

## Thames School of Mines



The Category I registered Thames School of Mines (TSM) – the town's most significant historic group of buildings which are cared for by the NZ Historic Places Trust – is still playing an important role in education in the Hauraki area 126 years after it was established in 1885. Photo: NZHPT, 2004.

### Paint the Town Ochre

An educational programme pioneered at TSM five years ago has involved local school children looking at the mysteries of making paint the good old fashioned way – completely from scratch and using only traditional methods.



Thames School of Mines. Photo: J Isdale, 2011.

According to the Thames School of Mines Curator, John Isdale, the workshops are a continuation of the school's history of providing education, and it's particularly appropriate that they are linked to the techniques and materials of 19<sup>th</sup> century paint making – a skill that was evident in the early days of development on 'the Thames'.

"The building has been a school of science and technology for over 100 years. Its historic classrooms were set up to teach the science and technology of gold mining to miners working the Thames goldfields – it's great that these same classrooms are used for all of our paint-making workshops," he says.

"There's a nice continuity in the fact that some of these technical skills, which were so important in the establishment of Thames, are still being taught in the same building."

Wellington-based artist and film-maker Barry Thomas leads the programme with support from John.

"People love the paint making and painting workshops that we do – there's something ancient and primordial about grinding up clays and volcanic iron oxides, binding them with oil of egg or other media, and then creating this virtual cave art," says Barry.

"Everybody who tries it enjoys the process of making paints and then using them to create amazing art work."

John Isdale, Curator

### From Segregation to Dewey Classification

The Category II registered Tamahere School opened in May 1884 with a roll of 33. This one room school was established through the efforts of the local European settlers and had separate entrances for boys and girls! As with many rural schools, the school building was often used for community purposes and local dances were held there. Today the building continues its useful life within the school as its library.



Tamahere School Original Building. Photo: L Williams.

*"Education is simply the soul of a society  
As it passes from one generation to another"*

Gilbert K Chesterton



New Zealand  
Historic Places Trust *ouhere Taonga*

# Your Heritage Matters

Local news for Waikato, Bay of Plenty, Tairāwhiti & Hauraki Members No. 29 Spring 2011

## School of Thought

European-style education in New Zealand originates from when mission schools were established throughout the country in the 1830s. These schools taught Maori children in their own language, and it is estimated that there were once 25 mission schools in the Thames-Waikato area alone. The New Zealand wars of the 1860s saw the suspension or closure of the missions and their schools.

A large influx of European settlers in the 1870s was followed by the Education Act in 1878 that gave all children between 7 and 14 the right to free schooling. This led to schools being established wherever there were sufficient children and a teacher could be found. Lessons were held in private homes, churches or halls until classrooms could be built. Schools were often built on donated land, with local labour, materials and public subscription making them possible; one can readily imagine that these early schools varied considerably in their quality and design.

Obtaining a teacher came with the complication that female staff had to be single and lost their job if they married. Many schools had a teacher's house built nearby; possibly an indication of the problems faced attracting and retaining a teacher. In rural areas a single-roomed school often became a multi-purpose building, with use by the community for meetings, weddings, concerts and dances.

During this period native schools were established with the primary purpose of assimilating Maori into a European way of life, 'civilising' them through education, assisted by an 1871 Act decreeing that English was the only language to be taught in schools.

In the 1930s a new emphasis on health produced 'open-air' classroom design. Features included increased room size, sliding doors, verandahs, and large windows for light and ventilation. Native schools particularly needed improvement and several of them were updated with the new-style classrooms. The outbreak of polio in 1937 saw many New Zealand schools close, and led to a greater popularity for the 'open-air' classroom design.

In some rural areas a falling school roll, staffing difficulties and improved transport led to school closures and many of our early classrooms and associated buildings were lost. Happily for this area though, our well constructed and spacious school buildings are ideal candidates for adaptive re-use and there are some lovely and very early examples surviving. High community esteem is often a factor in the retention of a school building; hardly surprising, more than any other building type, they were the hub of the community particularly in rural areas. The integral contribution many of the classrooms played in wide ranging community activities as well as schooling cannot be overemphasised.

Linda Pattison, Registration Assistant

## Ongarahu Pa Transformed by Community and DIY Marae Project



The newly erected waharoa leads visitors across the bridge built to protect the defensive ditch; the palisade type fences were also part of what was achieved in three short days, as were the plantings. Photo: K Hearle, July 2011.

Another important educational slant to the NZHPT's heritage work is across all historic places and how we learn and gain insights into our past from these place-based stories. Observing the keen interest and questions being fired at the archaeologists during a real Kiwi community effort at Ongarahu pa recently, has reinforced to NZHPT staff that there is strong community interest in our past and its heritage.

Part of Huharua Harbour Park at Te Puna in the Bay of Plenty, Ongarahu pa was transformed in three short days from a gorse and scrub covered seeming 'wasteland' to a culturally and archaeologically significant historic site to visit and to reflect upon its stories and past inhabitants. An initiative led by Julie Sparham of Pirirakau Incorporated Society – also a staff member at our Lower Northern office – it involved many months of careful planning with our area archaeologist, Rachel Darmody, also having input to ensure that the work planned would not impact on key archaeological features such as the defensive ditches.

