

Weathering the Covid storm

We may be tired of talking about it, but Covid has been more to the fore in recent months than at any time in the last two years.

And that includes March 2020 when we cancelled the Caroline Bay Rock and Hop and the country went into lockdown for five weeks. Then it was novel. We probably thought it would be short-lived.

It's no longer novel. It's hardly been short-lived.

The challenge this time is that Omicron is so much more contagious, so while South Canterbury had 17 Covid cases in total in 2020, in this wave we've recorded up to 319 in one day. Around 8000 people have had Covid.

For Hospice, the impact has been wide.

At time of writing three staff have contracted Covid, but we have maintained services in the inpatient unit.

Staff not required to come into Hospice have been working from home since March 1. This has detracted from our team feeling and those staff would far rather be here. Staff coming in have been self administering rapid antigen tests before each shift and mask wearing is now normal but still unpleasant.

We have tightened up on visitor rules where once upon a time we had no rules, and while this has not been ideal for some families most appreciate that we are trying to at least do something. Similarly we have continued our counselling services and relax and revive services with some restrictions.

In other words we have tried to continue as much as possible as normal and patient numbers have been maintained. We would not be able to do this without such dedicated staff.

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Sign of the times, clinical nurse manager Faye Gillies and EN Diane Wilson with just some of the PPE supplies now common at Hospice.

WISHLIST

Batteries - sizes 9v Alkaline, AA's, AAA's, C
Toilet Paper, Tinned fruit, Coffee, Biscuits, Tissues, Jif, Silvo,
Blue Pens, Volunteers (see page 2), White face cloths/hand towels
Items (except volunteers) can be dropped off at the Inpatient Unit during office hours. Thank you.

If it wasn't for our farmers



Most of our rural supporters prefer to support us quietly, as is the rural way. Hence, we will not be naming names, but we would like to give a well-deserved shout-out to our farming community.

The rural community step up to help in many different ways, from the deer farmer who donates the money from the sale of his velvet buttons every year; the farmers who raise a calf for us every year; and those who donate from the sale of their wool and recently from the sale of hens.

More recently we have the "Raise a Belgian Blue" calf fundraiser where Samen (a genetics company) donate 5 straws to any dairy farmers who choose to donate one calf from those straws to Hospice. These calves are then sent to different farmers who fatten them for us.

Just a few weeks ago we had a large donation come from a farming couple who were retiring and downsizing. This couple donate 10% of their income every year to charity, and donated 10% of the sale of their sheep to Hospice.

High country farmers who allow a trail ride company to run tours on their land have asked that the fee for that access be passed on to Hospice, and South Canterbury Rural Women also donate.

Each one of you who support us are vital to Hospice, so thank you.

We have accounts with all of the local meat works and sales agents, so if you are a rural supporter and would like an easier way to give you can do this directly. If you have any questions or would like to help us in any way please feel free to contact Jeanna on 03 6877679 at any time.

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In the Cottage we have not held our Therapeutic Monday sessions and while we managed to conclude our latest Carer Skills course we postponed a Better Breathing one. We have also delayed a Remembrance evening and our monthly Cuppa and Chat sessions are on hold.

You will all be aware that the Government's Traffic Light system put an end to the Rock and Hop when the country moved to red, meaning we have had to cancel two of the last three events. This has been disappointing not just for Hospice but also the district as a whole, and I really feel for the committee which puts in all the work only for the event to not proceed at the last minute.

On March 1 we also shut our two shops, moving instead to online shopping. This was no easy decision and done to protect the health of our staff, volunteers and customers.

Also, it makes a difference that we are Hospice. The shop staff and volunteers have missed the vibe their respective venues provide, but as soon as community case numbers reach an acceptable level, the shops will reopen.

This combined loss of income will hurt, however with some prudent budgeting we are surviving this pandemic. We can't wait to come out the other side and pray a worse variant isn't waiting in the wings.

We don't like the extra rules we have now; we miss our volunteers; we miss not being able to provide all our usual services. We are not alone though in managing the impact of Covid, and better times are ahead.

Peter O'Neill,
General Manager

Call-out for volunteers

Covid has presented some particular challenges for Hospice in maintaining relationships with our very valuable volunteers.

The spread of Omicron saw us close our Hospice shops and to also ask volunteers to not come into the inpatient unit. These moves, while difficult, were designed to protect our volunteers while also limiting the chances of transmission generally.

That said, we want our volunteers back, as soon as we feel it is safe and only when they are also ready.

