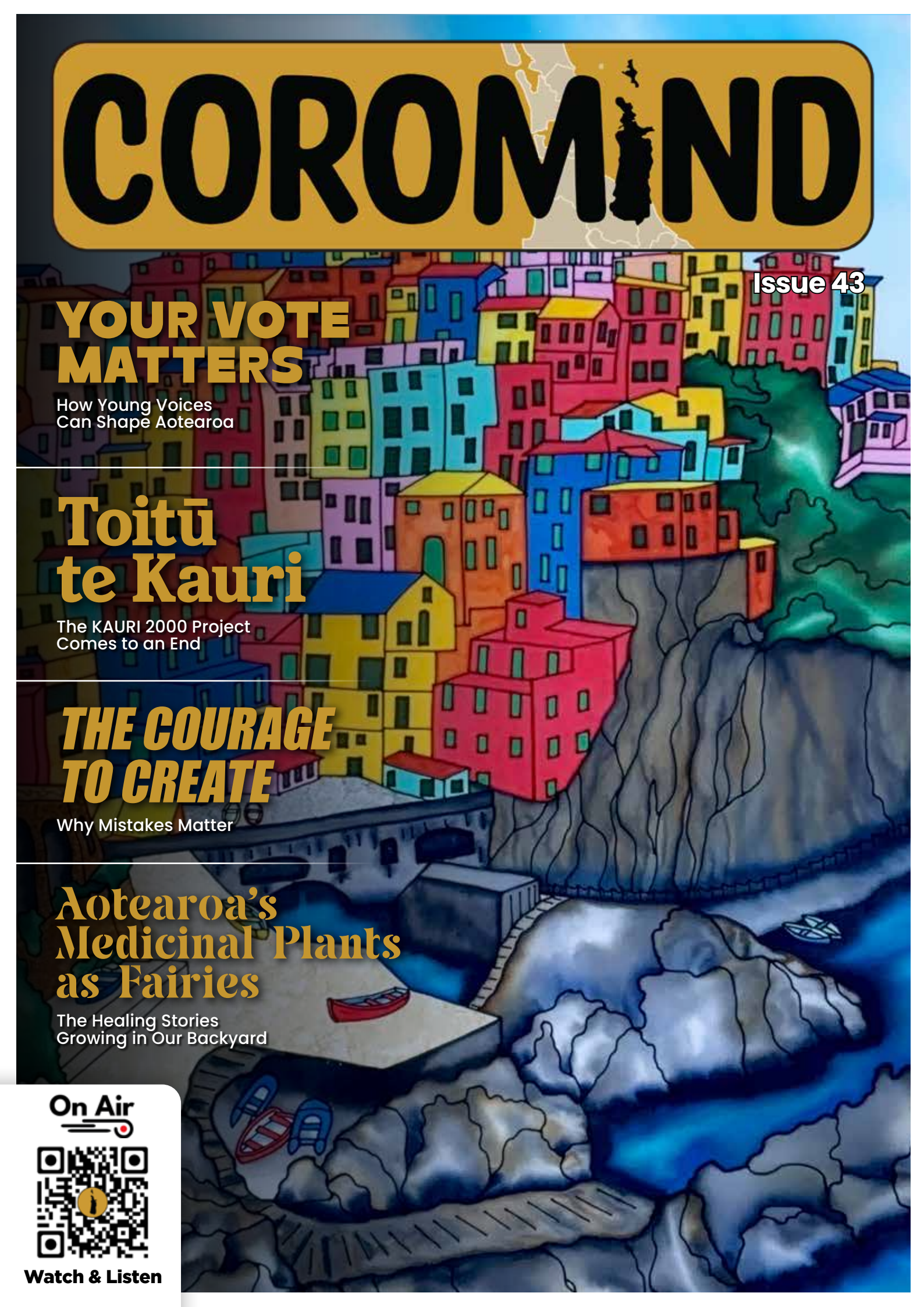


COROMIND



Issue 43

YOUR VOTE MATTERS

How Young Voices
Can Shape Aotearoa

Toitū te Kauri

The KAURI 2000 Project
Comes to an End

THE COURAGE TO CREATE

Why Mistakes Matter

Aotearoa's Medicinal Plants as Fairies

The Healing Stories
Growing in Our Backyard

On Air



Watch & Listen

Turning the Pages

So, the war's going on, fuel costs are rising, the weather's getting worse, my food bill's going up, I need a new carpet, there's gorse in my garden, I need glasses to find my glasses and my driveway seems to get steeper.

And, to top it off, I've just read that Eric Clapton's been demoted from top 10 down to number 35, according to Rolling Stone magazine's list of the greatest guitarists of all time! Really? It's all a bit depressing.

But ... then I put down my cuppa, reach for copies of Coromind Magazine and flick through all those colourful glossy pages.

I learn how to make perfect coffee, do and be my best, heal with herbs, calm my nerves, find stillness, and care for my skin. Then I read about Coromandel's underwater magic as well as all the amazing variety of talented artists and musicians on the Coromandel. The Ramblings of Ross are always interesting, there's some lovely photographs and I learn how to raise bilingual tamariki. Turning the pages, I spot some guidance on clearing relationship 'gunge'. Yeah!

I dance salsa and rock 'n roll and think about doing Ju-Jitsu – all thanks to this eclectic magazine.

Legends of Hot Water Beach plus the life force within us are also part of this publication that's packed with informative and positive reading.

I savour the vibrant artwork featured throughout those pages, feel inspired by the stories, smile back at happy faces, and I feel good.

Thank you Leo, Taylor and the wonderful team at Coromind. Also, thanks to all the advertisers and contributors that help to keep this magazine alive.

P.S. On reflection, I reckon David Gilmour is one of the best guitarists (just listen to the sizzling second half of Pink Floyd's 'Comfortably Numb'). But Eric really should be back in the top 10.

 Words by
Pamela Ferla



COROMANDEL JOINS AMPLIFY AOTEAROA

LOCAL RANGATAHI, MUSIC LEGENDS AND A NATIONAL STAGE

Amplify Aotearoa is an intergenerational music project bringing rangatahi (young people) together with some of New Zealand's most respected artists in professional studios and live performance settings.

Led by teacher and creator Lachie Holt, the project has gained national attention for opening doors for young musicians who might never otherwise step into a studio or share a stage with Kiwi music legends.

While Amplify Aotearoa officially launched in 2026, its roots can be traced back to The Mental Notes Project, a collaboration between Hamilton East School students and members of Split Enz. The project achieved national success, reaching number 2 on the New Zealand Albums Chart.

The process is simple. Student bands are paired with established musicians. They rehearse, send in practice recordings, then head into the studio to record their own versions of iconic New Zealand songs alongside the original artists. The outcome is both a recording and a shared experience, captured on vinyl.

