



Saved twice by Life Flight, thanks to you

Picton grandfather Gordon has cheated death twice in seven months - with your help.

Last July, critically ill with renal failure and severe lactic acid buildup, Gordon was flown to Nelson Hospital in our Westpac Rescue Helicopter. After four days in intensive care and undergoing dialysis he made a full recovery.

But on Waitangi Day, Gordon had stroke-like symptoms. The left side of his body was weak, and his mouth was drooping.

The 65-year-old was taken by ambulance to Wairau Hospital where doctors said he need to get to Wellington Hospital to see a neurologist. He flew in our Air Ambulance Plane.

Three days later Gordon was well enough to return to respite

care in Blenheim to recover. Flown in our air ambulance once again - with his wife of 43 years, Heather, at his side.

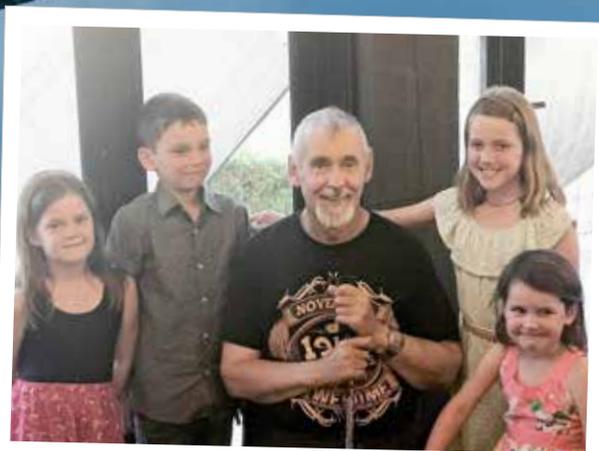
"My husband would have died if Life Flight hadn't airlifted him to Nelson in July,"

– says Heather.

And his chances of survival would have been slim had he not been flown to Wellington in February - about a third of people who have subdural haematomas die.

"He is a battler. He's like a cat with nine lives," Heather said of her husband.

Knowing a loved one is fighting for their life is a "shattering



Gordon with his four grandchildren at his 65th birthday in November which they were all delighted that he recovered to enjoy.

Photo credit: Donated by Helen Gray

experience" Heather said, however the professionalism and empathy the Life Flight staff showed, helped her cope during both incidents.

After Gordon's trip in the chopper, a Life Flight fundraiser happened to knock on the front door of his and Heather's home in Waikawa and asked if they wanted to donate to the organisation.

"Well of course what was I going to say? I said, 'Where can we sign?' My husband wouldn't be here if it wasn't for Life Flight," Heather said.

They are now Red Angels, donating to Life Flight every month.

*This is an abridged version of the 18 February 2018 New Zealand Herald article "Life Flight Trust crews save Picton man Gordon Gray twice in one year," written by Brittany Keogh.

New plane takes to the skies and helps 494 people thanks to your amazing support!

Last year we urgently needed another aircraft to help the rising number of people who urgently needed us. Your wonderful donations enabled us to buy the plane and carry out a major medical and navigation fit-out, transforming it from a passenger aircraft into a world-class 'Flying Intensive Care Ward'. The new plane has already flown 494 people to urgent care, thanks to your kindness.



Wellington Hospital nurse Karyn shows how your kind gifts help little ones in need

Photo donated by Lindsay Keats

Thanks to you, our Westpac Chopper Teams have the equipment and training to keep saving lives

Your donations to our April appeal made essential winch training possible, which was recently put to use when Life Flight was called to the aid of a sailor in distress. After an unexpected weather change he lost control of his yacht 15km south of Cape Palliser. With safety gear on, and an emergency locator beacon in hand, he called for help.

Due to four metre swells and high winds it was too dangerous to fly our Westpac Chopper close enough to winch him off the boat. Our team planned for the sailor to jump into the ocean so we could approach, and after only a few seconds in the water we already had him safely harnessed and winched aboard.



Your donations were a life-line for Richard

Technical rescues like this are only possible with the careful training you fund. Since April you helped fund 14 Chopper Training Flights, 5 Search and Rescue Flights, and another 153 Urgent Chopper Flights to help people in our community. Thank you very much!

A very warm thanks to our fantastic Vehicle Sponsor!

Fagan Motors Masterton generously donates Mazda cars and maintenance so our team can safely and reliably complete essential tasks like picking-up medical staff for urgent flights, collecting supplies and fundraising.

Dealer Principal Keith Allen says, "We chose to support Life Flight on behalf of our entire community. Without them... Well we won't go there, it's not a case of should we support them but MUST support them. The amount of lives they have saved in our region alone just blows us away."



Our brilliant sponsored Fagan Motors cars on display at the Open Day

Photo donated by Lindsay Keats

THANKS TO OUR SPONSORS:



TEAM UPDATE

Meet Mike B

Job with Life Flight
Helicopter Crewman

How long have you worked for Life Flight?
Since February 2015

What work did you do before coming to Life Flight?
Prior to that I worked for several Heli operators in New Zealand, Australia and Canada, working on wildfires, utilities, aerial crane and logging operations.

What attracted you to this job?
Crewing a rescue helicopter always looked like the pinnacle of the industry, using the best equipment and flying with the best pilots and crew to do the most important job in the world. I can't think of a more satisfying way to make a living.

What is the best part of the job?
Meeting the daily challenge, there are never two missions that are the same, so problem solving and creative thinking go a long way to completing the job. Getting a really challenging winch or hover exit is great.

What is the hardest part of the job?
Any time we deal with little babies that are not doing well is pretty difficult.

