

It's nice to be important but more important to be nice.



NP Positive Ageing, **MAY 2022** Newsletter: *Taupaenui*, Issue: 89

Kia ora, Talofa lava, Kia orana, Malo e lelei, Fakalofa lahi atu, Talohani, Bula vinaka, Ni Hao, Namaste, Greetings...

“When will we ever learn... when will it ever end?”

Chair's message...
Lance Girling-Butcher



‘When will we ever learn’ the folk singers of the 50s and 60s used to wail... Never, if recent events in the Russian attack on Ukraine is to be believed. In fact, the repetition of this cruel and unjust attack is almost identical to what happened at the start of World War 2. The big change and the one I find most interesting is the way these events are being reported.

A small group of dedicated journalists using the latest technology and putting their lives at risk, bring every awful detail to our living rooms. We can judge for ourselves, first-hand, the lies that Putin expounds and see for ourselves the full details of the pain and horror he is inflicting on his sovereign neighbour, Ukraine.

What he obviously doesn't understand is all that he is doing is uniting the people of that country against Russia and winning revulsion from the rest of the civilised world for the obvious war crimes, rapes, and murder of innocent civilians.

We must wonder how long it is going to take the major nations of the world to recognise the futility of trying to impose their will on lesser countries.

These battles are a reminder of earlier conflict between Russia, Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire in what became known as the Crimean War. This bloody religious conflict became infamous for the Charge of the Light Brigade when just over 600 Light Cavalries charged into the mouth of Russian guns with more than half falling dead and injured because of a mis-relayed order to attack.

America is still to realise its folly in moving on Vietnam, Korea, Somalia, Iran and Afghanistan.

The English also used colonial judgement to misunderstand the difference between support and intervention. Russia itself fell in the dry field of Afghanistan leaving the corpses of many, is a testimonial to its failure.



This year, the government is due to impose compulsory teaching of history in its schools. It would benefit the

world if this were to become a world-wide development. We just don't seem to want to learn from the lessons of the past and if we remain ignorant of them these sorts of follies will continue.

At this stage we are only looking at New Zealand history in our schools, but a little bit of foreign policy might not go astray in making judgements on what role we should play as a nation in this cruel and unjust world.

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A Newsletter for those interested in improving the quality of life for all persons in Taranaki

Please note: The views/opinions expressed in this newsletter may not necessarily reflect those of Positive Ageing



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

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We also need to look again at the role of the United Nations. This was developed at the end of World War 2 to ensure it was the last war to end all wars, but as it is, folk singers are going to go on wondering when it's all going to end.

Anzac Day is a fitting time to dwell on these subjects, and the number of Kiwis who have fallen in foreign battlefields supporting causes that really had little to do with the interests of Aotearoa.

Congratulations to our clear thinking government on offering support not intervention in a war that we might not like and need to be careful participating in.

**Together,
we can, and do,
make a difference.**

Lance Girling-Butcher—Chair
027 273 8066.

Older people have borne the brunt of COVID -19 ...

While Aotearoa / New Zealand has fared well in limiting the devastation COVID-19 has created world wide, make no mistake - it is the more vulnerable elderly that have paid the price for our success.

Without doubt, the strict official quarantining of rest homes was essential in protecting our more frail elderly, it also created a huge amount of anxiety, stress and a never-ending sense of social isolation. This situation has created significant stress on rest home staff and the families / whanau of residents.

It is the vulnerable elderly who have not only died and become critically ill in greater numbers even, when under such strict controls. Issues over lapses in care under such controls led to higher incidents of Covid in many rest homes.

Generally, older people have been a good deal more compliant and conservative in their approach to protecting themselves against infection. In rest homes, they have had little or no say in the restrictions imposed and have had to stoically abide by tight restrictions that many could not appreciate the need for.

One of the many new tasks the new Aged Care Commissioner, Carolyn Cooper and the Office for Seniors need to tackle is the provision of a voice for the elderly in these times where, too often, their voice is unheard and their family/whanau are left feeling powerless to intervene on their behalf.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson



Access Radio... supporting Positive Ageing with regular new fortnightly programme...

