



# Our Home



## The Swing of Spring

We are sure you have all noticed the warmer weather and the longer days. There seem to be bouncy lambs and blossoming trees everywhere you look. For all of you familiar with the Nelson climate, this means an almost instant change from winter woollies to summer shorts and dusting the cobwebs from the BBQ.

In mid-December we will say a sad farewell to Corrine Coombe, our Operations Manager. Corrine has only been Operations Manager at Tasman for a short time and has loved getting to know the residents, staff and families. She has been given an exciting opportunity to move back to Taranaki to be closer to her family. We wish her the very best for all the future holds as we look for exactly the right person to replace her in this important role.

Here at Tasman we are well into the swing of spring. Taking advantage of the recent Little Garden promotion at New World, we have planted a stack of seedlings and prepped our vegetable gardens ready to grow veggies and herbs to add to our summer salads. We are also adding new flowers to our gardens to bring pops of colour and scents to enjoy. We watched with delight as the bulbs we planted in autumn have flowered, with our purple and red tulips being a favourite of many.

Family/whanau is included at the centre of all we do and as such we have had a lot of lovely family moments over the past couple of months. We celebrated our many cultures with residents and families through stories, song, artwork, food and dance. We held our annual Fathers' Day BBQ where we honoured our gentlemen, giving each of them a homemade gift and card. A recent highlight for our residents was being invited to attend Nayland Primary School Art Exhibition. We were treated with special parking and an official welcome from the principal and school's Kapa haka group and escorted around the classrooms to view all the artwork on display and then enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea.

For many of us 2020 is unlike anything we have ever experienced before, but that does not necessarily make that a bad thing. As a home we have learned the value of good infection control practices and the positive outcomes that has meant for our staff and residents with very few cases of cold and flu symptoms and improved overall health for our residents.

We have flexed our creative muscles as we have had to find new and improved ways to communicate, educate, entertain and collaborate as staff, residents and supporters such as yourselves. Lastly, we believe the real gift of 2020 is the chance to slow down and reflect on life and what is really important.

We have been collecting our old towels, blankets and other bedding items that were no longer suitable for us to use. Once van rides were on the menu again visited our local SPCA and donated the towels and bedding for the rescued animals to use. It is very rewarding for our residents to continue to contribute to their community in these ways.

Christmas is one of our favourite times of the year here at Tasman and we know that it is special for our families too. We are planning our Family Gathering for Thursday the 17<sup>th</sup> December, so keep an eye out for the posters in reception giving you more details. Also, families are welcome to join us on Christmas day, although unfortunately we are not able to invite guests for Christmas dinner. A quick word about presents: clothing is a popular gift, but before buying check with the Caregivers or Nurse to make sure the item is appropriate and easy for the resident to use.

We join in wishing you everything of the very best for Christmas and the New Year, and look forward to welcoming you here often over the holiday season.

# A Christmas message

Andrew Sheard, Managing Director



*For some of our more mobile residents it is great to go out beyond our home and go for a walk out in nature and explore the world around us.*

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*We most warmly invite you to join us  
for our  
**Christmas Gathering**  
on Thursday, the 17th December 2020  
from 2-4 p.m.*

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*We celebrated Maori Language Week by learning new phrases and trying our hands at making pois.*

Sitting down to write my Christmas message I find myself, as always, reflecting on the year past and the year to come. As I do so now, approaching the end of 2020, I find myself lost for words. What is there to be said about the year we have just lived through? Where to begin? And with the world as we knew it rocked to its foundations, who is to say what the year ahead may bring?

Positioned at this fulcrum between past and future reminds me that right now, we are in the present. Whatever challenges and crises the past year has presented, this has always been the case. And in each present moment, we have been ok. We have survived. More than that, we have learned and grown stronger together.

No-one explains the concept of living in the present moment more clearly than Eckhart Tolle. “Nothing ever happened in the past; it happened in the Now. Nothing will ever happen in the future; it will happen in the Now.” We don’t have to worry about getting through a whole unknown scary future. All we have to do is live the present moment, right here, right now, as each moment unfolds.

How do you do that? Eckhart has advice on this too. “Accept — then act. Whatever the present moment contains, accept it as if you had chosen it. Always work with it, not against it.”

In our rest homes as we have been navigating the unfamiliar and turbulent waters of COVID-19, this is what we have been doing. Working with the situation step by step, day by day. We have made some mistakes along the way, and we have learned from them and done things differently next time. With the understanding, support and patience of you, our residents and families, we have kept our facilities safe. We have been incredibly lucky, and we have also had great leadership and good guidance.

What of our staff teams – those gentle, loving, courageous people who left their own families and the safety of their bubbles time after time to come to work and care for our residents? I am in awe of each and every one of them.

As I write this, at a time when leave applications are normally flooding in for the longed-for trips back home to celebrate Christmas with their families, my desk is bare. I can only imagine how hard this Christmas will be for many of our staff, so far away from home and loved ones.

