

Bi-monthly community newsletter covering Piopio, Aria and Mahoenui districts

Apr/May 2025

### Hello Readers!

Greetings from the Birdtalk crew!

Our bi-monthly newsletter focusses on local events, community achievements, and business news. We want to feature your stories and keep our community informed.

To this end, we welcome your submissions for articles, photos about local events, community achievements, and business news.

New Business: as a welcome to our area, we offer a free advert with accompanying article and photo.

**Graduates:** we'd love to publish our local graduates. Contact us for what we require.

Obituaries: do you have a passed loved one whom you'd like to feature in an obituary? Again, please get in touch.

Our email is piopiobirdtalk@gmail.com

Share your news/events with us!

We're excited to hear from you. Best regards,

The Birdtalk crew.

### Handy info

**ATM** machines GAS Piopio Piopio Cosmopolitan Club **Piopio Transfer Station** Cnr Aria & Kahuwera Rds Open Mon 9am - 1pm Sat 9am - 1pm Sun 1pm - 5pm



**DEFENDER** Horse of the Year is held in Hastings annually, where riders from the North and South Islands compete for prestigious National Titles. With Tessa Bradcock recently stepping up to 3\* on the eventing circuit successfully, 2025 seemed a good year to venture over to Hastings and compete at Horse of the Year for the first time. With the huge atmosphere, it's quite different to other events.

She entered in the Eventing which has three phases; dressage, show jumping and cross country. Her class entered was the Defender CCI3\*

Tessa got her 8-year-old mare Ceremony (paddock name Grace) as a 5-year-old. Ceremony had a foal as a 4-year-old, then had 6 months of show jumping before Tessa got her. Eventing was very new for Ceremony, but Tessa's dedication and training saw their amazing partnership form and move up the levels quite quickly, with many successes along the way.

"Absolutely love this little horse and how she gives me 110% every time we go down the centre line, enter a ring, or leave the XC start box; she's got my back no matter the day."

On the first day competing at HOY, Tessa and Ceremony were sitting in 14th place after the dressage phase; the second day was show jumping, which saw Tessa jump up the placings to sit in 3rd position after their clear round. The third day was cross country with Tessa and Ceremony finishing clear and under



time, moving them up again to take the win. The pair added no time penalties to their impressive dressage score of 38.2, securing a well-deserved victory. They were the only combination in their class to finish on their dressage score.

"A day that I've dreamt about for a few years now! Everything just went to plan and Grace gave me the best feeling out on cross country. I think she would have jumped anything I pointed her at. No one deserved to be crowned the CCI3\* event horse of the year more than her".

Tessa's next big adventure is the National Three Day event which is to be held in Christchurch this year over Easter. Tessa will take her other horse down there to compete while Grace gets a very well-deserved holiday.

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## **Piopio Lions**

SINCE the last Birdtalk the caravan has been taken to a Fun Day at the Tainui Domain in Mokau, the Aria Sports Day and Waitomo

Sports Day. Quite big days but a good turnout of helpers in the caravan.

Many club members were involved with the Aria Bike Ride with the caravan supplying food on the Friday night, and members marshalling on the roads on Saturday and Sunday.

The Club has donated funds to Piopio College to assist with the purchase of computers for students use.

A student has been selected from the College to go on an Outdoor Pursuits adventure; we will hopefully have some feedback on how that went, and be able to report in a future Birdtalk.

We are confident that the Club has a site at the next Fieldays in June. If your organisation might want to assist us please keep this in mind.

If interested please contact Gavin Todd 021 0870 0545 or Ross Smith 027 285 1703.

It flows generally southeast from its source in the coastal Herangi Range to reach the Mokau River 15km southwest of Piopio. One of its upper tributaries is the Waitanguru Stream, which has Waitanguru Falls on it.

MANGAOTAKI



#### We reserve the right to edit any material.

piopiobirdtalk@gmail.com

# Project Piopio Trust update

IT HAS BEEN a very busy two months for the team since last issue. A sub-group had a meeting about how we use the data from the Community Survey in a way that benefits the whole district. It is amazing how complex the process is. We are still hoping to hold a community meeting to share the results and seek feedback at some stage when it isn't so busy. There are some really good ideas to investigate. And the survey, - not surprisingly the overwhelming reasons people live here are because of family, the caring community and the quiet lifestyle.