We have a very strong volunteer pool, but pre-Omicron there were gaps in some areas. As we emerge from this wave, we'd like to fill those gaps, in particular on our inpatient cooking roster and in our shops.

In each case the commitment is what the individual can manage. One shift or a couple of hours a week, a fortnight or even a month. It all helps. If you have been considering signing up, or know anyone who might be, please contact Ange at the email below.

Some volunteers like to sign up as a pair, and one example of this is Amanda Browning and her cousin Lynley Niles who work together on the cooking roster.

They have been kind enough to share some words:

"Volunteer cooking at Hospice is a rewarding and satisfying opportunity to give back to the community.

"For us it's an opportunity to catch up with each other and enables interaction with the staff and a variety of patients and their families.



Lynley and Amanda, happy to pair up on voluntary cooking duties.

"The meals are based off a small menu with many items on the menu pre-made to enable reheating. Working as a pair, we are able to divide the tasks and focus on each other's strengths in the kitchen. This also makes the evening non stressful and we are often able to share a laugh as we strive to achieve presentation to a high quality using garnishes from the garden.

"We leave with a great sense of satisfaction, gratitude from patients and the Hospice staff for our effort and the knowledge that we have made a difference to a patient's day."

Similarly we have people sign up together in our shops so they enjoy a new experience together, have a laugh and use their skills to the benefit of Hospice.

If you would like to sign up, contact Manager of Volunteering Ange Rattray by email on volcoord@hospicesc.org.nz or phone 687 7677



Just as we were redoing our budgets after the cancellation of the Caroline Bay Rock and Hop and the closure of our two charity shops, Pub Charity announced it had approved a \$150,000 grant to your Hospice.

Pub Charity has been an ongoing support to our service and we can't express our gratitude enough. A beauty of this grant is that it can be used on operational items such as, front line nursing staff wages, and with our annual shortfall of \$1.2million that is crucial.

There are five South Canterbury licensed premises whose gaming machine profits are distributed by Pub Charity, so we are equally grateful to them. They are Armadillo's in the City Timaru, Crown Hotel Geraldine, Empire Hotel, Grosvenor Hotel and the Richard Pearse Tavern.

Find out more about Your Hospice

Hospice Awareness Week runs from May 16-22 and we are again inviting anyone from the public to join us for some specific events or to just come to learn more about what we do.

The following sessions are free, and also General Manager Peter O'Neill or Clinical Nurse Manager Faye Gillies are happy to talk one-on-one including a tour of the facilities. Equally, we are willing to accommodate groups.

Just phone reception on 03 687 7670 to make an appointment.

The sessions during the week are:

Advance Care Planning – Your life, your health

Tuesday 17th May 10-11am or 5:15-6:15pm @ The Hospice Community Cottage, 70 Orbell St, Timaru.

We plan for everything else in life except the end of it. Join us as we discuss various aspects of advanced care planning with Diane Wilson (Hospice EN). Feel free to bring your questions.

Burning of the cards from the Farmers Tree of Remembrance Campaign

Tuesday 17th May 11:30-12:00 @ The Hospice Community Cottage, 70 Orbell St, Timaru.

This reflective event seeks to honour those who have died and were particularly missed at Christmas. Together we burn the cards from the Farmers Tree of Remembrance campaign where people wrote messages to loved ones.

Supporting Grieving Children

Wednesday 18th May 10-11:00 or 5:15-6:15pm @ The Hospice Community Cottage, 70 Orbell St, Timaru.

“What do I say or do? I don't want to make things worse.” Be it the death of a grandparent, a family member, friend or even a beloved pet - children grieve. This session is designed for parents, grandparents, teachers, and support people - those who live or work with children. Come join us for a cuppa and explore ways to help support the children in your life who are grieving.

Wills, Powers of Attorney, Leaving a Legacy

Thursday 19th May 5:15-6:15pm @ The Hospice Community Cottage, 70 Orbell St, Timaru.

This session will be led by Robert Vincent, partner at RSM Law, on writing your will and setting up Enduring Powers of Attorney.

A member of the Community Trust Hospice Foundation will also discuss how you can Leave a Legacy for the benefit of future generations.

You are welcome to join in a guided tour through the Hospice after any of these events.

To assist in planning, please register your interest: phone (03)687 7670 or email support@hospicesc.org.nz or you can simply turn up on the day. All sessions are free of charge.

FROM A COVID HOUSE!!

I must admit my eyes bulged a bit and my heart briefly stopped when my 13-year-old daughter tested positive for Covid. I could not believe what the test was telling me.

