

# Motueka Valley Association Newsletter

the river, the land, the people

December 2020



## Crafting and Caring for the Earth

Joel Briffault and his wife Ashlin bought their property at Woodstock eighteen months ago. Since starting his business, *Crafted Earth*, four years ago, its focus has changed. Joel is no longer maintaining other people's gardens. He is now concentrating on his plant nursery and vegetable growing which are his passions.

Joel has been growing food since he was fifteen. With his training in amenity horticulture, and at times despite it, he has been constantly learning the best way to grow the most nutritious food:

*"So many practices we do are wrong, like leaving the soil bare. There's been a lack of understanding about soil biology and the way that it makes minerals available to our bodies -the soil microbes, the fungus and bacteria in soil that are freeing up the nutrients making them available to plants' networks."*

Joel belongs to the Urban Farmers Alliance. They connect on social media, sometimes daily, sometimes weekly through a WhatsApp - *For the Love of Bees*. Through that Joel is mentored by the nationwide network of farmers and also some soil scientists:

*"I'm just embarking on this journey. It's just the beginning for me. I've learnt over the last year that I actually know very little. When it comes to soil biology there's so much to learn...and I've got a really powerful group of people who I'm learning from...We're making a shift from farming the plant to farming the microorganisms in the soil...".* The Urban Farmers Alliance will be running a course next year in the South Island.

Another aspect of Joel's business, also his love, is growing perennial flowers:

*"It's a remanent of my amenity horticulture...It's impossible to pick a favourite flower but I like the many different echinacea species. I've been able to get some rare perennial flower seeds too ..."*

*"Here I don't have big tunnel houses and high tech setup so I can't force the flowers to bloom early. It all happens naturally and I'm still getting used to the climate this far up the Valley."*

Over this winter, with the help of family, Joel's nursery size has doubled. It's now 400 sq metres with hot houses and shade houses. The total productive area including



the area where he will grow vegetables is less than an acre.

*“I’ve had an area under black plastic for a few weeks. Now it’s planted with a summer green crop of 10 different families of plants to grow together. Each plant family releases different exudates into the soil which feed the microorganisms differently between each species.”*

Next autumn he will plant a winter green crop and repeat the process for another year to ready the area for planting:

*“ That’s four green manure crops in total to build the soil’s organic matter levels.”*

While this food growing area is prepared, Joel is growing vegetables on a leased area next to his property:

*“Hopefully, I’ll be selling at the gate by mid-summer. It will be small to begin with. Everything I thought I could do in a couple of years is going to take 10,”* Joel laughs.

All Joel’s produce is grown organically but he is not certified organic. Previously, it was a priority of his to become organically certified but now:

*“...Putting the nutritional value of the food before certification is more important to me than ticking some certifiers box.”*

Joel makes his own organic potting mix with a range of organic minerals and seaweed for the vegetable and herb seedlings. For his perennial flowers he gets a special potting mix made up in Richmond:

*“I’m working on a new composting system now not needing to turn it and making it more fungal dominated.”*

Restoring native vegetation is also important to Joel. He has leased six acres across the road to replant Woodstock forest:

*“It’s a 50 year plan and our contribution to restoring the ecosystem. It’s right on the Motueka river which plays such a vital role in the ecosystem here. I’d also like it to be a significant place in the future which others in the nearby region can enjoy.”*

Currently Joel has stalls at Nelson Market on Saturdays, Motueka Market on Sundays. Also he sells from *Tim’s Garden* in Nelson and *Stonescape* in Motueka.

Joel will sell from his gate at **2281 Motueka Highway, Woodstock**. He expects to have enough produce for 20 families in the beginning. So anyone interested in ordering a veggie box ring Joel on **021 028 47245**

Fiona Nelson

Reporter



## NGATIMOTI SCHOOL NEWS

Students will finish this year at school with a final assembly at Ngatimoti Memorial Hall on Wednesday 16 December.



### TERM DATES 2021

TERM 1: Tues 9 Feb - Friday 16 April  
TERM 2: Mon 3 May - Fri 9 July  
TERM 3: Mon 26 July - Fri 1 Oct  
TERM 4: Mon 18 Oct - Fri 17 Dec

**Pool Keys** The school swimming pool is **OPEN!** Pool keys are for sale from the school office at a cost of \$70 (\$40 if you have a child currently enrolled at Ngatimoti School), with \$10 refunded on return of your key - **BE QUICK** as school closes on **Wed 16 December**. You may pay by cash or cheque at the office (open 8.30am - 3pm daily) or you may also pay directly online to account 03 1354 0359568 00 (please reference swim pool key). There is an agreement to sign before you purchase a key so please request one from the office. The pool is open to the public between the hours of 12 noon - 6pm during the school holidays and after school, except when swimming lessons are in progress - times and dates for these will be displayed at the poolside (not yet confirmed). Thanks to TDC for their annual subsidy for the running of the pool. Thanks also to Festival funds for enabling us to keep our pool open to the public once again.

