

A photograph of an older couple outdoors. The woman, on the left, has short blonde hair and is wearing a blue top. She is smiling and has her arm around the man's shoulder. The man, on the right, has grey hair and a beard, and is wearing a light-colored polo shirt with a small logo that says "scotland". They are standing in front of green foliage.

The faces of giving

**Reassurance for
patients with
silent disease**

**A life saved brings
an emotional gift**

Vitality

SPRING 2017

CEO's message for you

I was delighted to recently receive an invitation to attend my first Friends of Austin AGM. What a wonderful morning it was, chatting with such a hard-working and dedicated group of volunteers. I am so grateful for the extraordinary contribution of \$295,000 made by Friends of Austin in 2016/17 to patient care and welfare at Austin Health. Another of our very active and loyal auxiliaries, the Greensborough Auxiliary, celebrated their 91st anniversary several weeks ago – congratulations and thank you!

I have been enjoying learning about our long history of partnership with the community – 135 years ago the Austin Hospital was started with a donation from Elizabeth Austin which has evolved into an incredible journey of support which we all share together.

I feel privileged to be surrounded by such a generous, kind and hard-working network of support – people like George, Dawn and Paul who you can read about inside. Each of them feel passionate about wanting to give back to the hospital and for that I am immensely grateful.

And to you - your help for people and families who need the very best of care is so much appreciated and I hope in my time here I can have the opportunity to thank you in person.

Gratefully,



Sue Shilbury
CEO, Austin Health



The ultimate gift brings mixed emotions

Every year we receive donations from wonderful people who have decided to leave a gift in their Will. The new Duckboard Function Centre at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital (HRH) has been built thanks to three such donors.

There are many buildings at HRH that are no longer in use, including the old 1970's kitchen and food services area. Robert Winther, Veterans Liaison Officer at HRH, says, "Hospitals never have enough function space and the suggestion was taken up by Austin Health's Executive."

The cost was very high, but covered by three wonderful individual bequestors. George Duncan was one of these individuals. Having served in World War II, the injuries George had sustained left him totally and permanently incapacitated.

George's gift of \$880,000 meant that redevelopment work could begin, transforming the kitchen into a modern space honouring Veterans and Repatriation. Other bequestors were the grand-daughter of the founder of Austin Hospital, Elizabeth Austin and also Len Bergemann who worked at HRH during the 1970s.

The only regret Robert Winther has is that he cannot thank the bequestors for their enormous generosity and contribution.

"Receiving a bequest means mixed feelings for me," he says. "I am excited and proud to see HRH continuing to be a vibrant community hub, but sad that I cannot look our bequestors in the eye, shake their hand and say a sincere and heartfelt thank you."

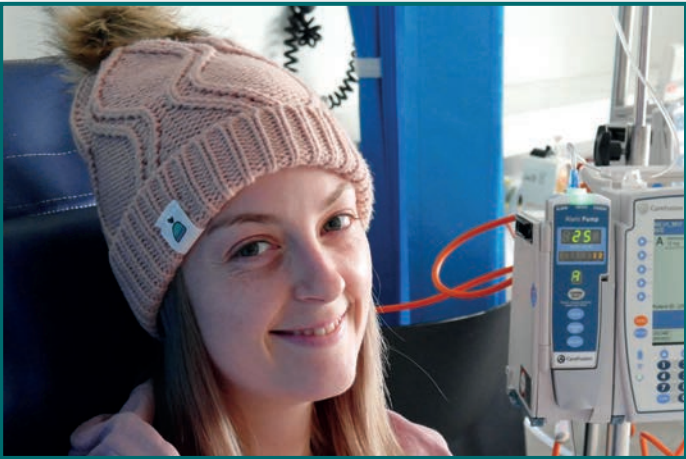
If you have thought about leaving a gift in your Will to Austin Health, why not consider becoming a living Bequestor? We can thank you now and show you how your gift will make a difference. Please contact our Bequest Manager Sevi Skaleris on (03) 9496 5361 or email sevi.skaleris@austin.org.au



Cover story:
The face of giving.
Dawn and Paul from Heidelberg Op Shop.
Read story on page 6.



Reassurance for people with ‘silent disease’



With the help of generous corporate funding, a prominent MS Nurse-Led Clinic at Austin Health is giving people with multiple sclerosis hope and reassurance that is just a phone call away.

