

Volunteer *Voices*

December 2020



Connecting the lifeblood of Mercy

Welcome to the second edition of our new volunteer-specific newsletter, *Volunteer Voices*. We are very aware that without our fabulous cohort of generous volunteers, Mercy Hospice could not provide the level of care to our patients that we are able to, and Nix and Sue feel that you deserve a newsletter of your very own!

Here at Mercy Hospice we provide end of life care to individuals and their whānau who are struggling with life limiting illnesses, both in our St. Josephs Inpatient Unit at College Hill, and to around 300 other patients in the community at any one time. Everything you do for Mercy Hospice, whether it be in the Hospice itself, retail shops, transporting patients to appointments, companionship, shaking buckets in the streets, or helping at our numerous fundraising events, we absolutely appreciate and value your time and commitment to this organisation.

It is your dedication that makes such a difference in the lives of our patients

We value each and every one of our volunteers and we are committed to ensuring your volunteering journey with Mercy Hospice is a pleasurable one. We will try our very best to accommodate your volunteer requests so that you feel supported and valued in giving your precious time to Mercy Hospice.

If you would like to contribute to the production of these bi-annual newsletters, please come forward to let us know what you can offer. We are always looking for great volunteer stories to share. Maybe it is a special moment with a patient, customer, or family member while volunteering, something you learned from your experience, or perhaps in one of our editions you would like to share the story of how you became a volunteer. We love to hear from our volunteers and to continue our very important relationships with you.

We would like to take this opportunity to say **a huge thank you** for everything you do for us, and to wish you and your whanau a safe, relaxing and inspiring festive season. 2020 has

been a crazy ride, and although Christmas may not look how we intended it to, we are sure we will all be grateful that we live in this wonderful country and make the best of the season's festivities.

Also a big thank you to Jennifer Gadney, our volunteer editor, for putting this newsletter together and for keeping the volunteer office well fed with her home-made chocolate!

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From left to right - Cheryl Kenwright, HR Manager and Executive Leadership Team; Nix Grigg, Volunteer Coordinator; Sue Campin, Volunteer Coordinator; Rosemary King (Admin Volunteer Extraordinaire for 21 years)

The Volunteer Team sporting our brand new aprons which will be worn by the managers and volunteers in the shops, and the volunteers at the Hospice. We are delighted with these aprons which were sponsored by Summerset Retirement Villages and NZ Uniforms. We are sure you will agree that they look smart and will identify managers, and also give the volunteers recognition for the work done for Mercy.

Thank you



Vicky Lewis sewed lava lavas for Mercy while in lockdown. Thank you Vicky.

Robyn Fisher knitted lovely woollen slippers for our patients. Thank you Robyn.



Thank you to all the fabulous volunteers who have made 'Subcutaneous Infusion Pump and Catheter Bags' for our patients. Latest delivery of bags with Christmas theme donated by Pauline Levi.



Jan Steele baked for our Remembrance Day Service and rallied her friends to bake and donate as well, as did other volunteers. Thank you to Jan and our merry band of bakers.



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We are so grateful to all of our volunteers for your kindness and dedication. You are very much a part of what makes Mercy Hospice what it is; a deeply caring community of special humans.

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A warm welcome and introduction to our new Health & Safety Reps



Hi, I am Gillian, one of your new Health & Safety representatives. I have many years of experience in this field and am looking forward to being your rep within Mercy Hospice. I am also very keen to meet you and hear your ideas and any concerns. My family consists of my partner, two teenage girls, a cat and a dog. We spend a lot of time in Mangawhai where we have a place and I have recently decided that taking up golf is going to be my new thing!



Hi, I am Lexie, one of the Patient Care Volunteers' representatives on the Health & Safety Committee for Mercy Hospice. It is a role I find rewarding and really enjoy.

I think it is important to have people slightly removed from Mercy on the Health & Safety Committee. We look at issues, or potential issues, through different eyes and can often offer an alternative perspective.

I enjoy being one of the Mercy volunteers where I have done a few roles in the inpatient area, plus helped at fundraising events.

I feel I bring both my past business experience and my life experiences to the Health & Safety Committee. I have been on the committee a few years now.

If you have any questions about Health & Safety or need to contact any of the reps, please email scampin@mh.org.nz



Hi, my name is Vandana Rana and I am a retail Health & Safety representative. I have been working as a retail volunteer at the Mt Eden Shop since December 2015. I love meeting new people, enjoy good conversations with a cuppa, and believe learning is an on-going process.



