

# MAKING A DIFFERENCE



**June at Gardening Group**

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# From The Manager

We are well into 2015 and continue to face the same challenges as many charities in New Zealand; how do we fund/attract enough money to deliver, grow and develop our services? Here at Alzheimers Canterbury we fundraise for 53% of our operational budget. Because dementia can be perceived as not a “cuddly or sexy” charity to support, we sometimes have to work even harder to attract the dollars.

The latest research from DIA Charities Services shows that in New Zealand we have one registered charity for every 162 New Zealanders compared with 243 in the USA, 322 in England, 389 in Australia and 413 in Canada.

In the last 12 months we have had:

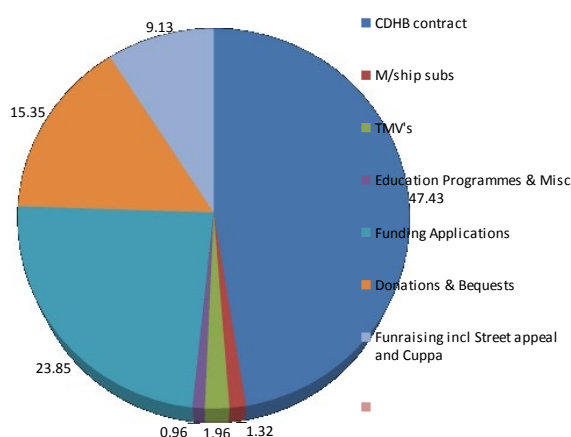
- \* 36 funding applications of which 16 were successful (and still 5 pending)
- \* A Family Fun Day in collaboration with the Wee Dram Farm (raffle, silent auction, face painting and coffee mug fundraisers)
- \* 2 movie fundraiser screenings (Still Alive and Alive Inside)
- \* Riccarton market raffle
- \* #GivingTuesday campaign
- \* Golf Tournament
- \* 1 community BBQ
- \* Street Appeal with over 100 collectors
- \* 2 newspaper articles
- \* Cuppa for a Cause campaign
- \* Rangiora Races raffle
- \* 2 ‘Dementia the Basics’ public training days
- \* Stamp sales
- \* And we support many volunteers who are putting themselves out there to raise funds for people living with dementia ... thank you very much for your invaluable help!

We need to remain open to diverse opportunities for fundraising and think creatively and into the future to sustain our services and grow.

Recently some of you may have received a donor request in the mail. We have had many calls asking if it was from us. Though we have done small donor mail outs in the past, this is not from Alzheimers Canterbury, and the funds raised from it do not support our operational costs for service delivery.

We need help from many sources to continue to provide quality, accessible services so if you or someone you know would like to support us in any way please make contact with us, or see the details on page 10. Every bit of support helps.

Darral Campbell  
Manager



# Respite Activities Group

## Volunteering at the Botanic Gardens with Alzheimers Canterbury

On the first day of spring in 2014 Alzheimers Canterbury in conjunction with the Christchurch Botanic Gardens started a new volunteer gardening group for people with dementia. The Botanic Gardens is a rich environment in so many ways; unbelievably beautiful, unchanged since the earthquakes and a repository of memories for many from childhood on. So the opportunity to give something back to this iconic treasure of Christchurch has great appeal.

Each month I meet with an enthusiastic group of people and along with a gardener and all the equipment we need we spend an enjoyable hour and a half working wherever we are sent. This might involve such things as raking leaves outside to bagging bulbs for the shop in the beautiful greenhouse of the visitor's centre. Feedback from the group has been positive, one man saying "I've feel like I've got a job" and, "It just keeps getting better", which it does as we get to know each other more. For me one of the joys is being around

some of the people who have a deep capacity for soaking in and appreciating the beauty of the environment, reminding me to slow down and do likewise.

