

scene magazine

IT'S ALL ABOUT WHANGAREI

no.109/MARCH 2018

COMING HOME

**KIWI RETURN
TO PUKENUI FOREST**

AT ONE WITH NATURE

► TAHI ECO SANCTUARY,
PATAUA NORTH

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COVER 06



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Ever got up close and personal with a North Island brown kiwi? Judging by the smile on the young man's face in this photo taken at a Kiwi Coast event at Bream Head, it's a pretty cool experience!
Community-led organisations are doing tremendous and effective work in Whangarei district to increase the kiwi population. Restoring our natural environment to a better ecological balance is no easy fix and it won't happen overnight – but it is happening.
Pukenui Western Hills Forest Charitable Trust, established in 2009 with a vision of making Pukenui a living treasure (taonga), reaches an impressive and important milestone this month with the release of up to 12 kiwi back into the forest. Congratulations! Keep up the good work.

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COVER IMAGE: Malcolm Pullman

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MR ED/OH SO NATURAL ...



Tahi Estate

STEVE CHALLIS
EDITOR-PUBLISHER

Caught myself laughing recently over those poor Aucklanders not being able to swim at Takapuna Beach on account of overflowing raw sewage.
But it's really no laughing matter. And while it's fair to say that most true-blue Northlanders know how good we've got it up here, there is no room for complacency in our little slice of Paradise.
Of course, the smartest of those very wealthy Aucklanders have already cashed up their mansions in Epsom, Mt Eden, Ponsnobby and Parnell and headed for the hills, beaches and lifestyle blocks of Northland, Bay of Plenty and the mighty Waikato.

That's why most property valuations in Whangarei district have gone up rather impressively in the last three or four years, and that's why you can expect a correspondingly hefty increase in your rates bill next year. Sigh.
Our little slice of Paradise needs to be looked after. If we don't do it, Mother Nature will – in ways we probably don't want to think about.
This edition of *Scene* includes feature articles on two local projects that aim to restore the ecological balance. It is fabulous to see their efforts, long-term vision and values being successful and rewarded.
Naturally, we can all do more to help.

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in the grove

LINDA SMITH OUTLINES WHY THIS IS A CRUNCH TIME OF YEAR FOR OLIVE GROWERS, AND THE INDUSTRY'S POTENTIAL TO SUCCEED INTERNATIONALLY



Nestled in the foothills of the Brynderwyns, near Mangawhai, sits our picturesque olive grove, Olives on the Hill. The warm coastal climate makes the beautiful rural setting perfect for our 1,300 olive trees.

When we purchased the grove six years ago the trees needed some serious care and attention. We didn't know much about olive growing at the time, so we had to learn quickly. It now looks stunning, with trees laden with olives ready for the coming autumn harvest.

It's the time of year when we need to focus on harvesting practices and processing the fruit from olives to oil.

To ensure highest quality, the olives need to be pressed within 24 hours of picking and the oil then stored in a cool dark place. Light, heat, oxygen and packaging are key factors in the degradation of olive oil.

Some growers leave their oil in clear plastic containers all year. Plastic is good enough for transport and short-term storage, but after a few months the plastic can affect the quality of the oil and there is often no protection from light. The ideal storage containers are stainless steel tanks or fustis which block 100% of light; they can be vacuum-sealed to reduce oxygen exposure and the stainless steel will not affect the oil.

Consumers of extra virgin olive oil should also consider the best way to store their oil. If the oil is in glass it should be a dark glass and stored in the pantry, away from heat and light.

The cloudiness in olive oil is sometimes offered as a mark of freshness, but it's usually a sign of moisture in the oil. All oil should be 'racked off' to ensure no water is emulsified in the olive oil. (Oxygen in water will react with the oil and cause it to degrade, lose its extra virgin status and eventually become rancid.)

It is considered best practice for the grower to rack off the oil after 6-8 weeks after pressing. This means transferring it from one container to another and leaving the residue behind once the sediment and water particles have settled to the bottom. This process is aided by keeping the oil stored between 12° and 18°C – warm enough for the oil to be fluid so the tiny water particles will sink, but not too warm to affect the oil quality.

Olives NZ provides an international grade certification programme to certify olive oil as extra virgin. Olive oils that meet these strict criteria are easily recognised in NZ and on the world stage through the red Olive Mark. This lets the customer know that what they are buying is the real deal.

The King Road property at Mangawhai is also home to The Grove Supply Co, supplying anything a small to medium olive grower needs, from harvesting equipment, de-leafers and nets to top quality fustis and stainless-steel tanks, taps, filters, cappers and presses. There is also equipment for orchardists to crush and press apples, plums, etc.

My husband Chris and I travelled recently to Italy and visited Sansone and Zanon, our two main suppliers of plant and machinery. Sansone and Zanon are high quality brands and The Grove Supply Co. is the sole official distributor of Sansone products in New Zealand.

Meeting face-to-face the people we do business with has enabled stronger relationships to be established that will result in benefits being passed on to our customers.

We also visited Spain for 10 days, joining an Olives New Zealand tour of olive groves led by its President, Andrew Taylor. That visit to the Spanish groves was very encouraging, because it is clear to us that New Zealand olives could well become as successful as New Zealand wine is today.

