

MANAWATU IDENTITY RETIRES

Dr Bernard Forde, MBE JP

Another change on the Trust Board this year saw Cancer Society representative Dr Bernard Forde step down after ten years of sterling service, to be replaced by Peter Noble-Campbell.

Dr Forde, a former DSIR scientist, is well known around the city for his civic roles (a past city and regional councillor and deputy mayor for 13 years) and the breadth of his involvement with many community groups and trusts.

Dr Forde's valued contribution stemmed from his extensive experience with community organisations and in many instances he was able to provide helpful insight into the operations of other groups the Trust dealt with. "He is a very experienced administrator" says outgoing Trust Secretary Tony Finnigan, "his input always measured and well thought out, helping keep us on the straight and narrow!"

TREATMENT WITH A SMILE:



From Left: Mairi-Ann Trotter, Jeanette Groube and Pam Te-Hiwi – the ‘welcome team’ at Palmerston North Hospital’s Radiation Oncology Department.

As a patient, it can be quite overwhelming navigating the start of radiation therapy whilst dealing with living away from home for extended periods. Ozanam House visitor books overflow with comments from grateful guests who have experienced the care and attention reception and administration staff at the Radiation Oncology Department strive to provide.

Pam Te-Hiwi, who fronts the LA4 reception desk on the ground floor, is usually the welcoming face that patients first come across when they arrive for treatment. "I'm the meet and greeter! To begin with I just explain briefly to them what to expect and how to get where they need to go. I try not to bombard them with information as many are pretty overwhelmed by it all when they first arrive."

Before meeting Pam, most will have also spoken to both Jeanette Groube and Mairi-Ann Trotter. Jeanette, working behind the scenes as the Bookings Co-ordinator, kicks off the treatment process by booking patients in for their initial nursing appointments and CT scans, where the data needed to plan their treatment is collected. "I call them up, and as part of our chat I will advise patients on all the other services that are there to help - things like the health shuttles that ferry people to us, Ozanam House where people can stay... really I just point them in the right direction for anything they need."

Once a patient's unique treatment plan has been devised, Mairi-Ann is the next point of contact, scheduling their suite of treatment appointments and liaising with Ozanam House for those who require guest accommodation. As the receptionist at LA1 and LA3, she is also a familiar face to many who come through the door: "We do try and accommodate people's needs as much as we can" she says, "Recently we had a support person who asked to take photos of his Mum undergoing treatment so he could send them home to the rest of the family – it really helped them to understand what she was going through."

They're a great team and their work does not go unappreciated if all the 'Thank You' cards behind the reception desks are anything to go by!

OZANAM HOUSE AT FEATHERSTON-RUAHINE STREET - GUEST COMMENTS: East Coast Enthusiasm!



Walden Wing Guests – From Left: Barry from Hastings, along with Adrienne and husband Ben from Wairoa.

With two days to go of his eight week stint at Ozanam House, self-employed painter/decorator Barry says "These are eight weeks I'll never forget. They sure live up to the promise of being a home-away-from-home here and I can't say enough about the place."

You can be involved as much as you like in community life at the House and Barry has certainly made the most of it, "I've been prancing about like a chicken since I got here, I play golf, walk up to the hospital and into town once a week and haven't thought about the fact I have cancer at all – I'm busy all the time." Being busy also included a stint as 'office boy', chipping in to help with the odd chore or two when Claire and Eileen in the office were stretched. Thanks Barry!

"I was forewarned this was a good place by others from home who had been...told I would love it" says Barry's housemate Ben, a freezing worker from Wairoa. "I've had an aunty and a cousin come through here for treatment, and when I go home, my advice to anyone coming here would be to mix in and don't be shy, don't just stick to your house, go round and meet people – it's magical!"

