

LATE SUMMER/EASTER 2018
COMPLIMENTARY

"PERFECT MORNING, OPITO"
by JANE GALLOWAY



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WHAT'S INSIDE

LATE SUMMER / EASTER 2018

Cover Artist Jane Galloway8
 Like Ants to Honey..... 12
 Wild Romance for Adventurous Couples 14-23
 Celebrating 25 years of our Marine Reserve23-28
 A Stroll through the Hall Arboretum20-32
 Carson's Bookshop: News and Reviews 35
 Thames Heritage Days.....36-39
 Exploring The Coromandel Coastal Walkway.....40-45
 Colville's Easter Arts Festival 46
 The Coromandel Art Scene.....48-56
 Peninsula Profiles.....58-63
 Hahei Explorer celebrates 25th year
 Azimuth Estates – A Dream Realised
 Derek Boyd Honoured
 Rocking out with Whangamata's Beach Hop.....64-65
 Community Calendar66-68
 Spotlight on Community happenings69-75
 Cheers to the Advertisers.....76

Publishers

Tovi and Greg Daly

Executive Editor/Managing Editors

Tovi Daly Carol Wright

Office Manager

Sarah Steinemann

Design & Layout

Matt Hishon: Anomaly Design
 other contributing support...

Carol Wright Shannon Okey Tovi Daly

Contributing Writers/Editors/Proofing

Carol Wright Emma Darragh Alison Smith Rowena Brown
 Robert Simmons Scott Simpson Tovi Daly
 Sandra Scott Georgina Bond Len Salt Kate Palmano

Calendar Coordination & Design

Shannon Okey

Advertiser Liaisons

Rowena Brown Len Salt Sarah Steinemann

Contributing Artists/Photographers

Cover Art Jane Galloway Marine Series Ginney Deavoll
 Alison Smith Rowena Brown
 Destination Coromandel Alan Duff Greg Daly

Printing & Pre-press

Crucial Colour, Penrose Auckland

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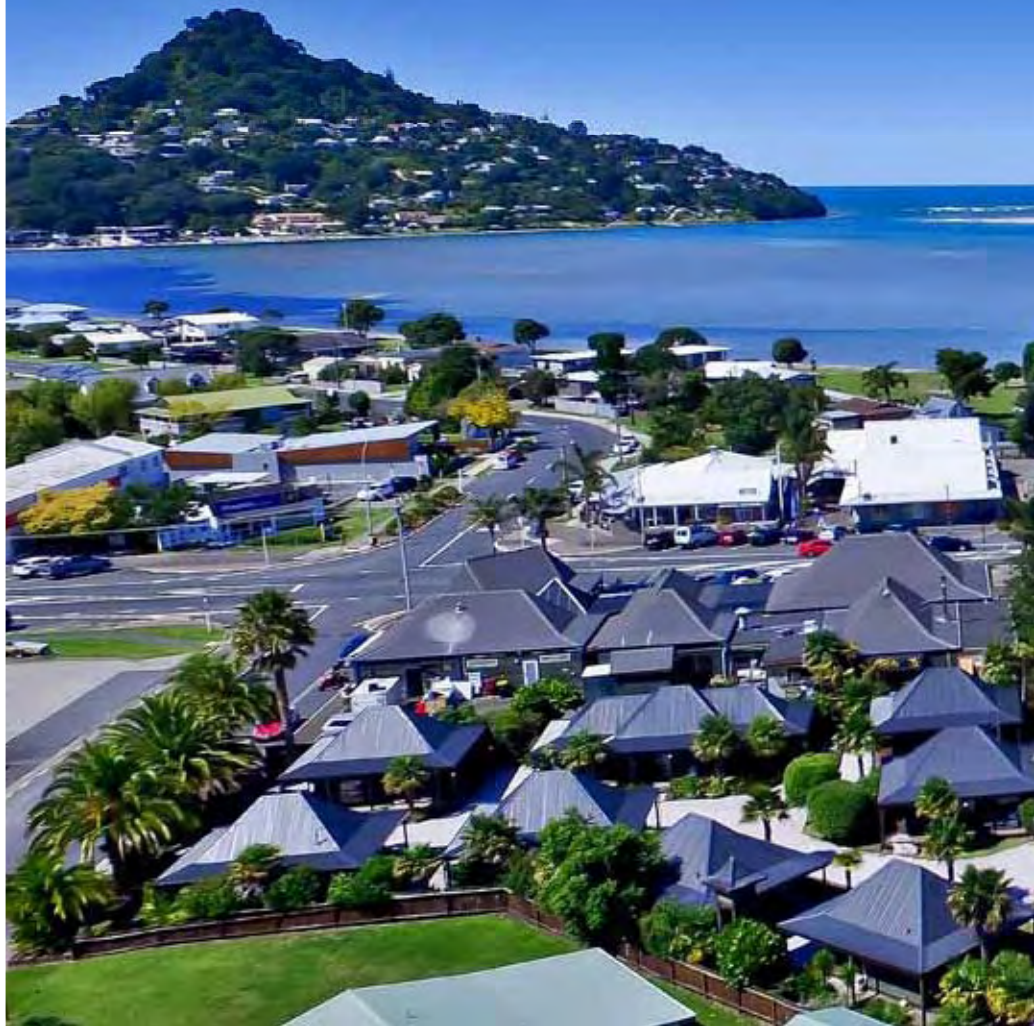
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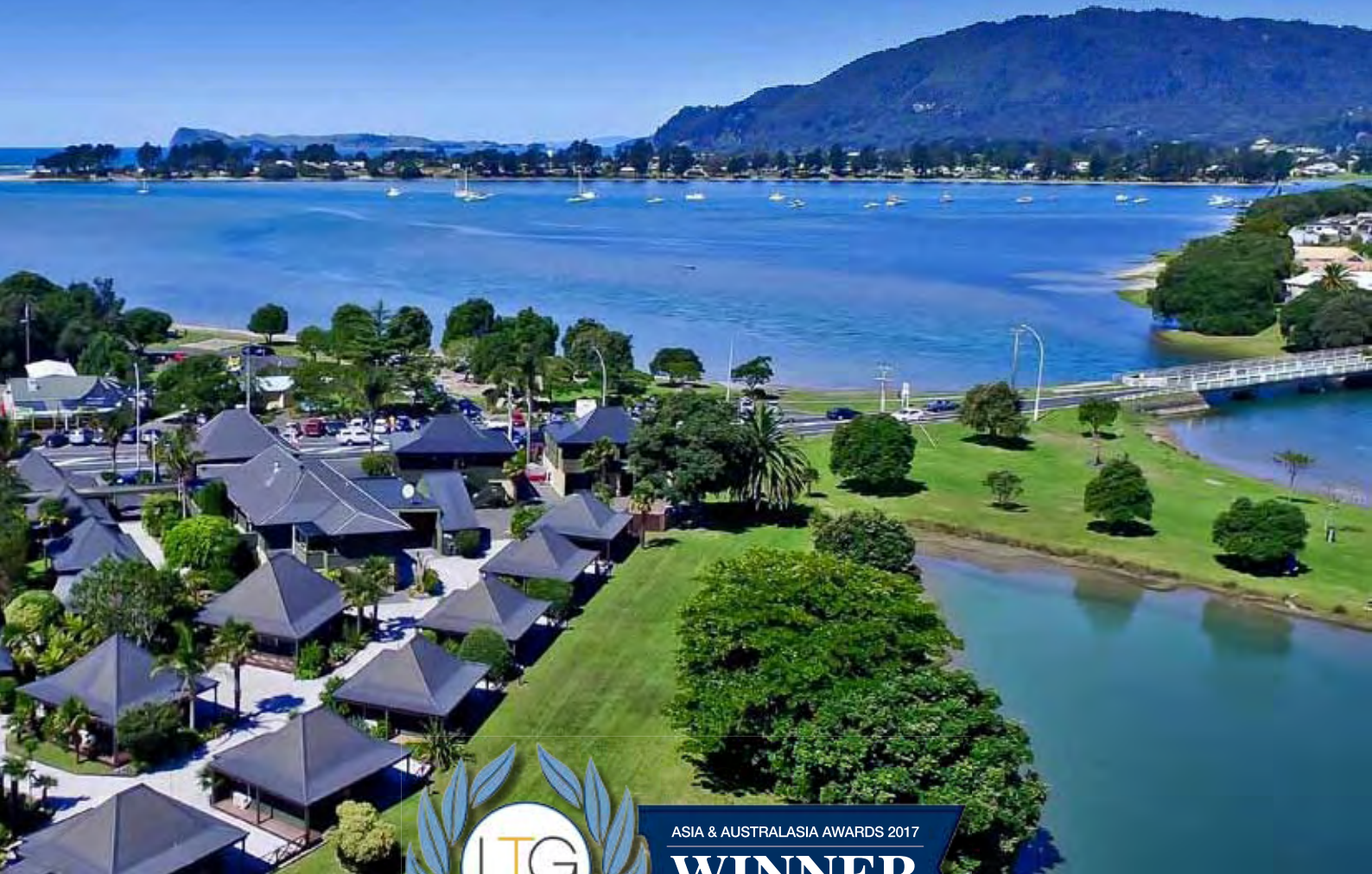


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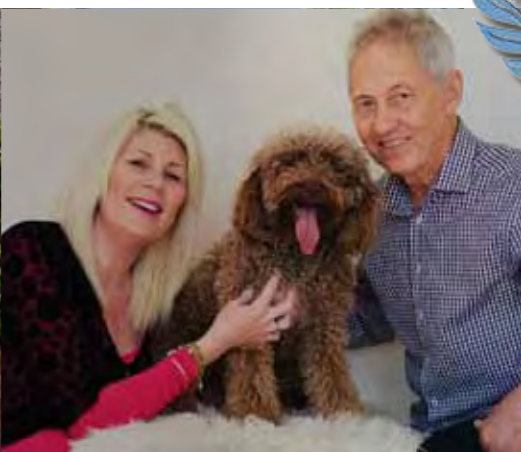
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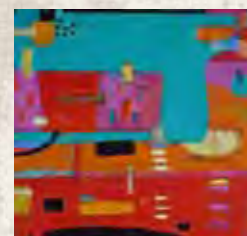
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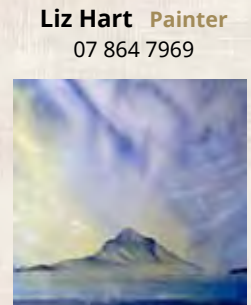
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Jane Galloway

We were pleased to find this stunning painting by Jane Galloway for our cover. "Perfect Morning, Opito" was inspired by a beautiful summer sunrise she experienced at Opito Beach a few years ago. So familiar is the sea, sand and flax blooms of our summers, that it could remind you of other Coromandel beach scenes near you – just add a nectar feasting Tui!

At right: Jane is working on another painting, inspired by the same location.



A STRONG COROMANDEL CONNECTION

Jane has been a Coromandel regular for many years. During her student days, she holidayed in flatmates' baches, garages or just 'slept rough' in the dunes at places like Hot Water Beach or Whangamata.

Many years later, there would be numerous (more comfortable) holidays with her family as they often enjoyed the gentler climate of the peninsula's east coast. Each visit built on memories of previous summers as they rented baches from Whiritoa to Port Jackson, and took day trips to as many beaches as those few weeks allowed.

Jane kept her keen artist's eye on the lookout for possible subject matter, gathering photos of beautiful coastal vistas to paint from in the winter months back at their home in Raglan.

"I had a wonderful summer holiday with my children a few years back", she recalls, "one of those painted into the memory with the intense light and saturated colours of The Coromandel."

"I ran down to the beach each morning with my camera in time to catch the first rays skimming the sand – I took hundreds of inspiring images over the days we were there. 'Perfect Morning, Opito' is painted from a detail of one of these. I still have more paintings planned from this holiday, including the one on my easel above titled 'Morning Walk, Opito', which will be available at Bread & Butter gallery in Whitianga, by the autumn."

Jane visits the Coromandel several times a year to bring work to galleries, catch up with

her 90-year-old uncle in Tairua, and continue to visit beaches all along the coast – always looking for perfect days with perfect light to inspire new paintings. To her it's the perfect getaway and a way to recharge from a busy life.

JANE'S TIME AT ELAM

Jane graduated with Honours from Elam School of Fine Arts in Auckland, where her painting tutors were Garth Tapper, Bob Ellis, and artist/conservationist Don Binney.

Jane shares that "surprisingly, during those years painting techniques were no longer taught – you were given a small space to work and you got on with whatever you wanted to say. There was an explosion of new media and avenues of expression at the time, and many perceived painting as an outdated medium".

It was an exciting time as a student, and Jane spent lively evenings at the local Kiwi Tavern, passionately discussing art and ideas with Don Binney and her Elam friends.

After graduation, she worked for her brother, at his successful store, Soul in Hamilton. Painting was set aside for making leather sandals (with car tyre soles back then), skills which extended into bag making, and eventually her own business in Auckland.

In 1993 Jane moved to Raglan and was drawn back into painting by doing projects with her artistic young children. It re-awoke the desire to do her own work, but where to start? Although she won a prize at Elam for a watercolour, that was 20 years before! With no 'formal' training Jane turned to the local library for books on

watercolour techniques and set about doing paintings on her kitchen table.

This talented artist now works in a myriad of styles. Many of her paintings are extremely detailed, however her fine brushwork is most evident in her print editions featuring vivid renderings of NZ birds, flowers and leaves.

One series of paintings named 'There is no Planet B', features birds in colourful glory, flying against a stark background of cities and motorways. Yet another artistic style is used in 'graphic design' prints, flat forms resembling screenprints, inspired by design and architecture from the 1940s and '50s.

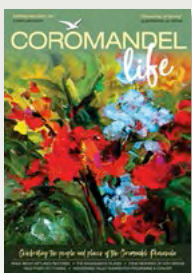
Each year Jane produces ranges of prints as well as several paintings. Some images are used as greeting cards distributed by Live Wires NZ Ltd. They are also available in limited editions at www.palmparts.co.nz and www.janegallowayartist.com.

Besides Bread & Butter Gallery, you'll find her work at The Little Gallery in Tairua. See another of her paintings, Paku from Pumpkin Hill, on our calendar, page 66.

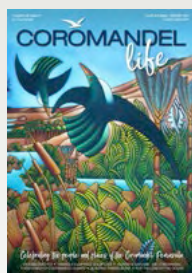


"There Is No Planet B – Karuhiruhi (Last Exit)"

See these recent Coromandel Life cover artists in their year-round open studios



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Kia ora...



Summer, the time of year everyone looks forward to as the Coromandel bursts at the seams with holidaymakers, visitors and those of us lucky enough to live here. Population on the peninsula leaps from 20,000 to 200,000 within days of Christmas. The shock of it can be quite an adjustment for us locals – no parking in town, long queues at the supermarket and people on our beach! Emma Darragh describes the scene quite well in her editorial on page 12.

And this year it seemed as if we leaped immediately from Winter to Summer. One day we had a fire to take the chill off a very wet day, and the next week everyone was talking of the stifling 25° weather. No complaints however – it was great to see the long stretch of sunny skies throughout most of December.

This early start of fine weather was a boost for the shops, cafés and accommodation – and no one was complaining about that either, although it did catch a few businesses short staffed!

We grew to 80 pages this issue – due mostly to Rowena Brown returning to the ranks and bringing more businesses on board to be part of our happy band of advertisers. What a great ambassador she has been for *Coromandel Life* (also its predecessor *PakuViews*). And she can write too! (See below.) Since we

keep our ad to editorial ratio quite low, it meant even more stories for you readers 'celebrating the people and places of the Coromandel'.

A big thanks to Carol Wright – my CL colleague/friend for over 30 years. She 'hung in' there (as did designer Matt) for the extra work involved – though we did commiserate about our stiff necks and shoulders after 14hr days at computers. As deadlines loomed and minds were frazzled, she reminded me of Brando's inspirational statement on p16, *"In the end, kindness is all that matters."*

New beginnings, reaffirmations, fresh starts, and promises for a brighter future – all come to mind as we rang in 2018. I revisited my 2017 New Year's resolution and realise it still stands – to work less, love more and have a whole lot more fun!

I made some progress last year, but have high hopes I can push even more into 2018. After being given a new lease on my life, and cautious optimism for my future health after my cancer recovery, I hope to honour it with continuing this motto. And with some talented help now on board, it makes that, as well as an even better *Coromandel Life*, possible.


All the best for the remainder of 2018!

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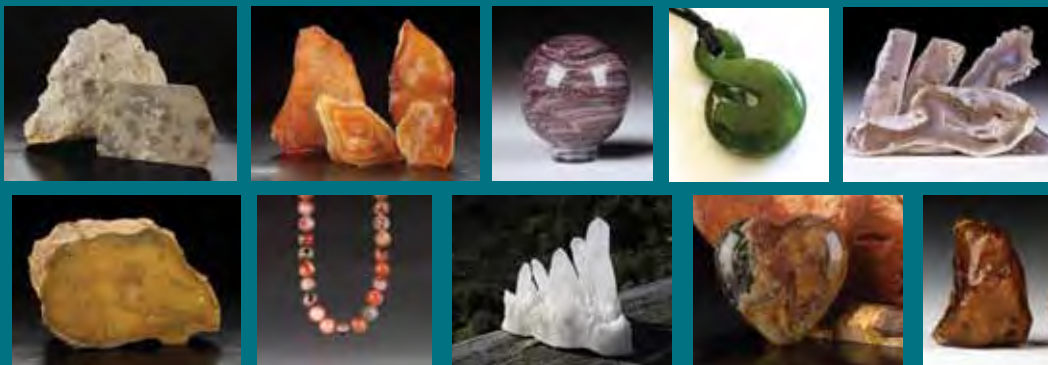
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Like Ants To Honey

Thousands descend on The Coromandel during summer. This week, I've noticed the shift. The light is brighter at 5.30am. There are more cars waiting at the stop sign on the one-way bridge – less cars I recognise. More people filling the fish and chip shop, lining up for ice cream, playing at the park. There are rental cars at the beach carparks. People on the beach, people in the water.

They bring with them a crackling atmosphere of energy, of anticipation for the coming season. Accompanying their weekend visits is a thrum of activity; lawn mowers, chainsaws, hammering of nails, trailer loads of tree clippings or household bric-a-brac heading for the dump.

What do the locals make of it? I used to dread it – so busy! Now I love it. I'm excited to see unfamiliar faces enjoying the beauty and bounty of the place we call home. I want to welcome everyone. Come in, come in, welcome! I'd say graciously. I am proud to showcase this area. And feel fortunate to call it home.

By Emma Darragh - CoLab Collective 17 December, 2017

I have developed a deep appreciation for the businesses that serve the Coromandel's seasonal economy. Many people navigate their way through the dramatic fluctuations of summer feast, winter famine.

Both business owners and employees are called to task come summer – required to rise up and meet the challenges of a sudden and massive population increase. And yes they are grateful. Yes, they know our Coromandel summer is largely what sustains their existence.

But yes too, it is tough. Many people move to the Coromandel to conduct their lives and businesses in a less frantic way, in a less peopled place. But what happens when the city follows you, as it inevitably does in summer? You cope best you can. Patience is tested, demands are increased, expectations run high.

What I see in shops and restaurants, amidst the traffic and the throngs of beach goers impresses me. I am so proud of our community; our local business operators, our local workers, our local kids thrust into their first summer jobs. I see people doing their best to meet the holiday needs of an, at times, overwhelming number of people.

Jumping off Tairua's one lane bridge is a long-time Summer tradition.



Soon it will settle again. But for now, I look around me and am in awe of those who are working their summer away in the Coromandel.

Thank you for my coffee. Thank you for my entree. Thank you for my bread, milk and impromptu bottle of wine."And may your holiday happen soon...

Population increase from 1200 to 20,000 makes for a super busy harbour situation.



