

2 MINUTES WITH Jean Hollier

The name Jean Hollier is synonymous with music in Tawa. It is particularly appropriate that we feature Jean this month, as it's only a few short weeks before the biennial Tawa Schools' and Community Festival, commonly known these days as "Tawa Goes to Town", is held at the Michael Fowler Centre. She is one of the key players in this key Tawa event, and has been involved in it in one way or another in its almost 40 year history.

Jean is a familiar face to hundreds of Tawa school students in her role in teaching music in this community, and especially with the weekly music festival rehearsals currently taking place. She truly is a Tawa taonga.



Where were you born? Wellington Hospital

Where did you grow up? Tawa

Where were you educated?

Tawa School, Tawa Intermediate, Tawa College (notice a trend?), Wellington Polytech – Business Studies, studied Piano with Jean Legge and Jillian Bray.

How long have you lived in Tawa? Forever!

What about family?

Married to the wonderfully supportive Gary, awesome daughter Zoe, Trixie our dog, Princess our cat and five fish!

Work experience over the years

Spent 14 years in the banking industry, including management roles. I continued to teach music at the Tawa Music Centre during this time, to "keep my hand in". Took the opportunity to be made redundant in 1999 and have been teaching music ever since. I currently work in four schools as an itinerant music teacher, am a tutor for Tawa College Community Education and Tawa Music Centre and have private piano/keyboard students.

What are your interests and hobbies?

Music, theatre, gardening (when time permits), and shopping.

Favourite sports team? Black Caps.

Favourite musical group and/or individual singer?

Will pretty much listen to and attempt to play most artists/composers, but Elton John's talent and the concert atmosphere he creates is pretty unbeatable.

What is your favourite holiday destination in New Zealand?

Paengaroa [according to Wikipedia, Paengaroa is a village in the Bay of Plenty, lying 11 km from Te Puke and 35 km from Tauranga – Ed.]

What accomplishments/achievements in your life give you the most satisfaction/pride?

Taking over the role of producer of Tawa Goes to Town was pretty daunting, but the tradition has lived on. My own musical love was nurtured through these shows, which I have been part of since 1976* (I haven't missed one since). Shona Murray directed these music festivals for many years and inspired so many people, including me. I have a passion for every Tawa student to have the opportunity that I had, to be a part of this amazing, unique Tawa community event.

When Murray [Cameron] took over the musical director role in 2012, a producer was needed to fill the vacant role. Murray and I have always been able to work well together, being involved in a few musical productions together, including many family events (21sts, weddings, etc). As his big sister I can tell him what to do!

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What are two or three things you would like to do before you die?

A river cruise through Europe.

See a live show or concert every month.

* The Tawa Schools' and Community Festival has been running in its current format since 1979, involving the college and adult choir as well as several hundred primary and intermediate school singers. The venue has been either the Wellington Town Hall or Michael Fowler Centre. It commenced in 1976 as a primary school music festival which was held at Viard College or the Porirua Recreation Centre.

From 1979 the music festival has been an annual event, changing its frequency to once every two years (biennial) after 1990. The 2018 occasion will be the 25th show in the current format!

(Compiled September 2018)