

Community MOVES

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July 2017

ihc
IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Personally Speaking

I'd like to take the opportunity to update you all on the important changes that are occurring at IHC.

This is a significant time for us. Since we were founded in 1949 we have been determined to meet the needs of people with intellectual disabilities; to step in where there is no one else and to stand up when people with intellectual disabilities are not getting the same rights and opportunities as others.



Many times I have talked to you about the very tight funding models within which we operate and the fact that we rely on the money we raise through the community to ensure that people live satisfying lives. Our government funding for services simply does not run to the things that we believe are essential for living a full and valued life.

We must adapt to people's changing needs. We must set priorities in services so that we can look at what needs to be done next. More people want to live independently, more people are coming to us with complex needs and thankfully more people are living longer – but each of these requires us to do things differently.

Knowing that the future will be different and that we need to adapt is why the IHC Board has made a strategic decision to move out of some services. We are looking to transfer services where there are others better placed to provide them. We will make these changes where we can be sure that people have options for quality, uninterrupted services.

We know this has been an unsettling period and that change is always difficult. We have assured families that they won't lose out on services and in fact those services may be provided by the same people who provide them now. But naturally people are looking forward to certainty.

I am very pleased that NZCare Disability will soon provide home support in every part of the country where we do now.

There will have been more announcements by the time you read this. I encourage you all to keep an eye on the news section of our website for the latest information.

We look forward to bringing you more news, later this year, of developments in our organisation, as we continue to work with an unwavering commitment to people with intellectual disabilities and their families.

Ralph Jones

Chief Executive

Pat's break comes at last



Pat TeAu worries about who will care for her grandsons in the future.

Pat TeAu's retirement in the tiny village of Mangaore in the foothills of the Tararua Range is not entirely restful. She is sharing it with three grandsons.

Now she and other full-time carers are about to get a break with the launch of IHC's 'Take a break with us' programme, sponsored by hotels and retailers. Pat is one of the first to be offered the choice of a night away or a pamper package in recognition of her hard work.

Pat, 77, looks after Jon, 10, Terence, 13, and James, 18. Despite her increasing age and failing health, she puts her energy into fighting for support for her boys and she fears what will happen when she can no longer look after them. "What support is going to be there for them? I have been fighting all the way through for them," she says. "My hip's gone.

My back's gone. I have got COPD [chronic obstructive pulmonary disease]. I am on a puffer. So I know my time is limited."

Still, Pat loads her walking frame into the car for the daily trips to and from Shannon to deliver James to the school bus to Manawātū College in the morning and to collect him in the afternoons. Then there's rugby practice twice a week in Foxton. There is no bus for that so he needs to pick up a lift in Shannon. Transport from the isolated village is her main problem and she hopes James will soon be driving. "He has finally got his learner licence. I am teaching him. There is nobody else to teach him," Pat says.

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COVER IMAGE:

Karen Chapman (left) takes every opportunity to help dairy farmer Becky Payne with the milking. The partnership between the IHC Calf Scheme and PGG Wrightson marks its 30th year. See story, page 4.

Pamper yourself or someone else

Do you look after a person who has an intellectual disability or autism?

All families, whānau and carers need a break to relax and put their feet up.

IHC's 'Take a break' with us programme is open to anyone who cares for a person with an intellectual disability or autism. A family can be referred to the programme by anyone – a friend, neighbour or support worker.

You don't need to be using IHC services to be eligible for a break. If you are eligible, you will be offered one or two nights' free accommodation at one of our participating hotels. We may also be able to help with meals, leisure activities and transportation if needed.

Pamper packages are also on offer for people who can't get away but could do with a treat. So far these are only available in Manawatū.

If you know somebody deserving of a break or need one yourself, please contact us on takeabreakwithus@ihc.org.nz or contact Danette on 04 471 6569.

Get started here
ihc.org.nz/take-break-us

Take@break
with us



Pat with grandsons Jon (left) and Terence at Shannon School.

It's a bit easier with the younger boys, who get a school bus from Mangaore to Shannon School. The small, inclusive school operates as two flexible learning environments – a junior hub and a senior hub – with teacher aides assigned to learners with special needs. Jon and Terence are in the senior hub. "The boys get home about ten-past, quarter-past three and I shoot down and grab James."

