

Inspired to start a new career

By Ainslee Dennis

IT is graphic. It is design. It is the end result of a re-think about how Jake Putan of Old Bar could step out of school and into a career that nurtured visual creativity.

Jake walked out of Chatham High School in 2010. He had studied, he had planned, he had sat the Higher School Certificate exams that he hoped would open the door to university and a career in graphic design.

It was to be the first chapter of Jake's post-high school life story and he couldn't wait for it to begin and so he waited, like hundreds of Manning Valley students for news of his results.

It was not as Jake had hoped and so his plan to study graphic design at university required revision.

He needed a new direction and a new way to nurture his creativity.

He found it on You Tube, a picture, an idea, graphic design that was not on paper and not on a computer screen. It was worked in hair and for 18-year-old Jake, it was inspiring.

Jake said he looked in the mirror, took hold of a pair of clippers and tentatively cut lines into his hair, creating his first hair tattoo.

"It was not very good, but I liked it. Really, the first couple were not very good," Jake said.

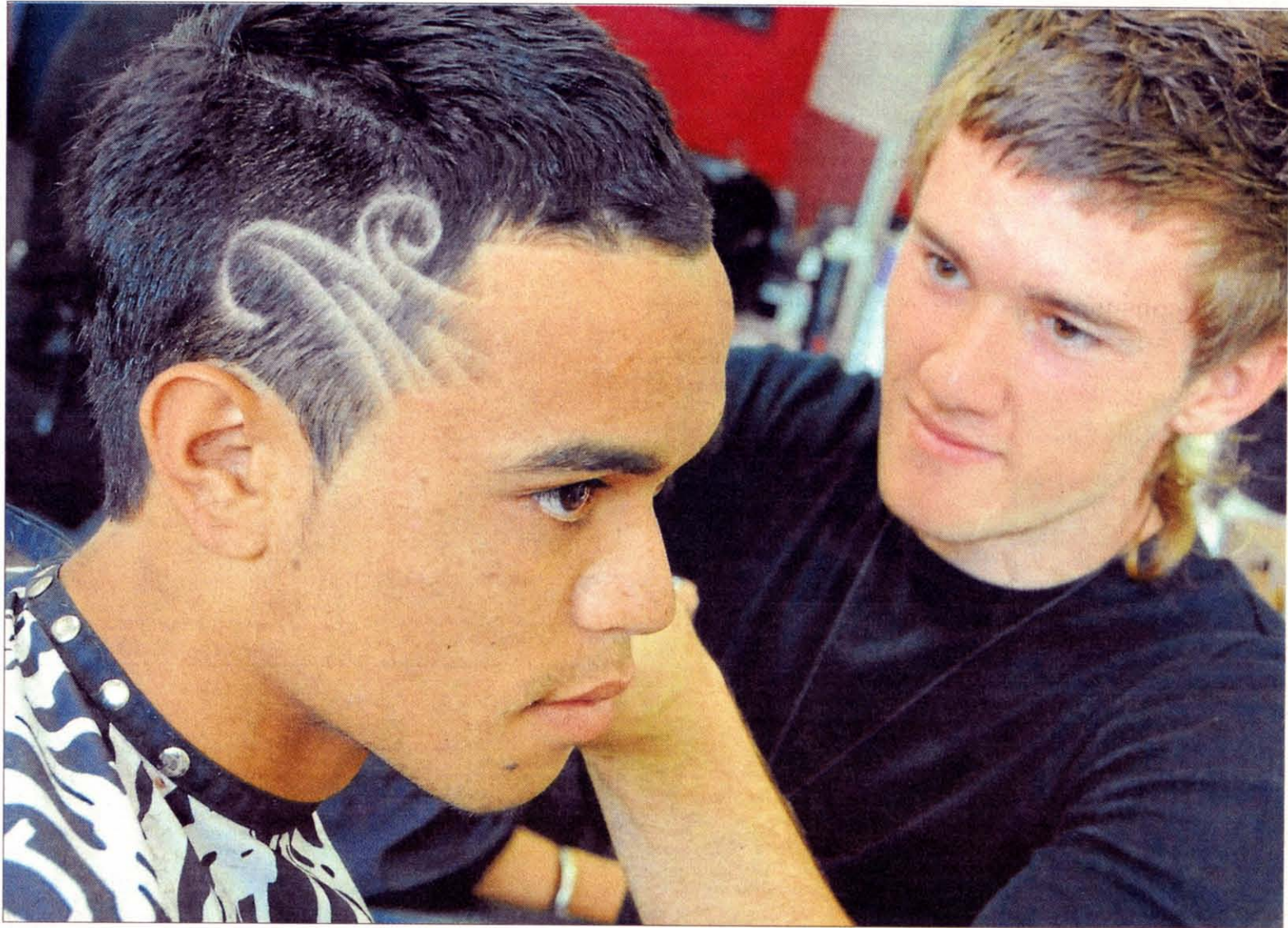
And so he kept practising. One step, one design at a time, one friend at a time.

"I'm totally self taught and I think I've done about 500 designs on about 50 people," he said.

The new year brought the opportunity for Jake to develop his graphic design skills in a new school of learning.

He will bring his unique skill and willingness to learn to the team at Nik's Cutting Edge in Taree.

This week he will begin a three-year hairdressing apprenticeship in the Albert Street salon.



Jake Putan works his 'hair tattoo' magic on Eric Grant's hair. at Nik's cutting Edge, where Jake has just started work as an apprentice hairdresser.

Jake said he is keen to learn and provide people with access to his unique cutting abilities.

"The ways things turned out made me think differently about everything and so now I may even work towards opening my own salon in Queensland. But for now, I'm here and it's great."