And From Our Visitor's Book

Couldn't ask for a better place. A five smile hotel! ~ Renee, Wairoa
Feels like home...but nicer! ~ Kathleen

To the battlers who come after me, the comradeship you find at Ozanam House will help you win your battle. Kia kaha. Be strong. ~ Thomas, Te Puia Springs

A wonderful retreat.~ Ian and Ngaire

OZANAM HOUSE TRUST

update

A unique style of 'home-away-from-home' accommodation for out-of-town guests undergoing treatment at Palmerston North Hospital's Regional Cancer Centre

New additions at St Mary's

Expanding our 'home'



Opened in November 2009, the beautifully appointed Craven and Butler Houses tucked away on a peaceful rear section beside St Mary's Catholic Church and Primary School have just had a \$400,000 addition - thanks to the generosity of the regional community, Lions and the East Coast-based Frimley Foundation and Springhill Charitable Trust.

It is hard to believe that just two years ago the site was an unused plot of land with a stream running through it. Lots of finishing touches to the grounds and gardens, courtesy of our stalwart Lions supporters and others in the community, have softened the brand new buildings into the established, welcoming environment that our guests now relish. Marleen Kingi, housekeeper at the complex, comments: "Guests often see something we need or have yet to add to the houses and donate it when they leave – things like wine glasses, coasters, bigger coffee mugs...the little things that help make this a comfortable home-away from-home."

Since opening, some 290 guests have used the facilities across the two six bedroom houses and adjacent three bedroom home, Rendu House, at 28a Newhaven Place. Just a short walk from the Radiotherapy Department, with ample off-street parking, our more able-bodied guests enjoy the freedom this handy location provides.



Craven House (Above) Housing the larger of the two communal lounges and kitchen-dining areas, and with adjacent summer outdoor seating, Craven House is often at the heart of any social events our guests plan during their stay.



Butler House (Above) Named after Dan Butler, who is acknowledged as the originator of the idea for the very first Ozanam House that opened in 1967. As a volunteer visitor to Palmerston North Hospital, Dan became inspired after talking to a Gisborne patient and witnessing his loneliness as he was separated from family who could not afford to stay in Palmerston North.



Rendu House (Above) Relocated in 2009 to make way for the new entrance to the St Mary's Complex, Rendu House sits on its own section in Newhaven Place and is ideal for guests who have extensive whanau support and need that bit more space.

GAME ON!

The recently completed recreation room 'The Lion's Den' and the Frimley/Springhill gazebo will be a boon to guests who find treatment often takes up only a small part of their day, and are looking for ways to help pass the time. The buildings are named in acknowledgment of the significant funding contributions Lions Clubs from surrounding districts have fed into the project, together with the support of the Frimley Foundation and Springhill Charitable Trust. Space has also been created to provide new offices for the Trust's Manager-Secretary, Roger Clark, and Administrator & Accounts Assistant, Kay Donoghue.

Rob and Marilyn from New Plymouth

St Mary's Butler House Guests

Three weeks into a four week stay for Marilyn's treatment, her husband Rob says, "This is our second time around using the facilities - we had a lovely welcome when we arrived and we have tried to pass that on to others that have come after us. We find the Ozanam Trust people provide the welcoming space and the guests provide the atmosphere." Grateful for the Wi-Fi connection at the St Mary's Complex that allows him to keep his work as an accountant ticking over and full of praise for the way the new houses are appointed, Rob notes "The Trust is a very important extension of the health system and they do it exceptionally well."

LIONS CLUBS - TAKE A BOW!



The Trust would like to make special mention of the superb ongoing support received from the many Clubs within the two Lions Districts (202D and 202M) that Ozanam House serves.

Their recent collective fundraising drive to support the construction of the St Mary's gazebo, recreation room and

offices saw close to \$100,000 raised - a truly magnificent effort!

Manawatu Lions Club president, Terry Freeman, has been involved in supporting the Trust for as long as he can remember and reckons the secret to the Trust's success is "...the good people that run it." As an ex-builder and in-kind donor, Terry is also one of those good people that help make it a success on the ground, and is often seen wielding a spade or arriving with trailer in tow to help with whatever needs doing.

