

# Beauty pageants life changing for former Miss Franklin

"I have to thank pageants for making me who I am today and feel it's a wonderful experience for any young woman. Who knows what path I may have taken otherwise?"



Melissa Lowe (now Chandler) was Miss Franklin 2004, representing the district at Miss World New Zealand. She talks to Franklin eLocal about the wonderful opportunities that have opened to her since she entered her first beauty pageant.

"I grew up watching the Miss World and Miss Universe pageants on TV. They always appealed to me as I loved the beautiful dresses and the graceful young women who wore them. When I was 20 I did my first beauty pageant with Dianne Foley, It was the Harvest Queen 2004. I didn't have a lot of self-confidence and didn't think I was going to win but after meeting Dianne she encouraged me to enter and said I was definitely beauty pageant material. I won the competition and was so over the moon. From there Dianne suggested I go on to enter Miss Franklin 2004 so again, not thinking I would get anywhere, I still entered to give it a go and meet some new friends. I won that too. I was so excited and amazed, as from this I gained automatic entry into Miss World New Zealand 2004. I represented Franklin in the competition with girls around New Zealand, but didn't place. I had a great experience, made new friends and had a new found self-confidence about me.

I left it at that and decided to go on with my life, until the next year, 2005, when I was at Botany Town Centre and was approached by Mila, one of the organizers who runs Miss New Zealand Asia Pacific. She again said I was what they were looking for and should enter. I was a bit unsure as I had not got anywhere in the last one but my parents and the organizers encouraged me to give it a go. I also spoke to Dianne who said "Go for it girl!" When I won this I was blown away! I was about to go overseas to Miss Tourism International held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in December 2005. I had so much fun over there - made lots of great friends.

➔ page 6



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