Hi, I am Geraldine Northey and I have worked in the Inpatient Unit at Mercy Hospice for 12 years. I train all new inpatient volunteers on the tea and drinks trolley, and my focus is keeping our new volunteers safe at the unit. I love travel, food and friends. I have three lovely grandchildren who keep me young and involved. I want to be there for any volunteer who has a query or problem volunteering, and I am happy for anyone to contact me through Sue or Nix.



Hi, I'm Dave, the van driver for Mercy Hospice circulating the retail shops, and the newly allocated Health & Safety representative for Retail.

I have a history of volunteering with the NZ Fire Service for 26 years, with 5 years as a level 2 paramedic. I have a background in farming and traffic control for Auckland motorways.

Originally from Clevedon, now living in Mt Eden and engaged to be married. Feel free to catch me on my rounds in any of the Hospice shops should you need any H&S advice, I am the one wearing the visi vest!



TEN – A Celebration of Tastes

TEN was a roaring success, with everyone enjoying the wonderful food and wine and a very engaging auction. Our community came together collaboratively showing enormous enthusiasm and generosity to support Mercy's mission. David Boyes spoke eloquently about his and his wife's journey with Mercy Hospice, humbling the entire room and reminding us all why we were there and how important the Hospice movement is.

A very special thank you to all our volunteers who made this event exceptional and magical.

This email was received from one of the volunteers after TEN:



"You should definitely go to next year's TEN. It was so much fun. Despite the guests being worth many millions they were absolutely lovely, down to earth and easy to chat with. Annabel White as MC was hilarious, and Simon Gault was great too. The food was to die for, although I was a bit shy to try it all. I will definitely put my name down to volunteer for this again. The live auction bidding was incredible, with one person bidding about 7K for something then gifting it to someone else. I know tennis volunteers are all sorted, but what's coming up after the tennis as I think I would put my name down for all of them. All the volunteers that helped out were also really nice to meet and we had lots of time to chat."



Tennis for Mercy

Mercy's annual tennis event was a great experience for all involved, with good natured doubles being played all morning, followed by a delicious lunch back at Mercy, and an exciting auction. Much fun was had by all! A special thank you to our volunteers who gave their time to bake goodies for the cake stall and to serve lunch to our tournament participants.

Thank you to all the fabulous volunteers that helped out on the day, some of whom are pictured here with Sue Campin, Volunteer Coordinator, back right.



Volunteer Stories



Barbara Watt

I've been volunteering at Mercy Hospice shops for six years now and have recently moved from the Blockhouse Bay shop to the Mount Eden shop.

I live alone and, during the first COVID lockdown, it was lovely to have time to think and reflect about things. I decided that a change is as good as a rest, so moved to the Mt Eden shop.

My history with Mercy goes back to when my mother Charlotte was an inpatient at St Joseph's. I was so impressed with the volunteers and their service, I knew that I would volunteer here one day. At that time, I was working as a bank manager and had two young children at home, so it was not until I retired that I was free to volunteer.

It was a great transition as I had enjoyed the variety of conversations I would have with bank customers, and working in the Hospice shop filled that void. Everyone has a story and you always learn something. There are regulars at the Hospice shops that come in for companionship, a chat and a cup of tea and it's a privilege to know them and to be of service, as I believe everyone comes in to your life for a reason.

I think COVID has given us all time to re-evaluate about what's important. I really enjoy working in the retail side of Hospice as it's so paramount that we raise funds and we really are "selling second hand goods for first class service".

Respect is my favourite of all Mercy's values and for me that means being in alignment with people's feelings and wishes, realising that everyone is different and has their own thoughts and ways and that is to be celebrated.



Norah

Norah is a volunteer at the Royal Oak shop.

Picture shows Norah wearing her vintage dress she purchased from the store to wear for her school ball.



Lucy Best

I've been volunteering for Mercy for around five years now and spend a couple of hours each week making up the syringe packs for the community nurses and the inpatient unit. I am a retired nurse and it is wonderful to do something easy that just needs doing and saves the nurses' time.

The best thing about Mercy is how lovely the people are, the great atmosphere when you come into Hospice and, despite the work that Hospice does, it is such a happy place.

I do patient transport for Mercy also, which I enjoy as it's good to do something so simple for people that makes their life just a little bit easier. It's not a big commitment or a regular commitment but it's so appreciated by the patients. I've done companionship roles in the community also which is humbling as you are going into someone's life and home at a time when their world has been turned upside down. I would listen to their stories as I understand that a problem shared is a problem halved. It's gentle support where you give the wider family a break or for some people who don't have much family, it means that they don't have to go through things on their own.

