



the world through
polly's eyes



photo: Will Clark



photo: Morgan Koons



Dr Jessie Stone educating

Polly Green has travelled extensively as a professional athlete, living a life based on action, adventure and living among other cultures.

Now settled in Gisborne, Polly has founded Flair Films to share the inspiring stories of people she has met along the way and the efforts they are making towards making the world a better place.

With an aim to produce positive films that leave the viewer feeling empowered, Polly is exposing the amazing true stories of people who are living their passion and giving back to the world in whatever way they can.

Her footage, spanning over 25 countries, has been aired on ABC World News Tonight (USA), TVNZ and TV3. But, more importantly, her work is inspiring more and more people to get onboard and volunteer.

"When people see my films and it makes such an impact on them that they begin to make positive steps forward, whether it's volunteering or raising awareness in their community, that's what it's all about," she says.

Polly recalls, as an eight-year-old, watching a television movie on a female runner named Wilma Rudolph. One of 19 children, Wilma caught 'infantile paralysis' (caused by the polio virus) as a very young child. After being told she would never walk, Wilma went on to win three gold medals at the 1960 Olympic Games in Rome for track and field.

This battle against overwhelming odds inspired Polly to want to share the stories of people determined to make a difference in their lives and the lives of others.

Polly attended the University of Colorado where she studied fine art and cultivated her love for skiing, running, biking, and white-water kayaking. She also studied art in Italy for one year, which she says was not only artistically inspiring, but ignited a new passion for travel and living in a different culture.

Upon graduating with a bachelor's degree in fine art in 1991, Polly began a nomadic seasonal life of raft guiding, teaching white-water kayaking and ski instructing.

Her love for the outdoors saw Polly first visit New Zealand in 1997. For years to follow, she would periodically return to utilise our kayaking spoils, and eventually gained employment at the NZ Kayak School in the 'white-water kayak capital of New Zealand', Murchison. Needing a base to go home to after her constant travelling, Polly found Gisborne, where she now calls home.

"The place for me is New Zealand," she enthuses. "I love it here."

While travelling, photography became Polly's main creative outlet until a kayak expedition in Vietnam with National Geographic in 2000 sparked an interest in making a film. Six years later, Polly finished *Nomads*, which she shot, directed, wrote and did the preliminary edits.

Nomads, a documentary about Dr Jessie Stone's vision to eradicate malaria in Uganda, has been in over 30 film festivals around the world and has won numerous awards. But, more importantly, the film celebrates Dr. Stone's achievement of distributing 30,000 mosquito nets and educating 100,000 Ugandans about malaria.

"This is just one example of the profound affect one person can have in changing things for the better," Polly explains.

Polly has also produced *Running for Water*, a documentary about the Blue Planet Run, the first ever around-the-world relay race promoting awareness and raising funds for clean drinking water in third-world countries.

"I was recently contacted by a 14-year-old boy in the States who saw *Running for Water* and now he's started his own clean drinking water campaign," says Polly.

"He's started doing presentations to schools in his community about the importance of clean drinking water and how it affects people. If my work has doing nothing more than inspire this boy, then it still would have been worth it."

Most recently, Polly has returned from a follow up shoot in Uganda, and has completed a documentary, *Soft Power Health*, which focuses on the continuing efforts of Dr Stone's malaria work.

With her project list continually increasing, Polly set up her own production company, Flair Films in 2007. Using the newest, lightest, digital equipment, Flair Films specialty is the ability to shoot and edit in remote places of the world with the use of lightweight video gear and laptops.

To help fund her projects, Polly has also founded Homes to View which offers a complete video production package including shooting, editing and preparation for web.

Polly's next project is a short documentary on Maori carvers on the East Coast and after that ... the world is her oyster. www.flairfilms.com

Polly's path to a positive planet

Make time for yourself – Sign up for that class you have always wanted to take: yoga, Aerobics, spinning, art or dance. Doing something just for you will bring more joy, calm and peace in your life and you will have more to give to others. When you feel good, it rubs off.

Go on a negativity diet – Avoid negative people, negative news and TV shows and keep negative comments and gossip to yourself. Focusing on what's good in the world and your life will create more good.

Give – Compliment someone today, bring someone flowers, help someone who needs your help, bring a friend a care package when they are sick (soup, medicine, lemons and honey, magazines) or tell your employees how much you value their work.

De-clutter – Get rid of anything you haven't used in the past year and donate it to your local charity. You will feel renewed energy and the charity will benefit as well.

Charities – Find an organisation you feel passionate about and volunteer your services. Volunteering can come in many forms. If you are a marketing specialist, for example, pick a charity you believe in and help raise their profile. If you are a web designer, do some design work for a charity that needs a website. Giving of your expertise is a great way to give back and make an impact. Fundraising Institute of New Zealand www.finz.org.nz is a place to start. Support people and organisations you believe in and are passionate about. There are so many good charities out there, and it's important that you truly believe in what they are doing. Do a bit of research, and support something that is close to your heart. I believe that if you can impact even one person positively, you are making a huge difference.