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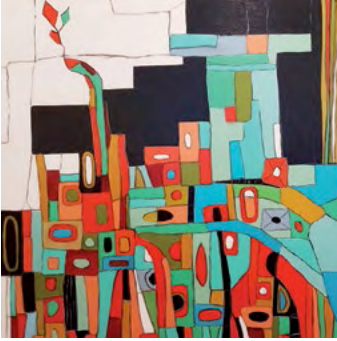


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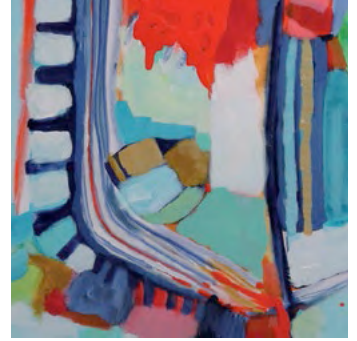
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Wild Romances

To acknowledge Valentine's Day, we thought a bit of 'Romance Coromandel-Style' was on order.

Love is in the air – or rather 'in the water' for the three adventure driven couples featured over the next several pages.

As well as being nicked by cupid's arrow, it was a shared love of the great outdoors and our stunning natural environment that drew our pairs together. We bring you some fabulous images along with the stories of coincidental meetings and surprise proposals made in some unrivaled scenic spots.

Ngaio and Brando share a love for the ocean – and each other.

Brando and Ngaio enjoying one of nature's gifts – natural thermal springs!



WildBOY meets WildGIRL

At the age of 20, Brando Yelavich made a name for himself as the first person to circumnavigate both islands of NZ in a 600-day, 8,000km solo hike chronicled in his first book 'Wildboy'.

What were the chances he would meet "the love of his life – the perfect girl" on this epic odyssey? And yet he did – right here on the Coromandel – Ngaio Gregory, a Hahei native. "I met Ngaio", Brando says, "about 400 days into my trek."

Much like the plot of a 'destined-to-be' romantic comedy, the pair were nudged together by a dog. How?

"I was walking along the shoreline near Hahei", explains Brando, "and because of the impassable swells, I decided to hike inland. I was on Orchard Road when I got chatting to a friendly local, Brett Gregory." And, as so often happened on this infamous trip, Brett invited the interesting young man back for a meal, a shower and perhaps the night ... if that was all right with his daughter Ngaio.

Brett was headed overseas, and after explaining the situation to Ngaio, he left Brando's number with her. She was headed home from the hospital in Thames, where she works as a radiographer.

"It was going to be late by the time I got back to Hahei, so I decided to tell Brando it wouldn't work for him to stay". Feeling a bit guilty, she sent him a text and left it at that. But fate, and her dog, had other ideas.

"I was walking along the shore when an excited little black dog ran up," remembers Brando. "I realised Brett's dog had followed me." He phoned Ngaio to collect 'Kaya' ...and...realising Brando was indeed a kind person that even her beloved black Staffy cross approved of, she reconsidered and offered him the spare room.

Although Brando needed to continue on with his journey, he invited Ngaio to meet up with him later so they might walk sections of the coast together. They

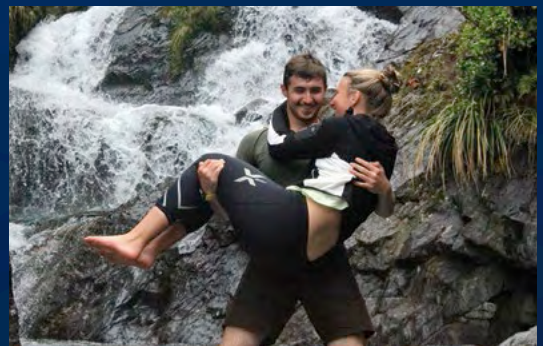
quickly formed a connection through their mutual love for adventure and the great outdoors. Describing Ngaio, Brando shared on his blog, "I have a new found love for girls with strength – especially this one!"

Brando now also calls Hahei home. Together for over three years, the couple enjoy the abundant offerings of the area – fishing, diving, kayaking and swimming – as well as adventures elsewhere in NZ and beyond. One shared outing was a climb up steep slippery slopes to the peak of the brush covered Te Manga – largest mountain in Rarotonga. They have also frolicked with dolphins, found hidden hot pools and showered under many a canyon's waterfall.

Ngaio has also introduced Brando to horseback riding, and they often ride over her family's land at Rangihau Ranch in Coroglen.

Brando is staying close to home this summer, working with Cathedral Cove Kayaks. He continues to write and has refined his solo quests into an outdoor guide business, Wildboy Adventures.

No matter what other challenging or humanitarian excursions might beckon him away next, Brando always comes back – to his Hahei home and his cherished 'Wildgirl'.





Wild Romances

More About Brando

Diagnosed with both ADHD and dyslexia, Brando Yelavich struggled early on. “School was a huge challenge for me, then my dream of joining the army was destroyed due to my learning difficulties. I was on a roller-coaster ride that was going nowhere good – fast.”

However, the determined 19 year old vowed to do something that mattered. “I decided to raise funds for Ronald McDonald House while walking around the NZ coast – living off the land, the sea and the kindness of others. No one believed I could do it – and I wasn’t sure I could either.

“This journey, and being in nature, saved and forever changed me. I overcame near-death incidents, incredible loneliness and physical and logistical obstacles. I came back with a completely altered view of the world and my place in it. Relationships with my family mended, and I had met my own Wildgirl, Ngaio. I could finally see a future for myself where there had been none.”

Brando also learned kaitiakitanga, or ‘guardianship of nature’ in Maori. “It’s all about respect,” he says. “When I go into the bush, I feel as though I am a protector of that space.”

Brando wrote the enthralling tell-all about his NZ trek in his first book, ‘Wildboy’.

“After finishing this trek, it took a lot for me to adjust back to real life.” He also had some setbacks including back surgery and the death of a close friend. Brando’s strong determination returned yet again – he ‘pressed reset’ and launched into planning a daring 60-day solo hike around Stewart Island.

However, after a month of perilous conditions, freezing weather, dangerous terrain and isolation proved too much even for this experienced ‘Wildboy’. A journal entry despaired, “I’ve never been so cold. I’m not sure I’m going to survive. Just in case, I want

everybody to know how much I love them.”

Near starvation, he even resorted to eating rats. (Later, displaying his innate good nature, Brando produced a YouTube video classic, “Cook Time with Brando: How to Eat a Rat”.)

In the depths of misery he had an epiphany, “There has to be more to life than this!” He cut short his trip and returned to Hahei and Ngaio, where he penned his new book ‘Wildboy: To the Edge and Back’.

SCALING NEW HEIGHTS!

This past winter Brando focused on fundraising to benefit a relief mission to Nepal. “This wasn’t any old sausage sizzle or cake stall, we decided to summit the four highest peaks of the North Island in only three days.”

In November 2017, he flew with a NZ family to deliver roofing materials, clothing and other relief supplies purchased with the funds.

“A most thrilling highlight was when our plane flew around Mt. Everest!

“The effect that our expedition had was more profound than I could have imagined. The people were so grateful for the smallest things. My favourite thing to give out was small toys to the children – their faces lit up with total joy. All up this adventure to Nepal made me feel so happy.

“In the end, kindness is all that matters.”



As part of Brando’s relief expedition in the Himalayas, they delivered much needed medical supplies for Khunde hospital. “Built in 1966 by Sir and Lady Hillary, it is the highest hospital in the world. So as you can imagine it’s one of the hardest places to access.” The jopkyo shown, a cross breed of yak and cattle, assisted their efforts.



Brando carries Ngaio close, even when far away in Nepal. “Best friends are those in life who make you laugh a little louder, feel a little stronger and sometimes shed a tear or two, but above all, they’re there when you need them most! Thanks for being my special human.”

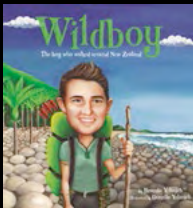


About his books...

His story is one of transformation, and the once shy Brando shares his story through his books, as a motivational speaker and as a role model – inspiring many other young adventurers to discover nature, the outdoors and themselves. He lectures publically about ADHD/dyslexia, is mastering social media, and is a TEDxYouth speaker, (search 'TEDxYouth Brando' on youtube.com).

"I talk at schools quite often", says Brando. "It's so cool to see the looks on kids' faces when I tell my story."

They will be thrilled to know he has written a book just for them!



COMING APRIL 2018: 'Wildboy: The Boy Who Walked Around New Zealand', Brando's children's book illustrated by his mother, Donella Yelavich. Penguin Puffin.



New! 'Wildboy: to the Edge and Back. More Adventures through Rugged, Remote New Zealand', recounts the Stewart Island trek. (August 2017) .

... a nail-biting account of Brando's solo exploration of the Deep South. An adventure tale of grit and determination, and inspirational story about chasing your dreams, it's the perfect read for any armchair adrenalin junky.



'Wildboy: An Epic Trek around the Coastland of NZ.' (2015) Extreme adventure, near misses, good sorts, and one beautiful country – 'Wildboy' is a ripping adventure story with an inspiring life change at its heart. 'Wildboy' has it all!

Signed copies are available through Brando or at Carson's Book Shop in Thames.

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Sharkman *hooks* Sharkbait...

Divers 'Sharkman' Riley Elliott and Amber Jones were in Tonga in September last year to study the humpbacks with Australian ocean photographer and whale guru Matt Draper. They were returning to shore after their third and final day in the water with the whales when the boat skipper veered in a different direction and approached the entrance of a notoriously beautiful sea cave where he urged the trio to get out and explore.

Getting into the cave was no small feat. "We were required to free-dive beneath the surface 5m then across about 7m", said Riley, "before we could surface again inside the cave. It seemed totally separated from the outside."

Amber adds, "Surfacing in the cave, Riley and I were blanketed in a turquoise haze created by the cave entranceway being lit up under the blue water. "I just couldn't stop exclaiming how beautiful it was," She still had no idea about Riley's grand plan that was about to unfold or that Matt and the skipper were in on it.

Riley, usually the talkative one of the two, was uncharacteristically quiet. "I turned around to make sure he was ok, and there he was holding up a little black box with a stunning turquoise ring inside.

"So there he was, frantically kicking his finned feet trying to stay afloat without the use of his arms, asking me to marry him. Since Riley was always joking around about us being engaged, I was a bit desensitized to the subject, therefore I thought this was just another gag and told him it was no time to be making jokes."

It took about five minutes before Amber realised Riley was actually serious before she gave him her answer: "I finally said 'yes' and did the whole 'Crying-Girl' thing!"

And of course, photographer Matt was there to capture the special moment for the pair.

Riley said the exotic Tongan locale was the perfect spot to surprise Amber with his proposal. "I love that the underwater world has become so much of my life", he explained. "And I'm lucky to have found a partner like Amber, who shares my love of the ocean, and most importantly, is driven by the desire to share it with others – so they, too, can prioritise it in their lives.

"Why do we both find our ocean work so important? Because if we don't protect the natural world, we are killing ourselves, literally. It's science 101." shares Riley.

BALANCING WORK AND THE WATER

The adventurous engagement is fitting for Riley (32) and Amber (29) who moved to Tairua in early 2017 to help pursue their love for the outdoors with their creative careers.

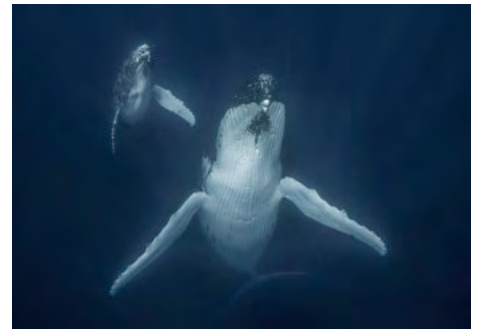
Riley is a marine biologist and completed his BSc Honours in Zoology and Masters in Marine Science with Distinction. He then completed an internship studying great white sharks in South Africa and became 'hooked' when he stayed on to help run the Great White Shark programme. Since then, 'Sharking' has taken Riley around the world many times, and has been involved in numerous documentaries and media appearances. His book 'Shark Man; One Kiwi Man's Mission to Save our Most Feared and Misunderstood Predator' later spawned the 'Shark Man' television series.

Although Riley has specialised in sharks, he and Amber share an overarching passion for the entire ocean, as well as its inhabitants, as an ecosystem.

A professional underwater camerawoman and qualified freediver, Amber joins Riley on many of his shark expeditions to capture his experiences on video. Out of the water, Amber works on photography projects for tourism and lifestyle clients.

Amber and Riley, with their adorable pup Kona, are busy building a home with stunning views from the top of Mt Paku where they enjoy easy access to so many of the Coromandel's outdoor activities in their own backyard.

When asked if the couple had set the wedding date yet, Amber replied, "No date yet. The engagement party – called 'Sharkman Hooks Sharkbait' (yeah, that's what he calls me!) – was enough for now!"



NOTE: Riley has helped develop the HECS 'stealth' wetsuit for divers that prevents sharks, fish and even shelfish from detecting electrical signals from divers' muscles. This suit allows Riley to almost embrace sharks without the intrusion alert of his body's electrical system.

Watch Amber's video that shows Riley using these suits "A Day in the Life: Riley Elliott – part 1" up at [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and visit his website at www.rileyelliott.com.

To check out Amber's 'commercial' videos or buy prints of her photographs visit www.amberandfriends.net.

Learn more about this dynamic duo in the 2017 Winter issue as well as Riley's work with sharks in the Summer 2014 issue on our website - www.coromandelife.co.nz

You may not be able to see it, but a very happy Amber shows her engagement ring.





Wild Romances

The 'trip of a lifetime' turned into a lifetime commitment when Tairua's 'Sharkman' Riley Elliot surprised Amber Jones with his proposal in this exotic Tongan cave.



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The 'knee drops' at Shoe Island

Another surprise proposal recently popped up on our 'romance radar'. Pauanui couple, Bevan Gooch and Georgina Bond, also share the joy of getting out into our natural environs – and their proposal had a water theme too!

Both are keen stand-up paddle boarders and after Bevan first tackled the sport almost 10 years ago, he was inspired to create the first open water SUP race around an island in NZ – the 10km Pauanui Shoe Island Challenge.

So while this route is all too familiar for both, Bevan admits he felt nervous setting out to do it last December with Georgina – and an engagement ring hidden in his PFD waist belt.

Georgina realised this trip wasn't the regular Shoe Island hit-out for the paddlers when Bevan suggested they paddle in near the cliff on the western side of the island, which had a lovely view back to Pauanui. And, there on the rocks, he popped the question.

I guess we wouldn't be telling this story unless her answer was "Yes", and Georgina says Bevan was spot-on with his choice of location to 'drop the knee'.

"I love this spot. And no matter how many times we make this trip, it always takes my breath away when I look up at the near-vertical cliffs on the eastern side while experiencing the rolling swell of the Pacific Ocean as it crashes against the rocks," says Georgina.

"Shoe Island is such an icon on the Pauanui coastline, and Bevan and I are fortunate to have a glimpse of it from our house. Of course, now it will always symbolise something even more special for us."

The couple have both holidayed in Pauanui since childhood, and made it their home after meeting there four summers ago.

Bevan, an electrician, runs Short Circuit Electrical, and in his spare time cuts a familiar shape to many locals – carving through the swell off Pauanui Beach on his foiling board (see photo below).

Georgina, a former business reporter and communications professional, has also done some writing and editing for CL. She now works as a communications and marketing officer at Thames Coromandel District Council.



Jodi La Grouw
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Above: Both Georgina and Bevan enjoy many types of outdoor activities and have done several multi sport races involving SUP, mountain biking and running. Here they are at the 2017 NZ SUP Nationals.

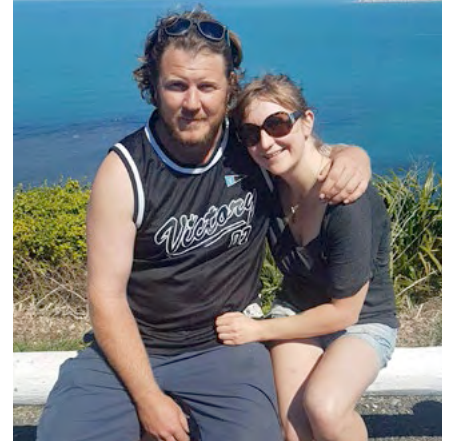
Right: Georgina had no idea that Bevan had hatched a plan to propose on their paddle to Shoe Island. And here, as they looked back to Pauanui, he popped the question.



Stop press

Just before print time another romance 'surfaced'. Our very own Shannon Okey, contributing writer and designer for the last three years, just revealed to us she has become engaged to Shane Nicolson, her sweetheart of 7 months!

Shane ensured the very last present Shannon opened on Christmas Day was the ring! We send our congratulations to them both. The wedding is set for Summer 2019.



It was 'love at first sight' for Whitanga couple Shannon Okey and Shane Nicolson.

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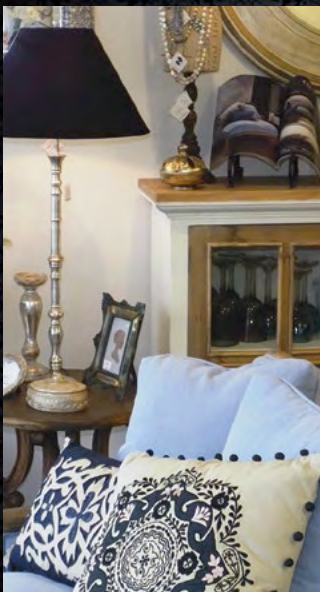


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Celebrating 25 Years of protection

Te Whanganui A Hei Marine Reserve at Cathedral Cove

In the 1970s, the fish stocks around Cathedral Cove were seriously depleted largely due to the use of box nets which indiscriminately scooped up everything from the seabed. Now, with the help of concerned locals including Ngati Hei and Dept of Conservation (DoC), the downward overfishing spiral was reversed. In 1992 The Te Whanganui a Hei Marine Reserve was established to help protect the area and the creatures who live there..

Now, with no recreational or commercial fishing allowed, the reserve's marine plants and animals have been free to reclaim their natural balance.

This Marine Reserve actually stretches at shoreline between Hahei Beach and the Cook Bluff Scenic Reserve, some half way to Whitianga. Even though you can not fish nor collect specimens from within its boundaries, see the following pages to see the many ways you can enjoy and explore it.



Hahei artist Ginney Deavoll painted a series of works showcasing the reserve's stunning scenery and abundant wildlife (see following pages).

"Over the years I have been fortunate enough to admire this reserve and its inhabitants in close proximity. There have been encounters with orca hunting stingray, kingfish hiding beneath my kayak, gannets dropping like bombs all around me and giant snapper nibbling my fingers.

"The challenge with this series was to portray the vitality and movement I see when observing this marine environment and to capture that one frame in a sequence of events that tells a whole story."

Painting to preserve The Marine Reserve



The Visitors.

While orca the world over generally have a hugely varied diet from octopus to fish to marine mammals, orca in New Zealand have also developed a taste for stingray. Stingrays are bottom feeders and can be seen on a calm day gliding through the shallows of the sandy bays, especially Sting Ray Bay within the marine reserve.



Hahei artist Ginney Deavoll creates a series of paintings and story that honour Te Whanganui a Hei Marine Reserve

Story and images by Ginney Deavoll.

The Hunt.

Snapper are thriving as the area regains balance. They are long lived and territorial, not venturing too far from their area so it is possible to encounter very large fish in the reserve. It will eat everything from kina, shellfish and crabs to small fish.

To help celebrate the Reserve's 25th anniversary, we are pleased to share Ginney's story with a sampling of paintings from a series inspired by her years as a kayak guide in this incredible reserve area. We admire and support her dedication to protecting our natural environment by informing others of the beauty and the vulnerable balance of our ecosystem.

Beneath the waves snapper crunch on kina, stingray drift amongst the kelp, small fish dart and weave through the swaying kelp gardens while crayfish peer out from their watery caves. Up above gannets circle, shags shake out their feathers and seals lounge in the sun. Within every eco system there is a balance, and within Te Whanganui a Hei Marine Reserve, all its inhabitants have been allowed to regain control of the natural order of their environment.

Te Whanganui a Hei Marine Reserve was established in 1992 as New Zealand's sixth marine reserve. This particular stretch of coastline was chosen for its diversity. It is nine square kilometres and within its boundaries there is no commercial or recreational fishing.

There is significantly more marine life, and more variety of species inside the boundaries compared to outside the reserve.