Nicky Atkinson and her team of volunteers have been busy working with children in our three local schools, plus Curious Keas, creating paintings, many of which will be displayed in the village. These will replace the existing childrens' art which has deteriorated badly. The plans are exciting. We now need to seek funding for the next stage. Childrens' artwork to enhance the village is just stage one of a four stage plan which will progress over time and as finance allows.

Keep an eye on the 'Piopio Community Information' Facebook page for updates on the Children's Painting Competition and other events in our District.

The 'Birdtalk' team of Jules, Hannah, Maree and Donna met recently for the annual review meeting. There will be a few changes in the future layout to include an 'Information' column and a 'This is us' column. Another new initiative is that new businesses will receive a complementary advertisement and space for photos and an article. The team is also investigating the use of new technology in the delivery of the magazine in the future. This team does a great job for our community for very little reward. Please remember that if you have any news to share, email <u>piopiobirdtalk@gmail.com</u>! It goes a long way to make Hannah's job easier in sourcing articles.

If you would like to contact the PPT team for any reason, email projectpiopiotrust@gmail.com



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**Karen Barrett** 

# **Piopio Fruit & Veg Stand**

THE SUMMER and autumn abundance continues at our Community Stand. At the moment there are lots of apples, peaches, zucchini/marrow (yep, they can get away from us) and quince.

My heritage climbing bean experiment seems to have gone reasonably well - I hope yours has too. The White Czar, Frada, Cherokee Trail of Tears and Ojo de Cabra ("Eye of the Goat") beans from the Heritage Food Crops Research Trust are all guite different peaches at our place. Both the (see photo). I also grew cannellini beans and some of Mr Wooderson's dropping about a month early. The Dutch heritage peas. They've been drying in the garage in ice cream containers per guidance from Mark Christensen at the Trust before I store them in glass jars in the pantry.

Rancho Gordo, another well-known confess that my online source for resource for "Leguminati," advises that dried beans are best used within one to two years. I'll be sharing recipes on the Stand's FB page as I experiment using them in case you're interested.

It's been a good season for heirloom tomatoes, potatoes, onions, garlic, butternut



squash/pumpkins, apples and hazelnuts and walnuts are butternut/pumpkins get a wipe with apple cider vinegar before curing on wooden pallets in the garage. We'll see about the kumara crop in April.

On the tomato front, I must Pink Berkeley Tie Dye tomato seeds, Chianti Gardens, pulled a fast white butterflies until they disappear one. The seeds didn't grow that particular variety, so my apologies if you found that with your seedlings as well. After checking online reviews and getting a bizarre response that this was due to our soil, I won't be buying seeds from

them again.

I trust everyone is starting the winter veggie crops: broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, kale, silverbeet, broad beans, carrots, rocket and spinach are all possibilities. I also pop in coriander seed about now and rocket, Italian parsley and spring onions in planters in the glasshouse. Remember to net for the dreaded with cold temperatures.

Check out our Facebook page for updates on what's on offer most weekday mornings, recipes and growing tips. Please don't hesitate to contact me with any questions or issues.

## **Piopio ANZAC Commemoration 2025**

OUR SERVICE this year is being organised by a small band of volunteers and is in the early stages. We are open to input from all sectors of the community so if you would like to be involved please get in touch. We would particularly like to hear from any current of past serving service men or women as it's great to have their involvement.

Our organisation is in the early stages but so far we know that the main highway through Piopio will be open to traffic so the planning will be around safety and also the quality of the service (dealing with excessive noise etc).

Pam Voyce has agreed to be MC again this year and the group of singers who were so good last year will be back. All groups and individuals are very welcome to

participate in the March and wreath laying ceremony. Following the service all attendees are welcome to share in light refreshments at the Piopio Cosmopolitan (and RSA) Club.

