Alzheimers Manawatu
Marion Kennedy Centre
Summer 2026

Out in force for our Memory Walks





All of our Memory Walks, including Levin's, left, and Feilding's had great support.



Manager's message

Kia ora,

It's been another great year for Alzheimers Manawatū and in this newsletter you will find photos of the four Memory Walks which were held in October, due to more ideal weather, and were a resounding success –a fun day for all who attended.

A huge thank-you to our guest speakers and entertainers. The club members, carers and staff certainly enjoyed dancing along with musician Norman Wale at Feilding MKC. 😊

As the year quickly draws to a close, I would like to take this opportunity to thank our staff and volunteers who bring kindness, fun and laughter to our programs every day. Enjoy your much needed break over the Christmas period as MKC will be closed from 20 December and re-opening on Tuesday 5 January and we look forward to seeing you all back nice and refreshed in 2027.

A special thank-you to our Board who tirelessly volunteer their time to ensure the smooth operation of Alzheimers Manawatū.

To our club members, carers and volunteers please check out our dates for the Club Christmas parties, these are events not to be missed if last year was something to go on.

Ngā mihi,

Verity.





Above: Members of Palmerston North Knights Lightsaber Group joined our ranks for the Palmerston North memory walk.

Thank you to all our entertainers.
Top left: Entertainer Norman Wale got the Feilding MKC members up and dancing. In Palmerston North For Folk's Sake serenaded us as we walked and then performed at Te Manawa.
In Dannevirke, left, we had a great turn out and musicians Pete and Tom played for us as we walked and then performed at the MKC. Muaupoko Tribal Authority Inc performed after our walk in Levin.





Left: Running our Memory Walk on Rural Day in Feilding got us a lot of attention.





Aroha resthome showed us some love

While some resthomes joined us on our Memory Walks, others like Aroha held their own one.

We have also been out and about





Palmy members enjoyed the park and Ohakea

Our club members go on van trips regularly. They recently enjoyed visiting Victoria Esplanade and Ohakea War Memorial Aviation Centre.

Fashion theme took Feilding and Dannevirke clubs down memory lane

Marion Kennedy Clubs' cognitive programs have weekly themes. A recent theme was fashion and members in Feilding and Dannevirke were encouraged to bring in photos of their younger selves that showed fashion trends from their younger days.















Being alive and his daughter is precious to Neil, left, and family is important to Marty.

Club members shared what is precious in their lives

Many wrote on their leaf for our celebration tree that their families were the most important thing to them, other members also mentioned kindness and the Marion Kennedy Club and the camaraderie they receive from it!



New board member knows how important support for people affected by dementia is

We gained three new board members at our AGM on August 27. One of those is Kirsten Holst, a geriatrician (doctor for older people) who has lived and worked in the Manawatū/Horowhenua area for over 30 years. She works in the hospital system, and for most of the last 9 years has been working at the hospital in Levin.

A lot of her work is with people who have memory problems, but also her Mum and Aunt have dementia, so she has had personal experience of 'living with dementia'.

She said support and information is really important for the families of those supporting people in the community with dementia, so she was happy to accept the nomination to the Alzheimer's Manawatū Board when another doctor, Pauline Blackmore, retired from the board.

Board member, Dementia Advisors and Manager enjoyed conference



The DAs, the Manager and Alzheimers Manawatu board member Rose Blair attended Alzheimers New Zealand's conference recently. The theme of the two day event in Auckland was "Beyond the story – Reshaping dementia support". It celebrated Alzheimers New Zealand's 40th birthday and was timed for the end of September, World Alzheimer's Month, and to highlight the need for politicians to support our cause ahead of the 2026 General Election. There was much discussion focusing on making the Dementia Mate Wareware Action Plan a reality and service innovations, workforce challenges, and clinical/lived-experience perspectives.

Carer Support Groups Memory Cafes

Dannevirke - Christmas morning tea
Thursday December 3
The HUB, Entry via carpark Allardice St
10 am-12 noon

Feilding - Christmas morning tea
Monday December 7
St John, 33 Bowen Street
10 am-12 noon

Combined Levin and Levin Men
Christmas morning tea
Freemasons Centre, cnr Parker and Power Street
Wednesday December 9
10 am - 12.00
Bring a plate

Palmerston North: No daytime, evening or men's groups in December.

No Carer Support Groups in January.



Palmerston North
November 17, none in December
The Elm Cafe, 283 Fitzherbert Ave, West End, Palmerston North
10 am - 11.30 am

Dannevirke
November 18 and December 16
The Black Stump Cafe
21 High Street, Dannevirke
10 am - 12 noon

Feilding
November 19, none in December
Beyond Coffee
32 Manchester Square, Feilding
Time: 10 am - 11.30 am

Levin
November 20
Bean Here Cafe
191/194 Oxford Street, Levin
Inside the Levin Mall
10.00 am - 12 noon

Woodville
December 9
The Wind Farm Cafe, 71 Vogel Street,
10 am - 11.30 am

The Dementia Advisers organise guest speakers for the Carer Support Groups. They recently had Dr Jonathan Kok and Rose Blair, a Nurse Specialist and board member, speak about the different types of dementia with Nurse Specialist Paula Ayres as a support person.

