

# **V**olunteer **Voices**

June 2021



## ***Celebrating Mercy Hospice Volunteers***



# Celebrating our volunteers!

What a fabulous cohort of volunteers we are privileged to work with. Mercy Hospice has approximately 550 'active' volunteers on our books, all doing a variety of volunteer roles.

Most of our volunteers work in our retail shops. We have nine shops across the Auckland Central area. We use the skills of nearly 400 volunteers across our retail shops. There are 122 three-hour shifts across the shops per week, each shop requiring between two to four volunteers per shift depending on the shop size and customer capacity. This equates to 6,344 shifts per year or averages 57,096 hours donated to retail by volunteers!

See how absolutely marvelous you all are? Together we can achieve great things.

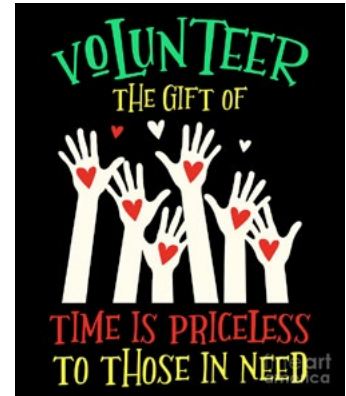
The number of 'active' non-retail volunteers who have patient contact or volunteer on the Hospice grounds is approximately 200, doing a wide range of roles. We have fabulous volunteers who transport patients

to appointments and the Manaaki programme here at the Hospice, volunteers who have regular shifts doing the tea and drinks trolley in the Hospice, flower ladies, companionship volunteers, life story writers, gardeners, sewers, and in-house function volunteers.

All volunteers are invited to participate in our fundraising efforts and events.

We are so very lucky to have you all and are so very grateful to receive whatever time commitment you offer Mercy Hospice.

Thank you again for your support. We truly could not do what we do without you!



From left to right: Sue Campin, Volunteer Coordinator, Nix Grigg, Volunteer Coordinator.

# Volunteer Voices meeting

## 29<sup>th</sup> April 2021

This was the first of our Volunteer Voices meetings. We had two sessions in the one day: a lunch session and an evening session.

Whilst the numbers were low (considering the number of volunteers we have) the outcome was very positive. 28 people attended the lunch session and nine attended the evening session.

Those who attended thoroughly enjoyed themselves, commenting that the sharing of experiences and roles was most valuable. We were fortunate to have Mercy Hospice's acting CEO Peter Buckland speak at both meetings. Input and suggestions from volunteers who attend these meetings, help us to improve service delivery and support volunteers more fully.

Good food, wine, robust conversation, and great people are always a fabulous way to spend time, and we would like to thank you all for attending. We would like to encourage more volunteers to participate in our next Volunteer Voices meetings closer to the end of the year.

Dates to be confirmed.

The other day was the saddest day. We lost a patient who was too young to be in our care. Her mum, husband and daughter had been regular faces around the Hospice for a couple of weeks.

She passed away today. Listening to the heart-wrenching sounds of her beautiful



10-year-old daughter uncontrollably sobbing for her mum highlighted all the reasons we do what we do here at Mercy Hospice.

The journeys that people are on when they need our services are raw and real and every now and then we need those little reminders that everyone is on a different path and a different place on that path called life.

It reminded me that kindness is not always at the forefront of our minds, but that maybe it should be a little more, as we never know what path someone else's journey is on. Are they struggling with something hidden behind that smile, are they grieving the loss of someone or something they loved, are they learning to live a new life, (which is harder than they thought), are they financially struggling, are they empty nesting? So many reasons that someone may not be in the best place emotionally, but a beautiful, heartwarming smile, sprinkled with compassion and kindness is often all it takes to ease the pain of someone suffering, until their world straightens itself enough to embrace what the future holds.

Just my thoughts on today.

**Sue Campin**



The attendees of the Volunteer Voices evening session, all looking fabulous!

