

Hats for Hospice

Honouring the legacy of Helen Martin

Described by her friends as a firecracker—always colourful and adventurous—Helen Martin was a lady of sharp intellect and a unique talent for the unexpected.

“Anyone who came to visit had to wear a hat!”

Her vibrant personality was perfectly reflected by her dazzling array of hats. She started collecting hats following the death of her husband in 1996 and by the time of her own death in 2015, she'd acquired more than one hundred. Anyone who came to visit had to wear a hat—she had enough colours and styles to suit any occasion.

This was no frivolous enterprise though. She wanted her hats to make a difference and, years before her death, began meeting with Victoria Hospice to discuss ways that her hats could be used to ensure accessible end-of-life care for those in the Greater Victoria area.

Ultimately, Helen decided to enjoy her hats throughout her life, and made her prized collection a gift to Victoria Hospice in her Will. Per her wishes, the hats will be sold at the upcoming, and sold out, *Hats for Hospice* event on April 23, thereby creating new funding for quality end-of-life care.

Colourful and unique... Victoria Hospice has never received a gift quite like Helen's hats. But true to her character, her gift was also a smart one: making a gift in your Will is one of the best ways to make a significant donation to a cause that has been meaningful in your life, without impacting your lifestyle today.

For Victoria Hospice, bequests are also one of the most important forms of giving for our patients and families: in a typical year, close to 40% of the funds we raise comes from gifts like Helen's (specific or residual gifts made through a Will).

So please join us in remembering Helen Martin, an inspiring woman who is continuing to make the world a little brighter for patients and families in need.



*Victoria Hospice staff model some of Helen's prized hats, on auction at the upcoming **Hats for Hospice** on April 23. All proceeds from the event will support Victoria Hospice and fulfill Helen's legacy.*

If you would like to learn more about making your own legacy gift, contact Gina at 250-519-1744 or visit www.VictoriaHospice.org/how-you-can-help/give-gift-future.

Welcome to the first quarterly edition of *Transitions*.

With spring in full bloom there's a buzz in the air with lots of exciting events to look forward to. Truth is, we are busy year round at Hospice – that's why we decided to publish this newsletter four times a year instead of two, to keep you better informed.

I'm so proud to report that this was a record setting year at Victoria Hospice. For the first time in our

history, donation revenues surpassed \$7.4 million in a 12-month period, an increase of more than \$3 million over our previous best year.

This was thanks in part to the vision and generosity of two extraordinary legacy donors – Lloyd Barrett and Judy Kedwell – but that doesn't tell the whole story. More than 7,100 individuals and organizations made gifts in the past year to provide this unprecedented level of support, thereby ensuring care of hundreds, perhaps thousands, of families in the year ahead, and

giving Victoria Hospice much-needed breathing room to plan further ahead for future care and patient needs.

To everyone who gave their time, their money, and their commitment to make a future gift via a Will in 2017: thank you!

I am grateful for the trust you have placed in Victoria Hospice, and I look forward to keeping you informed and connected. I hope you enjoy the inspiring stories within these pages. Happy spring!

With gratitude!

Sincerely,



Darcy's Story

Your support helped my buddy in his final days

I first met Brent when we were young and single, learning to fly in the Royal Canadian Air Force. In this strenuous time, Brent could always be counted on for a good laugh and a smile with a chuckle. We were buddies from that point forward.

Then, in mid-2015 Brent called me with bad news. "**Brain cancer**," he said. I was numb. It seemed impossible — Brent was only 47, recently married and a devoted father of three children. We spoke of his feelings, his fears, and most of all, what he would be missing in life. I told him that no matter what, he could count on me, that he wouldn't be alone.

Brent's fight began with an operation on his brain in August 2015. Fortunately, they were able to take out the tumour. Unfortunately, 4 months later, they found another tumour. More radiation and chemo followed but, by June, we could see that the treatments weren't working — Brent's time was limited.

When the time came, Victoria Hospice was there to support us.

Brent continued to stay at home with Hospice's help until August 2016, when he showed signs of needing care on the inpatient unit.

