

KATY COMES FULL CIRCLE

Renowned Brisbane artist, Katy Edwards has supported Karuna in many ways over the years. We were privileged to support her and her late husband Bob when they needed us.

Katy Edwards, Brisbane “naïve” artist realised belatedly that she was a frustrated nurse. It was the 1990’s and her school friend Shirley was struggling with the terminal stages of breast cancer at home. Katy didn’t know the best way to help and sometimes felt useless but along with several of Shirley’s nursing friends, visited regularly to keep Shirley company and ease her loneliness.

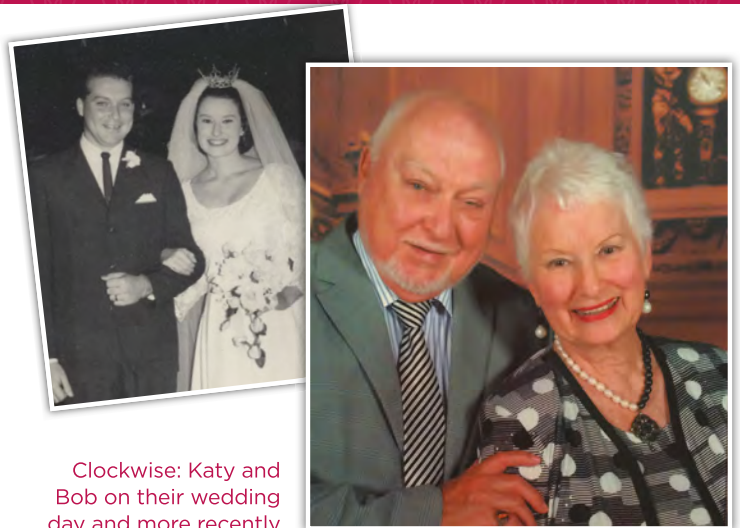
Katy’s friend, Merryl, told her at the time about Karuna Hospice Services, which provided palliative care at home, and utilised the services of respite care volunteers to ease the burden of those caring at home.

Although busy with her own life as a wife, mother, and artist, Katy decided to train as a Family Support Volunteer so that she could be properly prepared to assist Shirley. Katy had some experience in caring for her parents over the previous ten years, who had lived with cancer and stroke.

Katy recalls the training was rigorous and thorough, from personal reflections to practical caring techniques, and prepared the trainees to give carers a proper break without worrying about their loved one. Over the next ten years, Katy visited a number of Karuna’s clients, bringing comfort and companionship, and in her words “I finally felt I was being useful”. She shared Karuna’s belief that everyone should have the chance to die peacefully and as free from pain as possible, in the company of their family and loved ones. Her husband Bob was very proud of Katy’s work, and quietly supported her behind the scenes.

Katy’s contribution to Karuna families didn’t stop there. For many years Katy volunteered at our Art and Christmas markets, and was a popular public speaker at many clubs, explaining her art, and her link to Karuna. She kindly allowed us the copyright to her original painting : “Karuna Art Market”, which allowed us to raise funds through related merchandise.

Right: ‘Karuna Art Market’ painting by Katy Edwards



Clockwise: Katy and Bob on their wedding day and more recently

In 2019 Katy and Bob’s life changed forever, when Bob was diagnosed with oesophageal cancer. Katy had never expected to need Karuna’s help for her own family. But she felt she was prepared for the toughest of times ahead.

Katy called on Karuna to assist her with Bob’s care in June 2020. Our nursing and emotional support team began to visit and support Bob, Katy and their family.

Katy reflected that the experience was “**life-changing**”, and she was so grateful for the Karuna nurses doing call outs in the middle of the night, and that she could have Bob at home until the end. Bob died peacefully at their home in September 2020.

“I felt Karuna’s arms around me and still do.” ~ Katy

And the wheel turned full circle.



FROM THE CEO'S *Desk*

Dear Karuna friends

Despite the challenges of 2020 there is a resounding sense of community among everyone who supports and cares about Karuna. As a team we worked closely together, albeit at a distance, maintaining our support for clients and their families.

