



ALTRUSA INTERNATIONAL DISTRICT FIFTEEN

2027 CONFERENCE • OAMARU, NEW ZEALAND

CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER • ISSUE 2 • OCTOBER 2026

30 April – 2 May 2027

Inspired by the Past, Leading the Future

Greetings from Oamaru!

Planning is well underway for the Altrusa International District Fifteen Conference, and we are looking forward to welcoming you to our beautiful town from 30 April to 2 May 2027.

Our theme, Inspired by the Past, Leading the Future, reflects both the wonderful history of Altrusa and the opportunities we have to make a difference in our communities in the years ahead.

We are putting together an interesting programme with inspiring speakers, opportunities to share ideas, and time to enjoy the company of fellow Altrusans. There will also be opportunities to discover some of the special places and stories that make Waitaki unique.

In this newsletter, we are delighted to introduce our speakers and our Altrusa International Visitor, along with a preview of the Partners Tour.

We look forward to seeing you in Oamaru!

Voreen Julius

Conference Convenor

Altrusa International District Fifteen Conference 2027

Meet our Conference Speakers



Bevan Newlands

Bevan was part of a 12-strong team from South Canterbury and North Otago who embarked on the adventure of a lifetime to Nepal. Led by expedition leader Joe Rush, the group set out to tackle the world-famous Annapurna Circuit by bicycle.

Bevan is the son of the late Helen Newlands—a dedicated and dearly missed past Altrusan who sadly passed away in April last year. Carrying forward that same spirit of community and passion, Bevan will share a story of grit, determination, and high-altitude adventure.

This was no average bike trip. The team carried all of their own gear across a gruelling 200-kilometre route, averaging over 1,000 metres of vertical ascent every single day and ultimately reaching an altitude of 5,416 metres above sea level. Along the way, they battled illness, altitude sickness, and brutal riding conditions, constantly pushing their physical and mental limits.

Bevan will take us along on this journey over the Himalayas, sharing exclusive video footage and insights from their thrilling expedition.

Kirsten Taylor



Operations Manager | Safeguarding Children

Safeguarding Children is an award-winning New Zealand charity dedicated to creating safer environments for children and young people across Aotearoa. Established in Nelson 15 years ago, the organisation works nationally across education, health, sport, government and community sectors, providing specialist training, consultancy and advocacy to help prevent child abuse and neglect. In 2026, Safeguarding Children was recognised as Kiwibank New Zealand Community of the Year, acknowledging its contribution to improving child safety nationwide.

Kirsten Taylor is the Operations Manager at Safeguarding Children and a member of its senior leadership team. She oversees the organisation's operations, service delivery, strategic projects and partnerships, supporting its continued growth and national impact. Kirsten brings a practical, people-focused approach to her work and is passionate about helping organisations and communities understand their shared responsibility to keep children safe.

Presentation: Keeping Our Children Safe: Why Safeguarding Is Everyone's Responsibility

What does keeping children safe really look like in New Zealand, and are we doing enough? Kirsten will explore the current child safeguarding landscape, the challenges we face and why protecting children requires more than responding when harm has already occurred.

Drawing on Safeguarding Children's work across Aotearoa, Kirsten will highlight the importance of prevention, education and creating genuinely child-safe environments. She will share insights into the gaps in our current systems and the work being undertaken to strengthen safeguarding practices nationwide.

Importantly, Kirsten will explore how we can all make a difference as parents, grandparents, community members and leaders. Attendees will leave with a greater understanding of safeguarding, practical ways to advocate for children's safety and a reminder that keeping children safe is everyone's responsibility.

Our Altrusa International Visitor



Lisa Boyd

International Treasurer | Altrusa International, Inc.

Lisa Boyd has been a proud Altrusan since 2004, with a passion for service, friendship, and helping others discover their leadership potential. She believes the greatest reward of leadership is inspiring and encouraging others to step forward and make a difference.

Over the years, Lisa has served Altrusa in numerous club, district, and international leadership roles, including District Four Governor, International Director, and chair of several international committees. She also co-chaired two International Conventions and currently serves as International Treasurer.

Outside of Altrusa, Lisa is a real estate broker with Coldwell Banker in Tennessee and Kentucky, a Past President of the Clarksville Association of REALTORS®, and a veteran of the Tennessee Army National Guard, where she served as a First Lieutenant.

A native of Clarksville, Tennessee, Lisa is a proud member of Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc., an enthusiastic Tennessee Volunteers fan, and the sixth of seven children in a close-knit family. When she's not working or volunteering, she enjoys spending time with family and her much-loved miniature schnauzer, Carter.

Lisa is delighted to represent the Altrusa International Board of Directors in New Zealand and looks forward to meeting fellow Altrusans, sharing ideas, celebrating service, and making new friendships!

Partners Tour — Discover Waitaki

Saturday 1 May 2027

While conference delegates attend the Saturday programme, partners will have the opportunity to discover some of the special places and stories that make North Otago unique. Local Altrusa Oamaru partners will provide transport for the tour.



