



The Haumie Tike Tike Totara Pou now presides over the Te Maara Oranga site on the Opanuku Streambank.

## Carvings Bring History to Life

Two arresting new carvings now stand guard over *Te Maara Oranga* (Maori medicinal garden) on the Opanuku Stream. The figures are testament to a journey that, in the words of Te Kawerau a Maki *Kaumtua* Eru Thompson, began around a century ago with a totara seed. Despite only being recently installed, it's now hard to imagine the site without the carvings, so significant is their presence in the area.

The carvings are the result of a long-standing collaboration between Project Twin Streams Opanuku, a group of Maori Language Students and their teachers from Henderson High School that now dates back many years. The transformation of their adopted area of the stream has brought to life indigenous stories and traditions and has also fostered a deep sense of ownership and connection with place.

These ideas have found their natural extension in the Totara *Pou* which represents *Haumie Tike Tike* (the Maori God of uncultivated food) and a white Hinuera stone carving of *Rongo-Ma-Tane*, God of Cultivated Foods. From the outset Annie Cochrane, Project Twin Streams Community Coordinator Opanuku and Janet Holt, Project Twin Streams Arts Coordinator saw this as an opportunity to create something that truly represented and involved the local community.

Having worked with master carver Whare Thompson before on Project Twin Streams, Annie felt his ability to connect with young people and his commitment to sharing the stories of his ancestors was crucial. She feels it is a relationship that has more than paid off. "Whare's ability to inspire and collaborate with young people and his desire to revive traditional techniques and narratives has really shone through in his dealings with both the students as they worked together on the carving and the wider community. This was particularly clear at the Community Open Days we held as the project progressed" she says.

The uniqueness of this particular project is acknowledged by the students' teacher, Tipene Jackson, who notes "the opportunity for the students to engage so directly with traditional values and processes is one they're unlikely to experience again in their lifetime."

Acknowledging this *Kaupapa* has been central to the success of the carvings which have become a showcase of the potential for community art to effectively address both the environmental and cultural objectives of Project Twin Streams in a new way. As Janet notes, "the community has been learning about and engaging with this project and by extension, the environment as it's progressed. If you want to change behaviour or change the way you look at the environment, it's something that needs to happen over time."

## Hello and goodbye

Richard Heteraka comes to his role as Project Twin Streams Community Coordinator Ranui-Massey from alternative education provider the Te Piataata Trust. The Trust works with at-risk youth in West Auckland and was awarded a Green Ribbon Award in 2008 for their work on Project Twin Streams. It was this interaction with the project that inspired Richard to grab the opportunity when it came up and he views the new role as a natural extension of his work as a teacher there. Drawing on these community ties, Richard hopes to extend and cement the reach of Project Twin Streams in the Ranui-Massey catchment. "I'm primarily focused on fostering the relationships with the local school and community groups, while my co-coordinator Karena Way looks after the residents," says Richard.

Project Twin Streams has said a very fond farewell to Teremoana Jones, Project Manager: Future Governance. Teremoana has been working on the project in Glen Eden for over three years now, originally as Community Coordinator for the area. During this time she forged a reputation as both an innovator and a true people person handling a number of large scale community planting days which have subsequently transformed the Glen Eden area for its residents.

Teremoana is heading back to Northland where she has strong family and iwi connections and where we hope she will enjoy a much deserved holiday!

*He mihi aroha tenei mo tou ngakau mahaki.*



Bella's Artists were inspired by the Walsh Trust's work on PTS.



Taking stock of the 2011 planting season.



The Saving Our Streams unit provides a new resource for schools.

## Bella's Artists Mural

As the saying goes 'From small seeds, big things grow.' The Bella's Artists collective have proved this idea with a mural that is now causing ripples in the community in a way that the group never imagined.

Bella's Artists have been working with the Walsh Trust, a community group that provides support for those with mental illness or disability.

