



## Celebrating the community of Hamilton East

# Local lives – Lorraine Hooper

We arranged to meet at The Cook (oh dear, this is becoming a habit) and get to meet her husband Graeme for the first time. The Hoopers have been married for twenty-one years but you would never know it as they appear to still be on very good terms and are supportive of one another. They don't interrupt each other, are friendly, polite, enthusiastic, respectful and Graeme buys the drinks! Lorraine's energy and *joi de vivre* is refreshing and I am wondering how to do justice to it.

Lorraine was born in Haltwhistle, Northumberland in 1967 to Angela and Cliff Corbett. Her mother was a nurse, her father a diesel mechanic and later a driving instructor. The Corbetts also had a son living in Tynemouth. The Corbetts have lived in Northumberland for generations.

Haltwhistle is in the heart of Hadrian's Wall country. The wall was built by the Romans after a visit from Emperor Hadrian in 122AD. Hadrian reported problems with conquered peoples from Egypt, Judea, Libya, and Mauretania amongst others. It is commonly thought that it was also built as protection from the Picts, an ancient confederation of Scottish tribes who may have tattooed their bodies.

After primary schooling, Lorraine attended Haydon Bridge High, entailing a daily train trip. She passed six CSEs and three O levels before attending Carlisle Technical College at sixteen to study catering and hotel management. Moving to Lancashire, she worked as a live in trainee assistant manager. This was at "The Bell and Bottle" (part of a restaurant chain called Berni Inns). Working long and gruelling hours, she learned everything from cellar work, bar work, restaurant work and cheffing. At the tender age of eighteen, Lorraine met her future husband, Graeme, in his local bar at the "Bell and Bottle." Six



Lorraine Hooper

months later, she was offered another job with the chain but romance had quickly blossomed. Lorraine moved to Preston instead to live with Graeme and his flat mate, working as a barmaid at a couple of pubs and ASDA Shopper's Restaurant (a superstore).

Lorraine and Graeme were soon engaged and married in 1987. Their oldest son, Alex was born in 1989. Shortly after Alex's birth she started work as a carer in a nursing home doing the evening shift from five to eight pm when Graeme was home from work to mind the children. After eight months she quit as the grief from people constantly dying got too much. Lorraine has had a variety of occupations over the years including a two year stint as a carer at a nursery (Alex in tow) and seven years as a part-time dental receptionist. After Robert was born in 1993, Lorraine and Graeme shared the care of



their children, putting their welfare as a top priority.

The Hoopers began thinking about migrating to New Zealand from around 1987 as a way to have a better life for their family. Graeme had worked as a maintenance engineer for British Nuclear Fuels since he was sixteen but then came rumours of redundancies. In early 1999, they made serious enquires and applied for residency in New Zealand. Initially, they told no one of their plans being fearful of negative responses from family and friends who didn't want them to leave. The process took eighteen months from the date of application. Once they were accepted, they sold their home and arrived in Hamilton in August 2000.

The Hoopers researched thoroughly before settling on Hamilton due to its climate, medium size and inland location. Graeme recalls playing cricket with the kids in Steele Park. This was in August and he was amazed to find himself wearing a T-shirt. After renting for a while, they bought a house in Dey St and later moved to their present home in McFarlane St. Graeme now works at the Waikato Times as an engineer.

Starting as a parent helper, Lorraine then worked as a teacher aide at Knighton School for three years. Knighton staff encouraged Lorraine to study. The B.O.T partly funded a Certificate in Education Support course at WINTEC where she specialised in TESOL (Teaching English as a Second Language). Lorraine says that lifelong learning seems to be "a peculiarly New Zealand thing." On

completion of the course she was offered a full-time job for Kiwi Ora, a distance learning training course for new settlers, as a programme advisor. The job was mainly working at home so meant she could be there for the boys.

Lorraine is now a co-ordinator at the Waikato Migrant Resource Centre. She is responsible for building maintenance, centre bookings, liaison and basically making sure everyone is happy. As part of this role, she co-ordinated the New Zealand Ethnic Soccer Festival last year. She loves not knowing who is going to walk through the door and what they will bring and, like her colleagues at the centre, is passionate about what her work. Lorraine says the centre is a safe place for migrants and refugees to seek assistance and companionship.

Listing her hobbies as watching cricket, serious walking, beaches and Monday quiz nights at The Cook, she also enjoys entertaining visitors from the UK and visiting new places. A friendly bunch, a group of neighbours made up a trivia team, "Neighbours."

"Live and let live" is Lorraine's motto and she exhorts us not to judge people before we know them, especially in terms of culture. "We only live once," she says, "so we've got to make the most of it." Unsurprisingly, she hates racism but loves Hamilton and thinks we have had a lot of bad press. "Hamilton is a fantastic place to live," she reckons "I can't imagine living anywhere else. Don't focus on the negatives, focus on the positives. I am an eternal optimist and look on the bright side. I feel like I belong here."

Lorraine speaks highly of the New Zealand education system. She thinks the boys have both done better than their parents and never imagined that she would have any tertiary qualifications. The next step for the Hoopers is to become New Zealand citizens.

# Youth Scene



Kia ora whanau,

He mihi nui ki a koutou.