Multiple sclerosis (MS) is a progressive neurological disease that affects more than 23,000 Australians. Often affecting young active people in the prime of their lives, an MS diagnosis is usually a shock and fear is a common reaction.

Belinda Bardsley, Manager of the MS Service at Austin Health, says funding for the clinic allows employment of specialist MS Nurses who become trusted advisors to patients – from helping them deal with their diagnosis, symptoms and treatment options to being a reassuring voice when they feel worried.

“The Nurse-Led Clinic is often sufficient to resolve an issue, avoid an Emergency Department visit or hospital admission,” says Belinda. “We can quickly and promptly review the patient, and make sure they’re OK. It’s good for people at a crisis point.”

Sheridan Durose was just 23 when she was diagnosed with MS. “I always knew MS as an old lady disease which would mean I couldn’t walk. That really threw me – the fact that I’m 23 and not going to walk. This wasn’t meant to happen to me so young. I don’t want to lose myself to a disease.”

For Sheridan, having access to MS Nurses has helped her deal with the challenges of an MS diagnosis. “I can call Belinda any time that I’m worried about something. There’s nothing worse when you’re having a hard time and you don’t know anything about this disease or the treatments so to have someone you can count on is great.”

decide on her current medication which has made a significant difference to her symptoms. “I can walk, I can work properly, I can write, I haven’t had any more problems with my eyes, I’ve gained my hope back.”

Considered a leader in the field, the MS Nurse-Led Clinic at Austin Health shows how this type of clinic can help not only the patients but also the efficiency of the hospital. MS Nurses from all over Australia visit to learn how to set-up their own Centres.

“The MS Nurse role is so important in keeping people well and out of hospital, out of emergency, at work and productive citizens.

Often patients have to wait to see a doctor whereas they can usually see their MS Nurse within a few days. There is absolutely an ongoing need for MS Nurses,” says Belinda.

Last year Slater and Gordon supported the Nurse-Led Clinic with a much-appreciated \$10,000 grant. We are currently looking for future funding for this incredibly valuable service. If you are interested in helping please contact David Furniss, Corporate Partnerships Manager on (03) 9496 4129 or email david.furniss@austin.org.au

A life saved brings an emotional gift



George Petrovic needed a liver transplant to save his life. Three months on, he is now recovering well and getting on with his life. An intelligent and generous man, George is filled with gratitude for what he has been given and wants to give back.

George is a man who has already faced significant challenges in his life, having arrived in Australia in the 1990’s after fleeing his homeland during the Yugoslav War. He has since established a life here,

working as an engineer, and is married with two grown up children and recently, a grandchild.

“In April this year I had liver failure and things were going so badly they put me on the transplant list. It became a matter of saving my life. I needed it straight away,” says George. “I am still probably a little in shock; I am still coming to terms with what actually happened.”

George was lucky and a compatible donor liver was found for him.

“I could only live another few weeks if I didn’t get the transplant,” he says. “They (doctors, nurses, and staff) saved my life. I was very emotional, I was crying almost every day, thinking about what they did, how they did it. They are talking people’s lives. It’s amazing.”

Lying in a hospital bed with many tubes around him gave George plenty of time to think.

“I was amazed with the technology around me, and I thought about how much money it must cost to run this. I felt that I could help, it’s a public hospital, it’s not for profit, it’s for the community and I want to help as much as I can.”

George, from his hospital bed, gave a donation of \$4,000.

“It was the only way, being stuck in a bed, that I could help. I could do nothing else. I felt the spirit of being part of this community and helping each other. It’s not just patients – it’s doctors, nurses, cleaning ladies – they work to contribute as much as they can, this is the spirit of this place.”

“I was given a new life, by your people, and the liver donor.”

Thank you George for being part of the ‘spirit of this place’ and caring so deeply for others who need our help. Your donation is testament to the generous, kind and thoughtful person you are and will make a significant difference to future patients at Austin Health.

It is worth noting that it took some time for George to ‘go public’ about his donation. Such is his modesty and kindness that initially he wanted his donation to be in the same spirit as the liver donor who saved his life – anonymous. By going public he hopes to inspire others to help too.

Wonderful community of friends who keep on giving



For 92 years a dedicated and resourceful group of volunteers have made it their goal to support patient care and wellbeing at Austin Health. The Friends of Austin held their 92nd AGM recently and new CEO Sue Shilbury was honoured to attend and take a moment to chat with these remarkable volunteers.