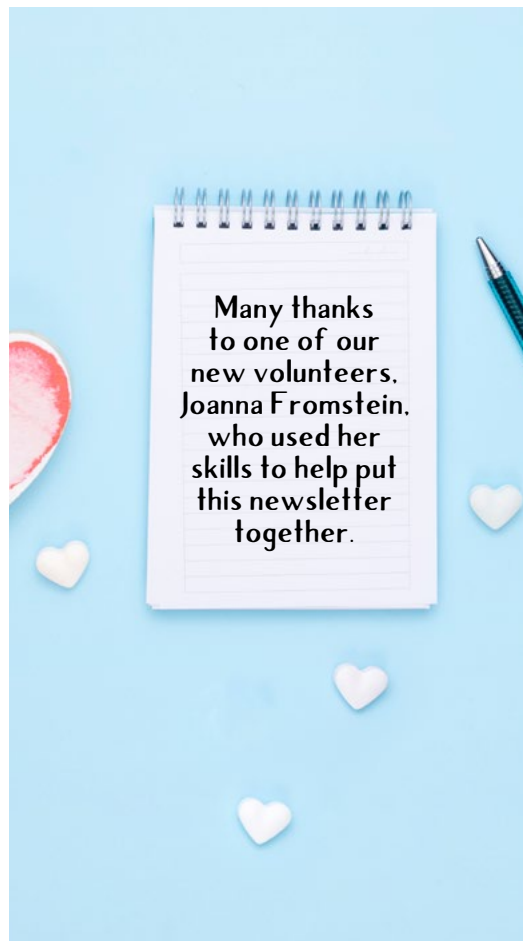




# Volunteering benefits volunteers as much as the organisation

Did you know that volunteering has been shown to improve your own life and health while you're helping others? Everyone who volunteers here at Mercy Hospice has their own reasons for doing so, but at the heart of it is the desire to help the patients and whānau being served by the hospice. It turns out that volunteering doesn't just help others; it helps you too!

Studies have shown that people who volunteer regularly tend to live longer lives, suffer from fewer diseases, and have better overall health than those who don't. It gets you out of the house and moving, and as a result, volunteers tend to be in better physical health. Volunteering also tends to improve your mental health through social interactions. You get to make connections with the people you serve and create friendships with the other volunteers that you work with. Regular social interaction has been shown to reduce depression and anxiety and may also reduce the risk of dementia or Alzheimer's disease. Volunteering makes us feel good. The knowledge that we are helping others and making a difference is rewarding and is a big motivator behind why we volunteer, but it turns out that in addition to this, there are lots of other unseen side effects to volunteering that benefit us all. Isn't that neat?



*We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give.*

AZ QUOTES

Winston Churchill



# Volunteer stories



**Joanna Bell**

Ponsonby  
Mercy Hospice shop

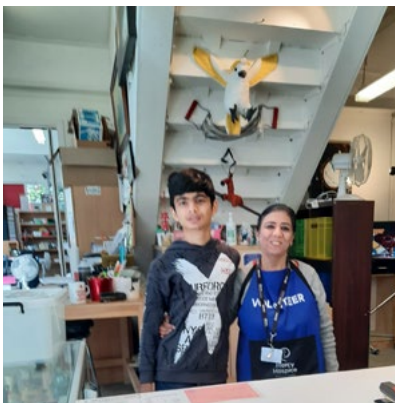
I live in Ponsonby and regularly walk down the road. I passed Mercy Hospice shop as it was being prepared for opening. I couldn't work out if it was an op shop or a "real" shop. I popped in on several occasions and talked to Maria and decided I wanted to be a volunteer. That was nearly 13 years ago. I absolutely LOVE being there and talking to people, most of whom are very happy to buy from Hospice. I think we all have a loved one, or know of someone, who has had or is suffering from cancer.

To volunteer is to give something back but also is a payoff to yourself as it makes you feel good. I have also made some lovely friends there and will continue to volunteer for as long as I can.

