

AUTUMN 2024



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# SENIORITY

Keep Mobile | The Voice of Age Concern  
Embracing the Joy of Ageing



[www.acwellington.org.nz](http://www.acwellington.org.nz)



04 499 6646



## From the CEO

*As I get older, I am noticing my muscles tend to ache more after I've been in the garden or pottering about in my workshop. I guess it's because I am using muscles I don't normally use!*

It's a reminder to me to keep moving. And that's what this issue of Seniority is all about. We often hear in the media discussions on how much money one needs to retire comfortably. But at Age Concern, we say that there are two other things that are also really important – social connection and mobility.

Good mobility allows an older person to be able to leave the house, connect with friends and get exercise. This all benefits both mental and physical wellbeing.

At Age Concern we're big on mobility – you

need to keep moving as much as you can. Even if you aren't able to move much, there are good exercises you can do in a chair. Just do what you can.



Enjoy reading stories about our exercise programmes and also the amazing treasure who runs them – Ann Dalziel.

*Remember to get in touch with us if you need some advice or support.*

**Stephen Opie**

*Age Concern Wellington Region CEO*

## Pictured on cover:

*Natalie and Shirley, going for a walk in the botanical gardens.*

The pair have struck up a lovely friendship through the Companion Walking Service, and they enjoy discovering new walks around Wellington. They especially enjoy their new walking spot in the Khandallah reserve as it's quite flat and sheltered from the wind. The bird life is also magnificent, and they are thrilled to have found this new spot away from hills and busy roads.

Age Concern's Companion Walking Service matches volunteers with older people who struggle to walk on their own. Volunteer Walking Companions receive training and are police vetted. For more information on this service, please visit [www.acwellington.org.nz](http://www.acwellington.org.nz) or call 04 499 6646.

**You can help us reach more lonely and isolated seniors.**

Scan the code to visit our secure donation website. Or navigate to [acwellington.org.nz](http://acwellington.org.nz) to make a donation.



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The views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of Age Concern Wellington Region. The inclusion or exclusion of any product does not mean that Age Concern advocates or rejects its use.



## Can You Help?

You can help us reach more lonely and isolated seniors. Do you have a couple of hours a week you can spare? Or are you able to make a donation? Call 04 499 6646 or scan the QR code on page 2 for more information.

Thank you to the lovely people who donated beautiful plants and a coffee urn! We are still in need of a few specific items. Maybe you can you help? We're looking for:

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# Embracing the Joy of Ageing: Mary's Inspiring Journey to Wellness

*In the heart of Brooklyn resides an extraordinary woman named Mary. At 79 years old, she defies stereotypes and embodies the true essence of living life to the fullest. Mary's journey toward improved wellness began almost a year ago when she joined Age Concern's falls prevention exercise class, an experience she initially found daunting.*

Mary's first encounter with the exercise class highlighted her struggles with balance. Living in an area with numerous potholes, Mary was pleased to gain some balance-improving knowledge through the exercises. As the weeks passed, Mary began to notice subtle yet impactful changes. Simple activities, like bending her knees in the shower, became more manageable. The improvement in her feet position not only made her feel safer but also sparked a newfound awareness of her body.

The exercise class became a transformative experience for Mary, who also battles Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD). Beyond the physical benefits, she enjoys the social connection she has found with the group.

She also has a love for singing and is part of a local choir group. Mary, a retired nurse, has spent most of her life in the Wellington Region. When she recently returned to her primary school in Wainuiomata last year for its 125th-anniversary celebration, Mary experienced a unique perspective on ageing. Seeing her former teachers as ordinary people, with the male former teachers appearing more aged than her former female teachers, emphasised the passage of time. Yet, for Mary, embracing old age has been a surprisingly enjoyable experience.



As Mary navigates the golden years of her life, the exercise class has become an important part of her weekly routine. The improved balance she gained enhances her safety during walks and brings many positives to her lifestyle. Mary firmly believes that the acknowledgment of falls among older individuals, especially in the exercise class, represents a departure from the past when the concerns of older people often went unheard. In her reflections on ageing, Mary recognises a positive shift in societal attitudes towards older individuals.

With almost a year under her belt, Mary has not only gained physical fitness but also a newfound sense of accomplishment. The exercise leader recently commended her for her impressive fitness levels. For Mary, it's not just about personal growth but also about inviting others along, like people she meets on the bus or in various groups she is involved with.

**“It’s nice to feel okay with who I am. I never realised how enjoyable old age can be if you let it.”**

Beyond her commitment to well-being, Mary is a testament to the pursuit of lifelong learning. In the 1990s, she studied film and literature at university, a decision she deems most worthwhile despite not working in the field: “It was about the price of a holiday to Italy,” she says with a smile. Married to her 83-year-old husband, Mary’s zest for life extends to family adventures. Last year, she took her teenaged grandson on a holiday to explore the natural wonders of the West Coast. The trip, filled with laughter and shared humour, reinforced the strong bond they share.

