

Chris King

Chris King started volunteering for the Hawke's Bay Cancer Society in 2020. She is a pivotal member of our team and steps into any role that we ask her to. Chris undertakes the following tasks for the Cancer Society:

Receptionist at our Hastings Centre one morning a week

A key member of the Fundraising Committee

Secretary of the HB Cancer Society Executive

Phones and assigns Daffodil Day collectors to duties.

Helps with Health Promotion events, including catering and facilitating group sessions.

On Daffodil Day, Chris effectively runs the Centre singlehandedly while staff are out supporting our volunteers. This involves dealing with all sorts of enquiries, collectors calling in sick, requests for more resources from collection points etc.

Serves on Cancer Society information and fundraising booths at the Potts Classic athletics event and the HB Racing Spring Carnival Raceday, including closing the site and processing the funds collected.

Chris has been a Justice of the Peace for many years and does a weekly court duty, is on the committee for SeniorNet and U3A and is involved in many other clubs and societies. She is the type of person who always ends up being on the committee!



Colleen Stephens

We're proud to nominate Colleen Stephens for her outstanding commitment to the PSEC Charity Shop in Joll Road. With over 5 years of service, Colleen has been a loyal, reliable, and much-loved member of the team.

Colleen is always generous with her time, quietly contributing in so many ways. She brings warmth and friendliness to the shop, creating a welcoming environment for customers and fellow volunteers alike. Her kindness goes beyond her shifts — she regularly knits beautiful items to donate, helping to raise funds and add a special touch to our displays.

She also brings in fresh fruit from her orchard, both for sale in the shop and to share with volunteers — a thoughtful gesture that reflects her caring nature and team spirit.

Colleen's dedication and generosity make her an invaluable part of the Joll Road whānau, and we are delighted to recognise her service!



Denise Gore

Denise Gore is a passionate and tireless volunteer dedicated to restoring the graves of war veterans and ensuring their stories are remembered. Her journey began four years ago at Napier's Park Island Cemetery, and since then, she has expanded her work to include Napier Hill, Taradale, and even the cyclone-hit Eskdale Cemetery, which she visited over six times to dig silt and restore graves following Cyclone Gabrielle.

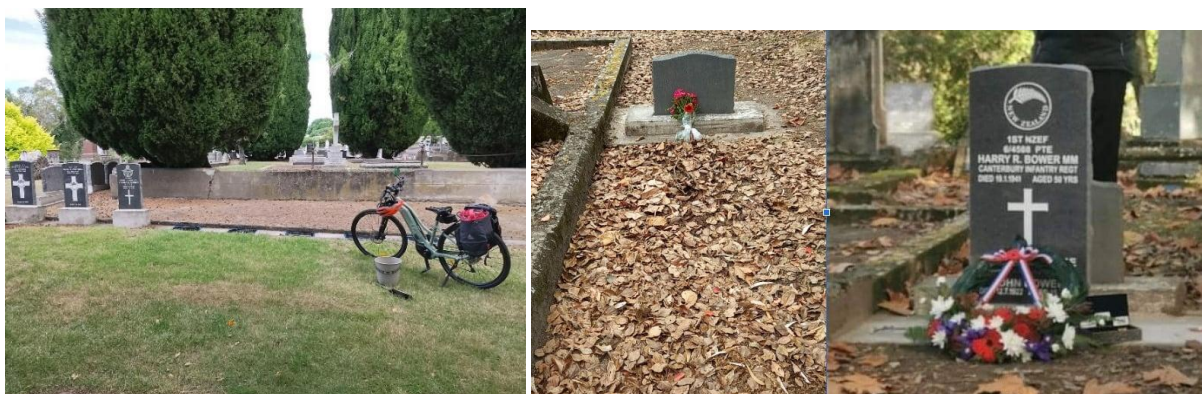
Denise doesn't drive, relying solely on her bicycle—often loaded with cleaning and painting supplies—to reach cemeteries across Hawke's Bay, including challenging rides to Eskdale, Puketapu, and Havelock North. Her dedication is unwavering, rain or shine, and she now uses an electric bike to make these journeys a little easier, always arriving with a smile.

