

2 MINUTES WITH Nick Hewer-Hewitt

It was around a month ago when Nick Hewer-Hewitt spoke at the Tawa Rotary Club. Nick lives in Tawa and works at Wellington Water as its Manager – Network Performance. His talk pointed out how dire a situation we may well find ourselves in following a major disaster, with our access to flowing water in Tawa being disrupted for as long as 40 days. In other parts of the city that could be for more than 100 days.



Wellington Water has established 11 emergency water stations across Wellington, three being in the Tawa area. Nick has operated “open sessions” at several of those including the one alongside the Tawa Fire Station, giving people the chance to see inside and to hear what Wellington Water has been doing to ensure residents are provided with access to at least temporary water supplies from day eight after major disruption to the regular water network. It’s a subject he is more than happy to talk about!

Where were you born?

Wellington

Where did you grow up?

Wellington, Wairarapa (3 years) and the West Coast (12 months).

Where were you educated?

Wairarapa College, Hutt Valley High School, Massey University.

How long have you lived in Tawa?

12½ years.

What do you like about Tawa?

I like the community spirit and how proactive local community groups are about improving Tawa and holding community events, e.g. Tawa Goes to Town and the Spring Festival.

What about family?

My partner is Anthea and we have two teenage boys, one of whom goes to Weltec and the other to Tawa College.

Work experience over the years

11 years in the regular Army, still serving as an Army Reservist after 28 years;

28 years in the water industry (Greater Wellington Regional Council, Opus Consultants, Ministry of Health, Wellington Water).

What are your interests and hobbies?

My main interest is riding my motorbike. I have had a 900cc Triumph America for about three years.



Favourite sports team?

The Tawa Toads, a Golden Oldies Rugby team.

Favourite musical group and/or individual singer?

Florence and the Machine [an English indie rock band that formed in London in 2007, consisting of vocalist Florence Welch, keyboardist Isabella Summers, guitarist Rob Ackroyd, harpist Tom Monger, and a collaboration of other musicians. – Wikipedia]

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What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?

Nelson/Tasman

What accomplishments/achievements in your life give you the most satisfaction/pride?

Spent two months in Samoa in the immediate aftermath of the Tsunami, helping rebuild villages and providing drinking water to the displaced people.

What are two or three interesting things about you that local people may not know?

I starred in a Bata Bullets ad when I was a teenager;

I have stood next to the Bamiyan Buddhas [two 6th-century monumental statues of Gautama Buddha carved into the side of a cliff in the Bamiyan valley in the Hazarajat region of central Afghanistan. The statues were blown up and destroyed by the Taliban in March 2001. – Wikipedia]

What are two or three things you would like to do before you die?

Visit Alaska;

Go to the Sturgis Bike Rally [an American motorcycle rally held annually in Sturgis, South Dakota, for ten days early each August. Attendance is usually around 500,000 people. – Wikipedia]

Brew the perfect beer.

How has lockdown affected you?

I am largely working from home. Just prior to Level 4 coming online, Wellington Water allowed us to bring all our monitors, laptops, and other tools home so we can maintain continuity with what we were doing from the office. I am also an Essential Service provider, which requires me to go out onsite to work with our service crews, contractors, and water treatment plant operators. For us it is about trying to maintain business as usual for our customers, repairing pipes, fixing leaks, investigating sewer overflows, and flooding while still trying to remain within our bubbles.

(Compiled April 2020)