**Mary Brasser**

Ponsonby Mercy Hospice shop

My name is Mary. I have been a volunteer at the Ponsonby Hospice shop for over 10 years now, working there on alternate Tuesday afternoons with my friend Willi. We have lots of laughs, love interacting with the customers and are always blown away by the generous donations the shop receives. Brenda and Andrew, the managers, have the shop looking really smart and are great to work with.



**Shaliza and Ansh Malik**

Ellerslie Mercy Hospice  
furniture shop

Soon after we moved to Auckland, my son Ansh and I began volunteering at the Mercy Hospice Furniture outlet in Ellerslie. We are new to the country and wanted to meet and connect with people while also contributing to the community in any way we could. Back in India, we were involved with Blind Relief because I wanted my son to participate in community service and outreach programs from a young age.

Mr. Knox, the Principal of Ansh's school, recommended Mercy Hospice and introduced us to Sue. Soon after, we attended an orientation, which helped us connect with other volunteers and align ourselves with Mercy's overall vision and values. The induction program was both engaging and well-organized. We were familiarized with Mercy's culture and its mission while being made aware of our responsibilities.

The Mercy Hospice Furniture shop at Ellerslie is a lovely place with wonderful co-workers. Ansh is really fond of Steven, the Shop Manager, who has a big heart and is always willing to help others. Volunteering at Mercy's shop in Ellerslie gives us a sense of accomplishment and fills us with pride. It's been one of the most rewarding and meaningful experiences we've ever had, and we look forward to being there every Wednesday.



**Julie Lloyd**

Pt. Chevalier  
Mercy Hospice shop

I have been working as a volunteer for just under a year at the Pt. Chevalier Retail Shop. After 30 years in the role of Personal/Executive Assistant, I decided to semi-retire, working part-time for Driving Miss Daisy and half a day per week at the Hospice Shop. I thoroughly enjoy working at the shop, meeting the general public and also enjoy working with the other fabulous volunteers. The biggest reward to me personally is knowing that I'm helping those in need of support and care in the final stages of life; this can be for both the elderly and young. I would encourage anyone who has any spare time to volunteer for this special cause. There are endless opportunities for all capabilities to work or support at either the Retail Shops or other areas within Mercy Hospice.

My name is Julie Milne and I volunteer at the Mercy Hospice shops in Blockhouse Bay and Mt Roskill.

After having coffee with Sue, the Hospice Volunteer Coordinator, I decided that I would give retail volunteering a go.

I was not sure if I would like it or be any good at it, especially as I am very shy, but as it turned out my fears were quickly discarded as I absolutely love it. I didn't realise how much I needed the social contact and hospice shops are full of lovely volunteers, managers and customers. The time goes so fast, filled with lots of chatting and laughter. Before you know it, it's closing time and I really do not want to leave.

Knowing that the profits from the shops are going to help those in the last stages of life makes me feel good, that I can help in some small way. On top of this, it is also great to be helping the customers, many of whom must make their dollars stretch further and by shopping at Hospice they are able to buy great quality items at low prices.

When I am at the Hospice shops it feels like Christmas, opening the many bags and boxes of goods donated. There are amazing designer clothes from decades past, crockery and crystal that spark memories of admiring my grandmother's china cabinet. I am blown away by the beautiful knitting that is continually being donated by elderly knitters. It is also great to hear some of the stories that people tell you, about what they are donating. Sometimes I feel as if I need to write down the story to be sold with the item. Prior to volunteering at Hospice, I wasn't an 'Op Shopper' but now I often spot something that I just have to buy. I love that buying from hospice is also helping our planet and it would now be my first stop when I am looking for something.

I was lucky enough to be involved at last year's 'TEN Degustation Lunch Fundraiser' as a volunteer. This was amazing! So much work had gone in to putting this event together and the guests who attended were ever so generous, buying auction items at huge prices. What lovely people they were. I would happily pay to volunteer for this fundraiser as I had so much fun.

With the borders slowly opening up, my Air BnB accommodation job is getting busier but there is no way I will give up volunteering at Hospice. It really is so lovely to feel part of such an amazing caring community.



