

Motueka Valley Association Newsletter

April 2015

Community Profile

by Lesley

Charmwood Alpacas

Soft, warm, light, colourful and with a 'low prickle factor', Davina Clarke's woven lap rugs are a wonderful result of two of her passions; natural fibre and the tartans of Scotland.

Twelve years ago a heavily pregnant Davina moved from the Waikato with her husband, John and 1 son. They had bought the land 4 years earlier and during that time John had pendulumed down to plant trees and build the house. A very different lifestyle from the Morrinsville library where she worked awaited . . .

. . . 3 sons; Knightly, Kingsley and Rupert, forests of pine, eucalyptus, lucitanica, macracapa, Tasmanian blackwood, redwood and douglas fir (some stands are now ready for harvest), a small herd of (18) beef cattle, 22 alpaca (built up from the original 3), a new puppy and an expansive view down into the valley.

In those earlier years, alpaca were a new market in NZ and most stock was kept for breeding purposes. But Davina, being a stay-at-home Mum of 3 little boys, developed a strong interest in the beautiful long-stapled, black, brown, white alpaca fibre (there are actually 22 different colours). She pulled the spinning wheel out of storage and joined the monthly Motueka spinning group which she still attends. Then came the question; what to do with the yarn? because "I suck at knitting". But luckily she discovered weaving. She bought a floor loom and the mammoth effort to learn the intricacies of the loom itself and the preparation work began. The thread calculations and setting up preparations (especially for traditional tartans) are about 80% of the work involved. Davina can weave any tartan just from a picture. She loves working out the thread counts. "The actual weaving is easy."

Davina sells her weaving and other products like packets of dyed alpaca fleece and hanks of alpaca mix yarn at festivals or through word-of-mouth and commissions but her focus lies more with education and the promotion of natural fibre. She's keen to promote awareness of 'where your clothes come from'. And the advantages of natural compared to oil-based fibres which "melt and burn your skin when you get too close to fire". Natural fibres are also now tested for 'the prickle factor'

to help discard the memory of scratchy wool singlets.

So today their alpaca are kept for their fleece and friendship. Fleece with a staple 10cm+ in length (which is about 10 to 20% of the fleece produced) is sent away to be commercially spun which is then woven by Davina. The rest is cleaned, carded, combed, dyed (sometimes) and spun at home. There are 3 looms and 2 spinning wheels at home and even the boys have woven bags and scarves on the table loom and Rupert is learning to knit. Davina obviously loves the creativity, the planning, the meditative doing and the end product satisfaction of her natural fibre work.

"It's a craft that's coming back" claims Davina, unused looms and wheels hidden for years in attics are slowly coming out.

Some interesting things about alpaca;

- pregnancy lasts 11.5 months but if the weather is bad (wet & cold) the mother and babe can hold on at least another 6 months.
- are shorn on a tilting table once a year – carefully, as they have sensitive skin.
- spit especially when pregnant or establishing a hierarchy.
- are good with children, affectionate, and make good pets
- are social herd animals so never have just one lonely alpaca.



March MVA Meeting

About 30 locals attended the presentation on Rural Land Review by TDC Policy Manager, Steve Markham and TDC consultant, Sonya Leusink-Sladen.

There was some good discussion on the issues and challenges. In fact it was verbally reported back that the meeting was one of the more "considered and constructive" exchanges held during the recent round of public input.

Now we await the next stage of the process.

Next MVA Meeting
@ Ngatimoti Community Room
7.30pm Wed 15 April

Ngatimoti Playgroup

Come and Play!

Free local playgroup for 0-5 year olds. Shared morning tea. 10-12 Friday mornings (during school term only) at Ngatimoti School Hall. Please contact Canada for further details 021994442 or 035268287.





Ngatimoti School
Greenhill Rd Ngatimoti
RD1 Motueka

Tel: 03 526 8842 Fax: 03 526 8872
Email: office@ngatimoti.school.nz

TERM DATES 2015

Term 1 : Tues 4 Feb – Thurs 2 April
Term 2: 20 April – 3 July
Term 3: 20 July – 25 September
Term 4: 12 October – 16 December

Our Young Authors Club has had four successful sessions this term, with a fishing experience, a visit to the Motueka Museum, a trip to the Waiwhero Cemetery and an opportunity to interview Tim O'Connell, a reporter for The Guardian Newspaper. The writing from this group is being collated into a booklet for the school library.

