A gift of love and care

BY MICHELLE GREY

In June of this year my mum Gayle Lee passed away, at the age of 82. Mum and I had been especially close for many years, in fact since my father passed away 12 years ago. I moved in with Mum and Dad for the last few weeks of his life to support Mum with his care. I remember clearly, feeling so proud of the wonderful way in which she nursed him in those final months and weeks.

When Mum was diagnosed with cancer in March, I was determined that she too would be able to stay home until the end if that was at all possible. The thought of ending up in a rest home was her biggest nightmare, and so, hard as it is to believe, the diagnosis of cancer was almost a relief because it meant that she wouldn’t end up spending years in one.

The diagnosis came while she was in hospital and we were soon visited by the lovely Marg Harvey, specialist community nurse for Arohanui Hospice, who became an important part of our lives for the next three months. Mum opted for no treatment, wishing just to let things run their natural course, and we headed home, knowing we had the full support of the hospice.

Marg visited Mum regularly, and Mum loved to have afternoon tea organised for her. Their sessions soon settled into a routine of questions, answers, notes left for me and cream cakes. Mum was so appreciative of Marg, whose sense of humour matched hers.

Mum’s symptoms started to get a bit out of control so Marg had her admitted to the hospice, where she spent 10 days, being assessed and getting things under control. She enjoyed that time because she felt safe. Her condition had deteriorated significantly and it was felt that she would not be able to return home, where she lived alone. This meant going into a rest home, her biggest fear. We were both determined and with the fantastic support of the hospice and district nurses who put in place the equipment we needed as well as 24/7 phone and physical support, my sisters and I had the privilege of nursing Mum at home until the end.

It was an amazing experience made so much better because of the amazing support we received. It’s not until you find yourself in a situation like this that you begin to see the scope of the work these wonderful people do, quietly and discreetly entering the homes of people who are unwell 24/7 giving treatment, support and even hugs when needed. They were all so generous and helped make what could have been a very challenging time, a lot more relaxed and rewarding for us all.

I know that the gift of love and care we gave Mum in the last few weeks was one of the most rewarding gifts we could have given ourselves as well. What a wonderful thing, to be at her side gently stroking her forehead, whispering goodbye as the flame quietly went out.

“Death is not extinguishing the light; it is only putting out the lamp because the dawn has come.” — Rabindranath Tagore

Michelle’s mum, Gayle Lee, enjoyed a flight over Manawatu and ticked an item off her bucket list
Welcome to spring 2012. I hope by the time this newsletter goes to print, the rain will have stopped and we will be enjoying some spring sunshine.

Our farmers will be knee deep in lush grass (instead of mud), which brings me to Farming for Hospice. Derek and Neil, our wonderful volunteers, are working towards having 400 head of cattle on farms across the region. Farmers graze the hospice cattle until the animals are ready to be sold, generously donating the grazing, and the profits from the sale go towards the care of patients in our community. Ron Eaton, who has been involved in administration of Farming for Hospice for 21 years, has recently retired from this voluntary role – thank you Ron for your meticulous record keeping – and your cheeky sense of humour whenever we see you! We have the support of the ANZ National Bank Rural Banking team who are helping us to promote the Farming for Hospice programme across the region (thank you team). We are expanding the farming programme into dairy cattle, and in fact we will accept virtually any type of donation from farmers – all donations are valuable!

Last month, we welcomed Louise Bartholomew to the role of Director Strategy and Operations. Our fundraising team reports directly to Louise, who has a management background in both the health sector overseas and in the local not for profit sector.

Our Board of Trustees and Senior Leadership & Management Team have been working on the Arohanui Hospice Strategic Plan 2012-2017. We have consulted with staff, volunteers, patients, families, Maori and stakeholders to create a plan that allows us to continue to deliver quality palliative care that meets the needs of patients and their families in our community, and to grow our service to meet future needs. A copy of our plan will be available on our website in the near future, or by emailing enquiries@arohanuihospice.org.nz. We welcome your feedback.

This year we have completed both a certification audit (required by the Ministry of Health and audits us against Health & Disability Standards) and an accreditation audit, which is an audit that focusses on quality improvement across the organisation. We received positive reports from both audits and were commended on our work in end of life care across the health sector, and in the number and range of improvements we have made. These results are a credit to our clinical team who provide care and compassion to patients and their families, and to our administration team who provide support behind the scenes.

Our end of year accounts are in draft and are with the auditors as I write this. We achieved our targets in community fundraising for the year and we have been able to improve the services we provide as a result. Thank you all so much for your support. Arohanui Hospice is proud to be part of such a wonderfully generous community.

Wishing you all the best for the remainder of 2012.

GARDENERS REQUIRED

Become part of the Arohanui Hospice volunteer team and help to maintain our vibrant gardens. A knowledge of gardening is required.

If you'd like to make new friends and contribute to a respected organisation, call Cyndi Gildea on 356 6606 or email cynthia.g@arohanuihospice.org.nz

HOSPICE WISH LIST

Can you help us?

