



# Canterbury *Anniversary News*

## Hohepa Canterbury

1965 – 2010

In 1965, thousands paid their respects as wartime hero and former British Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill, was laid to rest with full military honours. The USSR's Luna 8 crashed on the moon. 'Thunderball' was the latest Bond movie. In New Zealand – Keith Holyoake held the office of Prime Minister, with George Manning holding that of Christchurch Mayor.

A notable Christchurch event was Cynthia van Asch locating a suitable home for the establishment of Hohepa Canterbury. This was at the directive of Sir Lewis Harris – Chairman of the Hohepa Homes Trust Board. Grace and Shirley Home was eventually purchased in Hackthorne Road, Cashmere. This was paid for with the proceeds from the Canterbury University Students' Capping Day procession – an amount of £5,355.8s.2d.

Several founding year residents are still supported at Hohepa Canterbury – John Lambie, Maryanne van Haandel, Nicola Roper, Lynley Valentine, Allison Taylor, Lucy Smellie and Maryellen Hoban. Margaret Farrow held the role as the first principal.

Over the past four and a half decades, Hohepa Canterbury has developed into a thriving establishment, supporting over 80 residents and day attendees in both Residential and Day Services. With much to celebrate, the organisation has shown steady growth, currently with 72 staff on the payroll. Assets include a combination of 17 homes and flats, two day bases, a farm, and a fleet of 12 vehicles.

Significant resource has been put into renovating and replacing facilities to provide for an ageing resident population. Wheel chair accessibility, wet area bathrooms, heat pumps and low maintenance cladding have all added to the mix of renovations, improvements and enhanced levels of quality. The purchase of a new house for younger residents is currently in the planning stage.

Sincere thanks are due to the staff, Board and family members who have supported Hohepa Canterbury over the past 45 years.

Particular mention should be made of Sue Campbell and Ulla Van Erp, both arriving in the early years and contributing to resident support with care and dedication.

Sadly we have witnessed the passing of residents, family and staff members as time moves along. However, we are comforted by the overarching philosophies of Rudolf Steiner, enhancing and nurturing the community, while the universal tapestry continues to connect those linked to Hohepa Canterbury – past and present.

*Raymond Eberhard*  
General Manager, Hohepa Canterbury



Photo: Richard Oakden

## John Lambie

'We left home with John on the back seat of the car. We would get to the bottom of Hackthorne Road and he would wriggle around and slide on to the floor and kick up merry hell,' says Bruce Lambie.

'When we got in front of Grace and Shirley, we got him out of the car. We would be there for a while for a cup of tea with Miss Farrow, and then when we went away he was in Miss Farrow's arms waving goodbye. That happened a lot but got better over time.

They used to have quite a few plays, mainly on a Sunday afternoon. Grace and Shirley had a big staircase, which was used as a focal point for some of them. They all liked dressing up. Miss Farrow was very adaptable; she could make a costume out of a few sheets. John used to be the angel in the Nativity play on a harness, and sometimes a shepherd with his crook. John is a born actor.

I also remember the autumn fairs at Barrington Street, the Morris



Photo: Richard Oakden

*Bruce and John Lambie. John was six when he arrived at Grace and Shirley Home. There are many memories ... including the 1965 PV Vauxhall that Bruce drove up to Grace and Shirley Home still sitting in the shed at home. John didn't want to go, but now when he's home, he wants to go back to Hohepa.*

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# Allison Taylor

'I was 12 or 13 when Allison moved to Hohepa,' says her sister Geraldine Jellyman. 'Up until that stage she had been attending the IHC centre in Merivale which, given that we lived in Kaiapoi, entailed her busing. She enjoyed pulling the stop cord so the journey was becoming difficult as, understandably, drivers were getting cross.

My parents were starting to think about what to do. My recollection is that Allison was eight. My paternal grandparents died and Arthur Van Asch had been their lawyer. I think some money was left in the will for Allison's care and Arthur talked to my parents about Hohepa being established.

The home on the hill was a beautiful facility with wonderful views. I recall the grand staircase and the large rooms where the residents as they were all quite young lived four or so to a room. Parents would be there tucking them in on Sunday evening. I think I had about five years living at home and attended most festivals or special occasions. In particular I recall the advent plays I think on Sunday afternoons for the four weeks before Christmas. They became part of our Christmas preparation. The lighting of the candles each week was a feature.

I recall the energy and expansive love

of Margaret Farrow for the children. I also recall the annual fundraising fair which was a real family affair, with most parents involved as well as siblings. It always felt like a fun day although I suspect for the organisers it was rather arduous.

