



LOWE CORPORATION
**RESCUE
HELICOPTER
SERVICE**

OFF THE LANDING PAD

SPRING NEWSLETTER 2025

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FARM TOUR TURNS HILLSIDE HELICOPTER RESCUE

Falling headfirst 100 metres down a hillface the gradient of Te Mata Peak was not on Willie Murphy's agenda the day he spent enjoying a mid-morning farm tour two months ago. But as luck would have it, he survived the perilous fall with nothing more than 11 broken ribs, a perforated lung and a broken foot.

When Hawke's Bay's Lowe Corporation Rescue Helicopter crew received an EPIRB call on May 3rd they expected the worst, and within minutes of arriving at the accident scene on a farm near Hastings spotted Willie Murphy lying awkwardly on a sheep track, unconscious.

Critical Care Flight Paramedic, Jack Faxon Jr. recalls the winch rescue that day.

"My general impression was that externally he looked well although he was in immense pain, his mates were applying pressure to the wounds on his head (their contribution cannot go unrecognised as they did a great job administering first aid with what they had to hand). Willie had several lacerations on his forehead that were bleeding when the pressure was removed. He was conscious but overall confused.

HB Rescue Helicopter Paramedic Jack Faxon Jr. (back left) and Air Crew Officer, Julian Burn (right) surprise Willie with a bedside hospital visit.



"Once we winched him into the chopper we landed and reassessed him, we gave him IV analgesia and oxygen as his respirations were impaired due to all the fractures. Given that he fell around 100 metres we think he is incredibly lucky - I have seen people die from five metre falls."

In his day job working as a landscape designer, Willie Murphy is acutely aware of geography and angles and just how fortunate he is to have survived.

"It was a beautiful day, and as we looked out toward Te Mata Peak, we could see all the way to the wind farm and the Kawekas in the distance. We were on a farm tour, and I was sitting on a grassy rise, taking in the sweeping views over Hawke's Bay - completely unaware that just beyond the edge was a steep, dangerous drop.

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“When it was time to leave, I stood up but lost my footing in my gumboots on some long, tufty grass. The next thing I remember is tumbling headfirst down the hillside. I clearly recall thinking, ‘Oh my god, I can’t stop here.’”

“When I regained consciousness, I was lying at the bottom of a deep gully surrounded by my mates. Hearing the sound of the helicopter overhead was a huge relief. I was struggling to breathe and trying to stay calm, even though my back and ribs were in absolute agony.”

Willie spent nine days in hospital recovering from his injuries. Remarkably he required no surgery but 11 broken ribs, a ruptured lung and 16 breaks to the top of his foot have been “pretty sore and debilitating.”

“I’m amazingly thankful there was only damage to my ribs and foot, my head took a lot of gashes and I was one rock away from a very different outcome to my spinal cord.

“The calm reassurance and skill the crew showed that day getting me up to that skid and to hospital within an hour was pretty amazing. What’s more, six days later on a quiet Sunday my rescue crew came and saw me in hospital which was a pretty cool and unexpected personal touch.”

Paramedic Jack Faxon Jr. and Air Crew Officer Julian Burn say they genuinely wanted to know how he was doing.

“This is the best part of our job getting to catch up with people post incident and to speak to them in their recovery. It was great to see Willie with a big smile on his face, we were chuffed to see this and with his positive attitude toward his injuries, we know he’ll be just fine.”

FARMERS GET BEHIND ‘HELI LIVESTOCK’

A steady stream of livestock pledges have been made since the launch of HBRHT’s new rural fundraising initiative ‘Heli Livestock’ in June.

Farmers have been quick to get in behind their local rescue helicopter service through the sale proceeds of fat, cull or store sheep and cattle.

‘Heli Livestock’ initiator, George Neilson of Neilson Livestock (pictured opposite) hopes heading into spring, farmers will think of the helicopter when sending weaned lambs.

“As a long-time supporter of the rescue helicopter and a farmer/livestock agent myself, I was keen to utilise my network to help in any way that I could, so started killing a few lambs in March through Wilson Hellaby. I quickly recognised how logical it would be to make this readily available for farmers all over Hawke’s Bay. Once I put the word out with fellow agents, everyone was quick to back it.

“This is an exciting new concept for the service and if every farmer in Hawke’s Bay was able to pledge a couple of lambs, either fat or store or a cattle beast (if they felt generous!) every year, the revenue potential for the rescue helicopter is huge.”



