



CITTAMANI

CITTAMANI HOSPICE SERVICE LTD

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CITTAMANI NEWSLETTER — AUGUST 2017

DAD'S LAST DAYS

Our father, **Roy Dyer**, passed away in January 2017 and we had a celebration of his life at the local church where he had been an Elder for many years. Everyone was invited to wear “colours that reflect the happiness that Roy brought to their lives”.

Following the service, several people who had known Dad for many years commented that they learned something new about his life that day which was previously unknown to them. This theme of discovering new things about someone you have known a long time (in this case, for my entire life) arose on several occasions leading up to Dad's death.

Dad's stoicism and pragmatic approach to his disease were evident in the way he progressively let us know the details in a timely manner. Initially he was diagnosed with prostate cancer in 2015 and was told that it was likely he would die with the cancer, not from it. However, sadly in his case the disease spread despite the best efforts and care of his doctors. Once it became clear that Dad was terminally ill in late 2016, he actively participated in all the important decisions that arose.

One of Dad's choices was for Cittamani to provide palliative care for him at home. We anticipated that after that, Dad's final days would be in a hospice. Yet as Dad's health declined to the point where he needed a hospital bed, the nurses made it clear that dying at home was a realistic option. Although I had some personal concerns (what if he had his final breaths in the middle of the night, with only me in attendance?), the calm and professional advice from every nurse who visited echoed the same reassuring message. One of them was always just a phone call away, and dying at home, where possible, is best.

So thanks to Cittamani, many more intimate moments with Dad were made possible. Some prompted by being in familiar home surroundings with photos and mementos. However, the most remarkable moment for me, while tending to Dad in his final hours, was applying lemon flavoured glycerine to his lips, which eased the dryness of his mouth. It was incredibly helpful that I could do something for him at this time, however small it may be.

On one of the days when Dad was confined to bed, he asked for a cup of tea (which was out of the ordinary) at a time when three of his adult children, and a son-in-law, were attending to him. He had asked me for a cuppa on a previous occasion, but I gave him an alternative drink in a sipper cup, in keeping with my concerns that he might be burnt by spilled tea, or choke while drinking in a reclined position.



Roy Dyer — a man who brought happiness into people's lives.

This time, with four able bodied and educated adults available, we conjointly set about adjusting the bed position and wondering how best to handle the ‘cup of tea’ request. Then, in miraculous timing, the Cittamani nurse arrived, literally like an angel surrounded by afternoon sunlight in the doorway. Subsequently, we were shown how to best position Dad in bed, and then we stepped back while Dad received some personal care from professional hands.

Later, I apologised to Dad that he never did get that cup of tea, and that perhaps instead of one with us, he might get to have a cuppa with Mum in heaven. He agreed, and said ‘I will just have to be patient’. That moment, at Dad's bedside in his final days, meant the world to me.

Dad was not always lucid — his connection with the real world would fade in and out. His pain management medication worked well, but as his condition deteriorated, so the opportunities to interact with him grew fewer and further apart. On one occasion when my brother and I were attending to Dad, following a longer period of silence than usual, Dad said to us both ‘tomorrow morning at 10 o'clock, I want you to ask me if I would like a vanilla shake’.

The specificity of the request was hard to ignore (especially since we had struggled to get anything but small sips of water into him for some time), let alone the unusual choice — (PTO)

(continued) Dad was always an iced coffee drinker. So dutifully, the next day at 10am, I asked Dad if he would like a vanilla shake, to which he said yes. Thankfully we had all the ingredients to hand, and made him a milkshake which he then proceeded to drink in entirety. Amazing.

Later, my brother asked Dad about the significance of the vanilla shake at 10 o'clock. Dad told him that when he was a junior clerk in the bank in the 1940s, he and his colleagues would have a vanilla shake during their morning break. An anecdote that had not been previously mentioned, yet a prompt for what proved to be his last sustenance.

