



Women supporting women on the Kapiti Coast

Kia ora,

September 2007

Term three is coming to an end and what a term it has been. New women have joined the Centre Worker team and have quickly become an integral part of the service provision at KWC. Read about these wonderful women on Page 5.

Planning is well in hand for our major annual fundraiser – this year a **Quiz night**. As usual we have had wonderful support from the community which is very gratifying. Those who come along will be delighted with the opportunities to win spot prizes, special awards and awesome trophies. A big thank you to all our supporters.

We also look forward to “strutting our stuff” at our fundraising **Fashion Parade** in October. You will all be invited to support this event where once again you will be treated to food, wine and great prizes. The Centre has more information.

The Education Programme for Term Four is now available. There are new courses being offered, some in partnership with other community organisations. **Family Planning** are offering workshops that will assist us with ways to talk to our children about their sexuality. The **Open Polytechnic** in conjunction with Lifeworks are offering a course on developing our financial skills. This is a well resourced course with workbooks and equipment to assist our learning. KWC is also pleased to welcome Robin du Chateau who will teach us to develop pelvic power and Debbie Graham will support us on our journey to increase our self esteem. All great courses!

The collective at the Kapiti Women's Centre

The Kapiti Women's Centre is a drop in Centre for all women. Did you know that while there you can also;

♀ **Access free counselling**

There are five volunteer counsellors working at the Centre, offering up to eight free sessions to women. Come to the Centre to register for this service.

♀ **Use the Library**

KWC has a small library of books which provide information on situations that often confront women. The library is free and available to all women.

♀ **Have a pregnancy test**

If you suspect you may be pregnant and would like some support to find out, come along and we will do a test with you.

♀ **Exchange clothing**

Generous women in our community bring in their pre-loved clothes for you to take them away.

♀ **Obtain information on almost anything**

KWC has a huge amount of information on what is available in our community. This might be a service you may wish to access, an event that is happening, knowledge about a particular topic, or another community group that may be able to help. If we do not have the information we will do our very best to find it!

♀ **Discover women's experiences of local practitioners and tradespeople**

If a woman has a good or bad experience of a practitioner or trades person, we encourage them to come in to complete a form of their experience. This is particularly helpful for women who have just moved to the Coast or are seeking a particular service for the first time.

KWC Holiday closure

**The Centre will close on Friday 21st September and
Reopen on Monday 8th October**

Womens Suffrage Day- Local Body Elections

Our heritage, our right and our responsibility

We are all aware that elections are upon us – it can be confusing, overwhelming and all seem a bit pointless. Do you ask yourself what is the point, what difference will it make whether I vote or not?

Your vote **will** make a difference! There are lots of reasons why we need to exercise our right to give our opinion – it does count! Perhaps the biggest reason is in the story of the suffragists.

The road to enfranchisement for women

The call to give women the vote grew more audible in the late nineteenth century as worldwide movements for moral reform and equality began to gain strength. In the US the women's movement gathered impetus in support of anti-slavery and temperance. In Britain, women worked to claim married women's property rights, better career opportunities, and the vote.

Womens rights were gaining ground in New Zealand. Girls secondary schools were opened during the 1870's and women began to be allowed into universities. Women began making gains in the workforce and the right of married women to their own property was guaranteed in 1884.

By 1876 in New Zealand, the momentum for women's suffrage began to gather when voting rights in municipal (local government) elections was extended to women who owned property and paid rates. A growing numbers of women began to challenge this narrow view of the world bringing attention to women's legal and political rights.

The Suffrage movement begins in New Zealand:

New Zealand's pioneering suffragists were inspired by the equal-rights arguments of philosopher John Stuart Mill, British feminists, and by the missionary efforts of the American based Women's Christian Temperance Union.



The Women's Christian Temperance Union reached Auckland when Mary Leavitt visited in 1885. Her visit was the impetus for a number of WCTU's to be quickly set up around New Zealand. Kate Sheppard became a leader of the groups and headed the WCTU's legislation and franchise department from 1887. In the early 1890's the WCTU broadened the base of their support to include working class women and the elite along with temperance supporters. They joined forces with the Women's Franchise Leagues, and other similar organisations.

Skilfully led by Kate Sheppard, the suffragists began working together, organising heightened publicity and massive petitions supporting their cause. Suffrage meetings were held all over the country, councillors were sent encouraging telegrams and known supporters were given white camellias for their buttonholes. White Camellias have since become the symbol of women's suffrage in New Zealand.

