

RANFURLY CARE SOCIETY INC

Newsletter and Christmas Greetings December 2008

Dear friends,

We are well into the spirit of Christmas and are thinking of our friends at this festive time of the year. Just before our recent AGM, Clive Backhouse (Activity Centre coordinator) and I were discussing the future of Ranfurly and the importance of the involvement of families and friends. Clive bought in these poignant notes that he wrote that I would like to share with you all.

Thoughts from an Empty Hall.....Standing in the Activity Centre Hall one morning a few days ago, I was very aware that 'the hall', which has seen so much laughter and even a few tears, is nothing without people. The hall takes on many different forms – a winter grotto, the home of Macbeth, venue for the Special Olympics Disco and much, much more. But at the end of the day it is just part of a building.....

Ranfurly was 'born' out of the commitment of families wanting to ensure a better life for their children or siblings. Sadly, many of those family members have gone, but new ones have taken their places.

To remain vibrant, active and relevant Ranfurly needs the input of all family and society members; otherwise, it will easily lose its family focus. This is why the staff at Ranfurly want to thank all of you who are prepared to help out at various events, whether it be the Cabaret night, helping with 'Round the Bays', giving encouragement for a job well done, or giving advice on how to help a particular student. This input is very much appreciated and *needed*.

People often comment that Ranfurly still retains an 'atmosphere' that many larger organisations have sadly lost – an atmosphere of caring, support, having fun, education and challenges and of sharing our experiences with each other- whether they be joyful or sad.

To retain this uniqueness there needs to be input from both *families and staff*. If Ranfurly is seen as only 'a one way street', just '*another facility*' looking after their children/siblings, then it will only be a matter of time before it will become just that.

So back to the hall! Thankfully, we never have any trouble filling the hall at any of our events – in fact we have on occasion been obliged to turn people away! (Sorry to you!) If you are one of those people who have never been to an event – please come along to the next event – as stated before it is your contribution that 'keeps Ranfurly alive'. Clive Backhouse

Classic drama never the same twice

By Lisa Sloan

The tale of Antony and Cleopatra has been told on stages around the world for centuries.

But a group of Epsom actors are set to perform the Shakespeare classic in a way it has never been seen before.

The Ranfurly Players, a group of intellectually disabled actors from the Ranfurly Care Society in Epsom, will present an unscripted version of the play on October 16 and 17.

While scenes have been practised and the story learned, the actors do not memorise lines and the dialogue will be largely improvised.

This year's show follows sell-out seasons of Macbeth, The Hounds of the Baskervilles and the Three Musketeers in previous years.

Creative director Brett Ihaka says every time the actors rehearse the play is different so you never know what to expect on the night.

"Because these actors have difficulty remembering lines we tell them what the play is about and then they make it up themselves with regards to the theme of each scene," he says.

"Because they improvise the script this means anything can happen and often does."

Mr Ihaka started the Ranfurly Players in 2005.

While preparing for Antony and Cleopatra, the actors learnt the general story of the play and then thought about how it applied to them.

For example, they imagined how they would feel if their boyfriend or girlfriend ran off with someone else, and how they would feel if their best friend betrayed them.

They then used that information to create scenes and tell the story of the play.

"Our goal is to provide an artistic and creative endeavour for all of those who may not have the opportunity," he says.

Mr Ihaka says scenes can be as short as several minutes to as long as 15 minutes.

"It's different every single time and it depends on what mood they are in," he says.

"We will get a three-hour epic down to just one hour - hopefully."

Throughout the process Mr Ihaka has also been mentoring Ranfurly resident and actor Murray Nash to be the director.

Mr Nash has the ultimate say on how the story is told.

"I make sure they know all their lines and they go where they are supposed to," he says.

The Ranfurly Players will perform Antony and Cleopatra at 7.30pm at the Ranfurly Care Centre, 52-56 Ranfurly Rd on October 16 and 17.

Tickets are \$5. For more information, phone 630-4108.



Star struck: The Ranfurly Players are performing an improvised version of Shakespeare's Antony and Cleopatra. From left: Chris Radley, Anne Fitzpatrick, Murray Nash, Filia Solomona, Peter Mowday, Andre Pascual, Carol Wootten and Clare O'Connell.

Photo: JASON OXENHAM

Another successful year has passed at Ranfurly Care; many milestones have been achieved in a year marked by the usual varied mix of outings, events and activities which ensure a full and rich life for our residents and the students of the Activity Centre.

A big welcome to Peter O'Connor who moved into the Ranfurly Road home in January and to the student Chris Radley who in his first year took a lead role in the 2008 production of Antony and Cleopatra. We are always mindful and eternally grateful to

his father John's valuable legal assistance both in the six-month battle prior to the inception of Ranfurly and over the many years since.