These poignant moments are steeped in meaning and deeply etched in my mind. They could only have happened at home, with family as company, I am sure. It is only through the generous blessing of Cittamani's services, that these precious moments were possible for Dad and our family.

Thank you from: Jonathan, Felicity, 'pling and Rosemary.

Jonathan Dyer

June 2017

Members of the **WAVERLEY — PALMWOODS MASONIC LODGE** put in a lot of time and energy cooking sausage sizzles at Bunnings to raise money for Cittamani. Their hard work and commitment paid off and they were able to purchase two much-needed Air Mattresses for our clients. Bunnings generously supplied BBQ, gas, marquee, tables, plus their hungry customers!



MEMORIAL SERVICE — *change of venue*

This year we're breaking with tradition and holding our Annual Memorial Service at the Arts & Ecology Centre at the beautiful Maroochy Bushland Botanic Gardens. Parking has long been an issue at Cittamani, as has the possibility of inclement weather. So for the safety and comfort of all, we have decided that it's time for a change.

If you're not familiar with the Bushland Botanic Gardens (Palm Creek Road, Tanawha), there is an abundance of sealed parking, and the Multipurpose Room at the A & E Centre is a welcoming space which is wheelchair accessible. There's also a kitchenette close by, so we can all enjoy afternoon tea and a chat afterwards.

There are many lovely walks in the Gardens, both on sealed pathways and bush tracks, so throw in some comfy shoes. It's a delightful venue and we're all really looking forward to holding our Memorial Service there this year.

(see invitation in this Newsletter)



"I find it helpful. It's an enjoyable service. It's not a bad sad — you're almost reaching out and touching them."

"I come back to think about my wife and how Cittamani helped her. It's a remembrance thing and it always cheers me up."



World problems cannot be challenged by anger or hatred. They must be faced with compassion, love and true kindness. If you look deeply into such things, the blueprint is found within, in the mind, out of which actions come.

His Holiness The Dalai Lama

**CITTAMANI THANKS
THE JUNE CANAVAN FOUNDATION
FOR GENEROUS ONGOING SUPPORT**



**CITTAMANI'S
BEREAVEMENT GROUPS
ARE SPONSORED BY
NAMBOUR RSL**

FROM THE DIRECTOR

We hear so much in the media these days about violence and conflict that it is easy to despair about the human race. In the face of this barrage of negative news, we can forget that there is another side to this story. If we look around there are countless examples, perhaps not so evident in the media, of compassion, kindness and selfless action. On the international level, we need only consider the outpouring of support from around the world in response to events like the 2004 Tsunami, or the individuals who work tirelessly and in dangerous and difficult conditions for various international relief agencies. On the local level, within Australia and here in our Sunshine Coast community, there are many agencies and individuals working to benefit others. They are evidence of a positive, compassionate side to our human nature.

There are so many inspiring stories out there that we do not hear about. I would like to share my experience of one such story here on the Sunshine Coast, where many individuals and groups contribute to creating a caring and compassionate community for people facing end-of-life and bereavement. This includes the health care professionals and health services with whom we collaborate to provide care as well as the various organisations and individuals who donate so generously of their time and funds to support our work and the family and friends who provide care at home. This is a great example of the community working together to support one another, an example of the power of compassion.

A compassionate city is an uncomfortable city.

*A city that is uncomfortable when anyone
is homeless or hungry.*

*Uncomfortable if every child isn't loved and given rich
opportunities to grow and thrive.*

*Uncomfortable when as a community we don't treat
our neighbours as we would wish to be treated.*

Karen Armstrong Founder of the global movement
— *The Charter for Compassion*

Dr Louise Welch, Clinical Director of Palliative Care Service on the Sunshine Coast, recently commented:

*It is this special ability of local teams and groups to
collaborate with each other in an entirely patient-focused
manner that enables us to achieve the excellent care that
our shared patients receive.*

This is certainly my experience. Each person and each family that we support is unique, with their own unique needs and priorities. We collaborate with a myriad of individuals and services to meet these needs and we find that any request for assistance is met with enthusiasm to work together in the best interests of clients — a willingness to go the extra mile. Whether it be the specialist services such as the local Health Service Palliative Care Team, Dove Palliative Care Unit, Katie Rose Cottage, Bloomhill Cancer Care, medical consultants and GPs, or local domiciliary nursing

services and people who arrange respite, transport, home help etc. Together we can provide a level of support and care that would be beyond our individual capacities.

