

Silver Linings

Summer 2017 / Newsletter #61



SOUTH ISLAND

Keeping families close

After 133 nights in our Christchurch House, the Moore family knows that above all, family is what matters most.

Love, strength & gratitude

In May this year, the Moore family received the news no parent ever wants to hear – their 3-year-old daughter Grace was diagnosed with an inoperable brain tumour.

But after 133 nights in our Christchurch House, parents Paula and Alex have found the love and strength they need to face their daughter's medical battle. The Cromwell-based family say those first few weeks after Grace's diagnosis were a blur. "This is every parents' worst nightmare," explains Paula.

"Yesterday our 3-year-old daughter was happily playing at kindergarten with her twin sister, and now we are told we may lose her."

In June, Paula and Alex's lives were turned upside down when they moved their twin girls Sophie and Grace (3) and baby boy Beau to Christchurch so Grace could begin treatment at Christchurch Hospital's Child Haematology Oncology Centre (CHOC).

"Our heart was broken," says Paula. "These things happen to other people you don't know, why is this happening to us?"

But the Moores say as soon as they walked into Ronald McDonald House South Island, they were struck by the warmth, caring, and kindness of staff and volunteers.

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Thank you to
Jenna Young
Photography for
generously donating
a photoshoot to the
Moore family.



Baby Beau loves our Christchurch House playground.



Sophie and Grace were delightful characters around our Christchurch House – often taking part in 'planning meetings' in the staff office, and baby Beau even learned to walk on our House floors.



Twin sisters Sophie and Grace are like two peas in a pod.



Hugs and giggles with your family are home, no matter where you are.

"They gave us their absolute love, support, and open hearts," says Paula. "They knew all our names, they knew our kids love Peppa Pig, Frozen and porridge for breakfast."

Sophie and Grace were delightful, clever and courageous characters around our Christchurch House – often taking part in 'planning meetings' in the staff office, and baby Beau even learned to walk on our House floors.

Alex says the army of volunteers who give up their time to take part in the Family Dinner Programme meant cooking dinner was one less thing they had to worry about. "Roasts, lasagnes, and apple crumbles are all waiting at 6pm on the dot every night, served up by these angels in aprons." Paula describes the facilities as comforting, warm, and uplifting. "Everything is thought of – there are play areas for the kids, and an 'Adults Only Quiet Room' so we could share our stories, fears, and heartbreak with other mums and dads."

The Moores are now back in Cromwell, taking each day as a blessing with brave Grace continuing treatment for the benign tumour. Everyday stressors of kindergarten pickups and grocery shopping are no longer worries to the Moores – they know that above all, family is what matters most.

"That is why Ronald McDonald House South Island deserves your support," says Paula.

"When your child is sick, nothing else should matter except doing everything you can to support them and their family. I am forever grateful for Ronald McDonald House and for supporters like you."

"They knew all our names, they knew our kids love Peppa Pig, Frozen and porridge for breakfast."

From the Chairman, Paul Deavoll

So far, this year, we have supported more than 800 families and as we come into the festive season, the needs of families with sick children remain.

As most of us wind down for the working year, preparing for the holiday season with family and friends, our facilities in Christchurch and Invercargill will be full of families as they face the challenges of caring for a critically-ill child. That is why our priority in the New Year will remain keeping families with sick children together and near the care and resources they require.

Our team has worked tirelessly throughout 2017 to ensure each and every family, who walks through our doors, is wrapped in love and support.

On behalf of the Board of Trustees and team at Ronald McDonald House South Island, thank you for walking alongside our families this year. Whether it was attending an event, donating food for our pantries, or giving the gift of time, your support has made a significant impact on the lives of our families.

We wish you a safe and relaxing summer break, and look forward to working with you again in 2018.



» House Happenings «



1. Home time hugs! We love celebrating 'home time' with our families. Recently we said goodbye to the **Hall** and the **Hughes-Kent** families. Wishing these incredible families all the best for the next steps in their journey.

2. Look who popped in with a surprise! **NZAgbiz's** photography skills won them a year's supply of **Fonterra** milk for a family, and the Temuka team have donated it to the House. We're so fortunate to have supporters like these!

3. For the last eight months, the **Christchurch Adventure Park** team has come in to cook amazing meals and fill up the freezers for our families. We can't thank Maree and her amazing team enough, and wish them all the best for a busy summer season on the trails!

4. What's cooking, good looking? Our incredible supporters from **TimeZoneOne** whipped up a fantastic 'Nacho Bar' as part of the Family Dinner Programme to feed our families. Thank you so much, team!