The tide of public opinion towards suffrage had turned strongly in its favour, largely thanks to the campaigning of the WCTU across the country. A number of leading male politicians supported women's suffrage. In 1878, 1879 and 1887, bills or amendments to extend the vote to women (or at least female ratepayers) only narrowly failed to pass in Parliament. In 1891 and 1892 the House of Representatives passed Electoral Bills that would have enfranchised all adult women, however, on each occasion the legislation did not pass in the Legislative Council (Upper House).

A vast army of volunteers gathered signatures for the suffrage petitions throughout New Zealand. The Auckland Star reported *“Even in back lanes and alleys, resolute – looking female members of the suffrage committee present themselves at every door, with petition in hand, and volubly explain their mission. Their enthusiasm is infectious”*. Several petitions were presented and finally in 1893, a petition of nearly **32,000 signatures – almost a quarter of the adult European female population in New Zealand** was presented to Parliament. Following the presentation of this petition to Parliament in a wheelbarrow, another bill easily passed in the House and by 20 votes to 18 in the Legislature.



Success for the suffragists:

It is one hundred and fourteen years ago, on 19 September 1893, that New Zealand women were granted the vote when the approval of the Governor was finally given to the Electoral Bill passed by Parliament eleven days earlier. New Zealand was the first country in the world to grant women the right to vote. All women had the right to vote for the first time at the General elections on the 28th November 1893. Suffrage opponents had warned that delicate *“lady voters”* would be jostled and harassed by *“boorish and half-drunken men”*, but in fact the 1893 elections was described as the *“best conducted and most orderly ever held”*.

This success came at the end of an enormous struggle by suffragists in New Zealand, ably led by Kate Sheppard. The importance of this struggle was captured in the words of The White Ribbon editor, Nelly Perryman, 25 years later, *“We, the mothers of the present, need to impress upon our children’s minds how women of the past wrestled and fought, suffered and wept, prayed and believed, agonised and won for them the freedom they enjoy today.”* **These words of wisdom are as relevant today - eighty nine years later!**

The struggle for enfranchisement is celebrated each year on **Suffrage Day, September the 19th**. The herstory of Suffrage day is a herstory of taking action. As women of New Zealand we must all continue to fight for women's rights until true equality is achieved.

Why we need to vote in our local body elections in 2007:

It is a proud herstory we carry. It was a twenty year campaign to achieve suffrage for women in New Zealand. A long and hard struggle which ensured that today we can enjoy the right to vote. This right must not be taken for granted, we must honour the struggle of the women who came before us, claim our heritage and exercise our right to have our say.

Historically, Suffrage Day is an opportunity for women all over the world to celebrate acts of courage and determination. It has also been an opportunity to call for change when injustice occurs. One of the easiest ways to do this is to take up our right to vote.

So be a modern day suffragist. Find out who is standing for election to be your Mayor and Councillors. Exercise your right to choose who will represent you for the next three years. These are the people who will decide how our communities will develop and grow, what services we will have, how much we will pay for these services and a myriad of other things that will impact on our day to day lives.

(With thanks to the NZ Union of Student Unions)

Sharon



Sharon has rejoined the Centre after some years. Marie, a HUB member decided to find out more about Sharon.

Sharon is not a stranger to the Kapiti Women's Centre and has found her way back after 12 years away. A recent member to HUB (management group) she has come on board full of enthusiasm and great ideas. I first met Sharon whilst trying some of the delicious fare that she had prepared and what an introduction, I was very impressed with her culinary skills and thoroughly enjoyed the meal that she had made.

Being the inquisitive person that I am (some may say nose), I thought that I would find out a bit more to what makes Sharon tick, other than great cooking skills.

What memories do you have of your time as a volunteer 12 years ago.

My memories are very happy ones. I was really shy when I joined KWC (for those who know Sharon now this is quite hard to believe) I didn't even want to answer the telephone; however my involvement really helped to improve my self confidence. I was involved with the organisation of the Ten Year Anniversary and that was a very memorable event! I also remember the time when the carving of the women displayed in the garden was made and I was involved in laying the mosaic path outside of the Centre, both events that are part of the essence of the Centre.

What triggered you to re-join Kapiti Women's Centre?

