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Kate Syme

INVESTING IN A LIFETIME'S LOVE FOR EDUCATION

Kate Syme's life's work has been as a teacher and educator, and she believes strongly in the opportunities education can provide.

Back in the 1960s, she says, there wasn't much in the way of career options for young women. "Basically, it was teaching or nursing. I made up my mind that education was the way I would go and found that I really enjoyed working with students."

Kate met her husband Derek (or "Doc")

at Teacher's College in Christchurch and they both worked for many years in education, including for a time in Cannons Creek, Porirua. It was here that Kate worked with many children of Pasifika and Māori descent and learned first-hand of the barriers they can face in terms of educational opportunities.

"We always wanted to ensure that everyone had a fair go, and found that there were many children who, in spite of their efforts, never got equal opportunities in education."

Eventually, the couple returned to Ashburton to retire and, laughs Kate, "After two months of retirement, we went back to education."

Doc worked at Ashburton College and Kate continued to work at the College of Education, sometimes based in Wellington, training teachers.

It was in Ashburton that Kate and Doc heard about the Community Foundations' model through Advance Ashburton and started thinking about the legacy they would leave behind in their community. Sadly, Doc passed away before they had made their final decision.

Kate eventually decided to set up a fund that would help "particularly Māori and Pasifika students to succeed."

"I've been influenced by local people who set up scholarships while they are still alive and were able to enjoy the pleasure of seeing how their money was used. Seeing who it went to and, perhaps establishing a relationship with those people, I thought made far more sense than waiting until after you were gone."

The Kate Syme Scholarship will be managed as an invested fund with the Advance Ashburton Community Foundation. Annually, it will provide tertiary education opportunities for a student, in the first instance of Māori or Pasifika descent, from Ashburton College. The first scholarship payment is to be made next year, and Kate says that the scholarship will be flexible with regards to the subject and recipient.

"I find pleasure in knowing somebody is going to benefit from my giving," said Kate. "I'm particularly happy that I've made the decision to start my fund before I die. I find a sense of excitement with that." +

Annual Celebration

Please join us for our annual celebration of philanthropy on October 20, at the Event Centre starting at 5.30pm.

Hear about the work of the Foundation over the past year and from keynote speakers including Sir Ian Taylor, founder of an internationally known animation company, and Dr Don Elder, Chair of the Family Help Trust.

Please RSVP to Naneh Manoa, Office Administrator, by 10th October 2022. Phone 021 395 406, 307 5902, or email office@advanceashburton.org.nz



Sir Ian Taylor



Dr Don Elder

community

WELLBEING OPUKE

Building resilience in our district

Wellbeing Opuke is a grassroots initiative established in 2021 by a group of like-minded people wanting to connect the rural areas of Mt Somers, Mayfield, Methven, Rakaia, Dorie, and Chertsey.

Their intention is to help rural communities build resilience and thrive. They aim to improve social connectedness by offering opportunities to practise the Mental Health Foundation's five ways to wellbeing: be active, keep learning, connect, take notice, and give. These key actions provide ways for people to get to know one another and improve a sense of belonging. It also empowers locally led projects, initiatives, and events.

Jess Wilson and Juanita Richards are the community connectors for Wellbeing Opuke; they coordinate the community



FROM LEFT Juanita Richards, Michelle Brett, Jess Wilson and Megan Fitzgerald.

initiatives and events like the recent Rakaia Welcome Day. This was an opportunity to connect new members of the community, including those arriving after Gypsy Day, with clubs and service providers in Rakaia. A winter initiative for Methven was teaming up with Garage Gym, local health providers, nutrition and sports experts, encouraging the community to move well. "And there are plenty more community events to come," says Jess.

They have an experienced team of trustees, Michelle Brett, Megan Fitzgerald, Connie Quigley and the newest addition to the board, Peter Peilua from Mt Somers. They

are currently looking for an additional trustee from the Rakaia District.

