

Dementia Canterbury



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Autumn 2017



Life Stories

Enjoying the Life Story project – Vera, son James and Shelley from Dementia Canterbury

Contents

From the Manager	2
From Our Patron	3
Changes to Enduring Powers of Attorney	3
Activity Groups Programme	4
Brain Ignition.....	5
Younger Onset Support Group	5
Living Well	6
Library Update.....	7
Volunteers	8
Social Program	9
Fundraising Support.....	10
Fundraising Update.....	11
Donation slip.....	11
Sponsors	12



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From The Manager

2017 began with a hiss and a roar for Dementia Canterbury, with the purchase of a new people mover vehicle. (Thanks to Manchester Unity for their support.) Client access to our groups and activities remains quite a challenge with many people struggling to find suitable transport to attend. We have a small number of wonderful volunteer drivers but we are in desperate need of more. If you or someone you know could help us out for a few hours per week, please get in touch.

Our activities program continues to expand. Our program is unique in that we don't create activity groups in isolation for people, we partner with existing groups or services based in the community to create groups in normalised environments. New to our service are partnerships with two localised community centres where we will trial walking groups/wet weather activity backup. We are also working with our library colleagues in Waimakariri to begin Next Chapter (book) groups in North Canterbury. Delivering groups in partnership within the community provides valuable opportunities for education and increased awareness in creating dementia friendly environments.

2017 has brought some staff changes. We sadly farewelled Sacha O'Brien after eight years with us, but welcome both Alison Stevenson (West Coast) and Kate MacNeill (North Canterbury) to our team.

Canterbury has unfortunately continued to be affected by the power of mother-nature, this time with the fires that raged through the Port Hills area. We know this has impacted on some of our clients and families, and we are here for that additional support as needed.

Other areas affected by last year's earthquake remain majorly impacted. Many of our clients in Kaikoura were forced to leave the region. Mirroring what happened in Christchurch after the earthquake, change has resulted in more people presenting with dementia. At the request of the Kaikoura community (and with support from Lotteries Earthquake fund) we will be starting a special year-long project of additional social support, dementia education, as well as setting up a community based activities program which we hope the community will take over once up and running.

Planning is well underway for our annual appeal later in the year (October 6th and 7th) and we will be holding a "high tea" event series in September. Look out for more details about both events in our next newsletter.



Kate MacNeill.



Alison Stevenson.

From Our Patron

"I was privileged to be elected as Patron of Dementia Canterbury and while I have had a long association with the organisation there were some aspects I was not familiar with i.e. community involvement. I decided that the only way I was going to gain knowledge on this involvement was to join some of the activity groups.

The first activity I joined was the Gardening group. I thought this would be a nice activity, not too strenuous perhaps deheading some flowers, raking leaves etc. etc. – how wrong was I.

My fellow colleagues and I were ushered to a very overgrown area in the Botanical Gardens, provided with spades, trowels, gloves and set to work. It was not easy work but I was so impressed how everyone "rolled up their sleeves" and worked tirelessly to complete the task we had been given. When we finished, we all agreed it was a job well done and surprisingly decided that we all had enjoyed doing it.

My next outing was Artzheimers group. This I thought would at least be not so physically challenging but I underestimated how mentally challenging it would prove to be. The enthusiastic and knowledgeable guide from the Christchurch Art Gallery presented a selection of 3-4 paintings and the group sat around and shared individual thoughts on what we individually "saw" in the painting. I was totally amazed how insightful members of our group were

and what they could see and I couldn't. I have since been back to the art gallery and revisited the paintings and have decided how right they were and now agree with many of their interpretations.

My final outing was "McBakers" at Ronald McDonald House. From the minute I sat down I could see that I was surrounded by a number of expert bakers. Of course this was balanced by some who were enthusiastic but not so expert but happy to play a supportive role, which they did so well. There was much laughter and sharing of personal experiences as we measured, melted and mixed and by the end of the morning the array of "goodies" we had made for those people staying in the House was impressive – we just had to sample and of course take a photo.

What did I learn from joining these three community groups.

I learnt how important the involvement and camaraderie is for those who attend.

I learnt how valuable this interaction with the community is for raising dementia awareness.