Being a very good friend of Carol, a current Centre Worker I would listen to her talk about what was happening at the Centre and it was extremely hard not to get caught up in her passion and then being part of HUI last year really did it for me. I got to see a bunch of awesome women have heaps of fun and really doing something good for the women in the community at the same time. So the next thing you know I am back at Ngahina Street rediscovering the Kapiti Women's Centre and finding out where I can fit in. With my work and family commitments volunteering as a HUB member seemed just right.

Do you think that the Kapiti Women's Centre has changed from your previous involvement?

Yes there is definitely a difference but I think that this is largely due to the members of the Collective. There are always new women becoming involved with the Collective and with that comes new ideas, thoughts and energy. In terms of the physical building there are also some changes, which I would say are for the better. I can remember the office being where the counselling room now is and the clothing cupboard area is now much more accessible. The library also appears to be much better stocked and easier to use. The most popular services (pregnancy tests, counselling, and courses) back then, still seem to be the most in demand today.

What do you wish to achieve from your involvement with KWC?

I hope to help with the ongoing changes and growth of the Centre. It may seem cliché but I do feel good about myself when I am involved with helping others. I also want to ensure that the Kapiti Women's Centre continues for my children and their children.

Where do you see yourself at KWC in the next 12 years?

I would like to see the Centre more widely accepted and with a high community presence. I would like the security of the building to be guaranteed. The Centre is largely run on funding from various agencies and this is never guaranteed – a secure financial future would be the ideal.

Sharon revealed herself to be a very warm, positive and caring mother and nana with a genuine interest in people and I discovered that her passions don't just cover catering, she is also a super scrabble player. The Collective value and appreciate Sharon's input to the management of the Centre, her wisdom, warmth and experience are a wonderful contribution to the Centre.

New faces at the Kapiti Women's Centre



Lisa

Lisa moved to the Kapiti Coast five years ago. She has been involved in retail both owning and working in local ethnic shops. Her passion is everything about the beach – especially walking and playing on it with her son and dogs. She also makes time for yoga and time out with a coffee and a good book.

Lisa first came to the Women's Centre on the recommendation of her Doctor. Before she knew it she was enrolled on lots of courses. *"I loved being able to get out of the house and at the same time meet cool women so my life was not all about my baby:"*

"When I had myself back on track I decided to give something back to the Centre." The training was scary and challenging, however, it has prepared me well for my role at the Centre. It is great working here, lots of fun. I feel happy here and am very pleased that I completed the training and am committed to my work here.

Barb

Barb has lived on the Kapiti Coast for a long time. She is a busy woman. She has worked for many years as a caregiver and now works as a team leader, which means taking on a large amount of responsibility which she does with a caring competence. Barb wanted another dimensions other than work in her life.

"I first became aware of the KWC from a long time volunteer. She suggested that I do the training to see what help I could be to others and in turn discovered what help I could find there for myself."

"Since the training, I have joined the Centre Worker team and am a lot happier in my life and have also seen that happiness overflow to my son. KWC is an amazing place filled with amazing women. I feel wanted appreciated and valued".



Charlotte

I am Charlotte, mother, sister, friend. Caring, sharing, loving, loyal, gardener, artist, humanitarian. Having my own sometimes hilarious, tragic and down right bizarre journey through life, I have need of the insight, outer view, laughter, friendship and cajoling of the other women. Not to forget their shoulders and ears too, there are many of whom I can call friends.

Making the shift to Kapiti, I wanted to meet others, sharpen my skills, and be a part of the community, have fantastic women to work with and learn new things. With previous volunteer experience I knew where to go! I saw it in the free rag.

There are amazing courses I'd love to do and plenty to keep me busy!. I know that life is enriched for having people to share it with.

Sherrie

Sherrie moved up to the Coast from Lower Hutt just over two and a half years ago. Sherrie says *"I now wouldn't want to live anywhere else!"*

"I did a Crystal course at the Centre and was once more drawn to working with women after my rewarding experiences at the Lower Hutt Women's Centre. I decided to join the Centre Worker training. From doing the training I have met some wonderful compassionate women.

This place has been a haven for me in regards to the great support I have received after a great loss in my own life. I hope to be able to give the same support to women who come to the Centre.



New courses in Term Four

This term sees a number of new courses being offered at the Centre. Two of these are being offered in partnership with other community organisations. FPA are very aware of the gap in services in Kapiti and are keen to bring some of their workshops into our community, **Dale Ferris** will be facilitating two workshops which will assist us to speak to our children openly and honestly about their sexuality. **Renata Balfour** from the Open Polytechnic will be leading a programme helping us to develop better financial management.

