

A conversation with Dale Copeland

Part 1:
Dale the woman

I arrive at the home of Dale Copeland and Paul Hutchinson, skirt round the toppled gate and make my way along the grassy path between the shoulder-high hedges of vegetation leading to the front door of their early-twentieth century cottage. The colourfully painted front door is blocked by a tangle of flowering, sweet-smelling jasmine and the door-knob is home to spiders, so I knock on the glass door to one side of the verandah. I'm welcomed with enthusiasm by a large, bouncy, black Bearded Collie, closely followed by Dale, whose eyes crinkle up as her smile broadens. Fergus the Collie sniffs my armpits and other bits, and Dale reassures me that his welcome is a warm one. Thus, I enter into an Aladdin's Cave.

Dale Devereux Copeland was born in Midhurst in 1943 to Colleen Mary Copeland, nee Devereux, and Norman Copeland. Her parents separated when she was five. Norman, formerly a baker, spent most of Dale's life in Carrington Psychiatric Hospital. She didn't rediscover him 'til many years later. "He was nice," she says softly. She grew up with her mother, a factory worker, hotel cook and presser of drycleaning, and Colleen's new husband, Robert John Hill, who worked at the fertiliser works in New Plymouth. Dale muses that she didn't really notice her childhood in Inglewood, but remembers playing bows and arrows in Newlands Bush. "It was a smiling, solitary life, and a happy one," she reminisces.

Moving to New Plymouth, she attended New Plymouth Girls' High School. "My favourite subject was probably maths," she says. "I get all excited about it, especially imaginary numbers. I love its purity." She mourns that the most beautiful parts are almost kept a secret from students until their senior years;

that there's no linking between algebra and geometry and trigonometry. "There's no poetry, no passion. It's like trying to instil a love of poetry by teaching grammar," she muses. This excitement for learning, along with her innate academic ability, is reflected in her earning the title, "Dux".

"One of the most exciting days of my life," Dale relates, "was when I was fifteen or sixteen and learned that there was a school you could go to when schooldays were finished – a school called university – I couldn't believe my luck! I wanted to be a doctor but Dunedin was the only medical school at the time and it was too difficult to get to. So my brother gave me a ride to Auckland, where I studied maths and physics instead."

After gaining a BSc, she went on her "Great OE", into the Australian outback and then to London where she did some research into carbon fibre. But the mountain called her home to Taranaki, where she settled into teaching maths, science and computing at New Plymouth Girls' High School, before becoming Head of Maths and Science at Okato College. Dale is clearly proud of her involvement in launching her students into the wide world, but modestly puts it down to "a happy accident". Clearly, it's more than that. An email had arrived from a former student – a high academic achiever – the day before my visit, which said, "You helped me conquer a mountain (literally and figuratively) and I've been climbing mountains ever since. I've become a lifelong learner as the result of much that you taught me."

Dale kept studying extramurally through Massey University throughout her teaching years. She studied the Phenomenology of Universal Religion ("It



Dale relaxing at home.

couldn't fail to be interesting with a title like that!"), gained a BA and a Diploma of Social Science. But mostly, she studied maths, becoming the first student to get a Masters in the subject through distance learning from Massey University, with first class honours, no less. In 1997, she was offered a doctoral scholarship with the six Painlevée equations as her subject. Dale loves chaos and his equations are chaotic, but

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a peek inside

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editorial FROM THE TOM ZONE

It has been really great getting feedback from the first two issues of Okato TOM. We love hearing from our readers and it helps us to give you what you want to read.

During a meeting Kim and I had with TOM writers Milly Carr and Kerry Lilley, the number of stories within the Okato community just waiting to be told very quickly became obvious, so I would say get ready for an entertaining year.

Thanks again to all the contributors for getting your news to us each month and remember, what may seem obvious or trivial to yourselves may be interesting and enlightening to someone else. TOM is about keeping everyone informed.

Those of you on RD 4 who missed out on the first issue will be relieved to know that we have now addressed that situation and you will be getting TOM Okato delivered each month from here on in.

Have a splendid holiday season and we will be back in your letterbox in February as there is no January issue.

Tracey Lusk



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TOM

TOM-Okato is a free, monthly publication, delivered on the second Wednesday of the month to all homes and post-boxes from Timaru Road to Bayly Road.

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Deadline for February issue – copy and ads 25 January, delivery 13 February

Okato Lions Club

Greetings for the Christmas season from the Okato Lions.

On 1 December the Lions were involved with the "Around the Mountain Relay", a fun event open to runners and walkers. Our members helped out as marshals at various points where extra care was needed.

On December 5th the members and their partners met at the Braemar for our Christmas get-together and meal.

Then on 26 January we will be helping with the "Taranaki Cycle Challenge 2008" in the same way as the Around the Mountain Relay.