The coastline is riddled with caves, arches, islands and cliffs, all with peculiar patterns as if carved by giants. The offshore islands are a lot older and are the remains of a collection of ancient volcanoes called rhyolite domes. The predominately white rock along the coastline is called ignimbrite, a volcanic rock made up of pumice and ash. This arrived as a pyroclastic flow from an eruption in the Coroglen area. It is a very soft rock and subsequently the weathering caused by wind and waves keeps the coastline in a constant state of change.



History.

Hei, leader of the Ngati Hei, arrived in this area in 1350AD. Upon seeing Motueka Island he stated to his people that it looked like, "Te Kuraetanga-o-taku-lhu" (the outward curve of my nose). In saying this he was acknowledging Papatuanuku, the earth mother, who had carved it especially for him and was asserting his ownership over the area.

Hei and his people established themselves around the area naming it 'Te Whanganui a Hei' (the great bay of Hei). It was given the name Mercury Bay by Captain James Cook on his 1769 voyage after he observed the transit of Mercury from Cooks Beach.

Little Pied Shag.

Shags have no oil in their feathers making them perform brilliantly underwater but heavy and water logged after a swim. You'll often see them face the wind or the sun, wings outstretched in an attempt to dry out.



King of the Castle.

Kingfish are fast, aggressive predators that hunt around the offshore reefs. They can reach 1.7m in length, and weigh up to 56kg. All varieties have the trademark yellow flash on the tail. Blue Maomao can be the unlucky prey of a hungry kingfish.



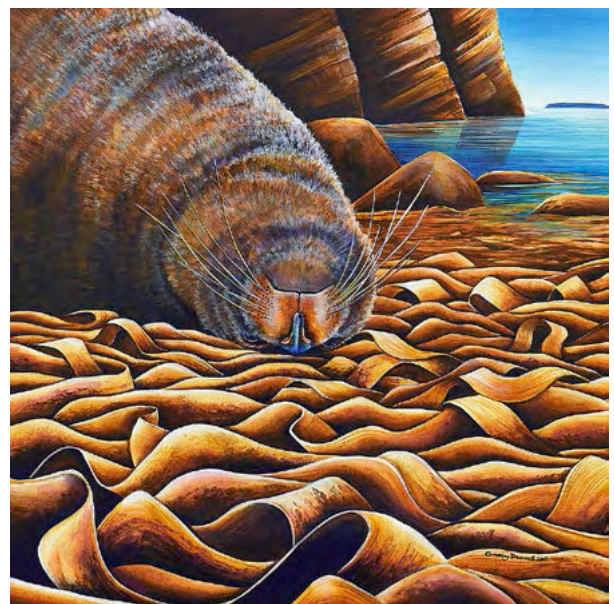
Catch of the Day.

A white streak plummets from the world above, crashing through the watery barrier at speeds of up to 145 kilometres per hour before plucking its unsuspecting dinner from the depths. Upon impact, the gannet relies on air sacs around their neck and chest to absorb most of the force.



Penguins in Pursuit.

Little blue penguins are the smallest penguins in the world and can be seen along any coastline in New Zealand. They nest onshore, but spend most of their time at sea hunting small fish, crustaceans and squid.



Lazy Daze.

Fur seals travel up the coast in the autumn months in search of food and warmer water. They're often spotted lounging on the islands offshore from Cathedral Cove.

Hiding Out.

Encased in their suit of armour, crayfish appear ready for battle with a host of features that help them explore and respond to their surroundings. They do most of their hunting at night and are highly perceptive of the slightest movements while underwater.

About The Artist: Ginney Deavoll

Ginney is not only an artist, but a talented author as well. We were thrilled to discover she had painted a series of the wildlife found at Te Whanganui a Hei – a perfect fit for this feature. Often using the natural world as her theme, she paints with a 'vivid originality' that you can't help but be drawn into.



Ginney, a devoted conservationist, says, "I endeavour to share the awe I feel when experiencing the natural world and my hopes for its future. The natural world speaks loudly to me and I feel an obligation to express my gratitude for our remarkable backyard while also raising awareness of the challenges it faces."

Ginney has created a 'free' pocket size accordion-fold guide with these paintings and more. It can be found at her studio, the Hahei Explorer office, Cathedral Cove Water Taxi, Hot Waves Café, and Bread & Butter Gallery in Whitianga.

Years ago, she and partner Tyrell pulled off an extensive kayak, hiking and biking trip up the coast of the South Island, which Ginney relates through photos, art, and writing in her fabulous coffee table book "... The Long Way", available through Ginney or Aries Publishing.

Ginney's originals and prints can be viewed at Bread & Butter Gallery – prints are also available at Hot Waves Café. Be sure to visit her 'open studio' in Hahei during the Mercury Bay Art Escape tour.

Ginney's painting 'Stony Bay' was on the cover of our 2014 Spring/Holiday and was a reader favourite (which you can view online).

See more at www.ginneydeavoll.com and on Facebook.



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Photo of a nudibranch
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ABOVE & BELOW: Exploring the marine reserve

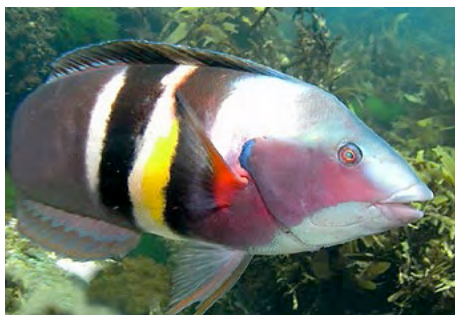
Above the water's surface, the iconic landmark of Te Whanganui a Hei Marine Reserve is Cathedral Cove and its lovely beaches and nearby bays. Accessible only on foot, by boat or kayak, this is definitely one of the "must see" sites on The Coromandel.

The reserve covers 9 square kilometres and was chosen because of the rich and varied habitats associated with the coastline and outlying islands.

All our marine creatures benefit from this healthy protected environment – sea birds like gannets, shags, red bill gulls, terns, shearwaters and petrels, as well as marine mammals like whales, seals and dolphins that regularly visit the reserve.

"And don't forget the eagle stingrays at Stingray Beach" says Shane Harnett, owner of the Hahei Explorer, "and those little blue penguins! We have a small colony in and around the reserve and I just spotted 12 yesterday out on the water.

"Parts of the reserve have recovered so well we can show our visitors fish over the side of the boat," explains Shane. "The fish we see regularly include snapper, blue cod, wrasse, blue mau mau, and trigger fish."



Sandagers wrasse - Cathedral Cove
Dive & Snorkel



Blue penguins - Courtesy of Hahei Explorer

GEMSTONE'S BAY SNORKEL TRAIL

One unique feature of the Marine Reserve is the snorkel trail at Gemstone Bay where divers may encounter large rock lobster, snapper and other coastal species up close. It is an easy and safe way to experience the amazing marine life in the reserve.

Getting to the boulder beach by land is a relatively easy walk from the Cathedral Bay car park or jump into the water from kayaks or tour boats that launch from Hahei or Whitianga. They often provide use of snorkel gear.

The Trail is marked by four yellow floating buoys, anchored 50-165m offshore at varying depths. Each buoy has an interpretive sign with information and photo that identifies the habitat and the species living below, varying from open water, tidal zone, rocky outcrops, sandy bottom, seaweed tangles, or spongy reefs. The buoys' handholds give divers a rest.

At nearby Poikeke Island there is a cave to explore with delicate corals, usually only seen in much deeper waters. Brittle starfish and

red moki graze among the seaweed here, and leather jacket can be seen seeking their smaller species prey.

Then explore the intertidal zone in the rocks onshore. The species here can tolerate the changing conditions in the pools, exposed to air and heat as the tide drops, and being submerged again at high tide. They have adapted to cope with the vagaries of this habitat, from the still water pools when the tide recedes, the surges as it rises, and waves pounding them when conditions are rough.

Remember, this area is a 'reserve', so no fishing, spearing, or species collection is allowed. The marine reserve's vast expanse, fanning out from a long shoreline, was protected in 1992, giving the entire region a quarter century to recover its ecological balance.

WAYS TO SEE THE RESERVE

Parking & hiking trail access to the Reserve's bays & coves

To reach the nearby Gemstone Bay, Stingray Beach and then Cathedral Cove by foot, use the hiking track that begins from the car park at the top of of Grange Road. From December to March, it is often full, however a park-and-ride service in Hahei village is available. Bring your own food, water, etc. as there are no public services beyond the parking lot.

Boat tours & rentals, kayaks, diving

Bring your own kayak or standup paddleboard (SUP) or hire one locally to explore the area. Other companies specialise in snorkel and scuba rentals, lessons and tours, with beginners often welcome.

Several tour companies operate out of Hahei Beach and Whitianga. Sales, rentals, air fills, lessons, glass bottom boats and guided trips are available.

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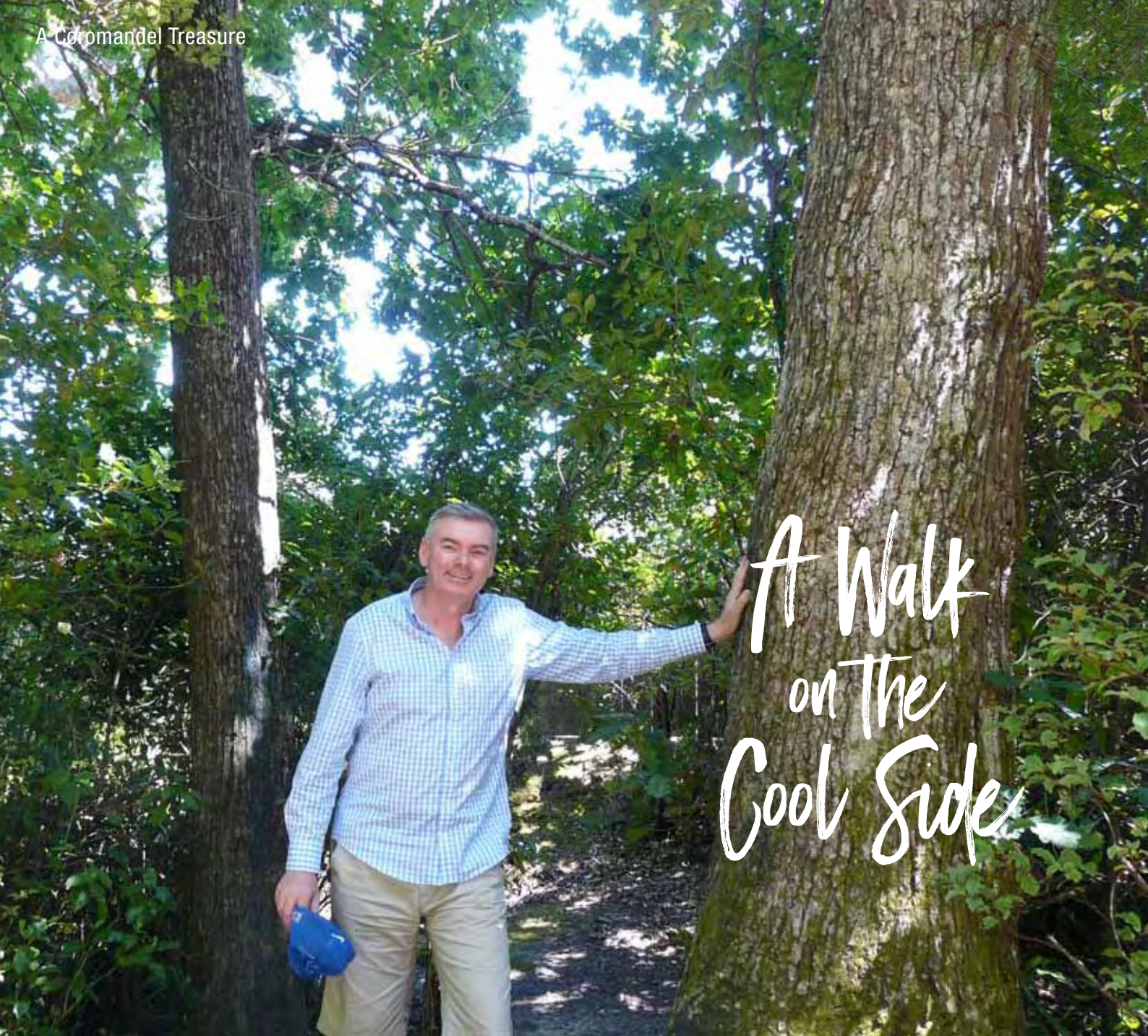
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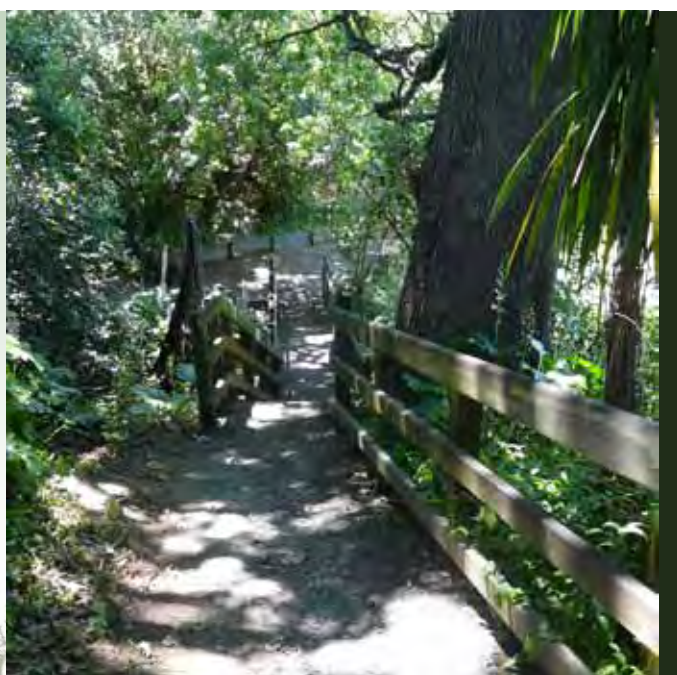


A Walk on the Cool Side



Right: Exotic and natives live side-by-side in this unique collection of trees planted by John William Hall in the 1870s.

Left: Overlooking Thames and tucked amongst the homes is the Hall Arboretum – forgotten and neglected until the 1990s.



EXPLORING THE HALL ARBORETUM

— WITH SCOTT SIMPSON —

We couldn't have chosen a better day to walk through this historic Thames Arboretum – it turned out to be the perfect place to stay cool on this very hot December day.

Scott has introduced our readers to some fascinating areas over the past few issues and this walk is no different. We're pleased these walks have offered us the opportunity to honour the organisations and dedicated volunteers responsible for preserving, restoring or maintaining these valuable 'Coromandel Treasures'.

Greg and I had not been to the Arboretum before, so we were thrilled to learn we'd be seeing many mature 'exotics' that included English elms, oaks as well as giant redwoods. And when I actually saw them – so huge and majestic – I couldn't resist hugging a few! It brought back fond childhood memories of playing in those bright coloured leaves that fell each autumn in the US midwest.

To make your walk even more interesting, some trees are marked with numbered tags that refer to a species list on the TCDC brochure – helps you identify the variety of species Hall planted here well over 100 years ago.

– Tovi Daly



Sometimes the historic and natural treasures of the Coromandel are so well hidden we don't even see them when they are right in front of our eyes.

That's very much the case in Thames with the beautiful yet frequently overlooked John William Hall Arboretum.

What's an 'arboretum' I hear you ask. Well, in its narrowest sense it's a 'garden devoted to trees'. However the fabulous work undertaken by John William Hall back in the early 1870s is something far more special today than just a mere collection of trees.

For a start, it's the oldest arboretum in New Zealand. Back in 1872, when he wasn't working in his Thames pharmacy, Hall was planting this three acre property at Parawai. Initially he planted for erosion control ... yes, land erosion was an issue back then too. But as an early conservationist, he planted to provide for habitat and botanical research in the very finest Victorian tradition.

Today, more than 140 years later, some 180 of his plantings survive in a lovely, well-presented reserve maintained by the Thames Coromandel District Council in collaboration with Forest & Bird Thames Branch.

Once you know where it is, and that it is

easily accessed from any one of the four public entrances, you'll wonder why you haven't explored it before.

Most of us don't think much about what the results of actions we take today will have in 150 years' time, but as I walk through the arboretum I can't help but think Hall did act with that in mind – giving thought as to how this diverse planting of both native and exotic trees would look when they matured so many years later.

Today visitors can't help but be impressed by the majesty of 140-year-old exotics such as English oaks, elms and giant redwoods as well as native species like totara, puriri, rimu and kauri, to name but a few. These trees, now huge in both height and girth, are of national and international significance – all lovingly planted and nurtured by Hall from both seeds and seedlings he propagated.

His love of amateur botany and work as a pioneer conservationist has left a magnificent legacy for us and for future generations.

A STROLL THROUGH A LIVING LEGACY

On the gloriously warm, sunny Thames summer afternoon, as we walk through his arboretum, the well-manicured pathway is shaded by a high canopy of lush green

foliage. The atmosphere created is calm and pleasantly cool, with melodious bird song providing a backdrop to the serenity of the reserve. Mottled sunlight creates an almost mystical air.

It's impossible not to be moved by the grandeur of the trees, be swept up by the history, and want to reach out and pat or hug these magnificent specimens as we walk by.

I can't recommend the Hall Arboretum more highly, and nor thank him enough for creating such a jewel right before our very eyes in a little visited but very special part of suburban Thames on the beautiful Coromandel.

Do take time to pay a visit, you won't regret it for a minute. It really is a walk 'good for your soul'.

Elected Member of Parliament for the Coromandel since November 2011, Scott Simpson MP has deep family ties to the Whitianga area spanning back four generations. His great grandparents arrived in Kuaotunu in the mid-1800s, and members of his extended family still farm in the area.

Although now living in Thames, Scott has owned a home in Kuaotunu for over 20 years. He has two adult children, and outside interests include trying to keep fit, reading, family time and, of course ... hiking and exploring the Coromandel!



Botanist John William Hall with his wife and five children, three sons and two daughters.



Hall's Thames chemist shop.

Overlooking Thames ~ THE HALL ARBORETUM ~

Thames chemist and amateur botanist John William Hall initially started planting both native and foreign 'exotic' trees on his three acre property in 1872 to help control the erosion that was occurring following the clear felling of Thames hills by farmers and miners.

Hall's plantings were at their peak in the early 1900s; however, after his death in 1915 the section was neglected. The property and its unique plantings were gradually – then literally – forgotten until rediscovered by Forest & Bird Thames Branch 70 years later.

Spokesperson Ken Clark recalls in the 2016 Winter issue of *Forest & Bird* magazine, "In the 1990s, retired botanist Alison Williamson went to a conference where Hall was mentioned and realised that she lived next door to his arboretum! Also on the Forest & Bird committee, she made us all aware of it."

Seeing it today, it's difficult to believe that just over only a decade ago, most of the Arboretum was covered in weeds and bush. Planting records had been lost and there were no longer any visible boundaries.

"At the time, Forest & Bird was monitoring the town's more iconic trees," adds Ken. "And we added Hall's Reserve to our work programme and started clearing out brush and weed, without knowing the precise boundaries of Hall's property." Council later spent \$16,000 surveying the land and constructing a boundary fence.

Ken, now 93, has worked countless hours with other volunteers toward the restoration of this town treasure. Projects included constructing paths, grass and bush clearing, plant inventory, posting signs and species ID tags, as well as searching for original written records, correspondence and documents.

ABOUT JOHN WILLIAM HALL

In the 19th century, chemists like the English-born and educated Hall were compelled to learn about the plants and herbs of their region for possible medicinal uses.

Hall's Arboretum, now established as the oldest in New Zealand, was considered a goldmine of botany even over a century ago, as Hall often traded collected seeds with botanists the world over.

The 1905 book *Tree Culture in NZ* by HJ Matthews, (Chief Forester, Government Printer, Wellington) notes the growth records of kauri, puriri, matai, totara, miro, rimu, kawaka and tanekaha which had been planted by Hall some 30 years previously.

Historian David Wilton of The Treasury in Thames has written several in depth articles about Hall. He tells us that another Arboretum milestone happened in 1913, when the government created a Royal Commission on Forestry to chart NZ's long term forestry policy and strategy. Members visited Hall's forest, measuring some 15 trees. Now that the arboretum is once more accessible, it is drawing interest from other botanists

interested in comparing such things as growth rates of native trees. Hall even had a species named after him (*Podocarpus Hallii* – Hall's totara).