She was essentially feeling fine but as a mother you are naturally concerned, then it began to sink in.



Jeanna with RAT.

We could not go anywhere, we could not see anyone, worst case was we had just shifted into a new home the day before. We had 12 people help us shift and celebrate the night before. Crikey I was going to have to ring everyone and let them know. How would they take it having their good deed returned to them in the form of a potentially nasty virus.

The phone calls began and of course everyone was fine and worried about our daughter. Then I started to feel ill, I tested and there were TWO lines. This was not good. I text the helpers and some were starting to feel ill. Oh no how terrible I think we had our own small spreading event. All up only one of the 12 people who helped did not test positive and one of those who did ended up in hospital.

Some had mild symptoms and some like myself were hit hard. I think the headaches and the fatigue were the worst, I am usually an active person but not being able to get out of bed for four days soon put a stop to that.

My head hurt, my muscles hurt, my kidneys hurt (I put this down to all of the pain killers I had taken). I did not really have a sore throat and blocked nose like the other two family members in our home.

After four days I could get out of bed for a few hours and on day seven I managed not to go back to bed all day, I was definitely on the improve. However, it does not take much for me to get tired again or to get headachy. I am petrified of getting long Covid now so will definitely be taking it easy for a while.

I used to think that it wouldn't be too bad to get Covid and I acknowledge that for some it is pretty symptom-free but for others it certainly is not. Put it down to not having a flu or virus for a few years, put it down to being soft, being run down or anything else you like, but Covid is not something I would want again and it is not something that I would like to see an elder or someone with underlying conditions go through.

One thing that Covid taught me is that I now understand the steps that Hospice has put into place to protect staff and volunteers are most definitely for the best.

PS: So sorry to all of our wonderful friends who came along to help us shift and ended up sick, I know that some of you suffered in the same way I did. When we are all better there will be a party at our new house.

Rock and Hop Cancelled

For Hospice Marketing and Events Manager Jeanna Munro the weeks leading up to the 2022 Caroline Bay Rock and Hop fundraiser were a bit like watching a slow moving tidal wave approaching.

The tidal wave was called Omicron, and it was bearing down on what was a year's worth of hard work by her volunteer committee, 1000 cars full of people ready to spend money and have a good time in South Canterbury, and 150 stallholders eager to serve on the gala day.

It was gutting therefore when the wave crashed with the Government's move to the red traffic light rating, especially as there had been so much extra planning to manage vaccine pass requirements. We were quite chuffed to have organised 1.3kms of fencing which we also offered to other event organisers.

"Personally I was gutted, not only was Hospice going to miss out on much needed funds but so were all of our motellers, restaurateurs and stall holders. I was gutted for the committee once again having to face a cancellation and I was gutted for our event attendees who had been expressing their excitement to me over the last few months.

"However once again there was a positive sparkle around a dark cloud as attendees started to make contact telling us to keep their ticket refunds for Hospice. It has been extremely humbling to have just over 30 per cent of our attendees choosing to donate all of or part of their ticket cost to Hospice. It leaves a real warm feeling and it is what makes our Rock and Hop community such a special one.

"A good number of vehicles still came to town to show South Canterbury their support, and we can't wait to see everyone again next year."

"Thanks to Venture Timaru which has made sure we were not left out of pocket for expenses already paid, and thanks to our amazing sponsors who have told us to keep their money as a donation, in particular Ellis Lea Farms, Simon Waldron, Lane Farming.

"You are all truly what makes South Canterbury such a wonderful place to live."



Rock and Hop raffle goes ahead

Despite cancelling the Rock and Hop we did go ahead with the raffle, and while it took a lot more work it was again a sell-out. We could not hold the draw in public but we did livestream it on our Facebook page.

Nora Hawke was the winner of the \$10,000 (sponsored by Ellis-Lea Farms) and was thrilled with her win, but also very generously donated some back to both Hospice and the Cancer Society. For herself, all she had in mind initially was to splash out on a feed of oysters.

Winner of two nights at the luxury Lakestone Lodge at Lake Pukaki was Di Herron; the \$1000 in petrol vouchers sponsored by MTF Finance Timaru went to Ken Austin (who immediately donated it back); and the \$500 Pak 'n Save vouchers went to Amanda Sanders and Rob Boswell.

Thank you to the above sponsors, and also to those businesses who sold tickets on our behalf and to everyone who purchased tickets. All this ensured the Lucky Ticket Draw was another successful fundraiser for your Hospice.