I personally learnt how to be a better gardener, art critic and baker – all in the company of such amazing people."

Wendy Fleming
Patron

Wendy Fleming has a long association with dementia, initially working as a Registered Nurse and trainer. She has been the Chair of Alzheimers NZ Charitable Trust, Vice Chair of Alzheimer Disease International, and is an Honorary Life Member and Past Chair of Alzheimers NZ. Wendy has been the Patron of Dementia Canterbury for several years. She lives in Christchurch.



Changes to Enduring Powers of Attorney

There have been some recent changes to EPA forms. For more information please check our website www.dementiacanterbury.org.nz or <http://superseniors.msd.govt.nz/finance-planning/enduring-power-of-attorney/>

Activity Groups Programme

The Activity Groups pilot programme started a year and a half ago. As staff members we find the groups hugely rewarding. We love to see people laughing, relaxing and enjoying themselves and returning home with a spring in their step. Of course it is about the carers too. It makes our jobs feel so worthwhile when we hear carers saying "how lovely it is to have a little time to themselves, knowing that their loved one is in safe hands and enjoying themselves".

The swimming groups at Papanui and Rangiora are a real favourite of ours. People are always glowing and vibrant after a dip in the pool and spa; and we are delighted to have a carer or two join us in the water, and for a cuppa afterwards.

We took a large and lively group to The Court theatre to see *Ropeable*. A small, select group took part in a "Backstage Tour". This was such a treat, as David Ladderman led our group, through the costume department, the props department, the dressing rooms. Finishing with a grand finale as people tried out their dramatic "stage entrances". We are beginning to get excited again as we make plans for the upcoming *Uncle Vanya* and *Songs for Nobody*.

March has seen the start of our third life stories programme. This course runs over six sessions, at the South City library and is run in partnership with Library staff. We pair everyone with a volunteer who assists to gather the stories. Envelopes full of precious black and white photos are scanned and entered into to the story. Then at the end of the 6 weeks a booklet containing an illustrated version of your "life story" is presented to each participant. It's fabulous.



Food prepared for residents at Ronald McDonald House.



Plants grown by participants.

We are in the process of starting two walking groups in the autumn. One will be at Sundbye House in Bishopdale and the other will be at Avebury House in Richmond. Sundbye is a lively community group, near Bishopdale Mall, supporting people in the neighbourhood. We are really looking forward to joining them. Our second group is at Avebury House, run by Avebury Community Trust. The house itself is a repaired historic homestead owned by the council with immaculate gardens. We plan to stroll around the gardens and finish with a warming cuppa in the homestead. This is such a beautiful place, it will be a real treat to be involved.

On another note. Our new van is proving to be a real hit. It's so comfortable. Shelley and I struggle to get people out! They sit in the back hatching plans for road trips to Hanmer for lunch, or even to Twizel.

Finally, we have to acknowledge our wonderful volunteer helpers. We would not be able to do what we do, without volunteer assistance. Thank you to all of our long serving helpers, and a huge welcome to our new recruits.

Bev Seabridge, Shelley Wright
Activity Program Coordinators

Brain Ignition

Research has demonstrated that social interaction and cognitive stimulation are both important for brain health – whether or not a person has dementia.

The Brain Ignition series that Dementia Canterbury started in December 2016 is intended to promote both of these important factors to enable people with dementia to live well.

Brain Ignition groups are run over four consecutive weeks from 10-11.30am, each series is held bi-monthly and groups consist of no more than ten people.

Sessions are designed to get people thinking, talking and engaging through a range of activities and discussions. Each session also incorporates a gentle exercise component. A key element of Brain Ignition is the shared social interaction.

What participants thus far have been saying:

- I always come away in a happy frame of mind



Origami figures made in an exercise during a Brain Ignition session.

- I enjoyed everything, everything was just right
- The best feature was the questions and exercises
- I've enjoyed the whole thing, hearing from the other people, the exercise and mindfulness, everybody is just so nice.