The inaugural Amplify Aotearoa programme brings together artists including Don McGlashan, Jordan Luck, Jason Kerrison, Hollie Smith, Nathan King, Mike Chunn, Andrew McLennan, and others. The recordings are pressed onto vinyl and distributed nationwide through JB Hi-Fi. This year's vinyl artwork has been created by Dick Frizzell in collaboration with his son Otis Frizzell and music legend Chris Knox.

As Lachie puts it, the kaupapa (project) is not about competition or pressure. It is about access, belief and possibility: "When a young person stands on stage next to a musician they've grown up listening to, it changes how they see themselves," he says. "It sends a clear message that this world is not closed to you."

That message is now reaching the Coromandel.

After Lachie's appearance on the Altbays Table Talk podcast in 2024, a connection formed with the Flock Media Group crew, including Leo Magri and Taylor O.G. from Coromind. The relationship grew through shared

kaupapa, including a Waitangi Day visit with social media creator Leighton Clarke, known as Uncle Tics, and time with Tame Iti's whānau following an invitation from Te Rangimoaho Iti.

In 2026, that connection comes full circle. Amplify Aotearoa has selected Coromandel as a new region, with the Coromind team invited to help lead the musical representation of the rohe.

Working alongside singer-songwriter Stu Pedley and producer Dave Rhodes, Leo Magri and the Coromind team have brought together a standout group of young local musicians. The Coromind Band features Joseph May on bass, Zach Greenfield on drums, Riley Flynn on rhythm guitar, Cameron Johansen on vocals, Jade Kekesi on lead guitar, with backing vocals from Olivia Graham, Bonnie Roberts, and Wallace Roberts.

Together, they will record and perform a tribute to Hello Sailor, with the opportunity to work directly with guitarist and songwriter Harry Lyon.

For Coromandel, this is more than participation. It is representation. Young local musicians stepping into professional spaces, carrying their own stories, and placing the region into a national creative conversation.

For now, this is the first note in a journey that puts Coromandel rangatahi on stage alongside some of the most respected names in New Zealand music!



Harry Lyon from
Hello Sailor by Chris Traill



COROMIND

THE ULTIMATE COROMANDEL GIG GUIDE

Coromind now brings gigs and events from across the region into one place – powered by Eventfinda. From live music and exhibitions to festivals and community gatherings, our guide at Coromind.nz helps you stay in the loop.

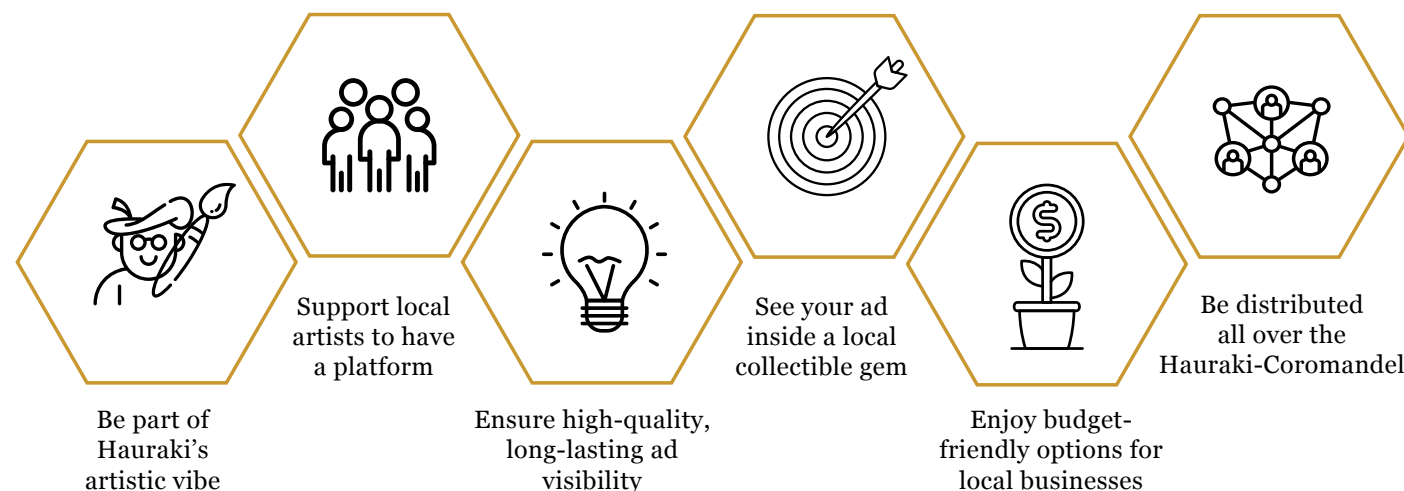
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Gaylene Lonergan

I have always been drawn to colour, creativity and the joy of telling stories through art. For many years, I have worked with silk as my canvas, using dyes and a liquid wax called gutta to create paintings that are vibrant, whimsical, and full of personality.

Painting on silk is both challenging and exciting. It is an unpredictable medium that demands patience, confidence, and a willingness to embrace risk. Unlike many other surfaces, mistakes cannot be erased or painted over. Every line and every colour choice matters. While that may sound daunting, it is exactly what I love about working with silk. I enjoy the challenge, and there is nothing more satisfying than seeing a piece come together exactly as I imagined.

Every painting I create has a story behind it. My work is fun, light-hearted, and often inspired by the moments that make life special. Living at beautiful Opito Bay provides endless inspiration. Surrounded by stunning beaches and ever-changing coastal scenery, I am constantly reminded of the beauty that exists in the world around us. I also draw inspiration from my travels overseas and from the laughter and memories shared with family and friends. These experiences often find their way into my paintings, transformed into colourful and imaginative works of art.

I have always loved bright, bold colours and use them with wild abandon. Watching ideas emerge from my overactive imagination and evolve into something tangible, colourful and unique is one of the greatest joys of my life. I feel incredibly fortunate to spend my days doing something that I love so much.

The most rewarding part of being an artist is seeing the reaction my work creates. Nothing gives me greater pleasure than watching someone smile when they see one of my paintings.

Each year I hold a solo exhibition at Opito Bay on 3rd January and open my studio to visitors during the first two weekends of March as part of the Mercury Bay Art Escape. The rest of the year I am either travelling in search of inspiration or happily painting in my studio.

If one of my paintings puts a smile on someone's face, my work is done.

