



**Leighton House**  
G I S B O R N E

# Family Newsletter

November 2016

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## A message from Arrah and Teresa

“Tena Koutou” (Greetings to all) from Teresa & “Kumusta Kayong Lahat” (Hello to everyone) from Arrah.

Over the past 6 months we have had some exciting and nail-biting events happening here at Leighton House.

Some may recall our recent 7.1 earthquake at 4:30am on Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> September. With the possibility of a tsunami, the prospect of evacuating was a priority for us. With the guidance and support of our Directors and the management team in the steps needed to ensure the safety of our residents, as a precautionary measure, we guided the residents whose rooms were closest to the river to our main dining area. At 5am the residents were very calm, understanding and supportive of each other as they made their way to the dining area. Updating them every half hour we were relieved to have the all clear by 8:30am.

From this event we have reviewed our civil defence plan, increased our civil defence kits and contacted our local DHB to see what support is available for aged care facilities in Gisborne. During our discussions we learned that Leighton House is situated right on the edge of the Tsunami Inundation Zone. In the case of a tsunami or flood the water would swamp the lower side of the river first, as Leighton House is positioned a little higher up than the other side. We are feeling relieved by this.



We have also been doing some more ‘earthquake-proofing’ of Leighton to minimise damage from falling objects.

Recently we underwent our ACC Audit for which we are proud to say we received the highest ‘Tertiary’ level. During Teresa’s 17 years at Leighton this is the first time we have achieved this level. We commend Chris Booth, our Quality Systems Manager, and our wonderful team here at Leighton House for guiding and supporting us to this great result.

A big thank you to family and visitors for their co-operation and understanding while we have had contractors on site. We have recently finished renovating part of the Admin Wing bathrooms and a couple of rooms in the East Wing.

We wish you all everything of the very best over the Christmas season and look forward to welcoming you often as part of our Leighton House family.



*You are very warmly invited to join us for our  
**Christmas Gathering***

*Tuesday December 13<sup>th</sup> 2.00-3.30 pm*

*We look forward to welcoming you!*

## Choosing gifts at Christmas time



We have discovered a source of personalised handmade fabric books and CDs to share on our page.

Des makes each book herself, incorporating images and themes of relevance to each person's interests and life.

Alternatively, generic books can be made to suit the needs of the home without adding any personal pictures or references.

Des's husband makes a CD with the person's favourite music and family pictures when someone has passed on as a keepsake of a life well lived.

Once they know what is needed, they quote first and go from there.

Personalised Fabric Books  
Hand made with love  
Life Memory Keep Sake CD

Frank or Desiree

des.nunneley@xtra.co.nz

The tradition of giving a gift at Christmas time can sometimes be difficult when your family member or friend has had a lifetime to accumulate "stuff" of all sorts, and that sometimes the usual ideas are not appropriate.

Gifts can come in many shapes, sizes and forms.

There are practical gifts that can be wrapped and delivered. There is also the gift of time, which can sometimes be the hardest to give but is always the most treasured.

There are ways to give gifts of thoughtfulness and the gift of improving the quality of time you do spend together:

- a small pocket-sized diary or notebook
- a calendar featuring family photos – write special family occasions such as birthdays and anniversaries
- a clock with the date and time in large type
- an outing to a movie, play or concert, sporting event, museum or possibly an organized holiday shopping trip with friends and family
- favourite musical CDs or CD with compilation of favourite tunes
- activities such as scrapbooking or other craft projects
- scented lotions
- a fluffy bathrobe in a favorite color
- a soft blanket or throw to keep warm
- track pants
- comfortable, easy-care snugly

tops – fleece is excellent

- bed socks with non-slip soles
- wrinkle free nightgowns, nightshirts and robes
- favourite chocolates with soft centres

**Music:** One study found that people who listened to upbeat music could improve their mood and boost their happiness in just two weeks. Buy favorite CDs or burn a CD full of musical favorites.