Waitaki Boys' High School Hall of Memories

Celebrating 100 years in 2027

Opened on 16 March 1927, the Hall of Memories was designed by Oamaru architect J M Forrester as a memorial to the school's Old Boys who served in the First World War and later conflicts. Around 700 Old Boys served during the First World War, with 119 losing their lives. The hall features memorial stained-glass windows, plaques recording those who served, and a collection of historic memorabilia. Some of its furniture was made from teak salvaged from the battle-cruisers New Zealand and Powerful. The Hall of Memories remains the spiritual centrepiece of Waitaki Boys' High School.



Discover the Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark

Explore the places that make the Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark unique, from dramatic rock formations and the braided Waitaki river, to ancient fossils and important cultural sites.



Waitaki Whitestone UNESCO Global Geopark

Museum of the Vanished World — Duntroon

Entry: \$18.00

The Museum of the Vanished World at Duntroon is the heart of the Vanished World Trail, with displays that help explain and interpret the fossils, rocks, localities, and landforms along the Trail. It houses an inspiring collection of fossils detailing the geology of the District.



Museum of the Vanished World, Duntroon

Visitors wishing to participate in the fossil heritage of the Waitaki are able to gain a greater appreciation of the unique nature of the area by viewing these displays. Specimens are mostly from within a 20km radius of the village of Duntroon. The fossils – whales, dolphins, and invertebrates, reveal the marine ecosystems of the Oligocene time some 20-30 million years ago.

Getting Around & Lunch

Our local Altrusa Oamaru partners will provide transport for the tour, allowing everyone to sit back, relax and enjoy discovering the Waitaki District.

Lunch will be at The Fort, where everyone can choose their own meal and pay for themselves.

Accommodation Reminder

With the Conference weekend approaching, we encourage delegates to arrange their accommodation early. Please contact your chosen provider directly to confirm current rates and availability, as the details below were supplied for the September bulletin and may have changed.

Brydone Hotel — Conference Venue

115 Thames Street, Oamaru 9400

Phone: 03 433 0480 | Email: brydone.hotel@olt.co.nz

Website: <https://www.brydonehotel.co.nz/>

Important — Booking Reference: 81247

The Brydone Hotel has changed its booking system and now requires a reference number. When phoning or emailing to book, please quote 81247 and check whether any conference rooms remain available.

Room type	Rate per room/night	Availability previously advised
Superior Twin (2 beds)	\$200	2 rooms
Standard Queen	\$195	3 rooms
Premium Queen	\$220	3 rooms
Junior Suite	\$235	1 room
Classic Suite	\$235	1 room

More rooms may become available. The room numbers above are from the September bulletin and are not confirmed current availability.

Other accommodation options

Alpine Motel

285 Thames Street, Oamaru

Phone: 0800 27 27 10 | Email: info@alpineoamaru.co.nz

<https://www.alpineoamaru.co.nz/index.html>

Accommodation	Rate per unit/night	Availability previously advised
Studio unit (2 beds)	\$150	6 units \$75 pp/night
One-bedroom unit (4 beds)	\$270	3 units approx. \$65.50 pp/night
Two-bedroom unit (4 beds)	\$280	1 unit \$70 pp/night

ASURE Ambassador Motor Lodge

296 Thames Highway, Oamaru

Phone: 0800 666 716 | Email: ambassador.oamaru@extra.co.nz

<https://www.hotelsone.com/oamaru-hotels-nz/asure-ambassador-motor-lodge.html>

Accommodation	Rate per unit/night	Availability previously advised
Studio unit (2 beds)	\$169	5 units \$84.50 pp/night
One-bedroom unit (2 beds)	\$169	3 units \$84.50 pp/night
One-bedroom family (3 beds)	\$214	1 unit \$71.33 pp/night
Two-bedroom unit (4 beds)	\$259	2 units \$64.75 pp/night

Mariner Suites

47 Tyne Street, Oamaru

Phone: 03 434 7788 | Email: stay@marinersuites.nz

<https://www.marinersuites.nz/>

Accommodation	Rate per unit/night	Availability previously advised
Executive studio, downstairs (king bed)	\$230	7 units couple
Executive studio, downstairs (king + single)	\$230	4 units \$115 pp/night
Premier studio, upstairs (super king)	\$270	11 units 2 people/couple

Midway Motel

289 Thames Street, Oamaru

Phone: 03 434 5388 | Email: midwayoamaru@extra.co.nz

<https://midwayoamaru.co.nz/midway/>

Accommodation	Rate per unit/night	Availability previously advised
Studio (2 beds)	\$150	7 units \$75 pp/night
King studio	\$170	1 unit couple
One-bedroom unit (4 beds)	\$270	2 units \$67.50 pp/night
Two-bedroom unit (4 beds)	\$280	1 unit \$70 pp/night

We look forward to welcoming you to Oamaru!

Voreen Julius – Conference Convenor

Email: oamaru.altrusa@gmail.com | Phone: 02102009503