New Zealand's olive industry can compete on the world stage but we have to compete on quality. We just have to discover the best way of doing that for our climate. ■



IMAGES: Olives on the Hill

Top, from left: A final check before sending them to the press; an avenue of olive trees at the grove.

Bottom: Crates full and ready for pressing.

More info: www.olivesonthehill.co.nz

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EASTER BUNNY

LISETTE BUCKLE SHARES HER WORLD-FAMOUS-IN-WHANGAREI RECIPE FOR HOT CROSS BUNS. LOW FAT, LOW SUGAR AND TASTY. HERE'S TO A GUILT-FREE EASTER!

Having worked with a number of health promotion organisations over the years, I am much more aware of the nutritional needs of many people requiring a diet with low fat and sugar content. Hot cross buns are the ideal way to enjoy an Easter treat without all the guilt. They have virtually no fat and the lemon curd is a good alternative to butter. Don't be daunted by all the instructions. It really is just a spiced fruit bun! If you like making bread, this is a sweet version without going 'all out' on brioche-style sweets.

INGREDIENTS

Fruit Mix
½ cup sultanas ½ cup currants

Spice Mix
½ tspn each of ground nutmeg, ginger, coriander and cloves
1 tspn ground cinnamon

Easter Buns
2 Tbspns brown sugar
1 Tbspn instant dried yeast
2 cups strong flour
1 egg
1 teaspoon salt
1 cup milk

Crossing Mix and Glaze
¾ cup flour
1 Tbspn vegetable oil
1/3 cup water
80g sugar
60mls water

Lemon Curd
125g butter
1 cup sugar
zest and juice of 4 lemons
3 eggs, beaten

METHOD

The night before baking, cover the sultanas and currants in cool water and leave to soak (covered) overnight in the fridge. Next day, make the spice mix simply by combining the ingredients. To make the buns, place the brown sugar and instant dried yeast in the lukewarm milk. Break in the egg and leave it resting, while you combine flour and salt in a large clean bowl. Slowly add the milk mix and form a soft dough. You can do this by kneading by hand, but you get less of a workout by using your cake mixer with the dough hook attachment. Drain the fruit and add to the dough mix, with the mixed spices, making sure the fruit is thoroughly combined into the dough (about 5 minutes in an electric mixer). Let the dough rest for 1 hour, covered with a clean tea towel. Punch the dough to knock out the excess air. Then shape into 12 evenly sized buns and arrange with plenty of room between each bun on a greased baking tray. Allow to prove in a warm place for 1 hour. (To avoid a skin forming, I use Gladwrap gently resting over the buns.) While the buns are proving, make the crossing mix by mixing the flour, vegetable oil and water. This will make a paste. Place in a piping bag with a size 5 nozzle. Gently pipe over the buns to form crosses and bake at 160°C for 16-20 minutes. While they are cooling, make the glaze by boiling together the sugar and water. Use a pastry brush to coat the buns as they cool. To make the lemon curd, in a saucepan bring to the boil the butter, sugar, lemon zest and juice. Pour just a little into the beaten eggs so as to not scramble them, slowly add the eggs back into the lemon mix, and whisk over low heat until thick. Store in the fridge, and it will keep for up to one month. Happy Easter! ■



Photo: Bryce Zhang

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COMING HOME

AN INVITATION TO YOU FROM MAYOR SHERYL MAI ...

I don't know if you've heard, but something exciting is happening in Pukenui Forest. Whangarei kiwi are coming home!

As Whangarei Mayor I am delighted to invite you to the official powhiri to welcome our kiwi at Maunu School on Saturday March 17 at 1pm (postponement dates if the weather is against us are Sun 18 March and Sat 24 March).

Up to 12 adult kiwi will be released into the forest later that night, with more to follow in the coming years. These are your kiwi, too, and we want you to be able to share in this special day.

The release represents more than 10 years of hard work by the Pukenui Western Hills Forest Trust and the wider community. I would like to congratulate everyone who has played a part in this.

A huge amount of effort has gone into making sure the forest is ready to receive the kiwi – from fighting pests such as stoats, weasels, ferrets and rats, to eradicating weeds and educating the community on the threat uncontrolled dogs can pose to kiwi.

The birds themselves have local DNA. They come from eggs taken from the western section of the greater Whangarei Kiwi sanctuary; they were incubated at Auckland Zoo and raised on Motuora Island.

Now here we are in 2018, about to see them released back into their native habitat, right on the doorstep of our city centre.

It is amazing what our community can achieve when we work together.

I would also like to acknowledge the support of the Department of Conservation (DOC), Northland Regional Council, Foundation North, Whangarei District Council and sponsors.

This has been a true team effort.

As one of the original trustees in the Pukenui Western Hills Trust, I remember when the idea of having kiwi released back to Whangarei seemed like a near-impossible dream. It gives me great pride to see this dream about to become a reality, and I sincerely thank all the people who have made this day possible.



OUR HISTORY

To many local residents Pukenui Forest has always been a bit of an enigma. We're all familiar with the Western Hills 'up Maunu way', and Coronation Scenic Reserve, with its entrance by the home of the late and respected Marge Maddren, well known to walkers, joggers and hardy trampers. But the deep forest called Pukenui ('great hill') is no place to get lost.

