



FNZI REPORTER

Quarterly Newsletter of Friendship New Zealand Inc.

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A Word from the Chair



At a recent council meeting, we spent time reflecting on who we are as an organisation and found ourselves wondering: **Is it time to refresh our image?**

For many years, Friendship New Zealand has proudly promoted our core values: **Friendship, Fellowship, and Fun**. These words perfectly capture what our clubs represent—welcoming spaces where

people can meet, connect, laugh, and enjoy great companionship during retirement (and the years leading up to it).

But as times change, so do people's expectations and needs. Many retirees today are looking for more than just a social club; they are seeking stronger communication, a deeper sense of community, and meaningful companionship. With this in mind, we want to ask our members: **Should our image evolve?**

Exploring a New Focus

One idea currently being discussed by the council is shifting our core message to focus on:

Communication, Community, and Companionship

These three words capture the traditional ethos of Friendship NZ, but package it slightly differently to emphasise:

- **Staying connected** in a fast-changing world.
- **Supporting one another** through shared experiences.
- **Creating genuine friendships** and a true sense of belonging.
- **Encouraging participation** and widespread inclusion.
- **Building strong communities**, both locally and nationally.

Of course, **fun and fellowship** will always remain a massive part of who we are. The real question is whether a refreshed image would better represent today's retirees and help us attract future members looking for connection, purpose, and lasting friendship.

We Want to Hear From You!

- Do you prefer our traditional message of *Friendship, Fellowship, and Fun*?
- Or do you feel *Communication, Community, and Companionship* better reflect who we are today?
- Could there perhaps be a creative combination of both

Please share your ideas with your local club committee and let the council know what you think. **Your opinion matters** as we continue shaping the future of Friendship NZ together. At the heart of everything we do, it is simply about *people caring for people*.

Club Notices & Reminders

- **Club Promotional Flyers:** Did your club order our promotional flyer this past year? We now have a new order available for you! You can get **15 flyers posted directly to you for just \$4.50**.
- **AGM & Winter Road Trip:** Have you got your winter road trip planned yet? We would love to see you in **Nelson** for our upcoming AGM. It will only take two hours of your holiday time, you'll be part of an important gathering, and you'll get morning tea too! Join us on **August 6th in Nelson**.

Stay dry, stay warm, and take care.

Judith

FNZI Chairperson

Editorial



As winter settles across New Zealand, this edition of the *FNZI Reporter* provides a timely reminder of what makes Friendship New Zealand such a special organisation: people connecting with people.

Throughout these pages, you'll read stories of members exploring new places, learning new things, celebrating milestones, supporting worthwhile causes, and simply enjoying each other's company. From sheep farms and sculpture gardens to conservation projects and community celebrations, our clubs continue to demonstrate that friendship has no age limit.

One theme stands out clearly in this issue—the importance of belonging. Whether members are attending a monthly meeting, participating in an outing, welcoming visitors, or sharing a cup of tea after a speaker's presentation, they are strengthening the connections that enrich our lives and build stronger communities.

As our Chairperson invites us to reflect on the future image of Friendship New Zealand, it is worth remembering that whatever words we choose to describe ourselves, our purpose remains unchanged: creating opportunities for friendship, companionship, and meaningful social connection.

Thank you to all the clubs that contributed reports and photographs for this edition. Your stories inspire us and remind us that Friendship New Zealand continues to thrive because of the enthusiasm, generosity, and commitment of its members.

Stay warm, stay connected, and enjoy this latest edition of the *FNZI Reporter*.

David Beer

Editor

From the Council

Friendship NZ Inc. Annual General Meeting



Our AGM plans are well underway.

We meet in

Nelson

at 9.30 am for 10am start on Thursday, August 6

**in the Mosaic Room at Habitat Hub 166
Tahunanui Rd.**

We'd love for you to include the date and location in your winter break plans in sunny Nelson! It's bound to make your trip even more enjoyable.

Message from FNZI Secretary



As the AGM approaches in August, we ask that all remits be submitted by July 7th. Any received remits will then be circulated to clubs along with other AGM documentation. Clubs will have the opportunity to vote by proxy and submit their apologies by July 27th. Please make sure that these are signed. Do not send your apology until you receive the paperwork, as you will need it for your club's submission.

For clubs with delegates attending, please provide your club name and the names of the members attending. Thank you for your cooperation.

Most clubs should have seen a good return with their members paying club subscriptions. Affiliation fees are due to FNZI at the end of September. For more information on fee changes, please check the bulletins at <https://fnzi.nz/clubs/draft-constitution>.

I've received several requests to update contact information, which is fantastic! Clubs can make these changes directly on the FNZI homepage. If you're unable to make the updates yourself, please email centreadmin@fnzi.nz for assistance. Please keep in mind that I am unable to make changes to your club details. Having accurate club information is essential for FNZI administrators to communicate effectively with you.

Maryon Beer

FNZI Secretary

Promotional Posters and Flyers

Friendship NZ has created a poster that clubs can use to promote themselves. The posters are available for download and printing on the FNZI website.

