

# Tauhara News



Kotahi tonu te Wairua o nga mea katoa ~ There is one Spirit that flows through all



## Welcome!

Hearty greetings from the Trustees and staff to all friends of the Centre both within Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad. Since our last issue, we have travelled from snow to drought with our lawns burnt to a crisp in December, then resurrected by the cleansing rain in January. For over two weeks, it felt like Taupo had entered the tropics, with beautiful, warm and humid mornings, followed by tempestuous thunder and lightning storms in the afternoons, with torrential downpours and heavenly pyrotechnic displays sending residents and holiday-makers alike scuttling for cover. We are thankful that in 2009 we installed uninterruptible power supply units for our telephone PABX and computers, as the power was frequently interrupted, surging and flickering back to life until the next deafening thunder clap. Tauhara's gardens have welcomed with gusto the combination of heat and rain, and are now bursting with produce, including delicious squash, mountains of zucchini and UFO-shaped scalopini, lettuces, tomatoes and this week the bountiful fruit trees of Rainbow Gardens have delivered a bumper crop of apples. The hazelnuts and feijoas which were planted in the winter of 2008 have matured very quickly, with nuts already appearing and the feijoas laden with young fruit. The season of "mists and mellow fruitfulness", usually associated with autumn, has come early, and our guests are the beneficiaries. We are in the middle of a 10-day yoga retreat, and much of the food on the tables is fresh, organic and no carbon miles are involved!

## A Fresh Look:

The programme of catching up on long-overdue maintenance begun by the Trustees in 2008 has continued apace, with the upgrade of our Sanctuary completed and marked in a special ceremony on January 9<sup>th</sup> during the 70<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration of Margaret Dance, who was the principal sponsor of the project. Our chalet, with stunning views down to Acacia Bay and across the Lake to the far distant Kaimanawa mountain range, has now been upgraded both inside and out. The last stage of the project, a total exterior repaint, including decks, was completed this week. It has been a challenging and extended project, as the chalet is such a popular choice for accommodation by our guests, especially those from abroad. We wish to acknowledge the excellent skills and perseverance of Kieron Baynham, who undertook both this project and the Sanctuary refurbishment.



**Margaret Dance**  
Photo: Ellie McMurtrie

## What's on at Tauhara?

[www.tauharacentre.org.nz](http://www.tauharacentre.org.nz)

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## Who's Who at Tauhara # 2 : Trustee Louise

In our last issue, we met Stan Vick, our chef. In this issue, we meet one of our two Trustees, Louise Belcher-Breuer of Auckland, who took up her current Tauhara role in 1995. Here is her story.

The fifth child in a family of seven children, Louise was brought up in Lower Hutt on the Western Hills (first Normandale and then Belmont). Her parents were very religious, and consequently she was brought up in a very strict and fundamentalist Christian environment, a serious challenge for a “fiery and outspoken child” (as Louise puts it) who did not conform to the norm. Perhaps this “grit in the oyster shell” was the very impetus that turned Louise into the independent thinker whom we know today. Leaving home at the age of 23, Louise moved to Auckland to study at university, followed by working as Human Development Manager for Fisher and Paykel for 15 years. It was in 1979 that she met her future husband, Dave Breuer, who moved to NZ in 1981. The young couple bought a rural property in 1984, married in 1985 and in 1987 their delightful daughter, Melodie, was born. [Many of us have experienced her wonderful singing at Tauhara.]



Louise spent the first four years of Melodie's life at home and during that time she studied and qualified, first as a counselor and then as a family therapist. She also began writing a parent column for *Healthy Options* and continued this for a couple of years. Louise developed a parenting/family programme called *Healthy Families*, the focus of this being to help families get a “vision for their lives” through art, music and education. She continues to deliver this programme even today through the Whanau Centre in Papakura, South Auckland, and loves this aspect of her life.

In 1992 Louise joined one of the Crown Research Institutes, Industrial Research Ltd (formerly known as the DSIR) as their General Manager of Human Resources, and was in that role for four years. It was during this time that she was able to heal her relationship with her original Hutt Valley family, because her job took her to Wellington every other week. “Gradually the thaw began”, Louise observes, “and now I am no longer persona non grata! Miracles do happen!”

It was also during this period of her life that Louise and Dave developed Life Fitness and personal development programmes, delivering them to the staff of corporate organisations. They subsequently brought out to New Zealand the world famous facilitator and teacher, Jean Houston, whose writings and workshops have deeply touched the lives of so many people in New Zealand. They also brought to these shores Dr Harville Hendricks and his Imago work, which is now well established in New Zealand. The Human Development Institute have kept this relationship training going, and it is now a very well known therapy, being well respected around the world.