My first visit to the Forest proper was a number of years ago in the company of Fritz de Witt, the then City engineer. What struck me immediately was the venerable age and size of the kahikatea. How did all the axes and butterboxes miss them? However, it was not the axe that was now threatening them, but – ironically – water.

As the City's population began to increase, planning for future water security made a lot of sense. Even the Whau Valley Dam might one day not be big enough.

What seemed an obvious option was to flood another valley, with the price of progress being the loss of ancient trees.

The area chosen for possible flooding is managed by DOC. The District Conservator at the time, Gerry Rowan, gave approval for the chosen valley to be converted to a dam, with the inevitable loss of a unique biodiversity. Fortunately, Mr Rowan had the wit to order a thorough ecological survey of the proposed area to be flooded. And thank the Lord he did!

An ecological report from Wildland Consultants basically said that the biodiversity values were very high and the forest should be left alone. It highlighted the presence of giant kauri, kahikatea and one totara among the ten biggest in New Zealand. The botanical treasures included ferns and a rare species of maire. High on the list came long-tailed bats, NZ's only mammal species, plus rare birds, pure white owls and lizards.

So, it was a huge 'thumbs up' for Pukenui Forest. It would live.

Soon after, in 2009, came the formation of the Pukenui Forest Trust, including a slow but growing relationship with tangata whenua.

The release of kiwi back into Pukenui Forest in March 2018 is a major credit to everyone who made it possible.

– Gerry Brackenbury

IMAGES

This page, top, from left: The kiwi chick called Bulldozer – found when its nest had been unearthed by a bulldozer. An unhatched egg and part of the father's body, guarding its offspring, also in shot; a waterfall, deep in Pukenui Forest; Trust chairman Max Hutchings during a kiwi handling exercise at Purua.

Facing page, top: A kukupa (also known as kereru and wood pigeon) perched on the fringe of Pukenui Forest.

This page, bottom right: Pukenui ranger Bevan Cramp at a kiwi handling exercise; Assistant ranger Ben Lovell showing Jacko the kiwi to children at Purua School.

Facing page, bottom: Pukenui Forest, referred to as the 'lungs of the city'.





PUKENUI FOREST

At 1700ha, Pukenui Forest is the largest remaining area of native forest in Whangarei District. It is administered by the Department of Conservation and Whangarei District Council as well as several smaller reserves and parks.

The forest is accessible to the public via a network of tramping tracks. A mixture of regenerating and old growth forest, the terrain varies greatly and offers a wide array of different habitats for the many species that dwell there.

Also noteworthy are important Maori archaeological sites, including several defended pa sites – Kauika Pa and Pa of Te Parawhau, as well as several kainga (villages).

THE TRUST

Pukenui Western Hills Forest Charitable Trust is a selected committee of trustees, with one funded full time ranger, Bevan Cramp, and a part time ranger’s assistant, Ben Lovell. Their task is to oversee the implementation of the Pukenui Forest Management Plan.

The trust was formed in 2009 following several years of consultation with stakeholder groups, including local land owners, tangata whenua, Whangarei District Council, Northland Regional Council, Department of Conservation and other community groups.

HUMAN IMPACTS

The impact of human colonisation on New Zealand has been devastating to our natural ecosystems, resulting in an enormous decline of our natural heritage.

This is due predominantly to the destruction of many natural areas, resulting in loss of habitat, as well as the introduction of mammalian predators such as rats, possums, mustelids and feral cats, all of which predate on many of our native and endemic flora and fauna.

OUR VISION

'Pukenui taonga – a forest treasure, a beating heart. With our help, its health and wellbeing remains, for future generations.'
'Whakahoki te mana te ora
me te wairua o te taonga nei hei
mohu mo o tatou mokopuna.'

To control mammalian predators found in Pukenui we have both intensive trapping and toxin networks in place.

The trap network is predominantly used to keep mustelids and feral cats under control, but also catches rats. This covers the entire forest as well as a buffer zone outside the forest.

The toxin network targets mainly possums and rats (feral goats and pigs were eradicated years ago) and currently covers about 900ha of Pukenui Forest. Further expansion is planned.

We also manage several smaller projects:

- > Weeding plant pests
- > Planting native plants
- > Biodiversity monitoring
- > Pest monitoring
- > Track cutting/maintenance; and
- > Regular volunteer events. ■

