

home of the new Pawarenga Community nursery and gardens. Its worth a stop to call in and find out what is going on. When did all this happen? And chances are that this will be the first time you will have heard of the Pawarenga Community Trust.

The names says it all. A trust established initially by 12 people who belong to the community of Pawarenga, and for all of whom this place is their *turangawaewae*. We are a mixed lot, a true cross-section of the community. Among us we represented the established families and the relevant newcomers; the old and the young; the idealists and the down-to-earthers; the Maori and the Pakeha. Each one of us is able to reach out and relate to different groups and families so that eventually everyone in this community of 200 odd people becomes part of the Trust.

Common factors

The common factor that has brought us together is a caring, a concern for the future of our children, our land, our community. We have the land, those hundreds, perhaps thousands of acres of underdeveloped Maori land all tied up in a complex network of titles and absentee owners. And we certainly have people too many of whom are young, unemployed and unskilled. Land and people. And now, the Pawarenga Community Trust where we pool all our skills such as they are, and our resources and our ideas and work together to help ourselves.

With the help of government wage subsidies and P.E.P. programmes the Trust has organised work in the community with an emphasis on skills training, and work that is satisfying and of continuing benefit to the community.

Another look

Take another look then at our workshop and you will see those four young people all under 20 working with a will and purpose. They started in January and helped to build that workshop under skilled supervision from the laying of the foundations to the carving of the *tekoteko* on top.

With tools and gear 'borrowed' from the community they are learning to weld and work with machinery and timber; and once the loan from the Internal Affairs department comes through for equipment there will be a whole range of workshop skills leading to permanent jobs created to service the needs of the community. A positive spin-off is that six of our workers went together to Whangarei to attend a two-day course at the Northland Community College on diesel tractor maintenance and seven more have signed up for selection to attend a month-long welding course arranged by the Dept. of Labour. A two day welding course with Community College tutors is scheduled this week in our own

workshop for 12 people. All of these are first for Pawarenga.

Beautiful nursery

The nursery? It's only a half-minute walk away through the bush reserve behind the workshop. There are four people here too who started in January. The gardens are growing all sorts of vegetables entirely for local supply and that line of avocados and macadamias is the start of our model orchard to show how and what can be grown under local conditions.

The site is beautiful with its boundaries marked by native bush and the Rotokakahi river and will lend itself well to the landscaping we are planning with flowers and trees and imagination. The tree seedlings nursery is our top priority and we started all our seedlings last October with seed bought from the Forest Service for timber and shelter belt trees.

You will understand why when you drive up the hill and look down into Pawarenga valley. Once the native forest was gone no-one seemed to think much about replacing the trees that had vanished forever, so the prevailing westerlies funnel up the Whangape harbour and really blow in from the sea. We intend to lease land soon in Pawarenga to demonstrate how to plant shelter belts and woodlots, how to use land to grow a variety of things, how to use people to work the land. Land and people, — our most valuable resources.

In the meantime we have been able to set up other useful projects to provide jobs for our unemployed. St. Gabriel's for instance, — that beautiful old church close to the monument on Taiao

Hill that marks the site of historic Makora Pa from whence came the Aupouri people. They are all that remain, sentinels on a hill overlooking a seaway that was once a part of New Zealand's early colonial history. With the aid of grants from the Historic Places Trust a group of our men are restoring St. Gabriel's. Carefully and painstakingly they have lifted it and lowered it onto new solid foundations. They will continue as funds allow until it is finished. For some it is their church where their *tupuna* lie, — for all it is a job worth doing that they are proud of.

Renewing themselves

In a way, St. Gabriel's is symbolic of what is happening in Pawarenga. As the church has been lifted so are we, the people of Pawarenga, lifting our expectations and laying new foundations to build a future on. As we restore the church we renew ourselves.

The cemetery, once overgrown with weeds and long grass is now clean and tidy, and a scrubcutter and storage shed for tools have been donated to ensure that this cemetery and all the others are kept clean and tidy.

People in the community are feeling good about what is happening and are looking to their own homes. With the help of Maori Affairs a scheme has been approved that will upgrade and renovate existing houses; and the Housing Corporation is investigating the building of a cluster of new rental homes in Pawarenga.

Overcoming

All started less than a year ago with the first meeting of a group of people with a vision of the future who decided to form the Pawarenga Community Trust. A lot has happened since and most of it has been good. But is a bit like our traditional walkway that climbs the steep hillside above the Whangape harbour to give us access to the *kaimoana* of the West Coast beaches; a walkway that we are also repairing and making safe as another useful P.E.P. project for our people. This is the Golden Stair.

We are climbing our own Golden Stairs. With tact, sincerity and straight thinking we can overcome the first big obstacles of misunderstanding and suspicion. Education is widening the way and good communication is making the going easier. Linking hands with other groups like the Maori Committee, the church committee and the Maori Women's Welfare League to support each other makes us all stronger.

There will be difficulties and delays and detours because we are ordinary people with our share of human faults and frailties and we have a long way to go. The important thing is that we have started our journey up those Golden Stairs; — we are on the move.

Na tatou tenei mahi hei painga mo matou tamariki.