Activity Centre



Under the skilled support of Glynis, the Activity Centre sent several students to perform the student's 'Pacifica' item 'Maui from the Sea' at the Auckland Multicultural Society Inc. then at Lakeside Festival at the Pump House, where the audience gave them a well deserved standing ovation. Another popular outing in March was going by ferry to Coromandel to visit Driving Creek railway and in March participating in the annual 'Round the Bays'.

Staff and students had a magical day when forty-eight of us enjoyed a fun in the sun Picnic on Waiheke Island. Five vans went by car ferry to Onetangi to Chris Wren's daughter's home for a picnic to all be spoilt by her wonderful hospitality.

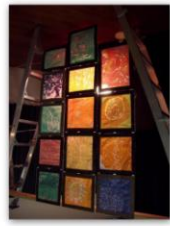
We are very pleased that two pupils from Baradene Girls School continue on a weekly basis as volunteers in the Activity Centre. Baradene College was so impressed by last year's production the 'Three Musketeers' that they decided to hold a fundraising event for Ranfurly. Three of the leading actors, Brett the producer, and myself thanked the School assembly when they presented us with \$2466. Thanks to their generosity, we are now the proud owners of a 'Sound Mixture System'.

The Cabaret evening – a Night with the Stars on 6 September was another great success. We were so impressed with the items that we repeated the concert on the 25 September in order that we could make a DVD.

Mellissa Durbin, our Art Teacher, instigated 'Art Expo Evening' on December 5. It was nothing short of amazing – the variety quantity and quality of the years work and achievement. Congratulations to all participants and to Mellissa for her creativity!

By the time, you receive this we will have enjoyed the 19 December BBQ lunch and the annual Nativity Play. The 22 December is the Students formal sit down lunch and Santa's visit – courtesy of the staff. The 23 December is the Student's last day, the clean up and finish for 2008. On 14 January, Students are welcome to return if it helps the families during the holidays and on the 19 January all the students/staff return ready for another rewarding year. Onwards and upwards then as we strive to provide an excellent service moving forward with new ideas and challenges for 2009.

Art Expo 5 December Flight of Fancy Evening



Residential The staffing continues to grow as we strive to achieve excellence in the services. Some of you may be interested to learn that Ranfurly Road and the flat which houses nineteen residents have a combined 432.50 hours staffing per week, an increase of 79 hours since October 2007.

Staff Training We successfully applied for funding under the M.O.H. Leadership Development Scheme with a pleasing result of receiving a \$9,288.39 (excl G.S.T.) allowance. The Ministry approved two of the four EMA courses our staff attended.

- 7 April 2008 Autism New Zealand. Introduction to advanced strategies for Autism Spectrum disorders formatted to include social stories and behavioral management using visuals as a tool. Also explores anxieties, introduces Functional Assessment of comprehension skills and picture exchange communication systems, developing visuals.
- 18 June 2008 Team Leader Toolbox 1 – Facilitating Your Team - Training Supervisors and Team Leaders in the ‘*development and fine tuning of their team through excellent communication and consensus-building practices*’.
- 27 June 2008 Team Leader Toolbox 2 - Getting the Work Done - An introduction to the techniques that expert ‘people managers’ use to organise teams, get work done and delegate successfully! *To get your team working together and see their efficiency increase and the profitability of your department or practice improve.*
- 1 July 2008 Workplace Coaching and Mentoring - This course is designed to develop very specific business coaching and mentoring skills that will enable participants to achieve optimum results from their colleagues and team members. This course covers the key elements of coaching and defines the differences between coaching and mentoring.
- 14 & 15 July 2008 The Quality Management Course to Demonstrate Quality Auditing Knowledge – This provided participants with the knowledge and skills to conduct Internal Quality Audits in their own organisation and to contribute as a member of a Quality Audit Team , a Technical Expert, Consumer / Family Auditor. This course is specifically centered on auditing against the Standards associated with the Health and Disability Services Act (Safety Act) 2001.
- 11 Sept 2008 Angela Arnold a (Clinical Psychologist) provided excellent staff training ‘Pervasive Development Disorder’.

There have been a variety of holidays this year starting with everyone going to Papamoa Pacific Park from 3-6 March while carpet was replaced in the Ranfurly home. Stanmore Bay was another holiday destination on 17/19 March and the 8/9 April. The Queenstown holiday 13/18 April was super - thanks again to the generous hospitality of Louise Kiely. Then a lucky group of six residents visited Samoa 20/27 June - a great success under the experienced eye of Shirley Lewis and Sara Stacy supported by Shirley’s family ties in Samoa in particular ‘Aggie Grey Resort’ where our residents were treated as ‘royalty’ by both staff and guests alike. The last holiday for residents this year was at Lake Taupo 21 - 24 October 2008.