‘Positively Ageing’ is a new initiative between long-standing community based entities— Access radio and Positive Ageing.

Each fortnight Positive Ageing will have a 30min time slot on Access Radio to promote all aspects of ‘positively ageing’.

We will be keen to be able to inform you when these regular programmes commence.



Puke Ariki - May activities aplenty...

Libraries ‘Click & Collect’ service...

If you are unable to visit one of the NPDC libraries, you can borrow a bag of books with their ‘click and collect’ service.

Their experienced librarians will select a bag of books just for you. Choose the library that you wish to choose your books and where you will collect them from. You will need to be a library member.

**For all enquiries, phone:
06 759 6060
Or email:
enquiries@npdc.govt.nz**

Tech Talk:

Electronic music production—Wed 18th May 6-7.00pm.

Exhibitions:

This is our World:

Until May 8th, Lane gallery, Level 2. Exploring the everyday experiences of young people.

Map it:

Until May 29th—Temporary Gallery Exploring the roles of mapping in everyday life.

Reef Alive:

Puke Ariki - Level 2
Incredible microscopic creatures of our ocean.



Providing sufficient housing for elderly renters... a major challenge looms...

Excessively high house prices, leading to decreased home ownership, leading to increased demand for rental accommodation seems to be the future for those successfully able to find a place to rent. The elderly are increasingly missing out.



Finding a warm place to call 'home' when you are on superannuation and have few savings is a nightmare for an increasing number of older people.

Superannuation is based on 66% age of the average living wage. It was based on the premise that people reaching 65 years would have their own home.

It no longer is enough to provide the very basics of life.

Increased rental prices, food, transport, council utilities and, health needs have to compete to make ends meet. Too often, for many, they do not.

In the past five years there has been a 50% increase in people over 65 years needing food and accommodation grants from the Ministry of Social Development (MSD). Nobody finds that an uplifting experience.

There is nothing to be gained blaming people for being too poor to meet their own survival needs. Poor health, the onset of a disability, a broken relationship, unexpected financial losses, supporting family/whanau, being a loan guarantor that collapses, being made redundant and unable to find employment when age can become an issue—these are all everyday occurrences that can financially cripple an older person.

Increasingly, older people, one in four, are working past retirement age, many out of financial necessity. Many retirees, 15%, have a mortgage to pay off. Many others have very few savings. Only two in three have their own home.

And throughout their lives, many older people have financially supported their offspring with many also agreeing to be a guarantor for them. This latter can become a significant issue if the loan company needs to foreclose on the loan and turn to the guarantor to honour their commitment.

Massey University's researchers Pushpa Wood and Claire Mathews believe that the cost of a 'no frills' lifestyle for a single person living in a provincial town is \$162 per week, more than the NZ Superannuation alone would cover. Most people, finding themselves in such dire financial straits, for a variety of reasons, are women.

Increased opportunities for home ownership or subsidized rentals / social housing are critical for a growing number of older people.

Kay Saville-Smith, Director of the Centre of Research Evaluation and Social Assessment reminds us that, "*Many, many older people are not wealthy and most cannot afford to buy into a retirement village because it is too expensive.*"

And with home ownership decreasing at an alarming rate at the very time the numbers of retirees are rapidly increasing means we are heading for an accommodation crisis.



The problems elderly renters face too are challenging. Age discrimination by landlords, health needs such as access ramps, wet shower areas, access to health services and public transport and living in insecure and possibly unsafe environments are just a few of the added pressures elderly renters have to contend with.

Make no mistake, the rental market is very much geared towards supporting the landlord rather than the tenant.

"Traditionally, landlords have quite liked older people; they're less likely to be cooking up meth in the backyard. But if older people are reliant on national superannuation they're problematic, as you can't keep putting up rent" says Saville-Smith.

And given the ageing population, this situation will not improve any time soon.

Nation-wide, rents, in the past five years, have increased 28% across all property types. Capital gains for landlords have increased a great deal more.

So many older people who are dependent on superannuation struggle to pay rent. Many do so by spending less on food, heating, healthcare and transport. This situation is one of surviving - certainly not thriving.