In those early days it felt like the Hohepa family was an extension of our family. The parents knew each other and we knew all the residents and connected up regularly. The core group of local folk was very committed.

The greatest benefit was the freedom it gave my sister and me to get on with our own lives not having to have the responsibility to care for Allison. We knew she was well catered for. I think the stability of being in the one place all her life has been hugely important. Although my involvement now is primarily with Allison and her home when we have had bigger occasions such as important birthdays I still



Allison aged 13.



Allison with her sister Gerry Jellyman (far right), brother in law (Don Jellyman, far left) and nephews and nieces, planting a tree in memory of her parents. Hohepa Farm, September 2001.



Raymond & Allison at Maypole.

recognise and enjoy meeting those long term residents. I think for Allison the network of long relationships has been very beneficial.'

## John Lambie *(continued from page 1)*

dancing, and John putting the sausages on the barbeque. My duty for the day was to run the pony rides. I had a truck with a big deck and I used to bring up bales of pea straw, which were piled up to provide seating, and then they used the deck of the truck for setting up wares, such as wooden toys made at the wood workshop at Halswell. Ashfords had offcuts of timber, which they sold to people for firewood, and I would go into Ashburton once a week and bring home sacks of offcuts. We originally paid for them and then, once they knew what was happening to them, they gave them to us.

John loves the outdoors. He and farm manager Terry got on well. Terry reckons John trained Holly (the dog). Terry was a universal person who was good with the farm work and extremely good with the residents. They'd grow their own vegetables, hens and pigs, compost and make fertilizer from fish heads. It was John's job to collect the eggs. Andrew Cameron used to hold on to them too tight.'



1965

## Announcement

The Trust Board has much pleasure in announcing that Miss Margaret Farrow, who for a number of years has been a member of the Staff at Sunfield, Clent, one of the first Homes established in Great Britain, has, at the invitation of the Trust Board, decided to return to New Zealand permanently in order to take charge of our first Canterbury Hohepa Home School which will open in the Spring of 1965 under the name of Grace and Shirley Home.

*Eighth Annual Report, The New Zealand Trust Board for Home Schools for Curative Education, Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Trust Board Friday 23rd April 1965.*

# Lynley Valentine

Lynley was a live wire, although very frail to start with,' says Mrs Pauline Valentine. 'She had a heart murmur but gained in strength as time went by.'

'We had to make everything safe around the house. Harry put up retaining walls so she had a safe place to play outside. We lived in Beckenham at the time.'

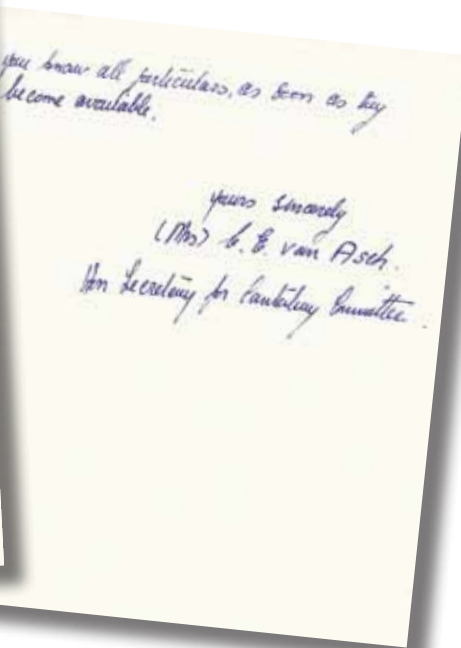
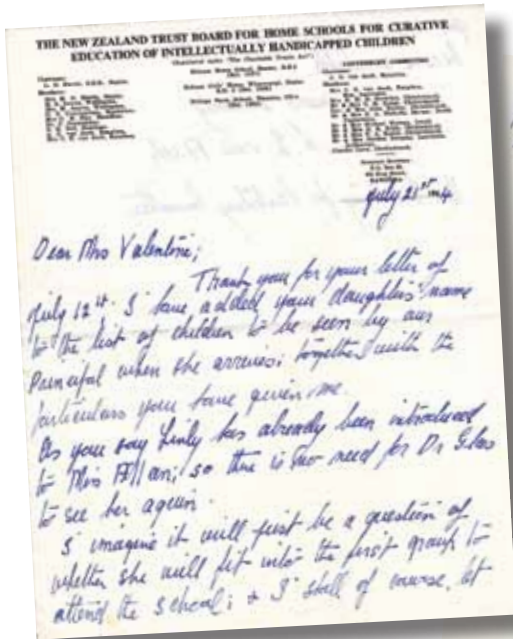
'There was no help or advice at all. I just depended on friends. I had read about the North Island Hohepa, so I wrote to Marjorie Allen, who wrote back and we visited. Because Lynley was under five, she said it was too risky to take children from the South Island to the North Island at her age and so we just bided our time.'

