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## Together in 2026: Celebrating Community and Connection

As we warmly welcome 2026, it's wonderful to reflect on how quickly the year has already begun to unfold here at Shalom Court. In just a short time, our home has been filled with laughter, meaningful moments, and a strong sense of community that continues to bring us all together.

From shared meals and engaging activities to visits from talented performers and time spent with loved ones, there has already been so much to celebrate. It has been especially heartening to see residents connecting, smiling, and embracing each day with such positivity.

Looking ahead, we are excited for all that 2026 has in store. With a calendar full of events, opportunities to connect, and moments to cherish, we remain committed to making Shalom Court a place of warmth, dignity, and joy for everyone. To our residents, families, and valued supporters thank you for being such an important part of our community.

Your presence, care, and support make all the difference. We look forward to sharing many more special moments together in the months ahead and to making this year one to truly remember.

# From the Chair

It was so strange that on 1st March, Autumn began and I think we are all enjoying the cooler nights and days now.

The summer was enjoyed by residents and staff, and you will see from this newsletter the myriad of events that we had and also went out for. Pesach (Passover) is the next one, and we will as usual, be celebrating it by a lunch on the first day of Pesach. If you would like to join your loved one here, then please liaise with Anna at reception to give numbers. It will be a charge of \$35 per person for the full lunch on Thursday 2 nd April in Albert House.

January saw the passing of our beloved Sybil Cornell. After nearly 13 years as a resident, and at 103 glorious years, Sybil decided it was her time, and she left us just a few weeks after her birthday. Many of us have amazing memories of this special lady. Mine are knowing that I could never disturb her during the afternoon while she played bridge online on her laptop, while the majority of the other residents were having their afternoon naps!

She attended every single event held, and her input into our daily happenings here were immense. She is gone, but she will never be forgotten! We welcome Hadas as our new activity coordinator who is helping Ilalina and Anna. Her computer skills and fantastic attitude is very gratefully received. She started as a volunteer and we quickly grabbed her. Hadas also is very involved in our Jewish festivals.

For me, we had our 5th grandchild (a little girl, Carmela) born in Toronto mid November, and now in early April #6 will be born – this one a first child to our son, Ron, in Auckland. We are truly blessed.

This month we are welcoming two new board members onto the Governance committee, and I will talk more about them in the next newsletter which will be around July.

As always, Shalom Court continues to be at full capacity, and it is due to the wonderful, caring staff and our beautiful facility, that this happens.

Roberta has had a much needed 3 week break overseas, and we look forward to a special Autumn and winter.

Thank you again for your interest and participation at Shalom Court.

Warm regards,  
Esther Haver

**“Wishing you all  
peace and happiness  
with everything  
that’s going on in  
this world of ours”.**



# A Tree, A Blessing, A Promise: Tu B'shvat 2026

This year's Tu B'shvat ceremony brought our community together to celebrate the Jewish "Birthday of the Trees" with the planting of a cypress tree (ברוש). Participants included Roni, Evleen, Linda, Neville, Gail, Leon, Jayne, Carole, Raul, Ronald, Mark, and staff.

The ceremony began with Mark reciting the blessing Shehecheyanu, marking the significance of the moment. Following the planting, Hadas shared reflections on the meaning of Tu B'shvat, reminding us of the deep spiritual connection between people and the land. Rooted in the land of Israel, the festival encourages us to recognise caring for the earth as a sacred responsibility.

Planting a tree is more than an action; it is a promise to the future. Trees provide oxygen, support biodiversity, help address climate change, and offer shade, nourishment, and beauty for generations to come. Each sapling planted contributes to a healthier, more vibrant world.

Hadas also reflected on how, here in Aotearoa New Zealand, we are guided by similar wisdom: that the land is alive and that we are its guardians, not its owners. By planting this tree together, we honoured the generosity of the earth and reaffirmed our shared commitment to care for it with gratitude, balance, and responsibility.

The ceremony concluded with an invitation for attendees to share their own reflections on Tu B'shvat, trees, and the soil that sustains us.

Thank you to all who took part.



# May we never forget

This year's ceremony was led by Janet, Ros, Ronald, Gail, Jayne, Astrid, Leon, Raoul, Robert (Bob), and Carol, and was conducted with dignity and reflection.

