

# TOM *Fitzroy*

JULY 2009

## Art with passion

Like many of the people that I interview for the TOM, local artist Amanda Hewlett leads a full and busy life. I was lucky enough to spend a morning with her recently and it was a fascinating few hours where we discussed her painting and the things that influence her art.

Turn to page two and read Amanda's inspiring story.



*Amanda with her faithful miniature poodle, Asterix.*



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What is the job of the TOM editor?

TOM is a slightly different publication in that it crosses over between a newsletter and a magazine. We are not journalists and the only media experience we have are our two other TOM publications - being Oakura and Okato. So in saying that we don't necessarily know the rules and that is to our favour as we can create what we believe is important for each community. As one reader recently said of TOM "it has a life of its own". This is due to the fact that even though Kim and I co-edit these publications we are more coordinators for all the stories that come our way. We package what you as a community represent, so it is more about your TOM than our business. It is a very exciting business to be in. The community link could easily be broken by the lifestyles we are living at the moment, everybody busy doing their own thing in an attempt to get to where they are going or just to the end of the day. I am watching with interest how we as a society are going to evolve. TOM can at least remind us that above all there is a past, present and future of which we are all part of.

Tracey



**TOM Fitzroy AUGUST Deadlines**  
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Points of view expressed in contributed articles are not necessarily the views of TOM

# Art with passion

**TOM interviews local artist, Amanda Hewitt**

From the onset of the interview one of the five male members of the family was intent on being part of the interview process. Amanda's grey miniature poodle Asterix did not leave either her side or her lap for the entire time I was there. Amanda shares her home with husband Phil and their two teenage sons - Chris who is currently home from university and Geoff, plus another young man who is boarding with them and of course Asterix. A busy household but Amanda's husband Phil has ensured that she has a place to paint away from the bustle of family life as he has built a studio at the front of their property for her. Without a dedicated art workspace at home it would be extremely difficult to work 30+ hours and still keep up her painting. With the studio she can leave work in progress and go back to it when time is available. Amanda works at Puke Ariki as an Educator, facilitating learning for visiting school groups to the museum and its exhibits. This is her fifth year of working there and it encompasses another of her interests, social history. She says "I am passionate about social history" this is certainly evident when she shares some of her knowledge and the influence it has had on her paintings.

A large painting on her living room wall is entitled "Captain reported that we will be at anchorage tomorrow May 22nd" This work was a result of when in 2007 Amanda was researching the arrival of early Maori and early settlers. This painting was one of a series of six paintings that Amanda did for an exhibition at Kina. The exhibition came about when another artist pulled out at the last minute and Amanda was offered half of the Kina exhibition space. She took up the offer and had six weeks to complete her paintings. It is here she mentions that she envies artists such as Taranaki painter Paul Hutchinson who can finish a painting in a day.

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*"Response to an Essay."*

Amanda describes herself as a person who likes change, challenge and projects. This would certainly have come to the fore when producing the six pieces for the series in such a short space of time. It was these characteristics and she says the support of her family that saw her complete the paintings on time.

In this series she wanted to express that sense of excitement tinged with foreboding that the early settlers would have felt when they were arriving in a new unknown country.

She went on to describe it as "a sense of anticipation of going somewhere new but also that sense of loss at what they have left behind." The misty landscape portrayed in the painting certainly captures the feeling of an unexplored New Zealand coast.

Another painting hanging in her home is titled 'Requiem for Catacea' or Mass for the Last Whale. Again, research she was undertaking at the time played a part in the birth of this art work. This time Amanda was researching the Southern Right Whale and how numbers of this species were dwindling. In contrast early settlers have been recorded in history as complaining about being kept awake at night by the noise the whales made. We both marvelled at how times have changed and how we would feel privileged to have a sighting of whales let alone be in such close proximity to them in numbers great enough to disturb our sleep! Along with her whale research Amanda was delving into family history and discovered her grandfather had worked at the Macquarie Islands killing penguins and seals. The mix of this knowledge and the whale research influenced this beautiful but sad painting which Amanda describes as "an emotive piece"

A painting Amanda completed in 2003 is in a completely different style to the previous two works. Titled "Response to an Essay" it is just that, an angry response to an essay Amanda was writing at the time as part of her studies at WITT. The essay was about early New Zealand women painters and the hypocrisy and double standards they had to put up with as female artists at that time.

With her work so obviously influenced and indeed directed by her experiences and learning it was no surprise when Amanda told me she is not an artist that can paint to order. She doesn't do commission work for this reason. She does sell her work though and has several pieces in Real TART.