Lynley was a real handful when it was decided she would go out to Templeton. She had very good care out there but I knew she was only there temporarily. Then I received a letter from the Education Board that Lynley would go to Merivale Lane and she would be picked up by taxi. She was there until she was 11.'

In July 1964, Mrs Valentine received a very welcome letter from The New Zealand Trust Board for Home Schools for Curative Education of Intellectually Handicapped Children – a forerunner to the opening of the Grace and Shirley Home on Cashmere Hills. Lynley was one of nine children to arrive at the home school that day.



Lynley Valentine at 14. Lynley always had heart-shaped birthday cakes.



'It was good to know she was going into a Christian atmosphere, where education and independence was valued and, of course, the welcome was wonderful.

We visited Lynley every Sunday. Margaret Farrow insisted the girls wore their best veyella frocks on Sundays. Lynley learnt to write and was very good at rug hooking. Some Sundays we took her out, spread the rug down, and saw Christchurch in the sunshine. We could hear the larks.

The two lamps, now at Barrington Street, originally came from St David's Presbyterian Church. They were taken up to Grace and Shirley Home and put up the drive. When they moved to Barrington Street, Harry rebuilt those cairns and did the bricks.



Lynley and Lucy

## 1965

"After 5.30pm tea, the children gather in a circle at the foot of the stairs for evensong. Candles are lit in a carved oak holder and the children hold hands and listen to a simple end-of-the-day prayer and a melody. Accompanying herself on the German lyre which she learned to play on the sea trip out from England, Miss Farrow hums the tune.

Then it is time for bed and the children climb the stairs to the two large dormitories, some of them humming the tune they have just heard. In the dormitories, the girls' beds have covers in a dainty check, with tougher candlewick spreads for the boys.

Before the children go to sleep, Miss Farrow moves through the rooms to each child, carrying a candle to sing another lullaby."

Kate Foster, From a woman's Angle newspaper clipping, September 1965

# Lucy Smellie

'The last few weeks have been particularly happy ones for Lucy, watching her mother make new clothes, going shopping with her for new pyjamas and dressing gown and helping to carefully stitch name tapes (ordered from Ballantynes) on to them, and hearing her mother tell their friends that she was going away to school in Christchurch – a special school.

The family is courteously greeted at the front door and ushered inside ... women and children appear and disappear through doors and at the top of the stairs. Those stairs! Magnificent and beautifully polished, carved and proportioned, they lend an air of grandeur and splendour that the rest of the house lives up to ...

Gently her mother lets go of her hand and moves towards the door. Her father ruffles her hair and winks at her. Her mother plants a firm kiss on her cheek and whispers: 'Try your best. Be brave.' The big front door opens. 'Bye, bye, Lucy goodbye' – and closes behind them.

Miss Margaret Farrow steps back from the door; swings around and focuses on Lucy, in a voice uncompromising in its warmth and authority says: 'Lucy, we're going to unpack your clothes. You're going to see where you're going to sleep and meet some new friends. Come along!' And with her small arm linked through Miss Farrow's, Lucy sets off up those stairs, at a brisk trot.

So Lucy's new life begins and of this time we know little from Lucy. For her, the move to Grace and Shirley was a radical change in her



Ulla Van Erp.

Photo: Richard Oakden



Lucy in her new bedroom in Bev Morrissey House.

Photo: Richard Oakden

lifestyle. As an only child living in a quiet farm cottage spending most of her days at home with her mother, the farm and its taciturn men in the background, we can only wonder how it must have been in those first few months, to be suddenly one of nine children – every part of each day timetabled and organised for you.' \*\*

Lucy's very first house parents – Ulla and Theo Van Erp arrived some 18 months later, gregarious, extroverted and eager for new experiences. Ulla says, 'Lucy was the oldest of the children to come to Grace and Shirley. An only child, suddenly there were four or five in the room. They had new playmates. They had each other – not just for an arranged afternoon, but for the whole week.'

'Lucy loves poetry and readings and has an

interest in the world. When my daughter and I went on a world trip Lucy went to the library and got picture books about the countries we were going to. If something takes her fancy, she goes for it. She gets a book out and finds more information.'