Pat says they have a good routine and stick to it. The lunches are made the night before school and the younger boys have their jobs to do in the morning while she is making her first trip to Shannon with James at 7.30am. "Terence's job is to put the dog out and give him his biscuits. They make their beds – it takes them anything from half an hour to an hour to do that. They have breakfast at school – that helps me a lot."

She first came to Mangaore, near Shannon in Manawatū, 23 years ago to look after another grandchild, Page. Prices were cheap in the small village five kilometres up the valley from

Shannon and she rented one of the 30 workers' houses left vacant after the building of the Mangahao hydro-electric power station in 1924. She then bought one two years later, in 1996.

Pat raised eight of her own children and has been ready to step in whenever her grandchildren need a home. She has cared for eight grandchildren at different times since 1988 – "five full-time and four of those with special needs". She says she has a combined total of 60 grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her regret is that she can't give the same attention to all of them.

"My whole life is the kids. You don't have time for anything else and it makes it hard for the other grandkids because I have to put them on the backburner. You think, 'You don't need me; you have got your Mum!,' she says. But she says caring for three grandsons has its rewards – like finding a lovely note saying how good it was that she had taken them to live with her. "It's their love," Pat says.

Wrightson threw weight behind gumboot plan



Karen Chapman (centre) grew up on a dairy farm at Clevedon in rural Auckland and loves working with cows. Now supported by IHC, she is just as happy milking in Jenny (left) and Syd Goodwright's shed in Ōtaua, or at their daughter Becky Payne's farm nearby. (Becky is on the right.) Jenny and Syd have been donating calves to the IHC Calf Scheme since 1995 and Jenny has been a canvasser for many years.

If you give us a calf, we'll give you a pair of gumboots. It was a bizarre idea for a fundraising scheme. But dairy farmers persuaded a reluctant IHC National Fundraising Committee to give it a go and the IHC Calf Scheme was launched in 1984.

PGG Wrightson's predecessor company Wrightson was a key part of the plan to turn calves into cash, and in 1987 the company became the major sponsor of the scheme. In 30 years the Calf Scheme has raised more than \$30 million to support people with intellectual disabilities.

It was Taranaki dairy farmer Norm Cashmore who first offered a pair of gumboots to every farmer donating a calf to the Taranaki branch of IHC. Blenheim dairy farmer Mick Murphy convinced IHC it would work nationally. Among the rural companies Mick approached for support was Dalgety Crown, soon to merge with Wrightson in 1986. Wrightson embraced the fast-expanding Calf Scheme and donations topped \$1 million for the first time in 1992-93.

After another merger, with Pyne Gould Guinness in 2005, PGG Wrightson was formed – still retaining its strong commitment to the scheme. The scheme changed too. Since 2008 farmers have also been able to donate sheep and beef cattle, and they can now donate a virtual calf rather than a live beast that has to be collected and auctioned.

The partnership with PGG Wrightson is one of the longest-running sponsorships of a charity in

New Zealand, and PGG Wrightson's expert livestock advice, support and networks have been central to its success. The company's sponsorship covers the costs of promoting the Calf Scheme and raising farmer awareness, and calves and other livestock are auctioned at dedicated IHC sales around the country.

PGG Wrightson Saleyards Operations Manager Neil Lyons, who covers the Waikato region, says IHC and PGG Wrightson work well together and between them can tap in to a huge network of farmers across the country. "We have a lot of clients who set up their farming patterns around purchasing bull calves. They like to buy the IHC calves because they get a good deal," Neil says they regard it as good business and at the same time they want to show their support. "It's huge business for us – and when you talk about right throughout New Zealand, it's a very important programme for the company."

PGG Wrightson livestock agents work with transport companies to coordinate pick-ups, and livestock staff sort the animals into saleable lots for regional auctions. IHC's biggest sale is the Frankton livestock sale, and the first Monday of November is devoted to selling IHC calves. Last year 505 calves went under the hammer for an average price of \$419. Nationwide in the 2016-17 season 3363 farmers donated calves and \$1.4 million was raised.

"We have tried all sorts of crazy and wonderful ways to raise money – Calf Scheme Patron and rugby great Colin Meads even raffled racehorses for us – but this scheme was an inspired idea and we are overwhelmed by the generosity of farmers," says IHC National Fundraising Manager Eleisha McNeil.