Hall was not the area's lone amateur botanist; he had a close friendship with Thames' first school principal James Adams and also Thomas F. Cheeseman, noted NZ botanist and curator of the Auckland Museum. With Hall's zeal, he would surely have kept records in his Thames library, but few have been found and the rest are considered lost. However, you can read many examples of Hall's enthusiastic correspondence with botanists of the times in David's well researched articles on The Treasury's website.

David states, "Hall was a noted amateur botanist, pioneer conservationist, pharmacist and family man. His environment was a challenging one, being an early settler in a gold mining community when the national focus was very much on exploiting resources for economic gain and the conservation of natural resources was an almost unheard of concept."

Wilton adds that the final sentence of the epitaph on Hall's gravestone shown on next page "seems fitting for a man of the foresight, innovation and energy of John William Hall,"

*'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do
Do it with all thy might'*

FROM HALL HIMSELF:

Hall's self-taught expertise in botany was recognised, and resulted in an invitation to present a paper to the Auckland Institute in 1901 (a forerunner to the Royal Society of NZ). In this, he summarised the rationale for, and success of, his experimental work:

It is much to be regretted that a well-organized arboretum for indigenous trees and shrubs has not been established in each of the great centres of population. The extensive, and frequently wanton, destruction of the native bush has been going on at such a pace that it will soon be difficult, if not impossible, to get sight of some of the rarer species. And, unfortunately, the planting of our beautiful New Zealand trees has not generally been adopted, perhaps from the mistaken idea that they are difficult of culture.

Partly to disprove this, but principally because I had a great liking for the occupation, I some thirty years ago, began a plantation at Parawai, Thames...

One object in making these plantations was to induce the visits of our rapidly disappearing native birds. The frequent visits of the riro-riro, the piwakawaka, and the kotare, with occasional incursions of the ruru, the tui, and the pipiwharuroa, and still more rare appearance of the kaka, kukupa, kohoperoa, weka, and miromiro, have amply repaid my expectations.

In conclusion, let me express a hope that these few cursory remarks may induce others to attempt the cultivation of our indigenous flora.



Just a short walk from the Hall Aboretum is the old Shortland Cemetery. John and Mary Hall are interred together at this gravesite. (David Wilton believes it is probable that John planted many of the exotic trees after the death of Mary in 1898. He died 17 years later in 1915).

This hillside cemetery property was donated to the public by Chief Taipari, who contributed so many other Thames land parcels for public use for churches, schools and hospitals. The first 80 or so bodies interred at Shortland were not even recorded, and the early wooden tombstones have not survived to this day. The oldest surviving stone tombstone is from 1870, while many others have been replaced.



HOW TO GET THERE:

Drive to the top of Mount Sea Road in Thames; find other entrances on Curies St, Brunton Cres and Korokoro Cres. Just look for the signs.

LINKS AND RESOURCES:

See www.thetreasury.org.nz for a wealth of historic information including articles by historian David Wilton about John William Hall.

Download the Arboretum flyer for more history and a plant species and identification chart. A description of the way to find your way back to your vehicle is also provided, as there are four entrances to the reserve. Download flyer from this TCDC page: www.goo.gl/DGGpeF

Get involved! See www.forestandbird.org.nz/branches/thames-hauraki



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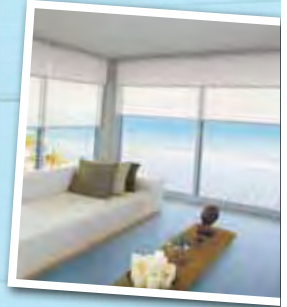
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Read Bros Hardware celebrated its 150th anniversary over the period 2-9 September, 2017. The week was a great success - due largely to the wonderful support received from loyal customers, friendly visitors, generous suppliers and random happy passers-by. Thank you all very much for making the triumph of family trading the happy and festive week it was.

Stuart and Jocelyn, John and Nicola

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See more at www.readbros.co.nz





THE COROMANDEL'S DESTINATION BOOKSHOP

EST. 1906



Above: NZ bestselling author Stacy Gregg chatted with young fans and signed copies of her new book, *The Thunderbolt Pony* in November.

Left: Exhibits in the art new gallery will change monthly. Recently featured were the works of Pacific artists Fatu Feu'u and his daughter Helen Feu'u.

A DEVELOPING CULTURAL HUB

The newly refurbished and rejuvenated Carson's Bookshop & Gallery is fast gaining a reputation as a vibrant cultural hub, combining a destination bookshop with an art gallery and venue space. Always a favourite of bibliophiles, the iconic bookshop, established in 1906, has now expanded with a new art gallery space and small event venue. The gallery has already hosted a number of events and exhibitions including an Italian sculpture exhibition, the Thames Public Arts Sculpture Competition, author readings, signings and music evenings.

Owner Greg Hampton is a keen supporter of community and the arts, and has planned the gallery space to be flexible so that it can be utilised to support local arts and events. "I'm particularly interested in the gallery space being utilised for compatible small events on a pre-arranged basis."

Currently the gallery is featuring prominent Pacific artists Fatu Feu'u and his daughter Helen Feu'u. Fatu has long been a renowned artist, acknowledged as both a leader and mentor within the Pacific arts community. His daughter Helen is a resident artist at the Corban Estate Art Centre in West Auckland. The original art exhibitions will change monthly, with the gallery also stocking popular NZ art prints and a great selection of art books. Further artist exhibitions are planned for 2018 – including potter Ian Drury and stitch artist Deb Shepherd – and the venue is the current home for the 'unplugged' Thames Acoustic Music Club on the third Wednesday



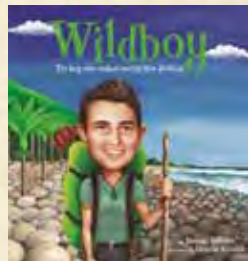
of every month from 7:30pm. Upcoming exhibitions and events will be advertised through the Carson's Bookshop facebook page.

As an independent bookshop, Carsons inventory is curated by knowledgeable staff who provide a wide and interesting range of both current fiction, non-fiction and the classics. "Sourcing hard-to-find books is also a challenge we enjoy!" states owner Greg Hampton.

All current books in the store can be viewed and purchased on their website below. The convenience of purchasing online with the benefit of being able to collect the very next day is a new feature now on offer. Books can also be purchased online or in-store, then gift-wrapped and sent anywhere in NZ or the world with minimum fuss.

'WILDBOY' IS COMING!

Author Brando Yelavich will be in store in April for signings of his upcoming new children's book "**Wildboy: The boy who walked around New Zealand**" – watch for date.



Inspired to go on a MASSIVE adventure, Brando Yelavich (aka Wildboy) ventured out on an 8000km journey around the coast of NZ – sleeping outdoors, hunting and fishing for his food, and encountering all forms of seascape and wildlife along the way including seals and sharks.

Brando's epic story, now re-written for children and beautifully illustrated by Brando's mother, will capture the imagination of children of all ages! A true tale of adventure in the great outdoors – inspiring, educational and a must read for all young Kiwis. See p14-16 of this *Coromandel Life* for photo story about our local Wildboy!

STAFF PICKS



OUT OF THE OCEAN AND INTO THE FIRE: The History in the rocks, fossils and landforms of Auckland, Northland and Coromandel – Bruce W. Haywood.

A fascinating and accessible account of how Coromandel and

Northland's unique landforms were created. This extensively researched and magnificently illustrated book is a synthesis of current knowledge of the geology and landscapes of the north will be of interest to anyone with an inquiring mind or interest in our geological history.



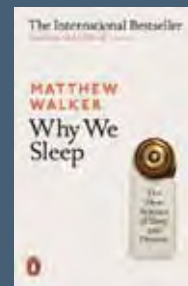
MANHATTAN BEACH – Jennifer Egan

A great summer read – the long-awaited novel from the Pulitzer Prize-winning author of *A Visit from the Goon Squad*. *Manhattan Beach* is Egan's first historical novel set in in Brooklyn during the Great Depression. A masterpiece, a

deft, startling, intimate exploration of a transformative moment in the lives of women and men, America and the world.

WHY WE SLEEP: The New Science of Sleep and Dreams – Matthew Walker

"A neuroscientist has found a way of being cleverer, more attractive, slimmer, happier, healthier and of warding off cancer – a good night's shut-eye" -*The Guardian*.



Sleep is one of the most important aspects of our life, yet it is increasingly neglected, with devastating consequences. Every major disease in the developed world – Alzheimer's, cancer,

obesity, diabetes – has strong causal links to deficient sleep. The first book of its kind written by a scientific expert, Professor Walker explores 20 years of research to solve why sleep matters. This book will have you zealously protecting and prioritising your sleep habits.

DRAWN OUT – Tom Scott

Drawn Out is a hilarious, heartbreaking, heart-warming account of Tom Scott's tragicomic childhood,



his manic student newspaper days, his turbulent years stumbling through the corridors of power, his falling out with prime ministers, his collaborations with comic legends John Clarke, A.K. Grant and Murray Ball, his travels to the ends of the earth with his close friend Ed Hillary and more. Ripping, riotous yarns from a Kiwi comic icon.

STILL ME – Jojo Moyes. From this #1 New York Times bestselling author comes a new book featuring her iconic heroine of *Me Before You* and *After You*. Louisa Clark arrives in New York to start a new life, confident she can embrace this adventure and keep her relationship with Ambulance Sam alive across several thousand miles. Funny, romantic, and poignant, *Still Me* follows Lou as she navigates how to stay true to herself, while pushing to live boldly in her brave new world.

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Visit www.carsonsbookshop.co.nz or Facebook for latest titles and events



THAMES Celebrates ITS HERITAGE

Friday 16 to Sunday 18 March

Now in its 12th year, the Thames 2018 Heritage Days continue to showcase the town's heritage with lectures, events, displays, historical exhibits, and costumes on display. The 150th Commemoration of the opening of the Thames Goldfields, held in August, with spunky accents from the now-annual Steampunk Festival, all helped build ongoing public participation.

Many of the town's historic hotels, schools, pubs, churches, parks, and mining facilities are still standing, with ongoing restoration efforts to keep them open and operating.

The events this year will offer something for all ages: workshops, teas, costumes, historic store displays, lectures, walks, concerts, and even a moustache and beard contest.

The fashion minded will be delighted to see the streets full of period costumes. Find gems galore at the Thames School of Mines, and check out the stunning new exhibit rooms at the Thames Museum. Admire fine woodwork at one of Thames' historic churches.

Want to research your family history? About one in every three Kiwis can trace their heritage back to the Thames Gold Rush days. The Treasury's trained staff can help you with its vast collection of resources.

Current Heritage Days organiser Margaret Cropp tells us, "The more you research, the more you find – and the more the past comes alive. Life here in Thames was hard, dirty and noisy with the stamper batteries going 24/7."

Like the gigantic old gears and the pounding of machinery? Check out the Goldmine Experience and the Bella Street Pumphouse.

The entire Thames Heritage committee invite everyone to get involved and join the fun – or just come and observe it. There are events that are sure to 'tickle everyone's fancy'.

These days, most of these organisations depend on the devotion of local volunteers to keep the doors open, help out in various ways, and work on the restoration projects.

"By keeping Heritage Week alive we are simply doing our best to share the real story of our town – with visitors certainly, but mostly with our own locals who may not appreciate how rich and significant Thames' history truly is."



The 150th Anniversary of Thames Goldfields continues through August 2018. For a listing of events see www.thames150years.nz.

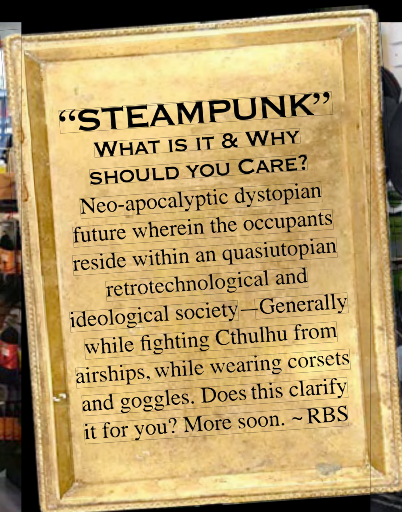


Life on the Thames Goldfields has been carefully researched by Meghan Hawkes. See www.firstyearthamesgoldfield.co.nz.

READ BROS. Steampunks its staff.



Read Bros, also founded in 1867, had their major 150th celebrations in September 2017. However, you can always count on their team to really get into the local festivities, as they all did for last November's 'Steampunk the Thames'. Sue Skeets



even created a punked out display of gear, at right. So you can bet they will produce a great store window display for the Heritage Festival in March. Drop by and see. Saturday is another Steampunk day during the Festival, so get your goggles on!



THAMES HERITAGE EVENT TRUST

THAMES HERITAGE FESTIVAL

A FANTASTIC CELEBRATION OF THAMES' RICH HISTORY

Friday 16 to Sunday 18 March

The festival promises to share a wealth of knowledge, stories, working displays, and events for locals and out-of-towners alike. Many events are fun competitions to challenge one's creativity. Tap back to the days when Thames was booming, with a population larger than Auckland.

THAMES WINDOW DISPLAY COMPETITION

Monday 12 to Sunday 18 March

Thames businesses dress up their windows in Yesteryear style. Check out the displays when you're shopping and cast your vote for your choice of the best. The winner will be announced the following week. Organised by Coromandel More FM.

HERITAGE FILM DAY

Wednesday 14 March

This event is always a surprise. A selection of heritage and classic films, and snippets will be screening at the Thames Embassy Theatre, Pollen Street, Grahamstown

"THE WAY WE WERE"

TREASURY TALKS

Thursday 15 – Friday 16 March 1pm-2pm. Subjects to be confirmed for talks at The Treasury on Queen St. Price: TBA. Also, The Treasury's experienced genealogists can help you get started researching your family history using its resources. The Treasury will be open every day during the festival from 11am-3pm. Ph 07 868 8827

SCHOOL OF MINES LECTURES

Friday 16 & Saturday 17 March

Evenings – check website for details

MINERS' DINNER AT THE PUMPHOUSE

Friday 16 & Saturday 17 March 6pm

Doors open 6pm; dinner served at 7pm. Entertainment. Period costume. Bar avail. Tickets at Carsons Bookstore, \$75pp.

IRISH CEILIDH

Friday 16 March 7:30pm

Sean Kelly and his Irish band at St James' Church Hall. Adv tickets: Lotus Realm, Thames. Adult \$20; CSC holders \$10, Children free. Info: Sean Kelly (text only) 027 252 0806

DEVONSHIRE TEA

Saturday 17th 10am-2pm

At the Croquet Club.

See updated events listing at www.thamesheritage.co.nz

OPEN OR EVENTS HAPPENING MOST DAYS

HISTORIC MUSEUMS in THAMES:

Most open every day during the Festival: The Treasury, Bella Street Pumphouse, Thames Historical Museum, Shortland Butts Hotel.

THAMES SCHOOL OF MINES:

Open daily, offers workshops, tours, lectures, the Mineral Museum, and rock and gemstone vvvvstore.

THAMES MARKET, Saturday mornings

The A&G PRICE STORY

Saturday 17 March 11am

The official opening of the new A&G Price Story exhibit at the Thames Museum, Cnr Pollen & Cochrane. No Charge. Contact: Morgan Lewis 07 868 8509, thamesmuseum@xtra.co.nz

HISTORIC SHORTLAND WALK

Sunday 18 March 9:30am

Starting at Shortland Wharf, take a guided walk around the historic Shortland area. Price: \$5. Contact: Graham Robinson, The Treasury 07 8688827 (during Treasury hours), gjrobinson@xtra.co.nz

NZ HISTORY FEDERATION – AGM

Sunday 18 March 10am-12pm

The federation comes to Thames for their AGM at the Thames School of Mines. All welcome. Contact: Neil Curgenven, historyfederation@gmail.com

STEAMING UP IN THAMES

Sunday 18 March Noon

Goldmine Experience will fire up a renovated stationary steam engine, one of the few operating in the country, and the only one to run a stamper battery. Enjoy tours through mining tunnels, and see other mining machinery. Open daily 10am-4pm thru summer. SH25, N. Thames Ph: 07.8688514, story@actrix.co.nz

ALL AROUND THAMES

Saturday 17 March

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BIZARRE BEARD &

MOUSTACHE COMPETITION

STOP SHAVING NOW and get your beard in good shape for this competition. In Heritage Market Grahamstown. Price TBA. Contact: Margaret Cropp, 078681027, Email: croppys@yahoo.co.nz

PETTICOAT PARADE

In Grahamstown. Judging in Grahamstown Hall. Check website for details.

SCHOOL OF MINES

HERITAGE ARTWORK DISPLAY

Monday 19 to Friday 23 March. on display the week following Festival.

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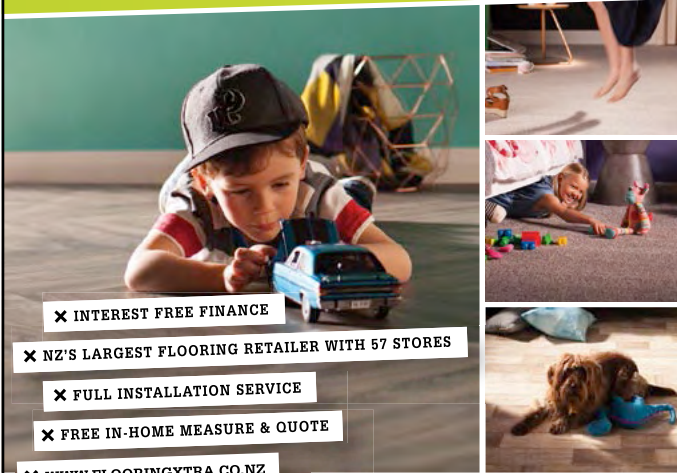
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"The Speeding Train" THAMES TRAIL ENTICEMENT



THE RED TRAIN. The Hauraki Rail Trail has generated many millions of dollars for our region. Capitalising on this asset to promote Thames as a destination, a competition was organised by the Thames Public Art Trust for a sculpture that, once erected, will be seen by motorists driving over the Kopu bridge. The idea was to drop a visual breadcrumb to entice viewers to investigate what's on offer in Thames.

The Speeding Train by Raglan artist Stuart Shepherd was the winner. Stuart's big red train will be one big red breadcrumb to lure cyclists along the trail. Either sitting on a plinth or on the "speed rods" that extend from the back of the stylised locomotive, the 3m high, 4m long and 1.5m wide sculpture was funded by the Thames Community Board and Smart Environmental.

Stuart says the speeding train is a toy train with the rakishly attached speed lines taken from comic art, and further from an old cover of the Meatloaf album "Bat Out of Hell", where a rock 'n roller sits on a Harley blasting out into space. Describing his sculptural work, Stuart says, "My work is loosely concerned with the way we, for better or worse, culturalise our children to the world through the objects and rituals we surround them with."

He enjoys the modernist phase of art history where purely abstract geometry balances the figurative tradition, so the speeding train is also a composition of geometric shapes.

"In general the sculpture is supposed to be good humoured, and act like a sign announcing the rail trail, and be recognisable and understood, by all sorts of people, all ages, from a distance, even in silhouette", he says.

Interestingly, it was after Stuart came up with the speeding train idea that he discovered that the A&G Price Company in Thames was New Zealand's largest engineering workshop...and that they made locomotives.

Congratulations Stuart and the township of Thames! Sculpture trails are proven to strengthen local economies, and Thames is on a roll.



Shown with a model of the winning design to be installed on the Hauraki Rail Trail is creator Stuart Shepherd, centre. From left: guest judge Joe Bleakley, project initiator Rob Johnston, Thames Community Board Chair Diane Connors, and Thames Public Art Trust Chair Paul Silvester.

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The Coromandel Coastal Walkway

The remote northern part of the peninsula is home to this spectacular trail. Join Emma Darragh and her family as they embark on a mid-winter return trek.

A family expedition on The Coromandel Coastal Walkway

by Emma Darragh

Your journey on the Coromandel Coastal Walkway begins the moment you start driving north of Colville. As your mobile phone loses cellular service and signs of other traffic slip away, you will start to appreciate the beauty of this remote Northern Coromandel landscape.