5. Commonwealth and Olympian Track Cyclist, **Eddie Dawkins'** skills were put to the test in a circuit challenge at the House. A sponsor of both the House and Eddie, **SBS Bank** sent Owen Hallmark to adjudicate!





Then and now: Dunedin besties Millie-Rose and Darcie are happy, healthy and loving being at school with their big brothers.

Then and now: Dunedin Darlings go from strength to strength

Looking at smiling and happy Dunedin 5-year-olds Millie-Rose and Darcie today, you would have no idea what they have been through over the past 12 months.

We featured Millie-Rose and Darcie's story in our 2016 Spring newsletter. The girls' bond goes much deeper than most childhood friendships, as they each battled cancer and underwent intensive treatment at Christchurch Hospital.

Since meeting in our Christchurch House in March last year, the girls have formed a very special bond which their mother's describe as more like siblings than friends.

Both girls are loving being back in Dunedin and attending school – just like their big brothers.

Looking back, Darcie's mum Cheryl says she will never forget her families' time at our Christchurch House. "I was just thinking the other day, I still have no idea what I would have done without the House – I have no idea where we would have stayed."

Millie-Rose's mum Carole says the friendships she formed in the House will last a lifetime.

We are thrilled to see Darcie and Millie-Rose blossoming!



*Our new Fundraising Coordinator
Devon Hamilton*

Welcome to the team, Devon!

We are so excited to welcome Devon Hamilton to the Ronald McDonald House South Island family, who joins us as the new Fundraising Coordinator.

Currently studying towards a Bachelor in Applied Management, doing a double major in Event Management and Sales and Marketing, Devon began volunteering with us in April.

Since then, Devon says she could not imagine working anywhere else.

"Once I saw the true extent of what we do and how it impacted families I only wanted to

become more and more involved and then luckily for me the job came up!"

Devon also has a very personal connection to the Christchurch House, staying here with her family when her brother was receiving treatment for Cystic Fibrosis.

Devon's role is about supporting the fundraising team in many aspects of their day-to-day tasks as well as working closely with current volunteers and encouraging new volunteers to join the fun. This young woman's passion for keeping families close is infectious, and we are very excited to have her on board!

Bringing colour to the Interior Plastering Services Teenagers' Room

Two Marlborough Boys College students have added an inspirational mural to the Interior Plastering Services Teenagers' Room at our Christchurch House.

Eli Cholmondeley (16) and his friend Max (15) have used their artistic talents to liven up our Teenager's Room. The Interior Plastering Services Teenagers' Room is a 'chill out' space for our teenage houseguests to relax and unwind.

"I was inspired by my auntie who volunteered at the house and asked me if

I would be interested in doing a mural for the charity, to which the answer was quite obviously going to be a yes."

Eli has been interested in street art from an early age and says he found creating the mural incredibly satisfying. It took the boys three days to finish the artwork, which reads 'Be someone who makes you happy'.

"It feels terrific getting to help the families and fellow teenagers who stay at the House, it was a heart-warming experience for Max and I. We have enjoyed the painting process and we're glad that it has brought some colour to the Teenagers' Room."



The Teenagers' Room in our Christchurch House is a space for teens to relax and unwind. It now features a street art mural created by Eli and Max.

» What's Going On « Down South

The latest happenings from the Ronald McDonald Family Room, Southland Hospital

Brave baby Charlie

Despite being born at just over 25 weeks in July and weighing 760 grams, brave baby Charlie is progressing in leaps and bounds.

Parents Brearne and Blair from Gore, spent 57 nights at the Ronald McDonald Family Room, Southland Hospital, just moments away from Charlie in the neonatal unit.

Brearne says the Family Room was a place of solace during Charlie's difficult start to life – and Family Room Supervisor Helen was always a shoulder to lean on! "Staying here has been a great way to keep our family together, and be around other families who can relate to us."

Baby Charlie now weighs 2.83 kilos, and mum and dad are loving being back home with their precious boy.



Recently parents Brearne and Blair were able to dress their wee baby son Charlie for the first time. Charlie looks as happy as mum and dad!



Our fantastic supporters The Southland Times getting behind 'Purple Work Shirt Day'.



Southland Stags players paid a visit to the Ronald McDonald Family Room, Southland Hospital as part of 'Purple Work Shirt Day'.

Celebrating Southland with 'Purple Work Shirt Day!'

The Southland Times and Rugby Southland came together in August to hold a purple work shirt day, raising crucial funds for the Family Room.