Chris Herries from Baystock Transport got in touch with us keen to promote ‘Heli Livestock’ on his growing fleet of trucks. Not only that, he very generously picked up the tab for the cost of getting our branding on the back doors. Cheers Chris!



To support ‘Heli Livestock’, simply contact your livestock agent or affiliated meat company to make your pledge today.

Livestock agents keen to be part of ‘Heli Livestock’ can get in touch with HBRHT’s office on (06) 878 1630.

HBRHT would like to thank the following meat companies and their agents for their support:

Neilson Livestock | Wilson Hellaby | Hansen Livestock
Cloud Yards | ANZCO Foods | PGG Wrightson
Silver Fern Farms | Affco | Ovation | Alliance Group
Carrfields | Redshaw Livestock | Hazlett.

COMMUNITY CHEER

We are so grateful to the Hawke's Bay Community for supporting our service so we can be available 24/7 for our region. Below are a few special people who have been raising valuable funds for us recently.

DO YOU HAVE AN IDEA FOR A FUNDRAISER?

Please contact Beth – email beth@hbhrt.org.nz or call (06) 878 1630 to discuss how we can help you, help us!



INT. Workspaces – 'Local Legends'

We couldn't be more thankful to Isaac Scott from INT Workspaces for his incredible generosity in fitting out our office and crew headquarters. As the new Director of Int. Workspaces, Isaac Scott is bringing fresh ideas and innovative solutions to office, libraries and function centres around Hawke's Bay. If you're needing to bring your workspace up to speed with improved technology and ergonomics, get in touch with them today.

Whopping Winter Olympics Record!

A record donation of \$53,300 from the Winter Olympics 2025 event was gifted to the Hawke's Bay Rescue Helicopter at the rescue helicopter hangar in Hastings in May. Spearheaded by fundraising powerhouse Claire Wilson, a team of around 30 volunteers, horse riders and sponsors helped hand over the giant sized cheque.

This year the Winter Olympics event was acknowledged with its logo added to the front of the hangar – which previously only featured sponsors Pan Pac and Unison – to cement the strong bond between the two groups.

HBRHT CEO, Andy Quayle says "they are the only community interest group we have got on the front of the hangar as a signboard. It's incredibly powerful, I've said to Claire their group would be one of the top fundraising groups in Hawke's Bay, and I don't say that lightly."

With the partnership growing each year, Claire is determined to retain a strong association, continuing to develop the event to attract more sponsors and competitors.

She enthuses "over the past 16 years of running the Winter Olympics, we have chosen clubs, schools and charities that have been relevant to our community. But, not only has the HB Rescue Helicopter been a very relevant charity to many local friends - they have been fantastic to deal with. The Winter Olympics organisers have felt appreciated, involved and inspired, and well the 'feel-good' factor you get from volunteering at community events is addictive!"



TUMU 'Moving for a Cause'

We love the work of our friends at Tumu Group – walking the talk in support of our valued service. Around 100 Tumu supporters (including plenty of four-legged friends) turned out for their Move for a Cause event in support of the Lowe Corporation Rescue Helicopter Service.

Mahia Hunt Club Jubilee Donation

It was a bitter sweet week for Mahia Hunt Club in July celebrating 125 Years with a colourful and combined Jubilee. The celebrations were tinged with sadness however as one of the country's oldest hunt clubs hung up their boots, calling time on the end of an era due to a decline in membership. As part of the Jubilee, the Club held a cocktail party and donated proceeds of \$4620 from the auction to the Hawke's Bay Rescue Helicopter.



Kitchens and More – Waipawa

Thank you so much to the teams at Kitchens and More - Waipawa and Tim Chote Appliances Ltd. for their incredible support in donating our crew a new washing machine and dryer. Chrissy Malcolm and Mark Chote personally delivered the appliances to the hangar where they met the rostered crew and shared a photo with fellow Central Hawke's Bay local, Pilot Matt Wilson. It's heartwarming to see Central Hawke's Bay continue to step up in support of our service.



Retirement Village Visits a Hit

The team and crew have been enjoying hosting visits from interested residents at some of Hawke's Bay's retirement villages. Summerset in the Vines and Summerset in the Orchard guests were fascinated to meet rostered crew: Michaela, Nat and Heath and learn more about Hawke's Bay's rescue helicopter service back in March. A huge thank you to Summerset in the Orchard for raising \$2,600 – the bar has been set for other interested villages to follow suit. We plan to kickstart these again in the summer when the hangar's a bit warmer.



'Yellow for Heroes'

Schools and ECE's around Hawke's Bay turned a brighter shade of yellow in June to support our 'Yellow for Heroes' community fundraiser.