In that vein Amanda is very careful to ensure her work is produced on canvases and linen of high quality which she sources from Auckland and by using paints that are also of high quality so that her paintings should have greater longevity for anyone who does purchase them.

Amanda says Taranaki is a great place to be an artist and mentions she had incredible support and encouragement from artist Dale Copeland when she returned to painting after a 15 year break. The reasons for the break were a mixture of things: at the time she was assisting her husband Phil who was very

involved with outdoor instruction; as well as this they were also involved with working with troubled youth. Following that the arrival of her two sons kept her away from her paints and canvas for a time.

These days it's other commitments that can sometimes keep her out of her studio but when she is painting she says she likes to challenge herself to try different techniques. For example she will use different types of brushes such as a large speed brush to achieve a different result. Layering the paint in her art is something she likes to work with and she says "I use landscape as a vehicle"

The few hours I spent with Amanda gave me a small insight into the things that inspire this artist to create her artwork. With this in mind I'm hoping that another social history event will provoke her to do an exhibition in the near future so we can all get a chance to enjoy her wonderful paintings.

*By Jackie Tomlinson*



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# Hot tips From the fire station

With the temperature falling and frosts greeting us in the mornings it's that time of the year when the firewood pile starts getting smaller and the gas bill starts getting bigger. We need to remind ourselves and others of a few hot tips that will help us get through the cold nights warm and safe.

## Hot tip # 1

For those people with open fires or wood burners, sweeping of chimneys and flues should be done at least once a year to prevent soot build up and chimney fires. Always use a fire screen in front of an open fire to prevent wood or sparks dropping out of the fire and onto floorboards/carpet. And remember when you empty ashes from the fireplace always place hot ashes into a metal container to get cold before disposing. There are too many fires every winter caused by ashes being placed in plastic containers and left on or near combustible material. Hot ashes and embers will quickly burn through plastic containers and start a fire if left. Ashes can take up to five days to cool.

## Hot tip # 2

The Heater-Metre Rule. Always keep furniture, clothes, curtains, and any other flammable products at least one metre from heaters and fireplaces to prevent fires caused by radiant heat. Don't dry or store objects on top of your heating appliances. Always ensure all electric heaters are in safe working order. Replace frayed cords, broken plugs and faulty switches, and don't use heating appliances through multi-boxes. If you are using a gas heater a good thing to remember is if it does not light straight away, turn it off then try again. Don't let the gas build up before trying to light it.

## Hot tip # 3

And last but by no means least the good old electric blanket. Remember to have your electric blankets checked annually by a registered service person – it could save your life. Before getting into bed at night do a night check for anything that may pose a fire risk to your family or yourself and turn off your electric blanket.

You can find more info on Winter fire safety at [www.fire.org.nz](http://www.fire.org.nz) or by ringing the New Plymouth Fire Station on 7573860.

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# Fitzroy Rotary Club

The Rotary movement was one hundred years old in 2003. A superb measure of success for an organisation that claims to be one of the great humanitarian groups in the world.

Rotary was started as a simple idea by a small group of community minded citizens who wanted to give something back to the community that they all worked and lived in. Rotary is a non-political, non-religious organisation with two defining characteristics that are also its strengths.

*Firstly*, each Rotary Club is a small part of the wider business and professional community. This encourages creativity and discourages complacency, and has the further advantage of networking within the club membership.

*Secondly*, Rotary is primarily about service, about action. On a local, community level, the Rotary Club of Fitzroy has a proud record of community activities, such as building the community hall and revamping the local scout den. The major project at present is a very successful Reading in Schools Programme, involving nearly 100 Senior Citizens providing reading assistance for nine local schools on a weekly basis. This year they have contributed over \$8000.00 to local community groups such as CCS, Waves, Life Education Trust, Taranaki Hospice, Helicopter Trust.

Further afield, Rotary in New Zealand has a proud record of involvement with organisations such as Plunket and CCS. Internationally it has achieved recognition from the United Nations for its involvement in the fight to eliminate polio, at a cost of over US\$500 million. You could be part of this movement.

The Rotary Club of Fitzroy meets weekly, Wednesday nights from 5.15pm to 7.15pm in the Beach Street Hall. Members enjoy a informal social time at the small bar, followed by a good meal at a reasonable price and a guest speaker. Dress is casual/tidy.

Rotary is considered to be one of the great enablers of society. People with ideas, goodwill and a sense of purpose, always focused on grass roots action.