**Julie Milne**

Blockhouse Bay  
and Mt Roskill  
Mercy Hospice shops



**Sisters Judith Jos**  
Tea and drinks trolley

**Sister Judith (left)** – one of the sisters of Mercy. Sister Judith is 91 years old, and lives in the apartments that have been specially designed for retired sisters at the convent, next door to Mercy Hospice, with nine other sisters.

Most of her mission years were in education. Now, Sister Judith spends her time doing administration and pastoral care work. Sister Judith has been connected to Mercy Hospice for eight years as a volunteer. She does the tea and drinks trolley, and she is the Minister of the Eucharist (communion).

**Dictionary definition of Eucharist** (the Christian service, ceremony, or sacrament commemorating the Last Supper, in which bread and wine are consecrated and consumed).

Sister Judith loves Mercy Hospice and appreciates the homely atmosphere but is mostly aware of the excellent service that is given to the patients that come here. Sister Judith is proud to be part of this organisation, however small the contribution.

**Sister Jocelyn (Jos)** (right), recently arrived in Auckland from Hamilton. Sister Jos also lives next door at the convent.

Sister Jos has a long history devoted to pastoral care with the aged at Atawhai Assisi where she has been for 20 years. Now retired at the end of 2020 and missing the people contact, Sister Jos approached the Hospice to see how she could help. She volunteers on the tea trolley every other Saturday and helps Sister Judith with her commitments at the Hospice.

“I just love the warm atmosphere at the Hospice. The staff are extremely helpful and friendly, and the patients and their families are so appreciative of everything that is done for them.”

## Recipes

### Grannie's Coconut Cake

This cake recipe is a favourite of Michelle Flatz, Mercy's Retail Group Manager. Her mother used to make it for her.

- 125g butter
- 2 eggs
- 2 drops vanilla
- 1 heaped tsp baking powder
- ½ cup sugar
- 6 heaped tbsp coconut
- 1 cup flour

Cream butter and sugar, then add eggs and beat to combine. Fold in coconut and vanilla then flour and baking powder. Add water if required to get a moist mixture. Bake at 180°C until golden brown. To make a simple frosting: cream 75 g butter and 1 cup icing sugar together, then add vanilla and coconut to taste.

### Canadian Butter Tarts

Submitted by Jo Fromstein, one of our volunteers, who recently moved to Auckland from Toronto.

- 2 frozen sweet pastry sheets
- ½ cup brown sugar (firmly packed)
- ½ cup golden syrup
- 2 eggs
- 2 tbsp (30 g) butter, softened
- 1 tsp vanilla
- Salt (a pinch)
- ¼ cup pecans or raisins (optional)

Roll the pastry out to 3mm thickness (if necessary). Cut the pastry into 10cm rounds and fit them into muffin tin wells, re-rolling and using scraps. Blind bake the shells for 5 minutes. Divide the nuts or raisins evenly between the tart shells if using. Whisk the brown sugar, golden syrup, eggs, butter, vanilla and salt together until well mixed. Spoon filling into tart shells until they are ¾ full. Bake at 180°C until filling is puffed and bubbly and the pastry is golden, about 15 minutes. Makes 12 tarts.