In her own words, Mary reflects: “It’s nice to feel okay with who I am. I never realised how enjoyable old age can be if you let it.” Her story resonates as a beacon of inspiration for those navigating the later stages of life, proving that age is just a number, and the golden years can indeed be filled with joy, growth, and new beginnings.

**LORNA HARVEY**

*Team Leader – Communications & Events*



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## Structural Change to Age Concern Wellington Region

*Age Concern Wellington Region was registered as an Incorporated Society in 1976 under the Incorporated Societies Act of 1908. This Act was recently updated after more than 115 years. In recent years, many charities around the country have chosen to move to a Charitable Trust structure – away from being an Incorporated Society. This is largely because it has become increasingly difficult to attract Members and get them involved in Governance, as they are entitled to do. While Age Concern Wellington Region has many current Members who receive our quarterly magazine, not many want to participate in the Governance of the organisation.*

So, at the 2022 AGM, our Members voted to move to a Charitable Trust. This process is almost complete, and from March 2024, we will be operating as Age Concern Wellington Region Trust. Only the background technical side of our administration changes – a new bank account, IRD number and Charities Services Registration. Our staff and volunteer team, our Board, and most importantly all our work with seniors won’t change at all.

So, we now have a new bank account and Charities Services number. These details are below. Please make sure you change your bank account details for us as soon as you’re able.

**New bank account: Kiwibank  
38-9025-0361487-00  
New Charities Services Number: CC61759**

*More information on Age Concern Wellington Region Trust can be found by searching the Charities Services website: [charities.govt.nz](https://charities.govt.nz)*

# Keep Mobile for Your Own Sake

Mobility is the ability to move or walk freely and easily. If you take time to search the internet you can find a plethora of information and advice about the advantages of maintaining mobility as you get older. Reading many of those articles, you find it's basically similar information from different sources; whether it be from the UK, USA, Australia or New Zealand, they all chant the same mantras.

The essence of the advice is that mobility is vital for the wellbeing and independence of older people allowing them to participate in physical and social activities. Researchers are working on this issue because it's not only a matter of physical health, but also the social and emotional wellbeing of older adults.

## Being more mobile can help seniors:

- Maintain their physical health by preventing falls, improving strength, and reducing pain and stiffness,
- Enhance their mental health by reducing anxiety and depression, boosting self-esteem, and stimulating cognitive function,
- Enjoy their social and emotional life by staying connected with family and friends, participating in activities and much more.

The problem is that no matter how you slice it or dice it, mobility can decline with age. There are various factors such as changes in gait (the way you walk), deterioration in your balance, and loss of muscle mass caused by disabilities or various aches and pains; lack of physical activity; sedentary behaviour; chronic conditions; and hospitalisation.

Whether you like it or not this gradual deterioration can increase the number and severity of falls and injury, to the extent that it

can become a self-perpetuating problem. Falls and loss of confidence reduce the prospect of independent activity and make it harder to get around the house or go out and visit with friends and family, according to the US National Institute of Aging (NIA). "Older adults who lose their mobility are less likely to remain living at home; have higher rates of disease, disability, hospitalisation, and death; and have poorer quality of life."

Loss of mobility can largely be attributed to a drop in physical activity or exercise as people age. The NIA also postulates, "The increasing incidence of sedentarism (sitting too much) is a growing health concern: too many older adults don't get enough physical activity and spend too much time sitting daily."

## **The advice is to get up and move around as much as possible – it is important for seniors to take steps to preserve or improve their mobility, such as:**

Taking regular exercise that combines aerobics, strength balance and flexibility training. The Steady As You Go programme run by Age Concern Wellington Region is a good example, but there are useful chair-based exercises as well such as Chair Yoga (more information can about this can be found on [www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/chair-yoga-for-seniors](http://www.medicalnewstoday.com/articles/chair-yoga-for-seniors)).

Using assistance devices such as walkers, canes or wheelchairs to get out and about to chat with neighbours or stop and smell the roses.

Installing environmental modifications such as handrails, grab bars, ramps to improve accessibility.



The general view is that physical activity (walking 150 minutes a week, strength training, flexibility and balance training etc) substantially reduces the risk of major mobility disability. So, a little bit of physical activity can do you the world of good.

In this context, it was interesting to read recently that many of the users of the Tawa "On Demand" bus service were reputed to be seniors. They were using the service to get out to meet their friends. It beats sitting at home.