Because we are working we get the satisfaction at the end of seeing the fruits of our labours, the massive pile of leaves or barrels full of bagged bulbs. But of course the real value is in the humorous banter and sense of camaraderie that comes with working alongside each other in an activity that is beneficial both to ourselves and others. As one group member put it "the environment is beautiful, I like gardening, I like [to] tidy, you can't beat it, I love the history of it [the garden's]. It's refreshing, I love it".

Philippa Cosgrove  
Educator





# Client Feedback

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## Education Course Attendee:

"The course that I attended with you has proved invaluable and I would recommend that anyone and everyone with a relation, partner, parent with Alzheimer's attend. It really does prepare you for what's coming. Thank you for your support and I am reassured that you are there when and if I need you."

## Attendees at a Memory Group:

"Thank you ladies & gents - I am a being (not a number)"

"I now feel much better than when I arrived."

"Many thanks for the lovely conversations and support over the last five weeks."

# Swimming for Solace

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There's always a story behind a face. A big smile can be deceiving as I recently discovered when I went out to meet one of our lovely clients Sheryl.

I met Sheryl at Pioneer Pool with her companion volunteer. They'd already been swimming laps and Sheryl had such a radiant smile on her I could have sworn she did not have a worry in the world! But I could not be more wrong.

Behind the beautiful smile lurks a sad reality. Sheryl, who used to travel the world as a nanny and loved caring for people as a nurse, was diagnosed with younger onset dementia at the age of 55.

A few years ago, while Sheryl was working in Australia, a viral infection had caused inflammation in her brain. It had left her fighting for her life. Her brain had to be drained on a regular basis to relieve the pressure of the fluids and it had affected her short term memory. When she was well enough to travel she was brought to Burwood Hospital and stayed at the Brain Injury Rehabilitation Unit for a while. They knew then that the infection had caused irreparable damage to her brain and the changes were immediate. She could not remember things that had happened moments before, that morning, or even the day or week before.

Her sister, who I contacted after I met Sheryl, explains. "It was very difficult to see the independent woman, a sister, daughter & mother, now so dependent on those around her. Sheryl isn't the confident person she once was and tends to stay close to home."

Catastrophically, after a number of assessments it was established that the infection in her brain had caused early onset dementia. This meant that she had to give

up her work as a nurse and give up driving but Sheryl is not a quitter.

"You can't stop, you've got to keep going!"

Her sister opens up on how the family dealt with the diagnosis.

"We wanted to know what to do for Sheryl so that she could find something to occupy herself, something that she could cope with and make her feel like she was valued, as she had been when she was working. Sheryl was getting very despondent and low in mood and we were getting frustrated watching it all happen. We felt utterly helpless. Then I happened to come across the Alzheimers Canterbury phone number. I phoned, told them our story and was immediately reassured and told that they could help. Within days I was put onto a social worker who took Sheryl under her wing and most importantly listened to her and us. I've attended the carer support groups and the free educational seminars. There's also a fabulous library. They've also done so much for Sheryl."

Sheryl attended the Memory Groups as well as the monthly Café and really enjoyed these. Because she used to work as a nurse, she was very keen to put these skills to use somehow. So it was arranged for her to help out as a volunteer at a rest home at walking distance from Sheryl's house. She got assigned a mentor who manages the times she's volunteering and the tasks she fulfils. Sheryl adds: "There's nothing more gratifying than helping others and making their day! I do exercises with them and give them lots of attention and hugs."

Sheryl's short term memory is affected by her condition. She often feels muddled or confused, but has found ways of dealing with this. She keeps a diary and writes

everything down every day, from meals, meetings to shopping lists. She also uses sticky notes to remind herself of things she did or is supposed to do. Her family supports her to get to appointments, the supermarket and when dealing with organisations such as a bank or EQC. Unfortunately her double-story home is increasingly a problem for Sheryl, so currently they are looking for a single level villa – attached to a rest home. Sheryl is not ready though to go into a rest home.

“I want my independence. And I would love to keep my garden.”