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 Words by
Gaylene Lonergan



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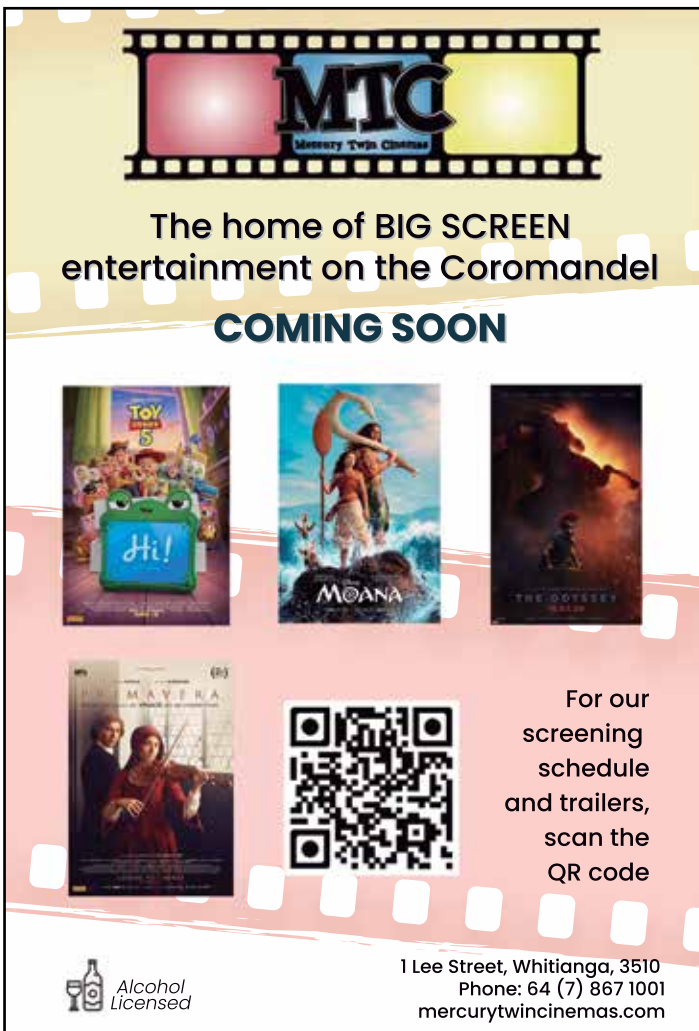
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Toitū te Kauri

The KAURI 2000 Project Comes to an End

This lofty project had its humble beginnings, more than 25 years ago, with a scattering of kauri seedlings in the Kūāotunu garden of Cliff Heraud. As Cliff contemplated what to do with these baby kauri, the 'seed' of an idea came about. He got up one morning and said to wife Julie, "We're going to plant a kauri forest for the Millennium." Hence a lasting and meaningful project was mooted to mark the new century, Kauri 2000. Kūāotunu local and fellow conservationist Vivienne McLean was one of the original Trustees. Many a rumoured whiskey and deep conversation were had as the project took off.

Coromandel kauri had been ruthlessly milled over the past two centuries and mostly shipped offshore for spars and furniture ... canopy forest, habitat and a natural heritage lost. Cliff attracted like-minded folk to help create the Kauri 2000 Trust with the goal of planting kauri to restore our whenua for future generations to enjoy.

Dame Catherine Tizard welcomed the opportunity to become Patron and was present at the inaugural planting in the Kauaeranga Valley in August 1999.

The original goal of planting 2000 trees to commemorate the new millennium took on a life of its own. Donations poured into the Trust, kauri were 'given' as gifts, as memorials, to commemorate birthdays or for no reason other than a belief in the kaupapa (scheme). Prime Minister Helen Clark planting the 10,000th tree during Conservation Week 2001 was considered a massive milestone, but there was much more to come.

Local institutions got involved, including the Outdoor Language Centre, primary and area schools. Hard work and learning went hand in hand as students became part of an amazing legacy. This project captured the imagination of thousands including the team at BNZ Markets who were about to release BNZ bonds, which they named 'Kauri Bonds', on the international financial markets. For every bond sold, they would donate 100 kauri seedlings and come help to plant them. This was a truly wonderful partnership which saw hundreds of kauri in the ground.

With the committed support of volunteers, iwi, local councils, Department of Conservation, the Lotto Millennium Fund, landowners, and Waka Kotahi (NZ Transport Agency), over 55,000 kauri were planted in the 25 year+ life of the Trust.

This work often wasn't easy, planting areas that were steep or difficult to access in lines cut through 4m high scrub dominated by manuka and hardwood. The plantings took on the life of military manoeuvres, so precise were the plans of chairperson Vivienne McLean and forestry advisor Max Johnston.

Upon the discovery of Kauri Dieback disease, the trust supported workshops around the peninsula to educate contractors, farmers, hunters and the general public. Over the years, the Trust also battled wilding pines and other pest species, Covid, the passing of beloved Trust members and supporters, and weather events. They have inspected and maintained trees planted in previous years, releasing them from encroaching bush and weeds – all this done with good humour and great camaraderie. The kauri plantings now span from Waihi in the south to beyond Coromandel town in the North.

Cliff Heraud was awarded a QSM in 2013 and following his death in 2015 the trust planted 92 kauri, one for each of his years, on the Black Jack Hill, Kūāotunu. Vivienne McLean was awarded a well-deserved QSM in 2015 for her services to conservation.

A celebratory but poignant closing of the Trust occurred on the 28th March 2026 at the Kūāotunu Hall. Past and present trustees, donors, supporters and volunteers attended. Alison Henry, chair for the past 15 years, spoke eloquently and passionately of the scale of the project, the camaraderie and enduring legacy of the past quarter century of hard mahi.

Trustee and organiser of the celebration, Jill Kaeppli, read words from original Trustee Vivienne McLean (now retired with husband Percy to Whanganui) resulting in both laughs and more than a few moist eyes.

This was also current trust chair Alison Henry's farewell to the Coromandel as she and her husband Alan have now departed for a new chapter in Hamilton.

A special thanks goes to all businesses who have sponsored over the years and to every individual who has donated money, trees or time to this project. Toitū te kauri.

Words by
Deli Connell



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HOW YOUNG VOICES CAN SHAPE AOTEAROA

Are you aged 18+? Have you ever had any interest in politics? Are you registered to vote??

With our national election coming up this November, NOW is the time to start thinking about these things.

Who do YOU want as our next Prime minister? Chris or Chris? What about Winston? Seymour? Chloe? Which political party do your personal views align with? Labour, National, Greens, Te Pāti Māori, ACT, NZ First? Each party has such differing approaches on how to run the country and we have a direct say on who will have that power.

Statistically, young New Zealanders have very little to do with politics. Most young people think, 'Politics is boring' or 'It doesn't make any difference to me' or 'I don't even know what they do'.

It is time that the younger generation started to realise that the politicians who have been voted into power actually DO have an impact on their day-to-day lives. The decisions they make can really impact YOU. And your future.

Remember, politicians are voted in by the people to serve the people. They are not there to serve their own interests or the interests of their wealthy mates. They are there to serve the needs of the everyday public, you and me, regardless of one's status, wealth, power or influence.

We should be paying attention to and scrutinising the decisions they are making on our behalf. THEY decide what to spend OUR hard-earned taxpayer dollars on. Those same taxpayer dollars pay their salaries. You know that 20-30% that comes off your pay each week? The government of the day takes those taxpayer funds and spends it on running the country. Do you agree with the way they run the country?