The flyers can be ordered on the website https://fnzi.nz/images/FNZI_Flyer.pdf or are available for purchase from the Chairperson, Judith Lawton, judithml.d80@gmail.com

Please take advantage of these resources to raise awareness of your club in your local area.



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For further information contact:

To find a club visit fnzi.nz or phone 0800 335 544

Club Reports

Redwood Ladies Friendship Club - An Ewe-nique Experience at the Jones Family Sheep Farm



We visited the Jones Family Sheep Farm in Kirwee, where we watched them milk the sheep. Tracey and her husband gave a very interesting talk. The sheep's milk was delicious and nutritious, and we also tasted their cheeses. Many of our ladies brought some home. It was definitely worth the visit. For inquiries, you can contact Tracey at 0272142589.

After our visit, we went to the Thirsty Acre for a senior lunch.



Rangiora Ladies Friendship Club hosts Pink Ribbon Morning Tea

We hosted a delightful pink ribbon morning tea at our May meeting, a highlight that our wonderful Committee brings to life each year. The atmosphere was warm and inviting, filled with the aroma of freshly brewed tea and the sweet scent of delicious pastries. Attendees came together to enjoy not only the tasty treats but also meaningful conversations and camaraderie, all in support of an important cause. It was truly an uplifting and memorable gathering.

The photo shows Yvonne McCulloch, President, and Sandra Williamson, Secretary.

Lively Meetings at the Mid Canterbury Friendship Club

Our first three meetings of 2026 have gone very well, with attendance averaging around 68, which we find quite pleasing. As mentioned in our last newsletter, we have experienced the loss of several members, and some have gone into care. However, this has been balanced by an increase in visitors, which often leads to new memberships. One thing that stands out to me is that our organisation truly lives up to its name as a friendship club! During morning tea, it can be difficult to hear yourself think due to the lively conversations.

Our current President, Merv Green, is a popular and highly respected individual. We wish him well for the remainder of his term and look forward to a rise in membership, as well as continued good health for all our members.

Ladies Friendship Club New Plymouth West - Fire drills, Scammers and EPAs

The Annual General Meeting on 25th March was a success, with all positions filled and three new committee members elected. After the formalities, Secretary Maureen Johns organised a fire evacuation drill, where members promptly exited the building while the President called for help. The drill went smoothly, and conveniently, Carey arrived with the luncheon just as it ended.

Following the fire drill, we conducted an earthquake drill and reviewed safety procedures to ensure everyone was prepared. We also honoured three long-standing members for their dedication: Maire Dodunski (34 years), Frances Maulder (30 years), and Myrtle Putt (27 years), each of whom received a Flora and Fauna Bouquet.

In April, Christopher and Joyce Backhouse spoke about scammers, sparking engaging discussions, and provided information sheets for reference.

In May, two lawyers from Nicholsons Lawyers discussed Enduring Powers of Attorney, Wills, and Trusts, offering valuable insights along with a helpful information sheet.

In June, we will hold our annual mid-winter dinner at the Fitz Restaurant in Fitzroy instead of having a guest speaker.

Highfield Ladies' Friendship Group Timaru visit Coptic Church



Recently, over 20 members and friends of our club visited St. George's Coptic Church in Timaru. Originally built as Chalmers Presbyterian Church, it is located in the inner city of Timaru. After the amalgamation of the Presbyterian parishes, the church was eventually purchased to serve the Egyptian Coptic community in Timaru and the surrounding area.

A generous local resident, Dr Albert Makary, played a crucial role in establishing and refurbishing the church. Our group had a member from the Coptic community as a guide, and we also connected with Dr. Makary through a video link. He shared an

engaging history of the early Coptic Christian church, and his unique sense of humour added vibrancy to his account as he detailed the challenges and successes his community faced during the refurbishment.

Inside the church, the interior shines with gold, adorned with beautifully simple icons and a superbly patterned ceiling. We truly appreciated the opportunity to explore this lovely addition to Timaru's church landscape.

Dunstan Friendship Club escape fog on Operatunity Trip to Invercargill



The office bearers and committee of the Dunstan Friendship Club elected at the AGM in March 2026: Back row from left: Beth McArthur, newsletter; Lynette Rolston, Rose Gardyne, Kaye Heka Reynolds, Susan Symons, Immediate Past President; Kim Thompson. Front row: Murray Leach, Vice President; Steve Battrick, President; Maree Davidson, Secretary and 2nd Vice President; Kerri Brown, Treasurer and Adele Pyne, Welfare. Absent: Pauline Sanford.

Our club is thriving, with an increase in membership and strong attendance at our monthly meetings.

On May 18, a busload of us travelled to Invercargill to see "Hoe Down Show Down" at the Civic Theatre. While Alexandra and Clyde were experiencing their fifth consecutive day of fog with temperatures ranging between 1 and 3 degrees Celsius, we enjoyed sunny weather in Invercargill, which was a delight for those on the trip.

We've had engaging speakers each month. In March, we welcomed Vicki Gordon, a Nurse Practitioner and midwife who spent 30 years working in the Northern Territory of Australia. Her contributions to her field have garnered her many awards.

In April, our speaker was Robert Gardyne, a club member who shared his experiences farming in the Ida Valley, complemented by wonderful slides that accompanied his talk.