Coming up in early February one or two Lions members will be required to help with the "Old Timers Day" – a display of old machinery at Hawera.

These kinds of activities keep us all busy, but as our motto is to help and serve others, we find much pleasure in doing these things.

One of our forthcoming projects is to repair, relocate, paint and apply our logo to school bus shelters around our district. If you know of any shelters that are not required or if there is a need for one (where a group of children assemble), could you please let a Lions member know.

Have a roaring and safe Happy Christmas.

Lion Merv Hooker 🌲

Tumahu Rural Women

Recently we held a "Grandmothers" afternoon at Jan Vanner's home in Oakura. This is our annual "good turn" for our older ex-Tumahu ladies who have gone to live in New Plymouth. We also invite the local "Care and Craft" group.

We were busy beforehand making jams and pickles and so forth, and wrapping them into cellophane parcels to present to each of our guests as a small Christmas gift.

We each made a little cane basket into a variety of raffles which, along with a sales table, brought in quite a substantial profit to our funds.

Our Christmas meeting will be hosted by Raewyn Lusk and Joanne Morgan at Raewyn's home on 12 December. Our competition will be a homemade Christmas hat. Santa will be calling in his 1938 Ford car, delivering parcels to our group.

Joyce Downes 🌲

President

Please note: the report in the November issue of TOM included a slight misprint: It was Heather Bolland and Joyce Downes who received Life Membership of Tumahu Rural Women.

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Hello everybody. My apologies for not getting an article in the last edition of *TOM* – I have been away on a couple of courses. Well, isn't Christmas getting close! I guess most of you are well into shopping for the big day and with that in mind, it is a good time to remind you all of the need to be very security wise.

Believe it or not, there are some people out there who delight in the Christmas season for reasons very different to you or me. You spend all your hard earned cash on lovely gifts for your family and these low lifes will not think twice about breaking into your house and taking these gifts.

Now I know all the security in the world will not keep some people out, but let's not make it easy for them... Don't put gifts under the tree where they can be easily seen from a window. When shopping in town don't leave valuables in your vehicle where they are visible. And take care where you leave your purse or wallet.

With Christmas comes school holidays and with school holidays comes lots of kids with little to do. Parents, please take an interest in your child's activities – make sure you know where they are, who they are with and what they have planned.

There are plenty of safe things for them to be doing, and remember, idle hands and boredom can some times lead them straight to my office. While my door is always open and I would like to see kids popping in and saying hello, I'd rather they were visiting for the right reasons and we do need to keep our kids safe.

With that in mind, I can't believe the number of people I still see riding their bikes without helmets on, and not just kids either.

One of the courses I mentioned earlier was a traffic accident course and some of the pictures I viewed of vehicle accidents involving push bikes were horrendous. I don't see why I should have to attend a vehicle accident involving somebody not wearing a helmet and then have to inform a loved one that, for the sake of \$50 and a bit of vanity, they have just lost someone close.

So please put a bike helmet at the top of your Christmas shopping list for everyone that has a bike in your house.

On a crime note, I have just come back from an address on Wairau Road, Oakura, where someone broke in and stole two reasonably new laptop computers, both ASUS brand and valued at about \$2500. These items both hold very important information for two students.

Now somebody out there knows where they are and we need to have them returned to the owners.

Parents be vigilant if your child has suddenly appeared with a new computer which they say they are looking after for a mate or have just bought for a really good price from a friend of a friend, or simply if someone offers you a laptop computer for a good price. Let me know.

I guess that is enough bad stuff for a while. Let's talk about something good like the Kiwi League team or the Black caps or the Silver Ferns, except there hasn't really been much good news there either! I would talk about the All Blacks but I am still not in a very good place with them at the moment – maybe in the new year. I did start doing my CV for Graham's job but the Police would not let me take on secondary employment.

Did you know the word "dinosaur" comes from a Greek word meaning "terrible lizard"? Not many people know that.

Anyway, must go. Please be safe out there.

Catch you later

Rich 🌲

burning issues

Things have been very quiet on the call-out side of things (dare I say it?).

The weather is getting warmer and boy, it is hot when you are training in those heavy uniforms!

On the building front, Fireman Cory Juffermans, who is employed by Brian Hill and working at the site, fills us in...

The first part of the floor slab should be down once this issue of *TOM* comes out and the footing for the retaining wall has been completed. With the weather being so fine we should be keeping on task. All is going well.

We wish you all a Merry Christmas and a happy and safe New Year. Please be responsible and have a designated sober driver if you are out enjoying those balmy evenings and having a few ales over the holiday period.

We'll chat again in the New Year.

Milly Carr 🌲



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Nana's Pantry open for business

November 15 saw the opening of Nana's Pantry and Seed Coastal Organics in the old Dairy on Okato's Main Street opposite The Waiting Room.



The revamped old dairy looking a million dollars.