Compassion is my favourite Mercy value as it's so important to put yourself in other people's shoes and understand that often their journey into Hospice can be sudden and frightening and, through empathy, you can see that just doing simple things helps to add some stability to their lives.

RECIPES

Sue's Healthy Christmas/Fruit Cake

Many people these days are not particularly keen on the traditional Christmas cake.

Here is a version for the more discerning! **Butter and Sugar free!**

It is lovely and moist and whilst still a fruit cake, is less like the solid traditional fruit cake we are used to at Christmas.

Healthy Christmas/Fruit Cake

- 1kg mixed fruit
- 2 cups self-raising flour (sifted)
- 2 cups orange juice
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- 1 tsp mixed spice
- Optional – 1/2 cup chopped walnuts

(It is not a mistake that the recipe does not have butter or sugar)

Mix fruit with orange juice and soak overnight. Add all other ingredients and mix well.

Line tin with baking paper, bake at 180°C for approximately 1.5 hours. Drop temperature to 160°C for another 30 minutes. You can cover with tin foil if your oven tends to overcook the top.

When your skewer comes out clean, remove from the oven and cool on a baking rack.

Nix's Christmas Pudding

(The Aunt Daisy Cookbook)

- 225g butter
- 225g brown sugar
- 450g sultanas
- 225g raisins
- 225g mixed peel
- 110g fresh breadcrumbs
- 110g flour
- 4 eggs
- 1/4 tsp salt
- 3 heaped tsp spice
- 5 tablespoons brandy
- 30g blanched almonds, chopped

Cream butter and sugar, add beaten eggs, then breadcrumbs, sifted flour, salt and spice, then fruit, peel and nuts. Add brandy last.

Steam in a basin for about 5 hours in a large saucepan with water reaching about half-way up the basin. If you do not have a steaming basin, just use a stainless steel bowl, cover the top with a few layers of baking or greaseproof paper, and tie around the top of the bowl with string, creating a "handle" over the top.

This is my favourite Christmas recipe. I have been making this pudding for years and it is always a family favourite because it's not heavy, it still has that lovely Christmas pudding flavour, but is lighter in texture. I always turn down the lights then flambé the pudding: heat at least a half cup of brandy, pour it over the pudding, and light. Voila! Happy Christmas!

Trees of Remembrance



The fabulous fundraiser 'Trees of Remembrance' is back this year. We have two venues operating outside Farmers stores, and we will need volunteers to man these trees. It is a case of sitting with the tree and taking donations from the public for tree baubles to be placed on the tree in remembrance of loved ones who have died. The roster for the Eastridge Shopping Centre venue is nearly full with fabulous volunteers, but we will need volunteers to step up and help with the New World Vic Park venue between **14 - 24 December**.

If you can help to do a two hour shift for us, please contact Sue Campin 09 376 7574 or email to receive the link to self book a shift. Thank you all in advance!

Retail Volunteers needed

If you have friends or family who are keen to volunteer in one of our fun retail shops, we would love to hear from them. There are vacancies in most of our shops, however Mt Roskill and Ellerslie Furniture have the greatest need. Our shops are keen to get weekend volunteers which is a great opportunity for students wanting to gain some retail experience before leaving school. Students need to be 15+ years of age and be reliable.



Dates To Diary

(Invitations to follow)

<p>Retail Volunteers' Christmas party</p>	<p>Each shop manager will arrange their own Christmas gathering for volunteers at their shops. Dates and times to be advised.</p>
<p>Patient Services Volunteers' Christmas party</p>	<p>Thursday 3rd December, 5pm at Mercy Hospice.</p>
<p>Foundation Day and Long Service Awards</p>	<p>Friday 11th December, 2pm at Mercy Hospice.</p>
<p>Carol Singing</p>	<p>Monday 14th December, 7pm at Mercy Hospice. Carol singing at St Catherine's Rest Home (next door) and then in the inpatient unit upstairs, followed by a glass of wine and Christmas mince pies.</p>
<p>Volunteer Voices Meeting</p>	<p>Our first meeting where volunteers may bring us great new ideas, discuss any challenges, support each other and let us know what you would like to learn more about. This was originally scheduled to take place in March but was cancelled due to the COVID lockdown. This will now be held on Thursday 11th February at 11am followed by a light lunch and a glass of wine. We encourage as many of you as possible to attend this, as the format and how these meetings look going forward will be decided by you.</p>



MERRY
CHRISTMAS
— & —
HAPPY NEW YEAR
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