Manawatū and Tararua Dementia Advisor: Andrea Hodgetts
Email: AndreaH@alz-man.org.nz Phone: 027 357 9560

Palmerston North and Horowhenua Dementia Advisor: Liam Walsh
Email: Liamw@alz-man.org.nz Phone: 027 600 4408

Your presence is requested at the MKC Christmas Parties

Bring a plate to share and a carer, friend or support person

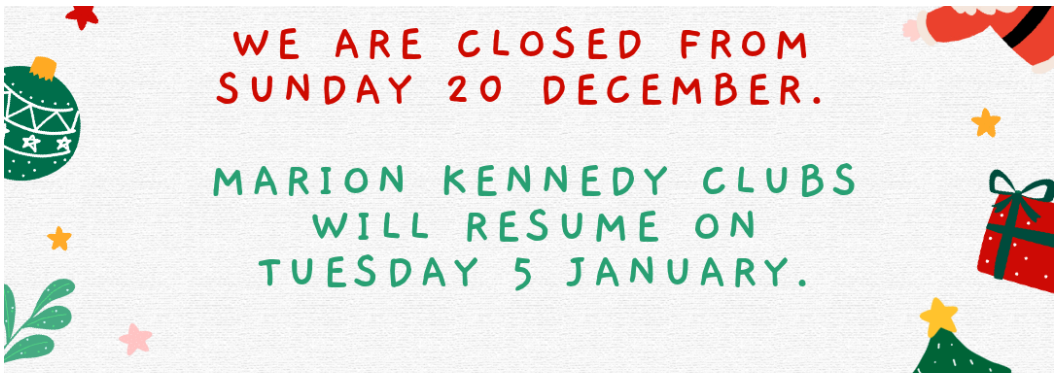
Palmerston North: Wednesday December 2
12 pm-2 pm,
Palmerston North Community Leisure Centre, 569 Ferguson Street

Levin: Friday December 4
11.30 am - 1.30 pm
at the MKC

Feilding: Monday December 14
11.30 am-1.30 pm
at the MKC

Dannevirke: Thursday December 17
11.30 am-1.30 pm
at the MKC

We will be closed through the Christmas/New Year period





Keeping Christmas cheerful

The Christmas holiday season can be challenging for many older people, especially those living with dementia.

Normal routines are disrupted, people around you get busy with their own plans and priorities and, often, the community services and support structures you rely on are closed for the holidays.

So, here are some tips to navigate the season if you are a care partner to someone who is living with dementia.

Keep it simple and familiar: Someone with dementia may feel overwhelmed over the Christmas period, so it's best not to overdo it. Keeping the day's activities low-key will help the person you support to relax. If they usually go to church around this time but are unable to, consider online or televised services.

Sticking to a familiar routine is also a good idea where possible: Having meals at regular times and in familiar surroundings will help to limit any potential confusion.

Get them involved: Playing Christmas music and singing favorite carols can be a simple way to involve the person in the festivities. The important thing is that they feel included.

Stagger visits and create a quiet area: A large number of guests can be overwhelming, so ask family and friends to spread out their visits over the festive period.

If things do get busy, designate one room or space in the home a 'quiet area' where the person with dementia can relax without loud noise. For some people, listening to music on headphones can be a good way to block out the noise.

Be mindful of food: Although many people eat a lot at Christmas, a full plate can be daunting for someone who has difficulties eating. If you're doing the serving, try not to overload the plate.

Be flexible: It's easy to get caught up in Christmas traditions and how things have always been done in the family, but your festive season might begin to look different as dementia progresses. It's always worth having a plan B, and being prepared to change your plans if something isn't working.

And don't forget, too, that loneliness can be a major factor over the Christmas season for many people living with dementia. So, if you know someone with dementia this holiday season, please make a special effort to get in touch with them and let them know you still care.



Five New Year resolutions

- **Look after your heart:** high cholesterol, high blood pressure, diabetes and obesity damage blood vessels and raise the risk of heart attack, stroke and dementia.
- **Be physically active:** an active lifestyle helps control blood pressure and weight.
- **Eat well:** a healthy, balanced diet with less fatty and processed food is best for body and brain.
- **Challenge your brain**: new activities help build connections in the brain.
- **Enjoy time with others:** social contact stimulates the brain and helps reduce the risk of dementia and depression. A walk along the beach, a picnic with friends, a swim or trying a new hobby all count. Choose things you enjoy and go at a pace that feels right.

While there is no single known cause or cure for dementia yet, there are ways to potentially reduce your risk and keep your brain as healthy as possible. The general rule is simple: what's good for your heart is good for your brain. And it's never too late to start.

These habits can help, even after a diagnosis.
Looking after yourself and each other after a dementia diagnosis

- **Share the news:** telling family and friends about a diagnosis can be tough, but it means they can give you the support you need. Often they have already noticed changes. It's your decision who, when and how, but sooner is generally best.
- **Lean on your people:** family and friends offer practical help, emotional support and a valuable connection to the past. As the Dementia Declaration says, "We ALL want to be seen, valued, appreciated and loved for who we are."
- **Be patient and kind to yourself:** it's normal to feel shock, sadness, frustration, relief, anger or loss after a diagnosis. Allow yourself to feel all of it.
- **Keep doing the things you enjoy, and talk to someone you trust about how you're feeling.** It's okay to cry, and it's okay to laugh.
- **Your local Alzheimers organisation is here to support you and your whānau.**



Thank you for donating to our Street Appeal

Fitzherbert Lions kindly volunteered to run a Street Appeal for us on September 18 at Palmerston North Pak'n'Save which raised $667. The Lions also donated $500.

Milson Rotary were busy bees

Milson Rotary freshened up the paint on the entrance way of the Palmerston North office and did some garden maintenance recently.



Thank you supporters

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Your votes at Z petrol station in Sanson helped us win $913!

Consider becoming an Alzheimers Manawatū financial member

Family Membership - $35 per year (for individuals and/or families)
Corporate Membership - $100 per year
Life Member - $200 one-off cost
Become a Champion - Make a regular monthly donation of your choice

Contact us on 06 357 9539 or manawatu@alz-man.org.nz for more details.