With the support of a grant from Advance Ashburton earlier in the year, they have established themselves as a locally led community organisation. Advance Ashburton provided Wellbeing Opuke with funds to go towards operational costs including a website, email, accounting software, advertising, and salaries for two part-time community connectors. Jess from Wellbeing Opuke said they are very pleased with how things were going and were hoping to employ another community connector by the end of the year. +

families

TACKLING DYSFUNCTION AT ITS CORE

Breaking the cycle of family dysfunction

On average 60,000 children are born every year in New Zealand, and of those, about 2000 children will experience some form of neglect or abuse. Of these, fourteen will live in Ashburton.

Family Help Trust board chair Dr Don Elder said, "Of those fourteen children in Ashburton, the most hopeless, the most vulnerable, the most neglected, the most abused – the ones that have the hardest lives – they are very likely to become lifetime repeat offenders. They're likely to end up with a sad, bitter, wasted life."

The Family Help Trust has been operating in New Zealand since 1990, working towards building safer and healthier homes for families and recognising and breaking cycles of dysfunction. With support from funders Advance Ashburton, Wilson Charitable Trust and the Mackenzie Charitable Foundation, a pilot programme has been established for three years in Ashburton. Experienced social workers will provide in-home

intervention and assist families with working through socioeconomic challenges and adverse life events.

The Safer Families Service will work with families with children aged 0-5 years, with a focus on addressing the causes of family harm and provide families with the skills needed to improve their lives and those of their children. Initiatives include financial advice, accessing counselling and medical support, and setting and supporting achievable goals such as obtaining drivers' licenses or securing state housing.

"Two thirds of these families are already experiencing significant family violence. Two thirds of the children's parents were abused themselves. It's just a cycle, it's continuing, and it has to be broken." +

our team



We welcome Eleanor Marr to the Foundation's board of trustees.

Eleanor is a qualified teacher with a Degree in Teaching and Learning, and a Diploma in Specific Learning Disabilities. She has worked as a Learning Support Teacher and is currently working part time as a tutor for those with SLD and is involved in tutor training.

Eleanor has been involved with various community organisations and is a member of the Seabrook McKenzie Centre Trust Board. She is a partner in a family arable farm in the Methven district. Married to Graham, they have 3 children and 6 grandchildren. +

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THE ASHBURTON COLLEGE ALUMNI FUND

New fund to assist past and present students and staff

It has been more than half a century since Ashburton College was founded in 1965, and since then, thousands of students, teachers, parents, and other supporters have shaped Ashburton College into the highly successful co-educational school it is today.

The College emerged from an amalgamation of the former Ashburton High School and Hakatere College (formerly Ashburton Technical School).

Thus, the College insignia became the Phoenix, and its Latin maxim 'Resurgamus': "Let us go forward", or "Rise".

Since the establishment of the College, funds have been raised and donated to the Ashburton College Alumni Fund and the



ABOVE Members of the Alumni Board, from left, Alumni Chair Peter Gluyas, Mark Kennedy, Shirley Falloon, Principal Ross Preece, Alister Argyle and Michael Clark.

Ashburton High School Centennial Fund. From these funds scholarships and awards were presented to students.

After the 50th year anniversary of Ashburton College the Alumni Board, headed by Chairperson Peter Gluyas, decided to transfer these funds to a new Trust Fund with the Advance Ashburton Community Foundation.

Peter Gluyas said, "This partnership with Advance Ashburton gives the Ashburton College Alumni group the assurance needed in going forward to achieve our vision and objectives."

The primary purposes of the new Ashburton College Alumni Trust Fund are to:

- + Provide charitable, educational, and cultural benefit to present and past students and staff
- + Promote the welfare of the present students and staff
- + Continue to provide scholarships to students

The Chair of Advance Ashburton, Mary Ross, said, "To be able to support the Alumni Association as they continue to grow is a privilege. The College has a key role within the district; it is an essential component in the development and learning of many of our young people. We hope over the years that the fund, with the continued support of former pupils, will continue to grow." +

health

NEW DEFIBRILLATOR Rakaia Medical Centre Trust Fund purchases a defibrillator for the Rokeby community

The Rakaia Medical Centre was a community "not for profit" enterprise that was sold in 2020 to Dr Sue Fowlie and husband Colin Stevens. When the business was wound up, the Rakaia Medical Centre Trust Board wanted the surplus funds to be used to create a legacy for the Rakaia community.