Because of swelling and pain in her legs, she expressed a desire to go swimming. She mentioned this to her social worker who then looked into this possibility. Alzheimers Canterbury found a companion volunteer for Sheryl who was willing to take her swimming on a weekly basis at Pioneer Pool.

These weekly swims have really made a difference for her, mentally and physically. “At times my legs swell up so bad they feel dead, so the swimming and the weightlessness of the water help relieve the pain.”

Her companion volunteer also adds: “Sheryl’s overall wellbeing has improved greatly. She occasionally has some very difficult down periods, but since we’ve started swimming, these have occurred less frequently.”

Sheryl’s advice for people going through a similar diagnosis is: “You’ve got to keep moving and get the

right support. For me, my social worker and companion volunteer have really made a huge difference for me. It’s important to have support from family but equally as important to have help from people who understand your situation and who you can turn to when you’re down.”

Sheryl is now just putting one foot in front of the other. She is grateful of the help she is receiving and that she has found activities in her life that give her a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

And Sheryl’s advice is quite right. Like Einstein said: “Life is like riding a bicycle, to keep your balance, you must keep moving.”

Living with dementia.... “Can be as if your loved one is wearing a mask. One minute they are playing the part of an unknown character you do not recognize and then suddenly they take the mask off and the person you know is back.”



## Book Review

### Look and See

A chapter in the book “Care in Practices” (ed Mol, Moser & Pols, 2010) entitled “On recognition, caring and dementia” by Janelle S. Taylor addresses with depth, compassion and intellect the perennial question eventually asked of all those who support someone with dementia, “do they still recognise you?” Taylor, a medical anthropologist and daughter to a mother with advanced dementia, examines and reflects on the layers of assumptions and meanings that underlie notions of recognition. Given the ubiquitous nature of this question, she views it from a societal rather than an individual level, looking at a number of different theoretical perspectives to better understand notions of ‘recognition’.

It is not uncommon that someone stops visiting a person

with dementia because they, the visitor, are no longer recognised, and that this ‘fact’ (whether or not it may be true) is taken as evidence of the futility of visiting... “what’s the point if they don’t know it’s me who’s visiting them?” Taylor explores the ethics and morality of recognition which may lead people to feel a deep sense (even if it’s intellectually nonsensical) that it is ‘wrong’ to be forgotten. There is an implicit assumption between caring and recognition – if I am not recognised how can I be cared for? What is relationship without reciprocity? How can a relationship continue if the person is no longer able to recall the people in their life story-if the continuing narrative thread of ‘my life story’ cannot be maintained then surely the story is over? Taylor seeks to challenge these views. She knows who she is, she doesn’t need

this validated by her mother with dementia, “I don’t need my mother to tell me my name, or how I am related to her. I already know these things.” What is important to Taylor is not recognition by her mother but rather her ability to recognise her mother.

For Taylor the crucial question is “‘Do you, do we, recognise her?’” For it is here she argues that so much is at stake. When recognition is lost of the person with dementia their status as unique, valued beings can, to many people, become compromised or worse. It is at this point that a person with dementia can suffer a ‘social death’, where people are described as ‘as good as dead’ or ‘empty shells’. Taylor calls for a broader model from which to understand self and personhood – that it is not the responsibility of a single individual to sustain but rather something that can be maintained by supportive networks and environments. Arguably there is much to learn on this front from cultures with a less individualistic, materialist and hyper cognitive bent than our current Western culture.

Continuing recognition of her mother requires a different kind of seeing for Taylor. One that relies less and less on words and more on noticing and appreciating the small gestures, actions and sounds. As her mother’s dementia progresses a nurse suggests that she be prescribed Prozac for behaviours that the nurse feels suggest OCD tendencies. Taylor refuses, as to her these same behaviours reflect a lifetime of providing care, they are small expressions of her very nature. Taylor is able to see her mother continue to express her care for others and therefore to recognise her. It is a seeing that requires sensitivity and a loving intention to preserve for both herself and her mother her inner qualities that continues to bring both meaning and relationship. Taylor hopes for a day when the question “Does she recognise you?”, which she sees as well-meaning but misplaced is abandoned altogether.