In May, we hosted Dr. Mavis Duncanson, a retired doctor living in Alexandra. She served as the Director of the Child

and Youth Epidemiology Service at the Otago Medical School, and was a senior lecturer and clinical epidemiologist. Before moving to Dunedin in 2014, she taught Population and Public Health at the University of Notre Dame in Sydney.

South Otago Ladies Focus Club Celebrates 35 Years



Zoe Latta and Jeannetta McArthur cutting the South Otago Ladies Focus Club's 35th anniversary cake at the April meeting in Balclutha.

The South Otago Ladies Focus Club in Balclutha recently celebrated a significant milestone, marking 35 years of camaraderie during their monthly meeting on Wednesday, April 8, 2026.

A special morning tea set the tone for a warm and festive celebration. Two of the club's long-standing members, both in their 90s, had the honour of cutting the anniversary cake, which was a much-loved highlight of the occasion. The cake was beautifully baked and decorated by our Vice President, Suzanne Anderson.

To commemorate this milestone, members received lovingly crafted anniversary bookmarks, thoughtfully created by Club President Judith Tunnah. These bookmarks celebrate the club's 35 years of friendship, fellowship, and fun.

Local Connections and Conservation Shine at Friendship Ōtorohanga

In 2026, our meetings have seen great attendance with local guest speakers.

In February, Jimmy Ormsby from Waitomo Fuels spoke on "Kiwis Fuelling Kiwis," covering procurement pricing, environmental care, and social impacts.



In March, the Haddrell family presented their conservation efforts on their 470-hectare property in Mangaiti, aiming to restore the kiwi population. Their talk, "Voices in the Night Again: The Kiwis Return to Waitomo," highlighted community involvement and partnerships with the Department of Conservation (DOC) and local iwi.

In April, Graeme Wilshier announced the sale of the Ōtorohanga Timber Company, sharing its journey from a small operation to a prominent manufacturer.



On April 29th, we visited the Ōtorohanga Kiwi House, enjoyed a picnic, and learned about the Mahoenui Giant Wētā and saw Pleakly, the Tūī, in a guided tour.

Ōhope Friendship Club celebrates 26 years



The Ōhope Friendship Club recently held its 26th Annual General Meeting (AGM), during which we elected three new committee members and bid farewell to three others. We are always delighted to welcome such talented and fun-loving individuals to our team!

Judy Tate is continuing her role as President for a second year, while her husband, Denis, our former President, is now serving as Secretary for the second consecutive year. We have a wonderful committee, and it makes our work much easier as we collaborate

effectively.

The photos highlight some of our recent guest speakers, trips, and activities, which include attending fabulous Operatunity concerts, FINSKA/Kub group events, and our Garden Group, among others.

Bishopdale Ladies Friendship Club: From Metal Sculptures to Fashion Finds

On February 23, 2026, we held our first outing of the year at the Rusty Acre in Mandeville. Eighteen ladies enjoyed walking around the two-acre garden and viewing the various metal sculptures on display, which included giant sunflowers, a Mad Hatter, a teapot, and birdhouses made from old gas bottles. We had a lovely picnic lunch and then took the time to explore the gift shop, making several purchases along the way. It was an enjoyable day for all.

For our February meeting, our speaker was Gill Atkins. Gill delivered a wonderful rendition of Pam Ayers and her poetry, reciting several poems including "Oh, I Wish I'd Looked After My Teeth," "They Should Have Asked My Husband," and "With These Hands."

Our March outing took us to The Raspberry Cafe in Tai Tapu. On Monday, March 23, 22 ladies carpooled to the restaurant for lunch. We enjoyed a variety of different dishes, and there was plenty of chat and laughter.

In March, our speaker was from Greypower, and she provided us with very informative insights.

On May 25, we went on an outing to Up Style Me in Swannanoa. We carpooled, arriving at 10 AM to explore the local boutiques filled with pre-loved clothing, shoes, homewares, and accessories. After shopping and finding many treasures, we enjoyed a morning tea that included a savoury item, something sweet, and a cup of tea or coffee. Following that, we had lunch at the 5 Stags in Rangiora, which everyone enjoyed.



Ashley Friendship Club awards Life Membership



The Ashley Friendship Club recently honoured Elvie Cuff with a Life Membership in recognition of her exceptional service to the club. For many years, Elvie has been the friendly face of the club, diligently managing membership records and ensuring that everyone felt included by bringing the "name-tag suitcase" to meetings. She has also opened her home for gatherings and contributed to the club's social activities. Along with her late husband, Ray, she was part of the Entertainment Group, where they staged popular performances. Elvie's dedication and generosity have significantly shaped the club's welcoming atmosphere, and this award acknowledges her invaluable contributions.

In April, the club visited the Birch Hill Cemetery. The Birch Hill Station Cemetery was established in the mid-1930s as a private cemetery for those associated with the Birch Hill Station sheep run. It features a notable monument that honours not only the soldiers from the station but also the horses that served in World War I.

This monument serves as a reminder of the strategic role horses played in the war and the strong bonds formed between soldiers and their horses, who became an integral part of the soldiers' lives.