Hayley, Barbara and Briar in Nana's Pantry and Lindsey, Mel and Jacqui in Seed Coastal Organics had a very busy time leading up to the opening of the shop. The shop cannot be missed with its wonderful rich coloured exterior of pohutukawa and a fantastic sign above – very style indeed. The interior is clean, fresh and in keeping with nature with its cream and green walls and wooden-style flooring from Formica. What a trans-formation of the old Dairy!

When the much anticipated opening day finally arrived people flowed in throughout the day to "check out" the new space and to peruse or try out the delicious goods on offer. A huge hit at Nana's Pantry has been the pies which Hayley and Barbara bake fresh each morning. I am with another local who said they are the best pies they have ever tasted. You just have to try them!

In stock you will find an assortment of Fair Trade goods including Trade Aid chocolate bars and Natural Confectionery lollies. And all at affordable prices, "Especially for children wanting to purchase anything," says Hayley.

Biodegradable packaging and bags are used to reduce the impact on the environment and Hayley encourages you to bring your own bags if you wish.

Petit Paris Bakery breads will also be available every Sunday. Come in and choose from a selection of breads – croissants, baguettes, ciabatta... Yum!

Hayley and her team have been overwhelmed with the support and positive feedback from everybody. It has been a wonderful first week, happy and buzzing.

Hayley's business partner, Barbara, who has helped her set up the business is due to return home to Australia, so if you are interested in a new venture and want to come on board or help in some way, please feel free to contact Hayley on 06 752 4966 or pop into the shop to see her.

By Milly Carr



Hayley Burwell and Barbara Abott looking the part, too.

Briar Burwell.




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*Lindsey, Mel and Jacqui
from Seed Coastal
Organics.*



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The Christmas House

Sometimes local rascals phone Mrs Christmas and ask, "Is Merry there?" She replies, "Not just now, but call back in half an hour and she might be." They never do, says Mrs Christmas. Mrs Eileen Christmas of Fitzroy was one of this year's many visitors to The Christmas House in Oakura's Kaitake Place.

A Surf Highway 45 Crafters and Quilters fundraising project, Joy and Murray Burmeister's holiday home was the scene of The Christmas House during Taranaki's 2007 Rhododendron Festival. This year, it raised \$2,700 for "A House for Karen", the refuge-by-the-sea on Tipoka Road for cancer sufferers and their families.

Open during the Festival for four consecutive years now, The Christmas House just gets better and better. While every corner of the two-storey Lockwood home was filled with little bits of magic, special features this year included a White Christmas Room, a Pink and Pretty Room, Bears Under the Stairs, Santa in the Bath (one young visitor found it so inviting he hopped into the bath too) and an extensive outdoor lighting display. These were made possible by the huge efforts of the craft group and the generosity of their sponsors.

Members of the group worked hard to produce new works for the displays and spent an entire week setting it up, while Glamourpuss, Nicci Goodin Designer Florist, Santa's Trees, Spotlight and The Girlz Garden Centre generously loaned stock to add the finishing touches. Terry Griffiths of Tern Corner at Oakura set up a spectacular outdoor lighting display, which included Santa arriving on the roof in his sleigh and reindeer grazing on the lawn. The House was open from early morning 'til late at night so visitors could enjoy the magical atmosphere by day and at night-time. During the ten days of its opening, thirty-five group members helped "woman" the house twenty-four hours a day.

New this year were the raffles. The bright and beautiful quilt made by members of the craft group was won by Linda le Fleming of Auroa, while the Christmas cake, baked by Dianne Honeyfield and iced (by me) like a boxed and beribboned present, was won by Allie Quinn, who was too young to voice her excitement when I rang to break the news to her. Her Mum, Lara, sounded excited though! Entries in the visitors' book this year declared The Christmas House "dazzling," "wicked," "magical" and "an inspiration." And while one visitor pronounced herself "gobsmacked," another told us she was, simply, "speechless!"

Watch out for us next year during the Rhodo Festival. We'll be back!

Story and pictures by Kerry Lilley 🎄

*The white room,
decorated by
Dianne Moffitt,
Kathy Appert and
Marie Martin.*



Santa taking a break.

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(Continued from page 1)

A conversation with Dale Copeland

she felt only lukewarm about them – the subject was too narrow. "I could have filled up the pages, but I didn't have the passion," she reflects. So she went backpacking to see all the galleries in Europe instead. "A fair swap," she reckons. "We took a Eurail Pass and stayed in all the cheap places." She found her favourite painting in a gallery in Glasgow; one of Rembrandt's abattoir series. The texture of the walls was amazing. "I just stood there sobbing."