This is particularly so for the already homeless. Emergency shelters for both men and women are stretched to the limit and cannot cope with the demand. Many homeless older people find themselves placed in motels, alongside units containing some rather challenging motel unit dwellers. These are meant to be short-term accommodation placements, but, too often, they become long term.

Saville-Smith says more work needs to be done on providing a supply of affordable homes suitable for older Kiwis.

This call is fully supported by all social service groups in Aotearoa / New Zealand, for example:



Age Concern, a rather dynamic service providing advocacy, education, support and recreation for older people has expressed dismay at the increasing number of older persons becoming homeless for the first time in their lives.

They are calling for options that enable more people to be able to age in their place of residence.

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Grey Power has long called for more Government involvement, local, regional and central, in social housing, along with the construction of a more diverse range of housing suitable for older people and particularly for older people with disabilities.

"The rental market is going crazy. Older people who do not own their home, almost by definition have fewer assets. If you are relying on NZ Super to pay your rent then there is really not a lot left over for other essentials such as food and heating," says Grey Power spokesperson, Pete Matcham.



Positive Ageing too have long been advocates for the provision of social housing in varying forms. Positive Ageing New Plymouth chairman Lance Girling-Butcher (pictured) agreed. *"I thought that was what the government was there for, to assist people who have financial problems and housing problems. It's great that they are concentrating on families, but this pensioner thing is a big issue and it is only going to get worse."*

It is essential to accommodate older people unable to financially manage renting or living in the 'open market'.



Older people are sleeping in their vehicles due to a growing housing crisis.

This is not what we are about. We can and must do more to ensure that the accommodation needs of vulnerable elderly are considered by the powers that be.

This requires firstly a recognition by the government that social housing is an essential component to any successful building programme, and secondly, a commitment to take action to meet the demand.

Latest Government figures show that, in February 2022, there were 764 people in Taranaki on the public housing register That is right. 764 people!

There are some plans on the immediate horizon. The prospect of a 45 unit single and double room block adjacent to Pack n Save has real potential as Kainga Ora intends to take ownership once completed. This is an initiative by a private developer that realised Taranaki was a region 'where building is needed, where it is being developed.

Add this to the prospect of a number of housing units in the

former Taranaki Polytechnic's Liardet Street premises will again provide a dent in the demand.

An artist's impression of the Te Atiawa development in Liardet Street.



A partnership with local Iwi to manage the development of a multi million dollar partnership with Kainga Ora and local Iwi will result in the building of many affordable homes for Taranaki whanau. These are three significant developments but much more is needed

National organisations such as Abbeyfield NZ are classic examples of alternative, cost effective 'supported' accommodation for older people. There is no branch of Abbeyfield in Taranaki—which is a real pity as Abbeyfield is a non-profit organisation designed to enable people with minimal incomes to their own accommodation while sharing communal areas.



New Plymouth has a limited number of organisations providing supported accommodation for people with limited income apart from superannuation—however the choice is both limited and may not always be appropriate. Worse still, so many of these organisations struggle financially.

Providing accommodation for older people in the community is a local government issue as well. Fortunately, our Council does have a number of accommodation units

available for older people with few personal means. We need to find ways to incentivise Councils to play a leading role in the provision of accommodation for the more vulnerable

older residents.

But providing a focused, creative approach to accommodating older people who have slipped through the financial cracks of life needs dynamic leadership at both national and local level. Problems of insufficient forms of accommodation for all elderly must remain as a government priority—along with so many competing demands for the government's attention. Providing a range of social accommodation for those elderly in need makes sound social and economic sense.

The alternative will be further pressures on family/whanau, a greater need for health services and increased social issues further disadvantaging those already in need.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson.

Why it is important older people get their free flu jab...

As Aotearoa emerges from its bubble, there's a much bigger chance of catching the flu. And, with international borders opening, we'll see new and re-curring strains of flu spreading in our communities.

Influenza can be serious and make people very unwell. It affects the whole body and can last up to a week or more.

In some cases, influenza can put people in hospital – particularly if you are 65+, or 55 and over Māori or Pacific. In severe cases the flu can be fatal – around 500 people die from it every year.