On Thursday August 24, the same day as the Southern Stags' first home game of the season, Southlanders wore purple shirts and, in the spirit of giving, donated money to help us keep Southland families close.

Rugby Southland general manager Andrew Moreton says supporting the Family Room was a great fit. "We are really happy to be involved with Ronald McDonald House where we can assist not only to help raise funds but somewhere our players can provide tangible support and interaction with the families involved.

"The purple work shirt concept is another great way Southlanders can show again the benefits of true collaboration and Rugby Southland are proud to be part of this," Andrew says.

Thank you to the Southland Times and Rugby Southland for a fantastic effort!



Culinary Flair!

We love this shot of Family Room Supervisor Helen Walker as 'sous chef' at Queenstown Supper Club 2017. Helen was not afraid to get stuck in and help chefs from Logan Brown, and wow our dinner guests at a Touch of Spice Luxury home. See page 6 for the scoop on Queenstown Supper Club news!



**Supper Club
is coming to
Invercargill!**

We are so excited to bring this mystery dining event to Southland in 2018. If you are a supporter, chef, restaurant or venue wanting to find out more, contact **Robyn Medicott** on **03 377 3311** or **robyn@rmhsi.org.nz**.

» Out & About «

Take a peek at the latest good sorts who are busy holding amazing events to help our families!

Supper Club 2017 dazzles Queenstown

The generosity of Queenstown Supper Club guests this year was overwhelming, raising a record **\$85,000** to support families staying at our facilities.

More than 200 guests gathered at the stunning Queenstown Skyline, before heading off to experience some of the best cuisine in the region at 28 'mystery' dining locations.

Thank you to all the table buyers, guests, restaurants, chefs, venues, sponsors and auction donors who made this event possible.



Want to find out about Supper Club events for 2018?

Contact Robyn Medicott on 03 377 3311, email robyn@rmhsi.org.nz



Author Phil Wilkins with illustrator Martin Coates showing Phil's son, Owen, their incredible picture book, 'Christchurch – Our Underground Story'.



Brrrrm brrrrm! By attending the Speed Works Premier Motorsport Champion Series you can help us keep little racers like Chloe close to her family.

The perfect Christmas gift!

Due to popular demand a second print run of 'Christchurch - Our Underground Story' is now here. But be quick as hundreds have already been sold.

This award-winning 'lift the flap' picture book written by engineer Phil Wilkins and illustrated by engineer Martin Coates, explores post-earthquake Canterbury in a very unique way.

By purchasing this book you are helping to keep families close.

Purchase your copy for \$30 by visiting www.everydayhero.co.nz/ourundergroundstory or email devon@rmhsi.org.nz.



Mark your Calendar: SpeedWorks Premier Motorsport Champion Series!

Ready, set, race! We are so excited to be chosen as the charity partner for this thrilling series in 2018. Motorsport racing will be heading to the Mike Pero Motorsport Park in Christchurch from January 12 to 14, and Teretonga Park in Invercargill from January 19 to 21. For more information and to get your tickets, visit www.speedworksevents.co.nz.



Our Linen Angels: Canterbury Linen Services have been supporting our Christchurch House for over five years.



House Heroes: Canterbury Linen Services

Canterbury Linen Services play a huge role in the day-to-day running

of our Christchurch House, making the lives of families we support a little bit easier – one sheet at a time.

Canterbury Linen Services have been delivering freshly laundered sheets, pillow cases, and towels as well as providing event support for over five years – completely free of charge. This equates to \$22,000 annually and ensures our 26-room Christchurch House operates smoothly so we can keep up with the demand of families using the

facilities. For our families this removes the stresses of household laundry so they can focus on what matters most – their child’s medical treatment.

Our Housekeeper Kathy Oakes says the Canterbury Linen team, who deliver three times a week, are “just amazing”.

“If we need any extra linen they are always happy to help – I don’t know what we would do without them.”

Canterbury Linen Services Sales/Service Manager Clive Hackett says helping the House is rewarding for the team. “It makes us feel proud knowing that we are contributing to the House’s great effort.

“We are owned by the Christchurch District Health Board, and many of the families of the children who use the hospital are from out of town, so working with the House helps with the whole process.”

Clive’s message to businesses wanting to support Ronald McDonald House South Island? “Go for it, it is a great cause with lovely people working there – you won’t regret it.”

For more information on Canterbury Linen Services, visit www.canterburylinen.co.nz.



Room Sponsor Spotlight: Trustpower

Trustpower is a New Zealand utility company with a heart of gold, generously supporting our facilities for over a decade.