If one were to choose a case study where that little acorn has grown into the giant oak tree, then Rotary leads the way. If it were not for the thousands of Rotary members, men and women, who always seem to make their entrance and exit without fuss, our nation would be much the poorer in its community life.

Your membership could be part of this movement.

For any further information contact Mr Ross Smith 758 4194.

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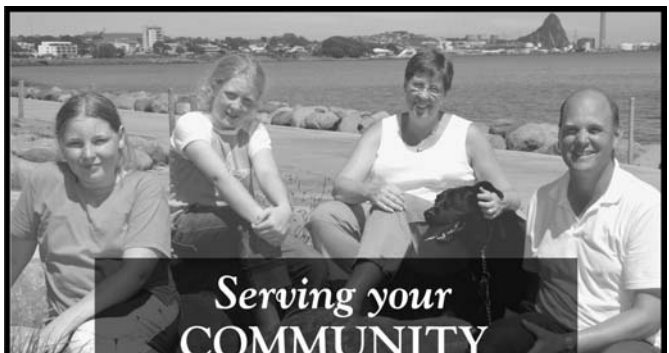
Times may have changed, but God's message through Jesus is "the same, yesterday, today & forever."

We welcome you to come & hear more.

**Every Sunday 5-6 pm in the Fitzroy Hall,  
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**Every Wednesday 7:30-8:30 pm in the  
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## Art workshops with Jayeta Valentine

Many New Plymouth people know Jayeta as a full time artist. Others remember her in a "former life" as a slightly whacky high school English and Art teacher. It has been natural progression to combine her love of art with teaching adults from her XXL Huatoki Street workshop.

The second cycle of all day Sunday 'Beginner' classes in drawing and painting is about to start. There are also three new 'Beginner / Intermediate' classes being offered for those with a bit of experience . . . either from having attended her beginner classes, or from their own efforts elsewhere. Details and photographs of what each class entails are on her website [www.jayetavalentine.com](http://www.jayetavalentine.com).



*Jayeta - ready to help kickstart some creative journeys.*

Jayeta's aim is to introduce people to the thrill of making their own art. Workshop participants leave with work that they have created on the day, as well as the skills and confidence to carry on making art at home.

To date, the students have been a "fantastic bunch" according to Jayeta. Their motivations for attending the workshops are hugely varied. Some come along to have fun and to pick up on techniques to propel them forward as artists. Others feel that they are a bit 'rusty' and need a burst of inspiration or some 'soul food'. Jayeta says that all motivations are "equally valid" and the main thing is that people are "being creative instead of just thinking about it".



*Stark emblems.*

Jayeta's workshops are friendly and relaxed and there is a heavy emphasis on teaching 'technique' rather than theory. She believes that the real learning happens when students carry on with their drawing and painting at home . . . but that "a workshop is like a rocket. It accelerates the learning process and provides a bit of structure to the creative journey!"

This artist's personal mantra that 'on the shores of hesitation bleach the bones of countless millions' has served her well so far . . . and her workshop participants seem to have the same idea! The first cycle of classes booked out quickly and early enquiries are advised for the upcoming workshops.

Jayeta advertises her workshops, exhibitions and other events to her website subscribers first. It's a good idea to be on her emailing list if you want to have first dibs on her painting 'specials'. To subscribe, go to her website.

If you want to speak to Jayeta, give her a buzz on 06 753 4278.

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# Local wetlands an investment in our future environment

Lake Rotomanu is a popular place in the warmer months for many of our local water users. Most weekends in summer water skiers, people in kayaks and sail boats and others on jet skis all vie for space on our local lake.

With the establishment of the Peringa Park Wetlands the water that filters into Lake Rotomanu will now be of better quality.

A recent walk around the wetlands project on the new paths and boardwalks revealed the huge amount of work that has gone into creating this unique environment. Over autumn there has been extensive planting. In September more riparian planting is planned with a community planting to take place. In the future there are also plans for cycling and walking tracks to link up with nearby streets. This I'm sure will be really popular with residents in the immediate vicinity.



*The Peringa Park Wetlands.*

There's still some finishing to take place in the main wetland area such as signs and seating, however the real 'finishing' will be taken care of by nature with the growth of plants and the establishment of bird, insect and frog populations. As locals we will be lucky enough to watch this area develop over time.

From a high vantage point in the wetlands it's possible to view three different water environments, the ocean, Lake Rotomanu and the wetlands themselves. They seem separate but are in fact connected by water filtering from the wetlands, to the lake and then to the ocean.

So why are wetlands important?

