

Homecoming for scriptwriter

By DAVID HAXTON

Nick Ward has long held a desire to write a Kapiti based script that would make it to the television or silver screen.

He loves the district where he spent a lot of time growing up and returns often to his parents Brian and Gill Ward's beachfront home at Raumati South.

His ambition is now becoming a reality as his third feature film, *Garage Sale*, is being shot in the district.

Mr Ward's aim came close before with a television series called *Coasters* that TV3 was interested in.

In the end it went for *Outrageous Fortune* that Mr Ward enjoys and is even writing for.

Garage Sale, co-written with Raumati South woman Linda Niccol, is a love letter to the district and about his parents' obsessive bargain hunting.

Getting people interested in making the "feel good" movie was very difficult, especially as the producers wanted something with more drama in it.

"They would say it's a bit lightweight and I would say 'no this is about family so it's the most heavyweight you can get'."

But director Paul Murphy and producer Kerry Robins loved it and so it's now lights camera and action time in parts of the district.

Mr Ward has even popped down from Auckland to be involved in a cameo role.

"I play a guy who is having a garage sale.

"He hasn't even got a name.

"He says a couple of lines and then he's out of there."

He said he was touched the filmmakers



Scriptwriter Nick Ward's third movie, *Garage Sale*, is being shot in Kapiti.

Photo: David Haxton K65-07

had asked him to take part in the movie.

"All I can say is the acting community better watch out.

"I'm a double-barrelled gun now.

"Writing and acting is a dangerous combination," he laughs.

The cameo role doesn't mean he's hanging around the set all the time bugging the filmmakers.

"It's like when you go to a restaurant.

"You don't go into the kitchen and tell the

chef how to prepare the meal.

"I'm quite happy to let them prepare the meal and then I can enjoy it at the end."

Mr Ward came to public prominence as the writer of the hit movie *Stickmen* that was released in 2001.

He had always wanted to write a movie or play but for one reason or another never got around to it.

But when he was made redundant from his job as an advertising copywriter in Wellington it was time to really put pen to paper.

He didn't need to rush out and get a job because the redundancy money could tide him over for a while.

"In days gone by redundancy was a death sentence but it opened up the door for me."

After the success of *Stickmen* he has devoted all his time to writing.

He is working on a range of screenplays and television projects both here and abroad.

His second film, *The Ferryman*, a twisted horror film set on a boat between New Zealand and Fiji, will be released at Labour Weekend.

In the Ward writing pipeline at the moment are six-part and 10-part television series for TV1 and TV3. Details can't be divulged.

He's also writing a Korean horror movie set in Auckland, has a play called *Mike and Virginia* coming up with the Auckland Theatre Company which he's excited about and has a few other movie ideas up his sleeve.

"I've even got a colouring-in book coming out soon - no I'm joking."