

# The 2012 Wairarapa Environmental

## Recycling fashions of old win-win situation for all



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Thirty-two fashion designers from across the country competed as finalists in the The Oversew Fashion Awards 2012. *Wairarapa News* talked to some of the women who made it happen.

Transforming old clothes into one-off, trendsetting styles: Upcycling is a growing, global fashion movement.

Since The Oversew Fashion awards (TOF) hit the Carterton catwalk last month, the small Wairarapa town has staked its claim as New Zealand Upcycling's headquarters.

Robyn Cherry-Campbell says it's a concept that's not new to Kiwis: "Upcycling is already a growing trend. We are more aware of the benefits of sustainability; the world of upcycling and recycling is already part of our culture."

"Upcycling is a way to be fashion conscious, environmentally conscious and of course, economically conscious. Back in the day when most mothers sewed – taking dresses up or down, adding something on that's in fashion –



And the winner is: Models show the winning outfits.

upcycling was a way of life," Corrine Edwards says.

"My idea of fashion is wearing what you feel is right for you. My own personal style is very different from most other people I know."

Vicki Waller says "we've got so many crafty/talented people in Wairarapa and TOF gives them a chance to showcase their fashion flair. I hope it gives them confidence to keep on designing and creating".

In true Kiwi style, the idea to hold what is possibly the world's first Upcycled Fashion Awards came about over a cuppa. The inspiration came from an event

put on by Crafte Latte – a craft group that meets weekly at a Carterton Cafe. Turning a great idea into a professional annual event on New Zealand's fashion calendar took 12 months of careful planning by the TOF team. The night before was nerve-wracking, with little sleep, Robyn says.

"What if the makeup artists and the hairstylists didn't show? What if the hill was blocked and they couldn't drive out? What if models pulled out at the last minute?"

But the fears weren't realised and instead, locals and fashion experts packed out the Carterton Events Centre for the inaugural, hugely successful awards show.

Lorraine Hall of Hall Fashion, one of the three judges, commented "the talent and creativity from the designers

was of a very high standard and clearly visible on the night. It was truly an honour to be invited to be one of the judges.

"I am already looking forward to being involved next year as the TOF Awards grow from strength to strength."

Chris Tracey says the concept underpinning Upcycling is a no-brainer, it's cost-effective and produces unique, one-off creations that are also good for the environment.

Having Wairarapa Environmental – the region's leading recycling company – come on board as a key sponsor has been described as a "marriage made in recycling heaven".

"For us recycling isn't just about rubbish collection, it's about how we live our lives and what choices we make every day."

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