

A new platform

A major series exemplifying the magazine's high-quality current affairs journalism takes us into our new chapter.

Kia ora tātou. The magazine you are holding recently marked its 84th anniversary. The *New Zealand Listener* was launched in June 1939 and the first edition – distributed free and billed as “the journal of the National Broadcasting Service” – promoted not only radio programming on the cover but also “Women, Children, Farming, Sport” (no further explanations given), the “Golden Days of New Zealand Rugby” and “New Zealand Greets the King”. We wouldn't write coverlines quite like that today but we're still covering sport and the King on occasion as part of current affairs journalism that also includes insightful columnists and cultural commentators, literature, entertainment coverage and broadcasting and streaming guides.

Eight decades on, we are delighted to write a new chapter in the life of the *Listener* with the launch of our digital platform, listener.co.nz.

After a successful collaboration last year sharing selected content with the *New Zealand Herald* online, we have built on that foundation: the *Listener*'s new site can be accessed both via listener.co.nz and from the *Herald*'s home page, nzherald.co.nz. You'll find the pick of our print content there, plus online-only exclusive articles such as a list of 100 “intriguing” New Zealanders, and new columnists including Ockham shortlisted poet Joanna Cho. There are treasures from our archives given new life, too – this week, photographer Jane Usher shares her recollections of a photo shoot with prime minister David Lange.

The *Listener* digital edition is paywalled; please see page 37 for an introductory subscription offer.

In this week's magazine and on the website, we begin a major series, “Hardship & Hope”, by Rebecca Macfie. It demonstrates the high-quality journalism that is a pillar of the

Listener and is the result of deep research and travel over the past year by Macfie, with support from philanthropists Scott and Mary Gilmour.

An award-winning investigative journalist, Macfie spent time with child-health specialists, whānau, marae leaders, non-government organisations, community organisers, iwi and local government leaders, mana whenua, housing activists, researchers and social entrepreneurs. She wanted to get behind the data on poverty and deprivation in New Zealand and listen to those on the front line who are working with families to help them build

lives of mana and security.

Most of the work the series highlights goes on out of the public eye. Frequently, it happens in spite of government social-support systems, which remain siloed and bogged down by what the Productivity Commission has called “pseudo accountability”.

“No one claims to hold all the answers,” says Macfie of those she spent time with. “Quite the opposite. The common themes are a drive to build deep collaborative relationships to deal with some of our most entrenched and damaging crises, to build on the strengths and skills of those commonly regarded as ‘marginalised’, and a commitment to respectful relationships with whānau who need support.

“A family might be in crisis – a lack of money for

the basics, homelessness, intergenerational trauma or addiction, poor health, or a toxic accumulation of multiple stresses – but every family has goals, strengths and capabilities. The task is to build trust and to support them to realise those strengths.”

As one NGO leader told her: “This is not about saving poor kids. This is about nation-building. They don't need to be saved. They are highly competent, amazing people. There might be shit going on and so you support them.”

“Hardship & Hope” will run over the next four weeks, with additional content online.

Do visit listener.co.nz and let us know what you think of this next chapter in the *Listener* story. – Kirsty Cameron



Hope: A message in Ruatoria, Tairāwhiti, by artist Mr G (Graham Hoete).

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IT'S BACK! This issue also marks the relaunch of a reader competition. See BRIGHT LINES, page 5.