In addition to physical restoration work, Denise conducts extensive research to identify unmarked or misidentified graves. Thanks to her efforts, 10 new headstones have been placed in Napier alone, with one replaced due to an incorrect service number. There are still several graves in Napier, Hastings, and Havelock North awaiting proper headstones. Her work has led to two high-profile unveilings outside of Hawke's Bay, including for a soldier awarded for gallantry at Le Quesnoy.

Denise also researches service records for graves already marked with a poppy but lacking any detail of service, helping fill these gaps in history. She records all her findings on FindAGrave.com, enabling people worldwide to reconnect with their ancestry. Despite not having internet access at home, she bikes to local libraries to carry out this research.

Denise's selfless commitment, resilience, and deep respect for New Zealand's war veterans make her truly deserving of recognition. Her work ensures that those who served are not forgotten—and that their names and sacrifices live on.

"Let them not be forgotten."



Dieuwke Wierdsma

We're proud to nominate Dieuwke for her quiet yet invaluable contribution to the PSEC Charity Shop in Taradale. Despite ongoing health challenges, Dieuwke continues to support the shop with dedication and heart.

When she's able, she comes in to help, but much of her work happens behind the scenes. She regularly takes home fabrics to measure and prep for pricing, sorts and bags sewing bric-a-brac, and checks items needing batteries — ensuring they work and are clean before returning them to the shop.

Dieuwke's attention to detail, reliability, and generosity make a real difference. She helps lighten the load for others and keeps things running smoothly, even when she isn't physically in the shop.

Her willingness to do what she can, when she can, is deeply appreciated. We're truly grateful for all she brings to the team and are honoured to nominate her for recognition.



Janne Newton

We are proud to nominate Janne for her outstanding contribution to the PSEC Charity Shop in Taradale. A dedicated volunteer for over four years, Janne brings warmth, creativity, and generosity to every shift.

Janne is a true advocate for PSEC and the services we support. She regularly promotes our kaupapa and creates a welcoming atmosphere for both customers and fellow volunteers. Her positivity and commitment make her a valued member of our team.

She hand-makes beautiful jewellery using materials she purchases herself, all donated to the shop. These unique pieces brighten our displays and are well-loved by customers. Janne also creates cheerful handmade cards, again from her own supplies, which add colour and personality to our shelves.

She gives freely, without expectation, and always with a smile.

We're honoured to nominate Janne and thank her for the incredible difference she makes to our shop and our community.



Jessica Aguilar

Jessica Aguilar has been the Unit Team Leader for St Augustine's Brownies for seven years for GirlGuiding NZ.

She is passionate about helping young girls explore their interests, develop new skills, and build confidence. She encourages community involvement by fostering a strong relationship with Weave Hawke's Bay. Each year, the Brownies take part in the Annual Appeal in May and organise a canned food drive before Christmas.

Jessica embraces a girl-led approach, allowing the Brownies to brainstorm, vote on, and plan their own activities. Last year, they chose to host a talent show where friends and family donated canned food as an entry fee, supporting the Weave Food Pantry.

She leads a team of two adult volunteers and mentors a high school student completing her Duke of Edinburgh Award, helping her grow in leadership and skills. Beyond her unit, Jessica also organises events for GirlGuiding NZ Te Matau-a-Māui.

In February, she ran a World Thinking Day event for GirlGuiding NZ members in Hawke's Bay. This May, she will lead the region's first Trail Jam event, further expanding opportunities for young girls to engage and grow.



Mia Sutherland

Mia has been a part of the Happy Bay News youth media team and prior to that a dedicated contributor to the photography workshops and programmes as run by Shayne and Cath Jeffares.

With a love for photography Mia has mentored other youth at these workshops, since 2020 and been an active volunteer and contributor to the Happy Bay News youth publication since 2022.