IHC to set benchmark for disability housing

For 15 years the hall at Park Road, Miramar, with its shed out the back, served IHC as a vocational day base. But when service users moved to their new day base, Aranui, in early 2015 the Park Road buildings were left empty.

Now they are about to begin a new life for IHC, transformed into three two-bedroom homes.

The Park Road conversion is typical of the work that Accessible Properties is doing in partnership with IDEA Services to meet the evolving housing demands of people with disabilities.

“The homes we build now have to meet the needs of their tenants today, but also be adaptable to meet the future needs of tenants when those needs change,” says IDEA Services' Wellington Area Manager Antoni Lowe.

The Park Road homes will have wide doorways, space in the kitchen and bedrooms for wheelchairs to manoeuvre easily, light fittings at wheelchair height, and bathrooms with fully adjustable wet-table facilities.

The homes will have the latest technology, including camera monitoring and silent alarms, so that staff can remain aware of people's movements without the need for loud alarms that disturb not only home occupants but the neighbours.

“IDEA Services and Accessible Properties are working together throughout the building process, from initial planning through to finished homes being unveiled, to ensure we get it right,” says Antoni.



The old Park Road day base starts a new chapter providing homes for people with disabilities.

Accessible Properties has always prioritised disability housing, but this year the organisation is refocusing on setting clear priorities when it comes to homes for people with intellectual disabilities.

“We are focused on ensuring that IHC-owned homes are the best they can be for people with intellectual disabilities,” says Accessible Properties' General Manager of Property Services Nigel Smith. “In 2017 we have increased our resources focused on IHC properties.

“We also need to build new homes beyond IHC's current stock to give people choice in how they are supported to lead their lives, including the opportunity to live independently in non-IHC homes that work for them,” says Nigel.

Accessible Properties is delivering. It has built around 200 new homes since 2012 using government funding grants, and another 150 homes are now planned for Tauranga and a further 60 in Auckland, with 80 percent of these homes to be rated disability-friendly against the Lifemark design standards.

Increasing the number of homes that Accessible Properties owns and manages benefits IHC/ IDEA Services and the people living in these homes, says Accessible Properties' Chief Executive Greg Orchard. “As we increase in scale we are able to build our skills and capabilities to

deliver better core services to all our tenants, including our largest customer – IHC/IDEA Services,” says Greg.

“But while we work closely together it is important that the entities remain separate. Funding for IDEA Services cannot go to social housing. The expansion of the social housing portfolio is only made possible through income-related rent subsidies for our tenants. This is a government-funded top-up for tenants' rents, allowing Accessible Properties to keep rents below market rate but still receive funding to continue to invest.”

“Whether our housing is for social housing tenants or those with intellectual disabilities, we want to be the voice for accessibility-friendly and disability housing in the sector,” says Nigel. “It starts by ensuring that IHC's homes are setting the benchmark for good disability housing, and Park Road is a great example of doing just that.”

The transformation at Park Road was due for completion at the end of June, something that Accessible Properties, IDEA Services and most of all the new occupants will be happy about.

You've just got to laugh

Carla gets to the door of the Arataki Community Centre in Mt Maunganui, points at Trish and starts laughing – and laughing.

And the 45 minutes of fun begins. Soon everyone is falling about laughing at the weekly session of the Laughter Club.

The great thing is that you can go and laugh even when you are not feeling that happy. It's the 'fake-it-until-you-make-it' principle. The idea is that the body doesn't know the difference between fake and real laughter and the happy hormones are released anyway.

Obviously the last thing that Laughter Club leader Trish Baars wants is a collection of gloomy faces when she is trying to get the sniggering started and the giggling going. So friends Carla Spain and Kristyn Wagner are very welcome at the club with their special brand of joy.

"They add a wonderful energy to the group," Trish says. "They laugh so freely and readily. Not everyone allows themselves the freedom of a good laugh. It makes it so much easier for me as well to be surrounded by people who laugh."

Laughing Wellness groups, or Laughter Yoga groups as they are sometimes known, are out to demonstrate that laughter is after all the best medicine.

"It improves your health in so many ways," Trish says. "It releases endorphins and serotonin and boosts the body's oxygen. When you have a really



Carla Spain (left) and Kristyn Wagner can see the funny side.

good laugh and you are gasping for air, you are releasing a lot of that stale oxygen."