Philippa Cosgrove  
Educator

## Research: Exercise and Dementia

More evidence is coming to the fore on protective factors that may help to reduce or delay our risk of developing dementia, one component of which is exercise and physical activity. The benefits of an active physical life however, are just as keenly felt for people living with dementia. Alzheimer’s Australia have recently released a Discussion Paper (November 2014), “The Benefits of Physical Activity and Exercise for People with Dementia”, which comprehensively details these benefits and calls for all stakeholders to embrace policies and practices which more effectively incorporate exercise into the lives of people with dementia (see below for a link to the full discussion paper).

Research cited suggests a raft of benefits that come with maintaining physical activity while living with dementia whether in the community or in residential care, including; a reduction in falls, a reduction in distressed reactions, to assist in maintaining basic activities of daily living and to delay the admission to residential care. People with dementia who engage in low levels of physical activity are at risk for higher levels of pain, sleep disturbances, agitation and falls. More research is needed to explore how much and what kind of exercise would best suit people at different stages of dementia as well as looking at its impact on cognition and how best to implement and deliver exercise programmes.

Exercise is also a wonderful way to promote social activity and inclusion thereby meeting peoples’ social as well as physical needs. A spin off of which can also be respite for the person’s care-partner or a chance for them to also get more active. Of course there are also a range of barriers that can limit access to physical activity such as other health issues, isolation, culture factors and environmental obstacles. With enough support and resolve many of these barriers can be overcome but support needs to come from all quarters including from within the helping sector, residential care facilities and society at large – for example gyms and trainers that are responsive to the needs of people with dementia.

Movement is central to life whatever our age or stage. Overcoming barriers and encouraging physical activity is good for all of us. Supporting people with dementia to stay active is an achievable goal in most cases and ought to be given the priority it deserves.

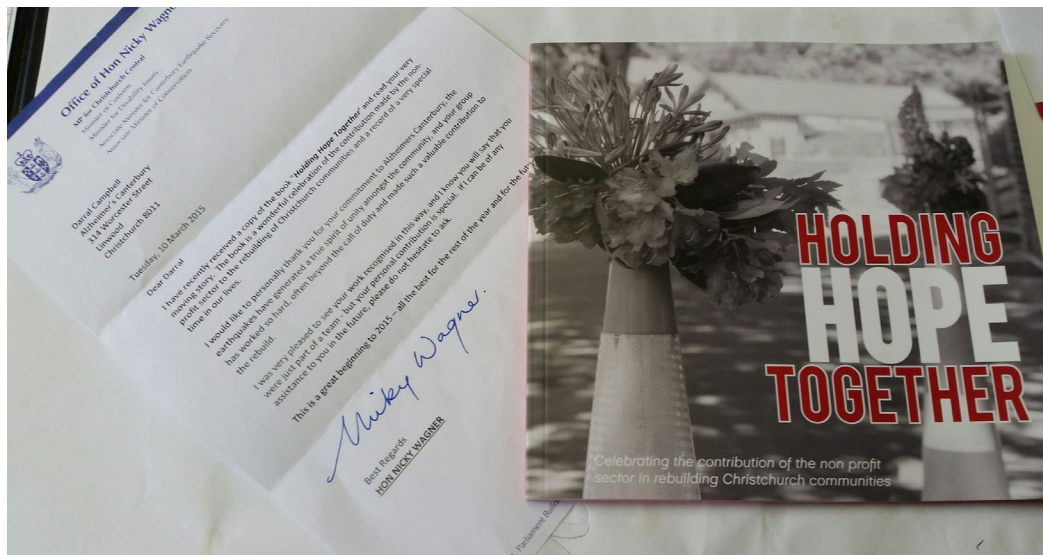
[https://nsw.fightdementia.org.au/sites/default/files/NSW/documents/AANSW\\_DiscussionPaper11.pdf](https://nsw.fightdementia.org.au/sites/default/files/NSW/documents/AANSW_DiscussionPaper11.pdf)

Philippa Cosgrove  
Educator  
Alzheimers Canterbury

# Holding Hope Together

## “Holding Hope Together”

Alzheimers Canterbury is proud to be a part of the published book “Holding Hope Together” – celebrating the contribution of the non profit sector in rebuilding Christchurch communities.