We headed out on the route via Port Charles to bring us to the trail's Stony Bay access point on the east coast. You can also begin the walk at Fletcher Bay by taking the western route 30km north from Colville, through Fantail Bay and Port Jackson. Some say this is the more scenic route; it is certainly the best part of the road to catch the sun setting over the Hauraki Gulf after your expedition.

However both roads are unsealed, steep, windy and narrow, requiring slow speed and intense concentration. Next time, I would book a tour operator from Coromandel Town, rather than driving the road myself. This would have provided more opportunity for me to enjoy the journey with my children and less stress before the start of the walk.

Also, they can drop you off at one point (in our case, Stony Bay) and pick you up at the other end (Fletcher Bay). With children especially, this may be a preferable option rather than walking 7-8 hours there and back in one day. And these local guides know of many wonderful places to stop on the way to catch perfectly-framed vistas and stunning sundown displays, plus they will enchant you with their local knowledge and stories of this place.

The hike itself is 10km end to end, and as it encapsulates the best scenery The Coromandel has to offer – you don't want to rush it. You might even consider basing yourself in Colville or Coromandel Town, at least the nights before and after your walk. There are many activities to take advantage of in the area to round out a weekend stay, or longer, and then you will have an entire day to devote to this stunning walk.

As is always the case with hiking, good preparation will determine the success of your expedition. The Coastal Walkway is no exception, especially with children. Make sure your backpacks are filled with plenty of food

and fluid, and don't rely on cellular coverage for access to maps and other information, as it is patchy at best.

STONY TO FLETCHER...AND BACK.

Arrival at Stony Bay Campground provided welcome relief and a good opportunity for everyone to stretch their legs. Shouldering our day packs, we set off across the ford. Piggy-backing for some saved wet feet so early in the day.

This memorable trek is part of an old bridle path formed by early pioneers to link Stony and Fletcher Bays. The Walkway is clearly sign-posted and follows the peninsula's northern coastline between the bays. It is an easily achievable walk, even with two teenage sons in tow. We allowed plenty of extra time to stop for snacks, and to take advantage of the many excellent photo opportunities.

We walked several kilometres through thick kanuka and manuka forest with peeks through the trees to the water below and hills beyond. A cheeky fantail fascinated even the most jaded teen, who stopped to watch it flitting at his feet.

The track eventually opened out onto farmland and rewarded us with stunning views of the Pacific, Mt Moehau, Great Barrier Island (Aotea Island) to the north and Cuvier Island (Repanga Island) to the east.

The majority of the walk followed a gentle gradient, however there was a steep valley to conquer en route to Poley Bay pictured at right. As is usually the case with young ones, the descent to the shoreline was no problem. The Bay is a picturesque spot for a break and a 'rock hop', however submerged rocks make it unsafe for swimming.

The beauty of this Walkway is the variety of terrain and scenery. This was particularly evident through the eyes of the children. They related the walk to the topography of the Coromandel Peninsula map we had studied before our departure. The clifftop lookouts gave them the thrill (and their parents the panic) of looking down almost 200 metres to the clear ocean waters below.



Poley Bay.

Undertaking the Coastal Walkway as a family excursion is a New Zealand Must-Do. Because of its rugged isolation, remote beauty and lack of distraction, the experience is guaranteed to bond your family or group, making memories to last a lifetime.



“Truly spectacular vistas
from the first to last
step. Awe inspiring.”

- Adam Taylor, New Zealand

Because the area is so unpopulated and remote, nature seems vast, and at times ferocious. It is an all-season walk, and passing weather – even the winter wind and rain – serve only to enhance the dramatic atmosphere of the northernmost Coromandel.

The track itself is well-defined, mild and trustworthy, no map is needed. Children run on ahead without any worry they will get lost. Finally, catching sight of Fletcher Bay from

the wide expanse of farmland encourages the young hikers, as does the promise of a good break for a hearty packed lunch.

The stunning environment offers up a peaceful and pleasant atmosphere, with plenty of space for everyone to do the walk at their own pace. It took us 4 hours to complete the hike one way, including a leisurely break for lunch and a rest stop at Poley Bay. Without young legs leading us, we may very

well have spent more time for photos and admiring the view.

The sense of achievement you will collectively experience having completed the Coromandel Coastal Walkway, will undoubtedly be the highlight of your trip. The splendid isolation of some of New Zealand's most spectacular coastal scenery is enhanced when shared with the people you love.



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PLANNING YOUR TRIP

The winding gravel roads beyond Colville are all part of the adventure. However, to reduce impact on these remote areas, and to make the most of the entire journey, we recommend booking a trip with one of the professional transport companies in the area. This frees everyone in your group to thoroughly take in the magnificent views and stunning landscape, and you might even find new friends among your fellow passengers to walk with. If you intend to walk the Coastal Walkway only one way (estimated hiking time 3.5 hours), you will need to arrange both a dropoff and pickup.

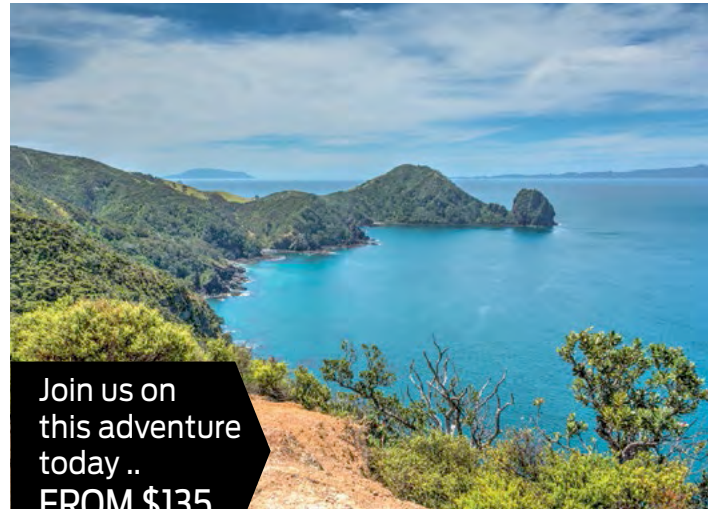
The Coastal Walkway is accessed by two access points. To start your hike at Stony Bay, take the 20km eastern route via Port Charles. To begin at Fletcher Bay, take the 30km western route, which hugs the coast north through Fantail Bay and Port Jackson. If you do choose to drive, don't be fooled by the low kilometres. Both metal roads are challenging, so allow at least an hour to reach either destination.

If you plan to hike the Coastal Walkway both directions (estimated hike time 7 hours), you may want to book a stay at one of the DoC campgrounds: Port Jackson or Fletcher Bay to the north, and Stony Bay on the south east side. Reservations are essential, especially in the summer months! (See info below). And please note – dogs are not allowed on the Coastal Walkway.

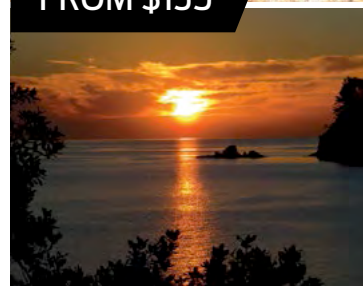
Bikes are permitted on the coastal walkway, however please be courteous and considerate, as you are sharing the experience with walkers of all ages. The Walkway does link with a separate Coromandel Mountain Bike Track. This 8km looped track is suitable only for advanced riders as the terrain is extremely steep, often slippery and very challenging. If you intend to bike this track please check ahead with DoC as it is currently in need of repair.

Coromandel Coastal Walkway

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Emma's story and photos courtesy of:

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Reservations essential!



Artistic toddlers to teens joined forces to create this fishy fence displayed at the Colville tennis courts. The fish are now on a fence at the school.

COLVILLE EASTER FESTIVAL

30 MARCH - 2 APRIL 2018

Once again, the small tightly-knit community of Colville is gearing up for its yearly arts celebration, the Colville Easter Festival (aka Colville Arts Festival).

This year's festival spans over four days, from the 8pm evening concert on Good Friday "Colville Sings the '60s" (20 singers, one song each – teens and up) through Easter Monday.

While nightly concerts will be held inside Colville Hall, sculptures will be displayed outdoors on the hall grounds and around the village. More art is exhibited at the Back Room Gallery behind the Colville Café.

SMALL TOWN. BIG ENTERTAINMENT!

A variety of arts and crafts workshops (clay, fabric dyeing, leatherwork, etc) will be held during the day hours on Saturday, Sunday and Monday with activities for all ages.

Saturday night's family-friendly "The BIG Music Night" starts at 6pm – "bring your dancing shoes" to dance to four or more fresh and lively music acts.

And then Sunday at 5:30pm, sit back and enjoy "The Auckland Playback Theatre Group", preceded by "The Bubble Show" by professional bubble artist Eran Backler. Be inside a bubble...! The theatre group will also offer a workshop (for teens only) on Monday, from 10am–2pm.

This vibrant festival is community organized, and with the kids out of school, the family-friendly spirit runs genuine and deep.

Check the Easter Festival's website for updated schedule, entertainers, info resources, food offerings...and tickets to guarantee entry. See www.colvilleartsfestival.co.nz.

Festival photos by Ella Osnat



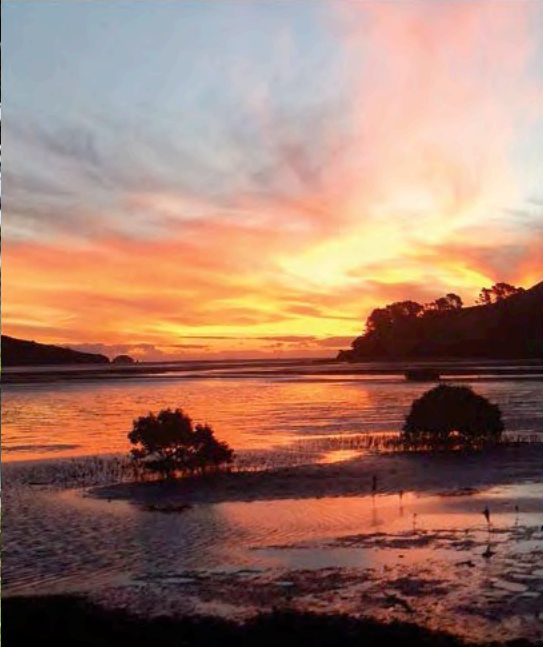
Guardians of the sculpture garden.



The mums help their little artists paint fish for mounting on the tennis court fence (see above). Spiderman looks impressed. There will be workshops for all ages. Check out Janet Palmer's Little Clay Creations group on Monday 2 April, 10am-12pm.



Brenda and Steve Carson's Leather Workshop is on again, Monday 10am-1pm. Ages 9 and over welcome, with adult. Booking essential. Two separate dyeing workshops are also available: The Art of Dyeing (anything) and Harakeke Dyeing for Weavers. See details on the website.



Colville...

This little town has lots to offer, so be sure to plan a stop at this quaint village, just north of Coromandel Town. Even locals drive miles for the unique products available here. It's worth remembering that these Colville shops also happen to be the last opportunity to stock up on provisions and fuel if you are heading north.

You'll enjoy beautiful bays with sandy beaches, lush forest, pastoral scenes of flat lands and steep hills where cattle, alpacas, sheep and goats graze. Fossicking for semi-precious stones such as carnelian and kauri gum is quite popular in the area as well.

The town itself is small, yet it is the service and social centre for the area. It's well known for its co-operatively owned and run Colville General Store that offers a huge variety of goods including fresh organic produce. There's also a café, historic post shop, community hall, school, motel, doctor's clinic, and several other small businesses (see right).

The perfect place to put your feet up, find a little peace and rejuvenation, and still have lots to do.



The Colville Café now sports an art exhibit space called the Back Room Gallery, which is also the simple name of their Facebook page.

COLVILLE GENERAL STORE

Heading north? Last stop for supplies & fuel!

Our old fashioned 'General Store' offers general grocery items, including local produce, manuka honey, a selection of gluten and dairy free items, as well as a wide range of camping, fishing and automotive supplies. **07 866 6805**



If you are looking for quiet, peaceful surroundings, **COLVILLE BAY MOTEL & MOTORCAMP** is the place for you. The self-contained motel units are fully equipped. There are several safe beaches, great fishing and many walks within easy reach and Colville Bay itself provides safe swimming.

For bookings contact Wendy & Mark
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Greg Taylor creates unique handcrafted wooden furniture from a range of local timbers. Pohutukawa and Macrocarpa feature in his work and lately he has been using ancient Kauri, Puriri, Rimu felled on his farm by loggers. The furniture that Greg creates is beautiful both in and outdoors; it's comfortable, rustic and relaxed. His work will outlast both you and me. Visit Greg's place to view his authentic New Zealand woodwork in a real Coromandel setting. **1925 Colville Road, Colville 07 8666846**
www.branchcreek.co.nz



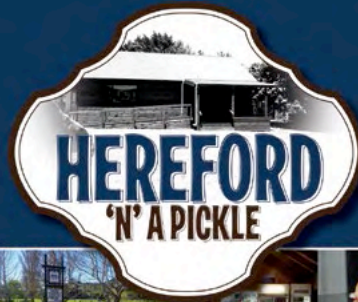
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MERCURY BAY ART ESCAPE CELEBRATES ITS 11TH YEAR

Amongst the 45 members of Art Escape you will find a diverse range of artistic media – painters, printmakers, sculptors, photographers, potters, glass artists, jewellers, carvers, weavers, mosaic and fibre artists, a knife maker and a furniture maker. 35 of those member artists – including 4 new artists and 3 art groups – will open their studios, galleries and workshops the first two weekends in March.

MOST ARTISTS ENCOURAGE STUDIO VISITS ANY TIME THROUGH THE YEAR - Find contact info on the Art Escape's website or in the new 54-page 2018 Art Guide (see below). These artists look forward to sharing fresh new works, produced especially for the event. Visit the studios and workshops at your own pace, meet the artists and learn about their creative process.

FREE! THE 2018 ART GUIDE

This new 56-page reference guide features a statement from each artist, an image of their work, and contact details. It also includes easy-to-read maps, ads, accommodation, cafés and other attractions. Available at i-Sites, most art galleries, many cafés and accommodation providers, or download from the website.

The Art Escape website offers easy navigation, is mobile friendly (responsive) for easy to use on tablets and phones. Visitors can scan the QR code on the website and use it to navigate to the studios of their choice.

The cover of the 2018 guide features 'Urban Summer' by Hot Water Beach artist Sally Samins. "I created a strong, distinctive style of bold and subtle colour, texture, layering and line work, conveying feelings of strength, sensitivity and familiarity."



GALA OPENING - Friday 2 March 6pm, Hot Waves Café

Hot Waves Café in Hot Water Beach will again host the official opening of the tour with the 2018 Mercury Bay Art Escape Showcase Exhibition, featuring a work from each member artist along with a piece from each of the Scholarship recipients. Guest speaker is TJ McNamara (shown bottom left), the well-known NZ Herald art reviewer for the last 50 years.

Your ticket price includes a delicious array of Mary Channing's hearty savoury finger foods and a complimentary glass of wine from Tohu. The café's great selection of wines and beers are available for purchase as well. Attendees will have ample time to mingle and chat with the artists.

This popular launch is a great time to network and make personal connections with the artists prior to the studio tour days, or even arrange to buy one of the exhibited pieces. Stay to see which artist will be awarded the 'Artists Choice Award', as voted by the artists themselves. This award is sponsored by

Bread & Butter Gallery. The exhibition at the café continues till Easter Monday. The public votes for their favourite piece in the 'Gordon Harris People's Choice Award', with winner announced at the end of the exhibition.

Member artists look forward to seeing you at the launch, and welcoming you into their studios and workshops in the following weekends. They invite you to contact them any time throughout the year. Find details on the Art Escape website or in the guidebook.

Buy tickets early – at www.mercurybay-artescape.com or at Hot Waves Cafe – this event is always a sell out.

TWO SPECIAL EVENTS!

(see next page for more details)
A compilation showing of the video documentary series by director Tony Hiles about artist Michael Smither. Shown Saturdays, 3 & 10 March. Sculptor Chris Charteris leads a free outdoor art workshop on Buffalo Beach, Saturday 3 March.



TJ McNamara (above)
Many of the artists attended the launch of the 2017 Art Escape tours, held at Hot Waves Cafe (right)



STUDIO & ARTIST HIGHLIGHTS



A SUMMER AFTERNOON
by Paula McNeill

PAULA MCNEILL MIXED MEDIA, PRINTMAKING, CERAMICS • TAIRUA

'A Summer Afternoon'

"A lot of my work revolves around how I am thinking and feeling. The viewer – forever challenged by the subject matter and the medium – can be taken on many personal journeys, through strong colours to sensitive tones, or from jubilant scenes to subdued, intimate or minimalist moments of simplicity and calm."

A DREAM REALISED

Paula McNeill is one of the originating member artists in MBAE that also included Betty Collings, Meg Auth, Rachel Olsen, Michael Smither, Airdrie Hamilton, Anne Bowden, Susan Dunster, Liz Hart, Gary Nevin, Alan Rhodes, and Lutz Gaebler.

"We all had a dream", remembers Paula, "to enhance the awareness of the arts in our area and create a memorable art experience of diversity, quality and uniqueness."

And that has been achieved. This group deserves a big round of applause for their dedication and loyal participation which has helped lead the Art Escape to the success and popularity it enjoys today. Well done all!

SUSAN DUNSTER PAINTING, MIXED MEDIA • TAIRUA

Susan Dunster says she "paints in a fluid, fragmented and abstracted manner. I like to weave vibrant colours and shapes across the surface so they dissolve. I seek to express a deeper emotional and spiritual reality beneath surface appearances."

She uses collage, oil paint, and mixed media; her themes vary from abstract to figurative, still life and landscape.



ALAN RHODES POTTERY • WHENUAKITE

Alan's stoneware is created from clay excavated from his Whenuakite property and he fires it there also.

"I make mainly sensible domestic ware and try to capture colours in my glazes that surround us in springtime through to autumn." The pieces are fired to 1300°C, making them durable and suitable for daily use.



REINA COTTIER MIXED MEDIA, PAINTING • TAIRUA

"My connection and love for the ocean, the native bush and the mountains that surround me are a huge influence in what I create, using acrylics, inks, powders and anything I can lay my hands on. My art is a mix of two distinct styles: one a very free and expressive mixed media style, and the other more disciplined, with fine precise lines and attention to detailing."



COLIN VERNER MIXED MEDIA, WOOD & CERAMIC • KUAOTUNU

"I have a strong interest in creative activity arising through unconscious and automatic processes."

"I use dreams, images that come to me through meditation, and automatic drawing to generate ideas, which become a starting point for my artworks."

TIM ALDRICH WOODCARVING & SCULPTURE • TAIRUA

This London-born artisan started carving at the age of five, and his talent grew into a career as carpenter, joiner and cabinetmaker.

Passionate about woodcarving, Tim works and teaches at his Tairua studio and welcomes commissions, such as fish trophies, "small to life-size" copies.

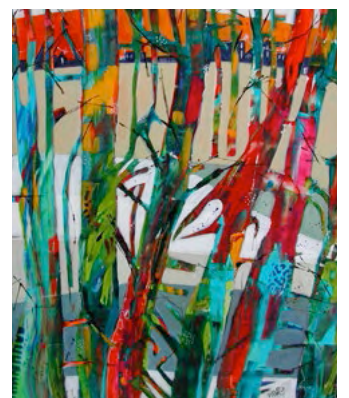
Tim has recently been capturing both movement and colour with his painted carvings. "I love bringing parts of these massive trees back to life again!"



WENDY WALLS MIXED MEDIA & ART CLASSES • WHITIANGA

"I paint all subjects encapsulating abstract and realistic concepts using gels, pastes, fluid acrylics and collage."

This well known artist is a top art tutor, giving workshops and classes in her studio or join her 'on the road' in other locations throughout the North Island.





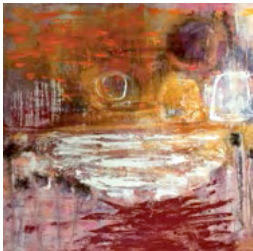
Visit us to see works by FOUR artists from the Mercury Bay area who are EXCLUSIVE to The Little Gallery in Tairua during the Mercury Bay Art Escape tour. Talk to the artists in residence and gain some real insight into their work.



