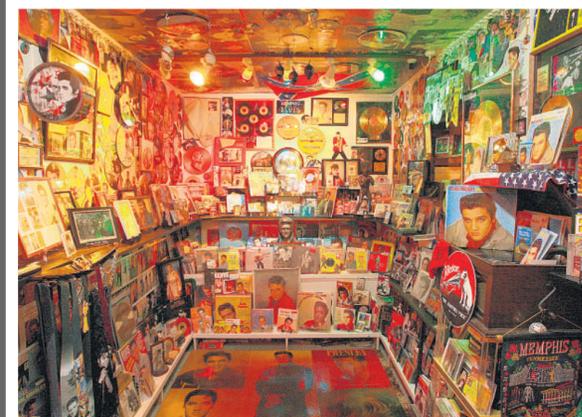




Reporter **Merania Karauria** and photographer **Tracey Grant** were in South Taranaki and found you can rock with the King in KD Wasley's shed, while at Kakaramea the students are learning about growing and caring for vegetables. Waikanae contractor Lance Goodman, working on the State Highway 3 alignment at Manutahi, says as an outsider working in the region, Taranaki people are "bloody great".



# Can't help falling in love with Elvis



**TRIBUTE TO HIS IDOL:** The inner sanctum of Hawera man KD Wasley's Elvis museum. PHOTO/TRACEY GRANT 290311WCTGELVIS09

## Hawera man's two-room shed pays tribute to the King of Rock 'n' Roll

Stepping in to KD Wasley's museum is a spiritual experience of an Elvis kind.

KD's swept-back hair style is the first sign that this is more than a passing fad; Elvis's memory is captured in memorabilia that KD has collected since the 1950s.

His wife cuts his hair and KD keeps it in rockabilly-shape every day.

KD says he can't help himself; Elvis is his world. But there are rules at the Wasleys' house: Elvis is off-limits in the home. Only the hairdo is allowed inside.

Elvis smiles from every space in KD's two-roomed tribute to the King.

KD points to the jacket Elvis wears in a picture; he is wearing a replica he had made years ago. It still fits decades later, and he can still sway his hips and legs as he did as the frontman for the Jewel Dance Band, which played Elvis tributes in the 1950s and 1960s in Hawera.