Coming up next term . . .

- We will learn more about ANZAC day
- In preparation for our School Science Fair we will conduct class experiments and observations and also learn from the Greenhill Road stream in EnviroTime.
- A school wide focus will be learning about helping others, asking for help and knowing who to turn to for help.
- We have the Life Education Truck here for our health topic, which will be based on 'Food and Nutrition'
- We invite any of our creative neighbours to contact us and perhaps come in to share their work.

The swimming pool is now CLOSED If you have a pool key please return this to the office to receive your \$10 refundable deposit. Thanks for all your donations towards the upkeep of the pool this year.

BOT Building Update We have received a 2nd design proposal from our architect which is now on display in the school office. Please come and have a look and let us know what you think. The timeline for the classroom redevelopment predicts that the detailed design and documents will be put out to tender by June following approval of the developed design in the next couple of weeks.

TDC Stopping Demonstrations We had a very memorable road safety demo recently on Greenhill Road, thanks to TDC and Police Education Officer Gerry Tonkin. As well as the message to the students about their vulnerability near roads, there was a clear message to drivers too, which was "the faster you go, the bigger the mess". Here are some examples of Junior writing following the Greenhill Road demonstration where Ms Reid was a passenger in the car:

I learned how to drive safely on the road. Don't play on the road or you will get run over. By Nikau.

Today at Ngatimoti School we learned from a road demonstration that it is dangerous to play on the road. I saw Ms Reid. Ms Reid was scared. By Tyrese.

We saw Ms Reid in the car and she was frightened because the car smashed into a cardboard man.

By Chris

Little Johnny Boy was alright but Ms Reid was frightened. By Ruby.

Local Hall Bookings

Ngatimoti Memorial Hall - Paul Wielandt 5268047
Reserve Community Room - Sarah Bradshaw 5268026
Pokororo Hall - Brian or Giselle Storer 5268065
Woodstock Hall - Kerry Hall 5433884

ST. JAMES CHURCH NGATIMOTI

Family Church Service

Sunday 19th April at 10:30 am
Conducted by Rev. Joy Bradley



*All children welcome to Sunday School
Morning tea and social time to follow*

**ANZAC 100 year
Commemoration SERVICE.
Saturday 25th April at 10:30 am
Motueka District Brass in attendance**

MVA Committee Members

Fred Hickling	528 6794
Bruce Dyer	526 8288
Lesley Hadley	526 8047
Stuart Granger	021 277 2704
Bernd Reiter	526 8545
Irma Jager	5268080
Nick Hancox	5268869

Please have all ads and copy for the newsletter in by the end of the previous month

General Content: Your contributions, ideas and community notices are welcome

Community Concerns: You can contact the MVA on local matters info@mva.org.nz

Advertisements: All ads can be emailed to Stefan at ads@mva.org.nz \$2.00 per column centimetre.

Past advertisers please let Stefan know if you wish to continue your advertising by emailing at the above address or **Phone 526 8066**

Back copies of the newsletter are available for printout from the website mva.org.nz



Many thanks to the Ngatimoti School for printing our newsletter. PLEASE have copy for next newsletter in by end of month. Email Wendy.newsletter@mva.org.nz with editorial content. For advertising email Stefan (ads@mva.org.nz) or phone 526 8066

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PH Mike Graham 526 8180

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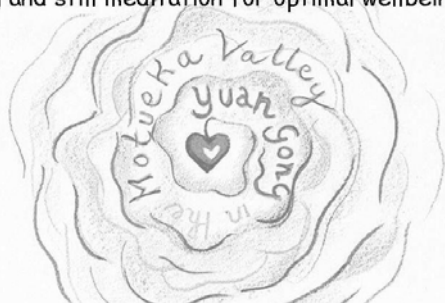
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Dates : 11, 18 and 25 of April from 10am to 1pm

Location : Ngatimoti community room (just past the school)

Contact : Ellen Urselmann 03 5268803/027 2425823

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