Kiwi Health Heroes

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BATEMAN BOOKS

health heroes .indd 1 6/10/25 12:52:39 pm

Contents

Health History 5

1. Nurse Maude: The story of Sibylla Maude 6
2. Hope Soars: The story of Peter Button 10
3. When Adults Think You're Sick Because You Saw a Cow: The story of Hannah Butler 12
4. Being Brave: The story of George Hamlin 13
5. Being the First: The story of Jean Sandel 14
6. Travelling the World to Help at Home: The story of Elizabeth Gunn 16
7. Snow Bound for Tapanui: The story of Peter Snow 18

Health Innovation 20

1. Forged by the Mountain: The story of William Pike 21
2. The World's First Disposable Syringe: The story of Colin Murdoch 24
3. The Parthemore Pulley: The story of Lorraine Parthemore 26
4. MARS Calling: The story of Anthony Butler 28
5. Inventing Cool Products to Improve Care for Patients: The story of Fisher & Paykel Healthcare 30
6. I Care: The story of Ehsan Vaghefi 32
7. Monty the Mouse: The story of Graham Liggins 34
8. Gene Detective: The story of Parry Guilford 36
9. The Machine with NO Instructions: The story of Sid Yarrow 38

health heroes .indd 2 6/10/25 12:52:39 pm

Health Care 40

1. Blooming Marvellous: The story of Sir Ashley Bloomfield 41
2. The World is Your Oyster: The story of Catherine Bell 44
3. A Helping Hand for Health: The story of Leanne Te Karu 46
4. Finding Tania: The story of Tania Mullane 48
5. Starship to the Rescue: The story of Starship Air Ambulance 50
6. A Breath of Fresh Air: The story of Jim Bartley 52

Health Triumphs 53

1. Heart-Stopping Moments: The story of Rob Waddell 54
2. The Unstoppable Buttabean: The story of Dave Letele 56
3. Wahine Toa: The story of Tupou Neiufi 58
4. Snow Rider: The story of Corey Peters 60
5. Real Beauty: The story of Anna Reeve 62
6. Kids Can Make a Big Difference: The story of Eddie Te Hōia (so far) 64
7. Weird Symptoms, Rare Disease: The story of David McPherson 66

Advice from our Health Heroes 69

health heroes .indd 3 6/10/25 12:52:39 pm

Welcome to Kiwi Health Heroes!

You're about to embark on a journey through time and discovery, where real-life Kiwi legends have changed the way that we think about and care for our health. From daring doctors and brilliant inventors to everyday heroes who never gave up, these are the stories of people who made a difference — just like you can!

Did you know that a New Zealand inventor created the first ever disposable syringe? Or that a rural doctor made a world-first discovery about chronic fatigue syndrome? How about the amazing Kiwi who started air rescues after witnessing a disaster? And let's not forget the clever minds behind incredible inventions like high-tech medical imaging that's helping save lives today!

But this adventure isn't just about looking back — it's about stepping into the shoes of a health hero yourself. In this book, you'll be able to pick your reading path, leading you from one story to the next. Will you follow the path of brave caregivers? Or explore the minds of inventors who changed health forever? Maybe you'll uncover the stories of Kiwis who faced huge health battles — and won! The choice is yours.

So, are you ready to explore the past, be inspired by the present, and discover how you can be a Kiwi health hero, too? Let's go!

health heroes .indd 4 6/10/25 12:52:39 pm

Health History

Aotearoa has amazing health stories from the past! Here you can find stories about the first female army doctor in New Zealand, the man who started air rescues after seeing the *Wahine* disaster, and Nurse Maude, who helped so many people in her community. Then there's the Tapanui GP who discovered chronic fatigue syndrome – a world first! Enjoy reading about these inspiring Kiwis who made a big difference.