My Christmas message to you all this year is one of gratitude, love, kindness and hope.

In this moment, right now, I wish you joy.

# A year of learning

Simon Hamley, Education Coordinator

Looking back on 2020, it has clearly been an unusual year, full of unexpected changes to our lives – donning masks, scanning QR codes and listening to Ashley Bloomfield! Despite this, it was heartening to see all of our great staff here at Tasman cope so very well during the pandemic situation. Many of them may have been afraid and apprehensive, but I can see that through this experience they have become more resilient and have grown as people. The varying NZ alert levels meant that for several months of the year I was unable to travel, which is usually a normal part of my role. For a brief time, I took on the role of Clinical Manager at Tasman, which gave me the opportunity to get to know the residents and their family and friends better. I am grateful for the support of the staff and families during this time. Everyone was very understanding and patient of the constant, sudden changes that the New Zealand alert levels brought us.

I still managed to connect 'virtually' using Skype or Zoom with other facilities around the country to provide some education remotely.

One of the best things I get to do here at Tasman is a training course called 'The Best Friends Approach to Care'. This takes place over three different sessions and is a time when we can reflect on our experiences and develop our empathy skills and learn to 'walk in the shoes' of the residents we are caring for. We often don't always notice the personal growth in ourselves, as it can happen slowly over time, but all of the staff I have come to know at Tasman have developed skills and knowledge through their work. Some are at the beginning of that journey of growth and some are further on. There are always new things to learn and discover (even for someone of my age) and I am already looking forward to 2021 spending time with the staff, meeting new staff and catching up with those I already know.

Christmas is my favourite time of year, as it is a time when we think of family and how much they mean to us. I hope you have a chance to connect with your family during this time and share some special moments, whether they are near or far away.

## Magic Moments

I was walking with one of the residents holding her hand when suddenly she kissed me from behind and said "Thank you."

When one resident is restless, singing her "you are my sunshine" always calms her down. She always smiles when I tell her that she has beautiful eyes. And she does.

During a van outing, a resident always comments about the beautiful weather and says "good driver" every time to our facility driver.

So lovely to see our cook perched on the edge of a chair in the lounge chatting with the residents about what was for dinner (silverside with mustard sauce). One gentleman's eyes in particular lit up. "I love silverside!" he told us. "What time is it? I can't wait!"

While residents were waiting on their turn to vote, a staff member asking one resident if he had decided who to vote for. The resident shouted, "Yes. National! National all the way!" Another resident replied "Really?? That could be a wasted vote". The first resident said, "As long as I get my lolly, it isn't a wasted vote" – laughing at his joke but went on to whisper to staff, "I bet Labour is more of a wasted vote!"

It was a staff member's birthday and I wished her a happy birthday in front of the residents and asked her how old she was. She replied that she was 21 years old, laughed and went on her way. As the door closed behind her, a resident asked me, "did she say she was 21? Plus GST?" and we both had a good laugh together.



# Endings and beginnings

Arah Cartagena, National Clinical Manager

2020 has been a year like no other. COVID-19 greatly changed our lives. Around the world, people are battling the pandemic and the other challenges that come with it - grief, loneliness, uncertainty, and loss.

Usually special occasions are celebrated with happiness and good cheer: a joyful celebration of the year that has passed. However, this year, some of us may have ambiguous feelings and thoughts toward it. It may be hard to celebrate and continue festivities amidst the uncertain landscape of these times.

Special seasonal occasions mean many things to different people. Some people are eager to welcome Christmas because with everything going on, they need something to look forward to, and sticking to traditions will help them achieve a feeling of normalcy. Others are more than ready to welcome the New Year because it has a promise of a fresh start and better things to come. And some view seasonal occasions as a welcome period of respite where they can unwind, relax, and celebrate the exciting year that is about to end.

The last two months of 2020 could be unpredictable, and there could be surprises, both good and bad, ahead of us. Leaving 2020 might not close a chapter for us. It could be a continuation of what is already happening, as much as we may not want that to materialize.

All of these thoughts and feelings surrounding the Christmas season amidst the pandemic help me realize that we can hope for the best for our future, but we can only ever focus and act on what is happening today, in our present.

Every day, we go through our routines and do our best to take care of ourselves and the people around us. Perhaps this is the best way we can embody the Christmas spirit, by being mindful of others, by doing our part in keeping our surroundings safe, and by being kind and considerate to the people around us and offering help when we can. We live each day with hope and being open to the joy around us. As this year draws to a close, let us welcome the new year with hope for the future while living mindfully in the present.



*It is great to get the guys outside in the fresh air with the warm sun shining high. With soap suds and polish at the ready the team goes to work washing and wiping, until our little blue bus shines.*



*A recent trip to the nearby Pic's Peanut Butter Factory, topped off with sampling (and more sampling) of delicious peanut butter!*