The older generation like to have their say on who is running the country and therefore turn out in large numbers to cast their votes. They seem to have more interest in who is running things. But surely the future government has more of an impact on the younger generation, as they make their way in this world, working towards their careers, starting families, renting/buying houses and growing into mature citizens. The impacts on them are very real.

As New Zealanders, it is our democratic right to vote and we really need to make use of that right. We are able to have our say on who the politicians are that will make decisions that have real impacts on our future. There are several countries where voting is either non-existent or highly restricted to certain demographics. People protest and even die, fighting for their right to vote. We are not one of these countries. We have the right and we should use that right. So get yourself registered and JUST VOTE!



Words by
Gabriel Johnston

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Abundance & Perspective

MATARIKI ENCOURAGES US TO REFLECT ON OUR CHOICES AND THE FUTURE THOSE CHOICES CREATE.

Recently, I found myself looking at waste through a very different lens.

Over King's Birthday weekend, Wāhi Tukurua took part in the Community Garage Sale, and I volunteered at the clothing stall. Over a few hours, I watched dozens of garments find new homes. Many were in excellent condition. Some looked barely worn. A few still had their original tags attached.

It was heartening.

But what stayed with me afterwards wasn't what we sold. It was what remained.

Back at the Mercury Bay Resource Recovery Centre, more than 70 boxes of clothing sit stored in the rafters, all clean, wearable, and waiting for a second chance. Speak to almost any local op shop and you'll hear a similar story.

The challenge isn't finding clothing.

The challenge is finding enough people to wear it.

Standing amongst those boxes, I found myself reflecting on a question that sits at the heart of Matariki: **What is enough?**

How many clothes do we really need? How many purchases are made because something is on sale, because fashion has changed, or simply because buying something new feels good in the moment?

Matariki encourages us to reflect on our choices and the future those choices create. Perhaps one of the most powerful questions we can ask ourselves is not, "What should I throw away?" but rather, "Do I need to buy it at all?"

Because when we learn to see abundance where we once saw scarcity, we don't just change our behaviour. We change our perspective.



Words by
Tracey Bell



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You've tried to cancel the kupu
in the classroom
But the spirit of kōrero remains
in the hearts and mouths of the tamariki
You may think you know better
which kupu are more important
And your judgement of their ability
is children cannot embrace both
This says more about you than them
Is the english
with a small e
of preferred importance
and relevancy
in their world?
NO!
We will speak Māori
you'll never cancel it out
The spirit of kōrero Māori endures
from the strap and ruler for children back in the day
to the media beat ups,
government cancellations
legislative reversals
and keyboard warriors of our day
You'll never suppress them
as the colonisers, church and other agents have tried to do
blankets and muskets
blankets and muskets
drink, drugs, gambling, unemployment
shit wages, damp housing, pathetic dole rates
police brutality, racial profiling
blatant segregation and subtle
and not so subtle sideways shifts
Māori have endured
defied annihilation
raged against suppression
survived marginalisation
grieved confiscations
put up with segregation
a lack of basic rights and respect
But you will not control them anymore
With legislation that refuses to allow their kōrero
It lives within hearts and breathes
into the world
every time breath is released and shared
So good luck with cancelling their kupu
Māori will endure
And the Reo will out
despite you

by WORDsmith

Sir Barren Church

I remember the excitement felt on Sundays
After spending six days alone.
My nights were always the hardest
The floorboards of mine would moan.
In darkness I'd count stars above me
Asking God how many there were
A silent response was my answer
I'm guessing he'd lost count for sure.
The odd mouse would entertain me
Scratching inside my walls felt good
The sensation was like a tickle
Considering my bones were made of wood.
A hundred years or so I've stood here
Weddings, baptisms, farewelling the old
Many memories I have heard and happy stories forever told.
The land around me now grows barren
Doors stay locked my windows closed.
I pray to God for restoration
So that my purpose will not foreclose.

by Paul Cate



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10 MINUTES WALK FROM

THE WHITIANGA FERRY



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THE LANGUAGE OF CLAY AND FEMININE FORM

Charlene Scott: Listening to the Land Through Art

My work is a form of silent activism. It is a plea for greater reverence for our Great Mother, Papatūānuku. I believe that many of the challenges we face today stem from our loss of connection with the natural world around us – our lack of gratitude, reverence, awe, and respect for the whenua that sustains us.

Art has been my calling for as long as I can remember. As a teenager, I was told by well-meaning parents that it was not a valid career path. For many years, I drifted in and out of various careers before finally returning to art about ten years ago.

At the time, I was living in Queenstown. Eight years ago, I moved to the Coromandel, drawn by the beaches, proximity to whānau, and its vibrant arts community. My creative practice evolved from painting to pottery when I began questioning the environmental impact of my painting materials. While searching for more natural artistic mediums, I attended a workshop with local potter Kay Ogilvie and realised I had found the answer I had been looking for. You cannot get much more natural than working with the earth itself.

I love the feel of clay in my hands and the innate life it seems to possess, sometimes evolving into something quite different from what I originally intended. Over time, my work has shifted from fairly realistic forms to more symbolic expressions. I have always been enamoured with the female form, which remains the foundation of much of my art. This naturally aligns with my reverence for Papatūānuku and the life she sustains.

My work is often inspired by myth, folklore, goddesses, archetypes, and divine feminine symbolism. A strong fertility theme also runs through much of my work, reflecting not only my own journey into motherhood but also the life-giving power of women and of Papatūānuku herself. Often, I create a

piece and only much later – sometimes years afterwards – come to understand its deeper meaning and symbolism.

Just over three years ago, my greatest creation was born: my daughter. My art took a temporary back seat while I soaked up every precious moment I could. In recent months, we have both become a little more independent, and I have been able to spend more time in the studio again, bringing fresh perspectives and experiences into my creative practice.

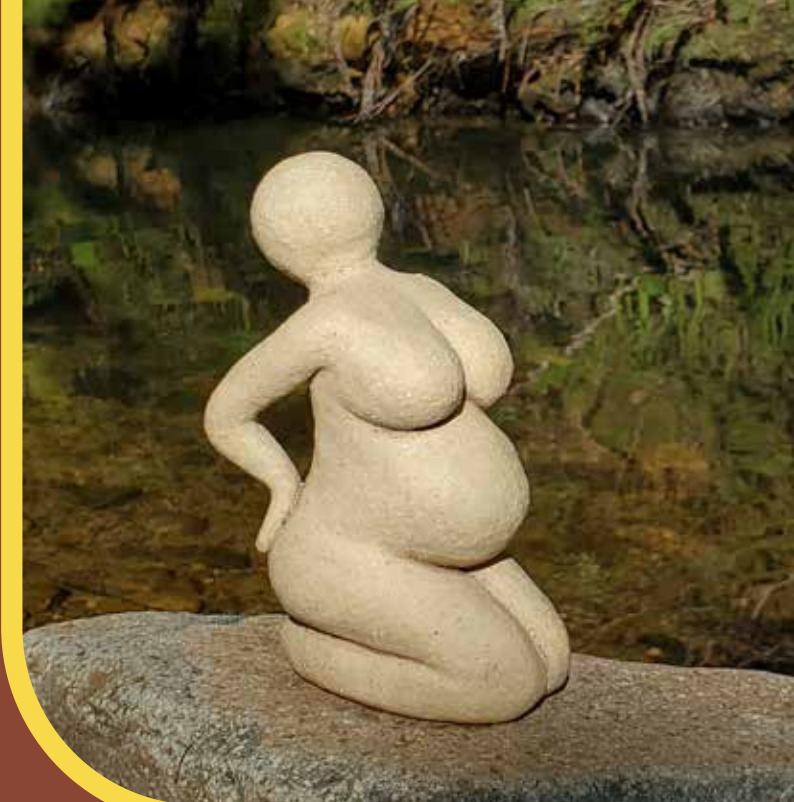
In recent years, I have also felt a strong pull to reconnect with my roots. This has involved learning not only the stories of the whenua of Aotearoa, where I was born and call home, but also exploring the histories and traditions of my ancestors in the United Kingdom. These explorations are increasingly influencing both my current work and the direction of future projects.