- Spotlight/Warehouse Stationery vouchers
- Postage stamps and petrol vouchers
- Luxury pastel pillow cases
- Men’s nightshirts (knit fabric, large sizes)
- Ladies pyjamas
- Bed handle
- Bean bags with washable covers x 2
- Energizer Max 9-volt batteries
- 5-litre Crock Pot (new or good condition)
- Olympus digital voice recorder (for use in Day Stay); approx $100, plus foot pedals; approx $200
- Thermostat for Day Stay kiln; $360
- A guitar — for families to play
- Laptop for patient use in inpatient unit
- For children: Felt tip pens, crayons, playing cards, activity pads, easels, water-based paints, A3 paper, stickers, comics, children’s magazines, Blu Tack, brushes, safety scissors, glue pens
- PlayStation games & children’s DVDs

FOR THE KITCHEN

- Serviettes
- Dishwashing liquid
- Milo
- Canned drinks 375ml (Lemonade, Coca-Cola regular or diet)
- Bottled Drinks – individual size around 375ml (Ginger Ale, Ginger Beer)
- White and brown sugar
- Packet biscuits
- Cracker biscuits
- Canned salmon
- Condensed milk
- Canned asparagus
- Canned creamed corn
- Tomato Soup – Watties only please
- Canned fruit – (in juice)
- Peaches, Pears, Fruit Salad, Apples,
- Apricots, Pineapple
- Golden syrup & maple syrup
- Canola cooking spray (oil)
- Raspberry jam

Thank you
Welcome to Wendy Smith who joined the inpatient unit nursing team in May as a health care assistant. Wendy had previously been part of the hospice volunteer team, helping out in an administrative capacity. Poppy Hemopo has also recently joined us as a part time health care assistant supporting the nursing team.

In June we welcomed two experienced part time social workers, Cindy Gibbs and Andrea Bowness.

Louise Bartholomew joined our senior leadership management team last month in the role of Director Strategy & Operations. As well as heading the fundraising department, Louise will ensure the hospice is working towards the achievement of our strategic goals, supported by effective operational planning processes and the timely reporting of relevant information to management and the Board.

We recently farewelled Liz Angus who was working with the National LCP Office in a short term role. We also said goodbye to Sande Ramage, who was offering part time pastoral support cover for Paul Ranby, while he developed a pastoral care education package. Paul is now involved in the development of a Hospice NZ national education programme.

In July, Nikki Fox commenced a two-year training post for registered nurses who have chosen palliative care as their area of specialty practice. The role is supported by the Donny Charitable Trust, working in partnership with Arohanui Hospice, and in collaboration with MidCentral Health.

Staff comings and goings

Volunteers and staff at the Palmerston North Hospice Shop are crying out for your old and vintage furniture for the upcoming annual Heritage Sale.

This year will be the 6th year the sale has been held, and shop manager Jennie Lewer says there’s still plenty of room on the shop floor for vintage items.

“We’ve sorted through an array of bric-a-brac and lots of beautiful crystal. But we’re still on the hunt for interesting old furniture items. We’d love to be able to present some unique pieces.”

Already put aside for the sale is an old organ, which Jennie believes to be of 1920s origin. There’s also an oak carved coat rack, which would suit the hallway of any villa.

Quality vintage items are donated by people in the community and can include books, jewellery, china, crystal, retro and vintage clothing, furs, hats and shoes.

Up to 50 hospice volunteers will be working on the shop floor during the sale, and volunteers are instrumental in sale preparations, which are already well underway.

To make space for Heritage Sale items, customers can enjoy a massive 50% off sale from Saturday 6 through to Wednesday 10 October.

The shop will close on Wednesday at 2.00pm, reopening for the sale on Thursday 11 at 5.00pm.

This is Jennie’s first Heritage Sale since joining the hospice shop staff and she hopes that as in previous years, hundreds of customers will be lining up outside prior to opening.

“I’ve heard they start queuing from 3.00pm, ready for the 5.00pm opening!”

The Heritage Sale starts on Thursday 11 October at 5.00pm, and runs through until Saturday at 2.00pm. People can drop off donated items to 285 Rangitikei Street (next to McDonald’s) or phone 356 1960 to organise pick up.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY FEILDING: Joint managers Pam van Zyl and Helen Wylie celebrated the first birthday, on 1 September, of the Arohanui Hospice Sale Yard. The success of the store lies with the Feilding community—from the quality donations that are dropped off each day to the wonderful volunteers who give their time freely, and the customers who keep coming back. Thank you Feilding, we appreciate your contribution!
He is described as a quiet wise old gentleman who was passionate about the work of hospice, and who brought a wealth of knowledge to his role as a trustee of Arohanui Hospice.

Dr John Crowley died in Palmerston North on March 13 after serving 17 years on the Arohanui Hospice board of trustees.

Fellow trustee and former chairman, Roger Clausen, says Dr Crowley was very interested in making sure hospice care was available to everyone, including those in aged care facilities.

“He thought the hospice community nursing service was great, as that had grown a lot over the years.”

Dr Crowley had a full career following his medical studies at Otago University and specialist training in London. He worked in Palmerston North as a hospital obstetrician and gynaecologist, and also practised privately.

Hospice volunteer Val Rolfe worked with Dr Crowley for 13 years at his private practice.