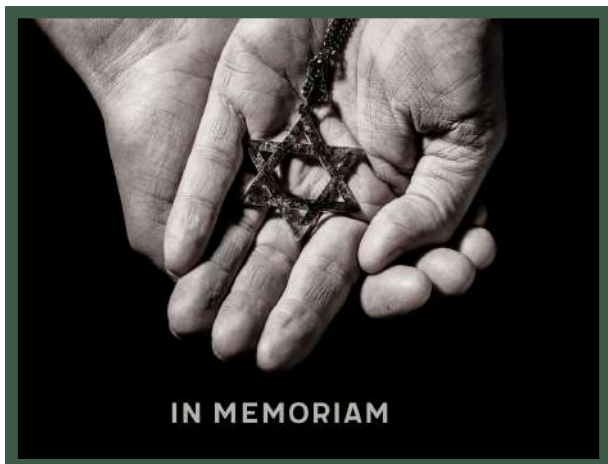
The ceremony opened with music from Schindler's List. Hadas then delivered the introduction, honouring the six million Jewish lives lost in the Holocaust and marking the 83rd anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz, the Nazi concentration and extermination camp.

The memorial candle-lighting followed, with six candles lit to represent the six million Jewish victims of the Holocaust:

Candle 1 – Raoul; Candle 2 – Ronald; Candle 3 – Jayne; Candle 4 – Leon; Candle 5 – Carol; Candle 6 – Ros.

Janet read the Memorial Prayer, followed by El Malei Rachamim in Hebrew (read by Hadas) and in English (read by Janet). Attendees then viewed a short video of the Mayor of London reading a passage from Anne Frank's diary (Holocaust Memorial Ceremony at City Hall, YouTube).

The ceremony concluded with personal reflections, as Ros shared her family's story and Hadas spoke movingly about her own family's experience.



# Off to the Beach

Our residents enjoyed a lovely bus outing to Eastern Beach, making the most of the beautiful summer weather. We shared morning tea while taking in the stunning sea views, watching the seagulls and soaking up some sunshine.

There was plenty of relaxed chit chat, laughter, and time to enjoy the fresh seaside air. A simple but wonderful morning spent together by the water.

**There was plenty of relaxed chit chat, laughter**



# Megillah, Meaning & Merriment: A Joyful Purim at Shalom Court

Megillah Reading with Rabbi Netanel at Shalom Court 3.3

What a fantastic and heartwarming gathering it was! The reading of Megillat Esther brought great meaning to the day and created a beautiful opportunity for the community to come together and share this special time with our residents.

The room was filled with colourful festivity, joyful spirit, and of course, delicious hamantaschen lovingly made by Judi Lubetzky.

Rabbi Netanel shared a thoughtful and inspiring explanation of the Megillah, its main characters and the unfolding story. His engaging storytelling kept everyone intrigued and eager to hear more, making the experience truly memorable for all.

Happy Purim!



# Megillah Reading and Children's Play at Kadimah Primary School

Nothing could have been more perfect for Purim than bringing generations together. The sweet children, dressed in their colourful costumes, were truly a beautiful sight.

Rabbi Netanel thoughtfully paused the Megillah reading at different moments, and during those breaks, the children acted out scenes from the Book of Esther. Their performances were joyful, lively, and full of humour, bringing smiles and laughter to everyone in the room.

Their presence enriched not only our residents, but also the students of Kadimah School, especially for many whose grandparents live outside New Zealand.

There was something so special in watching them shake hands, share small conversations, and simply be present with one another. In those simple exchanges, hearts opened.

The most touching moment? A child asking one of our residents, "When will you come again?" So sweet. So pure.

Yes, we will definitely do this again. A heartfelt thank you to Kadimah School for the warm hospitality and for the wonderful



# “Behind the Mask: Identity, Courage, and Hidden Strength”

“The secret of Purim that guides us in discovering our purpose in life: “And who knows if it was for this moment that you became queen?” (Megillat Esther)

Many people attended the Rabbi Natanel morning tea and were fascinated by the way the Megillah came to life thanks to the Rabbi’s great ability of storytelling. The Rabbi started by explaining the meaning of Esther’s name, her non-Jewish name. Esther means “hidden in plain sight” (comes from the Hebrew word to hide להסתיר lehistir) for her real name is Hadasah.

The entire Megillah story is about our ability to hide and in due time reveal. Everybody is wearing masks. This great ability is a super-power if only we realise it. And there’s a time and a place to everything. We need to decide with ourselves. When to hide and when to reveal.