Kristyn, a Canadian, arrived in New Zealand in October last year and set out to meet people. She found details about the Laughter Club and the IHC Volunteer Programme in the local library and signed up for both. She was introduced to Carla through the IHC Volunteer Programme and they go to the club together once a week.

"We just have some sort of connection. Carla is a very warm person and open, and she is not

afraid to say what she feels. And I am kind of like that myself," Kristyn says. "This is the thing I love about Carla. She is who she is and she doesn't judge anyone. She doesn't hold herself back."

Carla's specialty is the 'milkshake' laughing exercise – all you need is two imaginary glasses: one full; one empty. You pour the milkshake from one glass to another, shake it, then drink it – all while laughing.

Carla says she recently led the class in the milkshake exercise. "Everyone followed me," she says. "I liked it so much – it was my first time."

Artist sees colours in the dark

Tuakau artist William Robins won't paint from a photograph because he believes a camera can never show the depth of colour that is present in a dark shadow. And he resists using black in his paintings.

William says the eye can see much further into the darkness than a camera lens. So he chooses to paint his trees and landscapes from life. To depict the dark shadows he uses the colour burnt umber.

"If you go out and take a photo of a tree, you will always find patches that are black – those are the secret parts," he says. "They are not black; the camera can't pick them up as they really are."

For the fourth year running, the 83-year-old artist is sponsoring the prize money for the IHC Art Awards. He is donating \$10,000 to encourage artists with disabilities to keep making art.

As soon as he heard about the IHC Art Awards, William wanted to be involved, and he identifies strongly with the artists who enter. He says he struggled with learning at school and was bullied. He later turned to art when he was incapacitated for a number of years after surgery on his leg.

So far William has kept a low profile and he hasn't been able to attend the Art Awards gala night in Wellington. But in 2015 he was a special guest at an Art Awards regional exhibition at Northart Gallery on Auckland's North Shore and says he took the opportunity to talk to as many artists as possible.



Denise L'Estrange-Corbet, Ambassador for the IHC Art Awards, meets Blenheim artists working from the IDEA Services Scott Street Drop-In Centre (from left): Cindy Griffith, Michael Fry, Shylah Popata, Richard Giles, Denise, Mark Waters, Donna Bell, Jonathan Bowler and Glenn Griffith.



Tuakau artist William Robins (centre) with IHC Art Awards entrants and guests at Northart Gallery.

He says he is always amazed to see what the artists have produced when the catalogue arrives after each event. "They draw what they see, how they see it. When they start talking about their paintings, it's a whole story – and that is what it should be. I feel that very deeply. They are the people who have got it. They are the honest painters. The others paint the way they have been told to."

"If you go out and take a photo of a tree, you will always find patches that are black – those are the secret parts."

As a young man William left home in Taihape to train as a forester at Golden Downs near Nelson. Then, in 1969, he went for a three-week adventure in New Caledonia that lasted 26 years. He worked there as a gardener, eventually setting up his own gardening company. "I started doing it for a couple of friends and it just grew from there."

Art has always been part of his creative life. "I have always done some sort of art, but then I have had gaps of years when I have been unable to do it."

rkness



art Gallery in 2015.

When you are a married man, you haven't got time to paint. You have to go out and work to feed the family."

In New Caledonia, William took up embroidery - "they call it painting with a needle". Five of his pieces were exhibited in Paris in a Bastille Day exhibition featuring art from the French territories.

"I only did it because I'd lost the use of one of my legs for a long time in a bad operation." The embroidery - mainly of birds - belongs to that life in New Caledonia. These days he prefers to paint.

His advice to artists is to take whatever help they can get, but to paint their own way. "Always look at the painting when it's finished and say, 'I did that'. Always keep your eye out for a new idea, a new way of mixing colours," he says. "Paint anything; paint everything."

Homesick for New Zealand, William returned in the late 1990s to live in the Waikato town of Tuakau and to paint. His favourite subject matter includes scenes of Port Waikato to the west of Tuakau. "I am tree specialist. I love painting trees."

But he says he has had to adapt his method because of deteriorating eyesight. "My eyes are slowing down; I am having trouble coordinating colours.



Denise L'Estrange-Corbet and two4nine artist Joanna Lynskey with paintings of her sisters. two4nine in West Auckland is operated by A Supported Life. – Photograph: Beatrice Randell/Western Leader



Luke Fraser at two4nine. Photograph: Beatrice Randell/Western Leader

I have changed the art style to use one colour and white and, through shading, I get the colours."