Our 8 to 10 year olds enjoyed a successful day at the inter-school athletics, two classes have had swimming lessons at the Aquatic Centre, three bands represented us exceptionally well at the BandQuest, and our Touch Rugby team continue to play well this term. The Senior Class have been on camp at Totaranui and the Junior Class have had a day of outdoors learning at Bark Bay. All students have had the opportunity to learn to dance, as well as learning about Parihaka, the Pacific and our new pou. On 11 December we look forward to unveiling this beautiful pou that has been commissioned by Ngati Tama and carved by Tim Wraight. A 5:30 a.m. start will mark this occasion!

**Plans for 2021** We say goodbye to fifteen Year 8 students who move on to High School at the end of the year - good luck to our wonderful RIVER students! We wish Mrs Milnes good luck as she undertakes two terms of study leave and returns to her class in Term 3 next year.

Ngatimoti School welcomes all students back to school on Tuesday 9 February 2021. New enrolments welcome. For more information about Ngatimoti School please contact Ali Turner, Principal Tel: 03 526 8842.

[office@ngatimoti.school.nz](mailto:office@ngatimoti.school.nz) [www.ngatimoti.school.nz](http://www.ngatimoti.school.nz)

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Have a safe and happy holiday, from everyone here at school!



## Motueka Valley Association

**Meetings** every 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of the month at 8pm (7.30pm in winter) in the Ngatimoti Community Rooms.

**Everyone welcome!**

For community concerns email the MVA at [info@mva.org.nz](mailto:info@mva.org.nz) or contact any of the following **committee members**:

Peter Laufkotter	526 8554
Fiona Nelson	020 4160 1968
Joel Briffault	021 0284 7245
Fay Knight	022 320 0449

### local halls/facilities

Ngatimoti Memorial Hall  
• Bex Douglas • 021 173 1279 • [ngatimoti.hall@gmail.com](mailto:ngatimoti.hall@gmail.com)  
Ngatimoti Community Rooms • Sarah Bradshaw • 526 8026  
Pokororo Hall • Sylvia Arnold • 526 8282  
Woodstock Hall • Kerry Hall • 543 3884

### about your newsletter

- delivered on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of the month to 500 homes in the Motueka Valley from February to December
- send stories, photos & ads by the 20<sup>th</sup> of the month to the editor, Seiji Kubo: [newsletter@mva.org.nz](mailto:newsletter@mva.org.nz)
- advertising rate: \$2.00 per column cm
- online newsletter + archives: [www.mva.org.nz](http://www.mva.org.nz)

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## Working Together for Our Catchment.

At the end of last month, the conversation about working together to care for our catchment began with two meetings - Tapawera on Monday 23<sup>rd</sup> November and Upper Motueka on Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> November. Both meetings were supported by [NZ Landcare Trust](#), a not for profit organisation set-up in 1996 to support landowners, farmers and community groups to carry out sustainable land and catchment management projects. NZ Landcare Trust is an overarching group for funding purposes.

Annette Litherland, NZ Landcare Trust's Regional Co-ordinator for Nelson-Tasman-Marlborough says that the meetings were organised as:

*"... an opportunity for residents to start their own Motueka sub-catchment groups. When it comes to action on the ground we need to get with people who share the same river or stream. With landholder engagement the chance of getting funding increases."*

Once there is interest by landowners, there are several agencies in Nelson/Tasman that support catchment groups including Councils, Tasman Environmental Trust and NZ Landcare Trust.

Over 50 people attended the Tapawera meeting in Shedwood Hall, and organisers were pleased with the turn-out. John Ellis, who has extensive local knowledge of the river having worked on the Nelson Catchment Board from 1963 to 1989, gave a history of the river and soil conservation work in the Motueka Catchment. He said that from the time of first European settlement in the 1850s, Motueka river had been:

*"...subject to almost continuous attempts to manage and control the river's natural tendency to flood periodically".*

Roger Dalrymple, a passionate, fourth generation farmer from the North Island then gave a powerful talk and power-point presentation. Dalrymple chairs the Rangitikei Rivers Community Collective, an overarching organisation for a number of sub-catchments over a wide area in the North Island. He has been travelling around the country giving these inspiring talks - *Community Catchments with a Purpose*. He lists the aims of a community catchment as being:

*"First to catch-up and then to lead, setting environmental standards that protect our soil and waterways and enhance our biodiversity that we as farmers can be proud of... And second, to help make our rural communities vibrant and economically sustainable..."*

Dalrymple shared his knowledge and insights into starting-up and managing community catchment groups for the best outcomes for the river and for the people. He spoke of changing the current top-down model to one that is bottom-up so that those at the grassroots are setting the rules. Farmers, Iwi, Tourism Operators, Fishers, Schools and non-government organisations all want the same thing – to look after and protect the river.

Following Dalrymple's talk, people gathered in smaller groups according to which Upper Motueka River sub-catchment they belonged, which had been marked-out by ribbon on the floor. The intention of the Tapawera meeting was to form an Upper Motueka Catchment Collective. However, as what happens in the upper reaches of a river effects what happens in the lower reaches, it was decided that taking a whole catchment approach was needed with the forming of smaller sub-catchment groups as described by Dalrymple in Rangitikei Rivers Community Collective. So, at the end of the meeting, Jo Leyland, one of the organisers and contact for Upper Motueka Catchment, was able to announce that a (whole-of) Motueka Catchment Collective would be formed with landowners from below Baton Bridge as well.