Consequently, and after due diligence by the trustees, it was decided to donate the funds to the Advance Ashburton Community Foundation to invest and distribute earnings for the benefit of the Rakaia district.

They felt Advance Ashburton had a proven and successful track record of investing donors' contributions and distributing the income earned to the community in alignment with donors' objectives. They also hoped more local people and organisations would add to the fund over time.

The objectives of the Rakaia Community Fund are to support, facilitate, and encourage health and wellbeing in the Rakaia District and to promote the availability of primary healthcare and wellbeing facilities in the Rakaia District. The Fund has three Advisory Trustees, the current Practice Manager Emma Jaillet-Godin, Liz Depree and Bruce Kelly who monitor the grant applications.

One of these grants was made in May this year to the Rokeby Hall Society to purchase and install an Automatic External Defibrillator (AED) in the entrance of the Rokeby Hall. It is hoped that a defibrillator closer to the Rokeby area will save lives in the future.



ABOVE, from left, Margaret Crozier (Secretary of the Rokeby Hall Society) and Jeremy Simpson (Chair) with Vicks Johnson.

Margaret Crozier of the Rokeby Hall Society commented, "The Hall Society and members of the community were grateful to Advance Ashburton and the Rakaia Community Fund trustees." +

community

LISMORE COMMUNITY FUND

A fund benefitting the whole community

In its heyday, the Lismore School was the hub of its community and Lismore locals worked hard to support the students and the school. Community efforts such as selling pea-straw and firewood, and other money-making ventures raised funds to provide financial assistance for things such as school trips, more teacher hours and purchasing additional equipment for the school.

When the school closed in the late 1990s, the Lismore Community Group wanted to continue its focus on supporting children's education and decided to invest the residual money for this purpose. While the group were careful stewards of the funds, they were actively looking for an entity in which to invest their money. The Advance Ashburton Community Foundation was in its infancy at that stage, and when it was mooted as a possibility, it almost seemed



ABOVE The Lismore Community Group, from left: Nic Baxter, Barry Austin, Jan Clucas, Les Vincent, Garry Brown and Sue Carr (absent Tony Corbett).

purpose-built for their needs. Nic Baxter, chair of the Lismore Community Group, said, "We did our homework and liked the concept of the Foundation, particularly its philosophy and principles."

The decision was made to invest the funds with Advance Ashburton, and this led to the establishment of the Lismore Community Group Trust Fund in 2010, one of the Foundation's first named funds. The Fund's purpose was stated as being "for the development, advancement, and education particularly in the fields of remedial and other learning extension programmes for young persons who reside in the district aged between 4-13." In recent years, the interest from this investment has been used to support the BOOST Reading

Programme, benefitting many students in the Ashburton District by improving their literacy skills and confidence. The group is also pleased that the Lismore name is preserved in perpetuity through the Fund.

Nic Baxter said that it was amazing to see the original investment almost double through the Foundation's astute and wise management. She said that the whole process was very straightforward, right from the initial meeting. "The Foundation management team have been great to work with – very professional, welcoming, friendly and informative. We feel privileged to be involved with such an enterprising and successful Foundation which is helping so many people in the Ashburton district, both now and in the future." +

WANT TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE?

Do you want to give back to your community? Are there charities and causes that are especially important to you? Through Advance Ashburton you can support causes that are close to home, and close to your heart.

Advance Ashburton is driven by local generosity and the wishes of the donors to create a better future for our district. All donations are invested, and the income earned supports the local causes you care about, year on year.

If you are interested in looking at ways you can make a difference in Mid-Canterbury, please contact us on 03 307 5902, 021 395 406 or email office@advanceashburton.org.nz

GIVE NOW

Donate today to see the impact your generosity will create and benefit from a tax credit of up to 33% of the amount of your donation (for donations \$5 or more).

GIVE LATER

Through your will you can leave a gift to the Foundation, leaving a lasting legacy to the community you care about.

GIVE WHAT YOU CAN

Big or small, it's about economies of scale and through the Foundation every dollar makes a difference.

GIVE YOUR WAY

It's up to you whether it's a one-off donation, a regular direct credit, part of a workplace giving model, a giving circle, or a bequest in your will.