



It was like stepping back in time, as the horse-drawn carriage slowly trundled past the majestic old homestead.

# Matapiro magic

**VINTAGE** cars, Clydesdale horse-drawn carriages and a beautiful old homestead combined to create a garden party with a “lovely old feel”.

More than three hundred people flocked to Matapiro’s majestic homestead for the old fashioned garden party to raise much needed funds for Crownthorpe School.

One of the members of the Crownthorpe fundraising Group, Fiona McKenzie, says the entire community came together, even those with no connection to the school, to make sure the day was successful.

She says more than \$12,000 was raised during the day, which surpassed all expectations.

The iconic homestead has been the centre of the community for almost 100 years. However, many people, including those whose families worked on the station, have never stepped foot inside it.

Situated on the hill overlooking the Matapiro

bedrooms, as well as its own library and school room.

During the garden party, everyone was given the rare opportunity to view parts of the iconic homestead, letting them see the grandness and how people used to live.

Fiona says some of those who attended used to live on the station as children and had many interesting recollections of life on there.

During the day, many of the guests shared their childhood memories and while all the stories were different, they all had a common theme – the old homestead and its grounds were “sacred” and were “off-limits”.

Fiona says the Hawke’s Bay Vintage Car Club was present during the day to offer rides between the homestead and the historic St Georges Chapel.

“The rides were in hot demand and each car travelled in excess of 100 miles during the day.”



From left: Francesca Arlidge, Jivana Constable, Elizabeth Kinloch and Holly Atkins selling handmade soaps. The four were part of a group that created the soaps and packaged them. Selling at \$2 each they were in hot demand.

## Unforgettable experience at Matapiro

The homestead and chapel are connected as the homestead's original owners, the Shrimpton Family are buried in the cemetery beside the chapel.

"The chapel was just amazing. It was breathtaking, beautifully decorated with floral arrangements," Fiona says.

Overall, the day surpassed all expectations and was a huge success. Fiona says for her the highlight was the way people were enjoying themselves, many of whom intended to stay for an hour or two but ended up staying most of the day.

Many of those who attended felt it was a memorable day – one they would not forget for a long time.