As you get older your immune system isn't as good at protecting you, even if you feel fit and healthy. That's why it's important to boost your protection with a flu jab.

Getting the flu jab...

Although having the flu jab doesn't guarantee you won't catch the flu, it will give you more protection and reduce the symptoms if you do catch it.

In 2022, all people aged 65 and over are eligible for the free flu jab. For Māori and Pacific people, the free flu vaccination is available from 55 years.

For the best protection, get the flu jab before the start of winter.

You can get your free flu jab from your GP or healthcare provider. Many pharmacies also offer the free flu vaccine.

The flu jab is also free for those with underlying health conditions.

Why you should get a booster...

Taranaki DHB is encouraging everyone who is eligible to get a free booster now.

Current evidence shows your protection against infection after 2 doses slowly decreases over time. A booster dose will give you greater immunity against COVID-19, including Omicron.

A booster also helps reduce the chance of more serious infection, and it will be less likely that you need hospitalisation.

It is almost like free health insurance.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson.

**I'VE SUFFERED FROM
MEMORY LOSS**

SHUTTERSTOCK

**FOR AS LONG AS I CAN
REMEMBER**

*It's nice to be
important but more
important to be nice.*

I always knew I'd
get old. How fast it
happened was a bit
of a surprise, though.

Over COVID many of us have become used to shopping on line. Sometimes it just seems so easy.



But now we can move about more freely it is timely to consider changing habits of 'buying on line' to shopping at local outlets.

Covid has been particularly harsh on many local enterprises with some going to the wall. We really do need to support our local retailers, hospitality enterprises and

local services to ensure that we keep them in our communities.

What you do to support local shops may be the tipping point to their survival. We need to help re-establish a thriving local economy and the best way we can all do that is not only by shopping locally. Retailers will appreciate our loyalty and we will more likely enjoy having the pleasure of spending and supporting local businesses.



**WHEN A MAN SAYS
HE'LL FIX SOMETHING,
HE MEANS IT!**



**THERE'S NO NEED TO REMIND HIM
EVERY SIX MONTHS!**

**Unite
against
COVID-19**

*Getting boosted is the best way
you can support your own
health, that of your family/
whanau, other friends and your
wider community.*

0800 237 829



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

They are back!!!!

Breakfasts for a koha...

**By St Mary's
but based at Peace Hall**

Great food, great menu and great people...

All food just \$1.00 per plate.

Tuesday mornings

**7.30—9.30am
(Last orders at 9.45am)**

This café is in its 10th year and has raised over \$100,000 for local and overseas causes.

A big thank-you to all those supporting this initiative.

Everyone welcome!

We will be excited to see you back!

**And at
Holy Trinity Church...**

Great breakfasts for a koha are back on the menu on Thursday mornings 7.30am—9.30am at the Holy Trinity Church, Te Henui Street, NP.

Delicious food, great service, easy parking—the works. All for a koha with any profits being donated to charity.

Great to see so many service groups back doing what they do best—providing support with kindness to so many.

**I AM A PERSON
WHO WANTS TO DO
A LOT OF THINGS
TRAPPED IN A BODY
OF A PERSON WHO
WANTS TO SLEEP
A LOT**

More like this at FUNsubstance.com

Free Bowel screening for those in Taranaki aged 60-74 years...

Aotearoa / New Zealand has one of the highest rates of bowel cancer in the world. It kills as many people as breast cancer and prostate cancer combined.

It causes 1200 deaths per year, is more common in people over 60 years and in men more than in women.



National Bowel Screening Programme

In Taranaki, the Taranaki DHB has joined the national Bowel Screening programme and has successfully launched its local programme.

Those people in Taranaki who are aged between 60 and 74 years will have by now received a letter inviting them to use a home-test kit.

If you have received such a kit and have decided to participate in this free, possibly life-saving initiative—congratulations.

If you are one of the many who have put the test aside because it seems too much hassle and just a tad bit yucky—then do yourself and your whanau a huge favour and get yourself tested.

Why would you not get tested? It is free. It is like free health insurance. It gives you peace of mind. Take my word for it. I have had bowel cancer and was lucky to survive.

