

Murals brighten township

AN eye-catching art project is taking flight on vacant walls throughout Te Kuiti.

Led by local artist Brigid Allan, the Te Kuiti Art Project – ‘Empty Spaces’ – began last week with volunteer artists painting large scale pieces on previously unused walls to beautify the central business district and generate town pride.

Some of the art works, which are two stories tall, feature a falcon on Taupiri St, a tui on a wall in SuperValue’s car park, a Maori design behind the CAB building on Rora St and a young child and floral design behind the Waitomo District Library.

SUPPORT

With help from Waikato-based artists Daniel Ormsby of Te Kuiti, Jeremy Shirley from Hamilton and Denise Fort from Raglan, Ms Allan says the artists had “valuable support” from a large team of volunteers to carry out the project which is expected to be completed this week.

“As an artist I saw there was heaps of potential to fill up some big walls in town with artwork,” she says.

“So I spoke to the others about how the Te Kuiti community probably needed something that they felt represented themselves a bit more because I had noticed that people had very strong opinions about the other art work in town.

“We just wanted to create something that they could associate with – something positive.

“The birds have proved to be very popular and by responding to what the community wanted, we’ve had lots of great feedback already.”

FUNDING

Funding for the project was received through an online Boosted campaign as well as support from Waitomo District Council’s Creative Communities fund, Resene Paints NZ and The Lines Company.

Ms Allan says the aim of the project is to reflect the community’s values and culture through wall art and in doing so, creatively enhances some of the “forgotten spaces” in the heart of Te Kuiti.

“It’s really nice to see people walking down the street with big smiles on their faces after they’ve seen something you’ve created,” she says.

“That’s really cool.

“But I have to thank my children and Ant, Robin and Margi Peacocke and Hilary Karaitiana, because without their support, none of this would have been possible.”

The team of assistant artists, who are all based in the Waikato, included Arama Davis, Rima Emery, Jah McLean, Paige-Holly Wilkinson, Matiu Geroge, Stanley Chan, Harlem and Natsuko.



PICTURE PERFECT: The Te Kuiti Art Project ‘Empty Spaces’ led by local artist Brigid Allan aims to beautify the town’s central business district using large scale wall art featuring positive images including a young child (top) and native birds (below).

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