (1)
- Tue 7 July – Final Region Intermediate class
- Sat 18 July – Levin Club 70th Anniversary Dance
- Sat 25 July – Region Advanced class (2)
- Sat 1 Aug – Upper Hutt Club Annual Dance
- Sat 8 Aug – Waikanae Club Annual Dance
- Sun 16 Aug – Ashhurst Club Annual Dance
- Sat 22 Aug – Capital City and Johnsonville Clubs Combined Annual Dance (Johnsonville's 60th Anniversary)
- Tue 1 Sep – Wellington Region Committee Meeting
- Sat 5 Sep – Lower Hutt Club Annual Dance
- Sat 12 Sep – Closing date for the September issue of Harbour City Happenings
- Sat 19 Sep – Wellington Region Ball
- Sat 26 Sep – Glendarroch Club Annual Dance

Johnsonville Tartan Night

Khandallah Town Hall

11 Ganges Road, Khandallah

7.30pm, Monday 29 June

Music by Lynne Scott, Thomas Nikora, Heather Elder

Come What May	J	R Butterfield 51/11
Kingussie Flower	R	21/6
Miss Leslie Cunningham	S	R Downey – They Stole My Wife
The Shetland Shepherdess	J	R Wallace – 3rd Graded
Bill Little's Strathspey	S	R Goldring - 3rd Graded
Fight About the Fireside	R	1/10

SUPPER

Bev's Delight	J	B McMurtry – Devil's Quandary
The Kissing Bridge	R	R Butterfield – 47/9
Miss Milligan's Strathspey	S	RSCDS Leaflet
The Last of the Lairds**	J	H Thurston – 22/5
Mairi's Wedding	R	J Cosh – 22 SCDs

Adult \$5.00, Student \$0.50

Most dances walked.

** *The Last of the Lairds* is both fast & tricky. Only do it if you know it or are very experienced. Dancers who started this year might care to watch.





RSCDS NZ Branch Inc. Wellington Region Region Classes 2026

2 Afternoon Classes - Advanced Level

Saturdays 1 - 4pm

4 and 25 July

Tutor: Jeanette Watson

Cost: \$35 for both classes paid when registering; or \$20 cash per class

(It is best if you attend both classes. This allows the teacher to develop your skills from those taught at the earlier class)

Please bring a water bottle

Afternoon Tea

Live Music

Advanced Skills

For Dancers who are already consistently competent in footwork and rhythm, including transitions, dancing tidily with good control, handing and phrasing throughout. You can remember most common formations without prompting. You have a reasonable level of fitness.

Expect to: -

- work on all aspects of technique, footwork, rhythm and phrasing to achieve a higher standard.
- receive individual constructive critique.
- learn less common formations - eg Bourrel, Tournee, Tourbillon...perhaps more.
- dance these within more challenging dances.

The success of an advanced class depends on the whole team being of advanced standard. The Region will be checking with tutors to confirm eligibility for this class.

Registration – to be received by 27 June (a week before your first class)

Please complete the online registration form by clicking [here](#) or go to the website www.wellingtonscd.org.nz

Venue: St John's Anglican Church Hall, Bassett Rd, Johnsonville.





**Johnsonville and Capital City
Combined Annual Dance
Johnsonville 60 years in RSCDS
Crofton Downs School Hall, 21 Chartwell Drive
7.30pm, Saturday 22 August 2026**

Music by Lynne Scott, Heather Elder, Rebecca Bourne, Katie Scott

Come What May	(J) R Butterfield – 51/11
A Hundred Years Since*	(R) P Knapman – 54/8
Midsummer Common	(S) 49/3
The Button Boy	(R) B Zobel – Allanton Coll
Muirland Willie**	(J) 21/9
The St Columba's Church Strathspey	(S) R Downey – Rātā & Wheki
The Yorkshire Rose	(J) T Reid – 54/1
Jeanette's Hornpipe	(H) R Downey – Cane Toad
The Bon Viveur**	(M) I Brockbank – 52/11
The Reel of the 51st Division	(R) 13/10

Supper

Jig to the Music	(J) D Young – 2nd Graded
Shiftin' Bobbins	(R) R Clowes – Ormskirk
The Braes of Breadalbane	(S) 21/7
The Hunting Horn	(J) RSCDS Archives
Scott Meikle*	(R) A McLean – 46/3
City of Belfast*	(S) L Mulholland – 48/6
Mark and Susie's Jig*	(J) G Watt – 54/4
The Reel of the Royal Scots	(R) RSCDS Leaflet



- Adult \$18.00, RSCDS/first year dancers \$15.00, Juniors/Spectators \$6.00
- First year dancers welcome – most dances walked
- *Find a clever partner
- **For the very experienced and able



Lower Hutt Scottish Country Dance Club

Annual Dance 2026

Knox Church Hall, 574 High Street Lower Hutt

Saturday 5th September, 7pm

Music : Jason Morris, Hilary Ferral, Shane Rempala

RSCDS Members: \$15 | Non-RSCDS: \$18 | Juniors/Spectators: \$5

Maxwell's Rant	R	Book 18
Granville Island	J	Totton
The Garry Strathspey	S	Cosh 22
The Hunting Horn	J	SCD Archives
A Trip to Bavaria	R	Guide to SCD
The Gentleman	S	Book 35
Violynne	R	Downey
The Dance Dviser's Numberplate * *	J	Collin
Triple Happiness	S	Book 52
The Wild Geese	J	Book 24
The Irish Rover * *	R	Cosh 22