**Framed photographs or a photo collage:** Print photos of family members and friends at photo centres, insert the names of the people in the photo and put in frames or in a photo album created specifically for that person.

**Fiddle aprons, cushions or activity lap pillows** also make wonderful gifts, especially if they reflect the interests and preferences of the recipient. If you are not handy enough to make one yourself, they are readily available over the internet, for both men and women.

**Jigsaws** are also excellent gifts. Age-appropriate jigsaws with large pieces are available on the internet.

**Books** are always fantastic. For those with specific interests such as history, art, maths and sports, look for something recently published that they are unlikely to have read already. For those with shorter attention spans, collections of short stories are an excellent choice.

Time spent quietly being together is always special, and a good visit will leave you both with a feeling of satisfaction money could never buy.

## Happenings at Leighton House

In June we held our Mid-Winter Family Gathering. This was well received by family friends and residents. We enjoyed a wonderful afternoon tea and the cooks treated us with a wonderful assortment of goodies. We received such wonderful and positive feedback on how well this day went.

A Knitting Group has been developed due to a lot of interest from residents. Small knee rug blankets have been made for residents who are in hospital or palliative care.

December 6<sup>th</sup> is our Volunteer afternoon tea gathering from 2pm-3.30pm. This is a time when residents and staff join in showing our appreciation to the wonderful people who share their time so generously with us. All residents are very welcome to attend.

December 13<sup>th</sup> is our Family gathering afternoon tea from 2pm-3:30pm. We will be drawing the winners of our Christmas Hampers during the afternoon. Money raised will be donated to Hospice in Gisborne.

In October we celebrated the diverse cultures of our staff. Indian, Tongan, Maori, and European. Staff dressed and displayed their traditional garments and sang songs in their language.

Throughout the year Leighton House residents run several raffles to raise

funds towards a worthy organisation or cause in our community.

All items are donated by staff and recently we have a resident, Connie Tozer, who for the past two years has hand-knitted and donated beautiful dolls for our Christmas hamper. These collectors' items are extremely well made and highly sought after. Over the years we have donated the proceeds to Helicopter Trust, St John Gisborne, and 'Sunshine Bus'. Thank you to residents, families, friends and staff for your support for our community.

Over the past 6 months we have increased hours and added new shifts to our hospital area. With this we have had to grow our Leighton House staff team.

We have a few new faces on the caregiving team. We extend a warm welcome to Sarah King, Monique Carlyle, Kim Hiroki-Ana Moody and Janine Emms. Also we have a new Registered Nurse, Mary Racelyn, who has come to us from Auckland. They each bring great skills in aged care and they look forward to getting to know you well.



Residents and Diversional Therapists created beautiful floral centre-pieces for Mothers' Day



Jean Webster with the Mayoress at the A&P Show at which we were represented for the first time this year

Visit our website at [www.dementiacarenz.co.nz](http://www.dementiacarenz.co.nz) to link to our Facebook page.

'Like' us and receive regular updates on our activities, news and views and links of interest!

Archived copies of all newsletters are also available on our website under each facility name.

## Advance Care Planning afternoon

Advance Care Planning is the process of thinking about and talking about what is important to your family member and what medical care is desirable towards the end of life. For residents, being able to talk about and record their wishes now can relieve a lot of stress for family members at the time decisions need to be made. It is important to know that the decisions being made are in accordance with their wishes.

On Thursday 20 October we held a special information afternoon to introduce residents and interested family members to this important topic. We had a good turn out of both residents and families.

The session was facilitated by Nicola Carroll (Counsellor), and Clarice

Alderdice (Education Coordinator) from Hospice Tairawhiti. They created small groups and did an exercise to get everyone talking about what they would like to put in place for when their health changes.

A lovely afternoon tea followed, with conversation continuing well after the formal part of the afternoon had ended.

We thank those who attended. We invite those who were unable to attend to contact Arrah (Clinical Manager) to arrange a time to learn more about this important opportunity.