## Obituary: Barb Flower-James

Our friend and colleague Barb lost her battle with cancer in February. Barb was well known throughout the Canterbury dementia and wider mental health community. She began working as a professional social worker in the mid 80's in the area of mental health and was a key player in the development of community based services to support families affected by schizophrenia. She moved into Older Persons Health Services in the 90's becoming a strong advocate for older people (all people) affected by mental illness and in particular those diagnosed with dementia.

Barb worked for many years within the acute psychiatric inpatient services (K Wards) at Older Persons Health, and families often spoke of the difference Barb made with her quiet, focused and constant support. She loved music and was often involved in recitals in the K Wards. In her last few years with the DHB she was a member of the interdisciplinary team in the Memory Assessment Service (a specialist service to diagnose dementia). Following her early retirement, she came to work as a group facilitator here at Alzheimers Canterbury, where her practice, wisdom and specialist dementia knowledge proved a great support to carers and people living with dementia.

Barb had a way of making everyone feel that she heard them, and her warmth, skill and compassion provided comfort for many during challenging times. Her delightful sense of humour was a bonus. It's an understatement to say we will miss her, but her gentle spirit and practice wisdom live on in all of those who had the privilege to work with her.

Rest peacefully dear friend and colleague after a life well lived, and a practice legacy to social work, and the dementia community that will continue to shine in those whose lives you touched.





# Retiring Volunteers

It was with sadness, but understanding that we accepted the resignations of Maureen Snelling and Marian Bayley this month.

Maureen has been involved in many aspects of volunteering for the past sixteen years. She has been a compassionate companion volunteer, helped run the Now café (which she will continue to be involved in), provided food for Executive meetings and functions, and supported us with our annual collection, fundraisers and awareness raising events.

Marian has been a wonderful companion volunteer for the past five years, supporting numerous clients and carers. She has also helped to transport clients to the Now café.

Although we will miss these passionate and dedicated women, we wish them all the best and thank them sincerely for their years of service to Alzheimers Canterbury. They epitomise the strength and value that volunteers bring to an organisation. Kia Kaha Maureen and Marian.



## Can you Volunteer?

We require companion and driver volunteers to support those affected by dementia. Companion volunteers visit clients once every week or fortnight for a couple of hours. We aim to match clients and volunteers who live in the same geographical area and who have similar interests. Training is provided. Volunteers allow carers to have a short break whilst they support the person with dementia. For clients living on their own, volunteers enable the client to engage in activities that they may no longer feel confident doing on their own, such as going for a walk or going to a cafe.

Driver volunteers transport clients to support groups on one or two mornings a week. Groups include Memory groups, Alzheimers and Gardening group.

If you can provide support to those affected by dementia, then please contact Monique on 379 2590 ext 9 or email [monique@alzcanty.co.nz](mailto:monique@alzcanty.co.nz).



# New Staff

Welcome to our new Field Worker for the West Coast – Anne Marie Reynolds.

Anne Marie is based on the Coast and is working 20 hours per week. Cell Phone: 027 343 5466



# Fundraising

A successful Family Farm Day was held at Wee Dram Farm in late January. It was a wonderful opportunity to get close to animals and some great prizes sourced by our Wee Dram hosts were raffled. We hope to make this an annual event.

A big thank you to Wee Dram Farm (<http://www.weedramfarm.co.nz> and FB Wee Dram Farm Park)



Movie Fundraiser "Still Alice" saw close to 120 people purchase tickets and attend an exclusive showing of the movie at Hoyts Northlands in February. Wonderful to see a blockbuster movie about dementia and a well earned Oscar for Julianne Moore.