Louise and Dave became involved with Tauhara around 1982, initially serving on the Tauhara Committee and maintaining their association over the years, until in 1995 Louise was invited by a long-serving member of the Tauhara Centre Trust Board, Margaret Ponga, to become a Trustee. Her vision for Tauhara is to ensure its longevity through careful stewardship, maintaining and enhancing the grounds and buildings, providing a space and place where children, young people, families, individuals and groups can find their passion and vision which will inspire and sustain them in their everyday lives.

Throughout these years, Louise has continued to be deeply committed to many different causes that seek to improve the warp and weft of society in Aotearoa New Zealand. Louise managed the Parent Programme work for the Peace Foundation for over 13 years, delivering programmes through trainers right across New Zealand. She joined a non-governmental organisation here in NZ, Great Potentials, as Papakura's Whanau Centre manager, where she continues in her role today, currently preparing for the opening of a second, new centre in Takanini. The degree of Louise's commitment to this valuable family and parenting work is reflected in her negotiating the horrendous traffic between the North Shore and Papakura on Auckland's motorways four days per week.

Louise is co-founder and trustee of Anew NZ Trust (an independent, non-partisan network of motivated and concerned New Zealanders seeking a sustainable future, sharing the vision that New Zealand can be a vibrant and sustainable country with one of the highest qualities of life in the world). She continues her life-long commitment to learning, currently being halfway through a postgraduate diploma in Social Service Supervision (PostGrad DipSSS) through Massey University.

How can we possibly sum Louise up? Let us use her own words: “I love New Zealand and the outdoors. I am passionate about families and children. I love being a mother. I am musical, love singing, practical jokes and impractical ones too! I love cooking for family and friends, gardening, I am an avid reader, I am fascinated by history and anthropology. You could say I love life!”

Tauhara is indeed fortunate to have on its Trust Board a Trustee with such a depth of life experience, wisdom and skills.



## Goodbye Sylvia – Go in Beauty, till we meet again dear friend.....

*By Catherine Grace*

On the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2010 , long-time friend of Tauhara Centre, Sylvia Durkin passed on from this life at Taupo hospital after a long illness.

When we reflect on Sylvia's life, this was no ordinary life: rather, hers was an interesting and varied life. Some of her great loves being teaching, singing, dancing, gardening and community theatre. At the core of her being was a deep sense of the importance of education of the young, social justice and equality. She held friendships dear to her heart. She went the extra mile to support community events, lending a helping hand to those less privileged than herself. Sylvia was a great champion of the underdog.

Sylvia discovered Tauhara in the mid eighties – she became a familiar and dear presence around the Centre – helping out in the office and reception at times, and also helping in the kitchen.



Her great love of singing and dancing connected us deeply and whenever there was a dance evening or dance event or an opportunity to sing - Sylvia was there.

She had a gift for beautifying and creating sacred space – and her flair was welcomed by Tauhara Reiki groups, Dance groups and Women's events.

Les Ray, Sylvia's partner for the past 15 years also had a love for singing. They met in the Tauhara kitchen at a Christmas Festival – both at different times – yet soon singing the same song! This was the beginning of many blessings in song for the Taupo community from Les and Sylvia. In local stage productions together, and at Catherine and Nasir gatherings when they would sing in beautiful harmony. Together they organised Tony Backhouse to come and offer a great evening of song at Tauhara which was very well attended.

Given her long struggle with ill health, it was amazing what she did manage to achieve and the number of lives that she touched. She was a woman of great humanity. She leaves this world a better place for being who she was. A tireless campaigner for peace on Earth.

The Peace Certificate awarded to Tauhara at the Great Lake Centre in the nineties was one of Sylvia's achievements. This Certificate hangs in the Tauhara Common Room.

There is so much about Sylvia's life to reflect upon. She was unique – she was one out of the box! We are glad that Sylvia lived. We are glad that we saw her face and felt the touch of her hand. We cherish the memory of her words and deeds – her sense of fun and her generous heart. ***Sylvia's joyous voice may be still, but our memories are forever.***

A celebration of Sylvia's life was held at Tauhara Centre – her spiritual home - on Wednesday 3<sup>rd</sup> February – where 90 people gathered to farewell her.



***'Death is not the extinguishing of the Light, rather, blowing out the lamp because dawn has arrived...'***

# Volunteers – we love'em !



As a charitable trust, Tauhara Centre places a high value on all the kind folk who come and share in the life of the Centre. Many of them come through work exchange programmes, such as WWOOF (Willing Workers On Organic Farms), HelpEx (help exchange) and Workaway. But we also find them in our own local Taupo community, and in this issue we would like to introduce to you two angels known as Gwen and Les Wraight, hailing from Kent in England.

This wonderful couple were brought up on the same farm, just outside Canterbury where they both went to school. They married and moved to a small village outside of Maidstone, where they became the parents of two sons who later grew up, moved to New Zealand, and were the reason why Gwen and Les now live in Taupo. Gwen was a curtain maker, Les a teacher of technology, and together they became involved with taking school groups to Europe

for skiing, canoeing, white-water rafting and caving. On "retirement", they joined the local newspaper group as part of their promotions team, and towed around an exhibition trailer to all the big festivals and events in Kent, including air-shows, concerts and carnivals, where they not only got in for free, but got paid for being there! As Les says, "It was almost the best job in the world!" Once their two sons got married to Kiwi girls and settled here, Gwen and Les would visit every two years or so, and started asking themselves: "Why not move here and save all that travelling?" They applied to NZ Immigration, were accepted and moved to Taupo in 2008.