The name of God is also hidden in the Megillah and isn’t mentioned even once in the Megillah of Esther (Book of Esther). That’s not an accident though, it’s actually an intentional and meaningful choice. The silence kind of makes the point stronger: it suggests that God is working behind the scenes the whole time, through normal events that just seem random or coincidental on the surface.(Written by Hadas)



# Sharing Sweetness: Hamantaschen, Community, and Purim Joy

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## Making Hamantaschen

Purim is a joyful festival that reminds us to think of others and to strengthen the bonds within our community. One of the special mitzvot of the holiday is giving Mishloach Manot, Purim parcels filled with delicious treats such as cakes and cookies, sharing sweetness and friendship with those around us.

The signature Purim cookie is the Hamantaschen, known for its distinctive triangular shape and delicious fillings. The three corners are widely believed to symbolize Haman's three-cornered hat or his ears. On a deeper spiritual level, the three corners are said to represent the three Patriarchs: Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, whose merit strengthened the Jewish people's resolve during times of danger.

The story of Purim is told in the Book of Esther, which recounts how the Jewish people in ancient Persia (modern-day Iran) were saved from a plot to destroy them. The courage of Queen Esther and Mordechai, together with faith and unity, transformed a time of fear into a celebration of survival and hope.

Here at Shalom Court, we pray for the safety and shelter of the people of Israel. May we all be blessed with protection, strength, and peaceful days ahead.

## Chag Purim Sameach



# Beth Shalom Purim gift packages

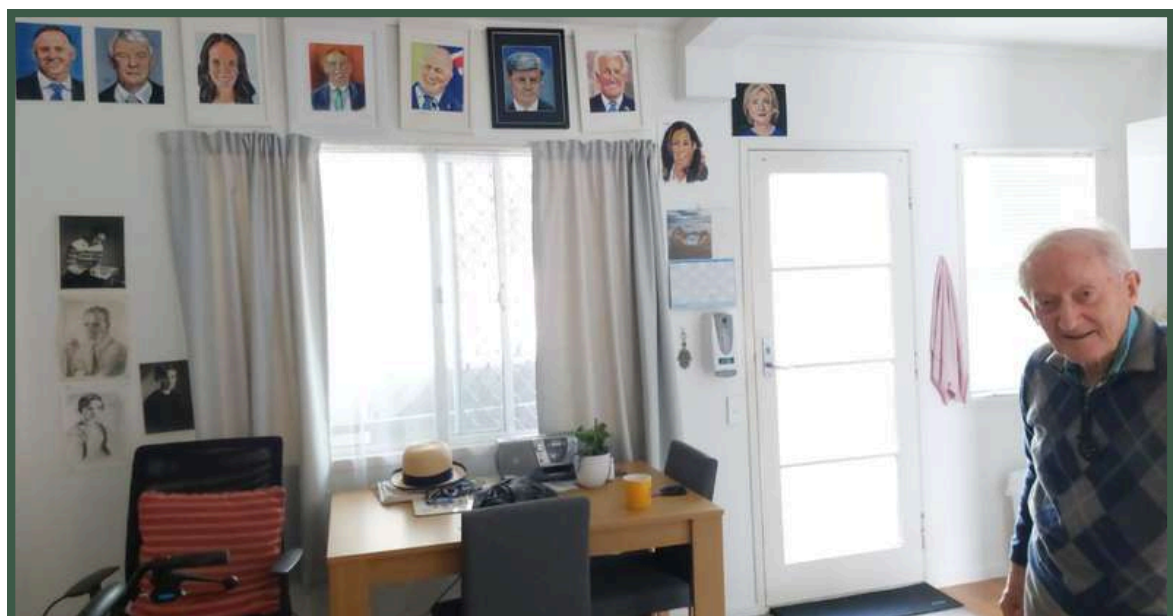
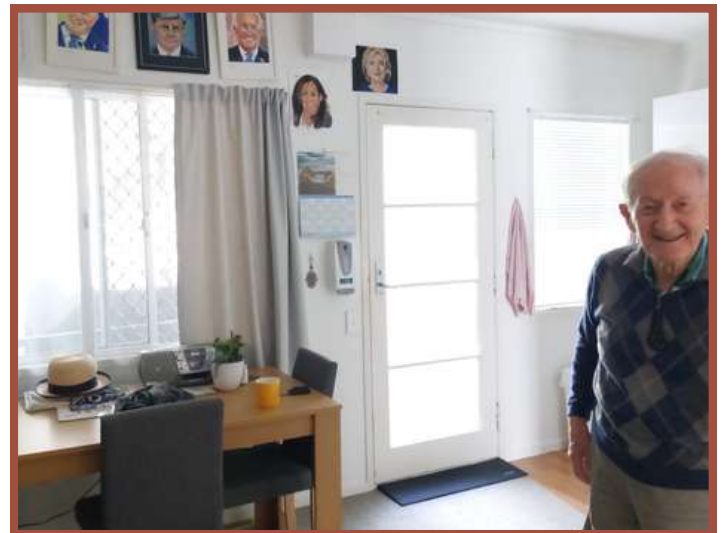
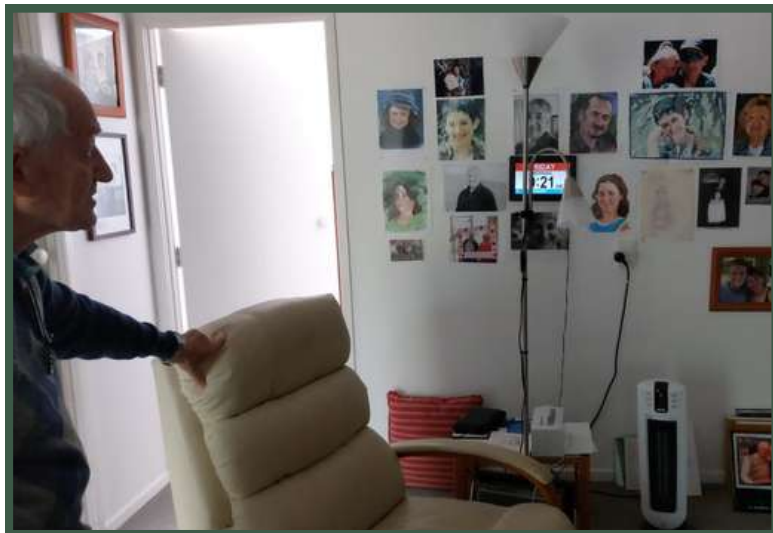