Opinion: Gordon Hudson.
06 7539815



Memoirs of Jim Tucker...

'Flair and loathing on the front page' is the title of Taranaki born and bred leading journalist Jim Tucker.



This is a most readable book, published as an E Book, which you can read on your tablet or your computer.

In 2022, he was invested as an Officer of the NZ Order of Merit for services to journalism.

For a copy, email Jim at:
jimtuckermedia@gmail.com
\$25.00

Let's vax... to the max...

INSIDE EVERY OLDER PERSON IS A YOUNGER PERSON WONDERING WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED.

- Cora Harvey Armstrong



"I'M JUST SAYING, IF OUR INCOME IS 'FIXED', HOW COME WE'RE 'BROKE'?"



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'

Quips and Quotes from the NZ Listener...

"We must use time as a tool and not a couch."

John F Kennedy

"I don't need you to remind me of age. I have a bladder to do that for me."

Stephen Fry.

"It is of immense importance to learn to laugh at ourselves."

Katherine Mansfield.

"The more I see the less I know for sure."

John Lennon.

"Young men think old men are fools; but old men know that young men are fools."

Truman Capote.

"How many world leaders, for how many decades have seen and known what is coming but have decided that it is more politically expedient to keep it behind doors? My generation and the generation after me do not have that luxury."

Chloe Swarbrick.

"The real measure of your 'wealth' is how much you'd be worth if you lost all your money."

Anon.

"What really flatters a man is that you think him worth flattering."

George Bernard Shaw.

"You know you are getting old when everything either dries up or leaks."

Will Rogers.

Not wearing glasses anymore. I've seen enough.



MAY Activities—NP

TUESDAY 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th and 31st: (10-11am)

Aqua Walking:

Held at the Methanex Indoor Pool, 10 Murray St, Bell Block.

\$3. pp. Vaccine pass for entry to facility. Please register with Pauline prior to entering the class by calling 06 759 9196.

WEDNESDAY 4th May—Monthly

Outing: We will drive out to the Coast—Butlers Reef Hotel for a set menu luncheon. Meet at 11.30am. Ring Pauline to confirm your attendance.

WEDNESDAY 11th and 25h:

Warm up Wednesday:

A fun, music interactive programme for everyone. 10am-12.30pm. Refreshments served. Gold coin donation to assist with costs. 'Music Trivia' refreshments and fun.

THURSDAYS: 5th, 12th, 19th, 26th, 9.30—11am...

Drop in Café / Social mornings.

Something different every day. Do join us.

IN TUNE WITH INGLEWOOD...

Fun and fabulous afternoon of singing, spot prizes, making music and great company.

THURSDAY 12th and 26th:

6 Mamaku Centre—1.30-3.30pm

Mask wearing and distancing apply. Gold coin appreciated.

WHAT'S ON IN WAITARA...

Music and singing afternoons.

Friday 6th, 13th, 20th and 27th March. 1.00 –3.30pm.

Senior Citizen's Hall.

Gold coin donation appreciated.

All welcome.

TOMORROWS MEALS:

Convenient frozen healthy meals are available to purchase daily.

Delivery on Fridays and by arrangement with Pauline. \$5. delivery fee applies.

Office Hours: 9.30am—1.30pm Monday to Friday.

06 759 9196—0800 243 625



Unite
against
COVID-19

covid19.govt.nz

0800 358 5453

New Zealand Government

Citizens Advice Bureau
New Plymouth

Te Pou Whakawhirinaki o Aotearoa

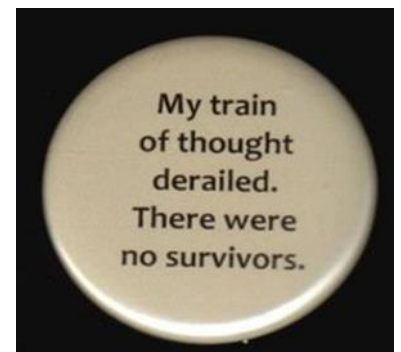
Community House, 32 Leach St., New Plymouth

Phone 06 758 9542

0800 FOR CAB (0800 367 222)

Email: newplymouth@cab.org.nz

www.cab.org.nz





At long last - help for older jobseekers...