Happy raffle winner Nora Hawke with GM Peter O'Neill.



**Campaign
Raises
\$15,000**

Once again we are indebted to management and staff at the Timaru branch of Farmers for their efforts in raising money through the Tree of Remembrance campaign. Held in the lead-up to Christmas, staff ask customers if they would care to donate to Hospice, with people able to fill in remembrance cards to loved ones which are hung on an in-store tree.

This year shoppers donated \$14,927 which in these times was just fantastic. In the eight years of the campaign \$132,000 has been donated to Hospice South Canterbury.

Thank you one and all. The remembrance cards collected will be burnt at Hospice at 11.30am on May 17, with the ashes buried in the Hospice gardens. Anyone can attend this ceremony.

Losing one of our own

Wow I don't even know how to start this! The 10th February was a very dark day for our Rock and Hop committee and our Hospice team. The committee all knew that Rob was sick, but no one was prepared for what was to come.

Rob ran the registrations section of our Rock and Hop, has done since day one. Rob and his team were the ones who met our vehicles when they arrived, gave them the info they would need and their entrance stickers.

This was no small job but Rob and his team had it down to a fine art. Imagine processing 1000 vehicles in a matter of a couple of hours, often with vehicles stacked 3 wide with the team working at running pace.

Rob did an amazing job holding this all together, was rightly proud of what his team achieved, and they all loved what they did. Alongside his wife Debbie who runs our merchandise section, the Kingan's were an integral part of our event. Rightly so Rob was extremely proud of having helped set up the Rock and Hop, what it does for our community and of course the money that was raised for Hospice.

This year we all knew Rob would be away for the event. He needed a stem cell transplant, but he had briefed his team well and we were sure that although we would miss him, we would get through the event ok, and looked forward to him being there to take the helm once again in 2023.



Debbie and their two lovely girls set up a facebook group so his friends could take his transplant journey alongside of him. It was a huge shock as we watched Rob get sicker and sicker. He fought to keep his chin up as he was put through all sorts of treatment, with Debbie doing an amazing job of staying connected and letting everyone know what was happening.

Rob would take one step forward and three back, but we were completely blindsided when there came a call from Debbie to Hospice. There was nothing more they could do for Rob; he was coming home and rightly so he wanted to be at Hospice. Seeing Rob and his family arrive was numbing as was the short time he had with us.

However, looking back, it was an absolute privilege to be there for Rob and his family. It was hard on all who worked at Hospice and knew Rob well but at the same time we were blessed to be able to provide his care and to be there for Rob and his loving family.

As a Rock and Hop team we will never be the same again. We will constantly remember Rob and will look to honour his contribution somehow for our 2023 event.

Jeanna Munro

Chair, Rock and Hop committee

Charity bike ride

The Central South Island Charity Bike Ride was another event impacted by Omicron but the organisers pulled it off with a plan B, or was that plan C or D?

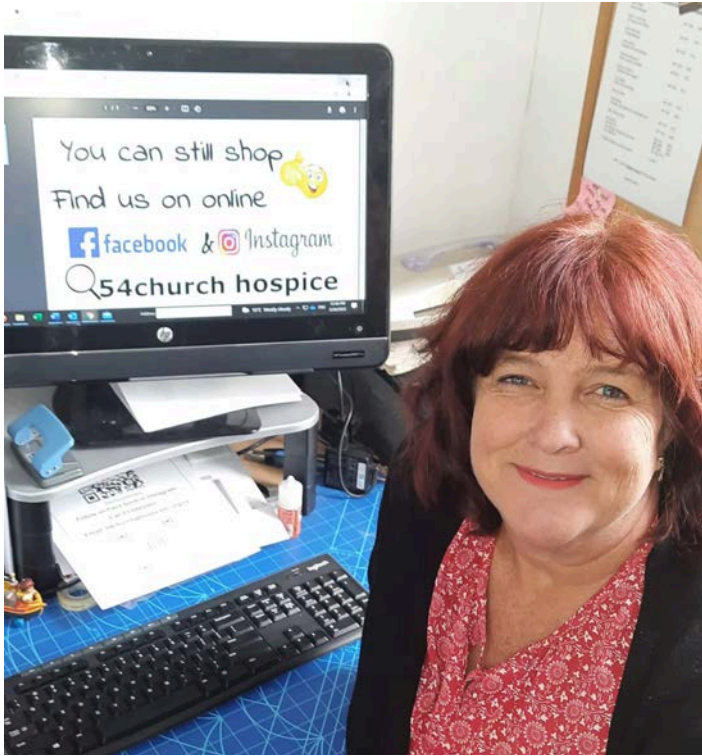
Instead of the three-day ride around the lakes more than 100 riders instead conducted two one-day rides, one out of Timaru on February 17 and the other from Pleasant Point the next day.

