

A warm welcome to 'The Village', our inaugural newsletter

It's wonderful to be back to a more normal life following lockdown. Everything has a silver lining and I've heard many people comment that they enjoyed the simpler pace of life – reminding us why it's important to create balance in our lives.

In this first issue of 'The Village', we discuss the power of positive thinking, setting goals, being kind and helping others. A great example of this is Captain Tom Moore (see below). He set himself a challenge to

help others, raised over 30 million pounds and has authored a book – at age 100!

Lastly, we're delighted to welcome Driving Miss Daisy as a sponsor. It's wonderful to have Janita, Brenda and Anne on board – our heartfelt thanks for helping us support seniors in our community.

Bonnie Robinson
CEO, Virtual Village East



The power of positivity: “tomorrow will be a good day”

The challenges of the Covid-19 crisis have been a powerful reminder of the importance of positive thinking. Research shows that positivity affects not only mental and emotional wellbeing, but also physical health. Positive thoughts also increase mental productivity, problem solving, focus and creativity.

Doctor Denis Lee, a local East Auckland GP, is a huge believer in maintaining a positive mindset as you age. *“I see many older patients suffering from loneliness and boredom.”* he says.

“I've recommended Virtual Village East to patients: it's important to have events to look forward to, and no-one's ever too old to meet and make new friends.”

Dr Denis Lee

The healing power of kindness

We've been constantly reminded to 'be kind' during lockdown, but there's more to these simple words than you might think. Dr

David R. Hamilton, author of 'The Five Side Effects of Kindness', says scientific evidence has proven that kindness changes the brain, impacts the heart and immune system, and may even be an antidote to depression.

Studies show that people asked to do more acts of kindness, including volunteer work,

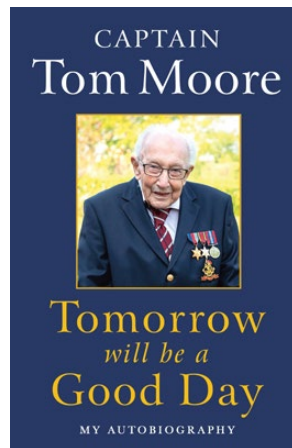


usually feel happier and have lower rates of depression. He says that kindness is far more contagious than the coronavirus, because it has a ripple effect. "Each time you are kind, you impact far more people than just the person you help! You make a difference even with the smallest of acts."

**Positively inspirational:
Captain Tom Moore**

A relatively small act of kindness that had a huge ripple effect was by Captain Tom Moore.

The retired army captain set himself the target of walking around his garden 100



times before his 100th birthday. In doing so, he raised more than £32m for the NHS, became a national hero, and earned himself a knighthood.

“For all those finding it difficult: the sun will shine on you again and the clouds will go away.”

Captain Tom Moore

Captain Moore will soon release his autobiography, entitled "Tomorrow Will be A Good Day"

- extolling the benefits of staying positive, whatever your age.

Boosting your mental and emotional wellbeing

Life has been pretty tough during the Covid-19 crisis, and not surprisingly, levels of anxiety, depression and loneliness have spiked. According to a UK report, depression is the most common mental health problem in later life, and loneliness can be more detrimental to our health than smoking.

One of VVE's '5 Pillars to Ageing Well' is mental and emotional wellbeing, which includes four key ways to keep yourself mentally healthy:

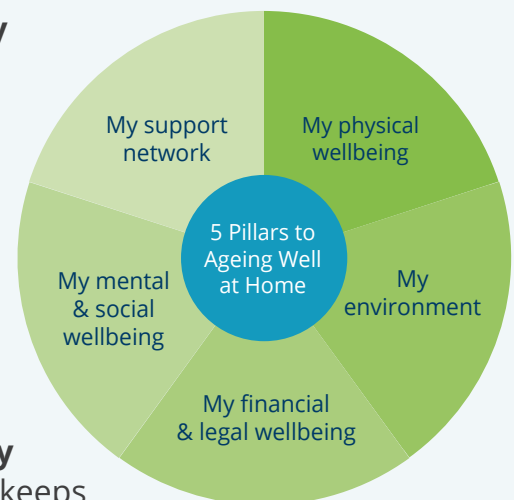
Find a purpose – setting meaningful goals keeps life rewarding and fulfilling and gives you a sense of belonging: things like volunteering or visiting someone who is lonely.

Stay social – people with strong social ties are shown to be happier and to live longer. Join a club, meet up with friends, or join one of our regular events or classes.