The Moutere catchment group hosted the Upper Moutere meeting. The group started two years ago and have secured \$1.9 million in funding from the One Billion Trees programme. Also, they have received \$0.96 million funding from the Provincial Growth Fund for riparian fencing. Their goal is to plant 270,000 trees over three years with 35 km of riparian fencing.

With our changing climate – drought or deluge, there are new opportunities for local catchment groups to be led by landowners. Local councils must now respond to the [National Policy Statement for Freshwater Management](#), and farmers must now start developing their Freshwater Farm Plans. Tasman District Council is also developing the [Tasman Environment Plan](#) and a 2020 Tasman BioStrategy.

There will be future events/meetings for Motueka Catchment Collective as it evolves. For anyone who would like to get involved in caring for your particular sub-catchment, for more information or to be put on a mailing list for Motueka Catchment Collective, you can ring or email Jo Leyland – 03 522 4411, [joleyland@gmail.com](mailto:joleyland@gmail.com) for the Upper Motueka Catchment, or Sky Davies – 0210515447, [skydavies@tet.org.au](mailto:skydavies@tet.org.au) for the Lower Motueka Catchment. Our MVA newsletter will keep you informed.



Fiona Nelson

Reporter



- From Motueka Valley Association Committee  
We wish you all a happy Christmas and a safe “unlocked” peaceful new year

- Please feel welcome to join our next meeting Wednesday 10th February 2021





## A Motueka River Story

*A heavy storm is filling up the hollows and adding to the pressure of the river - it has been raining for the whole night and the Motueka River is picking up speed this morning on its journey to the sea.*

*It's been beyond time, longer than a human can remember, I have been and seen so much, drought, trickles, an eddy for trout, relief for humans enjoying immersing themselves on warm days and to some a vital resource to irrigate their crops. At my peak I've travelled across bitumin when the stopbanks were lower than they are now, I've supported drivers in heaps of metal when they lose their way, tree branches have careered downstream and I've picked up logs somehow, from small streams that swell into me in storms. I've coursed into paddocks yet not for far, carried small creatures who aren't proficient swimmers. I've seen divers in the deeper recesses, looking for what, I'm not quite sure. Today there are some people with nets not far from where I spill into the sea, little tiny sprats flow unsuspectingly into them, I hear laughter and human excitement above the surface.*

*In all weathers I must pulse in the course of the lowest level - and this sees me take altered routes on the periphery during storms. My source is from several sub-alps in the Red Hills Range in the south-east of the mountainous region of the Nelson Tasman area. Just called the Upper Motueka River I flow into several braids through Motupiko, Tadmore, Tapawera and from the base at Mount Owen they call me the Wangapeka River, then the Pearce plus the Baton River, yet eventually pass Woodstock I become known as just the Motueka River picking up the former and other streams, some of them substantial. Recent downfalls have brought some more trees floating rapidly down, some stop at the supports of bridges, others end up at sea, once I took a case of apples to the bay, but they bobbed and floated to the shore, I believe.*

*Always a pleasant life, rarely dull, I, the Motueka River is life sustaining.*

*Deborah Taylor*



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### Location of AEDs in Motueka Valley

- **Woodstock Automotive (Kerry Hall)**  
982 Dovedale Road, Woodstock Junction.
- **Ngatimoti Community Rooms/Fire Station**  
Motueka Valley Highway next to Ngatimoti School
- **Pokororo Hall**  
West Bank Road at corner of Graham Valley Road



Motueka Valley Defibrillator Group is a registered charity (CC50792).  
Donations towards the maintenance of the AEDs can be made to:  
Motueka Valley Defibrillator Group, NBS acc # 03-1354-0474291-00 or  
contact Gloria Anderson, chairperson, on 526 8644 for more information.

## ASHTANGA YOGA

Are you interested in practising Ashtanga Yoga in 2021?  
Expressions of interest to [ange@angepalmer.com](mailto:ange@angepalmer.com)

### ST. JAMES CHURCH NGATIMOTI

#### Family Service

Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December - 10:30 a.m.  
Conducted by Rev Neil Bowdler

Children's Sunday  
School

Morning tea and social  
time  
to follow.

*All Welcome*



Christmas Eve Carol Service  
Thursday Evening 24<sup>th</sup> December  
at 7.30pm in the Church  
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### connect on Facebook:

#### Motueka Valley Community

A closed group with over 2000 members, who are not necessarily living in the valley, but have the valley at heart.

#### Motueka Valley Residents

A private group for people residing in the Motueka Valley area.

### NEXT MVA MEETING

Wednesday 9 December, 8pm  
Ngatimoti Community Rooms  
**ALL WELCOME!**

### MVA is looking for new committee members

Do you have an interest in the well-being of the Motueka Valley?

Do you have a couple of hours every month to attend meetings at Ngatimoti Community Rooms?

Do you enjoy meeting new people?

If you're interested or have questions, contact one of the committee members or email [info@mva.org.nz](mailto:info@mva.org.nz).

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