**"Elvis's music is healthy, and it's good for you."**

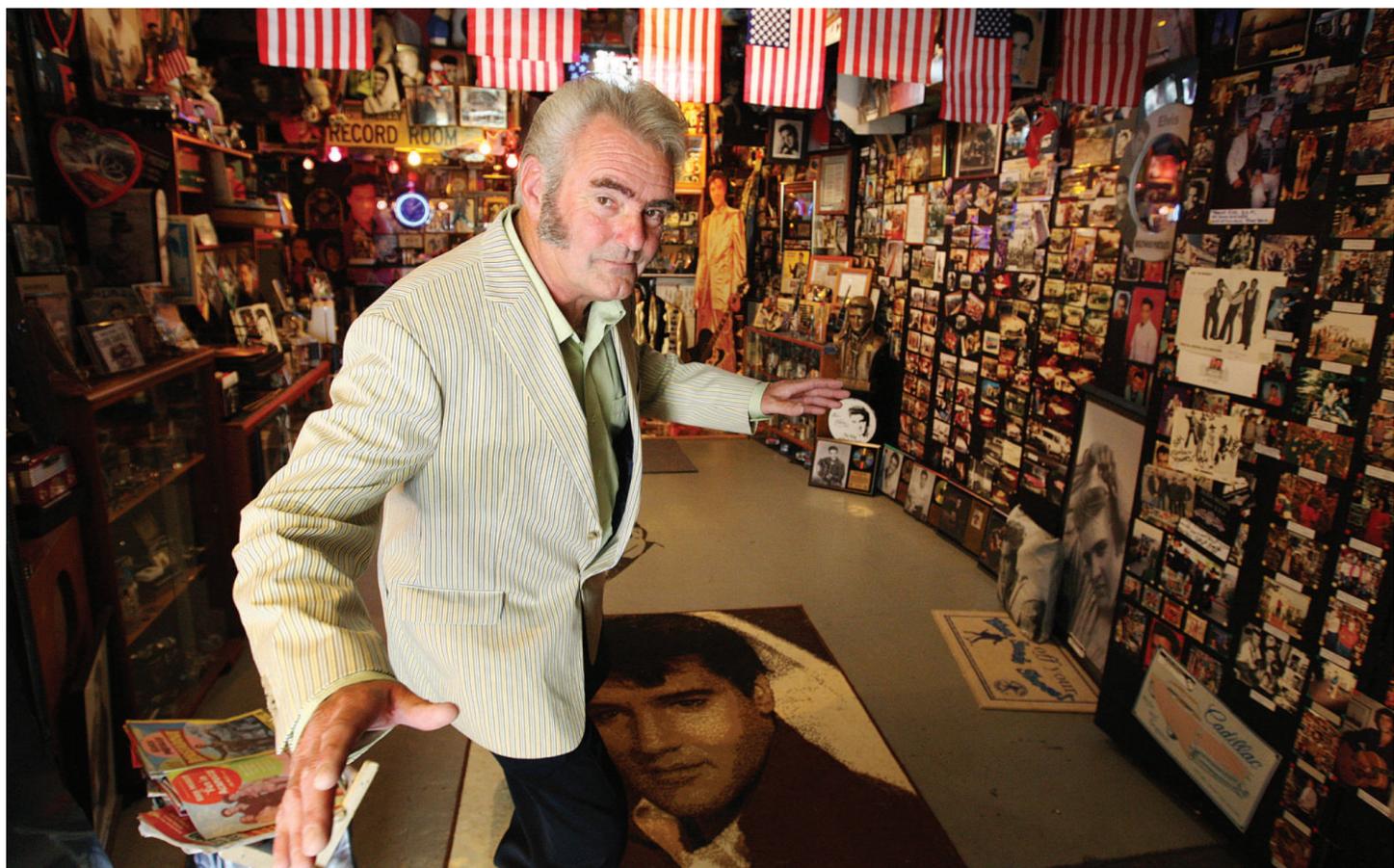
KD Wasley, Elvis fan

Pictures on a celebrity wall from the early 1960s include those who have made the pilgrimage to Elvis's Graceland estate in Tennessee. Among them are John Hoare, the Hi Marks, Maria Dallas, Justin du Fresne, Tom Sharplin, the Exponents in 1992, Foxtel TV Sydney in 2006 and, more recently, Jeremy Wells.

There is an original A&P picture of Elvis with members of a Maori kapa haka party in Hawaii, and another of Elvis in hongis with one of the women.

"Beautiful, eh?", KD says proudly.

In another display are 1960s LP records from around the world:



**ALL SHOOK UP:** Spritely KD Wasley says he is happy to be caught in a "time warp" in his shed-turned-museum dedicated to the King.

PHOTO/TRACEY GRANT 290311WCTGELVIS09

Japan, Russia, Italy, France, South Africa and England, and a copy of Elvis's first single, *Heartbreak Hotel*. There are also singles from a Memphis jukebox that cost 75 cents to hear, and an RCA vinyl LP.

There's a picture of KD's Memphis pen pal, Roy Lyon, who met Elvis.

Mr Lyon took the original pictures of Elvis and nearby are the original tickets to a 1968 Elvis concert he sent to KD.

"That was like flying to the moon," KD said, but as a young teenager he could not afford the plane ticket to go.

KD has met Elvis's original backing band, the Jordanaires, and Elvis's uncle, Vester Presley,

during one of his many trips to Memphis.

KD's three sons reckon their dad's in a time warp, and he agrees.

How many other blokes have a shed dedicated to a legend?

"Elvis's music is healthy, and it's good for you," says the 63-year-old as he sways and sings a few lines, enjoying the life of a King. ■ www.digitalis.co.nz/elvis/ m: 027 498 2942, viewing by phone appointment only.



**LEARNING WHILE FEEDING THE SCHOOL:** Anna Cole (left), Georgia Mackay and Scott Cole in the Kararamea School vegetable garden. PHOTO/TRACEY GRANT 290311WCTGGARDEN01

## Students dig deep for lessons

Planting vegetable gardens is a growing trend in schools, and at Kakaramea School, north of Patea, there's a thriving plot tended by the senior students.

Anna and Scott Cole's grandmother, Molly, comes to school to help the pupils with the garden.

They have learned not to sow too close together and are learning about the growing patterns of a plant from a seedling as well the best growing conditions for the plants up to harvest time.

The children have just added more

plants to the herb garden which already features mint, parsley, lemon balm, rosemary and chives.

So far the children have learned to make tomato relish and beetroot pickle. On Wednesdays they sell the crops to their parents.

Corn was abundant during the summer and fed the 44 children in the school. For those who didn't like corn, there were carrots.

A worm farm and compost bins for the children's food scraps and other organic matter have been placed in the garden

and had become an essential part of the learning experience at Kakaramea School.

The new children to the school also have their own little garden plots of flowers and strawberries that they have planted in tyres placed to capture the warm sun.

Kakaramea School on SH3 is 10km north of Patea and serves the children from the surrounding farming area. When the children leave the school they go on to Hawera Intermediate to the north or Patea Area School to the south.

## Safer highway drive closer

**IMPROVEMENT:** Motorists on State Highway 3 at Mugeridge Rd, Manutahi, will next week be able to drive on a 1.5-kilometre alignment that comes with a \$4 million price tag. The roadworks will improve safety for motorists in the deep gully section of highway. Once the funding and resource consent were approved, work began in the summer of last year with work continuing through the latest summer. Work is expected to finish at the end of May. NZ Transport Agency Wanganui, Opus consultants and the contractors said locals had supported those who had been involved since work began.



PHOTO/TRACEY GRANT 290311WCTGROADS01

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