1. **Nurse Maude:** The story of Sibylla Maude
2. **Hope Soars:** The story of Peter Button
3. **When Adults Think You're Sick Because You Saw a Cow:** The story of Hannah Butler
4. **Being Brave:** The story of George Hamlin
5. **Being the First:** The story of Jean Sandel
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health heroes .indd 5 6/10/25 12:52:39 pm

Nurse Maude

The story of Sibylla Maude

Thomas and Emily Maude lived in Christchurch and had eight children. Their first child was born on 11 August 1862, and they named her Emily Sibylla Maude. Because she had the same first name as her mum, everyone called her Sibylla. Sibylla cared for people her whole life, starting with her seven younger brothers and sisters.

When she grew up, Sibylla went all the way to London to learn how to be a nurse. It was 1889 and planes hadn't been invented yet, so Sibylla had to travel to the other side of the world on a ship. It took two years for her to learn everything she could about nursing, and then she came home to Christchurch to her new job as the matron of Christchurch Hospital.

Working in a hospital wasn't what Sibylla wanted to do for the rest of her life. She was an independent spirit and wanted more freedom to help people than a hospital could give her. She wanted to help sick people in their homes, especially people who couldn't afford to go to hospital — which is now known as district nursing.

Did you know?

In 1902, New Zealand was the first country in the whole world to register nurses! Before the Second World War, if you needed to go to hospital, you had to pay to stay there. That meant lots of people couldn't afford to get help when they were sick.

Sibylla talked to some friends to see if she could get enough support to start visiting sick people at home. She was friends with the Anglican Sisters of the Community of the Sacred Name and was also a member of St Michael and All Angels Church. Sibylla told the vicar, Reverend Walter Averill, what she wanted to do. Reverend Averill talked to Reverend Edwin Scott, the Vicar of St Saviours, and the two churches gave Sibylla their support.

Two of Sibylla's good friends, Heaton and Jessie Rhodes, gave Sibylla money to get started. With their support, and the support of the two churches, district nursing was born. Sibylla began making visits to people's homes on 5 November 1896. Really quickly, Sibylla — or Nurse Maude as everyone knew her — became a household name. More and more people came to her for help. Within a year, she had made over one thousand visits on foot to people who couldn't afford hospital

health heroes .indd 6 6/10/25 12:52:40 pm

health heroes .indd 7 6/10/25 12:52:40 pm

or private nursing care. Within five years, there was so much work that the Nurse Maude District Nursing Association was formed. There were now eight district nurses! They all had bicycles, because visiting people on foot was hard work.

Nurse Maude noticed on her rounds that people at home didn't really know how to treat diseases. Tuberculosis (too-ber-kew-LO-sis) was a scary disease, and Sibylla had some ideas on how to help people. She talked to two doctors, Dr Alice Moorhouse and Dr Leslie Crooke, about her ideas. With their support, she started two open-air camps in the New Brighton sand dunes. People at the camps got better — her ideas were working! Lots of people supported Sibylla and donated money for the camps.

Did you know?

Heaton Rhodes, who helped Sibylla by giving her money to start district nursing, became the Minister of Public Health in 1912. During the First World War, he looked into how sick New Zealand soldiers were being treated, and saved many lives. He also worked for the New Zealand branch of the British Red Cross Society. He and Sibylla must have had a lot to talk about!

health heroes .indd 8 6/10/25 12:52:41 pm

When Nurse Maude had been a district nurse for almost 20 years, a pandemic arrived in New Zealand. The end of the First World War saw influenza, or the flu, make its way quickly around the world and millions of people died. Nurse Maude set up in Christchurch's Cathedral Square and helped hundreds of people every day. She was in charge of the city's relief centre and organised lists of patients for volunteers to visit.

Nurse Maude was recognised as one of the volunteers who had contributed the most to solving the crisis caused by the pandemic. Because of this, Christchurch City Council decided to give money every year to the Nurse Maude Association which meant they could afford to employ two more nurses.