THE MAXINA + SUPPER

Shiftin' Bobbins	R	Omskirk 6
MacDonald of the Isles Big Mac	S	Carnforth 2 Montreal Moments
The White Heather Jig The Purple Heather Jig * *	J	Cosh 22 Dunedin Dances 5
Bruce's Men	S	Scotia Suite
Beach Dancer	J	Whangarei Book
De'il Amang the Tailors	R	Book 14

* * *Some dances may be walked as needed
Only if you know it - experienced dancers only*

Levin Scottish Country Dance Club

70th Annual Dance

with live music from the **SALTIRE SCOTTISH DANCE BAND**

July 18th 2026 2.00 – 6.00pm

Speldhurst Village Hall
Kimberley Road, Levin (see map enclosed)

(Plenty of parking
on site)

Admission: \$20.00 RSCDS members: \$18.00 Juniors & Spectators: \$5.00

Programme:

1. New Year Jig		J	Book 51
2. The Cranberry Tart		J	7 Year Itch
3. Midsummer Common		S	Book 49
4. The Fireworks Reel	**	R	Book 49
5. Seton's Ceilidh Band		J	Morison's Bush
6. City of Belfast		S	Book 48
	<i>Cutting of cake</i>		
7. Shiftin' Bobbins		R	Ormskirk
8. MacDonald of Keppoch	**	M	Book 49
9. Hoopers Jig		J	MMM2
	<i>Afternoon tea</i>		
10. Granville Market		J	2 nd Graded Book
11. Mairi's Wedding		R	Cosh
12. The Water of Leith	**	S	Book 53
13. The Montgomeries' Rant		R	Book 10
14. The Luckenbooth Brooch		J	Book 53
15. The Robertson Rant		S	Book 39
16. Beach Dancer		J	Eddie West 2003
17. The Deil Among the Tailors		R	Book 14

** *Only if you know it (experienced dancers)*

Do you require a billet? Please let us know by email to: secretary.lscdc@gmail.com

To further celebrate our 70th birthday please do join us for dinner
at The George Café (on site) at 6:00pm. Own cost, of course!

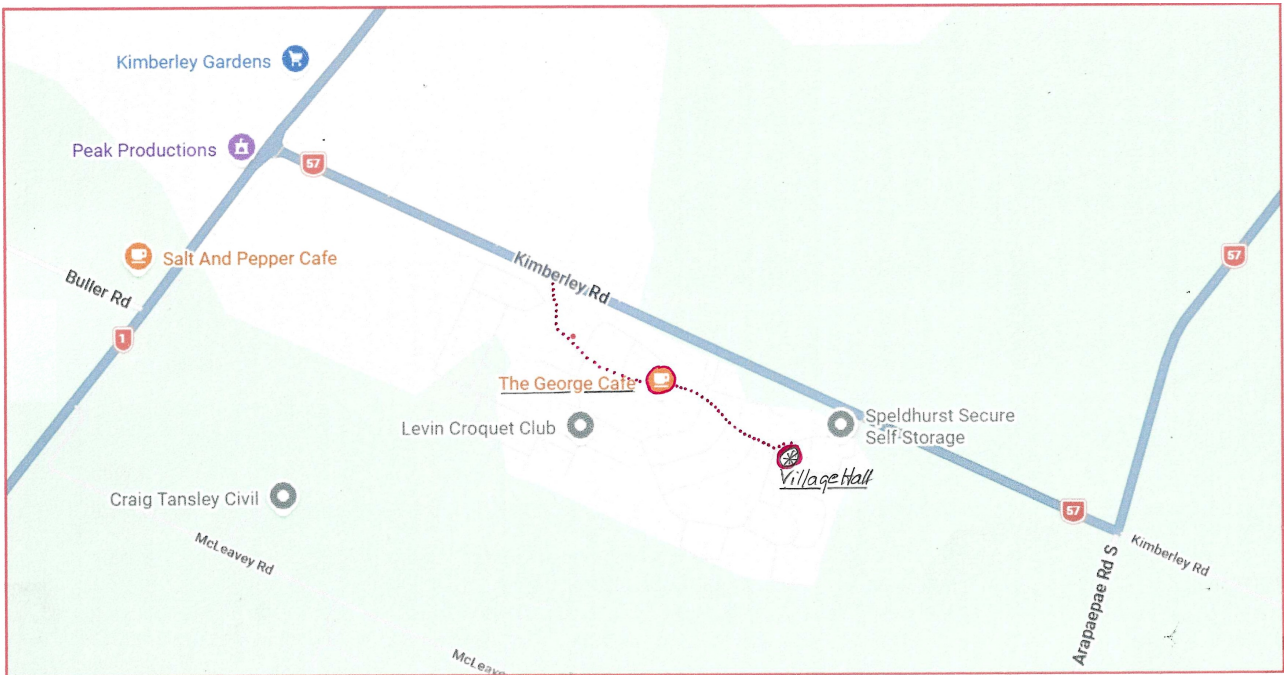
The menu is available to view at: <https://thegeorgecafe.co.nz/menu-levin-cafe>



Raffles: \$2 ticket or 3 tickets for \$5



Harbour City Happenings – June 2026



Map to the venue of the Levin Dance