She hasn't given up the idea of doing a doctorate entirely, as long as she can set the topic. "And what would that be?" I enquire. "The theory of chaos itself, of course!" was the reply. And what exactly interests her about the theory of chaos? "It's beautiful. There's no limit to it – you keep digging and it keeps showing you new stuff, hidden in the maths." Chaos, she asserts, is ubiquitous and relevant to everyday life. "So much of real life is governed by chaos. People try to predict the future, but they can't and they shouldn't try. It's amusing to me how people try to predict the weather, but weather is chaotic. They can't do it, not long-term."

"How did you come to live at Puniho?" I ask. "You dance around the mountain but you can't get away," she responds.



Dale in her workshop.

The mountain has always pulled her home. Then she grins. "I ran away from home in 1974 when I won a job at Okato College, to the centre of the universe... With the World Wide Web, "Puniho is the centre of the universe," she assures me. There was a house there. Built in 1903, it was originally the native schoolhouse. Dale approached the education board and it was agreed she would buy it. She and Paul borrowed a book called *Build Your Own House* from the library and with its guidance, they extended the general living space. Then, in 1999, they acquired the old manual training room from Inglewood Primary School. Dale had learned to cook tripe and onions there in her school days. Now it serves as a magnificent studio for Paul.

With the birth of daughter Toby, Dale discovered new meaning in life. "I was totally dotty about her... I didn't even know 'til then that I liked small children," she says, still surprised. She describes "trotting back to school" for teachers' only day at the beginning of the school year after Toby's birth and the revelation dawning that she was "out of there." This was accompanied by an immense feeling of liberation. Then, she says, she began to discover how sweet life could be.

And so, at forty-three, she went home to reinvent herself: Wife, mother, home-school teacher to Toby, assemblage artist, photographer, fabric artist, bookbinder, jeweller, jungle gardener, webmistress and Real Tart gallery co-ordinator. And these days, freelance programmer and "writer of good, clean websites". "I'm so lucky I don't have to go out to work", she enthuses.

And what of her spare time? "I'm a second Dan black belt Taekwon-Do, about which I'm passionate," she responds. (She took it up at fifty-six and took Toby along too because, "It's reassuring to know you're capable of self-defense.") She also bikes for fitness and pleasure, revelling in exploring little roads that no-one except a few cows know about. And she doesn't do housework.

"A sweet life, a happy life," says Dale. "How fortunate can one person be?"

We'll be continuing "A conversation with Dale Copeland" in the next issue of Okato TOM with "Part 2 – Dale the artist".

Story and pictures by Kerry Lilley 🐣



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Two talented teachers produce a stunning story book



Lesley Dowding and Margaret Scott with their new story book and displaying some of Margaret's fine art work from the page of the book.

Oakura artist Margaret Scott and Okato Literacy Consultant and school teacher Lesley Dowding have combined their various talents to produce a wonderful story book for children, parents and teachers alike.

The story book called "Midnight at the Lighthouse" is a most imaginative and captivating story about a little boy called Thomas and his Aunt Jenny and the adventure they have going to the lighthouse at night.

Lesley has written the story in such a richly descriptive way so as to stimulate a child's (and adults even) interest and imagination. Margaret has done the same with her 19 original illustrations created using brushes, rollers, layering and vivid colours.

Once Lesley had the bones of her story she opportuned upon an exhibition at Real Tart which featured Margaret's "Must go down to the sea" series of work. One painting was of a lighthouse and epitomised little Thomas's story. So a phone call was made to Margaret and Lesley explained what the book was about i.e. story telling as opposed to reading, teaching children about art and exposing children to real art and using the imagination. Margaret has had tremendous fun trying new techniques and even moving into painting objects and people that she felt she previously couldn't paint.

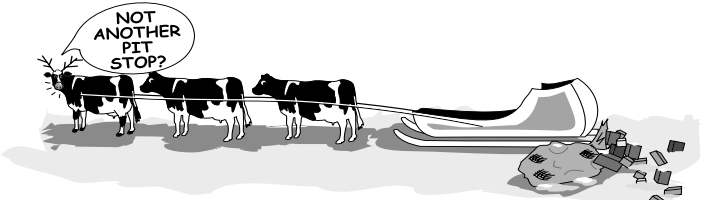
Of real interest in the book are instructions by Margaret who was once a school teacher, on how to paint and in particular, a starry night scene, how to paint rocks and how to paint texture. Lesley has included story telling techniques such as collecting artefacts, telling stories about them, then making a montage with different objects and developing a story to go with it.

Margaret and Lesley have used local New Plymouth businesses to develop the story book and they are both proud to call it a local product. Graphix Ex-plosion have worked with the ladies to layout the story book and Zenith Publishing are printing it.

They have set up their own publishing company and developed a website called www.lighthouse.co.nz.