KIWI RELEASE
Saturday
17 March
Powhiri 1pm
Maunu School

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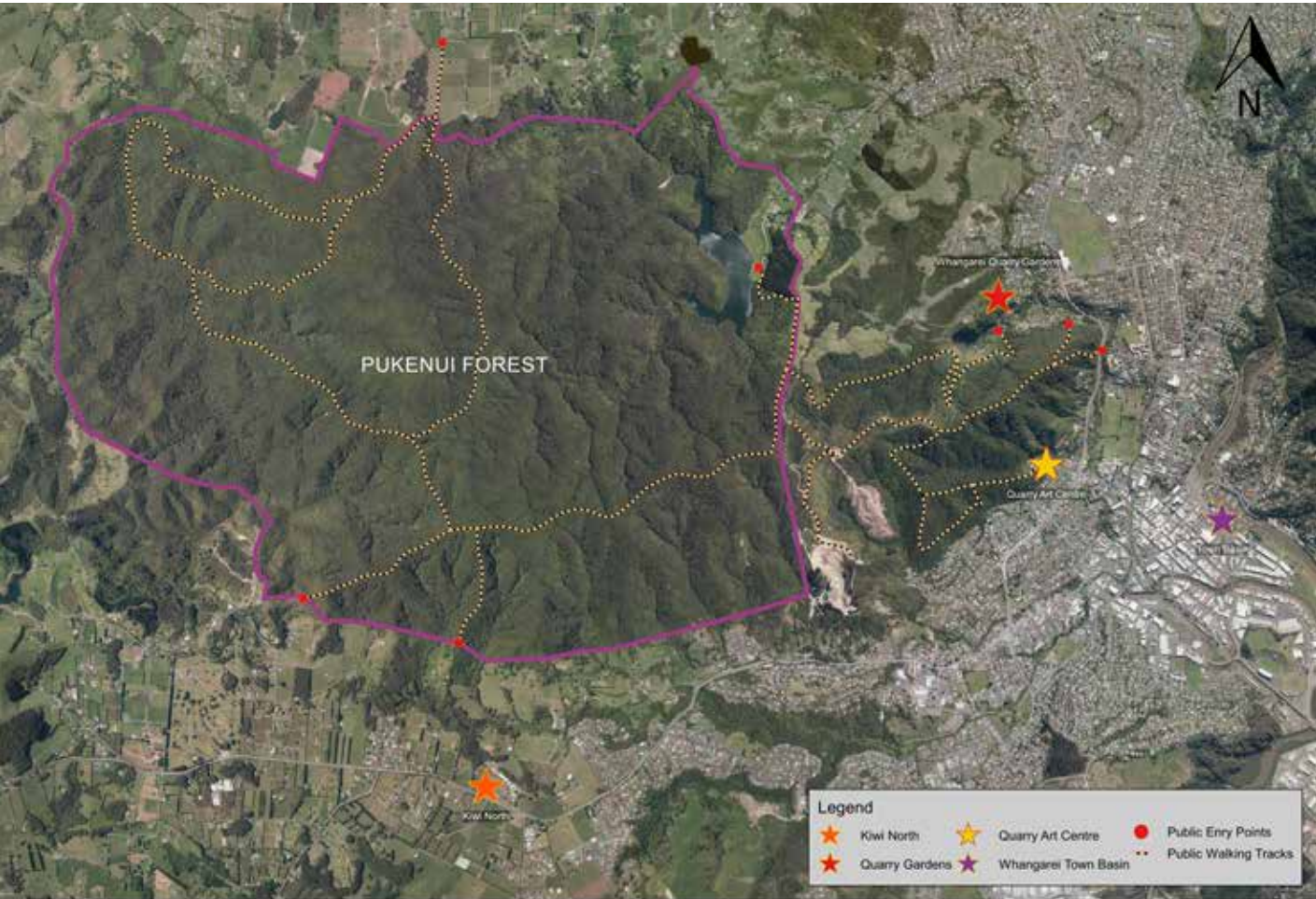
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Pukenui Forest boundary, public walking tracks and surroundings





'He kura tangata, e kora e rokohanga; he kura whenua ka rokahanga.

Possessions are temporary things compared to the land.'



At One with Nature

LINDY DAVIS VISITS TAHI ESTATE, A REMARKABLE ECO-SANCTUARY NEAR PATAUA NORTH

At the summit of Ohuatahi, literally 'first place of plenty', overlooking a valley blanketed in native bush, you get a sense of the deep spiritual importance of this land. The endless drone of cicadas interspersed with birdsong signals the soothing sound of nature at work.

Its peaceful aura is a far cry from the battlefield and bloodshed of the mid-19th century, when hundreds of lives were lost in land ownership wars here. It's also worlds away from its previous life as a run-down cattle farm.

The reincarnation of this 700+ acre (283ha) Pataua North farm to a fully sustainable eco-retreat that supports habitat restoration, wildlife protection and community partnerships is at the core of Tahi's philosophy. Based on an altruistic vision to give back to nature, that dream has been realised after a decade of hard slog and dedicated resolve.

Tahi owner Suzan Craig, who is now based in Switzerland, says she always imagined her own children having the same opportunities she had as a child to enjoy the outdoors here – swimming, walking barefoot on our surf beaches and hiking through spectacular native bush.

"When my boys come here now, they're in bare feet, shorts and t-shirts. They love to surf, so they're in heaven."

Suzan had spent years observing her father – conservation biologist and landscape ecologist Dr John Craig (ONZM) – as he helped plan an open sanctuary at Tiritiri Matangi Island in the Hauraki Gulf.

When an opportunity arose 14 years ago, Suzan purchased the McDonald family's cattle farm at Pataua North with the aim of creating an ecological reserve.

In an attempt to restore the land and encourage biodiversity, they have planted over 300,000 native seedlings, introduced a pest control programme and recreated wetlands that are now home to a variety of native birds and paradise ducks.

Tahi Reserve Manager Evan Karaka says the land would once have been richly fertile and supported generations of Maori.

He joined Tahi seven years ago to manage pest control. He now has six full time staff involved with planting and restoration. He rates his job as very much a "lifestyle choice" and feels privileged to have been part of the land transformation.