Paula McNeill
Artists' Choice 2015



Verena Tagmann
Artists' Choice 2016



Dhyana Muir



Julie Whyman

The Little Gallery also houses work by many of the MBE artists who are opening their studios and is a great place to get an overview of the talent we have in the area. Come in and explore what we have to offer, we pride ourselves on having something for everyone.

TAIRUA 228 Main Rd | 07 864 7204
info@thelittlegallery.co.nz
www.thelittlegallery.co.nz

Michael Smither's "The Next Ten Years" to be shown in Whitianga



A 'not-to-be-missed' Mercury Bay Art Escape special event is a two night showing of this documentary series by director Tony Hiles, chronicling Michael Smither's career. A one-hour compilation of excerpts from these films will be shown each Saturday of the Open Studios weekends (3 & 10 March at 5:30pm) at the Mercury Twin Theatres, Whitianga.

MEET THE ARTISTS. Both Michael and Tony will be present to discuss their project series on 3 March, and Michael will return for the Q & A 10 March.

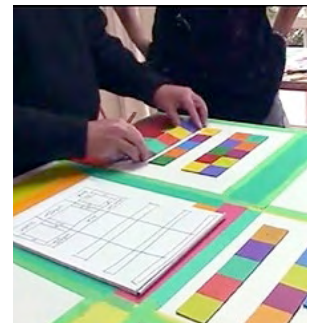
Smither's works encompass a mindboggling number of distinct styles. Upon reaching 70, he was asked by Tony what was on the horizon for his remaining years. Smither answered he would tackle the ten year's worth of unfinished works he had in his studio. Tony suggested that the renowned artist's next decade be captured on film, one programme per year starting in 2009.

Films sampled for the evenings include: 2009 Shared Harmonics, 2010 Artist in Residence, 2012 Into Perspective, 2012 Life and Death, 2014 Music, 2015 Prints, and 2016 Portraits.

Tickets available at
www.mercurybayartescape.com.

Above: From "2009 Shared Harmonics", Smither works with assistants to decide the precise colours to paint into the rectangular bands of "Aides Memoire."

Above: On the 2015 video episode, "Prints," Smither explains how indelibly screen-print work was associated with his father, and that he abandoned the medium after his father died. A meeting with screen printer Don Tee (shown left) eventually brought him back to it. It's now a medium Smither relishes for keeping his work affordable and accessible. Here they prepare a silk screen to print a precise recreation of one of Smither's colourful geometric works.



Sculptor Chris Charteris offers free class 3 March

"Living on the Coromandel Peninsula is inspiring for creativity", Chris says. "There are so many natural materials in our environment to work with." As a special Art Escape event, he will lead an outdoor art workshop on Buffalo Beach (opposite Stoked Restaurant), Saturday 3 March, 2-4pm. The class is free, and tickets not required.



MIRANDA FARM GALLERY

The Miranda Farm Gallery represents some of New Zealand's greatest fine artists: MICHAEL SMITHER, FATU FEU'U, WARREN VISCOE, CHRISTINE HELLYAR & NEIL MILLER to name only a few. Sculptures, paintings, prints, drawings and ceramics are for sale.

Cafe and Farm shop also on site and open 7 days.

Set in the peaceful surroundings of an organic orchard and gardens.

UPCOMING EXHIBITS

Shore Bird Watercolours by
Keith Woodley
March 3-31

Watercolour Landscapes by
Bernadette Parsons - April

Group show in May



GALLERY OPEN 10-4PM WEDNESDAY THROUGH SUNDAY • OTHER DAYS BY APPOINTMENT

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Cafes & galleries show artwork during the tour

WHITIANGA

Mosaic Gallery, 53 Albert St. Find several MBEA artists displaying their works at this popular gallery year round including Wendy Walls, Monique Rush, Vanessa McKay, and Gary Nevin.

Bread & Butter Gallery, 26 Albert St. Representing over 70 Coromandel artists including Art Escape members Michael Smither, Souzie Speerstra and Ginney Deavoll (see her work featured on page 24-28).

WHENUAKITE

Colenso Country Café and Shop on SH25. Find a variety of local art and handsome gift items. This popular café serves gourmet country food to enjoy indoors or out in the orchard garden.

HOT WATER BEACH

Hot Waves Café. The official Art Escape display gallery features a work by each artist in the art tour throughout the event. Vote for your favourite art piece until Easter Monday! This local favourite serves a wide variety of cabinet food plus hot prepared meals.

Moku Artspace represents over 100 established and emerging NZ artists. Their sculpture garden, gallery and artspace feature serious art to a lighter selection.

TAIRUA

The *Little Gallery* will present an exclusive Group Exhibition during the 2 weeks of the Mercury Bay Art Escape 3-11 March, displaying works of Paula McNeill, along with Verena Tagmann, Dhyana Muir and Julie Whyman.

The Gallery also houses work by many of the Art Escape artists who are opening their studios, and is a great place to get an overview of the talent in the area. Something for everyone.

HIKUAI

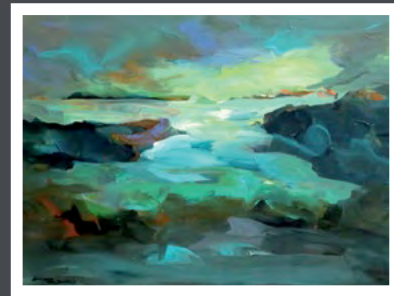
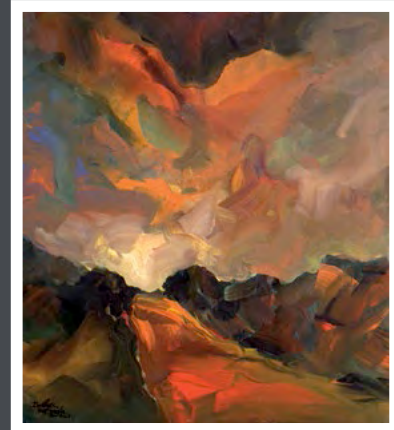
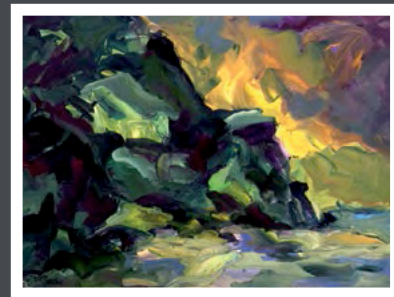
Painter Tina Carey will be showing her paintings during the Art Escape at *Hikuai Hall*.



Mosaic Gallery in Whitianga

Barbara von Seida

ARTIST



www.barbara-von-seida.co.nz

Multi Award Winning Artist

Kowhai Watercolour Studio

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64 7 866 8453

www.youtube.com/watch?v=fhRhEz0Smcw

NEW THIS YEAR! ART ESCAPE MEMBER GROUP

Printmakers Combined Group

The group will exhibit at 35 Corywright Dr, Tairua
3-4 March from 10-11am only.



This new group of Coromandel-based artists creates impressive, exciting works through the process of printmaking. The members share use of a press, which they have named "Patience".

Artists include:

Paula McNeill, Susan Dunster, Jane Parson, Tina Carey, Colleen Waite, Verena Tagmann, Liz Hart, Karla Cosford, Kay de Blaauw and Joanne Mahoney who printed "Ginger Pot Collection", seen left.

Jeanne-Marie Cantereau

Watercolour Artist

birds • landscapes
seascapes • still life

View art and meet
the artist at her new
Gallery in Thames



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NOW OPEN: The Little Gallery Whangamata

Newly opened in November, The Little Gallery Whangamata held its official opening event in mid-December.



Newly opened in November, The Little Gallery Whangamata held its official opening event in mid-December.

"We were really pleased with the reception of our new gallery by the local community," says gallery owner Sarah Holden, seen in the orange skirt. "Many remember the old Port Road gallery and agree that Whangamata has been missing a space like this. The feedback and enthusiasm we've received so far is very encouraging."

Similar to the original Little Gallery in Tairua, the Whangamata gallery is run co-operatively by a team of staff and artist volunteers. The strong focus on supporting and promoting local artists through its innovative co-operative structure affords visitors the opportunity to meet artists and learn more about their work from a firsthand perspective.

New to join The Little Gallery's Whangamata team is Belinda Wiley, who brings many years of experience in art collecting to her role "to assist people in their selection of artwork", working alongside the gallery's manager Deborah Forsman.

The Little Gallery Whangamata is located in Shop 3, 427 Port Road. See www.thelittlegallery.co.nz, Facebook and Instagram.

Charlotte Giblin solo portrait exhibition

Showing at Whitianga's Bread & Butter Gallery, 10 - 24 February

Painter Charlotte Giblin will unveil the new series of portrait paintings for her solo exhibition, "What Matters Most", at the Bread & Butter Gallery in Whitianga.

These paintings are a departure from her previous works with their vivid colourful tree forms. The new series celebrates her relationships with seven remarkable women.

"This constellation of new portraits shines a light onto core themes in our lives", she shares, "the importance of sincerity and honesty, unconditional love, the power of laughter and the vital force of women supporting one another – actively listening, sharing innermost thoughts, finding the courage to expose their vulnerabilities, helping one another to stretch and grow in the face of pain and personal challenge. And often over a lovely cuppa!"



Meet Charlotte on Sat 10 February 12-2pm, and Sun 11 February 10am-noon. The show runs through 24th Feb.



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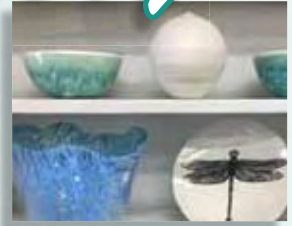


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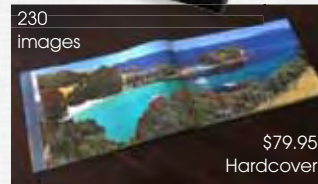
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Recent new releases include...



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PERFECTION (Orokawa Bay)

An Artist's Vision



Visitors to Tairua's Heaven and Earth Gallery will discover more than crystals and jewellery among its colourful displays. Adorning the walls are prints and greeting cards with the striking and unique collages of artist and healer Kathy Helen Warner.

I was immediately attracted to the art shown above and was keen to find out more about what had inspired these evocative pieces.

In this interview with Alison Smith, Kathy shares the genesis, purpose and process of her art, which represent and reflect her journeys of self discovery and awareness. She calls her images 'Spirit Art' and actually shares the process in workshops – 'Inner Treasures Collage'. Count me in!
– Tovi Daly

EXPRESSING 'INNER TREASURES' THROUGH COLLAGE

Tell us about your own experience with collage...

For over 30 years I've done collage as a form of meditation and inner exploration. For me, collage is a valuable tool, taking me on a journey to my own inner landscape. The images frequently reveal what has been hidden within the psyche, and they sometimes bring messages from other realms or beings that communicate with me in subtle, imaginal ways. This kind of work is not just my own – anyone can enter into this process, simply by taking the time and following the steps that allow it to unfold.

The images in your collages seem to have a real spiritual element. Can you explain that?

My art is inseparable from my spiritual life. As the visionary psychologist Carl Jung said, 'The wealth of the soul lives in images.' And collage works directly with the language of symbols, images and archetypes.

What is Inner Treasures Collage as opposed to other forms?

It is a creative process...and an imaginative process that takes one to those "inner worlds" one seldom takes the time to explore. And it activates one's innate intuition through listening to the deepest self. One's positive, love-centred creative intention can manifest in everything we do, and I feel that the process that I call Inner Treasures Collage can provide a window between the inner and outer worlds.

How does it help us?

Creating a collage can be a way to explore feelings or qualities in oneself or one's relationship with archetypes, or with other aspects of one's life. Sometimes Spirit gives a message through an image one has intuitively created, and we may not fully understand the content of the piece until the collage is complete. By working intuitively and spontaneously with collage and depth journaling, one can begin to bridge the realms of one's waking consciousness and the invisible realm that lies in the depths of the psyche.

How do we know that the images available in the process are the 'right ones' for us?

I tell people to gather the images that attract them, without any conscious plan. The collages then create themselves without any effort to make something 'artistic'. There are always surprises when we allow the images in our collages to 'select us' without a preconceived idea of what the finished piece will be. People who try this process frequently express amazement at the wisdom revealed to them by their own deep intuition.

One participant wrote to me: 'I was ultimately surprised at how much I liked what came from the effort, and even more amazed to discover that the collages I created were full of symbolic information I hadn't even been aware of. I still get new insights and understanding when I look back at them.'

Can anyone achieve this?

The technique is simple and requires no artistic background – only the willingness to let go and allow your intuition and imagination guide you.



The collages often inspire written works too; 'Self-Reflection' is both art and poem.

Self Reflection

There is a still pool
in the Silence of my heart,
where only I can go.
Here the Moon and I gaze
at each other's
changing reflection.

And a night bird
listens at the dark waters
for the song he'll bring,
at dawn, to the others
to sing for me.

And the moon faced child
in Her cloak of stars
with eyes I fall endlessly into,
sees my mysteries
and knows my secrets
And reveals me to my Self.



To view Kathy's art selection, stop by Heaven & Earth Gallery, 227 Main Road, Tairua. Enter into her images and "explore what messages or inspiration they might evoke for you."

ABOUT THE CLASSES: The technique Kathy shares in the collage workshops is both 'Earth-rooted and Spirit-centred' – just like the name she and husband Robert Simmons chose for their gallery – 'Heaven and Earth'.

Kathy has taught this process at the Jungian Center in Vermont in the US, as well as other venues, before she and her husband moved to NZ in 2013.

Kathy provides all visual and craft materials for the class, but attendees are encouraged to bring magazine pages with images that appeal to them.

To be notified about Kathy's upcoming workshops, leave your contact information at the gallery, or on her website where you can also view more 'Spirit Art' images and even learn how to explore Kathy's process on your own.

See www.womansway.com

Spirit Art

by Kathy Helen Warner



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Andrew Killick

- the craftsman behind Laughing Pottery

Greg and I recently had the pleasure of visiting Andrew in his new studio and shop in downtown Waihi. I could quickly see why Laughing Pottery received such rave reviews from everyone I knew who had stopped by. Andrew is not only a talented potter, he is the a charming host to all that venture in – many locals even bring their lunch and sit at the bar stools provided, chatting and watching him as he crafts.

Displays change daily with a 'Fresh out of the Kiln' table for his newest items. A revolving display of wall art compliments the ever-changing, gorgeous selection of pottery. Today Andrew is busy at the wheel skillfully turning out one of his unique vases. There was no way I was leaving without a purchase – the challenge would be what to choose. – T Daly



Andrew Killick is no stranger to the potter's wheel. He comes from a family background steeped in the artistry of crafting clay into fine wares. His family owned Killick Pottery in Pukekohe, South Auckland. After a 14 year break working with clay, Andrews's passion for the medium got the better of him and Laughing Pottery was established in his garage with a pop-up store in front. As word spread and orders started to pile in, it did not take long to outgrow that space.

Moving his cramped workshop to a storefront at 18 Rosemont Road – the main street of Waihi – proved to be the perfect solution. And with lots of hard work and sheer determination, Laughing Pottery opened May 2017.

"Pottery for me is a creative listening art. The clay forms and speaks in my hands, teaching me as I go," Andrew shares. "It's a tactile art form that allows me to flow with creativity, while adhering to simple architectural and design principles. These hand-crafted pieces take time to emerge, often crafted, glazed and fired many times over before it reaches completion."

Behind the counter are 5 throwing wheels, set up for classes. Dozens of pieces are set aside drying, the wet clay must air dry several days before the first low temperature bisque firing which will harden the pieces.

They can then be dipped into a glaze that will not reveal its true nature until fired again with higher temperatures, which will melt into a shiny glaze. The colours will intensify, and the surface will be glassy, bubble into a foam, a cracked texture or a vein of 'pure gold'.

The kiln in the back room held over 100 pieces on racks. Some pieces will get multiple glazes and firings to fulfil Andrew's vision. Many surprises are revealed when the pieces are removed, still hot, from the kiln.

Andrew's Raku style pieces are very unusual. Their 'fire/charcoal' markings are caused during firing, and they evoke a Japanese Zen touch, and we see unique 'personalities' in his rack of ceremonial tea cups.

Andrew creates one off pieces, dinnerware sets, homeware, commissions, and orders for restaurants and businesses. Each piece is individually thrown and the pottery has the makers mark stamped into it so you can be assured of the quality. "Some pieces include a touch of Waihi sand, and sometimes customers will bring sand from their own beach to work into the clay for their commissions." And all these creations are suitable for daily use – microwave, dishwasher and oven-proof.

"One of the things I love most about my craft is the thought that the pot I make may carry my

finger prints for thousands of years. I hugely enjoy the imperfections of handmade pottery. Somehow for me this is what I strive for, the perfection of the imperfection.

"The way a pot sits in your hands or you have the urge to pick it up, what you can imagine eating or drinking from that vessel, where you see it in your home, how you see it being used. You may even glimpse a finger print!"

Andrew's dream is to re-establish the New Zealand pottery store with old fashioned values and practices. Laughing Pottery is a calm space with a personal touch. "I love being accessible to people", he says, "connecting with them, and sharing ideas and stories. We all grow richer for the interchange."



**CORO
ROW**



The Coromandel's #1 Fan!

It's been a long time coming which isn't a bad thing – just saying. The good news for those of us who have often wondered when someone would start a taxi service in the area, is that Nick Roberts from Tairua, has. But it's definitely not your typical service.

Those who know proprietor Mr Roberts know that he's anything but typical. He's made capital on his new venture Sand Shifters – a pick-up, drop-off service to anywhere you want to go, doing anything you want to do, including digging holes.

Nick drove us to Hot Water Beach late one afternoon. On-lookers immediately noticed that the guy behind the sand spade knew what he was doing, and he got to it, pronto! Soon we were relaxing in our own hot pool. It was like bath-time for the rich and famous.

Controlling the temperature by channelling the hot and cold water needed to maintain perfect temperature, Nick dug more and more holes. And with each new hole came new delight. By the end of the evening the scene resembled an ancient Mayan water system.

We were thrilled with the experience. I can personally recommend Sand Shifters. Whether you need a safe ride home after a few drinks, a private driver to shuttle you around the Mercury Bay Art Escape, or a great guy to ferry you to the best time ever at Hot Water Beach – Nick is the guy to call.

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Happy 25th Anniversary Hahei Explorer

This year marks 25 years since the Hahei Explorer took its first passengers to visit Cathedral Cove – a special anniversary the company shares with the Te Whanganui A Hei (Cathedral Cove) Marine Reserve, which was also established in 1992.

This 9 hectare wonderland is accessible only by foot or boat, and Hahei Explorer was the first tour to operate in the area. Its sturdy pontoon boats have been taking awestruck passengers to the cove and showing them the awesome sights of the Hahei coast ever since.

Greg and I are two of those ‘awestruck’ passengers. While Greg’s mum was visiting several years back, we looked for activities we could enjoy together and a friend highly recommended the Hahei Explorer. We were all blown away and Mum took over 100 photos! We now make a point of taking all our visitors on this fabulous tour, so they can be awestruck too.

Owners Robyn and Shane Harnett say it’s still the only tour to visit all the highlights of the reserve, Cathedral Cove and the incredible volcanic coastline in only one hour. This is due to their central location.

“Our passengers include enthusiastic Kiwis as well as visitors from around the globe. We feel privileged to showcase this amazing area to sea-lovers who get to visit coastal islands, reefs, massive sea caves and bays, which includes the world famous Cathedral Cove,” says Shane. “Truly a photographer’s dream.”

The approach by sea, combined with an insightful yet relaxed commentary, enhances the experience of the magnificent scenery. Their vessels comfortably seat 10, and knowledgeable skippers provide a local perspective not available on larger tour boats.

“Stingray Bay near Cathedral Cove is just one highlight”, says Skipper Tom. “It is named after the Eagle Rays that take advantage of the surging motion of water in the bay’s shallows. The water naturally flows through their gills, and they can rest on the bottom; they don’t have to swim continuously to breathe.”