As TOM hits the letterboxes, "Midnight at the Lighthouse" will be launched at Paper Plus, where Lesley and Margaret will autograph copies. The story book sells for \$30 a copy and includes a CD featuring Lesley's lighthouse song. A teaching resource is still in the planning stage but will go to print soon. A signing opportunity will be held in the village soon too. The story book will make excellent Christmas presents and can be purchased from Margaret's *Art by the Sea Studio* in McFarlane St, Oakura or email lezley@xtrta.co.nz

By Kim Ferens 🌿



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TOM SPORTS

Okato Pony Club



6 year old Ciel Russell riding Nutleaf at Okato Pony Club Junior Sports Day

Warea Tennis Club

Twilight tennis on Wednesday nights from 6pm onwards has been well attended so far. Lots of fun has been had by all and we've seen some great competitions. We've had kids versus kids and adults versus adults.

Look forward to seeing you there. Don't be shy. Bring your racquet along.

Enquiries to Maria VanderPoel on 06 752 8130.

Tumahu Golf Club News

Our golf season is nearing completion for the year, with the ladies already finished their champs. Molly Jones won the senior section and Barb Crombie won the junior section.

Men's top dogs are up to round 8 of 11. There are no unbeaten teams at this stage!

If you are interested in Twilight golf, it is held on Thursdays from 5.30pm onwards, with a sausage sizzle afterwards. The entry fee is only \$2. Tumahu Golf Club subs are \$110 for a full season and junior subs are from \$20.

Our big tournament is the Glassman Christmas Hamper on 16 December, followed by the Butlers Reef Tournament to be held in mid-January. More details on this will be available closer to the day. For more information: call Kent Goodwin on 06 752 8005.

Bowling Club

Okato Bowling club invites any members of the community, either bowlers or non bowlers to come along and enjoy a couple of hours of bowls in the annual Bush vs Beach on December 11, 6.15pm at the bowling club. If this TOM gets to you on time and you would like to know more contact the men below. This is open to everyone and if you wish to enjoy a roll up on a Sunday in a nice, social atmosphere, please contact Russell Powell 752 4533 or Bruce Peacock 752 4538.

Okato Women's Bowling Club

The Okato Women's Bowling Club had its opening day on 28 September. It was well attended and members of other coastal clubs were very welcome.

Since opening, we have hosted several Egmont Shield games, which were a great success. The main event so far has been the Ladies' Triples Tournament held at the Okato green on 12 November. This was a lovely day, especially as we were able to attract teams from New Plymouth. The Tournament was sponsored by Taranaki Fresh Product, for which we thank them very much, and was won by Joy Collin's team from Opunake.

Our next event will be on 12-13 December when we host the Julian Pairs on behalf of the Western Division of Taranaki Bowls. This is open to all past and present western division members and we are looking forward to meeting old friends. We are always looking for new members, so if you think lawn bowls might be for you, then come along any Wednesday morning and have a go – who knows, you might be a champion! Look forward to seeing you.

You can contact me for more information on 752 4541.

Ros Bazley 🌻

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Okato Pool – warm and better than ever!

Thursday 22 November saw the combined official unveiling and launch of the new heat pump and the opening night of the Swimming Club at the Okato Pool.

Mayor Peter Tennent and TSB Community Trust chairperson, Colleen Tuuta addressed the large crowd, which included Barney from 90FM radio and Doug Hislop from the Kaitake Community Board. Peter Tennent congratulated John Pullar, Caroline Charteris and the committee for their hours of research and the great tenacity put into this project. Colleen Tuuta said, "It will provide many hours of fun and enjoyment for the community."

John Pullar stated that, "The heat pump was one of the ideas we considered to enhance the usage of the pool. The heat pump has enabled us to open the pool some six weeks earlier than in previous years and already the number of people utilising the pool has increased from last year." He gave special thanks to all the people involved in making this wonderful asset a reality.

Colleen Tuuta unveiled the plaque acknowledging the contributions made by the TSB Community Trust for the heat pump. Rex Neilson, patron of the Swimming Club, cut the cake and then four Taranaki rep swimmers swam several races to the cheers of the crowd. With all formalities complete, the pool was open for everyone to enjoy a twilight swim.

Thanks again to all those people in the present and past who have helped to make the Pool into the great community asset it is for the Okato District today.

Milly Carr 🌿

OKATO POOL

HOLIDAY HOURS FROM 20th DEC

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New Zeal Breakfast for Women and a difference of one!

On 17 November New Zeal Church hosted 70 women from around the Taranaki coast for breakfast. The women received special treatment with restaurant table settings, spot prizes, fresh red roses, coffee, candles (yes, even in the morning!) and of course scrummy food. Not a bad start to a glorious sunny weekend.

Local women were privileged to have Amy Muranko speak passionately about ministries in which she is currently involved. Amy is director of Life Way Bible College in Snells Beach. Born in America, Amy is now a New Zealand resident, after serving in various ministries throughout the world. One of these involved establishing "Global Impact", a Christian missionary organisation helping street kids and orphan's throughout the world. One simple way the guests could support this work continuing was to purchase beautiful Pilipino jewellery. Amy used the following story to inspire local women to fulfil their destiny.

