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“At school, they used to ask kids to run the projector and I put my hand up to do it. I just thought that job was the bee’s knees. I loved threading the film and listening out for any problems as it rolled through.” Meet Gavin, the next in a series from our people.

Our Whānau – Gavin Cowern – UHT Technical Officer, Palmerston North



Gavin

UHT Technical Officer, Palmerston North

I've always enjoyed understanding how a thing works. I grew up on a sheep and beef farm but pretty early on, when I was six, my mum and dad thought, nope, Gavin's not going to be a farmer.

I used to walk around carrying a little sack full of bolts, nuts, odds and ends and was always pulling something apart and putting it back together again.

At school, they used to ask kids to run the projector and I put my hand up to do it. I just thought that job was the bee's knees. I loved threading the film and listening out for any problems as it rolled through. I was hooked on film from that point on.

When I was a bit older, I went to a deceased estate auction in Fielding that had a projector going as well as a short film collection from New Zealand's National Film Unit. I spent \$100 dollars, which was 3 week's pay at the time, to get it and my interest kept growing from there. I spend a lot of my time looking for film archive. It's exhilarating! The thrill of the hunt, and the delight from finding rare reels.

My wife's just as bad and we joke that things come into this house, but they don't leave. In fact, it was actually my wife who spotted the old Scout Hall on Trade Me. We scooped it up and parked it in the paddock out the back, and in our spare time we run a local cinema.

The whole nine yards: we provide jaffa's and ice-creams from the old trays that hang around your neck. We even have an intermission, like they used to. We create little festivals for different folks – car clubs, motorbike clubs, other nutters like us.