LIGHTENING THE LOAD...

Step inside the Craven House dining area on a cold winter's morning and you're greeted with peals of laughter from the group gathered around the breakfast table.

"Mealtimes can take two to three hours here" jokes Lyndsay, a vegetable grower from Napier, "everyone here has a good sense of humour and we have a lot of fun". Glenis from Hawera chimes in "I told someone back home I was having fun here and they didn't believe me - they thought we should be being all serious about this".

It's a warm, infectious atmosphere with an easy camaraderie, which as an outsider you can tell is bred from shared experiences and respect for one another's place in the cancer journey. "There's no pressure and no expectations here" says Lynne, a midwife from Hawera. "The staff allow you to just be yourself" adds Glenys, a self-described 'weed-puller' from Oakura, "and the people you meet along the way are incredible - such care and kindness." "I was a little wary at first about this communal living idea, but in the first couple of days that quickly evaporated" says Lyndsay, "we're all here for the same reason."



Above: Craven House guests, August 2011. From Left: Lynne, Glenys, Lyndsay and Glenis relaxing around the breakfast table.

MARLEEN KINGI

THE FRIENDLY FACE OF ST MARY'S:

"I think of it as though they are coming to stay with me while they're having treatment," says St Mary's Complex housekeeper, Marleen Kingi, "and many will stay in touch with me after they head home. I say to them that the jug is always on if they want to pop in for a cuppa!"



The title of 'housekeeper' certainly does not do Marleen justice. She is the friendly face, the welcoming smile and the practiced ear of St Mary's. With her own experience nursing her late husband through his battle with cancer, Marleen lends a depth of understanding to the support she offers her house guests: "I like that I have the opportunity in my work here to give back, to make a return on some of the help that we had on our journey."

Marleen is key to the welcoming atmosphere at Rendu, Craven and Butler Houses in more ways than one. On deck from opening day in 2009, she set up the houses from scratch - unpacking the new crockery, stocking the kitchen and making the beds for the first time, creating the small details that go towards making this home-away-from-home that so many cherish whilst receiving treatment.

"I just love the people here - we all have a laugh and just get on with the normal things in life". An avid crafter, Marleen is keen on patchwork and knitting and has just begun an ambitious project creating a korowai (traditional feather cloak) as a family heirloom. Such handiwork interests see her swapping recipes and patterns with house guests and admiring the latest creation being worked on by busy fingers.

EAST COAST DHB LOOKING ELSEWHERE?

The Tairāwhiti DHB is considering the option of sending cancer patients to Hamilton instead of Palmerston North.

Ozanam House not only provides an excellent accommodation facility that is repeatedly praised by guests from this region, but also receives significant donations from individuals and trusts from the Eastern districts - resulting in many residents who have a strong emotional connection with Ozanam House. Our support services focus on providing a patient/whānau-centred approach that has been proven to meet the needs of the predominantly Māori guests that we host from this region.

Beverly and Robin from Gisborne, Featherston-Ruahine Street, Ryan Wing Guests

Just retired from life together as journalists and then hit with a health bombshell, Beverly and her partner Robin were faced with a lengthy five week stay away from home while Beverly received treatment. "It's a long five hour drive home for us, so much as we'd like to go home, being able to stay the weekend here is just magic."

When asked the most valuable part of staying at Ozanam House, Beverly says, "Probably the independence it gives - you're not staying in an institution. It's a lot cosier, warmer and more homely than staying in a motel. At this time of year when you're confined indoors, to have this comfort and warmth to retreat to is fantastic."

"That's what concerns us about the proposed move to Gisborne, as to what level of support might be offered there," says Robin. "I think it would be very difficult having to do this on your own, so being able to have your support person stay here with you is so, so important" adds Beverly.

WELCOME

Roger Clark - Manager-Secretary 2011

New Ozanam House Trust Manager-Secretary, Roger Clark, is excited about taking up a permanent role in the not-for-profit world.