Wetlands are critical in the overall functioning of the water cycle and of our planet. They can be compared with the kidneys in the health and well being of a human. If our kidneys aren't functioning properly and filtering out all the impurities we need to get rid of we can quickly become unwell. Likewise the wetlands keep our waterways healthy by acting as an amazing filtering system for getting rid of impurities and keeping the water environment 'well'.

At the Peringa Park Wetlands, dirty storm water from Fitzroy will be directed into the wetlands before it reaches Lake Rotomanu. As the water filters through, sediment [dirt] will be trapped in the wetlands soil and plants. All in all 96% of contaminants can be removed using wetlands.

Things like nitrogen and phosphate from fertiliser can be filtered out. These nutrients when in excess in water increase algae growth which in turn reduces the amount of oxygen in the water. Wetlands are able to filter out as much as 91% of Phosphate and 86% of Nitrogen.

To most of us these figures aren't really that important but most of us will agree that a clean lake, river and ocean are extremely important. Many of us choose to live here because of our close proximity to these local water features and we swim, surf and spend our recreational hours often in or on the water. So as well as having another unique place to walk and cycle through with the establishment of the Peringa Park Wetlands area it's great to know that this special part of our environment is getting cleaned and looked after in a sustainable way.

*By Jackie Tomlinson*

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# TOM SPORTS



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## Taranaki Roller Derby

The Taranaki Roller Derby Junior Division, known as Taranaki Derby Brats are recruiting for the Junior League.

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- 1 All girls age 8-16 are welcome regardless of skating ability.
- 2 Practices at this stage are Fridays 6-7pm at the East End Skate Rink
- 3 10 week session during school term.

Taranaki Derby Brats will be the first Junior Division in the country.

*Our mission is to provide a safe and fun environment.*

*Our goal is to promote self esteem, confidence, physical health and social awareness.*

Girls are encouraged to push their own limits through skating. They learn the basic skills (and are encouraged to join in the Early Bird skating as well). If you have been to a family skate night recently you would have seen some of the girls practice knee slides.

Knee slides are taught to show how to fall safely (the girls seem to put their own touch to these). The Derby Brats are to play a Flag Derby - no contact, played with Flags (like ripper rugby) and they gain points from the flags as the jammer moves through the pack. All our brats will be required to pass a skill test before they can play in a pack. Flag Derby was developed in America to give the younger girls (who sat watching their mothers) a way to gain skills for when they become of an age to play.

This meant the Senior Leagues had girls waiting in the wings with skills already developed. From my own experience I have taught my own children as I have learnt the skills and they have embraced this and excelled in areas I have difficulty (to be honest a women of my age has trouble twisting in a

direction I did not believe was possible and having children speed past you in that manner is a little frustrating). The main reason I have helped push for a Junior Team is because of the confidence and self esteem my own girls have gained. I believe this will help them in their day to day pursuits. The pressure for our children to succeed today is tremendous so we don't ask for any more than that the girls have fun and help their team mates have fun also. The success comes from the girls' achievements.

If you have any queries or would like more details, please contact any of the Junior League Managers - Michelle Scown (Nitro) 751 5448. Tina 021 181 6255, or 027 780 0323.



## Fitzroy Golf Club



Now that the shortest day has passed the Fitzroy Midweek Ladies Golfers are looking forward to some warmer days. The hardy have endured strong winds and cold temperatures so the possibility of some future warmth will be appreciated. Our course though, presents beautiful views with the snow clad mountain and the blue of the sea really being shown off during the cooler months.

The club, like many others, has smaller numbers participating. However, this has not dampened the spirit and many pleasurable days are enjoyed by our members.

Recently many of the club members attended a midwinter luncheon at the club rooms. A special aspect of this day was that many of our previous and older members were able to attend. For those of us who are newer members it was a pleasure to meet each of them.

Our weekly competitions are keenly participated and most of us have had our names on the 'results' board.

On Monday the 22nd June our 18 hole club pennant team participated in the final against Opunake at the Stratford Golf Course. The competition was keenly contested and a play off was needed to obtain a result. Our number one player, Marion Baeyertz, had the honour of being the team member to do this. She was successful and as a result Fitzroy won the 2009 pennant competition. The games against Opunake were played with a positive spirit and we thank the members of the Stratford Golf Club who hosted our day so well.

The following players participated throughout the final and preliminary rounds of the pennant competitions 2009: Marion Baeyertz, Gwen Norris, Jackie Dravitszki, Fay Wright, Jeanette Cowley, Esmae Rowlands, Maree Munro, Jan Clarke, Margaret Stewart, Miriam Koot, and Gloria Palmer. Our nine hole club members are presently lying second in their pennant competitions.