Growing up around dry-stock units and dairy farming in the Waikato, Evan says the concept of conservation was completely foreign to him.

"It takes real vision to create something like this. People talk a lot about conservation, but the Craigs really 'walk the walk' as well. Every plant we put in the ground is a stitch in the fabric of that korowai."

He says he is always learning and has been enormously guided by John and Chris Craig and the many people who have been actively involved.

When they initiated the pest control programme (to rid the land of feral cats, rats, stoats and possums) there were around 14 species of native birds. There are now over 70; fantails, robins and silvereye (wax-eye) are easy to spot on the various bush walks.

Each of Tahi's four walks (Board, Lake,

Estuary, Forest) offers something unique. If you're a fan of native trees the forest walk is an obvious choice, meandering under a vast canopy of Nikau, Cabbage trees, Puriri, Griselinias, Kahikatea and Karaka.

Bikes are available for exploring the numerous tracks and trails. Horse-riding, kayaking and surf lessons can be arranged in advance.

Suzan says the real connection to the land filters through to everyone engaged in Tahi's development. She attributes its growth to the drive and passion of the people involved.

"My father John, Dr Anne Stewart, and many others have spent enormous amounts of time dedicated to creating this sanctuary. I look at Tahi as a collaborative project, with so many people who have had an impact on its success."

PUBLIC OPEN DAY
Sat Mar 24, 9am-3pm

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Though living overseas, Suzan still sees herself as “100% Kiwi” and is involved in various facets of Tahī’s management every day. She is acutely aware that in order to preserve Tahī they need to diversify commercially, but not at the expense of the land.

“Tahī stands for what it is. We don’t wait for government hand-outs and we fund any conservation and community projects ourselves.”

They employ 20 people full time, involved with land restoration, retreat accommodation, education, and the Tahī honey business – a success story in itself.

Suzan’s father was a hobby beekeeper who kept a few hives on the property. Suzan says the honey was delicious so they looked for an opportunity to expand the operation.

“I grew up with bees outside my bedroom window and I can remember holding the puffer up above my head to ‘help’ with the hives. It was a natural progression to develop the honey business here.”

Enter Jon and Lesley Vincent, who joined Tahī in 2012 from Auckland, developing a comprehensive honey extraction and processing plant. Jon and graphic designer Jen Cheyne created the

brand identity, with its distinctive label depicting native New Zealand birds.

A small number of hives are positioned in various areas on the property; eight beekeepers manage over 3,000 hives in conjunction with 200 landowners from all over Northland. Head beekeeper Lennie Stone is involved with the Bee Friends with Schools programme; Knox Henderson manages honey production.

“School students get to have a close-up look at the hives and learn about good beekeeping practices,” says Suzan. “It’s important to get them involved and teach them the right way to care for the bees.”

Tahī’s honey is in huge demand now and much of it is exported. The brand is available in 23 countries, including China, Japan, UK and USA. All profits from the honey enterprise go back into conservation or community projects.

Tahī was recently singled out by the United Nations, which recognised it as a small business with a strong ethical message and for its dedication to Sustainable Development goals.

“The UN recognised that, while we are a small community in New Zealand, we are footing it with the best in eco-tourism and we can inspire others well beyond our boundaries.”

Suzan is a founding member and on the board of the global Long Run initiative, an organisation created for businesses committed to driving sustainability. She says Tahī’s core principles – based on the ‘4Cs’ of community, culture, conservation and commerce – guide them in all their decision-making.

Tahī’s commitment doesn’t stop at the land. The original farm buildings constructed from both weatherboard and sandstone were faithfully restored and the renovated interiors, whilst very comfortable, are not in any way ostentatious. A grove of Nikaus and Punga ferns line the pathway to ‘Hiwi’, one of two contemporary bungalows) perched on a hill overlooking Pataua beach and beyond to the Poor Knights. Deep purple hebes creep up the concrete wall where a fantail sits quietly scoping for insects. Lush Griselinia hedging has been carefully planted around the property, with total privacy in mind.

There are plans in place for more accommodation, including a lodge closer to the beach. Suzan explains the land has cultural significance to the local iwi (Te Waiariki) so they are cognisant of the need to remain respectful to the wider community in any decisions they make.

IMAGES: www.tahinz.com
Facing page, from left: Exploring Tahī’s tracks and trails; Manuka honey range.
Centre: Aerial view of Tahī.
This page, from left: ‘Hiwi’, two-bedroom bungalow; John and Suzan Craig; fantail (piwakawaka) at Tahī; Bee Friends in Schools; Manuka honey; Evan Karaka.

The property uses bore water and collected rainwater, composts organic material and has just recently established an integrated recycling centre. They are especially proud of the fact Tahī is carbon neutral.

Their commitment to the land, its partnership with the community and progressive dedication to being a fully sustainable, carbon neutral eco-retreat, makes Tahī a unique leader in the arena of eco-tourism.

Suzan maintains economic necessity doesn’t need to be at odds with the environmental imperative.

“New Zealand can be a leader in biodiversity. It’s something to be celebrated, that we can create something so unique in a small beach community north east of Whangarei, with a positive footprint.” ■



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FAST FIBRES

FOR THE LOVE OF POETRY

LINDY DAVIS TALKS TO FOUR LOCAL POETS WHO ARE UNAFRAID TO REVEAL THEIR HUMANITY.