In terms of financial support, we are very grateful to **Queensland Health**, who provide about 50% of our running costs. However, our community provides the other 50%, nearly \$500,000 annually. **Nambour RSL** has supported our bereavement support program since 2009. The **June Canavan Foundation** and the **Whitehouse Foundation** are also significant supporters as are local service clubs and community groups, too numerous to name individually. Many generous individual donors provide vital support and some have done so for many years. Michelle is one such donor:

I have been a monthly donor to Cittamani for 20 years. I wanted to maintain financial support after seeing the care my young mother received during her long battle with cancer. Cittamani made an awful journey bearable. My mother died at 49, and I am only 44 now myself, so the whole process had a big impact on me. It was easy for me to use monthly credit card deductions, and I have increased my donation level with my changing fortunes. I strongly recommend regular donations to Cittamani to anyone who believes this sort of care should be universal.

On an individual level, what better example can there be of the power of kindness, of the human spirit than the inspirational family and friends who provide the care at home for their loved ones. Through compassion and commitment, they go beyond what they would ever have believed themselves capable of. As one carer said: 'It feels like your world is falling apart, then the nurses come in and give you a hug and it just makes you feel... Alright, yes, I can cope. I can do this.'

So let's recognise and celebrate our human capacity to work together with kindness and compassion to nurture those positive qualities and capacities that make our community and the world a better place for everyone.

Alex Moore
Director, Cittamani Hospice Service



Residents of Allora Gardens held a very successful fete in May to raise funds for Cittamani Hospice Service.

CITTAMANI HOSPICE SERVICE invites you to our –

ANNUAL MEMORIAL SERVICE

DATE: **Saturday 7th October 2017**

PLACE: **ARTS & ECOLOGY CENTRE
MAROOCHY BUSHLAND BOTANIC GARDENS ***

Palm Creek Road, Tanawha

TIME: **2 – 4 pm**

RSVP: **Tuesday 3rd October 2017**

PHONE: (07) 5445 0822

* Please note new venue (see article).

Flowers will be provided as an offering in memory of your loved ones. You may like to bring a small photo special to you, to place on the altar, which will be returned at the end of the service.



THANKYOU TO THE WHITEHOUSE FOUNDATION

Reliable vehicles are essential to Cittamani as our team travels around 100,000 km each year. Our nurses are often called to visit patients at night, so it is important that we provide them with the safest vehicle possible. Several of our cars are coming to an age where we would like to trade them in, but we have found it very difficult to get grants to cover the cost of the upgrade. However, the Whitehouse Foundation have just given us the funds to purchase a Toyota Rav4.

We are very grateful as this will not only provide adequate space to carry equipment to client's homes, it will also be an ideal vehicle to visit our patients who live in the more remote regions of our Community.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY?

IT WILL HELP SAVE POSTAGE AND PAPER COSTS. IF SO, PLEASE EMAIL US AND LET US KNOW — news.cittamani@gmail.com



I'd like to help fulfil someone's wish to remain at home in the last few months of their life.

MY GIFT OF \$ _____ IS ENCLOSED

Please tick preferred payment option

☐

Cheque payable to **Cittamani Hospice Service**

☐

Charge my **Credit Card** for the amount above,

or

☐

Deduct the **Regular Amount** of \$ _____ per month from my credit card.

*Cittamani Hospice Service Ltd is a registered charity.
All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.*

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POST CODE _____ PHONE _____

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You can also donate online at Cittamani's secure website: www.cittamanihospice.com.au
ABN 67 110 865 560