# Shaping Minds, Capturing Souls: Raoul Ketko's Remarkable Journey

Raoul Ketko is a valued resident of Shalom Court in Auckland and a long-standing member of the local Jewish community. With a rich background in education, he dedicated many years to teaching and serving as a principal, shaping the lives of countless students through his knowledge, guidance, and care.

In addition to his work in education, Raoul has a remarkable talent for art, particularly in drawing portraits. His artwork reflects both skill and sensitivity, capturing the character and spirit of his subjects. He continues to share this creative gift with those around him, and his portraits are a source of admiration and inspiration within the Shalom Court community.

He remains an engaged and thoughtful presence, contributing his experience, creativity, and warmth to all who know him.



# Melodies That Brought Us Together: Jaz Paterson Live

We were delighted to welcome Jaz Paterson, an emerging singer-songwriter, who treated our residents to a beautiful live performance. From the moment she began to play, her music created a warm and uplifting atmosphere, gently filling the room with a sense of joy, comfort, and connection. Her voice and presence brought a special energy to the space, offering residents not just entertainment, but a meaningful shared experience that brightened the day for everyone involved.

It was truly heartwarming to see residents singing along, many with huge smiles on their faces and eyes lit up with enjoyment. Some tapped their feet, others swayed gently to the music, and all were clearly immersed in the moment. Performances like these are incredibly valuable in our community—they do more than entertain. They spark memories, encourage interaction, and foster a genuine sense of togetherness and happiness. We are so grateful to Jaz for sharing her talent and creating such a memorable and uplifting experience for our residents.



*Can I help you?*



Shalom Court's newest receptionist Micky is here to greet you



**Shalom Court**

Commitment. Care. Comfort.

# A Year of Memories and Gratitude

As we welcome 2026, it has been wonderful to see Shalom Court already buzzing with life, connection, and community spirit. The year has begun with a sense of warmth and optimism, as residents, families, staff, and supporters come together to share in meaningful moments both big and small. From lively gatherings to quiet conversations, there is a strong sense that Shalom Court continues to be not just a place to live, but a place to truly belong.

What makes our community so special are the stories that live within it. Every resident has a lifetime of experiences, memories, and reflections that deserve to be heard and celebrated. These stories help us understand one another more deeply, strengthen our connections, and preserve the rich history that makes Shalom Court unique. Whether it's a cherished memory, a family tradition, or a moment of joy from daily life here, each story adds something special to our shared journey.