The parade start time is 11am, assemble 10.45am and the service will follow.

Parade assembly point will be on the corner of Huia and Tui Streets. The Service will be either at the Village Green or in the hall if wet. Any changes will be put in the school newsletters and social media -**Piopio Community Information** Facebook page.

Contact person is Jenny Brodie 021 141 1243 or email jenbrodie63@gmail.com





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## Good music, good vibes & exercise

**SHANNON** Witchman and her sister started Boxfit in rural Auckland after realising there was a lack of access to exercise classes in the area. The classes quickly became very popular and ran for three years until family life took priority.

Shannon explains that Boxfit is more of an aerobic exercise class than a boxing class. It uses coordinated boxing techniques to the beat of excellent music.

After moving from Auckland to Te Kuiti in June 2023, Shannon started Boxfit back up as a way to get involved in the community (and also keep fit!) before branching out to Piopio in 2024, and both have been ticking along nicely since.

Shannon says her classes are for all fitness types.

"I supply the gear you need. You don't need a partner to come, and there are no start dates – just come when you can. You can be any shape or size, fit or unfit, coordinated or uncoordinated; even age isn't a factor! If you want a fun way to move, this is the class for you!"



Boxfit classes change weekly, and Shannon always comes up with new tracks to challenge her class.

"If you're looking for a way to move your body, I urge you to try a class; you'll get to meet new people and laugh – and trust me, you will! You will listen to good music and get carried through the session by good vibes alone.... The exercise is just a bonus. It's quite unique, and you'll be surprised at how quickly an hour of exercise can go by!"

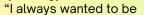
Classes are held in the evenings, Monday and Thursday at Piopio Primary School and Tuesdays at Te Kuiti Playcentre. Please keep an eye on the Facebook page for session times.

You can contact <u>www.facebook.com/shanzboxfit</u> with any questions you may have; you can also see some snapshots of what a class may be like. Shannon says she hopes to see you there!



## A holistic approach to health

WHEN it comes to health and well-being, it's easy to focus on just one area-whether it's nutrition, exercise, or emotional health—but true wellness comes from a balance of all these elements. For Laree Rauputu, the founder of Cultivate Health, her journey to understanding health more holistically started with studying health sciences and psychology.



in a profession that helped people. Then, after having kids and doing my own research, I realised naturopathy aligned most with my values and seemed to integrate all of the pieces of the puzzle. "

Naturopathy is a holistic system of medicine that uses natural remedies and therapies to support the body's ability to heal itself.

Cultivate Health is located next to Hairloom in Piopio, with a separate entrance at 1 Kea Street. Laree offers online bookings through her website and consults by appointment only. For existing clients who need a quick check-in or a specific herbal formula, she also provides mini consultations.

In rural communities like Piopio, access to holistic health services can be limited, and Laree is excited to be filling this gap. She believes that rural families, particularly those in farming communities with high stress and long hours, can benefit from a more balanced approach to health.

"I really enjoy helping families—mum, dad, kids. I see how the demands of farming can take a toll, and I feel I can offer support that brings some balance into their lives,"

For first-time appointments, Laree offers a 90-minute consultation, where she takes a thorough look at a person's

health history, current concerns, and lifestyle. She can then create a personalised health plan that includes dietary and lifestyle recommendations and, if needed, prescribe highquality supplements and herbal medicines to aid in their healing journey. Laree's mission is clear: to help people live

clear: to help people live healthier, more balanced lives.



Natural & holistic healthcare for you and your family

Book your appointment with Laree Rauputu Registered Naturopath & Medical Herbalist:

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## **Piopio Primary happenings**















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**Piopio Orchard** 

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THERE has been lots of learning activities happening at Piopio Primary in term 1. In the first few weeks, over 90 tamariki participated in the Project Piopio Trust art competition. The art that was created was of a high standard and we are excited to be part of a community project that reflects the special place that is Piopio.

In 2025, all tamariki at least once a fortnight is spending time in the school gardens and bush area. Each class are developing a different focus to apply their learning.