Finally, as noted above, there is an increasing emphasis on the deleterious effect of sitting down for prolonged periods – sitting on your bum all day is not a healthy choice if you can avoid it. After several periods of sitting at my computer collecting information and then reorganising it for this article, I decided that I had better follow my own advice. So, I rose from my chair and went out for a walk.

***"You are never too old to set another goal or to dream a new dream."***  
**– C.S. Lewis**

**MICK CALDER**  
 Office Support Volunteer



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# Francie's World

*At Age Concern Wellington Region, Ann Dalziel is our exercise superstar. Partly through the many Steady As You Go falls prevention classes which Ann establishes, she knows many (some would say most) people in Wellington. Ann recently met a fascinating artist through the Newtown class. I went along to meet Francie.*

The front garden is a vibrant tapestry of pink and yellow rose blooms that spill over the fence, saturating the air with the sweet scent of spring. As I pass through the gate, Francie's cheerful voice greets us, inviting us into a world of whimsical delight, artistic beauty, and vibrant light. Francie's home feels a little magical, as if someone has translated thoughts and imagination into the very fabric of its décor.

Guided by Francie, Ann and I walk down a long hallway. Speckled light dances through red and orange stained-glass windows. The abundance of light in the room gives it the ambiance of a conservatory. French doors lead us to the kitchen, where a tall easel proudly displays a half-finished painting. Francie shares that it's her 197th creation.

"Let's sit here," Francie suggests, but not before offering a glimpse of her studio. Passing through another room, we reach the back of the house, a treasure trove where Francie's artistic expressions come to life. Dozens of paintings are hung on racks, each telling a story—about birds, about people—with brilliance, color, and intense emotion. Francie keenly observes our reactions. "Very nice," I say.

"Very nice? That's not the kind of emotion I'm looking for. I want to give people something a bit stronger!"

"Amazing! Beautiful! Brilliant!" I reply. We laugh, and head back to the kitchen.

Over tea and blueberry muffins (with lots of butter), Francie proudly declares, "I bought these. I don't bake of course!" The wind chimes in the garden create a sweet melody when a slight breeze runs through the garden like a shiver. The garden looks like a dreamy place. There's a round table and a couple of chairs outside. It looks like a sanctuary, as if it were miles away from the bustle of the city. Everything is so green.

Francie demonstrates her unique painting technique. Her fingers bend and hold each other to form a painting tool. She declines a photo of her face, allowing only images of her paintings, hands, and silhouette. Francie's son looks after the admin side of her artwork ([facebook.com/FrancieConnorArt](https://facebook.com/FrancieConnorArt)).

"Would you like to see my bedroom?" Francie asks, revealing that the once black-painted gang house has been transformed into a haven. The ornate archway has been painted creamy white and connects the room to the garden. It feels like a sort of shrine to the beauty of the garden and infuses the room with the dreamy greenery outside. There's a black and white photo of an elegant twenty-something year old Francie on the wall. We pass by rooms adorned in vibrant Pasifika colours, festive bunting adding flair, and living spaces stacked with more paintings.

Francie walks cautiously as she moves through the house. "I've fallen a few times. I have to be more careful now," she sighs.

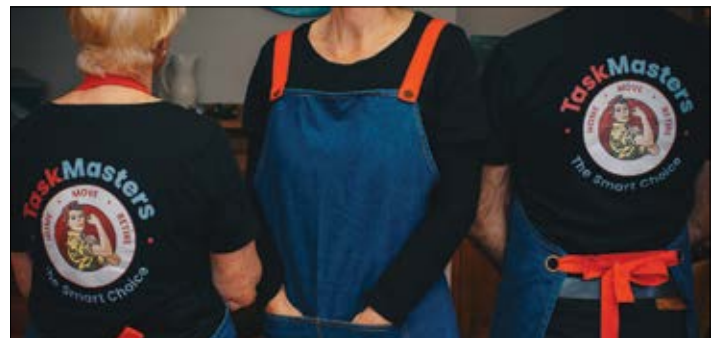
Approaching her 80th birthday, Francie reflects on her two-decade residence in the 120-year-old Newtown house where everyone is welcome, and she sometimes takes in homeless friends. As we sip on our tea again, Francie speaks of the importance of community, culture, folk dancing many years ago, and about

the importance of walking. She's fallen twice in the past few months, and has joined a Steady As You Go falls prevention exercise class where she met Ann. "Walking with your heel first at the class really spoke to me. I practice it every day now, and I think of what you said, Ann. It helps me enormously. The class is really good I think."

Francie loves painting, her community, her family, and her home. Her grandkids come and visit a couple of days a year, and Francie seems absolutely content with her life. I find myself reluctant to leave her whimsical world. Stepping out onto a busy street, the contrast of the warm afternoon bustle only reinforces the enchantment of the world we've just left behind.