Artists all around the country have been working on their entries for this year's IHC Art Awards, encouraged by Art Awards Ambassador Denise L'Estrange-Corbet. Entries closed on 30 June. The works will be judged by Wellington artist Gina Matchitt, Auckland arts and culture consultant Tim Walker and musician and jewellery designer Boh Runga. People's Choice online judging opens on Thursday 10 August.

The Awards National Exhibition will be held at Arts on High in Lower Hutt, from Thursday 10 August to Thursday 17 August. The awards will be presented at a gala night in Wellington on Wednesday 30 August. The winner receives \$5000, second place \$2000, third place and People's Choice winner \$1000 each.

For more information about the Art Awards see ihc.org.nz/events/art-awards

Mustering energy for the uphill stretches



The Marshall family (from left): Wade, Dave, Ben, Travis, Juli, Martin Howes and Natalie. It was Natalie's wedding day and Natalie had ridden her horse to meet Martin, her 'man-in-waiting' on the Southland dairy farm he manages.

The Marshalls' Benatrade Angus cattle stud farm is flat and low-lying – all between three and seven metres above sea level.

“We look out our living room window and we can see the Riverton hills and Stewart Island,” says Juli Marshall, cattle breeder, Chair of the IHC Southland Association, mother of four adult children – and advocate for their two disabled sons.

But it's been a long uphill road for Juli and husband Dave – the search for the genes responsible for the disorder affecting their eldest son, Ben, and their third child, Travis, the battle for a good education for both of them – and the struggle to educate those supporting them.

Ben, 30, and Travis, 23, have global developmental delay and an unspecified genetic disorder. They are both non-verbal and use

sign language. “Even their sign language is very hard for people to understand,” Juli says.

Ben also has cerebral palsy and uses a wheelchair. He and his twin sister Natalie were born at 26 weeks' gestation. Ben was born first, breathed on his own and cried at birth, while Natalie had to be resuscitated. But it was Ben who wore the impact of the early arrival. His cerebral palsy originated from the pre-natal period and he was diagnosed with global developmental delay when he was two years old. Six years later Travis was born and at 18 months, when it became clear his development was delayed too, medical specialists suspected a genetic disorder.

Juli says they were seen by a genetic researcher and genetic testing followed, with blood sent to Wellington and to North Carolina. But they don't have an

answer. “Genetic testing is not the easiest thing.” She says there is a 99 percent chance that Natalie and Wade aren't carriers.

“It's still a puzzle. You just kind of accept that this is where it's at.”

Growing up, Ben and Travis tried various schooling options between them – Ben went to a special unit attached to a mainstream school, then a special school. Travis was mainstreamed, but his transition to intermediate school wasn't successful. “Travis is more mobile, but he has more complex behaviour,” Juli says.

“It's a huge battle when you go through the education system – doing the right thing for your child if things aren't working in the school. Dave and I have always advocated for our boys.

“When you have children with special needs the toughest times are the transition times – some of it is the unknown. It's the extra

stress that goes on the child. When the anxieties are really high, that reflects in their behaviour. It's the time to reduce those anxieties. It's about putting in place a lot of support," she says.

When school days are over, the support stops – and that's particularly hard when you live 20 kilometres from the nearest town. The Marshalls' 240-hectare block at Taramoa is halfway between Riverton and Invercargill. Originally owned by Dave's father and uncle, the Marshalls now lease the farm back from Environment Southland.

Ben and Travis live on the farm with Juli and Dave. Travis works

in the stockyards with Dave, and Ben spends three days a week at an IHC day base in Invercargill, but likes to be on the farm as much as he can. Their youngest son Wade, 22, comes and goes; their daughter Natalie is doing a doctorate in food science at Otago University and has also been a support carer for Ben and Travis.

Natalie lives at weekends on a dairy farm in northern Southland managed by her husband Martin Howes, and spends weekdays in Dunedin working and studying.

These days the paperwork associated with recording the cattle occupies a lot of Juli's

time. She and Dave have 180 breeding cows, with 150 calves born last year.

"I don't do as much practical work as I used to, but I love working with cattle. There is a lot of work now with NAIT [National Animal Identification and Tracing scheme]. We have to record all the stock going out." On top of that all the stock has to be weighed and scanned regularly.