Both services are very interactive within the community and excellent records are maintained of all our Weekend and Community Outings. We welcome any one who is interested to come and peruse the pictorial files.

We are very fortunate that Julie Cooke continues to facilitate the Ranfurly Road Residents' Meetings bi monthly – many thanks to you Julie we all appreciate your input.

There are too many special outings from the homes to mention but one that stands out was when George took a group to the 'Shortland Street' filming set – they are all 'Shortland Street' fans you can imagine the excitement in meeting some of the cast.

Repairs and Maintenance The 'fale' is a great success as a nice shady spot the Ranfurly Road residents to sit or to enjoy dinner in the summer. Sadly, we had to remove the Aviary and two diseased trees, which will be replaced and replanted in 2009. The exposed bare fence will be covered in split ponga logs and the area grassed creating another pleasant leisure area.

For the safety of the residents and the security of the property we have installed a fence to isolate the back garden access. A pedestrian entrance, a sliding gate operated by automatic sensor pads and an intercom system will be operating in the driveway by Christmas. I will be in contact with you all re the pin number for the pedestrian entrance though you will always be able to gain access by the intercom. We are very mindful that we operate under an open door policy consequently with what we have organized there should be no problems and we will have a safer home environment.

Activity Centre The production Antony and Cleopatra was nothing short of brilliant, the actors were totally on the stage on their own without staff assistance. The Central Leader printed an excellent article/photo about Ranfurly and the objective players. After obtaining five quotes from various curtain makers and ensuring that any fabric we purchased was fire retardant, we chose to purchase the curtains from Curtain Creations and we have received wonderful service from them.



Some of the recent events have included a Sausage sizzle at Cornwall Park, friends and family members, the Operatunity pantomime (loosely based on the story of Cinderella), a student visit to the Te Waka Marae. Many compliments have been received from visitors to the Aotea Centre for Ranfurly's exhibit in the Christmas tree display - both last year and this year! This year's theme was 'recycling'! Students enjoyed a night of fun at Boogie Wonderland and a BBQ at Te UnWaka Marae. The 10 December Odyssey House Kapa Haka concert visit to Ranfurly was very touching with Ranfurly performing 'Mystic Beginnings' and their group performed several items. In the end, both groups were performing several raucous Hakas together. Such fun! There was a Joy Ministries BBQ lunch for the students and finally the Pumphouse Santa show.

General Our condolences go to many families as sadly we have lost many friends this year who include, Gwyn Duncan, Margaret Whitta, Peter Mowday snr, Harry

Littlewood and just this week we heard the sad news that Brian Bicknell who was our Alert taxi driver for many years.

All those we love remain with us, for love itself lives on, cherished memories never fade because a loved one's gone. Those we love can never be more than a thought apart. For as long as there is a memory they will live on in your heart

This is an opportunity to send Christmas greetings and best wishes to all our dear residents, students, friends, supporters and families a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year for 2009.

Once again a big thank you to the staff, for so often going that extra mile to further enhance the resident's and student's lives. A big thank you to all those friends and families of Ranfurly who have supported us with your thoughts, kind words and deeds or by financial assistance. And finally here is something to think about when you are writing and sending your Christmas cards.

Christmas Cards

I have a list of friends I know, all written in a book.
And every year at Christmas Time I go and take a look
And that is when I realise that these names are a part,
Not of the book they're written in, but of my very heart.
For each name stands for someone who has crossed my path some time.
And in that meeting they've become the rhythm of the rhyme
And while it sounds fantastic for me to make this claim,
It's true; I really am composed of each remembered name
And while you may not be aware of any special link,
Just meeting you has changed my life much more than you can think
For once you've met somebody, the years cannot erase,
The memory of a pleasant word or of a friendly face
So never think my Christmas cards are just a mere routine,
Of names upon a Christmas card that is addressed to you,
It's because you're on that list of folks I am indebted to.
For you are but a total of many folks I've met,
And you happen to be one of those I prefer not to forget
And whether I have known you for many years or few
In some small way you had a part in shaping things I do
For every year when Christmas comes, I realise anew,
The biggest gift that life can give is meeting folks like you.
May the spirit of Christmas that forever and ever endures
Leave its richest blessings in the hearts of you and your





Merry Christmas to You All from the Ranfurly Staff



Some of our staff at the Christmas Luncheon December 2008