**LORNA HARVEY**  
Team Leader – Communications & Events



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# The Voice of Age Concern Wellington Region

*Ann, a vibrant and dynamic force at Age Concern Wellington Region, brings a wealth of positivity, energy, and adaptability to her role. Recognised for her distinctive Northumberland accent, Ann's journey to New Zealand from the UK over two decades ago led her through Gisborne and Auckland before settling in Wellington.*

Introduced to Age Concern through an article in the Listener Magazine by Felicity McLellan, Ann transitioned from volunteering to a crucial role within the organisation. Initially involved in networking meetings, representing Age Concern on various Boards and Committees, and fielding all calls, Ann witnessed the organisation's transformation after the governmental policy shift which resulted in the organisation losing the Elder Abuse contract.

As the focus shifted, Ann's role evolved, placing a greater emphasis on workshops covering nutrition, ageing, and other similar topics. Despite her background in banking industry recruitment, Ann's passion for exercise prompted her to undergo Steady As You Go training, leading to the launch of multiple classes across the Wellington Region.

Renowned for her facilitation skills, Ann seems to know everyone around the Wellington Region. She even took the initiative to record a Steady As You Go exercise class during lockdown, which now has been viewed more than 20,000 times on YouTube. Her commitment to promoting wellbeing reflects the organisation's values and dedication to supporting the community.

Over the years, Ann's role adapted to address changing needs. She notes the significant

growth of the organisation, expanding from four to ten staff members in just the past four years.

A big part of Ann's role is still to take phone calls. The calls have changed as the years have gone by. 15 years ago, people might call when they were lonely and a little low. They'd quickly get whisked off to a rest home. Now the criteria is so much higher to get into a retirement home, and seniors are to age in place.

**Calls now are often far more complex. Seniors are frequently not getting the support they need, and often don't know what support exists. People call, concerned about older neighbours who are struggling on their own.**

"I used to worry a lot about people at first. Now, we give an answer or refer them to the appropriate service. We can't be everything to all people. What we do, we do really well."

Married for 44 years, Ann has three children and two grandchildren (with a third on the way). Ann begins each day with exercise: "I swim or do yoga early in the morning, and it sets me up for the day. Nothing phases me when I've started the day with exercise. It's really good for mental health as well."



“I enjoy my job and find it interesting,” Ann says. “Dealing with people, especially with Steady As You Go, is great. Each group is unique and seems to represent the area they live in. Everyone is always so enthusiastic about it. I like travelling to different parts of the Region as I set-up new classes as well.” The most important thing about the work, Ann says, is to have a great sense of humour and there’s always a lot of laughter around the office.

The recent addition of “Aligned To Go” is Ann’s latest challenge. This new exercise class is a faster, more active falls prevention class. Dance moves are incorporated into the exercises, and it sounds like a lot of fun. Keep an eye out for these new Aligned To Go classes soon.

As the enduring voice of Age Concern Wellington Region, Ann’s positive, can-do attitude and adaptability make her an indispensable part of the team. Her contributions ensure the organisation thrives in its mission to support and uplift seniors in the community. Ann is a joy to work with, and we’re so pleased she has been part of the Age Concern Wellington Region Team for more than 15 years!

**LORNA HARVEY**  
Team Leader – Communications & Events

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# Spreading Christmas Cheer: Bringing Joy to Isolated Seniors

*In the spirit of Christmas, Age Concern Wellington Region embarked on a heartwarming initiative that brought smiles to the faces of more than 50 isolated and lonely seniors in the Region. Our Christmas gift bags, carefully curated to brighten the holiday season, were met with gratitude and joy by the recipients.*

This initiative was supported through the generous support of AMP, Summerset and CK & Co. Realty. Their contributions played a vital role in creating meaningful and festive gift bags for those who often feel overlooked during the holiday season.

Each Christmas gift bag was a thoughtful assortment, aiming to cater to the varied interests and needs of the recipients. The contents included a large print puzzle book, a magazine, a tin of biscuits, a tea towel, warm socks, a Christmas ornament decorated by a local child, chocolate, a notepad, and herb and flower seeds.

The impact of these gifts went beyond mere material possessions; they conveyed a powerful message that someone cared enough to bring warmth and joy to the lives of those who might be feeling isolated. For one older lady, the experience evoked the sheer delight of being a child at Christmas all over again.

One gentleman expressed his overwhelming pleasure with the entire package, singling out the warm socks as a source of particular



*Staff member Kay, and AMP volunteers Paul and Donald delivering Christmas parcels*

excitement. These simple yet thoughtful items struck a chord, offering comfort and joy to those who received them.

A heartfelt note from one gift recipient beautifully captured the sentiments of the occasion: "How lovely and thank you very much. Both you and the sponsors of the products did a great job. I was overwhelmed, to say the least... This will be exciting in the days to come and a daily reminder that there are people out there who, with their actions, show interest and compassion for those of us, perhaps lonely and left out of it."