Amid all this, I proposed marriage to (my now wife) Jacqueline. A day later I asked Brent to be my best man. Over the next month, between cancer treatments and appointments at Hospice, we would spend time together going out for lunch or for suit fittings. Making it to the wedding was Brent's goal.

Just five hours before our wedding, I received a phone call from Hospice. Brent had experienced a seizure; he wouldn't make it to the wedding. The nurse said Brent's condition was "*stable but not good; possibly only 24 hours to live.*" She then took it upon herself to video-chat me on her phone, so I could at least say hi and see Brent smile before my big day.

The next day, we set up camp in Brent's room at Victoria Hospice.

He was only partially responsive but we knew he could hear us. Throughout our

eight-day stay, we were amazed at the genuine compassion each member of Hospice showed, not only for the patient, but also for his family and friends.

On September 18 at 10:50 am, with his wife, children, Jacqueline and me at his side, Brent passed away. Brent Maeland was my closest friend, and we will forever be grateful to the staff of Victoria Hospice for the care he received. **Thanks to Hospice and a wonderful community of supporters, this vital service was available to us when we needed it the most.**



Your support means that patients like Brent can have the people they love the most with them when they most need them.

A Day in the Life of a Victoria Hospice Volunteer

Stories from the edge of life as told by Harry*

It's Wednesday, shortly after 6 am, and I'm off to a weekly shift at Victoria Hospice. Hospice is in the Richmond Pavilion, an older, red brick building at the Royal Jubilee Hospital. Ironically, it used to be the hospital's labour and delivery unit. Yes, some people entered the world here, and left it again in the very same place.

The elevator opens on the 3rd floor, and I see one or two nurses around the front desk. Lights are low, and it's quiet at 7 am.

Sarah, my volunteer partner, is already there when I arrive. I enjoy catching up with her young life each week; her psychology studies, her job and news of her dad who, like me, was born in Northern Ireland.

Our first job is to listen to the overnight taped reports from the nurses, outlining each patient's status on the 17-bed unit.

** Volunteer and patient names have been changed.*

As I survey the list of patients I note that while there are a few very old patients, many are younger than my 65 years. Illness can have little respect for age.



With blue volunteer vests on, we're on shift at 7:30 am. I walk the still, dark hallway to see if any lights are on in patient rooms, and if they are,

I gently knock on the door, introduce myself, and welcome another day in both our lives. Some people I'll recognize from last week, some are no longer here, and possibly, some may be gone by the end of this shift.

One man I know well is Robert. In the spring, I met him at his home to record his life story as part of Victoria Hospice's Life Stories program. Robert is a gruff former mechanic who's been living with lymphatic cancer for a

couple of years and is now here as a respite patient. I enquire how he's been and if he's had a chance to listen to the Life Stories we recorded.

"Yes," he replies, looking out the window away from me, "I'm glad we did it." An edge of emotion cracks his voice and shows in his eyes, as he blinks back the beginning of tears. Robert's big concern is how his adult son who is disabled will cope with his death, even though they've talked about it lots. I nod and listen to Robert, but he's a man of few words when it comes to expressing emotion. I think I'll mention his name to Arnold the counsellor, for some follow up later.

As I leave Robert's room I see a small stuffed angel hanging by the door across the hallway, the signal that death has come to that room and claimed another, Karen aged 90.

This reminds me that I want to see Donna. I've helped feed Donna breakfast these past two weeks, but now I see her

Volunteer Harry, with Victoria Hospice's staff of nurses, doctors, and caregivers, ensures that each patient's journey is one of comfort and compassion.



Palliative Patient Score has dropped to 10, and death will not be long in coming. She, too, has had a long life, coming from England after the war and meeting her husband-to-be on her very first day in Canada. They were together for almost 70 years before he died just a few months ago. His picture sits on her side table.

Her room is dim and quiet. Her eyes are closed, and her breathing is shallow. The skin on her face seems to have drawn tauter since last week. I draw up a chair, hold her hand and wish her well on whatever journey lies ahead. Whether voluntary or not, there's a slight ripple under her eye lids, a small but perceptible press in her hand. Fare thee well, Donna.