Led by President Beverley Brieze OAM, the Friends contribution runs into millions of dollars since they began fundraising for Austin Health 92 years ago. This year alone they have contributed:

- **\$32,000** for a Portable Cardiac Ultrasound Device
- **\$89,000** for equipment for the Comprehensive Epilepsy Program
- **\$102,000** for Continuing Care equipment
- **\$48,000** for the redevelopment of the Austin Gift Shop on Level 3
- **\$13,000** for the Volunteer Driver program

“As someone that is new to Austin Health I think the Friends commitment is literally inspirational.”
- Sue Shilbury

Generosity above and beyond...

Greensborough Auxiliary, established in 1925, forms a part of the Friends of Austin and has an outstanding story to tell with over 100 years combined volunteering time from the current seven members. These incredibly generous people have contributed thousands of dollars by making crocheted and knitted items and donating them to sell in the Austin Gift Shop. Patients, families and staff are so grateful for so many years of giving from both the Friends of Austin and the Greensborough Auxiliary. Thank you!



Giving hope and a way through devastating injury

The Creative Therapies program at Austin Health's Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre provides patients recovering from spinal cord or brain injuries with the tools to help them accept and come to terms with their injury, gives them a sense of hope and helps them adjust to their new 'normal'.

This unique world-leading program relies on the ongoing generous support from you and other people like you. Every year you have helped us to raise \$75,000 to keep this program going, giving patients the opportunity to learn to regain their mobility and physical functions, along with their self-esteem and confidence, through music, horticultural and art therapies.



Emma suffered a devastating stroke at 24 years old. Music therapy helped her learn to breathe, speak and walk again. Dr Jeanette Tamplin, Music Therapist at Royal Talbot says, "Rhythmic music stimulates our muscle control system into a state of readiness so the body can move in a better, more co-ordinated way."



Steven, a husband and father, became a quadriplegic after an accident in the surf and struggled to deal with the reality of his spinal cord injury. Horticultural therapy helped Steven physically and emotionally. Steven Wells, Horticultural Therapist at Royal Talbot says, "The environment and what we've created helps patients start to empower themselves by making decisions and asking big questions."



Nitisha recently graduated as a chemical engineer at 24 when she became very sick with swelling in her brain. "I was in a really bad state of mind. I didn't know what was happening around me and I couldn't control my emotions", she said. Nitisha was helped immensely by art therapy. "I was able to put my emotions into drawings. Without art therapy I don't think I would have recovered as quickly as I have."

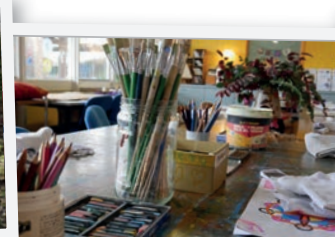
The Creative Therapies program helps patients recover faster, resulting in less time spent in hospital and more time with their families and loved ones. Every donation makes a real and life-changing difference for patients like Emma, Steven and Nitisha.

Please give hope to many more patients with spinal cord and brain injuries have access to these programs by making a donation to our current Creative Therapies appeal. You can complete the attached donation form on this newsletter or contact Fundraising on (03) 9496 5753, or by email fundraising@austin.org.au

You can see the difference creative therapies can make for patients in this video –



visit www.austin.org.au/fr/extraordinary_creative_therapies



Faces of giving



Every day a passionate and dedicated group of volunteers give their time and energy to help patients at Austin Health. They make an extraordinary contribution towards patient care, including welcoming patients and their families, providing directions and information, and getting involved in fundraising.

Hardworking 'salt of the earth' sister and brother Dawn and Paul volunteer for many hours each week at the Heidelberg Op Shop. Located in the Heidelberg Mall, the Op Shop was ready and waiting for someone just like Dawn to seriously sort, clean, organise and sell!

Dawn remembers how she first got involved. "I came in to the shop as a customer and I saw two darling 90 year-olds sitting behind the counter. They told me how they struggled to get volunteers. So I grabbed the Volunteer Form and sent it straight away. I started about two months after that and here I am two and a half years later!"

Last year Dawn encouraged her quietly-spoken brother Paul to also volunteer. Paul had been a patient at Austin Health, having been diagnosed with cancer.