We look forward to expanding and growing this Christmas gift initiative in the years to come as we continue to spread joy and alleviate the loneliness experienced by seniors.

# A Very Special 90th Birthday

*For almost four years now, Ariana has been an Age Concern volunteer visitor for Rane. Ariana and Rane are good friends now, and they've become an important part of each other's lives.*

When Rane's children threw a surprise 90th birthday party for her, Ariana was thrilled to be part of the celebration: "All of her kids except one flew in from around the world, the first get together that they've had since before Covid. It was lovely to meet them!"

Thanks for being such a fantastic volunteer, Ariana! We're proud to have you be part of our organisation.



Ariana, Rane, and another friend Sue

A blue banner with a decorative border of red and white leaves. It contains seven white icons representing different care services: a person with a cane, a person with a walker, a vacuum cleaner, two people talking, a bed, an alarm clock, and a car.

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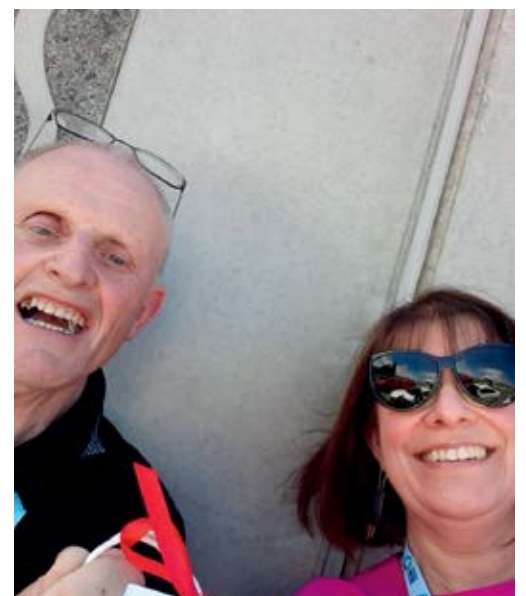
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## RECENT HIGHLIGHTS...



## ... Age Concern in the Community



# The Over Achiever

*If you are a certain age, you would remember that the phrase “Steady as you go” was used to advise people to be careful, or a reminder to be thoughtful, deliberate, and consistent. It comes from the nautical phrase “steady as she goes” to suggest keeping to a set heading, and avoiding sudden changes of direction.*

Barry Spencer is a shining example of someone who puts a lot of thought into what he does, and sticking to a set direction, particularly with respect to Steady As You Go classes.

He used to be quite active playing golf, plus playing both croquet and going to the gym three times a week. But about a year ago, he had a fall and broke his tailbone which limited his options. He found going to the gym a bit taxing and looked for other options.

A friend of his wife mentioned Steady As You Go (SAYGo) classes for maintaining balance and fitness which intrigued him. So he joined one, and found it suited him in his changed circumstances. His balance improved and he found he could take a rest if he needed.

“I started going two times a week then three times... I hardly go to the gym any more. I find that [SAYGo] really helps. At my age, I’m getting worn out, like computers where systems go down,” Barry says.

Barry had an itinerant upbringing. His father

was a Postmaster who was moved around New Zealand, so Barry changed schools frequently, initially in the North Island and then in Clyde and Hororata. He had to adjust to new timetables and to make new friends, which he found to be very disruptive, particularly living in country towns where many of his schoolmates were sent off to boarding school.

He considered the whole process of moving to new houses and schools an expensive business, both financially and mentally. He swore he would not follow that lifestyle, and subsequently developed a burning ambition to be a millionaire by the time he was forty.

He started in property development, purchasing his first home in Christchurch in 1968/9. He subdivided it and sold a section off the back, enabling him to convert the big old house into two 3-bedroomed flats. So, he doubled his money in 18 months.



He moved from Christchurch to Wellington in 1970 and built the business. He overachieved and reached his goal by the time he was 35, and just kept going. After accumulating a few flats, he branched out into commercial property then switched into residential in 1972. He commented that he started serious developing in 1982.

Barry doesn't recall where he started with SAYGo, but it suited him, and he decided to go to more classes even though some of the other participants questioned whether attending more than one class was allowed. As might be expected, Barry persisted. He now goes to four different SAYGo classes each week!

As if that wasn't enough, he bought a copy of the SAYGo DVD to ensure that he could keep up with the programme on the off days, and over the Christmas holidays. But, DVDs are on the way out; Barry did not have a DVD player and modern computers are not equipped with such devices. Warehouse Stationery came to the rescue and transferred the contents of the DVD to a USB stick, and from there it was transferred to his phone and his computer. Now he has SAYGo wherever he goes.