Now living in Hohepa Canterbury's newest residence, Bev Morrissey House, Lucy also attends Toastmasters and maintains a close friendship with Theresa King. 'Her and I are going to stick together,' says Lucy. 'If she's got something she's going to talk it over with me and I'm the same. We're going to be best friends for ever.'

\*\*Extract from *Winds of Change* – Lucy Smellie's Life Story, Fiona Munro



First Day Arrivals

## 1972

"This year was a very special one for us at Grace and Shirley and especially the first term was of a quality hard to describe. We started school again in February, all knowing that it might be Margaret Farrow's last term. But her courage and faith inspired all who were around her. "This inner strength, this faith in destiny was with Margaret Farrow to the last day. For us young people it was a blessing to have been allowed to witness the passing away of such a great soul."

*Fifteenth Annual Report of the New Zealand Trust Board for Home Schools for Curative Education, presented at the Annual Meeting of the Trust Board. Friday 25 February 1972. Margaret Farrow, Hohepa Canterbury's first principal passed away on the eve of April 21 1971.*

# Maryanne (Baz) van Haandel

Maryanne had been living at Grace and Shirley for five years when house coordinator Sue Campbell arrived in 1970. By this stage there were 18 children living in the home.

"I remember hearing the story, when there was a certain amount of controversy about having Hohepa up on the Cashmere Hill – people didn't know about intellectually disabled people – on the second day they lost Maryanne, and found her sitting on the next door neighbour's front lawn. No harm was done.

What I know is Maryanne was very, very happy. Because of her autism she loved order in her life, having things done in a certain way at a certain time each week, each month and each year and it was very much to do with the Steiner curative education where everything is done on a rhythmical basis. Maryanne responded to that.

They were woken with somebody singing to them. They would get up and get dressed, and before breakfast everybody gathered downstairs for morning circle, where there was a morning verse, then everyone held hands and said 'good morning' and the Matron at that stage used to play a song.

The school room was in the house. Once the morning was over, there was a hot meal at midday and then a rest time for a couple of hours before we helped the children with their craft classes in the afternoon.

The other thing that was very good for Baz was she absolutely loved the plays. Each

Christian and seasonal festival, there was usually a play and, because Maryanne has such a good memory, she always had a lead part in the play, or she was the story teller. She knew her lines off by heart. She not only knew her lines, but everybody else's as well, and it caused some consternation because not everyone was as good as Baz,' says Sue.

'The Christmas Nativity Play was my favourite,' says Baz, along with The Golden Goose, a Grimms Fairy Tale, Rumpelstiltskin, Goldilocks and the Three Bears, and St George and the Dragon. Baz remembers her lines from year to year – and at the opening of Bev Morrissey House this year, gave a very good speech of one-a-half-pages, all from memory.

Because we have such a close connection and work so well together, I found she loved being in the kitchen and cooking and preparing vegetables and making scones and breads, and she became my right hand man. She really found her niche in a way that was really fulfilling for her and very helpful to me. She got the stage where she could do simple things on her own like making scones or salads, and she would peel all the vegetables for the main



Sue and Baz.

Photo: Richard Oakden

meal. We used to make muffins every Friday night. She loves nothing better than scrubbing pots afterwards. She was absolutely wonderful to have in the kitchen.

Maryanne had lots of curative therapies when she first came, which helped her grow. In those days we didn't know a lot about autism but knew that through Steiner curative education we had to work on her limbs to make her more balanced in her approach to life. This is why this kitchen work was so good for her, because she was using her hands and not just her head.

I feel so great about Baz and it is so fulfilling to be in her life. To see someone grow like that is wonderful. A long relationship and never a cross word. She is such a pure soul and you would very rarely get cross with her."

# Nicola Roper

'Nicola was diagnosed at three months old and the literature was all negative,' says Lady Roper. 'I thought why should she be deprived? I am not going to accept this. One brother is at Christ's College, and another at Cathedral Grammar. They are having the very best we can give them.

When Cynthia van Asch rang me and said the words 'education' and 'independence', and asked would we be interested in establishing a centre down here, and would you form a committee with us, we did.

We had our very first meeting at our home in Rugby Street. Cynthia van Asch was the driving force. There was no holding her. Lew Harris came down from the North Island Hohepa and gave us his blessing. Our very first fundraising event was a stall out at Rangiora. We had established a fairly strong working group by then and Cynthia started looking around for properties. She met a solicitor called Mr Anthony, who was a widower and lived in a magnificent home in Hackthorne Road. She told him what she was trying to find and he became very interested. We bought the home from the proceeds of the Students' Procession and then of course had to apply to the Heathcote Council for permission to establish the school. Then the objections started pouring in.