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## No. 2 Road Hall A First Prize for Te Puke



This is the only known historic photo of the hall and has provided helpful clues to the original detailing of the building. The photo is believed to have been taken circa 1908, early in its time as a school. Photo: courtesy J Pendergrast.



When maintenance became too costly the building was clad in asbestos boards whilst the shingle roof is believed to have been replaced with iron at quite an early stage. Photo: K Hearle, May 2006.



Guided by the conservation plan and Lower Northern NZHPT staff, the restoration work is progressing well. Here, the team from Shingle & Shake Roofing is reinstating the timber-shingled roof. This is part of the plan to take the building back to its near original appearance, given that most of the kauri boards had survived. Photo: K Hearle, 29 July 2011.

The No. 2 Road Hall, Te Puke's oldest surviving building, has come full circle. Funded and constructed in 1884 by local residents, the hall was used for local events including weddings and concerts. The hall saw use as a school room between 1905 and 1925 and was renamed Te Puke No. 2 School. Between 1911 and 1912, the then headmistress also operated the Tapuwae post office there for a year... now that is multi-tasking!

Despite varied utilisation over subsequent years, which included church services, table tennis, meetings and a preschool, the demand lessened and by the 1990s the hall fell into disrepair.

In 2003 the 'Hall Rejuvenation Committee' was established and their hard work successfully raised close to \$300,000, and conservation is now well underway. Although built central to the planned township, growth of the town shifted and the building remains a rural one, sitting still in the midst of kiwifruit orchards; but the decision to keep it on its original site was applauded by NZHPT.

The original covenant stated that the building was 'available for all purposes calculated to promote the Religious, Intellectual and Social advancement of all classes inhabiting the district'. Now, in the final stages of restoration, the Hall has already been booked as a wedding venue.

Let the 'social advancement' commence.

*"When schools flourish, all flourishes"*

Martin Luther

## Te Rau Kahikatea Home Schooling



Blessing of Te Rau Kahikatea prior to it being winched forward on its site. Reverends Don Tamihere (left standing) and Brent Swann (right standing). Photo: Eastern Earth Landscape Architects, 2003.

Gisborne's Te Rau Kahikatea is a stunning Category I house built in 1876 for Archdeacon William Leonard Williams (Leonard).

Te Rau Kahikatea was not only Leonard Williams' private home, but was also used for classes until 1885. This was the beginning of Te Rau College which trained Maori students in order to recruit them to the ministry. Several cottages were placed in the grounds providing further classroom space for the college. Te Rau Kahikatea is the only surviving remnant of the Te Rau Theological College.

In 1915 the house was sold to the Anglican Church and it was then used as a vicarage until being sold in the 1990s. Early in the new millennium, ownership passed back to the church; after relocation forward on its site and restoration it is now used as the seat of Te Pihopa (Bishop) of the Maori Anglican church.

## DIY Marae – Yes! We Did It!

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The DIY Marae team complete the project. Photo: Courtesy J Sparham, April 2011.

It was a real community partnership project with councils, DOC, local and wider community members all pitching in and working around the impressive team from Maori TV's *DIY Marae* programme.

Despite torrential rain on the main community volunteer day, the work was completed and the two one-hour programmes aired recently.

The next stage of the project will be whakairo (carvings) sponsored by Western Bay of Plenty District Council.

## Matakana Island's Te Kotukutuku School House



Priming the exterior of Te Kotukutuku School House. Photo: E Anderson, 2008.

A Category I registration, Te Kotukutuku School House on Matakana Island in the Bay of Plenty is a modest building that evokes nostalgia in the older community members. Few pre-1900 native schools survive, and this one, like most native schools, was both a school house and teacher's residence.

It opened in November 1897; however the school roll fluctuated seasonally due to many of the children being required in the fields to assist with cropping activities; a then common problem in rural communities. Te Kotukutuku is no longer used as a school and has since been relocated; however it remains on the school grounds, retains its original orientation and the small but dedicated community is raising funds for its restoration – under the guiding hand of NZHPT's Maori conservators.

## A Somewhat Hidden Heritage Gem in Te Kuiti



Te Kuiti School (Old Building). Photo: G Henry, 2010.

Tucked away at the far end of what is now a much bigger school complex, this little heritage gem was built as a native school in 1897. Te Kuiti School (Old Building), a Category II registered historic place, was originally a combined classroom and residence, with the school taken over as a board school in 1905. The school was detached from the teacher's residence, and they were both enlarged the following year. Further classrooms were added in 1908 due to the burgeoning local population. The teacher's residence was later sold and relocated. The old building is now being used as a reading recovery centre.

## Another Much-Loved Educational Institution



Waikato Institute of Technology (WINTec) F Block following its seismic strengthening, restoration and sympathetic changes to the entranceway and fenestrations, enabling the Block to continue its educational purpose. Photo: M Vincent, 2009.

Designed by government architect J T Mair, Hamilton Technical Day School (now WINTec's F Block) opened in 1930. Extensions were added in 1934 and in 1948 – as evidenced by differences in brick colour. Curved staircases, terrazzo flooring and a recessed balcony above the front door are features. Fundraising has enabled WINTec to undertake seismic strengthening, restoration and it is expected that the building will continue to play its part in tertiary education for many more years.