Other than the exercises, Barry appreciates the social side of the SAYGo classes. The Hub gatherings after the Vogelmorn classes with interesting and informative speakers as well as the discussions adds to the attraction.

Barry has shown that he achieves many of the goals he aims for and sometimes exceeds his own targets through planning and sticking to the course: steady as he goes.

**MICK CALDER**  
Office Support Volunteer




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# Ron Mackenzie

## Medical Laboratory Scientist & Hiker

*Wellington-born and bred medical laboratory scientist, Dr Ron Mackenzie, PhD (Otago), was an enthusiastic trumper and mountain climber in his youth and had kept it up when and where possible throughout his career. As such, he looked to be a likely candidate for an article covering the mobility theme of this issue. It turned out that tramping was almost a sideline for this still-active 90-plus senior.*

Ron took up tramping after he left school joining the Tararua Tramping Club – the stepping off place for most keen hikers and climbers in Wellington. He tramped in the Orongorongo, Tararua and Ruahine ranges, then advanced to climbing in the Southern Alps and in the central North Island.

These rich tramping years and the camaraderie of tramping and socialising in high country huts were curtailed by marriage, family, and career, but the tramping/climbing gene was passed on to his children. “Two of them, he said, “are much better climbers than I was.”

After completing his training in 1954 Ron began a 40-year career in hospital laboratories throughout New Zealand; initially in Kaitaia, Auckland, Masterton, Invercargill and Wellington, and also in the Pacific and Southeast Asia.

In 1963 Ron was a member of the first New Zealand Civilian Surgical Team in Qui Nhon, Vietnam as part of the Colombo Plan, tasked with setting up a laboratory and blood bank. He still had the hiking urge but commented that hiking in Vietnam was limited due to the presence of land mines.



Ron later served as a consultant for the World Health Organization, the Red Cross, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on developing medical laboratories in developing countries in Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

His involvement with the Pacific began in the early 1970s when the New Zealand Red Cross provided funds for him to install laboratory equipment in the Gilbert Islands (now Kiribati) and show staff how to use it.

This experience led to the recognition of the need for basic training opportunities for medical laboratory staff, and the later establishment of Pacific Paramedical Training Centre, or PPTC as it is generally known, in Wellington in 1980.



The centre was co-founded by Ron Mackenzie and Henry Ford and has trained laboratory staff and supported medical laboratories in the Pacific Islands and Southeast Asia since its inception.

The PPTC is a small but significant part of New Zealand’s overseas development programme. This Wellington-based NGO (nonprofit organization) collaborates with many entities including the World Health Organisation for which it is a Collaborating Centre, the NZ Red Cross, NZ Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade, University of Otago School of Medicine and Health Sciences, NZ Institute of Medical Laboratory Science, and the Norman Kirk Trust.

The PPTC’s success over more than forty years has been guided by its founding policy of providing medical laboratory services, education and training which is appropriate, affordable, and sustainable.

Ron retired over thirty years ago but remains active as a Trustee of the PPTC attending regular board meetings. He still likes to move around as well and walks whenever possible rather than just sitting around.

Ron was awarded the QSO in 1993 for the major role he had played in the development of the medical laboratory and blood transfusion services of the South Pacific and Asian regions.

For more information about PPTC and its work go to <https://pptc.org.nz/about>

## Thank you to all the supporters of Age Concern Wellington Region.



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# Omai Faatasi – Come Together

*There is a long-standing assumption that most Pasifika seniors are OK and do not generally experience loneliness. This is because Pasifika seniors are more likely to be cared for by their families, in many cases even living with them. As religion plays an important role in many Pacific nations, seniors will often also be connected to a local church.*

Porirua is considered New Zealand's second largest concentration area of Pacific peoples, making up 60% of the total population in Eastern Porirua (Waitangirua, Cannons Creek). This is much higher than the national average of 8%.

A year ago, we started working with local Pasifika agencies and community groups in Porirua to learn more about the needs of Pasifika seniors and whether loneliness was an issue. We learned that while some seniors are OK and do have adequate social connection in their lives, many do not.

It is not uncommon for seniors to stay at home alone all day as their children go to work and their grandchildren to school. Mobility problems or a disability can perpetuate the problem of isolation and loneliness. Other challenges some seniors are facing can include elder abuse, lack of transport, food security and accessibility, housing and legal issues relating to finances and wills. Many agencies are already working to help alleviate some of these issues, but we've found that there are not many social connection opportunities specifically designed for seniors.

Out of this has come a vision for a social connection service to help Pasifika seniors connect with others and with community leaders, learn new things, have fun and enjoy



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good food with friends. Our goal is to help end loneliness for Pasifika seniors in Porirua and help them get the support they need to live full and happy lives.