Younger Onset Support Group

Though we have for some time had a support group for carers of younger onset clients (as well as a closed Facebook group), we became increasingly aware of the need to provide more support for those with younger onset dementia. Our unfunded monthly group has been running for a number of months now with great attendance and lots of enthusiasm from clients. They say:

“Consistent help/support and discussion”

“Hearing how other people are putting their lives together etc”

“I really look forward to coming to this group”

“I find it stimulating”

“I feel comfortable here amongst other young ones like me”

“I leave the group feeling so happy”



Living Well

Our Very Own Hero – proving that despite your own challenges you can still make invaluable contributions to those around you.

Stan sits very unassuming, in his favourite chair. He has spent the best part of his life in roles where he has supported his community.

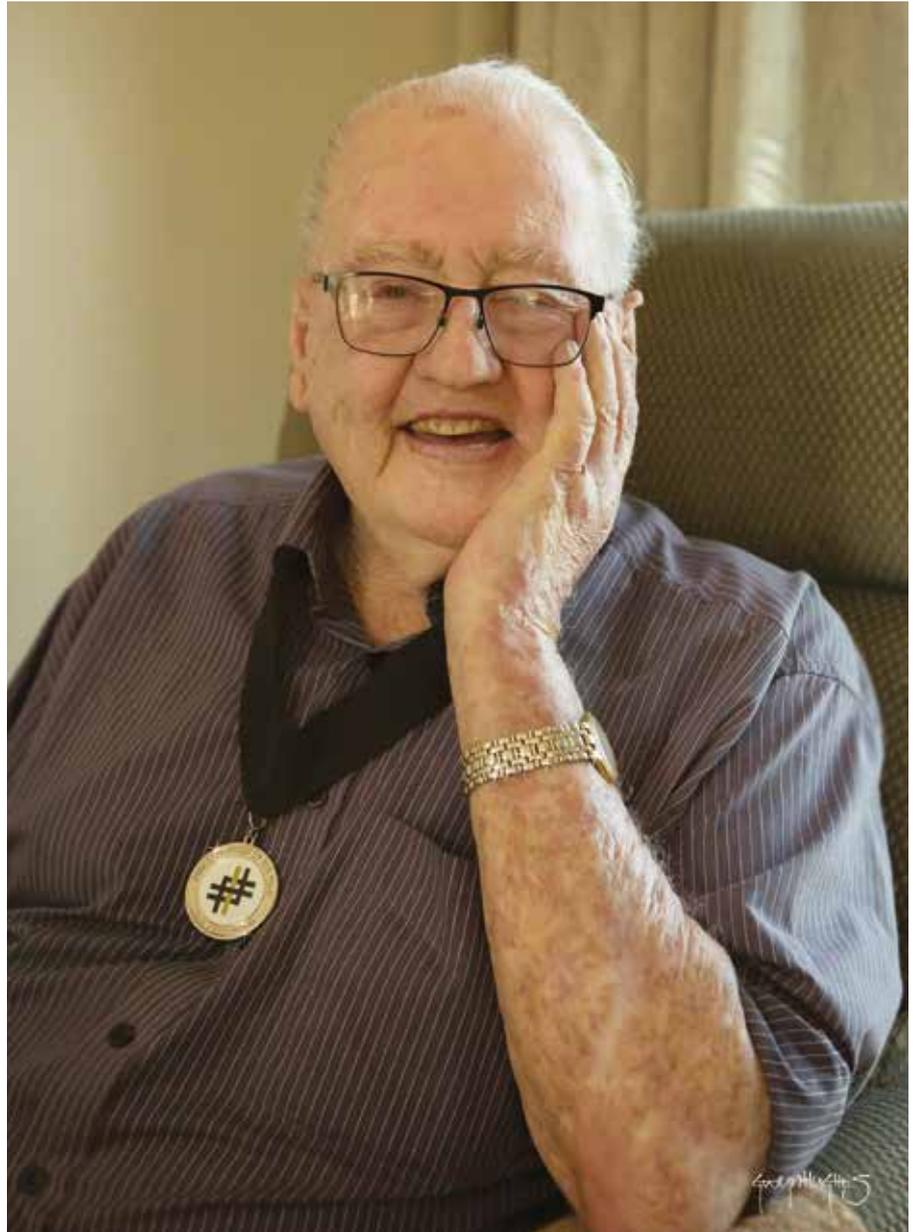
Recalling his days as a volunteer fire fighter in Fielding, and on to the Fire Brigade in Palmerston North, he has had an ongoing involvement in voluntary and community services. Married to Janice for 54 years, they have made a dynamic team, working with the Salvation Army in Men's shelters in Wellington, Dunedin and Addington, over a lengthy career.