In the junior classes they have been investigating healthy soil and ways to make soil ready for planting the seeds they are growing. They have also been learning how to code using special robots and small ball skills to help them to play tennis and cricket. Improving foundation P.E skills is very important to us.

In the senior area they have been learning how to ask good questions. They used silver beet from the garden to make a salad after pricing ingredients they may need, surveying what others enjoyed eating to decide what to include in their salad, and creating a silver beet salad recipe. The have also been planning ways to make the bush area an area where we can play and learn in.

Our year 3 to 6 tamariki all did well at our swimming sports at the end of February. Our house leaders lead the tamariki in loud chants and a free swim was enjoyed at the end of the competing. Nineteen of the tamariki then represented Piopio Primary School at the Waitomo Interschool Swimming Sports. The team was very successful and returned to kura with lots of ribbons.

At Piopio Primary we encourage our tamariki to try as many different sports as they can. Examples of this was the team who competed in the Waikato/BOP XC Mountain Biking Champs held at the Te Miro Mountain bike track. The team were competing against much larger schools and placed well. We also have some very skilled Motor X riders at our kura. Nia MacDonald and Case Wilson represented our kura at the North King Country Battle of the Schools and placed highly.

We are excited about future learning activities we have planned, including a school band, school trips and Matariki.



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IT HAS BEEN a super successful season for Piopio Swimming Club star, Caitlyn Cody. With her eye on two new records and aiming to break her own 2024 season record, 2025 started pretty well despite a shorter season than previous years.

In week 2, Caitlyn took out the 16-yearold girls 100m Freestyle record (1.17.67) from Catherine Pickering in 1993, swimming it in 1.16.53 minutes, only to break it again a week later with a time of 1.15.95.

Over two nights during Club Champs, (after 3 days on school camp), Caitlyn came back to break the 16-year-old girls 100m Breaststroke record (1.41.03) held by Rachael Voyce (now Laver) from 1986, swimming it in 1.37.56 - a

### **POSITION VACANCY**

The 'Whitebait Inn' Mokau has an exciting opportunity for a motivated customer focused individual to join our team. The position is up to 30 hours per week and we can roster to suit travel requirements. We do offer basic accommodation if this is necessary. For further information please email info@whitebaitinn.co.nz



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Caitlyn (centre) with head coach Lee Alcock (left) and Rachael Laver

memorable effort with Rachael watching on as one of the Club Coaches.

Looking towards the last swim of the Champs Caitlyn wanted to break her own 2024 record in the Open 400m Freestyle (6.16.56) and did so swimming it in 6.10.12 minutes.

Congratulations Caitlyn on your success.

Caitlyn has also been a volunteer coach in the Learn to Swim Programme for 3 seasons. A fantastic role model and an inspiration to our younger club members. We are so proud Caitlyn, keep striving and showcasing what it takes to be successful.

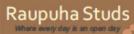




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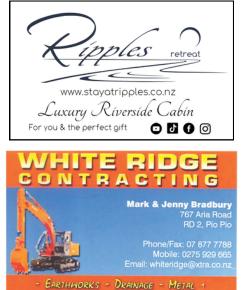




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## Japan trip quiz fundraiser a hit

**PIOPIO COLLEGE** is thrilled that 19 students and 5 teachers will be embarking on an unforgettable 10-day trip to Japan this September. Over the past nine months, the students and their families have worked tirelessly, organizing a variety of fundraisers to make this dream a reality. These fundraisers have included everything from marshalling for a rally to catering events, BBQs, raffles, and even shearing and crutching.

Their latest fundraiser, a quiz/trivia night held on March 21 at the Fat Owl Motel, Bar & Eatery, was an absolute hit. The evening was packed with entertainment, including picture rounds, cryptic rhymes, tricky puzzles, and a sensory smelling round (one of which even featured some local effluviant!).

It was an exciting competition! Congratulations to the Hurley "Wests" team for claiming the title! It's also impressive how close the "Lifestyle Hacks" team came, just two points behind. Also congrats to "Low and Slow" for taking the best-dressed team award. A shout out to our best dressed individuals; Joy Hurley for taking 1st place, with Paige Brooks and Lance Peterson rounding out the top 3. The auction was a great success, especially with Sam Brooks leading the charge! The "Waitanguru outdoor adventure with Lance" auction was humorous, particularly with Lance's personal pitch. We're sure Marieke and her friends will enjoy the experience.

