



Aberleigh
MARLBOROUGH

Family Newsletter

October 2013

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A message from Maja and Susan

A big hello from both of us as we leave winter and head towards the longer, warmer days of summer!

We are both very much enjoying our roles as joint managers of Aberleigh. Each new day brings its own challenges and learning opportunities. We are lucky to be fully supported by the staff, residents and family members, as well as by the organizational management team.

At the moment our lives are dominated by the ongoing building work. The first phase of this is now complete and looking beautiful, with our residents happily settled into their bright, sunny new home and greatly enjoying being in the new Koromiko lounge.

The building is now going ahead with great speed, and our residents are watching the progress with much interest. At the moment the finishing touches are being put in place on the garden outside Rata and Matai.

We will be opening a specialised hospital for people with advanced dementia in November. This will be the only home in Blenheim offering this highly specialised level of care. This is exciting for us and very helpful to the community, as people

needing this level of care will now be able to remain in Blenheim. We will also be opening more rest home beds for people with dementia and more general hospital beds in December. We will also be offering a dedicated dementia rest home level respite bed from December, and are accepting bookings from now onwards.

Residents, family members and staff greatly enjoyed the recent mid-winter family gathering in June, as well as the residents' fish and chip lunch in July.

A volunteers' morning tea in August was an opportunity to thank our wonderful group of volunteers, who give so selflessly of their time to visit with our residents. There was an excellent turnout with more than 20 people attending. Some of our residents baked choc chip heart biscuits a day before to give to the volunteers and we added a note to thank them for all they do for us.

We have had a renewed focus on staff education recently with education sessions on Assessment in Aged Care by Jenny Kane, Physiological Effects of Dementia by Simon Hamley, Continence by Amanda Walker from USL, and Palliative Care by



Jeanette Collins.

Our diversional therapist Babette recently accompanied a group of residents to the Art Gallery to see a display of students' art, and our DTs have also been enjoying daily walks with the residents now that the weather is warmer. Twice-weekly exercise sessions are greatly enjoyed by our residents, and we are noticing a marked improvement in mobility along with a decrease in falls.

Our Cuppa for a Cause event on 3rd October for Alzheimer's Society was much enjoyed by all who attended, with the proceeds of our gold coin collection being donated to this good cause.

Our regular residents' van outings have been continuing, with excursions to enjoy afternoon tea at Argosy Restaurant and lunch at Vines Village.

Thank you for being part of our lives at Aberleigh!

Magic and Healing Moments

Every day we are privileged to experience special moments with the people we care for, moments which remind us of the power of living 'in the present moment'. There may be no 'cure' for dementia, but these moments affirm that there is definitely joy, empowerment and healing. We keep a 'magic moment book' to record these in, which you are also welcome to use. We would like to share some of these special moments with you.



The magic of memories:
Henk with the ice skates

Last week I brought in a couple of old ice skates. They had belonged to my grandfather and are about 100 years old.

I went to Henk to show him the skates. Henk is from the Netherlands and came from the same area as my grandfather. His face lit up and he was so surprised to see the ice skates. He started to tell me about his ice skating years and he studied the skates for a while. I left Henk with the skates and when I came back he was still holding onto them.

It was so nice to see him remember that time and it brought back lots of other memories as well. In the north of the Netherlands everyone can ice skate and they spend all their spare time in the winter on ice skates, skating from canal to canal.

- Babette

(Thanks to Henk's family for their permission to share this lovely story and photograph)

I saw a female resident enjoying the sun on the Matai balcony. I was in the corridor by the laundry. I waved at her. She gave me a big smile and waved back at me. - Akiko

This morning I went to see a male resident to remind him it was his walk day. He wasn't very enthusiastic so I thought I would leave it and not push him. Later on I came out of

another resident's room and he had organised himself for the walk and was part way down the hall. Good on him!

- Mel

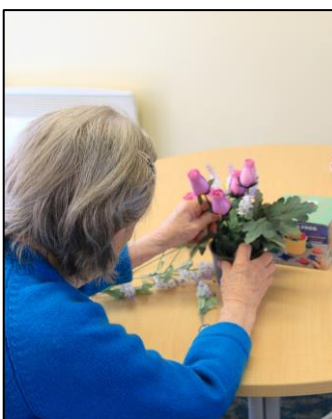
Last week a male resident asked if he could give a toy truck that he bought 4 years ago to a little boy who came in to visit another resident. I asked permission from his mother and she thought it was a lovely thing to do.