Fitzroy is a lovely club to belong to and we welcome new members.

## The New Plymouth Golf Croquet Club

Invites you to its **Opening Day** for the 2009/10 season, at the **New Plymouth Croquet Club**, East End Reserve on **Friday August 14th**.

Games commence 9.00am to 12.00 noon, then resume after lunch from 12.30 to 3.30pm. Please bring a plate for a shared lunch. New Members most welcome.

Golf Croquet is a new, modern variation of Croquet. It offers gentle, healthy exercise, lots of mental challenges and is great fun. You will need to bring flat-soled shoes. Visitors, \$3 for the day's games.



# National success for local Combined Martial Arts Club

Interviewing three young locals regarding their successes at the recent Combined Martial Arts National Tournament posed a few challenges. They are all so busy on a Saturday there was only a short window of time available to catch up with all three at the same time.

The juggling was worth it though as I'm sure like myself, TOM readers feel very proud when young people from our area are doing as well as these three are.

Last month Zeb Urbahn, Liam Parkes and Sean Hone were in Auckland for the intensive day long National Combined Martial Arts Tournament.

I first spoke with the oldest of the three, Zeb. He is aged 15 and a 2nd Dan Black Belt in Combined Martial Arts. At the tournament he competed in the Open Division Four grade. This is the highest level for competing and as it's an Open Grade he can be fighting against much older competitors, often in their 20's. However this year when he reached the final no older fighters had qualified to this stage and it was between Zeb and another teenager from Auckland who was aged 14. Zeb won the final and became the Combined Martial Arts National Champion for 2009 in the Open Division 4. Having success at martial arts isn't a new thing for Zeb. In 2006 and 2007 he was the National Champion in Division 3 and the Taranaki Open Division 3 Champion in 2007 and 2008. This is an impressive record for any sportsperson but particularly for a 15 year old.

A Year 11 student at NPBHS Zeb also plays Saturday Rugby for Boys High as well as being in a Rugby Rep team. Although he trains 3-4 times a week for his martial arts he also manages to fit into his busy schedule instructing a small group at Devon intermediate once a week.

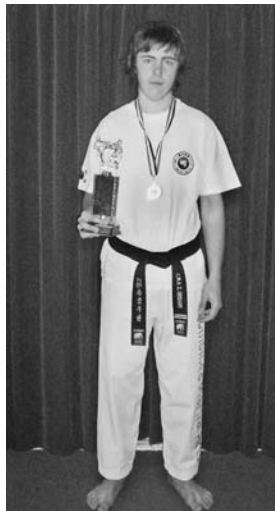
When I asked Zeb what his goals were for the next 12 months he said "I want to get my 3rd Dan Black belt and successfully defend the National title in 2010"

The other two boys Liam Parkes and Sean Hone are both aged 11 and students at Highlands Intermediate; they are also extremely busy chaps!

As well as martial arts Liam plays turf hockey and enjoys skateboarding while Sean plays Rugby for Tukupa and is in the New Plymouth under 13 Basketball Training Squad. He also manages to squeeze in some volleyball and boogie boarding into his spare time.

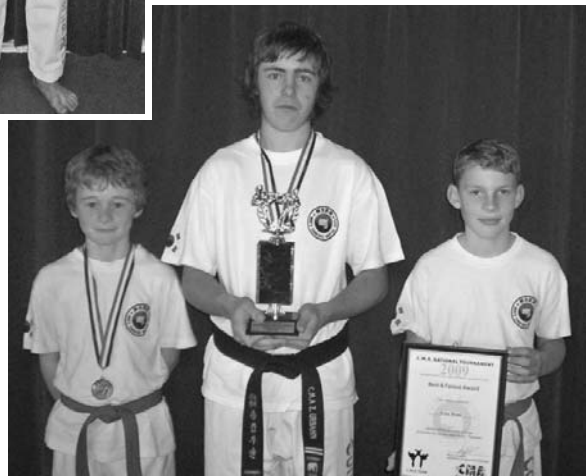
At the Tournament Sean won the award for the 'Best and Fairest Fighter'. Paul Urbahn his instructor explained that Sean won this from the qualities he displayed throughout the tournament.