This required a rush of last-minute planning for which all the recipient charities, including Hospice, are hugely grateful. Despite the uncertainty an amazing \$100,000-plus was raised, with final amounts for each charity still to be announced.

Huge congratulations to all involved. This event, after 15 years, continues to amaze.



Shops close as Omicron spreads



Church Street shop manager Noeleen Gillson back on March 1 when the decision was made to close our shops.

It was not an easy decision but we closed our two Hospice shops on March 1 as Omicron cases started to spread through the community.

Ultimately this was done to protect our staff, volunteers and customers, and being Hospice we also felt an obligation to limit community spread where possible.

Our shop managers though turned instead to online selling, and this has certainly been a learning time at both Orbell and Church streets.

Putting a large number of photographs up online and providing sufficient detail for customers to make decisions takes a lot of time, and then there is the organising of deliveries.



Tina Mitchell (left) and Karyn Lewis have incorporated some fun into their online selling by asking shoppers to find a little chap named Willy in their photographs. He's in this picture somewhere.

One of the challenges has been answering the questions posed by potential buyers, with some of these being, how might we say this politely, a little odd. That said, having had the time to try online selling in a concentrated way has taught us all a lot, including that dealing face-to-face is so much more appealing.

So our shops can't wait to get back to normal (by the time this newsletter is delivered they might even be open) and to begin to clear a backlog in donations.

Keep up-to-date with shop happenings on our shop's facebook pages:

54church Timaru Hospice shop or 68 orbell Timaru



Christmas lights delight

Sharr and Peter Harber once again did an amazing job in decorating their garage for the enjoyment of the community in the lead-up to Christmas.

The Christmas decorations they have built up over the years are amazing, delighting both children and adults alike. The display itself is an engineering feat.

Asking for a gold coin donation the couple again selected Hospice as the recipient of funds, and these amounted to over \$2000.

We are indebted to them for their hard work and generosity, as is the community for their Christmas spirit.

Goobye and Welcome



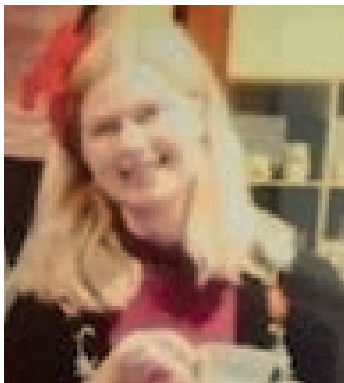
After working at Hospice since 2010 as both a casual and a permanent nurse, RN Janice Rowley has resigned. We wish Janice the very best weather and safe travels as she holidays in her camper all over New Zealand.



Debbie Lovett has joined our Church Street shop team filling a part time position as general hand, mainly working at the back of the shop. Debbie also spends many hours volunteering and has a real passion for Hospice.



As we have moved to six-day-a-week trading at our Church Street shop we have employed a part time shop manager to help out on Mondays. Yasmine James was also a regular volunteer at Church St and was just getting into this new role when the decision was made to shut the shops, but she is keen to get going again when we reopen.



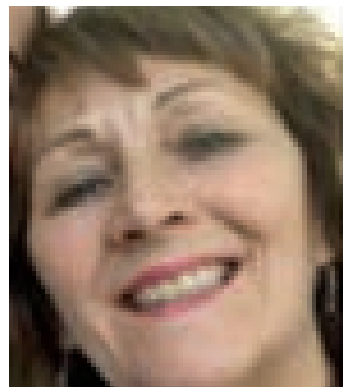
Mary-Clare Stocker has resigned after working the night beat three times a week since 2009. Before that she had worked a couple of stints as a casual RN. We wish her the best also.



We also welcome back RN Susan Mahalli, who retired in December 2020, and who is contracted to help us update policies.



Diana Saunders, who was employed in 2017 and became a team leader in 2019, has a 12 month contract as SCDHB Palliative Clinical Nurse Specialist covering maternity leave. We continue to work closely with Diana as she refers patients and sometimes visits them, while also continuing her involvement with our Better Breathing programme.