# Origins

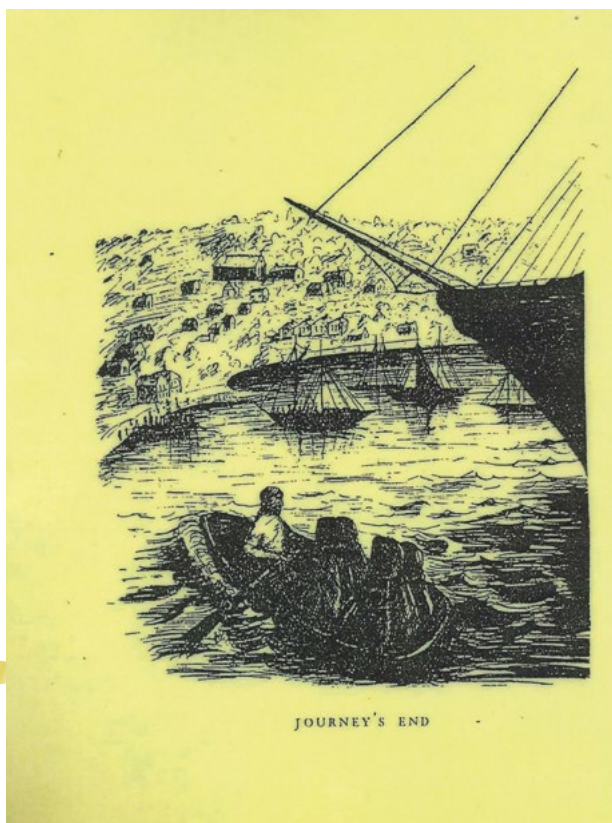
The first Sisters of Mercy arrived in Auckland on April 9th, 1850. They travelled to New Zealand from Dublin via London and Antwerp, and the crossing from Europe took them eight months! The group of Sisters was led by Mother Cecilia Maher, who was 51 years old when she made the voyage. She described the journey in a letter: "I do not know how anyone could ever undertake such a voyage, except for God." In addition to Mother Maher, seven other Sisters of Mercy made the trip, along with Bishop Pompallier and a number of priests. During their voyage, the Bishop taught the Sisters Māori and French, while Mother Cecilia made sure the Sisters maintained the routines of convent life as well as possible while at sea.

The Sisters of Mercy were the first canonically consecrated religious women to become established in New Zealand. Immediately after arriving in Auckland, the Sisters began teaching 60 children in a small school next to St. Patrick's church on Wyndham St. The Sisters first lived in a four-room house attached to the school, then

moved to a vacant presbytery, and then, by mid-1851, moved to the newly built St. Patrick's Convent in Hobson St, shown below. The Convent housed the sisters as well as orphans and contained numerous classrooms. Soon, in addition to teaching and caring for orphans, the Sisters began visiting the sick in their homes and at the Colonial Hospital, and prisoners in the city's jail.

Mother Cecilia's dream of a motherhouse for the Sisters of Mercy took shape on 18 acres of land in Ponsonby made available by Bishop Pompallier. The new convent, built to house 60 Sisters, was located on New St. and finished in 1863. Still standing today, the Kauri chapel, shown above, was blessed by the Bishop in 1866.

Auckland looked very different in the time when the Sisters were establishing themselves, with much more open land, but the streets that were there then are still here today. The map below shows what the Freeman's Bay and St. Mary's

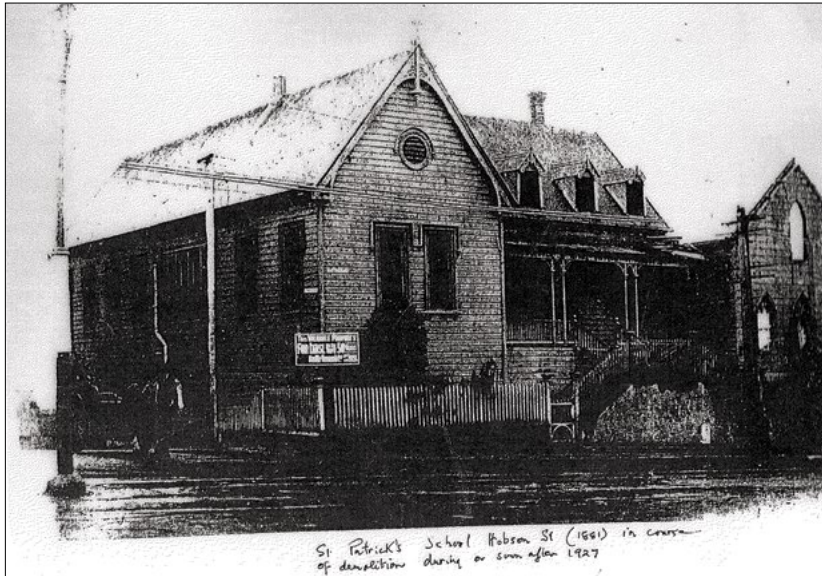


The Sisters being rowed to shore in Auckland from the Océanie April 9, 1850.