My current work explores the intersection of the feminine and the animal world, generally manifesting as bird and serpent hybrids. These creatures carry rich layers of meaning across many cultures and myths.

I am deeply grateful to all those who support my work. Following my calling as an artist is not an easy path, and I would not be able to continue if it were not for you.

If you would like to experience my work, I will be participating in this year's 20th Anniversary Coromandel Open Studios Arts Tour. Please come and have a chat. Alternatively, you can contact me and view more of my work through my website: www.divineearth.co.nz

 Words by
Charlene Scott



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PROUD TO BE LOCAL

Clinton Edward

Clinton Edward is one of CFM's newer local artists. We decided to find out some more about him.

You are currently working at Thames Hospital. What was your connection with the Coromandel before that?

I succumbed to the siren song of my now wife Aroha, who has been living here in Thames for a good portion of her life. We met when I played a gig with my brother at the Rocker Box in Thames. No particular connection to the Coromandel prior to that, other than my uncle Steve living up the coast.

Your family moved to Japan when you were younger and were involved in a television show where you performed live covers of pop songs viewers requested ...

Yes, we moved to Kyoto in 1990. It was so rare at the time for 'gaijin' (outside people) to move to the area that we were often stopped in the street for photos and made the local newspaper as the first non-Japanese students to attend the local elementary school since its founding. My sister and I landed an audition for a one-off performance on a weekly tv show called Seishun no Pops (The Pops of Our Youth). The producers liked us so much that they cancelled the appearance of the group that was to follow us and we appeared weekly on the show for the next five years.

So, are all your family musically talented?

Dad played in numerous bands and taught us to sing from a young age. We went from singing for our supper to performing at talent shows and other public events. It just kind of became 'our thing'.

Are you hoping to make music a full-time thing?

I'm taking one step at a time and certainly feel no pressure to succeed. Writing and performing my own music is the most honest expression I know. It is cathartic for me and I hope it can be appreciated by others as well.

Why start now?

Over the years, I have been a part of various musical groups and projects but have always wanted to do my own thing. I can be a bit of a control freak creatively, so this is my chance to get things as close as possible to how I hear them in my head. I have a stockpile of 200+ original songs, so you'll be seeing more of me.

Can we expect to see you performing around the region?

I have been performing at a few pubs and the odd night market. I plan on increasing my activity now that I have recorded and released some music and finally have something to promote.

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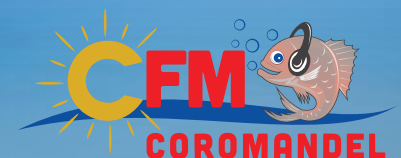
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SCAN TO HEAR CLINTON'S MUSIC



Walking the Line Between Habit & Addiction

Ross' Ramblings

Addiction is a word used for a wide range of experiences, both positive and negative and some where it is not clear which it is. "I'm addicted to surfing," I remember telling my mother, when she asked why I had skipped university lectures and spent the day at the beach. I have to ask myself, "Was that a good addiction that resulted in a positive contribution to myself and the world, or was it a selfish fetish that put a financial strain on my parents who were paying for the lectures I wasn't attending?"

Of course, surfing is a very healthy activity and saves the health department a lot of money due to the fact that surfers because of the physical nature of their sport are generally less likely to require medical attention than the average person. But then of course there are the less quantifiable effects of the well-known surfing lifestyle, often involving the age-old cliché of 'sex, drugs and rock 'n roll', not to mention the injuries caused by head butting a coral reef, being sliced open by a surfboard fin, or becoming the victim of a shark attack. On balance, I feel that this addiction which still has me hooked at the age of 75, tilts the scales on the positive side considering the fact that I am still alive and still have enough marbles to write this article. The sex, drugs and rock 'n roll seem to have failed to tip me over the edge into a serious addiction abyss. I would imagine that similar logic could be applied to many other physical activities and sports.

Unfortunately, addiction has a predominantly negative side. I had a friend who from his teenage years was addicted to sex. While he was young and unattached, this didn't manifest as a big problem and many of his peers envied his charming demeanour. However, when serious commitments like marriage and children barge their way into such an addiction, things can begin to turn to custard. He ended up with four children with his wife and an unknown number with other women, one of whom was his wife's best friend.

Another addiction, which I considered to be negative at the time it occurred, was a close family member's addiction to prescription drugs combined with alcohol. In the 1960s and 70s, women who were unhappy or depressed were often prescribed uppers or downers (mother's little helpers) like AP codeine, valium, lithium and barbiturates. When combined with alcohol, the buzz was undoubtedly euphoric for a time, but the comedown was a bummer and the long-term effects sucked even more. This family member's dependence on these legally prescribed so-called remedies eventually led to her going to the long-established Hanmer Springs drug and alcohol rehabilitation centre. She stayed there for several months and being in her sixties became a well-respected mentor to many of the younger addicts that were fortunate enough to have been sent there. When she returned home, a relieved husband booked plane tickets to Hawaii where he and his spouse enjoyed activities like snorkelling and bodyboarding under the Hawaiian sun, pursuits that had seemed impossible just a few months before.

Unfortunately, after a year of sobriety with the support of the wonderful organisation AA, she slipped back into her old ways with the inevitable negative consequences. When she finally reached the stage of needing more care than her spouse could provide, she entered a continuing care facility, which was partly a blessing as it eliminated the possibility of her self-medicating with alcohol and prescription drugs.

In my early 20s, the surfing lifestyle continued minus the drugs. I didn't decide to stop. It just happened one day by itself, and continued for a number of years. During part of this time, I was fortunate enough to be employed by the St Vincent de Paul homeless men's hostel in Sydney as an accommodation coordinator. My job was to decide which drug or alcohol dependent men would benefit from the opportunity to live in sponsored halfway houses in Sydney's western suburbs. This experience gave me a valuable insight into substance addiction, where it may lead, and the possibility of recovery.