It's 8:15 am and breakfast is arriving. Most patients are able to eat independently with some help setting up. This morning Greg will need help. I haven't met him before, and immediately notice his distinctive long, white hair that flows from a bald crown. At 98 he's had long innings,

but there will be no opportunity to hear his story over breakfast of chocolate pudding, as his recall and sentences are now confused. I hear his London accent, and so I break into an old music hall song, but today there is no sign of recognition.

Beyond breakfast, I run into James, whose wife Anna is on the unit. James describes how they've been living with Anna's breast cancer for over 5 years, facing the spectre of death all this time. I listen, and am reminded of the resilience required of caregivers at home when loved ones fall sick. Anna is 54.

The end of shift draws near, and I see Laura and Ted arrive, a couple of really experienced volunteers who replace Sarah and me at 10:30 am. We share our shift report and some lighthearted banter. There's a special bond between the good people who are hospice volunteers.

Volunteers like Harry provide comfort to patients and their families in a variety of ways. Your support helps our volunteers receive expert training to give your loved ones the best care possible.



I say my farewells in the volunteer office, then receive some thanks from the shift nurses on my way out.

On the elevator again, I'm with Maria, a hospice community care worker. Maria is from South America and is heading home to provide care to a family member who is dying. She explains that palliative care as we know it does not exist in her home country.

Together, we step out of the Richmond Pavilion on a lovely morning, she to prepare for the long journey ahead, and me to give thanks for my good fortune to be alive and well on another day of my journey on this earth.



Your Donation Makes a Difference

YES! I would like to help Victoria Hospice with a gift

Donation preference: 1-time Monthly / My donation: \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 Other

Name

Credit card type: VISA MasterCard AmEx

Address

Card #

City/Province

Expiry date: ___ / ___

Postal Code

My donation is in memory of

Phone

Please send an acknowledgement letter to

Email

Name

I would like to receive Victoria Hospice e-newsletters.

I wish to remain anonymous.

I have included Victoria Hospice in my Will.

Address

City/Province

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Thank you!

Compassionate care at Victoria Hospice is made possible through the generosity of our community. The individuals listed below have been remembered by friends and loved ones with gifts In Memory and In Honour between November 1, 2016 and January 31, 2017. These meaningful gifts honour precious lives and help to enhance quality of life for other patients and families in need.

IN MEMORY Desmond Ahearne · Nayer Ahmadi · Winfried Albrecht · John Alexander · Hazel Ames · Alice Anderson · Brian Andrew · Manfred Angene · Carol Ann Lum · Valerie Antcliffe · Denis Barker · Doug Barnett · Ann Battison-Cain · Carole Bawlf · Larry Beachkowski · Harry Beaton · Joseph Beaupre · William Bell · Sylvia Bell · Patricia Bell · Carol Bellows · Hilda Bennett-Brown · Donna Benson · John Benson · Jean Bethell · Henry Biles · Nancy Bingham · Dee Bingham · Don Bingham · Michael Birch · Jorg Boehm · Carol Bond · Lorne Botkin · Marie Boudreau · Carol Bradshaw · Helen Braithwaite · Marlene Brennan · Frances Brown · David Brown · Bob Buckingham · Terry Burnett · Ena Buttuls · Kathy Bynell · Kathleen Byrnell · Catherine Cadoni · Margaret Campbell · Michael Campbell-Moore · James Carfra · Mac Carpenter · Diane Carr · Melva Carter · Dudley Carter · Nancy Casey · Allan Cassidy · Donald Cawley · James Chow · Jon Chow · Len Christie · Michael Chupick · Terry Clement · James Cline · Susan Coneys · Marion Cook · Kay Cossom · Nicole Cotie · Patricia Coward · Stan Crampton · Sheena Creamer · George Crha · Edna Crowther · Carol Cutforth · Lita Dahl · Mario DaLuz · Barry Daniel · Craig Davidson · Joelle Dawne McCaig · Fernanda De Torres · Betty Denning · Elizabeth Denning · Victor Denning · Lenora Der · Anne Derosa · Trevor Donaldson · Doris Donaldson · Pat Donegan · Cheryl Donison-Luchsinger · Stephen Downs · Ruth Doyle · David Drewry · Rose Drewry · David Dunlap · Ivor Dunlop · Joe Dyke · Doreen E. 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IN HONOUR Joan Backus · Scott Bryant · Daugulis Family · Orlaith Duke · Sonja Fasoli · Valerie Graham · Gardiner Family · Gloria Greeniaus · Robert Guskey · Mari Hanna · Derek Hrycuik · Jennifer Jasechko · Bonita Joe · Cindy Jones · Henry Lam · Kenneth Lawrence · Darcy Lawrence · Elizabeth Loomer · Elizabeth McAuley · Beth McDonald · Vida McMillan-McKay · Valerie Moore · Gwyneth Moreside · John Moynan · Doris Parham · Del Pengelly · Stacy Polmateer · Ray Protti · Gerry Protti · Gretchen Rohani · Lynn Sadler · Allena Smyth · Brad Spence · Carol Spence · Michelle Tinis · Wendy Wainwright · Betty Watts · Cyril Williams