It's not something we can do alone – so we are partnering with Atamu EFKS Porirua, a faith-based charity in Waitangirua. Working together, and co-designing the service with seniors in the community, we hope to be able to help alleviate the problem of loneliness for many.

We have received seed funding from the Office For Seniors and Rotary Wellington to help launch this service. Plans are to host our first event in April.

*We look forward to updating you on this special new project.*

# Coming Events

## *Vogelmorn Hub for Seniors*

26 Mar, 23 Apr & 21 May, 2pm

## *Seatoun Hub for Seniors*

6 Mar, 3 Apr & 1 May 10.30 - 11.30am

## *Upper Hutt Hub for Seniors*

13 Mar & 10 Apr & 8 May, 12pm

## *Manners Street Coffee Group*

14 Mar, 11 Apr & 9 May, 10.30am

## *Linden Hub for Seniors*

12 Mar, 9 Apr & 7 May, 1pm

## *Staying Safe course for older drivers*

13 Mar, 10am in Upper Hutt

19 Mar, 10am in Linden/Tawa

15 May, 10am in Seatoun

30 May, 10am in Tawa

12 June, 10am in Khandallah

**Call 04 499 6648 to register**

## *Walter Nash Hub, Taita, Lower Hutt*

14 March, 11 Apr & 9 May 1.30pm

## *Tea & Tech, and Scam Prevention*

27 March, 10.30am, Epuni

23 May, 10.30am, Tawa

**Call 04 499 6646 for details**

# Services

## *Visitor Service*

## *Community Support*

## *Connect Programme*

## *Phone Friend Service*

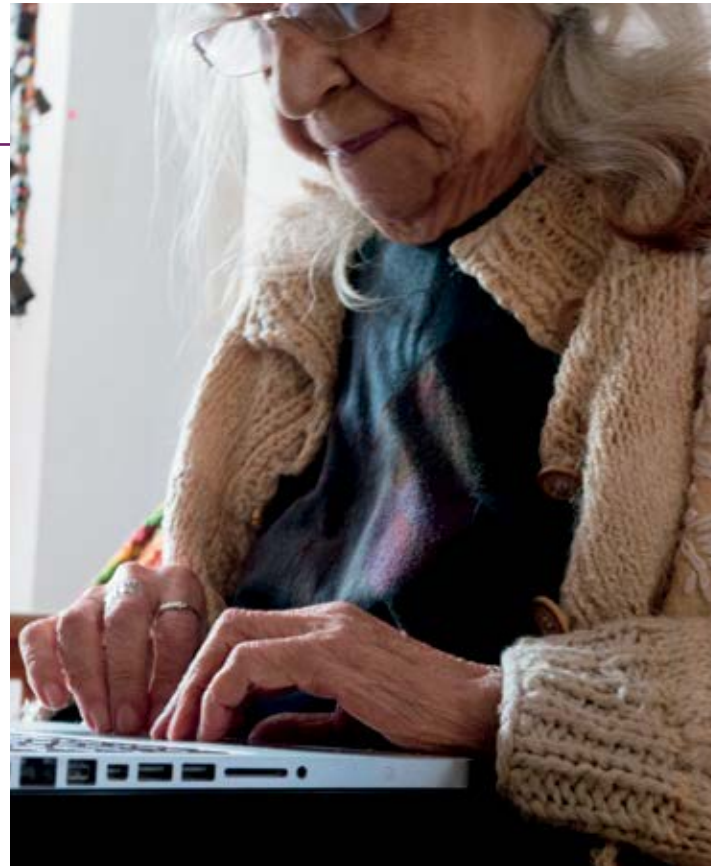
## *Companion Walking Service*

## *Advance Care Planning Service*

## *Falls Prevention exercise classes*

## *Staying Safe courses for older drivers*

Read more about the impact our services are having in articles throughout this magazine. Visit [www.acwellington.org.nz](http://www.acwellington.org.nz) or **Call 04 499 6646 for more information**



# Can you help?



**Loneliness** is a very real issue for many seniors, because it is detrimental to mental and physical health. That's why we bring people together across generations, cultures and places to help end loneliness for seniors. We provide high-quality, free social connection services for those who are isolated. But we need to raise more funds to help us deliver these services.

**Regular monthly donations** are a wonderful way to help us plan ahead and ensure this work continues. Can you consider making a monthly donation to this important work?