What do a retired physicist, a criminal defence lawyer, a University lecturer and a management consultant all have in common? A deep love of words.

According to the Fast Fibres Poetry group based in Whangarei, it's about sharing the human experience.

Since its inception in the early 1990s, a diverse group of Northland writing enthusiasts have met once a month to discuss and occasionally critique each other's work. The name Fast Fibres references the fibre optic cables used for communication, in a similar way to

strings or strands of poetic language.

Despite multiple venue changes (from humble beginnings in First Avenue, to an open-mic jam session at Riva's, a stint at the Butter Factory, the old Library, and the Bank Street Social Club, the core group has continued to cultivate their artistic talent.

They insist it's all about the poems, encouraging you to express yourself freely with others who may appreciate it.

IMAGES: Lindy Davis

Below, from left: Martin Porter, Piet Nieuwland, Olivia Macassey, Arthur Fairley.



'Love is at the core of my poetry.'

PIET NIEUWLAND

Piet recalls writing his first poem, about architecture, while still in primary school.

As a founding member of the Fast Fibres poetry group, he brought together several like-minded creative thinkers to form a group with a common interest in poetry. He was working as a management planner for DOC at the time, focusing on conservation management strategy and public consultation.

In the millennium year, he bought a 40ft yacht and spent the next 10 years berthed at the marina in Whangarei Harbour.

"I loved it, and our son was almost born on the boat. The moment I'd leave the office for the day we'd take off to Great Barrier, the Bay of Islands or Kaikoura Island." (His poem 'Humid over Kaikoura island' was penned after considerable time spent there.)

Piet's writing interest extends to mankind's relationship with nature and how various cultures see the environment and have different perspectives on it.

For the past 20 years he has explored poetry and the works of authors based abroad. His interest includes all sorts of themes related to politics, climate change and social justice, but the majority of his poems revolve around love.

"Creativity is the essence. It usually

stems from a real-life experience or something personal that's had an impact. It usually grows into something more fictional from there."

He likes reading the translations of foreign writers in parts of the world that are completely unknown to him, learning more about their thought processes, values and experiences.

Piet particularly admires the work of Chilean poet Pablo Neruda (1904-73) and Mexican Octavio Paz (1914-98), saying their poems give him a better understanding of life and a greater, more intimate connection to the rest of the world.

Piet's poems have been published in American, Australian and New Zealand journals.



'I'm horribly omnivorous when it comes to books.'

OLIVIA MACASSEY

Having scrawled her first poem during an experiment in a physics class at school, Olivia is a firm believer that "poetry can sometimes happen when you're supposed to be doing something else".

Originally from the Coromandel, she was drawn to the Northland poetry group after spotting some poems slung from the trees to highlight the Whangarei Art Fair.

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With an academic background as a lecturer in Film Studies at Victoria University (Wellington), film has always been Olivia's first love.

"The discipline of academic non-fiction writing can tie your brain up in knots and I have to exit and switch to poetry instead," she says.

Olivia is particularly focused on the embodied human experience, especially memory and how it works.

Her poetry often evolves from a vague idea in her head and despite her best efforts to direct her thoughts, the poem will often emerge in an entirely different way.

"I love narrative. If I've written a poem that relates to human trauma, it will sometimes take a shape and form that accentuates the loss or grief, mimicking the structure of trauma."

She maintains that poetry is being open to ideas and alive to language, and likes to think of her poems as a conduit, connecting people to her thoughts.

Finding inspiration everywhere, she recalls being moved at an early age by the poems of Spanish poet, playwright and theatre director Federico García Lorca (1898-1936), who was executed by Nationalist forces at the start of the Spanish Civil War.

With specific reference to her poem 'Burnt Umber' published in the *Fast Fibres Poetry 4* publication, she says poems affect people in different ways.

"We don't have to be personally affected by a situation, either current or historical, to be moved by it. One of the things about traumatic memory is that it's not anchored in time. A world is taken every time someone dies."

For anyone keen to write poetry, Olivia suggests reading as much as you can, writing honestly and just giving it a go.

"You can't edit an empty page. Try not to worry about what a poem should be like. Poetry is what you want it to be – there are no rules."

On some occasions you may feel less creative and she likens it to a fallow field that will produce something favourable further down the track.

She doesn't think she's ever written a poem that fully expresses what it is she's feeling, but believes somehow the poem is always writing itself under the surface.

Olivia has published two books of poems, *The Burnt Hotel* and *Love in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction*. Her poetry has appeared in several publications including *Landfall*, *Poetry New Zealand* and *Takabe*.



'You get to hone your craft through performance.'

MARTIN PORTER

Martin developed a love of writing at primary school and by the age of nine was compiling his first pieces of prose.

The retired physicist joined the Fast Fibres poetry group 10 years ago while working as a systems trainer at Northpower. His job largely involved training staff to use specialised IT systems.

"I like to write without feeling the poem needs to be event-based. Because I'm a physicist I'm more concerned in the principles of poetry, particularly form and structure. I'm less interested in the narrative of a story."

He says we tend to see things as a series of individual events and will often try to construct a narrative around them.