I warmly encourage residents, families, and friends to contribute to our newsletter throughout the year. Your stories, photos, and reflections are what bring these pages to life and ensure that every voice is valued. Please don't hesitate to reach out and share no story is too small. Together, we can continue to build a vibrant and meaningful record of life at Shalom Court in 2026 and beyond.

With warmest regards,

Chris Harris

Editor, Shalom Court Newsletter



# Building a Future of Care and Community

Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we navigate through the ever-changing landscapes of life, it's crucial to remember the values that anchor us: compassion, generosity, and community. At Shalom Court, these principles are not just words; they are the cornerstone of everything we do. Today, we invite you to join us in our mission to provide care, support, and a home for those in need.

Shalom Court is more than just a residence; it's a haven where individuals find solace, dignity, and a sense of belonging. We are committed to ensuring that everyone who walks through our doors receives the care and attention they deserve, regardless of their circumstances.

There are several ways you can contribute to our cause and make a meaningful difference in the lives of our residents:

- 1. Donate Now or in Your Will:** Your generous donations help us continue our vital work in providing high-quality care and support services. Whether you can give a little or a lot, every contribution makes a difference. Consider including Shalom Court in your will, leaving a lasting legacy of compassion and kindness.
- 2. Support Our Brick Campaign:** Instead of receiving traditional birthday presents, consider asking your loved ones to donate towards our Brick Campaign. By purchasing a brick, you're not just supporting our organisation financially; you're also leaving a lasting mark on our community. It's a gift that truly keeps on giving.
- 3. Explore Our Living Options:** If you or someone you know is seeking a comfortable and caring living environment, we invite you to explore our independent living apartments. Our recently refurbished, one-bedroom apartments offer a cozy and secure space for individuals looking to maintain their independence while receiving the support they need. Limited apartments are available, so don't hesitate to schedule a viewing today.

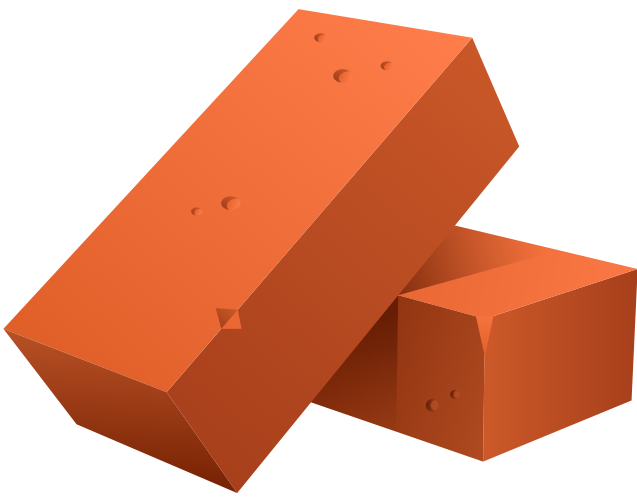
Whether you're considering a donation, supporting our Brick Campaign, or exploring our living options, your involvement makes a significant impact on the lives of our residents. Together, we can continue to build a future filled with care, compassion, and community.

For more information or to get involved, please contact us at [generalmanager@shalomcourt.co.nz](mailto:generalmanager@shalomcourt.co.nz). Your support is truly appreciated.



## Shalom Court

Commitment. Care. Comfort.



## BRICK DONATIONS

**3 bricks in appreciation of talk to Tom Godschmidt at Shalom Court**

**5 bricks to Adele Hirsh for her 90th birthday from Arnold and Sylvia Tresiter**

**6 bricks donation from Martyn Levy**

**2 bricks donation from Tamir, Shachar and Milar Alford**

**In honour of Judy Lubetzky and Carol Brenner's combined 75th birthdays**

**4 bricks from Valerie Levy; 2 bricks from Nina Blumenfeld, 10 bricks from Diane Levy**

If you are wanting to honour or celebrate a family member, friend or organisation. Cost \$18 each.

Contact our operations team Roberta Tills – 521 7325  
or email: [accounts@shalomcourt.co.nz](mailto:accounts@shalomcourt.co.nz)  
or click on the link on our website.

The perfect gift for someone.

*Thank  
You*

I have found that among its  
other benefits, giving  
liberates the soul of the giver. .

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