"I worked for many years in the agricultural sector, filling my spare time with not-for-profit work. Now I am lucky to have the opportunity to do this every day in my new operational role with the Trust."

As the St Vincent de Paul Society representative on the Trust since 2007, Roger is well-versed in the governance side of keeping such a facility running. Since he started on 1 July, guests at the houses have seen quite a bit of his face as he familiarises himself with the day-to-day operational side of things. It is Roger's job to look after the financials, strategic operations, and fundraising elements essential to the Trust's operation, as well as manage the relationships with other cancer support services.

"Previous boards and staff have left me a very solid foundation to work with" says Roger, "and I'll be focusing on working with the team to continue to develop our unique philosophy of providing a home-away-from-home for guests and carers."

CLIFF CRAVEN

26 August 1923 - 10 November 2010

It is with much sadness we acknowledge the passing of long-serving Trustee, Clifford Warburton (Cliff) Craven on 10 November 2010, aged 87 years.

Cliff served as a trustee of Ozanam House from 1990 until 2010 and was Trust Chairman from 1993 until 1995, and from 2001 until 2003. In recognition of his years of unstinting service, one of the new accommodation houses at St Mary's was named in his honour.

He joined the Saint Vincent de Paul Society in 1981 and was one of the volunteers who visited people in hospital, and those at Ozanam House, something he continued to do for almost 30 years. His greatest pleasure remained visiting guests at Ozanam House and seeing how sadness and apprehension quickly turned to appreciation of the simple joys in life: "It is a great place for laughter. That is the spirit of St Vincent de Paul."

"He was a quiet worker, tirelessly contributing" says retiring Trust Secretary Tony Finnigan, "and we always valued his contribution."



FAREWELL

Tony Finnigan, CA, QSM, JP - Foundation Secretary 1971 - 2011



Above: Retiring Trust Secretary, Tony Finnigan (right), with long-term colleague, House Administrator and friend, Eileen Day (left).

Says Eileen, "Tony was always so generous with his time and his self. He also has a great sense of humour but has a tendency to forget the punchlines to his own jokes!"

It is difficult to give full credit to a man who has devoted more than 40 years to upholding the values and philosophy of Ozanam House Trust in just a few paragraphs...

Many readers will know that the connections Tony Finnigan has had with the Trust, the wider community, and regional cancer support services over the years, run deep. As a member of the St Vincent de Paul Society in the late 1960s, Tony was involved with the genesis of the idea to provide 'homely' accommodation for out of town patients that has grown into the vibrant Trust we see today.

As a chartered accountant, Tony joined the Cancer Society Board in the early 1970s and saw an opportunity for the two entities to form an independent joint Trust to administer the burgeoning accommodation work. At the same time, his membership of the local Lions inspired what was the first of many fundraising campaigns over the years to support the gradual expansion of the Trust's buildings and facilities.

Tony has seen much change during his tenure, with some of the greatest reflected in the attitudes of the health funders - who now place more emphasis on supporting the patient, true to the patient/family-centred approach that Ozanam House has always strived to maintain. A self-described 'pragmatic do-gooder' and an experienced and effective advocate for the Trust's work and rights of the patient, Tony has seen his share of battles over the years. "I'd often think to myself if I don't make a bloody row about it, nothing will change!"

When asked to name the highlight of his time with the Trust, Tony was a little lost for words, but quick to comment "I've been blessed with the women sent to administer the place, they have all been very fine!" Upon further reflection, the Trust's agreement to purchase and progress the St Mary's Campus and its potential to allow future development was deemed to be the highlight.

On a more personal note, it's the call of the sunny south and family living nearby that has lured Tony and his wife to Nelson, where he plans to continue his private mediation and arbitration practice, along with some national work for the St Vincent de Paul Society and maintenance of various judicial roles that he holds. "I've also a bach in the Sounds and a 30 foot boat that I hope to use a little bit more" and like many New Zealanders, he is looking forward to attending a clutch of Rugby World Cup games around the country.