The boy's face turned into a great big smile as he thanked the resident for the gift. It made the resident feel ever so good. He had waited 4 years to give the truck to his own great grandson but had never had an opportunity to give it to him, so by doing this he got to see the smile of another little boy's face when being given something so special.

- Babette

Last week a female resident was singing The Wizard of Oz, and sang every bit of the song. A male resident was sitting beside her and joined in the singing, singing the lyrics as well as she did. I could see him smiling. He told her that he also loved the movie and remembered it as if it was yesterday.

- Eta



The pleasure of arranging
fresh flowers

Planning for excellence

As we move towards the end of the year a number of significant projects forming part of our annual business plan are now well underway.

These include important initiatives such as falls prevention and a reduction in staff and resident incidents and injuries.

We have a significant focus on medication, comparing the use of antipsychotics within our facilities and hopefully with comparable external agencies. Our aim is to continually strive to achieve the best balance for each resident, with the least possible medication our constant objective.

As always, our activities programme is high on our list of priorities, with a renewed focus on familiar, homely activities which are age-appropriate

and lead to a sense of purpose and fulfillment.

Staff education has taken place recently in falls prevention, protection and prevention of pressure areas, and abuse and neglect.

In addition, a new role of BPSD (Behavioural and Psychological Symptoms of Dementia) Advisor has been created to provide a specialised 'go-to' person for any concerns or challenges relating to residents.

An organisational continence specialist is also soon to be appointed to assist our staff team in the continuing quest to maintain continence and enhance the personal dignity and quality of life of our residents.



One of our homely kitchenettes



Our recent Cuppa for a Cause event was much enjoyed by all

Summer's on the menu!

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

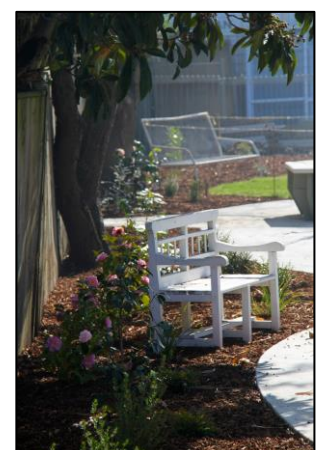
As well as taking the dietary requirements of our residents into account, the menu devised by our dietician changes with the seasons. The hearty soups, stews and hot puddings that provide warmth and comfort in winter give way to lighter, more summery seasonal fare featuring fish, pasta, chicken, cold 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 you to join your loved one for a meal.



A shady bench in our newly landscaped gardens

Courses for families

If you are new to Aberleigh you may not be aware of the two short courses we run for family members, Orientation for Families and Sharing the Journey.

These courses are a free, fun and supportive way of introducing you to many of the practical aspects of having a family member in residential care, and of understanding more about the dementia journey. People who attend the courses find them both enjoyable and enriching.

Please pop in and speak with Maja to find out more about the courses and register your interest!



A special request

Our organizational accounts team in Nelson has asked us to bring your attention to the importance of giving the resident's name as a reference for any payment, whether on an account or an Automatic Payment.

If any other name is given, such as the person making the payment or the EPOA, for example, it can take time to identify which resident the payment applies to, and there is greater potential for confusion and mistakes.

Thank you for your assistance with this.

Heading away?

Please remember that if for any reason you are heading away, it is essential to leave our RN with contact details (whether a cell phone, close family member or email address) so that we can reach you if we need to for any reason.

It will also give you peace of mind while you are away, knowing that we are able to notify you immediately if anything unexpected should occur.



Our Thanks to You

A poem for our volunteers

by Diversional Therapy Team Leader
Helen McLeane and residents of
Millvale House, Levin

Thank you for the gift of time,
You've given us so often,
The kindness of your voice and care
Has helped our journey soften.

Your smiling face, the words you share,
Can touch our hearts and minds,
And while we may not often say,
We love that you are kind.

You share your joy, your song, or words,
Or maybe just a smile,
And on a day when life seems hard
You stop and stay awhile

There are no words to capture
and value what you do.
Today is just a little chance
To show our thanks to you.

At times our lives are busy,
Or we seem far away,
But always know you've left a mark
And on our heart it stays.

Please know how much you mean to us,
And trust these words we say,
You've made a difference in our lives.
A gift we can't repay.

We wish you love and happiness,
And joy in all you do,
Our world has been a better place
Because it's shared with you.