Supercharge your Support

On any given day, Victoria Hospice has up to 400 registered patients. We never know when they will need our help, or when a medical emergency might arise. The same is true for people who are bereaved. Grief is not a straight path and can surface at anytime following the death of a loved one.

That's why it's so helpful when donors decide to convert their regular support to Victoria Hospice into a **monthly donation**. Monthly donations provide Victoria Hospice with a steady flow of

resources, which allows us to respond the moment a medical or bereavement issue occurs.

Plus, it's more convenient for you! With payments spread out over the year, rather than making one lump-sum gift, monthly giving can be more affordable and easier to track, and the monthly withdrawals take up less administration time. Simple for you. Big impact for Victoria Hospice.

Fill out the form on Page 4 to start your first monthly donation now!



Hospice nurse and super-supporter, Carolyn Wilkinson, knows firsthand the difference her donations make.

Victoria Hospice Vision Quality end-of-life care for all

Victoria Hospice Mission

To enhance the quality of life for those facing advancing illness, death and bereavement through skilled and compassionate care, education, research and advocacy

Restoring Vision, Renewing Lives

Victoria Hospice Patients Give the Gift of Sight

In 2016, more than 40 patients from Victoria Hospice gave the gift of sight through a unique eye donation program with the Eye Bank of British Columbia.

Thanks to generous patients and dedicated nurses who inform patients and families about this choice, Victoria Hospice achieved the highest number of eye donations of all donor organizations in the province.

To date, eye donations from Victoria Hospice patients have benefitted 56 BC residents through sight-restoring corneal transplants. Additional donor tissue has gone to further research efforts into the treatment and prevention of ocular disease.

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THE NEWSLETTER OF

VICTORIA  HOSPICE

Would you like to share
your Hospice story?
We would love to hear from you.

Contact Tamara Dean,
Donor Relations Officer
at 250-519-1744 or
Tamara.Dean@VictoriaHospice.org.

Thank you.

1952 Bay Street, Victoria BC V8R 1J8
250-519-1744, info@VictoriaHospice.org

www.VictoriaHospice.org

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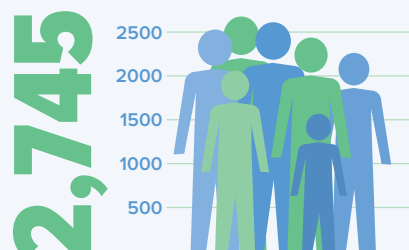
Robert, a recent recipient, says to the family of his cornea donor:

“We are finding ourselves in seemingly opposing spheres—death and life. Yet, through this operation we are now connected without knowing each other. I share your grief, even if only anonymously. I have received not just the gift of vision but the gift of life from you.”

Thank You Telus

Supporting Children and Youth in their Grief

Victoria Hospice thanks the Telus Victoria Community Board for their gift of \$20,000 to support grief and bereavement counselling for children and youth who have experienced a death or are living with a life-limiting illness.



The number of children, youth and adults Bereavement Services reached out to this year