

# HOSPICE CARE ASSOCIATION OF NORTH WEST TASMANIA INC.



## HISTORY OF THE ASSOCIATION

1985-2022

- ⇒ Researched and compiled by:  
Pat Cherry –1999
- ⇒ Edited and Updated by:  
Lyn Alcock—2006
- ⇒ Edited and updated by:  
Levina Hext 2010
- ⇒ Edited and updated by:  
Janice Lipscombe– 2015
- ⇒ Updated to a PowerPoint presentation by:  
Viki Elphinstone— 2019
- ⇒ Updated by:  
Lois Berry & Leanne Arnol—2022

### Original Mission Statement

“Working together to promote and provide quality care to support people living with a life limiting condition”

### Updated Mission Statement 2019

“Our Mission is to ensure that our Volunteers have the right skills to support our clients maintain dignified lives in a setting of their choice, during the final stages of life”

Early in 1985, a public meeting was called in Burnie at the Anglican Church Hall to measure interest in forming a Hospice Association on the North West Coast.

Around 70 people attended with the Reverend Eric Cave chairing the meeting and Father Jim Smith and Anne Mulhnuysen from Hobart being present. A steering committee was formed. On the 18th September the following year the inaugural meeting was held at the Adult Education Building in Burnie, attended by 51 interested people.

Dr Ed Simpson spoke on the aims and objectives of Hospice and progress reports were shared. The constitution which had been drawn up by the committee was adopted.

#### Elected Officers :

President– Gerry Fulham

Senior Vice President– Pat Cherry

Junior Vice President– Reverend Eric Cave

Secretary– Jenny Williams

Treasurer- Reverend Peter Asley-Bogg

Publicity Officer– Yvonne Fulham

Committee– Christine Guest, Bryan Cross, Norma Jamieson, Eliza Barron, Carl Castellino

In ensuing months the committee met regularly and a Grief training course was conducted by Reverend Eric Cave and Nada Franks.

## Early Days!

There were early challenges to find true direction and keep interest and motivation going.

Publicity was arranged with local talk-back radio programs, newsletters were published and fund raising was ongoing. During this time Dr Frank Reynolds replaced Eric Cave on the committee.

With other resignations, the committee struggled to maintain their momentum with only 4-5 members involved. Acting Chairperson Pat Cherry called a meeting at Hellyer College in 1988 to re-awaken community interest.

### New Committee:

President– Maureen Knowles

Vice President– Martin Jones

Secretary– Barbara Gardam

Treasurer/Public Officer– Viki Elphinstone



The first training program for Volunteers occurred late in 1989, with 20 interested Volunteers.

In 1990, Viki Elphinstone was elected as Training Coordinator and Lyn Evans as Roster Coordinator. Both these roles were filled in a Voluntary capacity.

At a committee level, Chairs and other positions continued to change with a future steadying of roles, leading to stability of Governance.

During this time there was a focus on fund raising and also speaking to community groups to raise awareness of the role of a Hospice Volunteer.

In 1990 Viki Elphinstone, Barbara Gardam and Lorraine attended the First National Conference on Hospice and Palliative Care in Adelaide.

Currently (2022), there is Board commitment for both staff and Volunteers to attend state conferences annually.

## Early 1990's

In 1991 Hospice Care branched into the Mersey-Leven area and Volunteer training was commenced. With this came the need to appoint a Roster Coordinator for the area, a position voluntarily filled by Vicki Jeffrey.

Visits were made to the Association for the first National Hospice week in 1992 by Mr. Mal McKissock for a two day seminar and by Professor Norell Lickissc.

In the following years, an Annual Ball was held as a money raiser, as well as raffles and button days for much needed funds. Volunteer speakers were also invited to community organisations to raise public awareness of the Association.

Throughout this time, members worked from their own homes and much credit is due to Lyn Evans for the time she gave working from her own home (1989 - 1993). But the number of requests were growing, so in March 1992, the group began looking for office space.

It was with much delight, and after considerable negotiation, Hospice Care accepted an office in the Jones Street Health complex, and moved there in April 1993. Donations of furniture and equipment were thankfully received from business houses and community organisations.