"He was the smallest competitor in Division 3, he won two matches and he never gave up. He was also extremely supportive of the other members of his team" Fantastic qualities in an 11 year old and obviously not just a 'one off event' as



*Zeb Urbahn.*

*The successful Fitzroy Combined Martial Arts Club members, Liam Parkes, Zeb Urbahn and Sean Hone.*



Sean also won this award in the 2008 Taranaki competition.

Liam also had some success at this year's national competition coming away with 3rd place in the Division 2 Grade for fighters up to 40 kgs. Previous tournaments have seen him place 1st in Division 1 at the 2007 National Tournament and in the same year 2nd in the Division 1 grade in the Taranaki competition.

Both Sean and Liam are currently Red belts and they both hope to grade and pass for their Black belts this year.

Martial arts have always been synonymous with fitness, self discipline and personal goal setting, qualities all evident in these three young locals.

Talking with Instructor Paul Urbahn it seems the sport of Combined Martial Arts is popular in Taranaki and he said it was great to see that of the 21 competitors from Taranaki at the National Tournament only 3 got knocked out in the 1st round [2 by other Taranaki contestants]

I asked Paul how people could get involved in the sport and he said "There are classes on Tuesdays at 7.00 pm at Mangorei School hall and Thursdays at 5.30 pm at the Fitzroy School hall."

People of all different ages can participate and it's not just 'for the boys'. Currently the mix is made up of about 40% girls.

Paul went onto say "It's great to see whole families getting involved and I'd love to see more parents participating, it's great for all ages"

So if any TOM readers are looking for a sport that the whole family can do together Combined Martial Arts may fit the bill.

*By Jackie Tomlinson*

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# GETTING WET!



## Boardriders – stay alive when you ride!

The news that a surfer had been killed in a collision at Lyall bay came as a shock to everyone but was not unexpected. As the numbers of surfers continues to grow rapidly so do the crowds. Many surfers lament the lack of courtesy shown nowadays with "drop-ins" prevalent at all beaches. A drop-in is where a surfer takes off on a wave in front of a surfer who has already caught the wave and has right of wave. This practice is dangerous to both surfers but particularly the one who is inside and most likely to be hit. Until we have the coroners' report we will not know for certain what happened at Lyall bay but all surfers are encouraged to learn the etiquette of surfing. If you want to get the full rules go to: [www.surfrider.org.au/about/surfethics.php](http://www.surfrider.org.au/about/surfethics.php)

Many non surfers ask what is it that makes you stay surfing for 40 or 50 years and sees you surfing right through the winter when it's really cold as well as in all conditions?

Many surfers have tried to answer in a way that demonstrates the joy that surfing brings – surfers call it being "stoked". A woman came into the Beach St surf shop and asked for a surf lesson so she could understand what her husband felt. She said that when there is no surf he is like a bear with a sore

head but all that changes when he comes home stoked after a great surfing session and will get on and do anything around the house.

One of the answers is being so intimately connected to nature while sitting just off the shoreline and looking back at the fabulous scenery that Taranaki has to offer.

For my bet the most beautiful scene in Taranaki is driving over the Tapuaes and looking across the Oakura country side and Kaitakes up to Mt Taranaki. This is exemplified when surfing at Weld Road where the ranges are so close to the coast and frame the mountain beautifully.

Another reason is the joy that interacting with the sea-life that inhabits what is "their patch", be they white pointers exercising their "customary rights" to feed, Orcas or the local seal population. In early June a pod of Orcas were seen by early morning surfers at Waiwhakaiho cruising sedately northwards along the coast. Some of the more prudent took the opportunity to decide it was time to paddle in and go home for a warm breakfast while others enjoyed the experience. The seals must have been taking precautions also as one large be-whiskered male surfaced within a metre of Smithy and blew him a raspberry. The sudden appearance of a seal close by is not uncommon around new Plymouth but it certainly gives you a fright when they pop up unexpectedly and close to you.

It is quite common also to witness shoals of fish surfing across the swell in the late afternoon with the lowering sun illuminating them. I recently had such an experience at Ahus and I and other surfers nearly forgot to paddle for the waves such was the pleasure of their company. I have yet to enjoy the company of dolphins sharing the surf but it is not uncommon as the photo below shows.



*A close encounter of the orca kind.*



*Dolphins dropping in.*



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# Fitzroy School

## Tech Wizards

Fitzroy School is involved in a Ministry of Education funded three year ICT professional Development Project with three other schools: Oakura, Welbourn & New Plymouth Girls High School. This group of schools is called the "Waka Cluster" and, while its primary focus is to develop the ICT capability of the teachers in each of the schools, there are opportunities for students to develop their own expertise directly. One such opportunity is the Tech Wizard programme. Each school has selected eight students to be involved in this programme which is kindly sponsored by Lamberts.

