



Celebrating the community of Hamilton East

LOCAL LIVES – Shinichi Louis

I MET Kaleo (now known as Shin) in a previous incarnation several years ago. Latterly, he worked on my "C shaped" spine in his role at Te Kohao Health as a lomilomi therapist. I meet him in his office with various people popping in and out. The conversation hops back and forth from Japan, America and New Zealand: from Buddhism, genealogy, history, martial arts, education, family and children.

Shin was born in Tokyo in December, 1974. His father was a Hawaiian schoolteacher and his mother is Japanese. His mother was born four years after the 1945 nuclear bomb in Nagasaki. Like many other Japanese families, this left a huge legacy – cervical cancer, heart problems, osteoarthritis and depression. His grandfather was a Portuguese/Spanish school Principal in Hawaii. His parents met in Hawaii when his dad was an Amway salesman and his mother was trying to learn English.

The family lived in Japan for a while but Shin lived in Japan with his grandparents a lot of the time. The family often spent half the year in Japan and half in Hawaii. Shin's parents were both Buddhists and this has had a huge impact on his thinking and life. There were two more sons and a sister. In the late 1970s, the family settled in Hawaii.

At school, Shin was often bullied at school for his "difference" – on both sides of the Pacific – in Hawaii it was because he spoke Japanese. His grandfather forced him to learn Kyokushin karate for self defence. He was a martial arts master himself. Shin says this taught him much more than just self defence. He learnt discipline, lasting values and conflict management skills. He got into some scrapes at school. When he was twelve, the travelling stopped when his grandparents moved to Hawaii. Schooldays weren't his happiest. Shin says he hated school and not being accepted. He did, however, like girls who were his "comrades" – sticking up for him at school, patching him up and walking him home.

At seventeen, Shin said goodbye to Konowae High School and enrolled in liberal studies at Hawaii's Community College-West. A stint in the U.S. Army National Guard as a preventive medicine specialist saw him being responsible for preventing the spread of disease to soldiers and civilians whilst concurrently being a submersible co-pilot for Atlantis Submarines International. One day a large wave knocked him over whilst he was jumping from a sub to a skiff, breaking his knee and putting paid to submarines.

After that, he gained a BA in Japanese Studies at The University of Hawaii's. Whilst studying, he also became a Lomilomi instructor and worked part-time whilst completing his studies. It was at University, that Shin met his future New Zealand wife, Hine, who was the first maori exchange student from Waikato University. Shin and Hine had a romantic wedding on the beach in Hawaii in 2002, echoing the marriage of his parents. The path of true love did not run entirely smoothly, however, with Shin getting a hard time from New Zealand immigration that sent him back to Hawaii.

Since coming to live in New Zealand, he has worked as and ESOL tutor, youth worker, and literacy tutor. Since 2005, he has been employed by Te Kohao Health at Kirikiriroa Marae in Dey St



Hamilton East
Local Lives
by Jane Landman

as a lomilomi therapist, iwi health worker, health promoter and physical and nutritional activities facilitator.

Shin has strong beliefs in creating peace and harmony. He volunteers his time with a Buddhist group and in community education about passive violence. The International group, Soka Gakkai International, was formed in 1975 as an offshoot of the parent Soka Gakkai group in Japan. Adherents practice a particular form of Nichiren Buddhism and engage in community based programmes to promote cultural exchange and understanding among peoples and to promote Nichiren Buddhism. It is based on the Lotus Sutra which encourages people's faith in their own Buddha nature, their own inherent capacity for wisdom, courage and compassion. Shin says that physical violence is fuelled by self putdowns and that it is important to reduce passive violence (anything that makes others not feel good eg bullying, exclusion, not being there for your friend, text bullying and similar). He is thankful to all the people who helped him out and helped him to be where he is today. Shin is a staunch believer in the promotion of self-care methods. He says we need to look after ourselves pro-actively. He says "I vow harmoniously to break down barriers."

Shin is a modern, man with energy to spare. He cycles to work and is home in time to be with his children, doing at least his share of domestic duties and ranking family as a top priority along with world peace and self-care. I feel exhausted just listening to him. We could do a lot worse than applying many of his principles in our own lives.

A special word for him is Ho'oponopono which means to make the right even righter and seems to be a philosophy he lives and works by.

COURSES AND ACTIVITIES STARTING FROM 13 OCT

FOR TERM 4, 2008

YOGA

Samadhimurti, Arbana Levande, is running a yoga classes again this term - Mondays from 11.45am and costs \$4 per week starting from the 13 October. Min: 6 Max: 9.

TAI CHI

Tai Chi will run on Wednesdays from 15 October 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

Cheryl Noble is offering this popular course again this term when she returns from Burma. It will run for four weeks from the 29 October. If there is enough demand, the course will be repeated on Wednesday evenings.

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

HOLIDAY PROGRAMME

This will run for 5-12 year olds for the September holidays from 29 September to 10 October. We are MSD approved which means that parents can apply for a WIN subsidy. Phone Waimarie for details.

COUNSELLING

Bill Rout is still offering this free counselling service on Mondays. Phone 859 0118 for an appointment

ADVISORY SERVICE

This term we are again offering the free service providing advocacy and advice on a range of issues such as employment, mediation, consumer contracts, housing and family problems. Shu-yin Wong is volunteering his services by appointment on Fridays.

He has previously worked with the Community Law Centre and has been active in several community groups. Shu-yin is fluent in English, Cantonese, and Mandarin with a good understanding of written and spoken Japanese. He has degrees in Law, Science and a post graduate Diploma in Communication. Ring Waimarie for an appointment.

Youth Scene



It's all happening for youth

KIA ora whanau, He mihi nui ki a koutou. Welcome to the Spring edition of the Eastside Community News for 2008.

Hope you have all survived the Winter season and are ready for some nicer weather.

For your information, the third school term ends on Friday Sept 26, and the school holidays run from Sept 27-October 12. The final school term begins on October 13. Keep an eye out for School Holiday Programme information or contact HCC Community Development Ph.07-8386623 for more information.

What's happening in our community?

The 2008 Recognyz Youth Awards are being held at the Clarence St Theatre Hamilton, 6.30pm on Friday 10 October. The awards recognyz some of the many positive contributions young people make to

our community. The event will feature entertainment from some of the top local performers. It's going to be a great night with top bands, DJs and loads of great prizes. All are welcome to the awards. Contact



By Mike Rarere, South East Hamilton Youth Advisor

Christine Watson for more information, 07-8386509.

Hui Whakapiri, are local youth Sector network meetings held every 3 months. The next Hui Whakapiri is on Friday 21 November, 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 organizations on the phone numbers provided.

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

Mike Rarere, Fairfield Hall Youth Advisor. Ph. 07-8556497 or 021315469. Kia ora.