Now, 40 years later I often think about those experiences in light of my own relationship with mind altering substances, these days mainly red wine. Sometimes I ask myself whether I have a minor addiction to it. I find myself drinking a glass or two several nights a week. I tell myself that I will only drink at the weekend, but then there's a party or a special dinner and ... well, you know the story. I can easily not drink for a month when my partner and I decide to do a cleansing fast, and I know I could stop tomorrow if I chose to. However, there is still that silent voice in my head that says, "Hey bro', a glass of red would be good before dinner, wouldn't it." I often silently answer, "Yes, it would", and in fact while writing this I am slowly sipping a glass of the fruit of the vine. If I was more vigilant, I would take no notice of that silent tempting voice. I would take note of it and let it pass without acting on it. But unfortunately, we humans tend to let our intrusive random thoughts determine our actions.

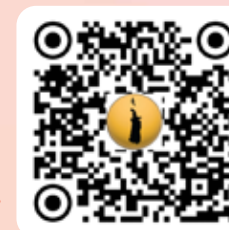
I am glad that red wine does make me a happy minor-addict. It seems more like a psychological mini-addiction than a physical one and I never feel a tendency towards violence or aggression, as is generally also the case for those who smoke weed. In contrast I find the current situation regarding methamphetamine addiction somewhat worrying. I have never and would never try it but I have been the victim of the aggression that comes with its use. It seems that it is both physically and mentally addictive and can have a profoundly negative effect on families and society as a whole. It makes an 'addiction' to surfing and red wine seem quite mild.

But then of course there is the addiction to devices which my generation never encountered. It affects mostly the younger generation, many of whom become lost in the cyber world of the various platforms that influence their reality. When I see the despair that is generated by a lack of access to this new drug, I feel that red wine will be an easy one to give up.

Words by
Ross Liggins

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My Indian Roots

A Memorable Trip and Celebration!

Kia Ora / Namaste

My name is Niharika Giri – most people know me as Nira. My family immigrated here in 1973 when my younger sister and I were under two years of age. We lived on a 1300-acre family farm in Whenuakite.

Over the decades of living on the Coromandel Peninsula, we have returned to India on numerous occasions (when I was 5 years old, 15 yrs, 20s, 30s, 40s and 50s) to visit whānau (family) and see various artistic and historical places.

My work dried up unexpectedly, and my cousin mentioned a celebration for my Dhadhi Ma's 100th birthday on the 18th April 2025. I felt a call to return to the birthplace of my ancestors.

Monett at You Travel booked me seats via Malaysia on Malaysian Airlines; I landed in Delhi on the 9th of April 2025.



First stop: Delhi

My first stop in Delhi was shopping at Delhi Hart to buy saris to take as gifts. In the past, it would take two days by steam train heading east across vast landscapes. Today, with a new airport, the domestic flight from Delhi to Gorakhpur in Uttar Pradesh (UP) took one hour twenty minutes. I travelled by car for two hours with my young cousins, back to my father's birthplace: Gopalganj, Bihar.



A Cultural Pause

An Indian protocol: when my uncle died last year, the grieving family stopped any celebrations or festivals (Holi, Diwali) for a year. This meant that Dhadhi Ma (Dad's Mum)'s 100th birthday celebration was postponed until 2025.

On arrival, I could not wait to hug the matriarch of our family. Namaste means 'I see the higher being in you' – by placing your hands together and a slight nod downward. In Indian culture, you touch your elders' feet as a sign of respect. (This also helps stop spreading germs!) The elder always replies with: "Kus Roe", which means STAY HAPPY!



Our Family Tree

Dhadha (Deo Vansh Giri) and Dhadhi Ma (Sona Giri) had 12 children – eight boys and four girls, my father being the eldest child. When observing the family tree, from those 12 children came: 39 grandchildren, 39 great-grandchildren, 3 great-great-grandchildren That's 95 humans, not including the partners.



The Power of Food

Dhadhi Ma's healthy, long life is attributed to a plant-based diet grown organically, with plenty of spices (garlic, onions, ginger, turmeric, etc). The live foods contribute to her longevity – also, being surrounded by family as you age keeps you feeling younger.

The food at home was delicious – with fish, chicken, and goat eaten on special occasions only (cows are sacred and provide milk). Fresh fruit and vegetables go direct from growers to market stalls and into your kitchen, where cooks prepare three meals a day – eaten within 90 minutes for optimal nutritional value. Being a foodie, I felt loved, cherished and looked after.



Celebrating 100 Years

Over two days, decorations went up at the family cricket academy grounds located across the road from the house. Food prep, cooks, and waiters arrived on the day. The house was decorated, and a large couch was brought in for Dhadhi Ma to sit and greet her guests. There were friends, family, dignitaries, and village folk – we fed between 5,000 - 10,000 people. The kids loved the ice creams. The 100th birthday celebration was a great success, with family and friends getting together, making her night memorable.

COMING HOME!

Te Korowai Services Reunite at Richmond Street

After five and a half years at Thames Hospital, Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki have relocated their Whānau Health Centre services back to their main site at 210 Richmond St.

It was December 2020 and our country's borders were closed. Summer was almost here and the annual seasonal influx of domestic tourists to Hauraki was predicted to be larger than ever.

Te Korowai Hauora o Hauraki answered the call from Waikato DHB to provide support to Thames Hospital emergency department over the busy summer period, setting up a temporary summer clinic in Thames Clinical Centre, Mary Street.

Four weeks later, the number of patients needing treatment at ED had halved as our Whānau Health Centre stepped in to provide care to those identified as non-urgent – so effective that the service was extended for the rest of the summer, and has remained at the site ever since.

This collaboration with other health services – to bring a coordinated response to the unique challenges that the global pandemic posed in our area – was a fantastic example of our core value of **whanaungatanga**: what rural communities can do when we work together to deliver services, not only to our enrolled whānau, but to our visitors too.

Fast forward five years and we are facing new challenges that require a different approach, drawing on another of our core values – **kotahitanga** (unity). As we are not immune to nationwide health workforce shortages, the time has come to return our services to home base where the collective strength of our organisation can support our Whānau Health Centre to provide the **manaakitanga** (respect, generosity and care for others) that is at the heart of what we do.



Kaimahi (staff) worked hard right up to the last minute to get the space ready for re-opening on Monday 29th June 2026.



Kaimahi prepare to gather in karakia to welcome Te Kauaeranga Whānau Health Centre back to 210 Richmond Street.



Tammy Dehar - Manukura Hauora (CEO), Janine Thompson - Poukura Hauora (Manager Clinical Services), and Anna Mikaere - Poukura Tāngata (Manager HR) at the morning karakia.



We closed off with a shared kai to acknowledge everybody for their hard work, and in celebration of being back together at our main campus.



Te Kauaeranga Whānau Health Centre has relocated back to 210 Richmond Street, Thames.