Judi Redwood rejoins the nursing team as a casual RN. She was first employed at Hospice in 2004 and resigned in 2009. Judi comes to us with experience at Timaru Hospital's children's ward, and much personal life experience of caring for unwell people.

FAREWELL PATSY



We lost a member of our Hospice family on Sunday April 3 when Patsy the Hospice cat passed away.

Patsy had been unwell but we had started some treatment which we expected would bring her right, so her death was unexpected. Because we inherited her from elsewhere we are not sure how old she was, but it would be around 15 years.

She was special at Hospice for her ability to sense which patients or family members might need her, and she regularly drew comments in our feedback forms.

Examples include: "One very special Patsy pussy cat was loved by all who stroked her ... please tell her what an important role she has."

Another, from a spouse: "(Patient) got a lot of comfort from Patsy as she would always find a place on his bed to sleep except of the day of his passing when she sat on my knee for most of the day."

Finally, what better tribute than this, from a (very) young family member. Again, from our feedback form:

What was of most value to you?

The cat.

How might we improve our service?

Another cat.

Any other comments?

The cat is very very very very very very very cute.

Patsy has been laid to rest at the home of one of our nurses, Carrie, with a suitably marked grave.

Yes! I would like to support the work of Hospice South Canterbury.

- Donation \$
- Online banking donations, see below, or; visit website www.hospicesc.org.nz, click Support Us
- Friends of Hospice Annual Subscription (\$20 per person) for financial year starting July 2022
- I would like to receive information regarding leaving a bequest in my Will.
- I am interested in learning more about becoming a Volunteer
- I would like to know more about making a regular donation

Name

Email

Address

Phone

My credit card number is

Please circle VISA Mastercard Exp Date /

Cardholder Name

Signature

As a security measure our admin staff will call you for your CVV number.

Eftpos Swipe your eftpos card or drop off cash at our reception during office hours.

Online Banking:

We gratefully accept direct donations to our account **03 0887 0348568 00** and ask that you include your name as a reference and use the code **NL06**.

We need to receipt your donation so can you please fill in the form above or email your name, address and amount donated to support@hospicesc.org.nz (or phone us on 03 6877670 ext 0) and we will send one out.

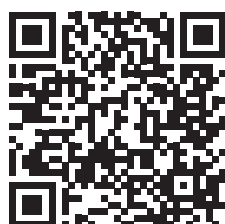
Scan the QR code to make an online donation



Names and addresses are held in accordance with the Privacy Act 1993 and are only used for Hospice South Canterbury purposes. If you do not wish to be kept informed about the work of the Hospice South Canterbury please contact the office, ph 03 687 7670.

An Easy way to support us

Do you have \$5 a week (the same price as your take away coffee) that you can spare to help your Hospice. You can join the club that is making a real difference in your community. The Virtual Coffee Club is growing steadily and is so important to Hospice fundraising. Your \$5 a week helps us to provide free care to our patients and their families in their time of need, this could be your friend, your family or your neighbour. This is why it is important to play a role supporting others and the Virtual Coffee Club is an easy way to do this. You can join online, call us or scan the qr code (on right).



It's that easy. www.hospicesc.org.nz/supportus

This dining room delight could be yours ...



Among the varied donations we receive, this beautiful dining table stands out as something different. Made by a local man who'd rather not be named, he had different plans for the timber until he saw how good it looked. Many hours later and this fantastic table is now finished, and we will offer it for sale on TradeMe.

It has a macrocarpa top and the legs are made from a lawson tree. It is 1.8metres long, 850cm wide and 750cm high and has been finished with Danish oil and three coats of polyurethane. The workmanship is superb.

We will list this on May 9 with a reserve of \$800.

Significant Donations and Grants

We are humbled by the amount of support we get from our wonderful community. Thank you to all who have donated large and small. Also thank you to those that donate their time and their expertise and to those who bring us items for our shops or from the wish list, you all make such a difference.

Donations from groups and organisations -

SC Rural Women \$500; Timaru Girls High School Year 10 market day \$283; SC Car Club Ladies Committee \$170; Hilton-Gapes Valley Collie Club \$3500; Sharr and Peter Harber, Gleniti Xmas House fundraiser \$2055; Porsche South Canterbury \$1202; Blair and Nicky Cartwright, Go Cart fundraiser \$150; Green Henz at Armstead, sale of hens \$500; Timaru Bowling Club \$251; Hutton Estate distribution \$4121; Adventure Trail Ride Tours \$550; Complete Curtains and Interiors Temuka, roller blind.

Special thanks to our regular supporters -