Welcome to the second edition of the Eastside Community News for 2008.

Just a heads up to our community that I soon will be relocating to the Fairfield area, and will be housed in the Fairfield Hall on Clarkin Rd. I would like to especially thank our Hamilton East community including the East Hamilton Community Policing Centre, Waimarie Hamilton East Community House, Link House Agency, Te Ara Hou Christian Social Services Village, Te Kohao Health and Kirikiriroa Marae, to name a few, for their support and acknowledgement of the great work that these and others do for our community.

What's happening in our community?

The first school term for 2008 finishes on Friday April 18. So the school holidays run from Saturday April 19 to Sunday May 4. For information on School Holiday Programmes check out the Hamilton Press newspaper the week before the holidays or contact the local schools in your area.

Waimarie Hamilton East Community House will again be facilitating their School Holiday Program. Contact them on 07-8583453 for more information.

Hamilton 400 V8 Supercars runs from April 18 to 20. For more information visit [www.v8supercar.co.nz](http://www.v8supercar.co.nz)

Waikato Youth-week runs from April 26 to May 3. Events during this week include Beatstreet2008 A Celebration of Positive Aotearoa HipHop Culture.



By Mike Rarere, South East Hamilton Youth Advisor

6pm Friday May 2 @ The Meteor Theatre. \$5 entry. Beatstreet has been produced annually for the last eight years by The Beatz Collective, a collective of Hamilton Youth-workers. Previous Beatstreet events have introduced talent to Hamilton including Scribe, P-Money, Nesian Mystik, Ladi6 and Open Souls, to name a few. This years event includes Rappers, DJs, B-boy and B-girl Battles, and an exhibition of local Graff Art. For more information contact Mike on 021-315469 or e mail, [mikerarere@hcc.govt.nz](mailto:mikerarere@hcc.govt.nz)

So You Think You Can Graff? Is a Graffiti/Street Art Competition being facilitated by Te Ahurei a Rangatahi Youth Agency. Entries are open from March 10 to April 18 and the entries will be exhibited throughout Youth-week at locations still to be finalised. There are several prize packages to be won that include tutoring, equipment and cash. For more information contact Shanara at Te Ahurei a Rangatahi, Ph: 07-8383013.

Hui Whakapiri, are local Youth Sector network meetings held every three months. The next Hui Whakapiri is on Friday 13 June, at The Hamilton City Council Reception Lounge between 10am-12pm. These meetings are a good chance to network and find out about the local youth sector. If you are a local youthworker or want to be involved in youthwork you can contact the Waikato Youthworkers Collective for information and advice. Contact Mike on 021-315469 for more information.

Capoeira for Youth is a free programme held weekly on Wednesdays from 6.30pm. Capoeira is an exotic Brazilian martial art that combines music, singing and self-defence. For more information contact Mike 021-315469.

Here in Hamilton we have some excellent youth focussed organisations including Te Ahurei a Rangatahi Ph:07-8383013, Whaimarama Youth Connex and the Youth Transition Service Ph: 07-8382558 and The Hub Community Youth Trust Frankton Ph: 027-4722559. These organisations provide a variety of youth friendly services including youth groups, youth advocates and advisors, counselling, camps, events and fun programmes.

For more information about these services, contact the organisations on the phone numbers provided.

If you want more information or advice please give me a call.

Mike Rarere, Southeast Hamilton Youth Advisor. Ph: 021315469. Kia ora.

## COURSES AND ACTIVITIES FOR TERM 2, 2008

- **YOGA** – Samadhimurti, Arbana Levande, is running two yoga classes again this term. Beginner's Yoga is on Mondays from 11.40 – 1.05 and Progressive Yoga is also on Mondays 1.20-2.45pm and cost \$32 for 8 weeks starting on the 5 May. Min: 6 Max: 9
- **CRAFT FOR KIDS** – This is scheduled to begin on Tuesday, 13 May and runs from 3.45 to 4.45. Cost: \$20 per term. Billie Neal is teaching this class.
- **TAI CHI** – Tai Chi will run on Wednesdays from 6 May at 2.00pm. There is a \$2 charge per class. The tutor, Eddie Tan, has been teaching Tai Chi for over 30 years and is a member of the New Zealand Tai Chi Association.
- **ORGANIC GARDENING WORKSHOP** – The Hamilton Permaculture Trust is offering another Organic Gardening Workshop. This will run for 4 weeks from 21 May on Wednesdays from 10.00am to 12noon. The course will be repeated on Wednesday evenings from 6.00-8.00pm for those who can't make the day class. Koha appreciated. Enquiries to Cheryl on 834-2249.
- **HEALTHY COOKING ON A BUDGET** – Sport Waikato is running this course for 6 weeks starting on Thursday, 22<sup>nd</sup> May. The tutor is Jen Riley. For enquires please phone Jen at Sport Waikato 838-2657. Sport Waikato also runs green prescription classes once a fortnight on Tuesdays from 12.00-1.30pm.
- **BOOK CLUB** – The Book Club meets once a month at a member's house in Hamilton East. If you are interested in joining a book club, phone the co-ordinator, Anne Minkhorst, on 856-8531