With increasing poverty for many older people, with a desperate need for people in the workforce and with the typical ageist attitudes towards older workers - this initiative is a wonderful opportunity to contribute to your own income and to the community—if that is what you want to do.

The NZ Government has introduced the **Older Workers Employment Action Plan** in a bid to help employees and Job seekers aged 50 years and older to find sustainable work that meets their needs.

The plan contains action that focus on supporting older workers to use and transition their skills to find and stay in employment as they age, supporting employers to be more inclusive of older workers, and promoting wider discussion of the effects of an ageing workforce for future economic planning.

By default almost... it seems that the government is at last listening and realizing that **'silver is the new gold'** when it comes to employment opportunities.

And it is timely. A third of NZ's workforce is made up of older workers, with almost half the population who are aged 65 to 69 remain employed.

"But we all know that older workers can face unique and complex challenges in finding and staying in employment. Whether that's being made redundant and struggling to find a new job or having limited options when they do look for work", says Minister for Seniors, Ayesha Verrall.

The plan acknowledges that older workers are targeted by age discrimination, where assumptions about them are made as early as hiring, and in the workplace and that they are often deprived of the opportunities for training and development.

According to the Minister for Seniors, *"Employing older workers can bring their knowledge and skills to workplaces and contribute significantly to the economy."*

"We want everyone, including older people, to have a job that fulfils their needs and aspirations and contributes to their overall wellbeing."

Opinion: Gordon Hudson.

Classes and groups are back...

You can be too...

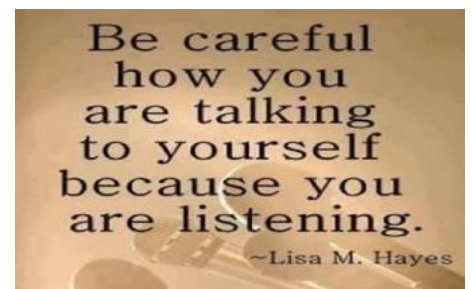
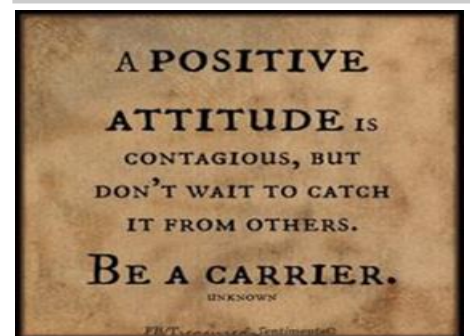
Participants not only benefit physically, but socially as well.



For further information please see www.livestronger.org.nz or contact Hilary Blackstock via email:

hilaryblackstock@sporttaranaki.org.nz

Telephone: 021-480-180



Positive Ageing NP



Your 2021/22 committee is:

Patron—Peter Tennent

Chair—Lance Girling-Butcher

Deputy Chair—John Major

Secretary—Gordon Hudson

Treasurer—David Showler

Committee— Brian Eriksen, Kathleen

Forde, Wally Garrett, Margaret

McCall, Carleen Broughton and

Stephanie Hansen.

Newsletter - Gordon Hudson

www.positiveageingtrust.org.nz

Positive Ageing NP is proud to be supported by:

COGS: Community Organisations Grants Scheme

Ministry of Social Development

New Plymouth District Council

TOI Community Trust

We are most grateful for their ongoing support.



"Floating about the internet is a parable of unknown origin. It contains what I believe is a simple but profound truth."

An old man says to his grandson: "There's a fight going on inside me. It's a terrible fight between two wolves. One is evil - angry, greedy, jealous, arrogant and cowardly. The other is good - peaceful, loving, modest, generous, honest and trustworthy. These two wolves are also fighting within you, and every other person too."

After a moment the boy asks, "Which wolf will win?"

The old man smiles.

"The one that you feed."



Taken from: 'Human Kind—A Hopeful History', by Rutger Bregman. 2020.



Taranaki Kowhaiwhai panel - The Hammerhead shark, Mangopare - 'keep positive, see it through'