One of the most dramatic geologic attractions of their 14km tour is the awesome blow-hole, ‘Wai Ora Ana’, seen at left. “When the tide is right, the nimble boats venture through a secret entrance into a gigantic rock cave cylinder, 80 feet high and open to the sky – it’s truly a magical place to behold!”

Operations Manager Tim Bright adds, “We took a guy from Auckland out last summer who later told us he had seen and learned more in one hour with us than he had in 12 years of bringing his own boat here.”

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Another tour highlight is the world famous Cathedral Cove. Even here, they offer a competitive edge. “As one of the few to have a DOC concession licence to land at Cathedral Cove”, notes Shane, “we can deliver a bride and groom with celebrant for a most unique picture-perfect ceremony on this renowned Coromandel beach.”

This special licence puts their pontoon boats in demand as sea taxis. They have often been tasked to transport film crews, cast and equipment for commercials, documentaries, and movies, such as the ‘Prince Caspian’ actors and crew from Walt Disney’s ‘The Chronicles of Narnia’ series.

The Hahei Explorer is happy to customise tours for your group that focus on your specific interests – such as photography, bird watching, geology or specific marine life.



Owners Robyn and Shane Harnett moved from Papamoa in 2003 after purchasing the Glass Bottom Boat business before purchasing Hahei Explorer three years later.

“A highlight for the business in recent years,” says Robyn, “was winning the ‘AA 101 Must Do Award’ for best water activity in NZ.” Robyn and Shane say they owe their success to a great team and supportive local businesses.

Happy passengers agree: “Comfortable boat with a small number of passengers. Very friendly skipper who was very informative. Saw penguins before we were even out of the bay, jellyfish in an amazing sea cave, nesting seabirds, and to top it all off, a pod of Orcas!...” –Jessica K., Matamata, NZ

Get information, book a tour or buy merchandise at their new office in Hahei next to the petrol station. Offering six tours daily over Summer and two in Winter. Bookings required. Contact 0800 COVE TOUR, 07 866 3910, or info@haheieplorer.co.nz.

See www.haheieplorer.co.nz or their Fb page for fabulous photos and testimonials.

Hahei Explorer’s sturdy, nimble 5-pontoon crafts can easily launch from Hahei’s flat sand beach as well as manoeuvre the volcanic coastline with its many sculpted cliffs, caves, and blow holes. Often orca whales and dolphins will swim along side.

“action packed and absolutely gobsmackingly beautiful.”



Developing with Heart



Tairua is a place of immense beauty, and an exclusive eco-residential development is set to enhance the biodiversity on this stunning natural canvas.

It may not be immediately obvious, since it's largely hidden from view from SH25, yet the ambition and vision behind the development taking shape here is extraordinary. Azimuth Estate is spread across a 92 acre site on the western side of Tairua's Main Rd. It overlooks the Coromandel Ranges, the Tairua 18-hole Country Club, plus offers expansive harbour, ocean and island views to the East, South and Southeast.

What distinguishes this development is that it is being built by Sky Mason, a Tairua local whose primary motivation is to give something back to the community of Tairua.

Sky's parents, Brenda and Wiremu Mason, moved from Thames to Tairua with their four children when Sky was five years old. Their family home on Tairua's Main Street backed on to farmland where the children explored and played – the perfect playground to unleash their creative minds.

Sky attended Tairua School and grew up doing all the things young boys did with their mates – shooting rabbits, fishing, diving, collecting pipis, scraping oysters off the rocks and building huts, which is what he enjoyed most. His mum knew early on that her first born son had a real talent for building. And she was right. After leaving school, Sky completed a building apprenticeship then went on to study architecture.

These days, Sky is involved in construction, forestry and farming around the Tairua countryside. Sky's Maori heritage, in particular the concept of kaitiakitanga, guardianship and protection of the land, has greatly influenced the direction Azimuth Estates has taken.



"Azimuth' is the angle of an object in the sky along the horizon," Sky shares. "But for me, it's my compass bearing to develop something ecologically sensitive and respectful to the land I grew up on."

Managing the development is Richard Wood, who joined Sky's company from a background as a land economist working on commercial projects in his native UK, before moving to NZ and settling with his family in Tairua. Richard likes to think it was his good looks that got him the job!

Richard believes the landscape being developed by Sky "is one of the most striking landscapes – not just in NZ but in the world.

"With its panoramic views to the ocean and The Pinnacles, and being so close to town, the site is unique – in fact it's mind blowing, under-utilised and undervalued, being less than a 2-hour drive from Auckland, Tauranga and Hamilton."

He says working on the Azimuth Estates project is more than just a welcome diversion from his typical projects, which involved conversion of factories and green fields into as many high-density flats as possible. The smallest of the sites are more than twice the minimum size required by Council.

With premium building covenants in place, Azimuth Estates is guided by principles of building quality and sustainability. The neighbourhood will be built to a superior standard, with guidelines also covering tree plantings including predominant species like pohutukawa, cabbage tree and lemon wood.



The intent right from the outset was to create a premium, highly desirable and exclusive community, which will retain investment interest and improve in value.

Sky's team of staff and contractors are dedicated, and for many of them, it's a dream job to be working locally on a project with such a strong focus on enhancing the landscape of the town.

The predator control and weed removal, native planting and restoration undertaken has necessitated full-time employment of locals, Todd Lurman and Nathaniel Blomfield. Todd is in charge of predator control – all done without the use of 1080 poison. He keeps bees on the property, shoots rabbits and possums, and hunts pigs from which he makes sausages. Nathaniel puts his skills as a horticulturalist into practice, managing and planting out the development.

27 sections have already been sold to a mix of owners from the permanent population of Tairua, and overseas buyers who have strong connections to the area. The development also includes a second stage of 48 sections that will start later this year.

Stage 1 titles are expected by 31 March, with Stage 2 work commencing in September, but perhaps even more exciting is the three-to-five year plan. The third stage will include boutique accommodation in the treetops, with a central restaurant and parking area, creating a 5-star ecological visitor destination. Richard explains, "The top quality tree-houses and cabins will utilise solar power, and a central complex is planned where guests leave their cars and are transported to their accommodation by golf buggies."

"What is most significant about Azimuth Estates is that it is founded on an ethical respect for the land, and Sky's genuine desire to create something beautiful his children and their children and the community of Tairua can be proud of."



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Tairua's Derek Boyd honoured with memorial carved bench.

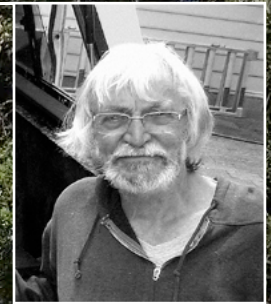


Photo courtesy of family.

Marlene Boyd, Derek's "sweetheart for 56 years", sits on the commemorative bench that overlooks one of his last big projects – the newly replaced, wider causeway bridge at Grahams Creek. She comments that "Derek would have stood near this spot hundreds upon hundreds of times viewing the area." Portrait courtesy of family.

By Alison Smith

Memorial seats have added a heart-warming dimension to the Coromandel landscape, and the masterfully carved one recently installed by the community of Tairua signifies the vast contribution to its surrounding place by a unique man.

Derek Boyd – affectionately known as Boydie – never sought the limelight. But at the unveiling of the seat carved by Whenuakite master craftsman Roger Harwood, his family said he would have been tickled pink by the gesture.

Bird song mixes with the playful voices of the nearby Tairua Kindergarten children at the location for 'Boydie's seat', which holds anchor

under mature banksia trees on the Manaia Road Causeway bridge reserve.

Derek's beloved widow Marlene walks to the seat every day from their home on Ocean Beach Rd.

As one of the instigators of the Whenuakite Kiwi Care group, Derek's love of birdlife was such that their welfare was his life's compulsion.

"Derek called out to our community 20 years ago," says friend John Drummond. "As a bushman and a hunter he saw the destruction of the coastal forest by goats and possums, the pohutukawa dying everywhere and the decline

in the birdlife by stoats, weasels and rats."

Derek began culling goats and organised possum control in the 1000ha of regenerating native bush that extends the coast north of Tairua toward Hot Water Beach. Firstly talking to individual land owners surrounding the forest, he negotiated with the Department of Conservation, pig hunters and others, and cut tracks and set traps through the DOC land.

He pulled together what he called "The A-Team" – a group of mostly women from Tairua who diligently re-set those traps every few weeks. Their volunteer work continues today.

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This 'kiwi sanctuary' is now a model of kiwi conservation on the mainland and among the country's most successful. But the location chosen for Derek's memorial bench – although surrounded by birdlife – is more a reflection of another achievement.

Boydie vs the floodplain

Several times a year, the Grahams Creek Floodplain on Ocean Beach Road would fill in during a storm, and the fury of this deluge would unleash itself upon a handful of properties at its hem line.

For 30 years, it was long-time Ocean Beach Rd resident Derek who fought hardest for a solution to the prolonged stress it was causing the people living closest to him.

Derek's seat overlooks the newly replaced, wider causeway bridge and widened stream mouth that allows the Grahams Creek floodplain to empty more efficiently into Paaku Bay. As one of the properties in the 'targeted area of benefit', Derek paid substantially more than the rest of the community for the works to go ahead, but more importantly, he gave the quiet leadership required to get it done.

"If not for Derek, nothing would have happened," says former Community Board member and near neighbour Gloria Rennie. "Even though he got permission and spent a lot of money raising his own property to address flooding, he saw the continuing issue for everyone else and still contributed to the cost.

"Whenever we had flooding, Derek would be out at day break – checking where the flooding was the worst, noting it, taking photographs, contacting authorities, and then be on the end of a broom clearing out garages to help his neighbours. He was the 'go-to' for everybody in the community."

Tairua Residents and Ratepayers Chair Tony Jacobs says his group donated money for his commemorative seat because Derek campaigned for over 25 years to get Waikato Regional Council and TCDC to provide flood protection to the surrounding properties of Grahams Creek even though his own property never flooded.

There has been no flooding since the recent completion of the work that Derek had been asking for, for so many years.

"For people who work for our environment," adds John Drummond, "we often relate them to a tree. I see Derek as a pohutukawa. A large coastal pohutukawa. A bit gnarly. A bit scruffy at times. And with the right conditions, flowers beautifully."

Carved on this seat is a species of bird that Derek once told carver Roger Harwood he'd most like to be if he could choose. But to find out which bird this is, you will just have to pay a visit to his bench.

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Whangamata WIMS

Best NZ Beach honours

Whangamata Beach voted 'BEST' by readers of the NZ Herald, from hundreds of beaches nominated. *"It's the classic Kiwi holiday place that caters to all ages."*

When the NZ Herald conducts a poll, its voting public includes the entire country, making any winner all that more prestigious. It also meant that every Kiwi beach was a contender. So what makes 'Whanga' such a special place? Voters came up with all sorts of reasons including:

"You name it, it's all there. It's paradise for me and my family!"

"It's clean. It's got everything — great surf, a bridge for kids to jump off, it's got the estuary, which is safe for the little ones, there's boogie boarding for the older ones,"

"Stunning setting, beautiful clean beach, crystal-clear blue water."

"It's just the best place to have a holiday. It's a great walking location and the streets are easy to bike around."

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Photo: Surf N Stay – surf school, rentals & adventure hostel. See www.surfnstaynewzealand.com

Also a "Whangamata" winner!

BEACH HOP™

EventFinder Best Event 2017



Whangamata residents (and perhaps 100,000 of their dearest friends) brace for NZ's largest nostalgia fest. This 5-day action-packed Repco Beach Hop and retro-fueled Rock'n'Roll Festival will be held 21-26 March with a theme twinged with Aloha tiki vibes.

1000 registered hot rods, classic cars, muscle cars, street machines and motorbikes will be cruising Coro-bound for parades, park-ups, auctions and

shows. Beach Hop's main location is Whangamata but there are events at Waihi, Whitianga and Onemana.

With 20 bands scheduled, expect non-stop entertainment, swing dance eruptions, and Elvis sightings. The NZ Petrolhead Vintage Market will be held at Whangamata Hall, and the Sunday swap meet is always a hit.

For schedule see www.beachhop.co.nz.

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COROMANDEL

life

calendar

FEBRUARY 2018

SAT 10 FEB



FESTIVAL - Coro Oyster Feast Coromandel Mussel Kitchen, 12-5pm. Oysters, craft beer, champagne and live music. \$20: 0800 BUY TIX.

FESTIVAL - Paeroa Highland Games and Tattoo Paeroa Domain, 9am-9pm. A fully-fledged Highland Games, one of only seven in NZ. www.paeroahighlandgames.co.nz.

EXHIBITION - "What Matters Most", Charlotte Giblin at Bread & Butter Gallery, Whitianga, 12-2pm. This solo portrait exhibition celebrates her relationships with 7 remarkable women. www.breadandbutter.co.nz. See page 54 for more info.

SPORT - ARC Adventure Race includes 2 races. A longer teams race that takes 12-18hrs and a shorter one of 6-10hrs. See www.arcevents.co.nz/arc-adventure

THU 15 FEB



CONCERT - Flora and Sean Kauaeranga Hall, 7:30pm. Their self-titled 'Flora and Sean' debut record is made up of songs and tunes they've gleaned on travels around the US, Canada and Australasia. \$18: 021 912 993.

FRI 16 FEB



CONCERT - Dub Cymatics NZ Tour Lukes Kitchen, Kuaotunu, 7-11pm. Catch 'em while you can, and let Dub Cymatics shape your soul and energise you with the best vibrations. Free: www.dubcymatics.com.

CONCERT - Flora and Sean The Club, 190 Woollams Avenue, Coromandel, 7:30pm. See Thu 15 Feb for full info.

FRI 16 - SUN 18 FEB



FESTIVAL - Brits At The Beach Festival Beach Road Reserve, Whangamata. Fri 9am-11pm, Sat 7am-11pm, Sun 10am-3pm. Celebrating All Things British! Free entry: www.britsatthebeach.co.nz.

SAT 17 FEB

CONCERT - Brits at the Beach Celebrate Cliff Richard & the Shadows Whangamata RSA, 8-11:45pm. Fabulous hits that made them the true pioneers of British Rock & Pop music in the late '50s and early '60s. \$29: www.britsatthebeach.co.nz.

CONCERT - Dub Cymatics NZ Tour Smash Pipi, Whangamata, 7-11pm. See Fri 16 Feb for full info.

SPORT - 'This Is Me' Morgan Park, Waihi, 10am-1pm. 'This Is Me' is a campaign aimed at females to grow participation in sport, recreation and physical activity. Free: www.waihi.org.nz/events/this-is-me/?view=upcoming.

SAT 17 - SAT 24 FEB

FISHING - Simrad / ITM Nationals Mercury Bay Gamefishing Club, Whitianga. 078664121, www.gamebase.co.nz.

FISHING - Tristram Marine Open Mercury Bay Gamefishing Club, Whitianga. 078664121, www.gamebase.co.nz.

SUN 18 FEB



RACE - Paeroa Battle of the Streets Held annually, riders from around the country and overseas converge on this otherwise quiet town to compete in the race. www.battleofthestreets.co.nz.

MARCH 2018

FRI 02 MAR

ARTS ON TOUR - Rado and Raybon: Save the World Whitianga Town Hall, 7:30pm. Leading comedians Raybon Kan and Nick Rado arrive in Whiti. \$30 from Paper Plus Whitianga.

ART - Mercury Bay Art Escape Gala 6pm. Meet the artists, view representative artworks. Lecture by NZ art critic TJ McNamara, wine, food, band. Hot Waves Cafe, Hot Water Beach. Tickets \$40 at www.mercurybay-artescape.com. See more p50.

FIRST TWO WEEKENDS 03-04 & 10-11 MAR



ART - Mercury Bay Art Escape: Area artists open their studios to visitors from 10am-4pm both weekends. This popular annual event showcases local talent from Tairua, Hahei, Hot Water Beach, Cooks Beach, Whenuakite, Coroglen, Whitianga and Kuaotunu. Guide book and attendance free. Two special events on offer this year with Michael Smither and Chris Charteris. www.mercurybay-artescape.com. See article on page 50-51 for more info.

THU 08 - SAT 10 MAR

FISHING - Stabcraft Trailer Boat Tournament Mercury Bay Gamefishing Club, Whitianga. 078664121, www.gamebase.co.nz.

FRI 09 - SAT 10 MAR



RALLY - Harley Davidson Gathering Albert St, Whitianga. Over 500 Harley enthusiasts are expected in Whitianga en masse. View motorbikes around town and at Saturday Market! www.allaboutwhitianga.co.nz/mercury-bay-events-guide/sports-recreational/the-harley-davidson-gathering.

FRI 16 - MON 19 MAR

FESTIVAL - Thames Heritage Festival In its 12th year, this popular event celebrates our district's history and includes lectures, events, displays, historical exhibits, and period dress. www.thamesheritage.co.nz/heritage. See page 36 for article and schedule.

FRI 16 MAR

FESTIVAL - St Patrick's Ceili St James Church, Thames, 7-10pm. Sean Kelly & friends return to provide Irish & Scottish Ceilidh music to the call of Noel Armstrong. Cup 'o tay and a biscuit. www.facebook.com/Seankellymusic.

SAT 17 MAR



RALLY - New Zealand Leyland P76 Classic Car Display Buffalo Beach Reserve, Whitianga, 2pm. Come and view the display of up to 20 cars and have a chance to chat to the car owners. www.leylandp76club.org.nz/index.html.

THU 22 MAR

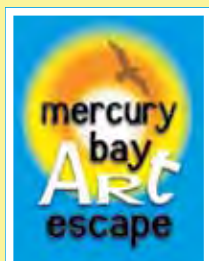
FESTIVAL - Beach Hop - Repco Beach Party In Whitianga Albert Street, 11am-3pm. Hundreds of classic cars are expected to come into the town centre to park up – and you're invited for the special viewing and free entertainment!

FISHING - Challenge Cup Fishing Competition Matarangi Boat and Fishing Club, 6am. Annual Challenge Cup between the Matarangi Boat and Fishing Club and the Matarangi Volunteer Rural Fire Brigade. Contact Dave on 02102311130.

WED 21 - SUN 25 MAR



FESTIVAL - Repco Beach Hop Whangamata. This popular 5-day festival celebrates the music, culture, fashion, music, hot rods, motorbikes, dancing, dragsters and scooters of this golden era. Over 1000 vehicles have registered and 20 bands scheduled to perform. See FB and www.beachhop.co.nz.

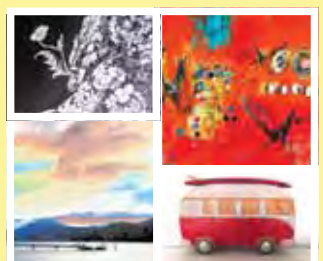


Open Art Studios

FIRST 2 WEEKENDS IN MARCH

www.mercurybayartescape.com

for full details and stockists of the FREE 2018 Art Guide



SAT 24 - SUN 25 MAR



RACE - Tairua Wet 'n' Wild Weekend
Pepe Reserve. Free family entertainment with stalls, great food, music, raffles and entertainment. Jet Ski Races, wakeboard, freestyler and flyboard. www.facebook.com/tairuawetandwild.

SUN 25 MAR

MEMORIAL - Matarangi and Kuaotunu Anzac Day Service Matarangi Fire Station, 10:30am (rain or shine). All are welcome to attend and to stay for a light lunch at noon. If you would like to lay a wreath at the service please contact George Rinui: 027493 3895.

MEMORIAL - Anzac Day Dawn Service in Whitianga Soldiers Memorial Reserve, 6am (rain or shine). Everyone invited back to Mercury Bay Club for breakfast. If you would like to lay a wreath at the dawn service contact Bruce Collier: 07 866 0284.

TUE 27 MAR

ARTS ON TOUR - Olive Copperbottom Whitianga Town Hall, 7:30pm. One woman portrays 15 characters in an hilarious musical journey. \$25 from Paper Plus Whitianga. www.hotpink.co.nz.

FRI 30 MAR - MON 02 APR

FESTIVAL - Colville Easter Festival Colville Hall, 10am-10pm. Artists will present sculptures, workshops will run during the day and nights filled with music, comedy, dance, cabaret and children's performance. www.colvilleartsfestival.co.nz. See page 46 for more info.