The quiz night was a great success, and the Piopio College parent group would like to extend a heartfelt thank you to everyone who supported the event, as well as the amazing sponsors who made it all possible. Thanks to the hard work and dedication of the community, the students are one step closer to their dream adventure in Japan!







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#### **OUR COMMUNITIES** 8

## Mighty thanks

To our volunteers, our sponsors, our farmers and our riders... THANK YOU for making the Mighty Mokau Trail Ride the spectacular day that it was! It is a privilege to be able to bring this event back each year. Our little town really appreciates the support and generosity. We look forward to welcoming you all back next

year. on February 15, 2026.







## Waitanguru Branch **Rural Women NZ update**

**OUR** local branch of RWNZ are planning to host an informal social evening at the Piopio Cossi Club on Tuesday, April 15 starting AT 7pm. We will provide a light supper and hopefully speakers from a couple of local businesses.

Everyone in the community is invited (including men) and we are hoping that people who are new to the district will come along and meet other locals.

Aside from the social evening above our small group has a membership stretching from Te Awamutu in the north to Awakino in the south and usually meet once a month. If you are interested in more information or would like to come along you are welcome to contact our President, Maree Jones 0274 759 805 or Secretary, Noelle Turner 07 877 8369.



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Ladies Club Captain: Jenelle Coxall Men Club Captain: Michael Kejstrup

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Lifestyle Adult \$100 (non-graded)

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# Aria Sports celebrates 120 years



**YET ANOTHER** great Waitangi Day in Aria marking the 120th Aria Sports Day was held recently. Thank you to all who competed, supported and made it happen. The weather played its part with a warm, sunny day which enticed families to come

and enjoy an array of events, stalls, and food offerings. The day included dog trials, shearing and wool-handling, horse and pony events, and this year a Colour Run, which proved very popular. And of course, the free kids waterslide and running races are always a hit.

The Shearing and Woolhandling event, which enjoyed record-breaking entries of 141 competitors, is testament to the quality Puketiti 2ths that have been put up over the last few years with often the lowest shearing points in NZ. This means fast shearing with excellent quality points being achieved. It also means some fast woolhandling is needed. This show would not run without the support of our local community, the Aria Domain Board, and our sponsors - thank you.

Locals that placed in Finals - Shearing: Sonya Fagan 1st Junior; Keahrey Mason 1st intermediate; and in Woolhandling: Mia Baron 1st Novice; Keryn Herbert 2nd; Sue











#### PGG Wrightson Real Estate

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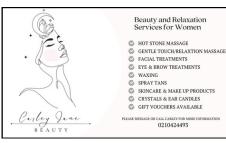
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### LOCAL FACILITIES

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Fat Pigeon Café 07 877 8822 fatpigeon@xtra.co.nz

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Piopio Dental Dr Kim Tatham 07 877 8864 smilingkiwi@piopiodental. co.nz

**Recreation Centre** Kimberley Cody 07 877 8700 027 210 1860

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Aria Primary School 07 877 7857

Aria Toy Library Librarian: Karen Jones 021 038 5153 ariatoylibrary@gmail.com **Curious Keas Preschool** Stephanie Brough 07 877 8224

Kohanga Piopio 07 877 8185

Mainly Music All Saints Church, Moa Street Music and movement for children 0-5yrs & caregivers. Thursdays @ 10am Alyson Singleton 07 877 8840

**Piopio Playcentre** Jo Stockley 021 148 7556

Piopio Primary School 07 877 8103

**Piopio College** 07 877 8173. Meeting rooms available for hire

# COMMUNITY

Piopio Police 07 877 0490 Crime Stoppers 0800 555 111 We live in a great community so let's stop these few who are taking from us. Tony.schrafft@police.govt.nz www.crimestoppers-nz.org