What was the main thing that stood out for you when you started working here?
There are a lot of checks and maintenance to do on a daily basis, as well as continued study for pre-hospital medicine.

What do you do when you're not at work?
Surf, when the ocean is in my favour. Also running and swimming.

What would you like to say to our wonderful supporters?
We are lucky enough to have a lot of people come visit us after we have flown them in the helicopter. A lot will end up being friends of the Trust, helping with fund raising and stopping in for coffee whenever they are nearby. So a big thank you to all who help!



Operations update

You have helped achieve the below so far this year. We think you're fantastic.

Thank You!

Statistics: January - July 2018

People helped 753

Average age 44

Oldest 100

Types of missions

Emergency accidents (e.g. road accidents) 78

Medical emergencies 39

Vital baby incubator transfers 181

Search & rescue 20

Intensive care transfers 411

Training 39

Other 24

Busiest day Monday

Busiest month January

In the last six months we have rescued, saved and helped over 650 people **thanks to you**. This includes 74 multi patient flights. These often challenging missions, once again underline the amazing pilots, crew and paramedics we have working here and who you very kindly support.



Upcoming events

Life Flight Open Day



10th March 2019

Join the team at the Life Flight Air Rescue Centre for our annual Open Day! Last year's event was bigger, better and more spectacular than ever before with your new Air Ambulance Plane on display, a live entertainment stage with local acts, and all your favourite attractions. Next year's Open Day will again wow your socks off with awesome emergency services' demonstrations, local food trucks, entertainment, prizes and more! The Life Flight Open Day has become a staple in the Wellington Events calendar – we can't wait to see you there!

Keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for events updates and early-bird competition entries.

Wairarapa Vintage Car Club 50th Celebration Car Show – 13th and 14th October

The Wairarapa Branch of the VCC (Vintage Car Club NZ Inc.) celebrates its 50th anniversary by holding a weekend of wonderful events. Check out a huge range of unique vintage cars! A donation from any profits will go to Life Flight.

The Neon Night Walk – 27th October

Fundraise for Life Flight and have a glowing good time! The Neon Night Walk is a fun new event that has 8km, 16km or 24km options at the beautiful Colonial Knob / Rangituhi Reserve in Porirua. The track will be transformed for the night with neon, music and lights! Dress up loud to make a statement - Retro Neon or Halloween theme. Head to the event website, or check out the events page on Life Flight's website to find out how you can enter and raise money for Life Flight!



BSA Motorcycle Show – 3rd and 4th November

Celebrating 40 years in New Zealand with a display motorcycles covering all makes of vintage, classic and modern, plus trade displays from many local bike shops. Held at Expressions Whirinaki Arts & Entertainment Centre in Upper Hutt. Proceeds from the event will be donated to Life Flight, including the collection at the door.

Wings over Wairarapa Air Festival – 22nd, 23rd and 24th of February 2019

The largest aviation event in the North Island celebrates its 20th anniversary! Come along with family and friends to experience a truly unique day-out or weekend. Life Flight will be there – come and say hello!

Kit's Run For Life Flight

One of our amazing supporters achieved something spectacular when she conquered her first running event in Christchurch, and did so whilst raising money for Life Flight. Not only did she go above and beyond her own personal expectations, she absolutely smashed her goal to raise \$500 for Life Flight with a total of \$940 raised! Wow!

Kit decided she wanted to raise money for Life Flight during her Christchurch run as we are a charity she loves to support, and one that helped her family at a critical time. Her baby brother's life was saved by Life Flight after he was born 'blue' in Wellington Hospital. He needed immediate care in Greenlane Hospital in Auckland so was flown there to receive heart surgery. Kit says she still remembers the day as if it were yesterday and, 22 years on, her brother lives a completely healthy life! Thank you, Kit. You are an absolute superstar!



We send a sincere thank you to the wonderful supporters who organise events and raise life-saving funds! Are you interested in organising or have you organised a fundraising event in support of Life Flight?

Please contact 04 920 2242 or events@lifeflight.org.nz

Your kind gifts gave Indi hope

Indianna was born with congenital heart disease hypoplastic left heart syndrome. Her mum, Carmen, has graciously shared her story to say thanks to Life Flight's supporters for helping her little girl, and to give hope to others who may be going through something similar.



Baby Indi in her flight incubator

Indi has had three open heart bypass surgeries along with several other procedures in her short six years. At just four days old she had her first open heart surgery. Life Flight's Air Ambulance Plane was there afterwards to carefully fly her to care closer to home. We were so grateful for the care the Life Flight team took to help our wee, fragile girl.

When I look back at those photos it's still hard to believe we went through so much with her - and we know there's still a big journey ahead as well. She will need a heart transplant at some stage. But we just take each day as it rolls around and deal with what we have to when needed. She really is such a feisty, beautiful little girl.

I can remember, back in the days when Indi was a baby, looking for older kids who were a little further down their journey than us. Those stories give you great hope.

Indi is now in school, about to start gymnastics and is a full-on girl with a true zest for life. I thought others might be inspired to see our tiny wee baby who is now a big girl. Her middle name is Hope, after all.

Every time I see Life Flight's Air Ambulance Plane, or Westpac Rescue Helicopter I feel a sense of pride. You look out the window and see those amazing people doing their job and just think how important and how cool they are.

Thanks for everything you do. You guys are true angels of the skies!



A big shout out to all who helped with this newsletter! Like everything we do here at the rescue base, this newsletter was made possible with a generous team effort. We send sincere appreciation to Fuji Xerox for donating printer paper, NZ Post for discounted postage, the newspapers that gifted stories, photographers who donated images, and the wonderful patients who volunteered time and shared their remarkable stories. Thank you!