Keep mentally fit – keep that brain active by doing puzzles, crosswords, reading, watching the news and talking to others.

Stay physically fit – staying fit keeps you stronger and more agile, and can improve your mental health as well.

Having meaningful hobbies, activities and social connections gives you a sense of purpose and belonging. **If you haven't already, do come along to some of Virtual Village East's events and gatherings – they're always a great wellbeing boost!**



<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/12/11/well/mind/how-loneliness-affects-our-health.html>

Getting to know Alison Miller, VVE member



Alison and her husband have lived in Pakuranga for 50 years and are still living in their own home. She joined Virtual Village East last year.

"I went onto the website and liked what I saw, particularly that it provides a network for seniors who have chosen to remain in their homes," she says.

"I've come to know some interesting people – they have such fascinating stories. I've been going to the 'Coffee and Catch-up' mornings and the 'Safe and Strong' exercise sessions for seniors. Initially, I hesitated to join as it was a new idea, but I'm so pleased I have."

"I'm so pleased I've joined."

Alison says that even though members couldn't meet in person during lockdown, there was still a lot going on. *"Every week, Lee would send us an email with videos of exercises and activities we could do at home, and links to wonderful exhibitions and recipes," she explains. "I looked forward to the emails each Sunday as they were full of interesting things for the week ahead."*

Armchair travels with Brian & Jenny Jones

In our 'armchair travel' series, VVE members share their amazing adventures to inspire others once we can travel again. If you have a story you'd like to share, please contact Lee Warmington (details on back page).

Where is the most memorable place you've been to?

We love Napier's Art Deco Festival held in February. In fact, we've been six times!

What made it so special?

Everything! It's such a unique experience, from dressing up and dancing to the music of that era, to dancing the cha-cha, Charleston and the jitta bug, to the car parade and the Gatsby picnic – it was all amazing.

How did you get there?

About 35-40 of us went by bus with a tour guide. You're collected outside your home and there are stopovers in places like Morrinsville, Taupo and Huntly, where the guide tells you about the history. They pay special attention to us old folk which makes for a wonderful trip.

What were the highlights?

The progressive dinner was fantastic. It was also fun dressing up differently for each event and enjoying a laugh with other like-minded folk.

Would you go again?

We'd love to if we can – it's quite a busy time and one night, you dance until at least 1am in the morning. But it help keep us young!



Welcome Driving Miss Daisy!

We are delighted that Driving Miss Daisy Botany, Howick/Bucklands Beach and Pakuranga have partnered with Virtual Village East. The team of 'Daisies' can:

- Transport you to medical or personal appointments.
- Help with any ACC related transport needs – it's funded!
- Drive you to visit friends and loved ones.
- Pick up your scripts, personal items and click and collect shopping.
- Accompany you shopping, or drop you off and collect you again.
- Go wherever you would like to go – just ask them!

Janita, Brenda and Anne all live locally and love what they do: riding with the Daisies

is just like riding with a friend. And you can be reassured that they continue to clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces between clients during Alert Level 1. They look forward to driving you soon!



Your local 'Daisies': Janita (Botany 021 174 9999), Brenda (Howick/Bucklands Beach 021 410 476) and Anne McClean (Pakuranga 027 472 9921)

Events coming up...

▶ Day trip to the Auckland Art Gallery

Thursday 23 July

- 10am to 2pm with lunch at the gallery
- Departing from HBH Senior Living, 139 Union Road, Howick

▶ Monthly coffee & catch-up

Tuesday 28 July

- 10.30am to 12.30pm
- Te Tuhi, 13 Reeves Road, Pakuranga

▶ Move to stay mobile exercise programme

Wednesday 5 August to 23 September

- 1.30pm to 2.15pm
- Gym, HBH Senior Living, 139 Union Road, Howick

▶ Book swap

Thursday 6 August

- 10.30am to 12pm
- HBH Senior Living, 139 Union Rd, Howick

▶ Monthly coffee & catch-up

Tuesday 25 August

- 10.30am to 12.30pm
- Te Tuhi, 13 Reeves Road, Pakuranga

▶ Day trip to the Auckland Domain Winter Gardens

Thursday 17 September

- 10.00am to 2.00pm with lunch at the cafe
- Departing from HBH Senior Living, 139 Union Road, Howick

▶ Monthly coffee & catch-up

Tuesday 29 September

- 10.30am to 12.30pm
- Te Tuhi, 13 Reeves Road, Pakuranga



To reserve your place please call Lee on 09 538 0827 or email co-ordinator@virtual-village-east.org.nz