Our thanks to all who supported both events.

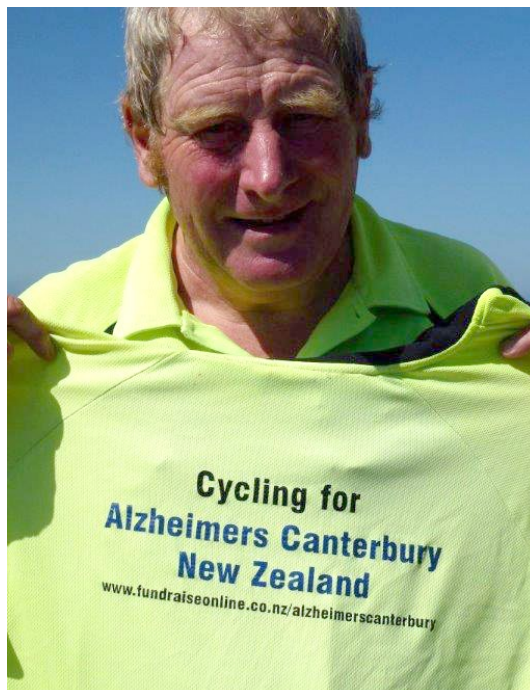
Dave O'Neil

Once again Dave rode for Alzheimers Canterbury in the Grape Ride, Blenheim.

Thanks Dave for all your great efforts.

You can still donate to support - <http://givealittle.co.nz/fundraiser/davesridefordementia>

Alzheimers Canterbury



## Donation Slip

### YES, I'd like to donate to Alzheimers Canterbury

As a not-for-profit agency, Alzheimers 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.

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☐ I would like to receive regular email updates from Alzheimers 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 Enclosed

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*Invest in your future – remember Alzheimers Canterbury in your Will.*

Contact us for more information. Email [annelies@alzcanty.co.nz](mailto:annelies@alzcanty.co.nz) or call 3792590.



# *Cuppa for a Cause*

## *JULY 2015*

### *Alzheimers Canterbury*



Make your next tea or coffee break count ***anytime in July*** by holding a *Cuppa for a Cause* for Alzheimers Canterbury. For a gold coin donation, you can help people affected by dementia.



Our aim is to increase awareness in Canterbury about dementia, as well as to raise funds to enable us to fulfil our mission:

*Making life better for all people affected by dementia;*

*Kia piki te ora mo ngā tāngata mate pōrewarewa*

For more information about Cuppa for a Cause please phone 03 379 2590

**Alzheimers Canterbury** – 314 Worcester Street, Christchurch, P O Box 32 074, Christchurch 8147 **Ph** 03 379 2590  
**Fax** 03 379 7286 **Email** [admin@alzcanty.co.nz](mailto:admin@alzcanty.co.nz) **Web** [www.alzheimers.org.nz/canterbury](http://www.alzheimers.org.nz/canterbury) **Charity Registration** CC 21639



Alzheimers Canterbury – 314 Worcester Street, Christchurch, P O Box 32 074, Christchurch 8147 Ph 03 379 2590  
 Fax 03 379 7286 Email [admin@alzcantry.co.nz](mailto:admin@alzcantry.co.nz) Web [www.alzcantry.co.nz](http://www.alzcantry.co.nz) Charity Registration CC 21639

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COGS Community Organisation Grants Scheme

[www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Community-Funding-Community-Organisation-Grants-Scheme-\(COGS\)](http://www.dia.govt.nz/Services-Community-Funding-Community-Organisation-Grants-Scheme-(COGS))



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INTERNAL AFFAIRS  
Te Tari Tauiereua

[www.dia.govt.nz](http://www.dia.govt.nz)



The Canterbury Community Trust

[www.comtrust.org.nz](http://www.comtrust.org.nz)



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