Trustpower are the proud Room Sponsors of Room 17 in our Christchurch House and Room 1 and the Ronald McDonald Family Room, Southland Hospital. Not only that, the community-spirited company also generously reduces our electricity bills.

Trustpower Community Relations Representative Abbie Siely says the company has been recognising the efforts of volunteers for more than 25 years through the ‘Trustpower Community Awards’.

“There’s no question that Ronald McDonald House is making a real difference to the lives of people in many South Island communities, and that volunteers play a vital role in making this possible. “For Trustpower, supporting the efforts of these volunteers and the work of Ronald McDonald House in the community was a natural fit with our own values as an organisation.”

Abbie says the Trustpower team loves the relationship with Ronald McDonald House. “Just last week we received a handwritten thank you note from a family who had stayed in one of the rooms that Trustpower sponsors. Gestures like that touch each of us on a personal level – family to family. It’s a good feeling to work for a company that has a genuine passion for giving back.”



Stronger communities together: The generous team at Trustpower believe stronger families make stronger communities, and love supporting Ronald McDonald House South Island.

To businesses or community groups thinking about supporting Ronald McDonald House? “Go for it! You’ll be making a real difference to families at a time when they are most in need of support, and contributing to stronger communities as a result.”

For more information on Trustpower, visit www.trustpower.co.nz.

Want to become a Room Sponsor?

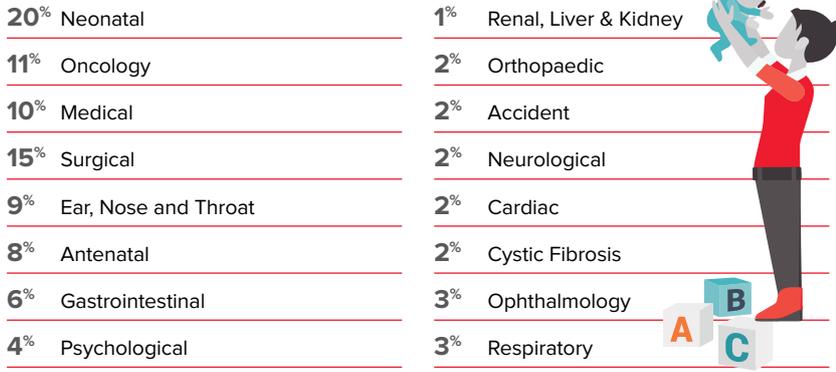
We have sponsorship opportunities in both Christchurch and Invercargill. Contact **Zucchi Leonard** on **03 377 3311** or zucchi@rmhsi.org.nz to find out more.

» Our Families «

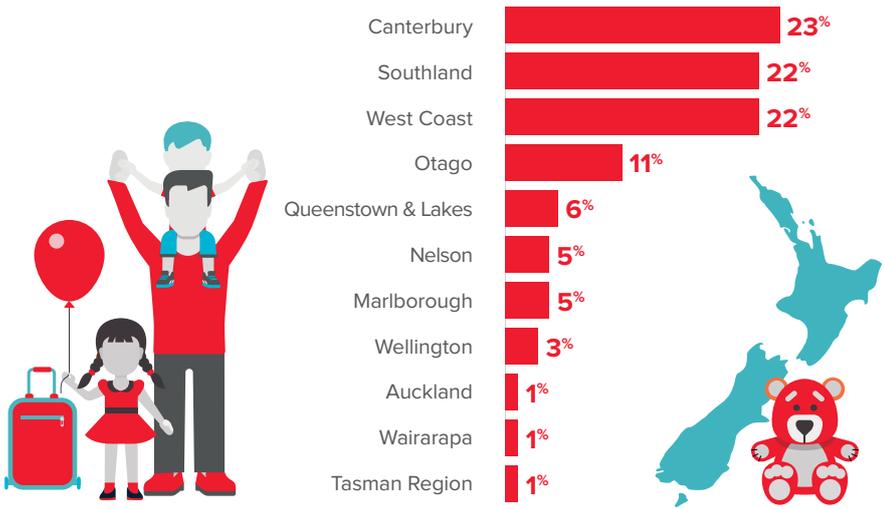
Families from all over New Zealand stay at our facilities while their children receive hospital care for many different reasons. Sometimes they stay for one or two nights, but some families can be with us for many months.

Here are our statistics for the third quarter of 2017.

Our most common diagnoses are



Our families come from



New & renewed Room Sponsors



Trusts & Grants



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Our sincere thanks to Pub Charity for their generous grant which funded the design and production of this newsletter.



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