The funds raised during our Christmas Appeal were received with much gratitude, and will contribute to our continued focus on exceptional clinical care.

I'd like to take this moment to send a heartfelt thanks, as well as our best wishes, to Dr Pryor who has been a long time supporter of Karuna, and is retiring after 44 years of service to the community.

This year we look to build more awareness about the need for palliative care, and that people living with terminal illness have choices about how and where they receive their care. This also includes education and developing further resources to be made available to our clients and families.

Keep an eye out for new activities this year too. Our podcast series will launch shortly, along with a new series of workshops.

Karuna's thirty-year anniversary is coming up in 2022. I feel extremely positive about the future of the organisation, and look forward to celebrating this significant milestone with you all.

Until next time,



Tracey Porst *Chief Executive Officer*



HAVE YOU GOT A STORY YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE?

We are capturing and collecting stories from individuals, families, current and past staff and volunteers that reflect their journey with Karuna over the last 30 years. We would be interested to hear how your experiences with or caring for loved ones or clients has touched your life and left its mark.

A story that has touched your heart, could touch another. It would be lovely to share these stories with our community through our appeals and newsletters. Especially coming up to our 30 year anniversary in 2022!

If you have a story you would like to tell, photos to share please contact verena@karuna.org.au.

Stories matter

Thank you!

Thank you for your support for our recent Christmas Appeal.

A record \$98,000 has been raised so far!

Thank you to Helen Cooper and her daughters for sharing their story with the extended Karuna community. It was a privilege, to be able to provide care for Ashley.



Ashley and his wife, Helen.

IN CONVERSATION WITH DR SUE COLEN

Medical Officer with Karuna

Our CEO Tracey Porst chats with Sue about her career and work with Karuna.

In 2019 Sue began working regularly with Karuna, having referred many of her patients to us during her career as a GP. Sue supports our Clinical Services team and has become an invaluable member of the organisation.

(TP) Sue, you have spent most of your career in general practice. Then you became aware of the emerging area of medicine known as Palliative Care in the 1980s, right?

(SC) Yes that's right. Once I graduated in medicine from UQ I began my medical career at The Princess Alexandra Hospital. It was in my second year that I was exposed to general practice and I decided it was a good fit for my career in medicine.

In the late 1980's I became aware of the emerging area of medicine called Palliative Care. I was able to do some courses and worked for several months at what was then Mt Olivet Hospice. From there, I returned to general practice but maintained an interest in palliative medicine. Mt Olivet and Karuna both developed community services that I referred to. I left GP work in 2015 and was able to locum at The Redcliffe Hospital Palliative Care Unit and The Wesley Hospital, broadening my experience in in-patient care.



Before you joined Karuna, we had not had a doctor on our team for many years. What do you see as the real value in the role?

Karuna's highly experienced and skilled clinical nurses referred back to hospital doctors or the client's GP for discussion and medical orders. This worked well but we wanted to see if there was a way we could seek decisions that would benefit the client in an even more timely fashion.

The role of Medical Officer with Karuna has developed over the period, how do you see it?



I see there are three main aspects to the role:

Support for the nurses. Palliative Care problem solving relies on a team and my experience helps to support the nurses and together the team is stronger.

Clients - I bring broad GP experience and Palliative Care background to patient care. Being able to prescribe medication and make medication changes is an advantage in client care.

Referring hospital or other specialist. Having a medical doctor on the team helps add credibility to the service.

Sue why do you think palliative care services are important?

The nature of General Practice has changed in that many GP practices don't do home visits. Clients receiving cancer treatments, or have a life limiting chronic illness will often have treatments that prolong their life, so there are many people living with a terminal illness. The skill of Palliative Care is enabling and supporting clients and families with symptom management to live the best life they can.

The spiritual element of Karuna care is well known. As a Doctor, what are your thoughts?