How did they find Tauhara? "We were taken past the gates a couple of times by real estate agents when we were house hunting. When we had found our home we had time on our hands. We could not move into it as it was near Christmas and we discovered that the whole of New Zealand uses this time of the year as play-time. Our container was on the dock-side in Auckland not to be released for a few weeks. What to do? Golf clubs, bikes and badminton racquets not yet with us. Let's go and look at Tauhara. What a welcome, what a position, what nice people. So we volunteered. We go once a week for a day, we love working in the bush, keeping the walking tracks clear, removing dead trees, hopefully doing our bit to enhance what many others in the past had the vision to create. We get invited to BBQ's, concerts and social events. We meet people from all around the world. Why do we stay now that the container with the golf clubs and bikes has arrived? Try it and find out!"

Les and Gwen are amazing workers, with the vigour and fitness of folk a third of their age. Whatever is needed, they tackle it with wonderful, willing hearts and hands, and are a vital part of our local Tauhara community. If we could clone 'em, we'd do it in a hot second!

**Anybody out there want to give it a go? Always room for more!**

## ***Where do our volunteers come from?***

Our work exchange programme attracts people from all over the world. Take the last three and a half months, for example. A total of 68 have come to experience Tauhara, the most mature being 69, the youngest 18, the largest number (39) being in their 20s, the average being 28. Of these, 37 were women, and 31 men. The geographical spread was: Australia-1, Austria 2, Canada 8, Czech Republic-1, France-5, Germany-13, Hong Kong-1, Japan-1, Latvia-1, South Africa-1, South Korea-5, Spain-3, Sweden-3, Switzerland-2, United Kingdom-11 (including 2 Scots), and the USA-13. Every year is different, the significant change in 2009 being the high number of French, and more recently Spanish, who rarely came in the 80s and 90s. Germany and the USA continue to dominate, as they have for many a long year. At our typical morning circle, the only native-born Kiwi is Nasir! Our work exchange programme continues to enrich life at the Centre, filling it with music and song, many different languages, ideas, values, youthful enthusiasm and increasingly, wise older heads who have experienced life in the full. We are the United Nations at work, speaking different languages and coming from so many different cultures, yet each day we work and play together in harmony and with enjoyment. Could life possibly be better?!!





# From Tauhara's Kitchen!

## Tauhara's Special Chocolate Self-Saucing Pudding

Super chef Stan says "groups always beg for more so be prepared to make extra!"

### Ingredients:

100gm butter  
1 cup sugar  
2 Tbs cocoa powder  
1 cup white flour  
1/3 cup whole meal flour  
4 tsp baking powder  
1/4 tsp salt  
2/3 cup milk  
1/2 tsp vanilla essence

### Sauce Ingredients:

1 cup brown sugar  
1/2 cup raw sugar  
4 Tbs cocoa powder  
2 cups boiling water

### Directions:

1. Turn oven on to 180C bake.
2. Melt the butter and mix in the sugar and cocoa powder.
3. Add flour, baking powder and salt and mix until just combined.
4. Mix in milk and vanilla.
5. Put into an oiled dish so it comes no more than 1/3 up the side (because it boils and could mess up your oven) 20cm x25cm is good.
6. Put brown and raw sugar, and cocoa powder on top.
7. Just before it goes into the oven carefully pour the boiling water over a spoon onto the mixture.
8. Bake for 40 minutes at 180C.
9. Serve immediately with whipped cream.



## ChrissieFest at Tauhara Centre

### *What a great way to spend Christmas and New Year!*

From all over the world and New Zealand folks come and gather at Tauhara to celebrate and enjoy the holiday season in friendship, and good will. **Doing something different for Christmas!** People of all ages, some who have been before and some new - enjoying connection, reflection and relaxation in this great meeting place – **Tauhara Centre.**

For the past 27 years this popular cross-generational gathering has seen thousands of people come to experience Christmas and New Year together. The little kids from the eighties have grown up and some bring their own little children now. They come to experience workshops and enquiry, nurturing and healing, meditation, singing, dancing and plenty of fun and laughter, which together are the hall marks of Chrissiefest. It makes the heart swell to think of the depth of friendships forged, minds opened to new possibilities, young and old experiencing positive pursuits, as we join our hands and hearts again and again in the ever evolving circles at Chrissiefest!





# ChrissieFest photo gallery!



This newsletter is published four times a year in spring, summer, autumn and winter. It is available at no charge by email, and can be downloaded from our website. Editor: Nasir Grace.