

Extraordinary Gratitude: One Man's Final Journey Home

Anne* and Stephen* were deeply in love and enjoying an adventurous life together when, at the age of 46, Stephen was diagnosed with a rare form of cancer.

He fought gallantly through the symptoms and equally difficult treatments for many months. Three years later, in a joyful ceremony, Anne and Stephen were married, determined to make the most of their life together and to not let cancer define them.

Just six months into their first year of marriage, as Stephen's illness progressed, he was admitted to Victoria Hospice's inpatient unit to address respiratory challenges. It became clear that more intense support would be required, as his time would not be long. While adjusting to this reality, Anne felt the warmth and compassion of the physicians and nurses who cared for him. She found comfort in the knowledge that she and Stephen were exactly where they needed to be, and she prepared

herself for what was to come.

One physician, Dr. Fraser Black, had a powerful impact on Anne. His calm, reassuring demeanor, together with his ability to infuse moments of lightness into difficult conversations, alleviated her distress and helped her find acceptance as Stephen rapidly declined. "Dr. Black made an unbelievably difficult time bearable," says Anne. "He seemed to know when his presence was needed. It's hard to put into words how much that meant to me."

One stormy January night as Stephen rested on the Unit, no longer conscious, Anne felt an overwhelming desire to take him home. At 6 am she approached the nurses' station. "Would I be crazy to think that I could take him home?" The

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** Names have been changed to honour the donor's wish for anonymity.*



Last October, I was contacted by a donor who shared with me the tremendous news that she would be leaving the bulk of her estate to Victoria Hospice. I was delighted. Calls like this don't come in every day, and I know how important they are to the future of this organization. I immediately contacted her to ask what motivated her decision and how we could ensure her wishes would be carried out. Over the series of conversations that followed, I was deeply inspired by her story, and I hope you will be too.

Gina

Gina Cuthbert, Legacy Giving Officer



immediate response was “Not at all. We can make that happen.” What unfolded over the next 12 hours was astounding. Dr. Black and the entire Victoria Hospice team mobilized to arrange for Stephen’s care at home. Equipment was ordered and delivered to Anne’s home, medications were prescribed, and transportation was arranged — with 24-hour medical support on standby in case any critical interventions might be needed to ensure his comfort.

At 6:00 pm that day, as the wind howled and the rain fell in torrents, Stephen went home. Family and friends gathered, surrounded him with love, and said their farewells. Anne spent some peaceful hours at his side, and he died early the next morning.

Looking back now, Anne can’t believe the team rallied so quickly to carry out her wishes. And 12 years later, she has decided to leave her legacy in honour of Dr. Black’s compassionate care.

When Dr. Black heard the news that the wife of one of his former patients was dedicating her legacy to him, he was moved. “People talk about how meaningful the care is to them, but they often don’t realize their journey is incredibly powerful for us, too. People

think of what Victoria Hospice gives—and we do—but as caregivers, we also receive. It’s truly a privilege to be with people in their final days and hours, to ease their pain and suffering, to help them find peace, and send them on their way with dignity, compassion and respect. We are honoured to be let into their lives at such a significant time.”

When we asked Dr. Black what he would like to say to Anne, he replied, “I’d express my tremendous gratitude and thanks—for trusting us to be there with you for that journey, for speaking up for what was important to you and

your husband at the time, and showing us your gratitude with your words then, and your actions now.

“This is an incredible gift to Victoria Hospice. We need support now, and we need support for the future, so we can be confident that we can continue to provide that care.”

If you would like information about simple ways to leave a legacy, or if you would like to explore how you might honour a loved one or a caregiver, please contact Gina Cuthbert at 250-519-1743.



The Man Who Inspired the Gift: Dr. Fraser Black

Dr. Fraser Black has worked with Victoria Hospice since 2002. He credits an “ah-ha” moment during his Family Practice Training at the University of Calgary for helping him find his calling as a Hospice Palliative Care Physician.

After a busy clinic day, he was invited to join his mentor on a home visit to a dying patient. He felt he did more for that man and his family in that visit than he had done for all the other patients he had seen that day, and he knew immediately that this was the work he was born to do.

Dr. Black is a Clinical Professor in UBC’s Department of Family Practice and holds the position of Assistant Dean of Student Affairs for the MD Undergraduate Program, Island Medical Program. He also has an interest in international health, particularly increasing the capacity and availability of palliative care, leading projects and initiatives in Nepal, India, Tanzania, and Brazil.

Your donation doubled!

In the Fall of 2017, Victoria Hospice was offered a very special opportunity: a group of local philanthropists would match new donations made to Victoria Hospice before December 31, 2017 dollar-for-dollar up to \$100,000.