Mia's volunteering has seen other youth encouraged to join the group, and contribute to their community through the podcast and publication. This opportunity has seen Mia develop skills such as leadership and mentoring and we know Mia has a strong sense of community and care for others through these opportunities.

A unique platform, Happy Bay news is a youth media programme that encourages youth to contribute to their community, showcasing stories through podcasting and a printed publication, allowing those involved to gain new skills, develop new connections and develop a sense of pride in their community.



Richard Coory

Richard has been a dedicated mentor with Big Brothers Big Sisters of Hawke's Bay since 2022, generously giving his time each week to support and spend time with his young person. Together, they've shared a wide range of activities, including motorbike riding, fishing, watching and playing rugby, target shooting, and attending our group events, just to name a few.

Beyond his role as a mentor, Richard is an active member of our Fundraising Task Group, helping to plan and deliver various initiatives alongside fellow committee members. Impressively, he's also led his own fundraising efforts, raising thousands of dollars for BBBS through the design and sale of ute mats, with all proceeds donated directly to our organisation.

Richard is always willing to lend a hand, whether it's driving the van for events or supporting other matches to get involved. We're incredibly grateful for the time, energy and commitment he brings to BBBS, and we sincerely thank him for his continued support and enthusiasm.



Ron Wilkins

Ron has been actively involved in Grey Power for 18 years with 8 as President of Hastings and District Association.

Some highlights are:

- He meets every 3 months with local police, MSN management, Mayor, local MP and the Hospital board to discuss questions and concerns of members.
- He receives ongoing calls from members on local issues. Matters of concern include ...
 - medical charges regarding license renewal,
 - Mailboxes (disused) not yet removed
 - Danger of locations for crosswalks
 - Clean up of debris after the Cyclone
 - Encroachment of plants on sidewalks

Other causes like ...

- Free parking between 9 am and 3 pm in CBD Monday to Friday for seniors
- Age Friendly Businesses
- Requirements and costs around license renewals
- Changes to Bus services

He passionately arranges

- meetings with other local organisations dealing with needs of seniors
- arranges speakers for monthly members meetings
- interviews on Hastings Radio
- initiates a Newsletter 3 monthly drawing from local interests
- co-ordinates with businesses to create a Discount Book for members.
- Introduced Pulse Energy Electricity providing discount to financial members
- Alternative bill paying facility



Suzette Potts

We're delighted to nominate Suzette Potts for her long-standing and dedicated service to the PSEC Charity Shop. With around 16 years at the Joll Road shop, Suzette has been a constant and reliable presence, contributing her time, skills, and unwavering support.

Suzette is known for her flexibility and willingness to help wherever needed. Whether it's covering shifts at short notice, supporting new volunteers, or stepping in to manage the shop, she's always up for the task — and does so with calm, capable leadership.

Her reliability and deep understanding of the shop's day-to-day operations have made her a trusted and valued member of the team. Her commitment over the years speaks volumes about her generous spirit and belief in our mission.

We're proud to recognise Suzette for her incredible service and dedication to the PSEC team



Carma Anderson

Carma is an exceptional volunteer whose dedication, leadership, and compassion have made a profound impact across multiple sectors in our region. As the long-standing Team Leader of the Red Cross Disaster Response and Welfare Team, Carma guided her team through both regional and national weather emergencies with unwavering strength and clarity. Her calm leadership during times of crisis has provided comfort and support to countless individuals and families.

In addition, Carma was one of the founding team leaders of the FENZ Recovery Team—New Zealand’s only team of its kind. Under her leadership, the team has grown to cover fire crisis response from Dannevirke to Wairoa, providing vital assistance to communities at their most vulnerable moments.

Carma’s passion for animal welfare is equally inspiring. As a founding committee member of Ruahine Animal Rescue, she has personally fostered over 20 dogs and manages the organisation’s duty phone, logging more than 19 hours on calls in 2024 alone.

Carma’s dedication is not only impressive—it is transformative. Her contributions span human welfare, emergency services, and animal rescue, making her a truly outstanding candidate for the Volunteering Excellence Award.