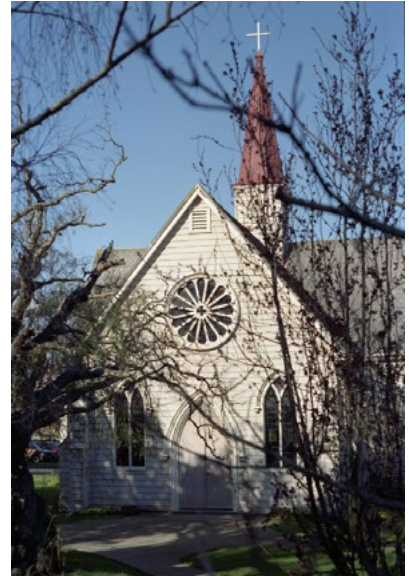


Mother Cecilia Maher (painting attributed to Gottfreid Lindauer)





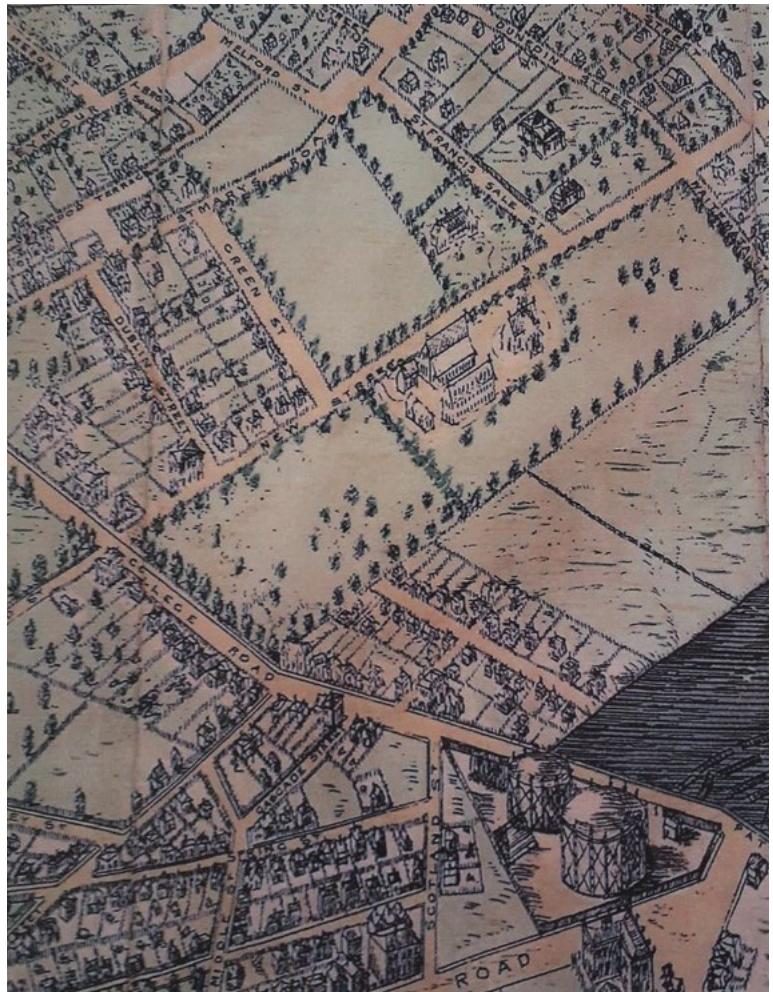
St. Patrick's School and Convent on Hobson St.



Kauri Chapel, St. Mary's Convent, New St.

Bay neighbourhoods looked like in the early 1860s. You can see the Convent on New St. just off College Rd (now called College Hill).

After the opening of the Mater hospital by the Sisters of Mercy in Dublin in 1861, Mother Cecilia wanted to open a similar institution here in Auckland. It didn't happen until after her death, but in 1900 the Sisters of Mercy bought a large house on Mountain Rd. which became the Mater (later Mercy) Hospital. In 1951, a property adjoining Mater Hospital was bought to establish a facility for the terminally ill and the elderly. This was the beginning of Mercy Hospice.