The difference of one

A small boy lived by the ocean. He loved the creatures of the sea, especially the starfish, and spent much of his time exploring the seashore. One day he learned there would be a minus tide, leaving the starfish stranded on the sand. The day of the tide he went down to the beach and began picking up stranded starfish and tossing them back into the sea. An elderly man who lived next door came down to the beach to see what he was doing.

"I'm saving the starfish," the boy proudly declared.

When the neighbour saw all the stranded starfish, he shook his head and said, "I'm sorry to disappoint you young man, but if you look down the beach one way, there are stranded starfish as far as the eye can see. And if you look down the beach the other way, it's the same. One little boy like you isn't going to make much of a difference."

The boy thought about this for a moment. Then he reached his small hand down to the sand picked up a starfish, tossed it into ocean and said, "I sure made a difference for that one."

Obvious care was taken in planning the event and you couldn't leave the breakfast without feeling somewhat treated and enthused to make a positive difference in our community. To remind us of this story, the women were invited to purchase one of the bracelets which had a starfish attached to it.

So Okato, get out there, reach out to someone and remember you can do anything you set your mind to. Think of the little boy, the starfish and THE DIFFERENCE OF ONE!

For more info go to www.myglobal.org or visit www.seastarjewelry.com

Special thanks to the businesses that donated spot prizes: Hairly Danz.

The New Zeal Church holds church services on Sundays at 10.30am at St Lukes Hall, Okato and 6.30pm at St James in Oakura. All welcome.

Emily Davidson 🌿



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Who is Alwin Heiler?



The Waiting Room.

Alwin Heiler has been living in the village for four years now and people might recognise him as the café owner and barista of The Waiting Room.

He was born in Austria and grew up in a small village called Pichling with a population of approximately two hundred. The village was a safe community where no one locked their homes and children would gather at the lakes and rivers to swim during the summer months. In the winter they would go ice skating or bowling on the frozen lakes or take their sledges down the hills. With it being so safe, parents put few restrictions on their children's play and the village life was great.

His family enjoyed the water sports available to them, such as wind surfing and sailing, and they also spent many of their holidays camping in the outdoors.

Austria has many traditions. One is Maibaum Kraxln or tree climbing in the month of May. On the longest day of the year (22 June) they climb mountains and light fires on the ridge line. Over Christmas many villages have markets where they sell goods and people drink mulled wine and listen to folk music. Sounds like lots of fun.

For sport all the children and families are soccer mad, unlike us with our rugby!

At the age of 18 every male has to serve eight months in the Austrian Army Service. Alwin fulfilled this duty when he was 25 as he had been studying at the time he was due to serve.

When he was 18 he ventured over to Australia for wave sailing. This led to surfing, which was significant for him as it made him realise he didn't want to go back to a land-locked place anymore. He spent the next 18 months in Australia, Europe and Indonesia, before studying in Vienna towards a tourism qualification and then travelling some more. His work took him to the Maldives, where he taught windsurfing and sailing, and gained qualifications in water sports.

In 1998 he came to New Zealand to check out the surfing spots we have here. He fell in love with our wonderful country and spent time in Raglan before coming to Taranaki, where he has remained (I mean, who wouldn't!).

He has coached the ski team up at the Mountain Club and also worked in their kitchen when needed.

In 2000 he turned his hand to waiter/barista work at several restaurants in New Plymouth and also worked in the Coffee Caravan – Signor Barista, which could be found by the wind wand at the foreshore.

Life was about surfing in the summer and skiing in the winter, enjoying the outdoors with our beautiful mountain and meeting so many good people.

In 2003 the opportunity came to purchase the shop where The Waiting Room is now located. It was his dream to own a café and he could see the advantages of being self-employed with the extra bonus of not having to travel to New Plymouth for work. The opportunity was irresistible.

He transformed the original surf shop into the fantastic space The Waiting Room is today. It took quite some time to get it up and running and Alwin is very grateful to the friends who helped him to get started. It involved quite a lot of organising to access kitchen equipment and then to build a new counter and table, which a friend helped with. It was cool to see it all coming together and friends would sit and wait for the good swells or snow, and this is how the name "The Waiting Room" came about.

Alwin has been running the business for nearly three years and in this time he has worked extremely hard to serve the community with the best food and coffee on the coast. His food is all homemade and he has offered a taste of Austria with the strudels and Austrian cakes that fill the space in his food cabinet along with other divine edibles.

Alwin and his partner Miranda have a very early start, rising at 5am most mornings to prep for the day and make their homemade breads and pizzas. Both work extremely hard and really do a wonderful job. Alwin is so thankful for the help and support he gets from Miranda as she also works fulltime in town as a tutor at WITT, and then returns home to help with more preparation during the week and then a full-on weekend in the café. Where does the energy come from?