"I prefer to write commentary about poetry and then find myself dissecting the existing structure of the poem."

Martin believes that ideas often stem from the way we are programmed to think.

Unsurprisingly, he likens the concept to physics. Scientists think of a vacuum of space as being energetic or full, not the empty nothingness that many people perceive when they imagine a vacuum or void.

The idea of exploring these types of contradictions, especially in terms of

concepts and ideas, means his work is often arranged quite thematically.

The most recent is a series of library poems that were written over a period of six months in several New Zealand libraries and abroad.

Flash fiction is another area of interest for Martin. He enters international competitions and is a member of the National Flash Fiction Week Competition committee.

His poems can be found in *Fast Fibres Poetry Vols 1-4*, USA publications *San Pedro River Review* and *Better Than Starbucks*, as well as the UK publication *The Interpreter's House*.



'A good trial lawyer will speak with their heart. It's a concept I apply to every facet of my life.'

ARTHUR FAIRLEY

When not reading books, writing poetry or listening to music, Arthur Fairley is a dynamic criminal defence lawyer based in Whangarei.

The concept of a career in the legal profession came to him largely through a process of elimination.

"I was hopeless with my hands, I couldn't add up and barely got School C maths. My father called me a useless yob, so that ruled out a wide spectrum of human endeavour."

Raised in a household containing hundreds of books, Arthur's paternal grandfather was a "walking dictionary". Despite having no tradition of lawyers in his family, it was an early love of books and language, combined with a talent for words, that drove him in that direction.

"I studied law because of a deep love of words and the potential to use language."

He began writing poetry during his mid-20s and has accumulated an admirable collection of 3,900 poems to his name.

A prolific reader with 20 books on the go at any one time, Arthur sees his poetry as an extension of that. He believes it's not emotion itself that resonates in poetry, it's the articulation of the word and the phraseology that triggers an emotional response in the reader.

He says the great shift over the last century is to see beauty in words. The only emotion poetry requires is the emotion of the word.

"It's a two-stage process and quite often I'll be inspired by terms or phrases I've heard. It might be street signs, lyrics and maybe even a throw-away comment that resonated for some reason."

Inspiration could well come during a visit to the library or a quiet evening at home.

Arthur maintains he doesn't set out to actively write a poem, usually the text follows a single word.

"I imagine words as you would dinner party guests. I arrange the seating of the words in the same way you might position friends together, depending on the words you choose, the conversation will ebb and flow."

He reveals that occasionally when he's summing up in a jury trial, he'll resort to poetry or flamboyant language because ultimately it speaks to the human heart. ■

Want to join Fast Fibres Poetry?

Contact: Piet Nieuwland

Email: fastfibres@live.com

Submission deadline for *Fast Fibres Poetry 5th Collection* – June 15, 2018

Publication date – August 24, 2018 to coincide with National Poetry Day.

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When is a good time to sell my business?



RUDY KOKX SCENE COLUMNIST

Rudy Kokx from Link Northland says the answer to the age-old question is not straightforward

THE BIGGEST MISCONCEPTION I COME

across in business sales is that businesses only sell when they are not doing well. The other side of the argument, of course, is that if a business is doing so well ... why would you sell?

The truth is that there is never a good time to sell a business! Just like there never seems to be a good time to have babies, or have lunch in a busy work schedule, or when to get your car serviced.

Like any other commodity, business sales are driven by supply and demand. In a bad economy we see a demand for owner-operator (job like) businesses; when the economy is good, people look to get a

higher return on investment than the bank can give them (or property, which is not everyone's cup of tea).

Within the last two months I have brokered the sale of a business that had been on the market for over 14 months, and another was sold before I even advertised it. The right person walked through the door just a couple of hours after I'd spoken to a potential vendor!

Currently, I am negotiating on an Auckland business that was only on the market for two weeks, and another in Whangarei that was marketed on Friday and I got a call with an offer on Monday.

However, I now also have four listings on my books that I just cannot get any interest on at the moment – anything can happen, but without any guarantees.

When selling a business you are dependent on the market you are working in, the demand created by external forces, and you are dependent on what the purchaser wants.

To make your business as appealing as possible (and to stand out from the other many businesses on the market) you have the best chance to sell when your turnover and profits are increasing!

There are many businesses on the



market at any given time. If your business doesn't look good compared to others, it will reflect in the offer.

Starting the sales process in April is good, but you want to make sure you have your accounts all ready as buyers expect to see what you have done in the last financial year. The previous year's accounts are now 12 months old and might not reflect the business in its current state.

And then, certainly in Northland, we have the seasonal businesses. These require exceptional timing. If you have a seasonal business you are thinking of selling, you have to talk to us at the end of the summer (February-March). We should look at listing the business in July/August only to expect an offer in October or November. Do not list a seasonal business in November. It is too short a timeframe to sell. It takes a month from signing an offer to finalise Due Diligence and settlement!

And why on earth am I telling you all this? Maybe I have just talked you out of wanting to list your business! Don't worry, I am busy

enough! At least now you can make a good judgment call on your timing.