All Saints Church Cooperating Parish of Piopio, Aria & Mokau Main Road, Piopio. Worship service 10am

King Country Christians Judy Bromham 07 878 6985 Every Sunday at 10.30am Senior Citizens Hall

**Community Fruit & Vege Stand** Karen Barrett 07 877 8012 struanfarm@gmail.com

Housie Thursdays 1pm Senior Citizen's Room All welcome. Paddy Coffin 07 877 8367

Justices of Peace Vikki Hall (07) 877 8058 Clive Fredericks (07) 877 8048

Piopio Garden Circle Visits are 3rd Thurs of every month except Jan & Aug Gillian Hooper 07 878 7880 027 345 9603 Laver Marine 07 877 8484 or 021 105 4737

**Opportunity Shop/ Mustard Seed** Cara Bryant 027 345 3389 Tasha Bryon 027 324 6016

Mahoenui Hall Lynette Adams lynadams@xtra.co.nz

Piopio College Community Library 07 877 8173 library@piopio.school.nz

Senior Citizen's Organisation Meetings first Monday of the month, 11am. All welcome. Wendy Weinberg 021 0826 5622

Seniors' Exercise Classes Wendy Weinberg 021 0826 5622

Marriage Celebrants Clive Fredericks 027 280 3867 Heidi Preston 027 679 1931 Tuituia (Ripeka Price) 021 464 000

Piopio Lions Club Stephen Cooper 07 877 8159 Gavin Todd 07 877 7700 Ken Perry 07 877 8035

**Piopio Memorial Hall** Book venue or facilities through Waitomo District Council 07 878 0800

Piopio/Paearuhe Retirement Village Jenny Brodie 07 877 8033

The Old Piopio Post Office Art Gallery 022 437 0789

Waitanguru Rural Women Maree Jones 027 475 9805 06 752 9765

# ACTIVITIES & ATTRACTIONS

Piopio POP (Tui Park) Waitomo District Council 07 878 0800 Key for toilet available from the Cloverleaf tearooms or Snow Nicol

Piopio Market Day 3rd Sunday of each month Alison Turner 027 615 8754 Piopio and Districts Museum Mark Verry 07 877 8842 Key available from Piopio Superette

### SPORTS & RECREATION

**Aria Squash Club** Secretary Lee Alcock ariasquash@gmail.com

Light Horse Club President Helen Potter helen.neilpotter@gmail.com

Line Dancing Club Linda Oliver 07 877 8313

Piopio-Aria Golf Club Hamish Roach 027 578 5905

**Piopio Bowling Club** Alan 021 0845 4198 Wendy 021 0826 5622

**Piopio Community Sports** (Rukuhia Domain) Tony Schrafft Tony.schrafft@police.govt.nz

**Piopio Rugby Club** President Peter Hurley 021 117 2973

Piopio Swimming Club Matt Carter 021 569 311 piopioswimclub@gmail.com

**Pony Club** President Dani Darke 021 168 0220 Secretary Rebecca Were

Tennis Club Reon Verry 07 878 8678

**King Country Hunt** Master: Joy Hurley 027 577 7881

Trail Bikes & Moto Cross Track Darren Lupton 07 877 8054

Waitomo Ski Club Kim Tatham 07 877 8820

Waitomo Aero Club Pete Voyce 07 877 8254 John Carter 07 877 8290

piopiobirdtalk@gmail.com

# **Riding success**

**BENTLEY** Jones & Heath Wilson are putting Piopio College on the map in the sport of Motocross.

In late February they both competed at the King of Schools 2025 hosted by the North King Country Motorcycle Club. With only the two boys making a team, it was always going to be a hard task to podium given they took the top placings from three students per school.

There were 65 primary/intermediate schools entered and Piopio College placed 20th overall with just two riders.

This didn't impact their determination and willingness to showcase their talents. Bentley rode in the 8-11yrs old 85cc class and placed 8th overall for the day. Heath road in the 8-11yr 65cc class and he placed 8th overall for the day.

Well done boys, we are extremely proud of your achievements and look forward to celebrating more successes.







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