Te Kauaeranga (Thames) Whānau Health Centre is now located at:
210 Richmond Street, Thames

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Aotearoa's Medicinal Plants as Fairies

The Healing Stories Growing in Our Backyards

How did this series come about?

A few months ago, I was asked to paint a mural at Coromandel Area School, collaborating with a class to create a shared vision of a magical forest. The class I worked with wanted fairies (or patupaiarehe) in it, alongside native flora and fauna. So, I thought it would be great to create some fairies connected to our native plants and mushrooms.

I created a number of small paintings as concepts for the mural below, one of which was a Kawakawa fairy and she sparked the series.

As a child, I adored Shirley Barber's fairy illustrations, *The Flower Fairies* by Cicely Mary Barker, and the fantasy works of Brian Froud. I hoped my mural would inspire students as much as these artists inspired me.

I decided to centre my fairy series not just around native flora, but on medicinal plants like Kawakawa. I love learning about natural medicine and what I can forage in my own backyard. So many of us are raised in synthetic environments, oblivious to what is growing around us. I didn't really know much about our native medicinal plants, so I began to do some research. An online course on the foundations of rongoā Māori (Māori medicine) popped up, and I found it really helpful. It was facilitated by Awhi Rongoā and Tarikura from Aio the Podcast. The course delved into the tikanga of working with the plants and how to identify and safely create rongoā rākau. I began identifying some of these rākau (plants) on my bush walks and found many of them growing close to home. I harvested leaves to use as references and later brewed them into teas!



I feel that conveying these plants as beings/fairies helps remind us of their sentience, so they are not just looked at as a resource. They need to be treated with respect, and having an energetic connection with trees and plants is so good for us. Rongoā Māori offers us a lens of reciprocal, respectful, and conscious engagement with plants. It's sad to realise how disconnected so many of us have been from this knowledge; after colonisation, rongoā Māori was actively suppressed and systematically undermined.

I've loved creating something that supports the resurgence of this knowledge. So far I have painted Kawakawa, Mānuka, Tātaramoa, Kohekohe, Harakeke, Koromiko, Kūmarahou and Kopakopa

(Plantain). I hope to keep developing this series and to exhibit the works in a way that connects viewers with these plants and rongoā Māori.

I am selling prints and a postcard-sized set of the eight fairies, with a write-up about their properties and identifying features on the back. I am currently on the hunt for the perfect frames for my eight originals so far, and I hope to exhibit them next year!

Visit my website www.EmmaEvangeline.shop for more information.

 Words by
Emma Evangeline

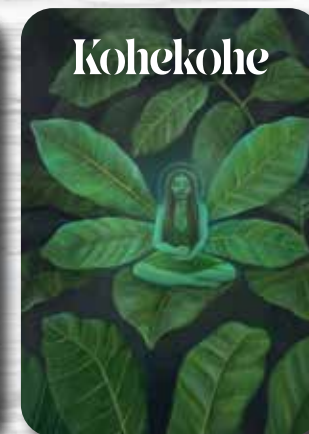
I used an image of my friend as a reference and made a rough sketch of the composition before blocking in the painting.



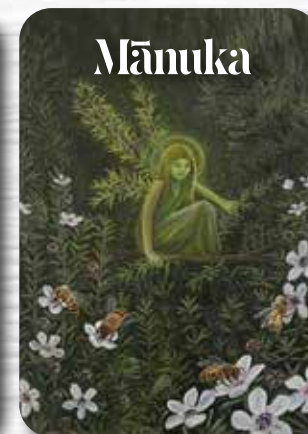
The plants I chose to focus on



Kawakawa
Has strong anaesthetic, anti-inflammatory and antimicrobial properties. Supportive for digestion, improving circulation and nourishing for the skin.



Kohekohe
Supports menstrual health, helps relieve cramps, eases symptoms of endometriosis and menopause, balances hormones, regulates menstrual cycles, aids in postpartum healing and more.



Mānuka
Helpful for respiratory, digestive and oral issues, also a great immunity booster. Has anti-inflammatory, antioxidant and antimicrobial properties.



Kūmarahou
Used to treat coughs, colds, respiratory issues, bronchitis, asthma and more.



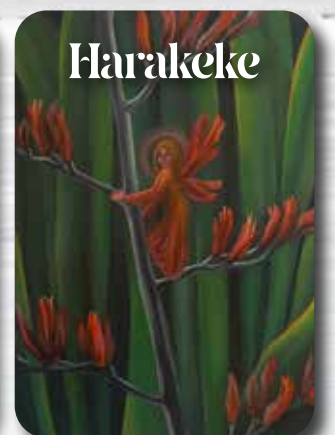
Kopakopa
Leaves are edible, rich in vitamin K, calcium and Vitamin A. Also supports the immune system and is beneficial for respiratory and digestive health.



Koromiko
Helps with stomach, gut and digestive issues. Can also be used externally for various skin issues.



Tātaramoa
Calms the nervous system, acts as a natural sedative. Also supports the respiratory system and can be used to reduce fevers.



Harakeke
The gel inside leaves can be used to treat wounds and burns and the leaves themselves were used as bandages.

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Shop Local: KEEPING COROMANDEL DOLLARS IN COROMANDEL

The Easiest Money You'll Ever Save

Last issue we explained open banking. We asked Coromandel developer David Crompton to show what he is building on top of it.

Last issue Coromind explained open banking, the shift that lets New Zealanders move money straight from bank to bank for a fraction of what cards cost. I want to show you what we have built on top of it, here in the Coromandel, and it launches this July.

For years I have watched local cafes, tradies and shopkeepers pay up to 2 per cent of every transaction to overseas card networks like Visa and Mastercard, and another slice to Google to be found online. Around 210,000 small businesses in this country have almost no online presence. A lot of them still take cash, or read their bank number out over the counter, because an EFTPOS terminal means a monthly rental and a cut of every sale. I thought there should be a simpler way.

So, we built one. Shop Local is a free app that lets someone pay you straight from their bank account. And you do not have to be a business. A sports club collecting subs, a school fundraiser, a market stall, the Saturday sausage sizzle: anyone who needs to gather money can use it.

Here is how it works. Set-up is a one-off: download the app, create an account on your phone, and register your bank account number. That is it. No terminal, no contract, no hardware to rent. Whoever is paying you approves a transfer in their own banking app, the way they would confirm any payment. There is nothing for them to download, it works with any New Zealand bank account, and the money lands in your account in seconds, not the day or two a card takes.

The savings are the point. Instead of paying a card network 1.5 to 2 per cent on every sale, you pay a small flat fee. A sole trader turning over \$4,000 a month might hand over around \$140 once you add up EFTPOS rental and card fees; take away the rental and the percentage cut, and that bill drops sharply. And because the fee is flat rather than a percentage, the bigger the payment the more you save: a tradie's \$600 invoice that loses around \$12 to a card costs a fraction of that here.