The Fitzroy students are Fraser Wood, Jessica Whittle, Suhayl Lauderdale, Olivia Raven, Eve Thomas, Jacob Stewart, Hazel Schofer and Esme Gulliver. These students have been involved

in two movie making challenges and some technical training to assist them in becoming tech helpers back at school. The movie challenges have helped the students to use computer technology and software in a meaningful and fun way. The Fitzroy Tech Wizards have been particularly successful having gained two first places and a second in the last three challenges.



*Below, left: Jessica Whittle, Jacob Stewart, Hazel Schofer and Olivia Raven along with NPGHS Tech Angel - Morgan.*

*Esme Gulliver, Eve Thomas, Suhayl Lauderdale and Fraser Wood along with Graeme Nelson from Lamberts – sponsor of the Movie Challenge.*





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# Mangorei School

**There's not many caretakers who can say they had a famous duck named after them.**

Donald Hodge, caretaker and resident jester of Mangorei School, claims he was the namesake for the legendary Donald Duck. Whether that's true or not, Mr Hodge is the superstar of the caretaker world, banishing rubbish,

building school features and making sure the school is perfect in every way.

Mr Hodge first started on the 30th of January in 1989 and ever since he has been involved in sports days, school fancy dress, and numerous school productions where he has played a bumble bee, a christmas pudding, a fairy, a hippy, and Her Majesty the Queen!

Right around the school you can find Mr. Hodge joking with the students and working to complete his jobs to 110%. In the weekend you will probably see Mr Hodge at the schools sports matches umpiring or supporting at the top of his lungs! In his spare time Mr Hodge likes to be involved with sports such as rugby referee administration and bowls.

Mr Hodge may not have an office but he does have a shed. Using bits and bobs and this and that, the builder by trade fixes anything that needs fixing. His most exciting achievement to date is the Peace Garden: an exquisite spiralled area where children can relax, eat lunch, and hang out. Mr Hodge played a major part in the construction and planting of this garden. He helped lay the concrete, plant the bushes and flowers around it, and erected the wooded screens. He also recently laid the tiles made by the Year 8's last year.

Right around the school there are positive comments about him and his work.

"We like Mr Hodge because he cleans up the school which makes a big difference for the environment," said one Year 4 student.

"I like how he puts the lines on the field cause they're dark and we know when the ball goes out in soccer."

"He's polite and he's really good at taking stuff apart and fixing stuff."

And when the school cat, Gypsy, heard the name Mr Hodge, all that was heard was a loud PURRRR...

Mr Hodge can't choose a favourite part of Mangorei. "All of it!" he says. "The biggest challenge would be unruly children, but we don't have any of those. So, I suppose the worst thing is wet weather."

Mr Hodge's worst caretaker experience was when he fell off a ladder. Ouch!

If you're looking for someone to fix your desk, move a heavy object, or put in the rugby posts, Mr Hodge is the best caretaker around. He is kind, funny, and resourceful, willing to help out in the toughest situations, or just to support the school sporting teams.

Mr Hodge is not just the caretaker, he is part of the Mangorei School family.

*By Victoria Berrie and Gabrielle Cathie,  
Year 8 Students of Mangorei School*



*Mr Hodge in his 'Swine Flu proof' outfit – keeping himself safe!*



*Mr Hodge working in the 'Peace Garden'.*

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## July TOM Garden

After the recent heavy frosts, rain and cold winds it's been great to have some perfect sun filled winter days. These are the type of days that remind me that I'm so lucky to live in this beautiful city.

But even with the welcome sunshine it's hard to put gardening high on the 'must do' list. As winter starts to bite a no lawn, low maintenance garden seems like a marvelous idea.

With these thoughts on my mind it's not surprising that the garden that caught my eye to feature in the July TOM fits the low maintenance bill perfectly.

Owners Rex and Pat will have lived here for three years this December. Their previous home had a ¼ acre garden. When I asked them if they enjoy the low maintenance garden of their current home they were both in agreement it was better. Rex explained that they found after a busy week working they then had to spend all their weekends working in the garden. Pat went on to say that although their previous garden was lovely with lots of native birds, their current garden suits their busy lifestyle.

It was in late afternoon winter sun that the garden first caught my eye: the garden is simple but visually really stunning. Almost lawn free, compact and effective this mass planting of aloes, palms, flaxes and grasses really compliments the modern architecture of the home it surrounds.