They decided on a legal hearing and my husband Clinton, who was the Christchurch Crown Prosecutor,



Nicola and Lady Roper. Nicola was the youngest of nine children to take up their new abode at Grace and Shirley Home.

was asked to appear for Hohepa. The hearings were held in the Masonic Hall in Dyers Pass Road and lasted six weeks. It was a real legal battle.

We had one little old broken down car. Hearings were on Thursday night. I had someone in to feed the boys, then I cut sandwiches, went down and collected Clin from the Court, and he ate the sandwiches while I drove him up to the hearing. I had to pick my mother up at the bottom of the hill each night.

We had to wait a little while for the results from the Council hearing

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# Maryellen Hoban

'We were in the middle of lambing. It was a nice sunny day but I remember leaving her and feeling terrible. It was a difficult decision because Maryellen was the eldest and I was expecting our third daughter. I remember going up the hill and my mum said 'you are not to cry; you will upset the other children'.

We were the first to arrive at 7.30am. Maryanne arrived with her mum and threw a tantrum. Nicola Roper came aged five. We opened the door and Margaret Farrow was standing with arms wide open. It was Wednesday 25 August and nine children arrived at Grace and Shirley Home.

Miss Farrow was a really motherly person. The children were attracted to her. When we went back on the Sunday, Miss Farrow had all the children sitting on the stairs. I found a very happy daughter that day. I had been worried about the stairs. Maryellen didn't walk until she was four and wasn't very steady on her feet. She was managing very well when we came back, so leaving on the Sunday wasn't as traumatic.

The parents who lived in Christchurch went up and did cooking, bottling and sewing. We made things for fundraising fairs. There was no government assistance then, so we were fundraising each year. In the first year, we had a garden party at Grace and Shirley with two stalls. We were in charge of the sweets.

Maryellen moved into Willow Cottage in 1978 and has lived in Kowhai and Manuka



Shona and Maryellen Hoban.

Cottages, before moving in to her home in Rose Cottage in 1991.

Maryellen is always happy to come home, and always happy to come back. She misses the interaction with the others although she likes the peace and quiet at home. She has two homes really. That was the point of parting with her so young – that she would always have a home. It has been worth it. It was the right decision to make.'



Maryellen's first day at Grace and Shirley Home

*Dear Mr and Mrs Hoban,*

*While typing out this letter for Miss Farrow I can't resist a word to one Mummie from another. to tell you that I've spent a lot of time at Grace & Shirley with Miss Farrow & children, and Mary Ellen is an absolute darling, & does not appear to be at all homesick; she is so good with the other children & I think is enjoying the routine Miss Farrow has mapped out for them.*

*Mary Ellen & I have become great friends, & I often find a little hand creeping in to mine which consoles me somewhat for having Juliana so far away.*

*Yours sincerely  
Cynthia van Asch*

## Nicola Roper (continued from page 5)

but Hohepa was successful and we were all ready to go ahead and establish the Home and get it ready for the residents.

Margaret Farrow was interviewed and accepted the position as the first principal. Cynthia, who had been busy canvassing the firms in Christchurch, walked into Lane Walker Rudkin and said: 'we would be prepared to accept some blankets from you'.

By 1965 the house was furnished and ready to receive residents. We preceded the opening by having a garden party one Sunday in the grounds with a stall and afternoon tea, which was well attended. Everyone wanted to come and see what was happening.

Then Margaret Farrow felt it was time to start calling in the residents. It was then that I really heard something very positive. She rang and asked if I would be prepared to part with my daughter at the tender age of five, and she would guarantee to educate her and give her independence.

Nicola arrived with a cot, a high chair and a pushchair. I was told not to have any contact with Nicola for six weeks but I went every Saturday

with a friend and did the washing. We had a roster for helping in the kitchen and various parents came in and cooked. Cynthia van Asch did a lot of the meals. I did a lot of meals. Marjorie Taylor came from Kaiapoi and cooked.

Every Wednesday my brother and I took the residents and Margaret Farrow and one of the nursery helpers to Scarborough and we let the children play in the playground.

In 1968, we had to leave Christchurch so I was no longer able to work up at Grace and Shirley, but I still had close contact because during the school holidays Margaret Farrow took the dormitory staff up to Napier for training and they traveled on the ferry, stayed overnight with me and again on the way back.'



**Hohepa**  
creating opportunities...

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