With the move into its own office, Hospice had met all its short-term goals.

The office proved to be invaluable for the Association, as by now there were 62 Volunteers on the coast and about 10 clients on the list at any one time. At this stage, it was essential to look for funding to enable Hospice to continue its services.

The Federal Government Palliative Care Programme funding in 1994 covered a part-time Co-ordinator (Viki Elphinstone) and Clerk (as Lyn Evans was unable to continue), plus the purchase of a car. A grant of \$71,000 was made for the first year, with \$54,000 for the following three years.



The Federal Government Palliative Care Program funding in 1994 covered a part-time Coordinator (Viki Elphinstone) and Clerk (as Lyn Evans was unable to continue), plus the purchase of a car. A grant of \$71,000 was made for the first year, with \$54,000 for the following three years.

Hospice Care Awareness week began to be held annually with Button Day appeals contributing to still much needed funds. The Button Day fundraiser continue for many years.

In 1996, the first Memorial Service was held and continues on an annual basis to the present time, with the exception of 2020-2022 inclusive.

A grant of \$8,500 from the Rural Access Programme in February 1998 allowed expansion of services to encompass the far North West and West Coasts with the commencement of volunteer training in Smithton, Zeehan and Queenstown. Twenty Volunteers completed the Circular Head training course and Jan Nes was appointed Roster Co-ordinator.

Office staff at the Hospice Care Association moved to new premises at Parkside, Burnie in January 1999, combining space with the Multi-Disciplinary team of the Specialist Palliative Care Service ( Doctors, Nurses and Social Workers).

In 2001/2002 funding for the Association became a critical issue and it appeared that the Association could not continue. However, most fortunately a special government grant for 2 years was provided for operating funds and in 2003 acceptance of a business plan guaranteed funding for the ensuing 5 years. A new 5 year plan was submitted to ensure continued operation after June 2008.

In May 2002 the Association was given the opportunity to take over the running of the Kiosk at the North West Private Hospital which was ably managed by Volunteer and Board member, Dianne Fitzgerald for a period of 5 years before handing over the reigns to Janet Warner in 2007.



## **Changes to Staffing:**

In August 2003 Viki Elphinstone moved on to work with Palliative Care after 15 years of dedicated work, of which 6 years were voluntary. Her contribution cannot be under-estimated in the moving of the Hospice Care Association from a small, committed group of people to a viable business, but nevertheless, still a large group of committed people.

Vicki Jeffrey took over as Manager and after a some challenging times Gaylene Reid was appointed as Roster Co-ordinator in 2004.

Vicki Jeffrey resigned in September 2006 after 15 years with the Association. This was followed by a short period with Gaylene as Acting Manager until a Manager, Liz Leslie was appointed in October. Liz managed the Association for two and half years before leaving in March 2009 at which time Gaylene Reid was appointed Manager. She was supported in the office by a volunteer, Helene Atkinson for about 4 months and then Sue Jordan returned in a regular two day a week capacity. Marilyn Maher Volunteered many hours in the office during Gaylene's tenure as Manager.

Gaylene Reid resigned in late 2014 and Lois Berry was appointed Manager in early 2015. After 12 years in the office, Sue Jordan retired in 2016 and was replaced for a short period by Lorraine Church before Michelle Malley joined as Coordinator in late 2017. In 2020 Leanne Arnol was employed in a casual relief position within the office. Although it sounds like a lot of change, most staff have given many years of service to the Association.

Since 1989 Hospice Care has provided many thousands of hours of respite and transport support to people on the North West Coast.

We have trained 48 separate groups of Volunteers (2022) with almost 500 Volunteers. Recruitment can be a challenge but Retention of Volunteers never is!

As we prepared to celebrate 30 years of training and supporting Volunteers in November 2019, Viki Elphinstone worked tirelessly on a Pictorial History of Hospice which is currently under review and consists of almost 800 slides. An enormous body of work !



