NORMANDALE TIMES

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Beloved community member Margaret Cousins dies



Normandale has lost a long-time community, and Residents' Association committee member, with the death of Margaret Cousins (pictured across). On October 5th 2026, Margaret died peacefully at Hutt Hospital, surrounded by her loving family, aged 77 years.

Margaret served her community as a Lower Hutt City Councillor for 36 years, first elected in 1983, and serving continuously for Western Ward from 1989 to 2019. She first entered politics by being 'volunteered' to present Normandale residents' concerns over the lack of maintenance of our roads due to the prevailing view of Councillors and officers alike that 'only half a dozen people live there'.

A staunch feminist, one of her favourite tales was of when she was first elected to Council as a young mum; emulating les tricoteuse below the Guillotine by knitting at council meetings, much to the horror of the male Councillors. Her passion for politics was well known. Having an Honours degree in politics she tutored politics at Victoria University, served for several years on Wellington Regional Council, and became chair of the Town Planning Committee.

Margaret's advocacy for women, and women's education is noted in her being a founding member of the Suffrage Hutt Education Trust (SHE Trust).

A community stalwart, Margaret was a Justice of the Peace for 40 years, and on the Normandale Residents/Progressive Association for more than 40 years. She was a regular helper at inorganic rubbish collections and other events. She also had many board and trustee roles including with the YWCA, the Porirua Licencing Trust and the Lower Hutt Childcare Centre. She will be greatly missed by the many people whose lives she touched.

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Disclaimer: The opinions expressed in this paper do not necessarily reflect those of the committee. *Note: Copy deadline is the 25th of preceding month.

Next NRA meeting - Thursday 19th November 2026 7:30pm at St Aidan's on the Hill. All welcome.

Normandale MEET THE CANDIDATES evening

The recent Meet the Candidates evening was very well attended by Normandale residents. St Aidan's was full with an estimated eighty plus residents listening to the Hutt South candidates and Normandale Residents' Association committee member Pete Matcham MCing the evening. All the well known political parties, together with some not so well known parties had candidates answer questions sent in from Normandale residents. The answers and comments from the candidates were generally very respectful of each other, which bodes well for democracy. In particular, following on from the 'Response times to fires on the Western Hills' series in previous Normandale Times issues Pete asked-

"A local house fire earlier this year has sharpened our community's awareness of the shortcomings of the Fire service. The local Fire station was closed in 2021 due to problems with the leased building, meaning that responses to a call out in Normandale cannot meet expected response times. Five years later the reply from the responsible Minister to our enquiry said that FENZ are considering setting up a panel to discuss what they might think about doing. It is also well known that FENZ has a worn out fleet whilst 30 replacement appliances bought in 2019 have never been deployed. The current structure, governance, management and funding of FENZ is clearly not fit for purpose. How will you address this to ensure that FENZ is adequately funded, has professional and competent operational management directly responsible to the appropriate Minister rather than the board of a Crown entity?"

There was general agreement from the candidates that, as noted, the current structure was not working and, more importantly, a consensus that bringing the service under direct ministerial responsibility was a sensible way to go. Of course there were differences in detail, but we can only hope that whoever ends up in parliament will remember their commitment to our community, and won't let it get lost in any coalition negotiations.

(continued over page)

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Sadly it seems then, despite the resignation of the CEO, the current Board don't seem to be in any hurry to fall on their swords, so any chance of a major shakeup leading to a new Station serving our suburb in the near future is still remote.

Pictured below: Candidates bending their ears to Normandale voters over nibbles post the formal question portion of the evening.





Upcoming Normandale Santa parade

The year is flying past and plans are already afoot for Santa's return to Normandale on Christmas morning. It will be the 43rd special daylight visit from the Man in Red after a busy night of deliveries around the world.

Santa delivers extra gifts by arrangement and there will be sweets for everyone waiting for him at their front gates. More details and the start time of the event will be published next month.

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NORTH PARK Petone Rugby Club Grounds FRI 27 NOVEMBER
tekirihimeteopitoone@gmail.com
Community Performances 3.30PM Carols 5.30PM

ST AIDAN'S FUNDRAISING GARAGE & JUMBLE SALE
St Aidan's on the Hill (corner of Poto Rd and Stratton St)
Saturday 21st November 2026 9am to 12 noon

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Beds	No sales	Average price	No days to sell
2	4	$543,000	45
3	13	$775,000	54
4	7	$904,000	66
LifeStyle	2	$1,596,000	58



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