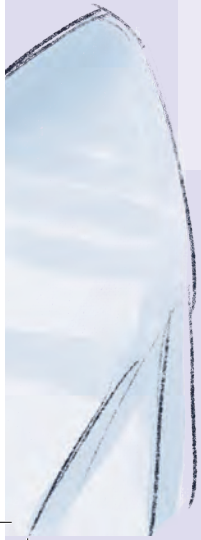
Thanks to Sybilla's vision, New Zealand has a District Nursing Service, and the Nurse Maude Association continues to provide care to people in their homes in the Canterbury, Nelson-Marlborough and Wellington regions, as well as in the Nurse Maude Care Home and Nurse Maude Hospice in Merivale, Christchurch.

Honouring Nurse Maude

In 1934, Governor-General Lord Bledisloe honoured Nurse Maude with an Order of the British Empire (OBE) for her decades of district nursing and homecare. That same year, she also received the King George V Silver Jubilee Medal.

When Nurse Sibylla Maude died on 12 July 1935, thousands of people lined the streets between Christ Church Cathedral and St Peter's Anglican Church Cemetery. At her grave, the waiata Piko Nei te Matenga was sung, and she was farewelled with the words 'Mahi pai, pono hoki' ('Well done thou good and faithful servant.')

Welcome to the pick-a-path! You can read this book in order by turning the pages, or you can let the pick-a-path send you somewhere else in the book. Turn the page to the next story and keep an eye out for the pick-a-path. Happy reading!



health heroes .indd 9 6/10/25 12:52:41 pm

Hope Soars

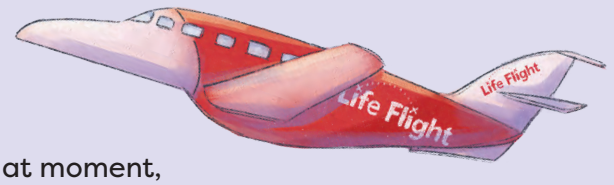
The story of Peter Button

A boy was born next to the runway in Wellington back in 1929. His name was Peter Button and he grew up watching planes. Peter had a passion for flying because of that runway and he also liked to help out at the local fire station.

From Plumber to Pilot

Peter worked as a plumber. He didn't know how to fly a helicopter, which he thought was the only thing stopping him from fulfilling his vision. But Peter didn't let it stop him for long. Within seven years, he had learned to fly. He bought his first helicopter thanks to Mark Dunajtschik, and together with neurosurgeon Dr Russell Worth, the Life Flight Trust was established. Peter's vision was now a reality.

When he was a young man, Peter witnessed a disaster — the terrible sinking of the *Wahine* ferry.



Everybody who was there tried to help. At that moment, Peter thought there had to be a better way. He had a vision — if he could have flown a helicopter to help with the rescue, he could have saved some of the lives that were lost that day. But, it was 1968 and rescue helicopters didn't exist in New Zealand yet.

Helicopter rescue missions are expensive, so in his free time, Peter would use the helicopter to raise money doing everything from scenic flights around Wellington to lifting pools into people's backyards!

In the early 1980s, he got a sponsorship deal with what is now Westpac bank. This meant he could dedicate one helicopter solely to rescue missions. It became the first Westpac Chopper.

In July 1986, the police boat *Lady Elizabeth II* capsized at the entrance to Wellington Harbour while on a training mission. Bravely, Peter decided to help. The wind was blowing very hard — over 100 kilometres per hour — and the waves were as tall as a three-storey building! Despite the conditions, Peter and his son, Clive, managed to save two of the four police officers from the monstrous waves.

Thanks to Peter's vision, Life Flight has helped rescue over 40,000 New Zealanders with their Westpac Choppers and fleet of Air Ambulance planes.

Peter and Clive Button were awarded a Queen's Gallantry Medal for bravery by Governor-General Sir Paul Reeves for their heroic actions after the capsize of the boat *Lady Elizabeth II*,

To read about someone getting a knighthood from Queen Elizabeth II, turn to Sir Ashley's story on page 41!

health heroes .indd 11 6/10/25 12:52:42 pm

When Adults Think You're Sick Because You Saw a Cow

The story of Hannah Butler

Hannah Butler was two years old when her dad got a new job in a different country which meant her whole family had to move. The country they moved to was New Zealand — and they moved here over two hundred years ago!