**1995**

⇒ Pat Cherry

**1999**

⇒ Viki Elphinstone

**2002**

⇒ Verna Smith

⇒ Bett Fishwick

**2004**

⇒ Barbara Schmidt

⇒ Betty Hinds

⇒ Mary Stevens

**2005**

⇒ Shirley Wilson

**2006**

⇒ Pam Wright

⇒ Vicki Jeffrey

⇒ Robert Hatto

**2007**

⇒ Damian Thompson

⇒ Ken Moore

**2008**

⇒ Sue Jordan

⇒ Lyn Alcock

⇒ Kathy Winduss

**2010**

⇒ Cecilie Radford

⇒ Carol O'Neil

⇒ Mike Ward

⇒ Jim McMahan

⇒ Rita Johnson

**2011**

⇒ Glynn Williams

⇒ Jan Nes

⇒ Geraldine Rockliff

**2012**

⇒ Joan White

⇒ Wendy Langmaid

⇒ Elizabeth Anderson

**2013**

⇒ Lesley Frampton

**2014**

⇒ Gaylene Reid

⇒ Mary Finnegan

⇒ Anne Cameron

⇒ Ann Wells

**2015**

⇒ Carole Clark

**2018**

⇒ Marilyn Maher

⇒ Rosie Bailey

⇒ Kirsten Ekdahl

⇒ Desi Binns

**2021**

⇒ Des Lovell

⇒ Helen Ziersch

**2022**

⇒ Sue Radford

⇒ Glennys Johnson

⇒ Marie Ward

## **A Hospice for the North West!?**

In early 2000, a group of interested stakeholders met to look at the feasibility of establishing a Hospice facility on the North West Coast. A working party was formed and after many months of hard work, a proposal was submitted to the State Health Minister outlining the desperate need for such a facility, and the option of establishing it at the North West Private Hospital in Burnie.

In the ensuing years this proposal was pursued relentlessly with changing Health Ministers, other politicians and through publicity in The Advocate.

In 2003 the Health Minister commissioned a state-wide Palliative Care Review and in mid 2004 the report “Palliative Care in Tasmania: current situations and future directions” was released. This report highlighted what we had known for many years - the North West Coast desperately needed many dedicated Hospice beds. The concept proposed was the “Hospice without Walls” model. The Health Minister promptly publicly announced that 4 beds would be allocated for this purpose at the Mersey Hospital. This finally eventuated in 2021.

## **The North West Cancer Centre**

In May 2015 a state-of-the-art Cancer Centre was opened alongside the North West Regional Hospital. This drastically affected the number of trips required by Hospice Volunteers for our Clients and their Carers.

## **An Innovative Bereavement Program**

In October 2015 funding was provided by TAHPC (Tasmanian Association of Hospice & Palliative Care) to train Volunteers to develop a Walking Through Grief Program (WTG). This program is a gentle fortnightly walk followed by morning tea in a local café. Annually in October we meet as a large group and share lunch. The program is for Carers after their loved one has died to ‘re-connect socially’ after what may have been an extended caring role. Participants all say they find it a positive experience as they walk and talk with other people who have been through something very similar.





## **Awards & Accolades:**

2019

- ⇒ “Outstanding Palliative Care Community Charter Advocate “
- ⇒ Runner –Up
- ⇒ Presented by the Governor of Tasmania the Honourable Kate Warner

2022

- ⇒ “Outstanding Palliative Care Service Provider”
- ⇒ Finalist

2022

- ⇒ Induction to the Honour Roll of Palliative Care Tasmania
- ⇒ Awarded to Viki Elphinstone for her lifetime commitment to Hospice and Palliative Care
- ⇒ Presented by the Governor of Tasmania the Honourable Barbara Baker

## **Membership of other Organisations:**

- ⇒ Volunteering Tasmania
- ⇒ Palliative Care Tasmania
- ⇒ TasCOSS

## **Funding & Grants :**

- ⇒ State Government Funding on a three cycle
- ⇒ Grant from State Government for a second vehicle– 2022
- ⇒ TCF Grant for upgrade of Website and marketing fliers
- ⇒ Volunteering Tasmania—Resilience Grant for Volunteers post 2020



## Contact Us!

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