SAT 31 MAR

FISHING - Easter Fishing Competition Matarangi Boat and Fishing Club, 6am. Spend your Easter on the water using your fishing talents in the Matarangi Volunteer Fire Force - Easter Fishing Competition. Contact Stu Arnold on 0274352899.

APRIL 2018

SAT 07 APR



FESTIVAL - A Taste of Matarangi The Village Green, 10am-4:30pm. A fantastic line-up of entertainment, delicious food and great wines. www.atasteofmatarangi.co.nz. See page 70 for more info.

SPORT - Cathedral Cove Swim Idyllic swim through a marine reserve to Cathedral Cove, then back to HaHei beach (4km). Or enjoy the scenic walk there and swim 2km back. www.brentfoster.co.nz/page5/index.php.

SAT 07 - SUN 22 APR



FESTIVAL - Echo Walking Festival Coromandel to Kaimais. From an hour's walk to full day tramps, there's something for everyone and every fitness level.

FRI 13 - SUN 15 APR

SPORT - Whitianga Dive Festival It's a great weekend of gathering divers from far and wide, entering into fun competitions with a pool of awesome prizes and a bit of social fun as well. www.divefestival.co.nz.

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MARKETS... AROUND THE COROMANDEL

SUMMER/EASTER 2017



THAMES MARKET- Saturdays 8am-12pm, Pollen Street. Farm fresh produce, Mussel fritters, cheeses, breads, crafts, flowers & plants. Info Angelika & Peter 07 868 9841

COROMANDEL TOWN MARKET Fridays 8am-12pm, 10 Oct-end of May. Pepper Tree Restaurant. Info Glenda 07 866 6747

COROGLEN FARMERS MARKET Every Sunday 9am-1pm, until 23 April. Gumtown Hall, SH25. Quality local organic seasonal produce. Info Jessie 022 081 4415

WHITIANGA CRAFT & FARM MARKET Sat 21 & 28 Jan; Sat 4, 11, 18, 25 Feb; Sat 4, 11, 18, 25 Mar. 8.30am-1pm. Soldiers Memorial Park, Albert Street. Info Anne 07 866 5550 (or 027 2460072); Doreen 07 866 5237 (or 021 0616489)

KUAOTUNU COMMUNITY SWAP
Fortnightly Sundays 10am at Lukes Kitchen. Exchange your home-produced food with food from other community members. Facebook page. Info Kathy 07 866 2770



TAIRUA MARKET DAY 1st Sat every month, 9am-1pm, Town Hall, Main Rd. Crafts, goods & produce. Info 022 412 8184

KARANGAHAKE HALL MARKET 2nd & 4th Sunday every month 10am-2pm. Main St, Paeroa. Info Moira 07 862 9233

WAIHI MARKET 3rd Sat every month 8.30am-1pm, Memorial Hall, Main Rd and in Sneddon St. Info Sherry 022 650 8253

WAIHI BEACH FRESH PRODUCE MARKET Sundays Labour weekend 'til Easter 9am-12pm. Opposite Waihi Beach Hotel, Wilson Rd. Produce, breads, meats, cheeses, flowers. Info Barb 021 103 6270

KATIKATI PLANT & PRODUCE MARKET Fridays 4-6pm (closes at sunset). Katikati A&P Showgrounds, Waterford Rd. Local produce, bread, cheeses, meats. Info 07 549 2449

KATIKATI LIONS MOGGIE MARKET 2nd Sat every month, 8am-12pm, Katikati War Memorial Hall. Info Margaret 021 507 456.

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SAT 14 APR

MARATHON - Surf 2 Firth Bush Marathon
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SAT 21 APR

FISHING - Doris Day Out Matarangi Fishing Competition Matarangi Boat and Fishing Club, 6am. Calling all keen fishermen to enter! This is a Ladies members event only. Contact Dave: 02102311130.

SAT 21 - SUN 22 APR

FISHING - Junior Tournament Mercury Bay Gamefishing Club, Whitianga. 07 866 4121, www.gamebase.co.nz.

SAT 14 APR

WHANGAMATA MULTISPORT CHALLENGE

RACE - Whangamata Multisport Challenge
One of the most scenic courses in NZ, choose from multisport, duathlon, run, paddle or mtb events. whangamataevents.co.nz/multisport.

MAY 2018

SAT 05 MAY



RACE - The Great Cranleigh Kauri Run A series of off road trail runs or walks on the stunningly beautiful Northern Coromandel Peninsula. www.arcevents.co.nz/kaurirun.

Coromandel Seafood Fest

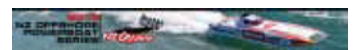
FESTIVAL - Coromandel Seafood Festival
Coromandel Area School Grounds, 10am-4pm. Fishing competition, oyster shucking, mussel shucking, food demonstrations, live local bands, fish filleting demonstration. www.coromandelseafoodfest.com.

SAT 12 MAY



SPORT - The Nugget MultiSport Festival Waihi. There's the Full Nugget Multisport Race, Half Nugget Duathlon, 21km Trail Run and the 10km or 5km off-road Run/Walk events. www.thenugget.co.nz.

FISHING - Ted Puddick Memorial Fishing Competition Matarangi Boat and Fishing Club, 6am. Contact Dave on 02102311130.



RACING - NZ Offshore Powerboat Racing Series Buffalo Beach, Whitianga, 11am. Park up with the family to view the thrill and excitement right from Buffalo Beach - boats can get to speeds of up to 180km/h. www.nzoffshore.co.nz.

SAT 26 MAY

RACE - Whitianga Half Marathon Buffalo Beach Reserve. Everyone can participate in some way. www.whitiangahalfmarathon.co.nz.

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The Amethyst

NZ GEMS

by Robert Simmons

If my 33 years in the business have taught me anything, it's that just about everyone loves Amethyst! And why not? These crystals and geodes are beautiful, colourful and unique. No crystal shop would be complete without a good selection of these purple wonders.

Prized for its beauty and legendary energies for thousands of years, Neolithic people in Europe used it as early as 25,000 BC, and in ancient Egypt it was made into beads and amulets. Early Greek and Roman societies placed high value on Amethyst, and it has long been viewed as a stone of royalty, utilized in crowns and sceptres of royalty, and the rings of bishops.

It's name comes from a Greek word meaning 'not drunken'. An ancient myth explains "The god Bacchus, angry when the beautiful maiden Amethyst refused his drunken advances, decreed that the first person he met would be eaten by his tigers. The unfortunate person happened to be Amethyst, on her way to worship at the shrine of Diana. When the tigers sprang, Diana transformed the girl into a clear, transparent crystal. In remorse, Bacchus poured the juice of his grapes over the stone, thus giving the gem its beautiful purple colour."

The Greeks believed the Amethyst crystal would prevent intoxication, calm anger and relieve frustrated passion.

HOW GEODES FORM

Amethyst Geodes – the hollow, cavellike formations lined with sparkling purple crystals – are a favourite among stone lovers. How are they formed? Not even scientists are 100% sure, but here is the most accepted theory:

The first step is the formation of gas cavities in lava. The hardened cavities fill with a silica-rich liquid with trace amounts of iron. Over time, this liquid forms crystals – six-sided pyramids (rhombohedrons) – of Amethyst. The trace iron creates the purple colour that ranges from light lilac to deep purple. Without the iron, the crystals would be clear or white.

Amethyst has been found on every continent, but the primary sources of geodes are Brazil and Uruguay – the greatest quantity and largest found in Brazil, while those of the deepest purple colour are from Uruguay. Southern Africa's Amethysts are 'gem-grade', used to make the multi-faceted stones for jewellery.

Amethyst can even be found right here on the Coromandel Peninsula! It often occurs in the same areas where the iconic Coromandel White Quartz crystals are found – in the creeks of Coromandel Town, the rivers along the 309 Road, the Komata Reef area, and the mountains east of Thames. There are reportedly beautiful Amethyst crystals in the Martha gold mine in Waihi, but the mining company does not permit them to be removed.

NZ Amethyst is usually much paler than Brazilian or Uruguayan material, but it can still be quite lovely. It often occurs in combination with white quartz crystals, and the effect can be strikingly beautiful.

In metaphysical lore, Amethyst is said to be a stone of healing, purification and protection. It is thought to engender a positive energy and to aid one in reaching higher states of consciousness when used in meditation. Wearing it can help clear negativity from oneself and others.

Another current-day belief is that Amethyst can help avoid over-indulgence, and break bad habits (similar to the Greeks' belief that it protected from drunkenness!). In general, many feel (including me) it to be a wholesome and positive influence from which all can benefit.

For those interested in seeing, holding, or acquiring an Amethyst cluster, geode, tumbled stone or piece of jewellery, Heaven and Earth Gallery offers literally tons! The knowledgeable staff will be happy to also introduce you to the hundreds of other lovely stones in their impressive collection. Located on Main Road in Tairua. Open 10-5pm every day. 07 864 8875.



This beautiful deep purple amethyst piece is from Uruguay.



NZ Amethyst: This specimen with the stripe of Amethyst in white quartz is actually from the banks of the river on the 309 Road.



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A fabulous day of food, wine and music by the beach.



Mark your calendars for Saturday, 7 April – you won't want to miss this fantastic line-up of entertainment, delicious food and great wines on offer at the Village Green at Matarangi – the sixth year of this fabulous festival.

Lap up the atmosphere with the beautiful backdrop of the stunning white sands of Matarangi Beach. Included in the mouth-watering, thirst-quenching goodies on offer is organic and local produce, gourmet burgers, seafood, fine wines, coffee and craft beers.

Gather around the main stage to hear music to suit everyone's taste. **The Monroes** can

really whip up a sizzling and snappy band chemistry. Back by popular demand are the absolutely amazing Coromandel favourites, **The Daughters of Ally** vocal duo. And from Auckland, **Wilde Taylor**, with vocalist and multi-instrumentalist Jesse Wilde and guitarist Ed Taylor with a lineup of folk/blues and classic 'Americana' music.

Cooking competitions and demonstrations, raffles, charity auctions, and a fun-filled kid's arena are planned – a day is filled with activities for the entire family from 10am to 4:30pm.

The Great Cookoffs

11am: A highlight of the festival is the return of the Te Rerenga School competition where three student teams will compete to create the best dish.



The winning kids recipe at 'Taste 2016', 'Toasty Stuffed Mushrooms' was prepared by Ike, Anna and Albey. Judge Andy Corles it so much, he added it to his menu at Castle Rock Café.

11:45am: Learn how to shuck mussels, fillet fish and prepare and care for your catch at the seafood demonstration.

12:30pm: Show off your cooking skills with this new competition.

"Previously the cook off showcased the expertise of local chefs, but this year we've decided to open the competition to home cooks with no previous commercial cooking experience," said coordinator Bronwyn Ririnui.

Contestants will cook their favourite dishes in less than 45 minutes using food items that will include seafood provided by the festival committee. Apply by February 28.

DAUGHTERS OF ALLY

are an absolutely amazing vocal duo to watch live and will 'blow you out of your seat' with their massive powerhouse vocals, crazy harmonies and silly on stage antics.



This event has donated over \$56,000 to benefit the community since beginning 6 years ago. The Westpac Rescue Helicopter Service and Kuaotunu **Land Search & Rescue** will again be the recipients of funds raised this year.

Pre-event ticket sales – \$15 adult, \$5 child or \$30 for a family (2 kids and 2 adults) – are available now at www.atasteofmatarangi.co.nz and **Coromandel Adventures**, Richardsons Real Estate Matarangi or Whitianga i-Site. Gate sales limited (and a bit more expensive) so grab your tickets now.

Shuttle bus service will be available from Whitianga, Kuaotunu, and Whangapoua through **Go-Kiwi** at **0800 44 65 49** or **info@go-kiwi.co.nz**. From Coromandel Town to Matarangi, contact **Coromandel Adventures** at **0800 46 26 76**.



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To Welcome & Inform: Coromandel's Visitor Centres serve us all



With its wide range of scenery and activities, NZ is one of the top tourist destinations in the world, and we have one great service that sets us apart from most other countries – Visitor Centres that provide free, well-informed and enthusiastic assistance to visitors and locals alike. Get maps, book accommodation, shuttles and bus transport, buy quality gifts and souvenirs, get directions, and find out about events, tours, walks, diving adventures, boat rides or historical sites... “Everyone can get it all at our local information centres.” –TD

by Rowena Brown

We know visitors to The Coromandel use our Info Centres, but do we as residents understand the relationship between our town's local economies and their Centres? Like a horse and carriage, peaches and cream, some things are just meant to go together.

Personal referrals and local knowledge are gems in our times, as are interactions with those people whose passions are to share information about the people and places they know and love. Find these kind of people behind the counters of The Coromandel's Info Centres.

From managing neighbourhood watch programmes to developing walks and fun-runs showcasing the beauty of the region, our Info Centre managers and volunteers are un-sung heroes, collectively a nexus underpinning tourism on The Coromandel.

Jewel Hughes has managed Pauanui's Centre for 8 years, so is well familiar with the lay of the land. “We support our community in every way, from the sale of school calendars and collecting office memberships to promoting our many clubs”.

Tairua's Centre manager Sam Taylor says if Info Centres are to remain for the long-term they need locals to support and utilise the services they offer. “Today's Info Centres rely on their communities as much as their communities rely on them”.

Coromandel Life encourage readers to pop into their Centres. We believe you may be surprised at what you'll find. With access to New Zealand's top giftware ranges, they offer the same high-quality products you see at our International Airports, except at half the price, making them an excellent place to shop.

Centres rely on the revenue generated from retail sales to top up their hard-fought-for coffers to provide services communities have come to expect, gratis.

Donna Brook of Sunlover Retreat B&B, now diligently directs all her guests to Tairua Info Centre. “We know our guests will get excellent service because they tell us, and Centres need the commissions to provide the services they offer. I encourage all owners of B&Bs to use their Centres for guests' activity bookings”.

Whangamata Info Plus manager Jude Oliver would like to see locals book their domestic travel accommodation through the Centre. “Whether wanting to tackle a day out canyoning, a visit to Hobbiton, or book accommodation, book through your Centre”.

Get the bottom line on what to do, where to go. Make a new friend. Info Centre managers and their staff enjoy sharing their love and knowledge of the area with you. Please support them so that they can continue to support your community.



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- WHANGAMATA INFO PLUS** 616 Port Rd, 07 865 8340, manager@whangamatainfo.co.nz
- PAUANUI INFO CENTRE** 23 Centreway, 07 864 7101, family-friends-fun@pauanui.co.nz
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Coro Row's 2018 #1 shout-out goes to Whitianga's Boom Sailing - with a respectful nod of acknowledgement to our very own Sir Peter Blake. As the world's most celebrated yachtsman, Sir Peter won every significant blue-water race on the planet, including successfully defending the biggest prize of all, the America's Cup. In his honour, Emirates New Zealand returned to New Zealand July 2017 with international sports' oldest trophy.

When the team emerged through Auckland International Airport's customs' doors, hundreds of dedicated sailing fans welcomed them home. Nationally, hearts soared. Black magic has struck again in Mercury Bay, and

Sir Peter would be beaming. Boom Sailing offers the world's first foiling charter catamaran experience on their big black boat, Excess. This zero cool adrenalin-pumping experience is available on the prototype catamaran on which Team New Zealand honed their America's Cup sailing skills.

Whether you are a real sailor or an armchair sailor like me, the opportunity to get between wind and the water, racing across Mercury Bay now exists - and it doesn't matter whether you know your marlinspike from your martingale. We can all experience our America's Cup dream. 100 percent froth. Boom. Boom. Boom.



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Tairua, Pauanui and Whangamata Rebrand

Shrugging off council's location moniker that sounded more like a title for a hospital ward, was the impetus behind the rebrand of The Coromandel's south eastern coast. Formally referred to as the "South Eastern Ward", Tairua, Pauanui and Whangamata have collaboratively rebranded as 'The Coromandel's Paradise Coast'. The big day out January 20 in Pauanui saw Kiwi singer Tina Cross belt out the launch song, 'Paradise Coast', that was written for the rebrand.

Augmented nationally and internationally, with NZ Herald reader's voting Whangamata the nation's best beach, and Tairua locals making Time Magazine for building a sandcastle in the estuary to avoid the New Year's Eve liquor ban, Paradise Coast is well on the way to shedding it's old mantle.

As in Tina's lyrics,

"Paradise Coast is haere mai, come on in and stay a while.
Kick back, relax and enjoy the vibe 'cos everything here is ka pai".

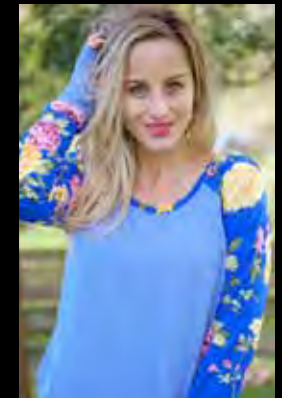
We really do live in paradise. It's 'my kind of easy'— so, so easy to share.



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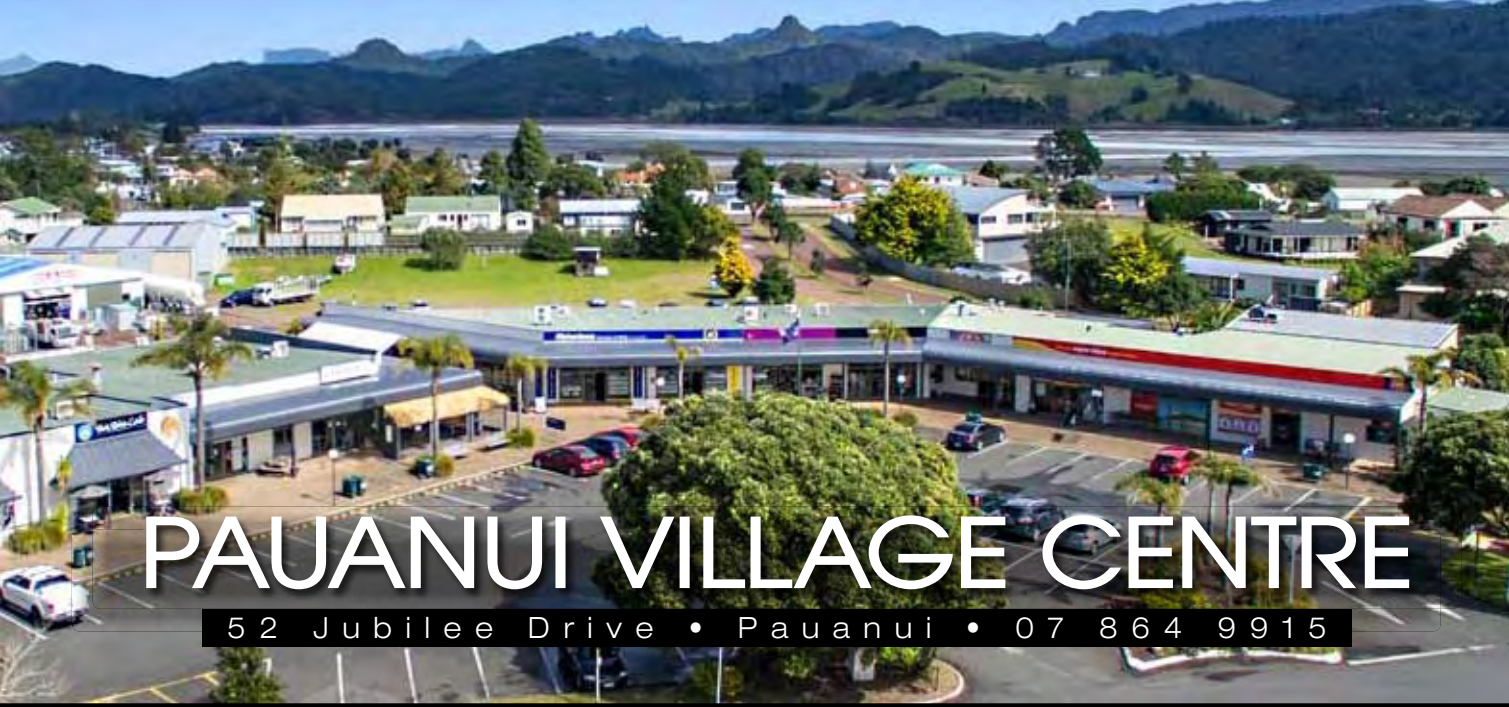
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