Both Dawn and Paul love the time they spend together at the Op Shop. They have taken great care in stocking the shelves with quality items they know will sell. Their love for the Op Shop sees them arriving at least one hour before opening time. This has also been a blessing for many Op Shop buyers who have taken advantage of doing some early morning shopping before heading to work.

Along with volunteer Michelle, they have taken the shop from breaking even to now being profitable and generating around four times the previous income.

Dawn is driven to give back to Austin Health. "Most of my brothers have passed away from cancer. My mum

passed away from cancer, my dad passed away from cancer. When Paul was diagnosed I thought I lost him too. Now seeing him here and becoming alive again, it's really amazing."

I want to give back to the staff and the hospital who have taken such great care of him."

Austin Health is all the richer for having a wonderful base of volunteers such as Dawn and Paul. If you are interested in becoming a fundraising volunteer contact Elaine on 03 9496 5753 or email elaine.levine@austin.org.au

The Heidelberg Op Shop is located at 12 The Mall, Heidelberg West and is open Mon–Fri 10am-3.30pm and 10am-1.30pm Sat.

You make a world of difference

The generosity and kindness of every one of our supporters is inspirational. So before anything else, we want to say "Thank You!"

We'd like to give special mention to:

- The Marian and E H Flack Trust for Creative Therapies program at Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre
- Banyule City Council for a Sleeper Bed Chair for families of loved ones in End of Life Care – Ward 9 at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital
- Specsavers Heidelberg for raising \$2,904 for the Paediatric Department since January 2014 through their Specsavers Community Program
- Amgrow Home Garden who again fundraised for Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre at the Melbourne International Flower and Garden Show, raising \$6,225
- Melbourne Cumhuriyet Choir who raised \$1,000 at their performance
- Charlotte, a Year 10 student at Luther College Croydon, for donating back the money she earned during her work experience in the Physiotherapy Department at Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital
- The Estates of Graham Marshall, Ruby Jessie Light, Margot Jean Dorum and Anna Maria Leydon
- The Estate of Charles Wallace Hyndman for \$450,000

A colourful breath of fresh air for kids

The redevelopment of gardens and the grounds at Austin Health is possible because of your generosity and that of other local individuals, businesses and community groups. Together you have helped to contribute over \$ 750,000 towards 25 Gardens and Grounds projects.



BEFORE



AFTER

Steven Wells is Austin Health's Gardens and Grounds Project Officer. With a background in clinical nursing and a qualified Horticultural Therapist, Steven is passionate about the benefits gardens provide patients, families, staff and visitors.

"Every garden at Austin Hospital, Heidelberg Repatriation Hospital and Royal Talbot Rehabilitation Centre is designed to be a welcoming and calming space," said Steven.

The courtyard attached to the Paediatrics Ward was once a grey and drab space used rarely by patients and families. Now this courtyard is filled with colourful flower boxes, mural artworks and is a welcoming space for children and their families to spend quality time together. This redevelopment was made possible because of the generous donations received from Myer Doncaster and Meadow Lea who recognised the need to create a space for children.

With three main sites, Steven's work is never done. To date over 7,000 new plants have been planted in and around Austin Health. Today Steven is working on a number of major projects across the three sites, all of which require funding.

If you would like to learn more about helping Steven get these projects off the ground please contact David Furniss, Corporate Partnerships Manager on (03) 9496 4129 or email david.furniss@austin.org.au

YES! I will give towards exceptional patient care at Austin Health.

Title: Dr / Mr / Mrs / Miss / Ms (please circle)

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ P/code: _____

Email: _____

☐ I would like to become a regular supporter of Austin Health.
Please send me more information.

Please accept my tax-deductible donation of:

☐ \$35 ☐ \$50 ☐ \$75 ☐ \$150 ☐ \$_____ *my choice*

☐ Enclosed is my cheque/money order made payable to Austin Health

OR Please debit the amount I have indicated from my:

☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX

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Name on Card: _____

Signature: _____ Expiry: _____ / _____

Daytime Phone Number: _____

Donations of \$2 or more are tax deductible.

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Please send me information about:

- ☐ Making a bequest in my Will to Austin Health; **OR**
☐ I have already included Austin Health in my Will



Austin Health

ABN 96 237 388 063

Locked Bag 25, Heidelberg VIC 3084
Ph (03) 9496 5753 Email fundraising@austin.org.au

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