Clarice from Hospice explains the advantages of Advance Care Planning to a packed lounge

## Summer's on the menu!

With daylight saving comes summer and the re-introduction of our summer menu.

As well as taking the dietary requirements of our residents into account, the menu devised by our dietician changes with the seasons. The hearty soups, stews and hot puddings that provide warmth and comfort in winter give way to lighter, more summery seasonal fare featuring fish, pasta, chicken, cold meats and salads, sandwiches, savouries and quiches.

Desserts remain a highlight of every meal, with ice cream and fresh fruit salads, mousses, jelly whip and crumbles being among the favourites. Fresh home baking is always on offer for morning and afternoon tea.

Please remember that there is an open invitation for family members to join residents for a meal.

### DUST IF YOU MUST

Dust if you must, but wouldn't it be better  
To paint a picture or write a letter,  
Bake a cake or plant a seed,  
Ponder the difference between want and need?

Dust if you must, but there's not much time,  
With rivers to swim and mountains to climb,  
Music to hear, and books to read,  
Friends to cherish and life to lead.

Dust if you must, but the world's out there,  
With the sun in your eyes, the wind in your hair,  
A flutter of snow, a shower of rain.  
This day will not come round again.

Dust if you must, but bear in mind,  
Old age will come and it's not kind.  
And when you go - and go you must -  
You, yourself, will make more dust.

~ Rose Milligan

## Sanctuary

It is my pleasure to share some thoughts with you. As always when I share my musings in this newsletter, today, I will write about something that is fresh to me because that is where my energy is. I write in humility as I am just learning. One thing I am learning, slowly, is that if I want to act wisely in the world, the first step is to quieten my mind. Believe me, I don't find this easy.

Recently I spent time with our team of clinical managers and spoke with them about the importance of sanctuary in our lives. As leaders, they take care of residents and their families, as well as the staff team, and do a myriad of other things besides. This is energy intensive work. It takes their mind, heart and soul. It both takes a toll and also gives enormous enrichment.

Being a family member of a very special person who is very unwell and/or has dementia can be exhausting and heartbreaking. Visiting is not easy. If your loved one has dementia then, often, much loss occurs before the final parting. Being a family member of loved ones in care has brought me anguish at times. The responsibility and care of my loved Aunty Eileen is particularly poignant perhaps because it is most recent and because she is the last of that generation to die in my family. I found visiting her difficult. She didn't talk, she didn't smile, she cried a lot, she just sat. Many times I got back to the car with tears in my eyes. In the end, we did find a way, with music. I would put her music tape of James Galway playing the flute on her very old tape player, we held hands and just sat together. It became a special time – it was a sanctuary for me ... and I think for her also. I miss those times we had together in her little room.

## Alison Hume

A sanctuary is where we can find space to reclaim our soul and get our bearings. It gives space where we can take refuge and heal from our many painful encounters. A sanctuary can take the form of: being in the natural world, a special song or a poem, the company of a trusted friend, sitting in stillness and silence, being with a loved dog, sitting with the sun on your back, just breathing. This is where we protect and nurture what Thomas Merton calls the "root of inner wisdom."

I encourage you to recognise and acknowledge the feelings that can be aroused as your loved ones reach the last years, months and days of their lives. Allow the feelings. They are to be expected. Then find sanctuary so that you experience a resilient, still, peaceful part of you that brings much comfort. When our own hearts and minds are in peace, we hear the purest intentions of our hearts and peace shows through in what we do.

I send my love to you.

Alison



### Important safety notice

If deliveries to the facility are underway when you arrive for your visit, please remain in your vehicle in a safe location until the delivery has been completed and the truck has left.

### Naming clothes

Please remember that all new items need to be clearly marked with the owner's name before they arrive at the home. This is especially important at Christmas time, when many lovingly chosen new items are given as gifts by family members. We discourage expensive woollen items, which are easily damaged in the wash. Please select easy care clothing wherever possible.