In full sun the main part of the garden runs along the north west side of the home. The plants are all thriving and are obviously very happy to be in such close proximity to salty air and full sun. At the moment the healthy fans of Aloe Plicatilis are still producing their tubular orange flowers. These have been mass planted and this grouping is visually effective. Behind them on the fence line are several Agave Attenuata, again these are in wonderful condition. Some lovely palms also add to the planting mix among them the Washington Robusta palm with its fanned foliage.

I asked Pat and Rex if they use any plant foods on the garden and Rex said that no they haven't used anything special on the plants and the only maintenance has really just been a little bit of weed spraying. The ground around the plants is covered in grey pebbles and this works well with the plants and style of the apartment as well as keeping weeds at bay.

The garden was professionally landscaped and although the owners didn't choose the plants they are happy with the plants in their garden. Pat and Rex did choose however to have a



*Rex and Pat's garden, low maintenance and full of strong architectural plants.*

small patch of lawn around their front entrance as they have a lovely little fox terrier in the family, whereas the other two apartments have used Mondo grass in keeping with the low maintenance theme.

This modern garden works extremely well for its busy owners who like many people today like to keep their weekends free from labour intensive gardening. Lucky them, they then have free time to be out enjoying our beautiful local area.

*By Jackie Tomlinson*

**The gardens featured in the Fitzroy TOM receive a \$10.00 garden voucher kindly donated by our local garden centre FAIRFIELDS**



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## New Plymouth Boys' High School

At New Plymouth Boys' High School the third Tiger Jacket ceremony was held recently. The distinctive jacket is given to boys who excel in Academic, Sporting, Cultural or Leadership activities and is very difficult to attain. The allocation of the Tiger Jacket for sport and culture is run on a points system where the boys gain points when they represent the school, province or country at the highest levels. A student can also gain a Tiger Jacket by gaining Excellences in NCEA, Scholarships or being a leader in the school.



*Tiger jacket recipients, back row: Jarred Hinton, Callum Oliver, Joel Meuli, Hamish Fraser, Phillip Mischefski. Middle row: Daniel King, Kane Robertson, Amrit Rai, Callum Davidson, James Fuller. Front row: Ian Leppard, William McBride, Matthew Burton, Kyle Still.*

## Healthy and happy at Fitzroy Kindergarten

We believe that healthy children are happy children. We have a Healthy Eating Procedure, which along with our active movement programme, means our children can

reach their full potential while at kindergarten. We are also *nut free* and *egg free*, as we have children with related allergies. Our families are fantastic, and fully support these initiatives, providing their children with healthy, nutritious food. Our



children have a great knowledge of what they can and cannot have at kindergarten and why, and are often policing each others' lunchboxes and talking about their healthy food as they sit and eat.

This initiative is also supported by the Taranaki District Health Board, HeHa – Healthy Eating – Healthy Action: Oranga Kai – Oranga Pumau, and is the Ministry of Health's strategic approach to improving nutrition and increasing physical activity for all New Zealanders. We have been really fortunate to have received funding for \$460 from HeHa for planting and irrigation of fruit trees. Having fruit trees growing in the kindergarten will give opportunities for children to learn about growing and caring for these trees, as well as providing fresh fruit to pick and eat.

Last Friday, Jesse and his family came to kindergarten and planted feijoa and mandarin trees for us. Another example of our fantastic families and Kindergarten working together!

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## Merrilands Kindergarten

Matariki shone on the Merrillands Kindergarten and community on 25 June.

The children, families and teachers had been busy preparing for Maori New Year again. They baked kumara, Rewena and potato patties. They made Maori kites (Manu Taratahi) and flew them in the wind. They gathered small handfuls of Tigerworms from their wormery, prepared the soil before planting Maori seed potatoes, kumara and a selection of winter and summer vegetables in their veggie garden.



Families were very generous, bringing Kai to give to the Foodbank to share with others who need it. Very special visitors came from Merrillands Primary and from NTKA to share Matariki. The waiata the children sang and the yummy feast were the highlights! This was a wonderful opportunity to celebrate enriching learning experiences.

Teachers: Yvonne and Lizzy

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### **New Plymouth Chess Club**

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### **NP Roller Sports Club Family Skate Nights**

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### **New Plymouth Swords Club - Fencing**

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### **Rotary**

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### **Taranaki Radio Control Car Club**

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*On-road racing*, contact Selwyn Duthie, ph 06-765-8108.

*Indoor racing*, contact Tracy van Beers, ph 751 1093.

### **The Taranaki Jazz Club**

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