There are psychological and emotional adjustments for clients and their families and Karuna have always shown their value of that aspect for patients by providing access to counsellors and psychologists. Living with a life limiting illness makes clients and their families face their death, and for many they appreciate the spiritual care offered through Karuna.

Over the course of the last few years I've become aware of the medicalisation of Palliative Care and I believe the human aspect of care and compassion has sometimes been lost. Health professionals are often aware of this but find it difficult to have the conversations with clients that touch on the emotional and spiritual aspects of their lives.

Your work with Karuna has made a difference to so many of our clients and families. We sincerely appreciate your support.

I feel very privileged to work with clients at this time of great vulnerability.

If you would like to help fund more hours for Karuna's Medical Officer please contact verena@karuna.org.au

Congratulations!

AWARD WINNING VOLUNTEERS

CONGRATULATIONS to Karuna's Palliative Care Support and Biography volunteers!

Our volunteers were recognised for their efforts by Volunteering Queensland, deservedly receiving the **Volunteer Impact Award**. The calibre of finalists was high, so to be recognised by the state body for Volunteers in this way is an honour celebrated by the Karuna community.

Prior to COVID-19, our Palliative Care Support Volunteers worked alongside our nurses visiting families at home, to provide companionship, practical assistance and respite to carers. Our Biography volunteers continue to give clients the opportunity to share their life stories and to leave a special keepsake for their loved ones.

Volunteers are generous with their time, kindness and compassion, considering it a privilege to provide support to Karuna clients and their family. Their willingness to change plans or travel distances when needed is commendable and much appreciated.

Some of our volunteers were on hand to receive the award in person from Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner and Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner (pictured with Annette Norris) on International Volunteer day on 5 December 2020.



Lord Mayor Adrian Schrinner, Annette Norris and Lady Mayoress Nina Schrinner

Congratulations to our Palliative Care Support and Biography volunteers on this wonderful achievement!

FUNDED BY YOU!

NEW BLADDER SCANNER

Karuna's nursing team were pleased to receive an invaluable piece of equipment funded by your passionate support for Karuna families.

A **bladder scanner** is a hand-held ultrasound device that reduces the need for unnecessary catheterisation and risk of UTI's.

This helpful device detects if urine is retained in the bladder which can cause discomfort and restlessness.

This piece of equipment is valuable in urinary continence planning and aids in the comfort of our palliative clients. The bladder scanner is used every day in our care for clients.

Thank you from all the team.



WORDS OF *Wisdom*

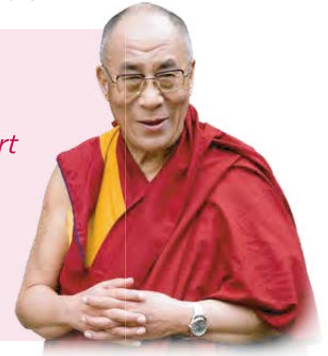
From His Holiness
The Dalai Lama

Karuna's Spiritual Patron



NEVER GIVE UP

*No matter what is going on, Never give up, Develop the heart,
Too much energy in your country is spent developing the mind, Instead of the heart
Be compassionate, Not just to your friends, But to everyone, Be compassionate
Work for peace, In your heart and in the world, Work for peace, And I say again
Never give up, No matter what is going on around you
Never give up.*



Thankyou KARUNA

I have recently retired from general practice after 44 years, having had the privilege of providing "cradle to grave" care for the families of The Gap and surrounding suburbs over this time.

Whilst there have been many major medical breakthroughs during my career, one important change has been the development of community-based palliative care.

One lasting memory as a junior doctor at RBH in the early 70's, was a night call to see a 30-year-old lady with terminal ovarian cancer in a verandah corner of the ward. She was in pain, alone and afraid. I was able to provide pain relief, but due to the pressures of multiple calls was unable to provide what she really needed, someone to listen to her concerns and fears and just comfort her.

This initiated my interest in palliative care.