Freeman's Bay and St. Mary's Bay in the early 1860s.





## Kindness Poem

Kindness breaks down barriers  
With words, a smile, a touch  
It links us all together  
In a way that says so much  
It shows concern for neighbours  
For communities and friends  
To be there for each other  
Is the message kindness sends  
Reaching out in friendship  
Taking time to show you care  
Being the anchor in their stormy lives  
When they're drowning in despair  
Kindness is essential  
It's resilient and tough  
A global glue to bind us all  
With gentleness and love

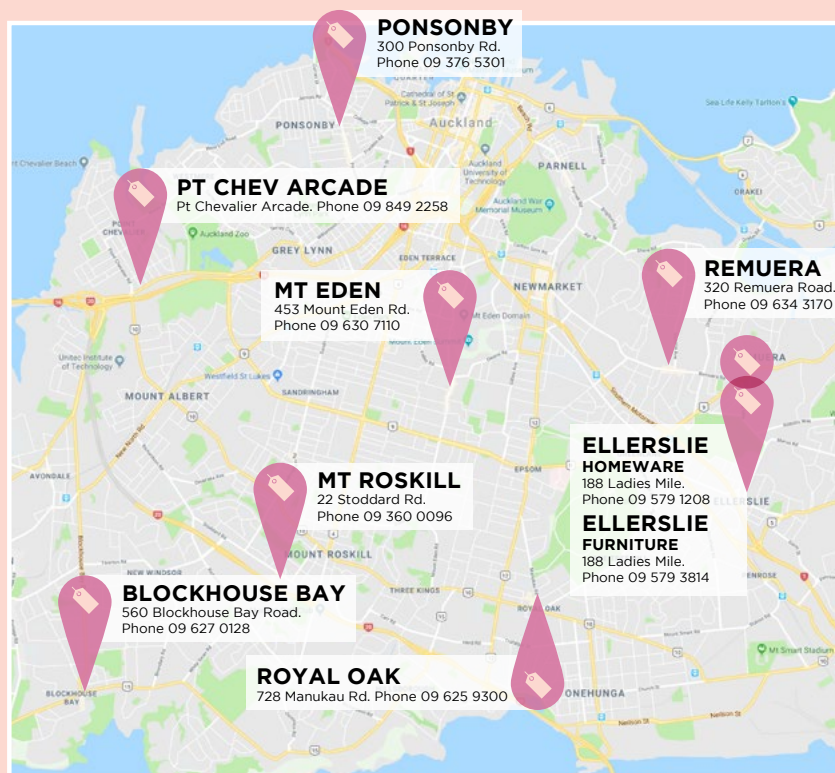
Written by Yvonne Ugarte, Carer





## Seen around Ponsonby

Have you seen this wonderful installation at the corner of Ponsonby Rd. and Douglas St.? It's a great reminder that we are stronger than we think. The big mural says "You are bigger than your biggest worry", and that is so true. The installation also includes a notepad and pen for you to write down your worries, and a box to put your worries into and let them go so you can carry on and focus on other things. It's a great reminder to us all that sometimes the best thing we can do is to acknowledge and then let go of our worries and get on with things.



## Mercy Hospice Shops

Visit one of the Mercy Hospice shops at one of **9 locations** or online at

[www.trademe.co.nz](http://www.trademe.co.nz)  
search **mercyhospice** on Trade Me members

*For large furniture and whiteware pick ups, contact the Ellerslie Furniture Shop  
09 579 3814*



**phone** 09 361 5966

**fax** 09 361 5977

**email** [admin@mercyhospice.org.nz](mailto:admin@mercyhospice.org.nz)

**physical** 61 College Hill, Ponsonby, 1011

**postal** PO Box 47693, Ponsonby, 1144

**[www.mercyhospice.org.nz](http://www.mercyhospice.org.nz)**