No stranger to supportive roles and volunteering, the Tricklebanks embarked on volunteering with 0800 HUNGRY, where they have given of their time, twice a week for the last 10 years. Having his own significant health challenges with dementia and skin cancer hasn't slowed Stan's efforts down, Janice brings his volunteer work to him at home, where he seals the bags of provisions distributed to those in times of need. He asks "Now what have you brought me home today?" with a grin, and gets stuck in to doing his bit.

He is proud, and a little embarrassed at the fuss bestowed upon him, in receiving his award as a Canterbury Local Hero – honoured for services to the community.

He says of his award "It wasn't just for us, it was for all of us who work at 0800 HUNGRY, no one is more deserving than anyone else!" and adds "The givers give, it's a volunteer thing! It's part of our life, we just do it because we can."

Stan has lead a busy life, with his 4 children, 9 grandchildren and 3 great-grandchildren but has always found the



time, and the energy to commit to being of value to his community. He is a true inspiration to all of us. He sums up life beautifully "I can't just sit and see people doing nothing. You have to get up and have a dance!"

<http://nzawards.org.nz/news/Canterbury-local-heroes-honoured>

Library Update

We are so fortunate at Dementia Canterbury to house such a comprehensive and up to date collection of books on dementia, (approximately 300), from a range of authors including health professionals, people with dementia and care partners. Additionally we have a small collection of books specifically for children and young people. A huge debt of thanks goes to philatelist Trevor Hayes whose stamp collection efforts and expertise continues to fund a large percentage of our collection. We know that for many of our library users having access to this quality range of books is a real source of knowledge and inspiration.

During the months of December and January we were fortunate to have the services of Rose Creed assisting to sort our library system, which included identifying all those books missing in action. Rather disconcertingly this totalled over 50 items (books and DVDs). Happily we have had a small number of these books returned following reminder phone calls. However, a greater number are still at large!

We would be delighted if readers could kindly check their bookshelves and coffee tables. Rose identified a large

number of the missing books were not issued following the usual process, we are therefore not able to identify who the borrower is.

Recent new books include:

“Connecting in the Land of Dementia: Creative activities to explore together” by Deborah Shouse (Daughter)

“What the hell happened to my brain?” By Kate Swaffer (Australian woman with dementia)

“Life story work with people with dementia: Ordinary lives, extraordinary people” by Polly Kaiser & Ruth Elay. (Various contributors)

“One Day at a Time: Sharing life with dementia” by Dorothy Webb (Spouse)

Educators (Philippa & Lee)

Health Science Students

We are enjoying having two Health Science Students helping us out with tasks in the office.



Rose rebranding our collection buckets.



Neethd who will compile our client survey results, as part of her 3rd year placement.

Volunteers

With Love From Fathima & Syed

Volunteering for Dementia Canterbury has been a great experience for us. We are approximately 11,965 Km's away from our home, yet we feel our dear ones are near. Thanks to Dementia Canterbury for choosing us as volunteers and offering us a chance to serve their clients. Dementia Canterbury is serving the people who are really in need of help and support. Fathima and I are involved in group activities such as swimming, gardening and individual companionship.

We would like to share our happy moments of being volunteers with Dementia Canterbury. As a group of clients and volunteers we enjoy travelling together to and from the swimming pool in Rangiora. While travelling it is nice to hear from the clients about their experiences and areas of expertise. We also enjoy cracking jokes and listening to recent news. The hot spa is a place where we all would like to stay much longer – we are happy to see the clients feeling relaxed and energized after coming out from the hot pool.

Gardening is an art. We as volunteers learn with clients of Dementia Canterbury in the Opawa community garden. We are shown things such as how to sow seeds, grow plants, water the plants – we feel really happy to see the plants growing month after month, flowers blooming and of course we have two cute hens in the garden that will play hide and seek in the garden before we put them back into their cage.

We are volunteering in fond memory of my grandmother who was diagnosed with Alzheimers. I understand some of the challenges faced, for both carers and clients and we wish to support others where we can.