I was fortunate to be mentored by Dr Brian Cole OAM, a pioneering palliative-care GP. Our practice provided 24-hour medical cover, which enabled us to provide consistent palliative care.

The arrival of palliative-care organisations such as Karuna was a godsend for the GP, patients and families.

They provided great medical, nursing, spiritual and social support for patients and their families. Patients could be cared for and die in the comfort and familiarity of their home, surrounded by family, not alone in a hospital verandah bed.

The practice staff wished to arrange a retirement gift for me. They had raised funds for Karuna previously, so I asked if they would donate to Karuna instead.

They went one better and involved our patients in raising the donation. There was a great response from all concerned.

As a GP who knew the patients and families well, Karuna allowed me to care for palliative care patients and their families in a way which would not have been possible 44 years ago.



Dr John Pryor

John Pryor

Keep Karuna caring with a GIFT IN YOUR *Will*

A gift in your Will is a meaningful way to ensure Karuna continues to improve the lives of future generations. Your gift can ensure that clients and their families are able to access high quality, specialist home-based palliative and end of life care when they need it.

If you have any questions or would like to receive a copy of our new Gift in Will brochure, please don't hesitate to get in touch. We'd love to hear from you.

Call Verena or Hilary on 07 3632 8300.



SHOP AT KARUNA AND SUPPORT FAMILIES IN YOUR COMMUNITY

Visit our shop via the Karuna website or at shop.karuna.org.au. There are lots of lovely craft, art and bric-a-brac items available for sale. The shop will be updated regularly. We hope that you will shop with us and would be grateful if you could share the link with your family, friends and networks.

If you would like to donate items for sale, please contact karuna@karuna.org.au.

Happy Shopping!



Below: Karuna crafters at work!



PODCAST *(stay tuned)*

In March the Karuna Podcast “What about death? – Everything you wanted to know about death and were afraid to ask” will go live.

This unique podcast will open up the conversation about death and dying in the broadest, deepest, non-threatening and we hope, stimulating and accessible way.

Keep your eye on Karuna's website, Facebook page and Twitter for launch details.

KARUNA *Workshops*

Please visit www.karuna.org.au/workshops to book your place or call Karuna on 07 3632 8300 for more information. The cost of these workshops support the ongoing work of Karuna Hospice in the community. All workshops will be available via zoom until further notice.

Mindfulness in Motion

Join Ven. Tsultrim (Carla Pearse) as she takes you through a unique and practical exploration of mindfulness that goes beyond drinking tea mindfully. You will learn skills to be proactive in cultivating healthier and more helpful habits, leading to more effective relationships whether in the workplace, at home or wherever you interact with others.

This workshop will help you:

- turn your everyday thoughts, words and actions into a long lasting mindfulness practice;
- build your confidence, and
- build a stronger, more resilient state of mind.

One course will begin on **Tuesday 20 April** and run over 6 weeks to **Tuesday 25 May 2021 6:00pm-8:00pm** and another on **Tuesday 7 September – 12 October 2021 10:00am – 12:00pm AEST (Brisbane)**.

Workshop Fee: **\$80.00**

Building Balanced Empathy



Explore the themes to empathy, vulnerability and emotional resilience with Ven. Tsultrim. In this workshop you will learn how to empathise from your heart and your head allowing you to relate to others in a healthy, more balanced way.

This workshop will be over 3 weeks starting on **Tuesday 17 – 31 August 6:00pm – 8:00pm AEST (Brisbane)**

Workshop Fee: **\$30.00**

Unlocking Your Potential

Ven. Tsultrim's Unlocking Your Potential workshop will help you to:

develop a calmer, focused mind and more self-understanding

explore human potential and the life long process of conditioning, influencing who you are today

understand how the way you perceive and interact with the world may support or limit the unlocking of your potential

reflect on how you can unlock and fulfil your potential

This workshop will be over 3 weeks starting on **Tuesday 20 July – 3 August 2021 6:00pm – 8:00pm AEST (Brisbane)**.

Workshop Fee: **\$30.00**