At the Kapiti Women's Centre we often get asked for self esteem programmes, so were delighted when **Debbie Graham** agreed to offer her "Strengthening Self Esteem" programme this term. A new workshop for the "Have a Go" Arts programme is "A peace of your Place – and exercise in abstraction" tutored by **Gill Kinns** a regular tutor at KWC. Pelvic Power is a four session programme which will appeal to many of us – a programme that will assist us "rehabilitate our pelvic floors". This programme will be facilitated by Robyn de Chateau, a Feldinkras® practitioner on the Kapiti Coast.

Strengthening My Self Esteem



"And then the day came that the risk of staying tightly closed in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom".

Good self esteem is essential for healthy living and meaningful relationships. We must learn to value and love ourselves so we can value and love others. Good self esteem helps us to be who we are and to become what we were meant to become.

If you are ready to blossom then this course is for you!

Tutor: Debbie Graham

A Peace of Your Place - an exercise in abstraction

You will roughly sketch by memory, a piece of your special place. It could be a place in your own home, in your garden, a corner of your special café or a favourite outdoor space.

You will then "abstract" out of this large sketch, a small piece to enlarge onto canvas.

This will be the time to let your creative self go – using pastel, paint and collage you will decorate your "Peace of Your Place".

Your tutor for this course will be Gill Kinns.



*Mel working under
Gills watchful eye*

Financial Skills - Making Finances Fun



**Are you fed up with feeling broke?
Debts getting on top of you?**

Then learn how to get sorted and make your money work for you. This financial skills course will teach basic money management skills and provides participants with a breadth of information giving you the confidence to create, manage and protect your money.

You will learn how to

- ♀ Budget better
- ♀ Set a plan of action
- ♀ Get to grips with financial terms
- ♀ Stay in control of you finances

You will be given tools and resources to make the most of this course.

KWC is pleased to offer these workshops in partnership with the Open Polytechnic

Pelvic Power

**Can we really rehabilitate our pelvic floors?
Once the muscles have stretched, isn't that it?
Why are so many women experiencing incontinence?**

These are questions often asked at the **Pelvic Power workshop** being offered at KWC in October. Tutor Robyn du Chateau, who has run many Pelvic Power courses says all women will notice improvement after this workshop.



Robyn du Chateau

"The answer is firstly to help women get a sensation of movement and then learn to separate the various muscles that make up the pelvic floor. Often women use only part of the pelvic floor and take the rest of it along for the ride" says Robyn. "By the end of the workshop women should be using all parts of their pelvic floor. That is what pelvic power is about".



Open and Honest – Talking to your child about sexuality

Do your children ask tricky questions about sex and sexuality?

Do you want to feel more confident answering your child's questions?

Children are building ideas about their sexuality every day. Children learn from many sources – by observing their parents and including friends and the media.

FPA supports the importance of parents/caregivers as the first educators in children's lives. These workshops focus on recognising the crucial role of parents, clarifying our own attitudes and values, practice responding to questions, understanding sexual development and age appropriate behaviours, examining influences and messages that children are exposed to.

The Kapiti Women's Centre is pleased to offer these workshops in partnership with FPA.

Do You Need

♀ *To borrow a book* ♀ *Information about courses & workshops* ♀

♀ *Take time out for a break* ♀

♀ *Free pre-loved clothing for you and your children* ♀

Pregnancy Test ♀ *Some company* ♀ *Use of a photocopier*

♀ *Information about community resources or agencies* ♀

A Chat ♀ *To feed and change your baby* ♀ *Have a Cuppa*

♀ *To find out more about KWC free counselling* ♀



KWC would like to acknowledge and thank the following organisations and individuals for their generous support, which enables us to continue to provide our services to the women of the Kapiti community.

**Box Trust – BP– Child, Youth & Family Services – CLANZ – Coastal Medical Rooms – COGS
Community Grants Foundation – Community Post – Coastlands – Creative Communities
Dr Alison Payne – Housing Corporation – J Ilot Trust – Kapiti Coast District Council – Kapiti
College Community Education – Kapiti Women’s Triathlon – Lotteries Welfare – Lion Foundation
JR McKenzie Trust – T.G. McCarthy Trust– More FM – Pelorus Trust – Porirua Family Planning
Centre – Pub Charities – Radioworks – The Trusts Charitable Foundation – Unison Trust**

KAPITI WOMEN'S CENTRE

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