But there is still time to chair the IHC Southland Association and Juli and her team are committed to providing additional support to families raising young children. They know. They have been there too.

NOTICE OF THE IHC ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2017

5 pm

Friday 8 September
2017

The Rydges Hotel
75 Featherston Street
Wellington

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Meeting procedures
3. Adoption of the Minutes of the 2016 Annual General Meeting
4. Presentation of Annual Report, including reports from Board Chair, Chief Executive and Board Committees
5. Appointment of Board Member
6. Election of Patrons
7. Appointment of Auditor
8. Annual Membership Subscription
9. Board Remit
10. General Business

2017 Annual Report

The 2017 Annual Report and financial statements will be available at the Annual General Meeting. They will also be available via the IHC website prior to the Annual General Meeting at www.ihc.org.nz

Ralph Jones
Chief Executive

Workshops

This year alongside the Annual General Meeting we are planning to run a number of workshops that will allow discussions on a variety of pressing topics. We hope to bring together Board and Member Council members, senior staff and IHC members to help shape the future of our organisation. We expect to consider priorities for future services, community engagement and connection with families as part of these discussions.

If you are a member of IHC we would also like to hear your suggestions for topics – please email them to membership@ihc.org.nz. We'll get back to you with a confirmed programme closer to the date.

The sun was high, the fish were jumping

It was the end of the golden weather in Eastern Bay of Plenty – a late summer break when all kinds of things seemed possible.

The sea was calm when 16 IDEA Services kiritaki and four staff set out from Ōhope for a fishing trip. An hour offshore, they struck gold.

Within 45 minutes the day-trippers had caught 60 fish – 35 snapper and 25 kahawai. On the boat was Taki Peeke, IDEA Services Kaitakawaenga (cultural advisor). “I went on the fishing trip because not many of the staff had keen sea legs,” he says.

The fishing trip and boat rides to Moutohorā (Whale Island), Whakaari (White Island) and along the Ōhope coastline were the watery highlights of a noho marae event in Whakatāne in March from throughout Eastern Bay of Plenty, Rotorua and Taupō.

On land too there was a lot on offer and the welcome from local Māori was warm. Fifty people were hosted overnight at Wairaka Marae in Whakatāne and up to 100 people joined in for the events held each day. These included a visit to the area’s oldest pa site, Tauwhare at Ōhiwa, and a tour of the new Ngāti Tūhoe centre, Te Uru Taumatua, at Tāneatua. Built of local materials, powered by solar energy and collecting its own water, it is New Zealand’s first accredited ‘living building’.



The fishing charter boat sets off from Ōhope, to return three hours later loaded with fish.

Also on the agenda was a visit to the digital lightshow, Hiko: Legends Carved in Light, to hear about the history of New Zealand’s most travelled Māori meeting house. The Mātaatua Wharenui was built in Whakatāne 1875 and travelled to Sydney



All set for the fishing trip were (from left): David Dobson, Sammi Bilcliffe, Paige Sullivan, Sharlene Brown, Marie Rogers, Irene Martin, James Lukmanov, support worker Debbie Morris, Harema Miki and Casey Lee Raston (back row).

mping



with fish.



Gordon Walker from Whakatāne had a great day fishing.

and Melbourne, onwards to London's Victoria and Albert Museum, then back to Dunedin and Otago before being rebuilt in Whakatāne in 2011.

The activities were offered at no cost to people with intellectual disabilities, thanks to a donation of \$10,000 from members of the Eastern Bay of Plenty IHC Association and a further \$2000 from an Eastern Bay/Rotorua cultural fund, says Service Manager and event organiser Margaret Underwood. Margaret says there was huge support for the event, including from a number of IDEA Services staff who weren't working but who had volunteered to help. On one of the biggest days, they hosted 150 for lunch.

"They weren't all Māori service users. This was for all service users," Margaret says. "Being on the marae, you saw strength in people that you had never seen before."

Participants swam at Awakeri Hot Springs, walked around the historic sites at Wairaka and the Whakatāne Heads, visited local attractions Kohi Point and Ōhope Beach and took advantage of mirimiri (Māori healing massage). In the evening they joined in kapa haka with children from Paroa School in Whakatāne.