Charities registration no. CC61799

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E [info@acwellington.org.nz](mailto:info@acwellington.org.nz)  
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**Making a regular donation helps us ensure we can continue our quality social connection services. Please consider making a regular gift.**

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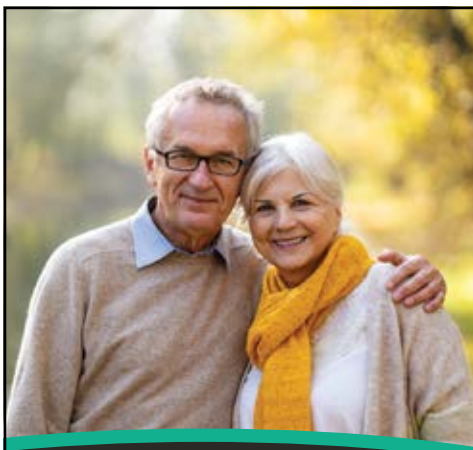
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# Dear Ann

Do you have a question for Ann that you'd like answered in the next magazine? Please email [news@acwellington.org.nz](mailto:news@acwellington.org.nz)

Recently a friend of many years had a fall at home and was admitted to hospital. She had once been very active, joining in walking groups, gardening and generally taking herself around town on foot.

On discharge it was apparent that she had lost much of her mobility and consequently had to change her habits and routines.

Is there any general advice you could offer to try to avoid this situation?

**Sally, Khandallah**

Dear Sally,

There is a famous song by Joni Mitchell which includes a line: You Don't Know What You've Got Until It's Gone. This is so true. Most of us don't really think about mobility until we don't have it.

Some say there are two kinds of existence: one with, and one without mobility, and it is important that we do everything we can to maintain our mobility. It's a much better life if we have choices where we go and what we do, without needing assistance.

It's good to keep active, and walking and gardening are excellent. A great daily tip to increase balance is when cleaning your teeth with an electric toothbrush, try standing on one leg, maybe right at night and left in the morning – this will give you 4 minutes of balance practice daily.

However, it is lovely to get out and about, especially with others. At Age Concern, we run a series of falls prevention classes called Steady As You Go. These have been developed by Age Concern Otago in association with the University of Otago Physiotherapy Department. Each movement is designed with falls prevention in mind –

there are sitting, standing, balancing and eye exercises, and the class cost is modest – currently \$3. There are around 40 of these classes in the region, although many of them are full. As Steady As You Go has been running for 20 years or so, there have been many requests for something extra. We are now trialling a new dance-based falls prevention class called Aligned To Go. All details can be found on the Age Concern Wellington Region website: [www.acwellington.org.nz](http://www.acwellington.org.nz)

In addition, there is a weekly 'live' Zoom class which you can access from your home if you are unable to get to a class – again check the website.

I hope this helps Sally – remember keep moving – every little movement helps!  
**Ann**



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[www.courtenayhearing.co.nz](http://www.courtenayhearing.co.nz)

## Steady As You Go Falls Prevention Exercise Classes

DAY	TIME	LOCATION
Monday	10 am	Seatoun Village Hall, 22 Forres Street, Seatoun
Monday	11 am	Knox Church, 574 High Street, Boulcott, Lower Hutt
Monday	1.30 pm	Walter Nash Centre, 20/22 Taine Street, Taita
Tuesday	11 am	Koraunui Stokes Valley Hub, 184 Stokes Valley Rd, Stokes Valley
Tuesday	11 am	Wainuiomata Library, 1 Queen Street, Wainuiomata
Tuesday	12 pm	Linden Community Centre, 10 Linden Avenue, Tawa
Tuesday	12 pm	Newtown Community Centre, Corner of Rintoul and Colombo Streets, Newtown
Tuesday	1 pm	Vogelmorn Hall, Mornington Rd, Brooklyn
Tuesday	1 pm	Johnsonville Uniting Church, 16 Dr Taylor Terrace, Johnsonville
Wednesday	9.30 am	Live Online Class, Zoom
Wednesday	12 pm	All Saints Church, Hataitai, 90 Hamilton Road, Hataitai
Wednesday	11.30 am	St Andrews Anglican Church, 11 Steyne Avenue, Plimmerton
Wednesday	12 pm	Eastbourne Community Hall, Tuatoru St, Eastbourne
Wednesday	1.30pm	Heretaunga Christian Centre, 51 Lane Street, Wallaceville, Upper Hutt
Wednesday	1.30 pm	Walter Nash Centre, 20/22 Taine Street, Taita
Thursday	1 pm	Tawa Community Centre, 5 Cambridge Street, Tawa
Thursday	1 pm	Koahunui Stokes Valley, 184 Stokes Valley Rd, Stokes Valley
Friday	10am	Aligned To Go at the Victoria Bowling Club, 125 Pirie Street, Mt Victoria
Friday	11 am	St Mary's Church Hall, 69D Discovery Drive, Whitby
Friday	1 pm	Loaves & Fishes, Wellington Cathedral of St Paul, 2 Hill Street, Thorndon

**Call 04 499 6646 for more information or  
check website for update events [www.acwellington.org.nz](http://www.acwellington.org.nz)**