And it is not only about fees. For a sports club or a school fundraiser, the app replaces the cash tin and the bank number scrawled on a sign: no float to count, no chasing a forgotten transfer. They approve, the money arrives, and you can see who has paid.

If you are a business, signing up does something else, too: a free listing in the Shop Local directory, with photos, hours, contact details and a map. People can finally find the plumber in Whitianga or the cafe in Thames they could not before. Yellow Pages and Finda used to do that job; both are gone or turned into ad platforms. We are putting it back, for free.

The Coromandel is our proving ground. We have already added over a thousand Thames-Coromandel businesses from public records, and our first local businesses will be taking real payments through the app from launch. If you run a business between Waihi and Colville, you are probably already in there.

The bigger picture matters more than the technology. New Zealand quietly loses tens of millions of dollars a year to overseas payment networks and advertising platforms. Open banking, paired with tools built here, plugs the leak, and the savings stay local: in wages, in stock, in better prices for the rest of us.

The app lands in the App Store and Google Play in July, free to download and free to use. Join the waiting list at www.shoplocal.nz today and we will tell you the moment it goes live. Whether you run a business, a club, or a one-off fundraiser in the Coromandel, it might be the easiest money you ever saved. Come and build it with us.

 Words by
David Crompton

THE COURAGE TO CREATE

Why Mistakes Matter

She sits on the deck as the light softens over the hills, the distant sound of waves rolling in beyond the pōhutukawa. The page in front of her is blank. She's been meaning to start for weeks – maybe sketching, maybe writing – but now that she finally has the time, she hesitates. The pencil hovers, then drops back onto the table. It's easier to put the jug on and leave it for another day.

It's a familiar moment. Not because we lack ideas – but because we haven't yet given ourselves permission.

Creativity is often described as expansive and expressive. It allows us to explore possibilities, make connections, and see the world differently. But despite all of that potential, creativity rarely begins in ideal conditions. It doesn't require a studio or expensive materials. It starts with something much simpler – and much harder. Psychological permission.

For many of us, the barrier isn't a lack of space or resources. It's the quiet belief that we're 'not creative', or that creativity belongs to other people – artists, makers, those who know more or are naturally talented.

Of course, physical space is a factor. Warmth, natural light, and a cleared surface can help the creative juices flow. But these physicalities are secondary. Without a sense of internal freedom, even the most carefully prepared space won't lead to meaningful creativity. What matters most is starting – with whatever is available.

This is often where things can begin to unravel: not at the beginning, but soon after.

You gather a few ideas, save some inspiration, maybe watch a tutorial or two. You give it a go. But what comes out isn't quite what you imagined. It feels awkward, unfinished, not quite right. After a few attempts, the project is quietly set aside.

In a world of polished feeds and rapid perfection, it's easy to assume that creativity should look (and feel) good from the beginning. We're used to seeing the finished product, not the hours invested in the rejected ideas and failed processes. So, when our own efforts don't measure up, we withdraw.

As educator Ken Robinson observed, "If you're not prepared to

be wrong, you'll never come up with anything original." Creativity isn't about getting it right the first time. It is about getting it wrong, often repeatedly, and learning from those mistakes.

Moving from hesitation to action.

As producer Rick Rubin puts it, "There is no wrong way. Only your way."

It's tempting to look outward, but the shift is mostly internal. It's there in small, deliberate choices: giving yourself permission to begin, making time (even in short bursts), gathering and refreshing inspiration, noticing patterns, and allowing space to play.

Developing creativity isn't about producing something satisfactory. It's about learning to notice. Put simply and beautifully, the late David Hockney said that, "Art is about learning to see things differently, to discover new possibilities in the world around us". This isn't something you can force. And one of the biggest pitfalls is trying to think like an 'artist'. Let that go. Think like you. Notice what you love and then reflect on it.

Keep an informal collection of inspiration – anything that captures your attention. It might be the shifting colours of the sea at Cathedral Cove or the texture in a magazine photo. Over time, these fragments begin to connect in unexpected ways, showing stories, waiting to be observed.

... And then there are the mistakes and frustration.

Creativity can be deeply challenging. It requires us to trust the process and sit with discomfort when the inevitable errors occur. We have to dig in, resist the urge to abandon something just because it isn't going 'to plan'. That builds resilience and patience.

Next, a shift in our thinking is required. It's time to trial an alternative method or material. Seek an alternative solution. Mistakes are a signpost that we are, in fact, making progress. They indicate that we need to keep going, not to stop. Because value isn't only in what you produce. It's in what the process builds. Trust the process.

So, I encourage you to shift your thinking – reimagine yourself not as someone who 'is' or 'isn't' creative, but as someone who is willing to begin.

Words by
Hannah Beasley

Hannah Beasley is a researcher, educator, writer, and community practitioner exploring creativity, human potential, and the environments that help people thrive.



WHICH WAY SHOULD TCDC GO? Have Your Say

SIMPLIFYING LOCAL GOVERNMENT

Now is the chance to have your say on three options
Thames-Coromandel District Council has shortlisted
for potential local government amalgamation.

Why is this happening?

The Government has said that they want councils to work together to decide new and larger structures for local government services and delivery. The new councils will deliver the functions and services of city/district and regional councils combined.

They said any proposal needs to cover the following criteria:

1. must simplify local government
2. must support the new planning system
3. must demonstrate economies of scale
4. must maintains local voice
5. must be deliverable

What you have told us so far

Through our initial community survey, you told us rates control and affordability were your main concerns for local government reforms. Also important were local representation, real simplification and partnering with councils of similar size and character.

The options

We identified three options to seek your views before we make a decision on which way to go.

Each option has potential opportunities and challenges. You can read more on these by reviewing our *Which Way Should TCDC Go?* booklet (see link below).

OPTION 1 Greater Waikato

This option would bring together all councils currently in the Waikato Regional Council area.



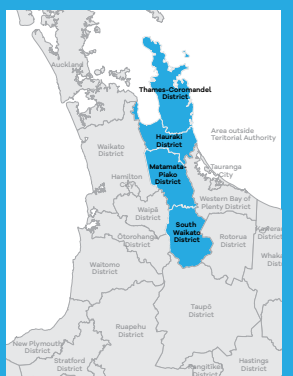
OPTION 2 North Bay of Plenty

This option brings together TCDC with Tauranga, Western Bay and part of Hauraki.



OPTION 3 East Waikato

This option brings together TCDC with Hauraki, Matamata-Piako and South Waikato.



HAVE YOUR SAY

Time is short. Our proposal needs to be with the Government by 9 August.

We, as your elected Council, very much want to hear your views by **Wednesday 15 July** before we decide which way to go.

Head to www.tcdc.govt.nz/localgovernmentreforms to find out more and fill in our online feedback form.

Not online? Pick up our *Which Way Should TCDC Go?* information booklet at our Council service centres and district libraries as well as a feedback form. You can also call us on 07 868 0200 and one of our team will ensure your views are included.

Make sure your voice is heard.



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