Alwin loves seeing the locals enjoying The Waiting Room's food and coffee and to have them leave happy is rather satisfying. He likes to think people can come in to relax, chat and have a good time. He has loved meeting the locals and others from around the coast and there has been wonderful support from all.

Unfortunately for us Alwin has the shop on the market as he and Miranda have other dreams to pursue. You can see the shop advertised on Trade Me.

We will miss him when the time does come to sell up, but in the meantime we will continue to enjoy his lovely hospitality and beautiful coffees and food!



Two flat whites coming up.



YUM!





Coastal Garden and Art Safari

Early next February, 28 gardens from Tataramaka to Rahotu will be opened to the public to walk through and enjoy as part of the annual Coastal Garden and Art Safari weekend.

The event was initiated six years ago by Marj and Syd Sharpe and now has an organising committee of ten. They wanted to open their gardens and offer a relaxed weekend to the people along the coast and around Taranaki. As the years have passed there has been an increase in interest and now there are so many gardens to feature they have had to split the event into two areas, featured on alternate years. Next year the area will span Rāhōtu to Manaia.

The Safari is very affordable at \$5 per ticket for the whole weekend, with gardens open from 10am to 5pm both days, and all proceeds go towards a local charity – this year the Rescue Helicopter Trust. Last year 400 tickets were sold and sales are expected to be around the same, if not more, this year.

One of the local gardens included in the 2008 Safari is Maria and Hugo VanderPoel's on Ruakere Road, Warea. This is the first time Maria has entered her garden and her incentive was to help with the charity, but I also think she has a lovely place to show off!

Maria has always liked visiting gardens and loves to work in her own garden to get it looking nice. There you will see some lovely established trees surrounding the house, but a large proportion of the garden is relatively new with a country cottage theme.

Maria will also have Warea School and District Centenary books for sale if anyone is interested – they are \$20 each.

Not all people have a garden to show, some exhibit other things of interest such as crafts and even classic cars. You will be able to check out what's on show for yourselves when the programme and tickets become available in late January – keep an eye out at the local Four Square and there will be several outlets throughout North Taranaki.

Anyone who may want to display their garden or other things of interest for next year's event can contact Margaret Goodwin on 06 752 4230 or Rose Ratahi on 06 761 8809. They welcome anyone who may want to join the committee or help in any way.

Don't forget to pencil the Coastal Garden and Art Safari on 9-10 February 2008 in your diary – it may seem a way off, but the way weeks fly, it will be here in no time!



Maria and Hugo VanderPoel's lovely front garden.



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Things have been busy with various things happening in all areas of the school.

Firstly we have had our farewell to the seniors of the school with seven year 13s leaving to venture off into the outside world and face different challenges. Good luck to them all and no doubt we will see some of them around again.

We have profiled three of the year 13's who leave this year and two of our international students.

A school talent quest was held on Wednesday 21 November in the school hall for all students. Certain students delivered various items to the crowd. Some of these were songs from the students, music from school bands, dancing and even jokes. This was enjoyed by all.

SCHOOL TRIPS/CAMPS

Year 10 have an exciting school trip heading over to the Gold Coast for a week

They will have been and gone by the time this comes out to your letter-boxes along with the other trips I mention.

Years 7 & 8 are heading up to Auckland for the week.

Years 5 & 6 are going south to Wellington for the week

While these students are away it will leave the years 1-4 at school and an Activity week is being held. Some students are having an overnight stay in the school hall and doing day trips like the Stony River walkway and swimming at the local pools.

In this week there will also be a visit from Sport Taranaki to run some activities with them all and for the last few days of the week there will be Christmas themed activities.

Years 7 & 8 have had a school visit to the Rocky Shore as they are studying this in class. Some lovely artwork is being produced for this.

Swimming has commenced and the students are loving the opportunity to enjoy it while the weather has been so fine.



Omata and Oakura schools slug it out.

SPORT

We hosted the Athletics day which was held on Thursday 22 November with Omata and Oakura schools attending. It was a successful day and a very hot one too.

Thank you to Omata and Oakura for taking part. It was really neat to see all students participating and a big thanks to all the parents, teachers and seniors who helped out



Coastal schools sports day organisers Gillian Hurley and Kathy Cole.



Omata school for the high jump!

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Coastal Taranaki School leavers

Maria Riepen (18)



Maria contemplates the world from on top of Mt Paritutu

What will you do now you have left school?

I will be making the most of my last holiday before starting the Canterbury University, Early Childhood Teaching course centre-based in New Plymouth for the next three years.

What were the highlights for you while you were at CTS?

I was always a quiet, shy student and wasn't even planning on returning for Year 13, but I am really glad I did as my highlight would have to be getting a Deputy Head Student position.

What are your long term goals?