Special thanks to the team at Dementia Canterbury for organizing different programs for their clients. These activities help to keep them busy, equipped, feeling good, relaxed and energized. Wishing the team at Dementia Canterbury the best of luck and we both will try our level best to serve as volunteers.

Fathima and Syed



Social Program

In addition to our activity program, therapeutic and support groups, education programs and community cafes, Dementia Canterbury run a social program of events throughout the year. These events attract large numbers of people, and have an emphasis on social enjoyment. For more information about social events, contact us directly on 03 379 2590.



Enjoyment shared at our Christmas Carols – December 2016.



Everyone enjoyed our annual picnic at The Groynes – January 2017.



A fun day shared with the animals at Willowbank Wildlife Park – March 2017.

Fundraising Support

Please Support Caroline in her Fundraising Half Marathon for Dementia

Despite being a busy 42 year old, working mum with two boys under 4, Caroline was passionate to do her bit for Cantabrians and Coasters living with dementia. She is currently in training for the St Claire Half Marathon in May 2017.

Caroline's motivation to support her community stems from her own story of her father, back in the UK, who is in the last stages of dementia. Remembering him as a fit and active man, who climbed mountains, played rugby for a National squad in London, and was heavily involved with Rotary International supporting charities, Caroline feels he would be proud to know she was attempting this.

Having a life goal of competing in a triathlon at 40, Caroline is taking her commitment to this fundraiser very seriously. She started her training prior to Christmas and gets out in the evenings as it's not so easy during the day with the boys. "I'm not really a runner, this is a big challenge for me. I want to complete it in a reasonable time"

"It was a very emotional decision, wanting to raise money for charity. It was about me giving back, it wasn't about me just running my race. Though there are lots of worthwhile charities in the UK, I felt it would be more relevant to raise funds for my own community here in Canterbury"

Dementia Canterbury would love you to show your support for Caroline on her journey, as the daughter of someone living with dementia, and her fundraising campaign in the St Claire Half Marathon.

<https://givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/carolinemckean>



Clients enjoy our new van.

Fundraising Update

Dementia Canterbury would like to thank once more, those individuals and organisations who have supported us in many ways – your donations, grants and sponsorship, the giving of your time and talents are what enable us to deliver the level of service you have come to expect, and what motivates us to continually improve and expand.

2016 ended with another successful Riccarton Market Raffle, brimming with donations from Canterbury businesses, and a great effort from our volunteers out in the community gift wrapping, and chatting to the public about who we are, and the difference we make. We are embarking on another busy year with plenty of initiatives and activities in place already, and the need for funding continues.

We are already putting plans in place for our major fundraiser, our Annual Appeal, which is 6th and 7th October

this year, and we are gathering our volunteer collectors in preparation. A big thanks to all those community groups who have offered to take an area with their members. If you can offer your time to collect please contact Julie on 03 379 2590

Our thanks once more to Z Energy for their financial support, we value our continuing relationship with key corporates such as Z Energy and Piko Wholefoods in the Canterbury /West Coast regions and welcome all levels of corporate sponsorship.

Please extend your support to Caroline McKean, who in honour of her father in the UK, living with dementia, has undertaken training for the St Claire Marathon in May 2017.

<https://givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/carolinemckean>

Donation slip



YES, I'd like to support people living with dementia

As a not-for-profit agency, Dementia Canterbury needs the support of the community to continue to deliver services that really make a difference to the quality of life for all affected by dementia.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE _____ EMAIL _____

I would like to receive regular email updates from Dementia Canterbury

Please accept my donation of : \$10 \$25 \$50 Other \$_____ or:

Internet Banking Details: ASB 123240:0097861:00 Alzheimers Canterbury

(Please use your Surname as a 'Reference') or: Cheque is enclosed

Credit Card Details: Please charge my credit card with \$_____ Visa Mastercard

Card number _____ Expiry Date _____

Name on Card _____ Cardholder's Signature: _____

Invest in your future – remember Dementia Canterbury in your Will.

Contact us for more information. Email admin@dementiacanterbury.org.nz or call 03 379 2590.

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Te Poari Hauora o Waitaha



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