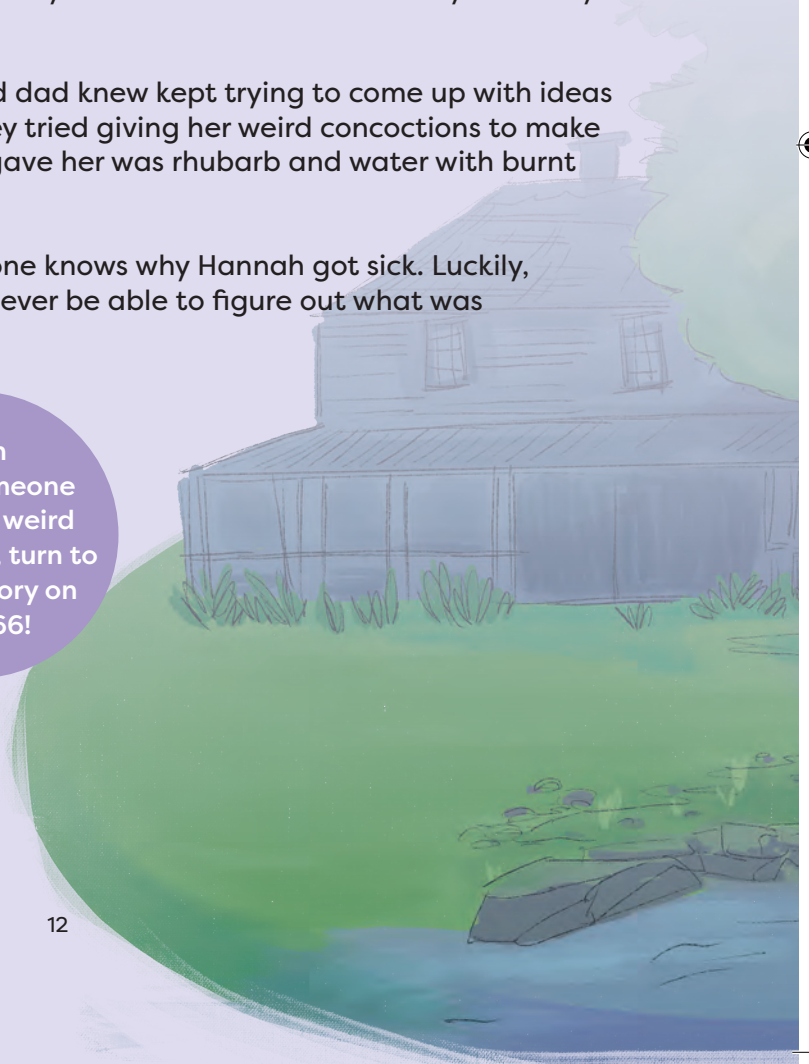
When she was five, Hannah got sick. It was really scary for her and her family because no one knew what was wrong. There were no doctors or nurses, no hospitals or machines that could help figure out what was wrong. She couldn't speak. Her body kept moving in weird ways and she couldn't eat for days and days. No one had ever seen anything like it.

All the adults that Hannah's mum and dad knew kept trying to come up with ideas for what was wrong with Hannah. They tried giving her weird concoctions to make her better. One of the mixtures they gave her was rhubarb and water with burnt shells in it. It was an experiment.

It's been over 200 years, and still no one knows why Hannah got sick. Luckily, she got better but maybe no one will ever be able to figure out what was wrong with her.

What do you think New Zealand was like 200 years ago? Talk to your family about what it might have been like for Hannah. Do you think there were places Hannah could get medicine? Who do you think Hannah's parents could go to for help?

To learn about someone else with weird symptoms, turn to David's story on page 66!



health heroes .indd 12 6/10/25 12:52:42 pm

Being Brave

The story of George Hamlin

When George Hamlin was born, his top lip had a big split in it up to his nose. Today we call this a cleft lip, and it can be seen on an ultrasound before a baby is born. But when George was born over 200 years ago, it would have been a big surprise to his mum and dad.