Support worker Alex MacDougall supervises the hāngi preparations.



Thelma Hook (in front) and members of the Catering Committee in 1991 (from left): Brenda Schrader, Kathy Heibner, Janet Johnson, Jo Gibbons and Margaret Rangitonga.

Thanks for sharing the love

The South Taranaki Branch of IHC ran like a well oiled machine fuelled by the goodwill of the good people of Hāwera and the surrounding towns.

Members of the branch committee met their annual fundraising targets with a superhuman effort involving galas, cake stalls, catering, golf tournaments and the love of a good community.

That's all over. The branch, founded in 1959, has gone into recess, finally acknowledging the fact that fewer people these days have the time or the inclination to serve on committees. And the existing committee was worn out.

Neil Taylor, branch President from 1986 to 1996 and current IHC Board member, puts it down to time-poor families, rather than lack of support for people with intellectual disabilities. "There was a community love for this organisation," Neil says. "In the early days we had phenomenal community support for our branch committee."

The annual IHC gala brought in \$10,000 on the day and the IHC Golf Tournament at Manaia

Golf Club another \$3000 from entry fees and proceeds from the bar. Neil Taylor and Paul Harris's Hāwera accountancy firm sponsored the prizes each year.

Another regular fundraising activity was catering, driven by Gwenda Mead and Thelma Hook. Their team of volunteers catered for all kinds of community events and celebrations. "Gwenda and Thelma always set a very high standard; everything was immaculate," Neil says.

Most of the members of IHC in South Taranaki were parents of children with intellectual disabilities. "These children have become adults now and everybody just got too busy with their lives. New young parents of children with intellectual disabilities didn't want to be on committees. I think it's all about the two-income family. Everybody is working," he says.

Neil was one of a number of people who served on the committee who had no personal connection to intellectual disability. He was on the committee for more than 30 years.

Brenda Schrader joined the committee when her son Mathew

was small. Mathew has Down syndrome and needs constant support. She spent more than 30 years on the committee, serving as President from 2009 to 2014. It was the best of times – "the community cooperation with the fairs and the parents all coming together, all like-minded and having a lot of fun. We enjoyed each other's company and we did it all for our children and for the friendships. I don't miss it one bit because I still have those friendships," she says.

But she remembers the tough times too for her and Mathew. "High school was one of the worst experiences of my life and his. It wasn't that they didn't care. They really didn't think these kids could do anything."

Neil recalls the struggle for education all too well. "A lot of the advocacy work done by these committees was to get children with intellectual disabilities to school. We are not quite there yet." But he says the decision to go into recess was a sensible one.

"It was well reasoned and one I supported." He says there are still funds earmarked for IHC South Taranaki, which will be held by IHC nationally and will be available to be called on for local people.



Chair of the IHC Horowhenua Association Dave Howorth and his son Ben, at home in Levin.

Education struggle fires up Levin parents

A small group of Levin parents anxious to get better education for their disabled children have revived the IHC Horowhenua Association.

The parents have been operating a loose support network of those involved in the Horowhenua Special Needs Network and Teen Zone, for older children. But new IHC Association Chair Dave Howorth says they were looking to make some real impact in the community and to provide better support to families raising children with disabilities.

In October last year they contacted IHC and after some discussions restarted the local IHC Association, which hadn't been operating since the mid-2000s. They elected a committee of five parents in November last year and plan to meet monthly.

Dave and Gina Howorth are parents of Ben, 12, who has autism and intellectual disability. Dave is a former police officer who now works casually with the police as an authorised officer, while Gina works full-time as a mental health

nurse on the community mental health team. Ben is the eldest of three children – he has a brother and sister, 10-year-old twins Alex and Maddie.

Dave says Ben can be extremely challenging, but he had been well supported at primary school and after six years had become used to the staff and the routines. Ben has now been enrolled a year early at the new special learning unit Te Whare Āwhina at Waiopēhu College in Levin. He started just before the end of Term 1 this year and is in the process of settling in.

The IHC Horowhenua Association is hoping to attract parents and members from Levin, Foxton and Shannon to provide a support network and find a way to help parents get a break. They have a number of ideas about community projects, such as dance and music groups, but Dave says one of their main goals is to keep the focus on education for children with disabilities in Horowhenua.

The Horowhenua Special Needs Network and Teen Zone are still operating as separate groups.

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