Thanks to the incredible support of people like you, Hospice surpassed the \$100,000 target, raising a total of \$253,628. Thank you for making this possible!

Your Donations:
\$153,628



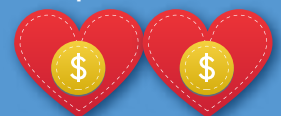
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The Match:
\$100,000



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Victoria Hospice receives: \$253,628!



Life Stories Bids Adieu to Program Founder



Have you ever wondered about the story behind *How your Grandparents met*? For the past 10 years Victoria Hospice *Life Stories* has been capturing stories just like this.

This program's milestone achievement would not have been possible without its founder, Dan Curtis.

Dan is retiring from *Life Stories* after ten years stewarding the program. Thankfully, he plans to remain as a Hospice volunteer.

"It is my hope that the program will continue to thrive for another 10 years," says Dan.

"I am pleased to have initiated *Life Stories* and to have worked with such a terrific group of volunteers, staff, and managers. My life is richer for having known them.

Life Stories will always be one of the most rewarding and satisfying experiences of my life."

Thank you for your enormous contribution, Dan!

To learn more about *Life Stories* or other volunteer opportunities, please contact our Volunteer Services Department at 250-370-8727.



"We are bound by a belief that providing a way for people to share their stories at the end of life can be comforting and healing." Dan Curtis



A Tribute to One of Victoria Hospice's First Caregivers, Dr. Jim Wilde March 8, 1932 – June 19, 2017

Born and raised in a small village in Yorkshire, England, Dr. Jim Wilde dedicated nearly 60 years of his life to the profession he dearly loved and the patients he cared for. He is remembered as a kind and compassionate doctor with an excellent bedside manner and a wicked sense of humour.

"He was universally beloved by patients and families," says Dr. Deb Braithwaite, a palliative care physician who worked with Dr. Wilde during his 30 years at Victoria Hospice.

After many successful years as a family physician in England and North Vancouver, Dr. Wilde began his second career at Victoria Hospice in 1983. Alongside Dr. Michael Downing, his work and mentorship was foundational in those early years at Hospice.

"He had a prodigious work ethic," reflects Dr. Braithwaite. "He never missed a day's

work. But he loved the call of the open road — how else to explain a man who owned 33 cars in his life?"

Over his long career, Dr. Wilde influenced at least three generations of physicians by freely sharing his vast clinical knowledge and unflagging compassion. "He was a wonderful mentor," says Dr. Braithwaite. "Many folks count him among their most influential role models, both for his superb skills as a clinician and healer, and for his wisdom in the ways of the human heart. I know a number of doctors, myself included, who long regarded Jim as the physician we'd most like to be when we grew up."

Thank you, Dr. Wilde, for your humanity, your loyalty, and your service to Victoria Hospice and countless patients and families. Rest in peace.

What Will the Future of Hospice Care Look Like?

Canada's population is aging, with Vancouver Island leading the way. As people live longer, the latest research shows that their needs at end of life will change too, with illnesses like organ failure and dementia needing as much palliative care support as cancer does today.

That means that Victoria Hospice will have to change too, both to meet the needs of those we serve, and to build capacity to serve more people. Over the past few months we've been working on an exciting project to identify our next steps for growth and improvement.

Members of our frontline clinical team, in collaboration with an external consulting group, have created comprehensive process maps to document the intricacies of our current work from both the patient and caregiver perspectives. We've also completed an in-depth

review of the latest research from subject matter experts around the world, as well as the most recent population projections for Vancouver Island, to explore potential models for care that can be adapted to meet the needs of local residents.

This comprehensive analysis will enable us, under the direction of the Victoria Hospice Society Board of Directors, to envision our future direction, establish priorities, and launch our renewed Strategic Plan 2018–2021.

We look forward to sharing our plan with you in the coming months, and to expanding and improving end-of-life care in our community.

Sincerely,



Mischelle vanThiel
CEO, Victoria Hospice



Some members of the wonderful Victoria Hospice team who worked on this important and exciting project. Their work will help identify Victoria Hospice's next steps for growth and improvement in meeting the needs of local residents.



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

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Credit card type: VISA MasterCard AmEx

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My donation is in memory of

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Please send an acknowledgement letter to

Email

Name

I would like to receive Victoria Hospice e-newsletters.

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I wish to remain anonymous.

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City/Province

I am interested in finding out more about including Victoria Hospice in my Will.

Postal Code

Thank you!