We were super impressed with the lengths some students went to, to meet the brief. Congratulations to Argyll East School for being voted best dressed – we have slabs of Whittakers chocolate coming your way!

CREW UPDATE - WITH PILOT AND BASE MANAGER BILL HARTREE

We're 12 months away from the arrival of the region's new H145 D3, how excited is the crew about the new aircraft?

There's a real sense of excitement building amongst the crew. The H145 D3 represents a significant upgrade in capability, safety, and performance - so there's definitely eager anticipation around having access to this state-of-the-art aircraft. Everyone's looking forward to seeing what it can do for patient outcomes and the way we operate.

It's been a long wait - how does this rate for you personally in terms of workplace developments, and what are you most looking forward to about flying it?

Yes, the Bay has waited a while, but it'll be well worth it. Personally, I'd rate this as one of the most exciting developments in my time here. The D3's advanced avionics and improved power margins will make a huge difference in the kinds of missions we can take on, particularly in challenging conditions.

For me, it's all about how this new tool will help us reach and care for patients more effectively.



As Base Manager, what upgrades and support are needed ahead of the aircraft's arrival?

There's a fair bit of work to be done ahead of its arrival - from hangar upgrades and new support infrastructure to specialist equipment. We'll need to lean on both community support and funding to help make these changes happen. The community has always backed us, and we're confident they'll be behind us as we get ready for this next step.



Westpac Chopper Appeal

New Zealanders dug deep to raise a record \$1.5m for the national network of rescue helicopters during the Westpac Chopper Appeal.

That is the highest total in the annual appeal's history, and includes \$29,798 raised in Hawkes Bay for the Hawkes Bay Rescue Helicopter Trust.

HBRHT CEO, Andy Quayle says whilst our aircraft is not directly sponsored by Westpac like other regions, we gratefully receive their support through the annual chopper appeal.

"Every dollar remains in the region it was raised so the fundraising here helps us meet the rising costs of equipment, and supplies. A great example of corporate altruism benefiting communities."



Fleet Sales NZ Sponsors a Pilot

We're excited to announce Fleet Sales NZ as our new Diamond Sponsors. Owners Bevan and Andrea Hall called into the hangar recently to catch up with the crew and grab a photo with Pilot, Matt Wilson. Commercial vehicle traders, Fleet Sales' increased sponsorship this year secures them the opportunity to sponsor a pilot, with their brand logo on the back of Matt's uniform.

For Matt, it's a personal connection.

"It's great to have the support from Fleet Sales NZ, I have known Bevan and Andrea for many years now, going back to when I started Heli Ag and would get Bevan to cart the product to jobs for me. It's great to see how well they are doing - we really appreciate their support and what it means for our lifesaving service."

If you or your business are interested in Diamond Level Sponsorship of the Hawke's Bay Rescue Helicopter, you can get in touch with us on (06) 878 1630.



"RESCUE ME" COFFEE

Our friends at Bay Espresso Organic Roastery continue to keep our crew caffeinated with their famous "Rescue Me" coffee blend.

Bags of "Rescue Me" coffee (ground and beans) are available at Bay Espresso Organic Coffee Roastery in Hastings and online at our website: www.hbrescuehelicopter.org.nz

\$5 from every bag sold is donated to HBRHT

THANK YOU TO THE FOLLOWING GROUPS/CLUBS WHO HAVE DONATED TO THE TRUST RECENTLY

- PGG Wrightsons – Cash for Communities Programme \$2850
- Mahia Hunt Inc \$4620
- Rapid Relief Team NZ \$1960
- Parkvale Community Group \$2117
- HB Hunt Club \$1000
- Putorino Volunteer Rural Fire Force \$1000
- HB Mountain Bike Club \$1000
- Heretaunga Tramping Club \$1243
- Lions Club of Takapau \$2000
- Kairakau Beach Development Society \$2000
- Summerset Palms Residence Committee \$1000
- Wairoa Club Inc \$1000
- #thecollectivehug Hawke's Bay \$2000
- Waipawa Co-Operating Parish Op Shop \$2700
- Baker Tilly Staples Rodway \$2,750

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Waipukurau Construction Ltd | Waterforce Limited | Websters Hydrated Lime Co Ltd

If you would like to discuss our corporate sponsorship packages or wish to come on board, please get in touch with Jo on 06 878 1630 or email jo@hbhrt.org.nz



Principal Sponsor



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KEEP IN CONTACT

Fundraising and Administration (06) 878 1630

Email: mfm@hbhrt.org.nz

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