My priority is to have you educated on the sale process before you sell. This makes the sale of your business much easier. The people who engaged me early on in the process will tell you that the process was not as hard as they would have thought. It is often when people rush into selling a business that problems arise later on in the process. ■

Rudy Kokx is a professional business broker in Whangarei. For more articles, go online to: www.BusinessSalesHUB.co.nz



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The 'Three Es' that will help you choose the right agent

Leslee Going from Barfoot & Thompson Whangarei outlines the 'Three Es' that will help a seller choose the best real estate agent for them

ENTHUSIASM

An employer once said to me: "Leslee, be fired with enthusiasm, or you'll be fired with enthusiasm!"

As you show a prospective real estate agent your property ('fixer-upper or not!'), and discuss how it might be taken to market, what level of enthusiasm is being shown?

ENERGY

Is the person you are considering passionate about you, your property and your situation – no matter what that might be? Are they showing genuine interest in your position and property? How well is he/she listening to you? Do the two of you 'connect'?

EXPERTISE

Does the agent know his or her stuff? Are they demonstrating past and present knowledge of local market activity? Are they



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"Leslee has a passion for real estate, putting in long hours on behalf of her clients. She kept us well informed and was really committed to selling and achieving the best outcome." – Ian and Gillian

I had the best salesperson, Leslee Going. She is so easy to talk to, professional and a genuinely nice person who cares. She listens and communicates. I would not use anyone else ..." – Deborah

"Not once did she let us feel overwhelmed or downhearted. At all times approachable, friendly and, above all, honest. Her enthusiasm, energy and communication was excellent." – Keith and Sue

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#review



PETROLHEAD **DAVID MUIR**
TAKES THE NEW SUZUKI SWIFT
SPORT FOR A QUICK BLAST

The paint colour of my new-found friend is 'Burning Red Pearl Metallic', but to my eye it could just as easily be 'Pohoot Flower'. So off I zipped in search of a pohutukawa tree, against which to photograph the new 2018 Suzuki Swift Sport. Alas, the flowering is all over until next Summer!

But the latest model Swift Sport did NOT disappoint. Oh, no. Because like the pohutukawa (botanical name *Metrosideros*, meaning 'heart of iron'), there's something pretty darn special at the heart of this snappy little car. The Suzuki people call its 1.4 litre, four-cylinder, turbo-charged engine a Booster Jet, and whilst 103 kilowatts of power – that's a shade under 140 horsepower – is not exactly tyre-shredding, it's more than enough to propel this 1000 kilogram whippet with impressively high breakaway torque multiplication characteristics!

That, incidentally, is my waffly way of saying "man, it goes!" Very, very smartly.

IMAGES

Top left: 2018 Suzuki Swift Sport at Waikaraka beach foreshore.

Top right: Smart small car styling from Suzuki.

Lower right: The turbocharged 1.4 litre engine gives the Swift Sport more zip.

Lower centre: Compact and svelte, the interior of the Suzuki Swift Sport has all the latest bells and whistles.

You see, little cars generally don't do much for this petrolhead, but this is one small car I can get very enthusiastic about.

Suzuki's Swift has been around since 2005, selling 3000+ units per year. That makes it one of New Zealand's best selling vehicles. In fact, if you disregard fleet sales of other popular brands, the Swift is very nearly the best-selling hatch. The market has spoken. There's one simple reason for this – it's an 'anybody's car'.

Anybody from a teenager to an age-enhanced pensioner can like it. If you ever wanted a smaller car, a Swift has always been easy on the eye, with a bit of style and pep, good quality build, and exceptional value for money. There have been a number of variants over the years, giving choice to buyers.

My road test model, the 2018 Suzuki Swift Sport, is the current top-of-the-line variant. It's equipped with a six-speed automatic transmission, with a manual override option controlled by 'paddle' shifters on the back of the steering wheel. What this car isn't equipped with probably isn't worth talking about. It has all the latest technology. Suzuki uses the term 'immersive interaction', which means that you're only the nut holding the steering wheel – the car does just about everything else for you.

OK, I'm being a bit frivolous there but, as an example, the car will read out your text messages off your cellphone for you, and as you dictate your response it will enter the data (words) into your phone and send it off for you. All while your hands don't leave the steering wheel.

And that's only one of dozens of ultra-modern nifty Swiftly tricks.

There's something pretty darn special at the heart of this snappy little car ...

A couple of things to bring to your attention. One, the Suzuki people say it's a five-seater. That only applies if you're talking about having child-size passengers in the rear seat. It's small.

Secondly, if you did fill the car with five people and they average, say, 80 kilos, you'd be increasing the Gross Vehicle Weight by 40%, which affects the weight-to-power ratio. When a light car gathers more weight, it won't accelerate how it would with just the driver on board. I'm just pointing out what should be obvious to performance-minded drivers. Although it's a very appealing 'hot hatch', it's a lightweight.

Is it a good-looking car? That's always a subjective question, but my answer is yes. A tad chubby in the rear end, although I'm pleasantly surprised to find my photos don't show that; it looked different to me while parked on the foreshore at Waikaraka Beach.



If I won one of these in a raffle, would I keep it? DEFINITELY.

Oh, and 'Burning Red Pearl Metallic' is one of six attractive colour options. Ask Pacific Motor Group for the colour chart. ■



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We don't really know what will happen – you can only break the board once – but it is interesting the surprised looks we get when some of these take about two tonnes of pressure to break!

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