Victoria Hospice Textbook Wins Prestigious Award

Last year Victoria Hospice released an updated edition of the ground-breaking textbook *Transitions in Dying and Bereavement: A Psychosocial Guide for Hospice and Palliative Care, Second Edition*, first release in 2003. Written by Victoria Hospice's Clinical Services Director, Wendy Wainwright, and Bereavement Coordinator, Marney Thompson, the textbook has been awarded third place in the 2017 American Journal of Nursing (AJN) Book of the Year Awards in the Palliative Care and Hospice category. The AJN Book of the Year is a prestigious competition that recognizes the very best in nursing publications.

The Victoria Hospice Society Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers extend their sincere congratulations to Wendy Wainwright and Marney Thompson on this achievement.



FROM LEFT:
Wendy and Marney holding the award-winning textbook

Our staff of nurses, doctors, and counsellors, and over 300 highly trained volunteers, ensure that the end-of-life journey is one of comfort, learning, and celebration of a life well-lived. Our bereavement team offers counselling to anyone in the community who is suffering loss, regardless of a prior connection to Victoria Hospice.

Let us privately recognize one of our support team for you. Leave your message at right..

Raising the Standard of Care for Kidney Patients

In 2009, a study by the BC Provincial Renal Agency showed significant gaps in the care provided to patients with kidney disease at the end of life.

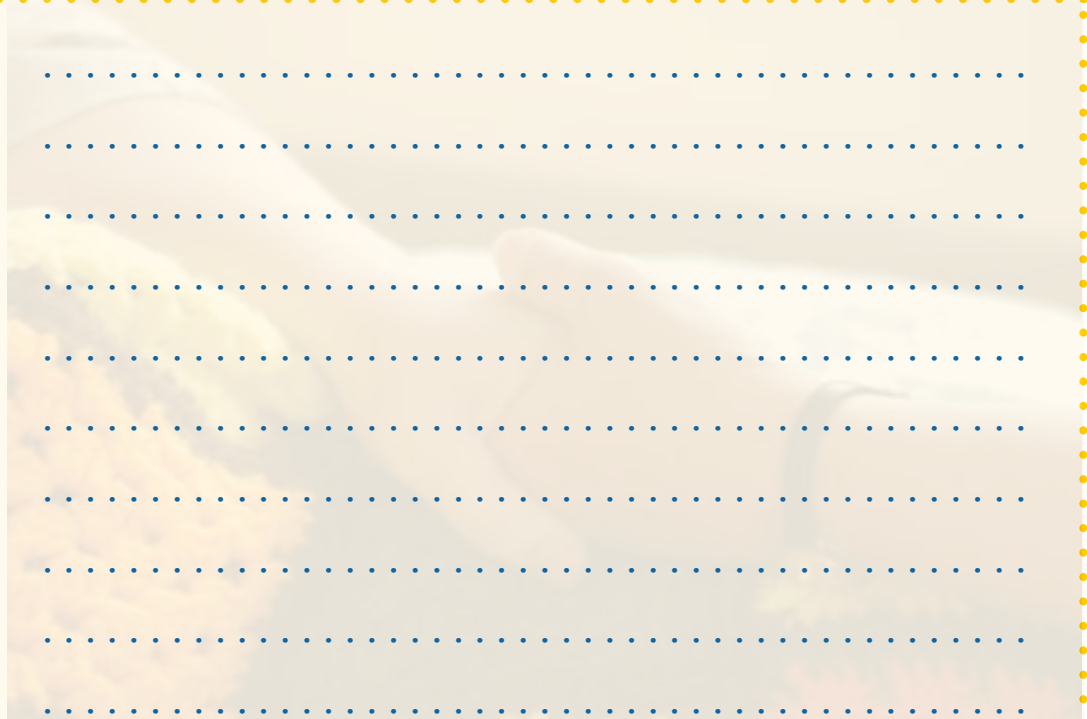
Thanks to a new grant from Victoria Foundation, Victoria Hospice is partnering through an interdisciplinary working group comprised of members of the BC Renal Agency, practitioners from the Royal Jubilee Hospital Renal Unit, and local family practitioners.



Together they will map the journey of patients living with kidney disease to better understand these gaps from the patients' perspective. The goal is to increase communication between patients and caregivers, provide better symptom management, more in-depth psychosocial and spiritual care, and greater assistance in navigating complex decisions.

This project will ensure that Victorians living with kidney disease will be better supported in by their medical care team when approaching the end of life, and in turn enjoy a better quality of life when their time is most precious.

Thank you, Victoria Foundation!



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. These meaningful gifts honour precious lives and help to enhance quality of life for other patients and families in need. Gifts made In Memory or In Honour between November 31, 2017 and January 31, 2018.

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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

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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.

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