George lived with his parents in Waimate North, in a house that was quite far away from the nearest neighbours and there were no doctors around who could fix his lip. One day, his dad heard that a ship was visiting nearby with a surgeon on board. George and his dad travelled to Paihia to see if the surgeon could fix George's lip.

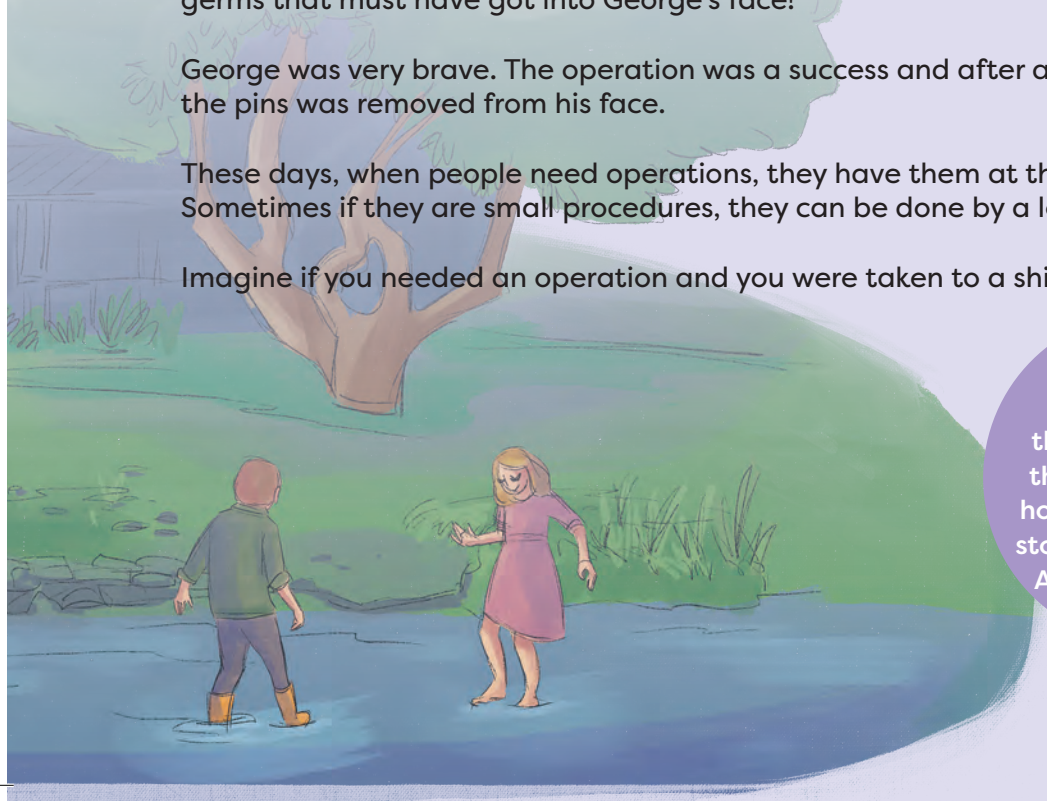
How do you think George and his dad travelled from Waimate North to Paihia? Maybe they had a horse, or maybe they walked all the way there! Have a look at a map and see if you can find Waimate North and Paihia (hint: they are in Northland).

The surgeon said he could do an operation and fix the split. It must have been scary for George, for someone to put pins in and sew up his face with no pain-killers. No one even knew about germs back then. They thought diseases and infections were caused by bad smells! They called this miasma. Imagine all the germs that must have got into George's face!

George was very brave. The operation was a success and after a few days one of the pins was removed from his face.

These days, when people need operations, they have them at the hospital. Sometimes if they are small procedures, they can be done by a local doctor.

Imagine if you needed an operation and you were taken to a ship instead!



To learn about an ambulance that flies patients through the sky to hospital, turn to the story about Starship Air Ambulance on page 50!