Encouraged by the work the Walsh Trust have undertaken on their adopted area of the Opanuku stream, the collective decided to employ their paintbrushes to raise awareness of Project Twin Streams' restoration work. The group was encouraged by Derek March, Project Twin Streams Community Coordinator Opanuku, to take their artistic inspiration from a streamside visit. The resulting collaborative mural will soon be donated to Spectrum Children's Care, another community link the group established while creating the mural.

Kristen Kell, Project Twin Streams Arts Coordinator, was inspired by both the mural's themes and the community links forged in the process. She has subsequently embarked on six similar murals in connection with various local disability groups, such as Spectrum Children's Care, the Agape Trust, Hospice West Auckland and the Walsh Trust. These murals will be submitted for inclusion at both the Project Twin Streams Art Awards and the InterACT Disability Arts Festival which are scheduled for later this year.

The spin-off effects from this single artistic initiative have, as Janet Holt, Project Twin Streams Arts Coordinator notes, "enabled community groups who may not have otherwise had the opportunity to be involved to become engaged with the project and in turn, hopefully inspire others and raise awareness through the upcoming awards."

## A Snapshot of the Season

As we hit the midway point of the planting season, it's a good time to take stock and look ahead to the final events of 2011.

Oratia kicked off the season with their harvest-themed event in late April, with 1,200 natives planted. The event proved that business, community leaders and environmental champions can work together and create a unique sense of fun and purpose on the project. Angelique Richards, Project Twin Streams Community Coordinator Oratia, is currently planning their next event scheduled for 27 August.

The Henderson Creek planting in May created a lasting impression on their partner in the event, the Henderson Squash Club. As Club Manager Mike Pirovich says, the day provided a valuable insight into the work being undertaken by Project Twin Streams. A core group of regular Henderson Creek volunteers transformed the streambank planting 800 trees, but more importantly perhaps, Mike is now a champion of the project in the wider community. The planting day signalled a shift in focus for Community Waitakere which will now move to a maintenance focus.

Glen Eden are anticipating that their upcoming final large-scale community planting day of 2011 will be a huge hit with a Project Twin Streams first, double planting sessions! The event will be held on Saturday 16th July at the Northern End of Barnea Circle, off West Coast Road. Session times are from 10 - 12pm and then from 1 - 3pm so it will be a big day for the Glen Eden team.

The Opanuku and Ranui-Massey catchments are both focussing on smaller, more targeted events working directly to engage with community groups on specific areas. These are proving very rewarding with the sense of ownership fostered by these relationships.

## Saving Our Streams Unit

Project Twin Streams ability to engage and educate the community's younger generations now has a more formal structure with the creation of the Saving our Streams Inquiry Unit. This online resource links to the NZQA national curriculum for Years 3-6 and was created specifically for Project Twin Streams by Chris McLean, EcoMatters Environment Trust EnviroSchools Facilitator.

The unit aims to support and encourage children to engage with their local stream and to take collective action towards a sustainable future for their freshwater environment. It's been designed to be used in a number of ways, from a single lesson, to a term, or even an entire year's scheme of work.

Students from Laingholm Primary School's middle and senior classes road-tested the six sessions and their colourful art projects and assignments bring the website pages to life.

Gill Aldworth, a teacher at the school, feels that having such an action-based resource makes the issues facing their local environment much more real for the students.

Each unit is structured with Learning Outcomes, Resources, Curriculum Links, Activities and suggestions for Assessment.

As Mark Miller, Project Twin Streams Community Coordinator Glen Eden says, "the unit will provide another hook for community coordinators to engage with schools. It's hoped that schools will take ownership of the unit and we'll be available to provide support and guidance for teachers delivering it." It's also anticipated that elements of the unit could be applied to other youth groups engaging with the project.

Saving our Streams can be found online at [tinyurl.com/3tww8g9](http://tinyurl.com/3tww8g9).

If you would like to receive a copy of Streamtalk direct to your inbox, please email your details to: [streamtalk@projecttwinstreams.com](mailto:streamtalk@projecttwinstreams.com)