To graduate my course at the end of 2010, get a job, make enough money to travel the world visiting exchange students my family have had and friends I have made, such as in Japan, Iceland, USA and Finland.

Asthildur Erlingsdottir (18)

What will you do now you have left school?

I have plans to travel around the North Island and try to make the most of the last weeks I have here in New Zealand before I go back home to Iceland.

What were the highlights for you while you were at CTS?

The year I have been a student at Coastal Taranaki School has been full of highlights for me! Being Art's Captain, sleeping in a snow cave, taking a calf to school and learning how to play netball and make coffees are all great things that I've experienced during my stay here.

What are your long term goals?

To graduate from my school in Iceland, go to University and return to New Zealand to see my family and the friends that I have made.

Erin Murphy

What will you do now you have left school?

I am going to study law at Victoria University in Wellington.

What were the highlights for you while you were at CTS?

Getting Deputy Head Girl, the World Vision Leadership camp, having the opportunity to do equine (horse) studies as a class via video conferencing and the friends I've made.

What are your long term goals?

To become a successful lawyer, do make up artist work for fun, own property, be a multi-millionaire.



The school disco is a great place to go looking like a pumpkin!

Senior student profiles

This month I interviewed two Japanese students at Coastal Taranaki School. Chiaki Nishihata is a Year 11 pupil who is even sitting the NCEA Level One exams this year. Kaeda Joh is in Year 10.

Chiaki Nishihata

What is it like to be an international student?

It's not easy, but I quite like it.

What was the hardest thing to adjust to in New Zealand?

The language barrier . . . having to communicate with everyone in English.

What has been the best thing during your stay in New Zealand?

School discos, we don't have any school dances in Japan.

What have you missed the most during your year here?

Japanese food! The sushi and raw fish I miss the most. I love fish!

What will you miss the most from New Zealand?

Butter Chicken! And fejoas.



Kaeda Joh

What is it like to be an international student?

It's good.

What was the hardest thing to adjust to in New Zealand?

Speaking English, and communicating.

What has been the best thing during your stay in New Zealand?

The school camp on Week One to Topec. Rafting was the best.

What have you missed the most during your year here?

Japanese food! Especially Nabe, which is a Japanese stew.

What will you miss the most from New Zealand?

Being a student at Coastal Taranaki School and my friends I have made here.



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Okato Playcentre

By the time you read this, we will have had our garage sale. A big thank you to the community members who contributed goods, and who came along to support us. Your efforts are appreciated. It's great to see the sun come out. We've been slip-slop-slapping away, as well as attempting to get a small garden going that could have some produce for next term's morning teas. Here's hoping the snails don't get there first.

This month, aside from enjoying the great sunshine, we've had a community focus, getting the children involved in planning some aspects of the garage sale and with painting the signs you've seen all over the countryside.

We've also had a visit from the new entrant class at Coastal – it was great to see you guys.

We have a number of children who have recently turned five or are about to, and it's pretty exciting to see them all go through the transition process and support their Mums as they let their babies go out into the big wide world.

We are having a grandparents' day on 13 December. Everyone is welcome to come along to Playcentre and bring a grandparent with you.

If you're visiting Playcentre over the next few months, please don't forget a sunhat and a change of clothes. Chances are the water play will be underway with great gusto.

Session times are Tuesday and Thursday, 9.30am to 12.30pm.

For more information, contact Jane Fleming on 06 763 8353, Debbie Fisher on 752 4500 or Marlene Goodreds on 752 8047.



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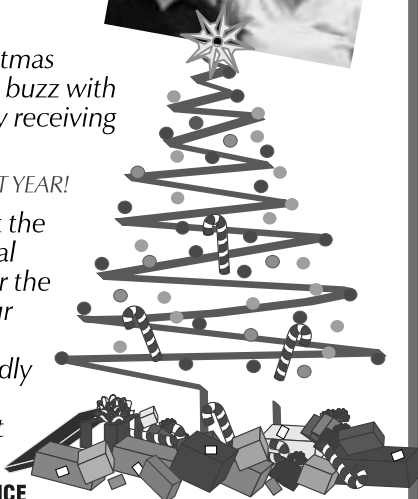
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Many of you have moved homes over the last year and are going to enjoy Christmas in your new home.

To all who are a long way from home and families this Christmas, like Lynn and Kristin, we wish you all a very special Kiwi Christmas and as you shed a few wee tears when you think of those back home, know that we are thrilled that you have chosen to live and buy your property through us and are now resident in this very special place in New Zealand.

To all of you that have family, especially children and grandchildren, all over the world, we also know what it is like not to be with them at Christmas. Just remember "Families are Forever".

To those people who have lost someone so very dear to them over the last year as some of our clients and team have, please enjoy the holidays as best you can . . . remember you are not alone. And we do care about you.

We wish all of you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year and look forward to working with many of you in the future.

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