

Go See Grimmy's Place



If there is such a place as tree heaven, it's conceivable that place is beyond the over-height roller doors of Don Grimwood's workshop and gallery. There, a multitude of wood-grains come to rest, or indeed for the lucky, are reborn. Totara, swamp kauri, rewarewa, walnut, olive tree, purple

heart and even the humble kwila are openly admitted – any/all sins forgiven. Here they have the chance to shine again, and indeed to put a smile on the faces of the people who visit. In the not-at-all chaotic workshop, pieces of lumber are re-imagined into tableware, tables and 'assemblage' – the art of creating three-dimensional works by combining found or everyday objects into a new composition. A wry smile is a likely outcome of a visit to Don's place, as the concoctions are often fun and whimsical – such as a friendly/not so friendly crocodile that came to life by the certain combination of camping at the beach, finding a piece of driftwood and other convivial creative influences. The concept at the time seemed like a good idea to Don – surprising then that the plan wasn't met with quite the appreciation he may have hoped for when he ran it past a fellow beach-goer and creative influence appreciator. Don's light hearted concept speaks for itself. Fun art – the type that creates a talking point in people's homes. Perhaps yours?

Don also delights in recycling, up-cycling, and repairing old furniture. He can create a fresh take on an old piece, completely re-imagine something interesting or precious (such as turning a concrete mixer into a chair or a trolley jack into a table), or simply breathe new life into a much-loved heirloom or curio. With experience in a wide range of skills, including tiling, metal fabrication, building, and joinery, and backed by a qualification in cabinet making, Don is likely your man for any furniture restoration project that demands



both craftsmanship and a genuine love of detail. Using his skill as a craftsman to make 'something out of nothing', and which others truly appreciate and want to have in their homes is hugely gratifying for Don and the thing that spurs him on to do more - a love of timber's second life inside welcoming new homes.

Speaking of love, Anni, the love of Don's life, magnanimously gave the stage to Don at our interview despite that she herself has also been an active member of the Whangārei Heads Arts community for some years. Anni's colourful mosaic, steam-punk and other creations sparkle around her home and studio. But as many artists find, energies (and ailing fingers) wax and wane and so whilst Anni is selling off all her mosaic creations in a 'closing down' sale, we feel it's very likely she will simply be taking an intermission until she bursts radiantly back on the scene – this time likely with oil paint. Watch this space...

Contact Don by email : grimvsmith@yahoo.co.nz

Meanwhile, we hope that you will all hold space for us at Easter (4 & 5 April) to come to the WHANGĀREI HEADS ARTS TRAIL, visit our home studios or one of the local group exhibition centres, where you will find a huge array of artworks for sale and appreciation. Please diarise the event and be sure to invite friends and family from out of town ahead of time. We look forward to seeing you and will tell you more about the event in the next edition. Happy New Year from the WHAT Committee. If you're not creating art, at least create harmony.

Emma Verberne