“His patients always came first … they thought a great deal of him. He was a good employer and we never left work without being thanked for the work we’d done that day. That was something special,” Val says.

Dr Crowley served as chairman of the obstetrics unit and as an elected member of the then Manawatu-Wanganui Area Health Board. He was a founding member of the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child and of Doctors for Life. He helped set up Pregnancy Help, which aimed to counsel and support women with unwanted pregnancies to avoid abortion.

He set up a natural family planning clinic in Palmerston North, which became a national association and also set up the Christian Family Life Education Group to teach sex education in Catholic schools.

In 1995 Dr Crowley retired and began to focus on end-of-life care. It was then he accepted an invitation to join the Arohanui Hospice board of trustees.

According to colleagues, Dr Crowley loved his role as a trustee. He had a passion for statistics and was often poring over figures to draw comparisons on the role of hospice now and how it might work in the future.

“He loved being a trustee and was proud of what the hospice did in the delivery of its services,” Roger Clausen says.

He was concerned with making sure hospice was providing services to everyone who needed them, including non-cancer patients. He cared for and understood the needs of hospice patients, but equally cared for and understood the needs of hospice staff.

Dr Simon Allan says Dr Crowley viewed his background in obstetrics and gynaecology as being quite attuned to palliative care. “It’s like birthing people into the world has some similarities to them exiting.”

Dr Crowley’s son, John, describes one of those similarities being the joy and intense satisfaction brought to those who provide the care.

“Dad’s enthusiasm for hospice stemmed from the belief that not only did it manage end-of-life but it did so in a way that provided a rich experience for all those involved, sad certainly, but with many good experiences, and when Dad’s own time came, some quite amusing moments.”

Dr Crowley and his wife Pat, also deceased, had seven children, 12 grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.
FARMING FOR HOSPICE VOLUNTEER RETIRES

Ron Eaton looks delighted with the whisky tumblers gifted to him following his retirement from the Farming for Hospice programme. Ron has been involved with the financial aspects of the programme since its inception in 1994 and will certainly be missed. Thanks for all your hard work Ron!

THANK YOU

It was Lotto’s 25th birthday in August. Since its establishment by the government in 1987, New Zealand Lotteries has enabled over $3 billion in funds to be returned to the community.

New Zealand Lotteries has supported Arohanui Hospice over a number of years and most recently contributed to our volunteer co-ordinator’s salary.

Thank you New Zealand Lotteries!

Hospice shop outgrows premises

In mid-June the Levin Hospice Shop moved to larger premises situated at 3 Main Road South, next to glass and glazing store Top Glass. The move meant the shop and separate “shed”, which housed larger items such as furniture, electrical appliances and whiteware, is now able to operate under one roof.

There is plenty of parking for customers and shop volunteers at the new site, including on-street parking.

Hospice shop manager Josie Connor says the layout of the new store means people can find things easily.

“Customers are enjoying the large and airy store. It has a good ambiance.”

Josie also says the quality of goods donated has improved since the move.

“People are happy to donate high quality goods, knowing they will be displayed attractively and priced fairly while fetching good returns for the hospice.”

The shop is open Mon-Fri 9.30 to 4.00 and Saturdays 9.30 to 1.00.

Chief Executive Clare Randall opens the Levin store with trustees John Freebairn and Dr Fred Hirst, and Horowhenua MP Nathan Guy

Yes, I would like to help others to live every moment.

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms □ First Name □ Surname
□ Address
□ Phone
Email
□ I would like to volunteer for Arohanui Hospice
□ I would like to give regularly; please send a direct debit form
□ Please send details on leaving a gift in my Will to Arohanui Hospice
□ I have already left a gift in my Will to Arohanui Hospice

$100 □ $60 □ $40 □ Other $ □ Cheque enclosed □ Please charge my credit card
□ Mastercard □ Visa □ Amex
Card no. ___________ / ___________ Signature
Expiry date ___________ / ___________

Donate via internet banking to Westpac 03-0502-0414019-00. Please ensure you use your supporter reference number if you know it, along with the code SNL12, so we may acknowledge your gift. Alternatively phone or email us to let us know you have credited our account.

Please return this form to:
Freepost 206743, Arohanui Hospice, PO Box 5349, Palmerston North 4441
November 17 will see the annual country fair at Cross Hills Gardens, 4km north of Kimbolton Village.

The fair runs from 9am until 4pm and entry is $10, but under 16s can attend for free. The entry cost gives people access to the fair, gardens, the plant centre and the children’s play area. There is also a café onsite.

This year there will be over 140 stalls selling crafts, designer jewellery, children’s clothing, baby gifts, masses of plants, outdoor furniture, preserves … and more. A perfect time for your Christmas shopping. Also, keep a gold coin handy and watch out for Arohanui Hospice collectors.

Upon arrival people will be given a map of the fair and garden and there’ll be plenty of staff around to help with directions. People should look out for staff wearing the “ask me” badges.

The fair will go ahead rain or shine. There is plenty of free parking, including space for buses. The more the merrier! Visit www.crosshillsfair.co.nz for further information or PH 0800 RHODOS.